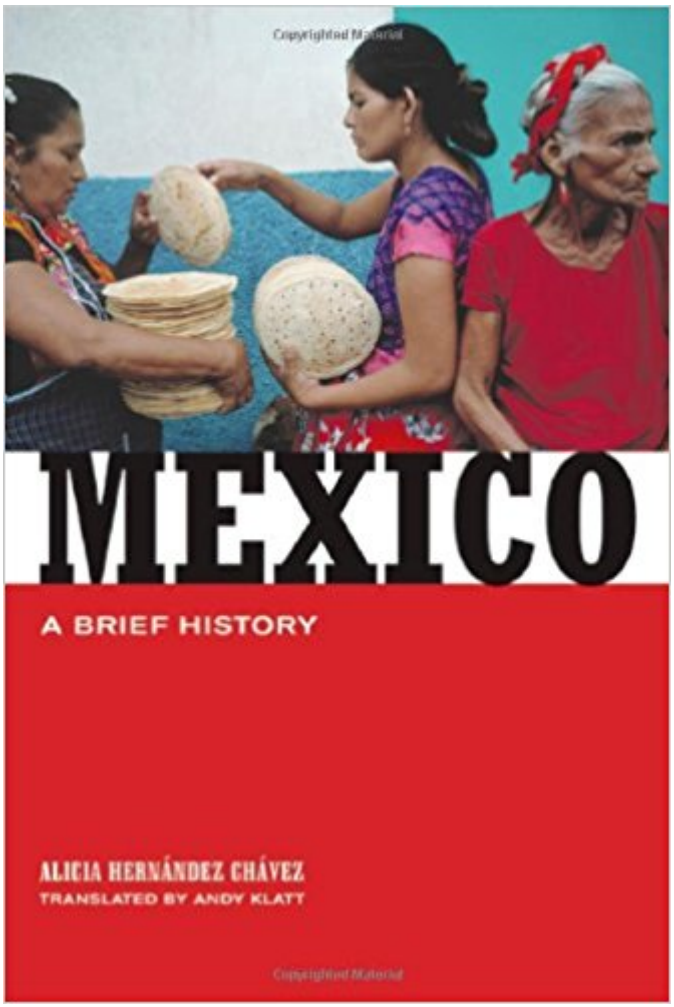
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# Mexico: A Brief History




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## Synopsis

Beginning with the pre-Hispanic period and ending with the latest democratic developments of the twenty-first century, this definitive one-volume history of Mexico analyzes the ways that economic, social, and political dynamics have interacted to shape the nation's past. Alicia HernÃƒÂ¡ndez ChÃƒÂ¡vez takes into account new historiography—which is fully integrated with anthropology, political science, economics, and international relations—to present an original and fresh interpretation of the structures and processes that determined the country's evolution. Based on the latest sources in both Spanish and other languages, this book illustrates that Mexico's history—far from being one of violent change, uprisings, and revolution—tended more toward stability and political collaboration. HernÃƒÂ¡ndez ChÃƒÂ¡vez argues that Mexicans relied on tradition and institutions to effect change, resorting to disorder and destruction as little as possible. Numerous maps, tables, and charts support the text, providing extensive information on geography, social structures, the economy, politics, education, health, and transportation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Alicia HernÃƒÂ¡ndez ChÃƒÂ¡vez is Professor at the Centro de Estudios HistÃƒÂ ricos at El Colegio de MÃƒÂ©xico. She is the author of La nueva relaciÃƒÂ n entre legislativo y ejecutivo: La polÃƒÂ-tica econÃƒÂ mica, 1982-1997 (1998), La tradiciÃƒÂ n republicana del buen gobierno (1999), and Anenecuilco: Memoria y vida de un pueblo (1993).

It’s good to have a history of Mexico in English which is written by a Mexican scholar. It tends to reflect the concerns of Mexicans rather than the fashionable obsessions of academics in the United States or Great Britain, and these are, for the most part, more taken with politics, power, and socieconomic questions than with race, class and gender. And that’s the real strength of this history: it isn’t afraid to talk about the evolution and mechanics of the PRI, so it is immediately easier for an outsider to understand its durability as a political machine. It’s also quite perceptive in the way it sets the table for the so-called "Mexican Miracle" of 1940-1970: Hernandez Chavez understands that the changes that were wrought by the Revolution and, in particular, by Lazaro Cardenas (1934-1940) were crucial to the success of the economic model, however one regards those results in terms of equity or efficiency. It’s also, blessedly, not a history cursed by neoclassical teleology: the development model employed in Mexico must have been "wrong" because things went sour in the 1980s. Sorry, not so. Go back and look at Clark Reynolds classic book published in 1970 on the Mexican economy: if there was trouble in Paradise, Reynolds, nobody’s fool, didn’t see it coming. In fact, there were intimations of structural problems in some of the analyses floating around after the Tlatelolco massacre in 1968, but no one seemed to think they were insuperable--and that’s probably because they weren’t. Hernandez Chaves is also openly skeptical of the "nothing but decline" model of Mexico after 1810, and even if you don’t buy her analysis, well, you suspect her skepticism is not misplaced, and closer to a Mexican account of things. So what’s not to like? The book is a textbook, but it’s not a textbook for beginners. Someone who already is in on the kinds of things that academics discuss--like other professionals--will not doubt find this book to be the best one volume history available in English, because it is. But if you know nothing about Mexico, this is probably not a good place to begin: my experience is that its strengths (broad but detailed coverage, sophisticated thinking, ample data) will probably overwhelm a neophyte. On the other hand, if you’re ambitious, go for it. You’ll get some insight into how Mexicans see their history, which, frankly, is about the only perspective that really matters.

book to use at the university

It was in excellent condition

I read this to get a general overview of Mexican history. It does cover all the major events but in trying to be completely unbiased, this book comes off as practically useless. Porifiro Diaz was a dictator. It’s unnecessary to be ’unbiased’ about that. I only finished this because I’d already bought

it and didn't want to buy another general survey book.

Don't bother with this. This book is either poorly translated or poorly written...Hard to tell. It is difficult to follow and lacks any pattern of organization. I was looking at this book as a possible supplementary text for college students. It would never work, even for advanced students. I'm a PhD and lost on page 10 of this book.

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