

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of History  
Semester I, 1982-83

History 241

Steve J. Stern

Colonial Latin America:  
From Conquest to Independence

Course Description:

The world as we know it today is, in a very real sense, the offspring of colonialism, and one of the first colonial creations was "Latin America." This course will study the emergence of distinctive Latin American societies under Spanish and Portuguese rule, roughly the years 1492-1826. 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. Although we will touch on nearly all regions of Latin America, the course will devote special attention to Mesoamerican (Mexico--Guatemala), Andean (Peru--Bolivia), and Brazilian history. A special feature of the course will be a concluding unit on "Debates and Legacies." In this unit we will explore debates among historians about the colonial experience, and study the legacies and implications of that experience in 19th- and 20th-century Latin America.

Readings and lectures will provide broad exposure to factual, documentary, and interpretive materials. Discussion sections, papers, and exams will encourage independent analysis and critical evaluation of historians' interpretations.

Schedule

- Introduction. Aug. 30--Sept. 3.
- Week 1. Lectures: Why Study Colonial Latin America?  
Latin America: Myths, Realities, Human Geography
- Readings: Julio Cortázar, "The Night Face Up" (hand-out).  
Elman R. Service, "Indian-European Relations in Colonial Latin America," American Anthropologist, 13 (Spring, 1957), 103-121. (3-hr. reserve, Helen C. White Library)
- Unit I. THE AGE OF CONQUEST
- Week 2. The Coming Clash. Sept. 8-10. (Sept. 6 = holiday)
- Lectures: A Tale of Two Civilizations: Incas and Aztecs  
Iberian Expansion: Gold, Gospel, Utopia
- Readings: Steve J. Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640 (Madison, 1982), 3-26.  
Bernal Diaz del Castillo, The Conquest of New Spain, trans. by J.M. Cohen (Penguin Books ed., 1963), 213-237.
- Recommended:
- Friedrich Katz, The Ancient American Civilizations.  
R.C. Padden, The Hummingbird and the Hawk.  
Jacques Soustelle, Daily Life of the Aztecs.

Schedule (continued):

- Week 3. Conquest of Highland Civilizations. Sept 13-17.  
Lectures: The Conquest of the Incas: How Could It Happen?  
"Conquest" versus "Alliance":What's In a Word?
- Readings: Díaz, Conquest of New Spain, 138-180, 185-200, 208-237, 242-249, 263-277, 280-311, 326-332,353-413. (You are invited to skim or browse through the unassigned pages.)
- Recomm.: Miguel León-Portilla, ed., The Broken Spears (1962).
- Week 4. Indian-White Relations: The First Generation. Sept. 20-24.  
Lectures: The Encomienda of the Aristocrat-Entrepreneurs  
The Moral and Political Dilemmas of Conquest
- Readings: Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples, xv-xix, (skim or review 3-26), 27-79.
- Recomm.: Charles Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century.  
Lewis Hanke, The Spanish Struggle for Justice.  
Nathan Wachtel, The Vision of the Vanquished.
- Week 5. The Latin American Frontiers. Sept. 27--Oct. 1.  
Lectures: The Frontier as Backwater: Paraguay  
The Frontier as Magnet: "Chichimeca" Mexico
- Readings: R.C. Padden, "Cultural Change and Military Resistance in Araucanian Chile, 1550-1730," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 13 (Spring, 1957), 103-121. (Xerox packet).
- Note: Sept. 27 = Yom Kippur, so one class will be rescheduled.
- Recomm.: Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Missionaries, Miners & Indians.  
Richard M. Morse, ed., The Bandeirantes.  
Philip Wayne Powell, Mexico's Miguel Caldera.

Unit II. THE COLONIAL ORDER.

- Week 6. The New Social Order in the Highlands. Oct. 4-8.  
Lectures: Mines and Indians: Peru and Mexico Compared  
Indians and Haciendas: Conflict and Symbiosis
- Readings: Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples, 80-193.
- NOTE: AT LEAST ONE PAPER must be turned in no later than Friday, October 8.
- Recomm.: Charles Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule.  
James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, 1532-1560. A Colonial Society.  
Murdo J. MacLeod, Spanish Central America.  
William B. Taylor, Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca.

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Week 7. The New Social Order in the Tropics (Part I). Oct 11-15.

Lectures: The Origins of Slave Societies: Brazil in Comparative  
Perspective  
Rebel Slave Communities

Readings: Articles by Kent, Bastide, and Schwartz, in Richard  
Price, ed., Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave  
Communities in the Americas (2nd ed., Baltimore,  
1979), 170-226. (xerox packet)

DOCUMENT #1 (xerox packet)

NOTE: The SEMESTER EXAM, covering weeks 1-6, is scheduled  
tentatively for Monday evening, October 11.

Recomm.: C.R. Boxer, The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695-1750.  
Frederick P. Bowser, The African Slave in Colonial  
Peru, 1524-1650.  
Esteban Montejo, The Autobiography of a Runaway Slave.

Week 8. The New Social Order in the Tropics (Part II). Oct. 18-22

Lectures: The Evolution of Colonial Brazil  
Afro-American Slavery and Freedom

Readings: Ann M. Pescatello, "Ladies and Whores in Colonial  
Brazil," Caribbean Review, 5:2 (April -  
June, 1973), 26-30 (xerox packet).  
A.J.R. Russell-Wood, "Female and Family in the Economy  
and Society of Colonial Brazil," in Asunción  
Lavrin, ed., Latin American Women: Historical  
Perspectives (Westport, Ct., 1978), 60-100  
(xerox packet).  
Susan A. Soeiro, "The Feminine Orders in Colonial  
Bahia, Brazil: Economic, Social, and Demographic  
Implications, 1677-1800," in Ibid., 173-197.  
(xerox packet).

Recomm.: Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, eds., Women and  
Colonization.  
Verena Martínez-Alier, Marriage, Class & Colour in ... Cuba.  
Ann M. Pescatello, Power and Pawn: The Female in  
Iberian Families, Societies, and Cultures.

Week 9. High Culture and Counter Culture. Oct. 25-29.

Lectures: The Culture of Pomp and Circumstance  
The Culture(s) of Drinking

Readings: William B. Taylor, Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in  
Colonial Mexican Villages. (Stanford, 1979),  
1-72.

DOCUMENT #2 (xerox packet).

Recomm.: Pablo Joseph de Arriaga, The Extirpation of Idolatry  
in Peru.  
Irving A. Leonard, Baroque Times in Old Mexico.  
R.C. Padden, ed., Tales of Potosí.

UNIT III. THE CRISIS OF IBERIAN COLONIALISM.

Week 10. Decay and Transformation. Nov. 1-5.

Lectures: Decay of the Hapsburg Imperial System  
The Bourbon Reforms: From Frying Pan to Fire?

Readings: Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, The Colonial Heritage of Latin America: Essays on Economic Dependence in Perspective (New York, 1970), 4-53, (skim 54-85), 86-106.

Recomm.: Mark Burkholder and D.S. Chandler, From Impotence to Authority.  
J.R. Fisher, Government and Society in Colonial Peru.  
Brian R. Hammett, Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico.

Week 11. The Crisis of Politics and Society, Nov. 8-12.

Lectures: Rise of Rebellion and Elite Factionalism  
The Wars of Independence: Argentina, Venezuela, Peru

Readings: 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).

Recomm. : John Lynch, The Spanish American Revolutions.  
Kenneth R. Maxwell, Conflicts and Conspiracies: Brazil....  
John L. Phelan, The People and the King: The Comunero Revolution.

Week 12. From Independence to "Neo-Colonialism." Nov. 15-19.

Lectures: The Wars of Independence: Mexico, Cuba, Brazil  
The Colonial Legacy in the 19th Century

Readings: Stein and Stein, The Colonial Heritage, 106-198.

Recomm.: Kenneth Duncan and Ian Rutledge, eds., Land and Labour Latin America.  
Doris Ladd, The Mexican Nobility at Independence.  
Domingo F. Sarmiento, Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants.

UNIT IV. DEBATES AND LEGACIES.

Week 13. Feudalism and Capitalism in Colonial Latin America. Nov. 22-24.

Lectures: The Debate on Feudalism and Capitalism  
The Colonial Social Formation: An Interpretation

Readings: Pierre Vilar, "The Age of Don Quixote," New Left Review, No. 68 (1971), 59-71. (xerox packet).

Optional: E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century,"

Week 13 (continued)

(optional) in Trevor Aston, ed., Crisis in Europe, 1560-1660 (New York, 1967), 5-62.

Recomm.: Woodrow Borah, New Spain's Century of Depression.  
Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America. Should be read with Ernesto LaClau's essay in New Left Review, 67 (May-June, 1971).  
Rodney Hilton et al., The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism.  
Eric Van Young, Hacienda and Market.

Week 14. Causes and Consequences of Indian Survival and Resilience.

Nov. 29- Dec. 3.

Lectures: Introduction: The So-Called Closed Corporate Community  
Solidarity, Conflict, and Survival: An Interpretation  
of "Closed Corporate Communities"

Readings: Taylor, Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion, (review 1-27),  
73-170.

NOTE: THE SECOND PAPER MUST BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN FRI. DEC.3

Recomm.: Frank Cancian, Economics and Prestige in a Maya Community.  
Eric Wolf, Sons of the Shaking Earth.

Week 15. The Colonial Heritage of Latin America. Dec. 6-10.

Lecture: Legacies and Nights Face Up

Readings: none assigned, but I suggest you re-read Week 1's readings.

NOTE: "THE LAST SUPPER," A FILM ABOUT SLAVERY IN CUBA, will be shown  
during Week 15.

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...) We will discuss the format of the exams well in advance of the exam dates.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

Students must also write two essays; one of them a short essay (about 4-5 pages, typed and double spaced) based on the assigned material of a given week, and the other a medium-length paper (about 8-12 pages) based on a given week's assigned material and approximately one supplementary book (or its equivalent) on a similar or closely related topic. Both 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 issues 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... 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; etc. Consult with me before deciding what supplementary reading to choose for the medium paper; I can help you choose a book or articles that will both address your interests, and illuminate the issues raised in the week's assigned readings and lectures. The "recommended" readings listed on the schedule above provide a starting point for selecting supplementary readings, but many more titles are of course available.

You may write either the short or medium paper first. In addition to the general deadlines for papers noted on the schedule above, please note the following particular due dates:

SHORT PAPERS -- THE FRIDAY OF THE SAME WEEK WHOSE MATERIAL OR TOPIC IS DISCUSSED IN THE PAPER;

MEDIUM PAPERS--THE FRIDAY OF THE WEEK AFTER THE WEEK WHOSE MATERIAL OR TOPIC, ACCOMPANIED BY SUPPLEMENTARY READING, IS DISCUSSED IN THE PAPER.

In cases where the general deadline noted on the schedule and the particular due dates for specific kinds of papers conflict, the earlier deadline applies. I advise you not to ask for extensions except in cases of genuine and unforeseeable emergencies. I grant them with great reluctance, and late papers without an extension suffer a one-grade penalty.

Please bear in mind that quality of reasoning, use of evidence, clarity and grace of exposition, sensitivity and originality, and improvement since the last paper all impress me more than the length of a paper or its bibliography.

Grading

The weighting of grades at the end of the semester will be:

discussion---15%	semester exam--15%
short paper--15%	final exam-----30%
medium paper-25%	

Office Hours:

I welcome visits during office hours, or by appointment (phone 263-1841; messages: 263-1800). Please do not hesitate to see me.

My office is 5105 Humanities. Tentatively, my office hours for the Fall semester are:

Mondays-----1pm--2pm

Fridays---12-12:30pm

Wednesdays-----11am--12noon

