

## LAST100: Introduction to Latin American Studies

Make-Up Midterm Examination, October 31, 2017

Select *five* of the following seven passages. In each case, identify the title, the author(s) (if the text has one), and the approximate date of writing and/or publication (within ten years). Comment briefly on how this passage relates to the text from which it is taken, examining the thematic significance of the passage for the text as a whole and, where it may be useful, noting issues of form or style. Discuss also the broader historical context and what the passage has to say about some of the themes we have been discussing in the course.

- 1) But our own America, which has had poets since the ancient times of Nezahualc6yolt; [. . .] and has lived, since the earliest moments of its life, in light, in fire, in fragrance, and in love—the America of Moctezuma and Atahualpa, the aromatic America of Columbus, Catholic America, Spanish America, the America where noble Cuauth6moc said: “I am not in a bed of roses”—our America, trembling with hurricanes, trembling with Love: O men with Saxon eyes and barbarous souls, our America lives. And dreams. And loves.
- 2) I served as a lieutenant for five years. I was there at the battle of Puren where my captain fell, leaving me in command of the company for some six months, and during that time I had a number of encounters with the enemy and took a few arrows. In one battle, I came up against one of the Indian captains, Francisco Quispiguaucha, a newly made Christian and a rich one too, whose devilish raids gave us plenty of trouble. I met him on the field, threw him from his horse, and he surrendered to me. I immediately strung him up from the nearest tree, and this made the governor furious, for as it turned out he had wanted the man taken alive.
- 3) Still dazed, the young man got up, and hurling a fiery look at the ferocious men, began walking toward his horse, which stood motionless a short distance away, intent on getting vengeance and justice with his pistols. Matasiete leapt down from his horse, and blocking him, grabbed him by the cravat and threw him to the ground, at the same time drawing his dagger from his waist and pressing it against the young man’s throat.  
An explosion of laughter was followed by yet another resounding “Hurrah!” that rose in the air in praise of Matasiete.  
What noble souls, what courage, that of the Federalists! Always in gangs and swooping down on their defenseless victims like vultures!

*Turn over the page...*

- 4) It has given me incalculable pleasure and joy, Your Majesties, to see all this, especially the pine trees, for one could build as many ships here as one wished if one brought in the equipment; wood is here in plenty and pitch could be easily made. I am not giving it the hundredth part of the praise it deserves; it has pleased Our Lord always to show me something finer than before, and in all my discoveries things have grown better and better: the lands, the woods, the plants, the fruit and flowers, and the people; always different, wherever I have gone. I am full of wonder at the sight of it; how much more wonderful it will seem to those who hear of it, for no one will believe it unless they see it with their own eyes.
- 5) Women should be educated; give them a solid education, based on wholesome principles, cemented with moral and sensible beliefs; they should have a general knowledge of everything that awakens ingenuity and determines ideas, but not for them are the calculation and egotism with which they instruct English women, not for them the ridiculous ideas of North American women who pretend in their pride to be equal to men, to be legislators and obtain a seat in Congress or be university professors, as if it were not enough to be a mother, a wife, a housewife, as if her rights as a woman were not enough to be happy and to make others happy, as if it were not enough to carry out her sacred mission on earth: educating her family, cultivating the tender hearts of her children making them useful citizens, laborers of intelligence and progress, with her words and acts; cultivating love in her children and the sentiments that most enhance women: virtue, modesty and humility.
- 6) Throughout the valley moves a wondrous system of electric cars, for even the crumbling house of Cortés is lit by electricity, and an electric elevator runs through the shaft of Chapultepec hill by which the Montezumas used to escape from their enemies.

It is hard to remember that this wonderful plain was once a lake and that the Aztecs built their great city on piles, with causeways to the mainland. President Díaz bored a tunnel through the eastern mountains and the Valley of Mexico is now drained to the sea by a system of canals and sewers that cost more than twelve million dollars . . .

“In my youth I had a stern experience that taught me many things (said Díaz). [. . .] I believed in democratic principles then and I believe in them yet, although conditions have compelled stern measures to secure peace and the development which must precede absolutely free government. Mere political theories will not create a free nation . . .”
- 7) To know is to solve. To know the country and govern it in accordance with that knowledge is the only way of freeing it from tyranny. The European university must yield to the American university. The history of America from the Incas to the present must be taught in its smallest detail, even if the Greek Archons go untaught. Our own Greece is preferable to the Greece that is not ours; we need it more. Statesmen who arise from the nation must replace statesmen who are alien to it. Let the world be grafted onto our republics, but we must be the trunk.

*Good luck!*