

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF  
LATIN AMERICA

VOLUME V

*c. 1870 to 1930*

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VOLUME I *Colonial Latin America*

VOLUME II *Colonial Latin America*

VOLUME III *From Independence to c. 1870*

VOLUME IV *c. 1870 to 1930*

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*edited by*

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## GENERAL PREFACE

In the English-speaking and English-reading world the multi-volume Cambridge Histories planned and edited by historians of established reputation, with individual chapters written by leading specialists in their fields, have since the beginning of the century set the highest standards of collaborative international scholarship. *The Cambridge Modern History*, planned by Lord Acton, appeared in sixteen volumes between 1902 and 1912. It was followed by *The Cambridge Ancient History*, *The Cambridge Medieval History* and others. The *Modern History* has now been replaced by *The New Cambridge Modern History* in fourteen volumes, and *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* has recently been completed. Cambridge Histories of Islam, of Iran and of Africa are published or near completion; in progress are Histories of China and of Judaism, while Japan is soon to join the list.

In the early 1970s Cambridge University Press decided the time was ripe to embark on a Cambridge History of Latin America. Since the Second World War and particularly since 1960 research and writing on Latin American history had been developing, and have continued to develop, at an unprecedented rate – in the United States (by American historians in particular, but also by British, European and Latin American historians resident in the United States), in Europe (especially in Britain and France) and increasingly in Latin America itself (where a new generation of young professional historians, many of them trained in the United States, Britain or Europe, had begun to emerge). Perspectives had changed as political, economic and social realities in Latin America – and Latin America's role in the world – had changed. Methodological innovations and new conceptual models drawn from the social sciences (economics, political science, historical demography, sociology, anthropology) as well as from other fields of historical

research were increasingly being adopted by historians of Latin America. The Latin American Studies monograph series and the *Journal of Latin American Studies* had already been established by the Press and were beginning to publish the results of this new historical thinking and research.

In 1974 Dr Leslie Bethell, Reader in Hispanic American and Brazilian History at University College London, accepted an invitation to edit *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, and he began work on the project two years later. For the first time a single editor was given responsibility for the planning, co-ordination and editing of an entire *History*.

*The Cambridge History of Latin America*, to be published in eight volumes, is the first large-scale, authoritative survey of Latin America's unique historical experience during almost five centuries from the first contacts between the native American Indians and Europeans (and the beginnings of the African slave trade) in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries to the present day. (The Press will publish separately a Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas – North, Middle and South – which will give proper consideration to the evolution of the region's peoples, societies and civilizations, in isolation from the rest of the world, during the several millenia before the arrival of the Europeans, as well as a fuller treatment than will be found here of the history of the indigenous peoples of Latin America under European colonial rule and during the national period to the present day.) Latin America is taken to comprise the predominantly Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking areas of continental America south of the United States – Mexico, Central America and South America – together with the Spanish-speaking Caribbean – Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic – and, by convention, Haiti. (The vast territories in North America lost to the United States by treaty and by war, first by Spain, then by Mexico, during the first half of the nineteenth century are for the most part excluded. Neither the British, French and Dutch Caribbean islands nor the Guianas are included even though Jamaica and Trinidad, for example, have early Hispanic antecedents and are now members of the Organisation of American States.) The aim is to produce a high-level synthesis of existing knowledge which will provide historians of Latin America with a solid base for future research, which students of Latin American history will find useful and which will be of interest to historians of other areas of the world. It is also hoped that the *History* will contribute more generally to a deeper understanding of Latin America through its history in the United States and in Europe and, not least, to a

*General preface*

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greater awareness of its own history in Latin America. Contributors have been drawn from the United States and Canada, from Britain and Europe, and from Latin America.

For the first time the volumes of a Cambridge History will be published in chronological order: Volumes I and II (Colonial Latin America – with an introductory section on the native American peoples and civilizations on the eve of the European invasion) in 1984; Volume III (from Independence to c. 1870) in 1985; Volumes IV and V (c. 1870 to 1930) in 1986; and Volumes VI–VIII (1930 to the present) in 1988 or as soon as possible thereafter. Each volume or set of volumes examines a period in the economic, social, political, intellectual and cultural history of Latin America. While recognizing the decisive impact on Latin America of external forces, of developments within what is now called the capitalist world system, and the fundamental importance of its economic, political and cultural ties first with Spain and Portugal, then with Britain, France and, to a lesser extent, Western Europe as a whole, and finally with the United States, the emphasis of the *History* will be upon the evolution of internal structures. Furthermore, the emphasis is clearly on the period since the establishment of all the independent Latin American states except Cuba at the beginning of the nineteenth century, which, compared with the colonial and independence periods, has been relatively neglected by historians of Latin America. The period of Spanish and Portuguese colonial rule from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries is the subject of two of the eight volumes. Six are devoted to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and will consist of a mixture of general, comparative chapters built around major themes in Latin American history and chapters on the individual histories of the twenty independent Latin American countries (plus Puerto Rico), and especially the three major countries – Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. In view of its size, population and distinctive history, Brazil, which has often been neglected in general histories of Latin America, written for the most part by Spanish Americans or Spanish American specialists, will here receive the attention it deserves.

An important feature of the *History* will be the bibliographical essays which accompany each chapter. These will give special emphasis to books and articles published during the past 15–20 years, that is to say, since the publication of Charles C. Griffin (ed.), *Latin America: a guide to the historical literature* (published for the Conference on Latin American History by the University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1971) which was prepared during 1966–9 and included few works published after 1966.