

# THE HISTORY OF RACE RELATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA: SOME COMMENTS ON THE STATE OF RESEARCH

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THE STRIKING RACIAL HETEROGENEITY OF CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA has obviously evolved in the course of a historical process that started in 1492. There would perhaps be a temptation to interpret the whole of Latin American history in terms of race relations. Though we believe that such an approach would be absurd, race relations have admittedly colored many aspects of Latin American history. Their role is by no means easily defined.

In this article we shall take up only three major aspects of this vast field, aspects to which historians have recently devoted considerable attention:

- (1) historical demography with regard to ethnic groups in Latin America;
- (2) the *Mestizaje* in the legislation and social stratification of colonial Spanish America;
- (3) the evolution of Negro slavery and the process of abolition in Latin America.

With few exceptions reference will be made only to works with a historical approach, although they need not have been written by professional historians.

When studying a subject like the evolution of race relations, the historian must recognize his dependence on disciplines like anthropology, sociology and demography for some of his data, and he may also have to utilize some of their research methods. Similarly, the historian, working on the basis of written records analyzed with heuristical methods, will often be able to provide fellow social scientists with fresh material to test their models of social change. The historians' ignorance of the work of sociologists and anthropologists and vice versa has often diminished the value of their respective conclusions. There is an urgent need for a "general widening and deepening of the channels of communication between historians and other students of human behavior. Before one can agree or differ, it is necessary to understand." (SSRC:1954: 154-155).

To promote interdisciplinary collaboration was one of the principal motives for convoking the conference on "The *Mestizaje* in the History of Ibero

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America" in Stockholm, Sweden, on August 19, 1960, under the sponsorship of the Commission of History of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History. The other motive was to stimulate interest in an aspect of Latin American social history that until then had received comparatively little attention. The brief discussions at this meeting centered around Spanish America during the colonial period.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Stockholm meeting, historical interest in the subject of race relations has increased a great deal. This is especially true with regard to *mestizaje*, a term covering both miscegenation and acculturation.<sup>2</sup> The conference that the Peruvian Academy of History devoted to this topic in August 1965 is a good example of this growing interest. The wish to promote interdisciplinary collaboration was well expressed in a special issue on *mestizaje* published by the *Revista de Indias* in Madrid in connection with the XXXVI Americanist Congress of 1964.<sup>3</sup> The same basic motives that led to the Stockholm meeting were also behind the recent conference on "Race and Class in Latin America During the National Period." Cornell and Columbia Universities co-sponsored and organized this interdisciplinary meeting in New York City on December 16–18, 1965, as a part of the Cornell Latin American Year. The choice of a chronological framework and the presence of a great many sociologists and anthropologists tended to emphasize the interdisciplinary approach more than the Stockholm meeting had. Furthermore, Brazil received a justifiably greater proportion of attention.<sup>4</sup>

In view of the fact that scholars are becoming increasingly aware of the need for interdisciplinary collaboration in a field like the evolution of race relations, an active scholar is virtually obligated to provide his colleagues in other disciplines with up-to-date information on the state of research in his own discipline. This report, which is necessarily incomplete, has been prepared for that reason.

#### HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHY WITH REGARD TO ETHNIC GROUPS IN LATIN AMERICA

The obvious point of departure in the study of demographic history is a calculation of the Amerindian populations prior to European contact. This is, however, a most controversial issue. In view of the results of comprehensive research on Central Mexico carried out by a group of Berkeley scholars (Borah & Cook: 1963), A. Rosenblat's long-accepted estimate (1954, originally presented in 1945) of 13.3 million for the whole New World should now be considered obsolete. This does not mean that one must necessarily accept the high figure of 25 million that the Berkeley scholars have attributed to Central Mexico alone. Woodrow Borah's recent guess that the total figure for the Hemisphere amounted to about 100 million must be substantiated by applying

the Berkeley research model to the rest of Latin America (Borah: 1962: 179). Borah and S. F. Cook have raised the important question of whether some Amerindian societies were already under strong demographic pressure when contact occurred (Borah & Cook: 1962: 6–7). If so, the post-contact population decline should be seen against this backdrop as well.

To the extent that we accept larger pre-Columbian populations, the dimensions of the demographic disaster that occurred after contact become significantly greater, and the traditional explanations of violence and abuse as the causes of the decline in Indian populations become clearly insufficient. That epidemics played a major role is certainly not new knowledge, but this aspect of the population decline deserves more attention than it has received.<sup>5</sup> As Rolando Mellafe (1965: 50) suggests, the role of diseases should be studied within a work-diet-epidemics framework as in the case of Medieval Europe. The Berkeley scholars have placed the nadir of Indian population decline in Central Mexico around 1650 (Cook & Borah: 1960; see also Gibson: 1964: 138–139). Studying the same area, José Miranda (1962: 182–189) has recently proposed a somewhat earlier date of 1620–1630. With regard to Chile, Mellafe (1959: 212–226) places the nadir around 1600. As Borah has shown in a well-known study (1951), the rapid decline of the Indian populations had a decisive effect on the development of economic and social institutions like the hacienda. Thus it is urgent to trace the regional variations of this process in all possible detail.<sup>6</sup>

To measure the demographic contributions of Europeans and Africans also presents extremely difficult problems. The Archivo General de Indias in 1940 started the publication of a *Catálogo de Pasajeros a Indias durante los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII* (AGI: 1940–1946). Based on two series of records the published volumes cover the period 1509–1559. For this period they give a total of 15,480 entries. But critics have pointed out that the real number of emigrants must have been many times larger in view of the gaps that exist in the two series used for the publication and the extent of illegal emigration (Friede: 1951: 1952; Konetzke: 1948: 269–289). Richard Konetzke (1965: 70) conjectures that about 300,000 Spaniards arrived in Spanish America in the course of the sixteenth century. Some research has also been done on the specific regions of emigration and immigration respectively. The studies by F. Morales Padrón on the Canaries (1951), A. Rubio on Extremadura (1947) and Konetzke on Río de la Plata (1952) may be mentioned. An index comprising data on 40,000 Spanish residents in America during the sixteenth century is being prepared by the Instituto Caro y Cuervo in Colombia (Boyd-Bowman: 1963–1964).

The sex ratio among the early Spanish emigrants may have been considerably less unfavorable than has traditionally been believed. With regard to

the period 1509–1538 about ten percent of the entries in the *Catálogo* refer to women. For this aspect we refer to studies by Konetzke (1945 a) and J. Torre Revello (1927). We have at least elementary knowledge about the migratory movement during the sixteenth century,<sup>7</sup> but hardly any serious research has been done on the seventeenth and eighteenth century migrations. The figures presented by M. Hernández Sánchez Barba for the eighteenth century (Vicens Vives: 1958: 326) are completely insufficient and arbitrary.

Almost nothing is known about the extent of Portuguese emigration to Brazil. This may be due, at least in part, to lack of source material. Portuguese authorities wielded less control over emigration than their Spanish counterparts did, and the records are therefore less complete (Konetzke: 1965: 71). Non-Iberian elements may have played a somewhat larger numerical role in the case of Brazil than in that of Spanish America. These non-Iberians were on principle strictly excluded from Spanish America, but they were temporarily admitted to Brazil. Legislation and practice on this subject in Spanish America has been studied by Konetzke (1945 b) and Inge Wolff (1961). More research is needed to evaluate the actual presence of “foreigners” in Latin America during the colonial period.

Estimates of the forced migration of Negro slaves also involve great difficulties. Georges Scelle’s work on the slave trade to Spanish America (1906) remains basic. Other recent contributions are those of E. Otte and C. Ruiz-Burrucos (1963) and Sampaio Garcia (1962). As Rolando Mellafe demonstrates (1964: 58–59), the summing up of the numbers given in licenses and *asientos* does not at all correspond to the number of actual arrivals. Local records must therefore provide the principal sources for a demographic reconstruction.<sup>8</sup> The book by E. Scheuss de Studer on the eighteenth century imports of slaves in Río de la Plata (1958) is an impressive contribution. The importation of slaves into Mexico has been studied by Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán in a well-known book (1946); into Chile by Mellafe (1959); and in Venezuela by F. Brito Figueroa (1963: 137 and *passim*). Obviously more research is needed.

Rolando Mellafe makes an educated guess that about 3 million slaves were introduced into Spanish America in the course of the colonial period (1964: 59). According to Frédéric Mauro (1956, 1960) 400,000 slaves were introduced into Brazil between 1570 and 1670. This calculation is based on his comprehensive study of Brazil’s overseas navigation during this period. Though hampered by the lack of sources, which is due in part to the deliberate destruction of records in Brazil in 1891, recent research seems to indicate that the total immigration of Negro slaves into Brazil, until it ceased shortly after 1850, may have reached some 4 million (Buarque de Hollanda: 1960: 191). Because of the higher price set for males and their lower mortality rate during

the passage, the sex ratio among the slaves who arrived was likely to be very uneven.

Apart from the immigration figures for Europeans and Africans, there is a variety of material available for the demographic study of the colonial period. The work of A. Rosenblat (1954) and R. Barón Castro's monograph on El Salvador (1942) provide a general idea of the extent and character of this material. The *Relaciones Geográficas* of 1575–1585 and other official accounts have been analyzed from the demographic point of view by R. Konetzke (1948: 289–323). W. Borah and S. F. Cook (1960) based their calculation of the population of Central Mexico in 1548 on the so-called *Suma de Visitas de Pueblos*. Ecclesiastical records and lists of *milicianos* (e.g., Góngora: 1960: 59 ff.) constitute important supplementary sources, which have so far received less attention.

Toward the end of the colonial period regular censuses were being taken in both Spanish America and Brazil. Their figures have been used rather frequently by historians (usually through the contemporary works of Alexander von Humboldt). A preliminary analysis of this material with regard to Brazil has been presented by Dauril Alden (1963). An article by S. F. Cook (1942) analyzes the 1793 census in New Spain, and Delfina López Sarrelangue (1963) compares the various demographic sources for New Spain between 1746 and 1810. As R. Mellafe states (1964: 53), there is need for a critical examination of all eighteenth century Spanish American censuses because their figures have too often been taken at face value. Finally, we must resign ourselves to the fact that for generations a great part of the population in Spanish America as well as in Brazil led a vagrant or semi-vagrant existence on the periphery of society (e.g., Martin: 1957; Góngora: 1966). These elements are likely to escape even our best demographic sources.

The demographic study of the *mestizaje* as a process of miscegenation as well as of acculturation presents a formidable challenge. As Borah and Cook (IPGH: 1961: 67) point out, each of the three stocks involved presented different rates of increase due to different sex ratios and social conditions. The two Berkeley scholars are, of course, well aware of the many deficiencies of the source material. Nevertheless, they arrive at the optimistic conclusion that the "application of probability theory to racial changes in the past has great potentiality" (IPGH: 1961: 72). It seems, however, that the "anchor points" to which they refer, i.e., the censuses of the late eighteenth century, provide a classification that is already as much socially as racially determined.<sup>9</sup> And Borah himself (1954: 341) has pointed out that there were in fact few "pure bloods" left in Mexico at that time. The historian is admittedly more interested in measuring social groups than miscegenation per se. But if we suppose that terms like *Criollo*, *Mestizo*, and *Pardo* had a mainly social connotation during

this era, how can the rate of intermarriage provide more than a partial explanation of the quantitative changes that took place with regard to the different ethnic groups? S. F. Cook (1942: 500–504) has shown that the material in the census of 1793 in New Spain consists of two different series. The first uses a four category “racial” breakdown into Spaniards, *Castas*, Mestizos, and Mulattoes. The second uses only three categories: Spaniards, Indians, and Mulattoes. Comparing the series where they overlapped, Cook found that only the Negroid element was approximately the same according to the two sources. Contemporary evidence often indicates the bewilderment and lack of consistency on the part of officials, both civil and ecclesiastic, when they tried to classify a racially as well as socially fluid population in racial terms (e.g., Aguirre Beltrán: 1946: 273–274). There was even confusion between basic terms like Mulatto and Mestizo (Barón Castro: 1942: 254–256). Richard Konetzke (1946 a) has shown that racial classifications in the parish registers were based only on the declarations of the parties, and were therefore arbitrary. They were not legally valid.<sup>10</sup>

The slave category, however, is easily distinguishable. Because of their monetary value, slaves were subject to frequent recording, but the systematic study of this material has scarcely begun. A pioneer effort is a monograph on the slave population of a latifundium in Río de la Plata (Garzón Maceda and Dorfinger: 1961). In most Latin American countries slavery extended beyond independence, though large scale manumissions usually preceded the final abolition. To identify the Negroes in post-abolition records is difficult if even possible. The acts of manumission, if duly gathered and analyzed, should permit numerical observations of interest. Anthropologist Marvin Harris (1964: 82 ff.) stressed that the ratio between slaves, freedmen, and non-African low and middle groups may provide the key for a comparative study of some aspects of race relations in several areas of the Americas.

The first national constitutions abolished the legal and administrative use of “racial” terms like Indian, mestizo, pardo, and casta. The “racial” classification in the parish records was also discontinued. But because the Indians were not integrated into the national society, administrative use soon sanctioned another designation, that of *Indígena*. Their traditional headtax, tribute, was received in 1826 under another name, *contribución de indígenas*, in the countries liberated by Bolívar. In Peru, this discriminatory tax was not abolished until 1854. Using source material related to this tax, George Kubler (1952) has been able to present his extraordinarily interesting analysis of Peruvian ethnic divisions and demographic evolution during the national period. He shows, *inter alia*, that the rate of integration of the indígenas actually slowed down during the early national period in comparison with the rate prevailing in the late colonial period. More research—with regard to Ecuador, for example—

could be carried out along the lines pursued by Kubler. Even during recent times Indians have sometimes continued to be classified separately in administrative records (e.g., González Navarro: 1960: 97; Adams: 1959: 84), but the extent of this practice remains to be studied.

Nineteenth century fiscal and administrative records that distinguish *indígenas* from the rest of the population obviously indicate social categories and not racial ones. The changes that can be observed more likely reflect a change in the rate of assimilation than the vegetative increase or decrease of either of the two sectors of the population.

The national censuses that have been taken from time to time since the late nineteenth century in various Latin American countries, have occasionally included a breakdown into ethnic groups. The criteria employed have differed from census to census, but cultural and social characteristics have by and large played a much greater role than the phenotype of the individuals (e.g., Iturriaga: 1951: 93 ff.).

Immigration statistics form another important category of sources for study of interracial relations during the national period. Both the European and Asiatic immigrations are well recorded. At the Race and Class Conference in New York in 1965 both Mario Vásquez of Peru and Florestan Fernandes of Brazil presented interesting papers on immigration and race relations.

Whereas the historical demography of the colonial era has received at least some attention in the context of race relations, the national period has largely been neglected by research. The most remarkable exception is Kubler's study.

#### THE MESTIZAJE IN THE LEGISLATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF COLONIAL SPANISH AMERICA

Reflecting the dichotomy between the Spanish conquerors and the vanquished Indians, colonial legislation at first did not reckon with the appearance of a third group, the *mestizos*. Intermarriage, which was clearly sanctioned in 1514 in accordance with canonical rules, legally opened the way for the admission of *mestizos* into the ranks of the *españoles*. The idea that the Crown promoted intermarriage (e.g., Barón Castro: 1946: 799) has been dispelled by Konezke (1946 b: 216). The dualistic concept of the two Republics, that of Spaniards and that of Indians, became the guideline of municipal organization. The continued existence of two parallel communities, both of them stratified, was taken for granted (see, e.g., Góngora: 1951: 78 ff.). On a theoretical level, this would have been compatible with a high degree of equality between Spaniards and Indians, though it is difficult to share with the Chilean historian Vial Correa (1964) a great appreciation of the equalitarian spirit of the early sixteenth century.

The dualistic legal theory was soon challenged by two important facts: the immense majority of the mestizos were illegitimate; and the African slaves brought to the Indies in spite of severe prohibitions also took part in the process of miscegenation. The stigma thus attached to persons of mixed origin did affect the legal as well as the social attitude. Mestizos born out of wedlock and free people of African descent were subject to legal discrimination by the fact that the fictitious dualism ignored their existence for a long time. In addition, they were also subjected to specific discriminatory laws. This discrimination was rather slight against the mestizos, much harsher against "free" negroes, mulattoes, and zamboes; yet the separate legal statutes established for these different groups remained rather incomplete. The whole matter used to be studied only on the basis of the *Recopilación de Leyes de los Reinos de las Indias* of 1680. It is now becoming much better known especially because of the source collection and studies published by Richard Konetzke (1953–1962; 1960). A special aspect of the legislation, that which imposed residential dualism and separation excluding non-Indians from settling among Indians, is the subject of my own research (1961 a, b, 1962 a, b, 1963, 1964 a, b, 1965). A study of Puebla highlights this policy in the urban sector (Marín Tamayo: 1960).

Blurring the border between social legislation and social reality is still a weakness of certain historians of the *Hispanidad* persuasion (e.g., Barón Castro: 1946). It is nevertheless apparent that the relationship between the two deserves great attention. Referring to the triumph of the Spanish Crown over feudalistic tendencies in the New World during the *Conquista*, Konetzke states that "metropolitan legislation was an essential factor in molding colonial society" (1953–1962: I: vii: 1951). His view is shared by Juan Beneyto, for example (1961: 232). In the concrete case of the legal status of the mixed bloods, however, it seems that the role of the Crown was largely passive. It was greatly influenced by pressures from special interests and by prevailing prejudice.

Accounts of colonial society have often suffered from over-simplification. Undoubtedly the coincidental circumstance that the contemporary term for mixed-bloods happened to be *casta* has induced some students to classify it erroneously as a "Caste Society" (see Corominas: 1954: I: 722–724). As Lyle McAlister points out in his perceptive study of the social structure in New Spain (1963), society in the Indies was the result of the transfer of the hierarchical, estate-based, corporative society of late medieval Castile to a multi-racial, colonial situation in the New World. The location of the existing ethnic groups within the hierarchical structure gave rise to what A. Lipschutz (1944: 75; 1963) has called "pigmentocracy." In accordance with "the law of the spectrum of racial colors," he states that the privileged group tried to justify its own position in terms of physical or racial characteristics. As time went on,

racial differences between the exploiters and the exploited continued to be invoked although they no longer existed. That prejudice thus helped to maintain and strengthen the established hierarchical order is not at all surprising.<sup>11</sup> The Iberian concept of *limpieza de sangre* (see Sicroff: 1960) was easily transformed in the colonial situation to exclude those of illegitimate or slave origin. The corporative structure offered excellent opportunities for effective discrimination (see, e.g., Konetzke: 1949 b; Carrera Stampa: 1954: 223–244; Leal: 1963: 310–333). Many historians, especially those of the Hispanidad persuasion, have made tenacious efforts to prove that prejudice and discrimination in the Indies were social and religious, not racial in character. Konetzke (1946 b: 237) also makes this point. Others, on the contrary, approach the issue somewhat anachronistically and condemn Spanish American society as “racist” (e.g., Dusenberry: 1948). Even if one does not accept the Marxist position that prejudice is merely an invention with which to defend economic self-interest (Bagú: 1952: 54), this controversy seems to be utterly sterile. What matters is the precise relationship that existed in Spanish America between social (and even legal) status and the color of the skin.

To what extent did the different strata of the *Régimen de castas* fulfill special social functions? Both Marxist and non-Marxist students have tried to identify the castas in functional terms (see, e.g., Chavez Orozco: 1938: 24–25, Aguirre Beltrán: 1946: 270–271).<sup>12</sup> But the results of their efforts are hardly convincing in view of the bewildering complexity of the social reality that we find in the documentation. A more thoroughgoing study of this social reality has only been initiated. The interesting facts about Negro slavery in the Indian “ghetto” of Lima presented by Emilio Harth-Terré (1961) exemplify what a scholar may uncover. Was the *Régimen de castas* a kind of veil draped over a reality of economic classes (Bagú: 1952: 23)? We still lack information about wealth, income, and occupation that would be essential for a meaningful discussion of the issue. To the extent that members of different ethnic groups were found within the same occupation, for example, were there discriminatory wage rates? Of the scattered evidence that we possess, certain sources indicate that there were (Jara: 1959: 74), others that there were not (Harth-Terré and Márquez Abanto: 1962: 39 and *passim*). Whereas economic classes can be discerned in colonial society, especially during the later period and in the rural sector, it seems reasonable to regard them, in McAlister’s terms (1963: 362–363), “as an incipient situation.” He believes that “the value systems” corresponding to economic classes “were lacking or at best rudimentary.” It was the *Régimen de castas* that supplied the social values until the end of the colonial period, and this order was sanctioned in law.

On the assumption that the *Régimen de castas* reflected a social reality, the struggles that took place between different social strata in the course of the

colonial period and within the framework of the Wars of Emancipation need not be explained only or even mainly in terms of class exploitation and conflict. They may also have derived from frustration engendered by the different forms of discrimination imposed by the Régimen de castas. Eric Wolf (1962: 236 ff.) has given an eloquent account of the alienation of the mestizo and of his becoming a rootless "power seeker." Mestizo frustration also manifested itself in revolts against the established order (see, e.g., Guthrie: 1945; Lopez Martínez: 1965). When studying these various conflicts, Marxist historians are faced with a dilemma. Thus Federico Brito Figueroa (1961: 85 with reference to F. Engels) admits that ethnic and juridical elements related to different social groups did influence the class struggle and sometimes even gave it external form. Consequently the economic origin of the aspirations of the contending parties has been obscured.

The Régimen de castas is sometimes presented as an almost static phenomenon. Much more attention should be paid to its gradual development and decline. The life story of an Inca-descended mestizo by Ella Temple (1948) shows, for example, how late sixteenth century mestizos of good status found themselves gradually downgraded to a casta. On the other hand, the military organization of the eighteenth century enabled pardos to rise from their low status and even share certain privileges of the military establishment (McAlister: 1957: chapter IV). When introduced in the Indies, the marriage regulations of 1776 were changed to place the mestizos in a better position than the mulattoes (Konetzke: 1953–1962: III: 477). Toward the end of the colonial era, cultured and wealthy mulattoes were also sometimes able to obtain legal recognition as "whites." We owe the first study of these *cédulas de gracias al sacar* to James F. King (1951; compare Lanning: 1944). A systematic investigation of this matter would be of great interest. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, mestizo had been almost synonymous with illegitimate. It seems that the frequency of marriage in the middle strata increased as time passed and that neighboring castas were likely to intermarry. But the subject, with its obvious importance for changing social attitudes, remains to be investigated. A study on the Norte Chico in Chile shows that one-fourth of the children recorded in the books of baptism between 1690 and 1800 were illegitimate (Carmagnani: 1963: 30; see also Gutierrez Pineda: 1963).

The Régimen de castas was above all undermined by the continuation of the process that had been responsible for its creation—the mestizaje. The terminological proliferation illustrates this fact. A number of famous series of eighteenth century paintings representing the various castas provide complex terminologies that have always attracted considerable attention (León: 1924; Blanchard: 1908–1910; Rosenblat: 1954; Woodbridge: 1948; Varallanos: 1962: 66–70). In fact, as Aguirre Beltrán (1946: 175–178) points out, they

should not be taken too seriously because they express erudite imagination and genealogical concern rather than social reality. The complex terminologies do highlight the increasing absurdity of a genealogical criterion for social classification in a multiracial environment. Furthermore, in the case of individuals who were often illegitimate, how could their genealogy possibly be traced? On the other hand, the variations in phenotype could only allow for a few, vague distinctions. In administrative practice we encounter only about five to eight different "racial" terms. Parish priests in New Spain, for example, kept three different sets of books, for Spaniards, Castas, and Indians (Konetzke: 1946 a: 585). These three categories are the only ones that McAlister (1963: 356–357) is willing to recognize "as elements in a definable social structure" possessing "definable social and juridical statuses." Aguirre Beltrán (1946: 270–271), on the other hand, finds six identifiable groups. It seems to me that the differences, legally and socially, between the mestizos and the castas of African descent were sufficiently significant to permit at least a four-group pattern.

It is important to notice that even the borders between the basic ethnic groups tended to blur. The self-interest of individuals encouraged "passing." Nor was it necessarily a question of "upwards" passing within the "pigmento-critic" social structure. Whereas the Indian might wish to pass for a mestizo in order to escape paying tribute, the mestizo might find it convenient to present himself as an Indian to escape the jurisdiction of the Inquisition (Greenleaf: 1965: 149–153; compare Gibson: 1964: 144, 147). Even as early as 1600 the mestizo phenotype and Indian dress of the same individual made it difficult to classify him (Jara: 1959: 60). Later, as we emphasized in the discussion of demography, many colonial officials recognized the futility of the classification they were carrying out. As the arbitrary designations in the parish records were not legally valid, on the eve of Emancipation, recourse to the courts was considered the only means of establishing the certain status of an individual (Konetzke: 1946 a). It is clear that socio-racial prejudice increased during the Bourbon period as a defense mechanism on the part of the higher strata (see e.g., King: 1953 a). At the same time, upward mobility between neighboring strata seems to have become increasingly frequent. Downward mobility is exemplified by the so-called *blancos de orilla* (Brito Figueroa: 1961: 78–80). The whole complex of phenomena related to the decline of the Régimen de castas deserves considerable research.<sup>13</sup>

The constitutional and legal aspects of the breakdown of the Régimen de castas in the course of Emancipation do not seem to require very great efforts of historians. A succinct account of the situation in Argentina has been presented by O. Carracedo (1960). The texts of the laws and constitutions are usually sufficiently clear, and the legislative debates preceding them have in part been made available in modern editions. Apart from the constitutions

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enacted in Latin America, the Cádiz constitution of 1812 is also worthy of attention in this respect because so many Spanish American deputies participated in its formulation. As J. F. King (1953 b) has indicated, the ethnic composition of the overseas population became a key issue during the discussions of what form popular representation of a constitutional Spanish monarchy should take.

Deprived of its legal framework and shaken by revolutionary upheaval, the Régimen de castas did not survive the lengthy Wars of Emancipation, although the traces it left have been profound. How social attitudes and conditions, apart from the legal aspect, were changed in the process is still imperfectly known. Charles Griffin's studies present the current state of research (1949, 1961, 1962).

#### THE EVOLUTION OF NEGRO SLAVERY AND THE PROCESS OF ABOLITION IN LATIN AMERICA

Since J. F. King surveyed the state of research (1944 a, 1944 c), considerable progress has taken place in historical and sociological research on Negro slavery in Spanish America and Brazil. New documentation has been brought to light and new interpretations have been advanced. A great deal more is known about slave traffic in the importation stage than about the internal trade and distribution.<sup>14</sup> Mellafe (1964) gives a general idea of the state of our present knowledge on slavery in Spanish America.

Slavery in the Iberian Peninsula prior to and parallel with slavery in Latin America has been explored by Charles Verlinden (1955), A. Domínguez Ortiz (1952), E. Correia Lopes (1944) and Vicenta Cortés (1964). It would now be possible to examine F. Tannenbaum's (1947) well known thesis about the importance of the regulations of slavery and serfdom in *Las Siete Partidas*. Of even greater interest is that under the impact of the sixteenth century commercial revolution, the plantation came into being on the islands settled by the Iberians off the coast of the peninsula and Northern Africa (Verlinden: 1964?). The combination of plantation and Negro slavery would soon be carried to the New World.

Indian slavery had preceded Negro slavery in the New World. But in the case of Spanish America, at least, Indian slavery, condemned by the influential ecclesiastical pressure group, declined and disappeared rather early. Konetzke (1949 a) provides the best account. At the same time, Negro slavery was never seriously challenged (cp. Konetzke: 1965: 80). Why did this ambivalence exist? Verlinden (1964?) suggests that it was primarily because Indian slavery constituted a threat against colonial peace. In Africa, on the other hand, European colonial ambitions were very limited, and the local effects of enslavement did not really matter.

Granting that the plantation provided the principal framework for slavery in the New World, another major problem arises. Why have Negro-White relations taken such a different course in Anglo and Latin America (e.g., Brazil), if the point of departure were the same? Were the differences already present during the time of slavery despite the common plantation framework? Or are they mainly a result of post-abolition conditions? Students who believe that Latin American slavery *per se* was different from and more benign than Anglo-Saxon slavery include Gilberto Freyre (1951 a, 1963 a), Frank Tannenbaum (1947), M. W. Williams (1930) and Stanley Elkins (1959). Evidence presented by M. Cardozo (1961) also lends itself to such an interpretation. This school relies on "national character," religion, and legislation to support its thesis. At a 1957 seminar on the plantations in the New World, the rapporteur concluded (PAU: 1959: 187) that to solve the problem posed by the different trends in race relations one needs to look beyond economic factors to "law, for one, or better . . . religion."

The idealization of the Portuguese approach to slavery and race relations in general is especially evident in Freyre's later works (e.g., 1963 a). This thesis has naturally provoked adverse criticism (e.g., Stein: 1961). Examining Portuguese behavior in different overseas territories, C. R. Boxer (1963) gives a picture which is in striking contrast to that of Freyre.

It is probable that the universalist approach of Catholicism *per se* was better fitted to influence and humanize slavery than the approach of exclusivist Protestant churches (W. Jiménez Moreno in IPGH: 1961: 82). But it remains to be proved that the Catholic Church did more to improve the situation of the slaves than Protestant churches did. With regard to abolition it seems that the Church in Brazil and elsewhere in Latin America played an insignificant role if any at all (Stein: 1957: 138–139. Cp. Siqueira: 1964).

That legislation in Latin America had a humanizing impact of some importance on slavery also needs to be proved. The reconstruction of social reality on the basis of legal documents is notoriously risky under any circumstances, and particularly in the case of slave codes that limited the rights of an owner of human property. Furthermore, the picture that one gets of early Spanish slave regulations (Konetzke: 1953–1962; Vial Correa: 1947)<sup>25</sup> is not exceedingly bright. The "humane" Spanish slave code of 1789, which played an important role in Tannenbaum's (1947) argumentation, has proved to be a rather complex issue, inspired as it was by the French *Code noir* of 1685 (Malagón: 1956; Torre Revello: 1932). With regard to the application of the code, conflicting evidence has been presented (Petit Muñoz: 1947: 79–89; Jaramillo Uribe: 1963: 79–89. Cp. King: 1943 b: 310). Finally, the code should be placed in the context of Bourbon efforts to liberalize trade and promote commercial agriculture (King: 1942; Villalobos: 1962).

The frequency of voluntary manumissions among the Spaniards and Portuguese has often been used as an argument supporting the humanity of slavery in Latin America. But Federico Brito Figueroa (1960: 108–114) has shown that these acts can sometimes be explained by the economic convenience of the ex-owners. A study on early nineteenth century slavery in Mendoza, Argentina (Masini: 1962: 40 and *passim*), illustrates the different categories of manumission. It is also clear that certain categories of slaves were in a better position to purchase their freedom than others. The whole problem of the extent and nature of manumissions should, as we stated in the discussion on demography, receive a systematic investigation.

The growing opposition to the Freyre-Tannenbaum school prefers to explain the nature of slavery on the basis of the economic function displayed by the enslaved manpower. Both the rise and the decline of slavery can be interpreted in purely economic terms, as Eric Williams did in his treatise on the British West Indies (1944). Consequently, the treatment of enslaved manpower also obeys primarily economic motives. The slaves working in a profitable enterprise tend to be harshly exploited, while those held partly for non-economic motives, i.e., servants and others, will usually receive more lenient treatment. They will also be able to purchase their freedom more easily. Thus the degree of rentability of slave labor rather than the nationality of the slaveholder or the character of legislation are held responsible for the character of slavery. Sidney Mintz's (1959) comparative study of slavery in Jamaica and Puerto Rico provides facts that support this view.<sup>16</sup> It is also quite possible that the somber picture Stein (1957) presents of slavery in the coffee district of the Paraíba Valley and Freyre's (1951 a) much brighter portrayal of slavery on the sugar *fazendas* of the Northeast reflect the contrast between a booming, more efficient economy and an old-fashioned, decaying one. The significant contributions of Florestan Fernandes (1965) and his fellow sociologists in São Paulo (Ianni: 1962; Cardoso: 1962; Cardoso and Ianni: 1960) on slavery and abolition in southern Brazil also fit into the theory briefly summarized here. It should, of course, be kept in mind that slavery is primarily an *economic* institution whereas the juridical aspect stressed by Tannenbaum and others is of a secondary character. There is a risk, however, that a strictly Marxist interpretation of the functional theory will lead to an oversimplification of historical reality.

In the new approach to the problem of slavery, comparisons will be meaningful only insofar as the whole economic context is considered and similar categories of slaves are compared. This recognition increases the urgency of investigating the economic functions that slavery fulfilled in different regions. In addition to Ortiz's (1916) classical work on slavery in Cuba, other good regional studies are those of Díaz Soler (1953) on Puerto Rico, of Goulart

(1949) on Brazil, of Jaramillo Uribe (1963) on eighteenth century Colombia and of Inge Wolff on Alto Peru during the period 1545–1640 (1964). Zelinsky's (1949) useful survey should also be mentioned. Surveys of slavery within specific occupational sectors in the whole or parts of Latin America remain to be written.

It is obvious that Gilberto Freye (1951 a-b) often talks about slaves used as domestic servants. These slaves, frequently held as status symbols as well as for practical reasons, seem to have formed a large percentage of the slaves in Spanish America. They constituted the slave elite.

Urban slaves often made profits for their owners by being let out or being allowed to work on their own in exchange for a rent to the master (Carneiro: 1964: 8–10; Harth-Terré and Márquez Abanto: 1962: 46–48). They consequently had good opportunities to buy their freedom.

Slaves used as cattle hands also seem to have enjoyed a comparatively high degree of freedom of movement within their condition of bondage. At least Cardoso (1962: 136–139) draws this conclusion in his study of slavery in Rio Grande do Sul. Our knowledge of Negro slave cowboys in the southern United States (Durham and Jones: 1965: 16–17) points in the same direction.

In mines, due to the high cost, Negro slave labor was used only when Indian labor was not abundantly available. Through C. R. Boxer's writing (1962: 173–178) we know a little about the harsh conditions under which slave labor exploited the mines of Minas Gerais during the eighteenth century. Other recent contributions of interest in this respect include that of I. Wolff on Alto Peru (1964: 162–164) and that of M. Acosta Saignes (1956) on Venezuela.

Plantation slavery, finally, constitutes such a vast area of research that general conclusions of value are not easily reached. As Stanley Stein (Wagley: 1964: 100) puts it, comparisons between plantation slavery in different areas require the use of comparable criteria, such as the phase and trend of agricultural development, size, function and location of the plantations and slave labor as well as the availability of slave supply. The studies of the historically oriented sociologist S. Mintz (1953, 1959) and Stein's own *Vassouras* (1957) are especially noteworthy. Many similar studies are needed.

Functionally and regionally focused studies of slavery in Latin America will undoubtedly help to explain the strength or weakness of the institution in the course of history. It will also be possible to place Latin American slavery within a global or hemispheric context. In addition to the bibliography on the United States and the Caribbean, the study by Van Lier (1949) on Surinam offers material for comparison. Those who out of romanticism or nationalism want slavery in their countries to have been better than and different from that of others will probably be dissatisfied with the results of this comparative analysis.

Slavery by definition has been an inhumane institution everywhere. Gilberto Freyre himself, in an excellent but little known monograph (1963 b: 220) on the descriptions in Brazilian newspapers of runaway slaves, has indicated the frequency of scars and mutilations on their bodies.<sup>17</sup> The repression of the family institution within slavery is another universal feature. A puzzling question arises in this context. Was the rate of reproduction of the slave population in Brazil, for example, lower than that in the American South? If it were so, as Brazilian economist Celso Furtado concludes (1965: 127–129), this would indicate that the living conditions of the slaves were probably worse.

Negro rebellions were a normal feature in both Spanish America and Brazil as they were in all slave-holding societies. They were characterized by mutual savagery. Runaway slaves often formed small “independent” communities—*quilombos* in Brazil, *palenques* or *cumbes* in Spanish America—as did the Maroons in Jamaica and the Bush Negroes in Guiana. These dramatic aspects of slavery have been highlighted in a number of recent contributions (Acosta Saignes: 1961; Arcaya: 1949; Carneiro: 1958; Guillot: 1961; Jaramillo Uribe: 1964: 42–50).

During the Wars of Emancipation Negro slaves and Indians often provided a major part of the fighting forces on both sides. Their role was a “passive” one, completely subordinated to aims dictated by the white leadership. Their history should be written in these terms, but it should not be forgotten as it has been in the past. In literature, for instance, there are surprisingly few references to the fact that about a third of San Martín’s army at Maipú and Chacabuco were Negroes. The recruitment of Negro slaves provided the way to freedom, but the casualties they suffered were heavy. The rapid decrease in the percentage of slaves and the corresponding increase in that of the free Negroes, as well as the absolute diminution of the African element in continental Spanish America during the early nineteenth century, must be seen against this background. Students like Masini (1962), Rodríguez Molas (1961), and Pereda Valdés (1940, 1941)<sup>18</sup> stress this point. During the civil wars that followed Independence, Negroes continued to enlist in the armies.

During the period from the 1820’s to 1888 slavery was abolished in country after country in Latin America, and suppression of the slave trade had preceded abolition. Expectably, both steps were taken sooner in the countries where slaves were few and slavery of little economic importance, such as Central America, than in countries where it constituted a basic element within the economy, as in Cuba and Brazil. Both the suppression and the abolition of the slave trade have received considerable attention from historians. J. F. King’s (1944 b) article on Great Britain and the suppression of the slave trade in the Spanish American countries and Alan Manchester’s (1933) treatment of the same matter with regard to Brazil are noteworthy. A brief comment by E. Car-

neiro (1964: 91–94) interprets the suppression of the slave trade to Brazil as favorable to the slaveholders themselves because they evaded their debts to the slave dealers.

With regard to the process of abolition itself, monographs are numerous but often of a rather poor quality. The best ones dealing with Spanish America are probably one by Feliú Cruz (1942) on Chile and another by H. Bierck (1953) on Gran Colombia. The principal legislative texts have also been made available, for example, in the bulky compilation on Colombia by E. Posada and C. Restrepo Canal (1933; Restrepo Canal: 1938).<sup>19</sup> With regard to Brazil, the literature is rather abundant (see Stein: 1960: 259–260, 275–277). Monographs on the abolition in different Brazilian states have also appeared. But only the recent contributions of the São Paulo group of sociologists have seriously tried to present more than a rather superficial compilation of abolitionist speeches and laws.<sup>20</sup>

During a transitional period in some countries, the *libertos* enjoyed a peculiar status that is worth studying. In Argentina they were even sold “for the years of service stipulated by law” (Masini: 1962: 53).<sup>21</sup>

Historians seem to lose all their interest in the Negro in Spanish America as soon as the abolition is over. He disappears almost completely from historical literature after that juncture. One of the few exceptions is a study by R. O. Hudson on the Negro in Northern South America until 1860 (1964), but its conclusions are vague. In the case of Brazil, Gilberto Freyre has to some extent followed up his famous interpretation of plantation slavery from *Casa Grande and Senzala* with ideas about post-abolition conditions (1959). But only the São Paulo sociologists have really attacked the complex problem of how the Negro fared after abolition. Stanley Stein’s concluding remarks in his *Vassouras* (1957) are also enlightening. The Race and Class Conference in New York in 1965 contributed considerably to the study of this whole problem, as the publication of the papers by R. Graham on Brazil, G. Aguirre Beltrán on Mexico, C. Rama on Uruguay and F. Fernandes on immigrants and race relations in São Paulo will show.

The manner in which final abolition was achieved and the relative number of slaves freed by this act compared with earlier manumissions seem to have been important in conditioning future race relations. Were there already a great number of Negroes and Mulattoes within the free labor sector when final abolition occurred? Or did the former slaves have to compete primarily with immigrants and “poor whites” (Harris: 1964: 83–89)? It may be possible to discern a correlation between the growth of racial prejudice and the competition for jobs in the case of Latin America as in other areas. It is not surprising that abolition easily creates the need to substitute a mythical racial inequality for the previous legal inequality (Cardoso and Ianni; Cardoso: 1962:

282; Ianni: 1962: 244–247). In many Latin American environments, however, the former slaves and their descendants have evidently been absorbed within the lower strata of the population with a minimum of friction (Stein: 1964: 100; Cardoso: 1962: 299–305).

Insofar as the historian shares the curiosity of his social scientist colleagues in the problems raised by the comparative study of race relations in the New World, he will undoubtedly have to rely on them for part of the answer. If, as is probable, the answer must be sought in post-abolition rather than pre-abolition conditions, the subject matter would also be more easily within their reach. Subtle circumstances that are properly within the domain of the social psychologist seem to play a considerable role.<sup>22</sup> In the past the Negro has received the greatest attention in scholarly research; now the historian would probably do well to focus more attention on the Mulatto and his position in society.<sup>23</sup> It is well known that general recognition of the fact of miscegenation and of the Mulatto rather than the attitude toward the Negro has made Brazil something of a contrast to Anglo America in the realm of inter-ethnic relations.

#### NOTES

1. IPGH (1961). Apart from my own report on the state of research, the proceedings comprise papers by R. Konetzke, W. Borah and S. F. Cook, J. Gillin, W. Jiménez Moreno and J. M. Siso Martínez.
2. Ideologically this interest seems to imply an effort of overbridging the gap between the emotionally loaded Hispanidad and Indigenista interpretations of the history of race relations.
3. RI (1964). Articles by E. H. Spincer, F. Cámara Barbachano, B. Leander, R. N. Adams, R. Bastien, G. Escobar, P. de Carvalho Neto, P. H. Saldanha, C. Esteva-Fábregat and M. Mörner.
4. The proceedings are being prepared for publication by the author of the present article who was the Conference Director. They will comprise the texts of four disciplinary reports and 14 papers by United States, Latin American, and European scholars.
5. The principal text is still Ashburn (1947). See also Figueroa Marroquín (1957), Dobyns (1963), Vellard (1956).
6. For an eloquent example, see Friede (1963: 253–254). For New Granada, compare Jaramillo Uribe (1964) who believes there were less than 1 million people there when the Europeans arrived. With regard to Mexico, the earlier studies of Kubler (1942) and Mendizábal (1942) have been rendered obsolete.
7. It should be added that the navigation statistics presented by Chaunu (1955–1960) provide an approximate framework for any calculation of the passenger traffic to Spanish America up to 1650.
8. King (1943a) discusses these records mostly in terms of their value for tracing the tribal origins of the slaves.
9. To be sure they add (70) that the racial designations of the 1777 census should be understood "in terms of the social environment of 1777." See also Cook (1942: 500).
10. The assertion of Roncal (1940: 532) that the priests "were experts in racial classification and were sincere in their judgments" is not at all convincing. In the course of their research in ecclesiastical archives in Mexico and Guatemala in 1958 the present writer and his wife noticed the lack of systematic criteria for the "racial" classification.
11. The obligatory work on prejudice is Allport (1958).

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12. A paper by J. Comas at the Race and Class Conference in 1965, analyzed the elaborate scheme presented by E. Molina Enríquez in "Grandes Problemas Nacionales."
13. A seemingly interesting study by González Sánchez (1963) has not been available for consultation.
14. One of the few exceptions: Sempat Assadourian (1965).
15. With regard to Brazil, see Boxer (1963: 101–104).
16. See also Mintz's review of Elkins (1959) in *American Anthropologist*, 43 (1961), 579–587 and Morse (1964).
17. Stein (1960: 259) also refers to A. Ramos, "Castigos de escravos," *Revista do Arquivo Municipal de São Paulo*, IV, 42 (1938), 79–104.
18. Though loosely constructed, the study of Molinari (1963) also contains interesting facts.
19. See also Díaz Soler (1953), Nuñez Ponte (1954), Martínez Durán and Contreras (1962), Tobar Donoso (1959). Compare, for an example of the reintroduction of slavery, Chavez Orozco (1961).
20. Villela Luz (1948) has not been available for consultation. Fernandes (1965), Ianni (1962), Cardoso (1962), Cardoso and Ianni (1960).
21. Compare with the *amparo* system in eighteenth century Paraguay, Carvalho Neto (1962: 44, 49).
22. The importance of the white elite's own "somatic norm image" is stressed by Hoetink (1962). Psychological factors probably count for the paradox indicated by T. Matthews, IPGH (1961) 94. As long as slavery lasted, continuous imports of slaves into the Caribbean was needed to prevent diminution of the Negroes. After abolition, their numbers increased though no one continued to be interested in their increase. A recent contribution on the role of religion is Warren (1965).
23. R. Morse, for example, criticizes O. Ianni (1962) for not having distinguished clearly between the free negro and the free mulatto in *American Anthropologist*, 46 (1964), 179.

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