

Contested Heritage of Latin America: *“Collectors, Coloniality and Markets”*

The Swiss School of Latin American Studies (SSLAS)
PhD Workshop 2026



Lithograph of Mexican antiquities in the National Museum of Mexico, 1857. C. Castro, lithographer (Mexico: Imp. Lit. de V. Debray, 1869). From the New York Public Library Digital Collections, 1519699.

Thursday, February 26, 2026 (12:45 – 20:00 & Dinner)
Friday, February 27, 2026 (09:00 – 16:00, Apéro Riche)

University of St. Gallen, The SQUARE
Room Rosenberg Rotmonten

The SSLAS workshop on “Contested Heritage of Latin American” brings together comparative research on illegal trade heritage, museum collections, and coloniality. It examines the role of the antiquities market and the formation of museum collections, with a particular focus on antiquities.

The workshop also engages with current debates on the decolonization of museum and academic practices, addressing how colonial legacies continue to shape the circulation, display, and interpretation of Latin American culture and heritage. It highlights the absence of the voices of communities of origin, whose cultural and spiritual heritage is often implicated in processes of extraction and commodification. The role of Switzerland, as both a transit and destination country in the (il)legal antiquities trade, will be explored within a broader reflection on the responsibilities of institutions and states in the Global North. The workshop will likewise analyse the historical and legal context in which Swiss collectors acquired Latin American antiquities.

Presentations will explore these practices, as well as national and international efforts to better understand the dynamics of (il)legal activity in the antiquities market, and how such understanding can contribute to more ethical and inclusive approaches to heritage practices.

The official talks of the workshop are in Spanish, Portuguese and English.

SSLAS PhD Workshop organized by the
Centro Latinoamericano-Suizo de la Universidad de St.
Gallen (CLS-HS)



SOCIÉTÉ SUISSE D'ÉTUDES LATINO-AMÉRICAINES
SCHWEIZERISCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR LATEINAMERIKASTUDIEN
SOCIEDAD SUIZA DE ESTUDIOS LATINOAMERICANOS
SWISS SOCIETY OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES



Universität St.Gallen
Centro Latinoamericano-Suizo

For more information or to sign up please contact:

Maylawi Herbas (maylawi.herbas@unisg.ch)

Location:

University of St. Gallen
The SQUARE,
Room Rosenberg Rotmonten
Guisanstrasse 20
CH-9010 St. Gallen

How to get there: From the Main Train Station St. Gallen, please take bus number 9 to the stop *Gatterstrasse*. From this stop, it is approximately a five-minute walk to SQUARE.



The SQUARE Floor Plan

Room Rosenberg Rotmonten

