

Professor Awarded Medal from the Swedish King for Research on Indigenous Peoples

Professor Marisol de la Cadena at the University of California Davis will be awarded the Vega Medal in Gold by the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography (SSAG). Marisol is a Peruvian anthropologist who has made important contributions to research on indigenous peoples in South America. On the Vega Day, April 24, the Swedish Royal Family will present the medal, followed by an open lecture.

Marisol de la Cadena's theories have inspired anthropologists all over the world. In addition to her academic work, she has also been involved in social justice issues in Peru.

-Marisol's research mainly concerns indigenous peoples' rights to be with their land in South America but is also relevant in the Global North. In northern Sweden and Sapmi, industrial investments are once again being made with arguments about the green transition. It can be compared with the colonialism of the past, says Madeleine Bonow, Associate Professor of Geography at Södertörn University and chair of SSAG.

Marisol is known for her ethnographic research on how indigenous peoples in the Andes interact with the environment and surroundings. The knowledge and attitudes of indigenous peoples challenge Western perceptions about the relationship between nature and culture.

-Both anthropology and geography are moving away from the idea that humans and nature are two separate categories. In the past, anthropologists were the colonial avant-garde. They traveled to different places to investigate 'others' to offer colonial powers ideas about how to 'better them'. Nowadays, anthropology is a field of study that can challenge the dominant Western views of the world. We do this by learning from non-Western people, who refuse the capitalist organization and destruction of the world, says Professor Marisol de la Cadena.

The Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography awards the Vega Medal every year. It takes place on the anniversary of the arrival of the ship Vega in Stockholm on April 24, 1880. Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld's Vega Expedition was the first in the world to sail through the Northeast Passage in the Arctic Ocean between Europe and Asia. The expedition is considered to be among the foremost Swedish scientific successes. King Oskar II financed the expedition together with SSAG. As SSAG's patron, it is still the King who awards the Vega Medal.

The Vega Symposium 2025 will take place on April 24 at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Sweden. In an open lecture, Marisol will present her research to the public, together with other invited researchers. The event is free and open to all.

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About SSAG

The Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography was founded in 1878 to strengthen the two disciplines in Sweden. The Society funded field trips and expeditions to parts of the world not yet explored by Europeans. Some of the Society's most famous explorers are Salomon August Andrée, Sven Hedin and Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld. Today, SSAG supports research through scholarships, and publishes the academic journals *Geografiska Annaler A/B*, *kritisk etnografi* - *Swedish Journal of Anthropology* and the yearbook *Ymer*. They also award medals and organize field trips, lectures and the symposium Vega Day.