

HI2C8-15 Visual and Material Cultures of the Spanish Empire

20/21

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Adrianna Catena

Credit value

15

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module introduces students to the visual and material culture of the early modern Iberian World. Drawing on a wide range of material objects and visual expressions, we will pay close attention to processes of conquest and colonisation, expansion and encounter – global interactions, transfers, and exchanges. We will discuss historiographical and methodological approaches to the study of visual and material culture, and consider how we can critically assess images and ‘things’ as historical evidence. What insights can these sources provide into the social, cultural, political, economic, and religious histories of Spain and its Empire?

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

Emphasis will be placed on understanding how things were made, circulated, displayed, and reproduced – and how this knowledge can inform our analysis of the sources. Students will also reflect on theories of vision and visibility. Each session will explore a key theme in Iberian history, through a range of images and objects – Mexican feather work, Japanese folding screens (byōbu), books and herbariums from Scientific Expeditions, court portraiture, urban architecture, maps, fashions, and textiles.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. 'Plumería, Enconchados, Biombos': Visual and Material Cultures of the Iberian World
2. Expansion and Encounter
3. Cross-cultural Art and Material Culture
4. Global Goods, Connected Spaces
5. Power and Propaganda
6. Reading Week
7. Ceremony and Ritual
8. Gender and Sexuality
9. Race and Identity
10. Cataloguing and Collecting

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of some major themes and questions in the social and cultural history of the Iberian world, between 1500 and 1800.
- Communicate ideas and findings, adapting to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.
- Generate ideas through the analysis of a broad range of primary source material, including images and objects.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing scholarship in the historical study of visual and material culture.
- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

Indicative reading list

- Achim, Miruna (ed.), "Science in Translation: The Commerce of Facts and Artifacts in the Transatlantic Worlds," Special Issue, *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 8.2 (2007).
- Aram, Bethany and Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492-1824: Circulation, Resistance, and Diversity* (Basingstoke, 2014).
- Bailey, Gauvin, *Art of Colonial Latin America* (London, 2005)
- Bailey, Gauvin, *Art on the Jesuit missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (London, 1999)
- Barnard, Mary E. and Frederick A. de Armas (eds.), *Objects of Culture in the Literature of Imperial Spain* (London, 2013).
- Bass, Laura R., *The Drama of the Portrait: Theatre and Visual Culture in Early Modern Spain* (Pennsylvania, 2008).
- Baxandall, Michael, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: a Primer in the Social History of a Pictorial Style* (Oxford, 1998)

- Bleichmar, Daniela, *Visible Empire: Botanical Expeditions and Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2012).
- Brown, Jonathan, and John Elliot, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (London, 2003)
- Burke, Peter, *Eye—Witnessing: the use of images as historical evidence* (London, 2001).
- Colomer, José Luis and Amalia Descalzo (eds.), *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe* (Madrid, 2014).
- Cruz, Anne J. and Maria Galli Stampino (eds.), *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflict, Dynastic Continuities* (London, 2016).
- Dean, Carolyn and Dana Leibsohn, 'Hybridity and its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America,' *Colonial Latin American Review*, 12.no.1 (2003), pp. 5-35.
- De la Cruz, Martín, *The Badianus Manuscript: An Aztec Herbal of 1552*
- Earle, Rebecca, "Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!!': Clothing, Race and Identity in the Americas, 17th-19th Centuries', *History Workshop Journal*, 52 (2001), pp. 175-95.
- Elliott, John H., *Spain and its World 1500-1700* (New Haven and London, 1998)
- Gerritsen, Anne and Giorgio Riello (eds.), *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London, 2015).
- Gruzinski, Serge, *Painting the Conquest: the Mexican Indians and the European Renaissance* (Paris, 1992).
- Jordan, Annemarie, "Images of Empire: Slaves in the Lisbon household and Court of Catherine of Austria," in T.F. Early and K.J.P. Lowe (eds), *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, (Cambridge, 2005).
- Jordanova, Ludmilla, *The Look of the Past: visual and material evidence in historical perspective*, (Cambridge, 2012)
- Kagan, Richard, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793* (London, 2000)
- Kagan Richard, *Cities of the Golden Age: The Views of Anton Van Den Wyngaerde* (London, 1989)
- Kasl, Ronda (ed.), *Sacred Spain. Art and Belief in the Spanish World* (New Haven and London, 2009).
- Katzew, Ilona (ed.), *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World* (London, 2011).
- Katzew, Ilona, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in 18th Century Mexico* (London, 2004).
- Norton, Marcy: "Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics," *American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), pp. 660-691
- Rublack, U., "Renaissance Dress, Cultures of Making, and the Period Eye,' *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, 23:1 (Spring-Summer 2016): 6:34
- Russo, Alessandra, Gerhard Wolf and Diana Fane (eds.), *Images take Flight: Feather Art in Mexico and Europe 1400-1700* (Munich, 2015).
- Sahagún, Bernardino de, *General History of the Things of New Spain (The Florentine Codex)*, 1577, World Digital Library.
- Sousa Rebelo, Luis de, 'The Expansion and the Arts: Transfers, Contaminations, Innovations,' in Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo de Curto (eds.), *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion* (Cambridge, 2007).
- Trusted, Marjorie, 'The Heritage of Islam and Judaism,' in *The Arts of Spain: Iberia and Latin America, 1450-1700* (London, 2007).

- Vernet, Juan, "The Legacy of Islam in Spain", in Jerrilynn D. Dodds (ed.), *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York, 1992)
- Wunder, Amanda, 'Women's Fashions and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Spain: The Rise and Fall of the Guardainfante,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 68:1 (2015), 133-186

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	1 session of 1 hour (1%)
Seminars	7 sessions of 2 hours (9%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Practical classes	1 session of 2 hours (1%)
Other activity	1 hour (1%)
Private study	131 hours (87%)
Total	151 hours

Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

Other activity description

1 x one hour seminar

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Seminar contribution	10%	
1500 word source review	40%	
3000 word essay	50%	

Feedback on assessment

Feedback via tabula and during office hours

Availability

There is currently no information about the courses for which this module is core or optional.