

**Labor, Slavery, and Caste in the Spanish Colonial System**  
**Theme: Social Structures**

Learning Objective 1.E: Explain how the growth of the Spanish Empire in North America shaped the development of social and economic structures over time.

**KC-1.2.II.B: In the encomienda system, Spanish colonial economies marshaled Native American labor to support plantation-based agriculture and extract precious metals and other resources.**

- The \_\_\_\_\_ granted land and coerced labor from Native Americans to Spanish settlers
- Spanish settlers would in turn promise to \_\_\_\_\_ natives
- There were opponents and defenders within the Spanish Empire in the form of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**KC-1.2.II.C: European traders partnered with some West African groups who practiced slavery to forcibly extract slave labor for the Americas. The Spanish imported enslaved Africans to labor in plantation agriculture and mining.**

- Natives in \_\_\_\_\_ systems were exploited for their work and often succumbed to diseases
- \_\_\_\_\_ began to be imported to work the new sugar plantations in the Caribbean and mines in Mexico
- Death rates amongst enslaved labor was still high, so imports of \_\_\_\_\_ continued through the age of exploration, ultimately \_\_\_\_\_ transported

**KC-1.2.II.D: The Spanish developed a caste system that incorporated, and carefully defined the status of, the diverse population of Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans in their empire.**

- Spanish intermarried with some of the surviving natives, creating a distinctive culture of \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ between Spanish, Indians, and Africans led to the development of a complicated caste system, called \_\_\_\_\_
  - In the system, \_\_\_\_\_, Spanish born in Spain were at the top, followed by \_\_\_\_\_, Spanish born in the New World, followed by \_\_\_\_\_ and the other variations of castes

**Quick Recap**

- The encomienda system awarded land and coerced labor in exchange for missionary work
- The rise of enslaved labor and African Slave Trade
- The Spanish Caste System

## Part II

### Short Answer Response

Answer each prompt using at least THREE sentences.

1. Explain how the growth of the Spanish Empire in North America shaped the development of social structures over time.

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2. Explain how the growth of the Spanish Empire in North America shaped the development of economic structures over time.

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### Document Analysis



This tract, a summary of a debate concerning the subjugation of Indians, contains the arguments of Bartolomé de Las Casas, the Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico, and Juan Gines Sepulveda, an influential Spanish philosopher, concerning the treatment of American Indians in the New World.

Las Casas came to Hispaniola, in the Caribbean, in 1502 with a land grant, ready to seek his fortune. A Dominican friar nurtured Las Casas's interest in the priesthood as well as his sympathy toward the suffering of the native inhabitants. In 1509, Las Casas renounced his land grant, released his slaves, and returned to Rome to take his religious vows. He returned to Hispaniola in 1512 as the first ordained priest in the Americas and denounced the Spanish exploitation of the Indians and the military conquest of the New World.

His efforts to end the encomienda system of land ownership and forced labor culminated in 1550, when Charles V convened the Council of Valladolid in Spain to consider whether Spanish colonists had the right to enslave Indians and take their lands.

## #5 - 1.5 Labor, Slaver, and Caste in the Spanish Colonial System

APUSH

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sepulveda argued against Las Casas on behalf of the colonists' property rights. Sepulveda rationalized Spanish treatment of American Indians by arguing that Indians were "natural slaves" and that Spanish presence in the New World would benefit them.

Citing the Bible and canon law, Las Casas responded, "All the World is Human!" He contradicted Sepulveda's assertions that the Indians were barbarous, that they committed crimes against natural law, that they oppressed and killed innocent people, and that wars should be waged against infidels. Las Casas managed to convince the theologians at Valladolid that the Spanish policy was unjust and had to change. However, his victory had no impact on the colonists, who continued to enslave American Indians. Las Casas has been called the "father of anti-imperialism and anti-racism," and he greatly influenced the drive to abolish the Spanish encomienda system.

### Excerpt

"When they [Native Americans workers] were allowed to go home, they often found it deserted and no other recourse than to go out into the woods to find food and to die. When they fell ill, which was very frequently because they are a delicate people unaccustomed to such work, the Spaniards did not believe them and pitilessly called them lazy dogs, and kicked and beat them; and when illness was apparent they sent them home as useless, giving them some cassava for the twenty-to eighty-league journey. They would go then, failing into the first stream and dying there in desperation; others would hold on longer, but very few ever made it home. I sometimes came upon dead bodies on my way, and upon others who were gasping and moaning in their death agony, repeating "Hungry, hungry."

1. Write a one sentence attribution for the document.
2. Who is the intended audience of this excerpt? How does that affect the way in which Las Casas frames his argument?
3. What would have been the impact of ending the Native Slave Trade?