

Mexico in Twelve Essays

In this course, we will analyze some of the highlights of the political, cultural, and intellectual history of Mexico during the twentieth century through the analysis of twelve representative essays on Mexican issues by twelve emblematic Mexican writers, thinkers, historians, social scientists, and cultural critics. Among the topics to be examined are: the question of “lo mexicano” and Mexican historical identity; the analysis of race, class, and culture as categories of Mexican society; the political evolution of Mexico and its connection with culture and ideas; and the interpretations of United States-Mexico relations within a historical and cultural context.

The twelve essays:

1. Manuel Gamio: Forging a Nation (1916).
2. José Vasconcelos: The Cosmic Race (1925).
3. Anita Brenner: Idols Behind Altars (1929).
4. Samuel Ramos: Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico (1934).
5. Octavio Paz: The Labyrinth of Solitude (1950).
6. Luis Villoro: The Major Moments of Indigenism in Mexico (1950).
7. Alfonso Reyes: The X on the Brow: Some Reflections on Mexico (1952).
8. Jorge Portilla: La fenomenología del relajo (1966).
9. Guillermo Bonfil Batalla: México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization (1987).
10. Gloria Anzaldúa: Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza (1987).
11. Carlos Monsiváis: Los rituales del caos (1995).
12. Sayak Valencia: Gore Capitalism (2010).