



Social Structure of Colonial Latin America

Chapter 25

Colonial Latin American Caste System

- When Spanish and Portuguese colonies were established in central and south America a caste system formed.
- One's social class was directly tied to how "pure" his blood was and his place of birth.
- The kings wanted to keep the colonies under their control and only have "loyal" people in office.

Peninsulares

Creoles

Mestizos

Mulattoes

Amerindians

Zambos

Africans

Peninsulares

- “pure blood” ???
- From the Iberian Peninsula
- Highest social class and the only class which could hold high office (church, military, administrative)
- Spain wanted to keep loyalty of colonial leaders.

Creoles

- Born in Americas
- Land-owning
- Elite
- Could not hold highest positions
- In 1800s will rebel against peninsulares in wars of independence

Mestizos

- Of Spanish and Amerindian descent
- Spanish and Portuguese men married native women and had families.



Mulattoes = Spanish and African descent

Zambos = Amerindian and African descent



Africans

- Many Africans were brought over from Africa to the colonies as slaves.
- Some of these Africans would escape from a plantation and find their way to native villages.
- Natives were usually sympathetic to the African people.

Factions by Fractions

- There were various levels in society, in between the main groups, based on blood quantum.

Example:

Castizos =

$\frac{3}{4}$ European,
no more than
 $\frac{1}{4}$ Amerindian

- Derogatory Slurs

