

ENTANGLED LIVES: EXPLORING THE (INTER)DEPENDENCY BETWEEN PEOPLE AND ANIMALS IN THE AMERICAS

WORKSHOP
JUNE 17-18, 2025



Picture credit: Maria Cecilia Bogado / Memorias del Suelo

THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

hosts the Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom”, which aims to overcome the binary opposition of “slavery versus freedom”. We approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependency from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.

For millennia, humans and animals have co-shaped societies through profound interdependencies, yet the asymmetrical power dynamics of these relationships – and their ripple effects on human social hierarchies – remained underexplored until recently. In the face of the Anthropocene’s planetary crises, integrating ecological dynamics into studies of colonization, slavery, and dependency has become urgent. The interdisciplinary workshop "Entangled Lives: Exploring the (Inter)Dependency Between People and Animals in the Americas" confronts this imperative, dissecting the ecological and cultural dimensions of human-animal relationships across Indigenous communities in the Americas, from the Caribbean to the Paraná Delta.

By probing practices of familiarization, embodied knowledge, and mutual dependency, the workshop interrogates how Indigenous relationships with animals – from livestock to wild species – shaped and were shaped by historical processes of subjugation. Through archaeology, anthropology, and history, experts will reevaluate animals’ roles in systems of power, spotlighting how ecological conviviality coexisted with power imbalances. This gathering seeks to map uncharted territories in human-animal studies, bridging past and present to illuminate pathways for just interspecies futures.

Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) University of Bonn

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VENUE

University of Bonn
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CONTACT

Workshop Organizers:

Taynã Tagliati, BCDSS, University of Bonn
Carla Jaimes Betancourt, Department for the Anthropology of the Americas, University of Bonn

Please register for the workshop **by 30 May, 2025** by emailing entangledlives@dependency.uni-bonn.de and indicating which day(s) you plan to attend.

Please visit our [workshop website](#) for more information.



Picture credit: Volker Lannert/ University of Bonn

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

2:00 PM
Welcome

2:15 – 3:45 PM
Panel I

Chair: Joaquín Molina (University of Bonn)

The Nature of Enslavement: Human-Animal
Entanglements and the Barbadian Gully

Joseph Biggerstaff
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

"Making kin out of birds": Mebengokré-Kayapó
Becoming with Parrots

Taynã Tagliati
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

A Reciprocal Relationship: Fauna in Tenochtitlan
and Its Role in Mexica Worldview

Israel Elizalde
(University of Bonn)

4:15 – 5:45 PM

**Keynote Speech as part of the Joseph C.
Miller Memorial Lecture Series**

"Taking up Company with a Beast": Familiarization
in Mesoamerica, 1400 – 1650

Marcy Norton
(University of Pennsylvania)

5:45 – 7:30 PM – Reception

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

10:00 AM – Coffee and Petit Four

10:15 AM – Welcome & Opening Remarks

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Panel II

Chair: Karoline Noack (University of Bonn)

Om Dypo: Sobre la Monstruosidad del Ganado

Felipe Vander Velden
(UFSCAR - Federal University of São Carlos)

Human-Animal Citizenship in an Andean Moral
Economy: Rethinking the Interdependency
between Humans and Animals in a Bolivian Ayllu

Denise Arnold
(ILCA - Bolivia; University College London)

Mesoamerican Entangled Animal Ontologies:
Past to Present Cosmological Embodiment

Miguel Astor-Aguilera
(Arizona State University)

Parrots and People in the Lower Paraná River

Gustavo Politis
(CONICET - Argentina; University of Bonn)

12:30 – 2:00 PM – Lunch Break

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

2:00 – 3:30 PM

Panel III

Chair: Joseph Biggerstaff (BCDSS, University of Bonn)

Resisting Sheep? Imposition and Reception of a
"New Resource" in the Andes in the 16th Century

Aliocha Maldavsky
(University Paris-Nanterre; Mondes américains)

Walking between Nature and Culture: A Tale of
how Jaguars challenged Colonization in the
Americas

Ana Paula Motta
(Kiel University)

Chakanas and the Interwoven Lives of Humans
and Birds: Featherwork, Ritual and Memory in the
Andes

Carla Jaimes Betancourt
(University of Bonn)

3:30 – 4:00 PM – Coffee Break

4:00 – 4:45 PM

Round-table

Rethinking Human-Animal Relations in the Americas

Chair: Carla Jaimes Betancourt (University of Bonn)

5:00 – 5:30 PM

Final Discussion

Chair: Taynã Tagliati (BCDSS, University of Bonn)