

Curriculum for an Undergraduate “Gateway Course” in Latin American Studies

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Introduction

The following model course is designed as an entry point or “gateway course” for undergraduates interested in pursuing the political, social, cultural and historical dimensions of Latin America. Although much of this course was designed by a committee of scholars representing several disciplines and academic research interests, inevitably it is a highly selective endeavor in terms of organizing questions, thematic modules and suggested readings.

Under the assumption that most undergraduate students do not possess the requisite reading skills in foreign languages, this model syllabus does not include sources in Spanish and Portuguese—although certain key works in translation are cited. A list of general source materials on Latin America is appended to the syllabus.

The syllabus is organized as a set of thematic modules over a standard 14 week undergraduate course. The syllabus and the accompanying annotated bibliography are not intended as comprehensive source documents on Latin America or Latin American Studies. Rather they seek to present one processual and relational approach to the study of the region consonant with the “process geographies” model being developed by the University of Chicago’s Regional Worlds Project.

Week 1: What is/was Latin America?

The end of the Cold War brought about deep cuts in funding for “area studies” along with a sharp and far from settled debate on the analytical validity of partitioning the world into “regional cultural areas” and “civilizations” in a global age. In a number of ways, Latin America is arguably the most coherent of these once conventionally understood cultural regions. First, it shares three hundred years of Iberian colonialism. Second, linguistically it is extraordinarily homogenous with Spanish and Portuguese serving as the principal languages. Third, the area was and still is predominantly Roman Catholic. Since Independence, the region has been under many of the same British and later United States economic, political, and cultural influences and pressures. But “Latin America” is more than a term imposed from without, as we shall see throughout this survey.

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Genealogy of a concept: “civilizations” and “cultural regions”
- Models and metaphors: how useful is the concept of Latin America?
- Geographically, what do we understand as “Latin America?”
- Can one speak of “Latin American culture?” If so, what are its core features?

Core Readings

Galeano, Eduardo. 1998 [1973]. *Open Veins of Latin America*. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press.

The most widely read survey of Latin America, translated into more than 12 languages and over seventy editions. The English translation by Cedric Belfrage is now celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary with a new edition. It is at once an angry, passionate journey across the landscape and also a poetic and deeply hopeful work by a noted Uruguayan journalist, essayist and speaker.

Mariátegui, José Carlos. 1971. *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*. Introduction by Jorge Basadre. Translated by Marjory Urquidi. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

One of the most influential and original thinkers in Latin America tackles complex issues such as the question of the “Indian,” land, mass education, regionalism and centralism as well as national literature.

Paz, Octavio. 1962. *The labyrinth of solitude and other writings (The Other Mexico, return to the labyrinth of solitude, Mexico and the United States)*. Translated by Lysander Kemp. New York, NY: Grove Press.

One of the truly “classic” texts of twentieth-century Latin America. Paz provocatively raises a host of central issues, themes and questions in a powerfully evocative and lyrical manner: Mexican national culture, modernization, social psychology, mythologies, *mestizaje*, violence and revolution, the gendering of power and Mexico’s uneasy incorporation into the “West” and its struggles with modernity.

Taylor, William. 1985. “Between global process and local knowledge: An inquiry into early Latin American social history, 1500-1900.” In Olivier Zunz, ed. *Reliving the Past: The Worlds of Social History*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 113-90.

A leading historian surveys the major debates, themes, and problematics of social history before 1900 with the challenge of a more connected history in mind. Topics include dependency perspectives and connections between the state and society. An excellent self-reflective introduction.

Supplementary Readings

Blaut, James M. 1993. *The colonizer’s model of the world*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Incisive critique of Eurocentric diffusionist arguments about “development,” “civilizations” and “tradition.”

Bright, Charles and Michael Geyer. 1994. “Doing world history in a global age.” *American Historical Review*.

Interesting essay by two noted historians on how ironically “world history” has become much more difficult an enterprise in an ever smaller, more global world.

Fuentes, Carlos. 1992. *The buried mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin and Co.

A renowned Mexican novelist presents a lavishly illustrated multicultural account of the interactive and relational hybridity of the Hispanic people and “soul.”

Gomez-Peña, Guillermo. 1996. *The New World border: Prophecies, poems and loqueras at the end of the century*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights.

Chicano performance artist and recipient of the MacArthur Foundation “genius” award, Gomez-Peña is always guilty of trespassing facile cultural, political and social frontiers.

Halperín Donghi, Tulio. 1993. *The contemporary history of Latin America*. Translated and edited by John Charles Chasteen. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

The single most influential Latin American survey of the region in English translation 24 years after its initial appearance. A masterful, complex, and nuanced survey ranging from 1750 to the 1980s.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. “The clash of civilizations,” *Foreign Affairs* Summer: 22-49.

A well-known political scientist argues that in the post-Cold War era, global conflict will manifest itself primarily as a clash of cultures.

Johnson, John J. 1980. *Latin America in caricature*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Landmark study of more than one hundred years of hemispheric relations through political cartoons collected from leading United States dailies. However, the work is flawed by lack of self-reflectivity and the failure to explore US sectionalism more seriously (e.g., most of the cartoons are taken from the Northwest and Midwest and not from the “Jim Crow” South).

Martin, Gerald. 1989. *Journeys through the labyrinth: Latin American fiction in the twentieth century*. New York, NY: Verso Books.

Utilizing a Marxist literary analysis, Martin seeks unity rather than dispersal in Latin America culture, stressing continuities over time and major conjunctures, highlighting major texts and the uneasy relation with dominant European cultural forms and practices.

O’Gorman, Edmundo. 1961. *The invention of America: An inquiry into the historical nature of the New World and the meaning of history*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Famous essay on the theme of how the Americas were an invention and/or projection of European visions, rather than a “discovery.”

Said, Edward. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage.

Classic statement by a noted figure in the literary world on the historical construction of a region of the world as the “Other.” Although the work deals with the greater “Orient,” the implications are wide-ranging and highly suggestive for other areas, such as Latin America.

Skidmore, Thomas E. and Peter H. Smith. 1996. *Modern Latin America*. 5th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Arguably the most popular Latin American Studies textbook in the United States, *Modern Latin America* adopts a “modified” dependency theory approach to the region since 1880. It is strong on political coverage, offering a useful framework for comparison and useful periodization. Noticeably absent are chapters on Colombia or Venezuela.

Williamson, Edwin. 1992. *The Penguin history of Latin America*. London, UK: Allen Lane Penguin Press.

Exceptional general survey with an unusual amount of space devoted to literary and cultural forms.

Wolf, Eric R. 1955. “Types of Latin American peasantry: A preliminary discussion,” *American Anthropologist* 57: 3, Part 1: 452-71.

A seminal article on Latin America that divides the peasantry into two types: “traditional” closed corporate communities, mostly in the highlands, and “open” communities, mostly in the lowlands, linked to global markets.

Wolf, Eric R. 1959. *Sons of the shaking earth: The people of Mexico and Guatemala, their land, history and culture*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

A classic introduction to Mesoamerica.

Wolf, Eric R. 1986. “The vicissitudes of the closed corporate community.” *American Ethnologist* 13 (2): 325-9.

An interesting retrospective of the author’s original argument thirty years later.

Wolf, Eric R. and Edward C. Hansen. 1972. *The human condition in Latin America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Very popular survey of the region by two well-respected anthropologists. “Our work is a quiet celebration of the re-entry of the masses into Latin American history” is how the two authors describe their “Brechtian” book.

Video series: *The Americas*. 1993.

Wide-ranging and often times exceptional ten-part television series, narrated by the late actor Raul Julia and produced by WGBH Boston.

1. The Garden of Forking Paths: Dilemmas of National Development
2. Capital Sins: Authoritarianism and Democratization
3. Continent on the Move: Migration and Urbanization
4. Mirrors of the Heart: Race and Identity
5. In Women’s Hands: The Changing Roles of Women
6. Miracles are not Enough: Continuity and Change in Religion
7. Builders of Images: Latin American Cultural Identity
8. Get up, Stand up: Problems of Sovereignty
9. Fire in the Mind: Revolutions and Revolutionaries
10. The Latin American and Caribbean Presence in the US

Week 2: What is/was globalization?

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Globalization past and present: How new is “globalization?”
- What is “capitalism” and when did it emerge?
- From “organized” to “disorganized” capitalism (waves of capitalist expansion)
- Is “globalization” simply synonymous with “capitalism?”
- What is “territorialization?”

Core Readings

García Clancini, Nestor. 1995. *Hybrid cultures: Strategies for entering and leaving modernity*. Translated by C. Chaippari and S. Lopez. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

A stimulating exploration of the cultural hybridity that characterizes Latin America. García Clancini examines the region’s ironic relation to past and present while proposing a method of constructing an autonomous culture that can survive the global “market” in which it is increasingly enmeshed as well as avoiding becoming a static “museum piece.”

Krugman, Paul. 1995. *Peddling prosperity: Economic sense and nonsense in the age of diminished expectations*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton.

Highly readable excursus across the contemporary economic landscape by a noted MIT professor. Topics such as “globalization,” “productivity and competitiveness,” “supply side economics,” and “strategic trade” as well as their interface with communication media and political sloganeering are demystified and made comprehensible.

Stern, Steve J. 1988. “Feudalism, capitalism and the world-system in the perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean.” *American Historical Review* 93 October: 829-72.

An historian takes Wallerstein to task for failing to provide an adequate explanation for the labor regimes of Latin America associated with its two main exports to the mainland: silver and sugar. Stern calls for a revitalized version of the “articulation of the modes of production.” See also the exchange between Wallerstein and Stern that follows: 873-85.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1979. "The rise and future demise of the world capitalist system: Concepts for comparative analysis." *The capitalist world-economy: Essays*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-37.

As one of the most influential and widely-read authors in the social sciences, Wallerstein has sought to rethink the history of capitalism since the mid-1450s in the light of his suggestive world-system analysis. This essay offers a succinct overview of his project and mode of analysis.

Wolf, Eric R. 1982. "Connections" and "Iberians in the Americas." In *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 1-126; 131-57.

A landmark work demonstrating that for the past five hundred years various parts of the globe, even presumptively "remote" areas, have been linked together through a political economy of world historical forces—especially after the expansion of European interests in the 1400s. It offers an excellent overview of these forces in Latin America.

Supplementary Readings

Hobsbawm, Eric. *The age of revolution, 1789-1848* (1962); *The age of capital, 1848-1875* (1975); *The age of empire, 1875-1914* (1987); *The age of extremes, 1914-1990* (1995).

All published by Vintage Books (NY). A master historian sweeps across the "long nineteenth" and "short twentieth" centuries with keen insight and a clarity of vision and writing unsurpassed. Excellent as background material.

Mandel, Ernest. 1975. *Late Capitalism*. London, UK and New York, NY: Verso.

Influential study by a noted Marxist scholar emphasizing "long-waves" of capitalist expansion and retraction. Some of the individual chapters are quite self-contained and can be readily used in a reader.

Storper, Michael. 1997. *The regional world: Territorial development in a global economy*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Outstanding example of the "California School" of external economics, it provides a rich combination of theoretical and empirical evidence for how regions sustain their economic viability in the era of multinational corporations.

Week 3: Pre-European and Early Colonial Peoples and Institutions

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Pre-European cultural and natural worlds
- Indigenous political and economic institutions
- Early colonial period "hybridities"
- *Encomiendas*, *haciendas* and Indian peasant economies

Core Readings

Gibson, Charles. 1964. *Aztecs under Spanish rule*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Landmark book seeking to demonstrate the continuities as well as rupture engendered by the Spanish arrival on such questions as land tenure, religion, population, social and political organization and numerous other central topics.

Larson, Brooke. 1998. *Cochabamba, 1500-1900: Colonialism and agrarian transformation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

An impressive study, utilizing class analysis to cover four hundred years of a once vitally central region of the Inca Empire.

Lockhart, James. 1992. *Nahuas after the conquest: A social and cultural history of the Indians of Central Mexico, sixteenth through eighteenth centuries*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

An excellent complement to the work of Gibson. Lockhart, a noted historian and linguist presents a sophisticated overview of Nahua society, including social structure (e.g., moiety organization, hierarchy) and linguistic and cognitive shifts.

Spaulding, Karen. 1984. *Huarochirí: An Andean society under Inca and Spanish rule*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

A penetrating analysis of indigenous Andean society in the late pre-Hispanic and early Colonial periods. Particularly strong analysis of indigenous social and political institutions and their transformations under European hegemony.

Supplementary Readings

Cortés, Hernán. 1985. *Letters from Mexico*. Edited and translated by Anthony Pagden. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Invaluable first-hand account of the splendor of pre-Columbian Tenochtitlán, with its great population, commerce, architecture and activity.

Hassig, Ross. 1986. *Trade, tribute and transportation in the Aztec empire: The sixteenth-century political economy of the Valley of Mexico*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Marvelously detailed materialist study that applies “central place” theory to the ancient city of Tenochtitlán. Hassig’s arguments about the “human geography” of the greater valley extend far beyond the sixteenth century.

Week 4: Demographic Collapse, Hybridity and Slavery

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Estimates of pre-contact population levels
- Explain the changes in the natural landscape as a result of the introduction of European techniques of farming, crops, seed, animals and tastes
- The “Great Dying” and its implications for colonial surplus extraction, landholdings and native rule
- Account for the transition from “white” to “black” slavery
- What is hybridity? “Purity of blood?”

Core Readings

Crosby, Alfred. 1991. *Ecological imperialism: The biological expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

A succinct and powerful account of the ferocity and extent of the pandemics that affected Amerindian populations. Crosby shows that Old World diseases were among the most devastating weapons in the conqueror’s arsenal in the struggle for “temperate climes.”

Davis, David Brion. 1984. *Slavery and human progress*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

A Pulitzer Prize winning intellectual historian describes how the institution of slavery shifted in the “West” from a “progressive institution” to a “progressive emancipation.” Davis links “emancipation” to the Age of Revolutions.

Genovese, Eugene. 1979. *From rebellion to revolution: Afro-American slave revolts in the making of the modern world*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press.

One of the leading historians of our times looks comparatively at slave revolts and structural conditions that facilitated and/or retarded them. Short, succinct and enlightening.

Stanard, Dennis E. 1992. *The American holocaust: Columbus and the conquest of the New World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

A powerful, disturbing account of the pre-Columbian peoples and their horrific, violent (and continuing) persecution and decimation by European settlers. It is also a searing exploration of the racist “heritage” of the Americas that still makes such distinctions as that between “worthy” and “unworthy” victims.

Supplementary Readings

Fryer, David. 1996. *Indians into Mexicans: History and identity in a Mexican town*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

An interesting attempt to explore the complex and subtle processes of identity formation and nation-state building.

Hale, Charles R. 1994. *Resistance and contradiction: Miskitu Indians and the Nicaraguan State, 1894-1987*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

A one-time advisor to the Sandinista government looks critically at the re-ethnicization of the Miskitu Indians in Nicaragua.

Week 5: Migrations and the Black Atlantic

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- What is the “plantation complex?”
- Connecting race and gender
- What are the connections between capital and labor flows?
- Waves of immigration in the Americas
- Proto-industry, industry and its demographic/geographic implications
- What is meant by “double consciousness?”

Core Readings

Curtin, Philip D. 1990. *The rise and fall of the plantation complex: Essays in Atlantic history*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

A noted historian charts the history of the “plantation complex,” primarily centered in the greater Caribbean, controlled by European states with coerced African labor with markets largely in Europe and North America. The global connections increased as it became intertwined with the British Empire in India.

Gilroy, Paul. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and the double consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Organized around the twin concepts of “double consciousness” and “Black Atlantic,” Gilroy explores the (re)creation of identity, unity and diversity, and major conjunctures.

Holt, Thomas C. 1992. *The problem of freedom: Race, labor, and politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Landmark study of the manifold contradictions connecting the collapse of chattel slavery and the rise of free labor, the ensuing legal restrictions and entrapment under new terms, individual and national freedom, as well as those within liberalism.

Tannenbaum, Frank. 1992 [1946]. *Slave and citizen*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Pioneering essay exploring the comparative treatment of slaves in Brazil and the United States and highlighting the allegedly “milder” and more integrationist histories of the Luso-Brazilians.

Supplementary Readings

Sassen, Saskia. 1990. *International labor and capital mobility*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.

This slim book can be viewed as a useful complement to the work of Brinley Thomas. In it, Sassen argues that newer migration patterns, such as those from Korea, Mexico, Colombia and others are once again tied to loan and investment cycles.

Thomas, Brinley. 1973. *Migration and urban development: A reappraisal of the British and American long cycles*. London, UK: Methuen.

Interesting study that links both migration flows from Europe to the United States and within Europe to investment cycles. An efficient and fully functioning immigrant labor market has been in existence since the early part of the nineteenth-century. The findings have great implications for later histories of immigrants.

Film: *The Harder They Come* (1973).

A searing look at the processes of rapid urbanization, the creation of an underclass, honor, violence, religion, drugs and music in Kingston, Jamaica in the late 1960s. From this potent combination emerged the powerful, defiant and hopeful sounds of reggae music and musicians such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh and Jimmy Cliff. Cliff stars as Ivan, a recently arrived proto-peasant turned urban outlaw in the face of structural violence.

Week 6: Territoriality, Land, and Production: Past and Present

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- What is a “tributary mode of production?”
- The infrastructure of capitalism: law, rules and institutions
- What is the historical role of land in Latin American peasant societies?
- The waning importance of agrarian reform
- The land question in contemporary Latin America

Core Readings

Collier, George, 1994. *Basta! Land and the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas*. Oakland, CA: The Institute for Food and Development Policy.

Penetrating account of the historical, social and cultural roots of the ongoing Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas.

Roseberry, William. 1993. “Beyond the agrarian question: Peasants, labor and the capitalist world system in Africa and Latin America.” In Frederick Cooper et al. *Confronting historical paradigms*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 318-370.

Critical synthesis of the literature on what Karl Kautsky called the “agrarian question”—a broad topic that includes enclosures, semi-proletarianization, family farming and peasant self-exploitation.

Semo, Enrique. 1993. *The history of capitalism in Mexico, 1521-1750*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Landmark Marxist study, emphasizing the articulation of three modes of production in Mexico (tributary, feudal and embryonic capitalist), their insertion into the global economy and the coming of independence.

Supplementary Readings

Van Young, Eric. 1982. “Mexican rural history since Chevalier: The historiography of the colonial *hacienda*.” *Latin American Research Review*.

Excellent précis of the extensive literature on the large landed estate or *hacienda*.

Week 7: Natural Resources/Biodiversity

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Ecological and natural resource diversity in Latin America
- Latin America’s fragile lands: the dilemma of population and development
- The meaning and social importance of biodiversity
- Natural resources, renewable and unrenowable: the politics of extraction
- Property rights, biodiversity and conservation

Core Readings

Clark, William. 1989. “The human ecology of global change.” *International Social Science Journal* 121: 315-45.

Hurrell, Andrew. 1994. “A crisis of ecological viability? Global environmental change and the nation state.” *Political Studies* 42: 146-65.

Moran, Emilio. 1983. *The dilemma of Amazonian development*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Wilcox, Bruce and Kristin Duin. 1995. “Indigenous cultural and biological diversity: Overlapping values of Latin American ecoregions,” *Cultural Survival Quarterly*: 49-55.

Supplementary Readings

Shiva, Vandana. 1993. *Monocultures of the mind*. Malaysia: Third World Network.

This book contains five essays which reflect on the causes of disappearance of biological diversity and the challenge of conserving it. They range in topic from explanations for the spread of monocultures to a critique of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Shiva argues that the expansion of monocultures through the spread of biotechnology and agricultural movements, such as the Green Revolution, has more to do with politics and power than with enriching and enhancing systems of biological production.

Week 8: The State in Historical Perspective

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- How did the Americas shift from “kingdoms” to “republics?”

- Whose “nation?” Whose “state?”
- What are “nation-states?” What are “regions?”
- What are the social origins of dictatorship and democracy?

Core Readings

Cardoso, Fernando Henrique and Enzo Falleto. 1979. *Dependency and development in Latin America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

A sophisticated, nuanced and subtle deployment of dependency theory by two noted sociologists (one of whom is now President of Brazil). Highly recommended.

Graham, Richard, ed. 1990. *The idea of race in Latin America, 1870-1940*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Succinct and provocative coverage of Brazil, Cuba, Argentina and Mexico by noted historians.

Haber, Stephen, ed. 1997. *How Latin America fell behind: Essays on the economic histories of Britain and Mexico, 1800-1914*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Pioneering collection of “new economic” essays, primarily dealing with Brazil and Mexico. Polemical, and with a mission, the book should be widely read, tested and discussed.

Klarén, Peter and Thomas J. Bossert, eds., 1986. *Promise of development: Theories of change in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Useful collection that gathers key statements on “modernization,” “dependency and Marxism,” “corporatism” and “bureaucratic-authoritarianism.”

Marx, Anthony W. 1998. *Making race and nation: A comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sophisticated and rigorous comparative histories of the way that nations make “race,” although not always in the ways of their own choosing.

Roxborough, Ian. 1979. *Theories of underdevelopment*. New York, NY: Macmillan Press.

Succinct and useful survey of the leading theories of underdevelopment.

Supplementary Readings

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. 2nd ed. London: Verso.

A landmark work that first appeared in the early 1980s, arguing that the dissemination of “print capitalism” engendered nationalism. There is a chapter dealing with American creole identity formation and the “imaginary.”

Cypher, James M. and James L. Dietz. 1997. *The process of economic development*. London, UK and New York, NY: Routledge Press.

Excellent primer on the often-times arcane and mystifying world of economic development. The authors use cases from Asia, Africa and Latin America throughout in an effective combination of theory and practice.

Hirschman, Albert O. 1958. *The strategy of economic development*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Landmark series of essays by a noted economist and philosopher introducing concepts of “linkages,” “regions,” “social savings” and more.

Jane, Lionel Cecil. 1929. *Liberty and despotism in Spanish America*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Older history emphasizing the relative autonomy of the American “kingdoms” and the creole oscillation between modernity and tradition.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich; Huber Stephens, Evelyne and Stephens, John D. 1992. *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

A highly influential volume emphasizing the decisive role played by organized labor across Europe and Latin America in pushing through democratic reforms and expansion of the welfare state.

Sommer, Doris. 1991. *Foundational fictions: The national romances of Latin America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

A provocative exploration of the way that national consolidation and romantic novels go hand-in-hand in Latin America. Sommer shows how nineteenth-century patriotism and heterosexual passion historically depend on one another to engender “productive” citizens.

Week 9: The State in Contemporary Perspective

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Citizen and state: the changing role of the nation-state
- Challenges to the nation-state: civil society, local and global

Core Readings

Coronil, Fernando. 1997. *The magical state: Nature, money and modernity in Venezuela*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

A complex and nuanced ethnographic account of the modern petrostate of Venezuela.

De Soto, Hernando. 1990. *The other path: The invisible revolution in the Third World*. Foreword by Mario Vargas Llosa. New York, NY: Harper and Row.

Noted Peruvian policy analyst offers his own “non-communist manifesto.” Stressing that people generally are nascent capitalists, De Soto calls for governments to allow market forces to operate freely and unleash the power of small-scale entrepreneurship.

Lipschutz, Ronnie. 1992. “Reconstructing world politics: The emergence of global civil society.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 21(3): 389-420.

Analysis of the historical factors underlying the emergence of “global civil society.”

Oppenheimer, Andres. 1996. *Bordering on chaos: Guerrillas, stockbrokers, politicians and Mexico’s road to prosperity*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co.

A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist looks at the Mexican presidency of Carlos Salinas and its neoliberal revolution.

Supplementary Readings

Bartra, Roger. 1992. *The imaginary networks of political power*. Translated by Claire Joysmith. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

A leading Mexican anthropologist focuses on networks that suppress class conflict and give unity and stability to society.

Lipschutz, Ronnie D. and Ken Conca, eds. 1993. *The state and social power in global environmental politics*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Impressive collection of essays that address “paucity of cross-fertilization between international relations and other disciplines concerned with issues relevant to global environmental change.” Editors invoke a dramaturgical metaphor to describe state and non-state actors involved in sociopolitical struggles that impinge on and respond to global environmental change. A veritable source-book on “new actors in environment” in the global context.

Week 10: The Rural-Urban Axis

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Linkages between large-scale social processes, such as capitalism and the emergence of the modern capitalist city. What is/was the role of the city in the development of modern capitalism and how, in turn, did/does capitalism shape the development of urban systems?
- Linkages between the city as a center in the accumulation process and its internal forms. How have capitalism and urban contours shaped one another?
- Linkages between these forms and the development of class and group consciousness and/or identity. How has the urban environment shaped these forms of identity and, in turn, how have these forms of identity shaped the urban built-environment?

Core Readings

Guillermoprieto, Alma. 1994. *The heart that bleeds: Latin America now*. New York, NY: Vintage.

Excellent reportage by a noted essayist for *The New Yorker* magazine on contemporary Latin American cities and how everyday people live through “big changes.”

Holston, James. 1992. *The modernist city. An anthropological critique of Brasília*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wonderfully innovative study of the ideological, political and social implications motivating the utopian design and the proposed radical break with Brazilian history in Brasília.

Lomnitz, Larissa. 1980. *Networks and marginality: Life in a Mexican shantytown*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

A well-received ethnographic account of the “hunters and gatherers of the urban jungle” of the Cerrada del Condor neighborhood in Mexico City. We see how the urban middle classes benefit most from this marginalized sector of the economic order. Survival networks are also well-explicated, such as the *tanda*, reciprocity, and *compadrazgo*, among others.

Supplementary Readings

Castells, Manuel. 1983. *The city and the grassroots: A cross-cultural theory of urban social movements*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Landmark work, emphasizing contingency, variability and agency among multiple social actors and an autonomous state. The central organizing principle of the study is the notion of “collective consumption” of city services and goods.

Durand, Jorge and Douglas S. Massey. 1995. *Miracles on the border: Retablos of Mexican migrants to the United States*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Unique study of migrant life as told by the migrants (or their families) through *retablos* (votive paintings on a sheet of tin).

Harvey, David. 1973. *Social justice and the city*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

A milestone in the field of urban geography and planning, *Social Justice*, at once broadened the domain of the field, redefined the objects of study and opened up a host of new questions. Harvey effectively deployed Marx's neglected comments on ground rent, arguing that cities are formed "through the geographic concentration of social surplus product, which the mode of economic integration must therefore be capable of producing and concentrating."

Schepher-Hughes, Nancy. 1992. *Death without weeping: The violence of everyday life in Brazil*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

A provocative and highly debated ethnographic study of post-dictatorship urban Brazil. As the author forcefully states, "The original, and in many respects still the central thesis of my research is love and death on the *Alto do Cruzeiro* [a hillside shantytown in the northeastern state of Pernambuco] and specifically mother love and child death. It is about culture and scarcity, both material and psychological, and their effect on moral thinking and practice, particularly on 'maternal thinking'."(15)

Week 11: Decentralization, Regionalism and the Politics of Difference

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- "Nation" and "ethnicity"
- How are class and ethnicity linked?
- Modernity and the politics of identity
- The politics of decentralization

Core Readings

Brown, Michael F. 1993. "Facing the state, facing the world: Amazonia's native leaders and the new politics of identity." *L'homme* 33 (2-4): 307-26.

Reflects on effects that the 500-year "conversation" between Amazonian Indians and the West has had on internal dynamics of Amazonian leadership. Conjectures that contact with nation-states has shaped indigenous forms of organization and the conceptual categories by which Indians perceive themselves collectively (i.e., the notion of "tribe"). Stimulating and delightfully written essay that touches on recurrent themes in literature on internationalized Amazonian activism from an anthropological perspective.

Kearney, Michael. 1996. *Reconceptualizing the peasantry: Anthropology in global perspective*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Self-reflexive critique of the traditional anthropological study of "peasants." Emphasizing internal and external processes of differentiation, Kearney seeks to develop ethnographic and political forms of representation that correspond to contemporary post-peasant identities.

Nugent, David. 1997. *Modernity at the edge of empire: State, individual and nation in the northern Peruvian Andes, 1885-1935*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Marvelous study of how nation-states are formed "from below," using the case of the Chachapoyas ethnic group and their relationship to the Peruvian state.

Schryer, Frans J. 1990. *Ethnicity and class conflict in rural Mexico*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Through a detailed ethnographic study of the Huasteca of Hidalgo in Central Mexico, Schryer sets out to answer two central questions: "what is the relationship of class to ethnicity and how do these two elements of cultural perceptions and social hierarchy reinforce or contradict each other?"

Supplementary Readings

Calhoun, Craig. 1992. "The infrastructure of modernity: Indirect social relationships, information technology, and social integration." In Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser, eds. *Social change and modernity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, pp. 205-36.

Lowe, Lisa and David Lloyd, eds. 1997. *The politics of culture in the shadow of capital*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Theoretically engaging collection on how the "particularly situated" remake the "global" in the terrain of culture.

Week 12: Commodity and Capital Flows: Past and Present

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- Sequencing in the global economy for "staples"
- What changes did Independence produce for Latin American export economies?
- The British Century in Latin America: 1830-1930
- The American Century: 1945-1982
- Latin American debt crisis
- Narcopolitics and the Illegal Drug Trade

Core Readings

Krasner, Stephen D. 1985. *Structural conflict: The Third World against global liberalism*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Stresses that many North-South conflicts are grounded in deep asymmetries of power and that political weaknesses and vulnerability are fundamental sources of Third World behavior. This "realist" work shows that much of the Third World supports international regimes based on authoritative, rather than market, principles and norms.

Marichal, Carlos. 1989. *A century of debt crises in Latin America: From Independence to the Great Depression, 1820-1930*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Written during the "lost decade" of the 1980s, this work seeks to place the latest debt crises in a proper historical perspective. Present events are not unprecedented, for in fact, they have been tied to "loan cycles" (which involve both a loan boom and a debt crisis) for over a century and a half.

Mintz, Sidney. 1985. *Sweetness and power: The place of sugar in modern history*. New York, NY: Viking.

Sweeping exploration of the way that "dietary transformations actively facilitated more fundamental changes in British society." Great Britain was the largest empire until the mid-twentieth century and the largest *per capita* consumer of sugar. Organized around three guiding chapters ("Production," "Consumption" and "Power"), Mintz charts the role of sugar in the emergence of industrial capitalism, fueling the triangular trade between the West Indies, North America, Europe and Africa as well as demonstrating how sugar shifted from a luxury item to a staple of mass consumption.

Smith, Peter H. ed. 1992. *Drug policy in the Americas*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

A straightforward series of essays about US drug policy.

Shannon, Elaine. 1988. *Desperados: Latin drug lords, US lawmen and the war America can't win*. New York, NY: Viking Books.

Journalistic account, written over a decade ago, chronicling (as well as reflecting) much of the hysteria and propagandizing organized in the US war on drugs.

Supplementary Readings

Sabato, Hilda. 1990. *Agrarian capitalism and the world market: Buenos Aires in the pastoral age, 1840-1890*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.

Prize-winning book that deals with the initially promising Argentinian entry into the world “staples” lottery.

Taussig, Michael. 1989. “History as commodity in some recent American (anthropological) literature,” *Critique of Anthropology* 9(1): 7-23 and “Reply to Michael Taussig.” Sidney W. Mintz and Eric R. Wolf: 25-31.

Important and highly critical review essay by one Marxist anthropologist of two senior Marxist scholars, with key and revealing exchanges.

Week 13: Transnational Actors/Communities

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- In the era of “neoliberal politics,” what roles have transnational agencies and institutions such as the multilateral development banks (World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Monetary Fund) played in restructuring Latin American political economies?
- How have transnational and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) assumed structural and technical niches in the fields of economic and social development previously filled by governments?
- What are the roles and efficacy of “grassroots movements” and their transnational allies?

Core Readings

Alvarez, Sonia and Arturo Escobar, eds. 1992. *The making of social movements in Latin America: Identity, strategy and democracy*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Analysis of emergent social movements and “new social actors” in Latin America from cross-disciplinary perspectives.

Fox, Jonathan and L. David Brown, eds. 1998. *The struggle for accountability: The World Bank, NGOs and grassroots movements*. Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press.

Provocative case studies of World Bank projects and policies.

Kane, Joe. 1993. “With spears from all sides.” *New Yorker* September: 54-79.

Journalist and activist Kane provides a nuanced view of the multiple local and international actors involved in an Ecuadorian indigenous community’s struggle to maintain control over its land and natural resources.

Uphoff, Norman. 1993. “Grassroots organizations and NGOs in rural development: Opportunities with diminished states and expanding markets.” *World Development* 21(4): 607-22.

Exploration of the relationships among public, private and collective sectors in the process of rural development.

Supplementary Readings

Wells, Miriam J. 1996. *Strawberry fields: Politics, class and work in California agriculture*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Fascinating study based on fourteen years of ethnographic research of the strawberry industry in northern California. Processes of structural adjustment are well chronicled as are the local social and political conflicts. On-the-ground politics, in the most literal sense, is the central determining element according to Wells, not macro-structural forces.

Week 14: Praxis, Ethics and Activism

Relevant Issues, Questions and Subthemes

- What ethical problems confront scholars who become advocates and activists for specific political stances?
- How does advocacy and activism affect scholarly analysis?
- “Objectivity” and “subjectivity” in intellectual discourse

Core Readings

Kane, Joe. 1995. *Savages*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Journalist’s poignant account of the struggles of an Amazonian indigenous group in Ecuador to maintain control of their lives and identity in the face of major private and public intrusions on their land to extract oil and gas.

Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1997. *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Analysis of the origins, strategies and impact of transnational advocacy networks, emphasizing the new roles of NGOs on the political and economic scene.

Rich, Bruce. 1994. *Mortgaging the Earth: The World Bank, environmental impoverishment and the crisis of development*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Passionate critique of World Bank policies on economic development and the environment.

Supplementary Readings

Peet, Richard and Michael Watts, eds. 1996. *Liberation ecologies: Environment, development and social movements*. London, UK and New York, NY: Routledge.

Theoretical exegesis of the “environment” and “development” as analytical categories linked to a radical critique of Western notions of these categories.

Tilly, Charles. 1995. “Globalization threatens labor’s rights.” *International Labor and Working Class History* 47 (Spring): 1-59. With responses by Immanuel Wallerstein, Aristide Zolberg, Eric Hobsbawm, Lourdes Beneria and postscript by Charles Tilly.

Historians, political scientists and sociologist attempt to make sense of the likely impacts of “globalization” upon organized labor. The essays are valuable for the content of their discussion and as a testament of American left-liberal opinion on the subject.

Additional General Source Materials

American Historical Review (book reviews and occasional essays)

American Journal of Sociology (book reviews and occasional essays)

Bulletin of Latin American Studies

Cambridge History of Latin America, Cambridge University Press edited by Leslie Bethell.

The eleven volumes (appearing between 1984 and 1997), all written by leading authorities and spanning the past five hundred years, are a testament to the diligence of the single editor and the commitment of the press to the study of the region. Bibliographic essays make this collection an excellent reference guide.

Hispanic American Historical Review

Journal of Latin American Studies

Journal of Latin American Culture

Journal of Social History (book reviews and occasional essays)

Latin American Research Review

Luso-Brazilian Review