



The Life Within: Local Indigenous Society in Mexico's Toluca Valley, 1650-1800

Caterina Pizzigoni

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The Life Within provides a social and cultural history of the indigenous people of a region of central Mexico in the later colonial period—as told through documents in Nahuatl and Spanish. It views the indigenous world from the inside out, focusing first on the household—buildings, lots, household saints—and expanding outward toward the householders and the greater community. The internal focus of this book provides a comprehensive picture of indigenous society, exploring the categories by which people are identified, their interactions, their activities, and the aspects of the local corporations that manifest themselves in household life.

Pizzigoni brings indigenous-language social history into the later colonial period, whereas the emphasis until now has fallen heavily on the earlier phase. The late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries emerge as a dynamic time that saw, along with cultural persistence, many new adaptations and creations. Covering a period of over a century and a half, this study goes beyond a monolithic treatment of the region to introduce for the first time a systematic analysis of subregional variation in vocabulary and real-life phenomena, showing how, within larger regional trends, each tiniest community of the Toluca Valley retained markers of its individuality.

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