



# Bordering on Chaos: Mexico's Roller-Coaster Journey Toward Prosperity

By Andres Oppenheimer

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Hailed for its gripping narrative, its insightful analysis, and its informed historical perspective, this book offers a "revealing look at the secret and powerful political society of Mexico, its breakup, and the fallout that we are witnessing today" ("Wall Street Journal"). of photos.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

This is an attempt to understand Mexico's steep descent into turmoil, which happened rapidly after the uprising in Chiapas on New Year's Day 1994. Following the assassinations of a presidential candidate and then the congressional leader, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari had barely left office when the peso collapsed. Pursued by allegations of corruption, Salinas then fled the country. Oppenheimer, a reporter for *The Miami Herald*, argues that the crisis is the result of nothing grander than a turf war within a decrepit ruling party and that the Chiapas uprising is not something new, just another eruption of the Marxist intellectualism that has long flourished in Latin America.

#### From Publishers Weekly

Miami Herald Latin American correspondent Oppenheimer traveled all over Mexico between 1992 and 1995, and this crisply written, eye-opening report depicts a country in the throes of political turmoil, corruption, peasant rebellions and massive layoffs. The authors, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1987 as part of a team that uncovered the Iran-Contra scandal, scaled guerrilla-held mountains to interview self-styled Subcommander Marcos, the white, middle-class Marxist revolutionary who in 1994 led a Maya armed uprising in the southern state of Chiapas. Oppenheimer views this revolt as symptomatic of a country marked by vastly unequal distribution of wealth and wasteful public works projects that fail to address the real needs of the people. He offers disturbing, fresh slants on the ruling party's control of TV news, the booming cocaine trade of Mexico's drug mafias, the rise of government-backed monopolies in key industries and the recent political assassinations that have weakened the ruling elite's credibility. Despite this bleak picture, Oppenheimer suggests that Mexico is stumbling toward a modern democracy under its new, technocratic administrator president, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon. Photos. Author tour.

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#### From Library Journal

Oppenheimer, who produced an insightful book on Fidel Castro (*Castro's Final Hour*, LJ 7/92), repeats his performance in this outstanding exploration of the most notable political events in Mexico in the last three years. The author has incisively examined the assassinations of presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and Partido Revolucionario Institucional's secretary general Jose Ruiz Massieu, the arrest of Raul Salinas, the rise of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatistas, the devaluation crisis, and the extraordinary decline of ex-president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Although many suppositions and incomplete facts about each remain, Oppenheimer, through careful investigation and firsthand interviews, provides convincing interpretations and even fresh, shocking factual information on each of these incidents, melding his analysis into a highly readable, entertaining account. Highly recommended.

-?Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Ctr., Tulane Univ., New Orleans

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##### Robert McKay:

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