

ALCS major/minor elective requirement

Alejandra Bronfman

### Cuba and Spain: The Paradoxes of Post-Colonialism

Cuba was a Spanish colony for over 300 years. When that ended in 1898, the relationship between the two countries continued and in some ways grew stronger, through ongoing migratory, economic and cultural links. While the relationship between Cuba and the United States has received a lot of attention, that between Cuba and Spain is less well known. This course will study that relationship through three influential moments in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries: The Spanish Civil War, which brought anti-fascist Cubans to Spain, including the prominent poet Nicolás Guillén; the Cuban Revolution, which had important economic, political and cultural repercussions in Spain, and recent migrations, in particular of a group of Cuban political prisoners who were given Spanish asylum in 2010. Through the use of primary and secondary sources, students will engage these histories and come to understand the transnational relationship between the metropolis and its former colony.

#### Course objectives

- Production of an understanding of 20<sup>th</sup> Cuban and Spanish relationship through migration, politics and culture.
- Understanding of transnationalism as a method and theoretical approach to 20<sup>th</sup> century history.
- Decentering of the United States in historical narratives of post-colonial Cuba.

-This proposal is for an online version of this course. When this course is conducted in Madrid, it will include field trips to Cuban/Spanish zones and neighborhoods, visits to editorials which have a long history of publishing Cuban authors, and sessions in museums, libraries, and public spaces in which students map and mark the nature of official Spanish narratives about Cuba and its colonial past. This will produce additional outcomes related to place-based learning, research and cross-cultural understanding as well as global citizenship.

#### Course outcomes

- Reading and critical assessment of both primary and secondary sources on 20<sup>th</sup> century Cuba and Spain.
- Oral skills developed in discussion, debate and required presentations throughout the course. Analytical skills applied to visual and audiovisual sources as well as written sources.
- Student-generated knowledge in the forms of written work and mapping skills.

#### Partial bibliography

Roy, Joaquín, 2009, *The Cuban revolution (1959-2009) : relations with Spain, the European Union, and the United States*

Lambe, Ariel Mae, 2019, *No Barrier Can Contain It Cuban Antifascism and the Spanish Civil War* ,

Berg, Mette Louise, 2011 *Diasporic generations : memory, politics, and nation among Cubans in Spain*.

Rodriguez, Daniel, 2020, *The Right to Live in Health: Medical Politics in Postindependence Havana*

Shaffer, Kirwin, 2020. *Anarchists of the Caribbean: Countercultural Politics and Transnational Networks in an Age of US Imperialism*

Primary media: film, music, internet sources, manuscripts

### Schedule

Week	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Writing</u>	Hands-on/experiential
	No more than 50 pages per week, avg. 25.	Submit 10 discussion questions, co-lead one discussion, draft and revisions of 2 short papers	Students will work in groups with these materials and submit a group project or presentation
<u>1</u> Introductions			
<u>2</u> Spain in Cuba: health, race, empire	D. Rodriguez, <i>The Right to Live in Health</i> , Chs. 1 and 5		Visual sources: maps and photographs
<u>3</u> Anarchists and Communists?	Kirwin Schaffer, Intro and Ch. 1		Historical newspaper search
<u>4</u> Spanish Civil War and transnational solidarities	Lambe, <i>No Barrier Can Contain It</i> , Chs 1 and 2		Political cartoons
<u>5</u> Tracking Nicolás Guillén	Guillen and Langston Hughes, poetry and correspondence		Mapping exercise
<u>6</u> Revolution in politics	Roy, <i>The Cuban Revolution</i> , Ch. 4		Diplomatic sources
<u>7</u> Madrid and the sounds of exile	Bebo Valdez, <i>Lágrimas Negras</i>		music and music production
<u>8</u> Revolution in clandestine books	Reinaldo Arenas, <i>Before Night Falls</i> (excerpt)		Archival materials
<u>9</u> Cubans in Spain: memory	Berg, Ch. 3		Cafes, bars, spaces of exile and memory
<u>10</u> Cubans in Spain: the sexual economy	Berg, Ch. 3		Remittances, mapping,
<u>11</u> Spaniards in Cuba: at the movies	Film, TBA		

<u>12</u> Dissidents in cyberspace	Yoani Sanchez, essays; <i>Encuentros de la Cultura Cubana</i>		Internet sources and interviews
<u>13</u> Wrap up			