

# MEXICAN MESSIAH

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

GEORGE W. GRAYSON

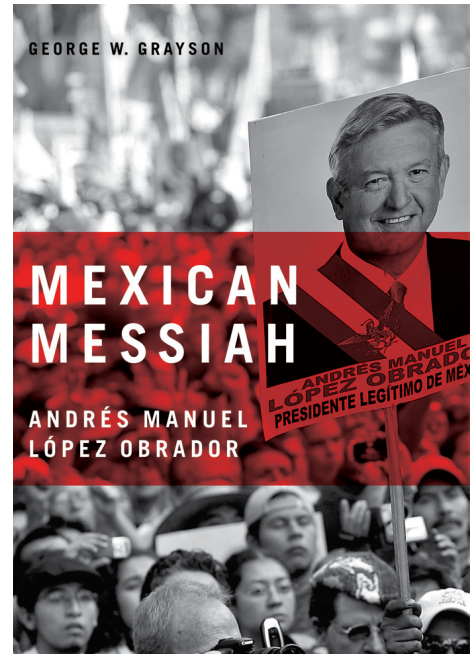
"No scholar has followed Mexican electoral politics more closely than George Grayson, who capitalizes on that extensive knowledge to provide a readable, provocative, critical, extensively researched biography that sheds light on Mexico's most controversial politician. Grayson's challenging interpretations and revelations allow readers to more fully understand López Obrador's personal and political motivations, his dramatic rise to national prominence, and his place in the recent wave of populist, left-of-center national political figures in Latin America." —Roderic Ai Camp, Claremont McKenna College

The emergence of Latin American firebrands who champion the cause of the impoverished and rail against the evils of neoliberalism and Yankee imperialism—Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Néstor Kirchner in Argentina, Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico—has changed the landscape of the Americas in dramatic ways. This will be the first biography to appear in English about one of these charismatic figures, who is known in his country by his adopted nickname of "Little Ray of Hope."

The book follows López Obrador's life from his early years in the flyspecked state of Tabasco, his university studies, and the years that he lived among the impoverished Chontal Indians. Even as he showed an increasingly messianic élan

to uplift the downtrodden, he confronted the muscular Institutional Revolutionary Party in running twice for governor of his home state and helping found the leftist-nationalist Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD). As the PRD's national president, he escalated his political and ideological warfare against his former president, Carlos Salinas, and other "conspirators" determined to link Mexico to the global economy at the expense of the poor. His strident advocacy of the "have nots" lifted López Obrador to the mayorship of Mexico City, which he rechristened the "City of Hope." Its ubiquitous crime, traffic, pollution, and housing problems have made the capital a tomb for most politicians. Not for López Obrador. Through splashy public works, monthly stipends to senior citizens, huge marches, and a dawn-to-dusk work schedule, he converted the position into a trampoline to the presidency. Although he lost the official count by an eyelash, the hard-charging Tabascan cried fraud, took the oath as the nation's "legitimate president," and barnstormed the country, excoriating the "fascist" policies of President Felipe Calderón and preparing to redeem the destitute in the 2012 presidential contest.

Grayson views López Obrador as quite different from populists like Chávez, Morales, and Kirchner and argues that he is a "secular messiah, who lives humbly, honors prophets, gathers apostles, declares himself indestructible, relishes playing the role of victim, and preaches a doctrine of salvation by returning to the values of the 1917 Constitution— fairness for workers, Indians' rights, fervent nationalism, and anti-imperialism."



July 2007  
 312 pages • 6 x 9 • 1 map  
 ISBN 978-0-271-03262-7 • cloth: \$35.00 sh  
 Conference Price: \$28.00

George W. Grayson is the Class of 1938 Professor Government at The College of William and Mary.

Please send me *Mexican Messiah*:

\_\_\_\_\_ cloth @ CONFERENCE PRICE \$28.00 subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. shipping and handling: \$6.00 first book, \$1.00 each add'l: \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign shipping and handling: \$7.00 first book, \$1.00 each add'l: \_\_\_\_\_

PA residents, add 6% tax; Canadians, add 7% GST: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment by:  Check\*  Money order  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  American Express

Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Return form with payment to:  
**PENN STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS**  
 University Support Bldg. 1, Suite C  
 University Park, PA 16802-1003  
 Credit card orders: 800-326-9180  
 Toll free fax: 877-PSU-BOOK  
<http://www.psupress.org>

\*Please mention the PA07 code when ordering by phone.  
 Make checks payable to Penn State University.