

C.IAS Lectures Series: Inter-American History and Culture

Austrians in the Americas:

# The Austrian Humboldt. Karl von Scherzer in Central America 1853-1855

Laurin Blecha



Karl von Scherzer travelled together with Moritz Wagner through North-, Central-, and South America (1853-55). He also joined the Austrian-Nowara-Expedition (round the world sailing tour) from 1857 to 1859.

From 1853 to 1855 the Austrian researcher and diplomat Karl von Scherzer (1821-1903) traveled to Central America and was one of the first ones to publish extensive text about the geography, nature, politics, as well as the Central American population. Scherzer's texts are part of the extensive travel literature that was written in the mid-19th century when the region became interesting for the hegemonic political players in the Global North. Therefore, the present work examines the texts of Scherzer as a discursive basis on which the political agents in the Habsburg Empire justified their imperial policies in Central America. The present study examines the perceptions and interpretations of the Central American region by a researcher from the Global North.

**Laurin Blecha** studied History (MA, Ph.D.) at the University of Vienna. His research areas include the history of Central American history in the 19th and 20th century, intellectual history, the politics of history, and the networks between the Europe and Latin America during the Cold War period. Since January 2021 he is a lecturer in the Illinois in Vienna Program, a cooperation between the Vienna University of Business and Economics and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Campaign, USA.

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**18.45h**

**Livestream:** <https://unimeet.uni-graz.at/b/cwi-jfh-tbv-ejf>

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