

Makers of the Mexican Revolution: Causes and Consequences
OLLI, Spring 2021 Study Group 787
Thursdays, 1:45-3:15

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Syllabus

The Mexican Revolution produced political, economic and social transformations that remain relevant to understanding Mexico today. Our study group will examine the causes of the Mexican Revolution and the actions of leaders of movements that helped to shape modern Mexico. Our framework will be the lives of Francisco Madero, Emiliano Zapata, Pancho Villa, Venustiano Carranza, Lazaro Cardenas and other leaders of the revolution.

Using this framework, we will also study how popular movements and culture stimulated profound transformations in Mexican society. We will explore the shifting roles of the United States in trying to influence outcomes of the Mexican Revolution.

Our discussions will be based primarily on the readings. Your study group leader will prepare suggested issues for discussion ahead of each session except the first.

Required Reading: *Mexico: Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico, by Enrique Krauze*. We will read a chapter from Krauze every week. In addition, I will recommend optional further readings for those who are interested. You can purchase the Krauze book online at Amazon for \$23.99.

NOTE: I am using the hardcover edition and the pagination might be a little different in the paperback. Please be guided by the chapter assignments.

March 4. Introduction and lecture: Mexico's struggle for independence during the 19th century. Read Krauze, Introduction: Past, Present and Future, p. 1-22; Optional reading, Chapter 8, the Indian Shepherd and the Austrian Archduke, 152-204

March 11. Causes of the Mexican Revolution during the boom economy of President Porfirio Diaz. Read Krauze, III: The Revolution, p. 239-244; and Chapter 9, The Triumph of the Mestizo.

March 18. The revolution begins: Francisco Madero and the quest for democracy. Read Chapter 10, Francisco Madero: The Apostle of Democracy.

March 25. Zapata and the social revolution for land rights. Read Chapter 11, Emiliano Zapata: The Born Anarchist.

April 1. Pancho Villa: Bandit, guerilla and revolutionary general. Read Chapter 12, Francisco Villa, Between Angel and Iron.

April 8. Nationalism versus regionalism; the Constitution versus the Convention. Read Chapter 13, Venustiano Carranza.

April 15. A Sonoran caudillo takes power; Revolutionary muralist art movement flourishes. Read Chapter 14, Alvaro Obregon: Death and the General.

April 22. Agrarian reform, secular education and anti-clericalism: the revolt of the Cristeros. Read Chapter 15. Plutarco Elias Calles: Reform from the Roots.

April 29. Institutionalizing the Revolution. Read Chapter 16, Lazaro Cardenas: The Missionary General.