

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History  
Semester II, 1986-1987

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

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4116 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. Finally, 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.

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

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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).

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).

Perlman, Janice E., The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976).

Vargas Llosa, Mario, The War of the End of the World (New York: Random House, 1986).

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  
1/21- Introduction  
1/23- Independence and its Aftermath  
No Reading; Set up Discussion Sections

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Week 2- Neocolonialism vs. Autarky, 1825-1860  
1/26- Between the Masses and the World Economy: Haiti and Paraguay  
1/28- The Frustrating Search for Stability: Mexico  
1/30- The Exceptions: Brazil and Cuba  
Reading: Mallon, pp. 3-57.  
Document # 1

Week 3- The Penetration of Capital, 1860-1930  
2/2- Cuba  
2/4- Bolivia  
2/6- Brazil  
Reading: Mallon, pp. 57-243.

Week 4- Nineteenth-Century Politics and the Nation-State, 1850-1900  
2/9- The Birth of an Authoritarian State: Mexico  
2/11- The Struggle over Democracy: Chile  
2/13- Analysis of a Document (Discussion and Lecture)  
Reading: Document # 2  
Vargas Llosa, pp. 3-168.

Week 5- Indians, Peasants, and the Nation  
2/16- Yaqui Resistance and Survival  
2/18- A Millenarian Response to the Penetration of Capital  
2/20- Map Quiz and Review Session for Midterm  
Reading: Vargas Llosa, pp. 168-350.

Week 6- The Emerging Balance of Power  
2/23- MIDTERM IN CLASS  
2/25- The Mexican Revolution  
2/27- The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires  
Reading: Vargas Llosa, pp. 353-568. NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS.

## UNIT II- THE FRUITION OF CAPITALISM, 1920-1960

Week 7- Crisis: The Great Depression  
3/2- The Violent Reaction: El Salvador, 1932  
3/4- Authoritarianism vs. Popular Front: Argentina, Brazil, and Chile  
3/6- A Populist Alternative: Cárdenas in Mexico  
No New Reading; Discussion on Vargas Llosa.

Week 8- The Development of Capitalism in Agriculture  
3/9- Continuity and Change: The Great Estate  
3/11- The Capitalist Plantation  
3/13- The Peasant Response: Politics and Consciousness  
Reading: Mallon, pp. 247-348.

FIRST PAPER DUE BY FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH, AT 5:00 P.M.

\*\*\*\*\*SPRING BREAK, MARCH 16-20\*\*\*\*\*

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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: Perlman, pp. xi-131.

Week 10- The Populist Solution  
3/30- Peronist Argentina  
4/1- The Bolivian Revolution  
4/3- Reform or Revolution? Populism in Guatemala  
Reading: Perlman, pp. 132-277.

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

Week 11- The Great Awakening: Cuba  
4/6- The Beginnings of Revolution, 1959-1970  
4/8- Attempts at Institutionalization, 1970--  
4/10- The Overall Record  
No New Reading, No Discussion Sections

Week 12- Guerrilla Dreams, Authoritarian Realities  
4/13- Guerrilla focus in Latin America  
4/15- The Origins of Authoritarianism: The Chilean Case  
Reading: Winn, pp. vii-136.

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

Week 13- Authoritarian Nightmares and a New Awakening(?)  
4/20- The Face of Authoritarianism in Latin America  
4/22- The Sandinista Revolution Comes to Power  
4/24- A Revolution Under Siege  
Reading: Winn, pp. 139-256.

#### UNIT IV- WHITHER LATIN AMERICA? THE 1980s

Week 14- The New Face of Struggle  
4/27- Guerrilla War in Central America: El Salvador  
4/29- Guerrilla War in Central America: Guatemala  
5/1- The New Role of the Catholic Church  
Reading: Argueta, entire

Week 15- The Face of the Future?  
5/4- "Redemocratization" in the Southern Cone  
5/6- Guerrillas and Populism, Take Two (Sendero Luminoso in Peru)  
5/8- Latin American Feminism

No New Reading; Review Sections for Final Exam  
SECOND PAPER DUE BY WEDNESDAY, MAY 6 AT 5:00 P.M.