

The History of Mexico

Burton Kirkwood

 **Greenwood**
PUBLISHING GROUP

THE
HISTORY OF
MEXICO

ADVISORY BOARD

John T. Alexander

*Professor of History and Russian and European Studies,
University of Kansas*

Robert A. Divine

*George W. Littlefield Professor in American History Emeritus,
University of Texas at Austin*

John V. Lombardi

*Professor of History,
University of Florida*

THE HISTORY OF MEXICO

SECOND EDITION

Burton Kirkwood

The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations
Frank W. Thackeray and John E. Findling, Series Editors

GREENWOOD PRESS
An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC

A B C  C L I O

Santa Barbara, California • Denver, Colorado • Oxford, England

Copyright 2010 by J. Burton Kirkwood

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kirkwood, Burton.

The history of Mexico / Burton Kirkwood. — 2nd ed.

p. cm. — (The Greenwood histories of the modern nations)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-313-36601-7 (alk. paper) — ISBN 978-0-313-36602-4 (ebook)

1. Mexico—History. I. Title. II. Series.

F1226.K57 2010

972—dc22 2009036964

14 13 12 11 10 1 2 3 4 5

This book is also available on the World Wide Web as an eBook.
Visit www.abc-clio.com for details.

Greenwood Press
An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC

ABC-CLIO, LLC
130 Cremona Drive, P.O. Box 1911
Santa Barbara, California 93116-1911

This book is printed on acid-free paper 
Manufactured in the United States of America

Contents

Series Foreword	vii
Preface	xi
Timeline of Historical Events	xv
1 Mexico Today	1
2 Mexico's Early Inhabitants	15
3 The Conquest	35
4 The Colonial Era, 1521–1821	51
5 The Wars of Mexican Independence, 1808–1821	77
6 The Aftermath of Independence, 1821–1876	91
7 The Porfiriato, 1876–1911	113

8	The Mexican Revolution, 1910–1920	129
9	Consolidation of the Revolution	151
10	The Revolution Moves to the Right, 1940–1970	169
11	The Search for Stability, 1970–1999	185
12	Mexico since 2000	205
	Notable People in the History of Mexico	223
	Bibliographic Essay	235
	Index	245

Series Foreword

The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations series is intended to provide students and interested laypeople with up-to-date, concise, and analytical histories of many of the nations of the contemporary world. Not since the 1960s has there been a systematic attempt to publish a series of national histories, and as series advisors, we believe that this series will prove to be a valuable contribution to our understanding of other countries in our increasingly interdependent world.

Some 40 years ago, at the end of the 1960s, the Cold War was an accepted reality of global politics. The process of decolonization was still in progress, the idea of a unified Europe with a single currency was unheard of, the United States was mired in a war in Vietnam, and the economic boom in Asia was still years in the future. Richard Nixon was president of the United States, Mao Tse-tung (not yet Mao Zedong) ruled China, Leonid Brezhnev guided the Soviet Union, and Harold Wilson was prime minister of the United Kingdom. Authoritarian dictators still controlled most of Latin America, the Middle East was reeling in the wake of the Six-Day War, and Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was at the height of his power in Iran.

Since then, the Cold War has ended; the Soviet Union has vanished, leaving 15 independent republics in its wake; the advent of the computer age has radically transformed global communications; the rising demand for oil makes

the Middle East still a dangerous flashpoint; and the rise of new economic powers such as the People's Republic of China and India threatens to bring about a new world order. All of these developments have had a dramatic impact on the recent history of every nation of the world.

For this series, which was launched in 1998, we first selected nations whose political, economic, and sociocultural affairs marked them as among the most important of our time. For each nation, we found an author who was recognized as a specialist in the history of that nation. These authors worked cooperatively with us and with Greenwood Press to produce volumes that reflected current research on their nations and that were interesting and informative to their readers. In the first decade of the series, more than 40 volumes were published, and as of 2008, some are moving into second editions.

The success of the series has encouraged us to broaden our scope to include additional nations, whose histories have had significant effects on their regions, if not on the entire world. In addition, geopolitical changes have elevated other nations into positions of greater importance in world affairs, and so we have chosen to include them in this series as well. The importance of a series such as this cannot be underestimated. As a superpower whose influence is felt all over the world, the United States can claim a "special" relationship with almost every other nation. Yet many Americans know very little about the histories of nations with which the United States relates. How did they get to be the way they are? What kind of political systems have evolved there? What kind of influence do they have on their own regions? What are the dominant political, religious, and cultural forces that move their leaders? These and many other questions are answered in the volumes of this series.

The authors who contribute to this series write comprehensive histories of their nations, dating back, in some instances, to prehistoric times. Each of them, however, has devoted a significant portion of their book to events of the past 40 years because the modern era has contributed the most to contemporary issues that have an impact on U.S. policy. Authors make every effort to be as up-to-date as possible so that readers can benefit from discussion and analysis of recent events.

In addition to the historical narrative, each volume contains an introductory chapter giving an overview of that country's geography, political institutions, economic structure, and cultural attributes. This is meant to give readers a snapshot of the nation as it exists in the contemporary world. Each history also includes supplementary information following the narrative, which may include a time line that represents a succinct chronology of the nation's historical evolution, biographical sketches of the nation's most important historical figures, and a glossary of important terms or concepts that are usually expressed in a foreign language. Finally, each author prepares a comprehensive bibliography for readers who wish to pursue the subject further.

Readers of these volumes will find them fascinating and well-written. More importantly, they will come away with a better understanding of the contemporary world and the nations that compose it. As series advisors, we hope that this series will contribute to a heightened sense of global understanding as we move through the early years of the 21st century.

*Frank W. Thackeray and John E. Findling
Indiana University Southeast*

Preface

I am delighted that *The History of Mexico*—and more importantly, the subject of the history of Mexico—has generated enough interest to merit a second edition with ABC-CLIO. As I indicated in the first edition, the good news is that interest in Mexico has continued in recent years, and more are attempting to learn about the country. Some of this interest has followed news about immigration from Mexico, cheap pharmaceuticals, easy spring-break trips for college students, economic relationships, NAFTA, the rebellion in Chiapas, the defeat of PRI in 2000, the recent 2009 fear about the H1N1 flu virus, and unfortunately, the escalating violence associated with the drug trade. The bad news is that many have only cursory knowledge of Mexico; many have not spent much time reading or thinking about Mexico's people, culture, and history, so stereotypes continue to creep into people's discussions about Mexico.

Since *The History of Mexico* was published in 2000, startling changes have occurred in Mexico and the world. The most obvious was the election in July 2000 of Vicente Fox as president of Mexico. Fox, from the opposition Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), defeated Francisco Labastida of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the Partido Revolucionario Democrático. Fox galvanized attention in the domestic and international press. The election garnered a great deal of international attention as people began to understand that the long-talked-about path to democracy

might be taking place in Mexico. News about the election in Mexico dominated headlines around the world. In July 2000 Fox won the presidential election, the first candidate not from the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) to win a presidential race since the PRI was established in 1929.

The goal of this book is to introduce secondary school students and the mainstream public to the history of Mexico. By examining Mexico in a succinct and, hopefully, readable history, this text will provide the reader with greater analysis than the traditional world history books or the Latin American texts in which a discussion of Mexico is limited to a relatively few pages. But this should be only the beginning. It is my hope that after reading this book, the reader will engage in further study of Mexico. To encourage additional reading about this remarkable country, I have included an annotated bibliography of English-language works that a student might consider for a greater examination of specific historical periods.

Creating a separate book about Mexico is a daunting task. To write a book about any country's history forces the author to determine what needs to be introduced and, of course, what will be omitted. This study of Mexico follows a traditional chronological development of prominent themes of the nation's political, social, and economic evolution. The first half of the book discusses the arrival of the first peoples into the Western Hemisphere and their successful creation of political, economic, and social institutions. Much of these indigenous systems are challenged and destroyed with the arrival of the Spanish at the end of the 15th century. First the implementation of the Spanish colonial system and then Mexico's attempts at self-rule in the 19th century complete the first half. The second half concentrates on Mexico's history from the emergence of Porfirio Díaz in 1876 through the 1910 Revolution and the struggles to implement the goals of the revolutionary period. The book concludes with a new chapter examining the historical evolution taking place in Mexico since 2000.

Supporting material in the form of a time line, with important events and their corresponding dates, can be found at the beginning of this book. In the appendix at the end of the book, a list of some of Mexico's more influential historical figures with brief biographical sketches will provide the reader some additional information that may not exist in the main text.

Recognizing that many are not familiar with Spanish, the use of Spanish terms and phrases has been minimized. Where necessary, however, Spanish terms are italicized. In each case, an accompanying explanation of the term follows.

The preparation of this edition involved the assistance and support of several people. I want to thank John Findling and Frank Thackeray at Indiana University Southeast for their support in the preparation of the original manuscript. Special thanks to Kaitlin Ciarmiello at ABC-CLIO for her support and

patience in guiding me through the completion of this edition. Also Jennifer Boelter was of particular help in the final stages of getting this edition to press. Over the years my family, friends, colleagues, and the students who have taken my courses on Mexico have helped in their inimitable ways in supporting me to complete this edition. I want to thank Anthony Tuck, Brad Cohen, Danny Gahan, Annette Parks, Tamara Wandel, and Bill Baer for their quiet support and encouragement. Students of mine have also assisted in the development of this project. The majority of students helped in the preparation of this book by taking my classes and quietly serving as sounding boards for the different ways I attempt to introduce them to Mexico. Others played a more direct role. In an earlier draft Cindy Meyer reviewed certain sections for clarity. Most recently, Maryclare Kirkwood has encouraged and championed my efforts to complete this edition; on several occasions she helped provide clarity when I could not find it. The arrival of our son, Benjamin Kirkwood, in May 2007 is a constant reminder of the joys of learning and the opportunity to share our passions. Although these people have aided in this project, the errors and weaknesses of this book are mine alone.

Finally, three other people deserve mention for ways they have guided me. Rodney D. Anderson introduced me to Mexico and early on shaped my views of Mexico and the Mexican people. His role as a model historian is an example I can only hope to emulate. C. Peter Ripley, friend and mentor, has consistently listened to my complaints and shared in the minor victories, and for that I am indebted. My dad and very good friend, Jim Kirkwood, died as this edition was being completed, in August 2009. He was surprised to read his name in his son's book, but he learned that over the years he had a lot to do with the decisions I have made.

Timeline of Historical Events

35,000–50,000 B.C.	First peoples cross Bering Strait and enter Western Hemisphere
pre-3500 B.C.	Emergence of sustainable agriculture
700 B.C.	Appearance of Olmec civilization
500 B.C.–A.D. 700	Monte Albán: civilization in modern-day state of Oaxaca
400 B.C.–A.D. 800	Mayan civilization
A.D. 200–800	Teotihuacán: powerful city-state north of modern-day Mexico City
A.D. 900–1200	Toltec civilization
1400–1521	Aztec civilization
1440–1468	Moctezuma I: principal ruler in the early consolidation of Aztec rule
1492	Arrival of Spanish explorers in Western Hemisphere
1502–1520	Moctezuma II: Aztec ruler when the Spanish arrived in 1519

1519	Jerónimo de Aguilar (shipwrecked Spaniard found by Hernán Cortés); Doña Marina (introduced to Cortés); Spanish land at Veracruz and establish city; encounter with Tlaxcalans; massacre at Cholula
November 8, 1519	Arrival at Tenochtitlán (Aztec capital city)
1519	Arrest of Moctezuma II
July 1, 1520	<i>La noche triste</i> (the sad night)
August 13, 1521	Fall of Tenochtitlán
1521	Settlement of New Spain begins
1522	Arrival of missionaries
1529	Arrival of Bishop Juan de Zumárraga
1531	Juan Diego sees the Virgin of Guadalupe
1535	Arrival of first viceroy—Don Antonio de Mendoza
1540s	Bartolomé de las Casas protests Spanish practices toward Indians
1542	Founding of Guadalajara
1542	New Laws protect Indians against exploitation
1553	Establishment of University of Mexico at Mexico City
1651–1695	Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: intellectual and critic of religious and social practices for women
18th century	Bourbon reforms enacted
September 16, 1810	Father Hidalgo and the Grito de Dolores
February 24, 1821	Plan de Iguala announces Mexico's break from Spain
September 1821	Independence from Spain
May 1822–February 1823	Mexican empire
1794–1876	Antonio López de Santa Anna
1836	War with Texas
1838	Pastry War

Timeline of Historical Events

xvii

1846–1848	U.S.–Mexican War
1848	Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo
1854	Revolution de Ayutla
1857	Constitution of 1857
1858–1861	War of the Reform
May 5, 1862	Battle of Puebla (Cinco de Mayo)
1862–1867	French occupation
June 19, 1867	Execution of Hapsburg prince Ferdinand Maximilian
1872–1876	Presidency of Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada
1872	Veracruz–Mexico City railroad is completed
1876–1911	Dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (the Porfiriato)
1880–1884	Presidency of Manuel González
1906	Strike at Cananea textile facility
1907	Strike at Río Blanco
1908	U.S. journalist James Creelman interviews Porfirio Díaz
1909	Francisco Madero publishes <i>The Presidential Succession in 1910</i>
1910	Porfirio Díaz wins his last presidential election; Francisco Madero is jailed; Plan de San Luis Potosí
February 1913	Assassination of Madero
1914	United States occupies Veracruz; convention at Aguascalientes
1915	Battle of Celaya; United States recognizes Constitution- alists
1916–1917	Constitution of 1917 is created
1919	Assassination of Emiliano Zapata
1920	Plan de Agua Prieta; assassination of Venustiano Carranza
1920–1924	Presidency of Alvaro Obregón
1923	Bucareli Agreements; De la Huerta revolt; assassination of Pancho Villa
1924–1928	Presidency of Plutarco Elias Calles

1926–1929	Cristero Rebellion
1928	Assassination of Obregón
1928–1934	Maximato (period of dominance by <i>jefe máximo</i> Plutarco Elias Calles)
1929	Creation of Partido Revolucionario Mexicano and origin of Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)
1934–1940	Presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas
1937	Nationalization of railroads
1938	Nationalization of oil industry
1940–1946	Presidency of Manuel Avila Camacho
1942	Mexico declares war against Germany
1946–1952	Presidency of Miguel Alemán Valdés
1952	Expansion of National University of Mexico
1952–1958	Presidency of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines
1958–1964	Presidency of Adolfo López Mateos; expansion of land distribution programs
1964–1970	Presidency of Gustavo Daz Ordaz
1968	Tlatelolco massacre; Olympic Games at Mexico City
1970–1976	Presidency of Luis Echeverría
1976–1982	Presidency of José López Portillo
1980	Mexico's oil reserves grow
1980s	Oil crisis
1982–1988	Presidency of Miguel de la Madrid
1982	Nationalization of bank industry
1985	Mexico City earthquake
1988	Election of Carlos Salinas de Gortari
1994	North American Free Trade Agreement; EZLN rebellion; assassinations of Luis Donaldo Colosio and José Francisco Ruiz Massieu; election of Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León

1997	Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas wins Mexico City mayoral election
1999	Pope John Paul II visits Mexico; conviction of Raúl Salinas for conspiracy in the murder of Ruiz Massieu
2000	Vicente Fox (PAN) wins the presidential election—first defeat for PRI in 71 years
2001	Fox meets with newly elected George W. Bush
2001	Zapatista rebels walk to Mexico City from Chiapas to engage with Fox administration
September 11, 2001	Attack on World Trade Center in New York City
2003	United States invades Iraq; the Fox administration does not support the U.S. initiative
2006	Felipe Calderón (PAN) wins the presidential election in closely contested victory over Andrés Manuel López Obrador (PRD)
2008	Marks the bloodiest year to date in the war over the drug trade—an estimated 6,300 killed
2009	Swine flu outbreak believed to have originated in Mexico