
HILA 144-Topics in Latin American History: Economic History, From Silver to Cocaine

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Winter Quarter 2018, Tu/Th 17:00-18:20h @ WLH 2207

Office hours: W 12-14h, or by appointment

Course Overview:

We will engage case studies as related to Latin American societies throughout time (1500-2000), a historically founded comparison based on the evolution of commodity chains and how they organized the international division of labor. One textbook, with additional readings for the research paper, according to students' interests. Additional readings to be discussed with instructor during office hours.

Following a weekly chronological order, students are expected to do the readings ahead of each class. A lively in class participation should follow, geared toward building up a joint and shared comparative interpretation over time and places, obtaining a more general sense of Latin American development patterns, and putting economic theory tools to its best use. Page numbers listed refer to the textbook.

Textbook: Steven Topik, Carlos Marichal, & Zephyr Frank (eds.), Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000 (Durham and London:Duke University Press), 2006

Topical Sequence:

Week 1 Global Money: How, when, where?

pp. 25-52

Week 2 Longterm Commodity Chains: Indigo, Cochineal

pp. 53-92

Week 3 Free Markets and Monopolies: Tobacco

pp. 93-117

Week 4 Contexts and Comparison: Coffee in Brazil and Costa Rica

pp. 118-146

Week 5 State Interventions: Protectionism, Subsidies, and Regulations (sugar)

pp. 147-173

Week 6 Internal and External Market Links: Cacao in Brazil

pp. 174-203

Week 7 "Banana Boats and Baby Food:" Latin America in the U.S.

pp. 204-227

Week 8 Industrialization: Fertilizers and Rubber

pp. 228-299

Week 9 Commodity Cycles: Production, Prices, and Demand

pp. 300-351

Week 10 Repaso: Re-read your notes from class, and the introduction and conclusions in our textbook (pp. 1-24 and pp. 352-360, respectively), in preparation for concluding your research paper and the final exam.

Evaluation:

Midterm Exam at the end of week 6 (a reading and comprehension test)	25%
Final Comprehensive Exam, week 11 (tbd)	35%
Research Paper	40%

Research Paper:

Will be 10-15 pages long.

You choose a commodity chain, any time period, any place in Latin America and write a contribution to Topik et. al.'s compilation, explaining why your paper merits to be incorporated into the volume. What does your paper add to the workings (and problems) of commodity chains? By week 8, I expect every student to have a written and commented list of titles, students have decided to work on for their research paper. The bibliography used, needs to be cited in the research paper (publication year, page number), in addition to a bibliographical list at the end of the paper. Start with your research early on in the quarter.