Between History and Literature: The Cristero Rebellion (1926-1929)

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Abstract

In the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution there was a concerted effort by the State to foster a nationalism based on the Mexican identity that was revealed through the revolutionary process. This *mexicanidad* was to be cemented by breaking loose from the European past and was to go hand in hand with a new nationalism that would exalt Mexico’s pre-Colombian past. The Catholic Church stood as a symbol of the old regime, and an obstacle to the modernisation of the country. President Calles moved to annul the pivotal role of the Catholic Church in Mexican life, setting the stage for a civil war that cost numerous lives, with mortality estimates as high as 100,000. This was a Catholic revitalization movement, the Cristero Rebellion of 1926-1929. This paper examines the revalist discourses that underlie literary treatments of this rebellion and their intersection with textual representations in historical testimony and the subsequent historiography.