When the Mexicas founded Tenochtitlan in 1325 they did so with a double, conflicting task: serving Huitzilopochtli, their tutelary god, and serving Tláloc, the god of the region Huitzilopochtli selected for them. This talk will trace the tensions between the different political configurations possible in the two economies derived from faithfulness to one deity or the other in the pre-Hispanic period, but also during and after the Mexican agrarian Revolution of 1910-1921. It is in this latter period that some of the most interesting themes emerging from pre-Hispanic times, especially from what Tláloc represented, once again become important for the political imagination in fiction and political texts alike.

Ivonne del Valle is Associate Professor of Colonial Studies at UC Berkeley. Her research and teaching make connections between the past and the present which try to show the relevance of the colonial period for an understanding of contemporary times. She was co-director of the Berkeley research group “Mexico and the Rule of Law.” She has written a book and a series of articles on the Jesuits (José de Acosta and Loyola, and Jesuits in the northern borderlands of New Spain) as a particularly influential politico-religious order that served modernization and the expansion of the Spanish empire.