



THE CENTER
FOR U.S.-MEXICAN STUDIES
at the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies
University of California, San Diego

The Great Death: Disease, Environment, Genetics and the Transformation of Mexican Colonial Society

The Center for United States Mexico Studies (USMEX)
Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS)
University of California, San Diego (UCSD)

PROGRAM

La Jolla, California, June 4, 2009

8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast, Welcome and Initial Remarks

Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, University of California, San Diego

8:30 – 9:45 Session 1. Drought and Dendochronology: How do epidemics and droughts interact? Can communities provide forms of insurance to protect themselves from catastrophic risks? How confident can we be of the tree ring reconstructions, particularly as we move towards the more tropical areas? Did settlement patterns follow the shifts in rainfall patterns?

José Villanueva Díaz, Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias, CENID RASPA

David Stahle, University of Arkansas, Department of Geosciences

9:45 – 10:00 Coffee Break

10:00 – 11:30 Session 2. Inferring demographic events in the Americas from DNA data: What do shifts in burial practices tell us about mortality? Does the shift in diet provide evidence of a healthier population? How does diet interact with disease? Can genetic markers provide evidence of the survival of the indigenous populations? In particular, can genetic tracers in mitochondrial DNA or blood type distributions tell us something about bottleneck effects?

Ripan Malhi, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Moramay López-Alonso, Rice University

11:30 – 12:45 Session 3. Demography: Has any progress been made in the debate regarding the counts of the population at the time of contact? What are the sources of bias and underreporting in the data? Can epidemiological or demographic models and simulations shed light on the debates? Can the 16th century dynamics be meaningfully

compared with other demographic catastrophes (i.e. the Spanish influenza, the Mexican Revolution, or the Plague in Europe)?

Robert McCaa, University of Minnesota, Department of History, IPUMS
Rodolfo Acuña-Soto, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

12:45 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30 – 2:45 Session 4. History: What is the status of historical research in updating the Cook and Borah datasets? Are there new archives or sources that complement or challenge their findings? What does medical history tell us regarding the virgin soil hypothesis? Can the resettlement of Indian communities through *congregaciones* and their role in the colonization of the North shed light on the initial populations? Is it possible to reconstruct migratory patterns during the century?

Elsa Malvido, Instituto Nacional de Arqueología e Historia
Susan Deeds, Northern Arizona University

2:45 – 3:00 Coffee Break

3:00 – 4:30 Session 5. Political Economy of Development: Can colonial institutions, particularly the *encomienda*, and the shifts in settlement patterns shed some light on the geography of poverty today? Do variations between nomadic and settled agriculture communities explain differences in demographic decline? Did the contact with international trade through the exploitation of cochineal, silk, gold and silver determine some of the variation in demographic patterns?

Luz Marina Arias, University of California, San Diego
Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, University of California, San Diego
Saumitra Jha, Stanford University

4:30 – 5:45 Session 6. Cultural expressions: What was the effect of the demographic collapse in artistic and cultural expression? Are there variations in the esthetic of death that can be regionally traced? Can stages within the century or variations across cultural areas (for example, Mixtec, Nahua, Tarasc) be distinguished, reflecting variations in demographic experiences? Did the differential success of missions have an influence in the transmission and adoption of cultural expressions?

Diana Magaloni, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Estéticas
Kevin Terraciano, University of California, Los Angeles