

Theme
of the year
2022

Colonialidades | Colonialities

Before and during the pandemic, configurations and regimes of Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America and elsewhere have been continuously framed through colonial legacies and their contestation. From the removal of the statue of Sebastián de Belalcázar in Colombia in September 2020¹ to the recurrent demonstrations against police brutality directed toward the black youth in Brazil, the global debates and disputes about coloniality continue to materialize in daily life in Latin American countries. They take place in dialogue with parallel demands for justice and change—and their rebuttal—in locations from South to North and East to West, as the cases of the Humboldt-Forum in Berlin², Rhodes Must Fall in South Africa³ and the UK⁴, and China's hold on Hong Kong⁵ illustrate.

In 2022, Mecila will give special attention to these social and political developments under the heading of *colonialidades* | *colonialities*.

As a key tool of conceptual and empirical reflection, knowledge production, and debate, coloniality frames numerous debates at the Centre. Research at the Centre draws from a number of different perspectives that critically address the legacies of colonial domination, including postcolonial approaches, subaltern studies, southern epistemologies. In Latin America, a rather recent scholarship that theoretically developed coloniality as the flipside of Western modernity has gained traction, but also awakened very fierce critiques.⁶

Rather than limiting the debate to coloniality or decoloniality only, Mecila's thematic focus for 2022 aims to further pluralize the debate: *colonialidades* | *colonialities* in the plural stress the productive tensions that are emerging from exchanges that juxtapose the empirical to the theoretical and challenge a self-enclosed, non-relational perspective. As Mecila's key conceptual framework, **Conviviality-Inequality** raises due awareness for the empirical detail of processes, practices, and materialities, as well as the resulting

¹<https://www.infobae.com/america/colombia/2020/09/17/indigenas-tumbaron-la-estatua-del-conquistador-espanol-sebastian-de-belalcazar-en-el-suroeste-de-colombia/> [accessed 29/01/2021].

² <https://barazani.berlin/> [accessed 29/01/2021].

³ <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/rhodes-must-fall-founder-racist-statues/> [accessed 29/01/2021].

⁴ Chigudu, Simukai 2020. Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford: a critical testimony. *Critical African Studies* 12 (3): 302-312.

⁵ <https://www.ft.com/content/cfd7089d-65b5-4c50-8b8e-a037350a42d7> [accessed 29/01/2021].

⁶ Makaran, Gaya, and Pierre Gaussens (eds.) 2020. *Piel blanca, máscaras negras. Crítica de la razón decolonial*. México: Bajo Tierra.

contradictions, ambiguities, and tensions in the contemporary configurations and regimes active in Latin American societies and states, as well as beyond.

Mecila thus encourages an empirically grounded recasting of *colonialidades* | *colonialities*. At this point in time of social and academic contestations, the multiple, empirical and theoretical dialogues between Conviviality-Inequality and *colonialidades* | *colonialities* will be conducive to societal and scientific regeneration.

Concretely, research under the yearly theme *colonialidades* | *colonialities* is intended to address the following thematic crossroads but is not limited to them:

- 1) Colonialities and the Pandemic
- 2) Colonialities and Material and Immaterial Cultural Heritages
- 3) Colonialities and Multinormativity
- 4) Colonialities and Intersectionality
- 5) Colonialities and Resistance
- 6) Colonialities and Indigeneities
- 7) Colonialities and Plural Epistemologies