

- Has had a progressive constitution, longest ruling single-party government in the world, political system stability in the twentieth century (unlike most of Latin America), Mex.'s political economy is an example of challenges from state-led development to neoliberal economic policy
- Mex. is especially important to US (NAFTA), we share a border, have Mexicans in our country, and Mex. is an important oil provider
- Even though it's been one-party like Russia and China, it's still democratic, even if it's consolidated

### Country Overview

- 1/3 population of US, 1/5 the size of US, borders California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas with very geographic diversity (snowy mountains to deserts) -two mountain ranges (Sierra Madre Occidental and Sierra Madre Oriental)
- Middle-income country-if all wealth was distributed it would be \$8,900; in US average was \$36,300; still quite wealthy as far as developing countries go
- Viceroy (vice-king) ruled Mexico as a personal representative for the king of Spain with very little power control; unlike Brit. very little autonomy
- Spanish colonization marked by mestizaje (racial mixing) b/c Spanish conquistadors didn't bring women with them-> created mestizos

### Independence/Postindependence Disorder

- Napoleon invaded Spain in 1808-> Latin American uprisings for independence began; Father Miguel Hidalgo started uprising in 1810 with peasants -> Mex. won independence in 1821
- US screwed them over (like usual)

### Porfiriato

- Porfirio Diaz became dictator of Mexico in 1876-> peace and economic growth
- Promoted modernization at the expense of the poor
- Francisco Madero called for revolution in 1910; Emiliano Zapata led rebel S. armies and Villa in the N.; Diaz resigned in 1911
- Factors of revolutions:
  - 1. potential revolutionaries must perceive injustice
  - 2. they must have access to basic resources needed to carry out a revolution
  - 3. the state must be weak

### One-Party Authoritarianism

- Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) formed in 1929
- Cardenas redistributed land to the poor, nationalized the oil companies in 1938 and set up corporatist system based on:
  - military
  - workers
  - peasants

- popular groups (middle class)
- Mexicanization: devotion to all things Mex.
  - Artists like Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Jose Clemente Orozco with their murals
- One-party rule with state-led development and strong economic growth until the late 1970s

### Democratization

- Mex. hosted Summer Olympics in 1968 and spent lots of money on construction projects
- Students at National University organized mass protests
  - to put down the protests before Olympics, the Mex. army shot into a peaceful student protest, killing over 400
- Earthquake in Mexico City in 1985 created many “self-help” organizations among the poor to create new leftist party the PRD
- In mid-1980s ran candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas who did well and among allegations of fraud, PRI’s candidate came to power with very little popular legitimacy even if he won
- 1989: PRI lost first gubernatorial elections in Baja California
- Vicente Fox (PAN) took over presidency in 2000
- Agents of democratization were opposition parties who contested elections, etc.

### Federalism

- Formally federal with national, state, and municipal levels of government; each state has its own constitution and elected governor with unicameral legislature
- 31 states and a Federal District (Mexico City or Mexico D.F.)
- Though governors were formally elected by local voters, the president as de facto party leader named the ruling party candidates for governorship
  - Came from his inner circle, with very little knowledge of the state they were to rule, and the pres. had informal power of dismissal from his control of the Senate
- 1980s/1990s economic crisis led to decentralizing the education and healthcare systems to the states
- Since Fox took power in 2000, there’s a clear break down of the pres’s “extra-constitutional” control over gov’ner’s.

### Branches of Government

- Technically divided like US, but power was still overwhelmingly in the executive branch
- Most important of the pres’s “extra-constitutional” powers was control of nomination process
- Legislature has two chambers
  - Upper house is Senate
    - each state and federal district has 3 senators and then 32 seats through proportional representation
  - Lower house is Chamber of Deputies
    - 500 seats
      - 300 allocated through single-member districts

- 200 through proportional representation
- Distributed in complex mixed-proportional system
- Pres. had control also because members of congress can't be reelected to consecutive terms-> once your time is up you're out of a job, so they needed good jobs afterwards from the executive branch
- Court never ruled against the president
- Judge was not considered a prestigious position, so there was a lot of turnover in the judiciary
- President Zedillo initiated wide-ranging reforms in 1994, and Fox strengthened the jud. in its admin.

### Parties

- Three main:
  - Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI): former ruling party from 1929-2000; occupies the broad center of the Mex. pol spectrum; no clear ideology; absorbed everyone like the National Peasant Confederation (CNC) and Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM)
  - National Action Party (PAN): party of current president Vicente Fox; oldest opposition party and represents right/conservative side; founded by middle-class Catholics' similar to Christian Democrats; initially didn't try for elections, just as vocal critic; in 1990s began to stress anticorruption and democratic reform, which was appealing, esp. popular with N. border states and N. central states
  - Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD): represents the left; Cardenas' run was impetus for party's formation in 1988; supports economic nationalism, opposing free trade, and privatization; strongest in Mexico City and poorer states of S. Mexico

### Elections

- PRI often skewed results to make it look like they had huge majorities of support
- During democratization (1982-2000), elections became the focal point of opposition politics; if candidates didn't win then they organized protests against the PRI and accused the government of fraud and demanded electoral reform

### Constitution

- First constitution as written in 1824-> adopted principles like federal system and separation of powers; modeled after US Constitution
- Constitution of 1917 is current, even though it has been reformed a lot; a lot more radical, including more anticlerical articles severely limiting the church; limited foreign rights to own land and exploit natural resources and provided protections for workers like collective bargaining and the right to go on strike

### Military

- Not plagued by military coups during the twentieth century like other Latin American countries
- Very small and completely loyal to its civilian leaders
- since 1990 has grown and started in on curbing the drug trade and putting down indigenous

groups

### Corporatism

- Civil society was very weak in Mex during most of 20th century
- Certain groups got benefits from the government that others did not
  - CNC
  - CTM
  - National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP)
- Economic crises of 1980s and 1990s meant government had fewer patronage resources

### Cleavages

- Main are: ethnicity, class, and region
- Religion isn't a biggie b/c most are Catholic
- Indigenous people are very discriminated against
- Class is a big issue: parties provided a way up
- Divisions between Mex. City and north and south
  - North is wealthier and more industrialized
  - south is poorer and more rural with more indigenous population-> increasingly votes for PRD

### Gender

- More representation in Mex. Congress than US, and are influential in politics
- Still hard b/c of class divisions-> upper and middle class women have very different problems than poorer women
- B/c of economic crises, labor force of women has gone up a lot
  - Multinational corp. prefer them as they're thought to be more detail oriented, more reliable, and less likely to protest

### Media

- During one party rule was very dependent on ruling party, but independent media has grown

### Political Economy

- PRI started a strategy of state-led development referred to as Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI): employs high tariffs, government ownership of key industries, and government subsidies to domestic industries
- Government nationalized oil industry and all subsoil rights; also owned banks, airlines, railroads, telecommunications, and other businesses like steel and sugar mills
- Gov't provided subsidized housing, healthcare, and food to urban workers to keep price of labor down
- 1970 discovery of oil-> boom, but oil prices fell in 1982 and said the government would be unable to pay back its debts
- Neoliberalism: free markets, balanced budgets, privatization, free trade, and minimal government intervention in the economy-> furthered by President Carlos Salinas
  - Screwed everything up: industries went belly up, unemployment soared and inequality

increased

- NAFTA symbolized end of state-led development and Mex's long-term commitment to free trade and free markets
  - All three countries had to reduce their tariffs, and established rules of origin and significant protection for foreign investors
  - Mex. industr. has become more diversified, but more dependent on the whims of a global economy

### Human Rights

- Regime violence was still important to control people
- Throughout 1990s there was widespread torture, summary executions and disappearances by police and military
  - Most vulnerable were labor leaders, independent journalists, and indigenous people
- Fox has created an undersecretary of human rights and democracy and increased cooperation with international human rights groups
- Freedom of information act passed by Fox opened up secret archives
- Still a problem in poor, rural areas

### Corruption

- Weakness of judicial system
- Drugs are a major corrupting factor
- Transparency International (NGO) devoted to combating corruption has tried to measure corruption in different countries
  - Mex. ranked 64th least corrupt country in the world in 2003

### Social Welfare

- High income inequality means unequal access to health and education
- Antipoverty policy PROGRESA pays poor families small amounts of money to keep their kids in school
- Fox also pushes for microloans to help people start up small businesses

### Environment

- Combat of protecting environment or helping lift the population out of poverty
- Big problem is air pollution in Mexico City (prob. the worst in the world)
  - Gov. introduced unleaded gas and restricted private cars from driving one day a week as well as making some businesses move out of the valley
- Other problems are water shortages and deforestation

### Migration

- N. border with maquiladoras (foreign-owned assembly plants) means internal migration
- Current flow of Mex. immigrants date back to the Bracero Program that let Mex. workers for agriculture in during WWII
- The ones who leave tend to be better educated, and at more of a cost to Mexico to lose b/c the poorer can't even afford to get to the border

