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## Colonial Identities and the *Sociedad de Castas*

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Analysis of the *sociedad de castas* has often been framed in terms of "race" and "class;" that is, to what extent did these two factors determine the functioning of the multi-racial and multi-ethnic societies of colonial Latin America, and how did their relative influence change over time, and why.\* Scholars have sought various paths to determine and measure these patterns and changes, often concentrating on marriage or sexual unions. Some have seen the decline in endogamous marriages as evidence of a move toward a class-based society, even arguing that capitalist economic relations lay at the heart of this change. Others have emphasized that despite this decline, most people, and especially those defined as "Spaniards" and "Indians" were still marrying within their "caste" even at the end of the colonial era (Anderson 1994, 28-30). Since proponents of both the "race" and the "class" interpretations recognize that over time there was a tendency for the former to become less important in the selection of partners, to some extent the debate is really over interpretation of the significance of that fact.<sup>1</sup> Was the glass half full or half empty?

While the debate has sometimes focused excessively on the appropriate measures of endogamy or exogamy and what these unions represent, I continue to believe that the "*sociedad de castas* like the society of orders was a juridical and ideological construct that influenced and interacted with work, marriage, and other forms of social life, and was part of it as well." "Values, perceptual identities, and ideology" as much as the measurement of behavior is crucial to an understanding of colonial society and the operation of various hierarchies within it (McCaa and Schwartz 1983, 711-12). In recent years, this position has been supported by a growing concern with questions of identity and social definition as well as by a search for alternate factors which shaped social distinctions.

Prof. Kuznesof's essay has returned to this crucial aspect of colonial society and has reopened the essential questions, but she has expanded and enriched the debate by refocusing on three primary elements: the category of "Spaniard," and what it meant both biologically and socially; the changing and thus historical nature of the *casta* system, and especially the nature of its origins; and finally, by asserting that not race or class but gender was the keystone that supported this social construction. She argues that "determination of race . . . was substantially driven by gender." Revisionism is always heady wine and it is difficult to take a position against a rethinking of these issues at once as learned and as radical as hers, but while I agree with much of what she argues, I would place emphases elsewhere and at some points part company altogether.

Since the "racial perception" tests of Charles Wagley, Marvin Harris and others in the 1950s, the concept of racial designations as social categories subject to redefinition according to social criteria and the situation of both the perceived and the observer has been around in the social science literature (Wagley 1952). There is nothing very novel or postmodern about this position. The racial categories of the *sociedad de castas* were not purely biological but were "socially constructed" markers which might become identities—although not always. In fact, getting people to assume the identities ascribed to them by the state, local powers, or customary practice often lay behind colonial social legislation. Identities were constructed by self and others (Silverblatt 1995). The first problem is recognizing the conditions under which identities were "created" or assumed. Much of the literature and at times Kuznesof's article views the definitions of caste as collateral to, or solidified by other life experiences: marriage, baptism, living arrangements. But there is considerable evidence that definitions, and especially self-definitions, were very practical and functional, responding not so much to identity as to convenience and situational advantage. We must recall that the colonial polity quite early privileged certain groups and statuses. Definition as an Indian and subsequently as a mulatto required an individual to pay tribute. Thus however one felt about who they were, their identity, there were compelling reasons for those at risk to avoid such definitions. Similarly, there were powerful motives for forcing individuals into categories. For example, caciques who were ultimately responsible for tribute payments sought to place as many people on the rolls as possible. Evidence from 18th century Quito is particularly revealing of how many people who were culturally Indians chose to emphasize Spanish or mestizo origin or ancestry in order to avoid the tribute rolls, using everything from clothing, hairstyle, language, and the *vox populi* to back their claims (Minchom 1994, 153-200; Burga 1988; Barragan 1992, 48-49). This functional and utilitarian selection of status should make us wary about

turning racial categories into identities. There is enough evidence of situational mobility, of shifting categories, and of the permeability of status to warrant such caution. How fluid and situational these categories and identities could be is underlined by an extraordinary case. The chronicler Diego Rosales wrote in 1674 of a Spanish soldier on the Chilean frontier, a captive for many years of the Mapuche who upon his escape made his way to Santiago where he dressed as an Indian to avoid further conscription, but who was then seized as a fugitive from an encomienda. The dissimulating Spaniard had to escape back to his former captors (Silva Galdames 1990).

In emphasizing the *casta* system not as a fixed structure but as a historical process in which there was considerable change over time, Kuznesof has done a singular service. Her concentration on the period prior to 1570, that is on the first, and in some places, first two, generations is an important refocusing of the debate, but as she admits, one fraught with documentary and methodological pitfalls.<sup>2</sup> I think that she underestimates three important elements in the story: the importance of legitimacy, the demographic constraints, and the regional variations dependent on differing social, demographic, and economic conditions. Above all, I believe that while gender clearly played a role in the differential functioning of the *sociedad de castas*, it can not be used as a surrogate for "racial" categories however defined, nor will gender provide an analytical tool as effective as class or other forms of social status for understanding the hierarchies within this society.<sup>3</sup>

The nature of the early contacts between Europeans and indigenous peoples and the treatment of their offspring is a key to the origins of the systems of hierarchy. Here, social origins, especially of the women, and legitimacy were cross-cutting and mutually reinforcing aspects of status, mobility, and identity. The creation of a generation of mestizo children accepted as Spaniards did not depend on marriages as Kuznesof asserts, but on unions with Indian women. The conquerors of Quito, for example, fathered a number of mestizo children but only one Indian woman actually married a first conqueror, and she was the exceptional Doña Isabel, a daughter of Atahualpa who married not one, but two encomenderos. She bore a son to her first husband, Esteban Pretel, before marrying Diego Gutiérrez de Medina after the death of her first husband (Ortiz de la Tabla 1993, 69-81). Her mestizo son was accepted as an "español." Other such cases of children of prominent conquerors and Indian women of noble or royal lineages who were accepted as *españoles* (whether their parents were married or not) can be documented in Peru. The well-known example of Garcilaso de la Vega need not be recounted, but there were others. Francisca Pizarro Yupanqui, daughter of Francisco Pizarro and Ines Huaylas Yupanqui (and thus granddaughter of Huayna Capac) who was sent to Spain at age seventeen, married her

uncle Hernando and with him built a noble house on main plaza of Trujillo to live out her father's and uncle's fantasies in Extremadura surrounded by Inca servants. Holder of encomiendas and benefactor of various pious foundations and churches, Tirso de Molina praised her in his "Amazonas de Indias" (Ramos y Fulsan 1992?; Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1989). These were first generation cases in which parental recognition and lineage more than "race" were essential.<sup>4</sup> Parental status and their social ranking bore directly on the recognition of the child as part of Spanish society.

Mexico also offers examples. Cortés had at least four mestizo children. Two of them were widely accepted in Hispanic society. His son, Martín (named for Cortés' father) was borne by his interpreter-mistress Doña Marina. Although illegitimate, Martín married Bernardina de Porras, received a habit of Santiago, and eventually assumed a leadership position in the colony until he ran afoul of royal government. Cortés also had a daughter with Techuipo, (doña Isabel Moctezuma) the daughter of Moctezuma. The daughter, Leonor, eventually married Juan de Tolosa, a Basque mineowner of Zacatecas. Her mother, doña Isabel had been also ceremonially wed to both Cuitlahuac and Cuahtemoc and later married three different conquistadores. She eventually held various encomiendas including Tacuba and her husbands became encomenderos through the marriage. The four mestizo children she had with Juan Cano became encomenderos or were otherwise well integrated into Hispanic society (Himmerich y Valencia, 1991; Uchmany 1987, 30-32). Pedro de Alvarado before the fall of Tenochtitlan was given the daughter of Xicontecatl, leader of Tlaxcala, who bore him a child (Thomas 1994, 255) whom he later married to the cousin of his legitimate wife, relatives of the Duke of Albuquerque. When the Adelantado and his legitimate wife died in 1541 he left only bastards and thus, as the bishop of Guatemala lamented, no legitimate heir (Martínez Peláez 1971, 266; Uchmany 1987; Herren 1992, 205).

These unions between conquerors and high-born Indian women were the product of passion and strategy on both sides. The case of Quetzalmamalitzin, lord of Teotihuacan who married his daughter and mestizo granddaughter to Spaniards in order to reinforce his family's position of power underlines the way in which the Indian nobility understood how to manipulate these unions (Bertrand and Grusinski 1993, 144-53; Cf. Barragan 1992, 48). On the Spanish side, high mortality, the instability of success, and religious vocations among the conquistadores and their families resulted in the disappearance of many lineages of the earliest settlers (Gonzalbo Aizpuru 1994, 330; Benítez 1992, 18).<sup>5</sup> This created a favorable demographic atmosphere (virtually a necessity) for the acceptance and recognition of mestizos, especially those born of Indian noble women. There is considerable evidence that

illegitimate children were often raised along with the legitimate offspring. But here too "class" seemed to matter. Spanish men preferred to marry "Spanish" women and those men of higher rank or local prominence were better able to do so. In a 1534 listing of the Spanish settlers of Puebla, conquistadores and members of the *cabildo* with few exceptions married Spanish women while over a third of those listed simply as *pobladores* married Indian women. (Gonzalbo Aizpuru 1994, 339-40; Cf. McCaa 1994).

These early unions, even when outside the sacrament of the Church, seem to have born little stigma for the children when compensated by the status or lineage of the mother (both are surrogates for class), the prominence of the father, and especially by recognition and support of the father.<sup>6</sup> Indian lineage, in fact, was not necessarily a handicap, and if noble or royal, could be used to advantage. Captain Martín de Ampuero, *procurador general* of Peru backed up his petition for a habit in the order of Santiago by pointing out that he was a nephew of Atahualpa (Lohmann-Villena 1947, I, xxviii, n.4). The advantage of noble origins could be sought in many directions. Some of the early threadbare conquistadores were chided by contemporaries for claiming descent from the Visigoths or ordering masses said for el Cid in an attempt to legitimate their status (Schwartz 1978, 35). By the eighteenth-century such pretensions reached silly levels. Asturians and *Montañeses* boasted of their Gothic origins (unmixed with Moors) while the Basques pointed out that their blood was even purer since they had never been conquered by anybody, including the foreign Goths. Purity and distinguished lineage were relative. The descendants of the Marqués de la Conquista and the Duque de Veragua would have been surprised by the Asturian noble who argued in the 18th century that he did not "descend from the Pizarros, Colons or any other suspicious family." (Caro Baroja 1965, 203).

Now while there may be some validity to the idea that lineage is a kind of marker of ethnic or "racial" distinction because of its dependence on "blood," (although non-consanguineal kinship and adoption was also a possibility) such an argument is of little use in understanding the specific operation of colonial regimes since it puts Europeans in the same category as Polynesians, Zulus, and Nahuas, or any other people with lineage-based social systems. Were these societies also organized by "racial principles?" (Liu 1991).<sup>7</sup>

Of course, many mestizos could make no claims to noble indigenous lineage or count on the support of their fathers, many of whom believed simply that, "it was no sin to fornicate with an Indian woman."<sup>8</sup> The attitude of Francisco de Aguirre, noted Indian fighter in Chile and Tucumán, is revealing. In 1569, he admitted to fathering fifty illegitimate children, claiming that making mestizos was more a service to God than

a sin. Although the Inquisition made him abjure this heresy, similar statements from Mexico and Brazil demonstrate that this attitude was widely shared by the average conqueror and common settler (Medina 1890, 116, 126-27, 258-59; Vainfas 1989).

For many of the first mestizo generation of contact, born of rape, casual, or even more regular consensual unions, there was little to separate them from the indigenous majority. Said one observer in Alto Peru, "they reside among the *ayllus* (se asientan en los ayllus) (Saignes and Bouysse-Cassagne 1992, 14-15). Unrecognized and unsponsored by their fathers, undistinguished by their mothers' rank or lack of it, and raised by their mothers, speaking indigenous languages, there was little chance that they would move into Hispanic society, adopt that identity, or be accepted as such. Their tendency was to become part of Indian society or to drift to the margins of the colonial world both physically and socially (Israel 1975, chap. 2; Lutz 1994, 99-103).

The point here is not that there were two types of mestizos, but that mestizos were not a category in themselves nor did they have a juridical identity. They were essentially defined by not being Spaniards or Indians (Lockhart and Schwartz 1983, 129-30; Colmenares 1973, 428-29). Mestizos chose and were chosen or accepted into other categories or statuses. Thus the term was at first reserved for marginals and increasingly for the unrecognized, illegitimate children who were absorbed into the mass of Indian population (Schwartz and Salomon in press).<sup>9</sup> From the Spanish point of view, they were a missing generation, the "children of Spaniards and Indians who go about lost," and various plans were sometimes made to collect them, send them back to Spain to learn useful occupations, and have the women among them marry.<sup>10</sup> The impractical plan to create separate mestizo pueblos ordered in 1558 was stillborn. Had it been implemented, it would have had the effect of creating mestizos as a separate ethnicity, something that was slow to take place and even then, always with contradictions.

Relations between mestizos and Indians were just as complex. Increasingly, the exploitative relationship between mestizos and Indian society became a problem, provoking continuous and mostly ineffective legislation, preventing their residence in Indian villages, inheritance of *cacicazgos*, and limiting other areas of potential exploitation. The crown and colonial officials also feared that mestizos would provoke Indian unrest by, "adulating the caciques and telling them that they are grandes just like the titled lords are in Castile" (Saignes and Bouysse-Cassagne 1992, 14). But even as mestizos were increasing and were increasingly feared and demeaned, there were still attempts to differentiate between the recognized children of important Spanish fathers, those of "good status and performance" and the restive and turbulent mass (Mörner, 1970, 106; Chance 1978, 94-101; Matienzo 1567, cap. 24, 85-86;



Busto Duthurburu 1965; Lutz 1994, 136). These efforts raise perplexing questions about the extent to which biological concepts of "race" were already in place in Spanish thinking and practice by the sixteenth century, at least, in so far as they related to Indians. Africans were another matter and as their presence in colonial population grew it tended to lower the status of all the castas.

Mestizos, however defined, always stood between two worlds. Indigenous peoples also had to decide about the positioning of mestizos. On the Chilean military frontier mestizos that chose to be Araucanians could rise to be caciques or lead *malones* (raids) (Silva Galdames 1992). Sometimes Indian communities would rise to the defense of mestizos who inherited leadership roles. (Colmenares 1973, 429). The Mexican Indian historian Chimalpahin recognized the liminality of mestizos and their ability to chose an identity and allegiance:

The honorable mestizos, male and female acknowledge that they come from us; but some misguided mestizos male and female, do not want to acknowledge that part of the blood they have is ours, but rather imagine themselves fully Spaniards and mistreat us and deceive us the same way some Spaniards do . . . We are all descended from Adam and Eve although our bodies are divided into three kinds. (Lockhart 1991, 384-85)

Identity and designation was thus a complex process involving the individual, the indigenous world, and colonial society. During the formative generations as Kuznesof herself suggests, legitimacy was a crucial feature for colonial society but the implications of the impact of legitimacy or recognition on the concept of "race" or of the reverse needs to be addressed directly. Harding (1986) or Liu (1991) to the contrary, the evidence of a pre-conquest racism determining Spanish social practice in the Americas is not entirely clear and certainly not without contradictions. Early opposition to Spanish-Indian marriages was contested by Las Casas and the early Jeronimite missionaries on Española and both Cardinal Cisneros in Seville and Governor Ovando on the island argued that such unions with the daughters of *caciques* had social, political and economic benefits; Ovando even projecting the marriage of Spanish women to Indian men. (Rosenblat 1951, 2:18-19; Mörner 1970). The *repartimiento* of Albuquerque of 1514 listed sixty encomenderos married to *cacicas*. The early Spanish *cédulas* of 1514 and 1515 promoted marriages between Spanish men and Indian women while that of 1525 also projected Spanish women marrying Indian husbands. These laws, as unfulfilled as they were, make it difficult to argue that the preconceptions later codified in the purity of blood regulations were already operating in the early sixteenth century (Gonzalbo Aizpuru, 1994, 336). One is tempted to argue that rather than predetermining Spanish action in the Indies, the concepts inherent in the *limpieza de sangre*

regulations were to some extent produced by those actions. That is, colonial experience and the increasingly negative evaluation of Indians, mestizos, and other castas during the sixteenth century were part of, and contributed to, a hardening of ideologies of racial and religious exclusion in Iberia itself.<sup>11</sup> Such an argument inverts the relationship of racial ideology and colonial experience or at least complicates it.

If "race" was indeed a social category, we must seek the elements on which it was constructed. For the first generations, legitimacy and recognition seem to have been the primary determinants. A common pattern for conquistadores was to arrange the marriage of a mestizo daughter to a dependent Spaniard. In Venezuela many families, among them the *mantuano* elite, included mestizos who were considered whites (Rosenblatt 1954, 2:77). As Aguirre Beltrán noted for New Spain, mestizos recognized by both parents were usually called "creoles" (Megged 1992). At first, it was illegitimacy rather than mestizo origins in themselves that caused the loss of status or excluded children from the succession to their parents' encomiendas. But within two generations or so illegitimacy and mixed origins were becoming strongly associated. Baltasar Dorantes de Carranza in his *Sumaria relación* (1604), a plaintive and bitter defense of the legitimate heirs of the conquerors, detested their illegitimate brethren, especially if their mothers were Indians: "Of the bastards my pen falls silent, nor will I write of them and it is better that they remain in the inkwell for ecclesiastical statute, divine and civil law does not favor them." Nothing, he felt, was owed to them and it was a great error to take what belonged to legitimate heirs to give it to "people of this race" (*gente de esta raza*).<sup>12</sup> This was a process reported or noted in many places (Chance 1978, 100; Barragan 1992).

While Kuznesof is surely correct that many "españoles" were undoubtedly biologically mestizos what made them so was not primarily their physical characteristics but rather their cultural inclusion. Thus, contrary to her suggestion that "African and Indian influences were negotiated into Spanish society" the first generation seems to indicate that biology played a less important role than did social rank (class) or culture—at least for the partial descendants of Indians. Acceptance of Catholicism, Spanish language and Spanish ways along with legitimacy or parental (paternal) recognition went a long way toward creating creoles out of persons of mixed origin. What was much less likely was that Indian, or especially, African culture or "influences" would be accepted in that process of definition, although within the private sphere the role of servants and nursemaids can not be overlooked. Here, however, there was considerable regional variation, especially in the colonial "fringes" where the number of Europeans, especially women, was small, the role of Spanish institutions and the force of law attenuated, and the impact of indigenous ways in language, material life, and social

practice broadly diffused. So long as such areas remained "fringes," European society "negotiated" indigenous ways and mestizos maintained a relatively high position as part of colonial society (Lockhart and Schwartz 1983, 253-304).

In Spanish American centers by 1560 or so the status of mestizos within colonial society had begun to fall due to a combination of historical, demographic, and locational factors. Mestizo rebellions in Cuzco (1567) and then a later one in Quito (1583) raised serious suspicions about the loyalty, ambitions, and attachments of the mestizos, even (or especially) the legitimate, hispanicized ones, heirs to their fathers' ambitions and unsatisfied claims, and those descended from royal allies (Rodríguez Crespo, 1965; López Martínez, 1964; López Martínez 1965; Milhou 1986). A fear that they would seize Peru for themselves or join with Indians to restore the ancient monarchy lay behind Viceroy Toledo's persecution of the mestizos of Cuzco. Similar doubts and suspicions followed the "conspiracy" of don Martín Cortés in New Spain (Benítez, 1965). In addition, in the heart of the viceroyalties, the number of mestizos had now grown to large numbers, but so too had the number of Spanish women, or at least those called "españolas."<sup>13</sup> With available Spanish marriage partners, there was less need to validate the Hispanic origins of mestizos, to include them as "españoles," or to seek them as partners. This process most likely affected men more than women, so that here gender really did make a difference in the operation of the system. Statements like that of Padre José de Acosta (1585) that mestizos with bad habits would corrupt the Indians and that, "they were all of one *casta* and related and that they understand each others thoughts having been raised together," represented a growing distrust and loss of status. (Saignes and Bouysse-Cassagne 1992, 14-15; Colmenares, 1973, 428-29). Finally, the increasing presence of Africans and their descendants among the *castas* lowered the relative position of mestizos. Whatever the Spanish ambiguity toward Indian nobility and legitimate mestizos, no such vagueness existed about Africans who were associated with slave status and almost universally depreciated.<sup>14</sup>

By the close of the sixteenth century the categories of creole and mestizo were increasingly blurred and subject to non-physiognomic definition. Improved socio-economic conditions in Antequera, Oaxaca, for example, allowed mestizos and even mulattoes to claim creole status (Chance 1978, 176). But the lack of fixed categories and definitions could cut both ways. While the blurring of categories might favor those of mixed origins, it could also lower the status of American-born "Spaniards." Governor Diego Rodríguez de Valdés who arrived in Paraguay in the 1590s wrote, "in the creoles one can put little trust and in the mestizos, none" (cited in Rosenblatt 1954, 2:114-15). The

taxonomy of distinction like identities could be manipulated in a variety of ways.

As competition for offices, ecclesiastical benefices, and control of the religious orders intensified, peninsula Spaniards began increasingly to associate and identify creoles with persons of mixed origin and with the defects of nature and lineage perceived as inherent in them. Here is where theories of climate, place of birth, and upbringing began to emerge most clearly. The debate over the transmission of bad character through the milk of wet-nurses was used to condemn even the creoles who had no racial "impurity." The unsavory Juan de Mañozca, frustrated by creole opposition, wrote from Quito in 1626 that, ". . . even those who have no Indian blood, suck their milk" (*quienes cuando no tengan sangre de indios maman leche dellos*). It was an argument found in the mouths of figures as diverse as Guaman Poma de Ayala and Padre Antonio Vieira from Peru to Brazil. (Saignes and Bouysse-Cassagne 1992, 16-17; Lavallé 1993, 48-50). This was part of the process that Lavallé has called the "Indianization of the Creoles." It was manifested in the *alternativa* between creoles and *peninsulares* within the religious orders. In Guatemala it resulted in creole friars being called "Indian priests (*padres indios*)," and "Indians and incapable" (*indios e incapaces*). These struggles were symptomatic of the depreciation of creole status and the tendency to collapse the categories (Megged 1992, 429; Cf. Bouysse-Cassagne 1994; Falcón Ramírez 1988, 90-98). It was also probably a recognition of the reality that many creoles were, in fact, biologically mestizos. While creoles sometimes tried to use this fact to argue that none were better suited than they to govern and control in the Indies, the loss of status implied was resented. The very depreciation of their status by peninsular Spaniards moved the creoles to increasingly insist on the distinction between themselves and the *castas*, a separation which they sought to reinforce by acquisition of titles, honors, mayorazgos, cabildo offices, positions as *familiares* of the Holy Office, and anything that might be used to prove purity of lineage (Pagden 1987; Schwartz 1978). Here I would agree with Kuznesof that racial designations became increasingly important and remained so until the end of the eighteenth century.

Finally, let us return to the privileging of gender in the analysis of the *casta* system and Kuznesof's hypothesis that prior to 1570, gender was more important than race in determining social position, ceding its dominant role only by the early eighteenth century. Rather than adding "gender" to race and class, her formulation has essentially dropped class altogether. As I have argued above, social position had much to do with the racial designation of both men and women in the first generations. Kuznesof's Tables II and III are as interesting for their "silences" as for their data. The social rank of the Spanish men or the Indian and mestizo brides does not enter them at all. Were the increasing number of

mestizo brides in the second generation actually marrying “españoles,” who were themselves really (biologically) mestizos? Moreover, these tables also present virtually no evidence that marriages (not unions) with Africans or their descendants was common. Finally, we must also recall that by the second generation there was a good deal of cross-group “passing” going on so that by 1800 mating patterns alone can not be used as a way of determining the growth of any of the “racial” categories of the population. Pedro Ramírez de Aguila wrote in 1639 that the generation of mestizos were diminishing and the Spaniards increasing by “consuming and attracting to itself that of the Indians” (cited in Barragan 1992, 51).<sup>15</sup>

For the first generations, rather than the “ideological technology” of gender, demography seems to have been particularly important. In the marriage market Spaniards married European women when available, those accepted as Europeans (mestizas) or members of indigenous noble and ruling families next. As the demographic patterns of immigration and the nature of the colony changed, so too did marital preferences and patterns. In the 1530s in Peru there were no mestizas to marry, but when there were by the 1560s, Spaniards preferred them to Indians. This seems to me to make “race” still the most useful way to understand these patterns, although admittedly they varied by place and time.

Gender surely affected the operation of colonial society in Latin America and the control and representation of sexuality and domestic arrangements became part of the politics of rule there as in other colonial situations, but gender was not a virtually independent variable (Stoler, 1989; Scott 1988, 28-50). For example, gender eventually had a strong impact on the “stickiness” of race (whether it did so in the Sixteenth Century is still to be shown), but did not in itself determine social mobility. Women were more likely and better able to change their *casta* definition by marriage because of prevailing ideas about gender, but women at the top and bottom of the racial hierarchy, Spaniards and Indians, were less likely to do so than others. For men, changes in racial designation was made more commonly by an alteration of economic status or occupation. Colonial censuses provide innumerable examples of people altering their status under such conditions. Whether women or men were more successful or susceptible to changing their status remains to be shown, but whatever pattern emerges, it will surely reflect the impact of race, class, age, and regional contexts.

## Notes

\*I wish to thank my colleague Robert McCaa for his comments and advice.

<sup>1</sup>The terms "race" and "class" are used here as general markers of distinction and hierarchy without necessarily implying their modern definitions. The theoretical difficulties in using the concept of "class" to describe a sixteenth-century society are presented in Cahill 1994, 325-47.

<sup>2</sup>In fact, the previous generation of scholarship on *mestizaje* often focused on the first generation of contact but tended to emphasize legal and biographical sources and methods. See for example Konetzke 1947; Pérez de Barradas 1948; Harth-Terré 1965.

<sup>3</sup>I am using "class" here in the broadest sense to represent various forms of social hierarchy, generally but not always related to access and control of the means of production. This is a recognition of the importance of the juridical divisions of the medieval European society of orders or estates or of various indigenous systems of ranking which were not necessarily based on economic position or activity.

<sup>4</sup>Many of the early conquistador marriages to high-born Inca women are discussed in Rosenblatt 1954, 2:84. Exemplary cases such as that of Ana, daughter of Martín García de Loyola and of Beatriz Clara Coya, and granddaughter of prince Sairi Tupac, who returned to Spain and was eventually made the marquesa de Oropesa, and who later married the son of the marqués de Alcañices are extraordinary but indicative of the possibilities open to some mestizos.

<sup>5</sup>Dorantes de Carranza in 1604 calculated that of 1,326 conquistadors of Mexico there remained only 934 descendants grouped in 196 "houses." The modern historian Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru reaches a similar conclusion. She claims that of 1,600 original conquerors and settlers more than a thousand family names had disappeared in a few generations. In Guatemala, 47 conquistadores listed in 1547 fathered 110 legitimate children and 30 *hijos naturales*, a ratio of about 3:1 of legitimate to recognized illegitimate children (Lutz 1994, 99-100).

<sup>6</sup>Legitimation was not necessarily an act of recognition by the father but could also be obtained (and bought) from the crown. See Bouysse-Cassange 1994, 125.

<sup>7</sup>In her emphasis on lineage, Liu also subsumes class to race in Early Modern Europe. Her point that race is a gendered social category is then used not to privilege gender in the analysis of colonial regimes, but to use race as a fundamental tool to understand gender in those regimes.

<sup>8</sup>Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico) Inquisición; Mexico 1538, tomo 2, exp. 6, f.201). There are many such references in statements made before the Mexican tribunal. They are remarkably similar to those made during the Inquisition visit to Brazil of 1591-93. Often they combine a depreciation of Indian women and at times even a questioning of their possession of a soul with a generalized popular attitude that fornication with unmarried women, and

especially if paid for, was not a sin. One accused youth from Nueva Galicia responded in 1538 to the question of whether it was a sin to sleep with an Indian or other woman, that he never heard it said ("que no lo ha oydo"). AGN, Inquisición tomo 2, exp. 4, f.196. (My thanks to Robert McCaa for these AGN citations).

<sup>9</sup>The etymology of the term *mestizo* and the fact that in the early years a number of alternate terms were regionally important still needs further investigation. Less pejorative terms such as *montañés* were used in Quito and Alto Peru. Curiously, terms such as *mameluco* (mameluke) used in Brazil, Laicacota, and Paraguay or *gentzaro* (janissary) found in New Mexico and Chile despite differing regional meanings always signified cultural crossing. These terms were drawn from the Iberian Mediterranean experience and contact with the Ottoman empire which had created types of loyal, cross-cultural dependents. See also Cope 1994, 15.

<sup>10</sup>Martínez Peláez 1976, 266. He cites a 1565 *cédula* that sought to reclaim them. It mentioned "hijos de españoles y indias que anduviesen perdidos; se recojan y saquen de entre los indios, trayéndolos a vivir á las ciudades de españoles." Mörner 1970, 105 notes that García de Castro, president of the Audiencia of Lima ordered mestizos gathered in the nearest Spanish town to be taught a trade so that, "they do not got about as they do, vagabonds, setting a bad example."

<sup>11</sup>I wish to leave aside here the ambivalent and contested nature of the "purity of blood" regulations in Spain itself where a serious critique developed among churchmen within the ranks of the Inquisition over the justice, utility, and doctrinal basis of these restrictions. See Sicroff 1985; I. S. Revah 1963. The idea that "purity of blood meant descent from Christian women" is questionable since no distinction seems to have been made by the Inquisition between partial New Christians according to whether their mother or their father had Jewish origins.

<sup>12</sup>Dorantes de Carranza 1902, cited in Benítez 1992.

<sup>13</sup>Robert McCaa believes that a "mating squeeze" remained a problem wherever large numbers of *peninsulares* congregated so that a fraction of them always had to contract exogamous marriages if they were to marry at all. See McCaa 1994, 21-26.

<sup>14</sup>This topic is still in need of investigation. More work has been done on the relation between Blacks and Indians. See Tardieu 1990.

<sup>15</sup>"... porque se van españolizando, que ya los más de ellos visten de paño y muchos camisas, capas y medias, y los españoles comunican mucho con indios y hay muchos mestizos, conque se van disminuyendo esta generación y creciendo mucho la española que va consumiendo y atrayendo a sí la de los indios." Ramírez del Aguila 1978, 123.

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