THE MULATTO IN THE NATIONAL NARRATIVE OF POSITIVIST HONDURAS, 1879-1887

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to anyone anywhere who is of African descent. There is so much beauty and resilience inside of us. This thesis is also dedicated to those who are not of African descent, but who understand and care about our struggle.
¡Levántate mulato!

--Manuel Zapata Olivella, Afro Colombian Writer
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Some experiences of afro-descendants in Latin America can be determined through researching the mulatto group, the mixed-race descendants of Europeans and African slaves. During colonization in the Americas, mulattos became a substantial presence in the region. Mulattos participated in colonial Latin American society and sought to implicate themselves as citizens into the new nation during the independence movement. At this time, the writing of national identity and heritage began in the national narrative, which included those of Spanish, mestizo and to a lesser extent, indigenous heritages. Though those of African, or slave descent were largely excluded from new national histories, mulattos were written into many Latin American national narratives and often became associated with national identity. This inclusion was a result of liberalism and the acceptance of those of mixed-race in the struggles of the early republic. Many prominent and influential mulattos appeared in national narratives. However, this racial group still faced discrimination and exclusion as an extension of colonial perceptions of the slave-descended. The circulation of positivism and scientific race theory influenced and enhanced negative attitudes of Europeans and elite Latin Americans toward slave-descendants. This group was written out of national narratives to accommodate a Spanish-Indian mestizo heritage. Thus, the suppression of the mulatto group in the national narrative is very likely a result of racist attitudes and the claim to a mestizo national identity. The recovery of mulatto history may hold the key to understanding the experience of the slave-descended and the complexity of race in the national narratives of the nineteenth century.

This thesis attempts to show mulatto presence in the late nineteenth-century national narrative of Honduras during positivism. Two Honduran intellectuals, Ramón Rosa and Antonio Vallejo, wrote the mulatto into the national narrative, revealing the complexity of Honduran racial identity. Rosa wrote about the mulatto military leader Francisco Ferrera, while Vallejo wrote about mulatto presence in Tegucigalpa and within the colonial racial classification system. These inclusions indicate perceptions of mulatto presence and contribution in the early Honduran republic. However, in Vallejo’s 1887 Census, the mulatto group does not appear as a separate racial group. This may indicate that the mulatto was no longer seen as part of the national narrative due the influence of scientific race theory and the consolidation of a mixed-race identity. Thus, the mulatto was both included and excluded from the national narrative, complicating understandings of Honduran national identity. This thesis seeks to address contemporary issues of Honduran national identity in determining the presence and contributions of the mulatto group in nineteenth-century Honduran society.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an historical assessment of the inclusion and the exclusion of the mulatto in the national narrative of Honduras in the late nineteenth century.\(^1\) In studying the history of large populations of African descent in Latin America, my interest lays in the experiences of ex-slaves and free people of color after emancipation in the period between the 1820s and early 1900s. Importantly, this is also a period of nation-building in Latin America. I was specifically looking for information on those who considered themselves to be “Black” and not necessarily “racially-mixed”. It was difficult to find written work on Afro-Latino historical experiences in my research, as Latin American scholarship still has yet to uncover many issues that the slave-descended faced after emancipation. In addition, there seems to be little information on issues facing afro-descendants that is actually written during this period and thus available in archival materials; the sources consistently indicate that, during nation-building, “race” was understood through a racially-mixed paradigm, not through a binary of “black” or “white”. My biggest obstacle was my desire to focus on those of African descent who were not racially-mixed or who did not identify as racially-mixed. However, without interviews to determine their perceptions on “race” and “blackness,” or without finding documents indicating how those of African descent were categorized in terms of “race”, I realized this would be incredibly problematic and virtually impossible. This lack of sources on “blacks” specifically and the difficulty in researching the way in which they understood their own heritage as “Black” led me to approach the question of what the slave-descended were experiencing in another way.\(^2\)

As I continued researching, the constant reappearance of slave-descended involvement in race-mixing for their own purposes and pursuits led me to change my

\(^1\) The “mulatto” is a person of African and European descent.

\(^2\) In this thesis, the term “slave-descended” indicates a person who is a descendant of an African or black slave, but who may or may not identify with the racial heritage of slaves and their descendants.
previously fixed ideas about afro-descendants and race-mixing. In fact, it can be quite difficult to understand Afro-Latin America\(^3\) without being aware of historical race-mixing in many of its communities. This realization led me to pursue the history of racially-mixed slave-descendants. Perhaps the most populous slave-descended, racially-mixed group in colonial Spanish America and the republican period of Latin America is the mulatto group.\(^4\) Though they participated in race-mixing, this group is also slave-descended—a compromise of sorts for Afro Latin Americanists who seek to study and understand racially-mixed descendants of African slaves. The mulatto of the Americas cannot be completely severed from slave origins or from a heritage of slavery. Mulatto existence is a result of (often forced) sexual relations between African slave females and European males. These two groups encountered each other because of the need for African slave labor during the economic expansion of European imperialism between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries in the Americas. However, the mulatto is also racially-mixed and can choose to identify with a “black” group, a “white” group or with both. This tension as to what extent the mulatto identified with those of African descent can only be revealed through archival research\(^5\) or anthropological research on racial identity between the colonial and early modern periods. Measuring this tension is not my focus here. In this thesis, I seek to show an example of historical processes that may inform or may have influenced this tension during the late nineteenth century.

Mulattos were visible throughout Spanish America in the colonial and early national period. Some made their mark on colonial and early national history and it was recorded; other mulattoes did not and led ordinary lives. Regardless, the mulatto experience in the nineteenth century should be provided because it helps us to understand the complexity of race and race issues the slave-descended faced in Latin America during nation-building.

Within Latin America, there were certain areas with high concentrations of mulattos, such as

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3. This term is used by George Reid Andrews to describe Latin America as those of African descent have experienced it. See George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America: 1800-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).


5. Ibid.
Cuba and Brazil, but I chose to research the mulatto in another place. My own regional interest is in Central America for personal reasons, especially the Caribbean coastal region. Honduras boasts Mesoamerican and Caribbean histories and heritage, and has a long history of those of African descent within its borders. These facts greatly influenced my choice to research the mulatto in this nation. My choice is also a response to Latin American Studies, within which scholars usually insist upon conducting ethno historical research in larger, more influential nations such as Mexico, Brazil and Cuba. Why not research Honduras, a nation that Latin Americanists tend to overlook? The mulatto existed there in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as it was recorded in the historical record of Honduras. After verifying that mulattoes were present in late nineteenth century Honduran historical record, which is my era of interest, my research began.

Several questions drove the research of this thesis. Why is the mulatto, a slave-descendant, present in early Honduran national history? What would lead writers of history to overlook the racial heritage of the mulatto so that they would be included in the national narrative? What would lead writers of Honduran history to exclude mulattos as a group after their inclusion in the national narrative? What does this contribute to the search for a Honduran national identity? This thesis seeks to answer these questions through exploring a way in which the mulatto was both written into the national narrative and omitted from the narrative in late nineteenth century Honduras, during the nation-building period in Latin America.

1.1 Mulatto Origins: Metropolis, Colony and Nation

The mulatto is of European and African descent; they are of two different “races” as we understand “race” today. Because the terms “race” and “racism” can easily become controversial and because this thesis is based on issues of race and the idea of racism which resulted from scientific ideas developed in the nineteenth century, these two terms should be made clear. Biologically, race is “a local population, loosely united by a tendency to share

particular variations in phenotype (appearance) or genotype (genetic inheritance).”

Biological race becomes racism when “differences that might otherwise be considered ethno
cultural are regarded as innate, indelible and unchangeable...” and “expresses itself in the
practices that a sense of deep difference justifies or validates.” This “regard” and “sense of
deep difference is “socially constructed” because groups of people create differences when
an “other” is perceived. The mulatto is understood through the European constructs of “race”
and the discriminatory treatment against them for their African ancestry as “racism”. This is
a result of “othering” by Europeans and those of African (and indigenous) descent in the
Americas. The mulatto has a long history of this “difference” in both Europe and the
Americas. Though the mulatto is European and African, the Spanish-African mulatto is the
subject of this thesis, as the focus is on Honduras, a nation that was colonized by Spain from
the sixteenth century until the early nineteenth century.

The Spanish-African origins of the mulatto can be accounted for, but are not easily
understood. The “mulatto phenomenon”, as José Buscaglia-Salgado refers to it, was “first
identified and named” at the crossroads of the Christian kingdoms of Castile, Portugal and
Genoa and North Africa during the slave trade in this region as far back as the eleventh
century. The mulatto in Spain can be traced back to Seville and Valladolid, Spain to at least
the fifteenth century because of Spain’s proximity to Africa. The origins of the term itself is
not clear, according to Buscaglia-Salgado, but it is generally agreed that “mulatto” most
likely comes from the Latin or Romance word *mula*, meaning mule, a hybrid animal and this
term was used in the Iberian contact zone. Thus, the mulatto was not a mystery to the

7. Pat Shipman, *The Evolution of Racism, Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science* (New
10. See the work of Franz Boas, Ronald Takaki, John Searle, and Jan Nederveen Pieterse for more on the
social construction of race.
11. José F. Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean* (Minneapolis:
University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 79.
12. Ibid., 51.
13. Ibid., 79.
Spanish or to Africans in the Mediterranean region, even as the Americas were conquered and colonization began in what would become the Spanish colonies.

Though an exhaustive history of the mulatto will not be provided here, it is important to understand the social status of this group in Spanish America in the colonial and modern period. Throughout colonial Spanish America, the mulatto was generally recognized as a person with both African and Spanish blood, as they had been recognized in Spain for centuries. In the colonial period, the size of the mulatto population was closely related to the plantation or hacienda but also was linked to urban areas, where many enslaved, freed and free-born mulattos dwelled. Free mulattos formed part of a large population of the “free colored” as a result of race-mixing. Though the mulatto was ever present, it is still difficult to account for their numbers due to loss of records, erroneous censuses and the tendency for mulattos to self-identify as mestizo. Over time, many slave-descendants of various racial mixtures were identified as “mulatto”, especially because of African features such as skin color or hair texture. Understandings of “race” were already at work in determining who was mulatto. At first the term was specific (Spanish-African) and over time came to define a person with definite or suspected African features or “behaviors”. Negative perceptions of those with African heritage led to racism, which was solidified as a construct in the nineteenth century.

Though a kind of racism was first developed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries based on religious and ethnic differences between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, the ideas of

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14. Ibid., 189. It is commonly known that mulattos in the colonial period were born as a result of forced sexual encounters between Spanish masters and African or black creole female slaves.


17. A mestizo is a person of both Spanish and indigenous descent. Because African heritage was not preferred or positively recognized by other racial groups, many of the racially mixed slave-descended group identified instead as mestizo, which allowed them a higher degree of social standing. See R. Douglas Cope, The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); and Bowser, “Colonial Spanish America.” For more on the Honduran mestizo, see Marvin Barahona, Introducción al estudio de la identidad nacional (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Editorial Guaymuras, 1990), 35.
race and racism resurfaced during the development of science in the nineteenth century. Before the ideas of race and racism were actually developed and were used in Spanish America, the Spanish used the *casta* system to determine quantities of Spanish blood which then determined who deserved power and a share of colonial wealth. There were many different terms to describe the racial mixtures within this system. The *mulato* was one of these racial-mixtures that had a precarious place in colonial society. If he was a slave, he was treated as such and was more associated with African or black creole heritage. If he was freed or born free, he could ascend the social ladder, often by “passing” for *mestizo*, *morisco* or Spanish. The *casta* system was based merely on the social construct of physical and psychological differences based on quantity of Spanish blood and society was thus divided; it was not scientifically “proven”. Racially and ideologically, the mulatto was ever difficult to define within this system. This had much to do with how the mulatto responded to inclusion and exclusion within the “coloniality of power.”

Aníbal Quijano’s paradigm of the “coloniality of power,” states that power was created and exercised based on race and racial classification, which operated in the Americas during the period of European colonization. This exercise of power based on race and racial social classification is Eurocentric and has left us with a capitalist colonial/modern world power model that remains to the present day. Within this system, the mulatto, as both European and African, can be viewed as both superior and inferior because of Eurocentric ideas of superiority of Europeans and inferiority of Africans. In the “mulatto world,” the

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20. Ibid.; and Bowser, “Colonial Spanish America.” A *morisco* is a person who is three quarters Spanish and one quarter African/black.
22. Ibid., xii.
mulatto contests the coloniality of power while also being an integral part of it evading definition. Discrimination or ambivalence toward mulattos was a manifestation of the Eurocentricity of the coloniality of power, and the racial classification with which it is associated. However, mulattos participated in and supported the nation of their birth, replicating or contesting the coloniality of power within the power structures of these nations. By the late nineteenth century, the coloniality of power was still relevant in Latin America, especially because of the spread of scientific race theory, which was based on negative perceptions of non-Europeans during the colonial period and resulting scientific credence given to these perceptions. This thesis shows an example of the influence of the coloniality of power in a national narrative of the late nineteenth century.

As the colonial period declined in the early nineteenth century, Latin American leaders and elites sought to follow the European republican model, which advocated a belief in liberal progress through market competition, limited government and individual liberty. After independence was realized throughout the region, often in bloody struggles, the colonial structure was no longer relevant for liberal nation-building in Latin America. Use of the *casta* system in Spanish America declined, though the coloniality of power still influenced ideas about “differences” among groups of people in the region. White liberals throughout Latin America now had the difficult task of creating a national body from colonial societies characterized by social division, which was based on the inferiority of certain racial groups. Supposedly, “liberalism presumed an unmarked, raceless, even genderless individual,” but the citizens’ right to “literacy, property ownership and individual autonomy” were associated with white males. Exclusion was inherent in liberalism. However, liberals focused on “sameness as a precondition for inclusion into the nation,”

27. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
which led to the inclusion of the mixed-race population alongside white creoles in the struggle for independence in Spanish America. Because of such inclusion, the place of the mulatto in society at this time may have been somewhat less unstable, leading to their inclusion in the national narrative.

Meanwhile in Europe, liberal ideas of individualism led to the belief in science to shape destiny. As science became the new determinant of destiny, scientists divided people around the world into biological categories and determined their achievement of evolutionary development. People from areas other than the colonial center and who were phenotypically and culturally different were seen as other races and were many times were not considered human, even though these “races” were merely different ethnic or tribal groups. By 1850, scientific race theory stated that some races could not advance because of “innate differences.” Intellectuals of the nineteenth century did not believe all humans were a single species; physical differences and cultural differences only made non-Europeans seem less “evolved.” The idea that the “fittest” would lead society and the economy because they were “naturally selected” remained constant. These assumptions were based on “thin biological evidence.” Though there are no differences biologically between races, the social construct of race from the mid nineteenth-century was an extension of “delegitimization” of non-Europeans as racial groups by western Europeans since the colonial period. Europeans continued to distinguish themselves from non-Europeans not only socially, but now biologically, which then gave them the right to continue to exploit non-Europeans, a group that included the slave-descended mulatto. Liberal ideals came into contact with positivism and scientific race theory, which led to more exclusion in terms of who could participate in

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34. Ibid., 75.
37. Ibid., 108.
38. Ibid., 68.
40. Ibid., 174.
liberal-positivist reforms. These ideas were implicated into the nation-building process of and their influence can often be seen in who was included or excluded from national histories. These histories were part of the nation-building process in which the mulatto was included and excluded.

During nation-building, new nations of Latin America were creating an “imagined community.” As Benedict Anderson deftly explains, the “nation…is an imagined political community…imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”\(^{41}\) The nation is “finite” because it has borders, it is “sovereign” because political power is not “dynastic”, and it is a “community” because there is “comradeship” and a profound sense of belonging.\(^{42}\) This imagined community will begin to develop policies, which address and control “compulsory state-controlled primary education, sate organized propaganda, official rewriting of history [and] militarism…”\(^{43}\) If the imagined community feels threatened by those who are outside of its boundaries, it will attempt to protect itself by amplifying the differences of “the other.” Though the imagined community can invite anyone of any heritage, ethnicity or race,\(^{44}\) it should be pointed out that the imagined community is created based on ideas about race and racial classification from the coloniality of power. As newly independent Latin American nations were trying to create a singular national identity, an imagined community, they could only understand themselves and the nation based on European political models. Adherence to these models led to the distancing of afro-descendants and the indigenous from national heritage and histories because of negative ideas about these groups and their association with tradition in a rapidly modernizing world. Mulattoes lived in nations with an imagined community, and they were included or excluded depending on their degree of membership within these imagined communities.


\(^{42}\) Ibid., 7.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 101.

By the 1870s, most Latin American nations were in pursuit of an “imagined” national identity, which by then was influenced by positivism and scientific race theory. Positivism carried with it the current of scientific race theory, which structured progress, yet excluded certain racial groups from progress. This philosophy allowed for the societal issues to be addressed through liberal reforms for “order and progress”, yet kept power in the hands of a few, maintaining white elite conservatism. Positivism was also influenced by scientific race theory, which denigrated non-whites to positions of biological inferiority and later, social inferiority, as discussed above. During this overlap of liberalism and positivism, it became more important to subsume all racial mixtures into a general racial category, such as “mestizo” in order to “purify” the national heritage and create an imagined community of a singular people to accomplish the new modernizing project. This modernizing project included educational reform for the new imagined community of the nation state. Free and compulsory primary education reconciled the liberals’ ideal for basic literacy for all and the conservative oligarchy’s desire to socialize and control the large masses of mixed. These educational reforms included the writing of history, to capture the essence of a national identity. The past and present of a nation interacted to create these new histories and its dissemination influenced the extent of the “imagined community”. These new histories were written by white and mestizo elites and intellectuals in the new republican societies, which began to focus on “democratic mixedness”, a discourse that included the racially-mixed and excluded afro-descendants. These new national narratives helped citizens of Latin American states identify with a national culture and are the basis upon which the nation was built.

45. Positivist philosophy or “positivism” is the pursuit of progress in society using scientific knowledge and observation. This philosophy originates from the French philosopher Auguste Comte in 1830. Positivism will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

46. A “mestizo” is of mixed Spanish and indigenous heritage.

47. Barahona, Introducción, 16.

48. Ibid., 17.


writing of history is integral to creating a national narrative. Typically national narratives include groups of people who are viewed as absolutely necessary to the creation of that nation. Usually these groups are viewed as “superior”, though “inferior” peoples can be included to create a history of origin. For example, the national narrative of the Dominican Republic includes the Taíno people before contact and Spaniards during conquest and the colonial period. Though slavery existed there, the history of black or slave presence is seriously downplayed by many Dominicans. Thus, the Dominican nation as a people assigns themselves primarily with an indigenous and Spanish identity. The historical reality is that most Dominicans are “mulatto” or even “black” by United States standards and do not have indigenous ancestry. This example points to how the national narrative creates (through imaginings) a population of a certain ethnic group who identify with each other and with a particular culture and customs. Throughout Latin America, mulattoes were a sizeable ethnic group with whom many in the national population could identify. Brazil and Cuba are notable examples of this phenomenon. Many mulattoes were included in the national narrative because their mixed-race heritage was part of a national heritage and history. However, the mulatto was also not written into the national narrative in many areas because of their slave heritage. Mulatto inclusion and exclusion in the national narrative demonstrates the desire to include the mulatto as part of nation-building, but also indicates uncertainty in doing so because of unfavorable attitudes toward the mulatto. This thesis will show certain aspects of the tension in including the mulatto in the national narrative.

The mulatto appeared as a character of mixed-race in the national narrative during the nation-building period of nineteenth century Latin America. Before, during and after the wars of independence from Spain, mulattos contributed to nation-building in Latin America. There are several influential mulattos who form part of this narrative, to include but are not limited to: Cubans Antonio Maceo, second in command of the Army during Cuban independence and poet Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés, (known by the pen name Plácido); Brazilian novelist Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis; and Columbian politician, writer and army general, Juan José Nieto Gil are several examples of influential mulattoes who are part of their respective national narratives. These men influenced early national thought through

51. Ibid.
writing and literature or contributed to the nation through military strategy (or both in the case of Nieto Gil) and were written into the national narrative. The national narrative included nineteenth-century literature, histories and essays in Latin America, which addressed the question of the large mixed-race population, within which the mulatto was included. Influenced by liberalism, positivism and scientific race theory, social scientists, intellectuals and politicians wrote fictional and non-fictional works about the racially mixed but “controversial” mulatto. intellectuals analyzed the “controversial” mulatto as part of the nation because of their racially-mixed heritage and as distant from the nation because of their African heritage. National histories include this tension toward the mulatto. Because the mulatto also possessed black heritage and "blacks were believed to be inclined to happiness," the mulatto was “favored…in terms of national character...” It was hoped that the mulatto would exhibit the best traits of his black heritage. Many mulattos also benefited from the development of the middle classes and established their presence in the state and in the business classes they were implicated into nation-building processes that supported a discourse of race-mixing. However, mulattos were still an obstacle to the Latin American nation because those of mixed-race were believed to be degenerate. These attitudes were seen in how the mulatto was written into the national narrative throughout Latin America. The nation of Honduras was no exception.

1.2 About Honduras

The republic of Honduras borders Guatemala to the northwest, El Salvador to the west and Nicaragua to the south (see Figure 1.1). It has a long coastline with the Caribbean

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54. Lizcano, “población negra,” 43.


Sea to the east and also borders the Gulf of Fonseca to the southwest. It was primarily a mining province in the Spanish empire and became independent in 1821. In 1880, Tegucigalpa was established as the capital of Honduras. Until 1982, Honduran politics was characterized by military rule. As of July 2013, Honduras had an estimated 8.5 million people. The country is the second poorest in Central America; roughly half the population lives in poverty. Primary education is available, but retention is poor. Unemployment and underemployment drive emigration to the United States and other nations. According to the CIA World Fact Book, the largest ethnic group is *mestizo*, with indigenous groups at 7 percent of the population, blacks at 2 percent and whites at 1 percent. Though these facts provide a picture of contemporary Honduras, this thesis is concerned with the history of how the nineteenth-century slave-descended Honduran mulatto was implicated into the national narrative. This appearance of the mulatto in the national narrative can provide clues to understanding contemporary questions of Honduran national identity. Honduran issues of national identity will be discussed in the subsequent literature review.

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57. Ibid.
The ethno history of the mulatto and the political history of Honduras from the colonial period to the year 1887 will be provided in this thesis to show how and when the mulatto is inserted into the national narrative. The Honduran national narrative began with the ideals of Central American liberal José Cecilio del Valle during the independence period. Influenced by European thought, del Valle’s notions of the nation were: that it was a political society whose members are freely organized and work to achieve common happiness, that equality and unity create a social balance and that the nation is independent, sovereign and equal compared to other nations. After these ideas were accepted, white creoles tried to bring liberalism to Honduras, but failed because of a lack of leadership. The republican model they sought to use only distanced them from the society of mixed-race in the province, because of the racial division for labor exploitation, which benefited the elites and made national unity impossible. At this point, the emergence of a national narrative and national identity began to be in question. In Honduras, a discourse of race-mixing as part of national identity had been and continued to be implemented since the colonial period. The mulatto was associated with slavery but was also part of this racially-mixed heritage. In Honduras, a discourse of race-mixing as part of national identity was also implemented. The nineteenth century Honduran historical record inserts the mulatto into the Honduran national narrative of the independence period and the early republic, and deletes the mulatto as a racial category from the population in 1887, both of which introduce the Honduran “imagined community”. This is done by two influential Honduran intellectuals, Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo.

Rosa and Vallejo were involved in a positivist overhaul of Honduran society to usher in progress and modernity under the Liberal Reforms of 1876. Though the prevailing philosophy was positivist, Honduran intellectuals and politicians were still influenced by liberal ideas of the Central American Federation and sought to bring progress through liberal

58. Barahona, Introducción, 29.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., 31.
61. Ibid., 32.
62. Ibid., 33-34.
reforms. The writing of history was among the first reforms. These histories, penned in the late nineteenth-century by Rosa and Vallejo, were about the colonial period in the Honduran province in the 1700s to the early 1800s, and during independence and the Central American Federation up to 1850. A second reform was implemented to account for the population of Honduras through a census, in order to more effectively determine more necessary positivist reforms. In the sources surveyed in this thesis from the late nineteenth century, the mulatto is written in history as present in the colony and during the independence movement. By 1887 the mulatto does not appear in the census, indicating their collapse into a ladino\textsuperscript{63} group and their disappearance from the national narrative at the turn of the twentieth century. Liberalism in Honduras likely influenced the inclusion of the mulatto in the writing of history, while positivism and scientific race theory influenced the collapse of the mulatto racial group into a ladino racial category, influencing the sustained association of the mulatto group with the Honduran national narrative. The appearance of the mulatto in the Honduran national narrative demonstrates perceived presence and contribution, indicating an association of this group with nation-building and a national identity.

This thesis discusses two historical reasons for the inclusion of the mulatto in written history and the suppression of this group in the Census of 1887. In Honduras, independence came without incident in 1821, as in the rest of Central America\textsuperscript{64} through the liberal agenda. In the Honduran “imagined community” of the nineteenth century, liberalism influenced the inclusion of those of virtually any racially-mixed heritage, including the mulatto, of the early nineteenth-century. This participation in the early liberal nation likely led to the inclusion of the mulatto as a racially-mixed citizen. Mulattoes themselves, as slave-descended and racially mixed, also negotiated their “mixedness” in using the black Garifuna on the North Coast to thwart attention from their own slave ancestry. This very likely made the transition for them as racially-mixed ladinos within the nation easier and made their

\textsuperscript{63} The term “ladino” in this thesis refers to a person of multiple racial-crossings in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who is not culturally indigenous and who did not have the same history of contact or mixing with the Spanish as had the indigenous. They are thus differentiated from the indigenous. See Marvin Barahona, Evolución histórica de la identidad nacional (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Editorial Guaymuras, 1991), 63-65; Barahona, Introducción, 35; and Lowell Gudmundson and Hector Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 1821-1871: Liberalism Before Liberal Reform (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995).

\textsuperscript{64} Barahona, Introducción, 28.
inclusion in the early nineteenth century Honduran imagined community less insecure. These factors during the era of liberalism may have facilitated the inclusion of the mulatto in positivist histories and their presence in the national narrative.

Second, as scientific racism and positivism influenced Latin American and Honduran thought, acceptance of those with African heritage most likely dissipated, resulting in a suppression of the mulatto as a slave-descended racial group in the Honduran census of 1887. This period was also one in which a racially-mixed identity was also consolidated and became part of the new national narrative. These factors may have resulted in the omission of the mulatto category from the 1887 census by Vallejo. The inclusion of the mulatto in history and the suppression of this particular group in the census can be interpreted as a result of attitudes of the liberalism era and of the modern scientific racism and positivist eras during the coloniality of power, which still operated in late nineteenth century Honduras as the national narrative was written to create a Honduran imagined community.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The primary sources used are books, while secondary sources are a mixture of books and articles. All were found either in the San Diego State Library or in other lending institutions. I received both primary and secondary sources through Interlibrary Loan. A great deal of internet research went into locating primary and secondary sources on Honduras that included information on afro-descendants, “blacks” and “mulattos”.

In this thesis, European and Latin American primary sources are used to help inform nineteenth century thought in Honduras. All primary sources are from 1848-1887, a period of forty years. Comte’s *A General View of Positivism* is a copy translated from French. It is assessed for an understanding of basic Comtean positivist philosophy. Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* are both copies. Both are assessed for content


on survival of the fittest and natural selection and specific attitudes towards blacks and mulattos. Spencer’s *Illustrations of Universal Progress: A Series of Discussions* is also a copy and is the foundational text for understanding how the biological idea of survival of the fittest was applied toward cultural and social practices.\(^6\) This work is analyzed to show racist Spencerian thought toward afro-descendants and how Spencer ties in this thought to “progress” or to positivism. It provides an idea of how society came to be viewed as within an evolutionary frame. All of these works are provided to show how positivism and scientific race theory are linked, which later influenced Latin American versions of these ideas.

The primary sources on Latin American thought is meant to help inform Honduran thought, which is more closely related to Latin America than Europe. Domingo Sarmiento’s *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants; or Civilization and Barbarism* is an English copy and provides specific ideas about blacks, mulattos and civilization.\(^6\) The second piece of Sarmiento’s is his speech, “La maestro de escuela,”\(^7\) a reproduction in Spanish, included to show the positivist modernizing educational project, which influenced Honduran intellectuals. The José Lastarria piece was also a speech originally given to the Circle of Friends Literature group’s public conference (1869). It is an English translation copy and provides Lastarria’s views on the importance of education for the new positivist nation. Sarmiento and Lastarria directly influenced Ramón Rosa’s ideas on reform and education specifically.

The Honduran primary sources are used to provide an understanding of how Honduran positivism was defined and how it was implemented. These sources also reveal that mulattoes were written into the national narrative. Rosa’s “Francisco Ferrera”\(^7\) is


\(^7\) Domingo F. Sarmiento, “La maestro de escuela, lectura del Sr. Sarmiento,” in Las escuelas: Base de la prosperidad I de la república en los Estados Unidos, informe al ministro de instrucción publica en la República Argentina (New York: D. Appleton, 1866), 128-70.

assessed for its content on the “mulatto,” while his “Importancia de la instrucción pública”\textsuperscript{72} and “Social Constitution of Honduras”\textsuperscript{73} provides Honduran positivist philosophy. Vallejo’s Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras\textsuperscript{74} and Censo general de la república de Honduras, 1887\textsuperscript{75} are Spanish copies. The Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras demonstrates how the mulatto is included in the colony and the early republic. The 1887 census does not include a “mulatto” racial category, only “ladino” or “indigenous”.

1.4 Literature Review: The Slave-Descended in Latin America

To account for the mulatto in late nineteenth century Honduras, this thesis is based on research of secondary sources on blacks, mulattoes and race-mixing in Latin America in the colonial, independence and early national periods. Since the 1970s, black and mulatto colonial history and history during independence have been given more scholarly attention. Black and mulatto slave history throughout the Americas is widely available and there is a growing availability of writing on black and mulatto involvement in the independence movement. Details about the abolition movement and emancipation legislature are also prevalent among the main topics discussed on nineteenth century blacks and mulattos in Latin American historiography. However, historical records on this population can be cumbersome to locate. Indeed, Magnus Morner, a prominent Latin American scholar, verifies that “historians seem to lose all interest in the Negro as soon as abolition is accomplished [and] he disappears almost completely from historical literature.”\textsuperscript{76} Dialogue on blacks in the

\textsuperscript{72} Ramón Rosa, “Importancia de la instrucción pública,” in Ramón Rosa: Escritos selectos, selección y reseña de la historia cultural de Honduras, colección Panamericana 19, ed. Rafael Heliodoro Valle (Buenos Aires: W. M. Jackson, 1945), 33-85, first published 1874 by Tipografía Nacional.


\textsuperscript{74} Antonio R. Vallejo, Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras, aumentada con los principales acontecimientos de Centro América, para uso de los colegios de 2.a enseñanza de la Republica de Honduras, 2nd ed. (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Tipografía Nacional, 1926), first published 1882 by Tipografica Naciontal.

\textsuperscript{75} Antonio R. Vallejo and Honduras Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, Censo General de la Republica de Honduras levantado el 15 junio de 1887 (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Tipografía del Gobierno, 1888).

\textsuperscript{76} Magnus Morner, “Historical Research on Race Relations in Latin America During the National Period,” in Race and Class in Latin America, ed. Magnus Morner (New York: Columbia University Press,
historical record either ends with emancipation or with freedmen, who are usually described as being racially mixed, such as the mulatto.

Part of the reason that mulattoes are not given much historical coverage in the post-emancipation period is because they are often subsumed into a discourse of race-mixing. Afro-descendants are usually presented as being of mixed-race heritage, instead of being associated also with a black or slave-descended heritage. This focus on race-mixing by historians and anthropologists is entrenched in studies on the relationship between slave-descendants and race-mixing. This focus, in turn, affects historiography on slave-descended blacks, especially in nations where race-mixing occurred most rapidly. Importantly, Honduras retains its “Central American” heritage because it was a province within the Audiencia of Guatemala in the colonial period, and was later a member of the Central American Federation after independence in 1821. Thus, the history of blacks from a regional Central American perspective must also be provided, since black and mulatto history was treated as part of regional history for a time. As more scholars on Honduras realized that Honduran history should be presented separately from a general Central American history, more scholarship was written to account for the specific involvement of blacks and mulattoes as slave-descendants in Honduras. Thus, the historiography on blacks after emancipation will be presented threefold: their historical treatment in general Latin American Studies; their treatment within Central America as a region; and their treatment in the history of the nation of Honduras.

Magnus Morner begins the discussion on race (and class) in Latin America from different historical perspectives and notes why black history in Latin America has not been uncovered in the 1970 edited volume *Race and Class in Latin America*. According to Morner, treatment of race is difficult because of the process of miscegenation and the loss of emphasis on race. Morner then claims that historians studying race relations after emancipation will encounter difficulty and studying the mulatto may be more fruitful. At the end of the chapter, Morner asserts that “an inquiry into the impact of European racism on


77. Ibid., 229-230.

78. Ibid., 219.
Latin American thought is one of the questions historical research must answer. It would not be until twenty years later that historians would address some of Morner’s questions.

Published in 1974, Neither Slave nor Free, The Freedmen of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World, edited by Jack P. Greene, discusses the status of free people of African descent in New World slave societies. The specifics of the history of the free-colored in this book verify Morner’s claim that most historical research on race (or Afro-descendants) is focused on the colonial period in the Americas. The book makes two points: the degree to which the free-colored experience measures slavery and race relations in the societies discussed; and the special and pivotal roles of this group in these evolving societies. The mulatto is written in this book as part of the “free colored” group. Frederick P. Bowser’s chapter “Colonial Spanish America” is most relevant to the study of the free-colored in the region of Latin America. In Bowser’s chapter, he states that “the presence of free blacks and mulattoes…dates from the earliest days of the conquest” and that “free person of color outnumbered their slave counterparts in Spanish America well before the struggles of political independence.” Bowser explains the free-colored and manumission, marriage practices, their legal status, education, vocation and levels of assimilation into Spanish American society among the free colored. Importantly, Bowser explains that the “free colored” were sensitive to racial classification and that whitening meant advancement in society, both factors that could lead to the incorporation of the mulatto group into a racially-mixed national identity.

In 1976, Leslie Rout wrote The African Experience in Spanish America: 1502 to the Present Day (Rio de la Plata, the Andean region, Central America/Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba), providing a general history of peoples of African descent in the Spanish-speaking nations. This work responds to Morner’s recommendation for a more

79. Ibid., 229-230.
81. Ibid., 19.
82. Ibid., 55.
83. Ibid.
thorough analysis of race history, while also addressing afro-descendants much like the Greene volume, albeit more generally. He includes the plight of free blacks, slave-descended castas and black/mulatto soldiers in the wars for independence. The mulatto is included in these groups. Race-mixing and military participation positioned blacks to participate in the societies of the new republics. Rout’s work is also one of the first to specifically mention the region of Central America and its blacks. He argues that the size of the black population is difficult to determine because of “social sensitivity and governmental practice.”

In most of the region, blacks accepted white [ladino] culture and hid or minimized black features according to Rout. This book is regarded as a classic work on slave-descendants in Latin America.

In 1990, Richard Graham’s edited volume The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940 examines how race theory shaped public policy, especially against slave-descendants in post-emancipation Latin American nations such as Brazil and Cuba. These policies were positivist and favored white and mixed populations over those who were discernibly black. This work solidifies the fact that positivist race theory very much influenced the status and history of slave-descendants and their dis/appearance from Latin American history after emancipation. The chapters on Brazil and Cuba explore in depth the attitudes of the white elite toward blacks and the intellectual currents and racist policies enacted to keep populations of color under control. This book addresses Morner’s recommendation in 1970 to research how intellectual thought in the nineteenth century related to attitudes of the Latin American politicians and elite about race. Though the history of the idea of race in Central America or Honduras is not provided, the same political and social theories were used in the region to construct a national racial identity.

In 1995, Darien Davis edited Slavery and Beyond: The African Impact on Latin America and the Caribbean, which continues to expose more Afro-Latino history, especially in accounting for blacks during slavery and after slavery. This book focuses on the afro-

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85. Ibid., 263.
86. Ibid., 267.
creole as participants in the social system and their struggles to modify negative circumstances and safe-guard their well-being. Afro-creole consciousness is highlighted, as many afro-descendants were of mixed-race and had assimilated and acculturated within Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Panama and Puerto Rico. George Reid Andrews is the only contributor who discusses blacks in the nineteenth century in his chapter “Black Legions of Buenos Aires Argentina, 1800-1900”. This chapter details how military involvement both improved and complicated the lives of afro-creoles, and discusses the extent to which positivism influenced white elite discrimination against them.

Also in 1993, Peter Wade published *Blackness and Race-Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia*. This book is an anthropological study on blacks and race-mixture in Colombia in the early 1990. Wade explains the history of race-mixing relevant to the colonial and national periods, in order to foreground the construction of race in Colombia. His work responds to historiography on slave-descended blacks and Latin American intellectual ideas about race in the late nineteenth century, as Morner suggested some twenty-five years before. Wade begins by explaining how race in Colombia and Latin America is related to both “…discrimination and tolerance…”, and that blacks and Indians can be excluded as non-mixed and included as those can potentially participate in race-mixing. Whitening discourse proliferates, unifying both race-mixing and discrimination beginning in the nineteenth century. Adherents to positivism labeled blacks and Indians as biologically inferior and elites instead targeted mixed-bloods, focusing on environment and education, and advocating “democratic mixedness.” Thus, the non-mixed population

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88. An “afro-creole” is a person of African descent, including blacks, pardos and mulattos, who were born in the Americas.


92. Ibid.

93. Ibid., 10-11.

94. Ibid., 11-12.
disappears in national rhetoric, and a mixed identity is overwhelmingly accepted.\textsuperscript{96} The premium on mixedness helped Latin America evade association with a biological determinism and perpetuated participation in whitening, which “absorbed” and “erased” blacks and Indians from the nation.\textsuperscript{97} Wade explains the exclusion of blacks through the paradigm of mixedness or \textit{mestizaje}. Wade’s work on “democratic mixedness” relates to racial processes amongst and against the slave-descended where race-mixing and race-mixing discourse easily subsumes them into a mixed-race category. This process is relevant to Honduras.

In 2004, George Reid Andrews published \textit{Afro-Latin America: 1800-2000}, an entire book dedicated to afro-descended Latin Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is the first work that dedicates a large portion of scholarship to addressing blacks in nineteenth century Latin America. While this book mentions race and race-mixing, the terms black, \textit{pardo} and mulatto are used and are associated with slave-descendants who may have African ancestry. The themes are blacks’ participation in the military, participation in social and political reform, their upward mobility as a result, and the emergence of the black middle classes and their struggle to address issues relevant to afro-descendants in nations that supported the idea of “democratic mixedness”. In the nineteenth century, free blacks and mulattos served in the colonial militias, either by forced conscription or as volunteers.\textsuperscript{98} These soldiers created an upwardly mobile class of free blacks and they were involved in nation building struggles. By participating in war, slaves and free blacks and mulattos were part of and responsible for a “great wave of social and political reform in Latin American history.”\textsuperscript{99} After emancipation, however, this group “struggled for citizenship and economic and social advancement under new and different structural conditions.”\textsuperscript{100} Though “racial exclusion or segregation [was] legally and politically unacceptable”, afro-descendants

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., 19.
\textsuperscript{98} Andrews, \textit{Afro-Latin America}, 46.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 114.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 117.
endured racism and discrimination at the hands of the white elite and middle class, though they claimed it was based on class differences and not race.\textsuperscript{101} Andrews addressed Morner’s ideas on race and class published thirty-three years earlier, but the plight of blacks is more specific and captures the racism and discrimination they faced after emancipation and during the new republican period. Andrews does not capture the intricacies of their daily lives, but does discuss social inequality amongst blacks and mulattos in the nineteenth century.

Three years later more depth about blacks and mulattoes in the nineteenth century is provided in Darien Davis’ 2007 edited volume \textit{Beyond Slavery: The Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean},\textsuperscript{102} in which the plight of afro-descendants after slavery is specifically addressed, from the independence period to the contemporary period. Exclusion, participation in civility campaigns, the \textit{caudillo} and notions of citizenship are among the experiences of slave-descendants after emancipation. The most relevant chapter to blacks in Central America is Darío Euraque’s “Free Pardos and Mulattos Vanquish Indians: Cultural Civility as Conquest and Modernity in Honduras”, which includes an explanation of how mulattos and \textit{pardos} were involved in civilizing discourse in the interior of Honduras in the mid to late nineteenth century. This chapter will be discussed in a later section, as part of Honduran historiography on slave-descended blacks and race-mixing. This volume is the latest known work in Latin American historiography that encapsulates the experience of the slave-descended in the early republican period of Latin America, just as Morner suggested thirty-seven years before.

\section*{1.5 Literature Review: Mulattos, Ladinos and Race-Mixing in Central America}

The colonial and independence province of Honduras and the early republic of Honduras cannot be understood without an assessment of Central American regional history and historiography during the same time period. Regional, provincial and republican histories are intertwined in the time periods discussed in this thesis and remain so to the present day. Because many aspects of Honduran history have not yet been uncovered, yet it remains part

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{morner1977} Ibid., 147.
\bibitem{darien2007} Darien Davis, ed., \textit{Beyond Slavery: The Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean} (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).
\end{thebibliography}
of a regional Central American history, it can be inferred that much of what occurred in
Honduras also occurred in other parts of northern Central America, though black and mulatto
histories differ in the region. The colonial presence of blacks is usually explained away by
the absorption and acculturation achieved through race-mixing in the region, the presence of
mulattos and civilizing discourse. This section includes Central American race mixing
history and slave-descended history as representative of what may have been occurring in
Honduras at the time, where exact occurrences still have not been accounted for in
scholarship.

Hector Humberto Samayoa Guevara’s *Ensayos sobre la independencia de Centroamérica*, is a book of essays about independence in Central America which includes
the writings of several influential leaders in the movement.\(^{103}\) This work is meant to give the
general public access to essays about independence. Most relevant to this thesis, the concept
of *ladinización* is introduced as the process of how the *castas* and Indians became *lados*.\(^{104}\)
This is done through the presentation of the writing of the Guatemalan Friar Matías de
Córdova, who was an influential educator in Central America. Matías de Córdova believed
national integration through education would assist the *castas* and the indigenous in
becoming *lados*.\(^{105}\) Samayoa Guevara’s work introduces the idea of the creation of a *ladino*
group and the process of *ladinización*, which is important to understand how certain racial
groups within the *castas* (such as the mulatto group) would disappear over time through race-
mixing and through assimilating processes such as education in the nineteenth century.

Ten years later, Constantino Láscaris’ *Historia de las ideas en Centroamérica*
accounts for slaves and free blacks in Central America from the sixteenth to the eighteenth
century and the emancipation of slavery in the region.\(^{106}\) Lascáris chronicles that slaves were
sent from Africa to Central America, but the population of free blacks was more significant.
Lascáris is unsure of the exact figures, but he estimates that the number of freed blacks in the

\(^{103}\) Hector Humberto Samayoa Guevara, *Ensayos sobre la independencia de Centroamérica* (Guatemala City: Instituto de Antropología y Historia de Guatemala, 1972), 7.

\(^{104}\) Ibid., 60-61.

\(^{105}\) Ibid.

Americas in the sixteenth century was equal to the number of Spaniards. He also mentions the mulatto as descendants of female slaves and Spanish males. This book further discusses the history of ideas—political, ecclesiastical and social—in Central America from conquest to 1838, through the study of institutions such as the church, slavery and education, which would influence national identity. This book is the first that very briefly describes African and mulatto presence in Central America.

In *Presencia Africana en Centroamérica*, edited by Luz María Martínez Montiel, the history of the presence of blacks is provided in great depth, perhaps more than any other book on blacks in Central America until Lowell Gudmundson’s and Justin Wolfe’s edited volume in 2010. Afro-descendants are divided into three groups: mulatto, creole and Garifuna. Mulattos were concentrated in Panamá and Costa Rica. Black creoles were concentrated in Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Belize; and the Garifuna live on the coast of Honduras, Guatemala and Belize. The book represents black presence in Central America as either Anglophone or Hispanic, and there is great attention to how these two groups interacted and overlapped. Francisco Lizcano, a contributor in this book, claims there was a mulatto presence in Central America.

Lowell Gudmundson and Hector Lindo-Fuentes’ *Central America, 1821-1871: Liberalism Before Liberal Reform* shows liberalism as a political process is responsible for racial identification in Central America. During this time, ethnic classification became biological and political. Labels such as Indian, mestizo, ladino, and mulatto indicated both the appearance of and the rights and privileges afforded to a person classified by these terms. Mulattoes are very briefly mentioned, but this work focuses on correlating politics with racial identification in Central America in the nineteenth century. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes also claim that the “African component of the mixed-races, Ladino [group]

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107. Ibid., 192.
108. Ibid., 191.
111. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, *Central America*, 120.
112. Ibid., 123.
was much greater than was commonly thought.\textsuperscript{113} First, this statement acknowledges that the racially-mixed group was referred to as “ladinos” in Central America. Second, this statement refutes perceptions of the “ladino” as simply Spanish and indigenous in Central America and recovers a African/black history and contribution to Central America. The mulatto of Central America was thus part of the “ladino” group of mixed-race. In terms of historiography and research, this work also briefly mentions the difficulty in recovering and understanding Central American history, due to records that did not survive because of civil war and changes in administration.\textsuperscript{114} As a result, Central American history is poorly understood, a phenomenon that this thesis seeks to address by participating in the recovery of Honduran race history and political history.

\textit{Blacks and Blackness in Central America}, edited by Lowell Gudmundson and Justin Wolfe, describes blacks as slaves in colonial Central America, blacks in the nation-building period, and blacks in the contemporary period.\textsuperscript{115} This is the most comprehensive work to date that explains the experience of afro-descendants in Central America from slavery to the modern period. This book argues that race-mixing ideology is responsible for the downplaying of black history in the region, while contributing also to “historical depth” in African diaspora studies in “places where African descended populations do not identify as such.”\textsuperscript{116} This book argues that, though race is part of Central American identity of blacks, “place” is more important because blacks created and maintain their own culture in many areas throughout Central America and view themselves as “rooted” to that place. This volume amplifies the experience of Central American afro-descendants and gives them a space along with Afro-Latinos throughout Latin America while also explaining how regional politics and race-mixing have contributed to specific renderings of blackness and black identity in Central America. This work also mentions colonial mulattoes in Guatemala and El Salvador as “intrusive”, “barbaric” or “violent.”\textsuperscript{117} Though this work does not mention blacks

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 79.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Lowell Gudmundson and Justin Wolfe, eds., \textit{Blacks and Blackness in Central America} (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 2.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 3-4.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 7.
\end{itemize}
or mulattoes in nineteenth-century Central America, this work correlates strongly with recent historiography on the revision of the history of afro-descendants and slave-descendants in Latin America and Honduras.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW: MULATTOS, LADINOS AND RACE-MIXING IN POST-EMANCIPATION HONDURAS

Honduran historiography reflects a social history that has generally been more concerned with indigenous heritage and its *ladino-mestizo*\(^{118}\) identity, implying a primarily Spanish-Indian heritage, and downplaying the African component. Darío Euraque argues that the historiography of Honduran *mestizaje* remains in its infancy,\(^ {119}\) because there is not yet an in-depth assessment of how Honduran *mestizaje* occurred and to what extent racial groups were involved in the process. According to Euraque, more research should be done to understand the process of *mestizaje* in Honduras and how it relates to black slaves, afro-descendants and slave-descendants. Because this research has yet to be done, *mestizaje* is the prevailing paradigm through which black, mulatto, and slave-descended Honduran history is understood. Slave trafficking and slave labor is quickly presented and much scholarly attention seems to be given to colonial mulattos and *pardos*, focusing on their absorption into the *ladino-mestizo* group. This colonial history of absorption overlaps into the nineteenth century, within which there is some explanation as to how race-mixing may have fragmented Honduras during the early national phase. After 1821, citizenship became supposedly less conditioned on race during the Central American Federation,\(^ {120}\) thus silencing issues of race that afro-descendants and the indigenous faced in the provinces and early republics. Recent scholarship seeks to recover these missing histories and address the erasure of the slave-descended and the Garifuna in history. This thesis situates itself in larger historiography by seeking to explain how race-mixing and politics influenced the appearance and presentation

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\(^ {118}\) Chávez Borjas, *Identidad*, 16. This term means a person of mixed-race, usually from the interior of Honduras, who was not indigenous and who was not from the Atlantic coast, such as the Garifuna.


of the mulatto in late nineteenth century Honduras. The section below provides more detail on the more important works on Honduran *ladino-mestizo* identity and slave-descended history in Honduran historiography.

In 1963, Luis Mariñas Otero wrote *Honduras*, a comprehensive history of the nation up to the 1960s. This work makes significant inclusions of the Honduran slave-descended in its history. Most of this book is not dedicated to race, but Otero does include an assessment of the three races present in Honduras—indigenous, Spanish and black. Otero explains that the Honduran is Spanish, indigenous and African and that these groups contributed to the Honduran spiritual and racial homogeneity, which favored national integration. Otero also verifies that the word *ladino* is a Central American term and that, by 1963, 91 out of 100 people in Honduras considered themselves to be *ladino*. In terms of blacks, there are African influences in Honduran customs, characters, and artistic expression, especially in music, but there is no in-depth explanation. Otero believes the blacks that ended up in Honduras and the Central American coast were from the Gold Coast and were culturally Yoruba, arriving in Honduras and Central America from the Antilles, especially Jamaica, after they were “seasoned.” Thus, no black slaves in Honduras were sent directly from Africa and it was easier for them to assimilate to Central American life. Blacks arrived on the North Coast, including the present day municipalities of Colon, Atlántida and Yoro, and they continued involvement in race-mixing. Otero also verifies the many mulatto settlements in colonial Honduras, providing a statement by Diez de

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122. Ibid., 23.
123. Ibid., 21.
124. Ibid., 38.
125. Ibid., 39.
126. Ibid.
127. “To season” a slave is a term that means prepare him/her for their duties and teach them the language of the slave owner, along with their religious beliefs. For a more in-depth explanation, see Albert Valdman, "Creole, the Language of Slavery" in *Slavery in the Caribbean Francophone World: Distant Voices, Forgotten Acts, Forged Identities*, ed. Doris Y. Kadish (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 155-56.
129. Ibid., 41.
Navarro, an engineer in the eighteenth century: “All the other villages and towns in the interior of the land of said governance are inhabited by mulattos (emphasis mine), there are few Indians and less Spaniards.” As Otero points out, the mulatto would be an important recurring figure in the history of the slave-descended, though few references to mulattos are made. With regard to afro-descendants present in Honduras, Otero also concisely mentions the zambo on the coast, black soldiers in the colonial militia, and black enclaves on the coast of Honduras and the Bay Islands. This is the extent to which Otero speaks of the history of the slave-descended in his compilation of Honduran history.

About twenty years later, Rafael Leiva Vivas’ Tráfico de esclavos negros a Honduras focuses on the trafficking of slaves for cultivation of sugar and gold mining, the population sent to Honduras and the specific towns slaves to which slaves were sent. Leiva Vivas claims that there were large importations of slaves, depending on the growth of production. This book describes the arrival of black slaves, their labor and their abolition and includes the abolition decree of slaves in Central America. In doing so, Leiva Vivas verifies that blacks were present in Honduras. This work also demonstrates how the mulatto became a certain kind of “mestizo” (or ladino) in Honduras in the early eighteenth century. Leiva Vivas explains that the mulatto was present by 1600, that the mulatto was part of the casta group during the eighteenth century, and that many mulattoes worked the land, raised and sold cattle and were small-scale vendors. As the free mulatto population continued

130. Ibid. Statement by engineer Diez de Navarro. Original Spanish: Todos las demás villas y pueblos del interior de la tierra de dicha gobernación son habitados por mulattos (emphasis mine), hay pocos indios y menos españoles.”

131. A zambo is a person of African/black and indigenous descent. For more on the Honduran zambo, see Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuente, Central America, 123. See also Marvin Barahona and Ramón Rivas, Rompiendo el espejo: Visiones sobre los pueblos indígenas y negros en Honduras (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Servicio Holandés de Cooperación al Desarrollo, Editorial Guaymuras, 1998), 20.

132. Otero, Honduras, 44-47.


134. Ibid.

135. Ibid., 122. Original Spanish: “A principios del año 1600 puede notarse un cambio en el cuadro social centroamericano, debido al cruce racial entre negros y blancos y que dio como resultado un tipo mestizo llamado mulato, con preponderancia de sangre africana, que le confería algunos privilegios de casta, mayormente reconocidos en los primeros años de 1700, al vérselas trabajar la tierra, criar y vender ganado y dedicarse al pequeño comercio en tiendas y como vendedores ambulantes.”
mixing with blacks, mestizos, *zambos* and Spaniards, the racially-mixed group of slave-descendants grew in numbers. Leiva Vivas’ work was among the first to delve into the history of Honduras’ slave-descended populations in order to provide the history of the black slave and the mulatto.

Eight years later, Marvin Barahona’s *Introducción al estudio de la identidad nacional* outlines how Honduran national identity has changed over time and what processes have influenced this change and the lack of national culture. Barahona claims that Honduran national identity has been in question since the nineteenth century. According to Barahona, the liberalism project by Honduran elites failed in forming a national consciousness. Honduras had not integrated its regions, had persistence foreign presence, institutional weakness, loss of authority prestige, and state weakness due to regional disintegration and lack of uniform powers, which affected the creation of a national identity. Specifically, Barahona claims that *ladinos* became the most important population during the independence period and have left their mark in Honduras. Again, the *ladino* is defined as the result of racial mixing among African, Spanish and indigenous. As *mestizaje* was difficult to control and speedily occurred, groups like “ladinos” and “pardos” resulted from multiple racial crossings and contributed to a deepening division by fragmenting Honduran society. This racial division contributed to the lack of a Honduran national identity because the creation of a culture and sense of rootedness was postponed. Thus, history should be studied in order to understand the formation of Honduran national identity and culture. In the 1970s, Honduran professional and intellectuals focused on social and economic reform instead of national identity and the return to constitutional order in 1980. After this time, Barahona argues that serious critique of Honduran identity actually began in the 1980s,
which includes revisiting the history of mestizaje in Honduras, the ethnic groups that were involved in race-mixing and how its research is a critical part of understanding Honduran national identity.  

Manuel Chávez Borjas’ essay, Identidad, cultura y nación en Honduras also responds to the debate in the 1980s within Honduras about its national identity. Chavez first believes that “The national culture of Honduras can be found today without a solidly formed hegemony.” According to Chávez Borjas, Honduras has no strong, preserved national culture. There is the sentiment that Honduras is still between colony and nation, but only formally marked as a nation. Chávez Borjas claims that the two “fountains of Honduran identity” are the production of maize (by the indigenous) and the presence of the black population. These two fountains are “key in the configuration of the national identity and explain a large portion of the fragmented and syncretic content of the Honduran identity.” Chávez Borjas then explains slavery in Honduras, beginning with the fact that slaves were introduced to Central America through Honduras and the most slaves were needed in Honduras. Though Chávez Borjas accounts for the existence of blacks and their participation in the process of mestizaje, he also makes the claim that “the colonial [slave-descended] black disappeared with the process of mestizaje. Nothing of his culture exists in the present, only the phenotypic factors in a large portion of the Honduran population today.” For Barahona, the omission of the history of both the indigenous and the slave-descended racially-mixed Hondurans is a critical factor in explaining why Honduras had so many issues consolidating a national culture and identity. This questioning of national identity in Chávez Borjas’ work and in Barahona’s work in the same year sets the precedent for more

144. Ibid., 6, 7-8.


146. Ibid.

147. Ibid., 11.


149. Ibid., 10.
questions of national identity and for Honduran anthropologists and historians to conduct research to answer these questions.

1.7 Darío Euraque: Mulattos and the Garifuna in the Late Nineteenth-Century

Several Honduran scholars have addressed blacks in Honduras during the early twentieth century, but few have explicitly addressed the position and experience of Afro-descendants in the mid to late nineteenth-century. Darío Euraque has conducted extensive research on blacks in nineteenth-century Honduras. As this thesis is based on Euraque’s research, this section is dedicated specifically to assessing his contribution to Honduran historiography on race and black history in the nineteenth century.

Euraque is virtually the only scholar who has consistently addressed mulattos, pardos and the Garifuna in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Euraque has researched mulatto and pardo involvement in civilizing discourse and how the Garifuna and West Indians contributed to the creation of a ladino identity at the turn of the century in Honduras. Euraque’s work introduces the banana industry as a catalyst for Honduran nationalism and explains the Honduran process of mestizaje. He also explains how the Garifuna and West Indian immigrants became outsiders and influenced Honduran mestizos, including the slave-descended, in order to appropriate an indigenous identity as officially Honduran. Euraque further addresses how Afro-descended participation in mestizaje in Honduras is accounted for, but that the history of the Afro-descended contribution to mestizaje is excluded from Honduran historiography. Thus, Honduran national discourse in the nineteenth century downplayed black history and upheld indigenous history, explaining why Honduras has not identified with its black (and mulatto) heritage.

150. Darío Euraque is a Honduran born scholar who is currently a professor of History and International Studies at Trinity College in Harford, Connecticut.


152. Darío Euraque, Conversaciones históricas con el mestizaje y su identidad nacional en Honduras (San Pedro Sula, Honduras: Centro Editorial, 2004), 34-35.
For the purposes of this thesis, the focus will be on Euraque’s work on the relationship between the mulatto and the Garifuna in nineteenth century Honduras. Euraque focuses on mulattos and *pardos* and the Garifuna, arguing that mulattos and *pardos* were subsumed into a *ladino-mestizo* group, while the Garifuna were excluded and contributed to the formation of a Honduran mixed-race identity. In researching the mulatto and the Garifuna, Euraque has significantly addressed the place of afro-descendants in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Honduras. Though Euraque has provided the history of afro-descendants in Honduras from the mid nineteenth century to the 1920s, this thesis is based on his research of mulattos, *pardos* and the Garifuna from the mid nineteenth century to the turn of the twentieth century.

The most relevant work to this thesis is Darío Euraque’s chapter, “Free Pardos and Mulattos Vanquish Indians: Cultural Civility as Conquest and Modernity in Honduras,” in the edited volume *Beyond Slavery: The Multifaceted Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean*. This chapter details how Honduran national discourse during the nineteenth century upheld the Indian and *mestizo* and diminished African contribution. First, Euraque asserts that “mestizaje deserves a regional and historical analysis…” and that the “historiography of mestizaje in Honduras remains in its infancy.” 153 Euraque claims the there are three historical debates that have affected how Hondurans view themselves: the evangelizing discourse of Spanish missionaries in the 1800s, the civilizing discourse of the nineteenth century post independence era and the rhetoric of *civicismo* developed by Olanchito’s intellectuals in the early 20th century. 154 This rhetoric worked together to make a “civilized” *mestizo* nation, yet contrasts with the historical record and memories of many Hondurans. Intellectuals and politicians in the nineteenth century succeeded in downplaying its African influence and locating blackness as an outside force through the Garifuna in order to revise Honduran history. 155 In this work, Euraque is limited to Olanchito, Honduras where

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154. Ibid., 82.

155. Ibid.
archives have yielded evidence of the involvement of pardos and mulattos in the modern period of Honduran nation-building.

Euraque’s research of historical records from the late nineteenth-century accounts for mulattos (and pardos, depending on their skin color) in the Olancho department of Honduras and their involvement in education and intellectual pursuits in a time when the ladino was becoming a marker of Honduran national identity. In the same chapter, he also addressed the place of the Garifuna at the time, who were a different group of blacks on the North Coast, yet whose presence was beginning to shape the ladino-mestizo identity with which those of African descent in the Olancho department would eventually identify. This assessment however, was focused more on a specific region boasting mulatto involvement and contribution to Honduran cultural patrimony, and less on what was occurring nation-wide, such that a certain group of afro-descendants (mulattos) were included and other blacks, such as the Garifuna were excluded, creating and solidifying the presence of the mixed-race ladino in the late nineteenth-century.

This thesis is based on what the available literature accounts for in terms of black slave presence in association with the mulatto, growth of the mulatto population, race-mixture, the mulatto as part of a slave-descended and ladino group, and attitudes toward mulattos as part of both groups in late nineteenth-century Honduras. The survey of the literature incorporates several important aspects that this thesis seeks to highlight or address with regard to the mulatto. First, the historical processes that Honduran mulattoes were implicated into were characteristic of processes occurring throughout Latin America, though they were not entirely similar. This has to do with diverging histories of race-mixing, Iberian settlement patterns, population of indigenous groups and the numbers of African slaves sent to certain regions. Though mulattoes were present through Spanish/Latin America, some regions had larger or smaller populations than others. Regardless of the numbers of mulattoes, they were an important group and were recognized by Spanish and creole elites as a specific racial group. There is plenty written on the mulatto in the colonial period of Latin America. After emancipation, however, information on this group begins to disappear, as the mulatto was implicated in the discourse of race-mixing and citizenship, which did not include those of African descent. Therefore, as Morner suggests, this thesis studies the mulatto after the emancipation period to determine race relations and also shows the impact of European
racism on Latin American thought, which influences the appearance of the mulatto in the national narrative. In Chapter 2, this thesis shows how the mulatto was associated with slavery and freedom and how the mulatto sought to “whiten” to advance in society, in accordance with Bowser’s work. This thesis also examines race and racism in Latin America through the philosophy of positivism in the late nineteenth century (Chapter 3), as does Graham’s edited volume. The mulatto’s appearance or exclusion in the national narrative is understood through the discourse of race and racism in Latin America, which was influenced by positivism and scientific race theory. The discourse of “democratic mixedness”, also demonstrates how the mixed-race mulatto was accepted in the Latin American nation, further showing how the mulatto can be included in the national narrative of Honduras. This thesis also responds to the general trend in Latin American Studies to address the question of what the slave-descended were doing in nineteenth century Latin America after emancipation.

In Central America, the mulatto cannot be understood without an assessment of the ladino as a non-indigenous mixture of races and the colonial process of ladinización as both a race-mixing and assimilation process. Though the mulatto falls into the category in Central America, the mulatto is also associated with a Central American history of black slavery in the early period of historiography. By the 1990s, the mulatto was considered to be a person of African presence who comprised the substantial presence of the afro-descended in the region. This thesis maintains this trend in researching the mulatto as an afro-descended and slave-descended group in Central America, though more emphasis will be placed on their heritage as slave-descended. In the nineteenth, century there is a return to the trend that the mulatto was part of a racially-mixed ladino group and that one fit certain social characteristics, not just racial, to be considered “mulatto”. In addition, the nineteenth century idea that ladino should be civilized to become part of the citizenry surfaces. The mulatto would likely have participated in these civilizing discourses. This thesis also addresses the question of what historical processes those of African descent were involved within the region of Central America, a region that has been neglected historically with regard to researching and recovering the history of afro-descendants. In response to the need for more research and writing of Afro Central American history, a history of the slave-descended mulatto in Honduras is provided, a history which can explain their appearance and exclusion in the national Honduran narrative.
Since Otero’s *Honduras* in 1963, the mulatto has been part of Honduran historiography and has been presented with a history of slavery. Because of the integration of the mulatto into colonial Honduran history, it is viable that the Honduran mulatto can be assessed in the record of the late nineteenth century. In the colonial province of Honduras, there were many “mulatto settlements” as several sources indicate, meaning they were either a substantial part of the population, an easily visible population or both. About twenty years later, the slave-descended mulatto was still presented as part of the colonial Honduran population, and continued to be written into the early national narrative. However, the mulatto is eventually presented as *mestizo*, or racially-mixed and as participating in a process that would create a larger racially-mixed population. For the next decade, there would be a preoccupation with how afro-descendants were implicated into the supposed *mestizo* heritage that Honduras claimed and if that would answer the question of national identity anthropologists and historians felt was non-existent. After about twenty years of grappling with *mestizaje* and the national identity, Honduran records pertaining to the history of the slave-descended mulatto were found and analyzed toward answering the question of a national identity. This national narrative includes the slave-descended mulatto and the Garifuna and how the mulatto were associated with a *ladino* identity after the Garifuna were identified as “black”, a classification with which mulattos were previously associated. Thus, the mulatto appears in the nineteenth century Honduran national narrative, an appearance upon which this thesis seeks to build.

### 1.8 Thesis Organization

As stated above, this thesis will demonstrate several ways in which the mulatto was included in the Honduran national narrative from the colonial period and through the Central American Federation. In this thesis, “race” is treated as it was understood in Central America and Honduras: as both political and racial.¹⁵⁶ First the liberal politics of the Central American Federation and Honduran republic will be discussed, which later affect the inclusion of the mulatto in the national narrative. Second, the subsequent acceptance of positivist philosophy and scientific racism in Latin America and Honduras will be discussed here to explain the

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¹⁵⁶ Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, *Central America*, 121.
exclusion of the mulatto as a specific racial group in the 1887 Census. All of these
philosophies inform understandings of race in late nineteenth-century Honduras. To explain
the inclusion and exclusion of the mulatto in the national narrative, thesis will be organized
as follows.

Chapter 2 will account for the presence of and population of blacks in colonial
Honduras as a result of the slave trade. Because of this slave heritage, a substantial mulatto
group was created and continued participating in race-mixing. Over time the mulatto became
ladino because he was of mixed-race and not indigenous. This can explain why the mulatto
in Honduras is associated with both a black, slave heritage and a racially mixed identity.
Around this time, the Central American Federation surfaced along with ideas of
independence, equality and freedom. While the mulatto participated in race-mixing and
reaped some benefits of liberal philosophy, the Garifuna were newly identified as the new
“blacks” by slave-descended mulattos. The presence of the Garifuna as black is then
discussed as a solidifier of the Honduran mulatto association with ladino identity. These
shifts in identity through a sense of belonging in Honduras can explain to some degree
mulatto inclusion in the national narrative written in the late nineteenth century.

Chapter 3 will examine politics in the early Honduran republic which influenced the
decision to write the mulatto into history and later exclude the mulatto from the 1887 census
as a racial group. When liberalism finally took a foothold in Honduras under the Liberal
Reforms, the regime implementing these reforms was positivist. Honduran positivists were
liberal in their approach to race in the record, yet were also influenced by positivism and
scientific race theory with which it was associated. Several ideas of European positivist
thought are introduced to explain positivism and scientific race theory, which will include
Auguste Comte’s basic philosophy of positivism, Charles Darwin’s concept of evolution, and
Herbert Spencer’s notion of “survival of the fittest”. These ideas influenced Latin American
intellectuals and fostered the creation of Latin American racism and positivism. When these
ideas were interpreted, it was determined that the “whitening” through immigration could
assist in creating a progressive population. When whitening proved unsuccessful, educational
reform became the means to bring progress. Domingo Sarmiento (Argentina) and José
Lastarria (Chile) were two Latin American intellectuals who championed educational reform
for the national populace, which included the provision of primary education, the teaching of
science and the re-writing of national history. The Hondurans Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo were influenced by these men and created the Honduran versions of educational reform, which also included the provision of primary education, scientific education and the rewriting of national history to be taught in primary and secondary schools. These politics help to inform the decision of Honduran intellectuals to write about the mulatto in the national narrative and exclude him as a separate racial category in the 1887 census.

Chapter 4 will explain Honduran positivism and the importance of education in Honduras, introducing several reasons for the rewriting of history. The appearance of the mulatto in positivist documents written by Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo around and after the Liberal Reforms of 1876 will then be analyzed. These documents include Rosa’s “Francisco Ferrera,” “Importancia de la instrucción pública,” and the “Social Constitution of Honduras”; and Vallejo’s *Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras* and the *Censo general de la república de Honduras*, 1887. The mulatto contribution during the colonial and liberal era is provided through assessment of these documents, showing that the mulatto is written into the national narrative of Honduras. However, by 1887, the omission of the “mulatto” category from the census indicates that positivist race theory may have influenced this decision to make all Honduran citizens either “ladino” or “indigenous” in opposition to a liberal inclusion of the slave-descended “mulatto” in written history. Thus the mulatto is part of the national narrative in the colonial period, the independence period and in the early republic, but is not included in the national narrative by 1887. This chapter ends with an analysis of the omission of the mulatto racial category in the 1887 Census.

Chapter 5 will draw conclusions on the mulatto in the late nineteenth century Honduran national narrative. Final thoughts will also be offered on how mulatto history informs Honduran national identity and may help to answer questions of Honduran national identity in the contemporary moment.
CHAPTER 2

THE MULATTO, RACE-MIXING AND POLITICS
IN COLONIAL AND EARLY REPUBLICAN
HONDURAS, 1535-1847

The mulatto came to be in existence in Honduras because of slavery and the miscegenation, often forced, associated with the institution of slavery. Miscegenation occurred quickly, creating a large group of mulattos, pardos\textsuperscript{157} and mestizos. These race-mixtures were all considered to be ladinos—non-white, non-Indian and Spanish-speaking people in the Central American region and in the colonial province of Honduras. Mulatto presence in Honduras was relatively significant, though mulattos were part of the ladino group. While race-mixing among racially-mixed ladinos continued into the late colonial period and during the Central American Federation, identification with a ladino identity led to the beginnings of a racially-mixed identity in the region this would later affect vagueness in racial classification of the new Honduran citizen. This vagueness is seen in the liberal constitutions of the Central American Federation, within which there are no racial references made to the citizenry of the region, province or early nation. The visibility of the racially-mixed mulatto group and their experiences in the colony, during the independence movement and in the early nation, together with liberal ideas of equality likely influenced the inclusion of the mulatto in the population. By the 1850s, after the collapse of the Central American Federation, the Garifuna, a black group on the coast of Honduras, came to be recognized as truly black by slave-descended Honduran mulattos, who then began to identify themselves as non-black, ladinos. The shift of mulattos identifying as non-black ladinos contributes to the appearance of mulatto Hondurans in the positivist histories of the nineteenth century.

This chapter explains the historical processes of slavery, the creation of a mulatto group, race-mixing, liberalism and Garifuna settlement on the North Coast, all of which constitute a

\textsuperscript{157} A pardo is a racially-mixed person with slave heritage. They usually have brown skin and more discernible African features.
Honduran mulatto experience. This experience surfaces in the late nineteenth-century national Honduran narrative.

2.1 FORCED LABOR IN COLONIAL SPANISH AMERICA: CENTRAL AMERICA AND HONDURAS

Before Africans were brought in as slaves, the indigenous were first obligated to servitude under the encomienda system in colonial Spanish America. In this system, the Spanish Crown gave rights over indigenous labor to a Spaniard, who then demanded tribute from the indigenous in the form of goods, labor, metals or money. In return, the hacendado was responsible for the protection of the indigenous, and their conversion to Catholicism. The hacendado was also mandated to protect the area and pay taxes to the Crown. The restriction of this labor was threefold: the encomendero did not own the indigenous and could not exchange them, the encomienda could only be given to the second generation encomendero and not the third, and Indians could not be relocated because Spaniards had no rights to land. This was done to control the power of the encomenderos and make both indigenous and Spanish subjects loyal to and dependent on Spain. However, after the loss of much of the indigenous population from the demographic collapse, their inability to handle the conditions of sustained labor, and the viewpoint that the indigenous were “childlike”, the Crown provided legal protections from harsh, exploitative labor under the encomendero. Labor remained an issue, however, for the colonies and had to be resolved.

When the Spanish discovered gold, silver and cacao in Central America, labor was absolutely necessary for extraction and production. The Spanish held slave raids for indigenous adults and as a result of resistance, many indigenous died during these slave raids. Though some indigenous slaves survived, there was not enough labor for gold and silver extraction and in other agricultural industries such as cacao. By the 1550s, slave raids


159. Ibid.

in Central America had declined substantially.\(^{161}\) After some hesitancy on the part of the Spanish Crown, the solution was to import African slaves for labor on mines and plantations. The expansion of the slave trade provided ready labor, which could be exchanged, expanding capitalism in Spain and its colonies.\(^{162}\) An estimated one million slaves were brought from Africa to Spanish America\(^{163}\) to satisfy labor demands.

Enslaved Africans were brought to the Kingdom of Guatemala in 1535,\(^{164}\) which was then part of the viceroyalty of New Spain. Black slaves arrived to present day Honduras from the Caribbean, especially from Jamaica.\(^{165}\) These slaves had arrived from the Antilles via the Gold Coast\(^{166}\) where they became creole blacks through learning the Spanish language and practicing Catholicism. The blacks sent to Honduras from the Caribbean may possibly have had Yoruba origins.\(^{167}\) Since no slaves were sent directly from Africa to Central America and Honduras,\(^{168}\) assimilation of slaves in Central America was relatively easy because they were already creoles. At first, African slaves were brought through Guatemala, and later came consistently through the ports of Omoa and Trujillo, Honduras and sent to Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. There are no concrete statistics of numbers of slaves sent to Central America and there remains no consensus on such figures, especially because the history of this region is poorly understood.\(^{169}\) One source claims that 10,000 black slaves were introduced to the isthmus for plantation labor until independence in the early nineteenth century.\(^{170}\) Another source claims that 24,000 slaves were brought to the region during the

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\(^{161}\) Ibid., 56.


\(^{164}\) Leiva Vivas, Trafico de esclavos, 32.

\(^{165}\) Otero, Honduras, 39.

\(^{166}\) Ibid.

\(^{167}\) Ibid.

\(^{168}\) Ibid.


\(^{170}\) Ibid., 39-40. Based on information from Rodolfo Barón Castro, La población de El Salvador
same period. In 1817, the Crown prohibited the slave trade, while England prohibited the trade in 1807. However, slave contraband continued under the English into the nineteenth century.

Once slaves arrived, they were diverted to every province in Central America for different kinds of labor. Labor included indigo preparation, cattle ranching, tending to sugar and cotton and silver/gold mining. More slaves were sent to Honduras for labor because silver mining was lucrative in the province. Sarsaparilla, cacao, indigo, and cattle ranching were important to the colonial economy of Honduras and also needed slave labor. Slaves in the interior provided agricultural labor, such as preparing indigo along with cattle ranching. Most slaves in the interior mined for gold or silver. During the sixteenth century, mines in the area of Tegucigalpa were among the most important in the Kingdom of Guatemala. In Comayagua alone, as many as 400 Africans worked in the silver mines. Slave labor in silver mines contributed to the Central American and Honduran economy, but did not afford its elite an opulent existence as silver mining did in Mexico or Peru. Because of the silver available in Honduras and the valleys and plains in the Southwest, more slaves were needed in Honduras than in any other area of Central America. Slaves on the coast also helped to build forts and garrisons, such as San Fernando de Omoa. Hence, Honduran slaves and their descendants and became a more concentrated population of blacks in

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(Madrid: CSIC, Instituto Fernández de Oviedo, 1942), 152-157.


174. Otero, Honduras, 67-68.


176. Black slaves, Indians, mestizos built the fortress of San Fernando de Omoa in the eighteenth century. These groups were salaried and were part of militia groups for defense. Mulattos and pardos are often collapsed into a “mestizo” labor group. See Dario Euraque, Reinterpreting the Banana Republic: Region and State in Honduras, 1870-1972 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); and Mario Argueta, Historia laboral de Honduras: De la conquista al siglo XIX (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Secretaria de Cultura y Turismo, Dirección General de Cultura, Departamento de Publicaciones, con el patrocinio de la Organización de Estados Americanos, 1985).
comparison to the rest of the Central America region. The presence of black slaves led to the creation of a mulatto population, many of whom were enslaved.

2.2 COLONIAL MESTIZAJE IN THE HONDURAN PROVINCE

Blacks brought to Honduras participated in race-mixing while enslaved and freed, leading to widespread race-mixing and resulting in the absorption of blacks in the Honduran province. During the period of slavery, blacks in Spanish America could become free and/or participate in freedom in various ways before emancipation. Cimarronaje and manumission (to a lesser extent) contributed to the rapid growth of the free-colored population in Honduras. In Central America and Honduras, race-mixing among the afro-descended and mestizos (Spanish-Indian mixtures) contributed the most to the disappearance of blacks in the colonial period and the creation of a large group of free-colored in the region.

Colonial mestizaje occurred in Honduras from the beginning of its existence as a colony, primarily because of the shortage of Spanish women. The mestizo and mulatto racial groups grew due to miscegenation. By the 1600s, mulattos, pardos and mestizos proliferated quickly in Honduras, as they participated in race-mixing. Race was differentiated in the casta system and was largely based on phenotype; the least preferred races, such as blacks or mulattos, were seen as physically farther from Spaniards. The castas formed the

177. Cimarronaje is the establishment of runaway slave settlements or cimarrones.
180. Otero, Honduras, 22.
182. The castas were a group with every possible mixture of Spanish, African and indigenous blood. The casta system determined rights and privileges based on quantity of Spanish blood and derived from the limpieza de sangre, used in fifteenth and sixteenth century Spain to determine “true” Spaniards. The casta system was created by the Spanish to control the colonial colored populations; those with less Spanish blood had fewer opportunities and privileges. See Cope, Limits of Racial Domination, for an in-depth analysis of the casta system.
183. Ibid., 51.
“colored” underclass of Hispanic society, but identifying the race of those in the castas was often confusing because it was subject to personal identification, church or public records, determination of the clergy or depth of relationships with those in the community. Others could change their racial heritage as often as necessary and “passing” usually included changing social relationships. By the eighteenth century, “mestizo” and “mulatto” became primary racial categories. Though the casta system itself differentiated race, the castas themselves interacted with those of different racial groups within their social class. Race-mixing was tolerated through certain institutions, but colonial society did not actively endorse race-mixing, especially among afro-descendants. Many unions within the castas or free-colored were common law or intermittent. Those of mixed blood, especially those with detectable African features, were automatically presumed to be illegitimate, inferior and associated with slavery, which greatly affect their social standing. The Spanish preferred the castas to Africans and blacks, and they were allowed upward mobility and “rights” in certain cases, such as the cédulas del gracias al sacar, which could be bought to improve social standing. Though the extent of the casta system has yet to be determined in Honduras, these general characteristics of the casta system are relevant to the colonial province of Hondurans within the Audiencia of Guatemala. Black slaves and afro-descended freedmen in Honduras comprised part of the casta system in the region and fully participated in race-mixing. The mulatto group was perhaps the largest group within the casta system in Honduras.

184. Ibid.
185. Ibid., 52-53.
186. Ibid., 73.
187. Ibid., 84.
188. Ibid., 73.
189. Ibid., 78.
190. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 124.
192. Ibid., 53.
193. Legal certificates of “whiteness.” Ibid., 46.
In Central America and Honduras, blacks disappeared, leaving mulattoes and *pardos*, for several reasons. First, the lower levels of slavery in the region did not yield an especially large group of blacks, though Honduras did receive many blacks for mining. The use of free labor instead of slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also contributed to fewer numbers of slaves being introduced in the region; hacienda owners in Central America could not afford the expense and instead sought after the free colored who would work for very little pay on a revolving temporary basis. The Bourbon military reforms and their assistance in helping blacks and mulattos achieve social mobility was responsible for “ladinizing” these groups and fostering the disappearance of blacks. During these reforms, Spain accomplished direct military control and created a new militia system based on race; Spanish officers ranked highest, creoles next and regiments were separated by color. Thus, mulattos and *pardos* participated in the militia, and sought the status associated with military participation and further assimilated into colonial society. The association of mulattoes as a specific and large group with [preferred] Iberian institutions also contributed to the disappearance of blacks. Mulattos and *pardos* were continuously mixed with European ancestry and exposed to European culture and thus were both racially and culturally mixed [or ladino]. Thus, assimilation and the presence of racially-mixed groups led to the gradual physical disappearance of blacks. This very well may have contributed to the presence of a substantial number of mulattoes in Honduras.

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195. Ibid.
196. Ibid.
197. One way for afro-descendants (mulattos and *pardos*) to assimilate and enjoy membership in the colony and early republic was through participation, voluntarily or forced, in the military. Freedmen participated in the military because it offered both financial benefits and social status for themselves and their families. See Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*; Rout, *African Experience*; and Morner, “Historical Research.”
199. Ibid., 42.
200. Ibid.
201. Ibid., 44.
2.3 The Honduran Mulatto

In Central America, the mulatto was a distinct racial group and was lower on the social scale\textsuperscript{203} than Spanish-Indian \textit{mestizo} mixtures from the colonial period into the nineteenth century. The mulatto shared the Spanish language and Catholicism with other non-indigenous \textit{ladinos}, such as the \textit{mestizo}. Mulattos were usually considered to be inferior due to their living conditions, occupation and tax obligations and their domestic life.\textsuperscript{204} In Central America, the term “mulatto” was used to indicate a person who was racially mixed, but who was involved in illegality or had some other character flaw such as “insubordination” or “lethargy.”\textsuperscript{205} It is important to note that throughout the Central American region, people or leaders were described as mulattos if there was criticism against them throughout the region. This criticism of Honduran “mulattos” is specifically present in the nineteenth century record and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4. Though such criticism is present, the degree to which mulattos encountered such criticism is unknown.

There are notable examples of mulatto presence in the mid to late eighteenth-century Honduras that verify their presence in the nineteenth century historical record. Mining and cattle ranching was concentrated in the central-south region, close to the area of Tegucigalpa and Olancho, and was populated by \textit{ladinos}, mulattos and blacks.\textsuperscript{206} In 1725, an \textit{informe} about the indigo factories indicated that there were free mulattos, \textit{mestizos} blacks and \textit{pardos} performing different labor tasks at haciendas in Choluteca\textsuperscript{207} (see Table 2.1). In 1743, Baltazar Ortiz de Leotona, the Alcalde Mayor of Tegucigalpa, counted 28 “valles” and 4 villas of indigo production, three of which were populated by blacks and mulattos exclusively.\textsuperscript{208} There were also 12 militia groups composed of blacks and mulattos.\textsuperscript{209} In

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{203} Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, \textit{Central America}, 123.
  \item \textsuperscript{204} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{205} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{206} Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórica}, 171-172, table on 186-187.
  \item \textsuperscript{207} Archivo Nacional de Honduras (ANH), \textit{Informe de la comisión que visitó los obrajes de añil de Tegucigalpa, 3 Noviembre de 1725}, Caja no. 30, Leg. 1000, quoted in Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórica}, 175-176.
  \item \textsuperscript{208} Baltazar Ortiz de Leotona, \textit{Relación de la alcaldía mayor de Tegucigalpa (1743)} (Guatemala City: Boletín del Archivo General del Gobierno, 1935), quoted in Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórica}, 176.
\end{itemize}
Table 2.1. Relación Demográfica de la Alcaldía Mayor de Tegucigalpa, (1743)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partidos</th>
<th>Españoles</th>
<th>Mestizos</th>
<th>Mulatos</th>
<th>Negros</th>
<th>Indios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tegucigalpa</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
<td>890</td>
<td></td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantarranas</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>290</td>
<td></td>
<td>1028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danli</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>950</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choluteca</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nacaome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300-400</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ojojona</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aguanqueterique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>224 (mulatos)</td>
<td>570</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orica</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 (mulatos), 35 (both)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goascorán</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300 (mulatos)</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>407</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>3.365</td>
<td>3.391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


this informe, there were conflicting reports of the total numbers of blacks, mulattos and ladinos. In Ortíz de Leotona’s total in the informe, there were 742 mulattos, and 177 blacks, without the total of those of different racial groups. If the totals from each jurisdiction are counted throughout the entire document, there were 3,365 total blacks and mulattos in the Alcaldía Mayor de Tegucigalpa alone.210 There was a notable presence of blacks and mulattos in this area of Honduras because of mining211 in addition to indigo production. The presence of both blacks and mulattoes in the Tegucigalpa area demonstrates their substantial colonial presence, at least in certain areas of the province. This example of their contributions in labor and in the military in the colonial period could likely represent mulatto involvement throughout the rest of Honduras, substantiating their appearance in the Honduran record of the late nineteenth century.

Mulattoes were also instrumental in the establishment of certain towns and regions in the Honduran states. The town of Olanchito and municipality of Yoro were founded in the

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mid seventeenth century by mulattos and free *pardos.* They brought "...creole values, customs, and government and business practices to the region..." Documents also exist that verify that Yoro was founded by mulattos and *pardos* in 1649. Demographic data in Olanchito from the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries shows that mulattos and *ladinos* inhabited the area. By the nineteenth century, the elite of the town of Olanchito, mostly of mulatto and *pardo* ancestry, like most of Yoro, helped to "civilize" the Tolupan Indians through forced labor in the export of sarsaparilla production as native, "non-black" (non-Garifuna) Hondurans. The municipality of Juticalpa was populated by mulattos and was considered to be a “mulatto municipality” by Spanish authorities. Numerous documents affirm that mulatto settlements existed in Honduras. At the least, mulattos were a visible group in the Honduran province and the early republic.

After the abolishment of slavery circa 1820, mulattos and *pardos* were given the right to vote as new citizens, but their afro-ancestry precluded them from doing so in certain circumstances. Jose Flamenco, a wealthy mulatto in the central zone of Honduras, complained to the Guatemalan provincial deputy because the mayor of Tegucigalpa prevented mulattos and *pardos* from voting. By the nineteenth century, there were many thousands of black, mulattos and *pardos* Hondurans whose black ancestry was beginning to disappear from national rhetoric and discourse on race-mixing. Slave-descended black ancestry was increasingly suppressed, while a racially-mixed *ladino* identity was upheld. For these reasons, mulattos in Honduras may have more readily identified as racially mixed

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215. Ibid.

216. Ibid., 89.

217. Ibid., 90.

218. Ibid., 89.


instead with identifying with a black group as the colonial period came to a close and the Central American Federation was created.

During the seventeenth century mestizos, pardos and mulattoes were generally classified as ladinos, which reduced various racial categories of the castas.221 By 1800, these ladinos represented the majority of the Honduran population222 that in turn influenced the dissolution of the casta system by the mid-nineteenth century.223 The slave heritage of the mulatto group cast them into a specific racial group with a different history from the Spanish-Indian mestizo. However, in Central America, the mulatto was part of the ladino group from the colonial period and as race-mixing occurred, became more associated with the ladino group. Because the mulatto was difficult to define,224 he could easily be part of a racially-mixed group and was not necessarily obligated to lay claim to a slave-descended heritage. The mulatto can slip back and forth between identification with a slave heritage, while contributing to the colony or establishing their presence in settlements. In addition to race-mixing, visibility and association with a racially-mixed group in the colonial period, political events also influenced mulatto participation in the province of Honduras. Liberalism in the Central American Federation and the early republic influenced the definition of the new citizen in Central America and Honduras, a citizenship to which mulattoes very likely aspired.

2.4 LIBERALISM AND THE CENTRAL AMERICAN FEDERATION

Around the early eighteenth century, the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment reached Central America, encouraging intellectualism and the possibility for economic and political change.225 Liberalism is based on progress, science, and faith in industry, such as producing

221. Euraque, Estado, poder, nacionalidad, 77.

222. Ibid., 75. See also Barahona, Evolución histórica, 183-193. This information is based Barahona’s analysis of a Spanish demographic document from 1804 that classified the population as Spanish, Indian or ladino. According to this document, “ladinos” were mestizos, pardos, mulattos and other racial mixtures.


224. Buscaglia-Salgado, Undoing Empire, 79.

and marketing wealth.\textsuperscript{226} Most Liberals strongly believed regular people should develop to their fullest capacity; that they should have the right to improve their living conditions; that education should be free for everyone; that property should be governed by rights; and that change is necessary and good.\textsuperscript{227} Liberalism also advocated the importance of property rights.\textsuperscript{228} The white creole elites of Spanish America wanted less interference from Spain and these ideas laid the foundation for the independence movement. These ideologies were also accepted in Central America.

Central America officially declared independence from Spain on September 15, 1821. After independence from Spain in 1821, the Central American Federation was created (see Figure 2.1), lasting from about 1823 to 1838. Central American independence came peacefully with the signing of an act, but there were not enough creoles to fill the power vacuum that this new independence brought with it.\textsuperscript{229} New leadership in Central America looked to Europe and the United States as a model to implement the republican model.\textsuperscript{230} Jose Cecilio del Valle (1777-1834), influenced by the Enlightenment, was one of the leading figures of white creole Central American thought.\textsuperscript{231} Del Valle desired the nation to be a political society whose members were organized freely and in agreement with the law, in order to attain a common happiness; social balance through equality and unity; the independent, sovereign nation, equality relative to other nations.\textsuperscript{232} These ideas formed the basis for the independence movement in Central America.

One of the federation’s main goals was to grant rights of citizenship to the inhabitants of the provinces that formed the previous Audiencia of Guatemala.\textsuperscript{233} Independent Central

\begin{footnotes}
\item[227] Ibid., 18, 19, 22.
\item[228] Ibid., 18-19.
\item[229] Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórico}, 55.
\item[230] Ibid., 56.
\item[231] Ibid., 57.
\item[232] Ibid.
\item[233] Barahona, “Del mestizaje a la diversidad,” 217. An “audiencia” is a court that heard cases in colonial Spanish America. The Audiencia of Guatemala consisted of present day Chiapas in Mexico all the way south to Costa Rica. This area included the province of Honduras.
\end{footnotes}
America sought to achieve secularization, privatization, emancipation and the “hispanicizing” of the population through education and civics. The abolition of slaves was also part of the liberal agenda. The new liberal order was associated with caudillismo, which reflected regional disintegration, but also heroism and patriotism. In Central America also, the independence struggle was further split into Unionists, who wanted to maintain the Central American Federation, and Separatists, who wanted the provinces of Central America to become separate nation-states. This caused a great deal of unrest, as caudillos also sought control over certain regional areas.

In terms of race, colonial terms such as “castas” and “criollos” were disappearing and were replaced with the term “ladino,” which unified the citizenry. However, citizenship in the Central American Federation was seen through a republican discourse, which was

Economic status, gender, education and age determined citizenship. This was done in two ways: by granting ladino men political participation and through state-mandated assimilation of those who did not participate politically, generally populations of color. The lower classes were “officially” included in rhetoric, but the actions taken favored the rich and middle class, instead of improving the quality of life for all Central Americans throughout the region and in the province of Honduras. Citizenship throughout the region was conditional and remained so in Honduras until well into the twentieth century.

Constitutions “abolished the legal and administrative use of [the terms] Indian, mestizo, Pardos and other “Castas.”” Constitutions also “abolished the caste system and officially announced equality for all.” Race became even more ambiguous as it was no longer officially recorded in order to equalize all citizens. Though the constitutions equalized its new citizens, most were barred from full citizenship.

On April 24, 1824, slavery was abolished in Honduras as part of the Central American Federation and the place of the freed slave was precarious. ‘Whites’ in Honduras agreed with theories that non-whites were inferior, yet would not discuss racial prejudice publicly. The freedom of slaves was recorded in all Central American constitutions, including that of Honduras. The slaves were instantly “freed” and the transition from enslaved to free was nonviolent. However, the abolition decree of 1824 was not enforced immediately and violations were numerous. When slavery officially ended, the slave

238. Ibid., 219-221.
239. Ibid., 219.
240. Ibid.
248. Ibid., 262.
population in Central America was only a few thousand or less.\textsuperscript{249} Most mulattoes in some way were linked to slavery\textsuperscript{250} whether they were free or in bondage. The abolition of slavery did not end dependency or prejudice, and stereotyping of afro-descendants did not disappear.\textsuperscript{251} After the abolition decree, the social status of many mulattoes was very likely affected.

During the Central American Federation, deep schisms were created between liberals and conservatives in the region. Central American Liberals desired progress and economic development to become civilized and resourceful,\textsuperscript{252} while Central American bourgeoisie ideology valued property, individualism and personal success.\textsuperscript{253} This shift from colonial feudalism to capitalism in the new nation sparked the divide between Central American conservatives and liberals.\textsuperscript{254} Liberals were more influenced by the Bourbon reforms and the Enlightenment and were generally Spaniards who arrived recently to the Americas or lower level creole elites who sought to advance their social standing.\textsuperscript{255} Liberals desired to determine their own destiny, especially economically, and were usually the middle classes and \textit{nouveau riche}. Their platform was freedom from servitude, the auctioning of national property, and the secularization of ecclesiastical property.\textsuperscript{256} Conservatives preferred long-standing Hispanic traditions such as serfdom and order and the strong pervasive influence of church and state.\textsuperscript{257} Conservatives also sought to maintain their hold on financial and social capital as the traditional Catholic elite of Latin America. Conservative leaders wanted and benefited from liberal policies such as land privatization and export policies,\textsuperscript{258} often openly

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{249} Andrews, \textit{Afro-Latin America}, 65. This population was not a substantial part of the regional labor market.  
\textsuperscript{250} Buscaglia-Salgado, \textit{Undoing Empire}, 189.  
\textsuperscript{251} Carmen Bernand, \textit{Negros esclavos y libres en las ciudades Hispanoamericanas} (Madrid: Fundación Histórica Tavera, 2001), 95.  
\textsuperscript{252} Skidmore and Smith, \textit{Modern Latin America}, 314.  
\textsuperscript{253} René Hilario Vallejo Jr., \textit{Ramón Rosa y el positivismo en Honduras} (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, Departamento de Filosofía, 1978), 13-14.  
\textsuperscript{255} Ibid., 59.  
\textsuperscript{256} Barahona, \textit{Introducción}, 32.  
\textsuperscript{257} Woodward, “Liberal-Conservative Debate,” 59.}
supporting such policies. Liberalism was the more popular ideology, but conservatives constantly protested and modified the liberal agenda. Liberalism mocked Catholic, Hispanic and indigenous traditions and alienated a large portion of the population and divided the elite, beyond the split between centralists and federalists.

In Central America, the Conservative and Liberal elite and quasi-elite were constantly competing for power in intraclass and interclass struggles. Though both sides were heavily active politically and contributed to political reform in the region, there was heavy peasant-based resistance to both the Liberal and Conservative elite rule throughout Central America. Leaders and elite oligarchs, held a tendency to switch between liberalism and conservatism, in order to achieve political and economic aims, which damaged Liberalism in the region. The conservatives wanted centrism, while liberals wanted a federation. In Central America, liberalism and conservatism were often conflated. There may have been a strong Liberal base in certain provinces in Central America, but those areas were not necessarily socially radical. There was a claim of equality for ladinos, but the indigenous question was not even addressed by Liberals, and a “national” identity was not found through Liberalism. Liberalism was not successfully implemented in Central America, neither among the elite nor the masses, in large part due to localism throughout the region.

Liberalism was mostly rhetoric on individual freedom and social equality until the 1870s.

258. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 86, 90.
259. Ibid., 92.
261. Ibid., 79.
262. Ibid.
263. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 82.
264. Ibid., 83.
265. Ibid.
266. Ibid., 86, 91.
267. Ibid., 92.
268. Ibid., 86.
269. Ibid.
270. Ibid., 89.
271. Ibid., 90.
in Central America. Ultimately, class and ethnic origin were more important than political affiliation.\textsuperscript{272} Liberalism in Central America was supposedly concerned with issues surrounding the establishment of the nation and the status of non-elite populations within the new nation.\textsuperscript{273} However, nationalism at this time was classist and elitist in character, alienating the popular classes.\textsuperscript{274} Amidst the struggle between liberals and conservatives before, during and after independence, postcolonial liberal society in Central America began forming a new social consciousness of national character.\textsuperscript{275} This new social consciousness was embodied by the Central American Federation as a regional entity. Honduras still retained its provincial name, but was now part of the “imagined community” of the Central America Federation.

Honduras at this time was not an influential province. Guatemala City was the most influential city in the kingdom of Guatemala, until San Salvador became the leading producer of indigo in the region in the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{276} San Salvador was rife with liberal ideals,\textsuperscript{277} and Honduras was to some degree influenced by its neighbors. From 1810-1814, Honduran creoles, along with Salvadoran and Nicaraguan creoles attempted to establish \textit{juntas} in 1811 and 1812, but this was suppressed by the central government in Guatemala City.\textsuperscript{279} Young liberals were greatly influenced by the Constitution of 1812, that called for elections, public discussion of issues, colonial presentation in Spanish and provincial councils, free trade, suppression of \textit{fueros}\textsuperscript{280} and monopolies, representative government and democratic procedure.\textsuperscript{281} This document laid the foundation for the Liberal Party in Central

\textsuperscript{272} Ibid., 91.


\textsuperscript{274} Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórica}, 53-54.

\textsuperscript{275} Ibid., 50.


\textsuperscript{277} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{278} A \textit{junta} is a governing body of prominent members of society in Spanish America.


\textsuperscript{280} \textit{Fueros} were special privileges given to the clergy and white elites in colonial Spanish America.

America. In Honduras, there was a protest in the same year, within which clergy, military officials and even mulattoes participated. Around 1820, Tegucigalpa accepted Guatemalan leadership, but Comayagua wanted independence from Guatemala and Spain, indicating the split between liberals and conservative in the province of Honduras. In 1823, the federal republic was born amid tension between liberals and conservatives and resentment of provincial elites toward the Guatemalan elite. When a federal force took Tegucigalpa in 1827, a liberal Honduran caudillo, Francisco Morazán, was victorious at La Trinidad, Honduras and retook Tegucigalpa and Comayagua soon after. After overthrowing the conservative in Guatemala City during civil war, Morazán constructed a liberal federation, and the federal capital was moved from Guatemala City to San Salvador by 1834. The liberal agenda was then enforced through military repression throughout the region.

In Honduras, the 1820s and 1830s were unstable politically due to civil wars and lack of stable leadership. During this time, power constantly switched between liberals and conservatives and leaders in power were known as “chiefs of state.” After a turbulent 15 years in the Central American Federation, Honduras became an independent republic in 1838. It would not be until 1839 that Honduran state leaders were referred to as “presidents.” There was some stability restored during the government of Francisco Ferrera (1841-1847), a noteworthy “mulatto”, but caudillos dominated Honduras until the end of the nineteenth century. The mulatto participated through all of these skirmishes for independence as a result of liberalism and through the conservative caudillos of the early nation. They were also part of the consolidation of race that sought include those of mixed-

282. Ibid.
285. Ibid., 65.
286. Ibid., 70-71.
287. Ibid., 72.
288. Ibid., 77.
290. Ibid.
race based on similarity. This participation may have lead mulattoes to identify more with a racially mixed heritage. However, the presence of the Garifuna on the North Coast of Honduras also influenced mulatto association with a mixed-race heritage and no longer with a slave-descended one. This process occurred through the decree of a Honduran “mulatto” military leader.

2.5 Prominent “Mulatto” Military Leaders in Honduras, 1829-1847

One method for afro-descendants to become free, assimilate and have some level of citizenship in the early nation was through participation, voluntarily or forced, in the military. Free blacks and mulattoes were also highly visible in the colonial militias and the independence wars. Many volunteered for military services because other lucrative professions were closed to them.291 The “military merits”292 earned during “the [independence] wars [which] provided opportunity for a considerable number of dark-skinned individuals to climb the social ladder….“293 A number of blacks and mulattoes commanded units and even became officers.294 Though their race precluded them from complete inclusion into the colony or nation, free afro-descendants in the military were able to achieve some social status for themselves and their families.

In Central America, politics in the region allowed for those of mixed-race to assume positions of authority, especially due to the small population of Spaniards and white creole elite. It was very likely that mulattoes in militias served alongside caudillos. Slave-descendants participated in civil wars, skirmishes and as caudillos in Central America, likely facilitating some Honduran slave-descendants into becoming culturally and socially accepted as “ladino”. In Honduras, several leaders were specifically referred to as “mulatto”295 in national history. Dionisio de Herrera and Francisco Ferrera are two such influential military leaders.

291 Blanchard, Under the Flags, 13.
293 Morner, “Historical Research,” 206.
294 Blanchard, Under the Flags, 13.
295 It is important to note that these men were referred to as “mulatto” because of their features, but may not have necessarily been strictly Afro-Spanish in terms of racial heritage.
leaders with purported slave-descended racial origins. Both of these leaders were referred to as “mulatto” because of their perceived incompetence as leaders.

Dionisio de Herrera, born in Choluteca, Honduras in 1781, became the first president of Honduras in 1824. De Herrera was part of the transition from the colonial period to the independence period along with Jose Cecilio del Valle. De Herrera was also a lawyer who studied the Enlightenment and liberalism and he tutored his nephew, Francisco Morazán, in liberal thought. He defended State resources, was an advocate for work and production in an independent and socially equal state and supported the creation of a nationality. Though de Herrera was Honduran, but was appointed president of Nicaragua in 1829. Apparently, Herrera’s racial heritage was uncertain because he “was frequently mocked by his opponents as part African or mulatto, and much of [Nicaragua’s] political difficulty was ascribed by regional critics to its alleged zambo or mulatto indiscipline and violent nature.” Thus, the political instability of Nicaragua was premised on the inherent inability of Herrera to effectively lead as a mulatto.

General Francisco Ferrera was another “mulatto” who governed Honduras during the early republic from 1841 to 1847. Ferrera was associated with the liberal movement of Francisco Morazán, but turned against him and later sanctioned the execution of Don Joaquin Rivera, a Honduran president. Though Ferrera was a military leader, he came from humble origins. Ferrera was born in San Juan de Flores, a town near Tegucigalpa. Ferrera was classified as a pardo at birth and was thus associated with African ancestry. In 1819, at the age of twenty-five, Ferrera was referred to as “a resident mulatto” by a priest. He had an

298. El Heraldo, “Dionisio de Herrera.”
299. Zúñiga Huete, Presidentes de Honduras, 133.
300. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 121.
301. Ibid.
302. Euraque, “Free Pardos,” 90
303. Ibid., 91.
304. Ibid., 90.
influential role in “newly emerging discourse on race in the first half of the nineteenth-century”\textsuperscript{305} and was responsible for use of the term “moreno” as a permanent reference to the Garifuna after 1842, to be discussed in the following section. General Ferrera’s heritage as “mulatto” gave him credibility with the mulatto population\textsuperscript{306} and influenced other mulattos to identify instead as racially mixed and not as “moreno” or black.\textsuperscript{307} After the leadership of Ferrera, slave-descended Hondurans were officially no longer referred to as “moreno” and instead identified as \textit{ladino} or racially-mixed. As seen in the identification of these two Honduran leaders, there was disdain for those with African ancestry, yet the same population could identify as racially-mixed and not “afro-descended” specifically. The section below explains the involvement of the Garifuna in this process.

\textbf{2.6 Garifuna Influence on the Racial Identity of Slave-Descended Hondurans: 1797-1847}

The Garifuna are greatly responsible for shaping a Honduran \textit{ladino-mestizo} identity,\textsuperscript{308} particularly for mulatto Hondurans. This group contested slavery on the island of St. Vincent and was expelled from the island, ending up in Honduras. The Garifuna landed at Trujillo on the coast of Honduras and set up villages along the North Coast, living autonomously for two centuries. During the independence and early republican period, the Garifuna were smugglers, soldiers in the civil wars, and provided temporary labor in the lumber industries.\textsuperscript{309} Since the early nineteenth-century, the Garifuna were targeted as a specific “black” group by the emerging Honduran \textit{ladino} government.

The Garifuna could not be easily subdued in the early national project of Honduras. In practicing resistance to maintain their tribal life on the coast, they were considered to be an obstacle to the Honduran nation that was involved in constant skirmishes and with the British over the Honduran coast. In 1842, the Honduran military addressed the Garifuna to “protect” the sovereignty of the Honduran nation. General Francisco Ferrera ordered the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{305} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{306} Ibid., 93.
\item \textsuperscript{307} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{308} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{309} Euraque, “Threat of Blackness,” 240.
\end{itemize}
repatriation of the “morenos” or the Garifuna who left between 1832 and 1833 for siding with the revolutionary movement of General Vicente Dominguez.³¹⁰ Ferrera, himself mulatto, referred to the Garifuna as morenos or “true blacks”, denying the colonial African legacy in Honduras.³¹¹ Use of the term moreno indicated an “emerging, and eventually hegemonic, racial discourse in which the state attributed “real” blackness only to the Black Caribs… [eliminating] the pre-Garifuna African colonial inheritance, including General Ferrera’s mulatto/pardo ancestry…”³¹² The use and circulation of the term “moreno” was from then on used to refer only to the Garifuna and the black heritage of slave-descended Hondurans was erased. The Garifuna remained the only “legitimate” blacks in Honduras. While the Garifuna became the "morenos" of Honduras,³¹³ mulattos (and pardos) in Honduras were considered to be trigueño,³¹⁴ an identification which actively negated an African heritage.³¹⁵ Thus, mulattos and pardos participated in liberal citizenship,³¹⁶ which denied a cultural citizenship to thousands of Hondurans with black, pardo or mulatto ancestry.³¹⁷ This denial of slave heritage to move toward “mixedness” represented the republic as a civilizing institution, to which those with more color did not belong.³¹⁸ Garifuna blackness, then, was a threat to a bourgeoning ladino identity,³¹⁹ especially among slave-descended Afro-Hondurans. Implementation of this tactic by mulattos to become legitimate ladinos now identified them as assimilated and civilized. The Garifuna and their heritage as blacks were now squarely outside of the “imagined community” of Honduras.

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³¹¹ Ibid., 92.
³¹² Ibid., 92-93.
³¹³ Ibid., 94.
³¹⁴ “Wheat-colored” or light skinned.
³¹⁵ Euraque, “Free Pardos,” 95.
³¹⁶ Ibid., 93.
³¹⁷ Ibid., 94.
³¹⁸ Ibid., 93.
2.7 CONCLUSION

During the colonial period, slaves were present in Honduras and miscegenation with Spaniards resulted in a large mulatto group. Since this period, slave-descended Hondurans such as mulattoes became part of the ladino group because they were not indigenous and were Spanish-speaking. Mulattoes established settlements in Honduras during the colonial period, which can indicate significant mulatto presence in Honduras. As independence swept through Spanish America and reached Central America and Honduras, mulattoes participated in the independence movement and in nation-building, establishing themselves as mixed-race participants. Liberal philosophy facilitated the transition to being part of a general racially-mixed population. During this time, the mulatto became more associated with a racially-mixed ladino identity and less associated with a slave-descended heritage, especially as the Garifuna were established by mulatto Hondurans as the “black” group. Thus, the inclusion of the mulatto in the Honduran record of the late nineteenth century as a ladino participant in the nation was all the more possible. The following chapter details subsequent political processes and prevailing theories which influenced the transition from liberal acceptance of mulattoes and their appearance in the Honduran historical record to the influence of positivism in the suppression of the “mulatto” group in the 1887 Census.
CHAPTER 3
HONDURAN LIBERALISM, EUROPEAN POSITIVISM AND RACE THEORY, AND LATIN AMERICAN VERSIONS, 1847-1876

Liberalism allowed the mulatto to participate in Honduras, but modernization and the scientific theories associated with it would affect how the mulatto was viewed in the Honduran nation. At this time in Latin America, ideas about the industrial revolution in Europe were greatly influential and modernizing became a new priority for Latin American nations. The industrial revolution was at its height in Europe and influenced Latin America, creating an elite class associated with industrialization. As result of industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Latin American “export boom” generated revenue such that new national governments could end civil war and could better control their societies through central authority. The bourgeoisie used science and invention to expand production that supported capitalism. In Central America, there was new policy consensus, changes in international trade, lower freight rates, a new generation of leaders, and greater political stability, which set the stage for liberal reforms. Blacks, the indigenous and those of mixed race now formed the proletariat, as wage labor replaced slavery and the working classes were forming under a modern capitalist system. Modernizing politics and economics greatly affected ideas about race, class and citizenship in Latin America. These ideas were exclusionary.

At this time, Auguste Comte’s positivist philosophy circulated in Europe and reached Latin America. The premise of positivism was “order and progress”, which the newly

320. Skidmore and Smith, Modern Latin America, 43.
322. Vallejo, Ramón Rosa y el positivismo, 12-13.
323. Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 6.
324. Bernand, Negros esclavos, 195.
independent Latin America desperately needed. However, “order and progress” encouraged
the acceptance of biological science and theories of evolution and natural selection to explain
natural phenomena. Scientific racism quickly emerged, and claimed that non-whites were
destined to fail in society because they were not as biologically “evolved”. More specifically,
Spencerian thought argued that blacks and mulattoes were backward and inferior and lack the
capacity for improvement.

Latin American societies had mostly non-whites, and therefore, could never progress. While liberalism previously included those of mixed-race, the slave-descended in Latin
America were now scientifically defined as inferior. These ideas tempered the radical ideas
of liberalism and were seen in the liberal reforms implemented throughout Latin America.
For conservatives, liberal progress was desired, but could easily turn disorderly with ideas of
free market competition and individualism among those who were not in the elite class.
Positivism and race theory barred certain groups from fully participating and benefiting from
the modernization process. Thus, both liberals and conservatives could accept liberal reform
as necessary for the aims of both groups: to allow competition and individualism to some
extent, but for the ruling classes to maintain power and improve their own quality of life.
These liberal reforms were meant to form an “imagined community” during nation-building,
though largely exclusive. Part of the Liberal Reforms was “liberal” in order to complete the
“equalizing” project in Honduras since the Central American Federation. The other part of
the Liberal Reforms was implemented to adhere to positivist philosophy, which sought
modernization and progress through science and observation.

In Honduras, establishing the nation took precedence over modernity until the 1870s. This chapter will explain liberalism in the early Honduran republic after the fall of the
Central American Federation and how the concept of race was affected. The overlap of
liberalism with positivist philosophy is discussed here and leads into the Honduran Liberal
Reforms of 1876. When the Liberal Reforms were finally implemented in 1876, they collided
with positivism and the scientific race theory, which were ideologies of the influential
European intellectuals Auguste Comte, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. These theories
greatly influenced Latin American thought. After interpreting these theories, Latin American
intellectuals determined that “whitening” the population would eradicate the racial
determinism inherent in scientific race theory. When “whitening was unsuccessful, education
was the next choice to prevent racial determinism and ensure progress. Domingo Sarmiento and José Lastarria were two influential Latin American intellectual-statesmen who interpreted European thought and supported education as a means to bring progress and modernity to Latin America. Influenced by Sarmiento and Lastarria in part, Honduran intellectuals Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo implemented educational reforms to bring modernity to Honduras. These reforms would also be responsible for the decision to write the national narrative, though liberalism, positivism and scientific racism would determine the time period into which the mulatto would be written.

### 3.1 The Early Republic: Politics

After Liberalism reached Spanish America, and the Central American Federation dissolved in 1838, Honduras, endured civil unrest as a result of caudillos that were divided into unionists and separatists. In Honduras, colonial decline was in part due to independence from Spain, but also was the result of other factors. Three factors determined the demise of the colonial system, independence and nation-building in Honduras: the industrial revolution that began in 1830s Europe, the liberal ideas of the Francisco Morazán revolution in Central America, and capitalist business in bananas on the North Coast in the 1870s. However, as Honduras transitioned from colony to independent nation, it still had many problems to overcome. In Honduras, liberalism was strong, but conservatism was still apparent. The mid to late nineteenth-century political situation was riddled with the instability of Honduran caudillos that controlled certain zones of the country, but the nation was slowly becoming established. By 1840, Honduras was an independent state, primarily occupied with foreign encroachment. For the duration of the nineteenth century, England forcefully dominated Central America, impeding the creation of a strong and centralized Honduran state.

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the mid-nineteenth century, Honduras struggled with the British primarily for control over the North Coast and the Bay Islands. By 1859, the British withdrew from the Bay Islands, but still held hegemony over the North Coast. Honduras was concerned about British invasion of Honduran territory throughout the nineteenth century. This concern about national territory contributed in part to a growing sense of Honduran national identity.

The 1850s in Honduras were met with the subsequent governments of Juan Lindo (1848-1852) and Jose Trinidad Cabanas (1852-1856). Cabanas was defeated by General Santos Guardiola, who was later assassinated and was succeeded by Jose Maria Medina until 1872. By the 1860s, thirty years after the fall of the Central American Federation, the industrial classes and the bourgeoisie were only beginning to ascend in Honduras. From this time until 1876, civil war created unrest. Honduras as a state had little control over its territory, resources and individuals. In 1872, Medina was defeated by Celeo Arias, aided by political leaders from El Salvador and Guatemala. About four years later in 1876, Marco Aurelio Soto, supported by Rufino Barrios, president of Guatemala, implemented the Liberal Reforms and ruled until 1883. Luis Bográn succeeded him until 1890. Honduras enjoyed more political stability after the Liberal Reforms.

Economically, Honduras could not afford to keep itself afloat as an emerging nation. Cattle, hardwoods and mineral products (mainly silver—gold to a lesser extent) were its main exports, but were not lucrative enough for Honduras to compete with its Central American neighbors. From the 1850s to 1880s, cattle were shipped to the Caribbean, especially Cuba; hardwoods were shipped from Honduras to Great Britain via Belize from the 1840s to the 1870s; and silver was shipped to the United States from the 1850s to the

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330. The British invaded the Bay Islands and parts of the Mosquito Coast. See Barahona, Evolución histórica, 239.
331. Ibid., 242.
334. Martínez, Honduras, 163.
336. Euraque, Reinterpreting the Banana Republic, 3.
337. Ibid.
For much of the nineteenth century, the British were commercially dominant in Honduras; the United States was a close second. As the British involvement with the mines and the railroad declined, U.S. investors were given a ninety-nine year contract to develop railroads, build ports, obtain land, and extract from mines. Until the 1880s, mining and the railroad created the largest wage-earning population in Honduras. Bananas then became an economic mainstay in Honduras to economically support the newly centralized nation after the 1870s, providing work for wage laborers.

### 3.2 The Early Republic: Implementing Liberalism

The Honduran era of the caudillo and military rule was economically draining. Conservatism was characteristic of Honduras, before and after the Central America Federation and also during the early Honduran republic. Conservatism suppressed liberal thought, which took years to implement in policy. The eventual embrace of liberalism in Honduras by intellectuals, elites, and a few politicians sought to bolster the economy through political stability. The economy was devastated, and had remained stagnant from decades of war and lack of substantial foreign or domestic investment. Honduran society was also fragmented from political factions and caudillos and needed to be defined to move toward establishing the new Honduran citizen. Thus, early Honduran liberalism was a response to the European version but was interpreted to suit its needs in becoming a republic. This desire for stability eventually culminated in the Liberal Reforms, after years of the ideas of liberalism existing within Honduras, but never having been implemented in government measures.

According to Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, the idea of the “long wait”—endless obstacles offered by Conservatives to the Liberal Program that made progress impossible—of the Liberal Reforms only formalized a situation long in the making. In Honduras, land

338. Ibid.


was in abundance, but there was lack of capital and labor. Peasants in Honduras had no problem gaining access to land, but could not acquire credit, markets, transport, education or political representation.\textsuperscript{342} Liberal reforms transformed peasants into a rural proletariat, accelerated incorporation into the world market through export, increased dependence and provided the material basis for an emerging oligarchy of landowners.\textsuperscript{343} Though Honduras was to be governed by liberal ideals, the leaders were conservative and vacillated between liberalism and conservatism. In addition, localism was evident in Honduras and there were constant power struggles between leaders in Comayagua and Tegucigalpa and among municipalities.\textsuperscript{344} Importantly, toward the end of the nineteenth century, liberals in the region implemented Liberal Reform with the support of both liberal and conservative elites.\textsuperscript{345} Finally, after the dissolution of the Central American Federation in 1838, civil war amongst centralists and federalists within Honduras, and the duration of several caudillos, Honduran intellectuals, politicians and elites finally implemented liberal reforms in the late 1870s. These reforms would finally address the political and economic instability in Honduras.

3.3 Changing Notions of Race

Honduran politics also included issues of race and class that shifted from the importance of race in the casta system, to skin color as an indicator of class. During liberalism, racial categories in Central America were politically consolidated amid continuous race-mixing, moving away from colonial racial constructs. However, elites and intellectuals still sought to consolidate racial categories in a different way. Honduran intellectuals and military leaders sought to civilize and assimilate the Indian and ladino population to promote order and progress through subjection to the state.\textsuperscript{346} Racial labels such as Indian, mestizo, ladino, and mulatto were biological, political and fiscal.\textsuperscript{347} Indians were those who lived in villages and paid tribute, no matter if they were a mixture of Indian

\textsuperscript{342} Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{343} Ibid., 2-3.
\textsuperscript{344} Barahona, \textit{Evolución histórica}, 233.
\textsuperscript{346} Barahona, “Del mestizaje a la diversidad,” 219.
\textsuperscript{347} Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, \textit{Central America}, 120.
blood. The term *mulatto* was often incorrectly used as a diminutive term for those of racially-mixed ancestry who supposedly possessed stereotypical characteristics of afro-descendants.

It is important to note specifically the shift in the use of the term “ladino” during this period of the consolidation of race, because many mulattoes were subsumed into this group. Central America and the individual republics had a long history of identifying those of mixed ancestry in use of the word “ladino”. The term “ladino” could mean any race mixture in any place in the region at any given time. Many *ladinos* were of obvious mixed race, but were light-skinned and became part of white society because of the lack of Europeans in Central America. *Ladinos* were associated with modernity, in juxtaposition to the indigenous. By the mid-nineteenth century, the *ladino* embodied liberalism, after coffee became successful in other Central American republics. Most *ladinos* did not have the economic or political power of the white/mestizo elite, but some ascended to the ranks of the middle and upper classes. In conservative Honduras, between 1839 and 1876, the existence of the *ladino* was legalized as a national group. Thus, racial classification was further solidified during the era of liberalism in Honduras.

By the mid-nineteenth century, *ladino*, *mestizo* and mulatto were the three main labels for those of mixed-race. Terms such as *mulatto* and *ladino* were less “racial”, but were determined based on how different a person’s behavior and political affiliation was when compared to “social superiors and inferiors.” Race came to identify a political and socioeconomic stance of some power instead of biological appearance, as it did in the colonial period. Specific racial identity became irrelevant if one functioned in society as non-

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348. Ibid.
349. Ibid., 123.
350. Ibid., 121-122.
351. Ibid., 121.
356. Ibid., 121.
indigenous and racially-mixed. The men who were involved in the early national struggle were of mixed blood—some of mulatto descent. While liberalism allowed those of mixed race to participate in the new republic as citizens, this did not mean that everyone of mixed race was “equal”. This process, as discussed in the previous chapter, facilitated the identification of slave-descended Hondurans, including mulattos, with the new imagined ladino nation.

3.4 **EUROPEAN POSITIVISM AND SCIENTIFIC RACE THEORY**

Though positivism and race theory enjoyed great currency in Europe in the 1850s and 1860s, it took some time for these ideas to reach Latin American intellectuals, especially poor, civil war ravaged nations such as Honduras. It was not until the 1870s that Honduras’ positivist philosophy and race theory surfaced in politics, written history and literature. For the “white” and ladino elite to create the Honduran version of the ladino, contemporary European theory was surveyed in order to understand the popular Latin American versions and then create the Honduran version based on race theory and positivist philosophy. Latin American positivism combined Comtean positivism with biological race theory and ideas of social evolution based on biological race.

Most European theories were positivist in nature because of the evolution and progression found in their basic tenets. These European models were developed separately by Comte, Darwin and Spencer, but did overlap and influenced the others. Comte’s work dealt with society; Darwin’s work was tested in nature, but the biological premises were transferred to humans; Spencer took Darwin’s theory of biological evolution and applied it to society. For the most part, the ideas of these men were separate and were not necessarily originally meant to be meshed. However, as these ideas circulated Europe and reached Latin America, Latin American intellectuals did not view these theories as distinct. Comtean positivism, evolution, and social Darwinism all blended together as Latin American nations struggled to grasp a modern identity.

The following section will discuss positivist thought and race theory, beginning with Comtean philosophy and science, which is positive when it deals with “similarity” and succession (or history). Darwin’s *The Descent of Man* and how this work influences positivism by discussing the history of biology (a higher stage science according to Comte) to
determine the existence of evolution and the survival of the fittest. Next, there is an assessment of social Darwinism and Spencerian thought and social Darwinism, which took Darwin’s theory in *The Descent of Man* and changed it into ideas that could be used to explain the “evolution” of society through cultural history. Both Spencer and Darwin were concerned with how certain groups were more successful in nature as well as the human environment and the degree to which their successes were biologically driven. In all of these works, ideas about blacks and mulattoes as inferior can be found. These European thinkers very much shaped the brand of positivism that was forming in Latin America. If European thinkers thought blacks were degenerate, Latin American thinkers had little choice but to follow suit, since they desired to be European. Latin American elites and intellectuals would accept European positivism and scientific race theories to be part of modernity.

### 3.4.1 Comtean Positivism

Auguste Comte was born in Montpellier, France in 1798. Comte’s creation of positivism was influenced by the French Revolution and desired the reconstruction of society to rectify what he believed was “intellectual chaos.” Though Comte was originally a mathematician by profession, Comte introduced his positive philosophy in 1826. In 1830, *The Course in Positive Philosophy* was published. Comte’s other works included: *Elementary Treatise on Analytic Geometry* (1843), *Philosophical Treatise on Popular Astronomy* (1844), *Discourse on the Positive Spirit* (1844), *A General View of Positivism* (1848), *The System of Positive Polity* (1851-1854), *Positive Catechism* (1852-1854), and *Subjective Synthesis or Universal System of Ideas Concerning the Normal State of Humanity* (1856). He also published lectures. Importantly, Comte was a liberal reformist and the founder of Sociology. Positivism is based on natural phenomena and their properties and relations as verified by the empirical sciences. Positivism focuses on science as a means to

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progress and the study of society or sociology as the ultimate “science”. Comtean positivism was critical to elites and intellectuals who desired an “elite led-reform model.”

First, Comte believed that “[Positivism] teaches that while it is for the heart to suggest our problems, it is for the intellect to solve them.” Comte also stated that progress is in actually using human abilities to help society improve, instead of doing nothing or doing the bare minimum. Knowledge of how society works helps to categorize certain phenomena in life and makes us able to improve the human condition. There will be no progress in society until there is enough knowledge of society and the individual to understand social phenomena.

Comte’s positivist doctrine argues that human history and science can be divided into three states and can be seen through all branches of knowledge. The first is the theological stage, to which the supernatural is responsible; the next is the metaphysical state, in which man instead creates secular or natural divinities to explain observed facts; and finally the positive state, which asks questions and seeks facts and understand the universal law through observation, experiments and calculation. Science thus becomes positive when it gets rid of the metaphysical and deals only with similarity and succession (or history). Comte ranks the sciences as progressively complex in the following order: mathematical sciences, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biological sciences, Sociology. All the sciences pass through stages of development at varying speeds. When a science transitions to another stage, it is because investigation and research somehow connects it with social needs.

363. Ibid., 30.
364. Ibid., 44.
365. Ibid., 45.
367. Ibid., 55.
368. Ibid., 56.
371. Ibid., 57.
Science was a sociological fact and helped people control their natural and social life and positivism unifies the sciences.

According to Comte, Sociology itself would eventually become the basic science of man. The method for sociology is history, which establishes similarities and succession within society. Comte believed that the intellectual progress of man determined the evolution of humanity. Comte also believed in social reform and that the tendency of humans to live together is innate and permanent and must be considered in any social reform. Sociology was the most complex science according to Comte—it was connected to the collective or to society. The positive stage seeks to comprehend why certain phenomena occurred historically, therefore observing, experimenting and calculating in the present. Social phenomena were to become part of science and reveal what needed to be reformed so that reforms would correspond with historical trends.

Studying history in order to assess society and embark upon progress was the main tenet of positivism, though there were many interpretations. Positivism surfaced in the mid nineteenth century when Europe affirmed an industrial-based society based on the development of science. Science thus brought man to his full consciousness, liberating him from insistence on the supernatural. Man then came to the full realization of his abilities and progress resulted. The supernatural was no longer the primary interest of man; science and the progress that resulted from it would improve society. Including science as part of society became increasingly important in the nineteenth century. Additionally, the biological sciences specifically influenced positivism and evolution reduced human situations to biological situations and the inner workings of society as to mechanisms for biological

372. Ibid., 53.
374. Ibid.
375. Ibid., 34.
According to Herbert Spencer, a positivist sociologist, evolution facilitated that positivist thought go past scientific methodology to apply biology as a determinant of the structure of human society.\(^{381}\)

Comte’s original positivist ideas called for scientific experimentation in the present in order to solve social problems. Progress was inherent to his philosophy. As Comte’s ideas were interpreted by scientists, the progression of the biological realm became important to account for to understand animal and human life and instances of progress or, as it came to be known, evolution. Thought Comte believed that biological science was not as advanced as Sociology, observation and the measurement of progress was necessary to understand the world. Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution and idea of “natural selection” closely followed Comte’s positivist schema. Darwin conducted experiments to uncover biological history and to establish similarities and succession in human development over time, though he did not use these experiments and data to solve problems in society. However, the use of history in conducting biological experiments was positivist in nature. The next section goes into depth regarding Darwin’s theory of evolution and how it relates to the positivist ideas circulating as it laid the foundation for race theory and Herbert Spencer’s subsequent ideas on race and society.

### 3.4.2 Charles Darwin and Evolution

Darwinism reached Latin America in the 1870s and 1880s from a variety of English, French and German sources.\(^{382}\) The educated believed that all living entities protect their survival through selective reproduction with the strong. Termed natural selection, these ideas of only the strong surviving became known as Darwinism and were widely accepted as scientific ideals.\(^{383}\) Charles Darwin’s (1809-1882) ideas were a precursor to Herbert Spencer’s, who greatly influenced positivist race theory. Darwin’s ideas of biological
evolution inform Spencerian social thought, which explains the pervasive racial aspect of positivism.

According to Darwin, the term species was “arbitrary” and was not homogenous but rather indicated viable reproduction that may have immense internal diversity. Darwin explained evolution through natural selection and believed in accidental variation through natural selection. Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* clarifies the natural selection, which is one of the main pillars of his theory of evolution. In natural selection, “as each selected and favoured form increased in number, so will the less favoured forms decrease and become rare.” Darwin believed changes in a genus/species are “accidental”; the “useful changes” help the “best adapted populations survive” and the others who “acquire harmful characteristics” eventually disappear. Thus, the “less favoured form” eventually becomes extinct.

In terms of race, Darwin was aware of physical differences between groups of people, but these differences were a response to environment in order to survive. Darwin felt that the races were related, and were only distinct with regard to emotions. Darwin’s *The Descent of Man* explained how man had evolved over time and sought to determine how evolution can reveal the “more complex problems” of mankind. Darwin also thought the races “differ[ed] in constitution, in acclimation and in liability to certain diseases…[in] mental characteristics…[and] in their emotional [state], [and] partly in their intellectual faculties.” Races differed mentally, emotionally and intellectually, but it was a result of their environment, not inherent inferiority. Darwin continues his views on race-mixing and says that people of various race-mixtures are not “distinct like ordinary species” and that it

385. Ibid., 187.
386. Ibid., 168.
388. Ibid., 110.
391. Ibid., 174.
provides an “immense mongrel population” in Brazil, “Indians and Spaniards blended in various degrees” in South America and “the most complex crosses between Negroes, Indians and Europeans” throughout the Americas as examples of race-mixing.392 Though they did not prescribe the biological inferiority of non-Europeans, these biological ideas of natural selection and race would greatly influence perceptions of the ability for afro-descendants, including mulattoes, to function in nineteenth-century society. Herbert Spencer created the idea of extending biological evolution to the social realm.

3.4.3 Herbert Spencer: Positivist and Evolutionist

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was a positivist sociologist who popularized evolution, arguing that culture developed by the same evolutionary laws of the physical world.393 He carried Darwin’s biological ideas into the social realm. Spencer suggested variability, evolution and natural selection between individuals, classes, societies and races.394 For Spencer, there was no distinction between the cultural and the biological development.395 Race development passes through slow but consecutively higher physiological stages.396 Spencer believed that inferior peoples could not respond to complex situations.397 People with larger brains went through a longer development process,398 because brain mass was related to past experiences.399 Developed or underdeveloped brains were then transmitted to future generations.400 A savage could not live with civilized man because his brain could not comprehend civilization; therefore, whites were the only people who participated in

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392. Ibid., 180.
393. Haller, Outcasts From Evolution, 121.
395. Haller, Outcasts From Evolution, 122.
396. Ibid., 124.
397. Ibid.
398. Ibid., 125.
399. Ibid.
400. Ibid.
evolution. Importantly, Spencer did not feel that mixing races would solve racial inferiority.

Spencer formulated the theory of evolution to include all forms of existence and their changes as a gradual process reaching "more differentiated areas of the world." Progress meant "increasing differentiation" to heterogeneity. Differentiation can also be traced in human history, which is divided by races; civilization and survival change through differentiation. Human society develops according to natural laws and is not man-made. This is where Spencer differs from Comte; Comte did not use a "biological-evolutionary approach" or changeability of species. Positivism abandoned tradition and advocated social freedom, which was related to competitive capitalism; all were justified by biological theories and laissez-faire. Because evolution was an inherent idea of positivism, Spencer felt that the lower classes would not progress and deserved to starve because they were unfit. The homogenous, or the less evolved were not "fit" enough to survive, and would eventually perish.

Social Darwinism was an idea also created by Spencer, based on Darwin's theory of evolution. Social Darwinism argues that "relations between people's of different race as biologically determined, but in a less mechanical way." These relations were characterized by an antagonism based on evolutionary function. By the turn of the twentieth century

401. Ibid., 127.
402. Ibid., 130.
404. Ibid., 92.
405. Ibid., 92-93.
406. Ibid., 96.
407. Ibid., 99.
408. Ibid.
409. Ibid., 102.
411. Haller, Outcasts from Evolution, 187.
413. Ibid., 99-100.
imperial and social class differences fostered the acceptance and use of social Darwinism in Europe and the Americas.  

In *Illustrations of Universal Progress: A Series of Discussions*, Spencer addresses his views on progress in society, offering his opinion on Comte’s work on positivism. As Spencer was himself a professed positivist, his work also addresses progress but unified scientific race theory with positivism to address issues Comte did not address in his writings on progress and positivist philosophy. In this particular work, Spencer begins by stating that “moral or intellectual progress…[is the]…state of the individual or people exhibited it…”  

Spencer also uses scientific theory to explain his belief that some people have “advanced” and others have not; the “civilized European” is more advanced than the “savage” so that the “law and the cause of progress” can be proven in the evolution of humans.  

Spencer continues by supporting Comte’s “scheme of the sciences which…demands respectful consideration” addressing that his ideas on the hierarchy of the sciences are “thoroughly intelligible.”  

After addressing evolution and agreeing with Comtean positivism, Spencer states that “aboriginal societies are…limited in their growth” and “out large civilized nations much exceed primitive savage tribes…” with the Bushmen being “among the lowest races [as] undifferentiated…” In this work, Spencer makes it clear his views on those who are non-European and how they progress. These ideas more directly influenced Latin American thought on race and racism and their influence was more visible in the national narrative.

### 3.5 Latin American Positivism

As Comte’s positivism and Darwinian and Spencerian scientific race theories reached Latin America, Latin American intellectuals were faced with the difficult task of how to ensure progress through science and modernization. For these intellectuals and elites, science

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414. Ibid., 96.
416. Ibid., 50.
417. Ibid., 130.
418. Ibid., 131.
419. Ibid., 393.
420. Ibid., 399.
offered progress and freedom, but it was also associated with scientific racism, creating a dilemma. Intellectuals and the elite were aware of the correlation between positivism and scientific race theory, which argued the “inferiority” of large non-white populations would drastically affect modernity. The immediate solution was to encourage white immigration to Latin America in an effort to Europeanize and whiten the black, indigenous and mixed race populations. These efforts were unsuccessful for much of Latin America except for Cuba, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. While this process occurred, positivist intellectuals were also advocating education as a method to equalize the mixed-race masses and forge a national citizenship and identity. Positivist educational reform swept Latin America, including Honduras.

In Latin America, positivism encompassed democracy, nation-building and progress. For white and mestizo Latin American intellectuals, Comte, Darwin and Spencer were three main European positivist thinkers upon which they based their versions of positivism and corresponding race theories. Comtean thought reached Latin America by the 1860s, setting the stage for positivist regimes, while an edited version of Darwinism reached Latin America by the 1870s and 1880s through English, French and German sources. Latin American thinkers justified European theories and created their own versions. By the 1880s, positivist scientific ideas, such as race theory, biological determinism and social Darwinism had received considerable attention in Latin America. Latin American positivist thought was in part shaped by the ideas of Darwin, but especially by the ideas of Spencer and Comte, and most Latin American intellectuals and elites chose to identify primarily the latter two schools. Latin American positivism and race theory,

however, often distorted the original European theories of history and biology.\textsuperscript{427} For white and \textit{mestizo} Latin American intellectuals, science brought the progress of positivism.\textsuperscript{428} Science was emphatically embraced both intellectually and in institutions by the elite who desired to modernize their nations.\textsuperscript{429} Modernizing the nations was necessary because the black, indigenous and mixed-race masses represented unproductivity and backwardness according to European race theorists. These populations were targeted to help Latin American modernize and progress. Through progress, positivism would address the controversial racial heritage of the region, and hopefully, make Latin America more closely resemble Europe and the United States.

Latin American intellectuals had several reasons for clinging to positivist philosophy in the pursuit of improving and modernizing their nations. The acceptance of science and thus, scientific racism, unified racial thought and social structure.\textsuperscript{430} As a result, the acceptance of scientific racism fostered concern over the lower classes, which were of mixed race or of black and indigenous descent.\textsuperscript{431} Blacks specifically were “associated with primitivism, slavery, antique modes of production [and] traditionalism.”\textsuperscript{432} Because of this, blacks were considered to be a problem to the nation.\textsuperscript{433} Since blacks were thought to be less evolved, they either had to participate in race mixing or “face extermination in the struggle of the fittest.”\textsuperscript{434} White and \textit{mestizo} Latin Americans were certain that blacks and the indigenous were lazy and ignorant and would disappear through evolution or race-mixing; those with more European blood were better positioned to participate in and benefit from progress. However, the question of mixed populations was a big cause for concern, because technically, according to European positivism and scientific race theory, only whites could

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{428} Stepan, \textit{Hour of Eugenics}, 40-41.
\item \textsuperscript{429} Ibid., 40.
\item \textsuperscript{430} Helg, “Race in Argentina and Cuba,” 59.
\item \textsuperscript{431} Morner, “Historical Research,” 224.
\item \textsuperscript{432} Wade, \textit{Race and Ethnicity}, 60.
\item \textsuperscript{433} Ibid., 50.
\item \textsuperscript{434} Haller, \textit{Outcasts from Evolution}, 161.
\end{itemize}
legitimately participate in progress since they were the most “evolved”. However, most Latin Americans were of Spanish, indigenous and African descent and most were mixed with any combination of these—including many of the elite. From 1850 to 1910, Latin American intellectuals wavered between the racial determinism of being mixed-race and faith in the progress of mixed populations. Latin Americans intellectuals and the elites pondered over whether race-mixture meant perpetual inferiority in the nation or whether race-mixing could translate into a new national identity. Eventually the belief surfaced that if Latin Americans continued race-mixing, black and indigenous blood would eventually disappear. Race-mixing was encouraged so that the large populations of mixed-race could “whiten” and thus participate in progress.

In order to whiten, Latin American elites and intellectuals attempted to encourage Europeans to immigrate to Latin America for work and to settle in their nations. Eventually, it was believed that Latin Americans would dilute their blood enough to become white and take advantage of positivism and progress in the process. This immigration would not only help to bolster the Latin American economy, but would also “save” the mixed race masses and “whiten” them for the progress of the nation. However, the extent of modernity and progress in these nations was determined by the ability to whiten. Except for Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Cuba, most Latin American nations did not attract enough European immigrants for permanent settlement. European immigration generally failed throughout Latin America. When whitening proved unsuccessful, there were few ways the mixed-race population could be legitimately included in positivist reform. Education was another modernizing project in Latin America.

Latin American positivists now insisted that education could bring progress and modernity to nations where most of the population was dark-skinned and thus, inferior. Education was the next solution to integrate large populations of the slave-descended, mestizos and indigenous groups to “equalize” the population, and expose the population to a

436. Stepan, Hour of Eugenics, 137.
national heritage. Education could “democratize” the nation. Positivism was thus executed primarily through education in Latin America\(^{439}\) through the writings of intellectuals who called for change through science, and through politicians who implemented new educational policy. Latin American intellectuals and the elite specifically embraced scientific education.\(^{440}\) For primary education, facts were sufficient; for secondary school the focus was on scientific principles; and at the university level, universal principles were taught.\(^{441}\) Two South American intellectual-statesmen were influential in the positivist education movement in Latin America—Domingo Sarmiento and José Lastarria. These men both influenced Honduran positivist writing, particularly the histories and census of Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo two influential intellectual-statesmen in Honduras in the 1870s and 1880s, the era of Liberal Reform. With the economy and the governing bodies improved through the Liberal Reforms of the 1870s, positivism could create a new Honduran society through education. The next section will specify the positivist intellectual thought of Sarmiento and Lastarria upon which Rosa and Vallejo were influenced in advocating education for the Honduran ladino citizen, which led to the rewriting of histories in which the mulatto was included.

3.6 ARGENTINA AND CHILE: VERSIONS OF POSITIVISM AND SCIENTIFIC RACISM

As mentioned above, two influential Latin American positivist intellectuals were Domingo Sarmiento, an Argentine, and José Lastarria, a Chilean. Specifically, Ramón Rosa was himself influenced by the ideas of Sarmiento and Lastarria. Rosa indicates the influence of these Sarmiento and Lastarria over his work more than does Vallejo, who mentions neither of these men in the census of 1887 or the *Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras*. However, because Vallejo was part of the positivist regime that implemented the Liberal Reforms in Honduras, it is likely that he was aware of the work of Sarmiento and

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\(^{440}\) Ibid.

\(^{441}\) Zea, *The Latin American Mind*, 192.
Lastarria and may have agreed with their versions of positivism. In order to understand the Latin American positivist civilization project through science and education, and thus the works of Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo, an assessment of the works of these Sarmiento and Lastarria follows.

3.6.1 Domingo Sarmiento: Argentina (1866-1868)

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888) was an Argentine statesman and educator and pointed to race as the reason for most problems in Latin America.\textsuperscript{442} He was part of the generation of 1880 in Argentina.\textsuperscript{443} Argentine intellectuals also greatly influenced the interpretation of European positivist and racist philosophy.\textsuperscript{444} Argentines believed their country would progress through racial change, which influenced other intellectuals in Latin American nations.\textsuperscript{445} The Argentine bourgeoisie was influenced by Spencer’s ideas of individualism and by Darwin’s idea of competition among species\textsuperscript{446} and Sarmiento was part of this movement. Sarmiento did not completely agree with Comtean philosophy, which he felt was anti-democratic and hierarchical.\textsuperscript{447} However, he accepted the ideas of Spencer to civilize Argentines.\textsuperscript{448} “…Sarmiento considered Spencer’s way of thinking as his own. The philosophy which best expressed the desires of Sarmiento’s generation was Spencer’s evolutionary positivism.”\textsuperscript{449} Sarmiento was a proponent of the progress inherent to positivist thought, though he was influenced by evolutionary positivism, which greatly affected his views on Europeans, blacks, mulattoes and the indigenous.

Sarmiento felt Anglo-Saxons were more superior than the Spanish and through reform, he hoped education and Anglo-Saxon immigration could “transform the mentality of

\textsuperscript{442} Helg, “Race in Argentina and Cuba,” 39.
\textsuperscript{443} Zea, \textit{The Latin American Mind}, 216.
\textsuperscript{444} Helg, “Race in Argentina and Cuba,” 38.
\textsuperscript{445} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{446} Ibid., \textit{The Latin American Mind}, 227-228.
\textsuperscript{447} Ibid., 216-217.
\textsuperscript{448} Ibid., 216.
\textsuperscript{449} Ibid., 130.
Argentina.” To Sarmiento, the indigenous represented barbarism and it was necessary to extinguish this population before progress could be manifested. Sarmiento is perhaps most notorious for his thoughts and actions toward indigenous groups in Argentina. He was more confident about the ability of blacks to progress than Indians, but did not regret that blacks were vanishing in Argentina. Sarmiento attributed blacks vanishing in Argentina to “the secret action of affinity and repulsion.” Sarmiento held a more favorable attitude toward mulattos. “The mulatto,” for Sarmiento, is ‘the link that binds civilized man to the uncouth one; a race inclined towards civilization, endowed with talent and with the finest aspirations of progress.’ Sarmiento believed that the mulatto was a link between “civilized” whites and “uncouth” blacks, though he thought they were civilized, talented and progressive, especially as they continued to participate in race-mixing. “In sum, Sarmiento…made [his] racial thinking conform to scientific racism…attaching a fundamental importance to education as a way to divert biological determinism.” Sarmiento vacillated between race evolution and the hope in immigration and education to civilize Argentines and compensate for their biological and social inferiority of those of mixed race.

Sarmiento believed that “the real struggle in Latin America was one between civilization and barbarism.” The fact that Latin Americans were comprised of three races made them even more susceptible to barbarism. Sarmiento wanted an “intellectual emancipation of Argentina” through education to eradicate barbarism. Sarmiento sought to educate the worker, which would “[help] the individual to recognize his position in society

452. Helg, “Race in Argentina and Cuba,” 44.
455. Ibid., 39.
457. Ibid.
and to assume the responsibility that goes with it.” Sarmiento wrote: ‘Instruction, education [should be] diffused through the mass of the inhabitants.’ Through education, Sarmiento believed that inferior races were not excluded and that intelligence through education would improve even the most backward. Ramón Rosa himself claimed to be influenced by Sarmiento’s thoughts on education for the masses. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

Sarmiento's writings were indicative of Latin American positivist and racist thought. Two of his works "La maestro de escuela" and Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants; or Civilization and Barbarism provide such insight.

In his lecture on the school teacher, “La maestro de escuela,” Sarmiento communicates the importance of education through the school teacher. According to Sarmiento, teachers place science within the reach of students and teaches them to read, opening closed doors and showing students the way and helping them related to the world, the centuries, the nations and all the knowledge that humanity treasures. Later, Sarmiento states that all educational courses can be reduced to a simple expression, which is to read the written word to find out what is known and continue with the works of civilizations own observational properties Sarmiento asks later: “What has been able to influence the sterile beginning of school in the morality of the individual? Its school and basic literacy cannot be taught except in school. It moralizes the appetite, educates the spirit, domesticates and subordinates the passions.” School exercises early, the organs of intelligence and is a way

459. Ibid., 224.
460. Domingo F. Sarmiento quote taken from E. Márquez Estrada, Meditaciones sarmientinas (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1968), 86, quoted in Larrain, Identity and Modernity, 134, 137.
463. Sarmiento, Life in the Argentine Republic.
465. Ibid.
466. Ibid., 149.
467. Ibid., 154.
to change industrial capacity, morality and habits in one generation.\textsuperscript{468} It is proven that showing how to read increases production in factories.\textsuperscript{469} These ideas were integral to the acceptance of education to bring progress to Latin America.

Sarmiento's \textit{Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants; or Civilization and Barbarism} provides more insight into his basic ideas on race and civilization. Blacks and the indigenous are presented as uncivilized, while European civilization is equated with progress and civilization and progress are made possible with education. According to Sarmiento, blacks are almost extinct everywhere in Argentina except for Buenos Aires yet still exist through \textit{zambos} and mulattoes. These \textit{zambos} and mulattos live mostly in the cities and have a tendency to become civilized and have talent and an instinct for progress,\textsuperscript{470} though introducing blacks to the Americas did produce fatal results.\textsuperscript{471} However, those who live in the cities can become civilized, as shops, schools and colleges can be found there\textsuperscript{472} and they dress in European style, are law-abiding, progressive, educated and able to organize.\textsuperscript{473} The uncivilized live in rural areas and are prone to barbarism, even though they may come in contact with the civilized city.\textsuperscript{474} Progress is made possible by Europe and was spread to the Americas,\textsuperscript{475} after which South America obtained books and participated in the movement for progress.\textsuperscript{476}

3.6.2 José Victorino Lastarria: Chile (1869)

José Victorino Lastarria (1817-1888) is from Rancagua, Chile. In 1839, he became a lawyer and was named a professor in the Institución Nacional the same year. He was a deputy, senator, state minister, diplomat minister of the Supreme Court, and director of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{468} Ibid., 155.
\item \textsuperscript{469} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{470} Sarmiento, \textit{Life in the Argentine Republic}, 10.
\item \textsuperscript{471} Ibid., 11.
\item \textsuperscript{472} Ibid., 13.
\item \textsuperscript{473} Ibid., 14.
\item \textsuperscript{474} Ibid., 15.
\item \textsuperscript{475} Ibid., 56.
\item \textsuperscript{476} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Chilean Academy. He founded several newspapers and was involved in political literature and created the political sciences as a study in Chile. He was also part of the inauguration of the University of Chile in 1844. He is considered to be the head intellectual behind the liberal party in Chile. Some of his works are: *El mendigo* (1843), *Investigaciones sobre la influencia social de la conquista en Chile* (1844), *Historia constitucional de medio siglo* (1853), *Lecciones de política positiva* (1874), and *Recuerdos literarios* (1885).  

Lastarria reinterpreted the ideas of Comte to create his own Chilean version of positivism. He differed from Comte in that instead of the use of society, he used the individual. Lastarria also rejected Comtean philosophy, but accepted Comtean law of the three stages of the evolution of the mind, which explained history. However, he believed liberty determined social actions, which departed from Comtean thought. Lastarria (and other Chilean philosophers) believed that all Hispanic Americans should participate in liberalism, to determine one’s own fate. Lastarria advocated intellectual development to correct the past and remake destiny. Lastarria believed that history should be written and studied from the perspective that individuals shape their own destinies. Lastarria also believed that historians should understand and interpret history according to his own ideas, which would determine truth. Observation and experience was necessary for Lastarria, and this drew him to positivism and the desire for progress in Latin America.

Lastarria believed that literature, written by the individual, would influence the progress of society. He was an advocate for literature, which became part of Chilean national identity and he wrote about the necessity of literature extensively. In a public conference in

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479. Ibid., 138.

480. Ibid.

481. Ibid., 135.

482. Ibid., 137.

483. Ibid., 135-136.


1869, he explained in-depth literature as a driving force of progress. According to Lastarria, literature is an expression of society.\textsuperscript{486} In small nations, ideas were not readily available and the writer had to struggle with "poverty and obscurity."\textsuperscript{487} There are no national writers, but literature represents "social uniformity" and writers who write about "society's aspirations" become infamous.\textsuperscript{488} "Fledgling literature" moves toward "democratic government" toward which everyone moves, and also toward independence which correlates with "positive, universal truth."\textsuperscript{489} According to Lastarria, art is social and universal, and literature and science are both subject to it; if not, they become obscure and contradictory.\textsuperscript{490} The basic strength of literature is independence of the spirit and it should show the path to positive truth.\textsuperscript{491} Literature should also represent "the positive progress of humanity."\textsuperscript{492} Every generation is responsible for improving the "past experience of previous generations and not to "accept blindly the errors and crimes of its forebears" so generation can fulfill their destinies and experience social and individual life to the fullest extent.\textsuperscript{493} This can happen if literature is as progressive as society.\textsuperscript{494} Lastarria then calls for democratic nations to build its progressive literature to shape the South American spirit and moral progress.\textsuperscript{495}

Sarmiento’s philosophy on education was that it should be provided to encourage civilization versus barbarism in Argentina. It was hoped that the educated would settle in the cities to perpetuate civilization. Those of mixed race could participate positively in society. Lastarria advocated that education be provided to citizens and that the emphasis would be on literature to incite and encourage widespread progress in Chile. In translating these ideas and


\textsuperscript{487} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{488} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{489} Ibid., 304.
\textsuperscript{490} Ibid., 308.
\textsuperscript{491} Ibid., 308-309.
\textsuperscript{492} Ibid., 311.
\textsuperscript{493} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{494} Ibid., 311-312.
\textsuperscript{495} Ibid., 313.
transferring them to the Honduran present in the nineteenth century, Rosa encouraged education to bring civilization to Hondurans and wanted to use history or historical literature to cultivate a national identity. Vallejo’s history book would also be used to cultivate this identity.

3.7 The Liberal Reforms of 1876

By 1876, positive and scientific race theory and the Latin American versions were enjoying currency. Honduras was not centralized; caudillos still controlled certain parts of the country. Honduras had yet to integrate its regions, address persistent foreign presence, and counter state and institutional weakness due to regional disintegration and lack of uniform powers. Between 1839 and 1876, Honduras experienced a short period of conservative restoration, which culminated in the Liberal Reforms. When President Marco Antonio Soto actually implemented the Liberal Reforms of 1876, Honduran ladino elites and intellectuals were already influenced by positivist philosophy, which was popular in Europe at the time. The Liberal Reforms were executed through a positivist regime from Tegucigalpa to bring modernity to Honduras. These reforms were designed to restructure Honduras politically and economically and to bring social stability and modernity. Such restructuring included national unity, the elimination of indigenous towns, and agrarian reforms designed to help ladino land tenants. It would not be until the 1880s that these reforms were at least partially implemented.

Among the first actions taken as part of the Liberal Reforms was to organize the governmental cabinet and those chosen could not deviate from their office. Two main cabinet members were Marco Aurelio Soto as the President and Minister of Government, Justice and Ecclesiastical Business, while Ramón Rosa was charged with the posts of

Exterior Relations and Public Instruction.\textsuperscript{501} Separation of church and state, the auctioning of national property, emancipation of slaves, and the secularization of ecclesiastical property,\textsuperscript{502} also surfaced in Honduras as they did throughout Latin America. Economically, Honduras previously dealt with perpetual inflation, but the economy stabilized under the Soto regime.\textsuperscript{503} In 1879, the creation of new silver-based money system leveled inflation.\textsuperscript{504} These reformers were also responsible for developing the idea that the cultivation of the banana through the influence of U.S. banana companies would contribute to progress in Honduras.\textsuperscript{505} These reformers, however, were also considered to be responsible for the foreign monopoly and creating the conditions in Honduras that allowed this to take place.\textsuperscript{506} In 1876, President Soto reclaimed the railroad as part of the Liberal Reforms, but granted it to U.S. investors in 1879 to generate capital, establishing the precedent of ubiquitous U.S. presence in the banana industry in Honduras.\textsuperscript{507} Ramón Rosa openly encouraged European and U.S. investors to come to Honduras in the hopes that they would influence the construction and progress of the Honduran nation.\textsuperscript{508} They agreed to give North Americans access to large plots of land for banana cultivation after the 1870s.\textsuperscript{509} By the 1880s and 1890s, Honduras elite coffee growing families of the interior (Santa Barbara and Comayagua) began to leave for banana plantations on the North Coast, which were easier to access.\textsuperscript{510} The Liberal Reforms promoted export agriculture,\textsuperscript{511} which included coffee and became mostly banana exports by the turn of the twentieth century. Banana cultivation and the influence of U.S. banana companies led

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{501} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{502} Barahona, \textit{Introducción}, 32. \\
\textsuperscript{503} Otero, \textit{Honduras}, 80, 82. \\
\textsuperscript{504} Ibid., 83. \\
\textsuperscript{505} Martínez, \textit{Honduras}, 211. \\
\textsuperscript{506} Becerra, \textit{Evolución histórica de Honduras}, 128. \\
\textsuperscript{507} Euraque, \textit{Reinterpreting the Banana Republic}, 4-5. \\
\textsuperscript{508} Becerra, \textit{Evolución histórica de Honduras}, 128-129. \\
\textsuperscript{509} Woodward, \textit{Central America}, 181. \\
\textsuperscript{510} Euraque, \textit{Reinterpreting the Banana Republic}, 13. \\
\textsuperscript{511} Ibid.
\end{footnotesize}
These reforms modernized the state apparatus and created the conditions that would stimulate the development of agriculture, business and industry. Interregional communication, postal and telegraph services strengthened central power, and the opening of new roads unified the nation. Communications improved and the press was given more rights. In 1882, educational reforms introduced science to Honduran schools. Education would bring Honduras into the modern and industrious nineteenth-century and would also fix social problems. Honduran positivism held its own view of education and the resulting reforms were specific to Honduran history and its social needs.

### 3.8 CONCLUSION

The question of the new Honduran citizen was not entirely defined by the 1870s. Honduras was a colony with a long history of membership in the Central American colonial region. The 1840s to 1860s were spent under violent caudillos, civil war and an underdeveloped economy due to the constant instability. Liberalism was believed to bring democracy and citizenship but widespread instability hampered liberal progress in Honduras. Elites wanted a form of liberalism, but one that was organized and progressive, while allowing them to take advantage of individualism and competition and remain in power and to maintain social control. By the time the liberal agenda could be properly addressed in Honduras, positivism was in circulation and influenced liberal thought.

Latin American elites and intellectuals were influenced to a great degree by European positivists such as Auguste Comte, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, unifying positivism and scientific racism. Variations of European ideas of secular progress and scientific measurement were created encouraged in Latin America. The new ideas that Latin American white and mestizo elites and intellectuals created were variations of these European theories. Pure European race theory precluded Latin Americans from participating in positivism. Thus, race theory had to be augmented to counter racial determinism and create a Latin American

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514. Ibid., 246-247.
515. Ibid., 247.
form of positivism would modernize Latin America. After scientific race theory was augmented to suit Latin American, there were attempts to encourage white immigration to whiten colored populations, which was unsuccessful. Education then became the focus of the modernizing project during nation-building. Sarmiento and Lastarria were two Latin American intellectuals who influenced the belief in education to ensure progress. This idea reached Rosa and Vallejo, two influential Honduran intellectuals, who were influenced by Sarmiento and Lastarria. These men interpreted positivism according to the history and needs of the Honduran nation and implemented educational reforms as part of the larger the Liberal Reforms. Rosa and Vallejo rewrote history to be taught in public schools. As a result of liberalism, positivism and scientific race theory, the mulatto was written into the national narrative as part of colonial history and the history of the independence movement, but was no longer a separate racial category by the late nineteenth century. Chapter 4 will explain these processes.
CHAPTER 4

HONDURAN POSITIVISM AND THE MULATTO
IN THE NATIONAL NARRATIVE, 1874-1887

Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo were both widely recognized intellectuals, and they worked closely with President Marco Aurelio Soto (1876-1883)\(^{517}\) to address and implement the positivist-influenced Liberal Reforms. Part of Comtean positivist philosophy required a review of history to assess the current state of the union and make recommendations for progress. The Honduran version of positivism was based on Comtean ideas on using and revising history and science in prescribing social problems and the ideas of specific Latin American intellectuals such as Domingo Sarmiento, and José Lastarria, who strongly encouraged education and civilization as a means to progress. Sarmiento’s ideas were seen in the writings of Honduran intellectuals of that time\(^{518}\) as were Lastarria’s. Honduran intellectuals digested European positivism scientific race theory and the resulting Latin American versions, and created the Honduran version of positivism.

For Honduras to overcome its turbulent social, economic and political history, knowledge of the conditions were necessary and so they could be improved and bring about progress. Specifically, the leaders of Honduras strongly believed in the scientific process and critical analysis in order to further social and scientific development,\(^{519}\) which was a central tenet of positivism. Rosa’s writings on education, provided in this chapter, forcefully encourage education for all Hondurans, including free compulsory primary education. Schools would provide instruction in the scientific processes and children would be exposed to critical analysis, which would eventually improve social conditions. There was a premium


\(^{518}\) Euraque, “Free Pardos,” 94.

on primary education, was thought to eventually create “the man of reform.” It was hoped that education would help cultivate a business sense to address the economic crisis in the nation. Thus, it was concluded that progress in Honduras could be achieved primarily through education. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Liberal Reforms of 1876 included legislation on education, which was to be improved throughout the country. In addition, Vallejo conducted the 1887 census under President Luis Bográn in order to scientifically observe the Honduran population.

Part of these reforms in Honduras was to write textbooks for primary and secondary schools, in order to address the positivist belief in learning and correcting past historical mistakes in order to progress. Rosa and Vallejo wrote texts in the late 1870s and 1880s about the history of colonial Honduras and about Honduras during the independence period to address history. Rosa wrote several short histories on important men involved in the independence movement in Central America, among other essays. Vallejo published various books that yielded unpublished information about the country, especially the Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras, a volume of Honduran history from the colonial period, the independence period and the end of the Central American Federation. Honduran histories were political histories and did not provide the progression of social conditions in Honduras. Another important extension of positivist thought was the Census of 1887. The census would satisfy the positivist principle of observation and experience to measure social ills. The statistics gathered would later be used to determine the scope of progress and how to bring modernization to the population. The involvement of Rosa and Vallejo in the writing of history and of Vallejo in executing the Census of 1887 for statistical analysis of the Honduran population in the late nineteenth century were both instrumental to usher in progress.

In these histories, both men included the mulatto. Ramón Rosa wrote about Francisco Ferrera, the mulatto military leader discussed in Chapter 2. In the Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras, 131.

520. Ibid., 131.

521. Ibid.


523. Ibid., 218.
social y política de Honduras, Vallejo includes a table listing mulatto families in Tegucigalpa in an 1817 census and briefly mentions the “mulatta” as part of the casta system. In the Census of 1887 however, the mulatto is not presented as a separate racial group; Hondurans are instead classified as either “indigenous” or “ladino”. The decision to suppress the “mulatto” group may have been influenced by positivism and scientific race theory in this era, or may have been influenced by the desire for a homogenous mixed-race identity. This chapter explains the Honduran version of positivism, provides examples of how positivism was implemented, and discusses how the mulatto was written into the national narrative, but excluded from the narrative in the Census of 1887. This inclusion and exclusion may inform perceptions about the perceived lack of a Honduran national identity.

4.1 RAMÓN ROSA

Ramón Rosa (See Figure 4.1) was born in Tegucigalpa on July 14, 1848, and died in 1893. He was a positivist intellectual, lawyer, poet, politician, deputy, newspaper editor, and writer. He first received a bachelor’s degree in Philosophy from the University of Honduras and received a law degree in Guatemala some years later in 1869. During Marco Aurelio Soto’s tenure as president of Honduras, Rosa was named General Minister in 1876. Rosa was in charge of exterior relations, public instruction and war. Rosa was the foremost and most active collaborator in Dr. Soto’s administration and penned biographies and short histories on important independence leaders such as Jose Cecelio del Valle, General don Francisco Ferrera, Doctor don Jose Trinidad Reyes and General don Francisco Morazán. He was a writer at the language academy and named academic correspondent. He is also considered to be one of the greatest writers in Honduran history. Rosa was concerned with forging a

524. Vallejo, Compendio de la historia.


527. Ibid., 60.

national identity\textsuperscript{529} and addressed this concern in his positivist writings and histories. Rosa believed that science would enrich, provide well-being, moralize, bring the capacity to govern and drive society, teach society to be just, and that its implementation was the beginning of the powerful civilization.\textsuperscript{530} He believed the social structure of Honduras could improve with access to free compulsory education for all Hondurans. Rosa’s approach to positivism was more philosophical than scientific and he actually implemented the education programs of the Liberal Reforms.

\textbf{4.2 DR. ANTONIO R. VALLEJO}

Born in 1844, Dr. Antonio Ramón Vallejo (see Figure 4.2) was a priest, lawyer and public figure.\textsuperscript{531} In cooperation with the state, he conducted historical investigations, defended the defense of Honduran territory, was involved in the founding of the Library and

\textsuperscript{529} Barahona, \textit{Introducción}, 7.
\textsuperscript{531} Rafael Bordales, Forward in \textit{Biografía del Dr. Antonio R. Vallejo}, by José Reina Valenzuela (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Ministerio de Educacion Publica, 1969).
National Archives, organized statistics and the census, teaching, and journalism. \textsuperscript{532} Vallejo is also considered to be “the father of Honduran historiography.”\textsuperscript{533} He died in 1914. Under the Soto regime, Vallejo was responsible for Honduras’s first historical writing on the provinces and the whole republic of Honduras. \textsuperscript{534} Vallejo identified with positivist philosophy, but was responsible for carrying out the observations that would eventually culminate in positivist “progress”. Vallejo conducted the 1887 census to survey the population and conditions in Honduras under the Luis Bográn administration and wrote the \textit{Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras}, which was used as a secondary education text in Honduras until at least the late 1920s. \textsuperscript{535} In the compilation of the \textit{Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras} and in the 1887 Census, Vallejo seems to be influenced by Lastarria, who believed in the positivist pillars of observation and experience. Vallejo was at the helm of observation and history to modernize Honduras.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{532} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{533} Euraque, \textit{Conversaciones históricas}, 13.
\item \textsuperscript{534} Parker, \textit{The Central American Republics}, 213.
\item \textsuperscript{535} This text was originally published circa 1882. The second edition, used in this thesis, was printed in 1926. This text may have been used after the late 1920s in Honduras in secondary education. See Vallejo, \textit{Compendio}, title page.
\end{itemize}
4.3 ROSA: EDUCATION

Creating a new citizen through education was a difficult process in Honduras. Rosa had the arduous task of organizing and implementing educational policy of the Liberal Reforms throughout Honduras. Before Rosa reorganized secondary and university education, he sought to organize free and compulsory, state-provided primary education, for he believed it was the base of knowledge. Rosa also believed that scientific education would enrich, moralize and make just and responsible the new, civilized Honduran society. Rosa insisted on organizing primary instruction as the base of all knowledge, and this education was declared obligatory and free under the responsibility of the State. Rosa then desired for secondary education to shape youth to enable successful university studies or to learn practical skills; youth would learn linguistics, geography, history, literature and mathematics-physics at these levels. In his essay, “Importancia de la instrucción pública,” Rosa also indicates his plan for educating the Honduran citizen. Rosa wrote in 1879:

Instruction is for shaping good citizens for the republic and it is to create an element of progress for the people. Instruction is the soul of societies that reveal, in the sphere of deeds of institutes in free countries: instruction is an impalpable fountain, yet alive, from the prosperity and culture of the nations. (My translation)

Rosa points out how other Latin American nations were implementing positivist education and he makes recommendations for Honduras to follow suit. Rosa indicates in his essay that other countries and governments had embraced positivism and were now beautiful and noble as a result of the republican education they supported, effectively innovating texts used in education.

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536. Argueta and Valenzuela, *Marco Aurelio Soto*, 34
538. Ibid.
539. Ibid. Original Spanish: “Pero al solución solo cumple aplicarla a los países que por su avanzado desarrollo moral y material, tienen la copia suficiente de inteligencia, de interés cívico y de recursos pecuniarios, para dar vida propia y creciente adelanto al fin científico de la sociedad.”
540. Ibid., 69-70.
541. De Oyuela, *Ramón Rosa*, 34-35. Original Spanish: “...Instruir es formar buenos ciudadanos para la república y es crear elementos de progreso para los pueblos. La instrucción es el alma de las sociedades que revelan, en la esfera de los hechos [de] los institutos de los países libres: la instrucción es también la fuente impalpable pero viva, de la prosperidad y cultura de las naciones.”
teaching. As seen in the following section, Rosa was also influenced by Lastarria and emphatically agrees with Lastarria’s recommendation of primary instruction for society and that history should provide the truth. Two of Rosa’s essays on the importance of education are discussed below. These texts also reveal Rosa’s concern with a Honduran national identity.

4.3.1 “Importancia de la Instrucción Pública,” 1874

Rosa’s 1874 document, “Importancia de la instrucción publica,” highlights his fundamental thoughts on education. He specifically mentions the Argentine and Chilean positivist primary instruction models and directly associates Sarmiento and Lastarria with the innovation of textbooks. Rosa seems to be more greatly influenced by Lastarria and specifically references Lastarria’s call for primary education:

José Victoriano [sic] Lastarria has assigned a principle whose importance should be unquestionable for everyone, for Latin American nations: the first social necessity for the people is primary instruction. (My translation)

Rosa believed education could no longer be administered by religious authorities. He argued that religious and domestic instruction was not adequate enough—Catholic education was no longer appropriate to educate. Rosa wanted education to, through science and the understanding of history, civilize the general public. For Rosa, instruction had always been a civilizing agent. As part of the scientific “awakening” of the nineteenth century, Honduras was to participate in education. Therefore, for Rosa, it was necessary to make public

542. Valle, Ramón Rosa, 50. Original Spanish: “Otros países, otros Gobiernos, en mucha parte, han llevado a cabo tan hermoso y noble objeto. Los nombres ilustres de Sarmiento, de Lastarria y de Bello están indisolublemente unidos al nombre de la empresa regeneradora que tiende, en América, a obtener la educación republicana, innovando para este fin los textos de enseñanza.”

543. Ibid., 39, 47. Original Spanish: “…en la muy sensata y desarrollada República de Chile, a pesar del participe activo que toma la Nación creando sociedades de instrucción primaria (emphasis mine), esta aun continua siendo un negocio que mantiene y dirige el Estado.”

544. Ibid., 50.

545. Ibid., 37. Original Spanish: “José Victoriano Lastarria ha consignado un principio cuya importancia debe ser indiscutible, más que para todos, para los países latinoamericanos: la primera necesidad social de un pueblo es la instrucción primaria (emphasis mine).”


547. Ibid., 33.
instruct

548 To develop morally and materially, Rosa believed a nation had to be intelligent and have civic interest and resources to give life and growth to the scientific end of society. To do this, a people must be educated, but Honduras needed good teachers, a new curriculum and texts, and resources, which had not been previously addressed to improve education. Rosa then explained that the lack of primary instruction was characteristic of Honduran life. Honduran schools had not shaped the heart and character of youth and they were not adequately prepared to live practical lives without knowledge or moral, social, political and industrial relations, and the laws of nature. In Honduras, it was believed that instruction was taking place, but nothing was actually done. Past vices in Honduras had to be overcome and education was the primary way a society is removed from ignorance and moves toward a prosperous destiny. Education would evolve from simple lecture and catechism to the most scientific texts of the Republic.

549. Ibid., 37.
550. Ibid., 37-38.
551. Ibid., 42.
552. Ibid., 43.
553. Ibid., 50.
555. Ibid.
Here, Rosa implemented positivist thought in the liberal aspect of “social harmony”, “justice” “science” and “civilization”. Rosa looked down on politics as the method of solving social problems because it was not solving them—it merely accomplished the aims of those in power. As a liberal and positivist thinker, Rosa called for responsible politics that would focus more on Honduran society. Politics was to be concerned about progress in a republic; this republic was founded based on liberty and on the labor and education of its citizenry. Rosa then outlined the expectations of the citizenry after they participate in labor and education:

The application of those ideas requires deeply rooted habits of order and of work in a society, through education, moral, intellectual, and political, in all social classes, a public opinion well informed as to its rights and duties, a high state of development of all the elements making up the civilization of the country, and a noble and broad sentiment of patriotism, before which the voice of passion is hushed and the influence of personal interests, of sect, and of party is lessened.

Hondurans were to be unified as a national body through participation in labor and education. They were to become civilized through these venues, and they would understand what it meant to be a citizen as part of a collective Honduran national identity.

Rosa continues, showing how he believed the political realm must help the social realm progress. It was the government’s responsibility to get education to those with no access to it in the late nineteenth-century. Rosa explains what will happen if the state is not involved:

If the state does not intervene in this matter, individual interest alone will be powerless to resolve the arduous problems presented us day by day, not through lack of enterprises, but because of lack of the will to work. The benefits of elementary education do not yet reach the majority of the public.

The Honduran public needed to be educated to understand the importance of work in order for progress to reach the Honduran populace. It is interesting, here, that Rosa alluded to laziness, which is a general “characteristic” of afro-descendants and indigenous peoples in scientific race theory. Rosa also believed that having knowledge of Honduran history and

556. Ibid., 96.
557. Ibid., 97.
558. Ibid., 98.
559. Ibid.
society was indispensable to progress in the nation and that Honduras “cannot ignore our social conditions.” In addition, Rosa further explains that, “Our progressive party…looks back on the past, accepts that painful obstacles it faces and, full of faith and hope, fixes its sight on the better future which lies at the end of the journey.” Determining the problems in Honduras, correcting those problems through the recommendation of education and hoping for the best future was the formula for Rosa and the positivist cabinet in late 1800s Honduras. Education, as part of political reform, would somehow unify Hondurans, solidifying a national Honduran identity.

4.4 Vallejo: Education Through History (1882)

Influenced by positive philosophy, Vallejo wrote the *Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras* for use as a textbook in Honduran secundarias (middle schools) in order to provide a political and social history of Honduras. This text was meant to address two positivist aims: the rewriting of history and educating the population on history, which would culminate in a sense of national identity and heritage. This volume begins circa 1810 and provides history up to 1825 in Honduran history, primarily as part of the Central American Federation, and is based on primary sources from this time period. Vallejo begins the volume with a letter to provide a description of the work:

> Getting started on this work, which is more difficult than I thought, I imposed myself by law not to say anything false, nor omit anything true; assuming the responsibility and the bitterness that this intention may bring me any form of hate or slander. (My translation)

The experiments are those that advance the sciences; and the experiments, easier in physics and mathematics, are very difficult to make in governing institutions. The analysis of a rock [and] the dissection of a reptile are experiments that can be repeated without work or cost. But the happiness or ruin of a nation is a test that

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560. Ibid., 100.
561. Ibid., 101.
563. Ibid., 6. Original Spanish: Al emprender este trabajo, que es mas difícil que no pensé, me impuse por ley no decir nada falso, ni omitir nada verdadero; asumiendo la responsabilidad y las amarguras que este propósito pueda traerme en cualquiera forma del odio o a la calumnia.”
Vallejo admitted that writing this history text was difficult, but that he adhered to the standards of not saying anything false about Honduran history or leaving facts out. Though he felt that providing the true history was necessary, he also felt that he may be persecuted for it somehow. Dr. Vallejo continued by mentioning the importance of the experiments in the sciences, but that these “experiments” are costly for the government. Geological or biological experiments are not as expensive as experimenting to determine the fate of nation.

Vallejo viewed his compilation of Honduran history for the *Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras* as an experiment that would determine the progress of the nation in its use as a scholastic text. The writing and dissemination of history was the “science”; the absorption of it by the Hondurans would create a sense of national heritage and eventually bring about progress. Interestingly, the mulatto appears in this text and in a short history by Rosa, indicating their inclusion into Honduran national narrative.

### 4.5 Rosa and Vallejo: The Mulatto

This section discusses Rosa and Vallejo’s recognition of the racially-mixed mulatto’s participation in the early Honduran republic. Though blacks as slaves were not specifically mentioned in the history of Honduras written by Rosa and Vallejo, the writing of the mulatto alluded to a slave heritage. There is no explanation of mulatto origins. The mulatto simply appears in these histories as if they had always existed in Honduras. Because of mulatto inclusion in history here, it can be concluded that they were at least present and participated in the colonial and early national periods. Such an example can be seen in Rosa’s celebratory writing of the “mulatto” Francisco Ferrera.

#### 4.5.1 Rosa: “Francisco Ferrera,” (1879)

As stated in Chapter 2, General Francisco Ferrera referred to the Garifuna as “morenos”, thus “officially” erasing the black heritage of slave-descended Hondurans. The

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564. Ibid., 227. Original Spanish: “Los experimentos son los que adelantan las ciencias; y los experimentos, fáciles en las físicas y matemáticas, son muy costosos en las constitucionales. El análisis de una piedra: la disección de un reptil son experiencias que pueden repetirse sin trabajo ni gastos. Pero la felicidad o ruina de una nación es prueba que no puede hacerse sino temblando, meditando aun las sílabas...”
following is an excerpt from Rosa’s short history of Francisco Ferrera, a Honduran military leader and caudillo:

In 1800, Francisco Ferrera was born to a poor family in San Juan de Flores. At age seven, he was orphaned and was given shelter by the town priest. The priest sent Ferrera to the city to learn letters and music. Around the year 1813, the priest died but because of the priest, Ferrera was familiar with altars, Latin and became a sacristan. He also became a director or counsel of alcaldes. In 1827, his destiny took another turn. General don Manuel Jose Arce, president of Central America invaded Honduras, then under the charge of Dionisio de Herrera. Ferrera went to defend his country against the invaders. He wanted to save the right and dignity of his country. After General Francisco Morazán was triumphant in Central America, civil war broke out in the department of Olancho. In 1832, Ferrera was sent to Omoa and Trujillo to fight against Colonel don Vicente Dominguez from Spain. He was successful. In the election of 1833 for chief of state, Ferrera was overlooked, but General Morazán appointed him to Division General. Ferrera was resentful and became a separatist. Ferrera was completely dedicated to dissolving Central America. In 1841, Ferrera had to fight factions in Honduras and invaders from Nicaragua and El Salvador. Ferrera was a sworn enemy of and principal demolisher of the Central American nationality. For this he was condemned in history forever. Besides soldier and politician, he was a writer, though not formally trained. Ferrera was also a geographer who pointed out the Honduran Interoceanic Railroad route before [Ephraim] Squier. In 1847, Ferrera was elected president of Honduras. Disillusionment led him to renounce the presidency. He died in exile in Sonsonate, El Salvador. (My translation)565

After Rosa provides the history of Ferrera’s life in the early Honduran republic during independence, he analyzes Ferrera’s contribution to the nation. In the following passage, Rosa refers to Ferrera as a “mulatto”:

The great, enormous and unforgivable crime that Ferrera committed turned him into a sworn enemy, the principal destroyer of the Central American nationality. Truly evident is that the Federal Pact should reform so that it might have the elements of consistency and stability, that were not possible given the theoretical prescriptions of the poetic Constitution of 1824; but Ferrera did not want reforms: he was clearly separatist. For this crime in life, he suffered from the punishment of the departure of the Holy Spirit and in Perulpan and after death, he receives and would receive the eternal condemnation of History. I who admire that great character, I who admire that iron mulatto (my emphasis), I who admire that sublime sexton, I will never forgive that we may have left him without a Country. (My translation)566


566. Ibid., 28. Original Spanish: “El grande, el enorme e indisculpable crimen que cometió Ferrera, fue el de convertirse en enemigo jurado, en principal demoledor de la nacionalidad de Centro América. Verdad
Curiously, Rosa identifies Ferrera as a “mulatto,” during the era of scientific racism, when allusion to the slave-descended was vigorously avoided in national history. Perhaps liberal notions of citizenship superseded the choice not to identify Ferrera as “mulatto.” If Ferrera was indeed mulatto, Rosa presented him as a defender of the Honduran nation; Ferrera’s nationalism merited him mention in Rosa’s piece. The fact that Ferrera was so protective of the nascent Honduran nation meant that, even if he was “mulato” he was a national character and considered himself to be Honduran. Though Rosa may have used the word “mulatto” to indicate Ferrera’s physical appearance and personality, it is also possible that due to Ferrera’s turncoat behavior against the Central American Federation, Rosa considered him to be “mulato”. Even so, Rosa indicated that Ferrera was a man with some degree of African heritage, yet, for his military service to Honduras, a ladino nation, he deserved honorable mention in a short history. The mulatto Francisco Ferrera is written into the national narrative of Honduras and is quite possibly is associated with a Honduran national heritage.

4.5.2 Vallejo: The ‘Mulato’ in the Compendio de la Historia Social y Política de Honduras (1882)

In his social and political history of Honduras, Vallejo mentions the mulatto twice. The first refers to a census taken in 1815 where he talks of mulatto families in the area of Tegucigalpa and the second refers to the mulatta as devalued in the Kingdom of Guatemala during the colonial period.

The first mention of the mulatto as inclusive in early nineteenth century history is through explanation of the presence of Spanish families in Tegucigalpa. Vallejo provides a table of the races of the families and individuals present in Tegucigalpa. This table of the 1815 population in Tegucigalpa mentions 170 mulato families and 845 total mulato persons in the Tegucigalpa parish (see Table 4.1). In this section of Vallejo’s history of Honduras...
### Table 4.1. A Ocho Mil Setenta y una Personas--Aquí Está la Prueba

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lugares</th>
<th>Familias</th>
<th>Niños</th>
<th>Confesión</th>
<th>Resumen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tegucigalpa y sus barrios</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>2092</td>
<td>2687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Españoles en todo el curato</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indios del pueblo abajo</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indios del de Comayaguela</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>1021</td>
<td>1499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Río abajo, mulatos</strong></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ermita del Río Hondo y Valle</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iglesia de Tamara, indios</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara y su valle, <strong>mulatos</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soroguara, Coa y Santa Cruz</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mateo y Upare</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>129</td>
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<td>Portrero Yaguasire a Horcones</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Rosa Loarque, a tierras del Padre</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacaleapa, Minas de Villa Nueva</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ermita de Suyapa y su valle</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabanagrande a los sitios &amp;</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1596</strong></td>
<td><strong>2228</strong></td>
<td><strong>5843</strong></td>
<td><strong>8071</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Vallejo, Antonio R. *Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras, aumentada con los principales acontecimientos de Centro América, para uso de los colegios de 2.a enseñanza de la Republica de Honduras*. 2nd ed. Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Tipografía Nacional, 1926. First published 1882 by Tipografía Nacional.

there is no specific explanation of the origin of these mulattos other than the fact that they in this census. The reader can only assume what is meant by the unexplained presence of mulattoes in the census. The fact that Vallejo did not exclude this from the census when he could have as an intellectual historian of Honduras provides insight into the acceptance of mulattoes in the national narrative. Vallejo may have felt that providing the presence of mulattos and mulatto families indicates Spanish heritage in the area, without which mulattoes would not exist. If this is indeed correct, Vallejo sought to amplify the mulatto as part Spanish and thus as more racially mixed or “ladino”. Included in this census of Tegucigalpa, the mulatto would then be more associated with Spanish heritage and not necessarily with an African or black heritage. There is also the possibility that the word “mulatto” was used incorrectly and that these “mulattos” were actually a group of not only mulattos, but various slave-descended racially-mixed groups. Regardless of Vallejo’s intent, the inclusion of the mulatto proves the existence of the Spanish in Honduras, verifies the process of race-mixing and accounts for a slave heritage. These processes comprise Honduran national heritage, whether intended or unintended by Vallejo.
The second mention of the mulatto was in reference to the social conditions in the Kingdom of Guatemala in the colonial period. Vallejo explains the social conditions below:

What were the social conditions that the old Kingdom (Guatemala) before independence? In politics: the chapetones [the Spanish?] dominated exclusively because, as we have said, the society then was divided into races, and this, which comes from Europe, was precisely the most powerful, the most considered and it needed, with few exceptions, the uses that had some signification,--because the mestiza, the mulatta, (my emphasis) the indigenous women and even the [white] creole woman, were looked upon with sovereign contempt. (My translation)\(^{569}\)

Vallejo explains the social conditions during the colonial period as related to the casta system and its use by the Spanish to control the population in Honduras. Vallejo here provides the basic members of the race spectrum in the casta system—mestiza, mulata, india and criolla. Vallejo does not mention the presence of Africans, blacks, or ladinos. Vallejo does, however, include the “mulata” as a person of mixed-race in the colonial hierarchy of race. The origins of the mestiza, india and criolla are not ambiguous, as the mestiza is Spanish and Indian, and the other two are self-explanatory. However, origins of the mulatta are ambiguous, as there is no mention of Africans or blacks here. Vallejo may have had several reasons for including the mulatta as part of a discussion of society in the colonial Kingdom of Guatemala. The inclusion of the mulatta could have accounted for what Vallejo believed was most of the slave-descended population in the colonial and republican period, who were often referred to as “mulattos”. Another possibility could be that Vallejo, like Rosa, was greatly influenced by Sarmiento, who viewed mulattos in a more positive light. Perhaps Vallejo may not have truly understood the history of slave-descendants brought to Honduras accounted for a slave-descended history through mentioning the mulatta in the colonial period. On the other hand, Vallejo may have been well aware of the extensive black history of Honduras, but could not mention it in a history book intended to help forge a national heritage and identity during an era of positivism and scientific racism. Referencing the mulatto in this way could be a compromise; quickly state that mulattos existed, which

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569. Ibid. Original Spanish: “Cuales eran las condiciones sociales en que se encontraba el antiguo Reino, antes de la independencia? En lo político: dominaban exclusivamente los chapetones porque, como ya hemos dicho, la sociedad de entonces estaba dividida en razas, y esta, que venía de Europa, era precisamente la más poderosa, la más considerada y la que ocupaban, con pocas excepciones, los empleos que tenían alguna significación;--porque la mestiza, la mulata (my emphasis), la indígena y aun la criolla, eran miradas con soberano desprecio.”
implies a black slave heritage, without mentioning the extensive history, which would tarnish the Honduran populace and set them back farther according to scientific race theory and positivism. Whether intended or not, the mention of the “mulata” in this section references a slave history and perhaps the visibility of the mulatto group in Honduras. By indicating the mulatto families in the Tegucigalpa parish in the colonial period and in including the mulatta in his discussion of the casta system, Vallejo includes the mulatto group as part of the national Honduran narrative.

4.5.3 Censo General de la República de Honduras, 1887

In 1887, under the presidency of Luis Bográn, Dr. Antonio Vallejo carried out the census of the Honduran population. As stated above at length, observation of the population was necessary to implement positive philosophy. This census accounted for ladino or indigenous ethnic heritage; occupation, literacy rates, sickness and disease, marital status, age, nationality, religion, and voting privileges of the population in each department. Not only was the determination of race an important factor, but determining who was educated and the livelihood of the population was also important in order to improve and expand education in Honduras. This section will discuss race, literacy rates and occupation, which will provide insight into the reality of Honduran society in the late nineteenth century. The omission of the mulatto in this census will then be discussed further.

The census begins with a letter to President Bográn, explaining what the census sought to accomplish:

His Excellency Mr. President of the Republic, deeply convinced that it cannot be cultivated in any way, the happiness of the country, nor can we move toward the compass of progress and of the demands of the age, without the population previously knowing, the different facets and the multiple elements of wealth that exploit and protect, I charge myself with reestablishing, on the 29th of March of the previous year, the Department of National Statistics, in order to obtain facts, useful as they are difficult and to economize, in this way, embarrassments that cause us ignorance to an unjustifiable point, so we asked ourselves how many we

are and what our riches are worth and also about the riches of which are not aware. (My translation) 571

After an introduction of the census, Vallejo explains why the census is important for the future of Honduras:

The Central Office of Statistics reestablishes personally that with the hurry with which it was conveniently created, his Excellency Mr. Bográn, understands that the statistics of the population is a study of the soul, the heart of the nation, that industry, wealth, public well-being, power and even the glory, has as its base the population. (My translation) 572

This introduction communicates to the reader the main reasons why Vallejo conducted this census in 1887.

In this letter to president Bográn (1883-1891), written in 1888, a year after the census was conducted, begins by communicating that this census was necessary for progress and modernity in Honduras. This census was meant to reveal the wealth of Honduras, which had to be protected and exploited and was to be used to dispel ignorance.

In the beginning, at first, the executive agreement given on April 16th prevented the census from being completed in just one day. Investigations about race, religion, nationality and the physical or moral incapacities of the inhabitant were to be carried out over time. To do so ensured that the experimentation used in the advanced sciences from abroad would be implemented in more extensive than in Honduras as they never had been before. In order to avoid the difficulties that usually surface with census taking, the Office of General Statistics sent Political Governors of the department census charts to fill in, with clear and detailed

571. Vallejo and Honduras Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, Censo General, I. Original Spanish: Señor Secretario de Estado en el Despacho de Gobernación: “Su Excelencia el Señor Presidente de la República, profundamente convencido de que no puede labrarse, en ningún sentido, la felicidad del país, ni hacer que marche al compás del progreso y de las exigencias de la época, sin que se conozca previamente la población, en sus diferentes fases y los múltiples elementos de riqueza que han de explotarse y protegerse, mando restablecer, en 29 de Marzo del año anterior, el Departamento de Estadística Nacional, para obtener datos tan útiles como difíciles, y economizar, de esta manera, rubores que nos causaban ignorancias hasta cierto puntos injustificables, pues se nos preguntaba cuántos éramos y lo que valían nuestras riquezas, y nosotros mismos no lo sabíamos.”

572. Ibid. Original Spanish: “Reestablece la Oficina Central de Estadística con el personal que por el pronto se creyó conveniente, su Excelencia el Señor Bográn, penetrado de que le Estadística de la población es el estudio del alma y del corazón de las naciones, que la industria, la riqueza, el bienestar público, el poder y hasta la gloria, tiene por base la población…”
instructions. This made it easier for the committees to carry out the assignment of the census with precision.

The census was not completed by June 1st as the law mandated. There were difficulties with the Tipografía Nacional, which was not able to print ten thousand charts to send to the Political Governors of the Departments and send them also to the distant departments of Copán, Colon, and the Bay Islands, from Tegucigalpa. Official authorization was given and an extension was made for June 15th. This extension was communicated immediately by telegraph to all the political governors of the departments and the governors continued to prepare to begin census taking on June 15th. Through the circular letter sent on June 10th, the governors were brought to attention so they would communicate to this office the hour they would begin the census operations in their respective areas. This circular letter was not attended to immediately, and another circular from Dr. Vallejo was given to the governors by telegraph. This telegraph communicated to the governors that they should be set to begin census taking and what was expected of them as they conducted the census. After this backstory to the census is provided, the census statistics begin. The following is a discussion of race, literacy and occupation.

According to this census, the departments of Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, Gracias a Dios, Santa Barbara, Yoro, Colón, and Olancho existed in 1887. Tegucigalpa and Comayagua were the seats of government and represent the interior. Gracias a Dios, Santa Barbara, Colón are coastal states. Yoro and Olancho are states closer to the interior with a historically larger presence of non-Garifuna slave-descendants573 in comparison to other states in the interior of Honduras and in the south. These areas would likely have had larger populations of mulattoes.

Table 4.2 shows 236,045 ladinos and 68,872 Indians in all of Honduras; 70 percent of the population was “ladino” and about 30 percent of the population was indigenous. The largest concentration of ladinos were in Tegucigalpa, Choluteca, Copán, Santa Barbara and Olancho (all departments of the interior), in that order. The most Indians in were concentrated in Tegucigalpa, Gracias a Dios, La Paz and Olancho in that order. In area of

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Table 4.2. Cuadro Numero I. Resumen General de la Población Empadronada en la República de Honduras, Según el Número de Habitantes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departamentos</th>
<th>Ladinos</th>
<th>Indígenas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hombres</td>
<td>Mujeres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tegucigalpa</td>
<td>22291</td>
<td>24279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Paraíso</td>
<td>8760</td>
<td>9103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choluteca</td>
<td>18444</td>
<td>19579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comayagua</td>
<td>7475</td>
<td>8364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Paz</td>
<td>4571</td>
<td>4782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intibucá</td>
<td>5324</td>
<td>5230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gracias</td>
<td>8164</td>
<td>7742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copan</td>
<td>16352</td>
<td>16594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Barbara</td>
<td>14069</td>
<td>13982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoro</td>
<td>5308</td>
<td>6083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>4382</td>
<td>4233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islas de la Bahía</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>1046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olancho</td>
<td>11583</td>
<td>13090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>128938</td>
<td>134107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Tegucigalpa, there were only ladinos and Indians provided for “race” and 48,000 out of 60,000 were illiterate (80%). 574 Comayagua also had mostly ladinos and very few Indians. The department of Gracias a Dios had mostly ladinos in larger cities, with some Indians in smaller cities and towns. 25000 out of 28000 are illiterate (89%) in Gracias a Dios. 575 In the department of Santa Barbara, the population there was mostly ladino, with some Indians. 27000 out of 33000 were illiterate (82%) in Santa Barbara. 576 In Yoro, there were mostly ladinos in some areas and mostly Indians in others. In the department of Yoro, 12000 out of 14000 were illiterate (86%). 577 In the department of Colon, the rural areas are mostly Indian and the urban areas are mostly ladino. 10000 out of 11000 are illiterate (91%) in Colón. 578 In Olancho, there were thousands of ladinos, and very few Indians; 25000 out of 31000 are

575. Ibid., 105.
576. Ibid., 141.
577. Ibid., 153.
578. Ibid., 185.
illiterate here (80%). According to this census, between ten and twenty percent of the Honduran population was literate. Departments with higher numbers of Indians had higher levels of illiteracy, though many ladinos were also illiterate.

At the end of the census, Vallejo includes tables that offer a quick glance of Honduras statistically. From these tables, it can be determined where the most concentrations of ladinos and indigenous lived and how much of the population were minors in need of education and the occupation of the population. Table 2 indicates that most of the population at the time were children—67,315 from age 1 to age 7 and 74,322 from age 7 to 16. Tegucigalpa, Choluteca, Copán, Santa Bárbara, Olancho, Gracias a Dios had the most youth, in ascending order. Table 7 in the census reveals that most of the population (tens of thousands) was a day laborer or farmer. These day laborers and farmers were most likely ladino men. Ironers, dress makers, cigarette makers, cooks, merchants and spinners numbered in the thousands and make a secondary occupational population. These were most likely ladina women.

According to this census, most of the population of Honduras at the time of Vallejo’s census was a ladino day laborer or farmer. The statistics of occupation indicate that most of the people in Honduras were ladinos of mixed ancestry and that they lived in poverty. Closer to the coast, there are higher illiteracy rates. Closer to the interior, there are lower illiteracy rates. Most of the population, as ladinos, was in need of the primary and secondary instruction promised in the Liberal Reforms. The census that Vallejo was charged with executing scientifically provided the composition of the populations in terms of race, class, residence, literacy rates, and health. These statistics would help men like Rosa determine the scope of what was necessary to provide education for the youth of Honduras. Thus, the census was the extent to which these reforms were necessary.

This census shows that the ladino at this time was probably more associated with the national narrative, as the mulatto does not appear as a separate category. It was decided before the census was conducted that “ladino” would be used to distinguish between who

579. Ibid., 202.
580. Ibid., 210.
581. Ibid., 215.
was Indian and who was not, no matter their racial heritage. It can be inferred that the mulatto population was subsumed into a *ladino* category. Mulattoes still existed in parts of Honduras in the nineteenth century and it is unlikely that this group completely disappeared by 1887. Thus, this census may also reveal sentiment about mulattos. Vallejo includes the mulatto in history in 1882, about five years before this census, but does not classify mulattoes in a specific racial category here. This decision may have been influenced by the perceptions of mulattoes according to scientific race theory. Honduras, like other Latin American nations was attempting to define itself racially, but could only do so within the parameters of scientific racism. The decision to identify most of the population as “ladino” and not to identify a “mulatto” group could have been influenced by the paradigm of the inferiority of afro-descendants according to scientific race theory and their inability to embody progress within the nation. Scientific race theory specifically labeled mulattos as “hybrids” and “mongrels” as seen in Darwinism. In Honduras, a nation that desperately needed progress, it may not have been so unfavorable to include the mulatto in history, but it may have been detrimental to the “imagined community” to include a real population of mulattos in 1880s Honduras. On the other hand, Vallejo simply could have sought to identify mulattoes at that time with a history of racially-mixed heritage and no longer with a specific mulatto history. During this time, the mulatto was probably transitioning from slave-descended *ladino* to simply “mixed race” *ladino* or had made the transition. As a result, the national narrative may have been going in a different direction, which sought to consolidate a single national heritage for all racially-mixed “ladinos”. Thus, the mulatto group could have been suppressed for purposes of national cohesion. This decision however, is problematic, as it suppresses the slave origins of the mulatto group. Those looking at the census that are unaware of Central American historical use of the term *ladino* may not be aware that *ladinos* are non-white, non-Indian Spanish-speakers, who could be slave-descended. Instead, an assumption could be made about the existence of a general “mestizo” Spanish-Indian racially-mixed heritage, which does not include those of African descent. A reader may

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582. Euraque, *Estado, poder, nacionalidad*, 78-79. Based on a document sent to the census takers for the 1887 census, recovered by Marvin Barahona.

decide *ladino* is equivalent to *mestizo* because the terms are often confused in Honduran historiography and in Latin American Studies. If a reader does not know what the term “ladino” means, they may be left confused about this term. Either way, the ambiguity of this term in the census could influence the subsequent writing of a national narrative, one in which the mulatto is not included and a general racially-mixed identity is upheld. If the conjectures made above are true, they may have affected the creation of a Honduran national identity, which may help answer to questions of Honduran national identity today.

### 4.6 Conclusion

Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo sought to execute progress in Honduras through educational policy and what they interpreted as positivist “scientific experiments” in the writing of scholastic historical texts and census-taking. These would constitute a Honduran national narrative to unify the nation and encourage progress. Both Rosa and Vallejo write about the historical presence and contribution of the mulatto, which demonstrates not only the existence of slave-descendants in Honduras, and the ambiguity of their black heritage, but also their presence and participation as part of a Honduran national narrative. These histories were written in 1879 and 1882. However, approximately five years later, the actual presence of mulattoes in Honduras is not accounted for in the Census of 1887. The suppression of the mulatto group could indicate that scientific racism influenced Vallejo in his decision to include only racial two categories for all the Honduran population: *ladino* and indigenous. Perhaps Vallejo was also influenced by the desire to consolidate a homogenous national identity to unify the population. Whatever the reason, it can be concluded that Rosa and Vallejo incorporated who they believed was relevant to write the national narrative and shape an “imagined community.” For some reason, the mulatto is part of the early national narrative, though little is known about this group in Honduras. The status of the mulatto in nineteenth century Honduras thus remains somewhat undefined. Perhaps further study can determine the extent to which the mulatto was part of a national identity.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I seek to address the questions:

Why is the mulatto, a slave-descendant, present in early Honduran national history? What would lead to overlooking the racial heritage of the mulatto so that they would be included in the national narrative? What would lead writers of Honduran history to exclude mulattos as a group after their inclusion in the national narrative?585

As demonstrated by the presence of the mulatto in these historical writings and their exclusion as a separate racial category in the 1887 Census, the mulatto was both included and excluded from the Honduran national narrative. The mulatto was included in the national narrative because of race-mixing, political processes influenced by liberalism, and the presence of the Garifuna on the Honduran coast. The mulatto was very likely excluded from the national narrative as a racial group because of the influence of positivism and scientific race theory and a new discourse of race that encouraged one racial classification for those of mixed race. These processes can help solve the issue of a Honduran national identity. Their progression is reviewed below.

In Chapter 2, I begin my analysis of the mulatto with an assessment of the presence of black slaves in Honduras, from which the mulatto emerged as a large racial group in the colonial period as a result of slavery and miscegenation. Next, there is an explanation how race-mixing gave rise to slave-descended populations who did not necessarily identify with black ancestry, but as racially mixed. In Honduras, the colonial ladino was a mixture of different races that existed during and within the casta hierarchy. As the colonial era declined and liberalism led to the independence movement, lados came to be identified as those of mixed race, who were not indigenous and who could legitimately exploit the indigenous.586 Ladino Hondurans, which included mulattos, came in contact with liberalism, and issues

585. Please see page 1 of this thesis, by Shayla Jacobs.

586. See Barahona, Evolución histórica, 63-65; Barahona, Introducción, 35; and Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, Central America, 121.
such as class, property rights, education and economic development were more pressing than issues of race.\textsuperscript{587} Liberal theory was generally somewhat more accepting of those of racially-mixed origin in the Americas; in Central America and Honduras, many of mixed-race participants politically in the independence movement, as unionists or separatists. Several mulatto Hondurans came to political and military prominence likely because of such liberal ideas on race. Further bolstering the claim of slave-descended Honduran mulattoes to a non-black racially-mixed identity was the presence of the Garifuna on the Honduran coast since 1797. General Ferrera, a mulatto, referred to this group as “morenos” in 1842 because of their more African appearance and culture in comparison to the mulatto.\textsuperscript{588} This set the precedent for mulattoes to identify themselves as ladinos and no longer as afro-descendants or with a slave-descended heritage.\textsuperscript{589} The slave-descended mulatto thus participated in the forging of the nation during independence movement and in early national politics. The presence and participation of the mulatto in these processes in the colonial and early national periods may have influenced the appearance of the mulatto in the national narrative of Honduras in the late nineteenth century. However, as liberal ideals came into contact with positivism and scientific race theory the status of the mulatto may possibly have become more precarious.

The third chapter examines the influence of Honduran liberalism, European positivism and scientific race theory and Latin American versions of positivism and scientific race theory on the decision to write history during the Liberal Reforms of 1876. After the fall of the Central American Federation, liberalism still existed in the new republic of Honduras. During this time, there was a shift in racial classification because of ideas about liberal citizenship in the new Honduran republic and an overlap of new philosophies of positivism and scientific racism. These may have influenced racial identification in Honduras, leading to the sustained identification of mulattos as racially-mixed or ladino, a heritage claimed since the colonial period.

\textsuperscript{587} Gudmundson and Lindo-Fuentes, \textit{Central America}, 120-123.
\textsuperscript{588} Euraque, “Free Pardos,” 93-94.
\textsuperscript{589} Ibid., 95.
Meanwhile, as liberalism overlapped with positivism, European theories such as Comtean positivism, Darwinism and social Darwinism looked to science and evolution as determinants of progress. Non-whites were scientifically proven to be less “evolved” and thus “inferior” and less progressive. Because of their African ancestry, the mulatto group fit into a category of inferiority. Latin American elites and intellectuals were emphatic about positivism, yet it was closely aligned with scientific race theory. After interpreting these theories, elites and intellectuals were obligated to address race, especially racial determinism, which could prevent progress. Latin American elites and intellectuals had little choice but to alter scientific race theory instead of succumbing to the fate of racial determinism. In the name of progress, a more conservative “liberal” reform agenda resulted for the benefit of the elite. This did not include equalizing the masses, but rather exercising social control over this potentially unruly group. An attempt to do this was made through European immigration and later, through education.

The first viable solution to counter a mixed-race heritage was “whitening” through European immigration, which was meant to bring European-style progress. This was largely unsuccessful as Europeans did not integrate with Latin Americans as it was hoped. Education was the next most suitable recourse to modernize the mixed-race population and avoid racial determinism. Argentine Domingo Sarmiento and Chilean José Lastarria were two influential intellectuals who encouraged education in Latin America to ensure progress. Education encouraged and cultivated the potentially positive qualities of the throngs of mixed-race and unified the population. In Honduras, the Liberal Reforms of 1876 influenced the writing of history to be taught in schools to address the positivist agenda of education. The mulatto appears in the histories written during these reforms.

Chapter 4 introduces the ideas of Honduran positivism, the emphasis on education and analyzes the mulatto in several works of Honduran positivists Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo. As the positivist regime carried out the Liberal Reforms from 1876 through 1890, throughout Honduras, positivist philosophy was carefully followed. History was written and the scientific method of observation was implemented through the census to assess the populations. These positivist reforms were an attempt to unify Hondurans in the

establishment of an imagined community through education. Ramón Rosa wrote about education extensively, later implementing educational reform, beginning with free primary education. After an assessment of what positivist education intended to address in Honduras, the history of the mulatto is provided to demonstrate the writing of history and the inclusion of the mulatto in the national narrative.

The latter part of this chapter details the appearance of the mulatto in these histories and the suppression of the mulatto group as a racial category. To introduce the imagined community, the mulatto is inserted into the Honduran national narrative of the independence period and the early republic, but the mulatto group is omitted as a racial category from the population in 1887. This is done by two influential Honduran intellectuals, Ramón Rosa and Dr. Antonio Vallejo. In 1879, Rosa wrote about Francisco Ferrera, a mulatto who contributed militarily during independence. In 1882, Vallejo highlighted the presence of mulattoes in the Tegucigalpa area (circa 1817) and the “mulatta” as part of the casta system during the colonial period. Honduran mulattos are written as part of national history by both Rosa and Vallejo, indicating mulatto contribution to Honduran colonial and early republican history, which was likely a result of liberal acceptance. As part of positivist observation, Vallejo conducted the 1887 census in Honduras in order to observe and assess the nation. By this time, the mulatto group was not a separate racial category in addition to “ladino” and “indigenous”. This omission can indicate the influence of scientific racism on positivism thought regarding decisions of racial classification or the desire to consolidate a singular national identity for those of mixed-race. The inclusion of the mulatto in the national narrative until 1887 and the exclusion of this group from the national narrative in 1887 may help inform previously stated questions of Honduran national identity.

Within the imagined community of Honduras in the late nineteenth century, the mulatto existed and was perceived as part of community in the colonial province and early republic of Honduras. However, within a span of five years, the mulatto was no longer

591. Rosa, “Francisco Ferrera.”
592. Vallejo, Compendio, 52.
593. Ibid., 133.
594. Vallejo and Honduras Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, Censo General.
specifically mentioned as part of the imagined community in the census. This occurrence marks a shift in the perception of mulattoes as part of the imagined community between 1821 and 1887 as the mulatto became permanently associated with a racially-mixed ladino identity. In Honduras, an unofficial discourse of race-mixing as part of national identity had been established early on and was implemented beginning in the colonial period. The mulatto was associated with slavery but was also part of this racially-mixed heritage. This association with a racially-mixed heritage warranted the appearance of mulattoes in the national narrative, which supported ladino heritage. Thus, early on, the mulatto was very likely more associated with being racially-mixed than with being slave-descended. Eventually, the mulatto group was manipulated out of the national story by the turn of the twentieth century to introduce a consolidated, homogenous ladino racial identity. The mulatto group did not simply disappear through race-mixing; rather, they were involved in the midst of changing discourses on race and race-mixture as part of a new national heritage and identity. In the emergence of a Honduran national narrative and in the formation of a national identity, traces of mulattoes or the slave-descended began to be eradicated in order to officially uphold a racially-mixed, ladino identity. The scant mention of the mulatto in history and the omission of the mulatto racial group in the 1887 census reveal a process in which the slave-descended heritage of the Honduran mulatto could have been suppressed until there was silence on mulatto heritage.

Not surprisingly, the influence of the race aspect of the coloniality of power has much to do with the mention the mulatto as a specific group in history and the eventual progression into silence about the presence of this group by the late nineteenth century. In his short history of 1879, Rosa identified Francisco Ferrera as a mulatto, an identification that was influenced by colonial racial classifications, though Honduras had been independent from Spain some sixty years before this piece was written. Ferrera lived through the decline of the Spanish in the colonies, through independence in 1821 and was present for the formation of the Honduran nation in 1838, about twelve years before he died in exile in 1851. This “iron mulatto” lived through turbulent times in Honduran and continued substantially to the national narrative. In 1882, Vallejo also identifies mulattoes in Tegucigalpa, also related to the racial classification inherent in the coloniality of power. Perhaps even more directly related to the racial classification in the coloniality of power is Vallejo’s mention of the
mulatta as part of the *casta* system used by the Spanish in the colonial period. For whatever reason, Vallejo thought it was important to include the mulatto as a particular group in colonial Honduran history, however brief their mention. These examples point to the presence and contribution of mulattos, a fact which was not denied by Rosa or Vallejo in their writing of history. Though Honduras had been independent about fifty years when these histories were written, the mention of the mulatto as a specific racial group indicates the pervasiveness of colonial perceptions of race, even in a time when a *ladino* racial identity was still being consolidated in Honduras. Even during Honduran nation-building, colonial perceptions of difference were still pervasive in society and influenced the newly forming imagined community. These perceptions were so pervasive that, though a specific mulatto group was mentioned in history, this group was still suppressed five years later to accommodate a newly emerging national identity. In seeking to no longer adhere to colonial classifications of race as part of a new national identity, the race aspect of the coloniality of power was further replicated through the suppression of a mulatto group. This group was historically less associated with colonial power, in comparison to Spanish, creole or *mestizo* groups. The fact that this group was not included in the census could indicate the degree to which the mulatto was associated not only with progress, but also with power. Mulattoes in Honduras were very likely present, but were not powerful enough as a group to maintain sustained association in the Honduran national narrative as a specific group. Though the coloniality of power influenced the inclusion of mulattoes in the national narrative and their eventual suppression as a group, mulattoes remain part of Honduran history and heritage.

As seen in this thesis, mulatto heritage is often conflated with a *ladino*, racially-mixed heritage, within which the African and slave heritage of the mulatto is not the focal point. This phenomenon is a result of the historical premium on race-mixing and retaining a racially-mixed identity in Honduras. Thus, revisiting the African heritage and slave heritage of the mulatto is a feasible starting point for understanding Honduran *ladino-mestizo* identity. This possibility creates a new set of questions. How does researching the mulatto group contribute to understanding early national identity? How does the mulatto answer questions of Honduran national identity in the late twentieth century and in the early twenty-first century? These questions can be cumbersome to address because of issues surrounding the
disassociation of the mulatto with an African or slave heritage and the over-association of the mulatto with a racially-mixed ladino heritage.

Honduras is a nation that it is generally unknown there was a distinct mulatto population or even an afro-descended slave presence. There has been little to no research on the experiences of black slaves, who are ascendants of the mulatto. The almost complete lack of focus on black slave presence in Honduras affects knowledge of the presence of a mulatto group because of the historical association between these two groups. As a result, this could affect the availability of the lived experiences of mulattoes as a specific group in this time period. The main issue in determining the experiences of black slaves and mulattoes is the fact that many records about black slaves and mulattoes have been lost or yet to be recovered, making it all the more difficult to determine an afro-descended culture and to what extent mulattoes as a slave-descended group contributed to a national heritage. Virtually the only way to do this is through extensive archival research in which there is an attempt to determine the association of mulattoes with an afro-descended slave heritage. Such research could find more evidence of mulatto subjects in the record and look for any evidence of lived experience to ascertain mulatto participation in the nation and any affiliation with a slave heritage. The importance of the mulatto group in Honduras could then be determined more accurately.

The Honduran mulatto is also virtually unknown because the mulatto was included in national history as racially-mixed participants and subsumed into a general group of race-mixed citizens in a liberal nation that favored a national mestizo identity. Problematic to studying the mulatto in the nineteenth-century and in present-day Honduras is the discourse of race-mixing, which assumes a Spanish-Indian racial mixture and downplays the African component, as explained above. The Honduran mulatto is presented through a paradigm of mestizaje because the mulatto was understood as part of a ladino heritage. The mulatto as both slave-descended and racially-mixed flesh out understand how those of African (or slave) descent may have been perceived Honduras in the late nineteenth-century. Thus, the mulatto could be a source to discover an early national Honduran identity that is related to both a slave-descended and racially-mixed heritage. Honduran national heritage would then have a specific heritage of race-mixing, instead of a generalized Spanish-Indian mestizo
heritage. Perhaps the process of *mulataje* could be part of Honduran *ladino* heritage in the colony and early republic, addressing the issue of national identity in Honduras.

If the issues discussed above are addressed in scholarship, the Honduran mulatto as part of the national narrative can contribute to answering more current questions of Honduran national identity. In the 1980s and 1990s, Honduran scholars were questioning why Hondurans did not seem to have an obvious culture or national identity. Several Honduran scholars came to the conclusion that it lies in how *mestizaje* has been treated in Honduras and how it has been accepted as a paradigm because that’s what occurred throughout Latin America. However, after researching identity and the history of Honduras, these scholars came to the conclusion that the national identity of Honduras lies within black and indigenous cultures, histories and heritage. They claim that *mestizaje* occurred differently in Honduras because of the *ladino*, who is a mixture of three races and the facts that much of the population was non-indigenous in the colonial and early national periods. However, this race-mixing fragmented the Honduran population and did not result on a specific Honduran culture or national identity. Hondurans recognize the African component of *mestizaje*, but it is minimized and there have been efforts to erase blackness from national Honduran identity. The effort to minimize slave-descended heritage contributes to the lack of a Honduran specific heritage of race-mixing. Honduran scholars then studied contemporary ethnic groups such as the Garifuna and the indigenous of Honduras and began researching historical groups present in the colonial and early national periods. Though the Garifuna have helped *mestizo* Hondurans lay claim to a rich cultural heritage, this thesis engages with the researching of historical groups present in Honduras to answer questions of national identity, especially the slave-descended Honduran mulatto, from whom many *ladino-mestizo* Hondurans today descend. The work of several Honduran historians and anthropologists suggests that Hondurans lay claim to its slave heritage and accept an afro-descended black or mulatto heritage. This is especially necessary, since, according to Manual Chávez Borjas,

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595. *Mulataje* is the practice of race-mixing among mulattos, and the process usually involves contestation of colonial power. See Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire*, 79.


most of the Honduran population has African phenotypic features. In finally claiming this heritage, perhaps a national identity can be solidified and Hondurans will be more unified as a result of knowing this special mulatto history in addition to a history of race-mixing. The Honduran mulatto could very well be an important link to truly understand and define a Honduran national heritage and identity.

Mulatto heritage is important to understand issues of race and race-mixing in the national narratives of Latin America. Though Honduras has a certain history of slave presence, race-mixing, and politics affecting racial classification and the mulatto in the national narrative, these processes represent the complexity of mulatto heritage throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Hopefully, future scholarship will reconcile the delicate balance of racial identity and the national narrative as it relates to the mulatto group. It is also hoped that this thesis begins to capture an example of this complexity.

599. Chávez Borjas, Identidad, 14.
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