



The Conquest of Mexico: The Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16Th-18th Centuries

Serge Gruzinski

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The Conquest of Mexico is a brilliant account of the Spanish conquest of Mexico, written from a new and unfamiliar angle. Gruzinski analyses the process of colonization that took place in native Indian societies over three centuries, focusing on disruptions to the Indian's memory, changes in their perception of reality, the spread of the European idea of the supernatural and the Spanish colonists' introduction of alphabetical script which the Indians had to combine with their own traditional - oral and pictorial - forms of communication. Gruzinski discusses the Indians' often awkward initiation into writing, their assimilation of Spanish culture, and their subsequent reinterpretation of their own past and recovers the changing Indian perceptions of the sacred and their "absorption" of elements from the Christian tradition. The Conquest of Mexico is a major work of cultural history which reconstructs a crucial episode in the European colonization of the New World. It is also an important contribution to the study of the relationship between memory, orality, images and writing in history.

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