

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

AMER 3300

The Americas: Identity, Culture, Power

I. Course Description

This course is designed to offer you a novel and innovative alternative to conventional classes in the humanities and social sciences. Truly interdisciplinary, the course draws on faculty from ten academic departments and schools. This class is also genuinely comparative and hemispheric. Unlike traditional "American Studies" programs, which define their subject matter exclusively by the geopolitical boundaries of the United States, this course takes a hemispheric approach that also encompasses the "other Americas": Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

This course emphasizes three broad themes. The first is identity. Here we are interested in the shifting ways that individuals have conceived and experienced their identity and their relationship to larger communities. We are especially interested in the ways that identity has been defined along--and across--racial, sex/gender, age/generational, ethnic, geographic, religious, and national lines. Thus, we are concerned about the way political, economic, historical, and social forces have shaped identities. Using the tools of anthropology, history, literary criticism, political science, psychology, and sociology, we will examine the ways in which identity has been represented and studied both by "insiders" and "outsiders," as well as the processes through which identity has been repressed, celebrated, altered, multiplied, and extended.

A second major theme is culture. We are not only interested in the "high culture" of elite intellectual and artistic activity, but also in "popular cultures," "folk cultures," "political cultures," and "commercial mass cultures" and the complex relationships among them. While our course will pay close attention to the "hegemonic" cultures that achieve a degree of dominance at particular times and places, we are equally interested in various subcultures and countercultures that offer alternative forms of artistic expression and values and that have repeatedly challenged and transformed dominant cultures. We are especially interested in issues of cultural resistance, transformation, domination, and colonialism as well as the possibilities of post-colonialism.

A central issue that we will explore is the intricate connection between culture as expressed in the arts, literature, music, and philosophy and the more holistic and inclusive anthropological conception of culture as particular communities' ways of life. Drawing upon approaches offered by anthropology, art, literary criticism, musicology, philosophy, sociology, we will examine the complex process through which culture has been defined, disseminated, contested, and commercialized in the Americas. We are especially interested in the ways that cultures are created through hybridization, processes of mutual borrowing and differentiation, as well as through transnational processes of migration, urbanization, and myriad forms of "modernization." Our objective is not only to show how complex societies consolidate a "common" culture, but also how the Americas have produced a multiplicity of cultures. Such an approach is essential if we are to understand both the cultural commonalities and differences that belong under the term "American."

The course's third key theme is power. We are interested not only in relationships of dominance and hierarchy, but also in various ways that order has been contested and resisted. We will place special emphasis on the power of ideas, and the way that they are formed into coherent systems of thought by intellectuals and communities; expressed and communicated through media and the arts; commodified and experienced as everyday lifestyles by subcultural, countercultural, and minority groups; and mobilized into forms of action by social and political movements. Thus we explore the varieties and forms of modernism and modernity that have emerged in the American experience, since these are the sites in which the logic and practice of both domination and resistance occur.

The underlying issue that the course addresses is "sharing." All Americans do share certain common experiences, histories, values, and aspirations. To what extent, we shall ask, are shared cultural elements--such as identity, belonging, and belief--differentially experienced as a result of such elements as ethnicity, gender, nationality, and race?

II. What is the American Cultures Program?

Designed to take advantage of Texas's border location, local resources, and demography, the American Cultures Program seeks to cultivate an understanding both of the United States and of the other societies of the Americas. It will also introduce you to economic, political, and social developments--such as migration, urbanization, and nationalism--that transcend national boundaries. Above all, the American Cultures Program is committed to high quality and innovative teaching. It seeks to create a forum where students and faculty from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds can come together to explore the forces that unite us as well as those that divide us.

III. Course Design and Goals

Traditionally, the field of American Studies defined the United States as America and America as the United States. In actuality, the term "America" properly belongs to the entire Western Hemisphere. This course is designed to break away from a United States-centered perspective, and offer a truly hemispheric and multicultural approach to the history and cultures of the Americas.

The course divides into three parts. The first unit, HISTORIES, shows that out of diverse experiences of colonialism, very different societies and cultures emerged in different parts of the Americas, with distinct places in the world economy, diverse value systems, social structures, and governmental institutions, and differing forms of artistic and literary expression. The second unit, AMERICAN MODERNITIES, focuses on the cultural, economic, and social roots of modernity and the forms modernism has taken in art, literature, music, and popular cultures. The third and final unit, LANDSCAPES OF DEBATES, turns to contemporary issues revolving around policy, politics, and practices of multiculturalism, pluralism, and cultural nationalism within the context of the changing ways in which America is being imagined and contested.

IV. Readings

Peter Winn, AMERICAS: THE CHANGING FACE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Ronald Takaki, FROM DIFFERENT SHORES

In addition you are required to read the Octavio Paz essay included with this syllabus for lecture 6.

V. Course Requirements

1. A proctored mid-term. This closed-book, closed-note exam will consist of multiple choice, identification, and essay questions based on the lectures, readings, and discussion.
2. A take-home final, consisting of essay questions based on the lectures, readings, and discussions.

Grading of Essays

When we evaluate your essays, we not only test your command of the facts, but also your analytical, organizational, and essay-writing skills. In an essay, you must do much more than simply regurgitate information offered in a lecture. You need to demonstrate your capacity to apply the knowledge to a

specific question. You need to present a clear and compelling argument and a structure that flows logically. In short, you are graded both on substance and style. Answers that simply repeat the lectures or that incorporate excessive extraneous material will be graded down.

Substance: Does the essay adequately cover the issues raised in the question?
Does the essay thoroughly define key terms and concepts?
Is the thesis too general?
Is the essay's argument logical?

Style: Does the essay respond directly to the question?
Does the essay adequately document its arguments?
Is the essay well-organized?
Are quotations thoroughly analyzed?
Are the spelling, punctuation, and grammar correct?

VI. Lectures Topics

PART I. HISTORIES

1. The World in 1492

Theme:

The three cultures--African, European, and indigenous American--whose historical intersection and collisions beginning in 1492 gave rise to new hybrid cultures in the Americas: African American, Anglo-American, and Latin American.

Topics:

Introduction to the Course
Africa, America, and Europe in 1491

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. Compare and contrast the levels of development of Europe, Africa, and the New World on the eve of Columbus's Voyage of Discovery.

2. In what specific ways is the concept of "civilization" used to judge levels of cultural development Eurocentric?

2. The Collision of Cultures in the Americas (Dorothy Baker, English; Quetzil Castenada, Anthropology)

Reading: Winn, 39-83

Theme: The nature and "success" of the European invasion and conquest of the Americas.

Topics: The Columbian exchange
How and why conquest was possible
American holocaust: The debate over the role of disease, labor conditions, and genocide
America in the colonial imagination

The Captivity Narrative: Mythic archetypes and legitimations of conquest and colonization

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. Identify and evaluate the various explanations that have been advanced to explain why the Spanish Conquistadors defeated the Aztecs.
 2. What is a "captivity narrative"? Why is this a significant literary form? What can these narratives tell us about Europeans and Indians?
 3. Identify and state the significance of Mary Rowlandson; the Virgin of Guadalupe; and the 1550 Debate between Las Casas and Sepulveda; mestizo; syncretism and hybridization.
3. Africa and Africans in the Making of New World Cultures
(Richard Blackett, History and African American Studies)

Reading:

Takaki: Jordan and Breen essays; Winn: 277-306

Theme: The indispensable role of Africans in the settlement and development of New World societies.

Topics: The origins, significance, and nature of New World slavery
The Atlantic slave plantation system
The origins of Afro-American cultures
Slavery and the origins of racism

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. How did "modern" slavery in the Americas between the 1500s and the mid-1800s differ from slavery in the ancient or pre-modern world?
 2. Approximately how many Africans were forcibly imported as slaves to the New World?
 3. What was the impact of the African Slave Trade on Europe? on West Africa?
4. Divergent Paths of Economic and Cultural Development
(Kenneth Lipartito, History)

Reading: Winn, 89-119

Theme: The Industrial Revolution.

Topics: The decline of mercantilism and the plantation slave complex and the rise of industry

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. Explain why the northeastern United States industrialized earlier than the American South, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
5. Emerson: The United States' Philosopher King; The Rise of Modern Culture; Forms of Hemispheric Hegemony
(Cynthia Freeland, Philosophy)

Theme: Popular ideologies and a shifting popular culture in the 19th century United States

Topics: Emerson and popular ideologies
The Reorientation of popular culture at the end of the 19th century
Forms of U.S. expansion: Cultural, diplomatic, economic, and military

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. Identify Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American Transcendentalism, and Cornel West.
2. What significant changes took place in U.S. popular culture during the last years of the 19th century? What innovations took place in mass communications? In leisure activities?
3. Identify Darwinism; and Frederick Jackson Turner.

PART II: AMERICAN MODERNITIES

6. Forging American Nations Out of the Cauldrons of Colonialism; The New World Baroque: Comparing Protestant and Catholic Cultures
(Thomas F. O'Brien, History; Lois Parkinson Zamora, English)

Reading: Winn, 399-441

Theme: The invention of different kinds of nations in the Americas during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the contrasting forms of artistic expression of the U.S. and Mexico

Topics: Comparing and contrasting British North America and Latin America
The causes and consequences of the Latin American Wars of Independence
Nationalism in 19th century Latin America
Latin American politics
Debates over dependency, neocolonialism, internal colonialism, imperialism, and underdevelopment
The New World Baroque

Study Questions for the First Exam:

1. Compare British North America and Latin America in the 18th and 19th centuries in terms of the composition of the population, the nature of the economy and workforce, racial categories, the distribution of legal rights and status, and treatment of indigenous peoples.
2. Compare and contrast the independence movements of the late 18th and early 19th centuries in the U.S. and Latin America. Were independence movements motivated by common concerns? Was the attitude of elites toward the masses the same? How did the new constitutions treat Indians? Did revolutions result in stable governments?
3. How did nationalism in Latin America differ from nationalism in the United States? How did Latin American elites try to promote economic growth following independence? How did they attempt to maintain order? What was Latin American elites' attitude toward immigration?
4. What was the goal of the popular nationalist movements that emerged in Latin America during the Great Depression? What groups did they appeal to? What was their effect on the peasantry and on agriculture?

5. Identify the term "baroque" and explain how it applies to Mexican culture.

7. Modernisms in Music
(Howard Pollack, Music; Joseph Kotarba, Sociology)

Theme: The emergence of distinctively American forms of musical and popular expression since the nineteenth century.

Topics: Nineteenth century musical traditions: Anglo-European, African, and Indigenous U.S. musical forms
Latin musics
Youth Culture and Rock 'n' Roll

FIRST EXAM:

8. Struggles for Equal Rights; Afro-American Modernisms: Literatures, Critiques, Canons
(Tyrone Tillery, History; Lawrence Hogue, English)

Reading: Takaki: Blauner, Bonacich, and Palmer essays

Theme: The African American struggle for equality; an examination of key texts and themes in African American literature

Topics: Major themes in Afro-American literary and cultural production during the 20th century
The making of inner-city ghettos and the internal world of Afro-American communities
The experience of and debates about racism
Strategies for promoting group interests and identities

9. Latino & Latina American Modernities: Canons & Critiques
(Lynn Cortina, Recovery of the Hispanic Heritage Project; Rodolfo Cortina, Director, Center for the Americas and MCL)

Reading: Takaki: A. Garcia, King, and Tienda essays

Theme: Major themes in Mexican-American literary and cultural production during the 20th century

10. Sexes, Sexualities, and Gender in Transnational Perspective
(Bill Simon, Sociology; Susan Kellogg, History)

Reading: Takaki: Dill essay; Winn, 313-345

Theme: Contemporary debates surrounding gender and sexuality as categories of knowledge in historical analysis, literary criticism, philosophy, and cultural theory.

Topics: Debates about the social construction of gender and sexuality
Gender and Women's Roles and Identity in Colonial Latin America

PART III: CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AT CENTURY'S END--TOWARD HEMISPHERIC APPROACHES TO IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND POWER

11. Migration, Urbanization, and the Making of Hybrid Cultures
(Nestor Rodriguez, Sociology)

- Reading: Takaki: Glazer, Higham, Light, C. Rodriguez, Chow, and Ewen essays
- Theme: Immigration and population movements in the Americas during their twentieth century and their cultural and political impact
- Topics: The Old Immigration and the New
Responses to multicultural contacts and interactions
Identity and difference: Forms of prejudice
Questions of assimilation and Americanization
Ethnic strategies, ethnic nationalism, and strategic essentialism
12. The Rise of Mass Culture and Mass Communication; The West as Myth and Symbol (Garth Jowett, Communication)
- Reading: Takaki: Takaki "Metaphysics", Deloria, and Vizenor essays
- Theme: The emergence and significance of mass communication in twentieth century United States; the Western as popular ideology.
13. Borders, Borderlands, and Frontiers (Emilio Zamora, History)
- Reading: Takaki: M. Garcia, Almaguer, Hayes-Bautista, and R. Rodriguez essays
- Theme: The "Southwest" as contested space.
- Topics: The concepts of borders and borderlands as analytical frames
Mythologies of territorial expansion
The significance of frontiers in forming national identities
Clashes of cultures: Power, sexuality, religion
Forms of "Mestizajes" (bio-racial crossing); syncretism; hybridization; and transculturation
Consequences of expansion for indigenous peoples
Creation of a distinctive Mexican American culture
14. Multiculturalism (Linda Reed, Director, African American Studies, and History; Bill Monroe, Associate Dean, Honors College, and English)
- Reading: Takaki: Raspberry, Sowell, Wilson, Schlesinger, and Takaki "To Count," "Dream Deferred," and "At the End" essays
- Theme: The cultural politics of identity at the end of the twentieth century.
- Topics: On-going debates over pluralism and multiculturalism
The contrasting and contradictory trends toward global integration and particularism
Some concluding thoughts: The Future of the Americas

"The Labyrinth of Solitude"

When I was in India, witnessing the never-ending quarrels between Hindus and Muslims, I asked myself more than once this question: What accident or misfortune of history caused two religions so obviously irreconcilable as Hinduism and Muhammadanism to coexist in the same society? The presence of the purest and most intransigent form of monotheism in the bosom of a civilization that has elaborated

the most complex polytheism seemed to me a verification of the indifference with which history perpetrates its paradoxes. And yet I could hardly be surprised at the contradictory presence in India of Hinduism and Muhammadanism. How could I forget that I myself, as a Mexican, was (and am) part of a no less singular paradox--that of Mexico and the United States.

Our countries are neighbors, condemned to live alongside each other; they are separated, however, more by profound social, economic, and psychic differences than by physical and political frontiers. These differences are self-evident, and a superficial glance might reduce them to the well-known opposition between development and underdevelopment, wealth and poverty, power and weakness, domination and dependence. But the really fundamental difference is an invisible one, and in addition it is perhaps insuperable. To prove that it has nothing to do with economics or political power, we have only to imagine a Mexico suddenly turned into a prosperous, mighty country, a superpower like the United States. Far from disappearing, the difference would become more acute and more clear-cut. The reason is obvious: We are two distinct versions of Western civilization.

Ever since we Mexicans began to be aware of national identity--in about the middle of the eighteenth century--we have been interested in our northern neighbors. First with a mixture of curiosity and disdain; later on with an admiration and enthusiasm that were soon tinged with fear and envy. The idea the Mexican people have of the United States is contradictory, emotional, and impervious to criticism; it is a mythic image. The same can be said of the vision of our intellectuals and writers.

Something similar happens with Americans, be they writers or politicians, businessmen or only travelers. I am not forgetting the existence of a small number of remarkable studies by various American specialists, especially in the fields of archeology and ancient and modern Mexican history. The perceptions of the American novelists and poets who have written on Mexican themes have often been brilliant, but they have also been fragmentary. Moreover, as a critic who has devoted a book to this theme (Drewery Wayne Gunn: *American and British Writers in Mexico*) has said, they reveal less of the Mexican reality than of the authors' personalities. In general, Americans have not looked for Mexico in Mexico; they have looked for their obsessions, enthusiasms, phobias, hopes, interests--and these are what they have found. In short, the history of our relationship is the history of a mutual and stubborn deceit, usually involuntary though not always so.

Of course, the differences between Mexico and the United States are not imaginary projections but objective realities. Some are quantitative, and can be explained by the social, economic, and historical development of the two countries. The more permanent ones, though also the result of history; are not easily definable or measurable. I have pointed out that they belong to the realm of civilization, that fluid zone of imprecise contours in which are fused and confused ideas and beliefs, institutions and technologies, styles and morals, fashions and churches, the material culture and that evasive reality which we rather inaccurately call peoples. The reality to which we give the name of civilization does not allow of easy definition. It is each society's vision of the world and also its feeling about time; there are nations that are hurrying toward the future, and others whose eyes are fixed on the past. Civilization is a society's style, its way of living and dying. It embraces the erotic and the culinary arts; dancing and burial; courtesy and curses; work and leisure; rituals and festivals; punishments and rewards; dealings with the dead and with the ghosts who people our dreams; attitudes toward women and children, old people and strangers, enemies and allies; eternity and the present; the here and now and the beyond. A civilization is not only a system of values but a world of forms and codes of behavior, rules and exceptions. It is society's visible side--institutions, monuments, works, things--but it is especially its submerged, invisible side: beliefs, desires, fears, repressions, dreams.

The points of the compass have served to locate us in history as well as in space. The East-West duality soon acquired a more symbolic than geographical significance, and became an emblem of the opposition between civilizations. The East-West opposition has always been considered basic and primordial; it alludes to the movement of the sun, and is therefore an image of the direction and meaning of our living and dying. The East-West relationship symbolizes two directions, two attitudes, two civilizations. The North-South refers more to the opposition between different ways of life and different sensibilities. The contrasts between North and South can be oppositions within the same civilization.

Clearly, the opposition between Mexico and the United States belongs to the North-South duality as much from the geographical as the symbolic point of view. It is an ancient opposition which was already unfolding in pre-Columbian America, so that it antedates the very existence of the United States and Mexico. The northern part of the continent was settled by nomadic, warrior nations; Mesoamerica, on the other hand, was the home of an agricultural civilization, with complex social and political institutions, dominated by warlike theocracies that invented refined and cruel rituals, great art, and vast cosmogonies inspired by a very original vision of time. The great opposition of pre-Columbian America--all that now includes the United States and Mexico--was between different ways of life: nomads and settled peoples, hunters and farmers. This division greatly influenced the later development of the United States and Mexico. The policies of the English and the Spanish toward the Indians were in large part determined by this division; it was not insignificant that the former established themselves in the territory of the nomads and the latter in that of the settled peoples.

The differences between the English and the Spaniards who founded New England and New Spain were no less decisive than those that separated the nomadic from the settled Indians. Again, it was an opposition within the same civilization. Just as the American Indians' worldview and beliefs sprang from a common source, irrespective of their ways of life, so Spanish and English shared the same intellectual and technical culture. And the opposition between them though of a different sort was deep as that dividing an Aztec from an Iroquois. And so the new opposition between English and Spaniards was grafted onto the old opposition between nomadic and settled peoples. The distinct and divergent attitudes of Spaniards and English have often been described before. All of them can be summed up in one fundamental difference, in which perhaps the dissimilar evolution of Mexico and the United States originated: in England the Reformation triumphed, whereas Spain was the champion of the Counter-Reformation.

As we all know, the reformist movement in England had political consequences that were decisive in the development of Anglo-Saxon democracy. In Spain, evolution went in the opposite direction. Once the resistance of the last Muslim was crushed, Spain achieved a precarious political--but not national--unity by means of dynastic alliances. At the same time, the monarchy suppressed regional autonomies and municipal freedoms, closing off the possibility of eventual evolution into a modern democracy. Lastly, Spain was deeply marked by Arab domination, and kept alive the notion of crusade and holy war, which it had inherited from Christian and Muslim alike. In Spain, the traits of the modern era, which was just beginning, and of the old society coexisted but never blended completely. The contrast with England could not be sharper. The history of Spain and of her former colonies, from the sixteenth century onward, is the history of an ambiguous approach--attraction and repulsion--to the modern era.

The discovery and conquest of America are events that inaugurated modern world history, but Spain and Portugal carried them out with the sensibility and tenor of the Reconquest. Nothing more original occurred to Cortes's soldiers, amazed by the pyramids and temples of the Mayans and Aztecs, than to compare them with the mosques of Islam. Conquest and evangelization: these two words, deeply Spanish and Catholic, are also deeply Muslim. Conquest means not only the occupation of foreign territories; and the subjugation of their inhabitants but also conversion of the conquered. The conversion legitimated conquest. This politico-religious philosophy was diametrically opposed to that of English colonizing; the idea of evangelization occupied a secondary place in England's colonial expansion.

The Christianity brought to Mexico by the Spaniards was the syncretic Catholicism of Rome, which had assimilated the pagan gods, turning them into saints and devils. The phenomenon was repeated in Mexico: the idols were baptized, and in popular Mexican Catholicism the old beliefs and divinities are still present, barely hidden under a veneer of Christianity. Not only the popular religion of Mexico but the Mexicans' entire life is steeped in Indian culture--the family, love, friendship, attitudes toward one's father and mother, popular legends, the forms of civility and life in common, the image of authority and political power, the vision of death and sex, work and festivity. Mexico is the most Spanish country in Latin America; at the same time it is the most Indian. Mesoamerican civilization died a violent death, but Mexico is Mexico thanks to the Indian presence. Though the language and religion, the political

institutions and the culture of the country are Western, there is one aspect of Mexico that faces in another direction--the Indian direction. Mexico is a nation between two civilizations and two pasts.

In the United States, the Indian element does not appear. This, in my opinion, is the major difference between our two countries. The Indians who were not exterminated were corralled in "reservations." The Christian horror of "fallen nature" extended to the natives of America: the United States was founded on a land without a past. The historical memory of Americans is European, not American. For this reason, one of the most powerful and persistent themes in American literature from Whitman to William Carlos Williams and from Melville to Faulkner, has been the search for (or invention of) American roots. We owe some of the major works of the modern era to this desire for incarnation, this obsessive need to be rooted in American soil.

Exactly the opposite is true of Mexico, land of superimposed pasts. Mexico City was built on the ruins of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec city that was built in the likeness of Tula, the Toltec city that was built in the likeness of Teotihuacan, the first great city on the American continent. Every Mexican bears within him this continuity which goes back two thousand years. It doesn't matter that this presence is almost always unconscious and assumes the naive forms of legend and even superstition. It is not something known but something lived. The Indian presence means that one of the facets of Mexican culture is not Western. Is there anything like this in the United States? Each of the ethnic groups making up the multiracial democracy that is the United States has its own culture and tradition, and some of them--the Chinese and Japanese, for example--are not Western. These traditions exist alongside the dominant American tradition without becoming one with it. They are foreign bodies within American culture. In some cases, the most notable being that of the Chicanos, the minorities defend their traditions against or in the face of the American tradition. The Chicanos' resistance is cultural as well as political and social.

If the different attitudes of Hispanic Catholicism and English Protestantism could be summed up in two words, I would say that the Spanish attitude is inclusive and the English exclusive. In the former, the notions of conquest and domination are bound up with ideas of conversion and assimilation; in the latter, conquest and domination imply not the conversion or the conquered but their segregation. An inclusive society founded on the double principle of domination and conversion, is bound to be hierarchical, centralist, and respectful of the individual characteristics of each group. It believes in the strict division of classes and groups, each one governed by special laws and statutes, but all embracing the same faith and obeying the same lord. An exclusive society is bound to cut itself off from the natives, either by physical exclusion or by extermination; at the same time, since each community of pure-minded men is isolated from other communities, it tends to treat its members as equals and to assure the autonomy and freedom of each group of believers. The origins of American democracy are religious, and in the early communities of New England that dual, contradictory tension between freedom and equality which has been the leitmotif of the history of the United States was already present.

The opposition that I have just outlined is expressed with great clarity in two religious terms: "communion" and "purity." This opposition profoundly affects attitudes toward work, festivity, the body, and death. For the society of New Spain, work did not redeem, and had no value in itself. Manual work was servile. The superior man neither worked nor traded. He made war, he commanded, he legislated. He also thought, contemplated, wooed, loved, and enjoyed himself leisure was noble. Work was good because it produced wealth, but wealth was good because it was intended to be spent to be consumed in those holocausts called war, in the construction of temples and palaces, in pomp and festivity. The dissipation of wealth took different forms: gold shone on the altars or was poured out in celebrations. Even today in Mexico, at least in the small cities and towns, work is the precursor of the fiesta. The year revolves on the double axis of work and festival, saving and spending. The fiesta is sumptuous and intense, lively and lunereal; it is a vital, multicolored frenzy that evaporates in smoke, ashes, nothingness. In the aesthetics of perdition, the fiesta is the lodging place of death.

The United States has not really known the art of the festivity except in the last few years, with the triumph of hedonism over the old Protestant ethic. This is natural. A society that so energetically affirmed the redemptive value of work could not help chastising as depraved the cult of the festival and the passion for spending. The Protestant rejection was inspired by religion rather than economics. The

Puritan conscience could not see that the value of the festival was actually a religious value: communion. In the festival, the orgiastic element is central; it marks a return to the beginning, to the primordial state in which each one is united with the great all. Every true festival is religious because every true festival is communion. Here the opposition between communion and purity is clear. For the Puritans and their heirs, work is redemptive because it frees man, and this liberation is a sign of God's choice. Work is purification, which is also a separation: the chosen one ascends, breaks the bonds binding him to earth, which are the laws of his fallen nature. For the Mexicans, communion represents exactly the opposite: not separation but participation, not breaking away but joining together; the great universal commixture, the great bathing in the waters of the beginning, a state beyond purity and impurity.

In Christianity, the body's status is inferior. But the body is an always active force, and its explosions can destroy a civilization. Doubtless for this reason, the Church from the start made a pact with the body. If the Church did not restore the body to the place it occupied in Greco-Roman society, it did try to give the body back its dignity; the body is alien nature, but in itself it is innocent. After all, Christianity, unlike Buddhism, say, is the worship of an incarnate god. The dogma of the resurrection of the dead dates from the time of primitive Christianity; the cult of the Virgin appeared later, in the Middle Ages. Both beliefs are the highest expressions of this urge for incarnation, which typifies Christian spirituality. Both came to Mesoamerica with Spanish culture, and were immediately fused, the former with the funeral worship of the Indians, the latter with the worship of the goddesses of fertility and war.

The Mexicans' vision of death, which is also the hope of resurrection, is profoundly steeped in Catholic eschatology as in Indian naturalism. The Mexican death is of the body, exactly the opposite of the American death, which is abstract and disembodied. For Mexicans, death sees and touches itself; it is the body emptied of the soul, the pile of bones that somehow, as in the Aztec poem, must bloom again. For Americans, death is what is not seen: absence, the disappearance of the person. In the Puritan consciousness, death was always present, but as a moral entity, an idea. Later on, scientism pushed death out of the American consciousness. Death melted away and became unmentionable. Finally, in vast segments of the American population of today progressive rationalism and idealism have been replaced by neo-hedonism. But the cult of the body and of pleasure implies the recognition and acceptance of death. The body is mortal, and the kingdom of pleasure is that of the moment, as Epicurus saw better than anyone else. American hedonism closes its eyes to death and has been incapable of exercising the destructive power of the moment with a wisdom like that of the Epicureans of antiquity. Present-day hedonism is the last recourse of the anguished and the desperate, an expression of the nihilism that is eroding the West.

Capitalism exalts the activities and behavior patterns traditionally called virile: aggressiveness, the spirit of competition and emulation, combativeness. American society made these values its own. This perhaps explains why nothing like the Mexicans' devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe appears in the different versions of Christianity professed by Americans, including the Catholic minority. The Virgin unites the religious sensibilities of the Mediterranean and Mesoamerica, both of them regions that fostered ancient cults of feminine divinities, Guadalupe-Tonantzín is the mother of all Mexicans--Indians, mestizos, whites--but she is also a warrior virgin whose image has often appeared on the banners of peasant uprisings. In the Virgin of Guadalupe we encounter a very ancient vision of femininity which, as was true of the pagan goddesses, is not without a heroic tint.

When I talk about the masculinity of the American capitalist society, I am not unaware that American women have gained rights and posts still denied elsewhere. But they have obtained them as "subjects under the law"; that is to say, as neuter or abstract entities, as citizens, not as women. Now, I believe that, much as our civilization needs equal rights for men and women, it also needs a feminization, like the one that courtly love brought about in the outlook of medieval Europe. Or like the feminine irradiation that the Virgin of Guadalupe casts on the imagination and sensibility of us Mexicans. Because of the Mexican woman's Hispano-Arabic and Indian heritage, her social situation is deplorable, but what I want to emphasize here is not so much the nature of the relation between men and women as the intimate relationship of woman with those elusive symbols which we call femininity and masculinity. For the reasons I noted earlier, Mexican women have a very lively awareness of the body. For them, the

body, the woman's and man's, is a concrete, palpable reality. Not an abstraction or a function but an ambiguous magnetic force, in which pleasure and pain, fertility and death are inextricably intertwined.

Pre-Columbian Mexico was a mosaic of nations, tribes, and languages. For its part, Spain was also a conglomeration of nations and races, even though it had realized political unity. The heterogeneity of Mexican society was the other face of centralism of the Spanish monarchy had religious orthodoxy as its complement, and even as its foundation. The true, effective unity of Mexican society has been brought about slowly over several centuries, but its political and religious unity was decreed from above as the joint expression of the Spanish monarchy and the Catholic Church. Mexico had a state and a church before it was a nation. In this respect also, Mexico's evolution has been very different from that of the United States, where the small colonial communities had from their inception a clearcut and belligerent concept of their identity as regards the state. For North Americans. the nation antedated the state.

Another difference: In those small colonial communities, a fission had taken place among religious convictions, the embryonic national consciousness, the political institutions. So harmony, not contradiction, existed between the North Americans' religious convictions and their democratic institutions; whereas in Mexico Catholicism was identified with the viceroy's regime, and was its orthodoxy. Therefore, when, after independence, the Mexican liberals tried to implant democratic institutions, they had to confront the Catholic Church. The establishment of a republican democracy in Mexico meant a radical break with the past, and led to the civil war of the nineteenth century. These wars produced the militarism that, in turn, produced the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz. The liberals defeated the Church, but they could not implant true democracy, only an authoritarian regime wearing democracy's mask.

A no less profound difference was the opposition between Catholic orthodoxy and Protestant reformism. In Mexico, Catholic orthodoxy had the philosophical form of Neo-Thomism, a mode of thought more apologetic than critical, and defensive in the face of the emerging modernity. Orthodoxy prevented examination and criticism. In New England, the communities were often made up of religious dissidents or, at least, of people who believed that the Scriptures should be read freely. On one side, orthodoxy, dogmatic philosophy and the cult of authority. On the other, reading and free interpretation of the doctrine. Both societies were religious, but their religious attitudes were irreconcilable. I am not thinking only of dogmas and principles but of the very ways in which the two societies practiced and understood religion. One society fostered the complex and majestic conceptual structure of orthodoxy, an equally complex ecclesiastical hierarchy, wealthy and militant religious orders, and a ritualistic view of religion, in which the sacraments occupied a central place. The other fostered free discussion of the Scriptures, a small and often poor clergy, a tendency to eliminate the hierarchical boundaries between the simple believer and the priest, and a religious practice based not on ritual but on ethics, and not on the sacrament but on the internalizing of faith.

If one considers the historical evolution of the two societies, the main difference seems to be the following: the modern world began with the Reformation, which was the religious criticism of religion and the necessary antecedent of the Enlightenment; with the Counter Reformation and~ Neo-Thomism, Spain and her possessions closed themselves to the modern world. They had no Enlightenment, because they had neither Reformation nor an intellectual religious movement like Jansenism. And so, though Spanish American civilization is to be admired on many counts, it reminds one of a structure of great solidity at once convent, fortress, and palace built to last, not to change. In the long run, that construction became a confine, a prison. The United States was born of the Reformation and the Enlightenment. It came into being under the sign of criticism and self-criticism. Now, when one talks of criticism one is talking of change. The transformation of critical philosophy into progressive ideology came about and reached its peak in the nineteenth century. The broom of rationalist criticism swept the ideological sky clean of myths and beliefs; the ideology of progress, in its turn, displaced the timeless values of Christianity and transplanted them to the earthly and linear time of history. Christian eternity became the future of liberal evolutionism.

Here is the final contradiction, and all the divergences and differences I have mentioned culminate in it. A society is essentially defined by its position as regards time. The United States, because of its

origin and its intellectual and political history; is a society oriented toward the future. The extraordinary spatial mobility of America, a nation constantly on the move, has often been pointed out. In the realm of beliefs and mental attitudes, mobility in time corresponds to physical and geographical displacement. The American lives on the very edge of the now, always ready to leap toward the future. The country's foundations are in the future, not the past. Or, rather, its past, the act of its founding, was a promise of the future, and each time the United States returns to its source, to its past, it rediscovers the future.

Mexico's orientation, as has been seen, was just the opposite. First came the rejection of criticism, and with it rejection of the notion of change: its ideal is to conserve the image of divine immutability. Second, it has a plurality of pasts, all present and at war within every Mexican's soul. Cortes and Montezuma are still alive in Mexico. At the time of that great crisis the Mexican Revolution, the most radical faction, that of Zapata and his peasants, proposed not new forms of social organization but a return to communal ownership of land. The rebelling peasants were asking for the devolution of the land; that is they wanted to go back to a pre-Columbian form of ownership which had been respected by the Spaniards. The image the revolutionaries instinctively made for themselves of a Golden Age lay in the remotest past. Utopia for them was not the construction of a future but a return to the source, to the beginning. The traditional Mexican attitude toward time has been expressed in this way by a Mexican poet. Ramon Lopez Velarde: "Motherland, be still the same, faithful to each day's mirror."

In the seventeenth century, Mexican society was richer and more prosperous than American society. This situation lasted until the first half of the eighteenth century. To prove that it was so, one need only glance at the cities of those days, with their monuments and buildings--Mexico City and Boston, Puebla and Philadelphia. Then everything changed. In 1847, the United States invaded Mexico, occupied it, and imposed on it terrible and heavy conditions of peace. A century later, the United States became the dominant world power. An unusual conjunction of circumstances of a material, technological, political, ideological, and human order explains the prodigious development of the United States. But in the small religious communities of seventeenth century New England, the future was already in bud: political democracy, capitalism, and social and economic development. In Mexico, something very different has occurred. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Mexican ruling classes--especially the intellectuals--discovered that the principles that had founded their society condemned it to immobility and backwardness. They undertook a twofold revolution: separation from Spain and modernization of the country through the adoption of new republican and democratic principles. Their examples were the American Revolution and the French Revolution. They gained independence from Spain, but the adoption of new principles was not enough: Mexico changed its laws, not its social, economic, and cultural realities.

During much of the nineteenth century, Mexico suffered an endemic civil war and three invasions by foreign powers--the United States, Spain, and France. In the latter part of the century, order was reestablished, but at the expense of democracy. In the name of liberal ideology and the positivism of Comte and Spencer, a military dictatorship was imposed which lasted more than thirty years. It was a period of peace and appreciable material development--also of increasing penetration by foreign capital, especially from England and the United States. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 set itself to change direction. It succeeded only in part: Mexican democracy is not yet a reality; and the great advances achieved in certain quarters have been nullified or are in danger because of excessive political centralization, excessive population growth, social inequality, the collapse of higher education, and the actions of the economic monopolies, among them those from the United States. Like all the other states of this century the Mexican state has had an enormous, monstrous development. A curious contradiction: The state has been the agent of modernization, but it has been unable to modernize itself entirely. It is a hybrid of the Spanish patrimonialist state of the seventeenth century and the modern bureaucracies of the West. As for its relationship with the United States, that is still the old relationship of strong and weak, oscillating between indifference and abuse, deceit and cynicism. Most Mexicans hold the justifiable conviction that the treatment received by their country is unfair.

Above and beyond success and failure, Mexico is still asking itself the question that has occurred to most clear-thinking Mexicans since the end of the eighteenth century: the question about modernization. In the nineteenth century, it was believed that to adopt the new democratic and liberal

principles was enough. Today, after almost two centuries of setbacks, we have realized that countries change very slowly, and that if such changes are to be fruitful they must be in harmony with the past and the traditions of each nation. And so Mexico has to find its own road to modernity. Our past must not be an obstacle but a starting point. This is extremely difficult, given the nature of our traditions--difficult but not impossible. To avoid new disaster, we Mexicans must reconcile ourselves with our past: only in this way shall we succeed in finding a route to modernity. The search for our own model of modernization is a theme directly linked with another: today we know that modernity, both the capitalist and the pseudo-socialist versions of the totalitarian bureaucracies, is mortally wounded in its very core--the idea of continuous, unlimited progress. The nations that inspired our nineteenth-century liberals--England, France, and especially the United States--are doubting, vacillating, and cannot find their way. They have ceased to be universal examples. The Mexicans of the nineteenth century turned their eyes toward the great Western democracies; we have nowhere to turn ours.

Between 1930 and 1960, most Mexicans were sure of the path they had chosen. This certainty has vanished, and some people ask themselves if it is not necessary to begin all over again. But the question is not relevant only for Mexico; it is universal. However unsatisfactory our country's situation may seem to us, it is not desperate especially compared with what prevails elsewhere. Latin America, with only a few exceptions, lives under military dictatorships that are pampered and often supported by the United States. Cuba escaped American domination only to become a pawn of the Soviet Union's policy in America. A large number of the Asian and African nations that gained their independence after the Second World War are victims of native tyrannies often more cruel and despotic than those of the old colonial powers. In the so-called Third World, with different names and attributes, a ubiquitous Caligula reigns.

In 1917, the October Revolution in Russia kindled the hopes of millions; in 1979, the word "Gulag" has become synonymous with Soviet socialism. The founders of the socialist movement firmly believed that socialism would put an end not only to the exploitation of men but to war; in the second half of the twentieth century, totalitarian "socialisms" have enslaved the working class by stripping it of its basic rights and have also covered the whole planet with the threatening uproar of their disputes and quarrels. In the name of different versions of socialism: Vietnamese and Cambodians butcher each other. The ideological wars of the twentieth century are no less ferocious than the wars of religion of the seventeenth century. When I was young, the idea that we were witnessing the final crisis of capitalism was fashionable among intellectuals. Now we understand that the crisis is not of a socioeconomic system but of our whole civilization. It is a general, worldwide crisis, and its most extreme, acute, and dangerous expression is found in the situation of the Soviet Union and its satellites. The contradictions of totalitarian "socialism" are more profound and irreconcilable than those of the capitalist democracies.

The sickness of the West is moral rather than social and economic. It is true that the economic problems are serious and that they have not been solved. Inflation and unemployment are on the rise. Poverty has not disappeared, despite affluence. Several groups--women and racial, religious, and linguistic minorities--still are or feel excluded. But the real, most profound discord lies in the soul. The future has become the realm of honor, and the present has turned into a desert. The liberal societies spin tirelessly, not forward but round and round. If they change, they are not transfigured. The hedonism of the West is the other face of desperation; its skepticism is not wisdom but renunciation; its nihilism ends in suicide and in inferior forms of credulity such as political fanaticisms and magical charms. The empty place left by Christianity in the modern soul is filled not by philosophy but by the crudest superstitions. Our eroticism is a technique, not an art or a Passion.

I will not continue. The evils of the West have been described often enough, most recently by Solzhenitsyn, a man of admirable character. However, although his description seems to me accurate, his judgment of the causes of the sickness does not, nor does the remedy he proposes. We cannot renounce the critical tradition of the West; nor can we return to the medieval theocratic state. Dungeons of the Inquisition are not an answer to the Gulag camps. It is not worthwhile substituting the church--state for the party--state, one orthodoxy for another. The only effective arm against orthodoxies is criticism, and in order to defend ourselves against the vices of intolerance and fanaticism our only recourse is the exercise of the opposing virtues: tolerance and freedom of spirit. I do not disown Montesquieu, Hume, Kant.

The crisis of the United States affects the very foundation of the nation, by which I mean the principles that founded it. I have already said that there is a leitmotif running throughout American history, from the Puritan colonies of New England to the present day; namely the tension between freedom and equality. The struggles of the blacks, the Chicanos, and other minorities are an expression of this dualism. An external contradiction corresponds to this internal contradiction: the United States is a republic and an empire. In Rome, the first of these contradictions (the internal one between freedom and equality) was resolved by the suppression of freedom; Caesar's regime began as an egalitarian solution, but, like all solutions by force, it ended in the suppression of equality also. The second, external contradiction brought about the ruin of Athens, the first imperial republic in history.

It would be presumptuous of me to propose solutions to this double contradiction. I think that every time a society finds itself in crisis it instinctively turns its eyes toward its origins and looks there for a sign. Colonial American society was a free, egalitarian, but exclusive society. Faithful to its origins, in its domestic and foreign policies alike, the United States has always ignored the "others." Today, the United States faces very powerful enemies, but the mortal danger comes from within: not from Moscow but from that mixture of arrogance and opportunism, blindness and short-term Machiavellianism, volubility and stubbornness which has characterized its foreign policies during recent years and which remind us in an odd way of the Athenian state in its quarrel with Sparta. To conquer its enemies, the United States must first conquer itself--return to its origins. Not to repeat them but to rectify them: the "others"--the minorities inside as well as the marginal countries and nations outside do exist. Not only do we others make up the majority of the human race but also each marginal society, poor though it may be, represents a unique and precious version of mankind. If the United States is to recover fortitude and lucidity; it must recover itself, and to recover itself it must recover the "others" the outcasts of the Western World.

THE AMERICAS: IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND POWER FINAL EXAMINATION

Write essays on FOUR (4) of the following topics. Each essay must be at least two double spaced typewritten pages in length; a thorough essay will be three-to-four double spaced typewritten pages long. No single essay should be more than five double-spaced typewritten pages long. Do NOT write essays on more than four topics; only the first four essays will be graded.

1. Octavio Paz draws a sharp distinction between Mexico's Catholic and baroque culture and the United States's Protestant culture, arguing that one can identify fundamental differences in attitudes toward the past, the body, and other important aspects of life. Summarize and critically assess Paz's argument, drawing on Dean Zamora's lecture (and any other relevant lectures) and the attached Paz essay.
2. When we examine American music in terms of its themes, symbolism, rhythms, tonalities, idioms, and images it is obvious that a wide variety of groups have been played a vital role in shaping American music from the beginning. Drawing on the course lectures, assess this contention.
3. In his lecture, Professor Kotarba discussed various approaches that social scientists have adopted to understand popular music. Thoroughly identify these approaches and critically assess them.
4. A number of lectures examined various strategies that twentieth-century African Americans and Mexican Americans have adopted to secure equality and autonomy. Select EITHER African Americans OR Mexican Americans, and identify the strategies that they have adopted to secure equality and the proponents of these strategies, and assess their effectiveness.
5. In his lecture, Professor Simon argued that sexuality in twentieth century America has been plastic (changeable), constructed, and shaped by historical context. Describe the arguments and evidence he offered to support these contentions.

6. Discuss the status and roles of women in pre colonial Mexico and describe how their roles and status changed during the early colonial period.
7. Explain why long-distance migration has become an increasingly important aspect of life since the early 16th century; identify the reasons why immigrants moved; and draw on the example of at least three immigrant groups to compare and contrast immigrant experience (including the motives for leaving, the group's reception, and their post-migration adaptation).
8. A central development in the twentieth century United States has been the rise of commercialized mass culture. Drawing on the relevant lectures, assess the functions that it has served in the twentieth century United States and its impact on popular behavior, perceptions, and political attitudes.
9. The myth of the frontier is one of the most important sets of ideas in the twentieth-century United States. Describe this myth; explain its popularity; describe the various functions it has served; and assess whether in recent years it has lost its appeal.