

*Mexico





Geographic Influence

Natural Resources – petroleum, silver, copper, gold, lead, zinc, natural gas, timber

U.S.-Mexican Border – 2,000 mile long border means relationships are inevitable (migration, dependency, conflict)



Population

- Over 120 million people live in Mexico
 - 60% Mestizo
 - 30% Amerindian (Indigenous)
 - 10% other (European, Asian)
- 75% of Mexico's population lives in urban areas (Mexico City's population is nearly 19 million; it is the 10th largest city in the world)
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- Population in the northern part of Mexico is more prosperous than central and southern Mexico. The farther south, the greater the poverty.

Political Culture

National Identity: Mexicans share a strong sense of national identity, based on history, religion and language.

Clientelism: Mexican politics has a long history of patron client relationships.



Historical Transitions

- Spanish Colony
- 1821 War of Independence (11 years, 500,000 deaths)
 - *latifundistas* - large landowners
 - *caciques* - local military strongmen
 - Santa Anna - 1st of many *caudillos*
- 1846-48 - Mexican-American War
- 1848-1867 - Benito Juarez Regime - Zapotec Indian
 - attempt to centralize, modernize, and secularize
- 1867-1910 - *Porfiriato* - regime of Porfirio Diaz
 - solidified power of state and 1st economic development
 - authoritarian regime
- 1910 - Mexican Revolution
 - middle class reformers - Francisco Madero - democracy & capitalism
 - poor revolutionaries - Emiliano Zapata (south), Pancho Villa (north); strove for radical socioeconomic reform
- 1917 - Carranza stabilizes Mexico
- 1929 - Calles creation of Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)
- 2000 - Democratic Reforms begin - PRI loses power

Historical Traditions

Authoritarianism -Mexico has long tradition of authoritarian rule. Presidents still hold a great deal of power.

Populism - The Zapatista movement is a reflection of this tradition.



* Historical Traditions

Power Plays/Divisions within Elite - There is a division over whether the *politicos* or *tecnicos* should run government.

Instability and Legitimacy Issues - Mexico's political history is full of chaos, conflict, bloodshed, and violent resolution to political differences. Even though most Mexicans believe the government is legitimate, the current regime is unstable.



Legitimacy

Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) - helped legitimize the revolution, served as an important source of government legitimacy until the late 20th century and is in power today

Constitution of 1917 - created a democratic, three-branch government, but allowed the PRI to stabilize and consolidate power. An authoritarian one party state was created but within a democratic framework.



Constitution of 1917

- Ended the Revolution
- The Mexican constitution is very long and easily amended
- Set up structure for Democratic Government (political Institutions resemble those of the U.S.)
 - Three branches of Government
 - Competitive elections
 - Federalism

Church and State

- Although most Mexicans are Catholic, church and state are legally separate
 - Until recently, priests were not allowed to vote.



Establishment of PRI

PRI brings all caudillos (patron client networks) under one big umbrella political party

- *Sexenios* - president could only serve one 6-year term
- PRI- “institutionalized” the revolution by stabilizing conflict between leaders
- Peasants in *camarillas* (political cliques) received jobs, financial assistance, family advice, and even food & shelter in return for votes for the PRI.

Citizens, Society, & the State

- Traditionally Mexican citizens have interacted with government through a *patron-client system*
- Clientelism has generally meant that the government had the upper hand through its ability to determine which interests to address and which to ignore
- The role of citizens in Mexico is changing as political parties have become competitive and democracy becomes more firmly entrenched



Patron-Client System

- **Corporatism** favors the largest businesses and labor unions
- Modernization and legitimate democracy tend to break up the patron-client system as networks get blurred in large population centers, and more formal forms of participation are instituted



Cleavages

Urban vs. Rural

Mestizo vs. Amerindian

North vs. South



Protests

When citizens demands have gotten out of hand, the government generally responded by not only accommodating their demands, but by including them in the political process through cooptation

Tlatelolco (1968) - student protest led to a massacre by government troops. The next president recruited large numbers of students into government, increased spending on social services

Zapatista Uprising (1994) - Partly a reaction to NAFTA, the Chiapas rebellion reminded Mexicans that some people still lived in appalling conditions, and poverty and lack of education were still serious problems (Indigenous Rebellion)

- *San Andres Peace Accord* - signed in 1996 with EZLN to protect indigenous languages, customs and political autonomy
- Standoff between gov't and EZLN has never truly disappeared.

Voter Behavior

Until 2000

- PRI controlled local, state, and national elections
- Voting rates were high because of patron-client system
- Election day was festive, accompanied by free food, music, and celebrations
- Corruption extensive
- Challengers easily defeated with “tacos,” stuffed ballot boxes



Voter Behavior

2000-2012

- In 1988, 49% voter turnout. This election was marred by fraud.
- 78% of eligible citizens voted in 1994, when election reform was promised
- 64% voted in 2000, when PAN won the presidency
- In 2012, turnout was 63%



Mexico in Transition

- Authoritarianism under the PRI has been replaced by competitive elections, which makes Mexico a transitional democracy
- Economic dependency and underdevelopment are slowly being transformed as public policies support a free market economy, yet a backlash against neoliberalism has continued

Linkage Institutions

- Mexico's political parties and interest group link Mexican citizens to their government
- During the PRI era all of this took place under the authority of the PRI party so a true civil society did not exist
- As democratization began and civil society began to develop, these structures were already in place, so activating democracy was easier than it would have been otherwise.

Political Parties

- Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)
- National Action Party (PAN)
- Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD)



Voter Profiles

PRI - small town or rural, less educated, older, poorer

PAN - from the north, middle-class professional or business, urban, better educated (at least high school, some college) religious (or those less strict regarding separation of church & state)

PRD - younger, politically active, from the central states, some education, small town or urban



PRI

In power from 1920-2000, re-elected in 2012

Viewed as party representing interests of Mexican State

Corporatist structure - Party has ultimate authority, but other voices were heard by bringing interest groups under the umbrella of the party.

- 1993 - top business leaders were asked to give \$25 million each to PRI

Patron-client system - party traditionally gets its support from rural areas where patron-client system is still in control
(deliver state services and access to power in exchange for political support.)

Breakdown of PRI

- Rapid urbanization
- Inability to continue patronage during economic downturn
- democratic reform (eliminate fraud)
- Although lost presidency, help control of majority of local states.

PAN (Right of Center)

Represents business interests

PAN support strongest in the north

PAN candidate Vicente Fox won 2000

presidential election, Felipe

Calderon won 2006 election

Platform

- Regional autonomy

- Less government intervention in the economy

- Fair elections

- Good relationship with Catholic Church

- Support for private and religious education



PRD (Left of Center)

- Presidential candidate in 1988 & 1994 was Cuahtemoc Cardenas
 - In 1988 Cardenas won 31.1% of the official vote, and PRD captured 139 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (500 total)
 - Many believe had it been an honest election Cardenas would have won
- Andres Lopez Obrador, former mayor of Mexico City, was the PRD candidate for president in the 2006 election.
 - He lost by a slim margin to Calderon (PAN)

Issues of Democracy

Election Reform

IFE (Federal Election Reform) - created as an independent regulatory body to safeguard honest and accurate election results

- takes power away from Secretary of Gov't
- Federal Electoral Tribunal - adjudicate all electoral disputes
- electronic register, voter ID cards

Campaign Finance Restriction - laws that limit campaign contributions

Elections

Voting is compulsory (avg 60% turnout)

Citizens in Mexico directly elect the president, Chamber of Deputy Representatives, and Senators as well as most local & state officials.

Elections are generally competitive, especially in urban areas



Elections

Each of Mexico's 31 states elects three senators, 2 are determined by majority vote, the other is determined by whichever party receives the second highest number of votes. 96 senators are selected this way.

32 senate seats are determined nationally through a system of proportional representation that divides the seats according to the number of votes cast for each party (128 Senate seats in total)

In the Chamber of Deputies, 300 seats are determined by plurality within single-member districts, and 200 are chosen by proportional representation

Elections

Election of 2000 - PAN candidate Vicente Fox won presidency

Election of 2006 - closely contested election, won by PAN candidate Felipe Calderon by narrow margin over PRD candidate Andres Lopez Obrador

Election of 2012 - Enrique Pena Neito of PRI won the presidency, with 38% of the vote, but party lost majority in legislature.

Split in votes has encourage gridlock, phenomenon unknown to Mexico under the old PRI-controlled governments



Interest Groups & Social Movements

Corporatist structure allowed for accommodation of interest groups

Due to paternalistic attitude of PRI and deep seeded distrust, Mexican people are disorganized

- **Business Interests** - networked with political leaders to protect the growth of commerce, finance, industry, and agriculture
 - Pena Nieto reforms against monopolies
 - Business sector intimidated by PRD

Interest Groups & Social Movements

- **Labor** - integrated within system, wage levels for union workers increased from 1940-1982, until the economic crisis caused wages to drop. Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM)
 - Power of union bosses has decreased as unions weaken and members become more independent - reduced patronage
 - National Union of Workers (UNT) - competes with CTM
 - Unions have more autonomy and ability to contest gov't policy
 - Reforms under Calderon and Pena Nieto attempt to weaken important unions

Esther Gordillo, long time president of National Union of Education Workers (SNTE) and President Pena Nieto





Interest Groups & Social Movements

Rural/Peasant Organizations -supported movements for better prices for crops, and access to markets and credit. Joined with other groups to promote better education, health services, and environmental practices.

- town of Cheran in Michoacan expelled municipal and state police for not protecting their town - deforestation by organized crime

Urban/Popular Movements - concerned about social welfare spending, city services, neighborhood improvement, economic development, feminism, and professional identity.



Government Institutions

31 States & Federal District of Mexico City - each with own Constitution and Unicameral house

Mexico is a federal republic, though state and local governments have little independent power and few resources

Executive branch has held majority of the power historically

Legislative & Judicial branch followed the executive's lead, rubber-stamping most presidential decisions

Mexico has traditionally been an authoritarian and corporatist regime

Strong Presidential Power

- Initiate legislation
- Issue decrees
- Transfer funds
- Authorize expenditures
- Appoint cabinet heads and justices (Sec of Gov't - internal affairs and Sec of Treasury-oversees economy)
- Appoint a large number of public officials



Legislature

Bicameral

Chamber of Deputies (500-member) - 3 year terms

300 deputies from single-member districts
(plurality)

200 deputies chosen by proportional
representation (seats cannot exceed 8% of vote)

Senate (128-member) - 6 year terms

3 senators from each of the 31 states & the
federal district(96)

- Majority party 2 seats, 1 seat second
party

Remaining 32 selected by proportional
representation (2% threshold)

This system makes it very difficult to gain a
legislative majority



Female Representation

- Women in both houses has risen significantly since
- 1996 election law required parties to sponsor female
- candidates
 - Parties must run at least 30% female candidates for proportional representation and single-member district elections

Judiciary

- On paper, has judicial review, but it never overrules important government policy or actions
- Judges appointed for life, but in practice resigned at the beginning of each sexenio
- 1994 - reduced # of Justices to 11 with 15 year term limit.

Judiciary

- Reforms have attempted to increase the professionalism and independence of the judiciary
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ request of lower house to determine constitutionality
 - Transition to an oral-based jury model - transparency
 - 2010 - class action lawsuits allowed in defense of citizen's rights

Essential Political Features

- **Legislative-executive system:** Presidential
- **Legislature** - Congreso de la Union (National Congress)
 - **Lower House:** Camara de Diputados (Federal Chamber of Deputies)
 - **Upper House:** Camara de Senadores (Senate)
- **Federal Division of Power**
 - subunits - estados (states)
- **Electoral System for lower house:** Mixed SMD and PR
- **Chief judicial body:** Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nacion (National Supreme Court of Justice)

Bureaucracy

20% of Mexicans work in the bureaucracy

Under PRI corruption and bribes were common

Parastatal Sector - semiautonomous government agencies that often produce goods & services

PEMEX

After 1980's oil bust reforms cut the number of para-statals, and many are now privately owned

President Fox tried unsuccessfully to privatize PEMEX

Media

- Part of the patron-client system under the PRI, with rewards and favors doled out in return for political support
 - *Televisa* - largest media conglomerate
- Have become more independent as PRI-political structure has been reorganized
 - 2012 Elections - PRD still criticized 2 main stations supported PRI
- Many Mexicans have access to international newspapers, magazines, CNN and the BBC
- Students used social media during the 2012 election to force stations to televise 2nd debate **#YoSoy132**

Military

Government control of the military one of PRI's most important accomplishments

Strong ties between military officers and drug barons

Military heavily involved in drug-enforcement

Patron-client system of favors and loyalty has led some military officers to accept money from drug lords in return for allegiance and security

General Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo (Head of anti-drug task force) arrested in 1997 on accusations of protecting a drug lord



Political Economy

Pres. Cardenas (1934-40) used a strategy of state-led development known as:

Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI)

- Employs high tariffs to protect locally produced goods from foreign competition
- Government ownership of key industries (PEMEX)
- Government subsidies to domestic industries
- Government takes the lead in promoting industrialization (very little capital in private hands during this era)

Depending on president, economic policies varied from economic growth to redistribution. Majority favored:

- free trade
- foreign investment/better relation with US
- neoliberal policies

Pendulum Theory

Pendulum Theory - back-and-forth effect in Mexican politics from socialist reform to free-market economic development and back again.



Tecnicos

Tecnicos - educated, business-oriented leaders usually with degrees in economics, political science or business.

Tecnicos in the PRI espouse a free-market approach to the economy

By the 1980s Mexico had settled into an economic approach based upon

Neoliberalism

- Free markets

- Balanced budgets

- Privatization

- Free trade

- Limited government intervention in the economy

Mexico borrowed in “Petrodollars”

- Mexico’s biggest company and tax revenue
- Reform passed to open up to foreign and private investment



Economics

- Debt Crisis
 - Mexican government borrowed heavily in order to industrialize
 - Most of the economic growth based on oil economy
 - Oil plummet in 1982, caused Mexican economy to plummet as well
 - 1987, Mexico over \$107 billion in debt, debt represented 70% of GNP

Economics

Sharp cuts in Government Spending - according to agreements with the IMF, World Bank, and the U.S. Mexico greatly reduced government spending by eliminating public enterprises, cutting government subsidies, and cutting hundreds of thousands of public jobs



Economics

Debt Reduction - with assistance from U.S. the Mexican government reached agreement to reduce interest rates on loans

Privatization - many government industries were privatized

Between 2001 and 2003 Mexico economy suffered from the post-September 11 U.S. recession. In 2004, the economy grew by 4.1% but an estimated 50% of the Mexican population still lived below the poverty line

Social Programs

- *Oportunidades*-
 - provides monthly stipends to low-income households to keep children healthy and in school
- *Seguro Popular*-
 - is a national health insurance programs for informal and unemployed workers.

Foreign Policy

GATT/WTO - in 1986 Mexico joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the precursor to the World Trade Organization

NAFTA - economics still dominates even in terms of foreign policy

- *maquiladoras*- import goods/parts to make goods to export (most foreign exchange; apx 500,000 jobs in the north)
- has affected Mexico's agricultural sector
- exacerbated the north-south income gap
- still hotly debated

Immigration & Drug Trafficking - America still the key focus for Mexican foreign policy

