Mexico from revolution to democracy

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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:


Paper 1, Oct. 6.


Midterm, Oct. 15.


Report 6, Nov. 5: Three chapters from Buffington and Piccato, *True Stories*.

Paper 2, Nov. 12.


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.


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:


Brading, D. A and Alan Knight (eds.), *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution*. Cambridge, 1980


Optional Bibliography/Further Reading


*Journal of Peasant Studies,* 32 (3-4). 2005, Special issue: Rural Chiapas Ten Years after the Zapatista Uprising.


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

