First Year Seminar - Spring 2018:
Latin America in/and the World:
Cosmopolitanism, Internationalism, Globalization

Monday 9:30 am - 12 pm

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Course description

The tension between cosmopolitanism and localism/nationalism shaped the emergent modern cultures of Latin America beginning in the second half of the 19th century, as new nations imagined their place in an increasingly globalized capitalist modernity. Throughout the 20th century, some of the most heated debates continued to revolve around that same tension and around the role that Latin America should play in the global networks of cultural exchange. This course aims to explore the concepts of cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and globalization as productive frameworks to understand the relationship between Latin American culture and European legacies, US hegemony, Soviet influence, and other cultures of the developing world. From a transdisciplinary perspective, we will critically engage with the cosmopolitan impulses promoting the notion of “world citizenship,” the spread of Marxist internationalist projects in the region, and the more recent landscape of interconnectedness, fluidity, and social exclusion that is characteristic of globalization.

How have writers and intellectuals, artists, and filmmakers represented the world in which they have sought to inscribe their work and intervene? How did they deal with the tensions between the national and the cosmopolitan, the local and the global? What are the differences between cosmopolitanism and internationalism? Why the obsession of many Latin American writers and artists with Paris and French culture? How have new technologies transformed the way Latin America interacts with the rest of the world? Do they facilitate South to South cultural exchanges or do they reproduce imperialist, neocolonial, and/or Eurocentric dynamics? These are some of the
questions that will guide our discussions around literary materials, films, the visual art, and performances from the late 19th century to the present.

**Course Expectations**

Active participation in class requires thoughtful preparation of the texts for each session, engaging productively in class discussions, and refraining from using electronic devices.

In the event that you are for good reason unable to attend class, please contact me in advance or as soon as possible. Each unexcused absence will invariably lower your class participation and attendance grade in 4%. A failing grade will be assigned to any student with three absences.

Every week you are expected to post a reading/viewing reaction paragraph on the seminar discussion forum on NYU Classes. These postings are due by 11:55 pm each Saturday and must revolve around at least two of the materials we will discuss on the upcoming week. Occasionally, you will have to complete in-class assignments on the materials covered that week. These assignments will not be announced beforehand.

You are required to present on one of the readings once throughout the semester. These presentations will take up to 15-20 minutes in total (during the first 5-10 minutes you will present the reading; then, you will engage in a discussion with the rest of the class for another 5-10 minutes). You will be exempted from posting a reading response for the class in which you present.

The three short essays (3-4, 5-6, and 7-8 pages long, respectively) will allow you to critically engage with ideas and contents presented in class in greater depth. Please find all deadlines in the class schedule—you will receive the essay prompts at least a week prior to each due date. Later papers will be graded down accordingly.

You must complete each of the following assignments and requirements in order to receive a passing grade for the class.

- Class participation and attendance: 12%
- Weekly reading reactions; in-class assignments: 20%
- Seminar presentations: 8%
- Two papers (first paper: 10%; second paper: 20%): 30%
- Final paper (outline: 5%; paper: 25%): 30%

**Class materials**

All readings will be posted online.
Films can be rented or watched for free online.

**Schedule of Topics and Readings**
January 22

1. **Introduction**:
   - Immanuel Kant: Perpetual Peace (selection)
   - Bruce Robbins: "Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism" (pp.1-19)

January 29

2. **Old and New Cosmopolitanisms**:
   - Martha Nussbaum: "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism" (pp. 2-17 in *For Love of Country*)
   - Pheng Cheah: "The Cosmopolitical - Today" (pp. 20-41)
   - David Harvey: "The New Cosmopolitans" (pp. 77-97 in *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*)
   - Mariano Siskind: Introduction to *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (pp. 3-22)

February 5

3. "**Outward Drives** at the Turn of the Century**:
   - Mariano Siskind: *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (*The Rise of Latin American World Literary Discourses (1882-1925)*) (pp. 103-183)
   - Rubén Darío: "Digression" (pp. 92-101 in *Stories and Poems*)
   - Rubén Darío: "Modernismo: November 28" (pp. 369-374)
   - Rúben Darío: "Leda" (p. 21)

February 12

4.1. **The European Question**:
   - Oswald de Andrade: "Cannibalist Manifesto" (pp. 38-47)
   - Alejo Carpentier: "On the Marvelous Real in America" (pp. 75-88)

February 19 NO CLASS (PRESIDENT'S DAY)

February 26 FIRST PAPER DUE

4.2. **The European Question**:
   - Jorge Luis Borges: “The Argentine Writer and Tradition” (pp. 171-178)
4. Paris / Anti-Paris:
- Pascale Casanova: "Paris: City of Literature" (pp. 40-54 in The World Republic of Letters)
- Marcy Schwartz: Writing Paris: Urban Topographies of Desire in Contemporary Latin American fiction (pp. 42-74)
- Julio Cortázar: “The Other Heaven” (pp. 167-197 in All Fires the Fire)

March 5

5. Women’s Cosmopolitanism:
Ana Peluffo: “‘That Damned Mob of Scribbling Women’: Gendered Networks in Fin de Siècle Latin America (1898-1920)” (pp. 164-180)
Victoria Ocampo: "Woman, her Right and her Responsibilities" (pp. 228-234), "Virgina Woolf in my Memory" (pp. 235-240), and "Women in the Academy" (pp. 278-288)
Garrido and Giorgi: Dissident Cosmopolitanisms (pp. 261-277)

March 12 SPRING RECESS

March 19

6.1. Cosmopolitanism / Internationalism I:
Timothy Brennan: “Cosmopolitanism and Internationalism” (pp. 40-50 in Debating Cosmopolitics)
Jean Franco: The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City: Latin America in the Cold War (Introduction pp. 1-18, "Killing Them Softly" 21-56)
Disney: Saludos amigos [film]

March 26 SECOND PAPER DUE

6.2. Cosmopolitanism / Internationalism II:
Roberto Fernández Retamar: Caliban: Notes Toward a Discussion of Culture in Our America (pp. 3-45)
Fredric Jameson's Foreword (pp. vii-xii)
Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas: The Hour of the Furnaces [film]

April 2

7.1. Boom! The Magic of Alterity I:
Jean Franco: “The Magic of Alterity,” in The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City (pp. 159-176)
José Donoso: The Boom in Spanish American Literature: A Personal History (selections)
Gabriel García Márquez: “Blacaman the Good, Vendor of Miracles” (pp. 272-282)
"A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" (pp. 217-225)
The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World (pp. 247-254)
María Rosa Olivera-Williams: “Boom, Magic Realism - Boom and Boomito” (pp. 278- 295)

April 9

7.2. **Boom! The Magic of Alterity II:**
Rosario Ferré: "The Gift" (pp. 89-118)

8. **Mapping / Remapping Latin America:**
James Corner: “The Agency of Mapping” (pp. 23-50)
Joaquín Torres García: “América invertida” (installation) and “La escuela del Sur” (essay)
Alfredo Jaar: “This is not America”
Néstor Perlongher: *Austria-Hungary* (selections)

April 16

9. **Cultural Imports & Exports:**
Van Den Georges Abbeele: “The Economy of Travel” in *Travel as Metaphor* (xiii-xxx)
Marta Minujín: “Importación / Exportación”
Mario Bellatin: *Shiki Nagaoka: A Nose of Fiction* (pp. 10-78)

April 23

10. **Globalization:**
Mary Louise Pratt: “Why the Virgin of Zapopan Went to Los Angeles" (pp. 271-289) & "In the Neocolony: Modernity, mobility, globality” (pp. 224-242)
Teddy Williams: *The Human Surge* [film]
David Harvey: “The flat world of neoliberal utopianism” (pp. 51-76)

April 30  

**FINAL PAPER OUTLINE DUE**

11. **Migration:**
Clarice Lispector: *Chronicles* (selections)
Israel Adrian Caetano: *Bolivia* [film]
Joshua Marston: *María Full of Grace* [film]

May 7
Conclusion / Final Paper discussion

May 14       FINAL PAPER DUE