The Cuban Revolution, 1956-1971: A Self-Debate

Jorge I. Domínguez
Fall term 2011
MWF at 10, plus section
Course web site:
http://isites.harvard.edu/k80129

Office Hours: MW, 11:15-12:00
or by appointment
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WEEK 1

W Aug 31 01.Introduction

F Sep 2 Section in lecture hall: Why might revolutions occur?


WEEK 2

(Weekly sections with Teaching Fellows begin meeting this week, times to be arranged.)

M Sep 5 HOLIDAY

W Sep 7 02.The Unnecessary Revolution

F Sep 9 03.Modernization and Revolution


WEEK 3

M Sep 12  04. The Necessary Revolution: State Structures
W Sep 14  05. The Accidental Revolution
F Sep 16  Question period

WEEK 4

M Sep 19  06. The Rebellion: Castro’s Strategic Genius
W Sep 21  07. The Rebellion: Collective Insurgency
F Sep 23  Extra section just for Freshmen in lecture hall


WEEK 5

M Sep 26  08. Revolution Betrayed: a New Dictatorship

W Sep 28  “Meeting of US Secretary of State Advisers” section in lecture hall.

F Sep 30  09. Revolution Fulfilled: the Logic of Socialism

Suchlicki, Cuba, pp. 137-151

Pérez, Cuba, pp. 237-256


[Sourcebook] O’Connor, The Origins of Socialism in Cuba, pp. 279-314


WEEK 6

M Oct 3  FIRST PAPER DUE at class time

M Oct 3  10. US/USSR I: The Structure of US Hegemony

W Oct 5  General Hour Test Review in lecture hall

F Oct 7  HOUR TEST: in lecture hall

WEEK 7

M Oct 10  HOLIDAY

W Oct 12  11. US/USSR II: The U.S. Pushed

F Oct 14  Question period. Freshman parents welcome.


WEEK 8

M Oct 17 12.US/USSR III: Cuba’s Initiatives

W Oct 19 Cuban feature film “Memories of Underdevelopment” at 7 PM, CGIS South, Tsai Auditorium #S010, 1730 Cambridge St., followed by discussion.


[Sourcebook] Gonzalez, Cuba under Castro, pp. 146-189


WEEK 9

M Oct 24  15. Economy I: The Transition to Socialism

W Oct 26 Cuban feature film “One Way or Another” at 7 PM, CGIS South, Tsai Auditorium #S010, 1730 Cambridge St., followed by discussion.

W Oct 26  16. Economy II: The Transition to Chaos

F Oct 28 Question Period

[Sourcebook] Carmelo Mesa Lago, The Economy of Socialist Cuba (University of New Mexico Press, 1981), pp. 7-28


[Sourcebook] Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution, pp. 203-204, 210-230

WEEK 10

M Oct 31  17. The Making of a New Society

W Nov  2  18. The State versus the Society

W Nov  2 Documentary film “Nobody Listened” at 7 PM, CGIS South, Tsai Auditorium #S010, 1730 Cambridge St.

F Nov  4  19. The Totalitarian Regime


[Sourcebook] Lowry Nelson, Cuba: The Measure of a Revolution (University of Minnesota Press, 1972), pp. 147-162


WEEK 11

M Nov 7  20. The Good Socialist Citizen

W Nov 9  Documentary film: PBS “Castro’s Challenge,” in lecture hall

F Nov 11  HOLIDAY


[Sourcebook] Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution, pp. 231-241, 365-370


[Sourcebook] Fagen, The Transformation of Political Culture in Cuba, pp. 69-103


WEEK 12

M Nov 14  21. The Duty of Internationalism
W  Nov 16  22. The Cuban Threat

F  Nov 18  23. Building the State


http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1963/19630726.html

http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1967/19670314.html

http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1968/19680824.html


Jorge I. Domínguez, To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba’s Foreign Policy (Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 61-77

[Online] Ernesto (Che) Guevara, “At the Afro-Asian Conference” (1965)
http://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1965/02/24.htm


WEEK 13

M  Nov 21  24. Building a Socialist Nation

W  Nov 23  HOLIDAY

F  Nov 25  HOLIDAY

[Sourcebook] Morley, Imperial State, pp. 301-316

Pérez, Cuba, pp. 257-266, 270-288

[Sourcebook] Gonzalez, Cuba under Castro, pp. 190-216
Societies of the World 15


WEEK 14

M Nov 28  25. Cuba Today

W Nov 30  “Emergency Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba”: section in lecture hall

F Dec  2  SECOND PAPER DUE at lecture

F Dec  2  26. Presentation of Final Exam and Concluding Lecture

READING PERIOD ASSIGNMENT. Read one of the following:


OR


http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebookbatch.ACLS_batch:MIU010000000000000005101018

Course Requirements:

This course meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 10:00 a.m., plus a section at some other hour to be arranged. Four films will be shown, three of them in the evening. You are required to attend all of these activities.

GRADING PATTERN:
Monday, October 3, first paper due, 15% of grade
Friday, October 7, hour test, 15% of grade
Friday, December 2, second paper due, 15% of grade
Section participation: 15% of grade, includes 5 ONE-PAGE PAPERS
Final examination, Saturday December 17, 40% of grade
Failure to fulfill any one of the requirements leads to failure in the course. No pass/fail. Late papers will receive a grade penalty.
PAPERS: times font, type-size 12, double-spaced.

FIRST PAPER (7-8 pp.): You are an Adviser to the U.S. Secretary of State or to the White House Chief of Staff. It is 1957 or 1958. You chair a meeting called to forecast events in Cuba. Write a memorandum to your boss. First, summarize briefly what you as the Adviser think are the facts; cite and refer to primary documents from WEEK 4 of the course. Second, sketch two policy options that emerge from the discussion. Assume that all public statements made by Cuban rebels are known to you as Adviser but assume also that the private correspondence in the Franqui and Guevara readings is not. Third, step outside of your role as Adviser: identify what difference (if any) it would have made for the statement of the facts or for either option if the private correspondence had been public. Refer to primary readings from the course. A good argument anticipates the objections that other reasonable people will raise. The first paper is due Monday, October 3 at class time.

SECOND PAPER (6-7 pp.): You can choose either of two topics: 1) Calculate the Soviet economic subsidy to Cuba through sugar purchases under two different quantitative assumptions. Formulate arguments that contradict each other based on the two calculations. Assess which calculation and which argument makes most sense. Data will be given. Or 2) Assume that you are a political actor in Cuba in the 1960s and that you wish to promote or to change a particular policy. Design a strategy to accomplish your goal. Identify your likely supporters and opponents and assess the chances of success. Refer explicitly to course readings. The second paper is due Friday, December 2 at lecture.

SECTION PARTICIPATION AND GRADING: To improve your learning and the quality of section discussion, YOU WILL WRITE FIVE ONE-PAGE PAPERS, AT LEAST TWO OF WHICH MUST BE SUBMITTED BEFORE THE HOUR TEST. Turn them in to your Teaching Fellow prior to Section. You will receive “discussion questions” in advance of section; pick a question to write your paper. You will get a check-mark on these papers; if warranted, you might get a “check-minus” or a “check-plus.” These papers will be part of the Teaching Fellow’s assessment of your section participation.