

Lois Barr
Dawn Schuman Institute for Jewish Learning
Spring 1996
Moriah Congregation, Deerfield
Mondays 8:00-9:30 p.m.

Latin American Jewish Life: Intellectual Currents

April 22-Assignment: Brazilian, Moacyr Scliar, "Inside my Dirty Head--The Holocaust" (**photocopy**).
Introductory remarks: How is the Holocaust treated in Latin American literature?
Study questions: What is Jewish self-hatred? Does this concept apply to Scliar? Why does Scliar use the eleven-year-old narrator? Is this a successful device?

April 29-Assignment: Porto Alegre, Brazil, a case study of managing the news about Israel by anthropologist, Prof. Sidney Greenfield (**photocopy**).
Introductory remarks: Zionism in Latin America.
Study question: Why did the community leaders act as they did?

May 6-Assignment: Death and the Maiden by Ariel Dorfman, available in paperback (\$7.95) at Borders Bookstore, Lake-Cook & Waukegan Rds., at the front desk under Barr.
Introductory remarks: Doctors and human rights issues in Chile
Study questions: Why have leftists faulted Dorfman for focusing on Paulina's problem? Is Dorfman's treatment a feminist one? What Jewish values does Dorfman bring to his work?

May 13-Assignment: view The Official Story, screenplay by Aida Bortnik and Luis Puenzo (available at video rental stores).
Introductory remarks: human rights in Latin America with particular focus on Argentina and the role of Jews in the human rights cause. In class video of interview with novelist Alicia Steimberg.
Study questions: How has this film changed your perception of human rights issues in Latin America? Why does the director use the song "In the country of Nomeacuerdo (I don't remember)" as the theme for the movie? Is Argentina still that country?

May 20-Assignment*: "The Invisible Hour" by Esther Seligson and "In the Name of His Name" by Angelina Muñiz-Huberman (**photocopy**).
Introductory remarks: Mexican Jewish Writers and the Mystic Tradition
Study questions: What is the meaning of "the yod of all births" (p. 188). Why does "The Invisible Hour" end as it does? How can one write about mystical experience? Is Muñiz-Huberman successful in her story?

Date and location of final session to be decided by the class.

Assignment*: The class will read a short story by Uruguayan novelist Teresa Porzecanski, "Clashes Down Below," and an excerpt from her novel Sun Inventions (**photocopy**). In class we will have a reading of translations in progress of the work of Latin American Jewish writers by Johnny Payne, Northwestern University and Phyllis Silverstein, University of Chicago.

* Assignment available in Spanish