Mexico

An exhibition chiefly from the books of the South Carolina College Library

ARCHIVED ONLINE EXHIBIT

Originally displayed at the Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina

Curated by Patrick Scott

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This exhibit from the Department of Rare Books & Special Collections displays illustrated books and maps about Mexico from the sixteenth century through the late nineteenth century. The exhibit documents the gradual process by which the cultures and history of pre-Columbian Mexico were described and published in Spain, in rival European countries such as the Netherlands, Britain, and France, in Mexico itself, and in the United States.

Most of the books on display have been in the USC library since the 1830's and 1840's. They are dramatic evidence of the intellectual ambitions of the original South Carolina College and of the worldwide range of the books that were purchased for its library. The oldest item on display is an engraving of Mexico City printed in 1565, from the Italian writer Ramusio's *Voyages.* Other early works include illustrations of Aztec customs by the German Theodor de Bry from 1594 and Dutch engraved maps from the seventeenth century by the Dutchmen De Laet and Montanus.

Some of the most impressive volumes are from the early nineteenth century, in Alexander von Humboldt’s great folio *Vue des Cordelleres et Monumens des Peuples Indigene de l’Amerique* (Paris, 1810) and Lord Kingsborough’s seven-volume *Antiquities of Mexico* (London, 1830), with its colored facsimiles of pre-Columbian illuminated manuscripts. The architecture of the pre-Columbian Aztec and Mayan cultures is represented both from Kingsborough’s work and from the American J. L. Stephens’s books about the Yucatan (1841, 1843). Of special note is a copy of the Mexican military code of justice owned by General Santa Anna.
Ramusio's Voyages


The oldest published account of Mexico in Thomas Cooper Library appears to be that printed in the third volume of this mid-16th century Italian collection of exploration narratives, published less than fifty years after Hernan Cortes invaded central Mexico in 1519. Shown here is an illustration and description of Mexico City, built on the ruins of the much larger original lake-bound Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan.

A View of Mexico City from 1572


The Osman Collection, donated by to the University by Mrs. Mary C. Osman, includes more than four hundred copperplate engraved maps and views of (mostly European) cities, issued by the Dutch engravers Braun and Hogenberg in six volumes over the years 1572 to 1618. In this engraving, the view of Mexico is paired with one of Cusco, in Peru.

Purchas His Pilgrimes


Purchas's collection of exploration narratives, in English translations made in the same years as the King James Bible, long retained a major influence among English-speaking readers as a source on the Spanish conquest. As the subtitle suggests, European rivalries, sharpened by religious differences, influenced Purchas's choice of sources to reprint. Shown here is the sharply-critical account of the cruelties of the conquistadors by the Franciscan missionary Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474-1566), which in 1542 led to changes in Spanish administrative policies in New Spain.
The Extent of Spanish Influence in the New World


Haklytvts posthumus or Pvrchas his Pilgrimes. Contayning a history of the world, in sea voyages, & lande-truells, by Englishmen and others. . . 

This map gives a striking representation of the extent of Spanish settlement in 1600, not only in Mexico and Central America, but north up the Californian coast, into what is now New Mexico, and up the Atlantic coast from Florida.

Peter the Martyr, as edited by Hakluyt


This decade-by-decade chronicle of Spanish conquest, by Peter the Martyr, had been published earlier, and had appeared in English translation in 1555. Shown here is the version edited and annotated by the British geographer Richard Hakluyt, resident in Paris in 1583-1586.

Theodor de Bry's Greater Voyages, I

Bry, Theodor de, 1528-1598, map of New Spain, in Americæ pars quarta. Sive, Insignis & admiranda historia de reperta primùm Occidentali India à Christophoro Columbo anno M.CCCCXCII.
Frankfurt: Feyrabend, 1594. Contemporary vellum with the date 1605.

The two volumes of Theodor de Bry's illustrated collection of voyages to the Americas were purchased for the South Carolina College library in the 1820's. The fourth part printed Urbain Chauveton's annotated Latin translation of the Italian Historia del Mondo Nuovo, book 1, by Girolamo Benzoni. Benzoni had travelled in America in the years 1541-1556. De Bry's beautiful map of New Spain shows how widely Spanish exploration and settlement had reached by the 1590's.

Theodor de Bry's Greater Voyages, II
Each of the separate parts of de Bry's great project was illustrated with an appendix of copperplate engravings, which had a lasting influence on European perceptions of pre-Columbian America. Shown here is de Bry's illustration of Aztec sacrifice, with the victim's discarded corpse tumbling down the steps of the temple, and the racks of human skulls beneath the main platform. While most of this ninth part of de Bry's collection is drawn from the Dutch explorer Sebald de Weert, the first section is by the Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta.

José de Acosta on American natural history and customs

Acosta, José de, 1540-1600. Historia natural y moral de la Indias, en que se tratan . . . los ritos, y cereminas, leyes, y gobierno, y guerras de los Indios. Sevilla: Juan de Leon, 1590. Nineteenth-century calf.

In 1583, as a Jesuit missionary, Jose de Acosta had published the first book ever printed in Peru. This sophisticated defence of Spanish policy in the New World was his most famous book, notable especially for its careful descriptions of natural resources.

José de Acosta in translation


The extent of European interest in Mexico and the New World is indicated by successive translations of Acosta's book into Italian (1596), French (1597), Dutch (1598), German (1601), Latin (1602), and English (1604).
17TH CENTURY

A Map of New Spain from the 1630's

Laet, Joannis de, 1593-1649.
*Novvs orbis, seu Descriptionis Indiae Occidentalis, libri XVIII.* . . . *Novis tabulis geographicis et variis animantium, plantarum fructuumque iconibus illustrati.*


Central America in the mid Seventeenth Century


Blaeu's Grand Atlas has two maps including 17th-century Mexico, a more detailed one concentrating on the central areas and the Pacific coast, and this one, covering a wider area, including the Caribbean coastline and Vera Cruz. The twelve volumes of maps in this atlas, published by Blaeu's son in various editions with accompanying text in different major languages, cover the whole known world and constitute the single most important Renaissance map series in Thomas Cooper Library. The beautiful hand-colored copperplates of the Blaeu atlas are nearly all reprintings of maps originally engraved and issued by the elder Blaeu in the 1630's and 1640's.

A Depiction of Mexico City from the 1670's

Montanus, Arnoldus, 1625?-1683.
*De Nieuwe en onbekende weereeld of Beschryving van America en 't zuid-land,vervaetende d'oorsprong der Americaenen en zuid-landers, gedenkwaerdige togten derwaerds, gelegendheid der vaste kusten, eilanden, steden, sterkten, dorpen, tempels, bergen, fonteinen, stroomen, huizen, de natuur van beesten, boomen, planten en vreemde gewasschen, Gods-dienst en zeden, wonderlijke voorvallen, vereeuwde en oor/oogen.*
Montanus's description of the Americas (which was immediately pirated for English translation by John Ogilby) also includes a double-page engraving of Port Acapulco.

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**A British Traveler through Mexico in the mid-17th century**

Gage, Thomas, 1603?-1656.

* A new survey of the West-India's: or, The English American his travail by sea and land; containing a journal of three thousand and three hundred miles within the main land of America. Wherein is set forth his voyage from Spain to St. John de Ulhua; and from thence to Xalappa, to Tlaxcalla, the City of Angels, and forward to Mexico. Second ed.


From an English catholic family and educated in Spain, Thomas Gage initially went to Mexico in 1625 as a Dominican missionary. In 1636, he left his parish and the order and traveled independently throughout the region, before returning to London in 1639, rejecting the Roman church, and becoming a warm supporter of Parliament during the English Civil War. His account of his travels, first published in 1648, with its description of the wealth and vulnerability of Spanish America, led to a British naval expedition, which failed to capture Hispaniola, but successfully seized control of Jamaica.

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**A Jesuit in Mexico and Peru in the early 17th century**

Victoria, Pedro Gobeo de, 1560?-1630?; Bissel, Johannes, 1601-1682, transl. *Joannis Bisselli, è societate Jesu, Argonauticon Americanorum, sive, Historiae periculorum Petri de Victoria, ac sociorum eius, libri XV.*

Monachii: formis Lucæ Straubii, sumptibus Ioannis Wagneri bibliopolæ, 1647. Contemporary pigskin over wood.

Gobeo’s account, *Naufragio y peregrinacion de Pedro Gobeo de Vitoria, natural de Sevilla,* was first published in Spanish in Seville in 1610.

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**Montezuma on the British Stage**

Dryden, John, 1631-1700.
Montezuma's story, as a heroic leader doomed by the clash between opposing civilizations, resonated with Britons in the post-Civil War Restoration period, in which their own monarch had been executed by the victorious Parliamentary forces. This play by the first English Poet Laureate, John Dryden, was first performed in 1665, and first printed the following year.

In the seventeenth-century, the wealth of Spanish America attracted the attention not only of rival governments but also of free-lance buccaneers. Dampier's account of his voyages in 1679-1691 (which took him right round the world) narrate a quasi-scientific story of geographic discovery, but the voyage was motivated and financed by piracy, and it was the chance of intercepting the Spanish galleons bringing bullion from the Philippines that took him both to the Pacific coast of Mexico and subsequently (by way of Africa) to the Far East.

This Dutch translation indicates the interest among rival European maritime powers in Spanish America in the late seventeenth-century, when Spain itself was politically weak.
Popular British Opinion in the late 17th Century

Casas, Bartolomé de las, 1474-1566. *An Account Of the First Voyages and Discoveries Made by the Spaniards in America. Containing The most Exact Relation hitherto publish'd, of their unparallel'd Cruelties on the Indians, in the destruction of above Forty Millions of people. . . . Illustrated with cuts.*


This little volume, a translation into English from a French condensation of several different older works by Bartolomé de las Casas, indicates the curious mixture in British attitudes of anti-Spanish outrage (in the illustration) and of entrepreneurial ambition (in its appendix "The Art of Travelling, shewing how a Man may dispose his Travels to the best advantage").

An Account of Dampier’s Return to Mexico

Funnell, William. *A voyage round the world. Containing an account of Captain Dampier’s expedition into the South-seas in the ship St. George, in the years 1703 and 1704 . . . together with the author’s voyage from Amapalla on the west coast of Mexico, to East India.*

London: W. Botham, for J. Knapton, 1707. Contemporary calf.

Funnell, who describes himself as mate but was apparently only the steward, sailed on Dampier’s third major voyage, when Dampier attacked but failed to capture the Manila galleon, and had to abandon his expedition. The map shown here depicts a section of the American coast where buccaneers could land and raid both Spanish and Indian settlements, which they lurked in wait for richer prey.
**Some 18th Century Historians**

**Torquemada on the Franciscans in Mexico**


Although the antebellum South Carolina College curriculum included neither Spanish language nor Latin American history, the College library held a significant number of books about Spanish America.

**Herrera's General History**


The engraved title-page shows the royal arms of Spain, with pictures of the conquistadors, of events during the conquest, and of American customs. The College library also held John Stevens's six-volume English translation (London, 1725-26).

**Bareia's Historiadores Primitivos**


The editor of this collection of exploration narratives, Gonzalez de Barcia, also edited the previous two works in this case.
A New Edition of Documents about Cortes

Lorenzana y Butron, Francisco Antonio, cardinal, 1722-1804, ed. *Historia de Nueva-España, escrita por su esclarecido conquistador Hernan Cortes, aumentada con otros documentos.*


This later 18th-century Spanish edition of Cortes also prints a number of other early sources, including this section of 31 plates with facsimiles from early codices.

A Spanish Epic Poem about Cortes


Madrid: Fernandez, y del Supremo consejo de la Inquisicion, 1755.

The only other work known by the author of this heroic poem (which was not reprinted till the 1980's) is his elegy on the funeral of the Queen of Spain, *Tristes ayes de la aguila Mexicana* (Mexico City, 1760).

A French Translation of Cortes


With the passing in 1701 of the Spanish throne from the Hapsburg to the Bourbon dynasty, it is perhaps surprising that more of the College's books about Mexico were not in French.

Clavigero's History in English

This English translation from the work of the Italian historian Clavigero was by Charles Cullen.

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**Diaz del Castillo in English Translation**

Keating, Maurice Bagenal St. Leger, d.1835, transl. *The true history of the conquest of Mexico, by Captain Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the conquerors. Written in the year 1568. . . Translated from the original Spanish.*


Keating’s was the first edition in English of this account by Diaz del Castillo (1496-1584).
Alexander von Humboldt, I

Humboldt, Alexander, von, 1769-1859.  
*Vue des Cordelleres et Monumens des Peuples Indigene de l’Amerique.*  

Alexander von Humboldt, the leading German scientist and explorer of his age, was already well-known as a geologist before he sailed for Spanish America in 1799 with his French collaborator Aime Bonpland. On his return to Paris in 1804, he and Bonpland published a 23-volume series covering physical geography, natural history, and ethnography, usually titled after its first volume *Voyage aux régions equinoxiales du nouveau continent* (Paris: Schoell, 1805-34). In part because each sub-series was differently titled, most library sets are incomplete, and this first "Atlas" volume of illustrative plates, though badly in need of professional conservation, is especially rare. [This volume is currently being covered and no image is yet available.]

Alexander von Humboldt, II

Humboldt, Alexander von, 1769-1859; Williams, Helen Maria, 1762-1827, transl.  
*Researches concerning the institutions & monuments of the ancient inhabitants of America, with descriptions & views of some of the most striking scenes in the Cordilleras!* 2 vols.  
London: Longman, 1814.

This English translation of the text from Humboldt's opening volume attests to the widespread influence of his work in his own time. The poet, novelist, and enthusiast for the French revolution Helen Maria Williams had published a poem titled *Peru* in 1784, though she is now best known for her volumes of *Letters* about French politics (1790 etc.).

Alexander von Humboldt, III

Humboldt, Alexander von, 1769-1859; Black, John, 1783-1855, transl.  
*Political essay on the kingdom of New Spain.* 2 vols.  

The third volume in Humboldt's series was his *Essai politique* (Paris, 1810), an argument based on demographic and statistical data for the overhaul of Mexican
political structures. The prefatory letter to the King of Spain is dated March 1808, before Miguel Hidalgo's "Grito de Dolores" initiated the first Mexican revolution in September 1810.

Aztec Costume from the Time of Montezuma: Humboldt, IV

"Costumes dessines des Peintres Mexicains du Temps de Montezuma," from Humboldt, *Vue des Cordelleres.*
Paris: Schoell, 1810.

Though less extensive and well-known than those in Kingsborough's *Antiquities,* the illustrations in Humboldt's atlas volume also included drawings made from the pre-Columbian codices.
By the first years of the 19th century, the example of the American and French revolutions, and the weakness of central authority in Spain during the Napoleonic wars, provided the context for a revolutionary independence movement in Mexico. The appeal by the priest Miguel Hidalgo (1753-1811) mobilized popular devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe, and came near to taking Mexico City before military defeat in 1811. Father Jose Mari Morelos (1765-1815) sustained the fight longer, though captured in 1815. This report by a British officer of engineers describes how the Spanish viceroyes were trying to maintain power against continuing guerrilla resistance.

The temporary successes of Hidalgo and Morelos foreshadowed Iturbide’s more conservative declaration of independence from Spain in 1821, though Iturbide’s was only the first of a long series of revolutions and counter-coups. Much of this book is a long account of maneuvers in Mexico in 1816, brought up to date as an argument that it would further American interests to support an independent Mexico.
The First American Envoy to an Independent Mexico

Poinsett, Joel Roberts, 1779-1851.

*Notes on Mexico, made in the autumn of 1822. Accompanied by an historical sketch of the revolution, and translations of official reports on the present state of that country.*

London: J. Miller, 1825.

Joel Poinsett, of Charleston, S.C., had served as a U.S. government agent working against the Spanish government in Chile and Argentina. While a member of the U.S. Congress (1821-25), he went to Mexico as special envoy for President Monroe to newly-independent Mexico. The first edition of this book, published both in London and Philadelphia in 1824, was issued anonymously as "A Citizen of the United States." Poinsett returned to Mexico City as the first American minister (1826-1830), when he became deeply involved in political intrigue, especially on behalf of his masonic allies, the *Yorkistas*, publishing a defense in Spanish of U.S. diplomatic activity in Mexico, under the title *Esposición de la conducta política de los Estados-Unidos, para con las nuevas repúblicas de América* (Mexico City, 1827: copy in South Caroliniana Library).
Kingsborough’s *Antiquities of Mexico*, I


The high point of the South Carolina College library’s books on Mexico is surely Lord Kingsborough’s sumptuously-produced illustrated sequence, a nine-volume series that starts out with facsimiles of all the major Mexican manuscript codices in European libraries, by the engraver Agostino Aglio (1777-1857). Edward King, son of the Irish Earl of Kingsborough, first caught sight of a Mexican manuscript in Oxford University’s Bodleian Library while he was an undergraduate, and that moment set the future purpose of his life. Shown here is a facsimile of a pre-Columbian Mixtec codex, one of those preserved in Thomas Bodley’s own collection in the Bodleian.

From a Pre-Columbian Illuminated Codex


Kingsborough’s *Antiquities of Mexico*, II


This illustration, from "A Copy of a Mexican Manuscript Preserved in the Library of the Vatican," dates from the post-Conquest period, depicting the encounter between the Spanish invaders and Central American resistance. The drawings (at least in this copy) also show the displacement or overlaying of pre-Columbian style with Europeanized visual forms.
After three volumes of codices, Kingsborough’s fourth volume was largely devoted to reproducing drawings and plans of Mexican antiquities by Guiliermo Dupaix, originally prepared for the King of Spain. It was Kingsborough and Aglio’s last volume of illustrations. Inexplicably staying with the same huge format, Kingsborough prepared further volumes of explanatory text, ranging from a valuable edition of the Franciscan Bernadino de Sahagun’s 16th-century description of pre-Columbian Aztec culture to his own speculations on the origins of Aztec culture in one of the Lost Tribes of Israel. As the project expanded (he had originally projected seven volumes, and eventually prepared nine-and-a-half), he had to switch publishers, and in 1839, while he was in prison in Dublin for debts to a paper supplier, he succumbed to typhus with his great project still incomplete. The South Carolina College set ends with the original seven volumes, before H.G. Bohn issued the additional two volumes.

Illustrations of Pre-Columbian Architecture

From Guiliermo Dupaix, *Monuments of New Spain... with their respective scales of measurement and accompanying descriptions*, in Lord Kingsborough, *Antiquities of Mexico*. Vol. IV.

London: Aglio, 1830.

Two engravings of Illustrations of Pre-Columbian Sculptures


London: Aglio, 1830.

An American in Yucatan, I


*Incidents of travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*. 2 vols.


John Lloyd Stephens, a New York lawyer, first won recognition as a travel writer with his *Incidents of Travel in Egypt... and the Holy Land* (1837), rapidly followed by *Incidents of Travel in Greece, Russia Turkey and Poland* (1838). Sent to Central
America by President Van Buren in 1839 on an ill-defined diplomatic mission, he took with him the artist Frederick Catherwood, publishing this book in 1841.

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**An American in Yucatan, II**


After the publication and success of their first book, Stephens and Catherwood returned to Mexico in 1841, specifically to describe and draw the mysterious, lost and ruined cities of which they had been told.

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**Further American Notes on Yucatan**

Norman, Benjamin Moore, 1809-1860.

*Rambles in Yucatan; or, Notes of travel through the peninsula, including a visit to the ruins of Chi-chen, Kabah, Zayi, and Uxmal.* 2d ed.
New York: Langley, 1842. Green calf stamped "South Carolina College Library."

Moore was more of a journalist than a scholar, but his book’s presence in the College library attests to contemporary interest in its subject.

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**Prescott’s Conquest of Mexico**

Prescott, William Hickling, 1796-1859.


Soon after graduating from Harvard (A.B. 1814), where he lost an eye in a food-fight, the invalid Bostonian W.H. Prescott set himself to become the American expert on Spanish history. His three-volume *Ferdinand and Isabella* (1838) established his reputation, but his epic narrative on the *Conquest of Mexico*, originally published in 1843 and written much more quickly, was more widely successful and remained influential and in print well into the twentieth century.
**THE EMERGENCE OF MEXICO**

**Davy Crockett at the Alamo**

Smith, Richard Penn, 1799-1854, supposed author.

*Col. Crockett's exploits and adventures in Texas . . . including many hair-breadth escapes; . . . Written by himself. The narrative brought down from the death of Col. Crockett to the battle of San Jacinto, by an eye-witness.*


The preface to this pseudo-autobiography of Davy Crockett (1786-1836), of Alamo fame, is signed by an Alex. J. Dumas, who claims that he received Crockett’s manuscript from a Charles T. Beale, who wrote the final chapter, but the work is generally ascribed to Richard Penn Smith. Santa Anna’s successful siege of San Antonio and the Alamo in March 1835 led almost immediately to Mexican defeat and Mexico’s loss of Texas.

**General Santa Anna’s own manual of Military Law**

Azcárate, Miguel María de.

*Catecismo practico criminal de juicios militares.*


A pencil inscription on the front endpaper reads "This book was taken from the private dwelling of President Santa Anna, Mexico—by Major Winslow A. Sanderson U.S. Army and presented to his uncle Gilbert Meiggs." Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna (1794-1876) was at the centre of Mexican politics from the 1820’s to the 1850’s, as military leader and coup leader, serving as president no less than eleven times. He was president when Mexico was defeated by the U.S. in 1846-47, with the loss of Texas and New Mexico, and president yet again when large areas of northern territory were sold in 1853 (the Gadsden Purchase).

**A portrait of Santa Anna**

Frontispiece to Wilson, Robert Anderson, 1812-1872.

*Mexico and its religion; with incidents of travel in that country during parts of the years 1851-52-53-54.*

An American Guide to Mexico in 1846

*Description of the republic of Mexico, including its physical and moral features, geography, agriculture, products, manufactures, etc. Illustrated by a map, in which is included smaller maps of the valley of Mexico, and the fields of Palo Alto, and Resaca de la Palma.*


Texas acceded to the United States in 1845, and this map shows the extensive territory then still part of Mexico that would soon be lost in the Mexican-American war of 1846-47.

The United States of Mexico in 1847

*Mapa de los Estados Unidos de Mejico.* Revised edition.

Nueva York: Disturnell, 1847.

Facsimile of the copy added to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of February 2 1848, reproduced in 1935 from the original in the Department of State. *Courtesy of the Map Library, Thomas Cooper Library.*

Texas’s application for annexation into the Union had been ratified by the U.S. in December 1845, leading to the Mexican-American War of 1846-47. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed February 2, 1848, annexed Upper California, New Mexico, and other border territories into the United States.

A Popular American Account of the Mexican-American War

*Complete History of the Late Mexican War Containing an Authentic Account of All the Battles Fought in that Republic Including the Treaty of Peace . . . Illustrated with Fifteen Beautiful Engravings, by an Eye-Witness.*


This is one of the books rescued following the devastating fire that destroyed most of Mr. Gus Graydon’s outstanding historical library.

Winfield Scott at Vera Cruz

Frost, John, 1800-1859.
Pictorial history of Mexico and the Mexican war: comprising an account of the ancient Aztec empire, the conquest by Cortes, Mexico under the Spaniards, the Mexican revolution, the republic, the Texan war, and the recent war with the United States.


This chromolithograph illustrates the bombardment of Vera Cruz in 1847 by the U.S. under General Winfield Scott.

Two Views of the French Intervention of 1862-1867


In 1861, with support from Britain and Spain, the French government sent an expeditionary force to protect European financial interests in Mexico. From 1864-67, with French support, Prince Maximilian of Austria was Emperor of Mexico. Initially liberal, he became increasingly isolated; following the defeat and withdrawal of French troops in 1867, Maximilian was executed by the popular government under Benito Juarez (1806-1872).

An American Account of Modernization


The last quarter of the nineteenth century brought increased political stability under President Porfirio Diaz, and also greatly increased foreign investment, both in railways, and in the extraction of oil and other raw materials. Diaz initially came to power as a non-reelectionist, but held the office for eight terms.

The Mexican Revolution of 1910-1913

Fernández Rojas, José. La revolucion mexicana de Porfirio Diaz a Victoriano Huerta, 1910-1913; obra
In November 1910 Francesco Madero issued a call for armed insurrection against Díaz’s continuing rule. Madero was murdered in 1913 by a conservative counter-revolution under General Huerta. President Woodrow Wilson’s administration backed in turn Huerta, the bandit Pancho Villa, and then the constitutional government of Venustiano Carranza (1845-1916), before invading Mexico on a punitive expedition against their former ally.

This map was issued to help the National Geographic’s readers follow developments in the Mexican American War of 1916-1917. In the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, Woodrow Wilson responded with a variety of diplomatic and military actions, including landing marines at Vera Cruz in 1914, backing Pancho Villa in internal Mexican politics in 1914-1915, before switching backing to President Carranza, and sending much of the U.S. Army into Mexico in 1916 on an (unsuccessful) punitive expedition led by General Pershing, following Villa’s border raid into New Mexico.