

Mexican Civilization: Cultural Identity of Mexican People

ANTH4225/6225 Spring 2009

M W F 12:20-1:10

Room 664 Baldwin Hall.

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Main Objective

The main objective of this course is to examine the development of Mexico and the configuration of a cultural identity.

More specific objectives of this course are that students will:

- Assimilate, analyze and relate class readings and lectures on the historical and cultural development of Mexico in order to understand how history and culture have shaped the configuration of Mexicans' cultural identity.
- Participate actively in class discussions and debates.
- Summarize and react to assigned readings and lectures in one-page reaction papers on various aspects of Mexican history and culture.
- Present at least one reaction paper orally to class, using PowerPoint.
- Choose a topic of interest to develop more fully, incorporating class readings, lectures and additional bibliographic sources in a research paper and present the paper orally to the class using PowerPoint.
- Participate in on-line class discussions through WebCt and E-mail.

Course Description:

In this course the student will examine the diversity of cultural groups in Mexico within modern nation-states from an anthropological perspective. The course will focus on issues of gender, race, class and culture, and discuss the historical, political, economic and social experiences of these groups, with special attention to their ethnic diversity and unity. Main themes covered in this class include the politics of *mestizaje*, gender relations, migration and globalization, political movements, issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender through various case studies, the impact of capitalism and U.S. intervention.

Economic restructuring brought about by the contemporary phase of the globalization process has meant sweeping changes taking place all over the world. However, their rate, form and significance vary widely across regions of the globe. Specifically, it has been stressed that peripheral countries are extremely diverse in their linkages with these global shifts, their domestic institutional patterns, and their consequences for domestic configurations of class, state and development.

Restructuring in Mexico broadly refers to sweeping changes in the technical, social and political organization of investment, production and trade. These changes must be understood in their local manifestations and empirical analyses of those areas of the periphery that are closely integrated to the core, like Mexico.

Topics to be covered

- 1) Prehispanic Mexico
- 2) Discovery/Encounter and Conquest
- 3) Colonial Mexico
- 4) Mexican Independence
- 5) Mexican/U.S. War
- 6) Mexican/French War and Reform
- 7) Mexican Revolution
- 8) Contemporary Mexico: international economy (NAFTA), and migration to the US, and its recent political event (change from PRI to PAN) and their consequences.

Requirements

Students will be expected to do the readings and prepare assignments before class and to participate actively in class discussions. There will be one mid-term and one final exam. Also, there will be an individual research project to be carried out in the community and a written research report. Depending on the size of the class, students may be required to orally present the results of this research as well.

Graduate students will be challenged to read more extensively and to integrate the materials more thoroughly, and will be graded with higher standards and expectations than undergraduate students. Graduate students will have additional readings and will write an original paper, drawing upon more general theoretical points and providing a deeper analysis. Graduate students will be required to prepare one additional reading on each topic. In addition, they will write a 15-20 page research paper, focusing on one of the specific theoretical concepts covered in class and providing an in-depth analysis of the topic, integrating several primary sources of research related to the topic.

Grading

The grading for the class will be as follows:

Attendance and class participation:	20%
Mid-term	25%
Final exam:	25%
Final research project:	30%

Class participation is considered active involvement in classroom discussions, critical comments or questions related to the readings and lectures.

All Academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class y the instructor may be necessary.

Required Readings

Paz, Octavio. 1997. *Labyrinth Of Solitude*, Penguin USA.

Suggested Supplemental Readings

Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo, 1996. *Mexico Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization* (Translation from Latin America Series), University of Texas Press.

Gutmann, Matthew C. 2007. *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City*, University of California Press.

Hamnett, BR. 2006. *A Concise History of Mexico* Cambridge University Press.
Selected readings from journals.

Iglesias Prieto, Norma. 1997. *Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora.*. University of Texas Press.

Krauze, Enrique. 2007. *Mexico: Biography of Power.* Harper Collins Publishers. N.Y.

Leon-Portilla, Miguel. 1992. *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*. Beacon Press.

Levy and Bruhn. 2001. *Mexico The Struggle for Democratic Development*, University of California Press.

MacLachlan, Colin M. and William H. Breezley. 2004. *El Gran Pueblo: A History of Greater Mexico*. Prentice Hall.

Winn, Peter. 1999. *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Updated Edition. University of California Press.

Wolf, Eric, 1959. *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, University of Chicago Press.