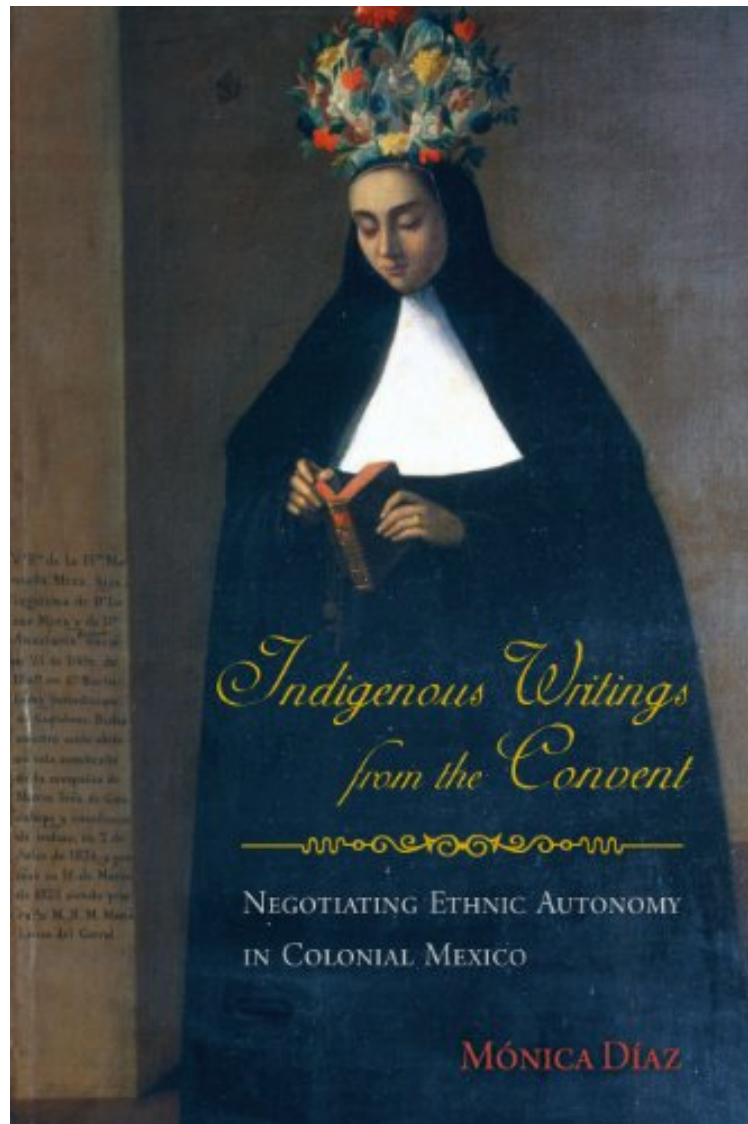


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Indigenous Writings from the Convent: Negotiating Ethnic Autonomy in Colonial Mexico (First Peoples: New Directions in Indigenous Studies)

Mnica Daz

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Mexico (First Peoples: New Directions in Indigenous Studies):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well researched and interesting. By Harrington Ashton Lackey Jr. This book is a very well researched study of female natives who were permitted to be nuns in colonial Latin America. I recommend it to anyone who is interested in or studying early Latin American history and literature.

Sometime in the 1740s, Sor Mara Magdalena, an indigenous noblewoman living in one of only three convents in New Spain that allowed Indians to profess as nuns, sent a letter to Father Juan de Altamirano to ask for his help in getting church prelates to exclude Creole and Spanish women from convents intended for indigenous nuns only. Drawing on this and other such letters--as well as biographies, sermons, and other texts--Mnica Daz argues that the survival of indigenous ethnic identity was effectively served by this class of noble indigenous nuns. While colonial sources that refer to indigenous women are not scant, documents in which women emerge as agents who actively participate in shaping their own identity are rare. Looking at this minority agency--or subaltern voice--in various religious discourses exposes some central themes. It shows that an indigenous identity recast in Catholic terms was able to be effectively recorded and that the religious participation of these women at a time when indigenous parishes were increasingly secularized lent cohesion to that identity. *Indigenous Writings from the Convent* examines ways in which indigenous women participated in one of the most prominent institutions in colonial times--the Catholic Church--and what they made of their experience with convent life. This book will appeal to scholars of literary criticism, women's studies, and colonial history, and to anyone interested in the ways that class, race, and gender intersected in the colonial world.

"This superbly researched study of Mexico's indigenous female religious should be read by any scholar interested in gender, race, and conventual writing." *Colonial Latin American Historical*