

"Inter-American Literature"

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Josef Raab

Course Description

The relationship between the U.S.A. and Latin America has traditionally been characterized by tension and ambivalence. Because of a long history of U.S. attempts to dominate the New World ideologically and economically the United States, while admired for their political achievements and technological progress, have also been scorned for their air of superiority. U.S. Americans, on the other hand, have looked south of the Rio Grande for spiritual renewal and for exoticism while also considering Latin America a backward area to be exploited. Such mutual projections and perceptions will be the focus of this seminar. Discussing literary and historical texts as well as some film and video material, we will examine changing attitudes of Latin Americans toward North Americans and vice versa.

Course Readings

Carlos Fuentes, *The Old Gringo*. Transl. by Margaret Sayers Peden. Farrar Straus Giroux.
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*. Knopf Publishing Group.
Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo*. Knopf Publishing Group.

Course Outline

Week 1 Introduction

The Uneasy Relationship between the U.S.A. and Latin America in Historical Perspective
Stereotypes at Work: Woody Allen's *Bananas*

Week 2 19th-Century U.S. Expansionism

Hans-Joachim König, "Inter-American Relations in Historical Perspective" (in Hagenbüchle and Raab, eds. *Negotiations of America's National Identity*, II: 517-37)
"The Monroe Doctrine" (in Ruth J. Bartlett, ed. *The Record of American Diplomacy*, 181-87)
Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, "Avarice and Bad Faith," "Moral Geography," "Elections" (from *Travels in the United States in 1847*, 181-210)

Week 3 Turn-of-the-Century Pan-Americanism

José Martí, "Mutter Amerika," "Unser Amerika" (in Angel Rama, ed. *Der lange Kampf Lateinamerikas*, 47-67)
George Lipsitz, "Their America and Ours: Intellectual Communication in the Context of 'Our America'" (in Jeffrey Belnap and Raúl Fernández, eds. *José Martí's "Our America"*, 293-316)

Week 4 A Model Inter-American Writer?: Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" (sections 1, 2, 3, and 34)
José Martí, "Walt Whitman"
Rubén Darío, "Walt Whitman"

Jorge Luis Borges, selections from *An Introduction to American Literature*
Josef Raab, "El gran viejo: Walt Whitman in Latin America"

Week 5 Latin American Self-Fashioning in Opposition to U.S. Hegemony

José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel* (excerpts in Angel Rama, ed. *Der lange Kampf Lateinamerikas*, 97-123)

"The Theodore Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine" (in Ruth J. Bartlett, ed. *The Record of American Diplomacy*, 539-40)

Rubén Darío "A Roosevelt"

Week 6 Romancing the Good Neighbor

"The Good Neighbor Policy" (in Ruth J. Bartlett, ed. *The Record of American Diplomacy*, 551-53)

Katherine Anne Porter, "Flowering Judas"

Video: *The Three Stooges* (episode "Saved by the Belle")

Week 7 Perceptions of the American Other

Ilan Stavans, "Introduction: Coincidence and Dissidence"

Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano* (excerpts; novel and film)

Elizabeth Bishop, "Arrival at Santos," "Brazil, January 1, 1502," "Manuelzinho," "The Burglar of Babylon," "Santarém," "Pink Dog" (in *The Complete Poems*, 89-92, 96-99, 112-118, 185-87, 190-91)

Week 8 Escape to New Frontiers

Carlos Fuentes, *The Old Gringo*

Week 9 Escape to New Frontiers

Carlos Fuentes, *The Old Gringo*

Week 10 Resistance to U.S. Imperialism

Gilbert M. Joseph, "Close Encounters: Toward a New Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations"

Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (excerpts)

Pablo Neruda, "Die Advokaten des Dollars," "Die Standard Oil Company," "Die Anaconda Copper Mining Co.," "Die United Fruit Co."

Week 11 In the World of the Other

Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*

Week 12 In the World of the Other

Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*

Week 13 Inter-American Crossroads

Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo*

Week 14 **Inter-American Crossroads**

Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo*

Closing Discussion