

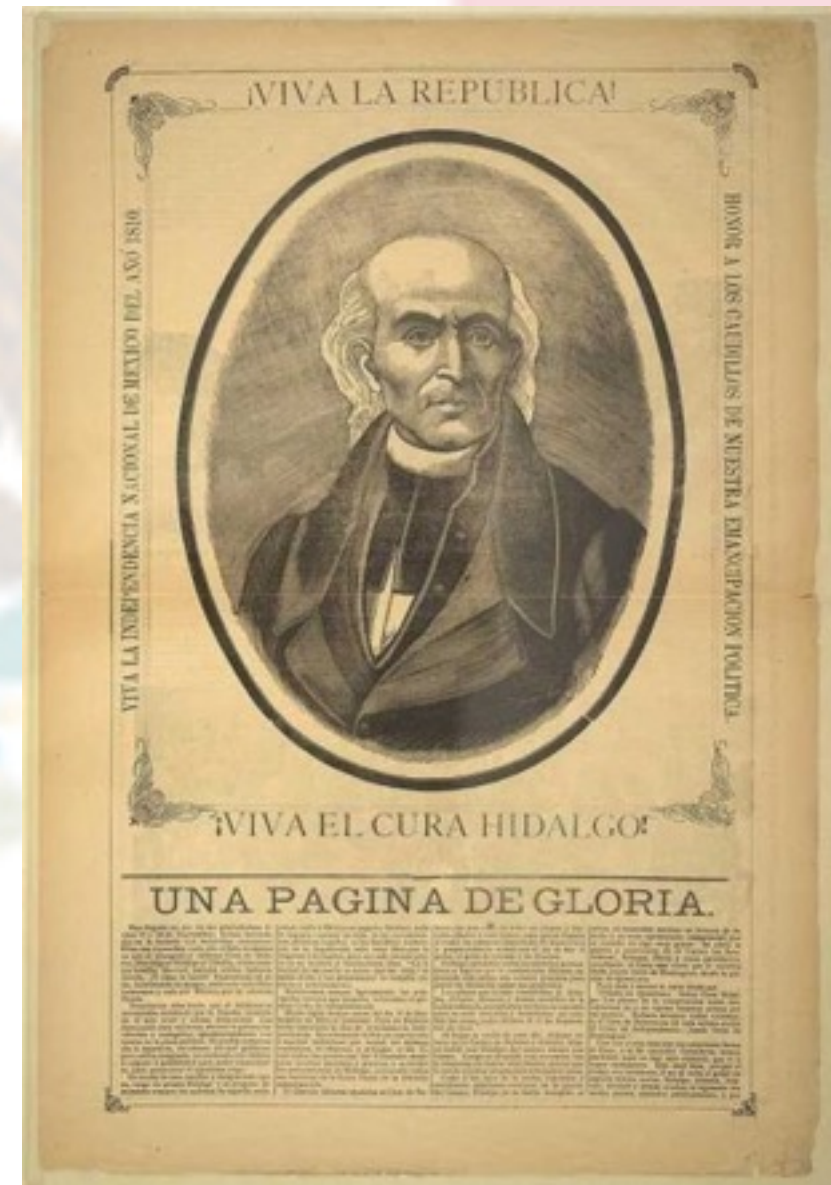


Mexico



Mexico: Sovereignty, Authority, and Power

- Rich in cultural heritage and resources, yet 40% live under poverty line
- Gained independence from Spain in 1821
- Populist movements emerged during period of nation building, bringing wide political perspectives
- PRI created monopoly on political power and ruled for nearly 80 years



Miguel Hidalgo, leader of Mexico's war of independence against Spain

Mexico: Political Institutions

- On paper, Mexico's government resembles the U.S.
- Executive branch:
 - President is head of state
 - Responsible for foreign affairs, creating government agencies, and issuing legislation
 - President builds administration through appointees, who in turn make their own appointments

Mexico: Political Institutions (continued)

- Legislative Branch
 - National Congress: bicameral with members limited to one six-year term
 - Political monopoly of the PRI made the legislature a virtual “rubber stamp” until the 2000 election
 - Genuine coalition government formed during President Fox’s term in office



The Chamber of Deputies, part of Mexico’s legislature

Mexico: Political Institutions (continued)

- Judicial branch:
 - Structured much like the judiciary in the U.S.
 - Justices and judges appointed by the president with consent from the Senate
- The bureaucracy:
 - Built on a system of patronage starting at the executive branch
 - Most civil servants loyal to their patron, not their job

Mexico: Political Institutions (continued)



Mexican soldiers patrolling for drug runners

- Military has mostly concerned itself with enforcement and defense
- Local governments constitutionally and financially subordinate to national government
- Patronage system deeply ingrained in local politics

Mexico: Citizens, Society, and the State

Several significant cleavages:

- Racial
- Geographic
- Economic
- Social classes (in ascending order):
 - Rural farmers and Amerindians
 - Urban poor and unskilled workers
 - Working class
 - Middle class
 - Upper-middle class
 - Rich landowners



Mexico: Citizens, Society, and the State (continued)



Logo of the *Partido Revolucionaro Institucional* (PRI)

Interest groups and influence:

- Prior to 2000 election, the PRI could counter the effects of opposition groups
- Part of the patron-client system
- Most influence done within the party and/or at the local level
- National government selects schools' curricula
- Voting mandatory and many Mexicans politically active
- Mexico's political culture has been marked by violence

Mexico: Political and Economic Change

- Mexico has enjoyed a long run of stable political leadership due to:
 - Revolutionary pride
 - Presidential term limits
 - Pragmatic approach to politics and solving disputes
- PRI lost in 2000 and 2006 for several reasons:
 - Growth of the middle class
 - Economic crisis of the 1990s
 - Privatization of key industries
 - Advances in communications technology

Mexico: Public Policy

- Issues that make public policy difficult to implement:
 - PRI's legacy still evident in Mexican politics
 - Rise in influence of other political parties
 - Legislative coalitions of opposition parties
- Important issues to address:
 - Expanded economic growth
 - Global competition
 - U.S. immigration policy
 - Drug trade