

# Latin American Humanities I

## Purpose:

This course is designed to offer an overview of Latin American culture that emphasizes specific social and intellectual movements through an analysis of representative texts, music, art, and critical literature covering the colonial and independence periods. The selected materials are essential documents of their times and are also, often, influential statements about Latin American history and identity.

## Assigned Readings:

All readings that appear on the syllabus below are required.

Works by Bartolomé de las Casas, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, El Inca Garcilaso de las Vega, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Domingo F. Sarmiento, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Gabriel García Márquez and the socio-political history book, *Colonial Latin America*, may be purchased at the University Book Store (Spanish Section).

--Copies of the readings in Spanish and English are on reserve at Butler Library.

--Selections from other assigned readings may be purchased in the Main Office of the Casa Hispánica (Cortés' Second Letter; Padre Antônio de Vieira; Gregório de Matos; Catalina de Erauso; selections from José Martí; selections from Rubén Darío.

## Background Readings:

Recommended handbooks available at Butler Library (Reference): Collier and Skidmore (eds.), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean*; Leslie Bethell, (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Latin America (CHLA)*. Note that portions of the latter are required reading in this course.

## Course Requirements and Grading:

In a seminar, students are expected to attend all sessions, and to prepare thoroughly the readings before the class lectures and discussions.

1. Active and Purposeful Participation, including specific textual analyses....15%
2. Paper: 7-10 pages.....15%
3. Midterm Examination.....15%
4. Seminar Presentation.....15%
5. Paper: 10-12 pages.....20%
6. Final Examination.....20%

### **Week I:**

A. Introduction to the Course. Spain under the Catholic Monarchs. Indigenous Civilizations. Nomenclature and Concepts: America, the Indies, Peruvian America, Mexican America, Spanish America.

B. Discussion: *Cortés' Second Letter to Charles V*; Video and discussion: Carlos Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror* (1992), pt. 1. Additional reading: *Colonial Latin America*, chapters 1 and 2.

### **Week II:**

A. Ideology of the Spanish Conquest. The "Black Legend" (leyenda negra). Discussion: Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*.

B. Discussion: Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *Castaways*.

### **Week III:**

A. Experience of the conqueror. Images of Cortés, the indigenous, Moctezuma, Tenochtitlan, St. James the Apostle, the Virgin Mary, and women.

B. Discussion: Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The Conquest of New Spain*.

### **Week IV:**

A. Legal administration of the Conquest. Spanish government of the Indies. The Aztec Empire. Discussion: John H. Elliott, "The Spanish Conquest and Settlement of America," in *CHLA*, vol. 1; *Colonial Latin America*, chapters 3 and 4.

B. The Inka Empire. Ideology and organization.

Discussion: El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *The Royal Commentaries of Peru*, books 1-8.

Instructor's Alternative: *La Florida del Inca*

### **Week V:**

A. Conclusion. Video and Discussion: Macchu Picchu in context.

\*Paper #1 assigned.

B. Interaction of indigenous and European cultures. Population. Evangelization and religious syncretism. Ethnic syncretism.

Discussion: Nathan Wachtel, "The Indian and the Spanish Conquest," in *CHLA*, vol. 1.; Padre Antônio de Vieira and Gregório de Matos, selections from *Review*.

### **Week VI:**

A. The Hispanic Baroque. Concepts and periodization. Catholicism and philosophy. Hispanic "decadence." Gallicanism and the relations between church and state. Women as saints or sinners. Construction of ethnicity.

Discussion: J.H. Elliott, "Spain and Spanish America in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *CHLA*, vol. 1; *Colonial Latin America*, chapters 5 and 6.

Discussion: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "First Dream" and "Reply," *A Sor Juana Anthology*.

B. Continuation of Sor Juana. Discussion: Catalina de Erauso, *Review*; Slides and discussion: women and ethnicity in 17th-century art. Instructor's alternative: María Luisa Bemberg's *Yo, la peor de todas*, for Sor Juana and other cloistered women.

### **Week VII:**

- A. Continuation.
- B. Midterm Examination.

### **Week VIII:**

- A. The Hispanic Late-Baroque and Enlightenment. Concepts and periodization. Bourbon administration and Habsburg legacy. Rationalization of piety and the expulsion of the Jesuits. Academy culture. Identity, economy, and ideology: regionalism, patriotism, factionalism. Discussion: John Lynch, "Spain, Europe, and America" and "Spain and America," *Bourbon Spain*, chapters 4 and 9.
- B. Slides, music and discussion: religion, "race," and medicine in 18th-century arts. *Colonial Latin America*, chapter 7.

### **Week IX:**

- A. Discussion: Simón Bolívar, "Manifiesto of Cartagena," Letters from Jamaica," and Discourse of Angostura;" *Colonial Latin America*, chapter 8.
- B. Conclusion. Video and discussion: Carlos Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror*, pt. 3.

### **Week X:**

- A. Independence: Enlightenment and Romanticism. Concepts and periodization. Identities and ideologies. The theme of Civilization and Barbarism. "Race," the "Spanish-American Middle Ages," and the Spanish-American as Asian. Nationalism. Discussion: D.F. Sarmiento, *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants* (including introduction).
- \*Final Paper assigned
- Alternative choice for instructors: Euclides da Cunha, *Rebellion in the Backlands*.
- B. Romanticism and the Birth of Modernism. Regionalism or "Americanism." Spanish America as ethnic and cultural synthesis and unit. Discussion: José Martí, "Mother America," "Our America," "Simón Bolívar," "San Martín," "Passages on the Racial Question"

### **Week XI:**

- A. Continuation.
- B. Discussion: Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, *Sab*. Role of slavery and women in 19th-century Latin America.

### **Week XII:**

- A. Flowering of Modernism. Modernity and its expressions. Arts and sciences in Modernist authors. Elites and the masses. Identity and nomenclature: "Spanish America vs. Latin America."
- Discussion: Rubén Darío, "In Winter," "It Was a Gentle Air," "To Roosevelt," "To Columbus"
- B. Continuation.

**Week XIII:**

A. Video and Discussion: Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror*, part 4. Reading: Gabriel García Márquez, *The General in His Labyrinth*.

B. Contemporary reconstruction of colonial period. Documentary. Historical fiction and its uses. Discussion: *The General in His Labyrinth*. Wrap-up and final examination instructions. Final Paper due last day of classes.