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ANCLAS Small Research Grants 2023

Tracing Cuban convicts through the Global Spanish Pacific penal institutions



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The last fifty years of the nineteenth century were unexpectedly turbulent for colonial administrators in Spain's remaining colonies in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. The Spanish empire had diminished considerably since the independence of its continental territories of Latin America. Demands for independence in Cuba and the Philippines gave rise to intense political conflict locally and its leaders became a source of inspiration and influence throughout the empire. The Spanish government responded by accelerating the mobilization of political and other detainees through deportation and exile from the periphery of the empire to peninsular Spain or to its other colonies.

The grant will contribute towards Dr Moret's research into why the Spanish government encouraged the transfer of convicts outside of Cuba in the latter part of the nineteenth century, in particular to the Philippines - including the desire to break down networks of supporters of independence, alleged anarchists, practitioners of traditional religions and any persons considered a threat to the social, moral or religious order.

Democracy and Human Rights: The Fragility of Latin American Democracies Reconsidered



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Presidential democracies in Latin America fail more frequently than European parliamentary democracies. The deterioration of democracy in recent years in Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Venezuela are cases in point. Accompanying this trend has been the deterioration of human rights protection in the region. The extent to which different forms of democracy and their institutions safeguard or infringe upon citizens' rights varies considerably. This challenges our understanding of how democratic political institutions (government, federal, electoral, and party systems) impact on human rights protection and in turn the consequences of human rights violations for their continued survival.

The grant will support Dr. Nascimento da Silva's research on the relationships between democratic political institutions and the protection of human rights in Latin American countries, including the collection of data from multiple sources to build a comprehensive dataset on political, economic, and human rights indicators. Drawing on this data, the project will examine the scope for enhancing those institutions to ensure the rights of citizens and foster the improvement of democratic governance, focusing in particular on the case of Brazil.