

LATIN AMERICAN CULTURE – 19th Century

Overview In the Nineteenth century, the art and literature of Latin America reflected the political sea-change, first with independence movement, the philosophy of the French philosophes, translated to a desire for self-governance and a rejection of colonialism, and then later with the inevitable power and territorial struggles that ensued. The result was a surge of freedom of self-expression and the development of national identities. Not surprisingly, there was a dramatic surge in all forms of cultural production, especially that which celebrated unique beliefs and national identities.

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Romanticism: Tied closely to independence, romantic fiction and epic poetry focused on establishing a sense of identity and acknowledging the groups that were often excluded by colonial rule. Examples include Domingo Sarmiento (*Facundo*, 1845, Argentina), Jorge Isaac (*Maria*, 1867, Colombia), Euclides de Cunha (*Os Sertoes*, 1902, Brazil), and Jose Fernandez (*Martin Fierro*, 1872, Argentina).

Revolutionary Essays: The philosophy leading to the French Revolution deeply influenced Latin Americans living and studying in France. They were inspired to bring their message to the various regions of Latin America, inspiring moves to break away from Spain and form independent nations. The most influential essays were written by Andres Bello and Simon Bolivar, who started in their native Venezuela and then traveled throughout Latin America. Later, Jose Marti of Cuba became an active force for independence and a peaceful future.

Literature of Resistance: The revolutionary essays had counterparts in other genres, especially novels and poetry. The main themes were utopian; the idea of independence from Spain, access and inclusion for previously excluded groups, and a peaceful future were characteristic features. Key literary figures include Jose Marti (Cuba), Ruben Dario (Nicaragua), and Clorinda Matto de Turner (Peru).

Costumbrismo: The Latin American correlate to literary realism in Europe (particularly in France (Zola) and England (Gissing)), Latin American “costumbrismo” focused on everyday life, including the customs (hence “costumbristas”), activities, manners, attitudes, and daily life. The genre became very important in Latin America, particularly in short stories and novels, and was often used later in the century and even into the twentieth century as a rallying cry for social reform movements. Important nineteenth-century costumbristas include Esteban Echeverria, whose *El Matadero* (The Slaughterhouse) gained fame and acceptance. Other important costumbristas include Jose Milla (Guatemala), Roman Vial (Chile), Jose Manuel Marroquin (Colombia), Jose Maria Vergara y Vergara (Colombia), Ricardo Palma (Peru), and Manuel Alonso (Puerto Rico).

Discussion:

The desire for independence from Spain did not form in a bubble. Instead, many of the people who were involved such as Simon Bolivar had studied in France and were very influenced by both the philosophes and the early Romantic writing. When Simon Bolivar returned to Venezuela, he and others wrote with the goal of convincing people to break away. Which writings were influential, and how did they whip up enthusiasm?

Readings

Paz, Octavio. *El Laberinto de la soledad*. Mexico, DF: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1950.
<http://www.hacer.org/pdf/Paz00.pdf>

Stavans, Ilan and Edna Acosta-Belen. *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010.

Ward, Thomas. *Decolonizing Indigeneity: New Approaches to Latin American Literature*. New York: Lexington Books, 2016.

Language

Spanish: Spanish is the language of the Conquistadores, and thus became the “lingua franca” of all of Latin America. That said, there are wide variations regional usage. Colombia became the enforcer of a standard Spanish, and maintained its continuity and consistency. Perhaps the most pronounced regional variations occur in Argentina and also in the Caribbean, where a kind of “creole” can be found. In Argentina and Uruguay, the “castellano rioplatense” is spoken. It utilizes elements of archaic Spanish (“voseo”) and its intonation bears a resemblance to Neopolitan Italian, from which a number of the inhabitants immigrated.

Portuguese: Because of the relative isolation of Portugal from its colony, and the fairly independent administration, the language was able to morph into a very distinctive dialect which has pronunciation patterns quite different from Portugal, or of African colonies’ Portuguese, for that matter. Brazilian Portuguese has been an important literary language as Brazil produced a great number of poets, novelists, essayists, and philosophers.

French: French is spoken in the former French colonies, particularly in Haiti. French has been influenced by African languages, as well as voodoo culture, resulting in a Creole dialect that can be quite difficult for outsiders to understand.

English: English was the language of colonies settled by English pirates, adventurers, and plantation owners. English is the original language of Belize, Virgin Islands, and other islands. It is closer to British English than American English.

Dutch: Spoken in former Dutch colonies, which include Aruba, Sint Maartens, and Suriname, Dutch continues to be an important conduit for government, economic assistance, tourism, and resource development (offshore oil and gas development, for example).

German: Spoken in Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and in other countries where mining engineers and Mennonite settlers decided to live and contribute to society. In some cases, due to being cut off from Germany itself and becoming peripheral isolates, the German spoken by the cut-off groups can be quite archaic.

Discussion

There are subgroups in Latin America that fiercely preserve their special languages, and the languages within their languages (idiolects). For example, the Mennonites in Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, and Paraguay speak an archaic German that helps them communicate as a group. Explain how language groups may have a unifying impact on a group.

Readings

Aissen, Judith, Nora C. England, and Roberto Zvala Maldonado. *The Mayan Languages*. London: Routledge, 2017.

Galeano, Eduardo. *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*. London: Monthly Review Press, 1997.

Launey, Michel. *An Introduction to Classical Nahuatl*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.

O'Connor, Loretta, and Pieter Muysken. *The Native Languages of South America: Origins, Development, Typology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.

Script

Simon Bolivar and Independence Broadsheets: Following the model of the one-page flyers and broadsheets printed during the American and French Revolutions, Simon Bolivar and his groups made use of the format to communicate messages quickly to the people. Even after independence, the tradition continued, with one-page broadsides tacked to walls, doors, and other public places to fire up supporters and energize them to fight for reforms. They tended to be very plain in their design, with large, prominent headlines, and a few block paragraphs, always with a call to action.

Discussion

When reading is universal, but writing the domain of a privileged few the actual printed word possesses a great deal more authority, to the point that it can take on the weight of a sacred text or a royal edict. Thus, in the years before the printing press, documents were written by scribes and kept under lock and key. The printing press changed all that. It made information more easily obtainable, and encouraged literacy. It also encouraged people to act on their dreams. For example, the tales of the explorers' exploits in "The New World" motivated many to make the arduous journey to try their luck. Discuss the different impacts of the printing press on and within Latin America.

Reading

Bushnell, David. *Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment*. Boston: Pearson, 2003.

Doe, Michael D., and Mark Van Stone. *Reading the Maya Glyphs*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

Raaflaub, Kurt A. *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

Rashkin, Elissa J. *The Stridentist Movement in Mexico: The Avant-Garde and Cultural Change in the 1920s*. New York: Lexington Books, 2009.

Mythology

The Guaraní of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay

Myths The Guaranis lived in the humid marsh and lowlands of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. Their myths and beliefs are passed down in an oral tradition. The Guarani creator god is known as Tupa, and is associated with the sun and with thunder. His wife, Arasy, is associated with the moon. Together, they had seven "monster children" (seven is a sacred number for the Tupi Guarani). The seventh was Kurupi, also known as Pombero. He is a shape-shifter who can enter locked doors during the siesta and impregnate women.

Iguazu Falls The enormous Iguazu Falls (from "Igua" or water, and "su" meaning "large") were created from when the underground serpent god, M'Boi, was thwarted in his desire to take the beautiful betrothed virgin he saw. M'Boi was enraged and split the earth, causing an enormous waterfall. In the meantime, he turned Naipi, the beautiful girl into a rock, and Taruba, her beloved, into a palm tree. They were destined to be separated forever, but able to see each other, across the falls.

Discussion Question

It can be argued that rapid industrialization and technological change create great social instability and the only way to combat it or harness it for the good is to have in place a series of myths that reinforce the

notion of individual agency and the possibility of self-actualization. In other words, people have to believe that they can plunge into the fast-moving stream of rapid change and use that force to create wealth, security, and freedom for themselves and their families. Describe just how the twentieth century myths encourage such activities, and how even the dystopian myths can be harnessed to control rapid social, economic, and technological change for the good.

Readings

Bingham, Ann, and Jeremy Roberts. *South and Meso-American Mythology A to Z*. Infobase Publishing, 2010.

PopolVuh: Sacred Book of the Quiche Maya People. Translation and commentary by Allen J. Christenson. Mesoweb Publications, 2007. <http://www.mesoweb.com/publications/Christenson/PopolVuh.pdf>

Roys, Ralph L. *The Book of ChilamaBalam of Chumayel*. 1933. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/maya/cbc/index.htm>

Steele, Paul. *Inca Mythology*. ABC-CLIO, 2004. ISBN: 1576073548

Taube, Karl. *Aztec and Maya Myths*. University of Texas Press, 1993. ISBN: 029278130X, 9780292781306

Folklore

Heroic Narratives during Independence (Political Propaganda): Stories and tales of both valor and cowardice were disseminated in Latin America during the wars of independence. The stories served to motivate individuals to join the military forces. The oral narratives took the form of stories that recalled the narratives used during the French Revolution, but with a twist: they focused on heroic exploits of those who resisted, and they framed them in a nationalistic frame in order to show how breaking away from Spain would also allow the affirmation of identity.

Ghost stories: Doomed lovers, tragic miscommunications, and falsely accused young men constitute a large part of the ghost stories, which seem to attach themselves to most of the older colonial towns. The fact that many of the tales are incorporated into tourist spectacles calls into question their authenticity. But, as an oral narrative, whether or not it is absolutely faithful to the actual events is not as important as the motives, impact, and eventual appropriation by another group who might find it useful to have the "Doomed Lover" tale or the "Heroic Sacrifice" tale in their arsenal.

Mining Tales: As prolific yet quite dangerous mines were placed into operation in Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, and Bolivia, the miners shared stories of the ghost, strange creatures (dragons and giant snakes) and unhappy gods. For example, in Bolivia, miners tell tales of El Tio (The Uncle), the lord of the underworld, and explain that if one does not place the proper offerings in small altars in the mine, there will be an accident.

Discussion Question

Discuss the role of oral narrative in times of revolution or large-scale political change. How might stories of heroic sacrifice motivate young, impressionable men to take action?

Readings

Blayer, Irene Maria F, and Mark Anderson, editors. *Latin American Narratives and Cultural Identity: Selected Readings (English, French, and Spanish Edition)*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers, 2003.

Carey, David. *Oral History in Latin America: Unlocking the Spoken Archive*. Forward by Alessandro Portelli. London: Routledge, 2017.

Fagundes, Francisco Cota, and Irene Maria Blayer. *Oral and Written Narratives and Cultural Identity: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.

VISUAL ARTS

Painting

Self-portraits by indigenous and mestizo artists. The nineteenth century was a time of breaking away from Spain and Brazil, and also of creating a national identity. While the indigenous peoples were still denied access to the economy in significant ways, there was a tacit understanding that they were needed in order to attain critical mass in breaking away. They were also valuable soldiers and support in the battles for independence. There were also examples where the artists were able to obtain formal training, as in the case of Manuel Ocoranza, born in Uruapan, Mexico. His self-portrait shows influences of the philosophy of the Cuban Jose Marti, positioned as it is with the Castle of Chapultepec in the background.

Heroic depictions of battles. Romanticism began to supplant the neoclassicism of the colonial period. One of the most popular genres was that of the military painting, particularly that which showed valor in fighting for independence from Spain. Examples include Patricio Ramos Ortega's *Hand-to-Hand Fighting* (1862) (part of the Battle of Puebla series), and *Fusilamiento de Maximiliano, Miramon, y Mejia* (unknown artist, 19th century).

Costumbristas. Perhaps the most important artistic movement of the nineteenth century was that of the "costumbristas" whose focus was on the daily life and times in towns, villages, and among ordinary people. They were painted in realist style, and have come to be of great importance in understanding the social customs, traditions, and change of the societies of Latin America. The movement progressed in tandem with the development of the regional novel. Examples artists include Francisco Pradilla y Ortiz, Agustin Arrieta (Mexico), Juakin Pinto (Ecuador), and Prilidiano Pueyrredon (Argentina). Pueyrredón, whose father was the first president of the republic of Argentina, painted landscapes and portraits that capture the vastness of the Argentine pampas, and working people's connection to agriculture, ranching, and the construction of a dream.

Discussion Question

When the spirit of independence began to inflame regions in Latin America, Simon Bolivar and others who shared his enthusiasm for the French philosophers' notions of liberty, equality, and brotherhood, sought ways to communicate the break from the past. Independence needed to look like heroic victory, although war rarely looks as glorious as it does in a painting or as statue. Discuss how painting was used to express emerging national identities separate from Spain and Portugal during the nineteenth century.

Readings

Baddeley, Oriana & Fraser, Valerie. *Drawing the Line: Art and Cultural Identity in Contemporary Latin America*. London: Verso, 1989.

Bailey, Gauvin Alexander. *Art of Colonial Latin America*. London: Phaidon 2005

Burke, Marcus. *Treasures of Mexican Colonial Painting*. Davenport IA: The Davenport Museum of Art 1998.

Fane, Diana, ed. *Converging Cultures: Art and Identity in Spanish America*. Exhibition catalog. New York: The Brooklyn Museum in association with Harry N. Abrams. 1996.

García Sáiz, María Concepción. *Las castas mexicanas: Un género pictórico americano*. Milan: Olivetti 1989.

New World Orders: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin America. Exhibition catalog. New York: Americas Society Art Gallery 1996.

Schiaffino, Eduardo, *La pintura y la escultura en la Argentina (1783-1894)*, Buenos Aires: Edición del autor, 1933.

Sullivan, Edward. *Latin American Art*. London: Phaidon Press, 2000. ISBN 978-0-7148-3980-6

Turner, A. (2013). *Sex, Myth, and Metaphor in Moche Pottery*. Dissertation for UC Riverside.
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6pw774tr#page-9>

Sculpture

Monuments to liberators and heroes: Simon Bolivar, who led independence movements throughout Latin America, appears on horseback as a triumphant figure in many countries. Many countries recognize national heroes, particularly those who died during a turning point battle. One example is the Monument to the Heroic Cadets of Chapultepec (Mexico City).

Pegasus statue, Cartagena, Colombia. A large statue of the winged horse, Pegasus, was erected to commemorate the valor of the people of Cartagena after declaring independence from Spain in 1811, and then enduring a siege in which more than 7,000 died. The sculpture, which was erected in the mid 19th century, is near the gates of the wharf. The artist is unknown.

Discussion Question

When construction began on churches, cathedrals, and government buildings, one primary goal was to create a monument that would transmit many messages, both of religious and political importance. How did religious sculpture communicate Christian history and values? How the large sculptures also communicate the wealth, power, and influence of Europe? Please provide at least four examples that explain how sculpture communicated history, values, and collective aspirations?

Readings

Falk, Peter Hastings, ed. *Who Was Who in American Art*. Madison, Conn.: Sound View Press, 1999.

Groce, George C., and David H. Wallace, eds. *The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564–1860*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957.

Havlice, Patrice Pate, ed. *Index to Artistic Biography*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981–.

Igoe, Lynn Moody, and James Igoe. *250 Years of Afro-American Art: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York: R.R. Bowker, 1991.

Optiz, Glenn B., ed. *Dictionary of American Sculptors: 18th Century to the Present*. Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: Apollo Book, 1984.

Optiz, Glenn B., ed. *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*. Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: Apollo Book, 1983.

Scott, John. *Latin American Art: Ancient to Modern*. University Press of Florida, 2000.

Sullivan, Edward. *Latin American Art*. Phaidon Press, 2000.

Architecture

French influence (Mexico, Argentina, Chile)

The French philosophes influenced Simon Bolivar and the individuals who urged independence from Spain. The independence was often followed by occupation by French (or at least enhanced commercial interests). As a result, many Latin American cities have a very significant French influence in their architecture and design. In Mexico City, there is the French Rococo; in Brazil, the main cathedral of Rio de Janeiro possesses the characteristically white, gold, and cerulean blue walls, pillars, and ornamentation. The Biblioteca Nacional of Santiago de Chile is another example. Later in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, French influence was expressed in Art Nouveau. Examples exist in Mexico City, Guanajuato (Mexico) and especially in Buenos Aires, which is considered the capital of Art Nouveau in Latin America.

Public Sculpture in Buildings: While there is a great deal of sculpture that stands alone in street corners and plazas, much of the architecture of Latin America includes sculptures of human personages. They may be heroes of the revolution or independence, or may be luminaries of art and music. Of course, the preponderance of such art forms is religious. For example, the indigenous Madonnas such as La Virgen de Guadalupe are important presences that are placed not only in churches and cathedrals, but on the ledges of the roofs of buildings and in windows, where they reinforce national and cultural pride.

Discussion Question

When the Europeans arrived in Latin America, some of the first building projects were designed to convey the message that the twin powers of Europe – the Catholic Church and the Spanish monarchy – were too rich and powerful to be resisted, and in fact, they should be regarded in awe. Select five or six examples of buildings in the colonial era that communicated that message and describe the architectural and design elements which reinforced the message.

Readings

Bayon, Damian. History of South American Colonial Art and Architecture. Ediciones Poligrafa, 1989.

Crespi, Irene and Jorge Ferrario. Léxico técnico de las artes plásticas. 3a ed. Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1982.

Gesualdo, Vicente, ed. Enciclopedia del arte en América. 5 vols. Buenos Aires OMEBA, 1969.

Miller, Mary Ellen. The Art of Mesoamerica, 5th edition. London, Thames and Hudson, 2012.

Schenone, Hector H. Iconografía del arte colonial. 2 vols. Buenos Aires? Fundación Tarea, 1992.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Bomba (Ecuador): The full name of the dance is the “Bomba del Valle del Chota (Ecuador).” The result of blended African, Spanish, and indigenous influences, the dance is very sensual and flirtatious, in which the woman dances around her partner, who is bent on seduction. She wears loose, wide skirts, and balances a bottle of spirits on her head as she dances. The dance evokes a great deal from the time of slavery.

Cumbia (Colombia): Originating in Colombia, the cumbia has become very successful and has penetrated almost all of South America. The music fuses indigenous PreHispanic melodies with African

rhythms and Spanish forms. The dance features women with wide, flowing skirts, usually red and white, while the man wears a white shirt, white pants, with a red bandanna and a red belt.

Galerón (Colombia): The Galerón Llanero derives from plains áreas between Venezuela and Colombia, and is a very joyous dance which involves intricate footwork reminiscent of Spanish flamenco. In the dance, the man pursues the woman and attempts to tie her with his bandanna, as she flirtatiously stays just outside his reach. The main instruments in the music are the harp, the cuatro, and maracas. When performed, there are generally six couples.

La Cueca (Bolivia, Chile, Argentina): Found in many parts of South America, the “cueca” enacts courtship, flirtatious evasions, and contains elements of the Spanish fandango. In Chile, the cueca has become the national dance, and there are competitions for all age groups, beginning with very young children. The cueca became quite popular in the early 19th century, and in Chile, the outfits are traditional Chilean dress, where the colors blue, red and white predominate. The woman wears a flowered dress, and the man wears the “huaso” black hat, white shirt, flannel poncho, riding pants and boots. The man and woman face each other, hold their handkerchiefs in the air and move with each other. They do not touch, but waive the white handkerchief as they dance with each other.

Guaranía (Paraguay): A dance performed with the “Guaranía” form of music, the women and men wear traditional Paraguayan outfits which feature wide skirts, hand-tatted lace and crochet panels (nanduti). The music is a derivation of polka, with harp, guitar, and bass guitar. The men typically wear white hats, white pants, red shirts, and blue belts.

Discussion Question

During Colonial times, dances were often performed in conjunction with important religious and political holidays. The first was always the time before Easter, the “Semana Santa.” Another took place before the official beginning of Lent, the Carnival. Other important days were on the feast days for each community’s patron saint, and also on the day for honoring the historical appearance of the Virgin Mary and of miracles. Compare and contrast the dances used in these different holidays and events.

Reading

Chasteen, John Charles. *National Rhythms, African Roots: The Deep History of Latin American Dance*. UNM Press, 2004. ISBN 0826329411,

Delgado, Celeste Fraser and Jose Esteban Munoz, eds. *Everynight Life: Culture and Dance in Latin/o America*. Duke University Press, 1997.

Drake-Boyle, Elizabeth. *Latin Dance*. Santa Barbara, California, ABC-CLIO. 2011.

Music

Milonga (Argentina): Originating in the Rio de la Plata area of Argentina in the 1870s, milonga music often deals with love and dreams. It is characterized by punctuated rhythms and the use of small hand-held accordians (bandoneons).

Zamba (Argentina): A form of music that originated in the Salta area of Peru, but then was further developed in Argentina. It is a slow dance in three-quarter time, and is often danced in the streets of Argentina and in folklore festivals.

Diablada (Bolivia): The “Dance of the Devils” originated in Bolivia and is performed during Easter (Semana Santa). The dancers wear elaborate costumes and there is traditionally a dance representing the war between good and evil, luz entre tinieblas (light and dark).

Cumbia (Colombia): A musical form that began as a courtship dance in the Caribbean areas of Colombia and Panama. Similar to salsa, the cumbia blends Amerindian and European instruments. It has spread throughout Latin America.

Reggae (Jamaica): Originating in Jamaica, reggae has come to be associated with island culture as well as Rastafarian philosophy. Reggae was popularized by Bob Marley and it blends ska, calypso and rhythm and blues.

Guaranías (Paraguay): Developed in the 1920s in Paraguay by José Asunción, Guaranías are a music form that are sentimental and express nostalgia for times past and lost loves. They feature the harp, guitar, bandoneon, and a singer.

Sanjuan (Ecuador): Incorporating Quechua musical instruments and forms, the Sanjuan is a music form found in Ecuador primarily in Quechua communities. It is played on traditional instruments.

Samba (Brazil): Associated with Brazil and Carnaval, the Brazilian samba has its roots in West Africa and in the religious practices. The samba has a “batucada” rhythm, with an emphasis on percussion and a distinct rhythm and meter. The samba is now considered the defining musical genre of Brazil.

Cueca (Chile): The national dance of Chile, the Cueca blends together Spanish and indigenous musical instruments, and includes several European musical instruments: Guitar, drums, accordion, harp, Chilean guitarrón, violin, mandolin. It reflects the Chilean gaucho culture, with rhythms that reflect Spanish flamenco.

Andean music: Huaynos and others include tambores (drums), quena (panpipe), cavaquinho, rattles, Andean flute, maraca, charango.

Discussion Question

When the Spanish brought their music to Latin America, many different fusions occurred. Compare and contrast the different Latin American music forms that are associated with dance and which have clear European influence.

Readings

Brill, Mark. *Music of Latin America and the Caribbean*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Olsen, Dale; Daniel Sheehy, and Daniel E. Sheehy. *Garland Handbook of Latin American Literature*. 2nd ed. London: Taylor & Francis. 2007.

Schechter, John M. *Music in Latin American Culture: Regional Traditions*. New York: Schirmer, 1999.

Theatre

Patronage and “Actos”: Many one-act plays, or “actos” were written and performed in conjunction with celebrations of the viceroys and governmental officials of Latin America. Actos were also written and performed in the church as “morality plays” and “virtue / vice” plays, similar to those in the Middle Ages. Their function was to educate largely illiterate indigenous populations about Biblical stories and parables.

Folkloric Theatre: Preserving the performative arts of Latin America gained momentum after nations became independent from Spain and during the costumbrista movement. The cultural patrimony became newly important, not only intellectually and artistically, but as a great source of economic development in the form of the development of national identity. Performative art into blended religious devotion with an emerging local and national pride. The energies were also used for recruiting soldiers for wars.

Discussion Question

The plays of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been very political, with messages that could be dangerous because they enact political repressions, kidnapping, torture, and the efforts of a military dictatorship to suppress dissent or resistance. Consider the examples of the plays that have political themes and discuss whether they stand up as works of art rather than propaganda. Why or why not? How can they be meaningful during times of peace?

Readings

Cortes, Eladio, and Mirta Barrea-Marlys. *Encyclopedia of Latin American Theater*. Greenwood Press, 2003.

Rudder, Robert S. *A Dozen Orgies: Latin American Plays of the 20th Century*.

Sadlier, Darlene J. *Latin American Melodrama: Passion, Pathos, and Entertainment*. University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Versenyi, Adam. *Theatre in Latin America: Religion, Politics and Culture from Cortes to the 1980s*. Cambridge University, 2009.

Writing

Avant-Garde Concrete Poetry BroadSides: In the 1920s, Mexican writers such as Manuel Maples Arce, created one-page flyers containing poetry fused with abstract art, inspired in many ways by the Russian Futurists of the 1920s, and earlier, the Italian Futurists of pre World War I Italy (many of the Italian futurists were killed in the war they thought they wanted, which would “liberate” aesthetics from old, tired, aristocratic forms). They were printed on one page and often included wood-block printing of block graphics and calligraphy. Calling it, a “Super-poema bolchevique en 5 cantos” poet-graphic artist-print designer Manuel Maples Arce, used a combination of block letters to create dramatic black, red, and white poems that also served as posters. German Arzubide produced work as well, under the name of “El Movimiento Estridentista” (The Strident Movement), which captured the bold, strident form and message of the innovative writing forms and design.

Writing and the development of Innovative Fonts: Stridentism, which was associated with the Mexican Revolution, and which took inspiration from the avant-garde Futurist movements in Italy and Russia in the early 20th century, was unique in its development of a blockish font that was an edgy echo of Dada and Art Deco, which always contained a loud cry to action. Poets Manuel Maples Arce, German List Arzubide, German Cueto and others produced one-sided broadsides and posters, as well as magazine covers. Surprisingly, it did not spring out of Mexico City but in Xalapa, the capital city of the state of Veracruz.

Revolutionary BroadSides and Posters of the 1960s: Writing styles and forms merged with pop art and culture in the 1960s, with the result that many posters containing minimalist poems, combined with collages of photographs (usually of Che Guevara in with beret) and colors / sketches inspired by comics. The skillful use of design to give the message a vibrant, relevant feeling was important in creating a “brand” and the kind of warrior banners that idealistic youth of the 1960s could rally around.

Reading

Simon Bolivar and Independence BroadSheets: Following the model of the one-page flyers and broadsheets printed during the American and French Revolutions, Simon Bolivar and his groups made use of the format to communicate messages quickly to the people. Even after independence, the tradition continued, with one-page broadsides tacked to walls, doors, and other public places to fire up supporters and energize them to fight for reforms. They tended to be very plain in their design, with large, prominent headlines, and a few block paragraphs, always with a call to action.

Discussion

When reading is universal, but writing the domain of a privileged few the actual printed word possesses a great deal more authority, to the point that it can take on the weight of a sacred text or a royal edict. Thus, in the years before the printing press, documents were written by scribes and kept under lock and key. The printing press changed all that. It made information more easily obtainable, and encouraged literacy. It also encouraged people to act on their dreams. For example, the tales of the explorers' exploits in "The New World" motivated many to make the arduous journey to try their luck. Discuss the different impacts of the printing press on and within Latin America.

Readings

Bushnell, David. *Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment*. Boston: Pearson, 2003.

Doe, Michael D., and Mark Van Stone. *Reading the Maya Glyphs*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

Raaflaub, Kurt A. *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

Rashkin, Elissa J. *The Stridentist Movement in Mexico: The Avant-Garde and Cultural Change in the 1920s*. New York: Lexington Books, 2009.

WORLDVIEW

Religion

Catholic Church Aligned with New Nations: The Catholic Church often supported the Spanish or Portuguese rulers, which is one reason why the power base stayed intact for so many centuries. However, in the 1830s, when Simon Bolivar started to move through South America and country after country declared independence from Spain, many priests and representatives of the Catholic Church supported independence from Spain.

Mennonites: Religious persecution in Europe resulted in waves of emigration to Central and South America. While it never achieved the same intensity as in North America, the diaspora of diverse persecuted groups did result in clusters of different isolates, which include Mennonites and also Mormons.

Discussion Question

The Conquest was a two-pronged effort with government / military on one side, and religion on the other. The most coordinated attacks occurred in the large religious centers, including Tenochtitlan, Cuzco and Quito, where the Church was quick to build over the temples. But, they did not succeed in eradicating the religions. Please describe how the ancient religions persist.

Readings

Gumucio, Parker. Religion and Awakening in Indigenous People in Latin America. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0037768602049001006>

Penyak, Lee M. Religion in Latin America. Orbis Books, 2007.

Popol Vuh. Sacred Book of the Quiche Maya. Translated with commentary by Allen Christiansen. Provo, Utah: Mesoweb Publications. 2002. <http://www.personal.psu.edu/abl128/PopolVu/PopolVuh.pdf>

Philosophy

Philosophes in the New World: The French Enlightenment deeply influenced Latin America, and the notions of self-determination, freedom, and liberty were deeply appealing to a group rebelling against old aristocratic orders (and concentration of power). Thus, Hidalgo, Bello, and Bolivar essentially evangelized the French Enlightenment throughout Latin America. The tangible first expression was in independence from Spain.

Miguel Hidalgo (1753-1811): Mexico. Miguel Hidalgo was a Roman Catholic priest and a brilliant strategist who not only led the uprising of the Mexicans against the Spanish, whose tariffs, crop controls, and restrictive rule resulted in poverty for peasant farmers, but also transformed the previously Spanish-aligned Catholic Church to something uniquely Mexican, and a powerful player in the development of a clear idea of Mexican identity. The Virgin of Guadalupe was given an even higher place of prominence and became the heraldic image (or battle flag), thus suborning at least on some level, the power, influence, and riches of the church.

Andrés Bello (1781-1865): Born in Venezuela, Bello embraced the ideas of Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire which formed underpinnings of the French Revolution and then applied them to the situation in Latin America. He taught Simon Bolivar and participated with Bolivar in convincing the people of Venezuela to become independent from Spain.

Simón Bolivar (1783 – 1830): Venezuela. Simon Bolivar has achieved the reputation as The Liberator of Latin America, although he worked closely alongside the Argentine general Jose de San Martin and also Antonio Jose de Sucre (later the first president of Bolivia). Bolivar traveled throughout South America and encouraged individual countries to become republics. Unfortunately, most converted instantly into dictatorships, but the prevailing political philosophy was not of dictatorship, but of free societies with individual liberty and self-determination.

Positivism in Latin America: The 19th century, and its thrust toward Independence from Spain, rejected mysticism and intuitive knowledge. Instead, it focused on logical, mathematically-supported arguments, all of which were directed at giving individuals the freedom to make their own rational decision. This was a variation of the positivist writings of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Ernst Haeckel.

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888): A prolific writer and the president of Argentina, Sarmiento's philosophy was deeply positivist and focused on the rational advancement of human society by means of technology and modernization. He was not a technocrat, and yet, his major Works, including *Civilization and Barbarism*, point to the rational organization of human beings and their collective efforts to incorporate labor-saving technologies as the prime drivers and transformative forces of a society.

Jose Ingenieros (1877 – 1825): Ingenieros was a positivist philosopher in late 19th century and early 20th century Argentina, which saw the great rise of the middle class and the production of wealth, and the development of a city, Buenos Aires, with culture that rivaled and some cases outshone Europe. His focus was on the use of rational thought to improve the human condition, and he focused on individual responsibility to overcome what he considered "mediocrity." In fact, his most famous work, *El Hombre Mediocre*, focuses on how to develop a code of values and ethics, and to truly differentiate oneself by being an Idealist. Those values would, when combined with actions and correct decisions, help one succeed in the world. His views were very popular as they encouraged upward social mobility and aspirational striving.

José Martí (1854-1895): Influenced by Bello and Bolivar, Martí was a Cuban writer, thinker, and philosopher who led the Cuban War of Independence. His philosophy is idealist and socialist, with a belief that the collective efforts of individuals can bring about a better world for all.

Discussion Question

Along with a proliferation of newly formed independent states, 19th century Latin America experience a dramatic expansion of the number of writers who pointed to the responsibility of the individual to take responsibility for social change. Discuss positivism in the 19th century in Latin America.

Readings

Beorlegui, Carlos. *Historia del pensamiento filosofico latinoamericano: una busqueda incesante de la identidad*. Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto, 2006.

Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011.

Gracia, Jorge J. E. *Hispanic / Latino Identity: A Philosophical Perspective*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999.

Gracia, Jorge J. E., ed. *Latin American Philosophy Today*. A Special Double Issue of The Philosophical Forum. Vol. 20:1-2, 1988-89.

Gracia, Jorge J. E.. *Philosophical Analysis in Latin America*. Dordrecht: Reidel, 1984.

Gracia, Jorge J. E., and Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert. *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century: The Human Condition, Values, and the Search for Identity*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2004.

Mariátegui, José Carlos. *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*. Translated by Marjory Urquidi. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971.

Nuccetelli, Susana, Ofelia Schutte, and Otávio Bueno, eds. *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Portilla, Miguel León. *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.

Salles, Arleen, and Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert. *The Role of History in Latin American Philosophy: Contemporary Perspectives*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.

Sánchez Reulet, Aníbal. *Contemporary Latin American Philosophy: A Selection with Introduction and Notes*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1954.

Science

Panama Canal: After more than 50 years of surveying and planning, the Panama Canal construction began in 1881, with a workforce of more than 40,000 individuals. The project was plagued by setbacks and scandals, and was finally abandoned. The United States took over, and completed the work in 1913. A total of 75,000 people worked on the project, and almost 6,000 died of tropical diseases and accidents. The project, which was largely designed during the 19th century, was one of the wonders of the world, and was of extreme economic and strategic value.

Railroads in Mexico: The railway system in Mexico featured some of the most advanced engineering in the world, and the Veracruz – Mexico City line that was inaugurated in 1873, was renowned for its mountain bridges, engineered track beds, and systems of controls. Financed largely by British, American, and French investors, the railway system consisted of more than 15,000 miles of in-service track by 1900.

Medicinal Plants: The medicinal properties of the coca leaf, grown primarily in Bolivia and Peru, were integrated into medicines and products used in 19th century United States and Europe. An influential paper by Dr. Paolo Mantegazza discussed its stimulating effects on cognition, which in turn stimulated the production of a number of patent medicines and tonics which included the liquid extract of the coca leaf.

Shipbuilding: Italian immigrants in the 19th century settled in Buenos Aires where they continued their practice of shipbuilding. In doing so, they developed innovative ships that were able to navigate rivers as well as oceans. The innovative designs, navigation equipment, and lightweight materials were groundbreaking for their time.

Chemical Engineering Processes: The demand for rubber to make impermeable footwear created a huge boom in the Amazonas part of Brazil, especially after the development of chemical processes involving sulfur and heat, called “vulcanization.” Vulcanization was first developed in the U.S., but Brazilian chemists further perfected it, which made it possible to export even more rubber from the Amazon region, without worrying about its oxidation.

Discussion / Questions

The Industrial Revolution in Europe and the United States during the nineteenth century resulted in a demand for a number of raw materials and inputs that would help build machines and products. While simple agricultural inputs were often needed, there was a larger need for inputs that contributed unique attributes and represented a step-change in industrial efficiency and in the standard of living of the consumer. Rubber was one of those products. There were others as well. Select one product and analyze the reasons why scientific and technological innovation resulted in a multi-tiered economic boom associated with that product.

Readings

Bethell, Leslie. (1995) *The Cambridge History of Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Fishburn, Evelyn, and Eduardo L. Ortiz (2004) *Science and the Creative Imagination in Latin America*. Institute for the Study of the Americas.

Hruby, Zachary X.; Braswell, Geoffrey E; and Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos. (2014) *The Technology of Maya Civilization: Political Economy and Beyond in Lithic Studies*. London: Routledge.

Mays, L. (2010) *Ancient Water Technologies*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Saldana, Juan Jose. (2009) *Science in Latin America: A History*. Austin: U of Texas P