

June 27, 2024 | 18:15-19:45  
P 109a (Philosophicum)

## Selective Anti-Imperialism, Settler Colonialism and the Lure of Racial Capitalist Progress in Spanish-Language Periodicals in Paris

**David Luis-Brown**

Claremont Graduate University, CA, USA



David Luis-Brown is an associate professor in the Cultural Studies and English Departments at Claremont Graduate University. His research specializations include hemispheric Americas studies, Latino/a/x studies, black diaspora studies, and American literature and culture in general. He is the author of *Waves of Decolonization: Discourses of Race and Hemispheric Citizenship in Cuba, Mexico and the United States* (Duke University Press, 2008). Luis-Brown is working on two books: a critical edition and translation of Andrés Avelino de Orihuela's Cuban 1854 antislavery novel, *El Sol de Jesús del Monte*, under submission at a university press; and *Blazing at Midnight: Slave Rebellion and Social Identity in Cuban and U.S. Culture*. One of the chief aims of *Blazing at Midnight* is to assess techniques of social categorization in predisciplinary social science, travel narratives, novels, periodicals, and visual culture.

The Spanish-language newspapers *El Eco de Ambos Mundos* and *El Eco Hispano-Americano* of Paris engaged in an unprecedented, transnational collaboration among Latin Americans, exile and migrant *hispanoamericanos* and Spaniards in constructing a Hispano-American identity or *Latinidad* in opposition to U.S. imperialism from 1852 to 1855, well before the Chilean Francisco Bilbao and the Colombian José María Torres Caicedo coined the term *América Latina* in the summer of 1856 in Paris. There were two politically discordant sets of writing threading through these two newspapers. First, writers championed the "Latin race" as an important contributor to the alleged progress of capitalism, as in editorials by the Spaniard José Florez and in a series of articles by the pioneering Spanish Humboldtian natural historian and sociologist Ramón de la Sagra. In a second, dissenting note in the newspapers, a critical take on both U.S. imperialism and Spain's intertwined legacies of colonialism, racial hierarchies and slavery emerged.

The topic of this talk is the contradiction between *Latinidad's* opposition to U.S. imperialism in the newspapers' coverage of Latin American news versus their oftentimes uncritical stance towards Spanish colonialism and Latin American settler colonialism. The newspapers' coverage of Latin American news addressed U.S. imperial expansionism, U.S. and European filibusterism and the strong-arm politics of dictators and Spanish colonial governments as well as constitutional conventions and wars against Indigenous peoples.

This talk is an excerpt from a monograph in progress tentatively titled "*Dos Hemisferios: Racial Capitalism, Revolution and the Problem of Latinidad in Hispano-American Newspapers in Paris and New York City, 1852-1856*." This book examines how three Spanish-language newspapers built on their contributors' experience of the revolutionary energies, insights and missteps of two revolutions, the anticolonial and antislavery Ladder Rebellion in Cuba (1843-44) and the republican European insurgencies of 1848 to think through the possibilities and limitations of *Latinidad* in relation to racial capitalism and empire in writings focusing on culture, economic activities and everyday life.