

**Latin America Today**

HUS 254.30

Summer Session-II

Satisfies: DIV. GLO. HUM

Thematic Categories: "Literature, Travel and Politics"  
"Latin America, Culture and Global Narratives", "Fiction, Literary Theory and Writing Practices"

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Online, Asynchronous

The travel chronicle is, at its core, a literary account that documents the traveler's personal experiences and observations while exploring a new or familiar place. It is a narrative that goes beyond the simple description of landscapes or events, because, as a "mixed" genre, it is nourished by the opportunities provided by literature to influence the intimate connection between the individual who narrates and the environment that surrounds him/her. Within the Latin American context, travel chronicles have played, since Columbus' arrival in America, a crucial role in the exploration and representation of the continent's geography, history and identity. From the chronicles of the Indies to the modern journalistic chronicles of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, we will ask ourselves about the continuities and discontinuities that cross this literary genre according to the different periods, taking advantage of this to pose a theoretical reflection on how the main elements that form the backbone of travel chronicles are configured. How does the previous cultural background influence the travelers' view when they face a different space? How does distance and time affect the consideration of a trip as a journey? What is the relationship between truth, verisimilitude, testimony and prestige as far as chronicles are concerned? How is the authors' genre reflected in the different texts? In the course we will try to raise a debate around these and other questions to support the main readings.

To this end, we will explore a diverse range of Spanish and Latin American travel chronicles, from classic explorer's tales to the works of more contemporary writers. We will analyze how these authors have used writing to give voice to their personal experiences, share their reflections on the things of the world and the time in which they lived, and offer new perspectives on the nature of travel, adventure and, of course, literature. A critical reading of the texts will make us appreciate the diversity of styles, themes and approaches present in Spanish and Latin American travel chronicles. In short, the travel chronicles will allow us to better understand how to approach the cultural, political, social and personal concerns of the authors in their respective historical contexts,

thus offering us the opportunity to better understand essential questions about identity and human experience in Latin America.