



SPLA20362:

History of Latin America

(Resistance, Agency, Subjectivity)

**SECOND SEMESTER
20 CREDITS**

Contact Hours: 3 hours per week (1h lecture plus 2h seminar) + 2 hours dedicated consultation per week

Teaching Staff: Dr Francisco A. Eissa-Barroso (francisco.eissabarroso@manchester.ac.uk)

Assessment: 1-hour exam (35%); 3,000-word essay (50%); Group presentation (15%)

Language: Taught in English; assigned readings in English; some seminar materials in Spanish or Portuguese but with English alternatives available

Topics covered: 1) The fall of the Aztec and Inca empires: 'Indian conquistadors'?; 2) Indigenous agency and colonial rule: migration, negotiation and forgery; 3) Slave agency: maroons, rebels and litigants; 4) Constructed ethnicity and social mobility: the *castas*; 5) Women and the market: female economic agency and new identities; 6) Public spectacles and ceremonies: the politics of urban spaces; 7) 18th-C urban and rural rebellions: from Sta Fe's *Comuneros* to Tupac Amaru II; 8) The Wars of Independence: multiple meanings of 'liberty' and 'equality'; 9) Popular 'Liberalism(s)': local identities and national politics in the 19th C; 10) The abolition of slavery: war, foreign pressure and slave agency.

Course Unit's Aims:

- To provide a general overview of the history of Latin America from the 16th to 19th century with a particular focus on how marginalised groups responded to the challenges created by both Spanish rule and post-independence national governments
- To provide detailed knowledge of particular areas and periods of Latin American History
- To develop awareness of the diversity of Latin American experiences and cultures, and of the importance of colonialism, slavery and race in shaping modern Latin American societies
- To encourage the development of comparative critical thinking, and group work skills
- To improve students' structure, coherence, clarity and fluency in written and oral expression

Course Unit Overview: We explore Latin America's past by addressing the ways in which subordinate or marginalised groups (particularly indigenous peoples, free and enslaved Afro-descendants, people of mixed ethnic backgrounds and women) adapted to different systems of oppression and exploitation between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The unit focuses on the strategies and mechanisms through which these groups challenged, resisted, negotiated or accommodated Spanish and Portuguese rule and the changes brought about by independence and nineteenth-century Liberalism. By analysing the different means and aims through and for which marginalised groups exercised agency in colonial and post-colonial Latin America the unit explores the role these groups and individuals played in the construction of Iberian imperial rule and of post-independence nations.

Teaching arrangements: Each week, during the lecture, the tutor will provide basic background information and an overview of the week's topic; in preparation for the seminar, all students will be asked to undertake preparatory reading. At the start of each week's seminar a different group of students will present a case study related to that week's topic. After the presentations the whole class will participate in a set seminar activity, discussing the material read in preparation for the seminar and the week's topic more generally.

Indicative reading:

- Ross Hassig, 'War, politics and the Conquest of Mexico', in *War in the Early Modern World 1450-1815*, ed. by J. Black (London: UCL Press, 1999), pp. 207-235.
- Matthew Smith, 'Laboring to Choose, Choosing to Labor: Coercion and Choice in the Potosi Mita', *Past Imperfect* 10 (2004), pp. 21-44.
- Sherwin K. Bryant, 'Enslaved rebels, fugitives, and litigants: the resistance continuum in colonial Quito', *Colonial Latin American Review* 13:1 (2004), pp. 7-46.
- Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (Albuquerque: UNMP, 2004), pp. 41-66.
- David T. Garrett, '"His Majesty's Most Loyal Vassals": the Indian Nobility and Tupac Amaru', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84:4 (2004), pp. 575-618.
- Michael Ducey, 'Village, Nation, and Constitution: Insurgent Politics in Papantla, Veracruz, 1810-1821', *HAHR* 79 (1999), pp. 463-493.
- Bianca Premo, 'Before the Law: Women's Petitions in the Eighteenth-Century Spanish Empire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53:2 (2011), pp. 261-289.
- James E. Sanders, '"Citizens of a Free People": Popular Liberalism and Race in Nineteenth-Century Southwestern Colombia', *HAHR* 84:2 (2004), pp. 277-313.
- Barbara Weinstein, 'The Decline of the Progressive Planter and the Rise of Subaltern Agency: Shifting Narratives of Slave Emancipation in Brazil', in *Reclaiming the Political in Latin American History*, ed. by G. Joseph (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 81-101.

Recent students' comments:

- 'The course got us to engage with theoretical issues around subaltern agency and consider the motivations of the indigenous communities in ways that I would not previously have thought to do' (2018-19)
- 'Tons of reading, but the information from the reading remained intellectually stimulating, at times unpredictable and unexpected. Certainly learned a great deal from this course and would recommend it to a friend' (2018-19)
- 'Interesting spectrum of a huge period of history condensed nicely. Able to choose the topics that really interest you the most for the assessment which is very important' (2018-19)
- 'The unit [...] sheds light on an area of history that I've never seen covered in my prior education [...] makes for a fantastic entry point into quite a complicated region and its historiography' (2017-18)
- 'The emphasis on student-led discussion in seminars fostered a really strong understanding of the sources and the issues surrounding them.' (2017-18)
- 'The course is diverse and covers lots of topics but still appears linked by certain themes, making a broader understanding easier' (2015-16)