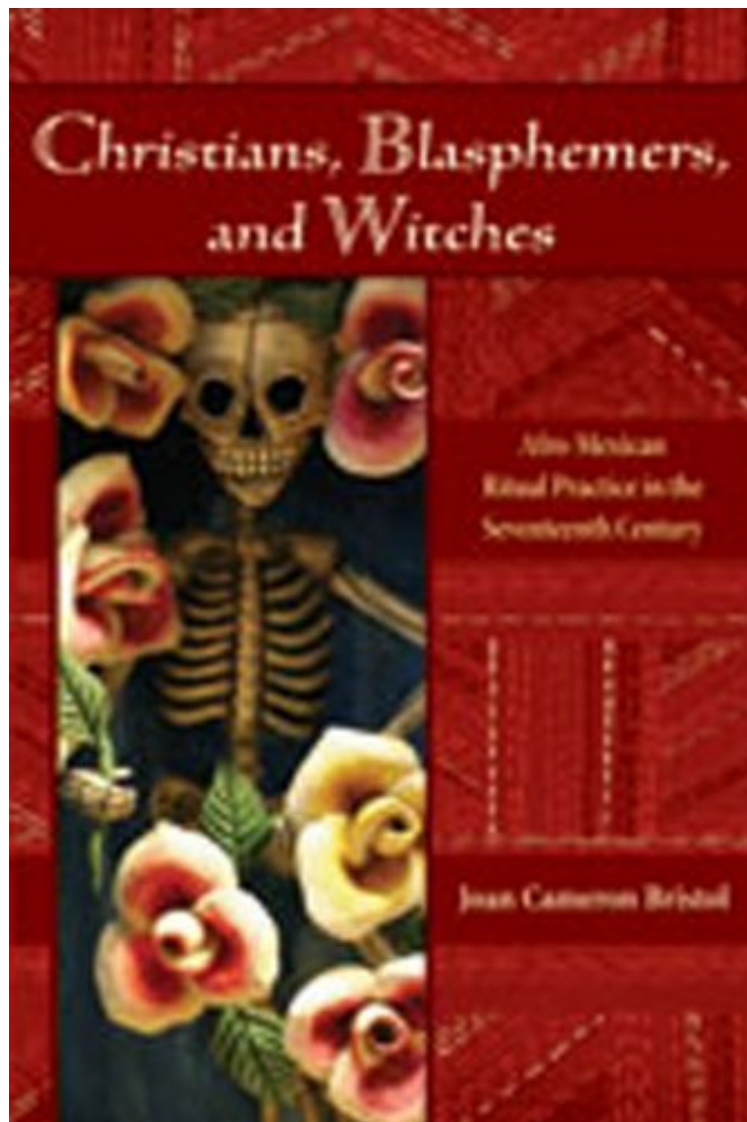


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## Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches: Afro-Mexican Ritual Practice in the Seventeenth Century (Diálogos Series)

*Joan Cameron Bristol*

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**Joan Cameron Bristol : Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches: Afro-Mexican Ritual Practice in the Seventeenth Century (Diálogos Series)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches: Afro-Mexican Ritual Practice in the Seventeenth Century (Diálogos Series):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Useful InformationBy MooncatInitially I found that this book, which was part of the required texts that were needed for the first class of its kind to be taught anywhere in the U.S.; History Special Topic, Afro-Mexican Cultures in Latin America, gives a new way to look at the past religious practices that had dominated not only Spain but also was widespread in Latin America's early history. Through the use of storytelling, we are given a look at the practices of these different faiths, some of which were brought over by the African slaves imported into Mexico. Differing faiths are explored in this book giving a much more open look at how possibly they all might have the same basic form yet differed because of the backgrounds of the individuals. This is a book that will help you understand more about why individuals rely on and keep their faiths so strongly with them from generation to generation.

The decline of the native population following the Spanish conquest of New Spain in 1521, among other factors, led to an increased demand for African slaves to add to the labor force and bolster the colonial economy. Approximately two hundred thousand Africans were imported into Mexico from Spain and from West and West Central Africa during the course of the slave trade. These "Afro-Mexicans" encompassed a great variety of individuals and experiences whose ritual lives differed as much as their backgrounds. Some were Christians who took communion, confessed, and celebrated Mass. Some were blasphemers who were denounced to the Inquisition. Still others were practitioners of mystical rites meant to cure illness, attract lovers, or control owners. Focusing on the time period from the intensification of slave importation in 1580 to approximately 1700, Joan Bristol presents information from Mexican Inquisition documents. Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches explores how Afro-Mexicans worked within the limitations imposed on them by the Church and the Spanish Crown in order to develop relationships with peers and superiors, defend themselves against unjust treatment, make money, and gain prestige on the local level.

From the Inside FlapNew information from Inquisition documents shows how African slaves in Mexico adapted to the constraints of the Church and the Spanish crown in order to survive in their communities. About the AuthorJoan Cameron Bristol is assistant professor of history, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches is her first book.