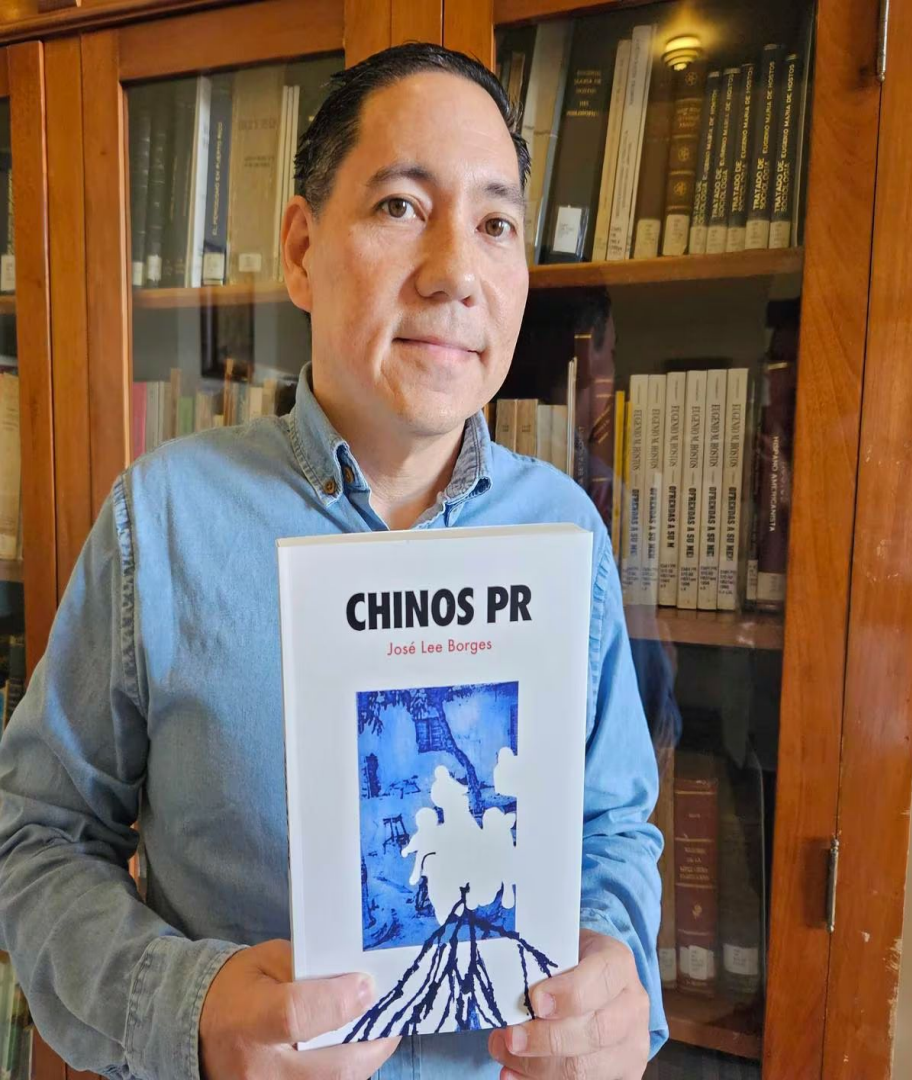




# Exploring Connections: Asian Diaspora in Puerto Rico

By: Adamaris Pabón Seda  
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# “Los Chinos en Puerto Rico” by José Lee Borges

## José Lee Borges

- Chinese–Cuban raised in Puerto Rico.
- Currently works as a history professor for the University of Puerto Rico.

## Los Chinos en Puerto Rico

- A collection of both his research and personal experience growing up in Puerto Rico as mixed race Chinese–Cuban.
- It explores the history of Chinese laborers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as Chinese immigrants of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# Historical Background

**Abolition of Slave Trade in Spanish America (1817)**

**Opium War (1839–1860)**

**Coolie Trade (1840's–1870's)**

**Chinese Exclusion Act (1882–1943)**

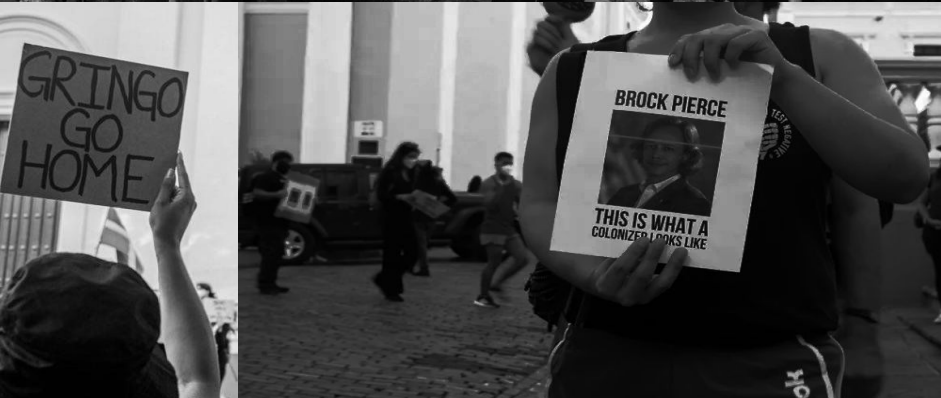
**Fidel Castro's Regime in Cuba (1959–2008)**

**New Wave of Asian Immigration in the Caribbean (1990–Present)**

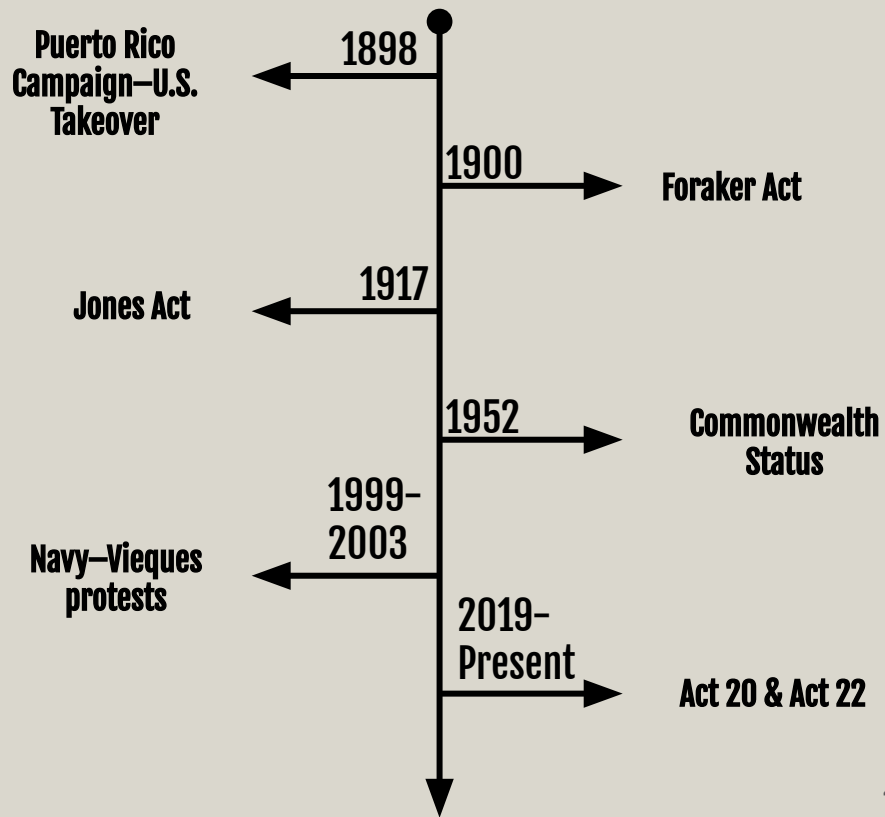


BY COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF THE Y.W.C.A.  
TYPICAL CHINESE COOLIE  
LOS CONFINADOS CHINOS EN PUERTO RICO





## Puerto Rico & U.S. Timeline



The background is a dark, semi-transparent collage. On the left, a man in a wide-brimmed hat and a patterned shirt looks towards the camera. On the right, a close-up of a young man with curly hair and a beard smiles. The bottom half of the image shows a dense crowd of people at a protest, with several individuals in the foreground shouting and holding up signs. One sign clearly reads 'PROTESTA POR LA PAZ' and another partially visible sign says 'DEFIEN...'.

# The Problem with Modern Colonialism and Gentrification

ASIAN AMERICA

## Chinese Puerto Rican TikToker goes viral for explaining multicultural identity

“I know I’m not the only Asian that was born here in Puerto Rico,” Keishla He said. “I wanted to be that person that they can look up to and say, ‘OK, I’m not the only one.’”

### Comments



\_eloriental 5h

Colonizadores !!!! Vienen nuestros país a hacer negocios sacarle dinero a pueblo boricua . Pero no toman accsion ni alludan al pueblo ni hacen nada por nadie ni el comercio puerto riquenos. No se casan puerto riquenos solo con su raza so el dinero nunca toca familias ni se benefician puerto riquenos !! Que bonito . Ahora que se valla un puerto riqueno para allá hacer lo que hacen ellos aquí lol !



## The Yellow Peril in Puerto Rico

### Ethnic Antagonism

- Colonizers → Evil, selfish, greedy.
- Chinese as scapegoats of a bigger problem (economy crisis).

### Model Minority

- Their **success as a threat** → but are they successful or oppressed?
- Outstanding work ethic → labor exploitation.
- Closed-off community → Are we welcoming them into ours?

# The Chinese Diaspora in Puerto Rico: Today

## Population

- Total population of P.R. is 3.222 million (2022)
- Around more than 1,843 are Chinese residents.

## Identity

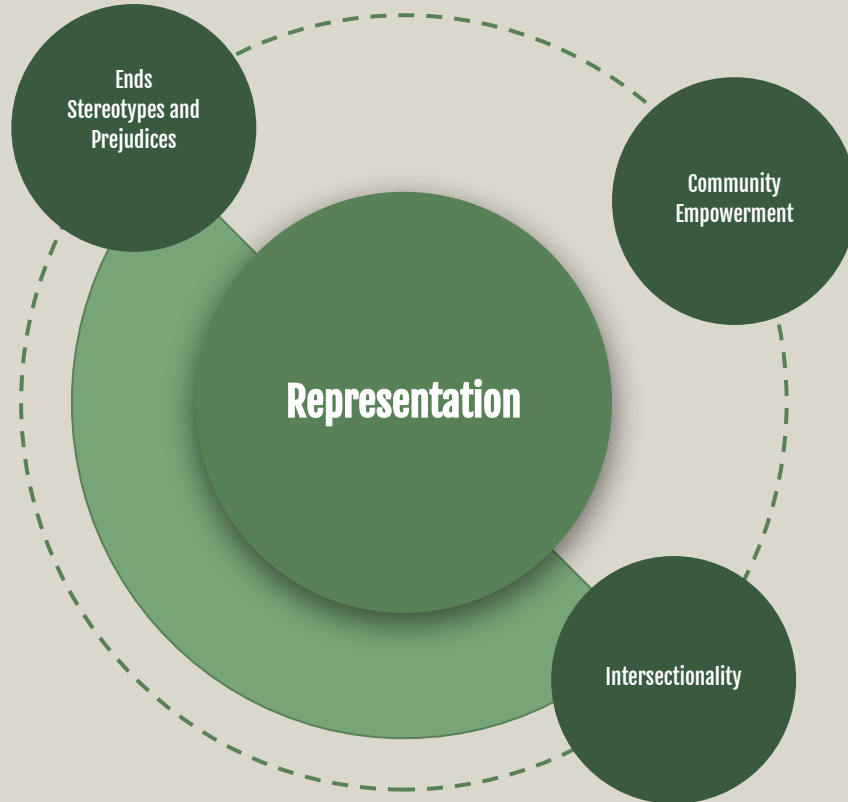
- The Chinese community are marginalized by Puerto Rican society and its government.
- “Not-real Puerto Ricans”

## Language

- There is only one Chinese school in Puerto Rico that teaches Chinese Mandarin → “Instituto de Mandarín: El Futuro - 未来中文学校”
- Most Chinese in Puerto Rico learn and speak more than three languages: Mandarin or Cantonese (or both), English and Spanish.



# Importance of Asian Latino Studies





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