

La Compañera



Foro Latinoamericano (Latin American Forum)
April 17-18, 2015

MEZCOLANZA: An Exploration of Food, Fusion, and Place in Latin America.

Food is no longer about nutrition or flavor; today food is about sustainability, resilience, identity, creativity and opportunity. Latin America seems to be taking center stage in this movement and the cuisines of countries like Peru and Mexico are making headlines in gourmet magazines, and being touted as the way to bring culturally sensitive sustainable development to rural farmers and small business owners. In the United States the Latin American diaspora is also asserting itself in new ways and actively using food as a way to rearticulate place, memory and identity in their new homelands. This year the Foro Latinoamericano plans to explore food movements among Latin Americans living in their ancestral lands or in the diaspora. The foro will bring experts to discuss some of the most innovative, unexpected, and even controversial ways in which food is being articulated, performed and enacted in contemporary Latin America. We hope that in the process we will find answers to the following questions: Why does food elicit the support of such a wide range of people, from farmers, to chefs, to consumers? Are food movements in Latin America delivering sustainability and progress? What are some of the challenges and opportunities encountered? And finally what does the new food movement say about what it is to be Latin American at home and abroad?

Virginia Nazarea is a renowned ecological anthropologist that has published widely on the connections between culture, memory, and biodiversity. Her work seeks to shed light on the connections between cognition and practice in order to understand local knowledge in historical and political contexts. Her most recent project examines repatriation and heritage in the Andes and the ways in which the Peruvian food movement is incorporating and talking about traditional foods. She is the author of several seminal books in ethnoecology such as *Cultural Memory and Biodiversity* and the classic *Ethnoecology: Situated Knowledge/Located Lives*. Professor Nazarea has carried out ethnographic fieldwork and ethnoecological research in Peru, Ecuador, the American South, and the Philippines. She is currently faculty in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Georgia and the Director of the Ethnoecology and Biodiversity Lab.

Mariano Valderrama is a celebrated sociologist, food writer and promoter of Peruvian gastronomy. He is currently the president of APEGA, the Peruvian Gastronomic Society, an influential organization that promotes sustainable development through gastronomic initiatives. He is also the force behind efforts to have Peruvian food declared part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Mr. Valderrama is a pioneer in food research and has been writing about the historical and social implications of Peruvian cuisine for years. His work has inspired a new generation of Peruvians to appreciate the value of indigenous and non-indigenous fusion in terms of ingredients, cooking traditions and national identity. He is the author of several books on development as well as a Peruvian cuisine such as *Rutas y Sabores del Cebiche* (Roots and Flavors of The Cebiche) and the cult classic *Pachamanca: El Festin Terrenal* (Pachamanca: The Earthly Feast).

Lauren Baker is notable food activist and scholar that is currently the coordinator of the Toronto Food Policy Council. Her vision around food and farming has launched several important food initiatives such as Sustain Ontario-The Alliance for Healthy Food and Farming and FoodShare an urban agriculture program in Toronto. Her research also examines food systems in a transnational context and has coordinated workshops and exchanges between Mexican and Canadian food activists and farmers. The details of this work has been published in her new book *Corn Meets Maize: Food Movements and Markets in Mexico*, a fascinating account of the contentious debates surrounding corn, food security, and social movements in Mexico. Dr. Baker is a research associate with Ryerson University's Center for Studies in Food Security and holds a doctorate in Environmental Studies from York University.

Yansi Pérez

Assistant Professor of Spanish

Interview by Ilana Mishkin '16

Yansi was recently granted tenure by the Board of Trustees. She will be teaching a new class called "The Other American Revolutions" in the Spring of 2015. This class integrates Yansi's own research with a historical and theoretical approach to the concept of revolution, focusing on Latin American revolutions in the 20th century.

Why are you excited to teach this class in the spring?

My own research is heavily focused on revolution and how it pertains to the work of [the](#) Salvadorian poet and journalist Roque Dalton. Because I've spent a lot of time studying the Cuban revolution and revolutions in Central America more generally, I'm very excited to teach a class that explores these concepts. In this class, we will also study the Haitian revolution of 1791-1804 because it was the first revolution led by slaves in the Americas. The Haitian revolution is significantly under-studied, even though it served as the precedent for many other revolutions to come. By looking at the Haitian, Cuban, Mexican, and Sandinista revolutions in turn, I hope that we can establish a genealogy of revolution in [Latin](#) America.



What will the structure of this class look like?

We'll begin the term by exploring the theoretical background behind the concept of revolution, and then we'll dive into the events of the revolutions themselves. We'll look at each revolution through both historical and literary sources, aiming to understand each individual revolution, revolutionary processes in general, and literary reactions to these revolutions.

What can students hope to get out of this class?

In addition to understanding the theories of revolution and several case studies of [Latin](#) American revolution, students will understand how authors have tried to make sense of the events that transpired. This class will involve an interdisciplinary approach to revolution, combining philosophy and political theory with literary analysis [and history](#).

Do you have a favorite region or time period of Latin American history?

I love to study the 1960s in Latin America, and in the US, as well. There was so much political fervor then, and intellectual production and energy. During that time, [Cuba and its young Revolution](#) became a center for young intellectuals and writers. Oh, but I can't choose just one favorite time period – I also love the colonial period and discussing the myriad of encounters and disencounters it produced.

The Other American Revolutions (SPAN 323) will be offered Spring 2015 from 10:10-11:55 T/Th. Please contact yperez@carleton.edu for more information about the class or her research.

Latin American Studies Courses

Spring 2015

LTAM 110: *Portuguese for Spanish Speakers:* This fast-paced introductory Portuguese language course focuses on developing communication skills and emphasizes speaking, reading, and writing. Previous knowledge of Spanish is assumed in presentation of grammar and vocabulary. *Prerequisite:* Spanish 204 or permission of the instructor. **H. Kaufman; MWF 8:30am-9:40am. 3 credits.**

LTAM 398: *Latin American Forum:* This colloquium will explore specific issues or works in Latin American Studies through discussion of a common reading, public presentation, project, and/or performance that constitute the annual Latin American Forum. Students will be required to attend two meetings during the term to discuss the common reading or other material and must attend, without exception, ALL events of the Forum which take place during fourth week of Spring term (on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning). A short integrative essay or report will be required at the end of the term. Intended as capstone for Latin American Studies concentrators. **C. Ocampo-Raeder; TBA. 2 credits.**

Related courses:

SOAN 233: *Anthropology of Food:* Food is the way to a person's heart but perhaps even more interesting, the window into a society's soul. Simply speaking understating a society's foodways is the best way to comprehend the complexity between people, culture and nature. This course explores how anthropologists use food to understand different aspects of human behavior, from food procurement and consumption practices to the politics of nutrition and diets. In doing so we hope to elucidate how food is more than mere sustenance and that often the act of eating is a manifestation of power, resistance, identity and community.

C. Ocampo-Raeder; T,Th 3:10pm-4:55pm. 6 credits.

SPAN 323: *The Other American Revolutions:* An interdisciplinary exploration of the ways in which the Haitian, Mexican, Cuban and Sandinista revolutions have been imagined in literature, art and film. Through the lens of cultural texts, we will study how the concept of revolution evolves in each of these cases and what new promises each case brings to our conception of the American continent. Authors read will include Alejo Carpentier, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Mariano Azuela, Derek Walcott and Ernesto Cardenal. *Prerequisite: Spanish 205 and above.*

Y. Pérez; T, Th 10:10am-11:55am, 6 credits.

SPAN 371: *Yours Truly: The Body of the Letter:* This course will focus on letters and their significance as acts of symbolic and material exchange, as objects that bear the mark of the bodily act of writing, and as a staging of the scene of writing itself. We will study different types of letters (love letters, prison letters, literary letters, letters imbedded in other texts, fictional letters, epistolary novels, etc.), but always as the site of production of a modern and gendered self. Texts by Simon Bolivar, Manuela Sáenz, Rosa Luxemburg, Simone de Beauvoir, André Gorz, Pedro Salinas, Marina Tsvetaeva, Boris Pasternak, Paul Celan, Ingeborg Bachmann, Elena Poniatowska, Alan Pauls, and Alfredo Bryce Echenique. *Prerequisite: Spanish 205 or above.*

S. López; M and W 1:50pm-3:35pm. 6 credits.

Jesús Díaz Álvarez Visits Campus

by Ilana Mishkin '16

On Wednesday, February 18th, Jesús Díaz Álvarez gave a talk in the Gould Library Athenaeum entitled, "La Guerra Como Problema Filosófico en José Ortega y Gasset [The War as a Philosophical Problem in José Ortega y Gasset]." Díaz Álvarez graduated from the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela in 1988, and has since taught at UNED, the Universidade de Vigo, and the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela. He is currently a professor of philosophy at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Madrid, Spain.

His primary research interests are phenomenology, the thought of Ortega y Gasset, and ethics. He has collaborated with Carleton Spanish professor Jorge Brioso on some of the research he presented on Wednesday, as both share an interest in Ortega y Gasset's (1883-1955) philosophy.

After attending the talk, prospective Spanish major Jesse Rothbard '17 said that he enjoyed Díaz Álvarez's discussion of Ortega's contradictory philosophy, saying that he provided a good analysis of some of his flaws and his strong points. Specifically, he analyzed the interaction between majority and minority, focusing on the tension between the "masses" who are generally more dependent on tradition and social stability, and the minority, which is the experimental, innovative, and progressive side. In other words, the larger sector is more traditionalist. In resolving these tensions, it is necessary to strive for a balance between peace and order and the liberty of the individual – some restriction of rights is necessary in order to maintain order.

Ortega y Gasset proscribed a hierarchy of morality that could determine when one person has an inferior moral system to another, which could compel the acceptance of the superior system. In enumerating these moral systems, Díaz Álvarez emphasized the differences between *lo noble* and *lo vulgar*. It is necessary to make this distinction very clear in a social system, but this clarity is virtually impossible. Jesse Rothbard added that one of the most interesting points of the talk was Díaz Álvarez's analysis of how this moral hierarchy is impossible in practice because of differences between individuals. By outlining those spots that make it difficult, he demonstrated several flaws and inconsistencies in Ortega's logic.

Spanish major Isabelle Ibibo '16 seconded Rothbard's comments, mentioning that the talk was very interesting, especially in how Díaz Álvarez gave a very clear summary of Ortega y Gasset's thinking, while at the same time pointing out major flaws in his logic.

Díaz Álvarez's talk, sponsored by the Carleton Spanish Department, was very well attended.

