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México's history is long and complex: early settlements thousands of years ago, refined indigenous civilizations a few centuries back, an overwhelming conquest by Spain and the merging of European and Indian cultures over a long colonial period, finally independence and national formation, entry into the currents of world trade and capitalist development in the late 19th century, a major social revolution 85 years ago, and modernization and economic and social change to the present.

This text was originally written for mass media communication. Its authors are distinguished Mexican historians: Ignacio Bernal, Alejandra Moreno Toscano, Luis González and Daniel Cosío Villegas (also coordinator)

The foreword, by Professor Robert A. Potash, of the University of Massachusetts, a specialist in Mexican history, introduces the book to the English-speaking reader. The translation is by Marjory Mattingly Urquidí, an experienced translator of books on Latin American History.