



SPANISH & PORTUGUESE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

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“RUIDOS. VOCES. RUMORES. CANCIONES LEJANAS”

VISUAL ANALYSIS & CREATIVE READINGS OF JUAN RULFO'S *INFRAMUNDO*

“El páramo y sus protagonistas” Photo by Juan Rulfo

This course offers students **visual analysis** of Juan Rulfo's **photography**, a close reading of the short novel *Pedro Páramo* (1955), and stories from the collection *El Llano en llamas* (1953) in the context of the Latin American literary “**Boom**” and **magical realism**. Discomfiting settings include Comala—a purgatorial, furnace-like town where only the dead are alive, doomed to an eternal power struggle. We will examine the vocabulary of landscape, *ekphrasis* (thick, painterly description), and hellish geography as part of the soul of Rulfo's characters—rural indigenous peasants who live apart from the Mexican nation in the aftermath of the 1910 revolution. But what exactly condemns them to solitude? We will attempt to solve the illogical, fantastic mysteries at the heart of these texts—or we will delight in their indecipherability.

We will study Rulfo's images and ideas in the context of other organic thinkers of modern *mexicanidad*, including the philosopher Octavio Paz, cultural critic Ilan Stavans, photographer Josephine Sacabo, anthropologist Claudio Lomnitz, and artists who represented the Mexican Revolution, including Posada, Siqueiros, Kahlo, Goitia, Rivera, Orozco, and the photographer Hugo Brehme.

Students will work with Rulfo's ideas in their own **magical realist projects**—translations, creative rewritings, artistic works, or photographic portfolios—to examine how values are lived within the emotional and geographic bounds of such a landscape.

REQUIREMENTS

COURSE TAUGHT IN SPANISH Prerequisite: any of the following, SPAN 301, 302, 303, 314, 315, OR 316. Span 395 may be repeated once. Contact instructor or the department academic advisor at spsadv@uw.edu with any questions.

SPAN 395

WINTER 2020

2:30–4:20 / TTh / SAVERY 157

CREDITS: 5

**INSTRUCTOR
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