

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester I, 1988-89

History 829 Research Seminar in Modern Latin American History

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5125 Humanities
263-1822

Course Description:

The purpose of this seminar is to provide an introduction to the process and meaning of historical research in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Latin American documents. In order to make the dialogue among existing primary and secondary sources more meaningful and cumulative, we will be focusing in our common documentary readings on modern Mexico. This does not mean, however, that you cannot research and write on a different area or time period.

One of our purposes during the semester will be to discuss the research task itself. How do historians see themselves in the ongoing dialogue between past and present? How have historians and other social scientists resolved the contradictions inherent in the combined tasks of research and writing? Without attempting to be inclusive, Unit I will examine some of the recent questions being debated by scholars.

In Unit II, we will examine a set of documents from 19th and 20th century Mexico. Again, there is no pretense to being exhaustive; we will simply read and discuss a variety of sources, and attempt to establish a dialogue between them--from primary to secondary and back, and between primary sources. We will focus on the problems and strengths of different kinds of materials.

In Unit III, students will present and discuss the results of their research. The purpose is not to present a finished product, but rather to bring the materials, analyses, and problems to a supportive forum. With the benefit of collective discussion and criticism, students can then revise and submit their research papers.

Requirements:

1) Everyone will be expected to do a library practicum by the fourth week of the semester, in which they identify a general time period of interest, then explore existing primary and secondary sources in the library. I will provide a handout with instructions. Anyone unfamiliar with Memorial Library is encouraged to sign up for a library tour, many of which are offered at the beginning of each semester. The library practicum report, both oral and written (see Week 4), will constitute 10%

of the overall grade.

2) Everyone will research and write a 25-40-page research paper, based on a combination of primary and secondary sources. People are encouraged to use the seminar as a forum in which to begin, continue, or finish M.A. thesis research, or to write and present a dissertation chapter. Special arrangements can be worked out with me. The paper will constitute 60% of the overall grade.

3) Everyone is encouraged and expected to participate in the discussions--of common readings, on the practicum and proposals (see Week 5), and especially during student presentations of research. Participation in discussion will constitute 30% of the overall grade.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS, DISCUSSIONS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I- PREPARATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH TASK

Week 1. Sept. 8: Introductory and Organizational Meeting
Discussion of possible research areas and topics;
discussion of seminar format and syllabus.

Week 2. Sept. 15: Historians talk about their work and themselves
Reading: MARHO, Visions of History (Can be bought at the University Bookstore; on reserve at Helen C. White).

Week 3. Sept. 22: Historians (and others) debate the meaning of history
Reading: (NOTE: In order to get more "coverage," we'll be dividing up some readings this week as well as doing some readings in common. There is enough overlap on the themes, however, so that we should have no trouble with a general discussion. All the articles are in each xerox packet, and you are encouraged to read them all if you have time).

ONE HALF OF THE CLASS:

Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History," Past and Present, #85 (November 1979), pp. 3-24. IN XEROX PACKET.

E.J. Hobsbawm, "The Revival of Narrative: Some Comments," Past and Present, #86 (February 1980), pp. 3-8. IN XEROX PACKET.

Ellen Meiksins Wood, "The Politics of Theory and the Concept of Class: E.P. Thompson and His Critics,"

Studies in Political Economy, #9 (Fall 1982), pp. 45-75. IN XEROX PACKET.

THE OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

James A. Henretta, "Social History as Lived and Written," American Historical Review, 84:5 (December 1979), pp. 1293-1322; "Comments" by Darrett B. Rutman and Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., pp. 1323-30; and "Reply" by Henretta, pp. 1331-33. IN XEROX PACKET.

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, "The Political Crisis of Social History: Class Struggle as Subject and Object," in The Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery and Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 179-212, 428-29. IN XEROX PACKET.

COMMON READING:

Ronald G. Walters, "Signs of the Times: Clifford Geertz and Historians," Social Research, 47:3 (Autumn 1980), pp. 537-56. IN XEROX PACKET.

Clifford Geertz, "Being Here: Whose Life Is It Anyway?" in Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp. 129-49. IN XEROX PACKET.

Richard Bernstein, "Anthropologist, Retracing Steps After 3 Decades, is Shocked by Change," New York Times, May 11, 1988, p. 23. IN XEROX PACKET.

Week 4. Sept. 29: Discussion of Library Practicum, and on how to design viable research projects and write good proposals.

Reading: Other students' Library Practicum reports, copied and distributed by Monday 9/26. Please see Practicum Handout for Instructions.

Week 5. October 6: Discussion of Research Proposals.

Reading: Research Proposals (number to be arranged), copied and distributed by Monday 10/3.

NOTE: By the end of the first unit, research topics and sources have been identified and students are beginning the research process.

UNIT II- DISCUSSION OF PRIMARY DOCUMENTS AND RELATED SECONDARY MATERIALS

Week 6. October 13: Political documents/Congressional debates
Reading: Juan Alvarez, "Manifiesto del Ciudadano Juan Alvarez a los Pueblos Cultos de Europa y América," reproduced in Daniel Muñoz y Pérez, El general don Juan Alvarez, Mexico City: Editorial Academia Literaria, 1959. IN XEROX PACKET.

Ponciano Arriaga, "Voto Particular sobre el derecho de propiedad," 23 June 1856, reproduced in Francisco Zarco, Historia del Congreso Extraordinario Constituyente [1855-1857], Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1956. IN XEROX PACKET.

Richard Sinkin, "The Mexican Constitutional Congress, 1856-1857: A Statistical Analysis," Hispanic American Historical Review, 53:1 (February 1973). IN XEROX PACKET.

Week 7. October 20: Making Sense of Popular Consciousness (The Caste War in Yucatán)

Reading: "Documentos sobre la rebelión maya," in Leticia Reina, Las rebeliones campesinas en México (1819-1906), Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 1980, pp. 393-416. IN XEROX PACKET.

"The Proclamation of Juan de la Cruz (1850)," trans. Victoria Bricker, reproduced in her The Indian Christ, the Indian King, pp.187-206. IN XEROX PACKET.

Todd A. Diacon, "The Contestado Movement and the Caste War of Yucatan: Secular and Religious Responses to Crisis Situations (M.A. Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1983), Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 44-95. IN XEROX PACKET.

Week 8. October 27: The Ups and Downs of Quantitative Data
Reading: Anexo núm. 3 á la Memoria de Hacienda del año económico de 1877 a 1878, prepared by Emiliano Busto, Vol. 1 (Mexico: Imprenta de I. Cumplido, 1880), Introductory pages not numbered; pp. LXXIX-LXXXVII; Agricultura 1-7;

Cuadros de Agricultura #'s 6, 7, 14, 19, 23, 28, 30; Observaciones al Cuadro Sinóptico, pp. 1-7. IN XEROX PACKET.

John H. Coatsworth, "Anotaciones sobre la producción de alimentos durante el Porfiriato," Historia Mexicana, #102 (Oct.-Dec. 1976), pp. 167-187. IN XEROX PACKET.

Week 9. November 3: Memoirs and Novels of the Revolution
Reading (One-fourth of the class will each choose one of the following, on reserve in Helen C. White):

Martín Luis Guzmán, El águila y la serpiente (Mexico City: Compañía General de Ediciones, S.A., 6th Ed. 1956; Orig. Ed. 1928).

Rosa King, Tempest over Mexico: A Personal Chronicle (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, Reprint Ed. 1970; Orig. Ed. 1935).

John Reed, Insurgent Mexico (New York: International Publishers, 1969; Orig. Ed. 1914).

Elena Poniatowska, Hasta no verte, Jesús mío (Mexico City: Ediciones ERA, 1969).

NOTE: I also recommend you glance at two compendia of photos, The Wind that Swept Mexico, and Border Fury, on reserve in the History Library.

In class, each group will give a 10-minute report on "their" memoir; in the second hour we will discuss the various and comparative benefits and limitations of the memoir as a historical source.

Week 10. November 10: Oral History
Reading: Elena Poniatowska, La noche de Tlatelolco, Mexico City: Ediciones ERA, 1971. (Can be bought at the University Bookstore and on reserve at Helen C. White).

NOTE: The book is long and complex, and it is hard to assign specific pages. Please familiarize yourself with the overall structure, look at the photographs at the beginning, and read selectively in both sections

with an eye toward getting the "flavor" of the period and following through on the testimony of at least one or two people in a consistent way.

Recommended: As background, you can read "The Student Movement of 1968: A Case Study," in Judith Adler Hellman, Mexico in Crisis, 2nd. Ed. (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1983), pp. 173-186. XEROX ON RESERVE IN HISTORY LIBRARY.

- Week 11. November 17. **First Week of Research Presentations!!!**
(Who will be the first four adventurous volunteers?)
WE WILL MEET FOR THREE HOURS AND FIFTEEN MINUTES, TILL 4:35 P.M. Each presentation will be 45 minutes--approximately 15 minutes of presentation, 30 minutes of discussion. We'll have a fifteen-minute "halftime" break. **Presenters are encouraged to hand out outlines (or rough drafts of papers, if you have them) by the Monday before class.**

THANKSGIVING BREAK, NOVEMBER 24-27

- Week 13. December 1. **Second Week of Research Presentations.**
Same format.
- Week 14. December 8. **Third Week of Research Presentations.**
Same format.
- Week 15. December 15. No class; revision of research papers.

PAPERS DUE WEDNESDAY, DEC. 21 AT 5:00 P.M.