



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Centre of Development Studies

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

CENTRE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



Photo Credit: Daniel Rincon-Machon

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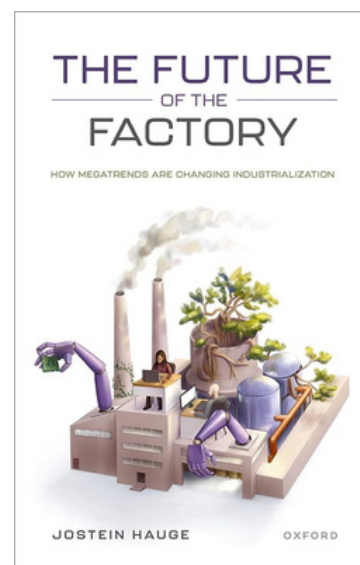
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NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

DR JOSTEIN HAUGE

Jostein Hauge recently published a book with Oxford University Press, entitled The Future of the Factory: How Megatrends are Changing Industrialization. The book investigates how industrialization pathways are shaped by recent technological developments, new forces of globalization, and the threat of ecological collapse. It also charts new pathways for industrial policy and global governance. In the weeks following publication, the book featured in the top 10 on Amazon's bestseller list for International Economic Development. Jostein has given a range of talks and interviews about his book at universities, think tanks, policy forums, and podcasts. A couple of recorded highlights include his talk at the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose and his podcast interview on In Pursuit of Development.



In September 2024, Jostein will be travelling to Buenos Aires for Argentina's Industry Day to talk about his book in front of 700 people, primarily representatives of the national government, provincial governments, and businesses. In other news, Jostein is taking a lead on drafting a paper for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) that is intended to serve as a foundation for the organization's 2026 Industrial Development Report.

Jostein has also recently joined the University of Oxford's Technology and Management Centre for Development as a Senior Research Advisor, with a focus on the Centre's new projects on industrial policy.

DR ILIAS ALAMI

GENDERING MERCHANT ECONOMY (OR CAPITALISM?)

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Centre of Development Studies

Aida A. Hozic is Associate Professor of International relations at the University of Florida, Gainesville, United States. Her research is situated at the intersections of feminist political economy, cultural studies, and international security.



Aida A. Hozic

Discussion about slavery and racial capitalism are generating renewed interest in pre-capitalist merchant economies and/or merchant capitalism, and rekindling debates about their influence in transitions to capitalism. Professor Aida A. Hozic examines these questions by focusing on the role of trade in the Ottoman/Balkan economy - usually excluded from analysis of European capitalism - and on the complex role of women within it.

Wednesday May 1st,
16:00 - 17:30
Lecture Block Room 8,
Sidgwick Site

Joint seminar
CDS/Political
Economy/International
Relations

Ilias Alami gave a public lecture at the Margaret Anstee Centre for Global Studies at Newnham College.

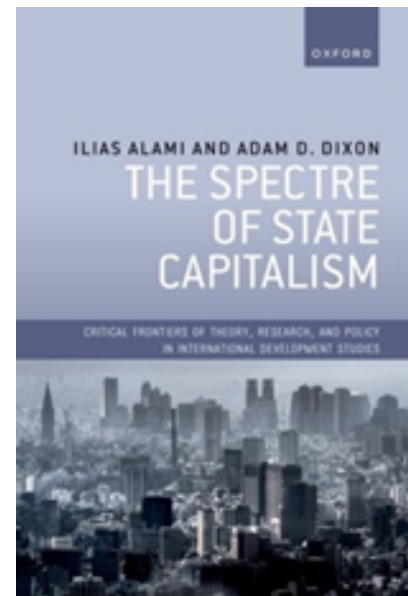
Read the full report on the Newnham College Website. A recording of the lecture is available on Youtube.

NEW BOOK

Alami, I., & Dixon, A. D. (2024). *The Spectre of State Capitalism*. Oxford University Press.

Abstract: The state is back, and it means business. Since the turn of the 21st century, state-owned enterprises, sovereign funds, and policy banks have vastly expanded their control over assets and markets. Concurrently, governments have experimented with increasingly assertive modalities of statism, from techno-industrial policies and spatial development strategies to economic nationalism and trade and investment restrictions.

This book argues that we are currently witnessing a historic arc in the trajectories of state intervention, characterized by a drastic reconfiguration of the state's role as promoter, supervisor, shareholder-investor, and direct owner of capital across the world economy.



It offers a comprehensive analysis of this “new state capitalism”, as commentators increasingly refer to it, and maps out its key empirical manifestations across a range of geographies, cases, and issue areas. Alami and Dixon show that the new state capitalism is rooted in deep geopolitical economic and financial processes pertaining to the secular development of global capitalism, as much as it is the product of the geoeconomic agency of states and the global corporate strategies of leading firms. The book demonstrates that the proliferation of muscular modalities of statist interventionism and the increasing concentration of capital in the hands of states indicate foundational shifts in global capitalism. This includes a growing fusion of private and state capital, and the development of flexible and liquid forms of property that collapse the distinction between state and private ownership, control, and management. This has fundamental implications for the nature and operations of global capitalism and world politics.

The book is open access and freely downloadable [here](https://www.elgaronline.com/display/book/9781800882324/1.1.4.1.xml).

BOOK CHAPTER

Alami, I. and Adam Dixon (2024), New State Capitalism(s), in Krista Nadakavukaren and Thomas Cottier (eds). Elgar Encyclopedia of International Economic Law.
<https://www.elgaronline.com/display/book/9781800882324/1.1.4.1.xml>

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Alami, I. (2024). State property, venture capital and the urbanisation of state capitalism. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 20438206241253590. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20438206241253590>

Abstract: To sharpen the conversation between urban studies and ‘new state capitalism’, I argue that studies of the state's role as a venture capitalist in the urban process may be developed along four lines: (1) expounding where logics of state-backed venture capitalism fit within shifting repertoires of urban entrepreneurialism; (2) specifying how the injection of state-owned capital in start-ups facilitates processes of both real and financial valorisation, thereby altering urban relations of production; (3) analysing state-backed venture capitalism in light of emerging forms of ‘derisking developmentalism’; and (4) foregrounding geopolitically infused techno-nationalism as a potentially significant driver of state-backed venture capital.

Alami, I., & Taggart, J. (2024). A partial conversion: how the ‘unholy trinity’ of global economic governance adapts to state capitalism. *European Journal of International Relations*, 13540661241226472. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/13540661241226472>

Abstract: To what extent is neoliberal global economic governance transforming in a world where states play greater roles as promoters, supervisors and owners of capital? Do these transformations signal a potential paradigm shift? To answer these questions, we focus on global financial governance and the trade and investment regime. We analyse recent policy documents from the IMF, World Bank and WTO – the ‘Unholy Trinity’ of neoliberal global governance. Our analysis reveals a growing acceptance of state interventionism within and across these organizations. Although this accommodation is significant, we argue that it constitutes a limited transformation. We observe attempts to incorporate emerging state interventionist practices and state-owned entities into established governance arrangements to discipline, curtail and control them. We argue that this does not signify a shift towards post-neoliberal plurality within Western-dominated global economic governance, but rather a defensive, ‘mutating neoliberalism’ which seeks to incorporate depoliticized and commercially oriented state ownership into its mainframe.

Alami, I. (2024). Racial capitalism, uneven development, and the abstractive powers of race and money. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 56(4), 1304-1310. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0308518X231202914>

Abstract: How does the circulation of capital in the form of money and finance mobilize different constructions of “Blackness” across historical-geographical contexts, and how does this produce uneven development? This contribution offers theoretical and methodological provocations to think about this question,

drawing on two cases of raced finance: race-based bank lending in the United States, and international investment to sub-Saharan countries. I argue that the impersonal character of social domination under capitalism, expressed in and by the movement of abstract categories (such as the commodity, value, money, the state) requires that we carefully mobilize the notion of abstraction in theorizing the co-production of racialized difference and uneven development. I develop this conceptual argument by way of a sympathetic yet critical engagement with recent scholarship on racial capitalism, and by bringing the critique of political economy into conversation with the Black radical tradition. The key question is not the extent to which cases of raced finance exhibit a paradigmatic “anti-Blackness.” Rather, it is about how the abstractive powers of race and the social forms of capital refract each other in violent configurations, and contribute to giving the capitalist production of space a raced imprint. The co-production of racialized and spatial difference thus enhances processes of capitalist discipline and extraction mediated by money, while the totalizing operations of money reproduce racialized power relations and uneven development. I then turn to the work of Bhandar and Toscano to reflect methodologically on how to mobilize various levels and modalities of abstraction in concrete research.

Schindler, S., Alami, I., DiCarlo, J., Jepson, N., Rolf, S., Bayırbağ, M. K., ... & Zhao, Y. (2024). The second cold war: US-China competition for centrality in infrastructure, digital, production, and finance networks. *Geopolitics*, 29(4), 1083–1120, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14650045.2023.2253432>

Abstract: Relations between the US and China have deteriorated to their lowest point since their rapprochement in the 1970s. To make sense of contemporary geopolitics, our objective in this article is two-fold. First, we historically situate contemporary US-China rivalry to conceptualise the Second Cold War (SCW). We argue that in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, both the US and China launched ‘restorative’ political projects that harked back to imagined pasts. These projects are mutually exclusive and animate contemporary geopolitics. Second, we conceptualise the spatial logic of great power rivalry in the Second Cold War. In contrast to the first Cold War, when great powers sought to incorporate territory into blocs, the US and China currently compete on a global scale for centrality in four interrelated networks that they anticipate will underpin hegemony in the 21st century: infrastructure (e.g. logistics and energy), digital, production and finance. We review the state of competition in each network and draw two broad conclusions: (1) this mode of competition makes it difficult for either side to conclusively ‘win’ the Second Cold War, and (2) many countries are likely to remain integrated with both the US and China.

Alami, I., Copley, J., & Moraitis, A. (2024). The 'wicked trinity' of late capitalism: Governing in an era of stagnation, surplus humanity, and environmental breakdown. *Geoforum*, 153, 103691. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016718523000179>

Abstract: Scholars within the fields of political ecology, environmental political theory, and international political economy tend to evaluate the prospects of state-led environmental transitions in general terms – enquiring as to the capitalist state's inherent properties and their environmental implications. Less attention has been paid to how the state's green capacities are conditioned by contemporary evolutions in the form and pace of capital accumulation. Capitalism's directional pattern of historical development poses unique challenges for green state projects. Its drive to raise labour productivity metabolises nature on a growing scale, while generating conditions of overproduction and rendering a progressively larger portion of the population superfluous to the production process. Thus, the question is not simply whether the state can rise to the challenge of climate change, but rather how states are scrambling to govern the intersecting crises of climate catastrophe, economic stagnation, and surplus humanity. This 'wicked trinity' compounds the tensions at the heart of the capitalist state, resulting in an increasing inability to perform its role while sustaining its liberal form. This governance trilemma is illustrated by the case of the solar photovoltaic boom, where the spectacular increase in the productivity and scale of solar panel manufacturing have generated oversupply and falling profitability. States have reacted by indefinitely providing subsidies, financing automation technologies that exacerbate labour superfluity, and relocating solar panel manufacturing to places with authoritarian labour regimes. The case of photovoltaics is a microcosm of the general predicament faced by states as they struggle to govern capitalism's secular developmental tendencies.

OP-EDS, MEDIA, AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Alami, I. and Jack Taggart (2024) Breaking Taboos? The IMF, World Bank, WTO Meet the New State Capitalism, *Global Policy Online*, available [here](#)

Alami, I., Copley, J., & Moraitis, A. (2023). Hard truths about green industrial policy, *Project Syndicate*, available [here](#)

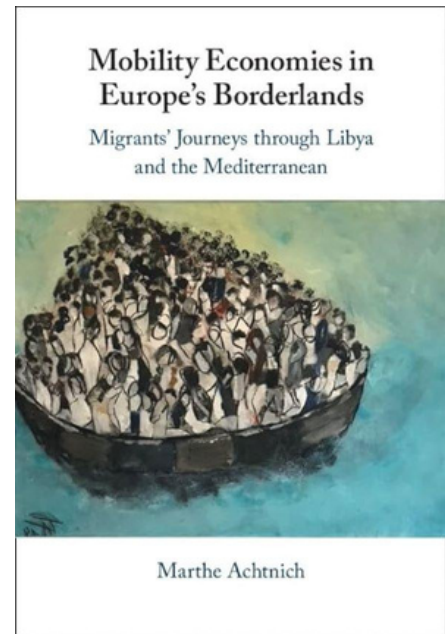
Ilias was interviewed by the French investigative journalism news outlet Mediapart, and his research on the role of the state in the green transition was featured in an article: <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/economie-et-social/100724/le-probleme-trois-corps-du-capitalisme-moderne-qui-eclaire-la-crise-politique-francaise>

DR MARTHE ACHTNICH

NEW BOOK

Achtnich, Marthe 2023. *Mobility Economies in Europe's Borderlands: Migrants' Journeys through Libya and the Mediterranean*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Winner of the 2024 BISA Susan Strange Best Book Prize)

Abstract: The arrival of unauthorized migrants at the shores of southern Europe has been sensationalized into a migration 'crisis' in recent years. Yet these depictions fail to grasp migrants' experiences and fall short of addressing a more complex phenomenon. In this original ethnography, Marthe Achtnich examines migrants' journeys and economic practices underpinning mobility to recast how we think of migration. Bringing the perspectives and voices of migrants to the fore, she traces sub-Saharan migrants' journeys along one of the world's most dangerous migration routes: through the Sahara Desert, Libya, and then by boat to Malta in Europe. Examining what she calls 'mobility economies', Achtnich demonstrates how these migrant journeys become sources of profit for various actors. By focusing on migrants' long and difficult journeys, the book prompts a necessary rethinking of mobile life and economic practices under contemporary capitalism, and the complex relationship between the two.



DR JOEVA ROCK

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Dowd-Uribe, B., Blundo-Canto, G., Glover, D., Louafi, S., Shilomboleni, H., Rock, J., Kikulwe, E.M., Fischer, K., and Joly, P-B. (2024) "Socio-Economic Assessment and Genetically Modified Crops in Africa: Building Knowledge for Development?" *Global Food Security* 42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2024.100782>

Abstract: How could we know if agricultural development interventions make contributions to sustainable development goals (SDGs)? Genetically engineered (GE) crops are celebrated as a class of technological interventions that can realize multiple SDGs. But recent studies have revealed the gap between GE crop program goals and the approaches used to assess their impacts. Using four comprehensive

reviews of GE crop socio-economic impacts, we identify common shortcomings across three themes: (a) scope, (b) approaches and (c) heterogeneity. We find that the evaluation sciences literature offers alternative assessment approaches that can enable evaluators to better assess impacts, and inform learning and decision-making. We recommend the use of methods that enable evaluations to look beyond the agronomic and productive effects of individual traits to understand wider socio-economic effects.

Dowd-Urbe, B., Rock, J., Spreadbury, T., Chiril, P., and Uminsky, D. (2023) “Bridging the Gap?: Public-Private Partnerships and Genetically Modified Crop Development for Smallholder Farmers in Africa.” *Plants, People, Planet* 6(2): 437-451. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ppp3.10453>

Abstract: Genetically modified (GM) crops are promoted as a key tool to address multiple challenges in Africa, including the impacts of climate change and food insecurity. Observers have noted, however, significant institutional challenges to achieving such goals, most notably, intellectual property rights (IPR) to key GM traits being held by private companies who have limited incentives to develop those technologies for smallholder farmers. To bridge the gap between privately held IPR and pro-poor crop breeding, advocates have called for increased funding for institutional innovations such as public-private partnerships (PPPs) to facilitate the transfer of crop technologies from private companies to public research institutes. For the past two decades, donors and firms have invested considerable resources toward PPPs. However, to date, few research efforts have empirically examined the extent and effectiveness of PPPs at the continental scale.

This study draws from a new comprehensive dataset on GM crop research and development in Africa to examine whether the anticipated advantages of PPPs have resulted in an improved ability to deliver GM crops to smallholder farmers. We find that although PPP research has focused on crops and traits more relevant for smallholder farmers, many of these efforts have been suspended, with only one crop thus far reaching the hands of farmers. PPPs can address some issues related to GM crop development but still appear constrained by other institutional challenges, which may limit their development, reach, and the achievement of targeted benefits for smallholder farmers.

Fischer, K., and Rock, J. (2023) “The Scientific Narrative Around New Food Technologies Needs to Change.” *Nature Reviews Bioengineering*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44222-023-00128-3>

Abstract: The scientific narrative around food biotechnologies, such as genetically modified crops, is ineffective at predicting their role in the development and change of agricultural practices and food. Here, we suggest placing the scientific discussion of new food technologies in the context of the political and economic forces that shape agriculture.

PRESENTATIONS

November 2023: **"GMOs, Food Sovereignty, and the Future of Food in Ghana."**, seminar at Cornell University.

November 2023: **"Genetic Entanglements: Biotechnology, Public-Private Partnerships, and the Making of Climate-Smart Rice."**, paper presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science

November 2023: **"Here, There, and Back Again: The Materiality of Genetically Modified Rice."**, paper presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association

EDITING AND MEDIA

Joeva co-edited a special issue of Elementa:

"Genome Editing and the Future of Food":
https://online.ucpress.edu/elementa/pages/genome_editing_and_the_future_of_food_in_africa

Joeva was interviewed by several European environmental media outlets:

- **Carbon Brief (UK):** <https://www.carbonbrief.org/qa-the-evolving-debate-about-using-genetically-modified-crops-in-a-warming-world/>
- **Reporterre (France):** <https://reporterre.net/Les-millions-de-Bill-Gates-pour-les-OGM-n-ont-pas-vaincu-la-faim-en-Afrique>

PHD STUDENTS

DUSTIN BARTER

Barter, D. (2024). Conflict sensitivity and activism: insights from Cambodia's resource conflicts. *Development in Practice*, 34(5), 555–567.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2024.2344519>

DANIEL RINCON-MACHON

Tapscott, R., & Machón, D. R. (2024). Procedural ethics for social science research: Introducing the Research Ethics Governance dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433241249352>

RADOSTINA SCHIVATCHEVA

Schivatcheva, R. (2024). "Governing Innovation For A Just Transition: A Critical Evaluation Of Bulgaria's Renewable Energy Policies," European Association of Evolutionary Political Economy (EAEPE) Summer School "Economic Policies For An Equal And Just Green Transition," Department of Economics, University Roma Tre, Rome, Italy.

CHEE YONG TAN

During the course of his PhD, Chee Yong found an archival document that debunked a 6-decade-old myth about Malay's route to independence. The discovery was reported by newspapers in Malaysia. Read the full story on the website of St Catherine's College : <https://www.caths.cam.ac.uk/malaya>.

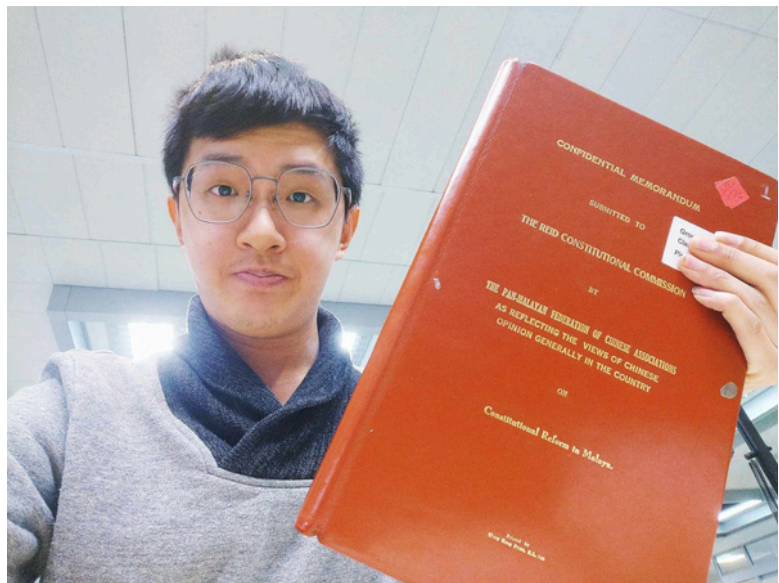
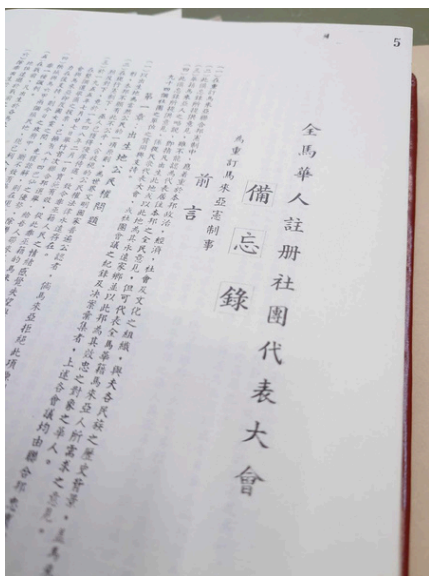


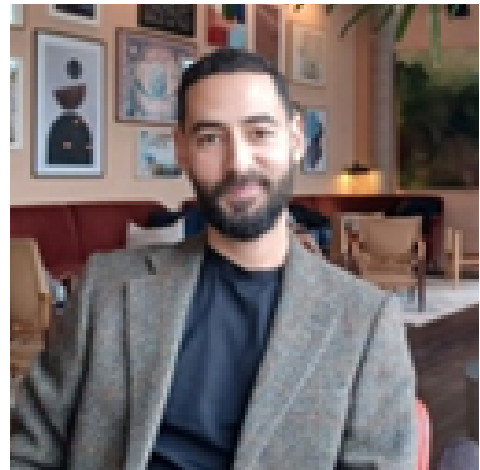
Photo Credit: Chee Yong Tan

NEW STAFF

Two new members joined the academic team of the Centre of Development Studies in the academic year 2023/24.

Dr Ilias Alami

Dr Ilias Alami is an Assistant Professor in the Political Economy of Development in the Centre of Development Studies and the Department of Politics and International Studies. Prior to joining Cambridge, he held research and teaching positions at Uppsala University, Maastricht University, and Manchester University.



Ilias also held visiting positions at the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Sao Paulo (June-Sept 2016), the University of Johannesburg (October-Dec 2016), and Sciences Po Paris (May-June 2022). He holds a PhD in Politics from the University of Manchester, an MSc in Development Planning from University College London, and an MSc in Management from Toulouse Business School.

Ilias is an Editor of *Developing Economics*, a leading blog featuring critical perspectives on development economics and political economy. He is also on the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Business, Finance & International Development* book series (Bristol University Press), the journal *Global Political Economy*, and the journal *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*. He sits on the Scientific Council of *Intérêt Général*.

He is a member of the recently created Second Cold War Observatory, a collective of scholars committed to developing nuanced understandings of how great power rivalry influences and shapes societies, economies, and ecologies worldwide.

His research and teaching interests are in the areas of global political economy, political ecology, the political economy of money and finance, state capitalism, economic geography, development and international capital flows, North-South relations, financialisation, the geographies of global finance, ecological planning, theories of the state, and the articulations between race/class/coloniality.

NEW STAFF

Dr Marthe Achtnich

Marthe Achtnich is an Assistant Professor in Development Studies at the Centre of Development Studies in the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS). Before starting at the University of Cambridge, Marthe was a Fellow by Examination in Anthropology (Junior Research Fellow, JRF) at Magdalen College, University of Oxford, and a Wiener-Anspach



Postdoctoral Fellow in Anthropology at the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie des Mondes Contemporains (LAMC), Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), in Brussels, Belgium. Marthe holds a DPhil (PhD) in Anthropology and an MPhil in Migration Studies, both from the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford.

Marthe is an anthropologist working on migration and mobility. Her research centres around the lived experiences, governance and economies of migration, with a focus on migrants' journeys, particularly to and through Libya, the Mediterranean and Europe. She has conducted multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork with migrants in Libya and in Malta.

Marthe's book 'Mobility Economies in Europe's Borderlands: Migrants' Journeys through Libya and the Mediterranean' was published by Cambridge University Press in 2023. It is the winner of the 2024 BISA Susan Strange Best Book Prize. Bringing the perspectives of migrants to the fore, the book traces the journeys of sub-Saharan migrants along one of the world's most dangerous migration routes: through the Sahara Desert, Libya, and by boat to Malta in Europe. Demonstrating how these migrant journeys become sources of profit for various actors, the book prompts a rethinking of mobile life and economic practices under contemporary capitalism.

Marthe's most recent work engages with the concept of the 'bioeconomy' in relation to mobility, examining the intersections between migration, economics and health.

SEMINAR SERIES 2023/4

The Centre of Development Studies Seminar Series is broad in scope, focusing on pressing theoretical, empirical, and practical issues in the field of development studies. Attendance is open to the public, although we construct the series with our MPhil students in mind. Over the years, the series has attracted world-leading scholars from across the social sciences; from economics and political science to sociology and anthropology. Our seminar series in 2023/2024 was no exception, displaying breadth both with respect to topics and disciplines. Below, you can see a summary of the seminar series in 2023/24:

Speaker	Title
Professor Kate Maegher (LSE)	African Informal Economies and the Will to Protect: COVID-19, Informality and Social Policy in Africa
Dr Pritish Behuria (GDI, Manchester)	Global Development as Paradigm Maintenance
Professor Sarah Radcliffe (Cambridge)	What does an alternative to development look like on the ground? Variegated geographies of Buen Vivir in Ecuador
Professor Adam Hanieh (Exeter)	The 'East-East' Hydrocarbon Circuit: Rethinking Middle East Oil and the World Market
Professor Elliott Green (LSE)	Industrialization and Assimilation: Understanding Ethnic Change in the Modern World
Dr Ben Radley (Bath)	Disrupted Development in the Congo: The Fragile Foundations of the African Mining Consensus
Dr Giulia Mascagni (IDS)	Taxation and Inequality: Cases on Tax Administration in Lower-Income Countries

MPHIL STATISTICS



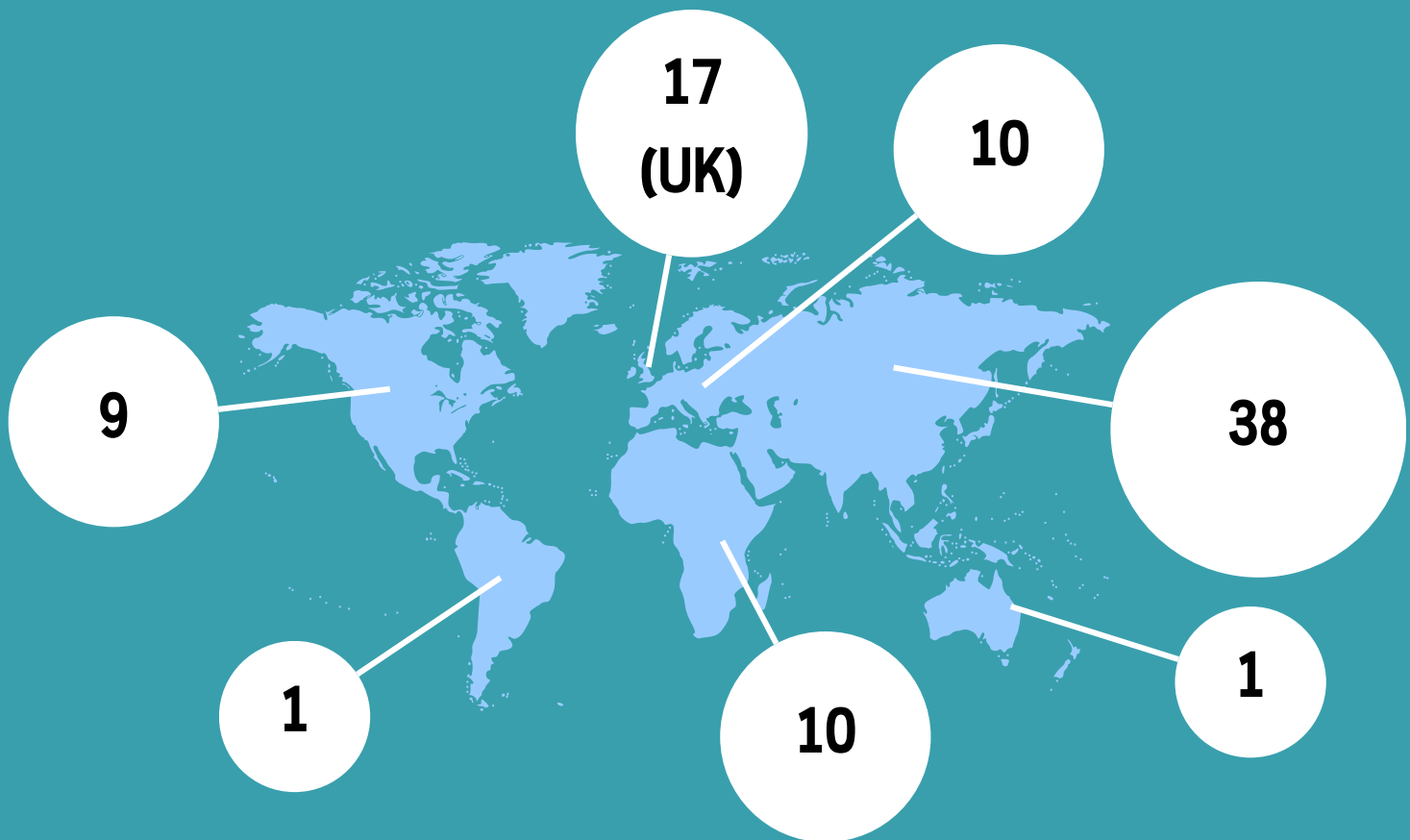
438 MPhil applicants



169 MPhil offers



86 MPhil students enrolled



100 PhD applicants



5 PhD offers



3 PhD students enrolled

PHD STATISTICS

PHD GRADUATES 2023/24

These following students completed the PhD programme and had their viva outcomes approved by the Degree Committee July 2023 to July 2024.

Jakub Csabay

Institutional Dynamics of State-Minority Relations in Slovakia and Azerbaijan

Mateus Labrunie

Economic development and industrial policy in the age of digitalisation: global mapping and the case of Brazil

Tessa Laing

Resistance to state-driven land expropriation in northern Uganda: Counter-hegemonic imagination and the reconstruction of identity, authority, territory, and property

Dustin Barter

Rivers of Resistance: Aid, Activism and Energy in Cambodia and Myanmar

Yingfeng Ji

Interpretating Belt and Road Initiative Dynamics in China and Kazakhstan

Chunwen Xiao

What Factors Determine Chinese Companies' Internationalisation? A Case Study of Telecommunications Industry

Radostina Schivatcheva

A neo-Schumpeterian study of the developmental techno-politics of post-socialist Bulgaria and Kazakhstan

FIELDWORK PHOTO STORY

BY DANIEL RINCON-
MACHON

Waste Pickers Cooperative of
Bom Jardim (ASCABOMJA),
Fortaleza, Brazil

Telma is a proud member of the waste pickers cooperative of Bom Jardim – one of the poorest and most insecure areas in Fortaleza. She braves the city daily with her trolley, collecting disposable materials from so-called "noble neighbourhoods" – wealthy, exclusive and securitized.



CENTRE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



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