



# **Hacienda and Market in Eighteenth-Century Mexico: The Rural Economy of the Guadalajara Region, 1675-1820 (Latin American Silhouettes)**

*Eric Van Young*

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This classic history of the Mexican hacienda from the colonial period through the nineteenth century has been reissued in a silver anniversary edition complete with a substantive new introduction and foreword. Eric Van Young explores 150 years of Mexico's economic and rural development, a period when one of history's great empires was trying to extract more resources from its most important colony, and when an arguably capitalist economy was both expanding and taking deeper root. The author explains the development of a regional agrarian system, centered on the landed estates of late colonial Mexico, the central economic and social institution of an overwhelmingly rural society. With rich empirical detail, he meticulously describes the features of the rural economy, including patterns of land ownership, credit and investment, labor relations, the structure of production, and the relationship of a major colonial city to its surrounding area. The book's most interesting and innovative element is its emphasis on the way the system of rural economy shaped, and was shaped by, the internal logic of a great spatial system, the region of Guadalajara. Van Young argues that Guadalajara's population growth progressively integrated the large geographical region surrounding the city through the mechanisms of the urban market for grain and meat, which in turn put pressure on local land and labor resources. Eventually this drove white and Indian landowners into increasingly sharp conflict and led to the progressive proletarianization of the region's peasantry during the last decades of the Spanish colonial era. It is no accident, given this history, that the Guadalajara region was one of the major areas of armed insurrection for most of the decade during Mexico's struggle for independence from Spain. By highlighting the way haciendas worked and changed over time, this indispensable study illuminates Mexico's economic and social history, the movement for independence, and the origins of the Mexican Revolution.

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