Critical Theory in Latin America
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Course description

This course reviews some of the most important ideas and arguments produced in Latin American Philosophy and Critical Theory. 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. Most recently, Latin American critical theorists — such as Santiago Castro-Gómez, Rita Laura Segato, Verónica Gago, and the Zapatistas,— have asked: What discourses of power lie behind the understanding of Latin American as otherness to Europe? What is the relation between war and the increase of femicide? How do aesthetic practices, social movements, and the exercise of memory change politics? How can those practices be understood as part of a "potencia feminista"? With which theoretical sources should we understand Latin American experiences such as "zapatismo" and its political principle of “governing obeying”? In this course, we will understand how the Philosophy of Liberation, and other Latin American 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. Students who have enjoyed the study of foundational critical theorists such as Marx, Nietzsche and Freud (and frameworks such as historical materialism, genealogy and psychoanalysis) will encounter authors in critical dialogue with these methodologies. 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 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 Aníbal 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. Further keywords from this course on decoloniality and critical theory include gore capitalism, coloniality and transmodernity, potentia/potestas, endebtedness, and baroque identity.

Learning Goals

- To become familiar with fundamental debates and problems discussed in contemporary Latin American Thought
- To understand some of the main intellectual traditions produced in the last century (such as the decolonial turn, philosophy of liberation, the history of ideas, genealogy of decoloniality, 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 through the revision of its expression in Latin America. Critical Theory, in this case, could be understood as a tool for understanding and intervening in the social reality.
April 2 COLONIALITY OF POWER

April 7 GENDER AND COLONIALITY, COLONIALITY OF POWER

April 9 MODERN SYSTEM OF COLONIALITY OF GENDER

April 14 ZERO POINT OF VIEW

April 16 TRANSMODERNITY

April 21 MULTIPLE MODERNITY, BAROQUE
[http://www.bolivare.unam.mx/ensayos/Multiple%20modernity.pdf](http://www.bolivare.unam.mx/ensayos/Multiple%20modernity.pdf)

April 23 POTENTIA AND POTETAS


April 28 DECOLONIALIZATION


April 30 GENEALOGY


May 5 CRITICAL THEORY


May 7 CATASTROPHE OF LANGUAGE, SYMBOLIC, SIGNS, REPRESENTATION


May 12 FEMICIDE

May 14 GORE CAPITALISM

May 19 BAROQUE ECONOMIES


May 21 ZAPATISMO & GENDER
Marcos, Sylvia, The Zapatista Women’s Revolutionary Law as it is lived today online translation of


May 26 INDIGENEITY AND DECOLONIZATION
May 28 QUEER DECOLONIZATION