

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester II, 2009-2010

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--though not human rights abuses-- 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. Most recently, the rightist Nationalist Action Party seems to be consolidating its control of the presidency. 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. In the process of transition back to democratic rule, Chile has carried out a deepening process of reckoning with torturers and elected its first female president, a socialist doctor like Salvador Allende. 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. And yet, in the last few years, a truth commission was formed to bring to light the arguably genocidal violence carried out against the highland population by both army and guerrillas.

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:

Week 1- 19-21 Jan.- GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE THEMES

UNIT I- Mexico

Tanalís Padilla, *Rural resistance in the land of Zapata : the Jaramillista Movement and the myth of the Pax Priísta, 1940-1962*

Week 2- 26-28 Jan.

Week 3- 2-4 Feb.

Week 4- 9-11 Feb.

Week 5- 16-18 Feb.

UNIT II- Guatemala

Daniel Wilkinson, *Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal and Forgetting in Guatemala*

Week 6- 23-25 Feb.

Week 7- 2-4 Mar.

Week 8- 9-11 Mar.

Week 9- 16-18 Mar.

UNIT III- Chile

Steve J. Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998*

Week 10- 23-25 Mar.

SPRING BREAK, 27 MARCH-4 APRIL

Week 11- 6-8 April

Week 12- 13-15 April

Week 13- 20-22 April

GENERAL OVERVIEW, REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

Week 14- 27-29 April

Week 15- 4-6 May