**Native Americans and Africans**

* With Spaniards and Amerindians, this was the third original “race” in this paradigm, but low on the social scale because of their association with slavery. These were people of full Sub-Saharan African descent. Many, especially among the first generation, were slaves, but there were sizable free-Black communities. Distinction was made between Blacks born in Africa (negros bozales) and therefore possibly less acculturated, Blacks born in the Iberian Peninsula (Black Ladinos), and Blacks born in the Indies, these sometimes referred to as negros criollos. Their low social status was enforced legally. They were prohibited by law from many positions, such as entering the priesthood, and their testimony in court was valued less than others. But they could join militias created especially for them. In contrast with the binary “one-drop rule”, which evolved in the late-19th-century United States, people of mixed-Black ancestry were recognized as multiple separate groups, as noted above.
* Other fanciful terms existed, such as a torna atrás (literally, “turns back”) and tente en el aire (“hold-yourself-in-midair”) in New Spain or a requinterón in Peru, which implied that a child of only one-sixteenth Black ancestry is born looking Black to seemingly white parents. These terms were rarely used in legal documents and existed mostly in the New Spanish phenomenon of Casta paintings (pinturas de castas), which showed possible mixtures down to several generations.
* At the bottom of the social heap are two racially pure groups: the American Indians, the indigenous people of the continent surviving as peasants and poor labourers; and the African-Americans, most of whom at this stage still have the status of slaves
* The great contradiction confronting Africans in the New World was that, although by phenotype they were the ethnic group most removed from Europeans, they were much closer to their masters than the Indians in the practices of everyday life. Legally Africans were chattel slaves, but soon they assumed the role of intermediaries between Europeans and the indigenous population. Africans in Spanish America served as soldiers, supervised Indian workers on the hacienda, and managed domestic servants in the town house. The shortage of labor in urban areas eventually led to the creation of a class of skilled black craftsmen who could purchase their own freedom