

Introduction to Latin American Philosophy (PHIL 342) / Fall 2022)

Department of Philosophy, University of Oregon, Eugene

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Office hours: by appointment Monday 4:00-6:00 pm

Class: Tuesday/Thursday 4:00- 5:20 pm

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1. Course description

Is it possible to write philosophy in other circumstances than the European one? What discourses of power lie behind the understanding of Latin American as otherness to Europe? What experiences of social organization have taken part of Latin American history? How do aesthetic practices, social movements, and the exercise of memory change politics? With which theoretical sources should we understand Latin American experiences such as "zapatismo", indigenous organizations, organized women (mujeres creando), etc. and its political principle of "governing obeying"? How has conquest configured a heterosexual Colonial/Modern Gender System?

This course will try to answer some of the previous questions and important ideas and arguments produced in Latin American Philosophy. Latin American Philosophy was born out of aims to understand how geopolitical conditions produced intellectual coloniality – understood as the impossibility of reaching an age of majority due to dependence on western thinking. We will explore some of the most representative movements of last centuries. Some important topics will be: Historicism, Marxism, Philosophy of Liberation, and the Decolonial Turn. Also, we will study recent theorist interested in topics such as: memory/mourning, new feminist movements, genealogy of history of ideas, violence and war, indigenous organization.

In this course, we will understand how Latin American intellectual productions, form part of a “knowledge apparatus” (a term in dialogue with the French philosopher Foucault) engaging the political needs of colonial and colonized nations. This is a creative dialogue, given that theories produced in western traditions do not always attend to the current realities of Latin American countries. We will start with the first concern in Latin American Philosophy. Is Philosophy possible in Latin America? Primarily, we will review how an affirmative answer gave rise to some of the most representative schools of thought: Marxism and Historicism. Both of them broke ground and gave birth to great thinkers during the 20th century. In addition to establishing significant lines of research/discussion to the present day. We will consider how gender-based critique has formed an important part of recent Latin American critical theory and address the role of race, gender, and class intersectional critique in this context. Thus, the course moves from Anibal Quijano’s critique of coloniality of power to María Lugones’ critique of this category, in light of her parallel account of a modern gender system. We will study projects to overcome intellectual coloniality by concentrating on the debate, and differences, between Dussel and Santiago Castro-Gómez, and their respective theories of a philosophy of liberation and a genealogy of coloniality. Finally, how can political damage be transformed through social movements and artistic expressions? We will go over reflections on mourning through works on dictatorship. Additionally, we will analyze the current feminist movement in an urban context and within Indigenous organizations (sometimes recognized only as women's organizations, instead of feminist organizations).

Further keywords from this course include: dignity, philosophy of history (in Latin America), indigenous socialism, modern/colonial gender system, coloniality of power and transmodernity, potentia/potestas, and baroque identity, among others.

2. Learning Goals

- To become familiar with fundamental debates and problems discussed in Latin American Thought
- To understand some of the main intellectual traditions produced in XX-XXI century (such as the decolonial turn, philosophy of liberation, historicism, genealogy of history of

ideas, marxism, etc.) and how they have been challenged and expanded by intersectionality, gender/sexuality, the interest in language and representation, and new social movements.

- To deepen understanding of critical theory as praxis through the revision of its expression in Latin America. Theory, in this case, could be understood as a tool for understanding and intervening in the social reality.

Core Education Area of Inquiry

Arts & Letters (“1”)

Cultural Literacy

Difference, Inequality and Agency (DIA)

This course fulfills the *United States: Difference, Inequality, and Agency* category of the Cultural Literacy Core Education requirement, a requirement informed by UO student activism. It is meant to develop students’ analytical and reflective capacities to help them understand and ethically engage with the ongoing (cultural, economic, political, social, etc.) power imbalances that have shaped and continue to shape the United States. In addition to considering the scholarship, cultural production, perspectives, and voices from members of historically marginalized communities, students in DIA courses:

1. Inquire into intersecting aspects of identity such as race, gender, gender identity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, indigeneity, national origin, religion, or ability;
2. Analyze uses of power to marginalize on the basis of identity, as well as the assertions of agency, resistance, and resilience by marginalized groups; and
3. Examine historical and contemporary structures, forms of knowledge, cultural practices, or ideologies that perpetuate or change the distribution of power in society.

and undertake one or more of the following:

1. Reflect on one's own multiple social identifications and on how they are formed and located in relation to power.
2. Practice respectful listening and ethical dialogue around deeply felt or controversial issues.

3. Course Requirements and Approximate Workload

Four-credit courses at UO require 120 hours of student engagement per term (which amounts to a little more than 10 hours per week over 11 weeks, but obviously this will include more work in weeks when you have papers due). In Philosophy courses, a good portion of this work involves engaging and reading (and rereading) difficult texts. Consider that the readings will be: abstract, challenging, and will require your patience and time. In philosophy, words and language are very important. I strongly recommend you to practice the exercise of writing your arguments, ideas, and doubts. Also, make sure you attend all discussion sections: there, you will gain confidence in your thoughts and in the quality of your comprehension.

4. Requirements

Final course grades will be calculated through a combination of:

a. Attendance & Participation 20%

Your attendance and participation are important. The classroom will be a place for thinking aloud as a collective community interested in the creation of a comfortable environment enriched by careful reading, informed questions, and attention to classmates' opinions. You are allowed to 2 absences, after that, for each absence a portion of the attendance grade will be deducted.

You are expected to participate in the discussion sections, with well-thought questions and opinions. Make sure you have a hard copy of the assigned text, and that you are ready to read and discuss the material.

See further below 8.1 on attendance policies and alternative engagements for making up absences.

b. Midterm exam 20%

The exam will be a paper where you will choose a question/dilemma, from three possible questions/dilemmas, you will select one of them and answer it. The answer will be developed in

two pages -as argued as possible and as clear as possible. The exam will be done in the classroom, you will not be allowed to take notes, books, or electronic devices.

c. Two papers: Total 60% of the final grade

First midterm paper: 25%

You will write a glossary of 2 or 3 concepts discussed in class, presented in 2 pages. All glossaries should be printed out and turned in on the day they are due, also they should be uploaded on Canvas. Plagiarism will result in the automatic failure of the course (see Rules of Academic Honesty, below). Papers should have your full name and course title.

Final paper: 35%

The essay should be between 4-5 pages. It should demonstrate your critical analysis ability and reflective engagement with the material reviewed in class. It should be written formally and provide full citations. The topic of the paper will be assigned by the course instructor. All papers should be printed out and turned in on the day they are due, and they should be uploaded on Canvas. Plagiarism will result in the automatic failure of the course (see Rules of Academic Honesty, below). Papers should have your full name and course title.

It will take into consideration the comments and feedback received in the first evaluation (done in 'track changes' format) and deepen the previous work (glossary).

*A page: 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 250-300 words.

** Each of the assignments (including each paper) fulfills a different aspect of the course: Therefore, failure to complete any one of the requirements will result in a "D" for the semester or failure of the course.

*** All assignments outside of class are to be typed and turned in when due, unless you have a documented excuse. All late assignments are to be turned in no later than 2 days after their

original due date and with the permission of the instructor or teacher assistant. If there is no permission and the assignments are late, it will represent 1 less point per day of delay.

5. Grade policies

Graduate Grading Standard:

Grade	Numeric Equivalent	Explanation
A+		Exceptional work.
A	93-100	Very Good. Student demonstrates a quality of work and accomplishment appropriate to preparing for successful research and teaching in the subject area, including very good grasp of the material and originality of thought.
A-	90-92	Good. Student demonstrates good grasp of the material and some originality of thought.
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	Acceptable. Student demonstrates a sufficient grasp of the material and has completed the work with

no significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive.

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-73 **Lowest Passing Grade.** Work is deficient. Minimum requirements have been met but without distinction.

D+ 67-69; D 65-66; F below 65.

- Graduate students must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in graduate courses taken in the degree program.
- Grades of D+ or lower for graduate courses are not accepted for graduate credit but are computed in the GPA. A grade of N (no pass) is not accepted for graduate credit.
- A grade of pass (P) must represent work equal to or better than a B-.

6. Materials

All the readings and films are available on Canvas under “files” and organized in weekly folders.

7. Readings

Week I

INTRODUCTION

A. Gabriel García Márquez, Nobel Prize Speech

(Optional) Comandanta Esther, Discurso en la Tribuna del Congreso de la Unión, Enlace Zapatista: <https://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2001/03/28/discurso-de-la-comandanta-esther-en-la-tribuna-del-congreso-de-la-union/>

B. Grosfoguel, Ramón. “The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economy Paradigms” *Cultural Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2–3, Mar. 2007, pp. 211–23.

Week II

Psychoanalyzing History

Paz, Octavio, *The Labyrinth of Solitude and the Other Mexico*, Grove Press, NY, 1994.

Chapter: II and IV (first session)

Chapter V, VI and IX (second session)

Week III

MARXISM

Mariátegui, José Carlos, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, Translated by Marjory Urquidi, University of Texas, 1971.

Bolívar Echeverría, *Multiple Modernity*, Presentation at a Colloquium on XVIII Century in Mexico. Organized by Josefa Salomon, Loyola University, New Orleans, 2001.
<http://www.bolivare.unam.mx/ensayos/Multiple%20modernity.pdf>

Week IV

COLONIALITY OF POWER/ MODERN SYSTEM OF COLONIALITY OF GENDER

Quijano, Aníbal, “Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America” *International Sociology*, vol. 15, no. 2, June 2000, pp. 215–32.

Lugones, María. “The Coloniality of Gender” *The Palgrave Handbook of Gender and Development*, edited by Wendy Harcourt, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016, pp. 13–33.

Week V

PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERATION

Dussel, Enrique. *Twenty Theses on Politics*. Translated by George Ciccariello-Maher, Duke University Press, 2008.

Week VI

GENEALOGY & CRITICAL THEORY

Castro-Gómez, Santiago, *Critique of Latin American Reason*, Translated by Andrew Ascherl, Columbia University Press, 2021.

(Chapter 4. Latin America Beyond the Philosophy of History)

WEEK VII

CATASTROPHY OF LANGUAGE, SYMBOLIC, SIGNS, REPRESENTATION

Richard, Nelly. “Torments and Obscenities” *Cultural Residues: Chile in Transition*, translated by Alan West-Durán and Theodore Quester, University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Guzmán, Patricio, “La cordillera de los sueños” (Film) 2019. English-language subtitle version available

Week VIII

INDIGENEITY AND DECOLONIZATION

Marcos, Sylvia, *The Zapatista Women's Revolutionary Law as it is lived today* online translation of

Marcos, Sylvia, *Actualidad y cotidianidad: La ley revolucionaria de mujeres del EZLN*, CEDECI, Universidad de la Tierra, Chiapas, 1993.

Cusicanqui, Silvia, "Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 111(1), 95–109, 2012.

Week XIX

GENDER VIOLENCE & FEMINISMS

Segato, Rita. "Territory, Sovereignty, and Crimes of the Second State: The Writing on the Body of Murdered Women" *Terrorizing Women*, edited by Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 70–92.

Gago, Verónica, *Feminist International: How to Change Everything*, Translated by Liz Mason-Deese, Verso Books, 2020.

Week X

QUEER DECOLONIZATION

Domínguez Ruvalcaba, "Queer Decolonization" in *Translating the Queer, Body Politics and Transnational Conversations*, Zed Books, London, 2016.

Lucas Avedaño (Muxe performer): No soy persona, soy mariposa

<https://youtu.be/udNHo8IFBvw>

8. Course Policies

1. Attendance

It is the student's responsibility to be in class and to make up the class assignments they have missed. Make sure you have at least one person in class who can provide you with notes and assignment information. Once you have worked on the material you missed, if you do not understand it or need clarification make sure you see the instructor during office hours.

2. Computer, Cell Phone, and Electronic Equipment Policy

The use of computers, cell phones, or any other electronic equipment not specifically allowed by the instructor is not permitted during class.

3. Rules of Academic Honesty

In the event of any of the following acts of academic honesty, the instructor reserves the right to assign the student a failing grade, i.e., an "F"

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts.

Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever: 1) one quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product; 2) one uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words; 3) one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material—unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services . In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise prepared totally or in part by another person, even if that person is acting as a tutor or editor (and ends up substantially producing part of the work).

Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.

Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise.

Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student's work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one's work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

4. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

I am an assisting employee. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see [Employee Reporting Obligations](#) on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence should call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE [7244] or visit safe.uoregon.edu for help. Students experiencing all forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment may contact the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator/OICRC at 541-346-3123. Additional resources are available at investigations.uoregon.edu/how-get-support. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Resources for people experiencing hate and discrimination can be found also on the following website: RESPECT.uoregon.edu and by calling 541-346-5555.

5. Assistance/Resources:

If you need a special learning assistance, (for example, use of electronic devices, extended time in exams) please notify me right away and contact the *Accessible Education Center*.

Accessible Education Center (AEC): coordinates services, provides advocacy and support to students with documented physical, learning, and psychological disabilities and provides assistance to the general campus community in responding appropriately to requests for accommodations based on disability.

Location: 155 Oregon Hall

Web page: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/>

Phone: 541-346-1155

Email: uoaec@uoregon.edu

Teaching & Learning Center (TLC): TLC provides numerous resources (including courses, workshops, and tutoring) to help UO students succeed. They work with a diverse student body with a wide range of needs. If you are unsure which resources would work best, they are happy to answer questions and share suggestions.

Location: 68 PLC. Web page: <http://tlcuoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-3226.

Counseling Center: The CC provides comprehensive mental health care and testing services to the University of Oregon campus. The primary mission of the UCTC is to provide quality clinical/therapeutic services, psychological testing and assessment, psychoeducational workshops and outreach as well as emergency services.

Location: University Health, Counseling, and Testing Center Building

Web site: <http://counseling.uoregon.edu>

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 541-346-3227

6. Inclement weather policy

“It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Canvas and by email. Updates on inclement weather and closure are also communicated in other ways described here: <https://hr.uoregon.edu/about-hr/campus-notifications/inclement-weather/inclement-weather-immediate-updates>”