

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester II, 1991-1992

History 242- MODERN LATIN AMERICA: From Independence to the Present

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5125 Humanities
263-1822/263-1800

Course Description

In the past twenty-five years, Latin Americans have been at the forefront of innovation in literature, music, religion, politics, and social science. It is here, for example, that the world-famous "new novel" and "new song" movements--now so popular in Europe and the U.S.--originated. It is also here that concepts as diverse as liberation theology and dependency theory got their start. It is also in Latin America--Central America, to be precise--that the most recent rash of popular struggles focused world attention once again on the suffering and courage of Third World peoples. To these events have been added more recently the mobilizations and repression of people in Chile and the Peruvian Andes, and the pioneering transitions to parliamentary regimes and free-market economics that stand as examples (or warnings) to the newly liberalizing Eastern European nations.

At the same time, the region as a whole has continued to experience poverty, political violence, economic dependence, and underdevelopment. Indeed, if we can find a constant in the Latin American experience over the past two centuries it has been precisely the inability of the various nations to rise above the legacies of colonialism and of stark differences between rich and poor, Indian and Spanish, black and white. The realities of grinding injustice, bloody and internecine war, and economic backwardness stand in stark contrast to the intellectual, artistic, political, and religious creativity of Latin America's people.

One of the purposes of this course is to trace historically the origins of this contradiction. By examining closely some of the complexities of the region's history, we will begin to uncover the roots of Latin American creativity precisely in the imaginative adaptations people have been forced to invent in order to survive against difficult odds. This course will challenge you, as students, to understand the multiple ways in which Latin American society, culture, and politics both reflect, and struggle against, the burdens of history.

Requirements:

1) Two short (ca. five pages) papers, inspired by the assigned readings. Your task is to use one of the readings, whether book or document, as a starting off point for a thought paper in which you explore an issue or issues suggested to you in the combination of that reading and related discussions/lectures. If the reading you choose is a book, please wait until all the pages have been assigned and discussed before writing on it.

- 2) Exams: (a) An in-class midterm, consisting of one essay question selected from a list of three review questions handed out ahead of time; and (b) A final exam, consisting of one comprehensive essay question, one essay on the second half of the course, and an I.D. section also based on the second half of the course.
- 3) Honors/Extra Credit Option: A semester project, consisting of an 8 to 10-page life history. You detail the experiences of a specific individual, in a specific country, over a period of forty years. The criteria for defining the individual will be established in consultation with the T.A. and/or the professor. In addition to the life history itself, you will also present a 1-page proposal for the project, due the fifth week of class, and an abstract of 1-2 pages, to be handed in with the life history. In the abstract, you should explain what you are trying to accomplish in your life history, and honestly assess how well you think you meet your goals. The details of the project, how to carry it out and what it entails, can be discussed with the T.A. or professor periodically throughout the semester. As an extra credit or honors option, the project is undertaken in lieu of one of the short papers.
- 4) Grading: Short papers: 30% (15% each); midterm: 20%; final exam: 30%; discussion: 20%; honors/extra credit option: to be discussed with professor and T.A.

List of Assigned Readings:

- Argueta, Manlio, One Day of Life (New York: Random House, 1983).
- Beezley, William and Judith Ewell, The Human Tradition in Latin America: The Twentieth Century (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1987).
- Diacon, Todd, Millenarian Vision, Capitalist Reality: Brazil's Contestado Rebellion, 1912-1916 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).
- Mallon, Florencia E., The Defense of Community in Peru's Central Highlands: Peasant Struggle and Capitalist Transition, 1860-1940 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983).
- Mastretta, Angeles, Mexican Bolero (London: Penguin, 1991).
- Winn, Peter, Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and the Chilean Road to Socialism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, DISCUSSIONS, AND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I- FROM COLONIES TO NATION-STATES? (1810-1930)

Week 1- The Colonial Heritage
1/22- Introduction
1/24- Independence and its Aftermath
No Reading; No Discussion Sections

Week 2- Neocolonialism vs. Autarky, 1825-1860

1/27- Between the Masses and the World Economy: Haiti and Paraguay

1/29- The Frustrating Search for Stability: Mexico

1/31- The Exceptions: Brazil and Cuba

Reading: Mallon, pp. 3-57.

Document # 1

Week 3- The Penetration of Capital, 1860-1930

2/3- Cuba

2/5- Bolivia

2/7- Brazil

Reading: Mallon, pp. 57-243.

Week 4- Nineteenth-Century Politics and the Nation-State, 1850-1900

2/10- The Birth of an Authoritarian State: Mexico

2/12- The Struggle over Democracy: Chile

2/14- A Country "Born Liberal"? Argentina

Reading: Document # 2.

Week 5- Indians, Peasants, and the Nation

2/17- Yaqui Resistance and Survival

2/19- The Construction of Neocolonialism in the Andes

2/21- The Mexican Revolution

Reading: Diacon, entire.

Week 6- The Emerging Balance of Power

2/24- The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires

2/26- The Violent Result: El Salvador, 1932

2/28- Map Quiz and Review Session for Midterm

NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS; Begin Mastreta.

UNIT II- THE FRUITION OF CAPITALISM, 1920-1960

Week 7- Crisis: The Great Depression

3/2- MIDTERM IN CLASS

3/4- Authoritarianism vs. Popular Front: Argentina, Brazil, and Chile

3/6- A Populist Alternative: Cárdenas in Mexico

Reading: Mastreta, Mexican Bolero; Beezley and Ewell, pp. 1-13; 27-40.

*****SPRING BREAK, MARCH 7-15*****

Week 8- The Development of Capitalism in Agriculture

3/16- Continuity and Change: The Great Estate

3/18- The Capitalist Plantation

3/20- The Peasant Response: Politics and Consciousness

Reading: Mallon, pp. 247-348.

Week 9- The Development of Capitalism in Industry

3/23- Industrial Capitalism and the Native Entrepreneur

3/25- The Role of Foreign Capital

3/27- The Rise of the Working Class

Reading: Beezley and Ewell, pp. 15-25; 59-88; 103-50.

FIRST PAPER DUE BY FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH, AT 5:00 P.M.

Week 10- The Populist Solution

3/30- Peronist Argentina

4/1- The Bolivian Revolution

4/3- Populism and Intervention in Guatemala

Reading: Beezley and Ewell, pp. 89-102; 167-80.

UNIT III- REFORM, REVOLUTION, AND REPRESSION, 1959-1979

Week 11- Reform or Revolution? The Cuban Case

4/6- The Cuban Revolution: The Beginnings, 1959-1970

4/8- Attempts at Institutionalization in Cuba, 1970--

4/10- Cuba: The Overall Record in a Latin American Context

Reading: Winn, pp. vii-136; Beezely and Ewell, pp. 41-57; 231-44; 283-93.

Week 12- Utopian Dreams, Authoritarian Nightmares

4/13- The Origins of Authoritarianism: The Chilean Case

4/15- The Face of Authoritarianism in Latin America

*****EASTER BREAK--NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS*****

Week 13- The New Face of Struggle

4/20- The New Role of the Catholic Church

4/22- The New Latin American Feminism

4/24- The Sandinista Revolution

Reading: Winn, pp. 139-256.

UNIT IV- WHITHER LATIN AMERICA? THE 1980s and 1990s

Week 14- The Face of the Future?

4/27- Bloodsoaked Stalemates and Negotiated Solutions: El Salvador and Guatemala

4/29- Drugs and the Dirty War in the Andes

5/1- "Democratization" in the Southern Cone

Reading: Argueta, entire

Week 15- The Magic of the Free Market?

5/4- The "Success Stories:" Mexico and Chile

5/6- Fujishock and Two-Faced Peronisms

5/8- Concluding Lecture and Evaluations

Review for Final in Discussion Sections.

SECOND PAPER DUE BY WEDNESDAY, MAY 6th AT 5:00 P.M.