

INAUGURATION OF THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION PROFESSORSHIP

Feb. 16, 2016 | 12:00 p.m.

COB 120 | UC MERCED

“Violence and Coloniality: Racialization and Viscerality in Latin America’s New Indigenous Narrative”



**ARTURO ARIAS**

*John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Professor in the Humanities*

Abstract: Two of the first-ever Yukateko Maya novels written in their own language are historical fictions about leaders from the Caste War: *Cecilio Chi'* (2003) by Javier Gómez Navarrete, and *T'ambilák men tunk'ulilo'ob/El llamado de los tunk'ules* (2012) by Marisol Ceh Moo. My analysis elaborates a discursive critique of these narratives, but primarily evidences the foundational, critical and political significance of this body of work. In my understanding, these still little-known textualities constitute an epistemic change in the Latin American “lettered city,” if we are to borrow Uruguayan critic Angel Rama’s conception of the power of written discourse in the historical formation of Latin American societies. Mesoamerican indigenous literatures already represent a serious undertaking at this early stage of their production. It is a voyage merely half a century old, if with millenarian antecedents. This talk will explore the epistemic implications of this ontological turn.



t: 209-228-2297  
e: [humanities@ucmerced.edu](mailto:humanities@ucmerced.edu)  
w: [centerforhumanities.ucmerced.edu](http://centerforhumanities.ucmerced.edu)