

# HILA 255 Fall 2022

## **Introduction to Early Latin America**

History 255/LAS 251

TR 9:45-11:00

Fall 2022

### **Prof. Chad Black**

**Email:** cblack6-at-utk.edu

**Office:** 2627 Dunford Hall, 6th Floor

**Drop-in Hours:** Tues 1:30-3:30 or by appointment.

### **TA Info:**

Rachel Wiedman (rwiedman@vols.utk.edu)

**Office:** 25

**Drop-in Hours:**

Emily Britt (ebritt3@vols.utk.edu)

**Office:** 2528 Dunford Hall

**Drop-in Hours:**

In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue and discovered or destroyed, conquered or civilized the Americas. Sixty years later, in 1552, López de Gómara, the private secretary of Hernán Cortes, wrote, “The greatest event since the creation of the world (excluding the incarnation and death of Him who created it) is the discovery of the Indies [i.e. Americas].” He was, himself, a participant the conquest of Mexico. From the very beginning, not only the magnitude, but also the meaning of the Conquest of the Americas has been a point of controversy and acclaim. The history of Early Latin America, however, does not begin in October 1492. Indigenous bands and great civilizations inhabited North and South America for more than ten thousand years prior to the arrival of Europeans on the shores of Caribbean islands. Thus, in this class we will concentrate on the pre-Colombian period, the conquest period, and the ensuing three hundred years of Spanish (and to a limited extent) Portuguese rule. The lectures will move both chronologically and topically. We will concentrate on two key geographic areas of examination— central Mexico, home to the highly structured pre-Columbian societies of the Maya and the Mexica, among many others, and later the center of Spanish control in its northern kingdoms as the Viceroyalty of New Spain; and, the central Andes, land of the Inca Empire and its sub-

ject polities (among others), and home of the Viceroyalty of Peru, the center of Spanish power in its southern kingdoms. Our class will cover a tremendous breadth of time and territory, and as such the lectures, readings, and discussion sections are designed to draw your critical attention to issues, including ethnicity, gender, slavery, culture, and power, as well as the institutions and structures that patterned native, African, and European experiences of Spanish and Portuguese imperialism.

## course objectives

1. To introduce students to the forces, events, and conflicts that defined the process of conquest and colonization of the Americas, including:
  - The histories and cultures of pre-conquest state systems, particularly in central Mexico and the Andes.
  - The historical precedents for Spanish and Portuguese expansion and conquest.
  - The process of conquest and colonization from the perspectives of Iberian, African, and indigenous populations.
  - The fundamental forms of institutional and cultural organization that structured daily life during the three centuries of Spanish rule.
  - The tensions of late colonial society that led to conflict, disorder, and eventually rebellion.
2. To understand and use a variety of sources that provide the core of historical inquiry.
3. To be able to identify, understand, and critique historical argument.
  - Historians follow a loose set of epistemological, theoretical, and evidentiary rules in their attempts to recreate the limited past that is accessible to us through our incomplete archival record. At the college level and beyond, it is your task to learn how to identify an author's central argument and to evaluate it based on its evidence, sources, logic, and narrative.

## required readings

There are two texts for purchase:

-

All other required readings are available on Canvas.

## policies



Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner with appropriate documentation.

**Masks:** The University is currently requiring students, faculty, and staff to mask indoors. We will comply with this requirement. The Delta variant of this virus is extremely contagious, with an  $R_0$  somewhere between 5-9 (one person will infect on average 5-9 people). This turns a classroom of 100+ people into a potentially high-risk situation. Wearing a mask for 75 minutes indoors is a small price to pay to be back in University community.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend, please email Dr. Black or your TA ahead of time. We're not making an Inquisition into your absences, so the reasons you can't attend are not as important as giving us the heads up. If you have *any* symptoms or have been exposed to COVID, please do not come to class! Just send us a quick email, and get tested.

**Deadlines:** Assignments must be uploaded to Canvas by the end of the day on which they are due. Late papers will not be accepted without **prior arrangement**. If you will not be able to complete an assignment on time, you must contact me and your TA ahead of time. If you contract COVID or some other illness, please let us know so that we can work with you.

**Cell Phones, Laptops, Zoom:** Cellphones should be put away during class. Please do not text or post to the Group Me during class. It is very distracting to people around you, and to the professor. Laptops may be used to take notes, but I would ask you to seriously consider using paper instead. If you want or need to use a laptop, please consider sitting towards the back of the room so as to minimize distractions behind you. If we have to utilize Zoom at some point, please practice the kind of respectful manners that I'm sure you have become used to over the last 15 months. In class and on Zoom, I would invite you to interrupt me with questions during lecture.

Research shows that analog note-taking improves learning. Consider having paper with you. Based on the prevailing literature, hand note-taking—both while reading and in class—leads to substantially better educational outcomes. Consider taking notes by hand even though you'll be watching on your computer.

**Drop-in Hours:** Students are strongly encouraged to speak with me and the TAs outside of class. The advantages include: extra help on an assignment or preparation for exams; clarification of materials covered in lecture, discussion

of comments on your work; discussion of this or related courses. I have an open door policy during my drop-in hours. I will be there, and you are welcome to come by for any reason. Your TAs have the same.

**Changes:** I reserve the right to change this syllabus as the semester progresses. This is not a contract, but rather a document to guide expectations and clearly communicate weekly assignments. Please bring the syllabus with you to our class meetings. Or, keep up with it on the course website. We'll have to remain flexible as the outlook for our fourth pandemic semester is still uncertain.

## required readings

There are two texts for purchase:

- Townsend, Camila. *Fifth Sun: A New History of the Aztecs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Walker, Charles. *Witness to the Age of Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

All other required readings are available on Canvas.

## weekly reports: (40%)

For eight of the semester's weeks, students will write a 1 page paper that synthesizes the readings and our synchronous and asynchronous sessions. There are eleven weekly report assignments. We will drop the lowest two grades. Weekly Reports are due by midnight on Friday, uploaded onto Canvas. The report will respond to all three of the following prompts:

- Identify at least one concept, event, claim, or proper noun mentioned in the readings that is unfamiliar to you. Use Reference Tools on the library website to look up information about it and report your findings, along with the source(s) of any information you find. Anything that could be answered with a fact-check, quick definition, or basic research might be included under this prompt. Be sure to indicate when you are quoting directly from another source by using quotation marks.

For example, if a weekly reading referenced the *encomienda*, and I did not know that that is, I would start by using OneSearch to find information on the *encomienda*.

That search brings me to the Columbia Research Encyclopedia, where I learn that the *encomienda* is "system of tributary labor established in Spanish America," along with other information on its origins and use in

the Americas. I'll summarize this in my first paragraph, and then make sure to cite my source.<sup>[1]</sup>

- Identify one of the Questions or Themes raised in earlier weeks that one of the assigned readings helps to answer. Then explain why you think this source sheds light on this specific question.
- Connect at least one of the readings to the lectures from the week they were assigned. How do the readings complement or contradict or expand on topics discussed in class?

The entire report will be no more than about one typed, single-spaced page.

### **take home exams (35%)**

There will be two take home exams- roughly a midterm and final. You will need to write a well-formed essay from a selection of questions that I will provide you. Your essay must draw off of only our readings and sessions.

### **film reaction (25%)**

We have two feature length film options this semester, *La Otra Conquista*, *Zama*, and *También la lluvia*. Students must write a 3-5 page analysis on one of these films, the first which treats the question of the spiritual conquest of Nahuatl civilization, and second of which treats the vanity, ambition, and capriciousness of late colonial rule.

Instructions for the *La Otra Conquista* version of this assignment are here.

For instructions for the *Zama* version of the assignment, click here.

1. week { :toc }

### **Week One: Introduction (Aug 25)**

Welcome (back) to the History of Early Latin America. This week, your only responsibility is to carefully read over the syllabus, the course requirements, and to plan for your participation in class! Make sure you understand what the coursework requirements are, and also some general recommendations on how to read, take notes, and think about weekly material.

This is quite obviously a very lecture intensive class. Your lecture notes will be very important for your weekly assignments. If you struggle with note-taking, or have never taken a humanities lecture course before, you will need to think about, and put effort into improving your note-taking. Take a look at these resources, and find a system that works best for you:

1. Effective Note-taking in Lectures.
2. The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard.
3. How to Take Better Notes.

In addition to taking notes during lecture, you need to be an active reader of the pieces we're assigning. This means using either paper or pdf tools to highlight and markup the assignments. We will be discussing this over the course of the semester, especially how to approach strange texts with unfamiliar concepts.

Your most fundamental skill for this semester will be creatively connecting the lectures and the readings, looking for thematic similarities or arguments both within a week's topic and between weeks. Make sure to look at each week's title, and the brief comments comment for the week to help follow the arc of the semester.

## **Week Two: Premodern Societies I (Aug 30- Sep 1)**

The immigrants to what we now call the Americas arrived by land and cruising the coasts. The civilizations that evolved from their wanderings were highly complex and advanced. We begin the semester considering their emergence, and the revolutionary domestication of *Zea mays* that made it possible. To this day, there is no single crop or animal more central to the US economy and its food system than corn.

This week we look at commonalities among most premodern societies, and then at the Maya.

### **Tuesday: On Sedentary Societies**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 1-32

### **Thursday: The Maya**

- Thompson, J. Eric. "The Meaning of Maize for the Maya." in Gilbert M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson, eds., *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 86-91.
- Anonymous. "The Popol Vuh." In Joseph and Henderson, eds., *The Mexico Reader*, pp. 79-85.
- Please watch this short video that animates part of the Popol vuh.

### **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Three: Premodern Societies II (Sep 6-Sep 8)**

The collapse of Classical Maya society did not mean the disappearance of the Maya. Indeed, Maya-speaking communities continue to form integral parts of Mexican and Guatemalan society today, along with other Central American states. This week, we consider the successors and inheritors of the Mesoamerican cultural world once dominated by the Maya, with the rise of the Mexica in the central valley of Mexico. Then, we turn to South America for an introduction to the third great sedentary empire of the pre-Conquest period, the Inka of the Andes. As you read and attend lecture this week, consider the influence of environmental factors on the emergence of these civilizations along with their religious and social practices.

#### **Tuesday: Mexica**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 33-58

#### **Thursday: Inka**

- Mary Strong, *Art, Nature, and Religion in the Central Andes* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2012): pp. 17-58.

#### **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Four: Premodern Societies III (Sep 13-15)**

With a foundation in the pre-Conquest Americas, this week we turn to the Iberian Peninsula, the close-in Atlantic islands, and to Africa to look at the roots of conquest in the so-called “Old World.” Consider the culture of conquest cultivated by Isabella and Ferdinand in the 1490s, and also what lessons Iberians learned of conquest and expansion in their control of Atlantic Islands and the trade in enslaved captives with West Africa.

#### **Tuesday: Across the Atlantic**

- “Las Siete Partidas: Laws on Jews.”
- “King Ferdinand, Marriage Concessions (1469)” in Jon Cowans, ed. *Early Modern Spain: A Documentary History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003): 7-9.
- “Surrender Treaty of the Kingdom of Granada (1491)” in Cowans, *Early Modern Spain*: 15-19.
- “Decree of Expulsion of the Jews (1492)” in Cowans, *Early Modern Spain*: 20-23.

#### **Thursday: African Histories**

- John K. Thornton, “The African Background,” *A Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250–1820* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2012), pp. 60-100.

## **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Five: The Early Conquest (Sep 20-22)**

Prior to sailing across the Atlantic, Columbus learned from Portuguese and Spanish expansion into the Atlantic Islands and down the coast of Africa economic models for colonial exploitation. Conquering and enslaving native populations, importing captive Africans for enslaved labor, cultivating sugar for export to Europe, and improving sea-going technology were all in place before he received Royal support. This week, we look at the transplantation of an Atlantic model of conquest and exploitation to the Caribbean, and at its religious critics. Pay close attention to the arguments made by Friars Montesinos, and Pane, and whether they offer an alternative colonial model, or an alternative to colonialism?

#### **Tuesday: Caribbean Conquests**

- Christopher Columbus's Log, excerpted in English. Focus on period after Oct. 11.
- The Requerimiento
- Antonio Montesinos, "Advent Sermon"

#### **Thursday: The Critique**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 59-84.

## **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Six: On the Mainland (Sep 27-29)**

In the 1520s and 1530s, the Spanish Empire expanded to cover much of Central and South America. At the time, Spaniards and their native allies both imagined themselves as conquering the controlling empires of Mesoamerica and the Andes. Who, then, conquered whom? In the early 16th century, did native allies with the Spanish imagine themselves as collaborators in European domination? If not, what did they imagine they were doing?

#### **Tuesday: Conquest Myths and Realities**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 85-106.
- For a fantastic graphic novel approach to telling this story, check out the five episodes so far written and drawn at Aztec Empire. This graphic novel version of the Conquest works hard to be faithful to the visual world and recent historical scholarship on Cortes's march from the sea.

#### **Thursday: On the Planes of Cajamarca**



- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 107-128.

#### **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Seven: Take Home Exam Due (Oct 4) and Fall Break (Oct 6)**

Your take home exam is due by the end of day on Tuesday, October 4th, uploaded to Canvas.

### **Week Eight: The Order of Things (Oct 11-13)**

How do you build an empire on the collapsing foundation of native society? How did early modern imperialists confront the technological and practical challenges of ruling the span of the globe?

#### **Tuesday: Building on collapsing ground**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 129-154.

#### **Thursday: Church in State**

- J.L Phelan, "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy" *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Special Issue on Comparative Public Administration. (Jun., 1960), pp. 47-65.

**DUE: Nothing. Take the week to get caught up with the middle of your semester.**

### **Week Nine: Captivity and Enslavements (Oct 18-20)**

#### **Textbook Reading: Black Communities**

From its inception, the Spanish and Portuguese colonial projects depended on the labor of enslaved Africans. As Kris Lane argues, slave owners even pinned their hopes for the afterlife on enslaved labor after death. Pay close attention this week to strategies that enslaved and free blacks pursued in colonial Latin America.

#### **Tuesday: A Society Built on Slavery**

- Kris Lane, "Captivity and Redemption: Aspects of Slave Life in early Colonial Quito and Popoyan," *The Americas* 57.2 (2000), 225-246.

#### **Thursday: Brazilian Development**

- Jane Landers, "Felipe Edimboro Sues for Manumission, Don Francisco Xavier Sánchez contests (Florida, 1794)," in *Colonial Lives*, pp. 249-268.

## **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Ten: Native Labor and Accumulation (Oct 25-27)**

Enslavement was not the only form of coerced labor exploited by Iberian empires. This week we consider the effects of *encomienda* and tribute on the integrity of native communities under Iberian rule. What significance is there in native communities pursuing their own legal strategies before the crown? How did tribute taxation and labor function? Were the New Laws successful?

#### **Tuesday: The Many Kinds of Economic Coercion**

- Ward Stavig, *The World of Túpac Amaru*, Ch. 6.

#### **Thursday: Wither the Two Republics?**

- Townsend, *Fifth Sun*, pp. 155-208.

## **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Eleven: Love, Hate, and Social Reproduction (Nov 1-3)**

This week, we are focusing on family, sexuality, and social order. The customs and laws of Iberia and the Indies were deeply influential in the ordering (and disordering) of colonial society. The Conquest, and its aftermath, included exploitative and coercive relationships, and even regular marriages had their fair share of conflict between spouses. This week, we consider these things by looking at unnatural sexuality and witchcraft, as a way of also understanding what colonial society understood to be natural.

#### **Tuesday: Sex in the Archive**

- Zeb Tortorici, "Impulses in the Archive: Misinscription and Voyeurism," Chapter 2 in *Sins Against Nature* (Duke University Press, 2018).

#### **Thursday: Is it Love, or Magic?**

- Ruth Behar, "Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism, and Women's Powers," in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*. Lavrin, ed. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1992.

## **DUE: WEEKLY REPORT**

### **Week Twelve: Disruption and Reform (Nov 8-10)**

This week, we look at the early transformations of the colonial relationship after the Spanish War for succession. Consider the reforms posited by José Galvez,

and reactions to them that fall short of open rebellion.

**Tuesday: Reacting to Reforms**

- “José de Gálvez’s Decrees for the King’s Subjects in Mexico (1769, 1778)” in Mills, et. al., *Colonial Latin America*, pp. 270-273.
- Pamela Voekel, “Peeing on the Palace: Bodily Resistance to Bourbon Reforms in Mexico City,” *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 5 No. 2 (June 1992): 183-208.

**Thursday: No class.**

Finish your film review, which must be smart, clever, and plugged in to this semester’s themes.

**DUE: FILM REVIEW**

**Week Thirteen: Rebellion and Reaction (Nov 15-17)**

By the 1780s, part of the Spanish Empire erupted into open rebellion against the economic reforms pushed after the Seven Years War. Why did these rebellions not lead to Independence? What explains the complicated political identities articulated by their protagonists? What constituted legitimate authority by century’s end?

**Tuesday: Opening the Age of Rebellion**

- Walker and Clarke, *Witness to the Age of Revolution*, pp. 1-52.

**Thursday: Insurrection and Aftermath**

- Walker and Clarke, *Witness to the Age of Revolution*, pp. 52-108.

**Week Fourteen: Thanksgiving (Nov 22-Nov 24)**

Safe travels. See your peoples. I’ll only add something this week for outside of class if we fall behind.

**Week Fifteen: Independence (Nov 29-Dec 1)**

The crises of the Bourbon reforms never produced independence movements. That would take Napoleon invading Spain. We consider this week the crisis of 1808 caused by Napoleon, and how that set up the process of independence, which wouldn’t culminate for more than a decade!

**Tuesday: Did Anyone See It Coming?**

- Walker and Clarke, *Witness to the Age of Revolution*, pp. 109-138.

**Thursday: On to War**

- Jaime E. Rodríguez O., “New Spain and the 1808 Crisis of Spanish Monarchy,” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 24.2 (Summer 2008): 245-287.

**Week Sixteen: New World Orders (Dec 6)**

Let's Wrap.It.Up. The new republics will be free of Iberian rule, and you're about to be free of this semester....

**Final Due:** December 12 by 6:00pm.