

Ruth Hurtado

Spanish 307

History and Politics of Mexico

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### **Portfolio**

Introduction: I am taking this course for two reasons. The first reason I took this course was because it was a requirement for major that I want to obtain at the end of my journey here at California State University, Monterey Bay. The second and main reason I chose to enroll in this class was because I wanted to learn more about the history about the country where my parents came from. As for personal outcomes, I wanted to take this class because of the topics that were going to be discussed in this course. As I mentioned before there are courses that are taught while we are in high school that focus more on the history of the United States and not so much the history of the rest of the world. For this course, I personally feel like it is extremely important for me to know how the country where my family came from whether it is the good or the bad aspects of the country including the struggles that they had to overcome to get to where the country of Mexico is at in present day even though they are still a bit corrupted in the political and the economic aspects of the country and not so much the cultural point of view along with the social aspect of the country. I also saw this as an opportunity to take this course so I can get more informed so I can go out and tell others of the historical background of the large country that is Mexico because there are a lot of people out there that do not really know how they came to be what they are now.

**Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Learning Outcomes:

- describe and characterize the different indigenous cultures of Mexico

Activities:

- Review of “The Search for ‘Lo Mexicano’”
- Introduction to Ancient Civilization
- Analyze “The Origins of the Aztecs”
- Analyze “The Cost of Courage in Aztec Society”

Reflection

On this day, I learned way more that caught than I thought that I would that would catch my attention. When we went over The Problem of the national culture something that caught my attention that most was that they claim or state that the true Mexico was represented by the Indians and the mestizos who were from the Mesoamerican. What I learned fitted into more of a comprehensive aspect because I was going up I would watch a television show that would be a focus was on Mestizo life but I was so young that I did not understand the concept of being a considered a Mestizo. This will help me on the long run because it will help with my future career that I want to have after I graduate I am still a bit unsure if I want to become a teacher for high schoolers or if I want to go on with teaching at a college level. The difference that this has given me as far as an intellectual person is that the more I know about the history of Mexico that I obtain that more I can go out with my family and my friends and go out to share what I have learned throughout this course of Spring semester. Not only did I find that Mesoamerican culture interesting I also really intrigued in the formative period because also when I was a small child I would have a Mayan Calendar hanging on my wall and I always wanted to know where it had originated from and I would have always ask my father or my mother and they would not know the full history behind it and now that I do I want to keep learning more about the Mayan culture and the background history of this beautiful culture.

*Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>*

Learning Outcomes:

- characterize and explain Mexico's independence movement

Activities:

- Critically analyze "US-Mexican War"
- Describe and define "Manifest Destiny"
- Discuss the roles played by James K. Polk and Antonio López de Santa Anna

Reflection

On Thursday, we learned more about the significance of the United States- Mexico war because I did not know that I was mostly describing that this was a struggle for land and power as well as the identity of the country. As the United States came out to the war for a regional power that would lead them to getting the world power. Not only was the war focused on that it was also a way to shape up the destiny that both countries would be taking on after the war. At the beginning of the war the United States and Mexico were neighbors but then later became strangers as they went into the war. I also learned more about how the war was the hour of sacrifice because of all the land and lives that were lost as this war took place. This lesson really helped me acquire the full background of this Mexican American war because while I was in high school this war was a topic that the professors would present for a day and would not test the students because they never finished giving the full presentation on the war and they would move on to focusing on the other topic that the United States was heavily involved with as well. This lesson helped me develop as a student because I am more aware of the struggles and the issues that the United States and Mexico had to face to get the outcomes from this war and how many lives had to be lost in order for the United States and Mexico to get what they gained and now to this day continue to fight over some things that are really unnecessary because of the president that currently has the power of the United States which will not benefit the country in the long run because the president has the power is just setting the country to where it was before. With that being said it helps a lot to know all this information so then later we can go and spread the word to try to have a better life.

*Thursday, April 20th*

Learning Outcomes:

- describe and analyze the Mexican Revolution and its impact on society

Activities:

- Describe the characteristics of the Porfiriato
- Discuss: *The Costs of Modernization*

Reflection

In class, we reviewed the Porfiriato during class which helped me understand better who Porfirio Diaz was and how he became to be such a well-known person in the Mexican empire. What I learned was that this that this was during the 1876 until he was not able to be successful in the year 1911. I also didn't know that the Porfiriato was symbolic for the dominance of the strong figure and then having the political order then leading to have stability along with able to obtain the central authority. Not only did it symbolize the period in which the Mexican power was achieving the fact of being considerable but it was not in a good way. Porfirio Diaz also helped with the economic growth of Mexico. Also in this era, it was also a time of social illnesses that started with the child and the then it continued to the labor to peasant exploitation. Something that I learned that I didn't know was about the científicos and how they were the major supporters of the dictatorship of Diaz. At the beginning of this class period I did not know anything about Porfirio Diaz and anything like that except he was someone well known in the Mexican history and was someone that a lot of people looked up to. with this information that I obtained during class I was able to come to the conclusion that there are a lot of information that I thought I knew until I took this class. Having being enrolled in this course was a good choice that I made because I am now more aware of what really went on during the Porfiriato and that era. Not knowing this information before made me a bit ignorant because as I have stated before I wanted to know more about the country where my family comes from and now knowing all this information really helps my intellectual status because I am now more aware of how Mexico became to be and all the leaders that they had to through to put the country where it is now.