



Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

PROJECT ACRONYM AND TITLE: CowDom - Colonization as domestication: cattle-human relationships in the making of South-American society

FUNDING PROGRAMME: HORIZON EUROPE

CALL: ERC-2022-COG

DESCRIPTORS: *multispecies ethnography; plantationocene; South American colonialism; social anthropology of South America; anthropology of domestication*

HOST DEPARTMENT: Department of Humanities

SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBLE: Valentina Bonifacio

FINANCIAL DATA:

| Project total costs | Overall funding assigned to UNIVE |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| €1.611.768,00 | €1.611.768,00 |

ABSTRACT:

Starting with Columbus' third trip to the Caribbean, Iberian cattle accompanied humans in the colonization of the South American continent. Since then, the cattle population has grown exponentially all over the region, adapting to a variety of local ecologies, being exported all over the world and leading to the cattle industry's "spectacular" historical trajectory and economic success. Nevertheless, the increase in beef and dairy cattle production brought along negative consequences such as deforestation, climate change and social inequality. Although the influence of cattle-human relationships on society has been an object of study since the beginnings of the anthropological discipline, the study of their entanglement with colonial ideologies and of their influence on South American society is just starting to take shape. In order to highlight cultural and historical trajectories and create a new framework of analysis, Cow-Dom will compare different forms of human-cattle relationships by focusing on opposing relational configurations of the domestication process - feral cattle on the one hand and the so-called racially "improved" cattle on the other - in some of the South American countries with the most intensive cattle production (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay). What values and ideologies, frictions and dilemmas, and what new socio-ecological systems did cattle's presence enable both at the center and at the margins of society? In order to answer these questions, CowDom will rely on long-term ethnographic fieldwork in cattle fairs and in areas with feral and semi-feral cattle. The fieldwork will be carried out by interdisciplinary teams formed by zoologists and anthropologists. The project will establish an innovative theoretical framework to analyse cattle-human relationships in a post-colonial context and incorporate experimental research tools such as video making and the collaboration with a contemporary art museum in South America.

Planned Start date

01/09/2023

Planned End date

31/08/2028

PARTNERSHIP:

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| 1. Ca' Foscari University of Venice | Italy | Beneficiary |
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