



A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico (Studies in Environment and History)

By Elinor G. K. Melville

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This is a book about the biological conquest of the New World. Taking as a case study the sixteenth century history of a region of highland central Mexico, it shows how the environmental and social changes brought about by the introduction of Old World species aided European expansion. The book spells out in detail the environmental changes associated with the introduction of Old World grazing animals into New World ecosystems, demonstrates how these changes enabled the Spanish takeover of land, and explains how environmental changes shaped the colonial societies.

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Review

"...a very important book for all those interested in Latin American history....a very important work because it opens up a debate that should help us better understand the processes of European conquest throughout Latin America." Erick D. Langer, *The Americas*

"Melville's book does a great service....All in all, the book truly contributes to an historical profession that too often sees nature in terms of the *longue duree* of Braudel. Melville provides a balance." Abel A. Alves, *H-Net Book Review*

"This is a fascinating study of the effects of policy and ecology on a small region in Mexico....All who are interested in historical environmental studies should read this book. Its implications are not limited to Mexico, nor to the early modern period." John F. Schwaller, *Sixteenth Century Journal*

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