

**LAS 1900 (CRN: 41508)/HIS 1900 (CRN: 19772)**  
**HISTORY OF COLONIAL LATIN AMERICA (3 CR)**

*An introduction to Colonial Latin America:  
conquests, empires, and cultures*

**Prof. Carlos R. Hernández (He/El/Ele)**

**Fall 2022**

**Tue/Thu 10 to 11:15 am**

**Synchronous Zoom**

All readings are in English. Everyone is welcome.



“Cortés and La Malinche.” Image from *The Florentine Codex*.

What was colonial Latin America? Whether you grew up hearing about the Aztecs, studied them in school, or encountered them through Hollywood, you may be surprised to learn that much of what you \*think\* you know about such groups is probably mistaken. Indigenous societies like the Aztecs did not merely succumb to “germs, guns, and steel.” Nor did they confuse Europeans with deities. But how do we sort out fact from fiction? And why do these histories still matter?

This course examines these problems by focusing on colonial Mexico, Peru, and Brazil with occasional references to the Caribbean, notably Haiti and Cuba. We will approach colonialism as both a historical process and an analytical framework. We will consider the following questions:

- How did religion, slavery, race, gender, and sexuality shape the contours of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires in the “New World”?
- How did ordinary people negotiate these categories in their everyday lives?
- How can we recover their experiences? What tools do we need to reconstruct “the past”?

Assignments include attendance/participation, weekly blog posts, and two exams. Readings include primary sources, a book, and occasional articles. Most readings will be posted online.