



Annual Meeting and Young Researchers Forum 2025:

Relational Approaches to Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America

Site: Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da Universidade de São Paulo and Ocupação 9 de Julho, Brazil

Dates: 8-11 September 2025

Relational approaches have increasingly sought to correct theoretical distortions and methodological shortcomings in the humanities and social sciences. As is well known, these fields remain deeply embedded in the illusion of a self-referential and self-sufficient human subject. Examples such as relational sociology, relational concepts of culture, and relational units of analysis illustrate ongoing efforts across various research fields to develop theoretical and methodological tools capable of capturing the interdependent and entangled nature of the ties that connect not only human beings to one another, but also to the planet on which they live.

Although relational analysis has been central to Mecila's research from the very beginning, we have chosen *Relationalities* as our thematic focus for 2025 to emphasize our particular interest in exploring interdependencies. Mecila's Annual Meeting and Young Researchers Forum 2025 will focus on diverse interdependent convivial configurations, following the concrete topics studied by our Fellows, Investigators, and Guests in the current year. Accordingly, we will primarily address relationships involving different forms of intersectional inequality; interdependencies between humans, non-humans, and artifacts; as well as entanglements encompassing politics, morality, and culture.

To promote more symmetrical collaboration between early-career and more experienced researchers as well as between academic and non-academic experts (including activists, artists, and policymakers), the Young Researchers Forum 2025 will be fully integrated into the programme of our Annual Meeting. Selected panels, focusing on topics of particular (though not exclusive) interest to early-career scholars, are also incorporated into the general activities.

Mecila:

08.09.25, at IEB-USP

9h30-10h

Welcome Address

Sérgio Costa (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Director in Presence from Germany)

Monica Dantas (Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Associated Investigator)

Adrian Lavalle (President of Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento)

Christina Norwig (Representative of the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space)

Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Vice President of Freie Universität Berlin)

10h-10h30

Opening Panel: General Framing and Conceptual Introduction to the Conference

Susanne Klengel (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Rúrion Melo (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Principal Investigator)

10h30-11h

Coffee Break

11h30-13h

Panel I: Difficult Convivialities: Controversies on Gender, Class, and Racism



Moderator: Marcos Nobre (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (CEBRAP), Mecila Principal Investigator)

Elizabeth Jelin (Centro de Investigaciones Sociales – Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas-CONICET)/Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social-IDES)

“The Rhetoric of Progress and Reaction: Revisiting Albert Hirschman in Challenging Times”

Reactionary and right-wing positions are on the rise in the world today. They have become the focus of much reflection and research, overshadowing the attention that progressive movements attracted until recently. In his book “The Rhetoric of Reaction. Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy”, published in 1991, Albert Hirschman offers us analytical tools that can help in understanding reactionary arguments, yet they also are useful to reflect upon analogous logics in progressive arguments and beliefs. Hirschman's model will be applied to current reactionary and progressive views about gender and feminisms, a key controversy in what is being labeled "cultural battles".

Benjamin Junge (State University of New York, Mecila Senior Fellow)

“Conviviality and Class (Dis-)identification among Brazil’s Once-Rising Poor”

This talk explores how recent theoretical work on conviviality might be used to shed light on identification and disidentification with conventional class labels (such as “middle class”) among Brazil’s “once-rising poor,” that is, families who experienced significant upward mobility before facing renewed precarity. Drawing on ethnographic and survey research in Recife, I examine everyday encounters in workplaces, shopping malls, leisure venues, and transit systems, where fleeting cross-class intimacies coexist with tensions, misrecognition, and exclusion. Conviviality, understood as a way of theorizing belonging—and the refusal of belonging—under conditions of inequality, offers a productive framework for tracing how these encounters prompt people not simply to reimagine their place in the social hierarchy, but to reject class labels altogether.

Livia de Souza Lima (Bielefeld University, Mecila Junior Fellow)

“We Now Have Voice and Vote: The Articulation of Political Legitimacy by the ‘Bancada Negra’ in the Brazilian National Congress”

In November 2023, amid the celebrations of Black Consciousness Day, Brazil saw the official creation of its first Black Congressional Caucus (Bancada Negra), formally recognised as a political bloc within the National Congress with a voice and vote in the College of Leaders. This milestone marks a significant shift in how race functions as an organising principle in Brazilian politics. Unlike past informal groups or temporary alliances, the Bancada Negra is a formally institutionalised parliamentary bloc explicitly based on racial identity and representation. Established through Resolution Project 116/23, authored by representatives Talíria Petrone (PSOL-RJ) and Damião Feliciano (União-PB), the Bancada Negra institutionalises race-based solidarity within legislative structures, aiming to strengthen collective empowerment and advance a broad social justice agenda. Building on the persistent problem of Black underrepresentation in Brazil’s National Congress, my study investigates the emergence and political performance of the Bancada Negra. Using a discursive-performative lens, this study examines how members of the Bancada Negra actively construct legitimacy, representation, and conviviality through political speech acts. It shows how Black political presence is performed and legitimized within Brazil’s Congress, challenging the established configurations of power within institutional decision-making spaces. By doing so, it highlights new forms of democratic engagement and the expansion of rights and representation within contested political spaces, offering insight into how democracy can be both contested and revitalized through emergent racialized political formations. By showing how politics unfolds through the discursive production of presence, connection, and recognition, this research contributes to rethinking theories of representation from the margins of power.

13h-14h15

Lunch



14h15-14h30

Short Book Presentation

Mecila-CLACSO Book Series

Branquitude/Blanquitud: Diálogos Latino-Americanos sobre Convivialidade e Desigualdade, Mário Augusto Medeiros da Silva, Patricia de Santana Pinho, Roosbelinda Cárdenas, Hugo Ceron-Anaya (eds.)

Canudos: Guerra y archivo. Jagunçada y povofonia en la conformación de la literatura brasileña (1893-1912), Juan Recchia Paez

Violencias y cuidados. Aproximaciones a una relación ambivalente, Raquel Rojas, Marcial Suárez, Izadora Xavier (eds.).

Presentation: Joaquim Toledo Jr. (Mecila Scientific Editor) and Mário Medeiros (UNICAMP/CEBRAP, Mecila)

14h30-16h

Panel II: Representing Conviviality, Inequality, and Territories

Moderator: Gesine Müller (Universität zu Köln, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Wolfram Nitsch (Universität zu Köln, Mecila Senior Fellow)

“Contact Zones in the Vehicular Fiction: Conviviality and Inequality in Urban Traffic According to Ezequiel Martínez Estrada”

The interdependence between conviviality and inequality that characterizes life in Latin American cities is particularly evident in urban traffic. Mobility infrastructures serve as contact zones between disparate actors. On the one hand, means of transport are themselves rolling meeting places; on the other, traffic routes give rise to continuous

interaction between vehicles and pedestrians with different forces and speeds. Such road contact zones often appear in vehicular fiction, namely in literary texts that assign a crucial role to the vehicles and roads used by the characters. In my talk, I will study the representation of such zones in the works of Ezequiel Martínez Estrada. In his seminal essay “Cabeza de Goliat” (1940), this coeval of Borges describes the streets and urban transports of Buenos Aires as a “zone of contact and friction” where the motorized traffic constantly provokes conflicts, but sometimes also creates fugitive communities. In his hardly known stories, however, he paints a rather grim picture of public transport by stressing its power to escalate emotions and to exacerbate inequality in a fatal way.

Hanna Nohe (Universität Gießen, Mecila Senior Fellow)

“Analysing Conviviality with Inequalities in 'Waste Narratives': Challenges and Highlights”

“Waste”, defined as substances and objects (to be) eliminated (OECD), represents both a global challenge and a relational concept, as it depends on who discards and therefore who defines: substances and objects which for some individuals are discardable, for others they can still be useful, be it for personal use or in order to be sold for recycling. Thus, “waste” embodies conviviality – in the sense of “the relational dimension of social life” (Costa 2019: 14) – both metonymically and symbolically, with strong inequalities of power (cf. Mbembe 1992: 24): it is through the material discarded by consumers that people for whom it represents a source of work and survival get in touch with the life of these very consumers. In my presentation, I will briefly outline the link between these observations and my Mecila project, in which I committed myself to examine how waste contributes to emphasize such inequalities in narratives – literature and film – in Brazil, Cuba and Argentina. In a second step, I will present the challenges that I encountered during my research at Mecila so far, especially epistemologically, as well as my current answers and highlights, both concerning the challenges and my research project in general.

Ernesto García (Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Mecila Advanced Doctoral Researcher)



“Conviviality, Tutelage, and Indigenous Resistances: Representations of Alterity in Three Franciscan Missions in the Argentine Chaco (1900–1950)“

This study explores representations of Indigenous alterity within the last three Franciscan missions established in the Argentine Chaco during the early twentieth century: Nueva Pompeya, Laishí, and Tacaaglé. These missions are conceptualized as spaces of conviviality characterized by hierarchical and asymmetrical relations, wherein Indigenous peoples retain constrained degrees of autonomy. Through a close analysis of texts and photographs produced by the leading friars overseeing each mission - Rafael Gobelli, Buenaventura Giuliani, and José Zurflüh - this research reconstructs the internal tensions and discursive variations embedded in missionary narratives. Furthermore, it investigates how these institutions contribute to the construction of particular forms of statehood and sovereignty, articulated in opposition to specific representations of Indigeneity.

16h-16h30

Coffee Break

16h30-18h30

Panel III: Counter-narratives in Afro-Brazilian Visual Culture

Moderator: Mário Medeiros (UNICAMP/CEBRAP, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Mirian Souza (Universidade Federal Fluminense, Mecila Senior Fellow)

“Marronage Meets Theatre of the Oppressed: Relational Praxis with People on the Move in Brazil”

When marronage encounters the Theatre of the Oppressed, what emerges is not merely a space for critique, but a praxis in which the dream of freedom is collectively staged. This presentation reflects on the creation of the play “Ngana Nzambi: The Migratory

Bureaucratic Life as It Is” and its filmic unfolding, “Theatre Marronage”, co-developed with refugee researchers and artists from the Middle East and Africa living in Brazil. These creative processes arose from collaborative efforts to draw parallels between the historical escape from transatlantic slavery and the contemporary journeys of people on the move. Engaging with Mecila’s focus on Relationalities, this contribution explores the Theatre of the Oppressed as a form of relational praxis. Theatre Marronage invites us to think through performance, humour, and collective storytelling as tools for challenging dominant narratives on migration and mobility.

Stephanie Dennison (University of Leeds, Mecila Senior Fellow)

“Quilombo Cinema, Conviviality and ‘Olhos de Erê’ (Luan Manzo, 2020)”

In this presentation my aim is to work with the idea of Quilombo Cinema (Moraes, Oliveira, Freitas, Costa, 2020), a term used to describe a collaborative Afro-Brazilian way of working within film and audio-visual production in Brazil, within the framework of conviviality. My case study is the short film “Olhos de Erê” (2020), filmed by a young quilombola during Covid lockdown. As well as considering the relationship between the concepts of quilombismo and conviviality for our understanding of Afro-Brazilian film culture, I am interested in exploring the film and its production and reception within the idea of a new, pluriversal cinephilia.

Mônica Cardim (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Thematic Fellow)

“Sacred Secrets: Ancestral Relationalities in Black Women's Photography”

Through this presentation, I discuss the role of photography in building ancestral bonds between women photographers and their predecessors. In this regard, the focus will be on photographic productions of my own, as well as those by Aline Motta, Nay Jinks, and Uenni. These are preliminary results of the postdoctoral research project Sacred Secrets, which is being conducted as a fellow in the field of Relationality at Mecila. In this project, I establish a relationship between the practices carried out in the 19th-century photographic studio and those practiced in the homes and terreiros of Candomblé,

recognizing both as spaces for ritualistic performances, identity formation, and the development of relationships of sociability and solidarity. The reflection on the past is guided by a brief analysis of a collection of portraits of Black people belonging to the Pai de Santo Juca Rosa and his relationship with the author of the images, the portraitist Alberto Henschel. Drawing from the historical and poetic thought of Beatriz Nascimento (1990), this study aims to illustrate the relationalities outlined by Black epistemologies through narratives that interrogate the violence experienced by Black bodies, both historically and contemporaneously.

Jasmin Wrobel (Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Mecila Thematic Fellow)

“‘Plantation Memories’: Colonial Legacies in Digital Comics from Brazil”

My presentation discusses “Confinada” (2020–2021), an Instagram comic series by Leandro Assis and Triscila Oliveira, as a case study from my Mecila research project “So Close. And Yet so Far...”: Social Segregation and Racialized Topographies in Brazilian Comics. The project explores how contemporary comics represent forms of social segregation, racialized urban space, and colonial continuities in Brazil, focusing on the persistent legacy of the “Casa-Grande e Senzala” system (Freyre 1933) in the spatial and affective configurations of urban life. “Confinada” stages the entangled lives of Fran, a privileged digital influencer, and Ju, her domestic worker, during the COVID-19 lockdown. Through its dialogical format and use of social media affordances (hashtags, stories, comments), the series makes visible the asymmetrical relationalities of race, class, and labor, while also activating forms of (digital) resistance. This contribution aligns with Mecila’s focus on Relationalities by examining how comics function as spatial media that visualize and challenge intersectional inequalities and reimagine urban conviviality. Through a cultural and media studies lens, the talk considers how graphic narratives like “Confinada” use aesthetic and digital tools to engage with (neo)colonial visual archives and articulate what Grada Kilomba (2008) calls “plantation memories.”

09.09.25, at IEB-USP

9h30-11h

Panel IV: Framing Indigeneity: Sovereignty, Materiality, and Translations

Moderator: Barbara Göbel (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Andrew Canessa (University of Essex)

“Savages and Citizens: How Indigeneity Shapes the State”

Indigenous people have long been seen as marginal to the nation-state with often contested citizenship, reservations and territories on the least productive land, or as a barely visible presence in the world's cities. We take the view that not only have Indigenous people not been marginal to the creation of the modern nation-state, they have been absolutely fundamental since the contemporary model for the state was theorised and imagined by Europeans such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. These philosophers saw the absolute need to imagine a “state of nature” outside the modern nation-state which was occupied by Indigenous people: Indigenous people were the fundamental foil against which the modern nation-state was to be built. If the state was to be made up by a civilized citizenry it had to imagine uncivilized savages whose autonomy, if reluctantly admired, had to be overcome in the service of the project of civilization. As European states expanded the internal savage became extended across the world and diverse peoples were subsumed under the category “Indigenous”. The state and Indigenous people are thus co-constitutive; we cannot imagine one, without the other: if we cannot imagine the modern state without Indigenous people, the converse is also true – we cannot imagine Indigenous people without the state. This position thus rejects the apparent marginal relevance of Indigenous peoples to the state and brings the subject to the very centre of state making. We argue that Indigenous Studies should be at the centre of the study of the state and should have a greater profile in political science and that sociological and anthropological studies of Indigenous people should have a much greater sense of how Indigenous people are constituted by relationships with state.

Ana Coutinho (Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, Mecila Junior Fellow)

“Ype: From Village to Museum — Itineraries of an Apyãwa-Tapirapé Mask (1960–2023)”

Based on ethnographic research on the various modes of relating with humans and non-humans, recent decades have seen, in the field of Amerindian ethnology, a renewed focus on the relational nature of materialities in different contexts, whether in villages, ethnographic museums, or Indigenous museums. Drawing on ethnographic experience among the Apyãwa-Tapirapé of Central Brazil, this presentation seeks to explore some of the trajectories taken by a specific artifact of this people, namely the Ype mask (Cara-Grande). Evoking the historical enemies of the Apyãwa-Tapirapé, the mask is present in the collections of various ethnographic museums in Europe, North America, and Brazil. We will therefore retrace the meanings of the circulation of the Ype mask, focusing on three aspects: (i) the context in which the masks were first produced and systematically sold outside the village (1960s); (ii) the modifications made by the Apyãwa to the masks so that they could be sold; and (iii) the current reception by the Apyãwa-Tapirapé of the digital images of the masks, to be examined at the end of the research. The masks used in rituals retain certain characteristics deliberately excluded from those produced for sale. I argue that the production of objects ineffective from the Apyãwa perspective was an initiative that can be understood through the notions of conviviality and inequality, conceived as co-constitutive. We will also take into account the relations with non-humans and gender relations that shape the processes of making masks intended for sale.

Anaí Vera (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Advanced Doctoral Researcher)

“Poetics and Cosmopolitics in Indigenous Translation: Insights from the Guarani Mbya World”

In guarani language, soul and word are synonyms: *ayvu e nhe'ẽ*, “soul-word”, as these terms have been translated, share the same dimension. For this reason, when the Guarani translate their words, they are also translating their spirits. Based on my ethnographic experience with two Indigenous thinkers from the Rio Silveira Indigenous Territory (Bertioga, SP, Brazil), in this presentation I aim to reflect on the task of translating worlds



(and not just words), drawing from the ways these thinkers translate their cosmology to non-Indigenous society. Therefore, I seek to understand the cosmopolitical and poetic aspects of these translations, considering the images, aesthetics, and feelings they mobilize. For the Guarani, the sense of hearing — the “art of listening well” — is the primary sensory pathway for learning and shamanism, which I interpret as practices deeply intertwined with translation and cosmopolitics. It involves cultivating a behavior of listening and perceptual attentiveness to the world, from which it becomes possible to articulate agencies and nurture relationships. I consider Indigenous translation here as a cosmopolitical proposal: an art of world-making, through which Indigenous peoples build bridges not only with non-human beings, but also between different cultural universes.

11h-11h30

Coffee Break

11h30-13h

Panel V: Intersectional Translations, Politics of Care, and Inequalities on the Move

Moderator: Marília Moschkovich (Universidade de São Paulo, Former Mecila Junior Fellow)

Merike Blofield (University of Hamburg)

“Health Needs of Vulnerable Populations in Border Communities: A Study of Risk Factors and Interventions to Address the Rise of Syphilis in Cúcuta, Colombia”

Migrants fleeing economic and political instability are at heightened risk for preventable and treatable diseases, due to unmet basic needs and lack of access to healthcare. This presentation discusses the findings of three studies from the Colombia-Venezuela border, from 2023, designed and implemented by the author and her team of collaborators. These studies address the alarming rise of syphilis, an easily treatable



sexually transmitted infection. Without treatment, the consequences can be devastating, especially for newborns with congenital syphilis. The authors embedded three studies into a pilot community health project on sexual and reproductive health in Cúcuta, at the Colombia-Venezuela border, in 2023. The health project provided sexual and reproductive health workshops to 1805 individuals from low-income communities in and around Cúcuta, with testing and treatment for syphilis included. The qualitative part of the study included 20 interviews of mothers with newborns with congenital syphilis in the main public hospital, and 30 interviews of young people at risk (11 men and 19 women). The quantitative part of the study included a quasi-experiment of the individuals who tested positive for syphilis in the health project (114 individuals). All patients who tested positive received an educational workshop on syphilis and health, individualized care, and a treatment plan (three doses of penicillin at weekly intervals) at no cost. In addition, half received cash transfers conditional on adherence to treatment. The presentation summarizes the findings from the interviews and the quasi-experiment involving cash transfers and provides policy recommendations.

tita - Letizia Patriarca (Núcleo Pagu/Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Mecila Junior Fellow)

“Ethnographic and Intersectional Processes of Translation of Human Trafficking Between Brazil and Italy”

In this presentation, I share part of my research developed at Mecila, focusing on transnational inequalities in terms of knowledge production on human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Based on the understanding that the terms of the debate on human trafficking are necessarily different in Brazil and Italy, I highlight the possibilities of transnational communication to think about the transits of Brazilian travesti bodies and epistemologies that engage in sex work, or not, in Italy. To demonstrate the diverse configurations and policies that impact sex work, I use ethnographic and intersectional processes of translation. Based on the notion that translation is an open process, and not just the transposition of meanings, I insist on demonstrating the ethnographic dimension when looking at terms that are simultaneously located in unequal cultural contexts. Through intersectional analysis, it is possible to observe local power arrangements and

the social markers of difference that are necessarily shaped and named differently in each cultural context. I argue, then, that through these ethnographic processes of translation, it is possible to access complexities, ambiguities, and local social movements, as well as promote dialogical relations between cultural contexts.

Camila Infanger (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Advanced Doctoral Researcher)

"Ideology-Free Gender Equality? Rationale Behind the Design of Motherhood-Inclusive Policies in Science"

Aiming to address intersectionality, this work argues for recognizing parenthood status as an equity dimension alongside gender and race in science policymaking. Including parenthood as a further layer of vulnerability is essential to assess the overall effectiveness of gender equality agendas (Misra & Strader, 2013). In particular, Black mothers, as the most vulnerable group within this spectrum, should be a central focus for policymakers across sectors influencing women's professional lives. This study concentrates on the academic sector, governed by entities such as Ministries of Science, Technology, & Innovation, and Education, and their funding bodies. Preliminary findings indicate that the politics shaping the inclusion of motherhood perspectives differ from other gender-related demands due to the nature, rather than the framing, of these claims. Supporting mothers in bearing, caring for, and raising children is too hegemonically validated to be openly rejected or deprioritized by left- or right-leaning representatives. However, as both an activist and a Feminist advocating for motherhood inclusion in science policy, the primary challenge lies in framing. How these issues are conceptualized determines the analytical lenses applied and the policies developed to address them. Policy design is subject to influence by policymakers' subjectivity, social movements' demands, and epistemic communities (Dunlop, 2012). Science policy is no exception and, driven by neoliberal academic productivism, often reduces gender equality initiatives to performative box-ticking exercises (Yarrow & Johnston, 2023). While motherhood-inclusive policies can challenge masculinist merit systems, gender pay gaps, and women's precarious employment (Rosa & Calvero, 2021; Yarrow & Johnston, 2023), findings show that careful attention is needed to the ideological values underpinning policy design. As Feeney et al. (2014) found, family-friendly policies in universities often fail to support women and instead reinforce inequality. By using the process tracing

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method (Kingdon, 1984; Kay & Baker, 2015) to analyse the trajectory of motherhood-inclusive policies in science in Brazil, this work investigates these intricacies, such as the framing of family-friendly (Morgan et al., 2021) versus genuinely motherhood-inclusive policies shaped by the ideology of actors influencing the design.

13h-14h15

Lunch

14h15-14h30

Short Book Presentation

Mecila-CLACSO Book Series

Conocimientos, medialidades e infraestructuras de información: ¿Nuevas convivialidades?, ¿Viejas desigualdades?, Barbara Göbel, Christoph Müller, Stefanie Schütze (eds.)

Good Citizens on the Mats: Embodying Conservative Conviviality in Rio de Janeiro's Periphery,
Raphael Schapira

Presentation: Joaquim Toledo Jr. (Mecila Scientific Editor) and Barbara Göbel (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)

14h30-16h

Breakout Groups

I. *(Hi)stories of Conviviality*

Gesine Müller (Universität zu Köln, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Carlos Alba (El Colegio de México, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Samuel Barbosa (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Principal Investigator)



Tilman Heil (Universität zu Köln, Mecila Postdoctoral Investigator)

2. Politics of Conviviality

Juan Piovani (IdIHCS/Universidad Nacional de La Plata/Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Peter Birle (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Philipp Naucke (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Postdoctoral Investigator)

Marianne Braig (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Ethics Committee Member)

3. Medialities of Conviviality

Gloria Chicote (IdIHCS/Universidad Nacional de La Plata/Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Susanne Klengel (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Barbara Göbel (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Carlos Nupia (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Postdoctoral Researcher)

Stephanie Schütze (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Principal Investigator)

16h-16h30

Coffee Break

16h30-18h

Roundtable I: Centres for Brazilian Studies and the New Geopolitics of Knowledge

Moderator: Susanne Klengel (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Principal Investigator)



Monica Dantas (Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros, Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Associated Investigator)

José Manuel Santos (Centro de Estudos Brasileiros da Universidade de Salamanca)

Jeffrey Lesser (Emory University, Mecila Advisory Board Member)

Stephanie Dennison (University of Leeds, Rede Europeia de Brazilianistas de Análise Cultural, Mecila Senior Fellow)

10.09.25, at Ocupação 9 de Julho, São Paulo

(The activities will mostly be held in Portuguese)

9h30-11h

Guided Tour of the Ocupação 9 de Julho

11h-11h30

Coffee Break

11h30-13h

Roundtable II: Strategies of Social Movements in the Face of a World in Crisis

Moderator: Tomaz Amorim (Mecila Academic Manager)

Douglas Belchior (UNEAFRO Brasil, Frente Negra por Direitos)

Cleber Ribeiro (Uniperiferias)

Jarê Pinagé (Engajamundo)



13h-14h30

Lunch

14h30-16h

Panel VI: Disputing 'Development' and Climate Justice

Moderator: Sérgio Costa (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Director in Presence from Germany)

Marco Teixeira (Mecila Urban Narratives Fellow)

"Just Transition Narratives in the Context of COP30: Activist Perspectives"

In the face of the deepening ecological crisis — particularly the climate crisis — political and academic debates on just transitions have gained significant momentum. The need to promote transitions has become part of a hegemonic discourse across social, political, economic, and environmental arenas, advanced by a wide range of actors, including social movements and civil society organizations, corporations, states, and international institutions. But what does "just transition" actually mean when invoked by such a diverse set of actors? This presentation explores this central question by investigating the meanings attributed to just transition by different actors operating at various scales and in diverse contexts today. The main focus will be on understanding activist narratives of just transition, particularly those articulated during the simultaneous events of the People's Summit and COP30 in Belém, Brazil. In addition, the presentation will examine how these activist narratives relate to — and potentially challenge or reshape — more institutionalized understandings of just transition. By highlighting the transformative potential of activist perspectives, this work aims to contribute to both academic and policy debates, emphasizing their role in reimagining convivial futures in times of climate crisis.

Igor de Sousa (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Mecila Junior Fellow)

"Race and Economic Development: Mapping Anti-Blackness in Planned Interventions Based on the Babassu Economy in Maranhão, Brazil"

This project aims to analyze how the associations between economic development and anti-Blackness are related to planned interventions concerning the babassu economy between 1920-1980 in Maranhão/Brazil. Through the discussion of the babassu economy, it is possible to map different agents and public interventions, with an emphasis on economic transactions and technical-political elaborations that link economic development to the racial belonging of individuals and communities, pointing to the inseparability of Blackness and Indignity in the rural world. To do so, it will be necessary to analyze a dispersed set of political interventions and discourses in public and private institutions in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and São Luís. This includes lectures, bulletins, intervention projects, and reports from a number of institutions, such as the Commercial Association of Maranhão, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, as well as the elaborations of other prominent agents.

Isadora Cardoso (Freie Universität Berlin, Mecila Advanced Doctoral Researcher)

"Relationality within Climate Justice Action Research"

On this panel, I discuss part of my PhD dissertation in the making, where I interpret actions and discourses on climate justice that I encountered and lived myself based on the accomplice frameworks of intersectionality and decoloniality. Both these frameworks engender the idea of the matrix for making sense of life, its convivial and unequal conditions. The matrix of domination, as proposed by Black feminists and intersectionality scholars (Collins, 2000), and the modern/colonial matrix of power, proposed by the Modernity/Coloniality school (Quijano, 2000), are frameworks founded on complexity. They help us see how historically constructed embodiments of race, gender, class, or sexuality are complicatedly and contextually coded into relational privileges and oppressions, and co-constituted inequalities and injustices. Besides

discussing this relational perspective that the decolonial and intersectional frameworks engender in my project, I emphasise relationality as a key in my research ethics. By using autoethnography as a decolonial practice of writing myself in the grid of “colonial historical frameworks” (Chawla & Atay, 2018, p. 3), I practice an accountability with the people and territories I collaborated with – such as activists, collectives and Quilombola communities in Brazil, South Africa and Germany. While reflecting on my fluid, Nepantla-like (Anzaldúa, 2015) positionalities through my research encounters, I keep exposing and seeking to abolish the bordered, colonial, binary ordering and hierarchisation of our worlds. The relational ethics plays a central part through my dissertation, for example, as my research collaborators and I co-create workshops where we tackle climate justice as a topic, while respecting our bodily needs, dignity and the territories we are with during the encounters. I then reflect how the struggle for climate justice is intrinsically connected to the ways we inhabit the world (Ferdinand, 2021). This relational ethics mandates that centring care and respect for our (ancestral) communities, sibling species, territories, spirits - manifested in material and immaterial forms, and nurturing an interdependent co-existence among all of us is, despite the arrogance of elites and Empires, and the unprecedented devastation of lifeforms we are witnessing, a necessary condition for climate justice.

16h-16h30

Coffee Break

16h30-18h

Keynote Lecture: “Digital Inequalities in Abya Yala”

Fernanda Rosa (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University)

Moderator: Christoph Müller (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)



Dr. Fernanda Rosa will discuss her work on the global South, international internet infrastructure and governance, and social justice. Rosa's work focuses on Indigenous and Latin American contexts to problematize the inequalities in the design of internet infrastructure and the values embedded in the code that shapes how data from the global South circulate online. She will explain the results of the application of a method that she defines as code ethnography to unveil the implications of code and infrastructure in people's lives. Her presentation will be based on ethnographic research that has been conducted in places such as Brazil, Germany, Mexico, and Tseltal and Zapoteco sovereign territories.

Bio: Fernanda R. Rosa is an assistant professor of Science and Technology Studies at Virginia Tech, a public university located on Tutelo and Monacan lands. Her current work focuses on internet governance and design from a decolonial and global South perspective. In her second and current book project, under contract with MIT Press, she proposes a new method defined as code ethnography, drawing on decolonial, feminist, and science and technology studies, to shed light on the inequalities embedded in internet infrastructure and protocols that shape how our data circulates online, including the data of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America. Fernanda is also the founder of the Abya Yala Pluriversity, an initiative comprised of a network of universities, including Indigenous universities in Abya Yala (the Americas), that aims to combat the epistemic erasure of the populations and traditional knowledge of Indigenous, Black, and Quilombola peoples. Fernanda's work has been recognized and awarded by organizations such as the American Sociological Association's Science, Knowledge and Technology section, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). Dr. Fernanda Rosa has a Ph.D. in communication (American University), a master's in public policy and management (Fundação Getúlio Vargas), and a bachelor's and licentiate degree in social sciences (University of São Paulo).

11.09.25, at IEB-USP

9h30-11h



Science Policy: Early Career Perspectives

Like many projects and centres that support early-career scholars, Mecila confronts the challenge of preparing a new generation of researchers for an increasingly saturated academic job market. This panel will address this issue by exploring career paths for highly qualified professionals both within and outside of academia, including teaching and research roles.

Moderator: Moacyr Novaes (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila Principal Investigator)

Anja Grecko Lorenz (German Centre for Research and Innovation DWIH São Paulo)

Ana Maria Fonseca de Almeida (São Paulo Research Foundation FAPESP, Universidade Estadual de Campinas)

Fernando Baldraia (Companhia das Letras, Former Mecila Postdoctoral Researcher)

11h-11h30

Coffee Break

11h30-13h

Science Policy: Academic Freedom in Turbulent Times

The global rise of a far-right, anti-science movement poses an unprecedented threat to academic freedom and the very existence of independent research. This panel will diagnose the situation in various countries and discuss strategies for resisting these existential dangers to academia.

Moderator: Laura Flamand (El Colegio de México, Mecila)



Encarnación Gutiérrez-Rodríguez (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Mecila Advisory Board Member)

Adriano Andricopulo (Academia de Ciências do Estado de São Paulo)

Juan Piovani (IdIHCS/Universidad Nacional de La Plata/Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas-CONICET, Mecila)

13h-14h15

Lunch

14h15-14h30

Short Book Presentation

Introducing the new Mecila Book Series in Portuguese

Presentation: Livia Lima (Mecila Scientific Editor)

14h30-16h

Keynote Lecture: “The Social Construction of Nature by Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon”

Eduardo Neves (Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia, Universidade de São Paulo)

Moderator: Samuel Barbosa (Universidade de São Paulo, Mecila)

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the Amazon region was viewed as a peripheral area within the context of ancient South American history. This perspective has underpinned public policies based on the premise that this vast region was always sparsely populated due to environmental limitations. In recent years, this view has been challenged by



archaeological research demonstrating that the Amazon was densely inhabited in the past and that its Indigenous peoples modified nature, thereby contradicting older environmental determinist hypotheses.

Bio: Eduardo Neves earned his degree in History from the University of São Paulo (USP) in 1986 and completed his master's and Ph.D. in Anthropology at Indiana University by 1997. He directed the Central Amazon Project's excavations from 1995 to 2010 and currently conducts field research in Rondônia, Acre, and Bolivia. He served as president of the Brazilian Archeology Society (2009-2011) and was on the board of the Society for American Archeology (2011-2014). He has been a visiting professor at institutions such as Harvard University and the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in France. Since 2014, he has been a full professor at the Museum of Archeology and Ethnology (MAE-USP), where he coordinates the Laboratory of Archeology of the Tropics and has supervised over sixty research projects. In 2019, he won the Shanghai Archaeological Forum research award. He was appointed director of MAE-USP in 2022, the same year he published "Sob os tempos do equinócio – Oito mil anos de história na Amazônia central" (by Editora Ubu).

16h-16h30

Coffee Break

16h30-17h

Closing Panel: Wrapping up, Lessons Learned and Looking Forward

Laura Flamand (El Colegio de México, Mecila)

Christoph Müller (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Mecila Principal Investigator)

17h-18h

General Assembly

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