

Welcome to Volume 8 of the Toro Historical Review!

Volume 8 showcases 3 essays that were developed in Dr. Namala's Fall 2019 HIS 300 'Historical Theories and Methods' course. Typically focused on Mexican conquest history, students in that course study indigenous sources from the conquest period in search of indigenous rather than Spanish perspectives. The New Philology is a body of scholarship that emphasizes the importance of native-language driven research in order to overcome centuries of Eurocentric historical writing. Working within this methodological framework Jasmine Abang, Jonathan Solares, and Vanessa Smith developed papers exploring the roles of indigenous allies across central Mexico and into Central America. Jasmine Abang focused her research on the role of the Nahuatl noblewoman Malintzin, who became part of the Spanish entrada when she was gifted to the Spanish by her Mayan slave masters. Using her linguistic skills to her advantage, Malintzin would become the main translator of the Spanish conquests in central Mexico and a key figure in terms of negotiating alliances between the Spanish and several indigenous groups and thus saving indigenous lives during the Spaniards' march on Tenochtitlan. Vanessa Smith is taking a closer look at the altepetl of Tlaxcala, perhaps the largest and most powerful indigenous group in central Mexico apart from the Mexica, and successfully articulates the internal motivations of the Tlaxcalans to seek an alliance with the Spanish against their arch-enemy, the Mexica. Finally, Jonathan Solares follows the Spanish conquests into Central America and from Nahuatl- to Mayan-speaking local populations. In addition to the better known and more thoroughly researched Nahuatl sources from central Mexico, Jonathan added Mayan sources to his primary sources and showed how from a Mayan perspective there was little difference between Spanish and Nahuatl conquistadors. He also highlighted the Spanish strategy of divide and conquer, as different Mayan groups found themselves on opposite sides of the conflict.