

The Graduate School and University Center  
City University of New York  
Ph.D. Program in History

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History 76000: Colonial Latin America

Wednesdays: 6:30 -8:30 p.m.

Fall 2018

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 p.m.

Course Description:

In recent years, some Latin Americanists have questioned the hermeneutics defining the field of colonial Latin American History. The colonial designation some feel posits a disjuncture (or beginning) when it could be argued that continuity characterized the historical narrative. While students of ideas, political practice, and the cultural domain have been the strongest proponents of this intervention, scholars of indigenous cultures—especially the Nahua Studies groups—share similar sentiments despite differences in scope and method. Consequently, scholars have been utilizing terms like ‘early’ and ‘early modern’ Latin America to distinguish their work from a colonial project and its association with the rupture that Spanish hegemony allegedly implied. Concurrently, a self-conscious collection of scholars identified as the Latin American subaltern studies group have called into question the elitist hegemony shaping the structure and content of Latin American history. Scholars of the Latin American subaltern along with those who take issue with the occidental reasoning informing how Latin America history is currently conceived are introducing new terminology (subaltern, postcolonial, Afro-Latin American) that allegedly re-frames the Latin American past and present. In our semester’s work, we shall explore the meanings and implications, if any, that this and other discursive shifts have had on Latin American historiography. Even as this seminar attends to shifts in meaning and context, we will engage the substance of the existing historiography.

This course is specifically designed as an introduction to the early modern/colonial field and is designed to prepare History graduate students for the major field exam in Latin American history. Courses, despite their prominence in structuring graduate programs, merely introduce students to some of the overarching historiographic and conceptual themes defining a field. To this end, a course identifies some areas of inquiry but in doing so obscures others. At the core of this seminar are three thematic foci:

**Firstly)** Utilizing the concepts of movement, power, and difference one focus is to examine the formation of a Renaissance Atlantic in the period of 1400 to 1600 in which Iberian History and early Latin America played a central yet still overlooked role. Framed as a question, I am asking: in what ways does recent scholarship on medieval and early modern Iberia call for a reconsideration of colonial Latin America history? Ostensibly a historiographical question, it has epistemic implications. In view that recent scholarship on the Iberian past has been transformative, what implications might this have on our thinking, approach, and writing of early Latin American history? Successive turns, most notably the imperial and Atlantic ones, complicate matters by underscoring how nineteenth-century nationalist fabrications conjured up

a mythic Iberia with profound consequences for the foundational representations of colonial Latin America history.

**Secondly**) through the prism of political economy this course will also bring into relief the genealogy of economy and government in early modern Iberia and the early modern Atlantic. In the wake of successive intellectual turns (the linguistic, feminist, cultural, the post-colonial, and archival turn), our engagement with the cultural domain has become finely honed but at the expense of our understanding of the social. This dynamic, in many respects, reflects the working of related but distinct renderings of the political. Arguably, for cultural historians narrating the political entails discursive formations and an awareness of how political rationalities are grafted on to cultural codes and grammars. While we now understand how the political related to the social draws on similar discursive formations, it also embodies a materiality—signified in the relationship of the political to the economy as in ‘political economy’—that configures it as distinct. To this end, the course will introduce students to a range of authors and texts which will develop our analytical skills as they relate to the realm of political economy. To be clear, this aspect of the course is not intended to mean the study of economics or political science for historians. While abstractions of the “economy” or “politics” figure prominently in the semester’s work, the course focuses on the contextualized meanings that these terms and related concepts implied for various authors and historical actors through time and space. At the same time, it should be understood that this course does not offer a formalized discussion of ‘political economy’ framed through a historiography self-consciously stylized as such. Instead by bringing a distinct selection of authors and texts into conversation seminar participants will hopefully refine their acumen for thinking and writing about the temporal and spatial specificity of early modern ‘political economy.’

**Thirdly**) this course seeks to situate the study of the African diaspora in the early modern period. Accomplishing this task is no simple feat since the study of the black experiences in the New World and the African diaspora in general emerged as subjects of scholarly inquiry burdened by the weight of European colonial expansion and racial dominance. In our efforts to route the study of the African diaspora through another scholarly abstraction—the early modern period—we will highlight the modern genealogies of many of our analytical concepts. The intent here is not simply to offer a relentless critique but to foster ever more awareness for historical specificity. By employing the heuristic concept of diaspora—and specifically the African diaspora—another thematic focus resides in the analytical work generated by studying cultures of movement. As scholars, we might begin by asking whether diaspora complicates our understanding of disciplinary formations—including the normative assumptions that inform the study of society and culture. How does diaspora, for instance, enhance our perspectives on imperial and colonial formations and the ways in which they have been historically represented? In utilizing the prism of diaspora we confront the politics of representation through which scholars render meaning out of the past and present. For this reason, diaspora like other categories of analysis engages the vexed terrain of representation whereby scholars frame the subject of their inquiries.

### **Required Readings:**

- Adelman, Jeremy. 1999. *Republic of Capital: Buenos Aires and the Legal Transformation of the Atlantic World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- , 2006. *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Bryant, Sherwin K. 2014. *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage: Governing through Slavery in Colonial Quito*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Ferrer, Ada. 2014. *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibson, Charles. 1964. *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Grunski, Serge. 1993. *The Conquest of Mexico: The Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Translated by Eileen Corrigan. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Guardino, Peter. 2005. *The Time of Liberty: Popular Political Culture in Oaxaca, 1750-1850*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Helg, Aline. 2004. *Liberty & Equality in Caribbean Colombia: 1770-1835*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Horn, Rebecaa. 1997. *Postconquest Coyocan: Nahua-Spanish Relations in Central Mexico, 1519-1650*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Larson, Brooke. 1988. *Cochabamba, 1550-1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lockhart, James. 1992. *The Nahuas After the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- MacCormack, Sabine. 1991. *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Martínez, María Elena. 2008. *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Mignolo, Walter. 1995. *Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Owensby, Brian P. 2008. *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Schwartz, Stuart B. 1985. *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Silverblatt, Irene. 2004. *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Stern, Steve J. 1982. *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Sweet, James H. 2003. *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Tutino, John. 2011. *Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wheat, David. 2016. *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

### **Requirements:**

There will be a single review essay (approximately 20-25 pages) required for this course. This essay should be drawn from the literature of the colonial field but also have some bearing on one of your current research projects or your larger intellectual projects. Seminar participants will be

asked to first consult with me about the topic of your choice. This meeting should happen within the first four weeks of the seminar. A draft of the essay will be due by November 21, 2018. The final draft is due December 21, 2018.

All papers need to be submitted electronically as a Word document (no PDFs). Your margins should be 1" and with the 12pt font. Please attend to all stand formalities (name, proper citation format, page numbers, etc.)

**Key Dates:**

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| By September 26, 2018 | Meet with instructor    |
| By November 21, 2018  | Draft of the Review Due |
| December 21, 2018     | Review Due              |

**Guidelines for Reading & Seminar Discussion:**

Ideally, you should engage all of your readings with the following guidelines and questions (or some similar version) in mind. After reading a book or article take about 20-30 minutes to write your thoughts in relation to the following queries. The questions and your responses are designed to facilitate discussion and serve as a guide for how you should be approaching all the books and articles we read this and every semester.

1. What are the main arguments of the book or article?
2. Why these arguments? i.e., what's at stake for the author? (this is a question you should ask of everything you read; it is the equivalent of the "what keeps you up at night? question.)
3. What did you learn that you did not know?
4. What are 3 representative or provocative or memorable quotes?
5. What are the book's strengths? Why do these strengths appeal to you?

Why are these particular strengths so apparent to you? What do they say about intellectual interests, commitments, preferences?

6. What are the book's structural, argumentative or empirical weaknesses? (remember: Be constructively critical [try asking yourself: could I have written this book?])

Why are these particular weaknesses so apparent to you? What do they say about your intellectual interests, commitments, preferences?

7. What footnotes did you turn to the back to look at (there ought to be at least a few!)?

What books, articles or ideas do you want to pursue from this text? (and what system do you have [you need one!] for keeping track of leads like this?)

8. How or why is this book useful to your work? When all is said and done (pros, cons, loved it, hated it, etc.), what is the “take away”?
9. How might this book be useful for teaching?
10. What other kinds of questions or issues do you want to raise in discussion, whether in class today, with a colleague or professor, or in the course of your own work? (why did I boldface or underline certain passages? And not unrelatedly, whom do you know who’s interested in the same kinds of questions you are? how will you make the time to pursue these kinds of questions in conversation, in community? what, where, who are your communities?)

If you address these questions in writing, however briefly, for every book and article you read in the coming weeks and months, you’ll be well on your way toward an annotated reading list by the time your exams. It is a challenging task, but worth thinking about, even in modified form (make a template of your own design, use it as a worksheet for everything you read).

August 29  
Week 1:

### **Introduction & Overview**

September 5 No Class: CUNY Monday  
Week 2:

Readings: Walter Mignolo, *Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995)

September 12  
Week 3:

### **Framing Colonial Encounters**

Readings: Gibson, *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964)

No Classes (Yom Kippur) **Colonial Rule, State Formation & the Politics of Resistance**  
September 19

Readings: Steve J. Stern, *Peru’s Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982)  
Karen Spalding, *Huarochirí: An Andean Society Under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984)  
Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise Of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984)

September 26  
Week 4:

### **Structuring a Slave Society**

Readings: Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985)

October 3

### **The Afterlives of Conquest**

Week 5:

Readings: James Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1992)

### **Colonial Imaginaries & Social Relations**

October 10

Readings: Serge Gruzinski, *The Conquest of Mexico: The Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, translated by Eileen Corrigan (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991)

Rebecca Horn, *Postconquest Coyocan: Nahua-Spanish Relations in Central Mexico, 1519-1650* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997)

October 17

### **The Making of the Colonial African Subject**

Week 6:

Readings: James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016)

October 24

### **Colonial Governmentality**

Week 7:

Readings: Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004)

Sherwin K. Bryant, *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage: Governing through Slavery in Colonial Quito* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014)

October 31

### **Race & Religious Governance**

Week 8:

Readings: María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008)

Sabine MacCormack, *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991)

November 7

### **Colonial Capitalism**

Week 9:

Readings: Brooke Larson, *Cochabamba, 1550-1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988)

John Tutino, *Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011)

November 14

### **Imperial Governance**

Week 10

Readings: Brian P. Owensby, *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico*

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008)

November 21

**Imperial Governance & Colonial Politics**

Week 11:

Readings: Aline Helg, *Liberty & Equality in Caribbean Colombia: 1770-1835* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004)  
Peter Guardino, *The Time of Liberty: Popular Political Culture in Oaxaca, 1750-1850* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005)

November 28

**Slavery, Freedom & Racial Sovereignty**

Readings:

Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014)

December 5

**Sovereignty, Capital and the Private**

Week 13

Readings: Jeremy Adelman, *Republic of Capital: Buenos Aires and the Legal Transformation of the Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999)  
Jeremy Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006)

December 12

**Re-configuring Colonialism**

Week 14

Readings: María Josefina Saldaña-Portilla, *Indian Given: Racial Geographies Across Mexico and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016)