

From Colony to Nationhood in Mexico

Laying the Foundations, 1560–1840

In an age of revolution, Mexico's creole leaders held aloft the Virgin of Guadalupe and brandished an Aztec eagle perched upon a European tricolor. Their new constitution proclaimed "the Mexican Nation is forever free and independent." Yet the genealogy of this new nation is not easy to trace. Colonial Mexico was a patchwork state whose new-world vassals served the crown, extended the empire's frontiers, and lived out their civic lives in parallel Spanish and Indian republics. There was a world of complex intercultural alliances, interlocking corporate structures, and shared spiritual and temporal ambitions. Sean F. McEnroe describes this history at the greatest and smallest geographical scales, reconsidering what it meant to be an Indian vassal, nobleman, soldier, or citizen over the course of three centuries in northeastern Mexico. He argues that the Mexican municipality, state, and citizen were not so much the sudden creations of a revolutionary age as the progeny of a mature multiethnic empire.

Sean F. McEnroe is a historian of Spanish America and the broader colonial world. His previous publications address frontier diplomacy in colonial Mexico; the encounters between Spaniards, North Americans, and indigenous peoples in the Philippines; and the place of Mexico in the Atlantic world. His work has appeared in *Ethnohistory*, the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, and *Oxford Bibliographies Online*. He earned his Ph.D from the University of California, Berkeley, and holds a graduate degree in education from Lewis and Clark College. He is an assistant professor of Latin American and Atlantic history at Southern Oregon University and a contributing editor for the Library of Congress's *Handbook of Latin American Studies*.

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SEAN F. McENROE



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In memory of John F. McEnroe (1945–2010)

My father and first history teacher

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