

# Department of LATINA/LATINO STUDIES

COLLOQUIUM SERIES

"Re-rooting Indigeneity: An Uprising, a Saint Day Festival, and Transborder Ecology"



During the early morning hours of April 15, 2011, a group of local women, armed with machetes, sticks, and rocks, attacked a pair of illegal loggers—armed with AK-47s—as they drove through Cherán, Michoacán. The loggers, backed by a leading drug cartel and even the town's mayor, had terrorized the community's ecological and social environment for years. As an indigenous P'urhépecha community, cheranenses—those from Cherán—for centuries had depended immensely on their rich forest economy for subsistence, and the women who stood in defense of their community had seen enough of their neighbors perish at the hands of the cartels or immigrate to the United States. Funding the uprising in Cherán were indigenous cheranenses who lived abroad, in places like Durham, North Carolina. Though separated by more than 2,000 miles away, cheranenses on both sides of the border drew from their ancestral knowledge and communal ways of knowing to defend their land and preserve their culture. This talk explores how cheranenses have fashioned indigeneity in the diaspora by linking the uprising in Cherán to the representation of a saint day festival in North Carolina. In this paper, I argue that the uprising in Cherán must be considered a transborder movement that, while occurring at a particular moment in April 2011, had historical roots to land and political struggles that had occurred throughout the twentieth century. By examining these things in relation to each other, I consider how we think of a politics of indigeneity—which scholars have understood as place-based—when it moves.

Yuridia Ramírez received her Ph.D. in history from Duke University. During her graduate studies, Yuri also was a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow. Following her 2018-19 residency at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Yuri will be an Assistant Professor of Latina/o Studies at Miami University in the Department of Global and Intercultural Studies. Her interests in migration, race, and critical ethnic studies are informed by her own experience as the daughter of Mexican immigrants. As such, she has personal experience with and an intellectual commitment to migrants and their families. She will teach LLS 379 Latina/os and the City during the Spring 2019 semester.

## Yuridia Ramírez

Postdoctoral Research Associate

Wednesday, Oct. 17  
4:00p.m.-5:30p.m.  
223 Gregory Hall