

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History  
Semester I, 2015-2016  
History 242- MODERN LATIN AMERICA, 1898 to the Present  
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Office Hours:  
Tues.-Thurs. 10 am-12 pm  
Sign-up appointments (sheet next to my door) Mon-Wed. 4-5:30 pm

Course Description:

From the painful events surrounding migration into the United States from Mexico and Central America, to current U.S. attempts to resume diplomatic relations with Cuba, the situation of our hemisphere cries out for historical explanation. In this course we will combine reflections on the historical and structural causes of today's events with a focus on the human experiences of the people involved. Reading sources produced by historians as well as film, images, and published primary sources, we will explore the historical experiences of Latin America's diverse peoples, placing political conflict and socioeconomic inequality in cultural, human and transnational context. Through lectures, discussion, and written assignments we will also learn more about history as a discipline and the tools historians use, and reflect on their application in our world more broadly.

Starting with the Spanish-American War (1898), we will consider a host of primary materials, including writings by Cuban intellectual José Martí, who at the end of the nineteenth century still referred to the full western hemisphere as "Our America." Yet today in our country, as we all know, the term "America" is synonymous with the United States of America. When and how did the fortunes of the United States and the rest of the Western hemisphere, today known as Latin America, diverge to the point that a geographical term referring to an entire hemisphere was applied only to one country?

We will trace how European colonialism generated Latin American societies divided by race and class, and then examine how the United States's increasingly powerful presence in the hemisphere was one of several factors that helped block Latin America's attempts at autonomous development. Although during the Great Depression of the 1930s most countries in the Americas – including the United States during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt – had no alternative but to engage in some form of state-interventionist policy, some of the policies worked better than others. In Latin America, what seemed to work best were the projects that involve the popular classes, especially workers and peasants, in the development of a national identity and community. At the same time, given deep divisions between rich and poor, state-directed attempts at autonomous development were also very conflictual within each country. We will then explore the economic and human implications the social and class conflicts that ultimately destroyed the viability of state-directed development, ending with a reflection on how this helps us better understand the current situation of the hemisphere.

### **Goals of the Course:**

Keeping in mind that this is an introductory course, we will use the history of Latin America from 1898 to the present to introduce you to the ways in which historians think and work. Through a combination of lectures, readings, discussion, and written assignments, we will:

1) Attempt to understand past societies on the basis of available, even if limited, evidence, and reflect on the human implications of the past for us today. Among the questions we will ask are:

- a) What was the nature of daily life?
- b) Who had power and who didn't, and why?
- c) How did a person's or a group's position in society affect their beliefs about themselves, their ability for conscious action, and the ultimate success or failure of their actions?
- d) How did this particular society become what it was?
- e) Can we apply this new knowledge to help us understand the present state of Latin American societies, and their relationship to the United States and to other parts of the world?

2) Since our attempt to recreate an image of past societies must rely on partial, dispersed, and often contradictory forms of evidence, we will need to:

- a) Analyze sources in relation to and in contradiction with each other, using their points of disagreement as a way to deepen the analysis of the whole.  
Be conscious of the ways in which our own assumptions, taken from our own cultures and historical moment, affect the kinds of questions we ask.

**Objectivity, in this context, does not mean avoiding or hiding our own beliefs, but working from an understanding of what they are. Objectivity, while absolutely crucial to our work, is not an endpoint, but a process.**

After collecting and analyzing these dispersed and contradictory sources, as all historians do, we will put the evidence we have collected together into an overall narrative. We will organize this story around two different, but related, thematic threads:

- **change over time** (chronology); and
- **unexpected connections** among previously dispersed pieces of evidence (causal and conceptual linkages).

### **Course Requirements and Assignments:**

The readings, discussion topics, and assignments in the course are designed to help us meet the goals outlined above. Each unit will contain a week in which we step back from the routine of lectures and readings to think through a major theme in the class, and to use what we are learning to analyze, in lecture, a primary document. The unit will then conclude with a paper that places the theme of the unit into a specific chronological and geographical context. In each of these written assignments, you will be expected to use evidence from lectures, readings, and discussion to construct an argument. The analysis will also need to be grounded in the relevant lecture and discussion materials. A worksheet will be provided two weeks before each due date to help students think through their papers in consultation with the professor and their colleagues.

Each unit paper, 5-7 pages in length, will center on the analysis of a document read in class and will ask you to compare it to other readings, whether primary or secondary, and other sources, including images and film. Each assignment is designed with two goals in mind: first, to help you review, summarize, and understand the materials in that unit; and second, to practice one of the main skills historians use. The last 25% of your grade will depend on your participation in class, defined both as attendance, and as useful contributions to our discussion. If, after we discuss the nature of useful contributions, this is still unclear to you, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

**Honors Credit is available in the course.** Students interested in honors credit will work individually with me, and need to meet with me **by the third week in the semester** to work out a viable project.

**Required Reading:**

**Please Note: The books listed below are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also on three-hour reserve at the College Library in Helen C. White.**

Daniel Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1902-2001* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

**There is a xerox packet available at the L&S Copy Center, Sewell Hall, 1180 Observatory Drive, Room 6120 (hours: 7:45 am-11:45 am; 12:30 pm-4:00 pm). Its contents are listed, in order of assignment, at the end of the syllabus. There will also be copies on three-hour reserve at the College Library in Helen C. White.**

**A Statement on Grading Policy:**

- 1) Criteria for grading: in general, an assignment receives an A when it combines three things:
  - Originality or a willingness to take intellectual and/or analytical risks;
  - Command of the lecture, reading, and other materials in the class and an effective use of these as evidence to back up your points;
  - A writing style that is clear and grammatically correct so that it doesn't get in the way of the content of the assignment.
  
- 2) Grading is not an exact science, and mistakes can be made. If you feel that you have been given a grade in error, you need to take the following steps, in the order listed:
  - Reread your assignment. Sometimes what you think you argued did not entirely make it onto the page, and it's important to reread and make sure that your impression of what you said is actually what you did say.
  - If after rereading you still feel that an error was made, ask me to reread the assignment,

giving specific examples of what you feel you did not get credit for.

### **SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, AND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:**

#### **Unit I- Colonial Legacies, Development, and Internal Contradictions, 1898-1950**

Week 1, Colonial Legacies (I): Fragmented Nations and Foreign Intervention

Wed., 2 Sept.: Explanation of the Syllabus and Introduction to the Cuban Case (including the reading). **PLEASE NOTE: It would be ideal for you to go over the documents before Friday's class. There is quite a lot of material, and rest assured that we will be going over them during lecture, and discussing them; but having at least a first knowledge of their contents will help you benefit more from the discussion.**

Fri., 4 Sept.: Discussion of Documents:

- Introduction by the Editors to the section called "The Struggle for Independence," in Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr and Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, eds., *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), p.113.
- Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, "Freedom and Slavery," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 115-17.
- "An Historical and True Account of the Cruel Massacre and Slaughter of 20,000,000 of People in the West Indies by the SPANIARDS. Written by BISHOP LAS CASAS, AN EYE-WITNESS," Published by J.B., Translated by N.M.L. from the French Edition, printed in 1620, Section entitled "THE SPANIARDS NOW IN CUBA," written by N.M.L., pp. 12-20; and pp. 21-28.
- Fifty-Fifth Congress, Second Session, "The Devastation of Counterinsurgency," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 139-42.  
José Martí, "José Martí's 'Our America'," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 122-27.

#### **NO CLASSES ON MONDAY, SEPT. 7 BECAUSE OF LABOR DAY**

Week 2, 9-11 Sept.-Colonial Legacies (II): The Struggle for the Nation in Mexico, 1910-1930

Reading: Friedrich Katz, "Pancho Villa and the Attack on Columbus, New Mexico," *American Historical Review*, 83:1 (February 1978), pp. 101-130.

#### **WORKSHEET FOR FIRST PAPER WILL BE HANDED OUT ON WEDNESDAY, 9/9**

Week 3, 14-18 Sept.-Colonial Legacies (III): The Limitations of Export Production and Foreign Investment

Reading: \*Fernando Ortiz, "The Cuban Counterpoint," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 239-43.  
\*Lawrence A. Clayton, "William Russell Grace: Merchant Adventurer," in Judith Ewell and William H. Beezley, *The Human Tradition in Latin America: The Nineteenth Century* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1989), pp. 189-202.  
**\*Document:** T. Esquivel Obregón, "Labor, Its Problems and Their Solution in Latin America," in Marrion Wilcox and George Edwin Rines (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Latin America* (New York: The Encyclopedia Americana Corporation, 1917), pp. 40-54.

Week 4, 21-25 Sept.- Colonial Legacies (IV): Export Production, the State, and Obstacles to Change

**PLEASE NOTE: NO LECTURE ON WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER BECAUSE OF YOM KIPPUR**

Documents to be Discussed Friday, 25 Sept., in Class:

- Raúl Prebisch, "Latin America: A Problem in Development," 1970/71 Hackett Memorial Lecture, Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin.
- Jacques Chonchol, "Land Tenure and Development in Latin America," in Claudio Veliz (ed.), *Obstacles to Change in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 75-90.

## **Unit II- Popular Mobilizations and the Rise and Fall of the Activist State, 1940-1990**

Week 5, 28 Sept.-2 Oct.- How Far Can the Pie Expand? Populism

Reading: \*Eduardo Elena, "What the People Want: State Planning and Political Participation in Peronist Argentina, 1946-1955," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37 (2005), pp. 81-108.

\*Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. 45-84.

**\*\*\*\*PAPER FOR UNIT I DUE IN CLASS, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7\*\*\*\***

Week 6, 5-9 Oct.- Reform or Revolution? Guatemala and Cuba in the 1950s

Reading: \* Rosalie Schwartz, "The Invasion of the Tourists," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 244-52.

\*Fidel Castro, "History Will Absolve Me," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 306-14.

\*Herbert L. Matthews, "The Cuban Story in the New York Times," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 326-332.

**We will also view the first part of Saul Landau's film about Cuba, "The Uncompromising Revolution" (1988)**

Week 7, 12-16 Oct.- Guerrillas in Power: The Case of Cuba

Reading: \*"Che Guevara on Revolution: Letter to Carlos Quijano, Editor of the Montevideo Weekly 'Marcha'," in Jay Mallin (ed.), *"Che" Guevara on Revolution: A Documentary Overview* (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1969), pp. 128-43.

\*Che Guevara, "The Essence of Guerilla Warfare," excerpt in John Charles Chasteen and James A. Wood (eds.), *Problems in modern Latin American history : sources and interpretations*, pp. 253-258.

\*Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins and Michael Scott, "How the Poor Got More," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 344-53.

**We will also view the second part of "The Uncompromising Revolution"**

Week 8, 19-23 Oct.- Revolution in Central America, 1979-1990

Reading:

\*Daniel Wilkinson, *Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 200-251.

\*V́ctor Montejo, *Voices from Exile: Violence and Survival in Modern Maya History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), pp. 42-104.

We will also begin viewing the movie "El Norte," by Gregory Nava, a film about the civil war in Guatemala and the efforts of siblings Enrique and Rosa to make it through Mexico to the United States. In conjunction with this we will further discuss "One Man's Testimony," pp. 82-104; and Wilkinson, Section IV (pp. 204-215); and "The Guerrillas" (pp. 217-251).

**WORKSHEET FOR SECOND PAPER WILL BE HANDED OUT ON FRIDAY, 10/23**

Week 9, 26-30 Oct.- Was Revolution Ever Viable? Cuba in Latin American Perspective

Reading: Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 1-135.

\***Document for the Week:** "A Mapuche Land Takeover, 1970."

Week 10, 2-6 Nov.- Crisis, Repression and the Return of the Free Market

Reading: Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, pp. 136-248.

**Unit III- Neoliberalism and the Erosion of Human Rights, 1973 to the Present**

Week 11, 9-13 Nov.- Free Trade and Globalization: an Overview of the Washington Consensus

Reading: Daniel Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), pp. xi-92.

**\*\*\*PAPER FOR UNIT II DUE IN CLASS ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13 (not to worry...Friday the 13 will not make this paper unlucky...☺)\*\*\***

Week 12, 16-20 Nov.- Free Trade in Latin America: Mobility of Capital, but not of Labor?

Reading: Jaffee, *Brewing Justice*, pp. 93-198.

**THANKSGIVING WEEK, 23-27 November:** Because everyone's plans are complicated this week, we will not be having regular lectures. Instead, on Monday we will finish viewing "El Norte" and begin reflecting on its implications for our understanding of the civil war in Guatemala.

**THERE WILL BE NO CLASSES THE WEDNESDAY OF THANKSGIVING WEEK.**

Week 13, 30 Nov.-4 Dec.- Free Trade, Fair Trade: A Move Toward Social Justice?

Reading:

- Jaffee, *Brewing Justice*, pp. 199-266.
- Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 1-49.

We will also view the documentary "Voice of a Mountain," about the Guatemalan coffee

cooperative Santa Anita and filmed in collaboration between the cooperative and filmmakers Tyler Rumph and Michael Field.

**WORKSHEET FOR THIRD PAPER WILL BE HANDED OUT ON MONDAY, 11/30**

Week 14, 7-11 Dec.- The Crisis of Nation-States and the Problem of Human Rights

Reading:

- Patricia Verdugo, *Chile, Pinochet, and the Caravan of Death*, translated by Marcelo Montecino (University of Miami: North-South Center Press, 2000-2001), pp. ix-58.
- Weld, *Paper Cadavers*, pp. 50-118.

Week 15, 14 Dec.- What Happens on the Other End? Death, Impunity, and New Forms of Violation

Reading:

- Weld, *Paper Cadavers*, pp. 119-210 (and through 256 if needed, or if inspired).
- Daniel Wilkinson, *Silence on the Mountain*, "The Defeated" (pp. 337-344).

**\*\*NO EXAM IN THE CLASS; PAPER FOR UNIT III DUE LATEST ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES, MONDAY, 12/14\*\***

**LIST OF READINGS IN XEROX PACKET**

- 1) Introduction by the Editors to the section called "The Struggle for Independence," in Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr and Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, eds., *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), p.113.
- 2) Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, "Freedom and Slavery," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 115-17.
- 3) New York Journal, "The Explosion of the *Maine*," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 130-34.
- 4) Fifty-Fifth Congress, Second Session, "The Devastation of Counterinsurgency," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 139-42.
- 5) "An Historical and True Account of the Cruel Massacre and Slaughter of 20,000,000 of People in the West Indies by the SPANIARDS. Written by BISHOP LAS CASAS, AN EYE-WITNESS," Published by J.B., Translated by N.M.L. from the French Edition, printed in 1620, Section entitled "THE SPANIARDS NOW IN CUBA," written by N.M.L., pp. 12-20; and pp. 21-28.
- 6) José Martí, "José Martí's 'Our America'," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 122-27.
- 7) Friedrich Katz, "Pancho Villa and the Attack on Columbus, New Mexico," *American Historical Review*, 83:1 (February 1978), pp. 101-130.
- 8) Fernando Ortiz, "The Cuban Counterpoint," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 239-43.
- 9) Lawrence A. Clayton, "William Russell Grace: Merchant Adventurer," in Judith Ewell and William H. Beezeley, *The Human Tradition in Latin America: The Nineteenth Century* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1989), pp. 189-202.
- 10) T. Esquivel Obregón, "Labor, Its Problems and Their Solution in Latin America," in Marrion Wilcox and George Edwin Rines (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Latin America* (New York: The Encyclopedia Americana Corporation, 1917), pp. 40-54.
- 11) Raúl Prebisch, "Latin America: A Problem in Development," 1970/71 Hackett Memorial Lecture, Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin.
- 12) Jacques Chonchol, "Land Tenure and Development in Latin America," in Claudio Veliz (ed.), *Obstacles to Change in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 75-90.
- 13) Eduardo Elena, "What the People Want: State Planning and Political Participation in Peronist Argentina, 1946-1955," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37 (2005), pp. 81-108.
- 14) Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. 45-84.
- 15) Rosalie Schwartz, "The Invasion of the Tourists," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 244-52.



- 16) Fidel Castro, "History Will Absolve Me," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 306-14.
- 17) Herbert L. Matthews, "The Cuban Story in the New York Times," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 326-332.
- 18) "Che Guevara on Revolution: Letter to Carlos Quijano, Editor of the Montevideo Weekly 'Marcha'," in Jay Mallin (ed.), *"Che" Guevara on Revolution: A Documentary Overview* (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1969), pp. 128-43.
- 19) Che Guevara, "The Essence of Guerilla Warfare," excerpt in John Charles Chasteen and James A. Wood (eds.), *Problems in modern Latin American history : sources and nterpretations*, pp. 253-258.
- 20) Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins and Michael Scott, "How the Poor Got More," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 344-53.
- 21) Margaret Randall, "The Family Code," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 399-405.
- 22) Juan Antonio Blanco and Medea Benjamin, "From Utopianism to Institutionalization," in *The Cuba Reader*, pp. 433-42.
- 23) Daniel Wilkinson, *Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 200-251 and 337-344.
- 24) Víctor Montejo, *Voices from Exile: Violence and Survival in Modern Maya History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), pp. 42-104.
- 25) "A Mapuche Land Takeover, 1970," Selected Testimonies and Introduction by Florencia Mallon, *The Chile Reader: History, Culture, politics*, Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, Thomas Miller Klubock, Nara B. Milavich, and Peter Winn (eds). (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 386-392.
- 26) Patricia Verdugo, *Chile, Pinochet, and the Caravan of Death*, translated by Marcelo Montecino (University of Miami: North-South Center Press, 2000-2001), pp. ix-58.