



## **Narrating Race and Nation in Latin America**

HISL 695-01H – Spring 2004 – Hebert Hall 114 – T 3:30pm – 6:00pm

Prof. Justin Wolfe

Office Hours: W1:30 - 4:00 PM or by appt.

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Latin Americans have struggled to define themselves and their histories. Who are we, what is our history and how will we mold our future? Answers ranged from the conservative to the revolutionary. Where Domingo F. Sarmiento dreamed of “whitening” and Europeanizing Argentina in the mid-nineteenth century, José Vasconcelos imagined that the Mexican Revolution foretold the emergence of a “Cosmic Race” that mixed indigenous, African and European descendants. In this seminar we will analyze such narratives of race and nation to understand their evolving construction and critique in Latin America and the Caribbean. As we trace the history of these notions, we will also unravel related concepts of gender, class and ethnicity. At the same time we will explore critical methodologies for approaching these issues. As a class, we will study these issues through cases studies in Argentina, Cuba and Mexico. Each student will also produce their own research project based on the writings of a Latin American figure (born prior to 1900) of their own choosing.

### **GRADING POLICY AND ASSIGNMENTS**

The success of this class depends on your critical reading and active participation in discussion. Each week for which we have readings, you will be expected to bring a concise and relevant question about one of the readings.

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- Biography (20%)
- Historical context paper (20%)
- Research paper (30%)
- Peer reviews (10%)
- Discussion (20%)

All assignments must be completed to receive a grade for this class. Three absences from class will result in your automatic withdrawal from the class.

All assignments are due on the date noted. If you turn in an assignment late without having cleared it with me 48 HOURS BEFORE THE DUE DATE, you will be marked down one letter grade for each day that it is late (e.g., from a “A” to a “B”, etc.). All emergency excuses must be received through your academic advisor.

## BOOKS FOR THE COURSE

All of the following books are available for purchase at the University Book Store. If available, they will also all be placed on 1-day reserve at the library.

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Verso, 1991).

Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, *Sab and Autobiography*, trans. and ed. by Nina M. Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993).

Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990).

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*, trans. Kathleen Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

Doris Sommer, *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race: A Bilingual Edition*, trans. Didier T. Jaen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### 1/20 Introduction to the seminar

### 1/27 Race, Nation and Gender (1)

“Gender,” in Gordon Maxwell, ed., *A Dictionary of Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), available online: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?entry=t88.e914>.

“Race, sociology of,” in Gordon Maxwell, ed., *A Dictionary of Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), available online: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t88.e1845>.

Richard Graham, “Introduction,” in Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, 1-6.

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 1-46.

Doris Sommer, “Part I: Irresistible Romance,” and “Part II: Love and Country: An Allegorical Speculation,” in *Foundational Fictions*, 1-51.

### 2/3 Race, Nation and Gender (2)

Elizabeth Dore, “One Step Forward and Two Steps Back. Gender and the State in the Long Nineteenth Century,” in Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, eds., *Hidden Histories of Gender and*

*the State in Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 3-32 (download from BlackBoard; the PDF also contains the Molyneux reading for next week).

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 47-111.

Partha Chatterjee, "Whose Imagined Community?" in *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3-13 (download from BlackBoard).

Paul Gilroy, "Race', class and agency," in *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 15-42 (download from BlackBoard).

Each student must have chosen the figure they plan to do research on by today.

### **2/10 Race, Nation and Gender (3)**

Maxine Molyneux, "Twentieth-Century State Formations in Latin America," in Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, eds., *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 33-81 (this is found in the same PDF file with the Dore article from last week).

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-206.

Partha Chatterjee, "The Nation and Its Women" in *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 116-134 (download from BlackBoard).

### **2/17 Biography Presentations**

Be prepared to present a 5 minute biographical sketch of the figure you've chosen. Turn in your 5-7 page biography of the figure.

### **2/24 No Class for Mardi Gras**

### **3/2 Sab (1)**

Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, *Sab and Autobiography*, introduction and 1-69.

Aline Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba, 1880-1930: Theory, Policies, and Popular Reaction," in Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, 37-70.

### **3/9 Sab (2)**

Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, *Sab and Autobiography*, introduction and 70-148.

Doris Sommer, "Sab C'est Moi," in *Foundational Fictions*, 114-137.

### **3/16 Historical Context Presentations**

Be prepared to present a 5 minute sketch of the historical context into which you figure was born and lived. Turn in your 5-7 page historical context paper.

### **3/23 Facundo (1)**

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo*, pp. 1-128.

Doris Sommer, "Plagiarized Authenticity: Sarmiento's Cooper and Others," in *Foundational Fictions*, 52-82.

Skim your notes or reread Aline Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba, 1880-1930: Theory, Policies, and Popular Reaction," in Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, 37-70.

### **3/30 Facundo (2)**

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo*, pp. 129-250.

Mary Louise Pratt, "Introduction: Criticism in the Contact Zone," and "Reinventing América/Reinventing Europe: Creole Self-Fashioning," in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 1-11, 172-197.

### **4/6 Cosmic Race**

José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race*, all of the English edition.

Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940," in Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, 71-114.

### **4/13 No Class - Keep working on your papers**

### **4/20 Draft Paper Presentations**

Be prepared to present a 5 minute sketch of your paper, highlighting your thesis and the structure of your paper. Turn in copies of your completed draft (bring one copy for me and enough copies for every other student)

### **4/20 Peer Reviews**

Bring your reviews and the papers with your comments on them to return them to their respective authors. Bring a copy of each review for me. Be prepared to participate in a brief discussion of each paper, offering helpful comments.

**Final research paper is due Wednesday, May 5, by 5pm. Lateness penalties begin after 5pm.**

## A Short List of Latin American Notables

Below is a list of notable Latin Americans born up to 1900 who have writings in translation. I have included people from a wide array of countries, time periods, and political inclinations. The number of Latin Americans available in translation seems to grow every year, so this list is far from complete. If you are interested and capable of reading any of these or other figures in their native languages, I'd be happy to discuss this possibility with you.

As a good starting point, you can find more information on most of these figures from the following online resources:

- Biography Resource Center ([http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/lln\\_tulane?db=BioRC](http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/lln_tulane?db=BioRC))
- Literature Resource Center ([http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/lln\\_tulane?db=LitRC](http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/lln_tulane?db=LitRC))

**Andrés Bello (1781-1865)** | Venezuelan writer and polymath, born in Caracas, Venezuela. He studied in Caracas, then lived in London (1810–29), before finally settling in Chile, where he became a senior public servant, senator, and first rector of the University (1843). The most remarkable Latin American intellectual of the 19th century, his writings embrace language, law, education, history, philosophy, poetry, drama, and science.

**Simón Bolívar (1783-1830)** | The national hero of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, born in Caracas. Having traveled in Europe, he played the most prominent part in the wars of independence in South America. In 1819, he proclaimed and became president of the vast Republic of Colombia (modern Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador), which was finally liberated in 1822. He then took charge of the last campaigns of independence in Peru (1824). In 1826 he returned north to face growing political dissension. He resigned office (1830), and died on his way into exile.

**Gertrúdis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814–1873)** | Poet, born in Cuba, but left in 1836. Her passionate and poignant verses reflecting an unhappy love affair won her a high place among Spanish romantic poets. She also wrote novels, including *Sab* (1841), an antislavery novel that featured a mulatto slaver as the central character.

**Joaquim Nabuco (1849-1910)** | Statesman and diplomat, leader of the abolitionist movement in Brazil, and man of letters. Nabuco was a member of an old aristocratic family in northeastern Brazil. Both in the national Chamber of Deputies (from 1878) and in the Brazilian Anti-Slavery Society, which he founded, he worked tirelessly for the emancipation of Brazil's slaves, which was proclaimed on May 13, 1888. One of his most important writings was *O Abolicionismo* (1883; *Abolitionism*).

**Clorinda Matto de Turner (1852-1909)** | Peruvian journalist, feminist and educator. She wrote one of the earliest and most important Indianist (*indigenista*) novel, *Aves sin nido* (1889; *Birds Without a Nest*), which details the difficulties of Peruvian Indians as they faced modernization, the Church and large landowners. Both her writing and work as a literary newspaper editor proved to combustible in the volatile political situation of late-nineteenth-century Peru and in 1895 she chose exile in Argentina.

**José Martí (1853-1895)** | Cuban poet and patriot. A lifelong advocate of Cuban independence, he lived in other Latin American countries and in the U.S. (1881–95), where he founded the Cuban Revolutionary party. He was killed at the start (1895) of the final Cuban insurrection against Spain. He also achieved fame with his modernist poetry, e.g., *Ismaelillo* (1882) and *Plain Verses* (1891).

**Rubén Darío (1867–1916)** | Poet, born in Metapa, Nicaragua. He lived a wandering life of journalism, amours, and diplomatic appointments. His *Azul* (1888, *Blue*) and *Prosas Profanas* (1896, *Profane Hymns*) gave new vitality to Spanish poetic modernism. After 1898 he worked mainly in Europe, where he wrote *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (1905, *Songs of Life and Hope*). Darío is considered one of the most influential figures in Spanish-language poetry.

**José Enrique Rodó (1871-1917)** | Uruguayan philosopher, educator, and essayist, considered by many to have been Spanish America's greatest philosopher, whose vision of a unified Spanish America inspired his continent. In the essay generally considered to be his masterpiece, *Ariel* (1900), Rodó warned against what he saw as North American materialism and called for idealism from young Spanish Americans to bring forth the best features of democracy.

**Fernando Ortíz (1881-1969)** | Cuban anthropologist who pioneered the field of Afro-Caribbean studies. He researched and wrote extensively on African cultural impact in Cuba, with *Los negros brujos* (1944; *Black Witches*) and *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* (1940, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*) among his most famous.

**José Vasconcelos (1882-1959)** | Mexican educator, politician, essayist, and philosopher who viewed the world as a cosmic unity. He carried over his philosophy into his writings on Mexico, calling for a synthesis of Mexican life based upon the indigenous culture of the Indians, which transcended what he saw as the narrow limits of Western culture. He is most famous for his autobiography. Among his other principal works are *La raza cósmica* (1925; *The Cosmic Race*) and *Bolivarismo y Monroismo* (1934; *Bolivarism and Monroeism*).

**Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957)** | Poet, diplomat, and teacher, born in Vicuña, Chile. A teacher from the age of 15, she taught at Columbia University, Vassar College, and in Puerto Rico, and combined her writing with a career as a diplomat and cultural minister. She established herself as a poet with *Sonetos de la muerte* (1914, *Sonnets of Death*), taking her name from Gabriele d'Annunzio and Frédéric Mistral. Her poem "Dolor" from the collection *Desolación* (1922, *Desolation*) is based on the suicide of her lover. She never married, and her work is inspired by a Romantic preoccupation with sorrow and death. She was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1945.

**Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954)** | Poet, playwright, and novelist, social agitator and revolutionary, one of the leaders of Brazil's Modernist movement in the arts. Focusing specifically on the nationalistic aspects of Modernism, Andrade, in his literary manifesto *Pau-Brasil* (1925; *Brazil Wood*), called for a rejection of Portuguese social and literary artifice and a return to what he saw as the primitive spontaneity of expression of the indigenous Brazilians, emphasizing the need for modern Brazil to become aware of its own heritage. To this end, he founded the literary movement known as Antropofagia ("Cannibalism"), a splinter group of Modernism, which, although short-lived, proved influential in its emphasis on folklore and native themes.

**Mario de Andrade (1893-1945)** | Like Oswald de Andrade (no relation), Mario was a poet, novelist, literary critic, musicologist, ethnographer, prolific letter writer, and a leader of Brazil's Modernist movement. Perhaps his most famous work is *Macunaíma* (1928), a fantastical avant-garde novel whose titular character is a true anti-hero. After the Revolution of 1930 brought Getulio Vargas to power, Andrade worked for the Ministry of Culture and became increasingly interested in ethnography and anthropology. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Andrade never traveled to Europe, or left Brazil, for that matter.

**José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930)** | Political leader and essayist who was the first Peruvian intellectual to apply the Marxist model of historical materialism to Peruvian problems. Mariátegui's masterpiece is the collection of essays *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (1928; *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*). While emphasizing the economic aspects of Marxism, Mariátegui nonetheless does not repudiate the value of religion and myth in his treatment of the Indians.

**Augusto César Sandino (1895–1934)** | Nicaraguan revolutionary, born in Niquinohomo (or La Victoria), Nicaragua. He led guerrilla resistance to USA occupation forces after 1926, and was later murdered, on the orders of Anastasio Somoza, near Managua. The Nicaraguan revolutionaries of 1979 (later known as Sandinistas) took him as their principal hero.

**Miguel Angel Asturias (1899-1974)** | Novelist and poet, born in Guatemala City, Guatemala. A law graduate from the National University, he spent many years in exile, particularly in Paris, where he studied anthropology. His novels, many of which reflect Mayan Indian influences, include *El señor presidente* (1946, *The President*), *Hombres de maíz* (1949, *Men of Maize*), and a trilogy on the foreign exploitation of the banana trade. In the Guatemalan civil service from 1946, he was ambassador to France, 1966–70. He was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1966 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1967.

**Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987)** | Sociologist, considered the 20th-century pioneer in the sociology of the Brazilian northeast. Among Freyre's numerous published works in Portuguese and English, the best-known is *Casa-grande e senzala* (1933; *The Masters and the Slaves*), an account of the relationship between Brazil's Portuguese colonizers and their African slaves. Freyre organized several university departments of sociology in Brazil and was the prime mover in the first Congress of Afro-Brazilian Studies in 1934.