Hist 390H: The Mexican Revolution

Although best known for the military phase that featured such colorful figures as Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican Revolution encompassed a range of state-building projects, ideologies, and social movements. As one of the great social, political and cultural movements of the modern world, and it continues to define Mexican national identity today. For many years, the standard myth of the Revolution claimed it was a movement for social justice that stopped the sale of Mexico to foreigners, replaced an oligarchy with a bourgeois state, and destroyed oppressive land and labor systems. Few would now accept such easy interpretations, but what should replace them? How should we describe the evolution of the revolutionary state, the role of leaders as well as ordinary people in the Revolution, and the amount of real change that it brought to Mexico? Students develop their own interpretations by analyzing books, articles, novels, art, and film.