

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester II, 1992-1993

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 (ALL BOOKS IN UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE AND ON RESERVE IN HELEN C. WHITE):

Argueta, Manlio. One Day of Life (New York: Random House, 1983).

Bush, Barbara Slave Women in Caribbean Society (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

Diacon, Todd, Millenarian Vision, Capitalist Reality: Brazil's Contestado Rebellion, 1912-1916 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).

Gould, Jeffrey, To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

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).

Recommended: Benjamin Keen, A History of Latin America, Volume II: Independence to the Present, Fourth Edition (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992).

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, DISCUSSIONS, AND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I- THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Part I: Mexico and the Andes

Week 1- From Colonies to Nation-States?

1/20- Introduction
1/22- The Process of Independence in Mexico and the Andes
Reading: Mallon, pp. 12-122.

Week 2- Indians, Peasants, and the Nation
1/25- The Frustrating Search for Stability: Mexico
1/27- Capitalism, Neocolonialism, and Regional Conflict in Peru
and Bolivia
1/29- The Birth of An Authoritarian State: Mexico
Reading: Mallon, 123-243.

Part II: Central America and the Caribbean

Week 3- Between the Masses and the World Economy
2/1- The Historical Construction of the Circum-Caribbean Region
2/3- Neocolonialism vs. Autarky: The Haitian Revolution
2/5- Cuba: A "Model" Colony Develops Capitalism
Reading: Bush, xi-82.

*****FIRST FILM ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3- 7:00 P.M. IN EDUCATIONAL
SCIENCES, 1025 W. JOHNSON, ROOM 204*****

The Mission: U.S.A. 1986. English. 126 min. Color. Directed by Roland Joffe, starring Robert DeNiro and Jeremy Irons. Historical drama about a soldier and a priest who together try to protect indigenous peoples in Paraguay from competing Portuguese and Spanish colonialisms.

Week 4- Whose Independence?
2/8- Liberalism and Indigenous Resistance in Guatemala
2/10- Cuba: A Late Attempt at Independence
2/12- The United States and Neocolonialism
Reading: Bush, 83-167

Part III: The Southern Cone

Week 5- Between the Caribbean and the Southern Cone: Brazil
2/15- A "Peaceful" Transition to Independence?
2/17- The Development of Capitalism
2/19- From Empire to Republic
Reading: Diacon, entire.

Week 6- Nineteenth-Century Politics and the Nation-State
2/22- The Struggle over Democracy: Chile
2/24- A Country "Born Liberal"? Argentina
2/26- The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires
NO NEW READING; REVIEW FOR MIDTERM IN DISCUSSION

UNIT II- THE FRUITION OF CAPITALISM, 1920-1960

Week 7- The Emerging Balance of Power
3/1- **MIDTERM AND MAP QUIZ IN CLASS**
3/3- Cities, Workers, and Feminists, 1890-1920
3/5- The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920
*****SPRING BREAK, MARCH 6-14; NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS 3/1-3/5*****

Week 8- Crisis: The Great Depression

3/15- Violent Responses: Cuba and El Salvador

3/17- Authoritarianism vs. Popular Front: Argentina, Brazil, and Chile

3/19- A Populist Alternative: Cárdenas in Mexico

Reading: Gould, pp. 1-82.

Week 9- The Development of Capitalism in Agriculture

FIRST PAPER (ON BUSH OR DIACON) DUE MONDAY, 22 MARCH, AT 5:00 P.M.

3/22 The Great Estate: Chile in Comparative Perspective

3/24- The Capitalist Plantation: Peru and Brazil

3/26- The Peasant Response: Politics and Consciousness in Brazil and Colombia

Reading: Gould, pp. 83-204.

SECOND FILM ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24- 7:00 P.M., 204 EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Don Segundo Sombra: Argentina. 1969. Spanish with English subtitles. 110 min. Color. Directed by Manuel Antín, with Juan Carballido, Juan Carlos Gene, Soledad Silveyra, Alejandra Boero. From a novel by Ricardo Güiraldes. Don Segundo Sombra, an old gaucho, is the mentor for Fabio Cáceres who learns the moral and human values of the gaucho as he grows to adulthood.

Week 10- The Development of Capitalism in Industry

3/29- Industry and "National" Capital

3/31- The Role of Foreign Capital

4/2 - The Rise of the Working Class in Chile and Brazil

Reading: Mallon, pp. 247-348.

Week 11- New Pressures and the Search for New Answers: Populism

4/5- Peronist Argentina

4/7- Populism and Intervention in Guatemala

THIRD FILM ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7- 7:00 P.M., 204 EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Hasta Cierta Punto (Up to a Certain Point): Cuba. 1983. Spanish with English subtitles. 75 min. Color. Written and directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, with Oscar Alvarez, Mirta Ibarra, Omar Valdés, and Coralía Veloz. A filmmaker makes a film to "help men understand their machismo," and to explore why, despite accepting the Revolution, men's attitudes towards women and equality have not changed--why they accept a new social order only "up to a certain point."

EASTER BREAK, APRIL 9-11; NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS

UNIT III- REVOLUTION, AUTHORITARIANISM AND REDEMOCRATIZATION,
1959-1992

Week 12- The Revolutionary Option: Cuba and Nicaragua

4/12- Cuba, 1959-85

4/14- Cuba: The Present Crisis in Historical Perspective

4/16- The Sandinista Revolution

Reading: Gould, pp. 205-305.

Week 13- Utopian Dreams, Authoritarian Nightmares

4/19- The Origins of Authoritarianism: The Chilean Case

4/21- The Face of Authoritarianism in Latin America

4/23- Bloodsoaked Stalemates and Negotiated Solutions: El Salvador and Guatemala

Reading: Argueta, entire.

*****FOURTH FILM ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21- 7:00 P.M., 204 EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES*****

La Historia Oficial (The Official Story): Argentina. 1986. Spanish with English Subtitles. 112 min. Color. Directed by Luis Puenzo with Norma Aleandro, Hector Altiero, Amalia Castro. Academy Award for Best Foreign film. Based on a true story, about an upper-class Argentine woman who adopts a child. Driven to learn the truth about the girl's background, the protagonist begins to suspect that the child may have been stolen from "los desaparecidos," the people tortured and killed by the military Junta that ruled Argentina in the mid- to late 1970s.

Week 14- The New Face of Struggle

4/26- The New Role of the Catholic Church

4/28- The New Latin American Feminism

4/30- "Democratization" in the Southern Cone

NO NEW READING: Begin Review in Discussion Section.

Week 15- The Face of the Future?

*****SECOND PAPER (ON MALLON, GOULD OR ARGUETA) DUE MONDAY, 3 MAY, AT 5:00 P.M.*****

5/3- The Success of the Free Market? Chile and Mexico

5/5- Drugs and the Dirty War in the Andes

5/7- Concluding Lecture and Evaluations

Continue Review for Final in Discussion Sections.

*****FIFTH FILM ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 5- 7:00 P.M., 204 EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES*****

La Boca del Lobo (The Lion's Den): Peru, 1988. 111 min. Spanish with English subtitles. Color. Directed by Francisco J. Lombardi, with Miguel Angel Bueno and Antonio Vega. The Peruvian army takes control of Chuspi, a small village isolated in the Andes by the revolutionary group Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path). Vitín Luna (Antonio Vega) and the other young soldiers must face an invisible, perhaps superior, force. Their unit is commanded by a brutal lieutenant who declares the entire village guilty of treason. In the face of this crisis, Vitín must choose between blind obedience and his own conscience.