

# Spanish casta system research papers examples

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Every society is stratified in one way or another and the chance of the absence of any stratification in any society is almost very remote. Through the course reading, I realized the history of racial mixture in most societies, especially Mexico stems from the Spanish colonial era, which occurred from 16th to the 19th century. Therefore, I wanted to learn why Spain instituted a racial caste system in the Mexico. I also discovered that most of ethnicity in Mexico, which is still relevant today, was because of the Spanish caste system.

When Spain came to Mexico, they stratified them in a racial caste system. They created many casts to racially segregate and conquer people in the Mexico. This is so because the caste system did not classify people by their skills, personality or character, but they were stratified based on where they were born. From the moment in 1502, their invasion into Mexico became inevitable (Stacy 123). At the time of the Spanish conquest, Mexico was wracked by the wars and quickly succumbed to Spain demands. Therefore, they took control of Mayan territory and established their capital at Merida, where they started imposing things to Mexicans. By the end of the 16th century, there were almost as many Africans as Spaniards in Mexico. The conquest managed to produce four castes of overall racial categories, which include Mestizos, slaves, Indians and Spaniards. Similarly, the offspring of Spanish and African parents were called mulattos, while those born to African and Indian parents were called zambos (Spickard 78). The Spaniard born in Span had a greater social class compared to the one born in the Mexico. Mestizo comprised of a mixture of the three races and by the 18th century, this class was divided into 16 diverse racial categories. This

group was not fully identified with either indigenous culture or with European heritage. However, they were identified having cultural features and heritage, which was combined from Europeans traditions and indigenous. This is so because when Spain conquered Mexico, a Spanish caste system imposed this cultural diversity. This made Mexican to spread a racial ideology referred to as Mestizaje, which created a new Mestizo national identity (Cope 98).

The Spanish Caste System brought great change in the Mexican society. These societies still traces the ethnic, caste system and racial to the Spanish Caste System. The Mexican population is based on social stratification and identity formation, which can be evaluated, based on ethnicity and race (Gordon 37). Therefore, the Mexican ethnic and racial relations can be classified on the axis between two extremes, Native American heritage and European. This classification is the remains of the colonial Spanish caste system, which classified people based on their perceived level of the biological traits of these two groups (Romano 45). Along this classification, the color hierarchy emerged, which still is relevant where those believed to be more Europeans or White are given higher social status. However, those seen being more indigenous are generally endowed, less social prestige. Therefore, the Spanish Caste System ended up complicating the racial hierarchy in the Mexico because they did not consider other factors such as character and personality. Some races ended up lacking identity and assimilation in the modern Mexico. Similarly, the issue of identity become socially stigmatizing due to lack of ideals and social expectations. Therefore, the Spanish caste system made Mexico a racial country.

## Works Cited

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