

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History  
Semester I, 2005-2006

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

Florencia E. Mallon  
5125 Humanities  
263-1822: femallon@wisc.edu  
Office Hours:  
Monday, 2:30-4:30  
(sign-up appointments; sheet posted by my office door)  
Wednesday, 11:00-12:00 (walk-in)  
Friday, 11:00-12:30 (walk-in)

Teaching Assistants: Julie Gibbings  
Ethan Simonowitz

Course Description:

Twenty countries, two hundred years, fifteen weeks: this is indeed the whirlwind tour!! In order to give meaning to this vast undertaking, this course provides a chronological, topical, and regional approach to the study of 19th and 20th century Latin America. Using film, primary documents, and historical monographs, it explores the distinct historical experiences of Latin America's diverse peoples, placing political conflict and socioeconomic inequality in cultural and human context.

Each week combines lectures with the discussion of two kinds of readings: a course text that provides short essays and primary documents organized around key problems and issues across Latin American history; and two historical monographs that offer case studies of how history is lived, experienced, and acted upon by people often considered marginal to the centers of power. All of this is then supplemented with the viewing and analysis of three movies listed in the syllabus, each of which provides a distinct view of a major issue also being discussed in readings and lectures. Writing assignments then provide a way to link these different elements together.

Course Requirements:

1) Two short papers, 3-4 pages each, that combine an analysis of one of the movies shown in class with the relevant lecture and reading materials, in order to explore a theme of importance to the history of Latin America in that period. At the time of each film's showing you will receive a handout with instructions for the paper, as well as a list of possible issues to be treated and the relevant readings. Please note: Although we will be seeing three films, and you are all strongly encouraged to see all three, you are responsible for writing papers on **two**.

2) Exams: (a) An in-class midterm, consisting of one essay question from a sheet of review questions handed out ahead of time; and (b) A final exam, consisting of one comprehensive

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essay question from a list of three review questions handed out ahead of time; and five short essays (about a page each) that explain terms selected from a list of ten that will appear on the exam.

3) **Honors Option:** To be worked out individually with me. Please see me by the third week in the semester if you are interested in honors credit for the course.

4) Grading: Short papers: 30% (15% each); midterm: 20%; final exam: 30%; discussion: 20%.

Required Books:

Please Note: The titles are available exclusively at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman, 257-6050, and on three-hour reserve at the College Library in Helen C. White.

1) Barnet, Miguel, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, Rev. Ed., trans. W. Nick Hill (Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1994).

2) Chasteen, John Charles and James A. Wood (eds.), *Problems in Modern Latin American History: Sources and Interpretations*, Rev. and Updated Ed. (Lanham, MD: SR Books, 2005).

3) Grandin, Greg, *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

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

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

**UNIT I- From Colonies to Nation-States?**

Week 1, 2-7 Sept.- Human Geography and Colonial Background

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 1-21.

Grandin, pp. 25-53.

**NO DISCUSSION THIS WEEK DUE TO LABOR DAY**

Week 2, 9-14 Sept.- Imagining Alternative Orders: The Nation from Below (1780-1850)

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 23-44.

Grandin, pp. 55-98.

MOVIE: "The Last Supper" (La Última Cena), Cuba, Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficos, 1976 (1 hr. 55 min.). Produced by Santiago Lalpur and Camilo Vives; Directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea; written by Tomás González, María Eugenia Haya, and Tomás Gutiérrez Alea.

**\*\*\*SHOWING WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 13 AT 7:30 P.M., LOCATION TBA\*\*\***

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Week 3, 16-21 Sept- What Will the New Society Look Like? (1820-1860)

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 77-101.  
Grandin, pp. 21-24, 91-158.

Week 4, 23-28 Sept.- When the Dust Cleared (1850-1880)

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 45-76.  
Barnet, pp. 17-156.

**PAPER ON "THE LAST SUPPER" DUE FRIDAY, SEPT. 30<sup>TH</sup> AT 5:00 P.M.**

**UNIT II- Consolidation of a Postcolonial Order, 1880-1930**

Week 5, 30 Sept.-5 Oct.- Political and Economic Changes

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 127-148.  
Grandin, pp. 159-97; Barnet, pp. 159-200.

Week 6, 7-12 Oct.- New Social Movements

**MIDTERM EXAM: No New Reading; No Discussion Sections**

Week 7, 14-19 Oct.- Social Reform and Dreams of Inclusion

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 149-213.

**MOVIE: "Afroargentines" (Afroargentinos), Diego Ceballos and Jorge Fortes, Documentary (75 minutes), 2002.**

**\*\*\*SHOWING WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19, 7:30 P.M., LOCATION TBA\*\*\***

**UNIT III- The National-Popular Romance, 1930-1973**

Week 8, 21-26 Oct.-The Cost of Dependence

Reading: Mallon, pp. 1-91.

Week 9, 28-31 Oct., 2 Nov.- When States Took the Lead

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 214-222, 227-249.

**PAPER ON "AFROARGENTINES" DUE FRIDAY, NOV. 4<sup>TH</sup> AT 5:00 P.M.**

Week 10, 4-9 Nov.- Revolutionary Solutions (I): National Populism or National Liberation?

Reading: Grandin, pp. 198-219.  
Mallon, pp. 92-135.

Week 11, 11-16 Nov.- Revolutionary Solutions (II): Reform or Revolution?

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 251-278.

**MOVIE: "The Motorcycle Diaries" (Diarios de Motocicleta), directed by Walter Salles (128 minutes), 2004.**

**\*\*\*SHOWING WEDNESDAY, NOV. 16 AT 7:30 P.M., LOCATION TBA\*\*\***

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**UNIT IV- Globalization, Neocolonialism, and Postnational Dreams, 1973-2000**

Week 12, 18-23 Nov.- The Making of the Global Economy

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 279-315.

Week 13, 28 Nov.-2 Dec.- The Making of the New World Order

Reading: Mallon, pp. 136-183.

**PAPER ON "THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES" DUE FRIDAY, DEC. 2<sup>ND</sup> AT 5:00 P.M.**

Week 14, 5-9 Dec.- The Many Faces of the New World Order (I)

Reading: Chasteen and Wood, pp. 222-26, 315-22.

Mallon, pp. 184-248.

Week 15, 12-14 Dec.- The Many Faces of the New World Order(II)

**NEW NEW READING: PREPARE FOR FINAL EXAM IN SECTION**

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Fall 2005-Mallon

### Week 1 and 2- Issues for Discussion Based on the Readings

In the first two readings from the Chasteen and Wood anthology, one of the main themes that emerges about Latin American societies in their transition from colonialism to independence is the importance, and challenge, of race relations. A central question seems to be the rise of a mixed-race population of mestizos, mulattoes, and more generally, *castas*. Should *castas* be considered a welcome addition to Latin American societies, because they can potentially be more progressive, more liberal, more interested in progress than people of indigenous or African descent? Are they, by contrast, simply interested in becoming like the white population and will be servile to them and, ultimately, imitate their worst traits (such as, allegedly, an aversion to physical labor)? If they would just be considered Americans, with the same rights and responsibilities before the law as anyone else, would this solve the problem? These seem to be some of the options being debated at the end of the colonial period. Let's take a look across the readings for these two first weeks with an eye toward figuring out the question of race, and the relationship among race, class, and gender factors in the way hierarchy works in Latin American societies.

1) In the period of colonial crisis, elites debated the need for reform. Would it rock the boat and cause more difficulties than it was worth? Or would it provide much-needed solutions to deep problems and thus keep the crisis from worsening or the empire from falling apart? In the first section of readings in the Chasteen and Wood, how do the Caracas City Council and Bishop Abad y Queipo differ in their answers to this question, especially with regard to regulations concerning populations of color?

2) One of the questions Chasteen and Wood ask about independence is, in effect, how did people deal with the legacy of racial hierarchy? Three of the readings they offer us deal in one way or another with this question: Simón Bolívar, who attempts to draw a line around everyone born in the Americas in order to form a national community; Father José María Morelos (who, incidentally, was a mulatto) who does a similar thing, though with a more egalitarian vision; and historian George Reid Andrews, who tells us about the option of freedom offered to Afro Argentines through service in the army. How different do you think these three options were? Would any of them be effective in creating a more egalitarian society? Why or why not?

3) Continuing to link the readings around the issue of racial hierarchy, Grandin presents us with a potentially quite different case. In the city of Quetzaltenango, in the western highlands of Guatemala, it seems that a K'ich'e Maya elite emerged across the colonial period and into the nineteenth century. Controlling the labor of poorer Indians through patriarchal relations and notions of ethnic solidarity, this elite became a fixture of the city landscape, controlling land, commerce, and local office. Do class and gender hierarchies thus trump race in Quetzaltenango, or is it more complicated than that? Can Indians, in a Latin American context, become educated citizens and still be Indians?

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Week 2- Imagining Alternative Orders: The Nation From Below

- I. The Nation From Below: How do we conceptualize?
  - A. The nation as a "previously existing" entity or identity
  - B. The nation as an outcome of modernity
  - C. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*
- II. Cases in Latin America
  - A. You don't have to have a nation to begin to imagine what it might be like to be a citizen... Do you?
  - B. Mexico and Yucatán
  - C. The Andes, 1780-82: Tupak Katari and Tupac Amaru
  - D. Haiti
- III. The Economic Alongside the Political
  - A. Much of recent work has been on political alternatives, but are there economic alternatives as well?
  - B. How this issue came up in post-independence Haiti
- IV. Conclusions: The struggle between capital and community

Important Terms:

- 1) Cortes
- 2) Spanish Constitution of 1812
- 3) *ayuntamientos*
- 4) *hatabs*
- 5) *kurnkas*
- 6) *kataristas, tupacamaristas*

**Movie: "The Last Supper" (La Ultima Cena), Cuba, Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficos, 1976.** Produced by Santiago Lalpur and Camilo Vives; Directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea; written by Tomás González, María Eugenia Haya, and Tomás Gutiérrez Alea. Based on an incident from the historical record uncovered by Cuban historian Manuel Moreno Fraginals and reproduced in his book *The Sugarmill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba, 1760-1860* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), pp. 53-54.

Main plot line: "In 1790 a Cuban slaveowner decides to reenact the Last Supper and wash the feet of twelve of his slaves in an attempt to teach them the Christian values of obedience and endurance. His lesson fails; the slaves rebel and are brutally repressed."

NB: Material about the movie comes from John Mraz, "Recasting Cuban Slavery: *The Other Francisco* and *The Last Supper*," in Donald F. Stevens (ed.), *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* (Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources, 1997), pp. 103-22.