

Laidlaw Scholarship Reflective Report

A reflective report is required after each summer period (by 20th September). Once submitted we will ask you to post onto the Laidlaw Network (without your supervisor comments if you wish).

This should be supplied as a Word document. Interesting photographs directly related to your research project or scholarship are encouraged and should be inserted into the body of the word document, not supplied separately.

There are six questions for you to complete. You are expected to write a detailed and thorough report; each section should be around 200-300 words.

Please note: This is NOT a technical research report. Scientific reports with a covering note cannot be accepted.

This report will need comments from your supervisor and is to be signed off by both you and your supervisor before submission.

If you have any problems or queries please contact the Laidlaw Scholarship Administrator, laidlaw@leeds.ac.uk.

Scholar

Name:	Elizabeth Angus
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Title of Scholarship Project:	Identifying North Africans in the French Internal Resistance

Please describe the research you have conducted this period

In this period, I have researched the impact and contribution that North Africans (particularly Algerians) made to the French Resistance during WWII. I have looked at the individual files and information of specific soldiers to create short fact files and biographies about their lives during and beyond the resistance in order to demonstrate the general North African experience and how they may have been treated by various impactors such as the French government, the Vichy and their fellow resistance fighters. I sourced this information from multiple sources including online databases such as Memoires des Hommes and genealogy sites as well as visiting the military archives in Paris on a short trip. I documented their turmoil and how they may have struggled with this momentous task looking at examples of soldiers who had been sent to concentration camps, prisons and psychiatric hospitals as well as recognising the positive impacts the resistance had in providing sanctuary and comradeship to a diverse group of people. I finished my research by reflecting on what a 'North African' experience was and how their ethnic and religious origins impacted their time in the resistance. I also had to show an understanding of how these men were not a singular homogenous group that we can create one narrative for, but instead see them as a collection of lives, stories, and experiences.

How is the research work you have been undertaking impactful or important?

Often within history, different narratives are recounted incorrectly to portray a world where victory was due to the triumph of white men. The French Government of the time after WWII wanted to maintain their empire and encourage a sense of paternalism between France and its colonies. Therefore, it was in their best interests to paint colonial soldiers as either weak or lesser so that they maintained the sentiment that they needed France's control to survive. In my research I came across cases of higher-ranking soldiers being listed as lower ranks by the French Ministry of Defence in order to rewrite history in favour of the selfish aims of government

stakeholders. This meant that for many years, our understanding of the resistance was warped by the tampering of various parties. Therefore, my work is impactful as it allows for the recognition and celebration of people who otherwise were written out of history despite resounding bravery and contribution to the liberation of France. My project allows us to see how North Africans were not idle and incompetent like many tried to pretend they were in order to perpetuate subservience of the colonies but instead quite the contrary – they were heroes, and they deserve to be held in high esteem in historical retellings for generations to come.

What impact has conducting research had on your degree course and university experience?

Upon signing up for Laidlaw, my primary aim was to make sure I left University having gained more than just a degree; In this period of research, I feel I have contributed to that goal. Doing a French degree, this research has allowed me to explore an academic area of interest related to, but outside of what I may be learning in lectures or seminars. I have broadened my understanding of Francophonic history and questioned some of the engrained biases I may have carried into my degree such as what role certain countries had in influencing the outcomes of history. I can now see that France's success was not gained by standing alone or by independence and instead, often the backbones of societies are not the ones we initially expect. I have hence gained critical thinking which I can take forth into my degree course to question what information may be clouded by bias and misunderstandings of history due to prejudices. As for my University experience, I feel as though my horizons have been vastly broadened by gaining competency in research and critical thinking. It has allowed me to feel part of a team, being supported by not only my supervisor but other scholars and meant I've been a part of a community that seeks to uplift others in their respective academic fields.

What leadership skills do you believe you have gained from the research period? (please refer to the leadership attributes below)

At the beginning of my research project, I had not undertaken a task of such scale, importance, and relevance. Hence it was a steep learning curve where I was able to attain attributes of a leader such as fostering effective communication and relationships. I learned this through experiencing and requiring ongoing dialogue between myself and my supervisor as well as other people I encountered which aided me with research such as the archivists at the Paris Military Archives. Without knowing how to communicate my aims, progress and questions, I would not have been able to produce research to the quality that I have done. The nature of project in being such a sensitive, thought-provoking area of research, allowed me to gain leadership skills in the way of empathy and lending emotion to a task when it is beneficial. Similarly, I also often found the work upsetting, especially seeing deportation and concentration camp documents in person which evoked lots of emotion. As a leader, I had to know when to detach myself and have a break as well as balancing knowing when feeling those emotions was productive and worthwhile to producing a sensitive bit of research to reflect a

torrid issue. I feel I have grown as a leader in this research period by being openminded to new ideas, experiences and ways of learning.

Please talk about activities you've been involved in to disseminate your research, including but not limited to attending conferences, producing research posters, and promotion of the scholarship

Part of my Laidlaw research period this summer was attending leadership workshops and residentials which made me apply what I had learned in my independent project, to a broader sense of leadership and my role in other workplaces. It taught me how to transfer my knowledge to other scenarios and apply my new skills to different competencies and areas of leadership such as other academic and professional endeavours. Producing a research poster to reflect my findings allowed me to not just review what I had learned but learn to present in a way that was digestible and comprehensible to audiences outside of groups which were already specialist on my topic. Until producing the poster, I had been used to discussing my project with people who knew lots about my topic and were informing me, so it was a learning curve to know how to approach a different group of people where I had to make my findings accessible to your average reader. This came in the form of indexing or explaining complicated terms as well as providing English translations to phrases and labels which I had previously only ever referred to in French. This allowed me to garner another layer of competency and collate my research into a coherent document.

What are your future career or educational plans?

In frankness, I don't know what specific career I may look to in the future as I have a breadth of interests and passions in which I'm unsure of how to encompass in a singular career or educational aspiration. I currently study a joint honours degree in French and Business and enjoy the Broadchurch of knowledge this course provides me. Laidlaw has been helpful in that it has allowed me to explore a facet of academic and professional interest, working in research and in and around museums. A primary ongoing interest for me is politics, and not just in the sense of national, parliamentary politics but also keeping aligned with ongoing social movements such as the decolonising of curriculums and modern understandings of race and history. My project has closely linked with this, allowing me to see yet another example of the way we may apply our biases to areas of academic interest. In the future, I do know that I want to be a part of an organisation that makes a difference for everyday people and marginalised communities – I feel it is the best way for me to exercise what I'm passion about and make an impact in the right way. I also love communicative tasks and roles, public speaking and sharing ideas verbally. It would be an aspiration of mine to encompass this into my future professional and academic work.

Supervisor

Please comment on your scholar's research period, what you consider to be your scholars' strengths and which leadership attributes (please refer to the leadership attributes below) you feel your scholar has demonstrated and is particularly skilled in. You could also identify areas which your scholar can develop further.

Lizzie has worked incredibly hard during her research placement and undertaken a significant amount of independent research into North Africans in the French Resistance. She immersed herself in the history of the period so that she had sufficient knowledge to tackle work in the archives and museums during her research trip to Paris. She demonstrated great resilience dealing with the trials and tribulations of French archival research paperwork. She also demonstrated great aptitude in devising research questions, in comparing and contrasting source materials (not always easy to decipher) and in reading between the lines of official state documentation. This report and her summary of research findings have been written with great thought and show perceptive understanding of both the wartime and postwar context, and especially of colonial power dynamics. The fact files that she has produced are of excellent standard and will be invaluable in moving research forward in this field as well as serving as usual pedagogical tools for our partner institution, the Memorial of Mont-Valerien in Paris. The Tiktok of the day in the life of an archival researcher will be used to inspire future students of French and future Laidlaw scholars.

Lizzie has already begun to build contacts and relationships with colleagues in our partner institution ahead of her placement period next summer. They were very impressed by her enthusiasm and professionalism. We will work together this year to strengthen these contacts so that she can get the most out of this second placement.

Well done Lizzie! What a great 1st placement period. Thank you for your dedication and excellent work.

Signature of Scholar __E.Angus____ Date: 12/09/2022

Signature of Project Leader __N.A.Wardleworth_ Date: __16__/_09_/_2022__

Leadership Attributes

Able to lead without authority

Able to convey purpose and build coalitions

Cultural intelligence and capacity for empathy

Honestly assess own knowledge/leadership style/preferences

Knows own limitations and acts accordingly

Learns continually

Speaks and writes clearly and confidently

Able to listen with understanding

Uses digital connectivity

Makes effective decisions in complex environments

Seeks out and fosters innovation and creativity

Strong intellectual ability

Turns ideas into action

Builds relationships and networks

Works collaboratively and across boundaries

Uses emotional intelligence to achieve this

Capitalises on the power of diversity

Able to navigate new and foreign situations

Uses this to build relationships and networks

Has energy and impact

Makes things happen

Able to analyse data and interpret results

Able to work and think independently

Prioritises activities and manages own time

