



Religion and Revolution in Latin America: Liberation Theology in Latin America, First Wave (An Introduction to Popular Theological “Introductions”)

Religious Studies 320-01
George Mason University – Spring 2020

instructor: *Prof. Garry Sparks*
office: *Robinson Hall B, room 444*
office hours: *M&W noon-1:30pm*
(or by appointment when available)

days/times: *M&W 10:30am-11:45am*
class room: *Lecture Hall 2*
office phone: *703-993-1979*
e-mail: *gsparks@gmu.edu*

Course Description

While most people today conventionally identify the engagement between religion and politics in the U.S. as a feature largely of politically, socially, and theologically conservative movements (e.g., Moral Majority, Christian Coalition, Focus on the Family, Heritage Foundation, etc. since the late 1970s and 1980s) or with militant religious fundamentalisms (e.g., within Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) in Asia Minor, India, and Africa – and the political “left” seen as affiliated with secularism, anticlericalism, or atheism – this course will examine the religious contributions (if not also roots) of socialist and communist revolutions in Latin America beginning in the 1960s. Specifically, this course will study the emergence of an activist religious movement called liberation theology through a wide variety of its scholarly and “popular” genres—such as sermons, comics, poetry, folk music, murals, catechism lessons, *testimonios*, human rights reports, etc.—that have been employed over the decades to also reflect upon, generate, and disseminate, or introduce liberation theology by Catholic and Protestant intellectuals. This course will serve as a basic introduction to some of the initial Latin American liberation theologians (as well as their critics, such as the U.S. Reagan administration, the Vatican, and indigenous peoples), their tenants, sources, context, and methods. Furthermore, it will do so by focusing on some of the key “popular” documents that were written at the time for both Latin American and global audiences. In this way, this course will serve as not only an introduction to modern Latin American religion but also as an introduction to such liberationist introductions.

Learning Objectives and Goals

Students who complete this course will:

- describe the basic claims, characteristics, and features of liberation theology in general, i.e., “praxis,” context, “conscienceousness,” “poor,” “liberation,” “solidarity,” et cetera;
- become knowledgeable in particular on the social and historical contexts of Latin American liberation theology;
- critically compare the merits and limitations of the various types of introductory materials written about, for, and by liberationists and the “poor”;
- analyze some of the claims by and about intellectuals of that period—whose impact is still influential today—and to be able to evaluate their claims; and
- master and make practically accessible a specific academic genre – the book review.

Methods of Instruction

The core of this course will consist of close readings of foundational primary texts. You will be expected to have read thoroughly and reflected upon all texts assigned every week. Each class will consist of lectures germane to the topic of the texts but not necessarily on the texts themselves. Lectures will be accompanied by discussing and exploring together the claims made in the assigned texts, what resources they draw upon, what specific assumptions they make, et cetera. The perennial questions for this class will focus on *how* this theological movement emerged, its limitations, and to what extent it began to account for concerns raised by its critics, such as elitist bias within an attempt for grassroots or “popular” responses.

A note regarding the readings: the “suggested readings” for this course are designed to: (1) provide necessary background information regarding this period in Latin American histories and societies (as no previous knowledge of either is a requirement for this course); and (2) allow you to further explore particular aspects and contexts of liberation theology especially for a research paper.

Therefore, pay close attention between the assigned (required) readings and any subsequent “suggested” (non-required) readings listed below. By now the amount and diversity of literature (primary and secondary) on liberation theology is extensive and highly variable in quality. The readings selected for this course are among the more significant and academic for the purposes of this course. Unfortunately, re-prints of many of the earlier and more “popular” works of and about liberation theology are increasingly rare or expensive. You are welcome to seek out used copies (found through on-line sites like www.bookfinder.com or www.powells.com), but please do so with enough time to complete the readings and assignments before class – late work will not be accepted due to book delivery delays.

For required readings found on Blackboard (Bboard) as PDFs: *you must print, read, mark up, and bring to class hard copies* – consulting electronic versions of these texts on your **computer, smart phone, or equivalent device during class is not allowed**. In this respect, *please have all computers and phones turned off* (and not merely on “vibrate” as this is still distracting from your learning and to those around you) and put away prior to the start of class (exceptions—including the need to audio record class lecture-discussions—will be made only with prior approval by the instructor; students requesting additional learning provisions should also consult GMU’s Office of Disability Services. If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should:

1. make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu/students/>) to determine the accommodations you need; and
2. talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Please note that I (the instructor) reserve the right to change the syllabus during the term if and/or when need arises (e.g., to meet the learning outcomes of the course). You are responsible for checking for such changes (checking Bboard often) and updating your copy of the syllabus.

Semester Outline of Topics (to be divided appropriately between class times every week)

Week 1 – Introducing an Introduction to “Introductions”

Jan. 22

Note: No classes on Mon., Jan. 20 – MLK Day

General introduction to course; what and why book reviews?

- **read** and discuss (found on Bboard):
Thomas Melville. “Appendix III: Revolution Is Guatemala’s Only Solution.” In *Guatemala: Occupied Country* by Eduardo Galeano. Translated by Cedric Belfrage. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1969, pp. 149-159.
- suggested readings:
Jeffrey Klaiber, S.J. “Anticlericalism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.” In *Religion and Society in Latin America: Interpretive Essays from Conquest to Present*. Editors Lee M. Penyak and Walter L. Petry. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009, pp. 157-174.

Week 2 – Introducing a Popular Social Movement: A Socio-Historical Account

Jan. 27 & 29

- **read** and discuss (both on Bboard):
Phillip Berryman. *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Religious Movement in Latin America and Beyond*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987, pp. 1-28.

AND Justo L. González. “A Shifting Landscape: Latin America.” In *Story of Christianity, Volume II*. New York, NY: HarperCollinsPublications, 2010, pp. 363-373.
- suggested readings:
“Part XIV: The Troubled Twentieth Century.” In *Religion in Latin America: A Documentary History*. Editors Lee M. Penyak and Walter L. Petry. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006, pp. 239-262 (on Bboard).

Christian Smith. “Chapter 2: What is Liberation Theology?” In *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 25-50.

Christian Smith. “Chapter 4: The Historical Context, 1930-1955.” In *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 71-88.

Week 3 – A Socio-Historical Account, cont’d. & Introducing the “Popular” as Poverty Feb. 3 & 5

- book review **due Feb. 3** on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (entire book).
- **read** and discuss: chapter 1 of
Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York, NY: Continuum, 2007 [1970].

Week 4 – “Popular” by/vs. Elites: Education, Politics, and Theology

Feb. 10 & 12

- **read** and discuss: chapter 2 (Mon.) and chapter 3 (Wed.) of Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York, NY: Continuum, 2007 [1970].
- suggested readings:
Freire. “Chapter 4.” *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.
Grover Antonio Espinoza. “Church-Sponsored Education in Latin America, c. 1800- c. 1930.” In *Religion and Society in Latin America*, pp. 138-156 (on Bboard).

Week 5 – A Chronicler’s Account: Historical Context for a Historical Project

Feb. 17 & 19

- book review **due Feb. 17** on *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts* (entire book).
- **read** and discuss:
Phillip Berryman. *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Religious Movement in Latin America and Beyond*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987, 29-161.

Week 6 – The Boff Brothers and Popular Education in Brazil

Feb. 24 & 26

- book review **due Feb. 24** on *Introducing Liberation Theology*.
- **read** and discuss chapters 1 & 2 (Mon.) and 3 & 4 (Wed.) of Clodovis Boff and Leonardo Boff. *Introducing Liberation Theology*. Translated by Paul Burns. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987.
- suggested reading:
Christian Smith. “Chapter 5: From the Creation of CELAM to Vatican II: 1955-1965.” In *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 89-121.

Week 7 – The Boff Brothers and Popular Education in Brazil, cont’d.

March 2 & 4

- **read** and discuss chapters 5-7 of Clodovis Boff and Leonardo Boff. *Introducing Liberation Theology*. Translated by Paul Burns. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987.
- suggested reading:
Robert S. Pelton, C.S.C. “A Preferential and Evangelizing Option for the Poor: The Catholic Church from Medellín to Aparecida.” In *Religion and Society in Latin America: Interpretive Essays from Conquest to Present*. Editors Lee M. Penyak and Walter L. Petry. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009, pp. 268-287 (Bboard).

Week 8 – Spring Break (no classes)

March 9-13

Week 9 – Theological Critique of Dependency and “Development” Projects

March 16 & 18

- **read** and discuss:
Christian Smith. “Chapter 6: From Vatican II to Medellín: 1965-1968.” In *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 122-149.
- AND Gustavo Gutiérrez. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. 20th Anniversary Edition. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003 [1984], i-18.

Week 10 – Theological Critique of Dependency and “Development” Projects, cont’d. March 23 & 25

- book review **due March 23** on *We Drink from Our Own Wells* (entire book).
- **read** and discuss pp. i-53 (Mon.) and 54-89 (Wed.) of
Gustavo Gutiérrez. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. 20th Anniversary Edition. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003 [1984].

Week 11 – Theological Critique of Dependency and “Development” Projects, cont’d. Mar. 30 & Ap. 1

- **read** and discuss pp. 91-106 (Mon.) and 107-137 (Wed.) of
Gustavo Gutiérrez. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. 20th Anniversary Edition. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003 [1984].

Week 12 – Priests and Popular Poetry in Revolutionary Nicaragua

April 6 & 8

- book review **due April 6** on *The Gospel in Solentiname* (selections).
- **read** and discuss:
Ernesto Cardenal. *The Gospel in Solentiname*. Translated by Donald D. Walsh. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010 [1982]. (selections)
- AND translated selections from the *Misa Campesina* (“Folk Mass”) liturgy (Bboard).
- suggested reading:
Christian Smith. “Chapter 7: Making Medellín.” In *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 150-164.

Week 13 – Solidarity in Human Rights

April 13 & 15

- book review **due April 13** on *Massacres in the Jungle* (Falla),
OR *Threatened with Resurrection & The Certainty of Spring* (Esquivel).
- **read** and discuss (found on Bboard):
Ricardo Falla, S.J. *Massacres in the Jungle: Ixcán, Guatemala, 1975-1982*.
Translated by Julia Howland. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994 (selections).
AND Guatemalan Church in Exile, “Guatemala: Security, Development, and Democracy”
(a.k.a. the “gray book” or “blue book”), 1989. (selections)
AND Julia Esquivel. *Threatened with Resurrection: Amenazado de resurrección*. Elgin,
IL, Brethren Press, 1994. (selections)
AND Julia Esquivel. *The Certainty of Spring: Poems by a Guatemalan in Exile*. Translated by
Anne Woehrlé. Washington, DC: Ecumenical Program on Central America and the
Caribbean (EPICA), 1993. (selections)
- suggested reading:
Christian Smith. “Chapter 8: From Medellín to Sucre: 1968-1972.” In *The Emergence of
Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: University
of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 165-188.

Week 14 – Liberation Spirituality in Sermons and Pastoral Letters

April 20 & 22

- book review **due April 20** on *Voice of the Voiceless* (entire book).
- **read** and discuss the First (pp. 52-62) and the Fourth Pastoral Letter (pp. 114-161) in
Óscar A. Romero. *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*.
Translated by Michael J. Walsh. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985.
- suggested reading:
Ignacio Martín-Baró. *Voice of the Voiceless*, pp. 1-21.
AND Jon Sobrino. *Voice of the Voiceless*, pp. 22-51.
AND Christian Smith. “Chapter 9: From Sucre to Puebla: 1972-1979.” In *The Emergence of
Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL: University
of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 189-221.

Week 15 – The “Popular” Class vs. Local Cultures - Indigenous Critique

April 27 & 29

- book review **due April 27** on *I, Rigoberta Menchú*
- **read** and discuss:
Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, ed. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian woman in
Guatemala*. Translated by Ann Wright. London, UK: Verso, 2010. (selections)
suggested reading:
Christian Smith. “Chapter 10: Liberation Theology since Puebla.” In *The Emergence of
Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, IL:
University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 222-233.

Week 16 – “Higher” Concerns and Early Critiques of a “Popular” Theology

May 4

- Note: *No class on Wednesday, May 6.*
- book review **due May 6** on (both):
“Instruction on Certain Aspects of the “Theology of Liberation”” (1984);
AND “Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation” (1986).
- **read** and discuss (as found on Bboard or the Vatican’s official website):
one of the two official early Vatican responses by the Congregation for the
Doctrine of the Faith (formerly the Inquisition), which can be found at:
1) http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_c_on_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html
OR 2) http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_c_on_cfaith_doc_19860322_freedom-liberation_en.html
- suggested readings:
Phillip Berryman. *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Religious Movement in Latin America and Beyond*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1987, pp. 179-200.
AND “Part XVIII: Critiques of Liberation Theology.” In *Religion in Latin America: A Documentary History*. Editors Lee M. Penyak and Walter L. Petry. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2006, pp. 313-320 (Bboard).
AND Nelson A. Rockefeller. “The Rockefeller report on the Americas; the official report of a United States Presidential mission for the Western Hemisphere.” (Bboard).
AND Lewis A. Tambs. *A New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties*. Washington, DC: Council for National Policy, 1980 (Bboard).

Final Exam Period – Take-Home Final Exam (or Research Paper) Due by...

noon on Fri., May 8

Methods of Evaluation (a.k.a. Grading)

- **Four (4) typed book reviews** of 1,000 words each (ca. 3 pages) will consist of **50%** of the course grade. Therefore, you may choose which six (5) of the nine (9) assigned reviews to not submit with the caveat that one book review must be over the Boffs or Gutiérrez. Class periods missed due to illness, work, or other commitments may (and probably should) count among these six “passes.” The book reviews should conform to professional academic journal formatting: 1,000 words, 1” margins all around, double-spaced, left justified, at 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman), with appropriate heading, et cetera (see handout from the *Journal of Religion*).

In each book review you will: summarize the key arguments or points made by the author(s); note apparent unique contributions strived for, resources marshaled, relevance for particular religious communities, impact on particular religious traditions, et cetera; as well as, in the final paragraph, evaluate the work as a whole. Note: unlike a mere book report or other forms of critique, in a book review you should think about assessing the text not from the outside-in (e.g., from your personal experiences or other resources that you have access to and measure against the text), but rather from the inside-out, from within the text itself. Improvement in the mastery of this genre over the course of the semester will be noted and taken into consideration. You may submit (an) additional book review(s) from which the highest four graded reviews will count toward your overall grade.

- *Critical, reflective, civil, and respectful* **participation** in all class discussions will consist of **25%** of the course grade. Part of this participation grade will involve (1) in-class discussions and part of it will consist of (2) your twice-weekly postings to the discussion forum on the course Bboard site. By no later than 9:00am prior to each class you must post at least a brief (a minimum of a few of sentences) response (critical insight(s) or question(s)) germane to the respective assigned reading(s) for that week’s material (NOTE: these postings should not be opinions about what you (dis)liked about the readings but rather some insight or judgment that you have culled from them). As the semester unfolds these twice-weekly postings may/should also include replies to your classmates’ comments. Occasionally, prompts will direct your reading and focus the on-line dialogue. Bboard postings will be graded on the basis of: /-/ (“minus” for no-posting), /√/ (“check” for posting), and /√+ / (“check plus” for a particularly good posting); thus there is a quantitative and qualitative dimension to your participation grade. Barring last minute emergencies, as a courtesy please notify the instructor prior to class time of an absence. While attendance is not graded it is obviously required for participation. **Lack of participation (both on Bboard and in-class discussions) will jeopardize your grade.**
- A **take-home final exam** will comprise another **25%** of the course grade. The exam will cover the entirety of the semester’s course and issues raised in the readings, your book reviews, lectures, and subsequent discussions. A 10-12 page research paper based on a prior approved in consultation with the instructor may also fulfill this requirement.

Academic Integrity

“I was thrown out of NYU my freshman year for cheating on the metaphysics final... I looked within the soul of the boy sitting next to me.” – Woody Allen¹

“Academic honesty boils down to three simple but powerful principles:

- When you say you did the work yourself, you actually did it.
- When you rely on someone else’s work, you cite it. When you use their words, you quote them openly and accurately, and you cite them, too.
- When you present research materials, you present them fairly and truthfully. That’s true whether the research involves data, documents, or the writings of other scholars.”²

Violation of the academic honor code (i.e. plagiarism or cheating on any course assignment) will not be tolerated in any degree and will be referred to the Office on Academic Integrity.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited. All written work is to be your original thoughts on the assigned texts with references and occasional cites from that text. The format and style rules of all of your assignments should be typed and conform to the *MLA Handbook* or *Chicago Manual of Style* (including *Turabian*). A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting.

While it is often quipped that “it is better to apologize afterwards than ask for permission before,” this does not hold in academia; please feel free to ask for clarification regarding any of the expectations for this course **before** due dates. For more information, see the [University Catalogue regarding the Honor Code](#). If you have questions about how to properly cite published work in your writing please consult the Writing Center or me during office hours.

Privacy Policy

Students must use their MasonLive email account (aka *@gmu.edu*) to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Unless your e-mail to your instructor is from your MasonLive email account your instructor will not be able to reply.

Please see <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

¹ Charles Lipson, *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 8.

² *Ibid.*, 3.

Policy on Expectations

Written book reviews are due before class time each week, except where noted in the syllabus. They may be turned in at class or e-mailed as an attached Word or PDF document before class. Late book reviews will not be accepted without prior permission from the instructor (as the quality of class discussion will rely on your prior analysis and evaluation of the assigned text). Previous week's book reviews will be returned the following week with written feedback or e-mailed back with typed comments – whichever you prefer.

All visual materials (such as charts, graphs, or pictures) used in lectures will be posted onto Bboard along with additional images and resource links. These are to be used for any missed classes as well as further exploration into the issues addressed as the course unfolds. However, lecture notes will not be posted; please secure notes for any missed classes from your cohort.

Finally, all written assignments prepared outside of class (e.g., the movie report and take-home final exam) should be:

- typed (no handwritten work will be accepted),
- in a 12 point (vs. 11 point or 10 point) and standard serif font (i.e. Garamond, Palantino, or Times New Roman vs. a sans serif font like **Arial**, **Helvetica**, or **Gill Sans** or a non-standard serif font like Papyrus or **Cracked**),
- double spaced (Note: if the default setting on a computer automatically inserts an additional half space after a paragraph you will need to change this before turning in your assignment),
- 1" margins all around,
- left aligned (not full justified),
- with your full name and page number in either the header or footer on every page.

These should be well-crafted and revised written pieces,

- free of typos and grammatical errors;
- use only inclusive language unless you are writing about something that is a gender-specific topic (i.e. Catholic priesthood);
- no contractions (i.e. “can’t,” “aren’t,” “won’t,” etc.) are inappropriate for professional and academic writing (unless part of a direct quote from another source);
- no the use of the first person singular pronoun (e.g., “I”) should be generally avoided with rare exceptions.

To achieve these please use the writing center, peer-reviewers, as well as discuss with me a drafts of your assignments during office hours (I’m more than happy to do so). **Major points will be deducted from unprofessionally written assignments.**

To help understand what is meant by crafting a piece of argument-oriented writing and correctly documenting the literary evidence required in professional (including academic) genres, students should purchase and use the following *highly* recommended sources:

1. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*;
- Gould, Jon B. *How to Succeed in College (While Really Trying): A Professor’s Inside Advice*;
- Lipson, Charles. *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*; and
- Lipson, Charles. *Succeeding as an International Student in the United States and Canada*.

Whether or not you read these specific books and are familiar with what they cover, as a college student you are expected to know, understand, and agree with these standards and expectations.

Instructional Materials

Required Readings (including Bboard PDFs) other than Handouts & Media

- Berryman, Phillip. *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Religious Movement in Latin America and Beyond*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1987.
- Boff, Clodovis and Leonardo Boff. *Introducing Liberation Theology*. Translated by Paul Burns. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987.
- Burgos-Debray, Elisabeth, ed. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian woman in Guatemala*. Translated by Ann Wright. London, England: Verso, 2010 [1984]. (selections)
- Cardenal, Ernesto. *The Gospel in Solentiname*. Translated by Donald D. Walsh. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010 [1982]. (selections)
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. “Instruction on Certain Aspects of the ‘Theology of Liberation.’” Vatican: www.vatican.va, 1984.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. “Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation.” Vatican: www.vatican.va, 1986.
- Esquivel, Julia. *The Certainty of Spring: Poems by a Guatemalan in Exile*. Translated by Anne Woehrlé. Washington, D.C.: Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean (EPICA), 1993. (selections)
- Esquivel, Julia. *Threatened with Resurrection: Amenazado de resurrección*. Elgin, Illinois, Brethren Press, 1994. (selections)
- Falla, Ricardo, S.J. *Massacres in the Jungle: Ixcán, Guatemala, 1975-1982*. Translated by Julia Howland. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994. (selections)
- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York, New York: Continuum, 2007 [1970]. (selections)
- Guatemalan Church in Exile (IGE). “Guatemala: Security, Development, and Democracy” (AKA the “gray book” or “blue book”), 1989. (selections)
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People*. Translated by Matthew J. O’Connell. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003 [1984].
- Melville, Thomas. “Appendix III: Revolution Is Guatemala’s Only Solution.” In *Guatemala: Occupied Country* by Eduardo Galeano. Translated by Cedric Belfrage. New York, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969, 149-159.
- Romero, Óscar A. *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*. Translated by Michael J. Walsh. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1985. (selections)

Supplemental or Suggested Readings

González, Justo L. "A Shifting Landscape: Latin America." In *Story of Christianity, Volume II*. New York: HarperCollinsPublications, 2010.

Penyak, Lee M. and Walter L. Petry, eds. *Religion in Latin America: A Documentary History*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2006. (selections)

Penyak, Lee M. and Walter L. Petry, eds. *Religion and Society in Latin America: Interpretive Essays from Conquest to Present*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009. (selections)

Rockefeller, Nelson A. "The Rockefeller report on the Americas; the official report of a United States Presidential mission for the Western Hemisphere."

Smith, Christian Stephen. *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1991. (selections)

Tambs, Lewis A. *A New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties*. Washington, D.C.: Council for National Policy, 1980.

Extra Credit Option: Movie Review (+5 points to final grade)

An additional “review” essay on one of the movies listed below may be submitted for extra credit ranging from 1-5 points added to your final course grade. Note: a movie review essay may not be written to supplement or replace a low-graded or missing book review (that will require an additional book review) but rather *only in addition* to other work for the course. Like the book review assignment, a movie review is not a movie report (it is not a plot summary and/or description of characters) but rather is a well-written analytical, critical, and evaluative examination of a film explicitly studied via the material addressed in this course. In this regard, a movie review essay needs to conform to the same academic standards, style, and requirements as a book review. Upon prior approval by the instructor, you may also suggest and write on another related film not listed below.

Options for Movie Review Assignment (select one):

- “AbUsed: The Postville Raid”
- “Che,” part 1 or 2 (2009 by Steven Soderbergh, director)
- “Elefante blanco” (2012)
- “El Norte”
- “Ernesto Cardenal” (reading & interview at the Lannan Foundation)
- “Ernesto Cardenal Solentiname” (2006)
- “Gerardi” (2010)
- “Granito: How to Nail a Dictator” (sequel to “When Mountains Tremble)
- “Men with Guns”
- “The Mission”
- “Monseñor: The Last Journey of Óscar Romero” (documentary)
- “Romero”
- “When the Mountains Tremble”

Note: Most but not all of these movies may be available at Fenwick Library. Please plan accordingly and in advance if you have to or borrow (Interlibrary Loan (ILL)) your selected movie.

Final note: many of the better/later editions of these films (such as “Che,” “El Norte,” “The Mission,” etc.), namely by Criterion Collection, have additional “bonus” material such as director commentaries. You are highly encouraged to engage and include that material in your movie review. However, you are highly *discouraged* from consulting internet sources for your book or movie reviews; these assignments are designed to develop what **you** think about such material (not what others think about it), as it is your learning that will be evaluated and graded (and not that by authors of on-line sources). Thus, consider very carefully the extent to which you are willing to farm-out your own thinking. Part of learning (your education) is learning *how* to think for yourself. (Furthermore, the direct (and uncredited) incorporation of internet material into your movie review and/or a book review will constitute plagiarism/cheating (see section above on **Academic Integrity**)).

Regarding Diversity

The academic study of religion includes the analytical (dissecting in various ways) and critical (bringing various criteria to bear) reflection on a diversity of religions and cultures including, in particular, their diverse order of values – including one’s own. The question, therefore, is not whether or not you (dis)believe, (dis)like, of (dis)agree any particular religion or even some aspect of it (let alone “religion” all together) but rather whether you understand “religion.” This requires thick description along with respectful engagement with a diversity of peoples, thought, and values.

To this end...

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Classmate Contacts:

Name

E-mail

Phone
