



# Behind the Mexican Mountains

*Robert Zingg*

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## **Behind the Mexican Mountains** Robert Zingg

In 1930, anthropologists Robert Zingg and Wendell Bennett spent nine months among the Tarahumara of Chihuahua, Mexico, one of the least acculturated indigenous societies in North America. Their fieldwork resulted in *The Tarahumara: An Indian Tribe of Northern Mexico* (1935), a classic ethnography still familiar to anthropologists. In addition to this formal work, Zingg also penned a personal, unvarnished travelogue of his sojourn among the Tarahumara. Unpublished in his lifetime, *Behind the Mexican Mountains* is now available in print for the first time.

This colorful account provides a compelling description of the landscape, people, traditions, language, and archaeology of the Tarahumara region. Abandoning the scientific detachment of the observer, Zingg frankly records his reactions to the people and their customs as he vividly evokes the daily experience of doing fieldwork. In the introduction, Howard Campbell examines Zingg's writing in light of current critiques of anthropology as literature. He makes a strong case that although earlier anthropological writing reveals unacceptable cultural biases, it also demonstrates the ongoing importance and vitality of field research.

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