



Queen Mary  
University of London

Institute for the  
Humanities and  
Social Sciences



# Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IHSS)

## Annual Report 2021-2022

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# Foreword



In a Faculty where research takes so many different forms – from lab-based experiments in Linguistics and Physical Geography to creative work in the literary, theatrical, and cinematic spheres – the IHSS plays a vital part in sparking interdisciplinary conversations that might not otherwise take place.

Since I took up my role as Dean in January 2021, I've been privileged to witness this community develop in scope and

ambition. In what follows you can find ample evidence of this expansion: the final activities of the IHSS's first Working Group, and the early activities of its second; the conceptual richness of the aftermath, explored across a range of activities; workshops and seed-corn projects; training sessions, academic visits, and much more. The report also sets out some of what researchers can look forward to over the coming years. Four Research Programmes will coordinate exploration of key themes, while two incoming groups – Lecturers and IHSS Fellows, and Global Professorial Fellows – will catalyse new thinking in both cross-disciplinary and cross-generational ways.

I'm sure that most if not all HSS researchers will find something to excite them in this report. But if you don't find enough excitement, please don't hesitate to make your own. Get involved with one or other of the Research Programmes and/or Research Centres; apply for funding to support a developing project; or, if you'd like a more open-ended discussion of how the IHSS might enrich your research environment, simply contact us for a chat. We're keen to nurture initiatives on a bottom-up basis – the IHSS will become what you make of it. We look forward to welcoming you at our events next year and beyond.

**Dean for Research, Professor Adrian Armstrong**

## The IHSS in numbers

**2**

working groups launched

**4**

Programme Directors recruited

**4**

distinguished visiting fellows

**10**

Global Professorial Fellows recruited

**13**

videos recorded

**16**

IHSS Strategic Lecturers during 2021 - 2022

**20**

IHSS Fellows recruited

**45**

online and in-person events with more than 1000 participants

**26,994**

IHSS website views (increased by **32.54%** on the year before)

**£5,120.50**

in total funding committed via the Early Years Workshop

**£47,950.05**

in total funding committed via the Large Grant Corn Scheme





## Report of the Director

The original purpose behind establishing the IHSS was to create a platform for cross-Faculty dialogue and research that would bring people together. Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic had other ideas. After a year (2020-21) in which we all pivoted to digital workshops and online gatherings – the practicalities of which were substantial, the charms somewhat less durable – the past year has seen a gradual move from online to hybrid and in-person events once more. We were thrilled to be able to host, in-person towards the end of the academic year, two events in particular: a closed workshop for our outgoing cohort of Strategic Lecturers (2019-22) and our first ever in-person Annual Symposium. The latter was presented by Professor Helen Small of Oxford after two previous and highly successful, but also online, events with Professor Thomas Piketty (2020) and Professor Shoshanna Zuboff (2021). More on both these events further on in this report. All in all,

despite the ongoing challenges, the academic year 2021-2022 has been a productive one at IHSS, with a great many fascinating events on everything from plants to global public goods and with new initiatives set in motion too. This is also my last year as IHSS Director since I will leave Queen Mary this summer, after eighteen years. For the past three years it has been a privilege to have led the IHSS and its core staff, along with our Research Centre Directors, Strategic Lecturers, Postdoctoral and Early Career Network leads, Distinguished Visiting Fellows, and Working Group Chairs. One thing we have had a clear focus on throughout this period is building up a vibrant “intellectual college” at the IHSS. And I am pleased this intellectual college will continue to grow as we welcome this summer four new IHSS Program Directors, IHSS Global Professorial Fellows, and an incoming cohort of over twenty Lecturers and IHSS Fellows. And, of course, a new Director,

Professor Kate Malleon, who takes up the post in August. Kate will be a major asset to the IHSS going forward and I wish her the very best of luck. Despite the difficulties of the pandemic during my own time as Director I have taken great inspiration from the work of colleagues across our eight Schools. I am pleased that the IHSS has supported their work in turn.

In three years the IHSS has grown into a dynamic institute of advanced studies. We are part of the UK Consortium of Institutes of Advanced Studies and of growing relevance at the international scale, as the huge interest in our recent Global Professorial Fellows scheme shows. Somewhat closer to home, the IHSS will continue to host our now habitual programmes, be it book launches, seminars, workshops, or our Faculty Forums geared towards issues in scholarship, or

indeed our more social Institute Afternoons and other events. Each of these fora provides a space for colleagues within the Faculty to convene and to develop together the ideas that put the Humanities and Social Sciences in the forefront of scholarly and public discussion. My heartfelt thanks to all of you who have assisted, and been part of, this journey from an idea to a reality over the past three years, and a special thanks to our former Faculty Research Manager, Anna Boneham, who has been a critical part of our management team, and to our IHSS Administrator, Jolanta Stanulionyte, who continues to work tirelessly to enable much of this. I hope that many more Faculty and colleagues within QMUL and beyond will engage with the IHSS during the years to come

**Professor Simon Reid-Henry (IHSS Director)**



## Management team

### **Professor Simon Reid-Henry** (IHSS Director)

Simon Reid-Henry is Professor of Historical and Political Geography. He is the author of four books and numerous articles in the areas of critical humanitarian studies, global health, intellectual histories of development and democracy, and the history of science.

### **Professor Adrian Armstrong** (Dean for Research, Humanities and Social Sciences, 2020-23)

Adrian is a Centenary Professor of French. Most of his work lies at the intersection of two or more disciplines: literary studies, visual studies, book history, and translation studies. He is an author and editor of five books.

### **Jolanta Stanulionyte** (IHSS Administrator)

Jolanta has a BA(Hons) in History and Philosophy from Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania and an FDA Graphic Communications from Kingston University London. She has joined Queen Mary in June 2021. Jolanta has worked in the Higher Education sector for more than ten years.

### **Anna Boneham** (Faculty Research Manager)

Anna worked at Queen Mary since October 2019. An Art History graduate her background spans the arts and culture sector as well as higher education.

From left to right: Jolanta Stanulionyte, Simon Reid-Henry, Anna Boneham, Adrian Armstrong

## Research at IHSS

### Working groups

#### **IHSS Working Group on Covid-19**

The IHSS Working Group on COVID-19 was an interdisciplinary group focused on examining the response to COVID-19 through the lens of trust. Drawing on different disciplinary backgrounds the group met from summer 2019 through to late 2021 to share thoughts and compile a dossier on the politics of trust in the age of COVID-19.

Trust is a central binding element connecting of ethics, scientific policy, diversity, inequalities, cultural responses, and social cohesion. As part of its work the group also produced a series of documents and working papers, as well as feeding in to national conversations and political deliberations (see, for example, the presentation of IHSS Working Group on COVID-19 member

Sophie Harman's presentation of oral evidence to the House of Lords Defence and International Relations Committee).

The IHSS Working Group on COVID-19 was led by Prof. Valsamis Mitsilegas (School of Law) and is comprised of the following staff: Dr Sydney Calkin (School of Geography), Prof. Sophie Harman (School of Politics and International Relations), Prof. David McCoy (School of Medicine and Dentistry), Dr Aoife Monks (School of English and Drama), Dr Mario Sluga (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film), Dr Sarah Wolff (School of Politics and International Relations), Professor Gülnur Muradoglu and Dr Stella Ladi (both of the School of Business and Management).

The Working Group published its final report, *How to Have Trust in a Pandemic*, in August 2022.



The IHSS Working Group on Covid 19 brought together scholars from a variety of disciplines within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Queen Mary University of London with the aim of developing inter- and multi-disciplinary dialogue mapping a contribution of the Humanities and Social Sciences to the debates on responses to COVID 19. The Working Group's final report presents the outcome of thinking developed within the framework of the Working Group and reflects the richness and diversity of conversations across the disciplines. The focus on trust, in particular, highlights the distinct contribution the Humanities and Social Sciences can make into the development of original thinking in the field."

**Professor Valsamis Mitsilegas, IHSS Covid-19 Working Group Chair and Professor of Law.**



## Publications

Tim Brown, Calkin, S., Holden, K., Reid-Henry, S., & Taylor, S. (2022) **How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: A critical reflecton on the discourses of COVID-19**, in Gavin Andrews, Valorie Crooks, Jamie Pearce & Janey Messina (eds) *COVID-19 and Similar Futures: Pandemic Geographies* (Springer)

Sophie Harman (2021) **Threat not Solution: Gender, Global Health Security, and COVID-19**, *International Affairs* (2021). Available online here.

Sophie Harman, Julia Smith, Sara E. Davies, Huiyun Feng, Connie C. R. Gan, Karen A. Grépin, Asha Herten-Crabb, Rosemary Morgan, Nimisha Vandan & Clare Wenham (2021) **More than a public health crisis: A feminist political economic analysis of COVID-19**, *Global Public Health*. Available online here.

Sophie Harman (2021) **COVID-19, the UN, and dispersed global health security Ethics and International Affairs** (Fall, 2020, pp.373-378)

Sophie Harman, C. Wenham, J. Smith, R. Morgan, et al. (2020) **COVID-19: the gendered impacts of the outbreak**, *The Lancet*, March 2020, 396 (10227): 846-848

Valsamis Mitsilegas, **Responding to Covid 19- Surveillance, Trust & The Rule of Law**, a blog piece for the Criminal Justice Centre available here.

Stella Ladi & Dr Dimitris Tsarouhas(2020), **EU economic governance and Covid-19: policy learning and windows of opportunity**, *Journal of European Integration*, 42:8, 1041-1056. Available here.

Gulnar Muradoğlu, **The impact of Covid-19 on G7 stock markets volatility: Evidence from a ST-HAR model**, *Science Direct*, March 2021

Mario Slugan **Pandemic (Movies): A Pragmatic Analysis of a Nascent Genre**, *Quarterly Review of Film & Video*, March 2021

Working Group (WG) members Sarah Wolff and Stella Ladi also coordinated a *Journal of European Integration* Special Issue on **Pandemic Politics and European Union responses**.

In addition, WG member Sophie Harman wrote in the *New Statesman* on how a lack of political will and underinvestment led to experts' warnings on a Covid-like event being ignored in The world had tools to prevent the coronavirus- why weren't they used? and WG member Stella Ladi contributed to an article in *The Conversation on Coronavirus recovery- lessons from the eurozone crisis*.

## IHSS Working Group on the Climate Emergency

Since its establishment in December 2021, the IHSS Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG) has met monthly. Its initial meetings were devoted to a conceptualisation of the CEWG's outputs and discussion on how best to bring together the interdisciplinary expertise of its members. In these initial meetings, the CEWG agreed that a set of creative outputs easily accessible to an audience broader than just academics would be the most appropriate deliverables. This is for several reasons, including the CEWG's strong desire to become part of a broader conversation on the climate emergency involving several stakeholders (ranging from other institutions to NGOs and local communities). In line with this, the CEWG decided that the most appropriate output would be a series of podcasts (as opposed to writing a joint report, for example). The envisaged podcasts would collect the major takeaways of a series of events that the CEWG would jointly organise with several departments across the HSS faculty. The podcasts will be created in collaboration with the Peace Palace Projects directed by Professor Paul Heritage, who is also a member of the CEWG.

So far, two of these events have taken place. On 7 and 21 June 2022, the CEWG, in collaboration with the newly established Centre for Climate



Crime and Climate Justice (School of Law), organised two events looking at the broader relationship between ecocide and the climate emergency. These events, entitled 'The Politics of Ecocide' and 'Rethinking Ecocide', were led by Professor Penny Green and Professor David Whyte (Chair and member of the CEWG respectively). A third event, organised in collaboration with the Department of Business Analytics and Applied Economics and led Dr Caterina Gennaioli (also member of the CEWG), is scheduled to take place in October 2022.

Between December 2021 and June 2022, the CEWG was chaired by Professor Penny Green, Professor of Law and Globalisation and Head of the Department of Law. On 13 June 2022, Professor Simon Reid-Henry, Director of IHSS, appointed Dr Tibusay Morgandi as new Chair of the CEWG for the remainder of the term (June 2022-February 2023) to replace Professor Green who will shortly step down as Head of School and take sabbatical leave.

### The members of IHSS Climate Emergency Working Group

Dr Tibusay Morgandi (Chair June 2022 – February 2023) (The Centre for Commercial Law Studies)

Prof Penny Green (Chair December 2021 – May 2022) (School of Law)

Dr Andrew Russell (School of Geography)

Dr Caterina Gennaioli (School of Business and Management)

Prof David Whyte (School of Law)

Dr Alex Henshaw (School of Geography)

Prof Paul Heritage (People's Palace Projects)



## IHSS Annual Theme 2021-22 “Aftermaths”

The IHSS thematic focus for 2021-22 was aftermaths, launched at a moment when we were still in the midst of COVID-19, even as vaccines began to roll out in some but by no means all countries. Nor was Covid the only crisis from which we could be said to be living in the aftermath of. The fallout from Afghanistan, Brexit, the Financial Crisis and the Black Lives Matter movement all remind us — if differently — of the powerful legacies of racial injustice, geopolitical hubris, and the aftermaths of colonial order. But how do we experience and make sense of these and other aftermaths? In the UK Brexit and COVID-19 have been compared to a form of shock: a sudden rupture in the existing social fabric, the earthquake or the tidal wave that for long was a possibility, but now is fact. These are the sort of upheavals that leave things in disarray, and the facts themselves to be struggled over. But the question must always be: “and what comes next?” How do people and societies and cultures react? What emotions do they go through, what experiences must they manage, what opportunities emerge? What comes to an end, in other words, and, as the aftermath of colonialism reminds us, what remains?

In the aftermath of the fall of communism, 30 years ago, the elation of political freedom was followed by a steadily dawning reality of economic constraint. Perhaps some Brexiteers may soon feel the same. In the aftermath of 9/11, now 20 years ago, it was trauma that bit hardest: a keening personal trauma for some and a national humiliation for others; a wound which supplied – or so the Bush administration insisted – a mandate for striking back. But aftermaths are not merely that which follows

on from historical occurrences, or the onset of crises. And their temporal frame may not always be short-lived. Aftermaths can linger, psychologically and in the built fabric of society: “war scorches, war dismembers, war ruins,” as Susan Sontag put it in her memorable depiction of a bombed-out Sarajevo. Aftermaths also take a variety of different forms: cultural, intellectual, political and economic. They can and have been experienced, treated and discussed in many different ways. They are ends, but they are also beginnings.

The Humanities and Social Sciences have a rich, if somewhat unassembled language and intellectual vocabulary for understanding and making sense of the way that aftermaths form a part of the human experience. In a year when the rupture of society imposed by national lockdowns around the globe thrust the language – and politics – of science and medicine centre stage, and awarded them a mandate to manage and control, there is a need to examine more closely what the humanities and social sciences can tell us about the way aftermaths themselves reshape “the plane of reflection” as Sartre put it. How do aftermaths re-imagine custom, tradition, or legitimacy? What is their own legacy? Why, for example, has race survived so long after its scientific refutation? Thinking about race as an aftermath of colonial order—a trace of history—helps us to think perhaps more clearly than does anything else about the ‘after’ in ‘aftermath’: just like the ‘post’ in postcolonial: a prefix whose temporal implications go beyond simple periodisation. What do aftermaths have to do with the haunting of the past, what power relations assemble within them (including around promises of renewal – be it



IHSS Symposium “The Commune at 150” (a part of “Aftermaths” series) took place on 2 November 2021.

moral, material or even spiritual), what “strange non-deaths”, as Colin Crouch observed, do they imply?

Well aware of this, a rich seam of literature looks to aftermaths as starting points in their own right (“l’année zero” of 1945 in Europe), as inflection points or openings for survivalist politics of life (between humanitarians, the traumatised and the dispossessed) and as transitions from one status to another (as in much apocalyptic and nihilist literature). But there are also efforts to think around the idea of aftermaths as moral or temporal wastelands, as spaces not just of “dead land” but of “roots that clutch,” as T.S. Eliot wrote. What then are the productive possibilities of an aftermath: for hope and optimism and renewal, or perhaps simply for starting anew? How do aftermaths shape legal regimes or even paradigms of thought? What does it actually mean to “build back better”

What gets remembered and what gets lost as we pass through these suspensive qualities not just of the “after” but of the “math”: literally, the “mowing” – the mud and ashes of the new.

This year, as we lived through the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as this moment intersected with a host of other legacies and afterlives, the IHSS set out to explore the «aftermath» in all its historical and cultural richness. We organised a series of events and activity that brought us towards a better understanding of the nature of this moment in which we find ourselves. For more details, see our events listings further on in this Report.



## IHSS Programmes

**In Summer 2022 the IHSS launched the first of a series of new Research Programmes. These will be headed up by Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty with a view to developing new lines of work in emergent areas of Faculty expertise. Among these new programmes of work will be:**



Environmental Futures (climate change as socio-cultural phenomenon) headed by Dr Giulia Carabelli, Lecturer in Sociology/Social Theory (School of Politics and International Relations)



Digital Lives (humanising the digital) headed by Dr Philippa Williams, Reader in Human Geography (School of Geography)



Rethinking Work (global and local ethnographies of labour) headed by Dr William Monteith, Senior Lecturer in Human Geography (School of Geography)



Global Epistemologies (taking stock of new cultural, medical, political, and social knowledges) headed by Dr Mario Sluga, Lecturer in Film Studies (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film)

## International Collaborations

Over the past academic year the IHSS has collaborated with the Miami Institute for the Social Sciences. The two organisations put together a series of three workshops addressing the issue of Global Public Goods from an historical perspective. The rationale for these workshops was that Global Public Goods have a history and a geography that pre-dates the current international policy discussion and which may provide clues as to how to take the concept forward. The COVID-19 pandemic has both underscored the need for this and presents some concrete challenges with which scholars and practitioners alike must reckon with. Despite rhetorical promises that “no one is safe until everyone is safe” and that we all share certain common global vulnerabilities, efforts to define the discovery and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines as global public goods have been half-hearted. What is the disconnect? And what other visions of common ownership provide alternative intellectual and political vocabularies for meeting global common needs and safeguarding the public interest.

Across the three linked workshops, the two institutes sought to raise a new debate as to what is missing in the language of Global Public Goods. There has been much discussion about

what constitutes a “good” in the language of global public goods, for example, but rather less on the matter of what constitutes the “public” and how we manage public needs at scale. This raises disciplinary questions. Economists have a particular understanding of “global public goods”; historians, geographers, political scientists, anthropologists and others may have a different take. Has a historical period ever existed when global public goods have existed, for example? The workshops set out to learn from the past of other people and places. Assuming we believe today that there exists certain ‘global public goods’—such as knowledge production in the medical and social sciences—they asked, how do we work towards the necessary legal, institutional, and psychic shifts in the national, regional and global public realms to fund and secure them appropriately? Also, who would and should be its funders? Raising questions such as this brought into sharp relief the way that we presently organize political society and its relationship to social and economic infrastructure. It also showed the power and the potential of transnational interdisciplinary engagements.



## Funded Schemes

The IHSS funds work within the Faculty via two primary schemes. Early Career Workshop Awards are for the organisation of workshops with a cross-disciplinary dimension, led by Early Career Researchers across the Faculty. Large Grant Seed Corn funds aim to pump-prime research leading to the submission of large, externally funded research applications by enabling academics to develop a full proposal for submission to an external funder. In 2021-22 the IHSS disbursed £5,120.50 in total funding via the Early Career Workshop scheme and £47,950.05 in total funding via the Large Grant Seed Corn scheme. A list of the funded projects is below.

### Early Career Workshop Scheme

#### *Legacies and Liabilities? Decolonising, Interdisciplinary, and Intersectional Approaches to the 19thC Now*

Led by Dr Rachel Bryant Davies (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film) and Dr Amanda Sciampacone (School of History) this seminar series will be dedicated to addressing the legacies of the nineteenth century and what studying the period involves across disciplines. How does the nineteenth century still shape today's world? What is the value of interdisciplinary nineteenth-century research? How do different disciplines address the same questions, or ask questions of similar or the same source materials?

#### *Memory in the Middle East and North Africa*

Led by Dr Hannah Scott Deuchar (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film), Dr Afef Mbarek (School of History), and Dr Rebekah Vince (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film) this three-part workshop series focuses on three archetypal modern sites of memory production – archives, museums, and narratives – to examine how memory is stored, mobilized, and contested across the Middle East and North Africa today.



The attendees and speakers engaged in conversations about how feminism in Latin America can offer ideas that can work in the UK. They also explored the personal struggles confronted by those working on Latin American decolonial feminisms, both in the UK and abroad, depending on their wide range of backgrounds and personal situations.

#### **Dr Valentina Aparicio (School of English and Drama)**

#### *Latin American Decolonial Feminism(s) in Britain: Challenge and Opportunities*

This one-day interdisciplinary workshop on Latin American decolonial feminism led by Dr Valentina Aparicio (School of English and Drama) and Dr Ana Laura Zavala Guillén (School of Geography) brought together researchers and activists working from this theoretical perspective in Britain.

#### *Feeling the Field*

Led by Dr Ana Laura Zavala Guillén (School of Geography) and Dr Micaela Signorelli (School of English and Drama) this project developed a series of online and in-person workshops that

delve into the connections between bodies and research to explore how female-presenting researchers navigate the ubiquitous risk of gender-based violence in the field.

#### *Reading Early Modern Recipes in a Digital Age*

This interactive workshop on 2-3 September will bring together researchers working on early modern food in different fields to discuss two related questions: how can cooking and otherwise attempting to follow or adapt early modern recipes function as a form of research? And how to use digital media to teach a public audience about the history of food and cooking and the ways it intersects with histories of gender, race, class, and colonialism? It will be led by Dr Clío Doyle (School of History).

#### **Large Grant Seed Corn Scheme**

(including projects carried over from 2020-21, owing to the Pandemic)

*Gender Violence and Killings of Girls and Women in Mexico: Trends, Causes and Effective Interventions* led by Prof Roxana Gutierrez-Romero (School of Business and Management) aims to narrow the critical gap in knowledge and contribute to the literature and policymaking and design effective interventions to prevent and reduce gender violence.

*Planetary portals: changes of state in the Anthropocene* led by Dr Kerry Holden (School of Geography) and Prof Kathryn Yusoff (School of Geography) aims to expose the forgotten stories and geographies of extraction through the production of a series of conceptual maps, portal methodologies and artistic practices in collaboration with partners in London, New York and Cape Town.

*Group Formation and Maintenance in the Abbasid Caliphate, 750-1000* led by Dr Anna

Chrysostomides (School of History) aims to compare the factors that caused ethnic or religious groups to form or disintegrate in the Islamic Abbasid caliphate which, at its height, spanned from Northern India to Africa. The project hopes to explore non-Muslim (Zoroastrian, Christian, Jewish and polytheist) identity formation and disintegration alongside the ever-changing identities of early Islamic groups.

*Global Ecologies of Work: A Case Study of Namibia's 'Green Hydrogen Rush'* led by Dr William Monteith (School of Geography) proposes to address the 'labour gap' in debates on climate solutions by conducting one of the first comprehensive investigations into the emerging green hydrogen industry in Namibia.

*War and Welfare: Historical Record Linkage and the Possibilities for Assessing Social and Economic Rupture* led by Dr Francesca Cornaglia (School of Economics and Finance). Using the First World War as a case study, this initial scoping exercise will ascertain the methodologies for linking large datasets to explore the true extent of the ruptures to social and economic life caused by war. The aim of this stage is to scope the largely digitised material to develop deeper understandings of the familial, marital, health (physical and mental) and employment circumstances of the men who were conscripted and/or went to war.

*Life with Houseplants after Lockdown* led by Dr Giulia Carabelli (School of Politics and International Relations). Dr Carabelli is developing an argument for human-plant relationships understood through the lens of solidarity, relationality and collaboration conducting preliminary research at Alnwick Gardens in Northumberland.

## Faculty Research Centres

The IHSS oversees the strategic coordination of the Faculty's own independent Research Centres, including via core funding. 2021-22 was a year of re-engagement for many of the Centres, whose directors will, from 2022, join together with IHSS Programme Directors as part of the Institute's Director's Forum. The highlights from some of the Centre activities are below:

***The Centre for the Study of the History of Political Thought*** hosted its Annual London Graduate Conference in the History of Political Thought, from 30 June to 1 July 2022. They also ran numerous events throughout the year, including the a book symposium on Andrew Fitzmaurice's 'King Leopold's Ghostwriter' on 13 May 2022.

***The Centre for the History of Emotions*** ran a variety of events from lectures and seminar series to reading groups and film screenings as a part of "Pathologies of Solitude" project. The Centre's award winning podcast series "The Sound of Anger" (2021) continues to be a popular download on Soundcloud.

***The Centre for European Research*** ran "Gods and Diplomats: On the Relevance of the Religious in Diplomacy" panel discussion in French and English on 7 October 2021. They published an article "Bailed-out governments did not lose policy-making discretion during the Eurozone crisis" in November 2021.

***The Queen Mary Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies*** ran the Open Digital Seminar in Eighteenth-Century Studies and a conference Women and Religion in Eighteenth-Century France on 24 June 2022.

***The Centre for Childhood Cultures*** held their Annual Lecture on 19 May 2022 with Professor Erica Burman "Putting 'Child as Method' to Work?". They also participated in the Being Human Festival, 11-20 November 2021.

## Ongoing Projects

Among the affiliated projects that are a part of the IHSS two have been particularly active this past year.

### Mobile People Doctoral Scholars Programme

The Mobile People programme is co-directed by Professors Engin Isin and Kimberley Hutchings (both from School of Politics and International Relations). The Mobile People programme involves 21 PhD research projects (2018-2023) concerned with how the world is being dynamically constituted by mobile people in active and novel ways and how this affects fundamental social and political institutions. Its aim is to generate theories, concepts, methods, and data that are necessary to understand mobility as a way of life – not as an exception but as an emerging norm. The programme has hosted a large number of events over the past year. The Meaning of Internationalism (June 10, 2022) brought together speakers from

across international studies and the history of political thought, the symposium will try to add determinacy to our concepts of internationalism by interrogating its complex and often contradictory histories in different regions and movements across the twentieth century. Tracing Sanctuary Cities (March 15, 2022), a talk by Dr. Rachel Humphris, illustrated how the histories of 'the city' in (settler-) colonial states is relevant to struggles over sanctuary cities today.

### The Solitudes Project

The Solitudes project ran a series of seminars all year with the Institute for Historical Research. As well as a colloquium on 'Solitude and Interiority' for the members of our Research Network and an exhibition, 'Raging Sea'.



# Visitors to IHSS

Each year the IHSS welcomes a number of world leading scholars to the Faculty as Distinguished Visiting Fellows. The fellows spend a period of a few weeks engaging in a pre-prepared plan of activity and events in close dialogue with QMUL Faculty and Students. Please read the highlights of some of this year's visits below.

Hosted by Professor Barbara Taylor (School of History) **Professor Thomas W. Laqueur** ran a seminar "When Species Meet", which was attended by about 25 people (hybrid: online and in person). He participated in a panel discussion on the book titled "Of Fear and Strangers", attended by about 50 people, and a public lecture "Canines in Solitude' the Gaze of the Dog in Western Art" attended by about 60 people.

Hosted by Dr John Adenitire (School of Law) **Professor Robin Fretwell Wilson** carried out the online workshop "Making Research Impactful: Cases Studies from the Clashes Over LGBT Rights and Religious Freedom".

Hosted by Professor Matthew Rubery (School of English and Drama) **Professor John Durham Peters**, 9 "Canines in Solitude' the Gaze of the Dog in Western Art) read the lecture 'Circumstantial Details (Birds, for Instance), Realism, and Environing Media' on 26 May 2022.

Hosted by Professor Catherine Maxwell, Professor Scott McCracken, and Professor Matt Rubery (all from School of English and Drama) **Professor Dennis Denisoff**. Professor Denisoff spent a month at Queen Mary and held a 5-member panel on Decadence and the arts (c. 50 attendees) as well as a 3-person discussion of his book "Decadent Ecology" (Cambridge University Press, 2021). Professor Denisoff also gave a graduate student workshop on queer ecology attended by students and faculty alike.

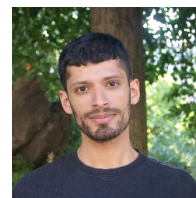
“

During my visit at Queen Mary I was able engage with my scholarship richly and warmly. The events went over-time because discussion was going so well. I have been chatting with or emailing with students throughout the experience and hopefully indefinitely. In short, this opportunity was a wonderful boost to my career and my spirits.”

**IHSS Distinguished Visiting Fellow Professor Dennis Denisoff, University of Tulsa**

# Outgoing IHSS Fellows

For the past three years the IHSS has had the pleasure of hosting 16 early career scholars. Officially inducted into the IHSS as “strategic lecturers”, our first cohort of IHSS fellows represented a major investment in a cross-faculty intellectual community at Queen Mary. Over the course of the three years they have developed into a real community of scholars who, while each pursuing individual projects, nonetheless have found common cause and application today. Numerous research projects and seminar series have emerged led by our IHSS fellows. Together they have contributed book manuscripts, multimedia platforms, podcasts, and a slew of articles and research papers. Above all they have contributed ideas and engagement across the disciplinary divides and initiated new research projects. The 16 Strategic Lecturers 2019-22 were:



**Dr Musab Younis's** (School of Politics and International Relations) book, "On the Scale of the World", coming out with the University of California Press in November. He is also co-editing a special issue of South Atlantic Quarterly with Alexandra Reza, which will come out early in 2023; it is titled 'Southern Questions: Theory at Europe's Colonial Frontiers.'



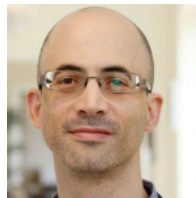
**Dr Will Bowers** (School of English and Drama) is an expert with Benjamin Zephaniah on Radio 4 two-part documentary on Shelley as a part of 200 year since Shelly's death. The programmes can be accessed at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0018wy2>. His digital resource / website — [dined.qmul.ac.uk](http://dined.qmul.ac.uk) is progressing well and will be complete by the end of the summer 2022. He published an article Wordsworth, Fox, and a Poet's Public Spirit .



**Dr Mario Slugan** (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film) has published “Fiction and Imagination in Early Cinema: A New Film History”. Bloomsbury, 2019. [Second Place: The 2021 BAFTSS Best Monograph Award] and IHSS Covid-19 Working Group Paper <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/ihss/media/qmul/ihss/documents/IHSS-Covid-19-Working-Paper-No.-2-Mario-Slugan.pdf>

He also co-edited with Enrico Terrone, “The Fiction/Nonfiction Distinction: Documentary Studies and Analytic Aesthetics in Conversation” *Studies in Documentary Film*, 2021 15(2) <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rsdf20/15/2> [Third Place: The 2022 Best Edited Volume Award], with Raoul Eshelman and Denise J. Youngblood, Special Issue “Pandemic Movies in Central and Eastern European Film and Television”, *Apparatus: Film, Media, & Digital Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe* 12, 2021 <http://dx.doi.org/10.17892/app.2021.00012>, with Enrico Terrone, Special Issue “Film Studies and Analytic Aesthetics in Dialogue”, *Projections: Journal for Movies and Mind*, 14(3), 2020 <https://www.berghahnjournals.com/view/journals/projections/14/3/projections.14.issue-3.xml>, with J. Alexander Bareis, Special Issue “Fiction in Central and Eastern European Film Theory and Practice”, *Apparatus: Film, Media, & Digital Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe* 8, 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.17892/app.2019.0008> and with Daniël Biltereyst, *New Perspectives on Early Cinema History: Concepts, Approaches,*

*Audiences*. Bloomsbury, 2022. Mario was a co-organiser of conference Experimental Film, Video Art, and the Borders of Cinema: A British Society of Aesthetics Synergy Conference, Queen Mary’s University of London, UK, May 25-27, 2022 <https://aestheticsfilmstudies.weebly.com/>. He has applied for ERC Starting Grant for his research project “Local Experiences of Early Cinema in the British Colonies”, ERC Starting Grant”.



**Dr Hedi Viterbi** (School of Law) has initiated and convened, with colleagues from School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, a seminar series on ‘Rethinking Childhood Studies Today’ last year. The seminars were jointly funded by the IHSS and the Centre for Childhood Cultures. Hedi has also initiated and held two workshops this year on ‘Reconceptualising Children’s Rights,’ funded by the Modern Law Review, with Rachel Bryant-Davies a series of informal meetings for the Strategic Lecturers, sponsored by the IHSS. He has published a book *Problematizing Law, Rights, and Childhood in Israel/Palestine* (CUP, 2021) which won the Socio-Legal Studies Association’s Early Career Book Prize. Hedi has also launched the Childhood, Law & Policy Network (CLPN) - an online, global, cross-disciplinary network for researchers working on social, political, and legal issues relating to children and childhood. The development of the website was funded by an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) grant.



**Dr Rachel Humphris** (School of Politics and International Relations) has published a book ‘Home-land: Romanian Roma, domestic space and the state’ Bristol: University of Bristol Press/ University of Chicago Press (2019) - Winner of British Sociological Association best monograph runner-up prize, an article Humphris, R., (2021) *Homemade State: Motherhood, citizenship and the home in child welfare encounters*, *Sociology* doi:10.1177/00380385211063367, report with Wangari-Jones, P. and Loyola-Hernández, L. (2021) *STOP THE SCAN: Police use of mobile fingerprinting technology for immigration enforcement*, UK. Leeds: Racial Justice Network and Yorkshire Resists and contributed with Schweitzer, R. and Monforte, P. (2022) “The Role of ‘Voluntariness’ in the Governance of Migration, Migration and Society” 5, 1-12. Her external engagement ‘Sanctuary, What’s next?’ international forum and online seminar series. 38 organisations including undocumented students, lawyers, municipal officers, academics and international organisations participated in six seminars in November 2020. More than 1500 people registered internationally. The series videos have 1000+ YouTube views; accompanying resource sheets have a similar download numbers.



**Dr Sydney Calkin**’s (School of Geography) European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grant project “Pharmaceutical Geographies of Self-Managed Sexual and Reproductive Health” has reached the final interview stage, to take place in September 2022. Her book “Abortion Without Borders: Abortion Pills and the Future of Reproductive Freedom” is under contract with University of California Press to be published shortly. Her collaborative research project with the Abortion Support Network (funded by the HSS Collaboration Fund) built a multi-lingual web resource for Europeans traveling abroad for abortion; her project was shortlisted for an impact award by Queen Mary University of London.



**Dr Andy Willimott** (School of History) has published a book with J. Speed Carroll, Pepe Karmel and Bela Shayevich, *Openness and Idealism: Soviet Posters, 1985-1991* (Winter, 2022) ISBN: 9788857245645 <https://www.artbook.com/9788857245645.html>. As we approach the 30th anniversary of the dissolution of the USSR, this publication looks back at the rich history of Soviet art from the USSR’s



final chapter: the colorful and radical posters of Glasnost. Ushered in by Mikhail Gorbachev, Glasnost (translating as “openness” or “transparency”) was a movement that allowed for artistic and open-minded alternatives to the state-endorsed Social Realism. Within this movement, posters became the primary vehicles for confronting the history of the USSR from the vantage of its impending dissolution. The book features approximately 212 reproductions of posters from the Martha H. and J. Speed Carroll Collection.

He has secured research grants from Queen Mary University of London Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty Fund and Staff Research (Recovery Fund). He used them to facilitate the use of a Research Assistant to collate pre-identified materials in Russia pertinent to his next book-project: “From Paris to Petrograd: The Paris Commune in the Soviet Revolutionary Imagination.”

Andy has applied for AHRC Fellowship fund for “Imagined Futures: The USSR and Modern Utopia in Transnational Perspective and AHRC Collaborative Covid-Response Grant ‘Home from Home’. He wrote an invited paper “A Soviet 1871: The Paris Commune in the Soviet Imagination,” *Osteuropäische Geschichte*, University of Basel, Switzerland (Zoom) 13 October 2021. Some of his Public engagements are: ‘War in Europe: Ukraine and History’ Mile End Institute, QMUL 25 March 2022. [Attendance: 145] and ‘Putin’s Russia and Putin’s distortion of History,’ School of History, Teach-in event, QMUL, 4 March 2022. [Attendance: 82]; 15/02/2021 - Invited lecture “Revolution, NEP, and Contingency,” College of Mexico (organised by: Arturo Zoffermann) and ‘The Paris Commune taught the Bolsheviks how to win a revolution,’ *Jacobin* 18 March 2021 <https://jacobinmag.com/2021/03/paris-commune-bolsheviks-win-a-revolution>



**Dr John Adenitire** (School of Law) hosted Professor Robin Fretwell Wilson as Fulbright Specialist and IHSS Distinguished Visiting Fellowship in May-April 2022 and held a Visiting Research Fellowship at the Bonavero Institute for Human Rights, University of Oxford from January to June 2022. John published ‘The Rule of Law for All Sentient Animals’ [2022] (1) *Canadian Journal of Law & Jurisprudence* 1-30. His 2020 monograph being the object of a book symposium in volume 4 of the *Keele Law Review*. This includes his new article ‘Religion, Diversity, and Conscientious Exemptions: Reply to Contributors’ [2022] *Keele Law Review*. He enjoyed being a delegate at the UK Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief in July 2022.



**Dr Francois Gerard** (School of Economics and Finance) published 5 articles in top Economics journals

“Assortative Matching or Exclusionary Hiring? The Impact of Firm Policies on Racial Wage

Differences in Brazil,” with Lorenzo Lagos, Edson Severnini, and David Card  
*American Economic Review* (2021), vol. 111, no. 10, pp. 3418-3457.

“Hysteresis and the Welfare Effect of Corrective Policies: Theory and Evidence from an Energy-Saving Program,” with Francisco Costa  
*Journal of Political Economy* (2021), vol. 129, no. 6, pp. 1705-1743. “Informal Labor and the Efficiency Cost of Social Programs: Evidence from Unemployment Insurance in Brazil,” with Gustavo Gonzaga  
*American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* (2021), vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 167-206. (Winner of the Prêmio Haralambos Simeonidis - Categoria Artigos; received by Gustavo Gonzaga)

“Job Displacement Insurance and (the Lack of) Consumption-Smoothing,” with Joana Naritomi  
*American Economic Review* (2021), vol. 111, no. 3, pp. 899-942.

“Bounds on Treatment Effects in Regression Discontinuity Designs with a Manipulated Running Variable,” with Miikka Rokkanen and Christoph Rothe.  
*Quantitative Economics* (2020), vol. 11, pp. 839-870.

He also wrote a policy paper at the start of the pandemic, which was later published at the *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*:

“Social Protection Response to the COVID-19 Crisis: Options for Developing Countries,” with Clément Imbert and Kate Orkin. *Economics for Inclusive Prosperity Policy Briefs* (April 2020) This policy paper was later published as “Social Protection Response to the COVID-19 Crisis: Options for Developing Countries,” with Clement

Imbert and Kate Orkin.

*Oxford Review of Economic Policy* (2020), vol. 36 (Issue Supplement 1), pp. S281-S296.

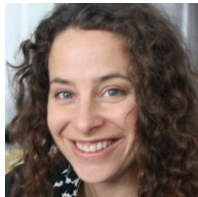
Finally, he organised 3 editions of the Zurich Conference on Public Finance in Developing Countries that I co-organise every year.



**Dr Rachel Bryant Davies** (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film) has worked on “Childhood Heroes: storytelling survival strategies and role models of resilience to COVID-19” with Lucie Glasheen and Kiera Vaclavik. This project is funded by the British Academy COVID-19 Special Research Grant (COV19\201444) <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/sllf/comparative-literature-and-culture/research/childhood-heroes-ba-covid-19-research-project/>.

Her selection of essays as a part of work “Our Mythical Childhood” are funded by European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202 <http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/hope>

She has co-edited a book with Erin Johnson-Williams *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth-Century Archive: New Essays on Power and Discourse* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2022)



Over the past year, **Dr Shari Plonski** (School of Politics and International Relations) has been working on an incredible collaboration with “Surviving Society”, the UK’s top sociological podcast. The project – which has been partly funded by IHSS – is a two-season series on the theme of ‘Material Crimes: Infrastructure, Colonialism and Capitalism’. Organised around 12 ‘true-crime-styled’ documentaries, each episode tells the story of a piece of infrastructure through the lens of a particular moment (‘the crime’), and slowly unveils its relationship to historical and contemporary circuits of colonial and capitalist relations. Each episode has been written by a different contributor, and her own ‘Train to Nowhere’, on the global logistics – and colonial entanglements – of Israel’s “HaEmek” Railway, appears in the first season. It is an exciting project in which she is learning how to tell stories in new ways, with the aim of reaching multiple, wide-ranging audiences. The public launch took place on 14th July 2022. The first season will be released by “Surviving Society” at the end of summer 2022. later this summer.



**Reflection by Dr Hannah Williams  
(School of History), IHSS Strategic  
Lecturer 2019-2022**

I joined QMUL as an IHSS Fellow and Strategic Lecturer in the School of History in September 2019. Obviously the three years that followed have been more eventful than any of us could have possibly imagined! But global pandemic aside, this has been an exciting and productive time thanks to the supportive environment and creativity of brilliant colleagues across HSS.

As an art historian at a university that doesn’t have a separate Art History department, one of my biggest highlights and challenges has been creating pathways at QMUL for visual and material culture in research and teaching. I’ve designed three new undergraduate modules on Art and the City, Art and Power, and most recently, with fellow Strategic Lecturer Dan Lee (History), Marie-Antoinette to Coco Chanel: A Cultural History of France. I’ve also enjoyed tapping into the rich vein of art-related research already happening at QMUL – from Business to Law! – to help resolve that into a more formal research network via the Visual and Material Forum (QMVMF). As Co-

Director, along with Émilie Oléron Evans (Modern Languages) and Matthew Walker (History), we’ve been running a programme of events, seminars, and other initiatives, which included a successful pivot to online forums during the lockdowns, just when we needed those connections most. It’s been especially wonderful to see a community of doctoral researchers starting to emerge here, which is something we’re keen to foster moving forward. I’m also a co-convenor of the Centre for 18th-Century Studies (QMCECS), along with fellow Strategic Lecturer Will Bowers (English). I’ve particularly enjoyed organising co-hosted events between the QMVMF and QMCECS – it’s always nice to get a bit more 18th-century art into everyone’s lives!

A significant direction that my own research has taken in recent years has been an engagement with digital mapping. This began during my Leverhulme ECF at QMUL when I created Artists in Paris: Mapping the 18th-century Art World in collaboration with Chris Sparks (History). But digital mapping has also proved an exciting point of interdisciplinary interest among our cohort of IHSS Strategic Lecturers. Our formal and informal discussions in this context have helped shape a new collaborative project I’m

embarking on with Chris Sparks and another colleague, Meredith Martin (NYU), to build a digital mapping platform specifically for humanities researchers. We’re currently finishing a major grant application to fund the project (so fingers crossed there’ll be more to say on that in the future).

Despite the disruptions of the pandemic to so many aspects of our working lives, it’s been gratifying to have some big projects come to fruition during this time. Last year I submitted the manuscript of a book called Artists’ Things: Lost Property from Eighteenth-Century France, that I co-authored with Katie Scott (Courtauld). This has involved a decade of archival and object research, as well as an experimental approach in the writing, and we can’t wait to finally share it with the world. It will be out with Getty Publications next year. Finally, another highlight during this time has been the opportunity to contribute to some great exhibitions, including Tate Britain’s recent show on Hogarth and Europe. I really enjoyed framing art-historical research for diverse public audiences in texts for the catalogue and wall labels. But I won’t deny it was slightly terrifying to watch people reading those words on the gallery walls!





### Reflections by Dr Simon Franklin (School of Law), IHSS Strategic Lecturer 2019-2022

I joined Queen Mary as an IHSS Strategic Lecturer in September 2019, as part of the School of Economics and Finance. The IHSS has provided me with a space to develop new ideas, broaden existing research agendas, and venture into completely new intellectual territory, in ways that I would not otherwise have had the opportunity to do.

On arrival at the IHSS I brought with me a portfolio of research projects on the economics of cities, matching youth to good jobs, and housing and neighbourhoods. I have since applied for and received a new grant to study the effects of moving to government housing in Ethiopia, seven years after households moved. Designing such a study required me to think deeply about the complex ways in which neighbourhoods, neighbours, and the built environment could affect the economic and social lives of people living in these new areas. My time at the IHSS allowed me to read more widely into a variety of literatures in economics, sociology and geography, as well as having

important conversations with other scholars in those fields, in order to develop a plan for data collection. That project is still ongoing.

Over the past three years my engagements at the IHSS have also enabled me to develop a new research agenda on the effects of social programs, in particular on their effects across space and beyond the areas in which they were originally implemented. For example, a program providing people with jobs in one neighbourhood can affect labour markets across many other neighbourhoods within a city. This new agenda was motivated by a study of the labour market effects of a new large-scale public works (the Urban Productive Safety Nets) program in urban Ethiopia. The study required me to acquire new skills in the use of equilibrium models from urban economics and to develop new methods in spatial data analysis to quantify the effects of the program. Developing those skills and presenting the resulting research paper brought me into contact with many scholars working on similar themes, which has opened up new avenues of research into the indirect effects of social programs, including on labour markets, neighbourhoods, and on

attitudes and demands for further redistributive programs. Together with Francois Gerard at the IHSS, I am planning to build an inter-disciplinary initiative to explore themes of social project and welfare states in developing countries.

In addition, I have had the chance to make sure that my research has an impact outside of academia. Over the last three years, have worked closely with policy makers in Ethiopia and at the World Bank on the design, implementation and monitoring of new large-scale programs, including a youth apprenticeship matching program and a nationwide version of the UPSNP. These efforts led to my nomination for a Trailblazer award for the QMUL Engagement and Impact Awards, and winning the QMUL SEF Impact Champion for 2021.

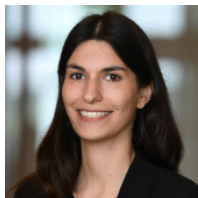
As my first three years here comes to an end, I am looking forward to continuing to use the IHSS as a place to explore new research questions with broadened perspectives and a renewed sense of curiosity.



One of **Dr Anna Bourne's** (School of Geography) research areas are "Tephra Framework for the South Pacific Islands". She co-published the article Human occupation and ecosystem change on Upolu (Samoa) during the Holocene in January 2020.



**Dr Daniel Lee** (School of History) works on a British Academy GCRF Sustainable Development Programme project entitled, "Traces of Jewish Memory in Contemporary Tunisia". He published his second book "The SS Officer's Armchair" (Jonathan Cape, 2020). He co-organised and chair a panel discussion "20 years since 9/11. Modern Jihad and the Crisis of Liberalism". He is BBC New Generation Thinker and have also appeared on radio programmes BBC Radio 3 - Arts & Ideas, The Free Thinking Festival Essay: Jews in Occupied France: Coexistence with the Enemy?, BBC Radio 3 - Arts & Ideas, WW II radio propaganda & French relations and gave a live interview on Tunisia's national radio in May 2022.



**Dr Leila Ulrich** (School of Law) has shared her thoughts on technology and terrorism and gender issues within the International Criminal Court (ICC). As a part of her project “Mind the Gap: Exploring the Interplay between Gender, Terrorism and Counterterrorism” funded through a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship she explored how ideas of ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’ shape the terrorism. As a member of The Feminist Reading Group together with the International State Crime Initiative (ISCI) she co-organised events “State Crime, Secrecy and Gender: Palestine and Kashmir” and global workshop “Provincializing Euro-American Feminism: Rethinking the Relationship between Feminism, Colonialism and Governance”.

## Incoming IHSS Fellows

For the period 2022-2023 the IHSS welcomes 20 new Lecturers and IHSS Fellows. The incoming cohort is:

### School of Law:

Dr Alexis Alvarez-Nakagawa  
Dr Camillia Kong  
Dr Daragh Murray  
Dr Dimitri van den Meerssche

### School of English and Drama

Dr Katherine Angel  
Dr Sita Balani

### School of Languages and Linguistics

Dr Yasmin Fedda  
Dr Daniel Mann  
Dr Cristina Moreno-Almeida

### School of Politics and International Relations

Dr Paul Kirby  
Dr Keren Weitzberg

### School of History

Dr Jane Freeland  
Dr Ria Kapoor  
Dr Delfi Nieto-Isabel

### School of Geography

Dr Archie Davies  
Dr Elsa Noterman

### School of Business and Management

Dr Louise Ashley  
Dr Benjamin Neimark  
Dr Jessica Sklair

### School of Economics and Finance

Dr Camille Terrier

## Incoming Global Professorial Fellows

In summer of 2022 the IHSS will be appointing up to 10 part-time Global Professorial Fellows. The fellows will join us for a period of three years, and carry out both teaching and research while on campus for up to two months of the year. Details on the successful candidates will be announced over the summer on our website.





# IHSS Annual Symposium Lecture 2022

## Professor Helen Small

The IHSS Annual Symposium seeks to recognise and bring to Queen Mary each year a scholar who has recently contributed a ground-breaking piece of work in the humanities and social sciences. The work will have engaged with multiple disciplines and have the potential to alter the social and political landscape. In particular we seek to celebrate work that has as its focus to overcome inequalities of various sorts and to promote social justice in the broadest sense.

The 2022 Annual Symposium Lecture was delivered by Oxford's Professor Helen Small on the subject The Humanities (In and After the Pandemic). COVID-19 saw the Humanities enrolled in the service of science and society. Professor Small's lecture considered efforts at articulating the public good of the Humanities in the context of the pandemic crisis and subsequent pressures on the economic and political contexts of university research. In her lecture Professor Small paid particular attention to the terms of engagement on which some

social scientists and scientists, encountering public resistance to their expertise, sought assistance from the Humanities. In particular, Professor Small examined the crisis of care in the UK. In relation to this politics of care, Professor Small explained why (even) high-level efforts at cross-disciplinary collaboration often falter—and identified ways of alleviating the difficulties.





# IHSS Events

In 2021-22, the IHSS hosted and organised approximately 40 events across different formats: book launches, lectures, panel discussions, seminars, workshops, and forums. Most events at the IHSS are internal and open to researchers, providing a quite space of reflection and academic discussion. Some of our events are public however, and open to all. Details on all events are advertised on our mailing list and via the events section of our website. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, we organised a majority of events over the past year online.

## **Panel Discussion of Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty's book "The Climate of History in a Planetary Age"**

**29 September 2021 / Online**

**Main Speaker: Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty, University of Chicago**

Dr Chris Moffat (Queen Mary University of London), and Dr Shital Pravinchandra (Queen Mary University of London) and Professor Simon Reid-Henry (Queen Mary University of London) joined the discussion on Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty's book, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* where we forced to reconsider everything from the nature of human agency to literature to humanism itself.

## **Global Workshop 'Provincializing Euro-American Feminism: Rethinking the Relationship between Feminism, Colonialism and Governance'**

**8 October 2021 / Online**

**Main speakers: Professor Vasuki Nesiah (New York University), Professor Ratna Kapur (Queen Mary University of London), Professor Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian (Queen Mary University of London), Dr Dilar Dirik (University of Oxford) and Assistant Professor Silvana Tapia Tapia (Universidad del Azuay)**

The workshop explored Halley et al.'s concept of 'governance feminism', and the postcolonial and Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAAIL) critique, but also raised broader questions about feminist engagements with state institutions and colonial projects, and their alternative.

## **20 years since 9/11. Panel Discussion on Modern Jihad and the Crisis of Liberalism**

**13 October 2021 / Hybrid event: Online and Peston Lecture Theatre, Queen Mary University of London**

**Main speaker: Dr Suzanne Schneider (Brooklyn Institute for Social Research)**

Dr Ahmed Dailami (University of Exeter), Dr Martyn Frampton (Queen Mary University of London), Dr Julie Norman (University College London) and Dr Daniel Lee (Queen Mary University of London) joined the roundtable discussion on her book of *The Apocalypse and the End of History: Modern Jihad and the Crisis of Liberalism*

## **Symposium. "The Commune at 150"**

**2 November 2021 / The Royal Foundation of St Katharine**

This conference brought together scholars from

a range of disciplines to explore the political and artistic legacies of the Paris Commune at its 150th anniversary.

## **IHSS Faculty Forum: Time and the Academy**

**3 November 2021 / Online**

Internal open discussions among colleagues from across the Humanities and Social Sciences on what aspects of scholarship are affected by the modern-day politics of academic time.

## **Working With Machines**

**17 November 2021 / Online**

Prof. Ruth Ahnert (Queen Mary University of London), Dr Kasper Beele (The Alan Turing Institute), Dr Katherine McDonough (The Alan Turing Institute), Professor Simon Reid-Henry (Queen Mary University of London) and Dr Daniel Wilson (The Alan Turing Institute) lead the online discussion of the Living With Machines project and how do we train machines to "read" maps and the pre-history of AI.

## **Book Launch: The New Sex Wars: Sexual Harm in the #MeToo Era**

**18 November 2021 / Online**

**Main speaker: Professor Brenda Cossman (University of Toronto)**

Prof Lizzie Barnes (Queen Mary University of London), Prof Ratna Kapur (Queen Mary University of London) and Dr Tanya Serisier (University of Birkbeck) discussed the book *New Sex Wars* which explores what can be learned from debates in the '70s and '80s, what traps we repeatedly fall into, and where to begin to make law work.

## **Occupy! Ten Years After**

**7 December 2021 / Online**

Journalists Sarah Jaffe and Michael Levitin joined Dr Sam Halvorsen, Prof. Simon Reid-Henry both from QMUL, to discuss the legacy of Occupy! ten years later.

## **Book launch "Comparative Methods in Law, Humanities and Social Sciences"**

**19 January 2022 / Online**

Professor Maurice Adams (Tilburg Law School), Professor Mark Van Hoecke (QMUL), Associate Professor Ralph Weber (University of Basel), Professor Greta Olson (University of Giessen), Professor Simon Reid-Henry (QMUL) and Professor Paula Giliker (University of Bristol) confronted comparative law with a number of other comparative disciplines, and their methodological problems and choices.

## **Research Funding Sources for ECRs: Choosing the Right One for You**

**24 January 2022 / Online**

An internal Early Career Researchers (ECRs) Network workshop lead by QMUL Research Manager Alex Nowosiad and Dr Hedi Viterbo (QMUL), Research Manager, for researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences interested in learning more about research funding sources.

## **Book Launch: Basic Environmental Protection – Some reflections on the Environmental Minimum**

**25 January 2022 / Online**

Dr Stefan Theil (University of Cambridge), Dr Tibisay Morgandi, Dr John Adenitire, Dr Andrew Russell and Prof. Simon Reid-Henry all from



QMUL discussed Dr Stefan Theil's monograph's explorations and how the environmental minimum provides the framework that permits a principled and consistent application of human rights to environmental harm.

### **Who is a Migrant? Abandoning the Nation-state Point of View in the Study of Migration**

**1 February 2022 / Online**

Assistant Professor Stephan Scheel and Professor Engin Isin (Queen Mary University of London) discussed the paper "Who is a Migrant? Abandoning the Nation-state Point of View in the Study of Migration", co-authored with Dr Martina Tazzioli (Goldsmiths, University of London), published by the journal Migration Politics.

### **Book launch: From Toleration to Religious Freedom: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives**

**2 February 2022 / Online**

Dr Marietta van der Tol (University of Oxford), Dr Carys Brown (University of Cambridge), Dr Emily S. Kempson (St Mellitus College), Dr John Adenitire (QMUL), and Professor Simon Reid-Henry (QMUL) addressed the knotty relationship between toleration and religious freedom from the early modern period to the present day.

### **Technologies of expulsion: Refugees' carcerality and the technological disruptions of asylum**

**8 February 2022 / Online**

Dr Martina Tazzioli (Goldsmiths University of London) who investigates the carceral spaces and mechanisms at play in refugee governmentality, digital technologies in refugee humanitarianism and explored her debates

on refugees' carcerality with Professor Engin Isin (Queen Mary University of London).

### **Horizon Europe for H&SS Early Career Researchers**

**24 February 2022 / Online**

An internal Early Career Researchers (ECRs) Network workshop was aimed at researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences interested in learning more about research funding sources. It was lead by Vicky Byers, QMUL EU Section Manager and Dr Delfina Isabel Nieto (QMUL).

### **Tracing sanctuary cities: Legacies of empire and urban sovereignty**

**15 March 2022 / Online**

Dr Rachel Humphris (Queen Mary University of London) illustrated how the histories of 'the city' in (settler-) colonial states is relevant to struggles over sanctuary cities by drawing on her research on San Francisco, Sheffield and Toronto. Professor Engin Isin (Queen Mary University of London) chaired the event.

### **There is no Revolutionary Nationalism: A Conversation with Nandita Sharma**

**22 March 2022 / Online**

Professor Nandita Sharma (Sociology, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa) and Queen Mary Leverhulme Trust Doctoral Scholars Ida Birkvad and Alex Stoffel discussed the universalisation of the nation-state as the emergence of a postcolonial world order and its consequences such as the hardening of borders and nationalism.

### **Open Access & Plan S - what you need to know**

**24 March 2022 / Online**

Prof Miriam Goldby (QMUL), Prof Adrian Armstrong (QMUL), Vijay Algoo, Research Analyst (QMUL) and Sarah Saines, Research Manager (QMUL) have addressed the questions and the various funder requirements at the internal seminar for the HSS colleagues.

### **An Interdisciplinary workshop series 'Reimagining Global Public Goods in the 21st Century'**

**6 April 2022, 11 May 2022, 8 June 2022 / Online**

Over the course of three linked workshops, the IHSS and Miami Institute for the Social Sciences raised a new debate as to what is missing in the language of Global Public Goods. Dr Olivia U. Rutazibwa, Dr Grieve Chelwa, Assist Prof Yan Long, Prof Raúl Rodríguez, Juliano Fiori, Dr Deen Sharp, Prof Simon Reid-Henry, Dr Maribel Morey, Prof Milindo Chakrabarti and Dr Rituparna Patgiri joined the discussion.

### **Aporias of activism**

**12 April 2022 / Online**

Professor Engin Isin (Queen Mary University of London) lead a discussion on dichotomies of activism such as violence versus non-violence, passivism versus activism, direct versus indirect, legal versus illegal, and individual versus collective in social and political movements and the legitimacy, justifiability, and transversality of actions ranging from submission to disobedience. Janina Pescinski chaired the seminar.

### **Latin American Decolonial Feminisms Workshop**

**14 April 2022 / Online**

This one-day interdisciplinary workshop on Latin American decolonial and feminist studies brought together doctoral researchers, early career researchers (ECRs), senior scholars, and activists working on subjects that overlap with this framework in Britain. Dr Valentina Aparicio (Queen Mary University of London) and Dr Ana Laura Zavala Guillén (Queen Mary University of London) organised the event.

### **Learning from rejection: taking the rough with the smooth**

**25 April 2022/ Online**

Dr David Veevers, Dr Sam Halvorsen and Prof Kate Malleson (all from QMUL) spoke about their experiences of where an application or piece of work that they had given their all was not successful, and share their tips and techniques for dealing with, and picking yourself up from, knockbacks at this internal Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Early Career Research (ECRs) Network Workshop.

### **Book Launch: Saving Animals, Saving Ourselves**

**26 April 2022 / Online**

Dr Jeff Sebo (New York University), Dr Raffael N Fasel (University of Cambridge), Dr Beth Greenhough (University of Oxford), Dr John Adenitire (QMUL) and Professor Simon Reid-Henry (QMUL) addressed the important and complex issues of human responsibilities in global health and environmental policy raised in Dr Jeff Sebo's monograph Saving Animals, Saving Ourselves (Oxford University Press, 2022).

### **Book Symposium on Andrew Fitzmaurice's "King Leopold's Ghostwriter"**

**13 May 2022 / Graduate Centre, Queen Mary University of London**

Professor Andrew Fitzmaurice (Queen Mary University of London), Professor David Armitage (Harvard University), Professor Michael Lobban (London School of Economics), Professor Lisa Siraganian (Johns Hopkins University) and Dr Inge Van Hulle (Max Planck Institute) discussed the main points raised in the book.

### **Book Launch "Of Fear and Strangers"**

**16 May 2022 / Online**

Prof David Feldman (Director, Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism), Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. (UC Berkeley), Akshi Singh (Queen Mary University of London) joined the book author George Makari to discuss diverse experiences of xenophobia, past and present.

### **Making Research Impactful: Cases Studies From the Clashes Over LGBT Rights and Religious Freedom**

**19 May 2022 / Online**

In this workshop Professor Robin Fretwell Wilson (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) focused on lessons for balancing the desire for impact with the need to do scholarship. The workshop was principally drawn on experiences in meshing LGBT rights with protections for religious belief and practice, or what Professor Wilson calls Civil Right Complementarity.

### **Interior Frontiers**

**24 May 2022 / Online**

Professor Ann Stoler (The New School for Research) and Professor Engin Isin (QMUL) discussed how the concept of "Interior Frontiers" can help us understand the racialized forms of colonial government operate in modern societies through both the unspoken and implicit distinctions that diverse forms of racism mobilise.

### **Circumstantial Details (Birds, for Instance), Realism, and Enviroing Media**

**26 May 2022 / Arts Two Lecture Theatre, Queen Mary University of London**

Professor John Durham Peters (Yale University), IHSS Distinguished Visiting Fellow delivered a lecture.

### **Professor Thomas Laqueur Seminar: When Species Meet**

**27 May 2022 / Arts Two, Room 3.20, Queen Mary University of London**

The aim of the seminar was to think about why we care about animals in the contemporary world of the Anthropocene, the post human, and more specifically the world of Covid and why we cared about them in the past.

### **State of the Archive**

**30 May 2022 / Scape 1.02, Queen Mary University of London**

The first Memory in the Middle East and North Africa workshop brought together archivists and archival theorists to present perspectives on what archival work means in the Middle East/North Africa today, and what future directions it might take. The speakers were Dr Sara Salem (London School of Economics and Political Science), Dr Hannah Scott

Deuchar (Queen Mary University of London) and Daniel Lowe (British Library).

### **Professor Thomas Laqueur Public Lecture: 'Canines in Solitude'**

**30 May 2022 / Online**

In this lecture Professor Thomas Laqueur, the IHSS Distinguished Visiting Fellow with the 'Pathologies of Solitude' project at Queen Mary University of London, argued that the gaze of the dog, grounded in evolution and appropriated by visual artists in the western tradition, offers a way of representing being seen - being regarded as worth regard - as a defence against loneliness both as a species and as social beings.

### **Form of the Narrative**

**10 June 2022 / Scape 1.02, Queen Mary University of London**

The second Memory in the Middle East and North Africa workshop took the translation of Une enfance juive en Méditerranée musulmane [A Jewish Childhood in the Muslim Mediterranean]\* as its starting point to discuss multilingual memories, contextualisation, and translating autobiography. It went on to discuss the transmission of Palestinian folktales from oral to written Arabic, and from Arabic to English, paying particular attention to the role of women in preserving this tradition.

### **The Meanings of Internationalism: An Evening Symposium**

**10 June 2022 / LSE Lecture Theatre, London School of Economics and Political Science**

Bringing together speakers from across international studies and the history of

political thought, the symposium tried to add determinacy to our concepts of internationalism by interrogating its complex and often contradictory histories in different regions and movements across the twentieth century. This event was a part of o Leverhulme Trust Doctoral Scholarship programme and co-organised by Radical International Theory Research Group.

### **IHSS Annual Symposium 2022: The Humanities (In and After the Pandemic)**

**14 June 2022 / Peston Lecture Theatre, Queen Mary University of London**

The third IHSS Annual Symposium hosted Professor Helen Small (University of Oxford) followed by an in-depth discussion with Professor Simon Reid-Henry. The lecture considered efforts at articulating the public good of the Humanities in the context of the pandemic crisis and subsequent pressures on the economic and political contexts of university research.

### **South Asia Early Career Researchers' Workshops**

**20-21 June 2022 / Department W, Queen Mary University of London**

A two-day workshop organised by the UCL South Asia Network, the UCL Global Engagement Fund, and the QMUL Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences brought more than twenty presenters.

### **Panel Event 'Rethinking Ecocide'**

**21 June 2022 / Online**

QMUL's Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice and the IHSS Climate Emergency Group co-hosted an event that explored the



prospects for a new legal concept of ecocide. It discussed whether the law of ecocide can create a new ontology, or will it simply reinforce the colonial binaries and abyssal thinking that have brought us to this point. The speakers were Professor David Whyte (Queen Mary University of London), Hannah Meszaros Martin (Goldsmiths University of London), Marília de Nardin Budó (Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil), Tameka Samuels-Jones (York University, Canada), Dr Alexis Alvarez-Nakagawa (Queen Mary University of London) and Assistant Professor Jose Atilas (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).

**Seminar: 'The future is private': WhatsApp in India and the geopolitics of digital privacy**

**23 June 2022 / Online**

Dr Philippa Williams (Queen Mary University of London) examined the global dominance of the Meta owned messaging app WhatsApp, and the recent ideological and policy shift by big tech towards digital private spaces through the case of WhatsApp in India.

**Future of the Museum**

**18 July 2022 / Online**

The third "Memory in the Middle East and North Africa" workshop brought together academics and museum curators from Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt to present the situation of the minorities' heritage in museums and the problems that their conservation raises. The speakers were Habib Kazdaghli (University of Manouba - Tunisia), Zhor Rehihi (Museum of Moroccan Judaism) and Nermine Khafagi (Grand Egyptian Museum).



**Reflection by Dr Will Bowers (School of English and Drama), IHSS Strategic Lecturer 2019-2022**

Over my three years at the IHSS my research has been concerned with the literary culture of Romantic Europe. Specifically, I have focused on appreciating this culture through debates over travel and travel writing; cosmopolitanism after Waterloo; the importance of sociability and the types of expression sociability prioritises; and the role the artist (specifically the poet) has in calling upon and calling out other professions and disciplines. A fuller overview of this work is available here. What follows is a reflection on a couple of projects that I've been able to work on during the past three years.

These writings have taken both traditional and more novel forms. Developing work from my monograph, *The Italian Idea* (2020), I recently published an essay — 'Vallombrosa Visited, 1638–1851', *Modern Philology* 118 (2021), 364–389 — that attempts to distil about ten years of research on the seemingly simple subject of how writers approach places they've previously encountered on the page. The essay uses a single monastery in central Italy as a case study to explore how and why a place becomes synonymous with a moment in a literary work, and the textual markers that are produced by visitors to these places. It engages with the work of the sociologist John Urry and the literary historian James Buzard, but forges a novel and more psychologically flexible approach to writers' encounters with what I term a 'scripted site'. This kind of theoretical and explorative work takes time: time to pay attention to work in other disciplines such as sociology and geography, but also time to make mistakes and learn from them. The opportunity afforded by my time as an IHSS Strategic Lecturer has allowed me to pursue research in this explorative manner — reading, thinking, going down cul-de-sac, changing direction, digressing, pausing, reimagining.

While the various lockdowns of the last two years have highlighted the virtues of this kind of imaginative travel, they have also emphasised the importance of digital approaches to research and research materials. In September 2019 I became involved in *Romantic Europe: The Virtual Exhibition (RÊVE)*. The virtual exhibition addresses both an academic and a general audience as an interdisciplinary project showcasing and sharing Romantic texts, objects, and places through collaborations between academic researchers, museums, galleries and other cultural groupings. I have written online exhibits for this project, which aim to share and promote fragile manuscript resources and precious objects to a global digital

audience. This object-orientated approach has made its way into my teaching at QMUL, and there have been exciting off-shoots. One is a commissioned essay on the subject of 'Transit' which considers how a pan-European approach that prioritizes things over words allows us to construct a cosmopolitan grammar of Romantic culture based on objects of difference and objects in common. The essay develops the aesthetic approach of art historian Arnaud Maillet's book on the Claude Glass (a kind of dark mirror), to consider how objects as varied as a traveller's cheque, a beauty case, and a chair, move and transmit meaning across Europe.

Involvement in a European network such as RÊVE has inspired my major research focus over the last eighteen months: a study of how Holland House, one of Europe's most important nineteenth-century political and literary coterie, came into being. At present the study is focussed on three bound manuscripts — Lady Holland's journal; a dinner book that records who came to dinner at the house; and a poem by Lord Holland in the style of an 'oriental tale' — and works at the intersection of bibliography, network theory, social history, and literary criticism. Building on Ruth Ahnert's research on epistolary networks, I am in the final stages of work on a digital resource that aims to map who dined at Holland House in the first years of their coterie (1798–1806). The website-in-progress can be visited here, [www.dined.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.dined.qmul.ac.uk) (use Firefox or Chrome), and the data presented in it will form part of a large book project on how such a cultural network came into being. The book uses interdisciplinary approaches and disregarded forms of evidence to question a number of assumptions around the elitism and exclusivity of the Holland House set, and to see its sociability, and the Romantic salon more generally, as a more plural, multimedia, and productive cultural site than has hitherto been assumed.



## Faculty at work

Each year the Director of the IHSS sits down with colleagues from across the Faculty to carry out a series of dialogues on their research, in the form of a “Five Questions” interview. The most recent of these interviews was with Professor Parvati Nair (School of Languages, Linguistics and Film).

### Five Questions with Parvati Nair, Professor of Hispanic, Cultural and Migration Studies

**Q1:** Welcome, Parvati, to our Five Questions series! Your work covers an impressively diverse set of interests. Yet in each case you write, as you say, “as a migrant subject”. In reading you, it is fascinating to see how this shapes your work. On one level, you address some of the central issues in cultural studies, such as visual representation, but you also do this via a frequently transnational approach. And you often turn to the medium of photography as an entry point for thinking and reflecting on some of the basic questions of modernity: including the processes – such as migration – through which we live it. In *A Different Light: The Photography of Sebastião Salgado*, for example, you raise the unexpected issues of “time” and “scale” in relation to the photograph and to the migrant experience alike. First, you identify the way that Salgado’s work upends many people’s assumptions of the immediacy of the photographic image. Second, is the whole issue of the size of his works, which also changes how we interact with them. On just a very banal level, it is harder to look away, I suppose. And I guess the reason I am starting on this is because there is a proliferation of images right now, particularly in relation to the war in Ukraine, that

*once again demand our attention to this question of what images “do” and what we “think” about our situation in relation to them: just as in Sarajevo before, or Rwanda, or Somalia before that, or indeed at any moment of mediated crisis where photography serves the role of connector and punctuator of a moral and a cultural reckoning with the facts of war and crisis. What does all this say about the way that we, as viewers, are enveloped in the same histories and ethical dilemmas as are being portrayed in the imagery created by someone like Salgado? What is it that is unique and especially compelling about Salgado’s work in addressing these issues, and how does that compare to someone like Ramón Zabalza’s gitano images, for example, which you have also written about, and the use of ambiguity there to realign “the performance of relation and hence identity” as you put it in your Iberoamericana piece on Zabalza?*

**A:** Thank you, Simon, for this opportunity to take part in IHSS’s Five Questions series.

In positioning my work on the overlaps of photography, migration and questions of culture, I take my cue from Walter Benjamin’s exposé of how life and ‘reality,’ as we know it, in the age of modernity, is mediated by technology and all that this entails. Perhaps we experience this now, in the pandemic, with its lockdowns, virtual encounters and remote connections, more acutely than ever before, as our own daily interactions and the evolution of our identities rely ever more on technology. To my mind, the invention of photography in the nineteenth century, as a medium whose reproducibility and interjections into time and place confounded the singularity of artwork (as Walter Benjamin so eloquently pointed out in his essay ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,’)

was a landmark event and a turning point in the hitherto largely unchallenged triad of memory-place-time. As medium and as artefact, the still image is symptomatic of, and also reflective of, the many mobilizations forced upon societies worldwide by the mass processes of modernity bearing notions of progress and development, such as industrialization and urban expansions. As local communities became disrupted by such processes that triggered what Marshall Berman, in his landmark book *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* (1982) referred to as ‘maelstrom,’ communities, cultures and identity itself at collective and individual levels underwent scattering and fragmentation. The poignancy of the photograph, what Barthes has called its punctum, draws precisely from this sense of the frailty of memory and the transience of place and time. A fragment of lived experience, glimpsed only ever in terms of the limitations of perspective and frame, the photograph also raises more questions than it answers, for it gestures also to what lies outside of the frame and remains lost to view, absent, obscured by the overriding forces of oblivion that memory seeks to overcome. The still photograph, therefore, is profoundly connected to the mobility forced upon the subjects of modernity. It is also an invitation to imagine what is absent, lost, elsewhere or simply out of view. A fundamental focus of my work, therefore, is on the ways in which photography engages with migrancy and the aesthetic/ethical import of such engagements.

To take the examples you cite, in very different ways and each with their own aesthetic and sense of scale, Salgado and Zabalza exemplify this connection through their work. Salgado is a planetary photographer of panoramic scale. Zabalza focused on one ethnic group in one country. Yet, both set out to engage viewers in a reflection on their own migrancy as displaced



subjects of fractured histories precisely through engagement with those who are displaced, other, different or marginal. Their images invite the viewer into this 'other' space of the frame, be this of time and/or place. And it is through this encounter with alterity that the self can reimagine and refashion itself, always in dissonant relation with this other and always in the process of identity formation. If an image does not, in some way, 'disturb' the composure of the viewer, if it lacks that evocation of the fleeting and the fragile, if it fails to remind us of our finiteness and frailties, if it does not somehow remake us in terms of the horizons of the heart and mind, then it remains two-dimensional, flat, removed from agency to make the viewer look again and ask, as WJT Mitchell did: 'What do pictures want?' There is drama, urgency, theatricality in the works of these photographers. The sheer scope of Salgado's work is such that each of his major photo essays takes viewers through a range of images. As we move from mass upheavals to individual subjects, 'their' imperilled lands and 'their' displacements become the visual stories that we as viewers witness via the image, so that we do not so much 'look at' the images, but rather, look back at the subjects of the portraits and gaze into their unblinking eyes, as if answerable to them and so to ourselves. In this sense, to look at photographs is to travel imaginatively and to transpose oneself across contexts. Few images do this more powerfully than the Chilean artist Alfredo Jaar's photograph 'The Eyes of Gutete Emerita,' a woman who witnessed the slaughter of her family by machete in the Rwandan genocide with the same eyes that we now look deeply into as viewers. Jaar has said that he sought to portray violence without being violent. Yet, the stillness of his image erupts the viewers' flow through time, as if interjecting the heartbeat, so that the haunting from an 'other

place and an 'other' people claims them not solely as image, but also as reverberating after-image.

My interest in photography stems from this notion of dialogic engagement. Photography is no doubt a key medium in the shaping not merely of the world as we know it, but also of ourselves. At its best, its task is to shed light on the spatio-temporal transience of existence, which makes migrants of us all. As memento, as trace, as shadow, as reference and as imagination, it accompanies us and guides us in our travels through time and place.

**Q2.** *This notion of travelling imaginatively that you refer to is an interesting one. Not least because it does indeed "make migrants of us all", as you say. I was not aware of Jaar's photograph, but I just had a look, and it is incredibly powerful. It forces you into mental and empathetic movement as you view it: it is indeed a very "still" image, as you say, and quite impossible to remain motionless before it. You mentioned something else that I thought was interesting just now: this notion of the mobility that is forced upon us as part of modernity. Some artistic groups famously saw a utopian side to this and, in place of a contemplative stillness, they celebrated instead the speed and movement of an emergent technological modernity. I am thinking, of course, of the Futurists. Founded by Marinetti the Futurists sought to throw off the dead weight of the past – aesthetically and culturally – and to embrace a new society based upon technology and the machine. Ultimately this would lead them to erase, aesthetically, all that did not comply with this view, and to cooperate, politically, with the fascists. Of course, even amidst even these sometimes astoundingly*

*naïve, even disingenuous works, there are some captivating and beautiful images (such as Giacomo Balla's The Hand of the Violinist). But it is an arresting beauty and in the wrong hands a dangerous one. Here movement is indeed celebrated, but for most futurists – Balla was perhaps a kind of exception, more interested in light than violence, and ultimately more faithful to the aesthetic insights of Futurism than its political pretensions – it is celebrated antithetically to the way that your work has tried to understand. For the Futurists, this forcing desire to capture speed and other attributes of modernity required them to incorporate more than a few contradictions in their aesthetic politics: from the way Marinetti espoused science but eschewed the scientific methodology, to his celebration of a future that was always reliant upon the erasure of a past. With the Futurists, quite differently to photographers whose work you engage with most directly, one is left wanting a good deal more space for reflection. Do you find that photography as a medium is simply better at enabling reflection than many of its 20th century counterpart genres in painting?*

**A:** Thank you, Simon.

I agree -- the Futurists did indeed embrace the dizzy speed of modernity and the excitement of technological prowess. Marinetti claimed in his futurist manifesto that art could be nothing but violence, thereby also positioning Futurism as a definitive break with other artistic movements that had gone before. Futurism did indeed lead to some absolutely remarkable images. I find, though, that the movement's almost juvenile refusal of the past and its zeal for the future actually turn the gaze from the image to what has been left behind, that wake or trail of memory that cannot just be done

away with, even if ignored. The question then comes to mind about the historical, political and ideological frames that shadow the images. Marinetti, after all, was born in Alexandria, Egypt. In his lifetime, he would have witnessed the rise and fall of Italian colonial power in the Horn of Africa. His politics were a heady cocktail of anarchy, rebellion and fascism that served to bolster nationalism, as his later alliance with Mussolini proved. I would say that in the case of Italy, the Mediterranean Sea and the Oltremare that lay beyond on the other shore played a key part, as has happened with other colonial powers, in defining and lending cohesion to nationalist and fascist ideology. I suppose that what this suggests is that images and artwork, like all cultural production, inevitably both emerge within ideological frameworks and are contingent upon historical contexts, even as they contribute to shaping the latter.

The Futurists were very excited by the possibilities of the camera. Futurist photography was experimental and avant-garde, playing a key role, in fact, in shaping Futurist painting. So, I would not say that the medium of photography necessarily positions itself differently from painting per se in terms of reflection. The Futurists had this fascination with the idea of capturing motion. Photodynamism was explored by the Bragaglia brothers, for example, as was chronophotography. The camera afforded a technology that was seemingly limitless in potential, as even the question of photographing invisible beings was pursued in the early twentieth century at the Sorbonne in Paris by the Comité de l'Etude de la Photographie Transcendentale. There was a lot of play with perspective, perception, even the invisible.

I am less drawn to this focus on form and method and the idea of 'capture,' rather than questions of witness and memory. Futurist

photography, with all its eschewal of the weight of the past, speaks eloquently to us today of that historical period in Europe when fascism was on the rise as a key feature of modernity's tensions between, on the one hand, modernity's uprootings, the break-up of traditional ways of life, industrialization, migration, urban expansions, etc. and, on the other hand, the desire to bring order, control and unification through the exercise of machine-based power. Photography is an ambivalent medium that can serve all sides.

**Q3:** *Quite. Which brings us back to that area where this politics of photography perhaps comes most powerfully to the fore: namely the genre of war photography. You've worked on this too. Are there any insights you could share with us from your thinking about the biographical and historical contexts behind the production of war photographs – and war photographers?*

**A:** Just a few years after Marinetti had published his manifesto on *La fotografia futurista* in April 1930, Robert Capa left Nazi-led Germany for Paris, from where he made several visits, together with his partner Gerda Taro, to photograph the Spanish Civil War. It could be said that the Spanish Civil War served, in tragic ways, as a precursor to the even greater tragedy that lay ahead in World War II, revealing, as it did, the deep chasm between fascist nationalisms and the democratic right to social justice and political diversity, so typical of modernity's many, and as yet distinctly unresolved, fissures. Capa took photography into the relatively new ground of war photography, as his visual updates in the press served to relay the Spanish Civil War to an international readership. Today, this corpus of images by Capa and Taro

serve to inform us of the Spanish Republican experience in ways that would have been impossible otherwise – the memory of what happened on the ground that the thirty-six years of dictatorship that ensued in Spain sought so hard to erase or bury. I know that many debates rage around photography and 'authenticity,' especially in relation to Capa's image of a Republican soldier falling to his death. To my mind, it matters little whether this image was a montage or 'reality.' No image is 'real,' in that sense, because it is always a construct, and hence a fiction. What the photograph does is frame that senseless death that abounded at the time -- that, not of a uniformed soldier trained for warfare, but a civilian, like so many others, perhaps a local farmer, a sheep herder, or an olive grower, dressed in a simple shirt and trousers, a nameless life about to collapse downhill but, nevertheless, doing so in the name of social rights. Taro's work is even more interesting, I think, not only because she was the first known woman war photographer, but because she got very close up, indeed to the point of losing her life. Her photographs reveal the grit and the grime of that war, the abject poverty of the people, as well as the blood and the sorrow -- and the ways in which war besieges and destroys entire families and communities.

War photography is a complex genre, of course. The camera has many uses in relation to war: as a means to surveillance, as protest and also as propaganda, as frames that expose war crimes, or memorialise suffering, or enable a sense of witnessing across space and time. The last century has been one of multiple wars globally and the camera has played a key part in framing the centrality of conflict to modernity and its many older and latter-day forms of colonialism. I am thinking here of the work of James Nachtwey, his images of conflict,

ruptures and losses, often agonizing to dwell on. The aesthetic of horror that pervades his work speaks of despair and alienation with no possibility of healing. I am thinking also of images, such as those that emerged from Abu Ghraib, photographs that possibly did more than any protest march to gather dissent to the invasion of Iraq and subsequent conflict. These are images that gesture to multiple political and ethical fields that emerge around them. They invite not only reflection and contemplation, but also a profound questioning of the status quo, for these images at once reflect and interrogate lines of power, control, and even abuse.

War photography has become almost synonymous with the daily news, as wars abound globally and proliferate. I fear that we may be at risk of becoming inured to images of and from war zones, even as democratic nations vote populist regimes into power all around. Yet, I think there is a very important sub-genre of war photography emerging and that is the photography of the Anthropocene, documenting the planetary fight for survival. If we reflect on the work of, for example, Edward Burtynsky, the same lines of power, control and abuse hit our eyes. In his images of the rubbish we produce, the ransacking we engage in, the plastics we unthinkingly discard, the colonisation of the earth and the land that we extract resources from, the alterations and distortions that we inflict upon the environment, we, the subjects of modernity, come to see ourselves as paradoxical warmongers against a planet that hosts us and of which we form part, victims of environmental myopia and historical amnesia, heady with the lust for power and weaponry that the Futurists so acclaimed.

As Foucault has stated, 'The strategic adversary is fascism... the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behaviour, the fascism that

causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us. It's too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see the fascist inside you, the fascist you yourself sustain and nourish and cherish with molecules both personal and collective.' The kind of documentary photograph that throws light on this molecular grain within is the kind of image that, for me at least, makes one stop and reflect.

**Q4:** *This was Sontag's point too, in a way, in her reckoning with the bombed out urban landscape of Sarajevo. Earlier, in her *On Photography*, Sontag writes of "the camera as the arm of consciousness in its acquisitive form": the camera as the artform of the industrial era, to return to your earlier point. But earlier still, at the end of her 1964 essay, *Against Interpretation*, Sontag enjoins us to "recover our senses. We must learn to see more, to hear more, to feel more. / Our task is not to find the maximum amount of content in a work of art, much less to squeeze more content out of the work than is already there. Our task is to cut back content so that we can see the thing at all." This may be one reason why Sontag was not a fan of Salgado's works: she found them to document something too vast as to leave compassion floundering. She wanted something more tangible, perhaps with more stripped away around it. I suspect you would disagree. Planetary scale structures, after all, may be concrete enough when experienced at the rough end of social or environmental inequality. Does your new work on migrations and crossings address any of these themes?*

**A:** A great question. Well... I would actually agree with Sontag when she says that compassion flounders in and through Salgado's work. But then, is that not precisely

what he seeks to achieve as a photographer-economist who is concerned with many of the big challenges facing the world, such as displacement, environmental conservation, and the fractured global panorama of planetary and social justice? Compassion, like charity, is a concept and sentiment that stems from -- and perpetuates -- existing power structures and inequalities. Compassion is perhaps a noble response, but not the same as engagement. I would say that the aesthetic/ethical power of photography is at its best precisely when it does not arouse compassion, but when it acts instead as a window for envisioning solidarity. I see the floundering of compassion, the absence of this perhaps even patronising sense of pity for the 'other' who is less fortunate than I, as a necessary condition for imagining this possibility of solidarity through engagement or praxis. Photo-documentary that is socially committed should steer well clear of compassion, but it will still be reliant upon one kind or other of aesthetic form.

Sontag's writings are hugely thought-provoking, but I do think she somewhat misses the point when she refers to seeing 'the thing at all.' The wonder of photography is that it always works from the ground up, upward and outward from 'the thing' -- but Salgado's extraordinary vision is planetary as well as particular. He is acutely aware of how globalization, imperialism and capitalism are global systems and structures that serve to connect the local to the global, so that one cannot properly situate the particular without first situating it in the larger dynamic of things.

If her concern was also the grandeur of Salgado's images, then I would say that these are merely a particular semiotics of the visual, of which there are many types and from which no photograph can be free. After all, as René Magritte said in his

painting *La trahison des images* (The Treachery of Images,) 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe,' thereby reminding viewers that his picture of a pipe was not a pipe, but a picture of a pipe. Magritte's point is key to understanding that image-making can only evoke reality, and never really be it. Images are composed and constructed via an aesthetic of some sort, be this large-scale and majestic, as with Salgado's images, or pared down and gritty. All images fall short of being tangible.

I do think Sontag opens up a really relevant debate here, however, about the entangled relationship of photography, as opposed to painting, for example, with reality. After all, photography always references a place and time that once was. Photography cannot relay lived realities, but it can transport the traces of the past across time and place.

This leads me to something that I have been wondering about quite a lot lately. In the course of the last decade and a half, more or less since the first iPhone was launched in 2007, smartphone technology has brought new dimensions to image-making. The ubiquity of the selfie is perhaps emblematic of how we make and remake ourselves in the everyday through image-making. The smartphone has turned ordinary people into photographers. Digital platforms, such as Instagram, offer possibilities of immediate publication and dissemination of the image. What we are experiencing today is a destabilisation of photography as solely event or capture of memory and, in its place, photography acting as a tool and vehicle, as the medium through which we navigate the present and the future and constitute ourselves. Digital photography promises democracy in image-making by interweaving photographer and subject, but it also bears the threat of surfeit and quick

oblivion.

My current work grapples with this shift. I am in the process of writing a book, entitled *Mediterranean Adrift: Displacement, Environments, Photo-Politics* that focuses on the dynamics of displacement in the Mediterranean region via photography. To consider this nexus of environmental crises, both social and natural, and human displacement, I am relying on the work of a number of photographers who range from the professional to the amateur. This includes the images taken by migrants and refugees themselves as they navigate their circumstances and chart their journeys. The Mediterranean region offers a confluence of many global challenges, such as environmental emergencies, conflict, economic and political imbalances, border dynamics, protracted encampment, latter-day imperialism, and profound inequalities in development. I am interested in seeing how these issues emanate via a wide range of visual vernaculars. What are the interjections that contemporary photographic practices can make in these contexts? What is the critical potential of photography, not merely to frame ongoing histories, power dynamics and trends, but also to deconstruct, expose, contest or revise them?

**Q5:** *Indeed, the ubiquity of the smartphone and the platforms to which it is connected, often instantaneously, suggest that this new disaggregated photography, is about "being" as well as "representing", and it captures – in ways you suggest – the structural inequalities that citizen and non-citizen photographers, those who are precariously on the move, partake in. The universalisation of crisis has not gone hand in hand with much by way of a democratisation of crisis. It will be fascinating*

*to see what critical potential photography still holds for us here. Thank you, Parvati, for this illuminating conversation. Tradition has it that in our final question we invite our guests to tell us about a book they are reading that they would particularly recommend to others.*

**A:** For some time now, I have been finding my way through a certain synergy between photography and poetry. Photopoetry is a sub-genre in itself of both photography and poetry. However, I think that any of us can connect photography to poetry in myriad ways. Both media can engage the visceral, the sentient, and the rational all at once. Both invoke metaphors and release the imagination. Both invite us to travel outside of ourselves and discover what we did not know. If photography means writing with light, then poetry can, in many instances, be image-making with words.

Reading poetry, such as the work of the late Spanish Republican poet Miguel Hernández, for example, offers cadence and helps to move thought along in terms of engaging with the kind of issues and images that my work focuses on. Hernández's poems, several collated into anthologies posthumously, also serve as a compass for tracing the ethical impetus that directs much socially engaged creative work, such as photography. The rough grain of survival in the everyday against engulfing contexts of injustice and violence speaks directly to questions of forced migration or displacement. So, too, the work of Mahmoud Darwish. What better image could there be to convey the despair of displacement and the intransigence of borders than the lines 'Where should we go after the last frontiers? Where should the birds fly after the last sky?'



These days, I have been turning to the work of the late Indian-American poet of Kashmiri origin, Agha Shahid Ali, especially his poem 'Postcard from Kashmir.' In it, he speaks as a migrant to the United States of the postcard-sized image, held in the palm of his hand, of the conflict-ridden and partitioned homeland that he left.

'This is home. And this the closest  
I'll ever be to home. When I return,  
the colors won't be so brilliant,  
the Jhelum's waters so clean,  
so ultramarine. My love  
so overexposed.

And my memory will be a little  
out of focus, in it  
a giant negative, black  
and white, still undeveloped.'

A gentle reminder that still photography is an apt medium for reflecting on the migrancy that time and contexts force upon us all. Its ambiguities expose the foibles of memory and confirm the impossibility of any return.

Thank you, Simon. You have given me so much of your time and focus and your questions have really made me think. I have very much enjoyed this conversation.

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