



BRAZILIAN STUDIES
PROGRAMME



LATIN AMERICAN CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Annual Conference

2023



LATIN AMERICAN CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Brazilian studies Programme

Latin American Centre

ANNUAL CONFERENCE



SCHEDULE:



09:45 - 10:15 - Coffee



10:15 - 10:25 - Opening words by David Doyle,
LAC Director



10:25 - Opening Panel

Chair: Javier Pérez, LAC Lecturer

- **10:30-10:50** - **Andreza Aruska:** Grassroots Politics in Brazilian Mining Towns
- **10:50-11:10** - **Jessica Rich:** The Sources of Bureaucratic Resilience Against Executive Attack
- **11:10-11:30** - **Alicia Cooperman:** Neighborhood mobilization in Northeast Brazil





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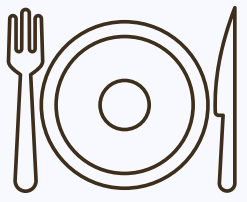
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11:30 - 12:00 - Q&A



12:00 - 14:00 - Lunch



14:00 - Second Panel

Chair: Francesca Lessa, LAC/ODID Departmental Lecturer

- **14:00-14:20 - Flávio Eiro:** Identity politics and electoral competition in Pernambuco (2018-2022)
- **14:20-14:40 - Rosana Pinheiro Machado:** The nexus between labour precarity and authoritarian subjectivity in Brazil
- **14:40-15:00 - Nicholas Pope:** Pushing back on milícia violence with food: rethinking public security approaches.



15:00 - 15:30 - Q&A



15:30 - 16:00 - Closure and Wine Reception



16:00 - End





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Speakers:



Alicia Cooperman

Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs | George Washington University.

PRESENTATION TITLE: Neighborhood mobilization in Northeast Brazil: Implications for accountability and the environment

ABSTRACT:Neighborhoods provide focal points for collective action and access to local public services, and neighborhood associations (associações comunitárias/de moradores) often act as primary intermediaries between residents and the government. In rural areas, many state and federal programs for development and the environment require the involvement of local association leaders. However, neighborhoods vary in their level of organization, political participation, and the extent to which elected officials respond to their requests. I discuss qualitative findings from interviews in rural Ceará in 2017 and 2022 and explore implications of neighborhood variation for democratic accountability and environmental policies.





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FLÁVIO EIRÓ

Sociologist, Assistant Professor |
University of Groningen

PRESENTATION TITLE: Identity politics and electoral competition in Pernambuco (2018-2022)

ABSTRACT: To contribute to the understanding of Brazil's recent rearrangement of political forces, this presentation will discuss the ways political candidates imagine and perform politics in Recife and Olinda (PE). Interviewing and accompanying different politicians of the PT and PMDB parties and their advisors during the 2018, 2020 and 2022 elections, the research analyses how these candidates and their staff navigate the new political scenario and interpret the ways the urban poor engage with politics. I critically examine the tensions they experience in, on the one hand, attending to people's direct needs and, on the other, the performance of what they consider a "truly noble politics".





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Nicholas Pope

Postdoctoral Research Fellow | King's College London

PRESENTATION TITLE: Pushing back on milícia violence with food: rethinking public security approaches.

ABSTRACT: Rio de Janeiro's milícias are widely understood as coercive, rational-economic actors with the power to silence political expression. State policies to combat them have relied on public security strategies. This paper builds on practice research from a food project led by an Afro-Brazilian feminist collective in milícia-dominated communities. It shows that milícias are inherently political actors who rely (at least partially) on popular support for their long-term survival. By doing so, it argues that community agency, social energy and withholding legitimacy may be able to undermine milícias and open up long-term potential for more peaceful politics in the margins.





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Rosana Machado

Professor | University college dublin

PRESENTATION TITLE: The nexus between labour precarity and authoritarian subjectivity in Brazil

ABSTRACT: More than a government, Bolsonarism became a movement that combines conservative, authoritarian and neoliberal rationality in Brazil. In this talk, I will analyse how such subjectivity is fomented among low-income groups, especially precarious workers engaged in the digital platform economy. Relying on previous long-term research projects on low-income entrepreneurship, I analyse some of the cultural and social roots of such a process in Brazil. The talk will also explore my current research project, which analyses how new digital technologies transform and foster such an ideological trend, making the far right an attractive force amongst various low-come strata by mobilising several layers of resentment and aspirations.





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Jessica Rich

Associate Professor of Political Science |
Marquette University

PRESENTATION TITLE: The Sources of Bureaucratic Resilience Against Executive Attack: Evidence from Brazil's Covid-19 Vaccine Success

ABSTRACT: In an era of intense political polarization, presidents have attacked expert agencies in a wide range of policy areas. How, then, do bureaucracies fend off those attacks? Others have highlighted the importance of cross-cutting political support, which can help agencies retain their policymaking and regulatory capacity. As the case of Brazil's Covid-19 vaccine program highlights, however, political support may not be sufficient to protect bureaucracies from attacks on their policy implementation capacity. In this article, we show how economic and societal support can offer bureaucracies additional leverage to help them fend off attacks to policy implementation, protecting them at different stages of the policy process and in ways that political support cannot. Drawing on media and government reports, in-depth interviews, and descriptive statistics, we show how Brazil's Covid-19 vaccine program successfully overcame executive obstruction through a combination of political, economic, and societal support.



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Andreza Aruska

Director of the Brazilian Studies Programme and
Lecturer at the Latin American Centre | University of
Oxford

PRESENTATION TITLE: Grassroots politics in Brazilian mining towns

ABSTRACT: Growth based on commodity exports remains pivotal in Brazil, with mining being the dominant economic resource in many municipalities. Different from the 20th century, however, mining may no longer be a significant generator of local employment or infrastructure. Conflicts between large and profitable companies with local residents about meaningful compensations for environmental loss would be expected to grow when noise, air, and water pollution remain a common problem, but local employment diminishes. However, we see that conflict expert companies have been employed, residents have been relocated, and in meetings between the company and affected residents, unequal power dynamics at work means that what is offered – although different from what residents want – cannot be refused. In this talk, I map company towns in Brazil, their new labour configurations and discuss what these changes mean to local and national politics.





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Chairs:



David Doyle

Professor of Politics in the Department of Politics and International Relations | University of Oxford

ABOUT HIM: David is Professor of Politics at the Department of Politics and International Relations and Director of the Latin American Centre. He is a Fellow of St Hugh's College. He is currently finishing two books - one on the political effect of remittances and the other on tax morale in Latin America. His work has been published in journals such as the American Political Science Review, the Journal of Politics, Comparative Political Studies and the British Journal of Political Science, among others. He is one of the editors of the Journal of Latin American Studies and is on the editorial board of Comparative Political Studies and Oxford Development Studies.





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Francesca Lessa

Departmental Lecturer in Latin American Studies
and Development | University of Oxford

ABOUT HER: Francesca Lessa (PhD in International Relations, London School of Economics) specialises in the international politics of human rights in Latin America, focusing on accountability for past and present instances of atrocities.

Francesca has published extensively on these topics in top-journals including *Human Rights Quarterly*, *The Journal of Latin American Studies*, and *The Journal of Human Rights Practice*. Her latest book, *The Condor Trials* (Yale University Press, 2022), is the winner of the 2023 Juan E. Méndez Book Award for Human Rights in Latin America.

Her research on Operation Condor has been recognised as one of the main projects with high impact within the Social Sciences Division at the University of Oxford: her project was Highly Commended in the ESRC IAA O²RB Excellence in Impact Awards 2021 for improving routes to justice for victims of transnational human rights violations in South America and also reached the final shortlist of the Vice Chancellor's 2020 Innovation Awards.





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Javiér Pérez

Departmental Lecturer in Latin American Studies
University of Oxford

ABOUT HIM: He recently concluded his DPhil in Politics as a member of the DPIR and Wolfson College. He is passionate about regime change, subnational politics, presidentialism, and the dynamics linking socioeconomic development and politics. His research aims to strengthen our understanding of subnational regime variation across Latin America and beyond.

Methods wise he's an advocate for 'theory-grounded eclecticism'. He strongly believes that quantitative literacy is fundamental and that at the core of every 'useful model' lies robust historical and case-specific knowledge. In learning and teaching CHA and 'metrics', he encourages a hands-on and problem-solving approach.

He has a broad interest in the politics of the 'developing world' and a keen interest in Latin America, specifically in Argentinian, Brazilian and Mexican political dynamics.





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Conference Organiser:



Andreza Aruska

Director of the Brazilian Studies Programme and
Lecturer at the Latin American Centre | University of
Oxford

ABOUT HER: Andreza is the director of the Brazilian Studies Programme and Lecturer at the Latin American Centre, University of Oxford. Her research is concerned with the intersections and dynamics between formal and informal political and economic systems in Brazilian cities. Andreza is particularly interested in employment, migration, and politics in mining towns in Brazil.

Given her interests in local governance and informalities, Andreza investigated sub-national responses to the pandemic in Brazil and has examined the impact of inequality in health policies. Her work has been published in Journals such as Nature Human Behaviour, Science, The Lancet, Ethnography, and others. She is the author or editor of three books focusing on cities in the global south.





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Conference Organiser:



Brenno Navarro

Research Assistant and undergraduate student |
University of Oxford; Federal University of ABC

ABOUT HIM: Brenno is a driven undergraduate student of economics at the Federal University of ABC and a Research Assistant at the University of Oxford, with a passion for studying a diverse range of related fields. He has a strong interest in economics, as well as its relationship to other disciplines such as international relations, marketing, digital marketing, and entrepreneurship.

In his professional career, he is currently developing knowledge in areas related to customer experience, economics, macroeconomics, marketing, Brazilian studies, and the financial markets.





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Venue: St. Antony's College



Investcorp Auditorium

