

**Philosophy 80E/LALS 80E:  
Latin American Philosophy  
Spring 2008**

Instructor: Prof. Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther  
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This course explores the work of important Latin American philosophers/thinkers. Does Latin American Philosophy/Thought have to appeal to quintessential Western philosophical questions regarding knowledge, values, and reality? Is there, or could there be, a single school (or even a few schools) of Latin American Philosophy/Thought? Latin America exhibits large ethnic and national diversity as well as strong political and social inequality. What difference, if any, does such diversity and inequality make to the development of core philosophical questions and frameworks?

In order to try to answer these questions, we first explore the intellectual, cultural, and historical context of Latin America by reading parts of *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* by Eduardo Galeano and *The Idea of Latin America* by Walter Mignolo. We subsequently investigate the rich and diverse philosophical content of the work of Latin American philosophers/thinkers, past and present. For example, we will read texts by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Simón Bolívar, Octavio Paz, Paulo Freire, José Vasconcelos, and Subcomandante Marcos. Perhaps the very concept of "Latin American Philosophy/Thought" is an example of *orientalism*? The hope is that this course will challenge you to reconsider how you see the nature, dynamics, historicity, and cultural-specificity of Philosophy/Thought.

**TAs**

Lourdes Ortiz [lortizba@ucsc.edu](mailto:lortizba@ucsc.edu)  
Christoph Durt [info@durt.info](mailto:info@durt.info)

Please direct all questions about assignments, grading etc. to your TAs. They will contact me if necessary.

I look forward to discussing Philosophy with you. Please come to my office hours or make an appointment.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Three one-page summaries (20% of your grade)
2. One short paper (approximately 5 pages) (20%)
3. Take-home midterm (20%)

4. Final Exam (30%)
5. Participation in class and in section. Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken and there will be "random questioning". (10%)

### **GRADING POLICY**

1. In order to pass the course, you must satisfy every requirement.
2. One third of a letter grade will be deducted per day for any late assignments (e.g., a B+ becomes a B, etc.).
3. Two incentives for NOT turning assignments in even a day late:
  - No assignments will be accepted more than seven (7) days after the due date.
  - Professors and TAs often have to handle papers from approximately 100 students. This is a large number. Late assignments run the risk of getting lost. It is your responsibility to track that we return any late papers.

### **WARNING**

**Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Please consult:**

[http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/index.html)

### **READINGS**

**Week 1.** Galeano. *Open Veins of Latin America*

3/31 pp. 1-15, 59-67, 91-94

4/2 pp. 22-31, 38-42

**Week 2.** Galeano. *Open Veins of Latin America*

4/7 pp. 107-110, 115-120, 126-135, 153-170

4/9 pp. 197-204, 205-214, 225-227, 259-261

**Week 3.** Mignolo. *The Idea of Latin America*

4/14 pp. x-xx, 1-22

4/16 pp. 34-50

**Week 4.** Mignolo. *The Idea of Latin America*

4/21 pp. 95-128

4/23 pp. 128-148

**Week 5.** La Conquista

4/28 Sepúlveda, Bartolomé de Las Casas, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, LAP, pp. 39-54, 86-91.

4/30 A retrospective: Octavio Paz, "Mexico and the United States" [email]

**Week 6.** Political Manifestos: Past and Present

5/5 Simón Bolívar, "The Jamaica Letter", LAP, pp. 105-119, José Martí, LAP, pp. 232-238.

5/7 Subcomandante Marcos

"Chiapas: The Southeast in Two Winds, a Storm and a Prophecy"

[http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/marcos\\_se\\_2\\_wind.html](http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/marcos_se_2_wind.html)

"First Declaration from the Lacondon Jungle"

<http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/ezlnwa.html>

**Week 7.** Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

5/12 Chapter 1

5/14 Chapter 2

**Week 8.** Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

5/19 Chapter 3

5.21 Chapter 4

**Week 9.** "Mexican Philosophy"?

5/26 (Holiday)

5/28 "Positivism and Porfirism in Mexico", Zea, LAP, pp. 198-218. "The Cosmic Race", Vasconcelos, LAP 279-286.

5/30 Hurtado, G. 2006. Two Models of Latin American Philosophy. *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 20: 204-213. [email]

**Week 10.** Contemporary Latin American Philosophy

6/2 Pereda, C. 2006. Latin American Philosophy: Some Vices. *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 20: 192-203. [email]

Latin American Philosophy Interview with Manuel Vargas, Philosophy, University of San Francisco

<http://unfspb.wordpress.com/2007/09/04/manuel-vargas-the-interview/>

6/4 Martínez S, "Science, Democracy and Technology" [email]