

Contesting the Color Line: The Payo / Gitano Racial Boundary in Spain



Dr. Martin Repinecz
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Friday, September 23, 2022 @ 2:20pm

Virtual Event [Zoom Link](#)

This talk will examine the contradictory social functions of the racial boundary that marks the difference between Spanish *gitanos*—known in English as Roma, Romani, or, more problematically, as “Gypsies”—and *payos*, Spain’s hegemonic majority population. After considering cinematic and anthropological evidence that highlights the ambivalent role of skin color and other phenotypical markers in shaping this racial boundary, we will consider how the *payo / gitano* border simultaneously upholds and subverts Spain’s claims of belonging in racial whiteness. To this end, we will use theories of racial performativity and whiteness as a wage to examine the construction of the *payo / gitano* boundary in a wide range of film genres, including folkloric musicals, *macho ibérico* comedies, and *quinqui* cinema.



Dr. Repinecz's research focuses on questions of race and colonial memory in Francoist and contemporary Spain and the global Hispanophone world. His book manuscript, titled: *Volatile Whiteness: Cinema, Race, and Europeanization in Spain*, is currently under review. His work has been published in *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, *Hispanic Studies Review*, *Transmodernity*, *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, and others.

