

# **CULTURES OF LATIN AMERICA (ANTH 3702)**

**DR. ERIC B. ROSS**

**(W, F, 2:20-3:35pm)**

## ***COURSE OVERVIEW:***

The course explores the nature and significance of the cultural diversity that characterizes Latin America and, in so doing, considers its relationship, on the one hand, to geographical and ecological conditions and, on the other, to historical forces, both pre-Colombian and post-Conquest, during the colonial and post-colonial eras. In the end, the principal aim is to demystify the origin of the varying degrees of marginality and deprivation found across the region and to better understand the nature of the different development strategies that have emerged across the continent in recent times.

## ***COURSE OUTCOMES:***

Students will acquire an historically-grounded understanding of the cultural and social variability that has characterized the populations of South America, from the pre-European period; they will generally appreciate the nature and scale of the different transformations and associated consequences that they have undergone through the period of colonization and its aftermath; and they will be able to situate their discussion and analysis of contemporary events and developments in the region in a comparative and historical framework. Above all, students will leave the course with a richer, more critical perspective on the cultural realities and social contradictions, tensions and potentials, of the development process in the different parts of South America and be able to contribute an informed understanding of the internal and external, historical and contemporary forces shaping current events to on-going policy debate.

## ***REQUIRED READINGS:***

I have refrained from requiring any specific books. Weekly readings generally will consist of articles or, occasionally, book chapters that I have made *pdf* copies of and posted on Blackboard.

I do, however, highly recommend your trying to obtain a copy of Eric Wolf and Edward Hansen's *The Human Condition in Latin America*. While it is out-of-print, many cheap copies are usually available through Amazon.

***Weekly Reading, unless available on the Internet, will be available on Blackboard.***

## ***ASSESSMENT:***

*Exams:* There is *no* final exam, but there will be a take-home mid-term exam.

*Papers:* A 10-12 page paper, the topic for which is open to the student *in consultation with the Lecturer*.

The paper will count 70%, the mid-term exam 30%, of the final grade.

## SYLLABUS

### 1. (Aug. 31) COURSE OVERVIEW

### 2. (Sept. 2, 7) THE PRE-COLOMBIAN LANDSCAPE

The course begins with an introductory overview that will acquaint students with the distinctive nature of the diverse cultural landscape that preceded the arrival of Europeans and their project of colonization.

*Reading:*

Denevan, William *The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492.*

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~alcoze/for398/class/pristinemyth.htm>

De la Vega, Garcilaso 1869 (orig. 1609) *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Incas*. Trans. and ed. by Sir Clements Markham. London: Hakluyt Society.

Roosevelt, Anna Curtenius 1993 *The Rise and Fall of the Amazon Chiefdoms*.  
*L'Homme, Année* 33(126): 255 – 283

Wolf, Eric 1959 *Sons of the Shaking Earth*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
(Chapter 8, "Conquest of Utopia")

Harris, Marvin *Patterns of Race* (Chapter 1, "Before Columbus")

### 3. (Sept. 9) DISCOVERY, CONQUEST, AND EARLY COLONIZATION

With this section, students will become familiar with the general pattern of European conquest, the nature of its initial impact on indigenous lives and culture, and its enduring legacy for contemporary Latin American development.

*Reading:*

Service, Elman 1955 *Indian-European Relations in Colonial Latin America*. *American Anthropologist* 57(3): 411-425.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1951 *The Encomienda in Paraguay*. *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 31(2): 230-252.

Harris, Marvin *Patterns of Race* Chapter 2, "Race, Culture and Manpower")

Crosby, Alfred 1972 *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. (Chapter 2, "Conquistador and Pestilencia")

Collier, George 1999 (orig. 1994) *Basta! Land & the Zaptista Rebellion in Chiapas*. (Chapter One, Part Two, "The Legacy of Conquest") Oakland, CA: Food First Books.

**NOTE: I AM AWAY IN ENGLAND THE WEEK OF SEPT. 12TH**

#### **4. (Sept. 21, 23) HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AMAZON CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

While, in some ways, outside the mainstream of Latin American society, the Amazon represents a large part of the Latin American region and one in which the global forces of development have long affected the autonomy and sustainability of a rich diversity of indigenous cultures, in pursuing

*Reading:*

Roosevelt, Anna C. 1993 The Rise and Fall of the Amazon Chiefdoms. *L'Homme*, Année 33(126): 255 – 283.

Ferguson, R. Brian 1990 Blood of the Leviathan: Western Contact and Warfare in Amazonia. *American Ethnologist* 17(2): 237-257.

<http://www.ifch.unicamp.br/ihb/Textos/FergusonAE.pdf>

**FILM: *The Feast* (T. Asch)**

#### **5. (Sept. 28, 30) THE WEALTH OF LABOR: THE MAKING OF LATIN AMERICAN PEASANTRIES**

*Reading:*

Ross, Eric B. 1978 The Evolution of the Amazon Peasantry. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 10(2):193-218.

Bolton, Ralph 1979 Guinea Pigs, Protein, and Ritual *Ethnology* 18(3): 229-252.

Harris, Marvin *Patterns of Race*, Chapters 3 (“The Highland Heritage”) and 4 (“Plantation Heritage”)

**Brook thomas**

Leonard, William and R. Brooke Thomas 1989 Biosocial Responses to Seasonal Food Stress in Highland Peru. *Human Biology* 612(1): 65-85.

Mazess, R. B. and P. T. Baker 1964 Diet of Quechua Indians Living at High Altitude: Nuñoa, Peru. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 15:341-351.  
<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/reprint/15/6/341.pdf>

**7. (Oct. 5, 7) THE ECONOMIES OF EXTRACTION (HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PROLETARIANS)**

*Reading:*

Brading, D. A. and Harry E. Cross 1972 Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 52(4): 545-579

Fifer, J. Valerie. 1970 The Empire Builders: A History of the Bolivian Rubber Boom and the Rise of the House of Suárez. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 2(2):113-46.

Widener, Patricia 2007 Oil Conflict in Ecuador. *Organization and Environment* 20(1): 84-105.

Lu, Flora and Ashley Carse 2007 Community Contradictions: Petroleum Exploration, Development, and Huaorani Sociality.” Paper presented at Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar, “The Changing Nature(s) of Land: Property, Peasants and Agricultural Production in a Global World.”  
[http://74.125.93.132/search?q=cache:X\\_HAPMhB014J:www.unc.edu/courses/2007fall/geog/804/001/Oil%2520and%2520Sharing%2520MS%25209-17-2.doc+lu+carse+huaorani&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us](http://74.125.93.132/search?q=cache:X_HAPMhB014J:www.unc.edu/courses/2007fall/geog/804/001/Oil%2520and%2520Sharing%2520MS%25209-17-2.doc+lu+carse+huaorani&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us)

McCreery, David 1983 Debt Servitude in Rural Guatemala, 1876-1936. *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 63(4): 735-759.

Film: *Sky Chief* (Scott Robinson) <http://www.antropologiavisual.net/2007/sky-chief/>

B. Traven. orig. 1936 *Rebellion of the Hanged* (extract)

## **FILMS: THE DEVIL'S MINER, CRUDE**

### **8. (Oct. 12) COLONIES OF GOD: MISSIONARIES AND THEIR MISSIONS**

Latin American history is a constant story of a struggle over resources between the agents of the world market and the cultivators of the land. In that struggle, European religion was not extraneous to the main action but, on the contrary, played a central strategic role in organizing the extraction of profit.

#### *Reading:*

Acuña, Father Cristoval 1639 A New Discovery of the Great River of the Amazons. In Clements Markham, ed., trans., 1859 *Expeditions into the Valley of the Amazons, 1539, 1540, 1639*. London: The Hakluyt Society.

USA Today 2008 Missionaries Accuse Brazil of Allowing Infanticide. Sept. 23.  
[http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-09-22-infanticide\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-09-22-infanticide_N.htm)

### **9. (Oct. 14, 19) THE “DEVELOPMENT” AND DESTRUCTION OF THE AMAZON**

#### *Reading:*

Mahar Dennis J. 1989 *Government Policies and Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon Region*. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.

Hecht, Susanna 1993 The Logic of Livestock and Deforestation in Amazonia. *BioScience* 43(10): 687-695.

Kaimowitz, D., P. Pacheco and G. Thiele 1999 Effects of Structural Adjustment on Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Lowland Bolivia. *World Development* 27(3): 505–20.

Adrian Cowell 1973 *The Tribe That Hides from Man*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhAvuPlhdNA>

**FILM: BANKING ON DISASTER** (Adrian Cowell)

### **10. (Oct. 21) A PROCESS OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT: POVERTY AND DEATH IN BRAZIL'S NORTHEAST**

*Reading:*

Riding, Alan 1988 In Brazil's Northeast, Misery Molded by Man and Nature *The New York Times* May 3. Reprinted July 237 2009  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1988/05/03/world/in-brazil-s-northeast-misery-molded-by-man-and-nature.html?pagewanted=all>

Gross, Daniel R. and Barbara Underwood 1971 Technological Change and Caloric Costs: Sisal Agriculture in Northeast Brazil. *American Anthropologist* 73: 725-740.

Terra de Souza, A. C. et al 2000 Circumstances of Post-Neonatal Deaths in Ceara, Northeast Brazil: Mothers' Health Care-seeking Behaviors during their Infants' Fatal Illness. *Social Science and Medicine* 51(11): 1675-1693.

De Castro, Josue 1966 Death in the Northeast (Chapter 1, "Six Feet Under and a Coffin.") New York: Random House.

**11. (Oct. 26, 28) THE UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF BOLIVIA AND GUATEMALA: ALTERNATIVE CONTEMPORARY TRAJECTORIES**

*Reading:*

Public Citizen and Water Privatization Case Study: Cochabamba, Bolivia

Olivera, Oscar 2000 The Fight for Water and Democracy: An Interview with Oscar Olivera [executive secretary of the Federation of Factory Workers in Cochabamba]. *Multinational Monitor* 21(6)  
<http://multinationalmonitor.org/mm2000/00june/interview.html>

Weil, Jim 1980 Coca and Tropical Colonization in Bolivia: The Adaptiveness of a Cash Crop. *Central Issues in Anthropology* 2(1):15-26.

**FILM: COCALERO**

**12. (Nov. 2) THE GREEN REVOLUTION IN CONTEXT: CAPITALIST AGRICULTURE AND PEASANT MARGINALIZATION IN MEXICO**

*Reading:s*

Spener, David 2005 Mexican Migration to the United States, 1882-1992: A Long Twentieth Century of Coyotaje. Working Paper, Center for Comparative Immigration

Studies at the University of California, San Diego

Durand, Jorge and Douglas S. Massey 1992 Mexican Migration to the United States: A Critical Review. *Latin American Research Review* 27(2): 3-42.

### **13. (Nov. 4) THE VIOLENCE OF DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF COLOMBIA**

*Reading:*

Ross, Eric B. 2007 Clearance as Development Strategy in Rural Colombia. *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 19:59–65.

Editors 1992 Development as Enclosure: The Establishment of the Global Economy. *The Ecologist* 22(4): 131-147.

<http://Biblio.iss.nl/opac/uploads/scandocs/DevAsEncl.pdf>

Hristov, Jasmin 2009 Legalizing the Illegal: Paramilitarism in Colombia's Post-Paramilitary' Era. NACLA Report on the Americas (July/August). Pp. 12-39.

[https://nacla.org/files/A04204014\\_1.pdf](https://nacla.org/files/A04204014_1.pdf)

### **14. (Nov. 9, 11) THE FAILURE OF LAND REFORM: LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT DURING THE COLD WAR**

*Reading:*

Ross, Eric B. 2005 Vicos as Cold War Strategy: Anthropology, Peasants and "Community Development." *Anthropology in Action* 12(3): 21-33.

Hugo Blanco 1972 Land or Death: The Peasant Struggle in Peru (Chapter 2, "The Geographical, Economic and Social Setting.") New York: Pathfinder Press.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2011 Reflections on Vicos: Anthropology, the Cold War, and the Idea of Peasant Conservatism. In Tom Greaves, Ralph Bolton and Florencia Zapata (eds.) *Vicos and Beyond: A Half Century of Applying Anthropology in Peru*. Alta Mira. Alta Mira.

Video: "So That Men Are Free" (CBS 1963)

[http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu\\_page\\_1.htm#stmaf](http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu_page_1.htm#stmaf)

Feder, Ernest 1969 The Campesinos' Perspectives in Latin America. *The Developing Economies*. 7(2):233–246.

[http://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Periodicals/De/pdf/69\\_02\\_07.pdf](http://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Periodicals/De/pdf/69_02_07.pdf)

## **THANKSGIVING RECESS**

### **15. (Nov. 30, Dec. 2) REBELLIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS: THE ON-GOING STRUGGLE FOR LAND AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

While emphasizing recent national developments in Bolivia, Venezuela and Ecuador, this section also focuses on regional resistance to neo-liberalism such as the Zapatista uprising of Chiapas in southern Mexico.

#### *Reading:*

Weisbrot, Mark Rebecca Ray and Luis Sandoval 2009 *The Chávez Administration at 10 Years: The Economy and Social Indicators*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)

Burbach, Roger Roots of the Postmodern Rebellion in Chiapas

<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/venezuela-2009-02.pdf>

Burbach, Roger 2006 Original Mandate for a Social Revolution: Bolivia's Evo Morales. *Counterpunch* Jan. 24. <http://www.counterpunch.org/burbach01242006.html>

Schwartz, N. B. 1991 Kilowatts and Crisis: Hydroelectric Power and Social Dislocation in Eastern Panama. *The Latin American Anthropology Review* 3: 73–74.

Farthing, Linda 2009 Thinking Left in Bolivia. *The Nation* (August 3) <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20090817/farthing>

Nash, June 1997 The Fiesta of the Word: The Zapatista Uprising and Radical Democracy in Mexico. *American Anthropologist* 99(2): 261-274.

Video: *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*. 2003. <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=5832390545689805144>

Video: *A Place Called Chiapas* (Youtube),

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKYL\\_GNQNa4&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKYL_GNQNa4&feature=related)  
<http://documentarystorm.com/a-place-called-chiapas/>

OR



**FILM: ZAPATISTA**

**16. (Dec. 7, 9) SUMMING UP**