Mexico from revolution to democracy

W3663  
Fall 2009  
Tuesdays, Thursdays, 11:00am-12:15pm  
411 IAB  
Pablo Piccato  
Department of History, Columbia University  
Fayerweather 324, 212 854 3725  
pp143@columbia.edu  
Fayerweather 324, 212 854 3725  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:30 to 1:30pm, 324 Fayerweather; Thursday, 12:30 to 1:30pm, 834 IAB  
www.columbia.edu/~pp143

Teaching assistants:  
Carlos Zúñiga-Nieto  
cgz2@columbia.edu  
Section: Monday, 11am-1pm, 301M Fayerweather  
Romeo Guzmán  
rg2543@columbia.edu  
Section: Friday, 10am-noon, 507 Hamilton

This course will survey a century of Mexican history that oscillated between an authoritarian regime (Porfirio Díaz’s presidency, 1876-1911), a massive revolutionary upheaval (1911-1920), the construction of a single-party, corporatist regime that became a model of stability and economic success (that of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional), and a complex transition to democracy (culminated in the July 2000 presidential elections).

Politics will be defined in broad terms. Lectures and readings will consider social and cultural processes from diverse perspectives. Topics will include: migration and population growth; economic expansion and stagnation; urban history, crime and punishment; gender, women and families; elite and popular culture; labor, agrarian reform; the left, electoral and armed insurgency; relations with the United States and other countries of Latin America. Local and regional perspectives will be offered as an alternative against prevailing state-centered, national narratives. Combining thematic and chronological lectures, the course will examine the most exciting recent literature on Mexican society, culture, and politics.

The course will require two papers (40% of the grade), a midterm and a final exam (40%), and short reports and participation in discussion sections (20%).

Assignments:

There will be two kinds of written assignments:

-Papers: up to 8 pages long. You must hand a printout of these to your teaching assistant on the due date. No electronic files will be accepted. Papers should attempt to answer the question drawing on the bibliographies provided for each one (see “Paper Assignments”). Students are also encouraged to read critically, and to compare the different approaches and methods in the texts in order to help situate their own argument. Students who wish to add further titles to their essay bibliography may draw on the optional bibliography (below) intended to guide and complement the required books. Students may also add other titles after prior consultation with Prof. Piccato or the TA. Further instructions will be provided in class and during discussion sections.

-Short reports, 200 to 400 words. They are mainly intended to build toward the discussion in sections. You must post these on the Courseworks site by 5pm of the day before your section meets. They should consist of a very synthetic statement about the main theses of the readings plus a response that may involve questions, criticisms, praise, links with other themes and readings discussed in class. These reports will be considered as part of your participation grade.
-Schedule:

Report 1, Sep. 15: James Creelman, “President Díaz, Hero of the Americas” in Joseph and Henderson, _The Mexico Reader_. Friedrich Katz’s chapter in Bethell, _Mexico_.


Paper 1, Oct. 6.


Midterm, Oct. 15.


Report 6, Nov. 5: Three chapters from Buffington and Piccato, _True Stories_.

Paper 2, Nov. 12.


Report 8, Dec. 3: Harvey, _Chiapas Rebellion_; or Womack, _Rebellion in Chiapas_.

Final, TBA.

General readings:

Bethell, _Mexico since independence_. A good reference, particularly the chapters by Katz, Womack, and Knight. Chapters can be used, along with lecture notes, to help with background for the papers.

Knight, _The Mexican Revolution_. An extensive, solid, engaging history of the revolution. Highly recommended if you want to look into specific regions, periods or characters, or for an overview.

Tutino, _From Insurrection to Revolution_. A synthesis of agrarian history that will complement the discussion. Very useful to understand the nineteenth century.

Meyer and Héctor Aguilar, _In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution_. A synthesis centered on the post-revolutionary state. Not a great translation but useful nevertheless.

Joseph and Henderson, _The Mexico reader_. This book contains a large selection of documents pertaining to Mexican history. It can be used to add material to papers and reports, and during discussions.

Bibliography:


Optional Bibliography/Further Reading

Note: Books have been placed on reserves and requested at Book Culture. They should have most of them although we recommend that you do not wait too long if you decide to buy them. Most book chapters are in a package available at Village Copier. Most articles are available online, via Jstore.
A chronology of modern Mexican politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Event/Leader</th>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Event/Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1858-1861</td>
<td>Reforma War</td>
<td>1932-1934</td>
<td>Abelardo Rodríguez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1867</td>
<td>French intervention</td>
<td>1934-1940</td>
<td>Lázaro Cárdenas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864-1867</td>
<td>Second Empire, Maximilian</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Partido de la Revolución Mexicana (PRM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867-1879</td>
<td>República Restaurada</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Expropriation of oil companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867-1872</td>
<td>Benito Juárez</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Partido Acción Nacional (PAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872-1876</td>
<td>Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada</td>
<td>1940-1946</td>
<td>Manuel Ávila Camacho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876-1880</td>
<td>Porfirio Díaz</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Declaration of war against Germany, Japan and Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-1884</td>
<td>Manuel González</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884-1911</td>
<td>Porfirio Díaz</td>
<td>1946-1952</td>
<td>Miguel Alemán Valdés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Francisco León de la Barra</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Women’s vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-1913</td>
<td>Francisco I. Madero</td>
<td>1958-1964</td>
<td>Adolfo López Mateos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-1914</td>
<td>Victoriano Huerta</td>
<td>1964-1970</td>
<td>Gustavo Díaz Ordaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1915</td>
<td>Aguascalientes Convention</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Student Movement, Olympic Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1920</td>
<td>Venustiano Carranza</td>
<td>1976-1982</td>
<td>José López Portillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Partido Comunista Mexicano (PCM)</td>
<td>1982-1988</td>
<td>Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Adolfo de la Huerta</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Mexico City earthquake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1924</td>
<td>Álvaro Obregón</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-1928</td>
<td>Plutarco Elías Calles</td>
<td>1988-1994</td>
<td>Carlos Salinas de Gortari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-1929</td>
<td>Cristero war</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional insurrection in Chiapas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-1934</td>
<td>Maximato</td>
<td>1994-2000</td>
<td>Ernesto Zedillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-1929</td>
<td>Emilio Portes Gil</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td>Vicente Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR)</td>
<td>2006-</td>
<td>Felipe Calderón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-1932</td>
<td>Pascual Ortiz Rubio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paper Assignments

**Paper 1 (due Oct. 6).**

Please answer one of the following questions:

Question 1: Why did peasants join the Mexican Revolution and what gains did they achieve?

Question 2: Why was the Mexican Revolution in the countryside so conflictive?

Bibliography for question 1 and 2:


**Paper 2 (due Nov. 12).**

Please answer one of the following questions:

Question 1: Account for the appeal, and for the limitations of the 1968 student movement.

Bibliography for question 1:


Question 2: “Post-revolutionary Indigenismo in Mexico was fundamentally elite-led, and superficial in impact.” Discuss.

Bibliography for question 2:

The Mexican Revolution (Spanish language: Revolución Mexicana) was a major armed struggle that started in 1910, with an uprising led by Francisco I. Madero against longtime autocrat Porfirio Díaz, and lasted for the better part of a decade until around 1920. Over time the Revolution changed from a revolt against the established order to a multi-sided civil war with frequently shifting power struggles. This armed conflict is often categorized as the most important sociopolitical event in Mexico and one Mexican Revolution, bloody struggle (1910–20) that ended a 30-year dictatorship in Mexico and established a constitutional republic. Mexican army officers planning strategy during the Mexican Revolution. Bain Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (LC-USZ62-95373). Mexican Revolution insurrectionists with a homemade cannon in Juarez, 1911. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (LC-USZ62-104635). Opposition forces led by Felix Díaz arresting Mexican Pres.