Philosophy 4460/4499: Philosophy of Liberation
Gabriel Soldatenko, Asst. Prof. of Philosophy
MW 3:30-4:45, Room: 3032, Spring 2012

Office Hours: Monday 11-Noon, Tuesday 1:00-3:00, and by appointment.
Social Science #4091

Office Phone: (770) 794-7759

Email Address: gsoldate@kennesaw.edu

Course Description: This course will focus on tracing and locating the “Philosophy of Liberation”, a philosophical school that came out of Latin America over the course of the nineteen-sixties, seventies, and eighties. We will do this through a combination of historical readings, political philosophy, theology, and primary source readings from the Philosophy of Liberation itself. All this, in order to understand the social context from which a distinct Latin American philosophical style emerges, to locate it in relation to Western social-political philosophy; and to see how the Theology of Liberation influenced the formation of a philosophical movement that took as its point of departure the excluded “Other”—in the form of the indigenous and the poor—within a practical horizon that strove for social transformation and liberation.

Texts:


Walter Mignolo, The Idea of Latin America (Blackwell: Malden, MA, 2005)

Course Requirements: Over the course of the semester students
- will bring the days reading to class according to the schedule on the syllabus and/or the professor’s instructions;
- will actively engage the course material and participate in the class discussion; and
- will attend class regularly, even if attendance is not taken.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the term students will have gained
- a solid foundation in the history of philosophy in Latin America;
- a firm grasp of how the political and economic history of Latin America have shaped social thought in the region;
- a nuanced understanding of how Latin American philosophy stands in a tense relation with traditional Western philosophy;
- an appreciation for how concepts and critiques posed from within other social situations can help clarify our own understanding of our current social arrangement;
• the tools and practice necessary to write quality research papers in the humanities.

**Evaluation:** Grades will be determined through papers (70%) and presentations (30%). Presentations will consist of a student led discussion of the course material; and as such, they should identify the thesis and principal idea of the reading, in addition they should also give a general summary of the argument that follows from and supports the thesis, and lastly these presentations should include questions to push class discussion (these questions should be both for the sake of clarifying the text and critiquing it).

The papers required in this course will be of two sorts; the mid-term will be ten pages in length and should give a clear account of philosophy in Latin America by creatively using the course materials from the first half of the semester. The final research paper should be fifteen pages in length and give a clear account of what is meant by a “philosophy of liberation” by using the course readings and by including at least three scholarly articles or book chapters from outside the course readings.

**Writing Center:** You should be aware of a writing center on campus. It is located in Humanities 242 and is open seven days a week. To schedule an appointment, you can visit their website at http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter/index.shtml or call them at 770 423 6380.

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including but not limited to provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, and misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program.

**Absence Policy:** There are no excused absences in college. Students are responsible for making up class by conferring with classmates (i.e. getting notes and discussing the main topics of conversation). Students are responsible for all material covered: readings, lectures, and documentary presentations. I will allow make-up exams only if I’m contacted at least two days prior to the exam date.

**Schedule of Readings:**

January 9: Introduction: Latin America and a philosophy of the “Other”

**Part I. Historical Context**


“Lust for Gold, Lust for Silver”

“King Sugar and Other Agricultural Monarchs”

January 16: (No Classes)
“Aristotle and America to 1550”
“The Great Debate at Villadolid, 1550-1551: The Setting”
“The Great Debate at Villadolid, 1550-1551: The Application of Aristotle’s Theory of Natural Slavery to American Indian”
“The Great Debate at Villadolid, 1550-1551: The Waging of the Just War Against the American Indian”


“Eurocentrism”
“From the Invention to the Discovery of the New World”
“Critique of the Myth of Modernity”

“The Materiality of Reading and Writing Cultures”

“Tales of Premature Death”

“‘Latin’ America and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World”

**Part II. Tracing Latin American Social Thought**


Leopoldo Zea, “Identity, A Latin American Philosophical Problem”
Agusto Salazar-Bondy, “Can There Be a Latin American Philosophy?”

Part I sections A and B
“Theses on Feuerbach”

February 15: Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* (University of Texas: Austin, 1974)
“Outline of the Economic Problem”
"The Problem of the Indian"

"The Development of Underdevelopment"
"Social and Economic Structure of the Porfiriato"

February 22: Nelson Maldonado Torres Visit and a conversation on Latin American Philosophy

February 27: "Adolfo Gilly Interview" in *New Left Review*, v.64 (July/August 2010)
John Beverley, "Rethinking the Armed Struggle in Latin America" in *Boundary 2*, v.36, n.1 (2009)

Part III. The Theology of Liberation

February 29: Terry Eagleton, "Introduction" to *Jesus Christ: The Gospels*

Paper #1 Due

Spring Break


March 14: No Class

"The Basic Question"
"The Three Levels of Liberation Theology"

"How Liberation Theology is Done"
"Key Themes of Liberation Theology"
"A Concise History of Liberation Theology"

"The Historical Power of the Poor"

March 28: No Class

"Liberation and Salvation"
   “Encountering God in History”
   “Poverty: Solidarity and Protest”

April 9: Enrique Dussel, “The Situation of the Christian Thinker in Latin America” in

   **Part IV. The Philosophy of Liberation**

   (pgs. 1-15)

   (pgs. 16-29)

   (pgs. 29-49)

   (pgs. 49-66)

   (pgs. 67-95)

   (pgs. 95-126)

May 7: **Final Papers Due** (no later than 5:30 pm)