

AS.361.330 - Latin America Otherwise: Voicing Dissent

Instructor: Túlio Zille

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Office hours: TBA

Meeting times: Tuesdays – Thursdays 1:30-2:45

Classroom: Greenhouse 113

This course will look at various Latin American texts through an unconventional lens: that of dissent. Partly inspired by French intellectual Jacques Rancière's concept of politics (2001), this syllabus takes as its premise the idea of dissent not simply as a moment of resistance, nor of the collective plea for rights, as it is often assumed in both leftist and liberal interpretations of politics. In this course we will assume that dissent takes place when given or accepted ways of living and institutional forms are unexpectedly reconfigured by subjects not previously recognized as political. For example, when mother nature (La Pachamama) becomes a recognizable subject by law and thus also protected by it thanks to the struggles of the indigenous peoples of Ecuador and Bolivia, we have a moment in which a given social order is reconfigured because a new subject now takes part in that order. In this Rancièrian understanding, any *given* social order limits what is and what is not sensible, whose voices can be comprehended and whose voices cannot. Politics is a moment of dissent when such terms of comprehension in a given social order are challenged and reconfigured.

Throughout the semester we will read/watch/listen to a multidisciplinary selection of texts, paying special attention to the ways in which the assumptions of a given social order are challenged. The choice of texts reflects the attempt to challenge not only commonly assumed disciplinary boundaries between Political Theory, History, Sociology, Literature and the Arts, but also the often taken-for-granted boundary between theory and practice. I am also open to considering students' suggestions of other materials they are particularly interested in as the course progresses.

This course is a seminar specially intended for more advanced undergraduate students. A background in Latin American history and contemporary politics is helpful, but not required. If you would like to acquire further background, please refer to the optional readings and/or consult with me to make appropriate alternative arrangements. Because this is a seminar, we will focus on discussion. However, I will lecture when deemed appropriate, so as to assist students, on the one hand, to grasp the more difficult concepts and theories dealt with in the readings, and on the other, to become acquainted with the general historical and political contexts relevant to each week. You are expected to complete the assigned readings in a timely fashion, and to contribute actively to our weekly discussions. Please notify me if, for any reason, you will need to be absent from class. More than one unexcused absence may negatively affect your final grade. Finally, do not hesitate to come to my office hours, or to contact me for an appointment if you would like to discuss any concerns you have regarding the course, or if you would just like to chat.

Assignments:

1) Bi-weekly news posts, starting on the second week: you will be asked to post two different news articles on the same, or related, topic from two different sources. Please write a short (roughly) 150-200 words summary of the news and how the different sources address (or not) them differently. Being concise yet to the point is a valued skill you should practice. The news articles do not have to be diametrically opposed in their views on the topic, sometimes differences are small and nuanced and that is ok too. A list of potential sources will be provided, but you are welcome to explore others (you are also welcome to read sources in Spanish, Portuguese, or other languages spoken in Latin America).

2) Seminar presentation: one time during the semester, you will sign up individually or with one of your peers to present on a topic related to that week's material. This can include, but is not limited to: researching and sharing material relevant to that week's topic, proposing topics for discussion, linking your topic with the assigned readings, facilitating discussion, etc. The format is flexible, but please discuss with me any potential topics and materials you have in mind on the week prior to your presentation.

3) 3 three-page (double-spaced) response and reflection papers throughout the semester. These papers are intended for you to reflect more deeply on the class material, i.e., why were you particularly moved by a specific point in the readings and discussion? How do different readings speak to each other? This is a chance for you to refine and delve into particular points of discussion, rather than summarizing specific readings. The first paper is due on Friday of week 4, the second one on Friday of week 7, and the third one on Friday of week 10 (all noted in the syllabus).

4) A five to seven pages (double-spaced) final paper. You should discuss the topic of your interest with the instructor. Alternatively you will have the choice of proposing a final project with a different format, and of working in pairs or groups, but if you choose to do so, you need to consult with me beforehand to discuss your ideas. The deadline is Thursday, May 7, by 5pm.

Grade distribution:

Bi-weekly news posts: 10%
Seminar presentation: 10%
Participation: 20%
Three response papers: 30%
Final paper/project: 30%

Note on Academic Ethics:

The University's official Ethics Statement: "The Strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of

the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery, and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.” For more information, please see <http://ethics.jhu.edu>.

Optional background readings:

On contemporary political context of Latin America:

Skidmore, T. E., & Smith, P. H. (2013). *Modern Latin America*. 8th ed. New York: Oxford University Press. (Part III)

On colonial history, linking up to the twentieth century:

Galeano, Eduardo. (1997). *Open veins of Latin America : five centuries of the pillage of a continent*. 25th anniversary ed. / New York: Monthly Review Press.

Readings:

Week 1 - Introduction: looking at dissent from a different angle

January 27: Introduction

January 29

Galeano, Eduardo. (1997). To be like them. *The Post-Development Reader*, 214-22.

Rancière, Jacques. (2001). Ten theses on politics. *Theory & Event*, 5(3). (Read Theses 1-5)

Watch: Interview with Ashis Nandy, “The Untamed Language of Political Dissent,” available at <http://disquietreservations.blogspot.com/2010/09/ashis-nandy-untamed-language-of.html>.

Week 2 - Contesting Modernity/Coloniality: Latin America and the Postcolonial debate

February 3

Rancière (2001), Ten theses on politics. (Read Theses 6-10).

Grovogui, Siba N. (2013). “Postcolonialism.” In Dunne, T., Kurki, M., & Smith, S. (Eds.). *International Relations Theories*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 247-265.

February 5

Castro-Gómez, Santiago. (2008). (Post) Coloniality for Dummies: Latin American Perspectives on Modernity, Coloniality, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge”, in: Moraña,

M., Dussel, E. & Jáuregui, CA (2008) *Coloniality at Large. Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate*, United States of America: Duke University Press. Pp 259-83.

Mignolo, Walter. (2005). *The idea of Latin America*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub. Preface (pp. x-xx)

Week 3 - Development and its discontents (part 1): traditional and contemporary debates

February 10

Sachs, Wolfgang (ed) (2010), *The Development Dictionary*. Zed Books: London & New Jersey. Please read the introduction to the first edition. (pp. xv-xx).

Escobar, Arturo. (2012). *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 and 6 (pp. 3-20, 212-226)

February 12

Escobar, *Encountering Development*, Preface to the 2012 edition (pp. vii-xliv)

Carruyo, Light. (2008). *Producing knowledge, protecting forests: Rural encounters with gender, ecotourism, and international aid in the Dominican Republic*. Penn State Press. Intro and Chapter 3 (pp. 1-12; 59-80).

Weeks 4-6 - Development and its discontents (part 2): the renewed wave of developmentalism

REMINDER: First response paper due on Friday, February 20, by 5pm.

a) The Yasuní preserve in Ecuador

February 17

Shiva, Vandana (1997). "Resources". In Wolfgang Sachs (ed), *The Development Dictionary*. Zed Books: London & New Jersey. Pp. 228-242.

Martin, Pamela L. 2011. "Global Governance from the Amazon: Leaving Oil Underground in Yasuní National Park, Ecuador." *Global Environmental Politics* 11(4):22-42.

February 19

Acosta, Alberto. "Why Ecuador's president has failed the country over Yasuní-ITT" *The Guardian*, 4 September 2013. Available at <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/sep/04/ecuador-president-failed-country-yasuni-itt>.

Radcliffe, Sarah. (2012). Development for a postneoliberal era? *Sumak kawsay*, living

well and the limits to decolonisation in Ecuador. *Geoforum*, 43(2), 240-249.

On the Yasuní-ITT project, watch documentary "A Wild Idea," by Verónica Moscoso.

b) The Belo Monte Dam in the Brazilian Amazon

February 24

Illich, Ivan (1997). "Needs". In Wolfgang Sachs (ed), *The Development Dictionary*. Zed Books: London & New Jersey. Pp. 95-110.

Fearnside, Phillip. (2012). "Belo Monte Dam, a spearhead for Brazil's dam building attack on Amazonia?", GWF Discussion Paper 1210, Global Water Forum, Canberra, Australia. Available at http://www.globalwaterforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Belo-Monte-Dam-A-spearhead-for-Brazils-dam-building-attack-on-Amazonia_-GWF-1210.pdf.

Movimento Xingu Vivo, "A Letter of denouncement and indignation against the approval of the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Dam's provisional license," available at: <http://amazonwatch.org/news/2010/0204-from-the-xingu-alive-forever-movement-a-letter-of-denouncement-and-indignation-against-the-approval-of-the-belo-monte-hydroelectric-dams-provisional-license>

Watts, Jonathan (2014). "Belo Monte, Brazil: The tribes living in the shadow of a megadam" *The Guardian*.
: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/dec/16/belo-monte-brazil-tribes-living-in-shadow-megadam>

Watch: "Environmental protection agency chief: Brazil will do the same to indigenous as Australians did to the Aborigines." Web. 10 March, 2012.
<http://news.mongabay.com/2011/0717-trennepohl_genocide.html>

Final declaration of the People's Summit, Rio de Janeiro, June 2012. Available at: <http://rio20.net/en/propuestas/final-declaration-of-the-people%E2%80%99s-summit-in-rio-20>

c) The politics of international events: the World cup, the Olympic games, and civil discontent in Brazil

February 26

Portal Popular da Copa. "Report from the National Coalition of Local Committees for a People's World Cup and Olympics," Available at: http://www.portalpopulardacopa.org.br/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=396&Itemid=294

Bowater, Donna (2014). "Whatever happened to Brazil's World Cup protests?"
<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/10/brazil-protests-worldcup.html>

Instructor's presentation on the June 2013 protests.

d) Amerindian knowledge and challenges to the social order

March 3

Mignolo, Walter. (2011). *The darker side of western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options*. Duke University Press. Introduction, pp. 1-24.

Escobar, Arturo. (1999). After nature: steps to an antiessentialist political ecology
1. *Current anthropology*, 40(1), 1-30.

March 5

Avelar, Idelber. (2014). Contemporary Intersections of Ecology and Culture: On Amerindian Perspectivism and the Critique of Anthropocentrism. *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, 48(1), 105-121.

Fabricant, Nicole (2013). Good Living for Whom? Bolivia's Climate Justice Movement and the Limitations of Indigenous Cosmovisions, *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*, 8:2, 159-178.

Watch short animated movie "La abuela grillo" (Bolivian legend and privatization of water). Available at
http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/09/abuela_grillo_a_fable_of_our_times.html

Week 7 - Social movements and creative resistance (part 1): Radical pedagogy and popular education

REMINDER: Second response paper due on Friday, March 13, by 5pm.

March 10

Freire, Paulo. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New rev. 20th-Anniversary ed. New York: Continuum. Preface, and chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 35-86).

Dussel, Enrique. D, & Vallega, A. A. (2013). *Ethics of liberation in the age of globalization and exclusion*. Durham: Duke University Press. Pp. 311-20 ("C: *Conscientização* in Freire").

March 12

Zibechi, Raúl., & Ryan, R. (2012). *Territories in resistance : a cartography of Latin American social movements*. Oakland, Calif.: AK Press. Section I, chapters 1 and 2 (pp.13-30); Section II, chapter 10 (pp. 121-126).

Tarlau, Rebecca. (2013). The Social(ist) Pedagogies of the MST: Towards New Relations of Production in the Brazilian Countryside. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 21(41). (pp. 1-18 + short appendix).

Jaramillo, N. E., McLaren, P., & Lazaro, F. (2011). A Critical Pedagogy of Recuperation. *Policy Futures in Education*, 9(6), 747-758.

Christel, Lucas, and Nancy Piñeiro (2014) "An Argentine Bachillerato Popular at the Crossroads: The Encroachment of the State on the Demands of Social Organizations." Available at <http://upsidedownworld.org/main/argentina-archives-32/4721-an-argentine-bachillerato-popular-at-the-crossroads-the-encroachment-of-the-state-on-the-demands-of-social-organizations>.

Spring Break! March 14-22

Week 8 - Social movements and creative resistance (part 2): a Zapatista philosophy of life

March 24

Harvey, Neil. (2005). Inclusion Through Autonomy: Zapatistas and Dissent. *NACLA Report On The Americas*, 39(2), 12-17.

Zibechi, Raúl., & Ryan, R. (2012). *Territories in resistance*. Section II, chapter 11 (pp. 127-158).

Subcomandante Marcos (2011). *Our word is our weapon: selected writings*. Seven Stories Press. Selections TBA.

March 26

El Kilombo Intergaláctico (2008). *Beyond Resistance: Everything. An Interview with Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos*. Durham, NC: Paperboat Press. (pp. 21-61).

Week 9 - Social movements and creative resistance (part 3): Memory, trauma, and the legacies of dictatorship

March 31

Galeano, Eduardo. (2000). *Days and nights of love and war*. Pluto Press.

Romero, Simon (2014). "Brazil releases report on past abuses"
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/11/world/americas/torture-report-on-brazilian-dictatorship-is-released.html?_r=0

Benedetti, Mario. (2013). The Disappeared: The Triumph of Memory. *NACLA Report On*

The Americas, 46(4), 78-80.

April 2

Hite, Katherine. (2013). *Politics and the art of commemoration: memorials to struggle in Latin America and Spain*. Routledge. Chapters 1 and 4.

Germano, Gustavo. "Proyecto ausencias" available at <http://www.slideshare.net/fuenteovejuna/gustavo-germano-proyecto-ausencias>

Selected political songs from dictatorship years

Week 10 - Culture challenging the social order

REMINDER: third response paper due on Friday, April 10, by 5pm.

April 7 - Theater

Browse website: <http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org/en/index.php?useFlash=1> (with particular attention to the description in the "Theater of the Oppressed" tab, and submenu on the left (for project examples).

Boal, Augusto. (2000). *Theater of the Oppressed*. Pluto Press. Foreword and chapter 4. (pp. ix-x; 120-156)

Watch: *Doutores da alegria (Doctors of Joy)* (screening to be scheduled).

April 9 – Music and capoeira

Marriage, Zoë (2012). "Capoeira and Security: the view from upside down." Available at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/zo%C3%AB-marriage/capoeira-and-security-view-from-upside-down>

Garsd, Jasmine (2011, 2012) "Es Un Monstruo Grande Y Pisa Fuerte: 12 Latin American Protest Songs" Available at <http://www.npr.org/2011/12/21/143669266/es-un-monstruo-grande-y-pisa-fuerte-12-latin-american-protest-songs> and "El Pueblo Unido: More Latin American Protest Songs" Available at <http://www.npr.org/2012/10/05/162384391/el-pueblo-unido-more-latin-american-protest-songs>

Other selected songs

Week 11 – Defying borders (Part 1): race, gender, class, and queerness

PLEASE set up an appointment to discuss your ideas for the final assignment.

April 14

Anzaldúa, Gloria. (2012). *Borderlands : the new mestiza = la frontera*. 4th ed., 25th anniversary. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books. Chs. 1, 2 and 7. (there are several editions of this book available, any should be fine).

April 16

Muñoz, José. (1999). *Disidentifications: Queers of color and the performance of politics* (Vol. 2). U of Minnesota Press. Intro and Ch. 7.

Week 12 – Defying borders (Part 2): “neither here nor there, but in both places at the same time”

April 21 and 23

Díaz, Junot. (2007). *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*. Penguin.

Week 13 – Open

April 28 and 30

We will decide as a class what to focus on

Final paper due Thursday, May 7, by 5pm.