



Memory, heritage and coloniality. Linkages between Chile and Sweden

Description

The linkages between Sweden and Chile have a long but relatively unknown history. This is especially true when it comes to Patagonia, a territory considered as a no man's land by the first Swedish travellers that arrived at its coasts at the end of the 19th century.

During a long time, this perception enabled the establishment of a colonisation model based on extensive sheep farming and a ruthless persecution of the indigenous populations. It also allowed the (re) naming of lakes, rivers, mountains and glaciers as well as the erasure of former names and perceptions of the landscape.

As the former inhabitants of Patagonia were decimated or exterminated, their cosmologies, traditions and languages have remained silent. Our knowledge of their lives relies in most cases on the narratives of European travellers and also on the collections of ethnographic museums. In Sweden these collections include not only artefacts but also human remains from the selk'nam, one of the people that inhabited Karukinke, in Patagonia.

A central question in this context is how a rethinking of the historical linkages between Sweden and Chile can contribute to the recovery of patrimonial values and the recognition of the rights of indigenous people.

Reflecting these linkages, this workshop seeks papers on heritage, colonialism and memory from various standpoints and different theoretical frameworks.

Expected outcomes

The linkages between the presence of Swedish names in Chilean territories and indigenous remains in Swedish museums is an unexplored issue that will be addressed from different perspectives. This is particularly important now when current discussions of the future constitution have the rights of indigenous people at the core of the constitutional definition of Chile as a multicultural nation. It is also relevant in Sweden where intense ethical debates on the storing of human remains have not resulted in a satisfactory solution (see <https://www.sametinget.se/8654>). The lack of a scholarly examination of these issues makes it extremely relevant to rethink traditional perceptions of the past in order to articulate visions of sustainable futures. The workshop will explore the possibility of of future cooperation (articles, projects).

Possible site-visits

Museum visits (Museo de la Memoria de Santiago, Museo Río Seco de Punta Arenas, Museo Regional de Punta Arenas and Museo de Puerto Natales.

Planned activities

- 1) call for contributions
- 2) selection of contribution and preparation of a time schedule
- 3) realization of a number of workshops in Punta Arenas
- 4) exploring the possibilities of future cooperation (articles, projects)

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