(PALAS 362) Latin American Cultures and Civilizations
Dr. Alejandro Manara
Universidad de Belgrano
Program in Argentine and Latin American Studies
Course Syllabus 2018

Course information
T–Th W 2:30- 4 PM Room 10-6
Instruction in English

Contact information
alejandromanara@gmail.com

Course description
Since its discovery until the present, Latin America has been imagined and conceived as the “New Continent”, a place for utopia, but also as a space of uneven modernity and extreme forms of violence. The course explores distinctive cultural aspects of Latin America by looking at the ways it has been represented in readings spanning from the diaries written by Christopher Columbus to the texts of the Cuban Revolution, the iconography of Peronismo, or the recent debates on Neoliberalism, Globalization and Populism. Drawing on essays, but also on short-stories, paintings, photographs, and films, the course addresses a set of questions that lie at the heart of how one thinks about Latin America. What is expected from “Latin America”? What were the different “ideas” that Latin America embodied? What are the forms of “Latin American” culture? How are the different “cultures” connected? The purpose of the course is threefold: to introduce students to problems central to Latin America, to familiarize students with a variety of non-fictional writings in Spanish, such as essay, chronicle, journalism and documentary films, and to sharpen student’s skills as analytical readers.

Course requirements
Following UB policies, students need a minimum of 75% of attendance to be in good standing for the final exam. Sliding the ID card is the only way to track attendance. Students are expected to do close readings, participate in class, and do one oral presentations in pairs or in groups of three. During the semester, students will write two short (2-3 pages) papers. The requirements also include a midterm and a final comprehensive exam. In addition to this, each student will be expected to make a significant contribution to the classroom dialogue. As part of this, students will be asked to bring two specific comments regarding the required readings in order to discuss in class. Any student caught plagiarizing will be given a “no credit” for all courses taken in the semester. As part of the course requirements, the students will have to visit the Evita Museum in the assigned week (see academic calendar below).

Grading Policy

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation (1)</td>
<td>15 %</td>
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<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Short Essay (2) (2 pages)</td>
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For a better understanding of the comparable table for grading: check the conversion table for the numerical scale (in orientation kit packet).

**Academic Calendar**

**Week 1**: The “New World”: Accounts of the Discovery and the Conquest:
  - Tuesday, March 6: The ideas of Latin America. Travellers & Discoverers
  - Christopher Columbus. “Letter to Luis de Santangel”
  - Thursday, March 8: Amerigo Vespucci. Account of his first voyage.
  - Edmundo O’Gorman. *The invention of America* (selection)

**Week 2.**
  - Thursday, March 15: Film. *Cracking the Maya Code*. Documentary.

**Week 3. Colonial Encounters and its Consequences**
  - Tuesday, March 20: Great pre-Columbian civilizations (chapters from the *Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Ancient Quiche Maya* and the Origin of the Aztecs)

**Oral presentations will be assigned.**

**Week 4. Revisiting the Conquest**
  - First short paper / Prompt by email.

**Week 5.**
  - Tuesday, April 3: Werner Herzog. *Aguirre, the wrath of God* (screening in class).
  - Thursday, April 5: Poma de Ayala *Nueva Crónica del Buen Gobierno*

**Week 6.**
  - Tuesday, April 10: Simón Bolívar. “Letter of Jamaica”.
  - José Martí “Our America”. Oral presentation on Simón Bolívar and José Martí. **Short Paper is due**

**Week 7**
  - Tuesday, April 17: Far away & long ago, (Chapter 7) W.H. Hudson and *The Voyage of the Beagle*, Charles Darwin (Chapter 6) & from *Rough notes taken during some rapid journeys across the Pampas*, “The Pampas Indians” & “The Town of Buenos Aires” by Francis Bond Head. **OP on English Travelers.**
  - Thursday, April 19: Alejo Carpentier: *The kingdom of this world*
**Week 8.**  
Tuesday, April 24  
Juan Rulfo. “Tell Them Not to Kill me”, & “No Dogs Bark”. Oral presentations on Mexican Muralists / Rulfo/  
Thursday, April 26. **Midterm Exam**

**Week 9.**  
Thursday, May 3; Fidel Castro. “History will absolve me” (excerpts).  
Miguel Barnet. “Biography of a Runaway Slave” (58-64)  
*Salut les cubains* (Agnès Varda. 1963) (27min film)  
Third Cinema: Julio García Espinosa, “For an Imperfect Cinema” (458-65)

**Week 10. The aesthetics of Peronism**  
Tuesday, May 8: Daniel Santoro, *Manual del niño peronista*  
Julio Cortázar, “House Taken Over”. Oral presentation on Cortázar.  

**Week 11. Dictatorships in the Southern Cone**  
Thursday, May 17: Patricio Guzmán. *Nostalgia of the Light* (Chile, 2010)  
Repression in Chilean Dictatorship.

**Week 12.**  
Thursday, May 24: Finnegan: *Silver or Lead: The drug cartel La Familia gives local officials a choice: Take a bribe or a bullet*. Ejército Zapatista. “Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle”

**Week 13.**  
Tuesday, May 29: Invited Guest from the Brazilian Embassy in Buenos Aires. Lecture about F-H Cardoso, Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff’s presidencies.  
Thursday, May 31: *Even the Rain*, film by Iciar Bolain... about the Water War in Bolivia.

**Week 14**  
Film: Lourdes Portillo, *Señorita extraviada*. Discussion.  
**Oral Presentation** on the Zapatistas & Maquiladoras.  
Thursday, June 7. Review in class. Each student should bring a subject she/he feels strongly about.

**Week 15**  
Tuesday, June 12. **Final exam.**

Thursday, June 14. “Final Grade Sheet and signature of Hoja de situación (attendance is mandatory)”.
Bibliography


Marysa Navarro. “Evita, una de las primeras desaparecidas políticas de Argentina.” (JSTOR)

- - -. “Wonderwoman was Argentine and her Real name was Evita.” Canadian Journal of Latin American & Caribbean Studies 24. London: 1999. 133.


Perón, Eva. In My Own Words (La razón de mi vida).

Savigliano, Marta. “*Evita: The Globalization of a National Myth*” (Jstor)