



Arturo García Bustos, Palacio de Gobierno, Oaxaca, 1980 The Tlacolulokos, Los Angeles Public Library, 2018

Historia de México/Visiones de México

Fall 2019

Profesor John Lear

This course examines visions of the history of twentieth century Mexico, combining an overview of the political order that grew out of the 1910 Mexican Revolution with analysis of changing representations of “Mexicanidad” (Mexicanness, or Mexican national and transnational identity) as competing versions of Mexico’s past and present. It introduces theoretical debates surrounding the use of visual culture—painting, photography, film, and other images—for the study of history, while providing a thorough introduction to modern Mexico. It begins with an examination of projections of a modern and cosmopolitan nation in the pre-revolutionary authoritarian regime of Porfirio Díaz, analyzes the patterns of resistance, nationalism, and reconstitution of authority that characterized revolutionary Mexico from 1910-1940, and considers the creation and dissolution of the “Institutional” revolution from 1940 to 2000 and its related and problematic re-engagement with the United States. We will often focus on an inevitable and obvious “Oaxacan lens” for events, artists and representations, and we will end with visual representations of the contemporary moment.

Within this periodization, we will survey a variety of individual artists, including José Guadalupe Posada, Saturnino Herrán, Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Tina Modotti, Arturo Garcia Bustos, and Manuel and Lola Álvarez Bravo; artistic collectives and generations, such as those formed around *El Machete*, los Contemporaneos, the LEAR and Taller de Gráfica Popular, the generation of 1968, the 2006 APPO movement in Oaxaca, and migration across the Americas (for example, the Tlacolulokos, above); and different visual media, including painting, murals, prints, photography, film, crafts and graffiti used to represent and challenge a changing “Mexicanidad.” We will incorporate such local resources as the murals of Arturo Garcia Bustos in the Palacio del Gobierno (above) and the Instituto de Artes Gráficas de Oaxaca; several local scholars and artists will be invited to speak to the class.

The seminar will immerse students in debates concerning visual culture and identity formation from the late 19th century through the present. The class is designed as an interactive workshop and requires active student participation throughout the entire course. It will have a heavy emphasis on student discussion, individual and group research and presentations, and writing. In

addition to providing a comprehensive introduction to the seminar topic, this course will develop student abilities to do close readings of texts and images, comment upon complex scholarly literature, and conceptualize original research problems. In a final research project with written and digital components, students will examine a particular artist, collective, or work of art in terms of its historical representation, or consider a particular historical moment in terms of its visual representation.

Among the readings and resources we will draw from, in Spanish where possible:

Nestor García Canclini, *Culturas Híbridas*

Colegio de México, *Historia mínima de México*

Margarita Dalton, *Breve Historia de Oaxaca*

Dr. Atl, *Las Artes Populares en México*

John Mraz, *Mexico en sus imagenes*

Olivier Debroye, *Fuga Mexicana*

Anita Brenner, *Ídolos detras altares*

Apertura, *Paul Strand en México*

John Mraz y Jaime Vélez Storey, *Braceros*

Margaret Hooks, *Tina Modotti*

Gilbert M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson, editors, *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*

Mary Kay Vaughan, *Portrait of a Young Painter: Pepe Zuniga and Mexico City's Rebel Generation*

Carole Naggar, *Visto Por Ojos Extranjeros*

Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexican Painting*.

Sisk, Christina L. *Mexico: Nation in Transit: Contemporary Representations of Mexican Migration to the United States*.

Jean Franco, *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico*

ASARO, Mike Graham de La Rosa, *Getting Up for the People: The Visual Revolution of ASAR-Oaxaca*

Louis Nevaer, *Protest Graffiti Mexico: Oaxaca*

A variety of image anthologies, artist catalogs and internet databases.

We will also view one or more of the following films:

“Vamonos con Pancho Villa” (Fernando de Fuentes, 1936)

“Redes” (Paul Strand, 1937)

“Flor Silvestre” (Emilio Fernandez, 1943)

“Los Olvidados” (Luis Buñuel, 1950)