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This volume is dedicated to my co-author, colleague, and close friend, Colin MacLachlan
and as always to Blue.
Contents

List of Figures xi
Notes on Contributors xv

Introduction: The Dimensions of the Mexican Experience 1

PART I: The Mexican Experience 11
1. Living the Vida Local: Contours of Everyday Life
   William E. French 13
2. On the Street Corner where Stereotypes are Born:
   Mexico City, 1940–1968
   Ricardo Pérez Montfort 34
3. Consumption and Material Culture from Pre-Contact through the Porfiriato
   Steven B. Bunker and Victor M. Macías-González 54
4. Consumption and Material Culture in the Twentieth Century
   Steven B. Bunker and Victor M. Macías-González 83
5. Geographic Regionalism and Natural Diversity
   Christopher R. Boyer 119
6. The Cactus Metaphor
   David Yetman 131

PART II: The Indigenous World Before the Europeans 143
7. The Gods Depart: Riddles of the Rise, Fall, and Regeneration
   of Mesoamerica’s Indigenous Societies
   Susan Kellogg 145
8. Painting History, Reading Painted Histories: Ethnoliteracy in Prehispanic Oaxaca and Colonial Central Mexico  
Elizabeth Bakewell and Byron Ellsworth Hamann  
163

PART III: The Silver Heart of the Spanish Empire: Colonial Experiences 193
Matthew Restall and Robert Schwaller  
195
10. The Kingdom of New Spain in the Seventeenth Century  
Linda A. Curcio-Nagy  
209
11. The Enlightened Colony  
Susan M. Deeds  
230

PART IV: Two Centuries of Independence: The Republican Century 249
12. Independence and the Generation of the Generals, 1810–1848  
Christon I. Archer  
251
13. The U.S. Intervention in Mexico, 1846–1848  
Linda Arnold  
262
14. Republicans and Monarchists, 1848–1867  
Erika Pani  
273
15. The Civilian and the General, 1867–1911  
Paul Garner  
288

Special Themes
16. The Penal Code of 1871: From Religious to Civil Control of Everyday Life  
Kathryn A. Sloan  
302
17. Conquering the Environment and Surviving Natural Disasters  
James A. Garza  
316
18. Indigenism in General and the Maya in Particular in the Nineteenth Century  
Terry Rugeley and Michele M. Stephens  
328
19. A Brief History of the Historia moderna de México  
Servando Ortoll and Pablo Piccato  
339
20. The House at Sadi Carnot 33: Amateur Photography and Domestic Architecture in Porfirian Culture  
Patricia Massé  
361
21. Disorder and Control: Crime, Justice and Punishment in Porfirian and Revolutionary Society  
Elisa Speckman Guerra  
371
CONTENTS

22. Military and Nation in Mexico, 1821–1916
   Stephen Neufeld

PART V: Two Centuries of Independence:
The Revolutionary Century

23. The Sonoran Dynasty and the Reconstruction of the Mexican State
   Jürgen Buchenau

24. Creating a Revolutionary Culture: Vasconcelos, Indians, Anthropologists, and Calendar Girls
   William H. Beezley

25. Counter Revolutionary Programs: Social Catholicism and the Cristeros
   Daniel Newcomer

   Susie Porter

   Roderic Ai. Camp

Special Themes

28. Photographing Indian Peoples: Ethnography as Kaleidoscope
   Deborah Dorotinsky

29. Challenges, Political Opposition, Economic Disaster, Natural Disaster and Democratization, 1968 to 2000
   Ariel Rodríguez Kuri

30. Fighting Bacteria, the Bible, and the Bottle: Projects to Create New Men, Women, and Children, 1910–1940
   Gretchen Pierce

31. Environment and Environmentalism
   Emily Wakild

32. Peculiarities of Mexican Diplomacy
   Monica Rankin and Dina Berger

33. Science and Public Health in the Century of Revolution
   Gabriela Soto Laveaga and Claudia Agostoni

34. A Century of Childhood: Growing up in Twentieth-Century Mexico
   Elena Jackson Albarrán

35. ¡De Pie y en Lucha! Indigenous Mobilizations After 1940
   María L. Olin Muñoz

36. Mexican Immigration to the United States
   Timothy J. Henderson
37. Sex, Death and Structuralism: Alternative Views of the Twentieth Century 616
   Paul Gillingham

38. For Further Research: Space, Sense, and Sensibility 633
   Ageeth Sluis

Index 654
Figures

8.1 Overview of Codex Nuttall pages 14 to 22. 164
8.2 Page 14 of the Codex Nuttall. 166
8.3 Pages 15 to 18 of the Codex Nuttall. 168
8.4 Pages 19 to 21 of the Codex Nuttall. 170
8.5 Page 22 of the Codex Nuttall. 172
8.6 Overview of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 173
8.7 Top scene of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 174
8.8 Cells 1 and 2 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 176
8.9 Cell 5 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 177
8.10 Cells 8 to 11 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 178
8.11 Cell 16 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 178
8.12 Cell 18 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 179
8.13 Cells 28 to 30 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala (center row), with cells 21 to 25 above and cells 33 to 37 below. 179
8.14 Cells 42 and 42 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 180
8.15 Cells 48 and 49 of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala. 180
FIGURES

8.16 Cells 15, 20, and 27 of the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*. 181

8.17 Macrocomposition in the *Codex Nuttall*: rivers and skybands on pages 14 to 22. 182

8.18 Macrocomposition in the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*: scenes with Malinche (shaded on left) and scenes with Santiago (shaded on right). 186

37.1 Latin American population growth in the twentieth century. Data from Oxford Latin American Economic History Database (OXLAD). 618

37.2 Mexican population distribution, urban vs rural settlement. Data from INEGI Estadísticas Históricas de México CD-ROM. 619

37.3 Death rates in the main sources and targets of internal migration. Data from INEGI, Estadísticas Históricas de México CD-ROM. 622

37.4 Infant mortality in twentieth-century Mexico and three comparatives. Data from INEGI Estadísticas Históricas de México CD-ROM, United Nations Statistics Division. 626

Plates

(Between pages 330 and 331)

1 This reconstructed plan shows the arrangement of the lots, the house, and its rooms. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

2 Mauricio Porraz, owner of the Tivoli de San Cosme, a recreation center, sold a piece of land to Juan Antonio Azurmendi that he joined with other properties to form the lot for the House at 33 Sadi Carnot Street. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

3 The construction of neighborhoods on the western outskirts of Mexico City had begun in the mid-nineteenth century and, in the 1890s, work began on the San Rafael neighborhood where the house would be located. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

4 The exterior of the house, through the use of photography, seems linked to nature. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

5 The Photographer worked hard to establish relationships between light and shadows in order to make the image and artistic quality. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
6 This photograph makes a connection between photography and construction as it focuses on the work of the stonemasons. The two master masons or architects, the arrangement of the stones, and the workers illustrate the hierarchy of technical expertise in construction. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

7 One unidentified person from the previous image appears again, suggesting that he is an engineer or architect directing construction. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

8 Although the person in this photo has his back to the camera, it appears that he is the same figure of authority as in Plates 6 and 7. It is possible he was a professor of architecture. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

9 The photographs of the garden may demonstrate nineteenth century romantic attitudes to nature, especially if it was placed in order. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

10 Certainly gardens such as the one in this photograph captured the desire to control nature and subjugate it to human regulation. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

11 The construction of the gardens and the techniques used in the photo share a fundamental concern with perspective. This photograph clearly illustrates this fascination. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

12 Again, the photograph and the garden both share the landscape designer’s and the photographer’s abiding interest in perspective. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

13 This rather curious photograph shows the photographer, Juan Antonio Azurmendi, pulling his large camera. This had to be staged because photographic equipment of the time did not allow snapshots. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

14 Here Daniel Garza (the individual seen in full length), the photographic assistant, holds a backdrop with another helper, so Azurmendi can photograph his wife and daughters. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

15 This and the following photograph provide the landscape context for the house. The lake and the section called the orchard identify the suburban location and its bucolic setting. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

16 The photograph establishes a register of the house and its location, a record of what and where it was at the time of construction. Fototeca Nacional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
17 Carl Lumholtz “Dr. Rubio” Guajochic, Chihuahua in Unknown Mexico, New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1902. Carl Lumholtz, Biblioteca del Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas – UNAM.

18 Bedros Tartarian, in Frederick Starr, Indians of Southern Mexico, Chicago, Lakeside Press, plate XXXVIII, “Aztec indian”, 1899. Bedros Tartarian, Biblioteca del Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas – UNAM.

19 Nicolás León, “Measurement of the ear, according to Bertillon” in Cátedra de Antropología Física Del Museo Nacional de Etnografía, Arqueología e Historia. Antropometría, México, Imprenta del Museo Nacional 1911. Biblioteca del Instituto de Investigaciones Nicolás León, Biblioteca del Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas – UNAM.

20 Raúl Estrada Discua, “Otomí mother” a view within the show Exposición Etnográfica, November 1946, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City. Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, UNAM. Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales – UNAM.


22 Raúl Estrada Discua, “Zapotecs from the Sierra, hats” Archivo México Indígena, cat. #4550 Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México 1939–1946. Courtesy of Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, UNAM. Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales – UNAM.

23 Luis Márquez Romay, photographs in Revista de Revistas, October 1, 1939. Biblioteca “Rubén Boníñaz Nuño” Nacional, Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, UNAM. Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas – UNAM.

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Introduction: The Dimensions of the Mexican Experience

This Companion recounts approximations. Here is the explanation: The Mexican experience, the lived history and culture of the peoples who have occupied and still occupy this land of diverse geography, biology, and ethnicity, has been recorded in captivating visual, aural, oral, glyphic, and written narratives. Modern historians have successfully recuperated only some of these rich, provocative, and dramatic accounts, usually with an emphasis on the rise of governing systems and their fall accompanied by destruction, death, and disappearance. Nevertheless, their remnants and glimmers become the echoes and ghosts that can be used to recreate an estimation of these past societies.

Approximations of the life that no longer exists are the best that can be accomplished, so that differences of opinion and interpretation abound about the appropriate emphasis, interpretation, and individuals. These differences themselves are fascinating, as they demonstrate the ancient Hindu story of the blind men and the elephant. In a delightful nineteenth-century poem about them, John Godfrey Saxe begins

> It was six men of Hindustan
> To learning much inclined,
> Who went to see the Elephant
> (Though all of them were blind),
> That each by observation
> Might satisfy his mind

Once he had described each effort at description and identification, Saxe concluded with a strophe about the debates:

> And so these men of Hindustan
> Disputed loud and long,
> Each in his own opinion
> Exceeding stiff and strong,
> Though each was partly in the right
> And all were in the wrong.

Like the learned Hindus, scholars have debated what this story means. Does it express the relativity or the inexpressible quality of complete, empirical knowledge, especially history? In this volume, the authors have dismissed both relative and inexpressive questions, and, as they provide their own narrative, have each discussed in detail the varying approximations. Rather than be concerned that each offers only an estimation of the past, we should delight in how the different accounts, when taken together, compose a mosaic that reveals a glimmer of the past as it was lived. Put another way, rather than dispute which description is the most correct, we should ask what view we get if we combine the approximations—and, with this insight, we are the richer for it.

Vanished peoples and extinct places make up history, and no matter how much the author attempts the scientific style or the social scientific jargon (often just literary analysis gone bad) or both, it remains a romantic endeavor. Far pavilions or day-old dreams, it makes no difference, describing each begins with a sense of romance (Levin, 1959). Knowing the variations of this romance make it richer and more interesting, so it becomes thought provoking. In sum, that is the goal of the authors of the chapters that follow: to review both amateur and professional approximations.

Efforts at systematic narratives about both Mexico’s history and culture began in the mid-nineteenth century, but earlier history deserves mention. Although not a comprehensive narrative, the Historia Antigua de México (1974), published in Bologna, Italy in 1780–1781 by a Jesuit priest expelled from Mexico had a great influence on the thinking of early Mexican nationalists. The author, the criollo Francisco Javier Clavijero, in the course of his work identified unique characteristics that might be seen as a precursory description of national identity. The book was translated into English, German, and Spanish, and achieved a wide audience.

Nevertheless, national surveys attempting comprehensive narratives did not appear until decades later. Emperor Maximilian, in the hope that political animosity could be put aside within the arts and sciences, founded the Imperial Academy of Science and Literature in 1866. He thought the Academy might foster reconciliation of the deeply divided society. At one of the Academy’s first meetings, Manuel Larrainzar, a politician and diplomat from Chiapas, presented an outline for the first general history of Mexico, from pre-Columbian times to the arrival of the Imperial couple. In the midst of a war between the Liberal forces of Benito Juárez and intervention troops of the French and Conservative forces of Maximilian, the time for such a general history that told a harmonious story of open-ended national development had not yet come. History and specifically public history rather became a battleground in which each contender fought to impose its own version of what Mexico had been, and hence of what it would be (Pani, 2011).

The first successful general history came in the now classic five-volume Mexico a través de los siglos (1883) directed by Vicente Riva Palacio. He created a chronology with the following periods, each the subject of one volume: first, Ancient History and the Conquest, ending in August, 1521; second, the Viceroyalty, 1521–1808, that is, the colonial period; third, the War for Independence; fourth, Independent Mexico, 1821–1855; and fifth, The Reform, 1855 to 1876. Each volume, he divided further into chapters based on chronology, so that change and progress evolved across the text. In the first volume, for example, he identified major cultural groups such as the Toltecs, Maya, and Mexica, each building on previous cultures and evolving toward increasingly sophisticated societies. Although Riva Palacio included a good deal of economic and cultural information, his political narrative dominated the text, following indigenous, Spanish
This multi-volume survey served as the inspiration, in many ways, for another major achievement written by the Minister of Public Instruction for Porfirio Díaz’s government. Justo Sierra wrote poetry and literature before turning to history with several efforts that resulted in his Evolución política de México (1910) that devoted over half its pages to the events affecting the national regime during the nineteenth century. Charles Hale, in 1970, stated unequivocally that it remained the unsurpassed one volume national history, not least of which resulted because Sierra “… had an eye for drama in history and especially for irony” (Hale, 1970). Sierra, with his history, wanted to educate the general population as part of his Positivist, secular campaign to make the nation more modern. His basic organization identified the indigenous era, the colonial period, and the independent nation, and he successful made these parts a narrative of evolution that combined the indigenous heritage with Spanish traditions to create the new independent culture and people—the mestizo. This approach unified Mexico’s antithetical past (O’Gorman, 1969).

Sierra’s interpretation stood in the early twentieth century, in part because the revolution disrupted historical undertakings as much as it did everyday life. Only in 1937 did José Vasconcelos write another survey, the rather mean spirited Breve Historia de México, prepared after he had already abandoned his optimism for both social change and ethnic integration. After World War II historians again tackled the writing of a general synthesis of the national history. The increased professionalization of the discipline came with the founding of the Colegio de Mexico, the establishment of research seminars there, and the training of professional historians. The success of the Historia Moderna de Mexico directed by Daniel Cosío Villegas and focused on the era 1867 to 1911, soon inspired the Historia de la revolución, in 23 short monographs. Luis González in El Oficio de Historiar offered an introductory, useful, and interesting guide for historians that included specific examples delineating narrative style and periodization (González, 1988). The training, and his volume, resulted in the Colegio’s jointly authored undertaking La historia general de México, now in its third revised edition. These volumes have different approximations of the Mexican past largely as a result of the different authors who were assigned chapters in the different editions, but the most recent volume also contains a revision of the chronology, with expanded geographic and cultural chapters.

English-speaking readers in the nineteenth century at first became familiar with Mexico only through the history of its dramatic episodes or by parenthetical digressions of travel writers. The two most famous examples of these approaches are the classics by the U.S.-Scots woman Fanny Calderón de la Barca, written first as letters and a journal, then published as Life in Mexico (1843), and by William Hickling Prescott the superb History of the Conquest of Mexico, with a Preliminary View of Ancient Mexican Civilization, and the Life of the Conqueror, Hernando Cortes (1843). Both books became best selling volumes in the United States and Great Britain.

General narratives in English for Mexico did not appear until the twentieth century. The first comprehensive account was The History of Mexico (1938) by Henry Bamford Parkes. With historical training at Oxford University and a Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan, Parkes brought a professional approach to his investigations and an anecdotal style that organized the narrative around colorful individuals and melodramatic events. He wrote a number of other national histories and political biographies, and he became recognized as a historical author rather than a Mexican historian. Lesley
Byrd Simpson soon appropriated Parkes’s approach and modified it to be slightly more scholarly in his widely read *Many Mexicos* (1941). His readable and rather concise history, elaborated, for example, the story of Antonio López de Santa Anna’s lost leg, so that it became a part of the common narrative, either through readers of the book or through efforts by professors to utilize this and other of Simpson’s anecdotes to give some zip to their lectures. Equally enduring has been his thesis: that because of the tremendous cultural and political diversity within the region, there is not one, but Many Mexicos. This has become an article of faith, explicitly or implicitly, shaping general narratives until today, used to explain regional diversity and state differences. Both volumes remain in print (last revisions, Simpson 1960, and Parkes 1972) and both continue to have general and classroom sales, despite being badly outdated.

As these various Mexican and foreign authors over the past century and half have made an effort to understand both the evolution of politics and the lives of the people, they have, for the most part, adopted the creation of the national government and the national identity as the over-riding theme, or at least the primary or most prominent pattern of events. Take, for example, the most successful one volume history in English, Michael C. Meyer’s narrative, written with his notable coauthors William Sherman and Susan Deeds, entitled *The Course of Mexican History*. The basic structure has remained through nine editions of the book, although the narrative has changed by widening its perspective. The historical plot, like the Mississippi River, has rolled and at times roiled through the nine editions, picking up all manner of detritus and silt. The authors rely on the political narrative, but have added to it economic and social considerations, with a chapter for each era on cultural—that is, usually artistic and literary—production. The organization reviews Mexico’s past as a political, governmental experience and uses the chronology common when Meyer first wrote his class lectures of the 1960s that became the text. This periodization divided into lecture-length chapters remains. So, the periods move from the earliest indigenous peoples to the arrival of the Spanish and their colony (divided into chapters on Conquest, Hapsburg New Spain, and the Bourbons). Chapters then move from independence through 1848, 1849 to 1876, 1876 to 1911, 1910 to 1940, 1940 to the present. Of course, the last period has changed over the last twenty years. Overall the Meyer approach represents a decidedly Liberal, professional analysis compared to earlier accounts.

Other general texts that have come and gone that have offered different chronologies, at least for the years since independence. In *El Gran Pueblo*, Colin MacLachlan and William Beezley argued that 1938 represented an end to the revolution, if the revolution was defined as programs—especially worker organization in the city and public health campaigns, educational missions, and land reforms—aimed primarily at the countryside. In that year Cárdenas shifted government support to an industrial, productionist approach to national modernization. Although there is a slight difference in the period, both this textbook and *The Course of Mexican History* interpret the revolution as a popular movement, whose major goal, through social and economic programs, was designed to create an egalitarian, inclusive society providing jobs, education, and health care to all, and success based on a meritocracy of individual achievements. The authors of both texts gave a prominent place to the revolution and used it to explain efforts at the re-invention or re-creation of a national identity.

In a number of monographs, another group of historians have begun to argue that the revolution was nothing more than a political conflict that ended in 1920. Several of these authors, motivated it seems by an understandable dissatisfaction with the official party,
the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party or PRI) and its national politics and administrative programs, especially after the middle 1970s, read backwards from this point to assume that the party from its creation in 1929 had always been the same; they have selected 1920 as the end of the revolutionary violence, and therefore the end of the revolution. In fact, this interpretation that the revolution ended in 1920 suggests a variant of the Great Man argument, because it rests on the emphasis that just one of the major revolutionaries, after a lethal game of musical chairs, remained: The ultimate winner, Obregón took the presidency, while the other three contenders, who had chosen sides and fought a civil war from 1914–1916, were dead (Zapata and Carranza) or retired (Villa). In an approach that is something like fixing the end of the Soviet revolution as when Stalin takes power, earlier versions of this particular argument rest on the Marxist analysis of revolution and on the illusion that a proletarian revolution was a possibility. This wistful interpretation, especially in light of the literary turn, might be called “uchronic.” Science fictions critics coined the term “uchronia” to express an “amazing theme in which the author imagines what would have happened if a certain historical event had not taken place.” The word represents a companion to utopia that focuses on a nowhere place with its concern for time (chronos), thus a nowhen event (Portelli, 1991, pp. 99–100, 299, citing Pierre Versins). In other words, these interpreters declare the end of the revolution in 1920 because it did not develop as they desired or expected; in many ways it is an expression of “if only” history or perhaps the most Mexican of all phrases that begins “Hubiera ….” This scholarship implies possibility over actuality. Among many of these authors, there exists an ideological belief that things could have been different, with better leadership, for example. They depict, in the words of Alessandro Portelli, a history of “… the revolution as a single, traumatic and violent confrontation rather than as a slow and deep process of social change” (1991, pp. 100, quote 105).

Other historians have fixed the end of the revolution following the 1968 massacre at Tlatelolco or later, when the daily life created by the revolution abruptly changed following the 1982 peso devaluation (Lomnitz, 2003) and the ensuing national economic crisis. This question of when the revolution ended remains unresolved and the different interpretations divide the historical analyses of the twentieth century. As a result the division of the century into periods remains a significant analytical point of contention.

The chapters that follow have been written by congeries of authors from Mexico, the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. In many cases, the authors have established their reputations closely associated with the theme or period they write about. Thus Susan Kellogg skillful reviews the Ancient Indigenous Cultures, examining historical, ethno-historical, and archaeological scholarship that has recently reshaped our knowledge of this era. Mathew Restall, known for his monographs devoted to the Spanish conquest, joins with one of his recent graduate students, Robert Schwaller, to evaluate this period and its literature. Chris Archer, who long ago carved out a field combining military and political history of the independence wars and early republican politics, brings that expertise to bear on the literature of the era. Linda Arnold, celebrated for her digitalization projects of Mexico’s Supreme Court and Congressional archives, has worked for sometime on the U.S.–Mexican war and its sources, and her essay for the first time puts that information in print. Erika Pani, Paul Garner, Jurgen Buchenau, Daniel Newcomer, and Rod Camp have each built on their well known previous work to write essays that broaden their interpretations and evaluate other scholars’ publications of the French intervention and empire, the Era of Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, the Sonoran revolutionaries, anti-government campaigns, and
recent democratic politics. Crime and punishment has been the focus of Elisa Speckman Guerra for some time and, in this volume, she reviews the law and law enforcement for the years of Porfiriato and the revolution. Dave Yetman, well known as both a print and television natural historian, again focuses on his passion, Mexican Cacti.

In other cases, the editor has challenged authors to write about a different period or theme, with the idea that a fresh pair of eyes might discover a different view. Some examples include Susan Deeds, known for her work on the Hapsburg seventeenth century, switching with Linda Curcio-Nagy, who regularly writes on the Bourbon eighteenth century; Bill French, much of whose work focuses on the Porfiriato and gender topics, deftly considers the sweep of daily life from independence to the present. Readers will certainly be aware of Mark Wasserman’s important summary of nineteenth-century everyday life (2000), but Bill identifies and evaluates a surprisingly large literature for the entire period in both English and Spanish. James Garza, also a Porfirián scholar, turned from his usual interests of crime and justice to look at natural disasters and science in the nineteenth century. Katherine Sloan, still another Porfirián expert, moved from gender in Porfirián Oaxaca to evaluate the secularization of society through the implementation of the 1857 Constitution that climaxed in the Penal Code of 1871. Susie Porter, known for her studies of gender and women workers leading to the 1931 labor law, took up the challenge to evaluate the Cárdenas presidency; Paul Gillingham, whose monographic research offers an intensive study of Guerrero state politics in the 1940s, considers non-revolutionary and non-political factors that have shaped the twentieth century, especially the demographic patterns of population increase and urbanization.

Other authors have written essays that offer previews of new endeavors. Tim Henderson, who has recently published on both Independence and the United States–Mexican War, in his chapter for this volume looks at the major contemporary issue of immigration to the United States and places it in historical context in a condensed sample of his next book. Bill Beezley, now working on a reevaluation of José Vasconcelos as Minister of Public Education (1921–1924), here explores this ministry’s programs and their relationship to other campaigns for mass education, national folklorization, and indigenous incorporation throughout the hemisphere. Ariel Rodríguez Kuri has been researching the years after World War II, especially the 1960s, and his essay for this volume offers a concise portrait of his forthcoming book on the era. Rod Camp’s essay condenses the pertinent themes and analyses of his new, essential work, The Metamorphosis of Leadership in Democratic Mexico (2010). In a wide-ranging cultural essay, Ricardo Pérez Montfort gives an outline of the next in his series of studies on popular culture, national folklore, and the mass media.

Scholars just entering the profession have contributed essays on the general topic of their dissertations, bringing to bear the latest scholarship through their recently done literature reviews, on themes that are new or newly considered. These authors include Gretchen Pierce on the revolutionary anti-Alcohol campaign, Steve Neufeld on the military, Elena Jackson Albarrán on children in the revolutionary era, and María Múnoz on the indigenous movement of the 1970s. Steve Bunker, drawing on his recent dissertation on Porfirián consumer society, soon to appear as a monograph, and Víctor Macías González, an established gender historian, tackled in two chapters the broad general theme of consumer culture throughout the Mexican experience.

Chapters weaving in and out of the other essays represent three particular themes unique to this volume: the indigenous experience, examining Indian communities beyond treatment as victims or insurgents, the visual representation of episodes of