



# Yucatán's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War (Symposia on Latin America Series)

*Terry Rugeley*

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Conflicts between native Maya peoples and European-derived governments have punctuated Mexican history from the Conquest in the sixteenth century to the current Zapatista uprising in Chiapas. In this deeply researched study, Terry Rugeley delves into the 1800-1847 origins of the Caste War, the largest and most successful of these peasant rebellions.

Rugeley refutes earlier studies that seek to explain the Caste War in terms of a single issue. Instead, he explores the interactions of several major social forces, including the church, the hacienda, and peasant villagers. He uncovers a complex web of issues that led to the outbreak of war, including the loss of communal lands, substandard living conditions, the counterpoise of Catholicism versus traditional Maya beliefs, and an increasingly heavy tax burden.

Drawn from a wealth of primary documents, this book represents the first real attempt to reconstruct the history of the pre-Caste War period. In addition to its obvious importance for Mexican history, it will be illuminating background reading for everyone seeking to understand the ongoing conflict in Chiapas.

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