

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Department of History  
Semester I, 1986-87

History 241

Colonial Latin America  
From Conquest to Independence

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5105 Humanities  
263-1841/263-1800

Course Description

Are you interested in understanding Latin America? If so, you must come to grips with the colonial experience and its legacies. Spanish and Portuguese rule of the area spanned roughly the years 1492-1826, more than half the period since the initial confrontation of Amerindian peoples and European colonizers. Equally important, the legacies of colonial rule have conditioned social relations, economic life, culture, and political struggle during the 19th and 20th centuries. This course will study the emergence of distinctively Latin American societies under Spanish and Portuguese rule, and the implications of the colonial experience for 19th- and 20th-century Latin America. A central theme will be the ways in which social conflict--between and among colonizers in America, the peasant and slave populations they exploited, and metropolitan interests in Europe--shaped the historic evolution of colonial Latin America. A second major theme will be the interplay of gender, race, and class in Latin American society.

Do you prefer courses that grant you the right and the obligation to think independently? This teacher respects your brain--your independent intellectual capacity--but also demands that you think hard and well. If the idea of developing your own skills at critical analysis and expression excites you, consider this course an intellectual laboratory designed for you. The highest form of teaching does not train students merely to "absorb" information and analysis propagated by the professor. The highest form of teaching leads people to "learn" for themselves. We will strive toward that goal in this course.

Do you agree that rigorous intellectual work, although sometimes difficult and even dull, may also include fun and variety? If so, you will enjoy this course. Our non-lecture materials will include historical analysis written by scholars, documents (in translation) that ask you to be the historian, literature that uses fiction and fantasy to understand history and its legacies, and a very interesting film. The lectures will occasionally take the form of special "Change-Up Lectures." The Change-Ups will resort to unconventional lecturing techniques that will promote active student participation, and add variety to classroom lectures.

Schedule

- Week 1      Introduction. Sept. 3-5.  
 Lectures:    Introductory session (Sept. 3).  
               Why Study Colonial Latin America?  
 Reading:     Julio Cortázar, "The Night Face Up" (hand-out).
- UNIT I. THE AGE OF CONQUEST
- Week 2      Introduction (cont'd)/The Coming Clash. Sept. 8-12.  
 Lectures:    Latin America: Myths, Realities, Human Geography.  
               A Tale of Two Civilizations: Aztecs and Incas.  
               Iberian Expansion: Gold, Gospel, Utopia.  
 Reading:     Bernal Díaz del Castillo, The Conquest of New Spain,  
                   trans. by J.M. Cohen (Penguin Books ed., 1963),  
                   7-139 (much may be skimmed).
- Week 3      Conquest of Highland Civilizations. Sept. 15-19.  
 Lectures:    The Conquest of the Incas: How Could It Happen?  
               "Conquest" versus "Alliance": What's in a Word?  
               Change-Up No. 1: Meeting of the Minds (featuring  
                   Orson Welles, Steven Spielberg, Hernán Cortes,  
                   La Malinche, and a special cameo guest).  
 Reading:     Díaz, Conquest of New Spain, 140-413 (again, much  
                   may be skimmed).
- Week 4      Indian-White Relations: The First Generation. Sept. 22-26.  
 Lectures:    The Early Encomienda of the Aristocrat-Entrepreneurs.  
               The Moral and Political Dilemmas of Conquest.  
               No lecture on Friday, Sept. 26.  
 Reading:     Steve J. Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples and the  
                   Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640  
                   (Madison, 1982), xv-xix, 3-79.
- Week 5      The Latin American Frontiers. Sept. 29-Oct. 3.  
 Lectures:    The Frontier as Backwater: Paraguay.  
               The Frontier as Magnet: "Chichimeca" Mexico.  
               The Frontier as Utopia: The Missionaries.  
 Reading:     R.C. Padden, "Cultural Change and Military Resistance  
                   in Araucanian Chile, 1550-1730," Southwestern  
                   Journal of Anthropology, 13 (Spring, 1957), 103-  
                   121 (xerox packet).

Begin next week's reading.

## UNIT II. THE COLONIAL ORDER

- Week 6      The New Social Order in the Highlands. Oct. 6-10.  
 Lectures: Mines and Indians: Peru and Mexico Compared.  
 Indians and Haciendas: Conflict and Symbiosis.  
 Change-Up No. 2: Techniques of Documentary Analysis  
 ("The Downfall of Don Francisco Chocata").
- Reading: Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples, 80-193.  
 Document on Don Francisco Chocata (hand-out) to be  
 read for Friday's lecture session.
- NOTE: AT LEAST ONE PAPER is due no later than Friday,  
 October 10.
- A MAP QUIZ is scheduled for October 15, and the  
 SEMESTER EXAM, covering Weeks 1-6, is scheduled  
 for October 17.
- Week 7      Torture Week (just checking if you're reading this!). Oct. 13-17.  
 Lectures: No Monday lecture on Oct. 13--Yom Kippur.  
 Map Quiz/Review for Exam (Oct. 15).  
 Semester Exam (Oct. 17).
- Reading: No new reading assigned. Begin next week's reading.
- Week 8      The New Social Order in the Tropics (Part I). Oct. 20-24.  
 Lectures: The Origins of Slave Societies: Brazil in  
 Comparative Perspective.  
 The Evolution of Colonial Brazil.  
 Slaves and Masters: The Interplay of Resistance and  
 Accommodation.
- Reading: Articles in Richard Price, ed., Maroon Societies:  
 Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas (2nd ed.,  
 Baltimore, 1979), 1-63, 82-103, 149-226.  
 DOCUMENT #1 (xerox packet).
- Week 9      The New Social Order in the Tropics (Part II). Oct. 27-31.  
 Lectures: Afro-American Slavery and Freedom.  
 A FILM about slavery, "The Last Supper," will be  
 seen in lieu of the Oct. 29 lecture, on the  
 evening of Oct. 29 or Oct. 30.  
 Change-Up No. 3: Special Debate on Religion and  
 Colonial Slavery.
- Reading: Emilia Viotti da Costa, "The Portuguese-African Slave  
 Trade: A Lesson in Colonialism," Latin American  
 Perspectives, 44 (Winter, 1985), 41-61 (xerox  
 packet).  
 Articles in Price, ed., Maroon Societies, 227-292.

- Week 10 Paternalism, High Culture, and Counter Culture. Nov. 3-7.  
 Lectures: Honor, Shame, and Gender in Colonial Society.  
 Drinking in Colonial Society and Culture.  
 The Culture of Pomp and Circumstance.
- Reading: William B. Taylor, Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages (Stanford, 1979), 1-72.  
 DOCUMENT #2 (xerox packet).

UNIT III. THE CRISIS OF IBERIAN COLONIALISM

- Week 11 Decay and Transformation. Nov. 10-14.  
 Lectures: Decay of the Hapsburg Imperial System.  
 The Bourbon Reforms: From Frying Pan to Fire?  
 Rise of Rebellion and Elite Factionalism.
- Reading: Oscar Cornblit, "Society and Mass Rebellion in Eighteenth-Century Peru and Bolivia," in Raymond Carr, ed., Latin American Affairs (St. Anthony's Papers, No. 22, London, 1970), 9-44 (xerox packet).
- Week 12 From Crisis to Independence. Nov. 17-21.  
 Lectures: Change-Up No. 4: History Workshop on: "Is Cornblit's Article Good History, or Elegant Fluff?"  
 The Wars of Independence: Argentina, Venezuela, Peru.  
 The Wars of Independence: Mexico, Cuba, Brazil.
- Reading: George Reid Andrews, "Spanish American Independence: A Structural Analysis," Latin American Perspectives, 44 (Winter, 1985), 105-132 (xerox packet).  
 DOCUMENT #3 (xerox packet).

UNIT IV. THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE AS AN UNCLOSED CHAPTER

- Week 13 Causes and Consequences of Indian Survival and Resilience. Nov. 24-26.  
 Lectures: Colonial Origins of So-Called Closed Corporate Communities (two lectures).
- Reading: Taylor, Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion, (review 1-27), 73-170.
- NOTE: THE SECOND PAPER is due no later than Monday, Dec. 1.

- Week 14      The Colonial Heritage in Post-Colonial Times. Dec. 1-5.  
Lectures:    The Colonial Legacy in the 19th Century.  
              The Tricks of Time.  
              Teacher Evaluation/Study Guide for Final Exam.
- Reading:     Ramon A. Gutiérrez, "Honor Ideology, Marriage  
                  Negotiation, and Class-Gender Domination in New  
                  Mexico, 1690-1846," Latin American Perspectives,  
                  44 (Winter, 1985), 81-104.  
              Gabriel García Márquez, Chronicle of a Death Foretold,  
                  trans. by Gregory Rabassa (New York, 1983), all.
- Week 15      Looking Back. Dec. 8-12.  
Lectures:    Feudalism and Capitalism in Colonial Latin America  
                  (two lectures).  
              The Colonial Heritage of Latin America.
- Reading:     No new readings assigned.

Course Assignments

There are three course requirements: class participation, examinations, and papers. Class participation means contributing your presence, thoughts, and voice (!!) to weekly discussion sections. To participate effectively requires that one keep up with readings and lectures, think about the issues posed by the week's material, and volunteer for occasional assignments announced in section. The two examinations, one during the semester and covering Weeks 1-6, and the other a final examination covering the entire semester, will emphasize analysis and interpretation rather than memory of isolated facts and detail. A solid grounding in the evidence, however, is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for writing a compelling analysis or interpretation... There will also be a map quiz.

Students must also write two short essays, each about 1000-1750 words (4-7 pages). These papers do not entail extra reading or research, but rather a careful and critical analysis of assigned material. At least one paper should analyze a historical document included in the assigned readings. Historical documents in translation are found in the readings for Weeks 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12. These essays should be well-reasoned "think-pieces" that present and defend your points of view, reading of the evidence, and insights. The topic is flexible: any aspect of a given week's readings, lectures, and discussion is fair game. You might end up writing on an entire book as such, or on an issue raised in one paragraph of a book or document... Similarly, the format you choose to use is flexible: an argumentative critique of readings or lectures; a hypothesis or insight on a particular issue, based on available evidence; a comparison or contrast with historical experiences in other societies; a methodological discussion; a critical book review analyzing a work's assumptions, evidence, reasoning, insights, shortcomings; etc. You may, if you wish, focus the papers on one of the discussion section questions I normally hand out at the Monday lectures. The papers are due at the Monday lecture following the week whose material is discussed in the paper. When a paper combines materials from more than one week, the deadline is the Monday lecture following the last week whose materials are discussed. Please note the paper deadlines on the syllabus schedule. Please note also that I grant extensions only in cases of genuine and unforeseeable emergencies, and that late papers without an extension suffer a one-grade penalty.

Grading

Grades will be weighted at the end of the semester on a 100-point scale distributed as follows:

discussion----12 points	semester exam---16 points
map quiz----- 2 points	final exam-----30 points
first paper---15 points	
second paper--25 points	

Note that the weighting of papers varies for students taking the three-paper option or the term paper option. These options are described below.

Honors Students and Special Options

Any student may elect to write three short papers instead of two, and to have the highest two grades count 20% each towards the final grade in the course. The purpose of the three-paper option is to allow students who are especially motivated to improve their writing a fair chance to receive feedback, respond to it, and receive special credit for their efforts. Three conditions, however, are attached to this option: 1) the student must request this option no later than one week after receiving his or her first graded paper; 2) the second paper will be due no later than Monday, Nov. 10, and the third no later than Monday, Dec. 8; and 3) no more than four students may select this option. Please do not take the slot of another student unless you are willing to commit yourself to intensive work on your writing.

Any student may elect to take the term paper option instead of the standard two-paper assignment. The term paper should either research a well defined topic on the basis of primary and secondary source materials, or focus on a critical evaluation of controversies in the scholarly literature. For those who do not read Spanish or Portuguese, a surprisingly large set of primary sources is available in English translation. The term paper will count 40% towards the final grade. Students selecting the term paper option must turn in a formal one-page proposal, accompanied by a tentative bibliography, no later than Monday, Sept. 22. I reserve the right to reject poorly conceived proposals. Term papers are due no later than Monday, Dec. 1.

Honors students must take the term paper option described above.