

Democracy in Contemporary Latin America

Dictado en: Department of Sociology | New School for Social Research

I. Instructors.

Carlos A. Forment
Nicolas Lynch

II. Course description

This seminar seeks to introduce students to the debate on the democratization of contemporary Latin America.

In the first part of the seminar (Weeks 1 to 9), Professor Lynch will lead the discussions. We will be examining conceptually and historically the interaction of social movements, popular sovereignty, political representation and the pluralization of public life during the following critical junctures:

1. struggle against oligarchic rule and the emergence of the first populist experience from 1930-1980;
2. transition from military to democratic rule during the 1970's and 1980's;
3. blocked transitions and the turn to the left and the consolidation of the so-called "turn to the left" in the region between 1998 and 2016, and
4. the resurgence of liberal democracy and the crisis of the left from 2010 to today.

In the second part of the seminar (Weeks 10 to 15), Professor Forment will lead the discussion. We will be studying the writings of the most influential theorists of democratization in the region and through their work understand the frameworks used to make sense of it: Guillermo O'Donnell (transitions and disenchantment); Carlos Nino (epistemic democracy and human rights); and Ernesto Laclau (populism and representation).

III. Requirements and grading policy

Students are required to: a) complete all the required readings prior to each meeting; b) write four memos (3-5 pages) that discuss the weekly readings in a critical, thoughtful and engaging manner; and c) take turns leading the discussion. Sixty percent of the grade will be based on the memos: the remaining forty percent will be based on your classroom participation.

Memos must be uploaded to the course website 24 hours before the seminar so we can all read them before each meeting.

IV. Protocol and etiquette

There is a website for the course. It contains a copy of the syllabus and all the required and all the readings (see below). You are responsible for retrieving them, and also for checking the website for any announcements.

If you bring a laptop to class be considerate of your colleagues; use it only for taking notes (not for internet surfing, email exchanges, etc.). Remember to turn off your cell-phones before you enter the class.

V. Academic honesty and integrity

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at

<http://www.newschool.edu/leadership/provost/policies/>

Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center/virtual-handout-drawer/>

VI. Availability of readings

All the required book chapters and journal articles are available through Blackboard. If you have any difficulties downloading them, contact Santiago Mandirola () immediately so that you can access the readings in a timely manner.

VII. Readings and course schedule

PART ONE: Nicolas Lynch

I: Introduction and overview.

Week 1: (August 27)

What is the problem? : Two competing democratic perspectives?

Reading:

- Nicolás Lynch. Latin America at the crossroads: two divergent democratic paths (draft).

Week 2: (September 3) Labor Day. Holiday. No Class

Week 3: (September 10) Rosh Hashanah. Holiday. No Class

II: Oligarchical heritage and the meaning of populism

Populism as democratization.

Week 4: (September 17)

Readings:

- Vilas, Carlos. Latin American populism. A structural approach. *Science and society*, 56, 1992. (P. 389-420).

Populism as a logic of politics.

Week 4 (September 17)

Readings:

- Laclau, Ernesto. (2005). *On populist reason*. London: Verso. Chap. I (P. 4-20) Chaps. 4,5 and 5. (P. 65-171).

III. A response to populist politics.

Week 5: (September 24)

Readings:

- Weyland, Kurt. Clarifying a contested concept. *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 1, October. (P. 1-22)

Recommended:

- De la Torre, Carlos. Populism and nationalism in Latin America. *Journal of the European Institute of Communication and Culture*. Vol. 24. 2017. Issue 4. (P. 375-390)

IV. The transitions to democracy

Week 6: (October 1)

Background: the globalization of liberal democracy.

Readings:

- Huntington, Samuel. "Democracy's Third Wave". *Journal of Democracy*. Spring 1991. (P. 12-34)

The political project of the transitions.

Readings:

- O' Donnell, Guillermo y Schmitter Philippe. *Transitions from authoritarian rule. Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press. (P. 3-72)

V. The critique of the transitions theory.

Week 7: (October 8)

Readings:

- Collier, Ruth Bernis. *Paths toward democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 1999. Chap. I (P. 1-32) Chaps. IV and V (P.110-197)

Recommended:

- Franco, Carlos. *Acerca del modo de pensar la democracia en América Latina*. Lima: Fundación Friedrich Ebert, 1998.

VI: The failure of the transitions and the turn to the left.

Week 8: (October 15)

Readings:

- Levitsky, Steven and Keneth Roberts. Introduction: Latin America "Left turn" a framework for analysis. *The resurgence of the Latin American Left*. Edited by Steven Levitsky and Keneth Roberts. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. (P. 1-28)
- Lynch, Nicolás. "What the "left" means in Latin America now". *Constellations*. Vol 14, No. 3, 2007. (P. 373-383)

The critique of the turn to the left.

Week 8: (October 15)

Readings:

- Weyland, Kurt. "The threat from the populist left". *Journal of Democracy*. Vol 24, No. 3. July 2013. (P. 18-31)

Recommended:

De la Torre, Carlos. *Populismo, ciudadanía y Estado de derecho. El retorno del pueblo*. Carlos de la Torre y Enrique Peruzzotti, editors. Flacso, Ecuador. Ministerio de Cultura, 2008. (P.23-53)

VII. The revival of liberal democracy and the crisis of the turn to the left.

Week 9: (October 22)

Readings:

- Peruzzotti, Enrique. Regime betterment or regime change? A critical review of recent debates on liberal democracy and populism in Latin America. *Constellations*. Vol. 24, (3) 2017. (P. 389-400)
- Crespo, María Victoria. Beyond consolidation: Democracy and dictatorship in post transitional Latin America. . *Constellations*. Vol. 24, (3) 2017. (P.401-415)
- Saffon, María Paula y Juan F. González Bertomeu. Latin American populism: an admissible trade off between procedural democracy and equality? *Constellations*. Vol. 24, (3) 2017. (416-431)

Recommended:

- García Linera, Álvaro. (2016) “¿Fin del ciclo progresista o proceso por oleadas revolucionarias?”. *Las vías abiertas de América Latina*. Emir Sader editor. Caracas: Editorial Octubre. (P. 9-48)

PART TWO: Carlos Forment

A) Carlos Nino: Epistemic Democracy, Human Rights and Transitional Justice

Week 10: (October 29) Epistemic Democracy

Readings:

- The Constitution of Deliberative Democracy (Yale University Press, 1996) 107-143)
- James Bohman, Survey Article: The Coming Age of Deliberative Democracy,” *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 6:4 (1998) 400-425.

Week 11 (November 5) Human Rights and Transitional Justice

Readings:

- Radical Evil on Trial (Yale University Press, 1996) 107-148.
- Paige Arthur, “How Transitions Reshaped Human History: A Conceptual History of Transitional Justice,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 31 (2009) 321-367.

B) Guillermo O’Donnell: Institutionalizing Liberal Democracy

Week 12 (November 12) Transitions from Authoritarian Rule

Readings:

- Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1986, 1988, 2013) 1-84.
- Nicolas Guilhot, *The Democracy Makers* (New York City: Columbia University Press, 2005) 101-133, 134-165

Week 13 (November 19) Democratic Consolidation and its Illusions

Readings:

- "Illusions about Consolidations," in *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democracy* (Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1999) 175-194.
- "Delegative Democracy" in *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democracy* (Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1999) 159-174
- "Horizontal Accountability in New Democracies," in *Dissonances: Democratic Critiques of Democracy* (University of Notre Dame, 2007) 49-76.
- "Horizontal Accountability: The Legal Institutionalization of Mistrust," in *Dissonances: Democratic Critiques of Democracy* (University of Notre Dame, 2007) 77-98.
- *Notes on Various Accountabilities and Their Interrelations,* in *Dissonances: Democratic Critiques of Democracy* (University of Notre Dame, 2007) 99-110.

Week 14 (November 26) State, Rule of Law and Citizenship

Readings:

- "Democratic Theory and Comparative Politics," in *Dissonances: Democratic Critiques of Democracy* (University of Notre Dame, 2007) 1-48.
- "On the State, Democratization, and Some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Postcommunist Countries," in *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democracy* (Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1999) 133-158.
- "Polyarchies and the (Un)Rule of Law in Latin America: A Partial Conclusion," in *Dissonances: Democratic Critiques of Democracy* (University of Notre Dame, 2007) 111-138.
- "Human Development, Human Rights and Democracy" in *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications* (eds. O'Donnell et. al.) (University of Notre Dame Press, 2004) 9-92.

C) Ernesto Laclau: Populism, Hegemony and Representation

Week 15 (December 3)

Readings:

- Ernesto Laclau: *Post-Marxism, Populism and Critique* (ed) D. Howarth (Routledge, 2015) 1-20, 21- 65

Week 16 (December 10)

Readings:

- Ernesto Laclau: Post-Marxism, Populism and Critique (ed) D. Howarth (Routledge, 2015) 65-108

Week 17 (December 17) Populism and Representation

Readings:

- Ernesto Laclau: Post-Marxism, Populism and Critique (ed) D. Howarth (Routledge, 2015) 109-196
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