

The rapid metamorphosis of the mexican government

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The Mexican Revolution was a period in Mexico's history where the entire political, economic, and social fabric of Mexico was thrust into rapid transformation. During this period, the principles that founded Mexico—the role of Amerindians in society, the power of the Church, isolation versus foreign imperialism, the role of heavy bureaucracies and hierarchies—were called into question by the Mexican people. Ideologies such as nationalism, neoliberalism, socialism, and anarchism seeped into the collective consciousness of the Mexican people, causing the push for political reform. Radicals and reformists like Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, Venustiano Carranza, and Álvaro Obregón rose from the ashes of Porfirio Díaz's and Victoriano Huerta's rule.

Mexico's volatile history of colonization, foreign occupation, imperialist domination, and revolution still affect its present. However, the three most influential developments that resulted from the revolution itself were the inclusion of Article 3 in the Constitution of 1917, the connection of Mexico to the United States, and formation of the National Revolutionary Party in 1929.

The inclusion of Article 3 in the Constitution of 1917 was one of the most influential developments that resulted from the Mexican revolution. The Constitution of 1917, specifically Article 3, mandated that education must be compulsory. Pre-school, primary, and secondary education were included in the compulsory education. In order to satisfy the Constitution of 1917 the Mexican government had to dedicate the single largest part of its budget to building schools for rural municipalities and hiring teachers.

The inclusion of this article allowed for José Vasconcelos, the head of the Department of Education from 1920-1924, to implement Communist Russian policies and practices in the Mexican education system. Within this period, 1000 rural schools were opened. Before 1900, less than 15% of the Mexican population was literate. As a result of Article 3, by 1940 50% of the population was literate.

The rise in literacy in Mexico, and in any country for that matter, is an important development because literacy is a good measure of education for a country. As the population becomes more literate, more people will pursue higher education and advanced careers, allowing Mexico to have a larger pool of professionals to pull from. The advancement of an educated populace in Mexico meant a larger democratic base and a more robust economic system.

The second most influential development that resulted from the Mexican Revolution was the rekindling of a relationship between Mexico and the United States. Since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and skirmishes along the Mexico-U. S. border to the occupation of Veracruz, the relationship between Mexico and the United States has always been strained. Franklin Roosevelt implemented his Good Neighbor policy in which he pledged not to intervene in the affairs of Latin American countries.

Out of this newfound relationship came NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. The North American Free Trade Agreement, though there are contentions over the imperialist nature of the agreement, brought

Mexico into the global trade market by linking it to the two largest powers in the Western Hemisphere, the United States and Canada. Many scholars have linked NAFTA with increasing the flow of illicit drugs from Mexico to the United States. Nonetheless, NAFTA encouraged free and open economic relations between these two bordering states.

Finally, the formation of the National Revolutionary Party (PNR) in 1929 by Plutarco Elías Calles was one of the most influential developments that resulted from the Mexican Revolution. Prior to the formation of PNR, political parties did not have much political influence. They functioned more like clubs and interest groups than political parties. Take the Anti-Reelectionist Party formed by Francisco I. Madero as an example. This party was formed in strict opposition to Porfirio's Díaz's policies and his three decades of political control that, for some, constituted an authoritarian dictatorship. In contrast, PRN (now renamed the Institutional Revolutionary Party) was able to secure Mexico's economic position after the Great Depression and the collapse of the banks by modeling this party after the Communist Party in Russia and the National Fascist Party in Italy. The formation of PRN allowed Mexico to execute a higher level of democratic freedom promised to the Mexican people in the Constitution of 1857 and 1917.

From the American perspective, Mexico's history was more rich and complex than one can imagine and this was only a cursory course. Classes like this should be followed up the following semester with an investigation of the countries modern history. It was thought provoking to trace the beginning of Mexico from its colonization to how Mexico is faring today with issues like

domestic security, economic stability, and social justice issues like reproductive rights and rural education. When studying the events in Mexico's history, the question arises: what causes one nation to succeed while others fail? Adam Smith relates this gap to causes such as the division of labor and the early development of free markets. Jared Diamond chalks it up to guns, germs, and steel. After taking this class, it is obvious that there are too many variables that contribute to a nation's success or failure.