Spanish Central America (Revised Edition)
A Socioeconomic History, 1520–1720
by Murdo J. MacLeod
LLILAS Special Publications Series
The seventeenth century has been characterized as “Latin America’s forgotten century.” This landmark work, originally published in 1973, attempted to fill the vacuum in knowledge by providing an account of the first great colonial cycle in Spanish Central America. The colonial Spanish society of the sixteenth century was very different from that described in the eighteenth century. What happened in the Latin American colonies between the first conquests, the seizure of long-accumulated Indian wealth, the first silver booms, and the period of modern raw material supply? How did Latin America move from one stage to the other? What were these intermediate economic stages, and what effect did they have on the peoples living in Latin America? These questions continue to resonate in Latin American studies today, making this updated edition of Murdo J. MacLeod’s original work more relevant than ever.

Colonial Central America was a large, populous, and always strategically significant stretch of land. With the Yucatán, it was home of the Maya, one of the great pre-Columbian cultures. MacLeod examines the long-term process it underwent of relative prosperity, depression, and then recovery, citing comparative sources on Europe to describe Central America’s great economic, demographic, and social cycles. With an updated historiographical and bibliographical introduction, this fascinating study should appeal to historians, anthropologists, and all who are interested in the colonial experience of Latin America.

Murdo J. MacLeod is Emeritus Professor of History of the University of Florida at Gainesville.

Gabriel García Moreno and Conservative State Formation in the Andes
by Peter V. N. Henderson,
LLILAS New Interpretations of Latin America Series (November 2008)
This book explores the life and times of Ecuador’s most controversial politician within the broader context of the new political history, addressing five major themes of nineteenth-century Latin American history: the creation of political networks, the divisiveness of regionalism, the bitterness of the liberal-conservative ideological divide, the complicating problem of caudillismo, and the quest for progress and modernization.

Two myths traditionally associated with García Moreno’s rule are debunked. The first is that he created a theocracy in Ecuador. Instead, the book argues that he negotiated a concordat with the Papacy giving the national government control over the church’s secular responsibilities, and subordinated the clergy, many of whom were highly critical of García Moreno, to the conservative state. A second, frequently repeated generalization is that he created a conservative dictatorship out of touch with the liberal age in which he lived. Instead, the book argues that moderates held sway during the first nine years of García Moreno’s period of influence, and only during his final term did he achieve the type of conservative state he thought necessary to advance his progressive nation-building agenda.

In sum, this book enriches our understanding of many of the notions of state formation by suggesting that conservatives like García Moreno envisioned a program of material progress and promoting national unity under a very different formula from that of nineteenth-century liberals.

Peter V. N. Henderson is Professor of History at Winona State University in Minnesota. He is author of, most recently, In the Absence of Don Porfirio: Francisco León de la Barra and the Mexican Revolution.

Both books may be ordered through the University of Texas Press. For more information, visit http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/ or contact LLILAS Managing Editor Virginia Hagerty at vhagerty@mail.utexas.edu.