

COURSE: LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY

45 clock hours

2 weekly meetings – 1 ½ hours each

Course Description

Latin America's heterogeneity entails a discussion about its origins and its different historical, social, political, economic and cultural processes. Latin America comprises a group of different countries, regions and cultures stretching from the northern Mexican frontier to the southernmost border, in the south of Argentina's and Chile's Patagonia. This giant geographic area is the home to societies whose histories and current political and economic situations have been extremely varied: from advanced industrialized economies – as those in Brazil, Mexico or Argentina –, to economies which – as those in Paraguay, Bolivia and a big part of the Caribbean, among others – are rooted in rural production. There is also a marked ethnic and cultural contrast among "mestizo" countries such as Mexico or Peru, "Europeanized" countries such as Argentina and Uruguay, and countries with an indigenous mark such as Guatemala and Ecuador.

This motley and colorful panorama, where generalizations cannot be easily made, can certainly be approached from a fact that makes it even: the territories in these countries share a colonial descent, that is, all of them have been marked by Spanish conquest. However, an important diversity should be noted within this evenness: Spanish implantation had different formats among the earliest systems – Mexico and Peru –, and a late system such as that in the *Río de la Plata*.

In this sense, the course aims at identifying the "Hispanic mark" which bestows unity on this cultural and territorial space. In particular, two "ideas-forces" are explored which could be called a Weberian and Tocquevillian problem, respectively. On the one hand, there is the question of compatibility between instrumental rationality and Catholic spirit – or said in other words, Catholic ethics and capitalist spirit – and, on the other hand, the democratic question and its necessary link to active and self-organized societies.

In summary, therefore, the Hispanic legacy and its political and cultural consequences are studied. To that end, the following is examined:

- First, the diverse formation of the colonial system which, in general terms, is related to the layout of pre-Columbian civilizations.
- Second, the conformation of a Latin America in two strokes: the conquest and the establishment of the colonial world.
- Third, the Hispanic legacy sketches a double problem field: on the one hand, the question of Hispanic or Latin American “identity”; and, on the other hand, the question of modernity in this region.
- Fourth, how Latin American diversity is resolved in the different historical processes that brought democracy to the continent. Finally, the course is going to deal with the region’s contemporary situation in a context of rapid civilizing change at a global level.

CONTENTS

Introduction: 1 class

	Objective	Contents	Reading material
	To recognize the complex unity of the territory in Latin American	The problem of Hispanic America’s unity. The different ways of looking at the region: Hispanic America, Iberoamerica, Latin America.	Romero, José Luis. 1970. “La cuestión de la unidad y la diversidad del área latinoamericana”, en El pensamiento político de la derecha latinoamericana. Bs. As., Paidós. Pp. 19-23.

Unit 1. Pre-colonial civilizations

	Objective	Contents	Reading material
	To present a panorama of the demographic, political and cultural conformation of the Hispanic American territory before the conquest	a) Pre-Columbian societies: from archaic cultures to postclassical civilizations (Mayas, Aztecs, Incas, among others) b) The southern societies: pre-colonial cultures in the Argentine territory	Gudemos, Mónica. Cuadernillo del curso 2005. Lucena, Manuel. 2005. Atlas Histórico de Latinoamérica. Cap. 1, pp. 14-33. Lobato, M. y Suriano, J. 2000. Atlas Histórico. Bs. As.: Sudamericana. (Colección Nueva Historia Argentina). Pp. 29-39.

Unit 2. The conquest. The formation of Hispanic America

Objective	Contents	Reading material	Other activities
<p>* To recognize the different conquest and colonization waves.</p> <p>* To present a panorama of the demographic, political and cultural conformation of Hispanic America's territory during the colonial splendor</p>	<p>a) The great conquests: the Inca and Aztec empires and the South (Río de la Plata)</p> <p>b) The economy, society, politics and culture of the viceroalties</p>	<p>Lucena, Manuel. 2005. Atlas Histórico de Latinoamérica. Caps. IV y V. Pp. 58-74; y 106-134.</p> <p>Lobato, M. y Suriano, J. 2000. Atlas Histórico. Bs. As.: Sudamericana. (Colección Nueva Historia Argentina). Pp. 99-122.</p>	<p>Movie-watching and analysis: "La Misión", by Joffe</p> <p>Reading in class: "El eclipse", by Augusto Monterroso</p>

Unit 3. Democracy in Latin America and its challenges

Objective	Contents		Other activities
<p>To debate about Latin American modernization by reflecting on the processes to build the state</p>	<p>The independence crisis. The new republics, 1800-1870</p> <p>1) The <i>noble</i> question and its saga: the idea of "forced modernization"</p> <p>2) The state and political culture in the <i>noble</i> conception. An outline of the political and cultural project to build nations: Mexico and Argentina</p>	<p>Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants, eds. Mary Tyler Peabody Mann and Ilan Stavans (New York: Penguin Classics, 1998), Chapters 1- -7 (vii-xxxviii and 9-122).</p> <p>Wiarda, H. 1997.</p>	<p>Movie-watching: 'Camila' by María Luisa Bemberg</p>

		<p>"Determinantes históricas del estado latinoamericano", en Vellinga comp. El cambio del papel del estado. México, Siglo XXI. Pp. 45-73.</p> <p>Zapata, F. 1997. Ideología y Política en América Latina. México: El Colegio de México. Pp. 31-58; 113-134.</p>	
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	Objective	Contents	Material de lectura activities	
	To debate about democracy and its historical complexities in Latin America	<p>Hispanic America and the Tocquevillian idea of democracy and crises in Latin America. Crisis and transformation, 1930-1960.</p> <p>The impact of international crises. The process of import substitution. The origins of <i>Peronismo</i>. The deepening of import substitution and the new middle classes. Populism. The limits of transformations in Latin America. Military interventions in Latin America and resistance movements.</p> <p>Poverty, inequality, exclusion. Incompleteness of democracy in Latin America.</p>	<p>Morse, Richard. 1982. El espejo de próspero. México: Siglo XXI. Pp. 89-220.</p> <p>Fernando Enrique Cardoso y Enzo Faletto, Desarrollo y Dependencia en América Latina</p> <p>Torre, Juan Carlos. Sobre los orígenes del peronismo en La vieja guardia sindical y Perón, pp. 217 a 255, Ed. EDUntref, 2006</p> <p>Terri Karl, "The Vicious Cycle of Inequality in Latin America" 20 pp</p>	<p>Movie-watching: "Luna de Avellaneda" by Campanella</p> <p>Movie-watching: 'Diarios de motocicleta'</p>

Evaluation criteria

- Reading checks: 30%
- Class participation: 30%
- Final exam: 40%

Reading checks will be done the first class every week. They will consist of a short set of concise questions which will assess students' preparation of the reading texts. After watching the movies, students will write a short text showing the confrontation of the theme in the movies and the ideas discussed in the course texts. The final exam will consist of a short essay about an assigned topic.

General Bibliography

- Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Historia Contemporánea de América Latina*, Chapters I to V
- John Charles Chasteen and Joseph S. Tulchin (eds.), *Problems in Modern Latin American History* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994), especially the following chapters:
 - “Spanish American Independence and its Consequences,” 1-13
 - “War to the Death,” 20-22
 - “The Royalist Army of New Spain,” 22-28
 - “The Black Legions,” 29-34
 - “African Slavery in Brazil,” 69-75