

ANTH 179

The Anthropology of Mexico

Instructor: Professor R. González

Semester: Fall 2007

Classroom: DMH 166

Meeting time: TTH 3:00-4:15 pm

Introduction

Conquest, commerce, and migration have made and remade contemporary Mexico. This course critically analyzes concepts underlying the idea and reality of the Mexican nation-state by examining its history, land, and people from anthropological perspectives. The course begins with a brief review of the pre-Hispanic period then focuses upon colonial, revolutionary, and contemporary periods in Mesoamerican history—periods from which modern Mexican society emerged.

We will begin with an overview of key 20th century works by Mexicans and North Americans who formulated analytical concepts, often with instrumental goals in mind (such as nation-building and economic development). The role of Mexico's indigenous people as subjects of anthropological inquiry and intervention will be an important theme for discussion. In the latter part of the course, we will review recent events—the 1968 massacre at Tlatelolco, the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, the economic crises of 1982 and 1996, "free" trade, guerrilla uprisings in Chiapas and Oaxaca, and migration, among others—that have prompted intellectuals and the public to rethink assumptions about contemporary Mexico.

We will use the following texts, all of which are available at the campus bookstore:

Sons of the Shaking Earth by Eric Wolf

True Tales from Another Mexico by Sam Quinones

Nothing, Nobody by Elena Poniatowska

Zapotec Science by Roberto González

In addition, we will use a supplemental course reader available for purchase at Maple Press (at 481 E. San Carlos Street). All materials will be on reserve at King Library. Much of the course material will be covered during the lectures, so it is critical that you attend class and take detailed lecture notes. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Office Information

Office hours are held Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30-2:30 pm and Thursdays from 4:30-7:30 pm in CL402G. I may be reached by telephone at 924-5715.

Course Assignments and Policies

Course grades will be based upon two mid-term examinations (on October 4 and November 7), a cumulative final examination (on December 13), and five unannounced quizzes:

Midterm 1	25% of course grade
Midterm 2	25% of course grade
Final exam	35% of course grade
Quizzes	15% of course grade

All assignments must be completed in order to pass. No late assignments will be accepted unless student presents documentary evidence of illness, death in family, jury duty, etc. No assignments *will be accepted* via e-mail—I must receive hard copies of all assignments. No makeup exams will be given unless student presents documentary evidence of illness, death in family, jury duty, etc. Cell phones must be turned off during class to avoid disruption. Any student who allows a cell phone to ring during class will first be given a warning. A second infraction of this rule will be promptly reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Laptop computers are not permitted in class unless you have a note from the Disability Resource Center. You should write lecture notes by hand, or else make audio recordings of lectures and transcribe them after class.

Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty will be reported to the University. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at SJSU, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The University's academic integrity policy can be found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>.

Disabled students with special needs should make arrangements with me as soon as possible. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. SJSU Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Department Learning Objectives

1. Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution.
2. Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
3. Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline.
4. Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history.
5. Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society.
6. Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.
7. Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.
8. Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology, and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one sub-discipline.
9. Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.
10. Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research.

Grading Distribution

100-97 A+	89-87 B+	79-77 C+	69-67 D+
96 - 93 A	86-83 B	76-73 C	66-63 D
92 - 90 A-	82-80 B-	72-70 C-	>63 F

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1 (Aug 23) Informational Class Meeting
(No required readings)

Week 2 (Aug 28-30) Introduction
Read: Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapter 1

Week 3 (Sept 4-Sept 6) Mesoamerican Civilization I—Olmec, Maya, Zapotec and Mixtec Societies
Read: Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapters 2-4

Week 4 (Sept 11-Sept 13) Mesoamerican Civilization II—Toltec and Mexica Societies
Read: Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapters 5-7
Film: "Aztecs: Inside the Hidden Empire"

Week 5 (Sept 18-Sept 20) Conquest, Colonialism, and Early Capitalism in New Spain
Read: Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapters 8-9

Week 6 (Sept 25-Sept 27) "So Far from God, So Close to the United States"—Mexico and the U.S.
Read: *Howard Zinn, "We Take Nothing by Conquest, Thank God"
Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapter 10
Film: "Ahí Está el Detalle" (Part I)

Week 7 (Oct 2-Oct 4) The 1910 Revolution and *Lo Mexicano*
Read: Eric Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chapter 11
*Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "The Indian Resurgence in Mexico"
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Introduction"
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "The Ballad of Chalino"
Film: "Ahí Está el Detalle" (Part II)

MIDTERM 1—October 4

Week 8 (Oct 9-Oct 11) Megalopolis—Mexico City in Anthropological Perspective
Read: Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Tepito"
Elena Poniatowska, *Nothing, Nobody*
Film: "Los Olvidados" (Part I)

Week 9 (Oct 16-Oct 18) Twentieth Century Modernization Projects
Read: Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "The Popsicle Kings"
Elena Poniatowska, *Nothing, Nobody*
Film: "Los Olvidados" (Part II)

Week 10 (Oct 23-Oct 25) Gender Roles in Contemporary Mexico
Read: Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Dead Women of Juárez"
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "The Jotos of La Fogata"
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Telenovela"
Film: "Global Assembly Line"

Week 11 (Oct 30-Nov 1) Mass Culture, Migration, and NAFTA

Read: Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "West Side Kansas Street"
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Nuevo Chupícuaro"

Week 12 (Nov 6-Nov 8) Indigenous Communities, Past and Present

Read: Roberto González, *Zapotec Science*, Chapters 1-2
Film: "Sacred Games" or "Oaxacan Hoops"

MIDTERM 2—November 7

Week 13 (Nov 13-Nov 15) Ecology and Culture in Rural Mexico

Read: Roberto González, *Zapotec Science*, Chapters 3-4

Week 14 (Nov 20) The Last Campesino? Dilemmas in the Countryside

Read: Roberto González, *Zapotec Science*, Chapters 5-6
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "San Quintín"
Film: "Little Injustices"

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY—NOVEMBER 22 - 25

Week 15 (Nov 27-Nov 29) Challenges to Neoliberalism—Zapatistas, APPO, and Resistance

Read: Roberto González, *Zapotec Science*, Chapters 7-8
*Eric Ross, "La Coyuntura"
Film: "A Place Called Chiapas" (Part I)

Week 16 (Dec 4-Dec 6) Mexican Futures—21st Century Porfiriato or New Civil Society?

Read: *"Risking Corn, Risking Culture" by Claire Cummings
Sam Quinones, *True Tales from Another Mexico*, "Afterward"
Film: "A Place Called Chiapas" (Part II)

FINAL EXAM—Thursday, December 13 (2:45-5:00 pm) in regular class meeting room

*Articles marked with an asterisk are included in the course reader.