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Olinde Rodrigues, a mathematician "in the shadow"

Olinde Rodrigues lived in the first half of the 19th century, and was an outstanding mathematician whose achievements are only being fully recognized today. He was Portugese by birth but French by training and education. Even his most famous contribution, the Rodrigues formula for the Legendre polynomials (which appears nowadays in most texts on differential equations, advanced calculus, *etc.*), was not attributed to him until about 50 years after his death. In this talk we will discuss his mathematical contributions which are in diverse fields such as analysis, rotation groups (in particular what we now call SO(3) and Spin(3)), group theory, and combinatorics. We will also discuss his contributions to an amazingly broad collection of other disciplines: philosophy (in particular socialism), music, women's rights, and racial equality. In the latter half of the 19th century France named a ship in his honour. We will conclude by showing that recently Rodrigues is finally getting some of the recognition he deserves, in both mathematics and theoretical physics.