

»Autobiography of Cotton: The Making of the US-Mexico Border in the Early 20th Century«

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Houston / DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program

In *Autobiography of Cotton*, the migrant experience of Rivera Garza's paternal grandparents as they engaged with a cotton social and agricultural experiment led by engineer Eduardo Chávez on the Mexican side of the Rio Bravo during the early 1930s will be explored. Post-revolutionary state efforts to expand forms of monoculture through agrarian reform and recently build water infrastructure along the U.S.-Mexico border will be traced, especially in the Texas-Tamaulipas borderlands. The cotton experiment was as successful as it was short-lived. Formerly landless peasants became *ejidatarios* (small private property owners), but monocrop agriculture soon affected the land, generating cycles of economic precarity and ecological devastation. It is not a mere coincidence that half a century later, this territory would become a battleground of the misnamed War on Drugs.

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“Border Temporalities: Doing Literature in a World of Walls” *Lecture Series*

Lecture

Thursday, 26 October 2023

6—8 p.m.

ZI Lateinamerika-Institut, R. 201

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