

Anthro 3.2

Race and nation-building in the Americas

Problem of Belonging and Organization

Post-Conquest Latin America and the organization of differences

Colonial societies

National societies

Emergence of the castas- mixed races mestizos, mulattoes, etc...

- economic exploitation and ideological domination

- impossible to differentiate between Iberian and Indian

- Ordering of differences structured by underlying forces of political economy

Capitalism, slavery, need to discriminate

- the need to organize a hierarchy of social relations for the purpose of

economic exploitation produces

- an organization of race differences

- need to discriminate produces differences

Race is social construct

- derives from European justification of slavery, conquest, and colonialism

- race relations are types of social relations

- knowing the range of one trait does not predict the presence of others

- strategy to control

Dilemma of Race Mixing

- Mixed racial identities in Latin America

1. Spanish: two societies, then legal hierarchies of casts

2. Us Americans: legal separations, denial of national membership

- outright denial to slaves and natives - different than latin america

3. Portuguese/Brazilians: legal measures to encourage race mixing

all three based on racial strategies, but with different outcomes

New World Slavery

- approx 12.5 million Africans shipped, 10.7 survived

- Brazil, Caribbean, U.S.

Latin American dilemma of race mixing

- Darker races inferior

- Social Darwinism

- Race mixing produces degenerates

Inequality as organizing principle

- gendered and radicalized hierarchies

Spanish Solution: Two Republics

- Segregation of conquerers/ conquered

- Sustained through violence and cultural imprinting

Labor Regimes Based on violence

- Encomienda

Repatriation in 1549

drafted portion of men from each Indian community and assigned to Spanish employers

Basic shift in land and labor between 1570-1630

increased demands for labor and emergence of free wage labor

African slavery/ Indian labor/ wage labor

African slaves too expensive, turned to wage labor

Caste System

Race-mixing

Legally defined racial indexes:

Spanish + criollos (white)

Mestizos (hispanicized elite (minority) and lower African-Indian-Mexicans (majority))

viewed as dangerous class; likely to lead insurrection, developed Caste system

spanish > mixed > natives

enforced by violence and hegemony

New Model based more on cultural economic rather than strictly racial indexes

existence of poor Spanish and mulattos diminished social distance

gente decent (respectable people)/ gente plebes (plebeians: racially mixed)

Gente decent model combines with Caste system to designate the racially mixed

Resistance and Rebellion

African and native-born blacks revolt

cultural imprinting: christianization and syncretism

culture and ethnic identity become contested terrains