

Philadelphia University

School of Liberal Arts

L352 – Area Studies: Latin America

Discussion Guide for **Communicating with Brazilians**

3-42:

1. What are the significance of *casa* and *rua* in Brazilian culture?
2. What is the difference between the intercultural view and the intracultural view?
3. What is meant by the phrase that “Brazilians are ‘cultural cannibals?’”
4. Describe two ways in which Brazil’s pre-nineteenth century history differs from other Latin American nations?

43-89:

5. How is Brazilian racism different from U.S. racism?
6. What is the ‘myth of racial democracy’ in Brazil?
7. What is *jeito* and why is it such an important part of Brazilian daily life?
8. What are the differences between collectivist cultures and individualistic cultures? Which is Brazil? How?

90-150:

9. How do social hierarchies organize Brazilian life?
10. How are gender relations changing in Brazil?
11. Identify three powerful Brazilian symbols and discuss why they are so important.
12. Enumerate two values which are particularly admired in Brazil.
13. Discuss three ways in which Brazilian sexuality differs from U.S. sexuality.
14. What are *alimento* and *comida*?
15. How are Brazilian eating habits different from U.S. eating habits?
16. Compare the stylistic differences in cross-cultural negotiation between Brazilians and North Americans.

17. What 4 types of problems undermined the negotiations between CouroFab and ImporCorp?

153-204:

18. How does the Brazilian sense of time differ from the American (U.S.)?

19. What is the Brazilian attitude towards body and eye contact?

20. What are the roles of nonverbal “displays” in Brazilian communication?

21. Identify 3 ways in which Brazil is “a land of paradox”.

Discussion Guide for **Revolutionizing Motherhood**

1. What is the significance/meaning of the title of the book?

2. According to Bouvard, what were the motives of the Argentinean military regime in abducting its own citizens?

3. Why were the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo so successful in combating the Argentinean military regime?

4. In what four ways did the “Dirty War” destroy the world of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo?

5. How were the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo different in their organization and their aims from other Argentinean political groups of the same period?

6. Why didn’t the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo disband with the end of the “Dirty War” and the return to civilian rule in Argentina?

7. According to Bouvard, how are the youth in Argentina different from their counterparts elsewhere in the world?

8. In what ways were the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo revolutionary?

Discussion Guide for **The Ticos**

1-140:

1. What is the “natural base” of Costa Rican society? Why?

2. What is the “culture of the *pobrecitico*”?

3. What role does *choteo* play in Costa Rican life?

4. What is the “*leyenda blanco*” and how has it shaped Costa Rica politically and culturally?

5. On what commodity was Costa Rica’s prosperity based in the nineteenth century?

6. Analyze the conflict between the *calderonistas* and the *figueristas* in the 1940s.

7. What are the 3 stages of Costa Rican history between 1950 and 1980?
8. Expand on the statement: “Coffee creates entrepreneurs; bananas create *peons*”.
9. How are *Colegios* important in Costa Rica?
10. What do the *camaronears* reveal about the present day Costa Rican economy?
11. What is meant by the term *quedar bien*?
12. Are Costa Ricans better informed and politically active than (U.S.) Americans? Why?
13. From what activities have the Costa Rican elite derived most of their wealth?
14. How has the Costa Rican class system changed since 1981?
15. Enumerate the different ethnic groups found in Costa Rica.

143-289:

1. Compare the homes of a poor rural Tico and a prosperous urban Tico.
2. How would you rate Costa Rica’s public health and social security systems?
3. How have gender roles in Costa Rica changed since the early 1990s?
4. What is *Flirtear*? How does it differ from the U.S.?
5. Discuss 3 chronic problems of Costa Rican marriages and family life.
6. What is “the myth vs. the reality” of the Tico educational system?
7. What role does Catholicism play in Tico culture and daily life?
8. Why have an increasing number of Costa Ricans converted to Protestantism?
9. What is the significance of the term *matando la culebra*?
10. Why is it that so many Ticos are friendly but (supposedly) have few friends?
11. How do rural and urban conceptions of leisure time differ in Costa Rica?
12. Identify 4 functions Soccer plays in Tico life.
13. Why do many Ticos say that their nation has undergone a cultural revolution in recent years?
14. Enumerate 3 ways in which Costa Ricans have been affected by external influences.
15. According to the authors, what is the “Tico way” of handling problems and conflicts?

1. What is the significance of the title **Deep Rivers**?
2. How does the city of Cuzco embody the Peruvian historical experience?
3. Why is Ernesto so drawn to Quechua? Why is there so much Quechua in the novel?
4. Who/What does the “old man” represent? Why does Ernesto’s father hate him so much?
5. Why is there so much description of the natural world in the novel?
6. Given the father’s anti-clerical convictions, explain his reasons for entrusting his son’s education to the Catholic Church.
7. Analyze the Rector’s attitude towards Native Americans. Give three examples from the book.
8. The *zumbayllu* chapter is central to the book. Discuss three different symbolic meanings of *zumbayllu* and say why they are so important.
9. What causes the insurrection? Who instigates it? Who crushes it? What is the aftermath?
10. What does the fate of Brother Miguel reveal about social and political relations in Peru?
11. Why does Arguedas include so many descriptions of Peruvian music in his novel? Discuss two of these descriptions.
12. What is Arguedas’ attitude towards the Peruvian Catholic Church?