

**Department of Geography  
University of California, Berkeley**

**RACIAL AND ETHNIC GEOGRAPHIES OF LATIN AMERICA  
GEOG 170**



Juan Ríos Martínez (Wixárika yarn painting on beeswax and wood), 1975

Spring 2024

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:00

145 McCone Hall

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Office hours: Mondays 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

587 McCone

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course offers a geographic survey of spaces identified as belonging to both the core and margins of what Cuban scholar José Martí called “Nuestra América.” Through course readings, films and activities we examine old and new ways of thinking about where the racial and ethnic geographies representative of Latin America begin and end. As such, we will critically consider the constitutive racial and ethnic identities that make up Latin America and the ways in which the geographic imaginary of this immensely diverse region can be understood through networks driven by diaspora and distinct socio-political movements. Throughout, we will examine the cultural and political boundaries that are erected and crossed in what we broadly call the Americas. The course will draw from academic scholarship, creative non-fiction, podcasts, and film in order to weave together critical voices from California, the Caribbean, Mesoamerica, the Andes and the Amazon. Students will come away with a stronger knowledge of the region’s history and geography, as well as key debates on political, economic and cultural topics concerning Latin American peoples and intellectual movements.

Rather than having exams or one final cumulative project, the course's assignments will consist of short research and reflective exercises that use cartography, music, photography, food, film and personal narratives as lenses through which to understand the many cultural layers that make up Latin America.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Through course materials, lectures and class activities, students will develop a historical and geographical understanding of racial and ethnic formation in Latin America;
- Through course materials, lectures and activities, students will acquire theoretical foundations for understanding historical and contemporary cultural geography as well as debates over race, ethnicity and social justice in the Western Hemisphere;
- Through the course assignments, students will develop and demonstrate analytical engagement with course topics and practice written argumentation and comparative analysis;
- Through the final course assignment, students will further develop their theoretical and conceptual engagement with the course topics while applying independent research methods and a choice of multiple genres to execute a written and/or visual project.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Assignments and Grade Breakdown:**

**20% Class participation.** Punctual attendance and participation in class discussions and activities is always a goal. Please come to class having completed the assigned readings for each class. If you should miss class due to illness or family emergencies, please inform me at your earliest. Consistent tardiness will result in a lowered grade; please advise me of any expected absences or challenges that you may have in attending lectures. Please keep me informed of any issues or challenges that will affect your performance in our course. Class participation grade is based on each student's critical and respectful engagement with the course material. I will hand out an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class starting our second week of classes. Each student gets one free absence a semester that will be recorded in the attendance grade at the end of the term. **Communication is key. It is your responsibility to read all course announcements sent via bcourses which will announce any changes to syllabus, readings, course materials, and general updates and announcements.**

**15% BAM/PFA Exhibit Analysis**

**15% Food Study**

**15% Bancroft Library Photo and Map Exhibit Analysis**

**20% Comparative Film Analysis**

□15% Exploratory Reflection (Select from: family album, public archive, popular music, social media, etc.)

### CALENDAR OF ASSIGNMENTS:

<b>BAM/PFA Exhibit Analysis</b>	<b>February 8</b>
<b>Bancroft Library Photo and Map Exhibit Analysis</b>	<b>March 7</b>
<b>Food Study</b>	<b>March 21</b>
<b>Comparative Film Analysis</b>	<b>April 25</b>
<b>Exploratory Reflection</b>	<b>May 9</b>

#### **Final class grades will be based on the following scale:**

- A – Student successfully meets and exceeds course requirements (90-100 points)
- B – Student meets course requirements, shows some need for improvement (80-89 points)
- C – Student meets minimum standards for obtaining credit (70-79 points)
- F – Student does not meet minimum standards and cannot obtain course credit (69 points or below)

### CLASSROOM POLICIES AND UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

**Learning Environment:** We will cover various contentious and politicized topics in this course, many of which will be unfolding in real time. While you are not required to hold the same political perspectives as your classmates or your professor, you are required to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Our goal is to find ways to engage in constructive dialogues without denying the opinions and experiences that your peers bring to the table. Specifically, this course and its materials cover questions of colonialism, colonial violence and resistance, race and racism. Content or trigger warnings for lessons will be noted as much as possible and I encourage students to spend some time overviewing the syllabus and ask me any questions pertaining to this content. *Ultimately, content and trigger warnings can provide a heads up to students who may need time to prepare (mentally, physically or otherwise) so that they can best engage with challenging and emotional course material.*

**Come prepared:** Bring pens and paper to every lecture for note taking and any in-class writing exercises. Take notes so you can keep track of ideas, questions, or any important references that may come up in lecture! Above all else, engaged listening is the most important way to make the most out of course lectures. Readings and multimedia materials are essential, please complete each before the lecture for which it is assigned. Videos and music should be treated as text as well in that they are required and may be relevant material for your essays and final project should be treated as text in that they are required and may be included in exams and assignments.

**Late Work:** Late submissions of course assignments are possible with prior permission. Talk to me as soon as possible if you anticipate the need for an extension on any assignment, otherwise, assignments turned in after deadline will be docked 10 %.

**Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:** Please bring any accommodations you will need to my attention and through the Disabled Student Program as soon as possible. We will provide all requisite accommodations and I am always happy to talk about how to make course materials as accessible as possible.

**Laptops and other Digital Devices:** I ask that the use of laptops and other digital devices during lecture be kept to a minimum and only for the purposes of accessing course materials and note taking. Please turn off your phones during lectures— I will not tolerate texting during lectures. Exceptions to this policy will be made directly with the professor.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is a joint endeavor among not only students, but the entire academic community in all scholarship and scholarly activity. In this course each of us is responsible for fostering an environment of honesty, fairness, and respect. UC Berkeley has strict policies concerning academic misconduct and dishonesty. The University defines academic misconduct as “any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community” (UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct). This typically involves the following: (1) plagiarism: copying text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference; and (2) cheating: fraud or dishonesty in an academic assignment, including examinations. Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, quiz, or exam in questions and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. For more information about intentional academic misconduct and attendant consequences see: <http://advocate.berkeley.edu/conduct/>

## STUDENT RESOURCES

- The Student Learning Center offers peer tutoring, writing support, and other academic resources. <http://slc.berkeley.edu>
- The Disabled Students’ Program provides a wide range of resources to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, including advising, assessment, note-taking services, and academic accommodations. <http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu>
- The Tang Center / Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) offers immediate and long-term counseling services to assist students with a variety of concerns about academic success, mental health, life management, and personal development. <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/caps>
- Basic Needs Center provides food, housing, and other basic needs support and services. <https://basicneeds.berkeley.edu>
- PATH to Care Center provides affirming, empowering, and confidential support for survivors and those who have experienced gendered violence, including: sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual exploitation. Confidential advocates bring a non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources. <https://care.berkeley.edu>
- Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD) Ensures that UC Berkeley provides an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. OPHD takes reports alleging discrimination and harassment on the basis of categories including race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual

orientation/identity, including allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence.  
<https://ophd.berkeley.edu>

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

All course readings will be uploaded as PDFs to our bcourses site, unless otherwise noted. *I will make a note in each week's schedule whether the materials are under Files, Modules or online.* Note that we will have occasional podcasts and videos as well. Please advise me of any special accommodations you may need with the formatting of readings.

### **WEEK 1—Locating Latin America and Latinxs**

#### **Tuesday, January 16—Course introduction**

Defining a region, defining the question of Race for Latinxs.

***In class:***

- “A Conversation with Latinos About Race” in *The New York Times* Op-Doc, March 7, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLLCHbCgJbM> ;
- “Are Hispanics White?” in MTV News, August 24, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aosT6Kecj24&t=2s>
- Mapping exercise

#### **Thursday, January 18—The ‘We’ in Nuestra América**

José Martí. “Nuestra América/Our America” originally published in *El Partido Liberal* (Mexico), January 20, 1891, translated by Centro de Estudios Marianos. (Available in Modules)

### **WEEK 2— Configurations of Race and Ethnicity**

#### **Tuesday, January 23— Racialization and “Science”**

Nancy Leys Stepan. “*The Hour of Eugenics*”: *Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1991. Chapter 2: Eugenics in Latin America: Its Origins and Institutional Ecology, ps. 35-62. (Available in Files)

***Examine in class:*** *National Geographics 1930s*

#### **Thursday, January 25—Confronting Colorism and Racism**

Diana Negrín. “Cracking the Silence on Racism in Mexico” in *Latino Rebels*, July 20, 2022. (Available in Modules)

Erika Edwards. “Why Doesn’t Argentina Have More Black Players” in Washington Post article, December 8, 2022. (Available in modules)

**Recommended:** Edward Telles. *Pigmentocracies: Ethnicity, Race and Color in Latin America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014. Chapter 1: The Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America, ps. 1-35. (Available in Files)

### **WEEK 3—Native Spaces and Colonial Foundations**

#### **Tuesday, January 30— Native Spaces**

Damon Akins and William Bauer. *We Are the Land: A History of Native California*. University of California Press, 2021. “Native Spaces: Yuma”, pp. 32-35; “Native Spaces: San Diego”, ps. 59-63; “Native Spaces: Rome”, (Available in Files)

#### **Thursday, February 1—Colonial Caste Structures and Racial Mythologies**

Jacques Lafaye. “Caste Society in New Spain.” In *Artes de México—La pintura de castas*, No.8, ps. 81-83. (Available in Files)

Rebecca Earle. *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. Chapter 4: Patriotic History and the Pre-Columbian Past, ps. 100-132. (Available in Files)

*Class Field Trip: BAM/PFA (Oxford and Center) for the “Matrix 283/Gabriel Chaile: Nadie destruye el corazón como la pobreza” exhibit.*

### **WEEK 4—Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Blackness**

#### **Tuesday, February 6—The Haitian Revolution**

Leslie Alexander. *Fear of a Black Republic: Haiti and the Birth of Black Internationalism in the United States*. University of Chicago Press, 2023. Chapter 1: “A United and Valiant People: Black Visions of Haiti at the Dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century”, ps. 17-46. (Available in files)

#### **Thursday, February 8—The Promise and Threat of Blackness in Hispaniola**

Richard André. “The Dominican Republic and Haiti: A Shared View from the Diaspora. A Conversation with Edwidge Danticat and Junot Díaz” in *Americas Quarterly* (August 6, 2014). (Available in modules)

Henry Louis Gates Jr. *Black in Latin America*, “Episode 1: Haiti and the Dominican Republic—An Island Divided”, PBS, April 2011. (Available in modules)

*Guest Speaker: Monifa Milon, Chef and Writer*  
*Due: BAM Gabriel Chaile Exhibit Analysis (11:59 pm on bcourses)*

### **WEEK 5—Quilombos and the Making Spaces of Freedom**

#### **Tuesday, February 13—Marronage and Quilombismo**

Paula Ramón. “Their Identity Was Forged Through Resistance: Inside the Lives of Brazil’s Quilombos” in *National Geographic*, March 14, 2022. (Available in modules)

João José Reis and Flávio do Santos Gomes. “Quilombo: Brazilian Slaves During Slavery” in *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, April 28, 2010. (Available in Modules)

*In class film: Quilombo* by Carlos Diegues (Brazil, 1985), 1 hr 54 min

#### **Thursday, February 15—Autonomous Spaces, Life Spaces**

Adam Bledsoe. “Marronage as Past and Present Geography in the Americas” in *Southeastern Geographer*, Vol. 57 no. 1, 2017, pp. 30-50. (Available in files)

*\*Class Visit to Bancroft Library\**

### **WEEK 6— The Bronze Race and the Rise of Mestizaje**

#### **Tuesday, February 20—La Raza Cósmica in and out of context**

José Vasconcelos. *The Cosmic Race*. John Hopkins University, 1997 [1925].

#### **Thursday, February 22—Mestizaje**

Regina Martínez Casas, Emiko Saldívar, René D. Flores and Christina A. Sue. “The Different Faces of Mestizaje” in Edward Telles. *Pigmentocracies: Ethnicity, Race and Color in Latin America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014, ps. 36-80

*In class film: Pelo Malo (Bad Hair)* by Marian Rondón (Venezuela, 2013), 1 hr 33 min

### **WEEK 7—Peru, Race and Vision**

#### **Tuesday, February 27—Racial Harmony, Racial Discord**

David Sulmont and Juan Carlos Callirgos. “¿El país de todas las sangres?” in Edward Telles, ed. *Pigmentocracies: Ethnicity, Race and Color in Latin America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014, ps. 126-171. (Available in files)

#### **Thursday, February 29—Visual Economies in the Andes**

Deborah Poole. *Vision, Race and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997. Chapter 5: Equivalent Images, ps. 107-141. (Available in Files)

### **WEEK 8— Shamanism, Otherness & Magic in Colombia**

#### **Tuesday, March 5—Geographies of Encounter**

Michael Taussig. *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing*. University of Chicago Press, 1987. “Chapter 7: A Case of Fortune and Misfortune”, pp.139-164; “Chapter 8: Magical Realism”, pp. 165-170. (Available in files)

*Class Fieldtrip:* Bancroft Library Curated Visit with Theresa Salazar and José Adrián.

#### **Thursday, March 7—Magical Economies**

Alhena Caicedo. “How Did Ayahuasca, Indigenous Diversity and Conservation Become Commodities in the Amazon?” in *Chacruna Chronicles*, November 26, 2020. [https://chacruna.net/alhena\\_caicedo\\_indigenous\\_diversity\\_amazon/](https://chacruna.net/alhena_caicedo_indigenous_diversity_amazon/)

*Watch at home for class: The Embrace of the Serpent* by Ciro Guerra (Colombia, 2015), 2hr 5min.

*Due:* Bancroft Library Photo and Map Exhibit Analysis (11:59 pm on bcourses)

### **WEEK 9—The War on Drugs as Racialized Violence**

#### **Tuesday, March 12—The War on Drugs, from Nixon to Escobar**

The Washington Post. “Lost Cause: 50 Years of the War on Drugs in Latin America” in *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/06/14/war-on-drugs-50-years-latin-america-violence-mexico-colombia/>

Adam Schraff. “Ending the War on Drugs in Latin America” in *The Borgen Project*. December 24, 2022. <https://borgenproject.org/war-on-drugs-in-latin-america/>

#### **Thursday, March 14—Ayotzinapa’s roots and consequences**

Anayansi Díaz Cortez. “After Ayotzinapa”, Chapters 1-4, January 14, 2022. *Reveal News*.

*Guest speaker:* Anayansi Díaz Cortez, Public Radio International/Reveal News

### **WEEK 10— Gender, Conflict, Expression**

#### **Tuesday, March 19—Genocide, Gender and Human Rights**



Charles R. Hale. *Más Que Un Indio: Racial Ambivalence and Neoliberal Multiculturalism in Guatemala*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Resident Scholar Book, 2006. Chapter 4: Ladino Racial Ambivalence and the Discourse of Reverse Racism. ps. 111-136. (Available in Files)

*In class film: La Yuma* by Florence Jaugey (Nicaragua, 2009), 1 hr. 30 min.

**Thursday, March 21—Musical: mestizaje, appropriation or diasporic commons?**

Julyssa López. “Behind Argentina’s Bourgeoning Trap Movement.” In *Billboard*, October 10, 2019. (Available in Modules)

Martín Cordova. “Seven Argentinian Artists Giving a New Face to the Trap Scene.” In *ReMezcla*, December 27, 2021. (Available in Modules)

Lucas Villa. “Interview with Natanael Cano.” In *ReMezcla*, February 24, 2020. (Available in Modules)

*Due: Food Study Group Presentations*

**WEEK 11**

**SPRING BREAK MARCH 25-30 / NO CLASS**

**WEEK 12—White Supremacy, Revolution and the Pursuit of Racial Justice**

**Tuesday, April 2—Debating Whiteness After Revolution in Cuba**

Maile Speakman. “Little Wynwood: Whiteness, Tourism, and Gentrification in Havana’s San Isidro Neighborhood.” In *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, February 28, 2022, ps. 1-11. (Available in Files)

*In class film: Memories of Underdevelopment* by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea (Cuba, 1968), 1hr 37min.

**Thursday, April 4— The Rise of Francia Marquez and Racial Justice**

Nadia Mosquera Muriel. “Living Without Fear: Francia Marquez and Black Feminist Politics in Colombia.” In *NACLA*, April 5, 2022. laaa (Online)

Laís Abramo and Marta Rangel. *Children of African Descent in Latin America*. (Available in Modules)

**WEEK 13— Racial Consumption and Dispossession**

**Tuesday, April 9—Tourism, Urbanization and Displacement**

Marisol de la Cadena. *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Perú, 1919-1991*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000. Chapter Seven: Indigenous Mestizos, De-Indianization, and Discrimination, ps. 306-330. (Available in Files)

**Thursday, April 11—Ethnoexodus**

Juan Castillo Cocom. “Maya Stories In and Out of Contexts.” In *Kroeber Anthropological Society*, Volume 96, January 2007, ps. 13-35. (Available in Files)

**WEEK 14—Reclaiming Identities in and out of Place**

**Tuesday, April 16—“Unusual” Suspects**

Carrie Stetler. “As Chinese Cuban Population Dwindles, Traditions Die” in *Rutgers Today*, October 18, 2013. (Available in modules)

Lily Balloffet. “Latin America and the Arab World: One Hundred Years of Migration” in *Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies News*, North Carolina State University, September 30, 2015 (Available in modules)

Gabriel Leaõ. “I Fear for Asian Communities in Brazil” in *Al Jazeera*, (April 2, 2021)



<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/4/2/i-fear-for-asian-communities-in-brazil>

*In class film:* *Mama* by Xun Sero (Mexico, 2022), 1 hr and 20 min.

**Thursday, April 18—Claiming Geographic Fluidity**

Diana Negrín. *Racial Alterity, Wixarika Youth Activism and the Right to the Mexican City*. University of Arizona Press, 2019. Chapter 5: “She Who Walks in Many Places.”

**WEEK 15—Back to the Borderlands**

**Tuesday, April 23 — Biographical Encounters with Race and Ethnicity**

Octavio Solis. *Retablos: Stories from a Life Lived Along the Border*. City Lights Books, 2018.

**Guest Speaker:** Octavio Solis

**Thursday, April 25—Continued**

Octavio Solis. *Retablos: Stories from a Life Lived Along the Border*. City Lights Books, 2018.

*Due:* Comparative Film Analysis (11:59 pm bcourses)

**WEEK 16—Review Week**

*\*Due: Exploratory Reflection May 9 (11:59 pm bcourses)\**