History 441 - Revolution and Conflict in Modern Latin America

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Course Description:

In Latin America, responses to the events of the past generation-- including socialist revolution, guerrilla movements, violent military dictatorship, redemocratization, and free-market economic reforms--have indeed been diverse. In Mexico, where enduring political control by the postrevolutionary state had prevented strong guerrilla challenges and military dictatorship, recent economic and political crises, perhaps most dramatically exemplified by the armed rebellion in Chiapas, resulted in the loss of the presidency by the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party. In Chile, the electoral path to socialism led to a deeply violent and repressive military dictatorship, and during its decade and a half in power to the deepest transformation of the economy and of political society in the Southern Cone. And in Peru, where a reformist military government attempted broad-ranging reforms between 1968 and 1975, a bloody civil war between the Shining Path guerrillas and the Peruvian army ate away at Peruvian society during the 1980s, leading to an increasingly authoritarian civilian regime, the decline of political parties, and the breakdown of civil society.

This course will explore the historical differences among these three cases in the context of today's postrevolutionary sensibilities and questions. How were narratives of social inclusion and human rights constructed in the 20th century, and how are they different today? What justifications for violence were used on the left and right in the context of revolution and social conflict? What can we learn from the revolutionary dreams and violent nightmares of the 20th century that might be of use to us today? How have the historical differences among the societies we're studying both facilitated and limited political options for their citizens?

Course Requirements:

1) Written assignments:
   a) Weekly response papers, to be worked out with the T.A. at the first section meeting. These will count as part of the discussion grade.
   b) One 5-page paper that places one of the additional books on the Book Review List (copies available for purchase at Rainbow Bookstore) in the context of other relevant course materials, including readings, lectures, and discussion.
   c) A midterm exam written in class, but on a question received ahead of time and with outlines permitted.
   d) A final exam, which will consist of one comprehensive essay, prepared from a list of questions handed out ahead of time, that compares two of the three countries analyzed during the semester; and five short essays (ca. 1 paragraph each) that identify important terms from a list of ten presented on the exam.

2) Participation in discussion: This is important enough to be calculated as 20% of the overall grade in the course. Although the response papers will be a part of this grade, attendance and oral participation will also be components of the overall section evaluation.
3) Overall grading: Discussion: 20%; Book Review: 25%; Midterm: 25%; Final Exam: 30%.

4) Evaluation and Feedback: Across the semester we will engage in several short in-class evaluations of the learning process: what is working and what is not working in the course? The last 5-10 minutes of lecture time will occasionally be used for this purpose, and the feedback provided will help us improve as the course is in progress. Your candid assessments of the class will be extremely helpful.

5) Extra Credit/ Honors Option: Students interested in working directly with the professor on an extra credit or honors project should talk to me early in the semester. Essentially, this project will involve expanding the already assigned book review with between two and four additional sources from outside the course. In a 10-page paper due at the end of the semester, the student will place the featured book in broader context, drawing on course materials and the additional sources. PLEASE NOTE: Due to limits on my schedule, I can only work with a total of 5 people, so if you are interested please make an appointment to talk to me by the end of the third week of the semester. I will need an email confirmation from you after our conversation that lists the novels/memoirs you have chosen and suggests a theme to be pursued, latest by the end of the fifth week, if you expect to follow through on the project. I will accept people on a first come, first served basis and will announce in class when my limit is reached.

READINGS: The bulk of the course readings are in a Xerox Packet, available from Humanities Copy Center, 1650 Humanities, and on three-hour reserve at Helen C. White.

The following books will be available for purchase at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman, 257-6050, and on three-hour reserve at the College Library in Helen C. White:


Book Review: Everyone in the class must choose ONE of the following three (listed in alphabetical order):


• Mary Kay Vaughan, Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS, LECTURES, AND MOVIES

(Please Note: Readings are listed in the week they are discussed)

9/2- Introduction and Overview: Postcolonial Legacies, National Inclusion, and Revolution No Discussion Sections

UNIT I- Postcolonialism and Its Discontents, 1880-1940

Week 2, 9/7- 9/9- Struggling with Postcolonial Legacies: The Mexican Revolution, Origins and Process, 1880-1940
Week 3, 9/14-9/16- Peru's Persistent Postcolonialism (I)
9/14- The Origins of the Aristocratic Republic and the Limited Nation, 1880-1895
9/16- ROSH HASHANAH, Film in Class


Week 5, 9/28- 9/30- Postcolonialism Through the Back Door: Chile, Frontier War and the Limits of Democracy in the “Compromise State,” 1880-1940


***PAPER ON VAUGHAN DUE BY FRIDAY, OCT. 1***

UNIT II- The National-Popular Romance, 1940-1975

Week 6, 10/5- 10/7- Peru: A Late Attempt at the National-Popular (I)
10/5- Changes in the City and Countryside, 1940-1965
10/7- MIDTERM EXAM

NO NEW READING, NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Week 7- 10/12- 10/14- Mexico: The Golden Age of the Revolution, Promises of Modernity, Inclusion, and Autonomy, 1940-1968

Steven J. Bachelor, “Toiling for the ‘New Invaders’: Autoworkers, Transnational
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Week 9- 10/26- 10/28- Peru’s Late Attempt at the National-Popular (II): Peasant Movements, Military Revolution, and Guerrilla Options, 1965-1985


Week 10- 11/2- 11/4- Chile: The Unraveling of the Compromise State, 1940-1973


***PAPER ON KLUBOCK DUE BY FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5***

UNIT III- Authoritarianism, Repression and Transition, 1975-2004


Reading: Stern, Remembering Pinochet’s Chile, pp. 39-103.

Week 12- 11/16-11/18- The End of the Mexican Revolution: From Chiapas to the Fall of the PRI, 1994-2004


Week 13- 11/23- Why is Peru always so difficult to understand? Authoritarianism, Repression, and Sendero Luminoso, 1985-2004
11/25- THANKSGIVING

NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Week 14- 11/30- 12/2- Memory Struggles and Market Growth: Mexico, Peru, and Chile Compared, 1992-2004

Reading: Stern, Remembering Pinochet's Chile, pp. 104-154.

***PAPER ON STARN DUE BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3***

Week 15- 12/7- Wrapping Up: The Challenge of Globalization
12/9- Concluding Lecture and Evaluations

Discussion Sections: Review for Final Exam

FINAL EXAM: Saturday, Dec. 18, 5:05 p.m.