The Minority Experience in Latin America (Jeff Lesser)

Page published by Kolt Ewing on Friday, May 23, 2014

HISTORY 340G The Minority Experience in Latin America

Dr. Jeff H. Lesser Telephone: 439-2229 Winthrop 110 Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:05 - 11:20 Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:30 - 4:00 or by appointment

Latin America, contrary to popular belief, has a diverse racial and ethnic population. Although biological and cultural mixing has created seemingly new cultures, many continue to feel as if they were "others," and somehow not part of dominant Latin American society.

The Minority Experience in Latin America will analyze the complex societies of Latin America by examining the African, Asian and Jewish experiences in the region. By concentrating on four distinctly different countries, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Argentina, students will study the historical role of these groups on the development of Latin America. Furthermore, the complex process of accommodation, integration and acculturation will be examined from a historical perspective.

The course will begin with an overview of key concepts such as minority, ethnicity, and race from a Latin American perspective. We will also discuss the concept of "ethnic history" and how it differs from other types of historical analysis. We will then proceed to examine each of the three different groups within a national perspective so that we may closely analyze how ethnic and racial groups affect and relate to national interests and historical change.

Although this is not an introductory seminar, no prior knowledge of Latin America, or its languages, is assumed. Students who are able to speak or read Portuguese, Spanish, or any other Latin American language should inform me immediately. Race, culture, ethnicity and religion will be examined from theoretical, economic, social, political and policy perspectives. We will use different types of documents in order to examine these topics including monographs, films, videos, oral histories and photographs.

Since interaction is crucial to the learning process, and since this is a seminar, classes will be generally student-led. Seminar participation will be worth 20% of the final grade. Students will be expected to participate in all discussions and keep up with the weekly reading assignments, which will average about 200 pages per week. Two five page analytical papers will be due and the average of these papers will be worth 40 per cent of the final grade. A final research paper will be worth 40%.

Required Readings: All available at the Connecticut College Bookstore. Readings packet available from Dr. Lesser.


2. Moacyr Scliar, The Centaur in the Garden

3. Nicolas Guillen, APatria o Muerte!: The Great Zoo and other poems. [NG]
4. Readings Packet [RP]


**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, READINGS AND EVALUATIONS:**

JAN 21 Introduction

23 What is Race, What is Ethnicity?

READ: Pierre L. van den Berghe, "Introduction" from Race and Racism. [RP]

28 What is a Minority?

READ: Rex, John. "Race and Ethnicity in Sociological Theory"; from Race and Ethnicity. [RP]

READ: Yinger, J. Milton. "Intersecting Strands in the theorisation of race and ethnic relations." [RP]

30 Historical Theories of Race and Ethnicity I

READ: Stone, John. Race relations without races?" and "Minority Groups and Power." from Racial Conflict in Contemporary Society. [RP]

FEB 4 Historical Theories of Race and Ethnicity II

READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. "Ethnicity and Other Bases of Sociality" and "The Dynamics of Ethnicity." from The Ethnic Phenomenon. [RP]

READ: Ianni, Octavio. "Race and Class in Latin

Race and Ethnicity in Latin American and Caribbean History

BRAZIL----------------BRAZIL----------------BRAZIL------

A Brazilian Perspective on Race
READ: Gilberto Freyre "Brazilian Melting Pot" [RP]
VIDEO: Robert Levine, The Faces of Slavery

The Idea of Race in Brazil
READ: Skidmore, Thomas E. "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870-1940" [RG]
READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. "Brazil" Ch. 3 in Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective.[RP]
BEGIN READING: Moacyr Scliar, The Centaur in the Garden
18  African Experience in Brazil

READ: Mahomman G. Baquaqua, "Recollections of a Slave's Life" [RP]

READ: Author unknown "Who shall be a slave and why?" [RP]


20  Minority Experience in Brazil

READ: Jeff Lesser, "Continuity and Change in an Immigrant Community: The Jews of Sao Paulo," Luso-Brazilian Review [RP]


25  Library Research in History

Have Moacyr Scliar, The Centaur in the Garden finished.

27  The racial definition of ethnicity II

READ: Jeff Lesser, Exodus to the Land of the Future: Brazil and the Jewish Question, 1900-1945, chapter 7 "The Pope, The Dictator and The Refugees who never came."

Mexico---------------Mexico---------------Mexico---------------
READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. Mexico. Ch. 2 in Race and Racism [RP]

5 Who is the Other in a bi-racial society? - New Views
   READ: Knight, Alan. "Racism, Revolution and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910-1940 [RG]

SPRING BREAK -- SPRING BREAK --SPRING BREAK --

MAR 24 Coolies or Chinese???

Cuba-------------------Cuba-------------------Cuba------

MAR 26 The Colonial Experience
   READ: Stanley M. Hordes, "The Inquisition as Economic and Political Agent: The Campaign of the Mexican Holy Office Against the Crypto-Jews in the Mid-Seventeenth Century." The Americas. [RP]

30 FILM: El Otro Francisco
   Begin reading Nicolas Guillen, APatria o Muerte!

APR 2 FILM: El Otro Francisco

7 Revolution and Minority Society I
   READ: Lourdes Casal, Race Relations in Contemporary Cuba. From A. Dzidzienyo and L. Casal, The Position of Blacks
in Brazilian and Cuban Society, pp. 11-25.

9 Revolution and Minority Society II
VIDEO: Hotel Cuba
Finish reading Nicolas Guillen, Patria o Muerte!

Argentina-----------------Argentina-----------------Argentina-----------------

14 Gobernar es poplar, to govern is to populate
READ: Aline Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba, 1880-1930" (RG)

16 A European Other: Jewish Argentina
VIDEO: Mark Freeman, The Yidishe Gauchos

21 Afro-Argentina

April 23 Class Presentations

28 Class Presentations

30 Class Presentations
MAY  2   Class Presentations

7   Class Presentations

Information provider:
Unit: H-Net program at UIC History Department Email: H.Net@uicvm.uic.edu
Posted: 17 Apr 1995