

ANTH 325 MODERN LATIN AMERICAN SOCIETIES
Course syllabus
Spring 1999

Professor: Dr. Chris S. Beekman
Office: Lutz 238
Office Phone: 852-6864
Office Hours: Thursday 4-6pm, Friday 1-2pm

Anth. Dept. Office: AD 228
Class Time: 2:30-3:45pm TR
Class Location: AD 232

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces anthropological perspectives on Latin America. By Latin America, I mean those areas of the New World colonized by the Latin countries (Spain and Portugal), and consisting generally of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. This course will focus on those groups who have been forced to deal with mainstream society without completely participating in it - the Native Indian populations whose rich culture was decimated by the arrival of Europeans, the African peoples brought to the New World as slaves but who today hold increasingly important social and political and religious roles, and women who are breaking out of the long-held pattern of subordination to become more active participants in Latin American society. Native societies will receive particular attention. Although we will discuss politics and economics from this perspective, we will not cover these kinds of issues in the same way that a course in Latin American political history might. In many ways, this course is Latin America "from the ground up", and our topics will be illustrated by the use of several ethnographic studies of Latin American communities.

This course is divided into three parts. We will begin with a brief summary of native societies in Latin America at the time of the European Conquest, to impress upon the students the complexity of the indigenous base. We will discuss the policies and institutions of the invading European powers, and how these impacted native society to create the culture of mixed ancestry that today exists throughout Latin America. Students are required to read a history-based ethnography of the Cakchiquel chiefdom of Guatemala as an example of Indian-European interaction of this period. We will follow this with a discussion of a much simpler native society, the Canela of the Brazilian Amazon, whose lifestyle remains today quite distinct from that of urban dwellers, although they cannot be characterized as a form of "fossil culture". They are, however, a group with limited interaction with mainstream Latin American society.

The second part of the class will examine issues of cultural identity in Mesoamerica and the Andes by reading two ethnographies, one focused on the Mixtec of Santiago Nuyoo in southern Mexico and the other on the Quechua of the Peruvian Andes. Each of these communities has developed distinct ways of retaining their own community identity while interacting with more urban, "Hispanized" peoples and institutions. These case studies will bring out major issues of contemporary relevance in Latin America, such as the drug trade, gifting, kinship, cosmology, community life, cultural brokers, and land ownership.

In the last section of the course we will look more at outsiders' views on indigenous peoples. We will begin with the highly ambiguous status of Indian culture - revered for its grand history but decried for holding back progress - and discuss how it has been appropriated by non-Indians for political and social reasons. We will read an ethnography on the "Indians" of Hueyapan, Mexico, as a case study on this topic. This will be followed by examinations of the

African contribution to Latin American culture, and the changing role of gender. We will end the course with a discussion of development projects in Latin America, and how these have once again resulted in inaccurate views of native peoples.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Within the two weeks of class, students will need to complete a map assignment meant to familiarize them with the region that is the topic of this course. This will be worth 10% of the final grade, and I will give you details the second day of class.

Active and productive discussion in class is expected - This will be worth 5% of your grade and can easily push you over into the next letter grade if you do well.

There will be three examinations over the course of the semester, including the final exam. Each exam will be worth 20% of your grade. Exams are to be taken the day they are scheduled, and students cannot expect to miss exams and be able to make them up later at their leisure. Students with special needs should inform the professor.

A 10 page paper is also required from students in this class, and will count for the remaining 25% of your grade. Details will be provided the second week of class, but students will need to submit an abstract and outline/bibliography as preliminary steps over the course of the semester.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Colonial Cakchiquels: Highland Maya Adaptations to Spanish Rule, 1600-1700. Robert M. Hill, II, Harcourt Brace, 1999.

The Canela: Bonding through Kinship, Ritual, and Sex. William H. Crocker, Harcourt Brace, 1997.

The Hold Life Has: Coca and Cultural Identity in an Andean Community. Catherine Allen, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988.

The Covenants with Earth and Rain: Exchange, Sacrifice, and Revelation in Mixtec Sociality. John Monaghan, University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

Being Indian in Hueyapan: A Study of Forced Identity in Contemporary Mexico. Judith Friedlander, St. Martin’s Press, 1975.

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND READINGS

Date	Topic	Readings
Jan. 12 (T)	- Introduction to the course	
Jan. 14 (R)	- Native American society and the European Conquest: Mesoamerica	Begin Hill
Jan. 19 (T)	- Native American society and the European Conquest: South America	Maps Due
Jan. 21 (R)	- Colonial Institutions and Independence	
Jan. 26 (T)		Finish Hill
Jan. 28 (R)	- Anthropological Community Studies in Mesoamerica and South America	Begin Crocker

Feb. 2 (T) - The Canela and Traditional Kinship Based Societies	
Feb. 4 (R)	Finish Crocker
Feb. 9 (T) - FIRST MIDTERM EXAM	
Feb. 11 (R) - Identity in the Community of Sonqo: the Runakuna	Begin Allen
Feb. 16 (T)	
Feb. 18 (R)	
Feb. 23 (T) - Identity in the Community of Santiago Nuyoo: The Mixtec	Begin Monaghan
Feb. 25 (R)	
Mar. 2 (T)	
Mar. 4 (R) - Trends and patterns in Mesoamerican and Andean communities	Finish Allen, Finish Monaghan
Mar. 9 (T)	
Mar. 11 (R) - SECOND MIDTERM EXAM	
Mar. 16 (T) - NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 18 (R) - NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 23 (T) - Who gets to be Indian, anyway?	Begin Friedlander
Mar. 25 (R) - NO CLASS	
Mar. 30 (T) - The appropriation of Indian-ness	Finish Friedlander
Apr. 1 (R) - African slavery and race relations	
Apr. 6 (T)	
Apr. 8 (R) - FILM - "Umbanda"	
Apr. 13 (T) - Machismo, Marianismo, and Changing Gender Roles	
Apr. 15 (R) - Environmentalism, Development, and Indians	
Apr. 20 (T) - Film - "The Kayapo: Out of the Forest"	
Apr. 22 (R) - Future Trends	Papers Due
Apr. 27 (T) - READING DAY - NO CLASS	
Apr. 28 (W), 11:30-2:00pm. FINAL EXAM	