

SYLLABUS

Progress, Development, and the Future in Latin American and Caribbean History

LACS 262 / History 262, MoWe 4:20-6pm, Oxford Science Building 415

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Office Hours: Pierce 215, TuTh 9-10, W 3-4, and by appointment

Description

The goal of “progress,” the concept of “development,” and the elaboration of the “future” have puzzled Latin Americans throughout their modern history. Intellectual and political elites crafted ambitious goals based on them. To ordinary Latin Americans, they became in some occasions a concrete reality, and in others an elusive dream. Everywhere “progress,” “development,” and the “future” actually or presumably took place, they created new and unexpected challenges. This course discusses the crucial issues of progress, development, and the future in Latin America from the times of the Iberian reformism in the 18th Century to the present, with a focus on the 20th century. The course therefore deals with the problem of “historical time” and of conceptualizing the entire region.

“Progress” used to represent in the 19th century the very sense of universal history, a teleology inherited by visions of “Western modernity” and “globalization.” In the 20th century, “Development” became the master key of the modernizing social scientists. Crafting the “future” is the trait shared by almost all modern political traditions. But progress became to some a scam and a myth to debunk, development turned into a technocratic and failed fantasy, and the future morphed into a cynical mirage in our current pessimistic intellectual environment.

The three concepts are interesting objects of historical reflection. Was “progress” merely an illusion for Latin Americans? Should not we consider it a *myth*, not in the sense of a delusion, but a narrative through which a community gives to itself a sense of being in the world? Is “progressive” a politically meaningful category? What happened with “development” since WWII to the present? Can we integrate the future among our historical categories? Are the agendas of economic modernization and environmental policies compatible? Can both be included in a democratic vision of the future?

Students will choose a historical problem and trace its history in terms of the concepts of progress, development, and future at play in that specific realm. Students will be able, thus, to approach debates about the “progress,” the “development,” or the “future” of

economic regimes, political systems, environmental policies, institutions, technology, or culture, aware of their underlying ideological visions. The readings include philosophical and conceptual approaches, ethno-historical accounts of colonial times, and above all key studies on 19th - and 20th -century history.

Texts in Spanish and Portuguese will be available for those students interested. The grade will consider class participation and a short paper.

Grading

Class attendance and participation	50%
Paper elaboration	25%
Final paper	25%

Grade Scale

A = 94-100	A- = 90-93	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	F = 0-62	

Absences: Only one unexcused absence is permitted. After that, one point per absence will be discounted from the final grade.

Honor code: Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will automatically result in an F grade.

Laptops are not allowed in class, except on specifically indicated occasions.

Smartphones are not allowed in class under any circumstance.

Office hours: Students are expected to attend office hours within the first three weeks of class. Failure to do this will affect their class attendance and participation grade.

Accessibility and Accommodations: Students must contact the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) to receive a letter outlining specific academic accommodations and should discuss them with their professor as early in the semester as possible. OAS contact information: (770) 784-4690 oas_oxford@emory.edu / <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html>

Bibliography

Books (available at the campus bookstore)

- Thomas D Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds a Labor and Environmental History of Sugar in Northeast Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
- Chad Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus. The Rust Belt, the Maquilas, and a Tale of Two Cities* (New York: Oxford UP, 2015).

Articles and book chapters (available on Canvas)

- Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the philosophy of history" (1940) in *Illuminations*, New York: Schocken, 2007, p. 253-264.

- Claudio Lomnitz, *Death and the Idea of Mexico* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Zone Books, 2005), chapter 1, "Laying down the law."
- David E. Timmer, "Providence and Perdition: Fray Diego de Landa Justifies His Inquisition against the Yucatecan Maya," *Church History* 66, no. 3 (1997): 477–88.
- Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Alida C Metcalf, "Millenarian Slaves? The Santidade de Jaguaripe and Slave Resistance in the Americas," *The American Historical Review* 104 (1999): 1531.
- Cyril Lionel Robert James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2d ed., [orig. 1938] (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).
- David Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment*, Yale UP, 2005, Chapter 2: "Savages and Spaniards: Natives transformed" and Chapter 3: "The Science of Creating Men."
- Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism* [1845], California UP, 2003, Chapters I-VII & XV.
- Raymond Williams, "Progressive," in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Oxford UP, 1976.
- Brodwyn Fischer, "A Century in the Present Tense: Crisis, Politics, and the Intellectual History of Brazil's Informal Cities," in Auyero, Fischer & McCann, *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America*, Duke UP, 2014.
- James P Brennan and Marcelo Rougier, *The Politics of National Capitalism: Peronism and the Argentine Bourgeoisie, 1946-1976* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).
- Albert Hirschman, "The Rise and Fall of Developmental Economics," in *Essays in Trespassing*, Cambridge UP, 1980, p. 1-24.
- John Hammond, "Popular Education in the Midst of Guerrilla War: An Interview with Julio Portillo," *Journal of Education* 173:1, 1991 (p. 91-106).
- Wien Arthus, "The Alliance for Progress. A case study of failure of international commitments to Haiti," in Millery Polyne, ed., *The Idea of Haiti: Rethinking Crisis and Development* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
- Mala Htun, *Sex and the State: Abortion, Divorce, and the Family under Latin American Dictatorships and Democracies* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- Felipe Arocena and Kirk S. Bowman, "Retirement with dignity? Lessons from pension reform in Chile and beyond," in *Lessons from Latin America: Innovations in Politics, Culture, and Development* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2014).
- Peter Taylor Klein, "Engaging the Brazilian State: the Belo Monte Dam and the Struggle for Political Voice," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42:6, 2015.
- Greg Beckett, "Rethinking the Haitian Crisis," in Millery Polyne, ed., *The Idea of Haiti: Rethinking Crisis and Development* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
- Pablo Lapegna, *Soybeans and Power: Genetically Modified Crops, Environmental Politics, and Social Movements in Argentina* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).
- Fernando Coronil, "The Future in Question: History and Utopia en Latin America, 1989-2010," in Craig Calhoun & Georgi Derluguian, *Business as Usual: the Roots of the Global Financial Meltdown*, NYU Press, 2010.

Class Schedule

Introduction: “progress,” “development,” “future,” “Latin America”

- 1/ W Jan 17 Presentation: Temporalities in Latin America
- 2/ M Jan 22 Historical time, “space of experience” and “horizon of expectation”
Reading: Benjamin, “Theses on the philosophy of history” + Veloso, “Tempo”
- 3/ W Jan 24 The colonial Holocaust
Reading: Lomnitz, “Laying down the law”

Millenarianism, prophecy, power

- 4/ M Jan 29 Colonialism and time
Reading: Timmer, “Providence and Perdition”
- 5/ W Jan 31 Maya Time
Reading: Clendinnen, “Part II: Indians”
- 6/ M Feb 5 Millenarianism and slave rebellion in Brazil
Reading: Metcalf, “Millenarian Slaves?”
- 7/ W Feb 7 / French Revolution and slave revolution
Reading: CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*

Modernization

- 8/ M Feb 12 Spanish Enlightenment
Reading: Weber, *Bárbaros*
- 9/ W Feb 14 Collapse of the Iberian empires and emergence of a *criollo* elite
Reading: Bolívar, “Jamaica Letter”
- 10/ M Feb 19 Progress and the national project
Readings: Sarmiento, *Facundo*; Williams, *Keywords*
- 11/ W Feb 21 Environmental transformations
Reading: Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds*, Ch. 1 “Eternal Verdure”
- 12/ M Feb 26 Labor and the modernizing environment
Reading: Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds*, Ch. 2 “A laboring landscape”
- 13/ W Feb 28
Reading: Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds*, Ch. 3 “A landscape of captivity”
- 14/ M Mar 5 Paper Workshop I: bring to class a 1-2-page idea to elaborate in a paper. It could be a reflection on a topic from the bibliography or a different topic, such as United Nations Development Program in Latin America; national or regional indicators of living or educational standards; “bio-power”; state apparatus; trade and development; Gross Domestic Product (GDP); Gini index; institutional stability; pluralism/ peace/ integration of religious/ ethnic/ political groups, etc.

Development

- 15/ W Mar 7 Informality and urban development

Reading: Fischer, “A Century in the Present Tense”

SPRING BREAK

16/ M Mar 19 National capitalism

Reading: Brennan & Rougier, *The Politics of National Capitalism*, Intro & Ch. 1

17/ W Mar 21 Developmental economics

Reading: Hirschman, “The rise and fall of developmental economics”

18/ M Mar 26 US Alliance for Progress

Readings: Arthus, “Alliance for Progress”; Hammond, “Popular Education in the Midst of Guerrilla War”

19/ W Mar 28 The limits of developmentalism: sex and patriarchy

Readings: Htun, *Sex and the State*, ch. 2 and 6

Neoliberal futurism

20/ M Apr 2 “Fordism” and NAFTA

Reading: Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus*

21/ W Apr 4 Mexico under NAFTA

Reading: Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus*

22/ M Apr 9 Agricultural commodities boom

Reading: Lapegna, “The dark side of the boom”

23/ W Apr 11 Pension policies

Reading: Arocena & Bowman, “Retirement with dignity?”

Neo-Developmentalism

24/ M Apr 16 NGOs and the State

Reading: Beckett, “Rethinking the Haitian Crisis”

25/ W Apr 18 Neo-Developmental State

Reading: Klein, “Engaging the Brazilian State: the Belo Monte Dam”

26/ M Apr 23 Critique of the neo-liberal and neo-developmental futures

Reading: Coronil, “The future in question”

27/ W Apr 25 Paper workshop II: bring an outline of the paper. We will discuss writing strategies, text organization, hypotheses, and arguments.

28/ M Apr 30 Conclusion

Final paper due date: TBA