

# FROM *ESPAÑOL* TO *CRIOLLO*

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SPANISH-AMERICAN CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION, 1493-1600

**KATHLEEN DEAGAN** University of Florida

**RESUMO** A arqueologia histórica tem contribuído em muito para a compreensão do desenvolvimento do mundo global moderno. No caso dos contextos ibero-americanos, a informação arqueológica tem vindo a revelar como se desenvolveu uma identidade colonial hispânica a nível das comunidades, em resposta a circunstâncias locais. Ao mesmo tempo, pode demonstrar-se como as diversas experiências locais partilham, em geral, certas práticas à escala do Império. Utilizam-se os contrastes entre a diversidade à escala local e as perceções partilhadas à escala imperial para ponderar a transformação da identidade, de “espanhóis na América” a “crioulos hispano-americanos”. A investigação arqueológica demonstrou que as raízes desta transformação se situam nos inícios da época colonial.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE** Ibero-América, crioulo, Espanha, identidade, colonização

One of the most important and complex issues in the study of the early modern world is the physical confrontation of distinct societies through colonization, and the subsequent genesis of new, integrative social groups. In much of the world, it is also an issue that can only be fully addressed through historical archaeology, given the obvious disjunctions of power and literacy inherent in such colonial confrontations.

Social ethnogenesis and power relations during the colonial period have been heavily emphasized by American historical archaeologists, perhaps because we live and work in a part of the world that was transformed completely over the past 500 years by European colonization (for examples, see Cusick (ed), 1998; Deagan, 1998; Galloway, 1995; Hill (ed), 1996; Thomas, 1989; 1990, 1991; Williams, 1992). As a North American, my own approach to these large questions has also been conditioned by the unavoidable contrast between America's various European colonial projects, particularly those of the English and Spanish empires. There are a great many questions through which we might approach the investigation of colonial cultural transformations. I have chosen, in this essay, to focus on the development of a generalized “Spanish-American” cultural identity; that is, a more or less collective self-awareness of being distinct from, and not primarily identified with, the European metropolis. From an archaeological perspective, I suggest that well before 1600, engagements among Spanish, American Indian and African people in the Americas, as well as their interactions with the imperial center in Spain, had led to distinctly American, creolized sets of social practices. These practices, and their associated social attitudes,

distinguished the people of Spanish America quite markedly not only from their homelands in Spain, but also from other European colonists in America. I furthermore suggest that the clearest archeological evidence for such social transformation is found in the context of households, where people lived their daily lives (This assertion is developed in greater detail in Deagan, 2003).

That said, I also appreciate that such notions as “Iberian”, “Spanish”, “English” or “American” mask the extraordinary variety of individual and local experience in the colonial world. In the Spanish-American colonial world, nevertheless, there did exist some general and shared points of reference (discussed below) that cut across local colonial experience, even though such points of reference were largely imposed by European powers.

My comments are based primarily on archaeological research at excavated Spanish colonial town sites in the circum-Caribbean region. The longest and deepest of our studies (1972-the present) has been in St. Augustine, Florida, which was settled in 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Aviles, and remained a Spanish colony until 1821. Projects in the Caribbean have included La Isabela, today in the Dominican Republic, which was established in 1493 as the first intentional settlement of Christopher Columbus. I had the privilege of working there in collaboration with José M. Cruxent between 1988 and 1996 (Deagan and Cruxent, 2002a-b). Other Hispaniolian town sites include Puerto Real (1503-1578), a cattle ranching town on the north coast of what is today Haiti (Deagan, 1995; Ewen, 1991) and Concepcion de la Vega, which was a wealthy gold-mining center in the central part of the Dominican Republic.

The town was occupied from about 1500 to 1562, when it was destroyed by an earthquake (Kulstad, 2008; Ortega y Fondeur, 1978). Santo Domingo, which has been the Dominican capitol since 1502, has also been studied extensively by archaeologists (Council, 1976; Garcia Arévalo, 1978, 1990; Ortega, 1978; Ortega y Fondeur, 1979; Veloz-Maggiolo and Ortega, 1992) (fig. 1).



1. Map of the Caribbean region showing Caribbean Spanish colonial sites.

I have also drawn heavily from the work done by colleagues in the early Spanish-American colonial communities of Cuba (Domínguez, 1978, 1980, 1984, 2005), Mexico (Charlton et al, 1985, 2005; Rodríguez-Alegría, 2005; Rodríguez-Alegría et al, 2003); Panamá (Castille-ro, 2006; Baroni, 2001; Rovira, 2001), Venezuela (Cru-xent, 1971; Vargas et al, 1998; Willis, 1978) Spanish Jamaica (López y Sebastián, 1985; Woodward, 1988, 2006); El Salvador (Card, 2007; Fowler and Gallardo, 2002); Colombia (Thierren et al, 2002), Ecuador (Jamieson, 2000, 2004) Argentina (Sentatore, 1995, 2007; Schaveltzón, 2000) and others.

There has been comparatively less archaeological attention focused on sixteenth and seventeenth century household domestic contexts in Spain, and very few comparative archaeological studies of Spain and Spanish America (some of the few examples include Carredano y Jiménez, 1993; Coll Conesa y Más Belén, 1997; McEwan, 1988). Therefore, any conclusions about differences between households in seventeenth century Iberia and America must remain tentative, until more exchange on these topics across the Atlantic can be realized.

#### AMERICAN SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From Chile to Florida, and New Mexico to Cuba, life in the Spanish colonies was overseen in almost every aspect by a mutually-understood, if essentially ideal, imperial-religious structure implemented by the Spanish

crown. Catholicism, centralized political administration, life in towns, class-based social hierarchies, institutionalized race mixture, a government-controlled, mercantilist economy and the Spanish language were all found throughout the empire (for discussions of these elements from Americanist historical perspective see Burkholder and Johns, 1990; Elliott, 2006; Kagan, 2000; Lockhart and Schwartz, 1983; MacAlister, 1984). Although the ways in which these elements were manipulated and played out in local settings were subject to tremendous variation, they did offer a common frame of reference for social understanding, engagement and resistance among people in the early Spanish colonies. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Spanish colonial project in the Americas was, in fact, the ability to impose and maintain a centralized organization across such an extraordinarily diverse and dispersed array of people, environments and polities. There was clearly a delicate balance of power between imperial and local interests, and an opportunity for flexible dialogue. It was undoubtedly in large part owing to the capacity of Spanish imperial structure to accommodate local agency and local challenges that the empire was able to persist.

Central to the imposition and maintenance of the Spanish American empire was government-sanctioned Catholicism, and a fundamental intolerance for any other mode of spiritual expression. The Catholic church – in tight alliance with the Spanish crown – pervaded nearly every aspect of social life, and privileged religion as the overriding factor (above race, rank or gender) in assigning social acceptability. This had a powerful influence on the nature of intercultural engagement among Spaniards, American natives, and Africans in the Spanish Americas, and stands in dramatic contrast to the English-American colonial experience.

During the early years of American encounter, Spain energetically engaged in formal inquiry into the nature and capacity of American natives, and struggled as no Europeans had been required before, to define the degrees of difference and similarity between themselves and the people of the Americas. It was ultimately concluded, and formalized in the 1512 Laws of Burgos, that the American Indians did indeed have souls, were indeed human, and as such would be considered free subjects of the Spanish crown see Brading, 1991, p. 79; Hanke, 1965; Hussey, 1932; MacAlister, 1984, p. 153-166; Pagden, 1982).

This position created a fundamental tension between crown and church interests in converting and protecting its subjects, and the Spanish colonists' desires to exploit indigenous labor. This was initially resolved by the uniquely American institution of *encomienda*, un-

der which those Indians associated with a particular allocation of land were obliged to exchange their labor for instruction in Christianity and civilization, although it seems quite clear that the Spanish side of the exchange was largely ignored (Elliot, 2006, p. 39-41; MacAlister, 1984, p. 157-166).

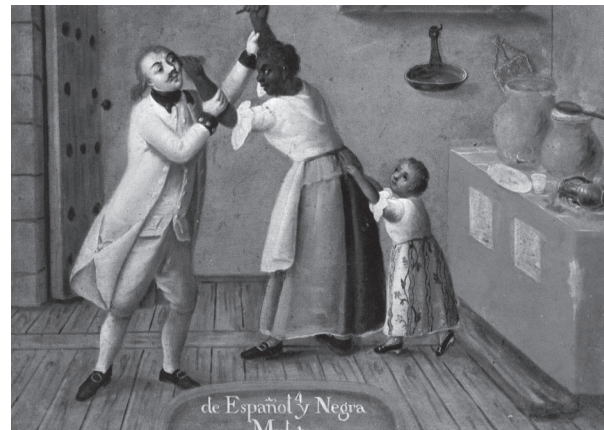
In some parts of the Americas invaded by the Spaniards, these obligatory labor regimens figured centrally in the social disintegration and breakdown of traditional cultural patterns among American Indian groups during the first century of contact, particularly in those coastal areas that were among the first to encounter Europeans (the Caribbean, the Southeastern United States; and parts of Central America). In other regions however, such as Guatemala, parts of the Andes, the southwestern United States and the interior Florida missions, American Indian social practices were accommodated and left largely unaffected, as long as caciques pledged fealty to Catholicism and the crown and served a useful purpose (Thomas, 1989, 1990, 1991; Gasco, 2006; Palca, 1998; Weber, 1992).

In places where the indigenous population experienced severe loss of from disease, warfare and labor, Native American decline spelled doom for the hundreds of thousands of African people brought unwillingly to the Americas as slaves after 1518. This was also the beginning in America of the association of blackness and labor, despite the fact that many free black Spaniards had participated in the early expeditions of conquest, and a number of them rose to *hidalgo* status, gaining grants of land and Indian labor (see Landers, 2006).

Recognition and accommodation of elite Native Americans was a cornerstone of Spanish policy in the Americas, and served in its own way to mitigate the tensions among crown, church, colonists and natives over Indian labor. By securing the alliance of caciques (American Indian leaders), it was expected that conversion, labor requirements and tribute would then be imposed through them to their subjects. During the sixteenth century, this was often accomplished through marriages between Spanish men and elite or ruling native women. Such marriages represented familiar forms of alliance for both Spaniards and Native Americans, and are well-documented throughout Mexico, Central and South America, Florida and the Caribbean (Burrkett, 1978; Morner, 1967; Socolow, 2000, p. 32-36). While canonical law considered different religions to be an obstacle to marriage, it did not consider race an issue as long as both parties were Catholic. Intermarriage and consensual relationships among Spaniards (mostly men) and non-Europeans (mostly women) accounted for between one quarter and one half of all marriages in some parts of the colonies during the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Arranz Marquéz, 1991; Morner, 1976; Socolow, 2000, p. 39-41). Marriages between Africans and Spaniards occurred, but were considerably less common than those between Native Americans and Spaniards. Spanish-African and Indian-African concubinage was, however, apparently practiced widely (MacAlister, 1984, p. 126-127; Morner, 1967, p. 30-31).

The acknowledgement and institutionalization of the resulting mixed racial and cultural categories- embodied in the Mexican *casta* paintings - has been a focus of intense scholarly study (Carrera, 2003; García Saíz, 1989; Katzew, 2004; Morner, 1976, p. 53-75) (fig. 2).



2. "de Español y Negra sale mulata". Anonymous, mid-eighteenth century casta painting, Mexico. Courtesy of the Museo de América, Madrid (*Serie de mestizajes*).

These racial categories not only represented an Iberian response to American colonial choices and realities, but they also formed a crucial dynamic in defining a peculiarly colonial sense of identity characterized by socio-racial ambiguity and fluidity in a way that was very distinct from that of Spain (see, for example Boyer, 1997; Chance, 1978, p. 155-159).

This pattern of racial fluidity also stands in stark contrast to the English-American colonies, where such racial mixture rarely occurred, and was generally discouraged. This distinctiveness is most powerfully expressed in the materiality of life in Spanish-American households, where daily practice can document behavior, and presumably identity.

#### ELICITING IDENTITY THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY

A number of historians working in American colonial settings have tracked emergent colonial identity in the Spanish colonies through such material forms of expression as architecture, urban plans and portraiture (Carrera, 2003; Kagan, 2000; Katzew, 2004; Pagden, 1987). Richard Kamen, for example has shown us that in representations of

American towns, the work of artists and cartographers from Spain was governed by a sense of space and organization. The colonial occupants of those towns, in contrast, mapped the same towns with a different sense of place and community (Kagan, 2000).

I was particularly struck two decades ago, however, by historian Stuart Schwartz's studies of identity in colonial Brazil, in which he expressed anxiety over the fact that all the sources available to historians were produced by a tiny elite segment of colonial society, writing that "*there may be an unwritten history of colonial identity that at present cannot be reconstructed. It is one no less valid than the one we have traced*" (Schwartz, 1987, p. 16). He was correct of course, and it has been archaeology in the homes and settlements of non-elite colonists that has helped realize his prediction, and construct a model of colonial identity formation that could not have been gained through documents alone.

### COLONIAL AMERICAN ORIGINS

Spain's first American colonizing venture was guided by a template very different from the centralized, bureaucratically-complex Spanish American imperium that is more familiar to readers of American history. La Isabela was established in Hispaniola by Christopher Columbus in 1493, and it was not intended to conquer American land. It was rather a crown-sponsored, public-private trading enterprise modeled along the lines of the Portuguese West African *factorías*, intended to trade with American Indians and exploit local resources (Deagan and Cruxent, 2002a-b; Pérez de Tudela Bueso, 1955). The settlement was under the local administration and control of Columbus who, through a very detailed contract with Ferdinand and Isabela, would share in the profits with the Crown.

The 1 500 member Spanish expedition was exclusively male, and many of them were fresh from religious wars in Europe. The men were expected to build and maintain the town, grow crops and work in the trade operations for a salary, but the colonists quickly became disaffected by the hard labor of building a settlement, illnesses, food shortages, and the absence of quick profits. Although relations with the Taínos were initially amicable, they very quickly disintegrated into animosity and conflict.

Despite the general misery, hunger, sickness, hardship and conflict emphasized in the primary documentary sources for La Isabela, archaeology has revealed that settlers put considerable effort into recreating the material circumstances and organization of their mother country. Columbus built a substantial walled settlement that reproduced a medieval Spanish Morisco city

in architecture, material culture and spatial organization (that is, an organic non-aligned pattern rather than the more familiar Ibero-American grid plan *traza*). Full complements of craftsmen, including metallurgists, carpenters, architects, lime burners, potters, and blacksmiths practiced their trades. They were equipped with modern armament (for the late fifteenth century). In fact, had no documents been available for this site, the archaeological record might have been interpreted as a well-supplied and reasonably comfortable fifteenth century Spanish settlement.

The private mercantile structure of La Isabela ultimately proved to be a failure. After gold was discovered near Santo Domingo, La Isabela was abandoned by 1498, and Hispaniola came completely under Royal Crown control in 1502. In 1503, immigrant settlers from Spain increased Hispaniola's European population from about 300 to about 3 000, and thirteen towns were established on the island, both to accommodate the newcomers and subdue the remaining Taínos (Deagan and Cruxent, 2002b; Moya Pons, 1997).

Excavations in the households of some of those towns have shown a very different material pattern from that of La Isabela (see Deagan, 2003; Deagan and Cruxent, 2002b, p. 284-296; Kulstad, 2008; Ewen, 1991). Rather than attempting to replicate Iberian household practices, the settlers in Puerto Real, Concepción de la Vega and, later, St. Augustine incorporated Native American elements into their daily household lives, particularly in food preparation and kitchen activities. Regardless of documented self-identification as "Spanish", and regardless of economic status, the kitchen assemblages in these households are comprised predominantly of Native American or newly created, syncretic European-American-African elements.

The production of European-style unglazed utilitarian pottery – such as that produced in such quantity at La Isabela – was greatly reduced, and in many areas stopped completely. Instead, locally-produced and locally available Native American pottery was adopted into Spanish colonial kitchens. At Puerto Real, the early Native American Taíno household pottery was replaced by what we believe is African-inspired pottery, corresponding to the decline in Taíno population and the importation of African slaves to Hispaniola (Smith, 1995). Hand-built, low-fired, unglazed, locally-made earthenware pots dominate many of these domestic assemblages, replacing the *cazuelas* and *pucheros* found in Spanish kitchens. *Manos* and *metates* useful for grinding corn, and *burénes* for toasting corn tortillas and cassava bread seem quickly to have replaced the Spanish *morteros*, *anafres* and *sartenes* used for grinding wheat and frying in olive oil. Beverages in the Rio

de la Plata area were most often prepared with *matés*; and *chocolateros* were used in Mexico.

A similar pattern of culturally pluralistic material incorporation seems also to have emerged in archaeologically-documented sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Spanish colonial households in Cuba (Domínguez, 1978, 1980); Puerto Rico (Solís, 1999); Mexico (Rodríguez Alegría, 2005; Charlton et al., 1995), Argentina (Senatore, 1995, 2005), Panama (Baroni, 2001), El Salvador (Card, 2007), Columbia (Thierren et al, 2002), Venezuela (Vargas et al, 1998) and presumably wherever pluralistic American-European-African-mixed-blood households and communities prevailed. Cooking vessels excavated in such sites are predominantly either local indigenous ceramics wares, or locally-made “*cerámica criolla*” incorporating elements of Native American, European, and sometimes African ceramic traditions (this category of pottery is known generally in the Anglophone colonial regions as “colono ware”) (fig. 3).

James Quine



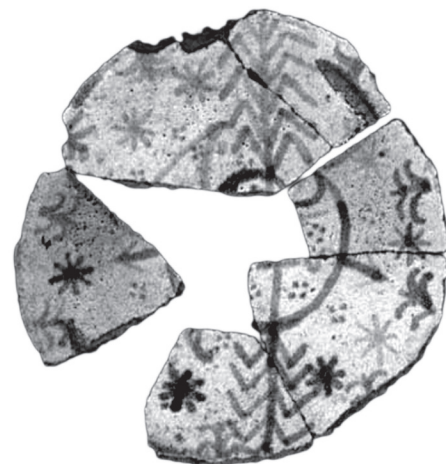
3. Examples of “cerámica criolla” or “colono ware” combining European and American Indian elements. Top: Sixteenth century red and cream polychrome indo-hispano wares, Concepción de la Vega, Dominican Republic. Bottom: Late seventeenth century cross-simple stamped pitcher form, St. Augustine, Florida (Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida).

The specific physical attributes of such pottery vary by region, but whether made by Spanish *criollos*, Africans, Indians or mixed-race people, these local ceramic traditions share the characteristics of being:

- (1) formally and technologically distinct from contemporary kitchenware ceramics in Iberia;
- (2) locally-produced;
- (3) influenced by both European and non-European material traditions; and
- (4) dominant elements in most kitchen assemblages in “Spanish”-identified households.

Hybrid ceramic forms in Spanish American colonies are not exclusively restricted to non-European production technology. The “Guadalajara” or Tonolá pottery of Mexico for example, incorporates introduced (European) production methods of wheel throwing and kiln firing as well as local, American forms and decorative elements (Charlton and Katz, 1979; Deagan, 1987, p. 44-46; García Saíz, 2003). During the colonial period, this Aztec-influenced pottery was produced and exported in great numbers, largely because of a belief among Spanish women that its *búcaro* clay contained cosmetic and healthful properties. This might have been excellent market promotion on the part of exporters, or the adoption of Aztec beliefs by Spanish women, but this inquiry will require a great deal more archaeological and historical contextualization, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The lesser-known “cerámica Indo-Hispano” found in early 16<sup>th</sup> century contexts in Concepción de la Vega and in Santo Domingo incorporates both hand built and wheel-thrown forms with Spanish and Native forms and decoration (fig. 4). Elements of this singular ceramic assemblage include what may be South or



4. Blue and white majolica plate from Panamá Vieja, with corn plant motif. Sixteenth century. (Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida).

Central American indigenous decorative motifs and techniques, and it seems to represent the period in Caribbean labor history when the local Taíno people were at a very low population level and Spanish slave raiders plundered more widely throughout the circum-Caribbean region (see discussions in Kulstad, 2008; Sauer, 1966, p. 154-160).

Another example of emerging material differences between Spain and the Spanish American colonies can also be traced in domestic household items that followed essentially Iberian forms and functions. By the 1570's, local American industries and regional trade networks in tableware pottery, glassware, coin minting, jewelry, cloth, leather and iron goods were established (Deagan, 2002; Santiago Cruz, 1960). Glazed tableware pottery, for example — beloved of archaeologists — was after about 1570 typically (although not exclusively) from Mexico or Peru or Panama (Lister and Lister, 1987; Gavin, Pierce and Pleguezuelo, 2003; Rodríguez-Alegría, et. al., 2003; Rovira, 2001). Although designs on these early American majolicas often followed Spanish patterns, they quickly developed local American variations in motif, such as palmettes and corn plants (fig. 4). Coins were from colonial mints in Mexico, Bogotá, Lima or Potosí. Glassware was made in Mexico. Examples of these categories of material life found in Spanish colonial households are more often the products of colonial, rather than Iberian, production. Although these products for the most part continued the technological and stylistic traditions of Iberia, they nevertheless underscore the material difference between colonial and Iberian households.

In other words, the materiality of life in those sixteenth century towns demonstrates a clear divergence from what we know so far about household material patterns of Spain (McEwan 1988, 1992; Amores Carredano y Chisvert Jiménez, 1993; Coll Conesa and Más Belén, 1997), both in the regular incorporation of American Indian and African domestic technology, and in the early dependence of colonists on American-produced crafts and commodities rather than in those imported from Spain. These factors furthermore also archaeologically distinguish Spanish-American from English-American colonial households. In the latter, imported ceramics, glassware and domestic furnishings dominate the archaeological household assemblages until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Deetz, 1977, 1993; Honerkamp, 1990; Kelso, 1984; Shackel and Little, 1994; South, 1977; Zierden and Herman, 1999).

Another notable source of material differentiation between Iberian and Spanish-American colonial households of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the incorporation and consumption of illicit goods

from European nations other than Spain. In an effort to monopolize the products of the American silver and gold mine, Spain's strict mercantilist economic policies mandated that trade in the Spanish American colonies was to be carried out only by Spanish-licensed ships, and only from the ports of Seville or Cádiz (Haring, 1964, p. 115-122; Macleod, 1984). As both historians and archaeologists have demonstrated, however, this centrally-controlled trade system was insufficient for providing the everyday needs of the colonists, and by the mid-sixteenth century, colonists in many areas turned to contraband and smuggling to make ends meet (for archaeological considerations of this see Deagan, 2007; Halbirt, 2004; Lyon and Purdy, 1982; Schaveltzón, 2000; Skowronek, 1992).

The Spanish towns of Puerto Real and Bayahá in northern Hispaniola, for example, were forcibly abandoned and burned in the late sixteenth century by Spanish government officials, who found themselves unable to control the illicit trade with foreign corsairs in which the town citizens enthusiastically engaged (Hodges and Lyon, 1995). Even such drastic measures were insufficient to prevent contraband trade, and it became a regularized part of colonial economic strategy throughout the Spanish empire (Cohen, 2003; Haring, 1966; Macleod, 1984). The nature and degree of participation in contraband trade varied widely according to local geography, access to ports, wealth and social inclination, but it remained a resistant and more or less overt practice until the Bourbon reforms of the later eighteenth century.

Covert and overt resistance to Spanish-imposed regimens by the residents of the American colonies — and particularly the Spanish crown's accommodation of such resistance — offers another avenue for understanding the formation of Spanish-American identity. From the fifteenth century onward, the refusal of some local Spaniards, Native Americans and African slaves to accept imperial mandates altered not only the empire's policies but also the colonial social order. For example, one centrally important factor in the failure of Columbus's *factoría*-type colonial template was the refusal of non-elite expedition members to accommodate the Crown's and Columbus's vision of the colonists as salaried employees. They, like the *hidalgos*, demanded land and rights to Indian labor, in effect, rejecting the "natural" social order of fifteenth century Spain based on *hidalguería*.

In 1497 one of Columbus's former vassals, Francisco de Roldán, living among the Taíno with a group of commoner-born Spanish compatriots, led a rebellion that forced Columbus to grant land and the labor of those who lived on it to the Spanish rebels, regardless of

their social class. This not only helped lead to Columbus's removal in disgrace, but it also introduced class disruption and a different kind of social order in Spanish America. It is one of the first instances of the many adjustments made to Spain's imperial colonial project and policy in response to local and, for the most part, non-elite agency (Moya Pons, 1986, p. 19-27; Stevens Arroyo, 1993; Pérez de Tudela Bueso, 1955).

The Spanish imperial government also faced challenges from African and mixed blood peoples in the Americas, frequently in alliance with American Indians. In Hispaniola, for example, Taíno Indians and escaped African slaves allied during the 1520's to attack Spanish towns in Hispaniola. When the Spanish authorities were unable to defeat the rebels, they agreed instead to peace treaties that guaranteed freedom and legitimization of the *cimarrones*. This was a continuing process in the Spanish American world, and similar accommodations were reached with black and Indian rebels in Mexico, Panamá, Ecuador, Venezuela Brazil and elsewhere during the sixteenth century (see Landers and Robinson, 2006). A distinct kind of pluralistic materiality emerged in these *cimarrón* communities, but they nevertheless incorporated Spanish, American Indian and African elements.

## CONCLUSION

By the mid-sixteenth century, the structure and dynamic of social life in Spanish colonial America were no longer wholly shaped by an Iberian perspective, or controlled exclusively by a Spanish imperial authority. New kinds of labor exploitation systems, racialization categories, social class distinctions, marriage patterns, economic strategies and material traditions had emerged through the actions and perspectives of second and third-generation colonial residents. These included people whose cultural and racial origins lay variously in Europe, America, Africa or in a combination of these, and who represented a new kind social and political identity, distinct from either indigenous Europe or indigenous America. Social class was obviously also a critical element, along with racial and cultural origin, in the genesis of Spanish American colonial identity. It is likely that the emergence of this distinctly American identity was most pronounced among those people who did not share in the wealth of the colonies.

One of the clearest archaeological expressions of this new sensibility was in domestic life, in households,

where a new, culturally pluralistic and culturally integrative material world prevailed by the middle of the sixteenth century. The social mechanisms by which integrative household practice developed were undoubtedly many. I have suggested that culturally and racially pluralistic commensality in households was a critical factor, occurring regularly by the incorporation of American Indian and African women into "Spanish" households (whether through marriage, servitude, or concubinage). Some have argued that Spanish social strategies for accommodating native elites contributed to such integration, and others point to the organization by Spaniards of Native labor and production, or to simple economic necessity as contributing factors (see, for example, DeFrance, 2003; Rodríguez-Alegría, 2005; Voss, 2009).

To the extent that material life expresses practice and choice, American Indians, Spanish creoles and African laborers all contributed visibly to the collective identity of Spanish colonial households, and a way that was uniquely New World. This was not the case in the Anglo American colonies of the same region. This has been shown many times over by archaeological work at English-American sites dating to the first century of colonial occupation, where a very strong adherence to English domestic practices, furnishings, food, architecture and landscape organization is very well-documented. Archaeologists working throughout the English colonies have shown that there was virtually no incorporation of Native American or African material elements into English colonial households or domestic life organization (Deetz, 1977, 1993; Honerkamp, 1990; Kelso, 1984, 2007; Shackel and Little, 1994; South, 1977; Zierden and Herman, 1999).

There are many cultural and ideological reasons for this; including attitudes about racial intermarriage, individual economic enterprise, political background and religious pluralism, and there insufficient space in which to address these here. However it is interesting to American historians and archaeologists that one of the United States' most cherished notions about our origin is that of a cultural "melting pot". This is not supported by archaeology in the households of Anglo colonial forbearers, who seem to have practiced a stern exclusion of non-European material life. Archaeology suggests instead that it was in the households of Spanish America that a new, distinctive *criollo* culture arose by incorporating and reconfiguring Native American, Spanish and African practices, into a new American lifestyle.

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