

Ezekiel Stear, PhD



Presentations on Colonial Mexico & Latin America

Unconquered, Unconverted, & Uncharted: The Frayed Edges of the Spanish Empire

In spite of what we know now, the popular notion of Spanish colonial power as total prevails in the media and public conversations. However, a closer look at sources from the colonial period reveals that various corners, pockets, and peoples successfully warded off the invasion. In fact, there are regions that remained completely under indigenous control until after Latin American independence from Spain. Through resistance and negotiations with power, natives leveraged skills that aided their survival. In the long run, their resistance shaped Spanish policies and larger cultural practices in the Americas.

From Aztlan to Tenochtitlan: Indigenous Documents on the Mexica Migration

The *Tira de la perigrinación*, the *Crónica mexicanoyotl*, and the fabled *Crónica X* all offer representations of the Mexica memory of the journey from mythic Aztlan to the Valley of Mexico. Examining these documents shows the strength and sacrifice of the Mexica in their inter-generational journey to the center of Mesoamerica. Yet there are surprises as well: not all that we commonly think about the foundation of Mexico is contained in these native-authored documents.

The Indies in Ink: Colonial Native Writing of Mesoamerica & the Andes

From Mesoamerican codices to the *quipus* of the Andes, this presentation shows examples of how natives represented their world, communicated with each other over vast distances, and preserved information before and after the arrival of the Spanish. During the colonial period, native writers, painters, and other artisans made strategic appropriations of European methods of communication. As the *Codex Borgia*, the *Codex Mendoza*, and other texts show, native conceptualizations of writing went beyond words in a linear format.

A Spear, a Gem, & a Jilted Lover: Moteuczoma Ilhuicamina's Magical Conception

After the Mexica people arrived to the Valley of Mexico, they lived a meager existence in a swampland. On top of the scarcity of food and lack of shelter, they had to pay tribute to the nearby Azcapotzalco. Yet, a young Mexica nobleman had a plan. How would the right marriage help the Mexica to overcome poverty? What would the future hold for the Moteuczoma dynasty in the *Crónica mexicayotl*, a fascinating manuscript on Mexica history?

Sketching the Stones, Imagining the Future: Lithography & Identity in 18th Century Mexico City

Street construction in Mexico City at the end of the 18th century unearthed the "Aztec Calendar Stone," a name that reveals a certain cultural vision, yet conceals a forgotten past. This presentation traces developments in the printing press that made the images of the Calendar Stone, the statue of Coatlicue, and other ancestral objects of Mexico-Tenochtitlan available to the world for the first time. As fame of buried artifacts in New Spain spread throughout Europe and North America, the cause for independence gathered strength. Writers began to rely on these artifacts and the heritage of Mesoamerican civilization as a way to plot the future.

A Bribe, a Bottle, & Bartolomé: Decolonial Responses in *También la Lluvia*

Icíar Bollain's 2010 film *También la lluvia* (*Even the Rain*) examines Spanish colonialism. The film focuses on historical and dramatized events during the water riots of Cochabamba, Bolivia in 2000. That year, native demonstrators opposed corporate control of the vital element of water. *También la lluvia* is a film within a film. A crew from Spain goes to Bolivia to make a movie on Columbus' first years in the Caribbean. Their filming overlaps the water protests of the present and reenactments of indigenous resistance against Columbus' soldiers. *También la lluvia* also recalls the roots of human rights –rebel friars who spoke out against soldiers' abuses of the natives. The film offers rich opportunities for critical discussion on colonial Latin America. This presentation can include a screening of the film.



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