The construction of early modern global Cities and oceanic networks in the Atlantic: An approach via OceaN’s Cultural Heritage

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IMPACTO

The consortium considers that the best tool for achieving excellence is to develop inclusive projects of collaborative research based on innovation, creativity and shared values. Previous projects led or organized by CONCHA’s partners have focused simultaneously on an academic and a non-specialized public, with a strong component of inter-institutions and inter-sectors cooperation aiming at promoting high level dissemination and contact with different levels of the society. Similarly, exhibitions have been co-organized by CHAM’s researchers, where archaeological artefacts found in excavations, photos, information, and project results have been displayed.

In the consortium, researchers from all the institutions will be asked to publish, as scientific outputs, open access peer-reviewed paper, books and book-chapters, as a fundamental way of producing science at an international level. New exhibitions will be prepared, and several activities will be carried out in schools and local communities within the context of public awareness about the ocean’s cultural and natural heritage, in collaboration with UNESCO ASPnet. Moreover, short films of the missions conducted and obtained results, will be produced and displayed at CHAM Youtube Channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyLNbUnPDVzSNnH6Fv4kX0s).

Measures to ensure the visibility of the project will follow internationally accepted standards. A project website will be constructed, containing information about the project as well as GIS, and other digital visualizations, and the meta database of information feed by the different partners. Here, the annual report will be published electronically. Teaching material will be developed and made available to students and cooperating institutions. Simultaneously, in an era in which network communication assumes a fundamental role, not only in social relations, but also in interpersonal communication and in the interaction person-community, it is essential to consolidate the online presence of the investigation project. Therefore, it would be important to disseminate these activities in different social networks with large diffusion as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. This is a common practice within the institutions of several partners of these projects.

CONCHA

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RESUMEN

CONCHA’s main goal is to explain the different ways port cities developed around the Atlantic rim from the late 15th and early 16th century in relation to differing global, regional, and local ecological and economic environments. This analysis will be framed around a distinction between two separate navigational systems that existed in the Atlantic during the age of sail (1400-1800): the equatorial passage and the North Atlantic passage. Speaking to different literatures on port cities in the Atlantic, and environmental history, CONCHA aims to produce an Atlantic history of seaports in which the ocean – its ecosystems and species – is included as a dynamic player. CONCHA analyses the history of seaports using historical data as well as geomorphological, environmental, and archaeological studies. As case studies, CONCHA uses different locations in Northern Europe, North America, Iberia, the Atlantic archipelagos, Brazil and Colombia, which were central nodes in the circulation of people, resources, and knowledge in the early modern Atlantic world.

INTRODUCCIÓN

The focus of CONCHA is on the creation of new human geographies and frontiers resulting from these transatlantic interactions, including those established across Atlantic latitudinal coasts and those created across the hemispheres. Instead of aggregating a few discrete European histories and several regional histories of European, African, and Amerindian peoples in the Americas, the project takes an integrative or global approach to construct a truly oceanic history. Indeed, Atlantic history cannot be merely additive; when properly done, it must be more than the sum of its parts and go beyond the formal and legal structures of its time. Fundamental features of the early modern Atlantic – like the slave trade, the rise of experimental science and long-distance commerce, and the proliferation of religious confessions – were transnational in character. CONCHA contributes to Atlantic history by analyzing and conceptualizing the growth of port towns and cities, the establishment of navigation and commercial circuits, and the circulation of people, products and kin the early modern Atlantic world (1400-1800). The project also focuses on marine resources and derived products, still a much-neglected theme in the history of oceans’ use and value.

OBJETIVOS

1. Address the political concerns and economic motivations driving oceanic expansion in medieval and early modern Europe;
2. Conceptualize the growth of Atlantic port cities in the early modern period, by analysing early settlements, seaport structures, natural environments, economic activities, marine resource availability from a comparative geographic perspective;
3. Analyze connections and nodes of contact between different Atlantic spaces, especially the circulation of people, products and knowledge;
4. Understand the creation of local Atlantic identities and cultures (by Europeans, Africans and Amerindians) and their material and immaterial heritage;
5. Expand our understanding of the rise of global capitalism in its early form (“colonial mercantilism”), by using coastal and underwater archaeological context analyses;
6. Identify and discuss the multiple maritime cultures forged through the process of construction of Atlantic Ocean cultural landscapes, including their intangible memories and heritage;
7. Contribute to the current historiography of an integrated Atlantic History and the early development of its cultural maritime heritage;
8. To gather scientific knowledge, as well as methods and techniques of research, to inform locally and to teach globally, and to create networks of scholars and stakeholders to develop and disseminate Atlantic History and its Heritage at a global scale allowing to develop career opportunities;
9. Apply digital humanities tools to data analysis and dissemination of information, and to create new digital routes of the early modern Atlantic heritage to be used by the different stakeholders.

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