

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL BULLETIN  
ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Florida International University**  
*University Graduate School*

Doctoral Dissertation Defense

**Abstract**

“We Have the Land Titles.” Indigenous Litigants and Privatization of *Resguardos* in Colombia,  
1870s-1940s

by

**Gloria Patricia Lopera Mesa**

Pressures for the privatization of indigenous lands accompanied the making of nation-states in post-colonial Latin America and boosted the natives' quest for colonial legal documents suitable to prove their rights over indigenous communal landholdings (known in Colombia as "*resguardos*"). This dissertation compares the experiences of two communities - San Lorenzo and Cañamomo-Lomaprieta - engaging with the law and producing legal and historical evidence to respond to the privatization of their *resguardos*. These communities inhabit the municipalities of Riosucio and Supía (Caldas) in the Western Colombian Andes. While the study explores the genesis of San Lorenzo's and Cañamomo-Lomaprieta's communities and territories during the colonial era, its main focus is "the privatization era" that spanned from the 1870s to the 1940s.

Blending approaches and methods from legal history, social history, and ethnohistory, this dissertation argues that *resguardo* titles trace *indígenas'* roots to their lands and history and encapsulate long-term processes of resistant adaptation. Besides, this study establishes that San Lorenzo's and Cañamomo-Lomaprieta's different attitudes toward litigation, dissimilar political stances, and their contrasting experiences during the 1870s campaign account for both communities' divergent responses to the last phase of the privatization process.

**Date:** June 10, 2021  
**Time:** 10.00 a.m.  
**Place:** Zoom

**Department:** History  
**Major Professor:** Victor Uribe-Uran