

MEXICO & OXFORD



2015/16

Long-standing partnerships and new innovations

Oxford has long enjoyed strong ties with Mexico. One of the earliest and most precious holdings in the Bodleian Library is the Codex Mendoza – a spectacular and unparalleled record of the deep past that reaches back into the pre-Columbian foundations of the Mexican nation. We now enjoy a raft of long-standing partnerships and a set of new and exciting initiatives with colleagues in the country, some of which are highlighted in the following pages. They include collaborations on population ageing, the development of new vaccines, work on the major causes of premature sickness and death in the country, innovative conservation work in our libraries and studies of Mexico itself. In recognising the challenges we face in the 21st Century, we are more committed than ever to strengthening our long-standing partnerships in Mexico, working with Mexican colleagues on the pressing issues of our time. The University of Oxford is expecting to be at the forefront of activities to mark 2015 as the officially designated year for Mexico-UK academic and cultural exchange.

Mexico at the Latin American Centre

In celebrating its 50th anniversary (on 18–20 September 2015), the Latin American Centre recognises its historic strength in Mexican studies. Leading researchers on Mexico have produced outstanding students and publications with impact in Mexico and in other parts of the world. As an example, two members of the current Mexican government are alumni of the Centre. In addition, it has benefited from eminent scholars from the top universities and academic institutes in Mexico in its weekly seminar as well as in its academic visitor programme. Fortunate to have world renowned experts in contemporary Mexican history, politics, economics and society, the Latin American Centre has featured Mexico in classes, dissertations and theses, in academic events, and in a specialised library collection on Latin America. Recent seminars have included 'Alcohol and Nationhood in Nineteenth Century Mexico' by Dr Deborah Toner, University of Leicester, and 'Total war: Mexico and Europe, 1914' by Professor Alan Knight, who is also author of *The Mexican Revolution*, and other publications on modern Mexico, and Emeritus Professor of the History of Latin America at Oxford. The Centre's concentration on Mexico is further enhanced by collaboration with the North American Programme bolstering teaching, supervision, and event planning on Mexican themes. The Centre looks forward to maintaining its focus and expertise on Mexico for the next fifty years.



Analysis of Bodleian's early Mesoamerican treasures



MOLAB team performing Raman spectroscopy on Codex Mendoza

Credit: Bodleian

The Bodleian Libraries' Conservation and Collection Care team were recently awarded a grant from the Cultural Heritage Advanced Research Infrastructures, Synergy for a Multidisciplinary Approach to Conservation/Restoration (CHARISMA). The grant enabled the Bodleian to use a mobile laboratory for instrumental analysis (MOLAB) to characterise

the colours present in the Libraries' five pre-Hispanic and early colonial Mexican pictorial manuscripts: Codex Mendoza, Codex Laud, Codex Bodley, Codex Selden, and the Selden Roll. Due to the fragility of the codices, very little work had been done in the past to assess their materials and composition. Yet it is these very aspects that are critical to understanding

the nature of these documents, their construction and their durability. In order to determine the ancient Mesoamerican painting techniques and to characterise the pigments and colorants used in their manufacture, the MOLAB team used different spectroscopic techniques on each codex. The non-invasive investigations were completed by imaging analyses such as UV fluorescence imaging and digital microscopy to obtain general information about the distribution of the fluorescent materials and indications on possible mixture of pigments/colorants and material consistency of the painting layers. The outcomes so far include learning more about the pictorial techniques and materials used in these five manuscripts; answering key questions concerning both the history and the making of these codices; and minimising the unnecessary handling and piecemeal analysis of these unique items. The results of the analysis are currently being finalised and the Bodleian Library plans to share them widely with all those interested in this fascinating area of study, through both an exhibition at its Weston Library and a conference.

Programme for the Future of Cities



Cancún

Credit: Shutterstock

The Oxford Programme for the Future of Cities, run by the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society, conducted a study in Yucatán as one of the field work sites for a project exploring notions of 'urban flexibility' in cities undergoing reconstruction after major disasters. Cancún managed to expand its

population from 100,000 to 700,000 between 1970 and 2009 in the face of recurrent and sometimes devastating natural disasters, particularly tropical cyclones, making it an ideal site for the study. Publications from the 'urban flexibility' project are available from the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society.

Network on Ageing



Professor Alejandro Klein from the University of Guanajuato with Dr George W Leeson from Oxford's Institute of Population Ageing
Credit: University of Guanajuato

In 2009, the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing established a research network, the Latin American Network on Ageing, directed by Dr George W Leeson. The network now comprises more than 70 distinguished academics in the field of ageing from 10 countries across Latin America working together and with fellow academics from the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing. Network activities have received funding on several occasions from the British Academy, most recently an International Partnership and Mobility Scheme Award in collaboration with the Department of Governance and Development at the University of Guanajuato-Leon, Mexico. Annual Network conferences have been held in the region since 2010 and the network's first training and capacity building workshop is to be held at the University of Guanajuato-Leon in March 2015.

Collaborative research centre on infectious disease pathogenesis and vaccine development

In order to contribute to the development of research and innovation capacity in Mexico, the Nuffield Department of Medicine of the University of Oxford and the Medical School of the Tecnológico de Monterrey have signed a memorandum of understanding for researcher exchange and collaborative studies of infectious disease pathogenesis and vaccine development. Following this, UK and Mexican researchers have begun to establish the Collaborative Academic Centre Mexico-United Kingdom. The proposed project is a major initiative of this programme, led by Dr Arturo Reyes-Sandoval from the Jenner Institute, University of Oxford, and Dr Juan Jose Plata and Dr Fernanda Murguía-Meca from the Tecnológico de Monterrey Medical School.

The University of Oxford is also establishing a collaborative research centre in Mexico. While this collaborative centre sits within the Tecnológico de Monterrey campus in Mexico City (TEC), the University of Oxford has established agreements to collaborate not only with the TEC, but also Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, and is currently pursuing an agreement with the Universidad Michoacana San Nicolás de Hidalgo. This will constitute a network between laboratories in Mexico and the UK. As part of the activities to support the network, the partners are applying to the UK Government's Newton Fund for support under various schemes, including Researcher Links, International Exchanges, Advanced Fellowships, and Travel Grants.

Recent Events

In 2014, Oxford hosted many Mexico-related events within the Humanities and Social Sciences. These included a talk by Ambassador Diego Gómez Pickering on 'Rising Mexico' in June 2014; a joint seminar organised by El Colegio de México, Nuffield College and the Centre for International Studies on 'President Peña Nieto's Reform Agenda' in October 2014; two conferences in November on 'Twenty Years after NAFTA', supported by ProMéxico and the Canadian High Commission; the book launch of *The War Has Brought Peace to Mexico: World War II and the Consolidation of the Post-Revolutionary State* by Senior Research Fellow in North American Studies Dr Halbert Jones; and a showing of *Señorita Extraviada*, a film investigating the killing of young women in Juárez, as part of the Latin American Centre Film Series.

Acceleration of Mexican innovation



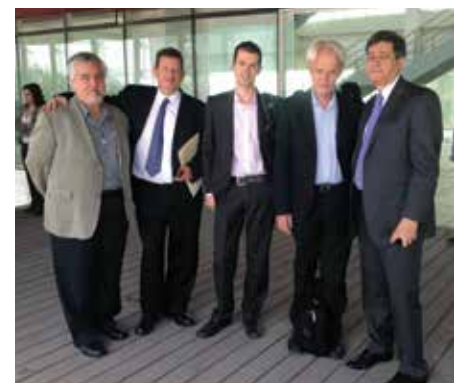
Elena Andonova and Mireya McKee with Mexican colleagues and panellists at the TTOs' Network Congress
Credit: Sarai Pineda

Like other emerging economies, Mexico is realising the importance of science and technology for improved competitiveness and sustained economic growth, and is currently taking major steps on the road to becoming a knowledge-based economy. Isis Enterprise, the technology commercialisation and innovation management consulting arm of Isis Innovation (the technology transfer firm of the University of Oxford) has helped the Mexican Council of Science and Technology define clear strategies to promote and increase funding programmes related to scientific and technological development and innovation. With the help of Isis, the network of technology transfer offices in Mexico has grown to include 135 Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs). Isis has trained the leadership teams at many of the TTOs

and has provided detailed guidance on the commercialisation process and strategy. Leveraging the Oxford model of technology transfer, Isis' contribution has been widely accepted by the Mexican technology transfer stakeholders. As an outcome, Isis Innovation staff Mireya McKee and Elena Andonova recently participated in the Third Congress of the Network of TTOs of Mexico, contributing valuable know-how from Oxford and beyond. Isis is also a partnering institution to the UK's Newton Fund initiative and as such is engaged in screening promising science and technology based projects from Mexico. Isis expects to continue working with Mexican institutions to accelerate their rate of innovation, establishing long term partnerships and developing a stronger presence in Mexico and Latin America.

Epidemiological studies

Since the late 1990s, the University of Oxford Clinical Trial Service Unit and Epidemiological Studies Unit (Professor Rory Collins, Professor Richard Peto and Associate Professor Jonathan Emberson) has been working with researchers at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (Professor Pablo Kuri-Morales, Professor Roberto Tapia-Conyer, Professor Malaquias Lopez-Cervantes and Dr Jesus Alegre-Diaz) on a blood-based cohort study of 150,000 adults living in Mexico City. By relating baseline physical and lifestyle characteristics and blood biomarkers to the subsequent health records of these participants they are helping to determine the major causes of premature morbidity and mortality in Mexico. In particular, they are currently studying the effects of adiposity and diabetes – which are very common in Mexico – on deaths from heart and kidney disease. In the future, the researchers will also be relating genes to participants' records.



Malaquias Lopez, Jesus Alegre, Jonathan Emberson, Richard Peto and Pablo Kuri, shown outside the study's main office in Mexico City.

Funding and Scholarships



Induction week for the Louis Dreyfus-Weidenfeld Scholarship and Leadership Programme, 2014

Credit: Louise Ingledov

The University offers a wide variety of scholarships for graduate students, covering fees and living costs: over 900 fully-funded scholarships are available for new master's and doctoral students in 2015–16 from the University, our colleges and supporters. The University's flagship Clarendon Fund provides over 130 graduate scholarships each year to students studying any course, from any country. Mexican students are also eligible for the Louis Dreyfus-Weidenfeld Scholarship and Leadership Programme (up to 20 scholarships are available each year in subjects as diverse as International Relations, Computer Science and Law) and the Chevening Scholarships, which enable scholars with leadership potential to study for one-year master's courses in the UK. In addition, there are two annual scholarships supported by the Development Bank of Latin America for students completing the MSc Latin American Studies. For other scholarships open to Mexican graduate applicants, please use our online Funding Search tool:

www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/fundingsearch.

For undergraduate studies, Mexican students are eligible to apply for the

fully-funded Reach Oxford Scholarships. For more information, see: www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/oxford-support/reach-oxford-scholarship.

Internships

The University of Oxford Internship Programme (OUIP) has been running for six years and facilitates access to over five hundred global internship opportunities exclusively for Oxford students. Alternativas y Capacidades A C, based in San Jerónimo Aculco, has been one of our key internship providers in Mexico since the inception of the programme. The organisation's mission is to contribute to the burgeoning development of Mexican civil society by strengthening and professionalising both organisations and donors and promoting collaboration between sectors. Our students value the experience of working in a variety of sectors and in countries across the globe. We are always looking for new organisations to partner with, both in the research and the private sector. If you would be interested in hosting Oxford interns in Mexico, please contact internships@careers.ox.ac.uk.



José Ramón López-Portillo, Rafael Tovar (President of the National Council of Culture and Arts in Mexico), María Blanco, Mariana Tovar, and Mantina López-Portillo at Trinity College, Oxford
Credit: Eliza Tudor

As an Associate Professor in Spanish American Literature, María del Pilar Blanco lectures to undergraduate and graduate students on a wide range of topics related to literature and film. Her current research project, 'Modernist Laboratories: Scientific Invention, Poetic Innovation, and Print Culture in Spanish America, 1870–1910', has been made possible by research conducted in the Hemeroteca Nacional, the Fondo Reservado at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and the Centro de Estudios de Historia de México. Professor Blanco is co-investigator on the AHRC-funded 'Science in Text and Culture in Latin America' research network, which aims to bring together scholars from across Latin America, Europe and the US working on this area.

In numbers

Oxford currently has nearly 300 alumni based in Mexico, with one alumni group in Mexico City, 12 members of academic staff from Mexico and 36 Mexican students.

With 19 years of history in the country and sales teams in all major cities, Oxford University Press Mexico is recognised among the educational community for its high quality materials, academic support and service to educators.

Best known in the market as an English Language Training publisher for adult learners, OUP Mexico has focused in recent years on expanding its presence in all segments; one example of this is the recent success in the Primary segment with the introduction of the innovative Oxford Discover series.



STUDENT PROFILE: RODOLFO SALVADOR DELGADILLO



Hometown:

Hidalgo, México

Previous education:

BSc in Civil Engineering
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Current academic

interests/activities: I am

currently studying for an MSc in Water Science, Policy and Management supported by the Louis Dreyfus-Weidenfeld Scholarship and Leadership Programme. I am particularly interested in water governance and undertaking an analysis of the water utilities in the 60 largest cities in Mexico, to determine the most efficient way to manage hydraulic resources in regions of diverse backgrounds and conditions.

Comments on your Oxford experience so far:

To me, Oxford has been a marvellous place to develop and re-invent myself. Every activity,

either academic or recreational, has given me the opportunity to discover new interests and get to know fascinating people.

In my view, Oxford is a synonym of culture, diversity and development; the world needs more towns and cities like this.

Current extra-curricular activities:

I am the treasurer of the Oxford Mexican Society. We are currently planning activities for the rest of the academic year, especially under the auspices of the 2015 year of Mexico in the UK and the UK in Mexico.

I have also become guitarist of a band which plays Latin music.

Career aspirations following the completion of your course:

I definitely want to go back to Mexico and use the knowledge acquired in my home country, but first I am planning to work abroad, aiming to gain more experience on how things work in an international environment.