Molly Tun

De Bry's America: Engraving a Discourse of Colonial Violence

The acknowledgment and articulation of violence in the images of Spanish colonization in De Bry’s América is crucial; the artistic expression thereof controls the discourse and definition of violence, this being a hegemonic, dynamic, and historically-situated construct. My purpose is two-fold: to examine how violence is defined in this context and how the illustrations further promote the violence portrayed. I juxtapose expressions of indigenous and Spanish acts of aggression to reveal underlying ideological constructs regarding violence and its perpetration. This collection ultimately portrays European “violence” as justifiable sanction, thus contributing to the acceptance and promotion of systematic colonial violence against its indigenous counterpart.

Eva Palma

Transmitting memory and imagining the future in Fuenzalida by Nona Fernández

How can a just collective memory be transmitted to the next generation? What do we remember and how are memories shaped by the present facts and interpretations today? In commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the coup in Chile, Nona Fernández explores these issues in her novel Fuenzalida, a hybrid work of fiction and real life facts, which tells the story of a soap opera writer in search of the memory of her father, Ernesto Fuenzalida. She is unsettled when her son asks her about his grandfather, and for the first time, surprisingly she doesn’t have any story, any narration, any answer. Memory, as Nelly Richard has stated, is an open process, is unreliable, fragmented and many times filled with empty spaces that oblivion tends to occupy. Therefore, digging out memories to rebuild a past could easily result in inventing one, just like Fuenzalida’s daughter does, as if she were writing another soap opera. What counts is having a story to tell. This paper will analyze this literary work to understand the central role of narrations when society finds itself among unanswered questions about the past. Four decades after the coup in Chile, a territory where extreme memories and conflictive perspectives come into play, the transmission of a fair and unbiased collective memory to future generations becomes essential to fulfill truth, justice and reparation, but also to prevent, what Huyssen calls, an hypertrophy of memory that could cave society in melancholy.

In memory of our group’s co-founder, Isabel de Sousa Ramos