



Indian Conquistadors: Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica

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The conquest of the New World would hardly have been possible if the invading Spaniards had not allied themselves with the indigenous population. This book takes into account the role of native peoples as active agents in the Conquest through a review of new sources and more careful analysis of known but understudied materials that demonstrate the overwhelming importance of native allies in both conquest and colonial control.

In *Indian Conquistadors*, leading scholars offer the most comprehensive look to date at native participation in the conquest of Mesoamerica. The contributors examine pictorial, archaeological, and documentary evidence spanning three centuries, including little-known eyewitness accounts from both Spanish and native documents, paintings (lienzos) and maps (mapas) from the colonial period, and a new assessment of imperialism in the region before the Spanish arrival.

This new research shows that the Tlaxcalans, the most famous allies of the Spanish, were far from alone. Not only did native lords throughout Mesoamerica supply arms, troops, and tactical guidance, but tens of thousands of warriors—Nahuas, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, Mayas, and others—spread throughout the region to participate with the Spanish in a common cause.

By offering a more balanced account of this dramatic period, this book calls into question traditional narratives that emphasize indigenous peoples' roles as auxiliaries rather than as conquistadors in their own right. Enhanced with twelve maps and more than forty illustrations, *Indian Conquistadors* opens a vital new line of research and challenges our understanding of this important era.

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