World Cultures: Contemporary Latino Cultures
C55.0529

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Course Description
We must begin by clarifying the title of this course. It is a misnomer, or more precisely, the inclusion of contemporary Latino cultures within the "World Cultures" rubric of the MAP is a category mistake that necessarily participates in the very history of domination that the MAP seeks to redress. Latinos, like the inhabitants of the rest of the Americas, are part of the Western tradition, Black Legend against the Spaniards not withstanding. It would be more appropriate to include Latino cultural production within the "Conversations of the West" rubric. For after all, when the Dominican priest Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas—along with other Spanish theologians—repeatedly argued before the Mexican Ecclesiastical Conference and before the court of King Charles V (1536-1555) that the indigenous populations of the Americas were human, capable of reason, and worthy of freedom, he and other missionaries initiated a uniquely Western contemplation of the meaning of humanity and the condition of freedom. They initiated this theorization of humanity because of their experience with colonialism, rather than simply as a philosophical derivation of their own training in the Greek and Latin traditions. Indeed, de las Casas' own intellectual trajectory suggests that the Western philosophical tradition is a consequence of Europe's repeated encounters with the subjects of domination, with those who that were the objects of Europe's varied colonial projects.

World Cultures classes, however, are also designed to give students perspective into the history of "trade, colonialism, and immigration" that has created a "globalized world." In so far as this is one of its goals, contemporary Latino cultures provide a perfect window into the history of U.S. imperial expansion into the rest of the Americas beginning in 1848 and continuing until today with NAFTA and other free-trade agreements. This course is organized as an examination of key historical events leading to formation of "Latino" identities within the contemporary borders of the United States: the 1848 U.S. war against Mexico; the 1898 U.S. war against Spain; the 1910 Mexican Revolution; the 1959 Cuban revolution; the 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic, the U.S. covert wars against Central American countries in the 1980s. While Latin Americans are inevitably fleeing either poverty or political unrest, these migratory factors are almost always set in motion by direct territorial expansion into and annexation of Latin America by the U.S., or by its neo-colonial relations of economic "development" strategies and covert intelligence operations. In addition, the course examines the psychic life of race through poststructuralist and psychoanalytic theories of subject and psychic formation (Althusser, Butler, Alarcón, Moraga, Anzaldúa). Finally, the course explores the cultural production— theater, film, literature, and visual art—produced by Latinos in the U.S. in the 20th century.

Required Texts
Americo Paredes, "With A Pistol in His Hand": A Border Ballad and Its Hero.
Leonor Villegas de Magnón, The Rebel.
Tomás Rivera, And the earth did not devour him. Translated by Evangelina Vigil-Piñón.
Reinaldo Arenas, Old Rosa.
Jaime Cortez, Sexile.
Julia Alvarez, How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents.
Hector Tobar, The Tattooed Soldier.

All film screening will be held on Fridays, 4-7pm, Silver 411.
Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation. The primary requirement for this course is your attendance and participation in lecture and in recitation. More than two unexcused absences from your recitation and you will be given the choice of dropping the course or receiving an F. An absence will be considered excused if it is due to an illness which makes it impossible for you to get out of bed or a death in the family. In order for your absence to be considered excused, you must email your preceptor before missing class, stating your reason for absence and permission to miss recitation. Only in case of emergencies (visit to the emergency room) will you be excused for missing recitation without prior approval, however, you will have to provide proof of the event to your preceptor. Your preceptor will specify what constitutes participation in your recitation. Attendance and participation account for 40% of your grade.

Reading Journal. You are required to hand in a reading journal to your preceptors at the beginning of lecture on Monday. This reading journal should exactly one page, single-spaced—no more, no less (roughly 400 words). If it is handwritten, it should take up the front and back of one lined sheet of paper and it should be written in clear print. This reading journal SHOULD NOT be a summary of the readings for class, but rather an analysis of either the reading assignments as a whole, or of a particular angle of an issue raised by one or more of the assigned texts. In addition to the reading journal, I expect each of you to generate three questions based on the readings. You are not required to turn in these questions, however, preceptors may randomly call upon you to generate discussion during recitation, so please come to recitation prepared to be called upon. Your reading journal is included as part of your participation. Your preceptor shall determine its percentage of your grade.

Essays. You are required to turn in two 7-8 page papers during the course of the semester. In each of these papers you are required to interpret a text (filmic, literary or historical), that is, to analyze its historical significance and discursive meaning. Again, this is not an exercise in summary. Your preceptors have already read the text or seen the film, so do not summarize the plot. Rather, your essay should both interrogate and interpret the content and context of the text—its implicit and explicit assumptions, its representational strategies, its dependence on previous iterations about race/sexuality—as well the rhetoric used by the author to make his or her point—voice, tone, use of satire, irony, metaphor, metonymy, analogy, etc. I expect each of these papers to 1) make an argument about the piece of writing under consideration, 2) to engage in close readings of the text as evidence of your argument, and 3) to reach substantive conclusions. These arguments may require you to move beyond the text, or they may not, but in either case, I want you to consider the text you choose to interpret as the congealed social relations of its time. Essay are each 15% of your grade, for a total of 30%.

In-class midterm. This exam will consist of three essay questions, each of which synthesizes the material covered in the course to date. You will be given six essay questions one week in advance in preparation for the exam. This exam is worth 10% of your grade.

Final Exam. You will have a multiple choice and essay exam. The multiple choice questions will be designed to determine if you kept up with the readings. The essays will address issues raised during the course of the class. The final exam is worth 20% of your grade.
Class Schedule

Week 1: The Racial Order of Things
9/5 Introductions
Requerimiento (1510)
Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848), Articles IX & XI

Week 2: Mexican Settlement in the Southwest/U.S. Conquest
9/10 From Martha Menchaca, Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans, Chapters 2,3,4,5,7, & 8 [237]
9/12 In class film screening of, The Last Conquistador, discussion to follow with Producer/Director, Cristina Ibarra

9/14 Film Screening: The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez, Robert M. Young, Director

Week 3: The Aftermath of Conquest and the Furthering of Empire
9/17 From Ameríco Paredes, With A Pistol In His Hand, Chapters 1, 2, 3: "The Country," "The Legend," "The Man" [107]
9/19 José Martí, "Nuestra America"/"Our America" [10]
Gonzalez, HE, "Banana Republics and Bonds: The Taming the Empire's Backyard (1898-1950)" [20]
Zinn, Voices, "The Expansion of the Empire"

Week 4: The Furthering of Empire
9/24 From Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing, "The Mouth of a New Empire: New Orleans in the Transamerican Print Trade" [52]

Week 5: The Mexican Revolution and the Great Migration Northward
10/1 Leonor Villegas de Magnón, The Rebel [297]
Ernesto Galarza, "The Roots of Migration" [6]
From Ronald Takaki, A Different Mirror, "The Borderlands of Chicano America" [27]
10/3 Magnón & the Revolution, Continued

10/5 Film Screening: Memorias de subdesarrollo/ Memories of Underdevelopment, Tomás Gutierrez Alea, Director
Week 6: The Cuban Revolution and its Aftermath
10/8 No Class
10/10 Memorias de subdesarrollo/Memories of Underdevelopment
MIDTERM PAPERS DUE

Week 7: The Cuban Revolution and its Aftermath
10/15 Reinaldo Arenas Old Rosa [106]

Lourdes Casal, "Para Ana Velford" [poem]
Frances Negrón-Muntaner and Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, "In Search of Lourdes Casal’s 'Ana Veldförd'" [38]
Gonzalez, HE, "Cubans: Special Refugees" [9]

10/19 Film Screenings: Chicano Park, Marilyn Mulford, Director
El pueblo se levanta, Third World Newsreel, Distributor

Week 8: Latino Revolutionary Nationalisms
10/22 In class midterm

10/24 Young Lords 13 Point Program [manifesto]
Plan Espiritual de Aztlán [manifesto]
Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzalez, Yo Soy Joaquin [poem]

Week 9: Latino Revolutionary Nationalisms
10/29 Miguel Piñero, Short Eyes [127, play]
Tato Laveira "My Graduation Speech" [poem]
Sandra María Estevez, "My Name is María Christina," "From the Commonwealth," "A La Mujer Borriqua" [poems]
In class screening of Latino Artists: Pushing the Boundaries, Juan Carlos Garza, Director

10/31 Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Toward an Investigation)" page 127 to 157 [30]

Week 10: Theorizing the (Feminist) Subject
11/5 Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus" page 158 to 186 [28]
Tomás Rivera, and the earth did not devour him [79]

Gloria Anzaldúa, "La Prieta" [19]

Week 11: Theorizing the Latina Feminist Subject
11/12 Cherrie Moraga, "From a Long Line of Vendidas" [55]
Norma Alarcón, "Traddutora, Traditora: A Paradigmatic Figure of Chicana Feminism" [20]

11/14 Moraga & Alarcón, continued

11/16 Film screening: Paulina, Vicki Funari, Director

Week 12: Queering the Latino Family
11/19 From Rosalinda Fregoso, meXicana encounters: The Making of Social Identities on the Borderlands, "Crossborder Feminist Solidarities" [18]
11/21 Jaime Cortez, Sexile, A Graphic Novel [79]
Achy Obejas, "Above All A Family Man" & "We came all the way from Cuba so you could dress like this?" [20]

Week 13: Feminist Interventions
11/26 Julia Alvarez, How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents [290]
Gonzalez, HE, "Dominicans: From the Duarte to the George Washington Bridge" [12]
11/28 Alvarez, continued

11/30 Film Screening of Film Screening Mambo Mouth, John Leguizamo (performance)
Bowl of Beings, Culture Clash (performance)

Week 14: Postnationalist Performances of Masculinity
12/3 Mambo Mouth
12/5 Bowl of Beings

Week 15: Central American Revolutions and U.S. Interventions (Again)
12/10 Héctor Tobar, The Tattooed Soldier [307]
12/12 Tobar continued