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Mexican Revolution at age 100

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THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION AT AGE 100

Thank you, Xavier for the invitation to join you, your colleagues, and other members of the Weslaco community here today. To use a phrase employed by many traditional Native American speakers, I hope that my presentation will do honor to the audience and on a related note, I hope that I can cover in one hour a topic that usually takes half a semester.

For many, the Mexican Revolution that began in 1910 was the most important event in Mexican history. Although the immediate causes of that revolution were the conditions brought about by the 1876 to 1910 dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz causes far older that those need to be considered. So, I'll spend the next five minutes on a quick review of early Mexican history.

When the Spanish first conquered Mexico, they established a racially and economically stratified society in which the two per cent of the population that was Spanish held the greatest power. They excluded the remaining ninety-eight per cent of the population from senior positions in government and in the Church. Of those who locked out, some ten per cent were native-born whites, or *criollos*. In turn, they looked with suspicion and fear at the largest population group, the Indians. Additional ethnics groups included those Mexicans of mixed ancestry (or mestizos) and Afro-Mexicans. All of these groups lived together in uneasy accommodation.

In 1808, the affluent criollos running the Mexico City *ayuntamiento*, or municipal council, sought to assume power with the argument gain the power to govern reverted to the municipal governments in the absence of the king, who had been captured by the French. Spanish officials listened politely and then promptly arrested the criollos. Two years later in 1810, when Father Miguel Hidalgo initiated Mexico's War of Independence, the conflict rapidly turned into a war not only for independence, but also for power among these various groups.

In 1821, Mexico gained its independence but faced internal divisions that would plague the nation from decades to come. As independent Mexico began its history, Mexicans divided themselves into four political groups. The Conservatives argued that the colonial moral and social order was best and that independence consequently meant that those ruling the nation should be Mexican rather than Spanish. As one Indian remarked, the formula meant that there would be a new rider for the same mule. Their most prominent spokesman was Lucas Aleman.

By contrast, the Moderado Liberals, whose most famous leader was the now-forgotten Ignacio Comonfort, argued that all men eventually could be made fit to participate in government. Another Liberal faction, known as both *Puro* Liberals and the Radical Liberals, rallied to the leadership of that most famous of Mexicans, Benito Juarez. They

argued that liberty should not be conditional upon wealth or education and sought to give all men the right to vote. Unlike the moderados, they were hostile towards the Church. They sought to confiscate all Church land and wealth not used for purposes of worship and also sought to remove any legal privileges of the clergy.

The fourth group, consisting of more than ninety per cent of the population, did not participate in the electoral politics. Voting requirements prevented them from doing so.

From 1821 to 1867, multiple revolts and three civil wars were fought over these issues. These conflicts ended with the Liberal victory in the War of the French Intervention, fought between 1862 and 1867. Benito Juárez led the Liberal force to victory and served in office until his died peacefully in 1872. From then on, Vice President Manuel Lerdo de Tejada ruled until violently overthrown by General Porfirio Díaz in 1876. In that year of 1876, the countdown to the Mexican Revolution truly began and so, with that brief review of early Mexican history finished, we need to take a look at Díaz, and at what he did for and to Mexico.

Born in 1830 to mestizo parents in the city Oaxaca, Díaz lost his father to cholera when he was three years of age. To earn money no longer provided by her husband's work as a blacksmith and mule driver, his mother supported herself and four children by working at a variety of jobs including waitress, dye maker, and primary school supervisor. Young Porfirio also took up several trades, including carpentry and pistol repair. From early youth, he dreamed of being a soldier. When he was old enough to attend high school, he enrolled at Oaxaca Institute of Arts and Sciences where the administrator of the school, none other Benito Juárez, welcomed young Porfirio. When Juárez added military courses to the curriculum, Díaz enrolled in them.

During both the War of the Reforma and the War of the French Intervention, he always placed himself at the front line and rose steadily in rank. Famously, he led the successful charge against the French at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, after shouting "Up and at them for Mexico." After that battle, Díaz became a national legend. His escape from a French prison camp and subsequent success in evading recapture and in raising new troops made him, with the exception of Juárez himself, the greatest national hero of Mexico. Díaz saw himself as the great soldier, the capable administrator, and the master politician.

After Juárez's death in 1872, he decided to run for the presidency and in doing so, opposed the Vice President who had become Acting President after Juárez's death, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada. After losing the 1875 election for the term starting in 1876, Díaz launched a military revolt on the grounds that by running, Lerdo de Tejada had violated the constitutional provision against running for a second term. Given the reality of Díaz subsequently serving eight terms, we safely can dispose of this as an excuse for

seeking power. And his quest for the Mexican presidency would bring him to South Texas.

At first, the United States government remained sympathetic to the elected government of, and even allowed a force of 500 Lerdistas to disembark at Brazos de Santiago here in South Texas and then cross into Mexico. However, Diaz found far more powerful allies on the north side of the Rio Grande.

These included the most prominent of the Texas ranchers, Richard King, plus the New York Bondholders Company (which represented U.S. investors seeking restitution for loans unpaid by the Lerdo de Tejada government), William Starke Rosecrans (a former general of the Union Army and organizer of a transcontinental railway project), Andrew Pierce (president of the Texas International Railway), Thomas T. Buckley (president of the Republic Bank of New York and of the Central and Southern Pacific Railroad), and Charles Stillman, president of the largest bank in the United States (First City National Bank) and a direct descendant of the founder of Brownsville.. These men gathered at Kingsville, Texas to meet with Diaz in February 1876

According to a witness (Richard Salmon Ford, a Captain of the Texas Rangers and Colonel of the Confederate Army), Diaz asked those Americans to loan him cash. In response, they told him he would receive the loan if he promised to be responsive to their ambitions for border security, restitution of their losses, and commercial access to Mexico. Diaz agreed. He soon received \$624,000 in contributions, with the largest share (\$320,000) came from the New York Bondholders Committee. Also, shipments of rifles, pistols, ammunition, plus nitric and sulfuric acid arrived for Diaz' force then forming up in South. Texas. ⁱ Thus fortified, he crossed the river and took Matamoros in April 1876. A short time later, he succeeded in forcing President Lerdo de Tejada from office and, with the assistance of a lobbyist and friends in Washington, obtained U.S. recognition that year.

Once in power, Diaz embraced a new political philosophy known as Positivism. This theory held that humanity would advance to greater levels of knowledge, prosperity, and happiness if our path is guided by science and if our society is ruled only by the most talented and competent among us. The clearly meant rule by a minority and rule by a minority was a concept that had enjoyed support in Mexico since the days of the Spanish and the Aztec Empire.

To foreigners and those Mexicans who looked only at the industrial sectors of Mexico during the next thirty-four years, Mexico prospered. By 1910, copper production grew from 5,650 to 48,160 metric tons, gold production rises from 51,146 ounces to 1,461,046 ounces, and railroad tracks laid and operating increased from 416 miles in 1876 to 15,300 by 1910.

However, these improvements were more than offset by the damage Diaz' methods did to Mexico society. For example, railroads (all owned by foreigners) were granted fifty-nine square miles of Mexican territory for each mile track that they laid, Mexicans living on that land thus became the railroad's tenants. Similarly, any land not producing a cash crop, be that land a village or ranch, could be declared vacant and sold to the highest bidder under a policy known as *tierras baldias*. By 1910, ninety-six per cent of Mexicans owned not so much as a single inch of land. In the rush to industrialize, Diaz had dispossessed much of the nation. Mexicans whose families had lived on lands their families and communities had owned for centuries now found themselves declared tenants subject to eviction or rent payments.

Certainly the sacrifice of liberty proved as significant as the loss of land. After the conflicts fought from 1821 to 1867, Mexicans, especially the politically active and literate among them, expected to be able to write, publish, speak, and politically organize without fear. They were not. Opposition parties routinely faced a variety of oppressive tactics. On one memorable day, the editors of every newspaper in Mexico City met in the jail cell in which Diaz ordered them placed simply because he did not like the coverage of the day.

With the benefit of our experience in the late twentieth century, we now know that Diaz's development model was defective because he did not seek to involve the entire populations. Nations that have succeeded in industrializing with the space of a generation, such as South Korea and Singapore, did so by providing education and job training to the entire by trying to life all boats at once. Diaz never did.

Additional opposition arose in response to the status foreigners obtained in Mexico. They owned one of every four acres of Mexican territory, received favorable treatment from courts separate from those that judged Mexicans, could live in neighborhoods in which Mexican could not reside, and often held jobs for which Mexicans were not allowed to compete. The phrase for this was *Mexico, madre de los extranjeros y madrastra de los Mexicanos*, - Mexico, and mother of foreigners and stepmother of Mexicans. In summary, Diaz took most of the problems that has caused so many revolts and wars in the nineteenth century and made them worse.

By 1910, opposition to Diaz is rising and that opposition comes from many distinct groups. So now, as we get into the outbreak of the revolution, I want to discuss the leaders and the various ideas for which they and their supporters stood. These men included Francisco Madero, Emiliano Zapata, Pancho Villa, Venustiano Carranza, Ricardo Flores Magon, and Bernardo Reyes.

Francisco Madero, born in 1873, was the product of the marriage of two of the greatest land-owning criollo families in northern Mexico. His paternal grandfather had been governor of the state and remained a close friend of both Diaz. Francisco received his primary education from private tutors at home, attended a Jesuit preparatory school in

Saltillo, and then went to Paris for five years of study that included courses in commerce and economics. Afterwards he went to the University of California at Berkeley, where he studied agricultural science so that he could make his estates more productive.

Like many Mexicans of his day who received a foreign education, he returned home troubled by the failure of Mexico to equal the societies of Western Europe and of the United States. As he became involved in the day-to-day management of estates, he concluded that the primary causes of Mexico's poverty and backwardness the absence of true liberty and the failure to develop all of Mexico's citizens. His great passion turned out to be for public education and political liberties. His employees received instructions in reading and their company houses, while just basic, and offered more space and ventilation than the typical ranch hand received. Madero argued that everyone had a right to a job and to respect in performing that job as well as living wage.

From 1903 to 1906, Madero ran unsuccessfully for local and state office while simultaneously using his financial resources to build his support nationally. Local chapters of the Mexican Liberal Party received checks from him, as did editors of opposition newspapers. He sent words of encouragement to journalists and activists jailed by Diaz often also would receive letters from Madero. He founded and funded his own newspaper, *El Democratico*. His principal goals for Mexico consisted of restoring full civil liberties to all citizens and providing all Mexicans with an education.

Emiliano Zapata was a very different sort of person. Born on August 8, 1879 in Anenecuilco, Morelos, he was one of ten children brought into the world by Gabriel Zapata and Cleofas Salazar. In spite of rumors that he was illiterate, Emilio received a grade school education. When orphaned at sixteen, he bought a team of mules and made a living hauling corn from farms to market. He also was a farmer, raising watermelons. His early fame came as a horseman. He competed in rodeos and races and even received a temporary job training horses on the ranch of one of Diaz' closest friends.

In 1909, he kidnapped the woman he loved, Inez Alfaro. This ancient Mexican custom, known as *rapto*, involved the groom physically seizing the bride and spirited her away from her home because his mad passion could not be restrained. Her father was not amused and denounced Emiliano to the police. He was captured and sentenced to serve as an infantryman in the Porfirian army. He soon deserted and returned to Anenecuilco, where he was made chairman of the village defense committee. Zapata regarded Anenecuilco as his true homeland and sought above all else to preserve the autonomy of the village, to have full civil liberties given to its citizens, and to have all lands taken under the Diaz administration returned.

Here, there was a critical difference between Zapata and Madero. Madero argued that the Mexican people's chief concern was civil liberty while Zapata contended that the

return of land was the most sacred cause. Almost exclusively, his supporters were peasants from central and southern Mexico. In the political space between these two men stood Pancho Villa.

In spite of intensive research efforts over the years, his early life still remains a bit of a mystery. There are three versions of his early life. The only point upon which they all agree is that he was born in 1878 on the Rancho de la Coyotada, one of the largest haciendas in the state of Durango. His parents, Augustin Arango and Micaela Arambula, worked as sharecroppers for the owners of the estate, the Lopez-Negrete family. They baptized their child Doroteo Arango. His father dies at an early age and his mother had to support five children on a sharecropper's income. Life would be hard.

According to the White Legend, (told by Villa), a great crisis occurred when he was a sixteen year old working at the Hacienda de Gogojito, another possession of the Lopez-Negrete family. He saw his mother pleading with Don Agustin Lopez Negrete to leave her daughter alone. Pancho claims that he ran at once to the house of his cousin Romualdo Franco to get a weapon and then shot Don Agustin in the foot. When five of the hacendado's employees took out rifles to shoot Villa, Lopez-Negrete ordered them to stop because he did not wish to shoot a boy. Young Pancho then left and fled to the mountains. There, he repeatedly fought men sent to capture him.

To cover his tracks, Arango adopted the last name of Jesus Villa, whose illegitimate son had been Pancho's father. With his new name, he fell in with two robbers and together they began staging spectacular robberies. Villa claims that such theft and the accompanying murder were not different that the theft and murder by which he said Mexico's rich and influential leaders stayed in power. And he unlike those Mexicans who oppressed Mexico, he claimed that he almost all of the money stolen to the poor. According to Villa, in 1910 he met in Parral, Chihuahua the man who persuaded him to join the revolutionary armies: Abraham Gonzalez. Gonzalez later became the Governor the state of Chihuahua.

An example of the Black Legend can be found in a report written by Colonel John Biddle of the United States Army to the Chief of the War College Division. According to this story, Villa first killed for very different reasons. A sheriff eloped with his sister and Villa gave chase. When he caught them, he forced the man to marry and killed the sheriff after forcing him to dig his own grave. Villa's decision to join the revolutionary armies resulted not from a desire to join Abraham Gonzales in destroying the Porfirian oppressors of the people, but because General Pascual Orozco reluctantly accepted the bandit and his gang simply because he needed more men.

The Epic Legend – As written by U.S. correspondent John Reed, a man who never saw a revolution he did not like, Villa was the idol of Chihuahua's peasantry and the living nightmare of the Terrazas family. This version assigned to Villa far more influence than even he claimed. Here, he not only gave money to the poor, but he even carried a

butcher's knife so that he could cut up stolen cattle and give chunks of meat to the poor. None of these legends, black, white, or epic, can be corroborated with documents.

Villa envisioned Mexico as a nation in which the majority of the population worked in the countryside on land owned by the people who tilled that soil. Unlike Zapata, he addressed the role of cities and modern industry in Mexican life to the extent that he said that were necessary, but that their production should be directed towards providing for the needs of the rural population. Like Zapata and Madero, he too advocated a full set of civil liberties for all Mexicans. Contrary to popular belief, he did not believe in seizing all hacienda land or all American property. Villa's base of support was in the north of Mexico, principally in his home state of Chihuahua. His supporters included a few city residents, ranchers, cowboys, Indians, and every other sort of person found in rural Mexican society except for the hacienda owners.

Very well then – we now move on to Ricardo Flores Magon. Like Diaz and Benito Juarez, he was born in the state of Oaxaca. His father, Teofilio Flores, rose to the rank of Colonel in the army and as such, the family had a comfortable. Thanks in part to his father's influence; he gained admission to the school which then, as now, stood as the best public school in the nation: the federally-operated *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria*. By 1892, the eighteen-year Ricardo was leading demonstrations in Mexico City protesting the decision of Diaz to run yet again for President. For that offense, Diaz's police briefly jailed him. When released, he returned to publishing his small paper, *La Democratica*. He fiercely criticized the hacienda system and soon was rewarded with a court order shutting the paper. Undeterred, he founded another paper, *Regeneracion*. Understandably, this paper focused upon press censorship that Magon correctly deemed illegal under the terms of the 1857. By 1900, the paper had a national reputation.

In that year, the independent publisher joined with Camilo Arriaga the founding of the PLM, *Partido Liberal Mexicano* (PLM).

Magon became more critical of Diaz, calling for his resignation. Diaz promptly returned the favor by locking him in the Bélen prison. In essence this was a dungeon. Ricardo recalled that his cell had no light and was so dark that he could not see his own hand. With the exception of the spiders, he had no companions. In his absence, the staff continued publishing and continued to do so until the police seized the printing press four months later. They all went off to prison in February of 1902. The following month, Diaz released the Flores Magon brothers. Prison life had broken Jesús Flores Magon, but Ricardo returned to the struggle.

Recognizing that his time in Mexico would end in only one way, he crossed into the United States in January 1904 at Laredo. Finding themselves under the surveillance of Diaz' agents in Laredo, he and his brother moved north to the heart of Tejano Texas, San Antonio, in May of that year. There, Arriaga, who had gone into exile earlier, met them. Within a short time, they were publishing *Regeneracion* in Laredo. When an agent of the

Mexican government came into Ricardo's home and tried to stab him, the brothers and Arriaga moved the enterprise to St. Louis, Missouri.

So by 1910, we have the radical and rural-oriented peasant leader Zapata, the moderately leftist Villa, the elite reformer Madero, and the urban leaders of the middle class rebels, the Magon brothers. Two other groups stood in the wings. On the right were the Reyistas. Their leader, Bernardo Reyes, argues that the Porfirian regime has been good for Mexico and should continue after Diaz resigns. On the left, a small but powerful labor movement had organized in the factories and the mines. They came together under a big tent, known as the *Casa de los Obreros Mundial* (House of the Workers of the World), Divided between those who favor a return of small scale industrial enterprises (anarcho-syndicalists) and socialists who favor mass industrialization; they would play a role in the revolution.

When Diaz announced that he would not run for reelection, two candidates emerged. One was Reyes, who promised to continue the old order. The other was Madero, who ran as the candidate of a newly formed umbrella organization, the Anti-Reelection Party. As Madero's popularity became evident, Diaz cancelled the election and declared himself reelected for a ninth term on what was to have been reelection day, June 21, 1910 and tried to arrest Madero, who then fled to the United States. From San Antonio on October 10th, he issued the Plan of San Luis Potosi, which calls for a violent uprising on November 20th. The shooting began two days early in Puebla, when Aquiles Serdan and his opened fire on authorities from their house. Small and not very organized bands then emerged

While Diaz' men gained some success in crushing rebels in parts of central Mexico, the revolt prospers in Chihuahua under the leadership of Pascual Orozco. He enjoyed his work. For example, after ambushing a Federal supply, convoy, he striped the bodies, laundered and pressed the uniforms, and sent them to Diaz with a note saying here are the wrappers (hojas) send me more tamales.

By Spring of 1911, Orozco and Villa convinced Madero he that should focus on capturing Ciudad Juárez. Madero at first agreed, but then hesitated for fear that some shells might fall into the United States and provoke a violent American response. Orozco defied him and took the city on May 10, 1911 as Diaz's men run low on ammunition and hope.

A week later, Zapata's forces in Morelos, which had grown from a few men seizing a hacienda to a substantial force, took one of the only two remaining places in the state they did not yet control: the city of Cuatla. Diaz now realized that matters are beyond his control and resigned on May 25th. He and his wife, their dearest possession, and a still undermined number of gold bars took a train to Veracruz and to a comfortable exile first in Spain and then in Paris.

On October 1, 1911, Madero is elected president. Immediately, he encounters problems as he realizes the revolution means different things to different groups of Mexicans. He disappoints many. Zapata expected the return of land to begin immediately and showed no patience when one of the most powerful hacendados of Mexico, Francisco Madero, delayed. In November 1911, Zapata issued the Plan de Ayala, accusing Madero of betraying the revolution and calling for the restoration of all lands seized during the Porfiriato and the nationalization of 30% of that which remains. Zapata began seizing towns and defeating detachments of federal troops. With the unifying presence of Diaz gone, the triumphant revolutionaries already were falling upon each other.

Orozco, angered by Madero's refusal to proceed with a series of reforms ranging from land reform to improving working conditions, also rebelled. In May, 1912, he joined General Vasquez Gomez in a northern-based revolt and seized Ciudad Juarez. Their *Plan Orozquista* called for a ten-hour workday, restrictions on child labor, improved working conditions, the end of company stores and script, nationalization of the railroads, and the transfer of land to anyone who had worked on that land for twenty years. General Victoriano Huerta smashed Orozco's victorious armies en route to Mexico City.

Madero's insistence on appointing family member and friends to important positions produced also anger many who had expected a cabinet more representative of Mexico. Also, Porfirians angry at the recent turn of events rebelled. In October 1912, a revolt led by Felix Diaz, the former dictator's nephew erupted. He assembled a small army that failed to attract additional support. With little effort, Madero's forces defeated him and took the would-be dictator to a prison in Mexico City. In December, 1911, Bernardo Reyes invades northern Mexico from New Orleans and is soon captured. He is sent to prison in Mexico City. But in February, 1913, General Manuel Mondragon, the Mexican inventor of the world's first semi-automatic rifle and a devoted supporter of Porfirio Diaz, freed Felix Diaz and Bernardo Reyes from prison. Together, they seized the *Ciudadela*, a colonial fortification in Mexico City, and began shelling the National Palace. In response, Madero ordered General Huerta to defeat the Porfirians. From February 9th to February 19th, a period known the *Decina Tragica* (Ten Tragic Days), the center of the capital becomes a battleground as shells hurl between the Ciudadela and the presidential palace.

On February 18th, another man who believed that Mexico needed a dictator rather a democratic form of government, U.S. Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson, convened a meeting at his embassy. Present were Generals Huerta, Diaz, and Reyes. They agreed that Madero should be overthrown and Huerta made dictator. On February 20, the conspirators placed Madero and his Vice-President Adolfo Pino Suarez under arrest. Both men were executed the following day as Victoriano Huerta proclaimed dictator.

In the north, Coahuila Governor Venustiano Carranza rose in revolt, taking up the mantle of Madero – in a political as well as in a socio-economic sense. He too was a man of economic, social, and political prominence and of a decidedly non-radical nature.

Calling himself the leader of the Constitutionalists, he begins fighting the forces of the central government. Governor Pancho Villa of Chihuahua also proclaimed himself in revolt and Alvaro Obregon, the governor of Sonora, soon joined. The three northerners agree to designate Carranza First Chief of the Revolution. The plan they issue, the Plan de Guadalupe, calls only for the removal of Huerta. Zapata, who was not a governor, continued fighting and refused to join the plan because he doesn't trust anyone from the north of Mexico.

Huerta now has another enemy – Woodrow Wilson. The newly elected President of the United States, who was no relation to the ambassador, was outraged by Madero's execution and wanted to see Huerta gone. However, the American public remained overwhelmingly opposed to intervention. So Wilson ordered the main U.S. battle fleet to patrol off the Mexican coast and engage in a policy he calls "watchful waiting." He did not wait long.

In April, 1914, a U.S. whaleboat entering Tampico harbor to pick up the crews' mail entered a restricted area. The Mexican commander swiftly arrested the crew. Although the Mexicans quickly release the sailors, the United States demands that the Mexican flag at Tampico be lowered in salute to our flag as a further gesture of respect. The Mexican commander agreed on the condition that U.S. fleet commander salute the Mexican flag. The Americans refuse on the grounds that doing so would constitute recognition of the legitimacy of the Mexican government, whose president the U.S. president regarded as a murderer and a thug. The Mexicans consequently refused to salute the U.S. flag and in response, the United States seized the port of Veracruz.

The American invasion forced Huerta to shift troops away from his Mexican foes and towards the Americans. For Huerta did not know that the American had no intention of advancing beyond the range of their naval artillery and as he moves troops to the Mexico City-Veracruz route, his forces on other fronts are weakened. In both the north and center of Mexico, desertions from the Huerista forces mount rapidly.

Carranza and Villa and Obregon the advanced and Huerta resigned in July 1914, leaving Mexico soon thereafter In October of that year, delegates of the victorious armies arrived to a constitutional convention in Aguascalientes with voting strength proportionate to the size of the armies in the field. The Villistas had the largest delegation. The only change in makeup of various factions was that Carranza had now forged an alliance with the labor unions and their Red Brigades in which he pledged a modern industrial Mexico with full support for unions They in turn pledged their loyalty.

When the Carrancistas began the convention by suggesting that all delegates sign a Mexican flag as gesture of unity, the leader of the Zapatista delegation, Paulino Martinez, refused, calling the flag a symbol of criollo domination. Further he stated that promises such as prohibiting a president from seeking reelection are goals having little

meaning to average Mexicans, who instead wanted land, land better working conditions.

On the following day, the Villistas and Zapatistas elect Euliano Gutierrez President of the Assembly. In response, Carranza ordered his followers leave the convention and withdraw eastwards towards Veracruz. Another civil war is imminent.

But now the center stage moved to Veracruz. As Carranza marched eastward, the U.S. prepared to withdraw. The Americans left a few hours before Carranza arrives. When the Carrancistas reach the city, the president of the American Chamber of Commerce handed one of their officers a key ring with six keys. Each key opens the door of a different one square block warehouse. Inside were 10,000 Springfield rifles, over one hundred machine guns, field artillery, and enough ammunition to keep all of them firing for some time. Other items included miles of coiled barbed wire, uniforms, and boots. The Carrancistas spent some in Veracruz learning how to use these.

When ready, Carranza moved east and north to confront Villa at the Battle of Celaya on April 1915. In this battle, the Carrancistas suffered 300 casualties while defeating a Villista force upon which they inflicted 6,000 casualties. The superior weaponry and tactics of Carranza's force proved to be the deciding factor. This pattern is repeated and Villa gradually is forced north. On November 1, 1915, Villa's last major attack is smashed near the U.S. border at the Battle of Agua Prieto. To add insult to injury, part of the Carrancista commander's counterattack included a thrust from the United States by Mexican soldiers who had been allowed to cross the U.S. in sealed boxcars specifically for this purpose. In response, Villa will launch an ill-prepared attack on Columbus, New Mexico on March 9, 1916.

In response, President Wilson ordered General John J. Pershing to enter Mexico and so thoroughly harm Villa that he never again troubled the border area. Although Pershing never succeeded in catching Villa, he nonetheless killed a number of Villa's men and then withdrew. Facing a bleak future, Villa accepted a settlement a peace offer from Carranza that included an amnesty and a 123, 550 acre hacienda in Chihuahua. On June 20, 1923, he was assassinated when returning to the ranch after spending a night with a woman.

Zapata met a similar fate. On April 10, 1919, he was walking to a truce negotiation with representatives of President Carranza when the Carrancista Honor Guard shot him instead of saluting him. Carranza too would die violently. In 1920, he became the first and last post-revolutionary president to try to break the rule prohibiting the President from running for reelection. When he did so, a successful revolt erupted and Carranza fled towards Veracruz. On May 21, 1920, a remnant of the Zapatistas blew up the train on which he was traveling, pursued the escaping Carranza, and shot him to death.

So, having considered the background of the Revolution and its course, we are left with the most important question of all: What did six long years of violence accomplish? Briefly stated: a great deal.

We must start with the Constitution of 1916. Although written by a delegation drawn from the ranks of the victors, those authors contained a faction of leftists within their ranks. More importantly, the leaders of the convention knew that the defeat of the Villistas and Zapatista did not mean the disappearance of their ideals or of their supporters. So what emerged from the convention was a Constitution incorporating some objectives of each of the revolutionary factions.

First, the constitution reestablished the traditional Mexican structure of three branches of governments led respectively by a President, a Supreme Court, and a Senate as well as Chamber of Deputies. During the Porfiriato, both the courts and the legislature served as instruments of Diaz' will. Also, the delegates included additional articles providing Mexicans with some of the guarantees of civil provided to Americans by the Bill of Rights.

Second, the new constitution sought to reverse the main effects of the Porfiriato by declaring null and void any land seized by the government from 1876 onward. Additionally, the constitutions stated that every community in Mexico had a right to adequate water and land. In the years from 1916 to 1992, more than ninety million acres of land would be redistributed under the provisions of the new constitution.

Thirdly, the new constitution addressed the dominant foreign presence in much of the Mexican economy by declaring all natural resources and water to be the property of the Mexican government. This included oil, coal, copper, gold, and silver reserves as well as lakes and rivers. The new constitution stated that the government would assume a central role in developing the economy. Here, the intent was to replace the dominant position exercised by foreign investors with a government playing a dominant role. As matters would work out over the next five decades, Mexican companies made handsome profits from government contracts.

Fourth, the revolution weakened traditional gender roles. Porfirian morality confined women to what was called the Holy Sphere –children, confessionals and the home. The law required unmarried women were required to remain in the homes of their parents until they reached the age of twenty-five.

Many Mexican women took advantage of the tumult to move into new positions. They fought in the front lines of the Villistas and Zapatistas armies as soldiers, nurses, and cooks. After the war many entered professions such as teaching and nursing. Now while critics might call these traditionally female occupations in that they involve nurturing, I point out in response that by training for professional posts and earning salaries that enabled them to live independently, these women brought about an enormous change

in their status and that of their gender. Although federal legislation allowing all women to vote would not pass until the 1950s, it was the revolutionary era in which millions of Mexican women began to empower themselves.

Far less successful were the anti-religious provisions of the Constitution of 1917 that remained on the book until 1992. In their original form, they gave the federal government complete control over all primary and secondary education. The new curriculum, according to the constitution, was to be secular and socialist. All religious schools were to be closed, all priests and nuns forbidden from teaching, and any remaining private schools required to submit their curriculum to the government for approval. Additionally, all religious lands and structures and monies other than those used to maintain the places of worship were to be confiscated.

These provisions reflected not simple the traditional liberal hostility to organized religion, but also the power of ideologues within the winning armies. Their base within the new ruling party would be the Education Ministry and they were determined to mold a new generation of Mexicans in the image demanded by the State. If we had an additional hour, I would review the subsequent religious war of the 1916-1929 era known as the Cristero War, the reconciliation of Church and state that began with the administration of President Lazaro Cardenas and which continued at a steady pace until 1992. At that point, all of the restrictions I had mentioned were removed.

This brings us to the question of whether or not Mexicans became a democracy as a result of the revolution. I suggest that Mexico did become a democracy, but not for seven more decades.

Once the shooting ended, the victors sought to create what they called a Revolutionary Family. This was to be an all-embracing party to which Mexicans of the Left and Right would resolve disputes within the party. The name by which the Revolutionary Family became known was the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or PRI.

As might have been expected of any large bureaucracy, the party accomplished much in its early years, but corruption, ineptitude, and repression soon took hold. Following a period of rebuilding and industrialization during which life expectancy rose from forty to sixty years and during which the literacy rate increased from the teens to over ninety per cent, the PRI froze into a repressive organization more interested in its own welfare than in that of the nation.

The 1968 machine-gun killing of more than 400 Leftists in Mexico City ruptured the party's unity. The left wing split to form what today is called the PRD, or the *Partido de Revolucion Democratica* (PRD). The subsequent collapse of Mexican economy in the 1980 and 1990 strengthened the PRD and the older opposition party that had existed since 1927, the conservative and free market *Partido Accion Nacional* (PAN). As of 2010, the president of Mexico is a PANista and both houses of the federal legislature are

controlled by the PRI. But that situation may not be permanent. The PRI still has considerable support and the PANistas will need to show real progress on both the economic and domestic security fronts if they wish to remain in power.

The PRIistas have experienced a further rupture in the ranks. On one side stand the Technocrats, a university-educated group with little direct political experience and open contempt for both the old party bosses and the patronage-heavy government companies. The traditional PRIistas, known as Dinosaurs, remain unrepentant and defend both the mixed economy and the party's domination of many sectors of domestic life.. So yes, there is an open democracy even though the judicial system remains a place I would wish to avoid.

In closing, I hope that all of you will pursue your interest in Mexican history and to further that noble goal, I've prepared this list of suggested readings and movies. And now, please ask me many questions.
