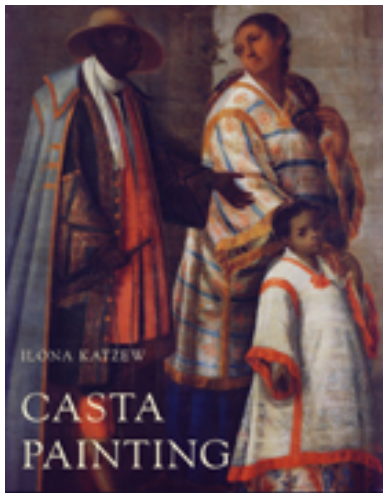


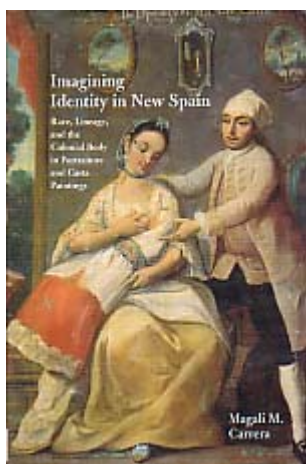
Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico.

by Thomas B.F. Cummins

ILONA KATZEW, *Casta Paintings: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. 256 pp.; 127 color ill., 143 b/w. \$60.00



MAGALI M. CARRERA, *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. 188 pp.; 12 color ill., 60 b/w. \$40.00



In eighteenth-century New Spain (Mexico), a genre of painting appeared, the likes of which had never been seen before. Called casta paintings in English, this new genre took as its subject the colonial issue of race (*raza*), racial intermarriage, and their offspring. Almost always painted in a series of approximately sixteen canvases, they depict a mother, father, and child, each of whom represents a different category within the *sistema de castas*, or racial lineages. For example, the first painting in the series normally represents a Spaniard, an Indian, and their child, a mestizo. These remarkable paintings have become increasingly the subject of studies and exhibitions in the last twenty years. (1) These recent books by Iлона Катзев and Magali M. Carrera add greatly to our knowledge about this unique and fascinating genre, and they demonstrate at the same time the growth of the field of Latin American colonial art history in the United States. More important, their work demonstrates that scholars in the United States are no longer interested only in the art and architecture of the sixteenth century, an area first plowed by George Kubler (to use his metaphor), Harold We they, and George MacAndrew in the United States and by a much larger

contingent of scholars from Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, and Spain. New and careful studies in the United States by such scholars as Jaime Lara, Jeanette Peterson, Elizabeth Boone, and Barbara Mundy concerning the sixteenth century have been published. New and important work also is being published in Peru, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico, and a list would be too long to mention the outstanding research that has enlivened the sixteenth-century colonial art studies in the past twenty years. It is, in fact, now possible to teach an early Spanish colonial art history course using a wide range of material published in English. But now, as this area matures, some art historians throughout the Americas are looking to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as fertile fields of inquiry, and not only in areas of religious art--although the production of religious art certainly predominates in all colonial periods--but also in the study of secular works such as maps, textiles, silver-work, portraits, and casta paintings.

The two books by Carrera and Katzew are additions to this growing area. While their almost simultaneous publication on the same eighteenth-century genre may seem imbalanced in light of how much other work remains to be done in the field of eighteenth-century Mexican art and architecture, their efforts might be best understood as a consequence of the tremendous attraction exerted by casta paintings. Beyond their aspect as visually arresting paintings, these works, unlike any other genre of painting in Western art, deal directly and concretely with the visualization of racial categories within the colonial context of a broad racial discourse. As such, casta paintings resonate in various ways with modern sensibilities about race; it should be no surprise that the recent exhibition of casta paintings curated at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art by Ilona Katzew drew a very large, enthusiastic, and diverse public. In fact, any American viewer of today--and by American I mean anyone in the Americas--who looks at these paintings must come face-to-face with the roots of racialized America. Casta paintings, as both Katzew and Carrera point out, constitute a pivotal part of the formation of racial categories and how they are registered in Mexico. The paintings visually order the interracial marriages of New Spain, beginning with a marriage between a Spaniard (Español) and an Indian (Indios); a Spaniard and a Negro (Negros); a Negro and an Indian. These marriages are compounded in racial diversity by the marriages of their children (mestizos, mulattoes, and so on). The progression has infinite possibilities in terms of the degree of mixture. However, casta paintings are organized in a predetermined sequence, often numbered from one to sixteen, so that the order cannot be altered. It therefore composes a closed series in which is found a bewildering and ultimately fictitious set of categories for the descending categories of racial mixing. For example, from the marriage between an Español (Spaniard) and *torna atrás* (literally, return backward, who is the offspring of the marriage of a Spaniard and albino) is born a *tenete en el aire* (hold-yourself-in-midair). This immediately poses the question: What racial category is an albino in the system of castas in Mexico? To arrive at the category of albino in the casta series there must first be a marriage between a Spaniard and a *mulata*, the child of whom is called a *morisco*. The *morisco* in turn must marry a Spaniard, whose child is termed an albino. Of course, in reality, not all *moriscos* and Spaniards have albino children and not all albino children are born to *morisco* and Spanish parents. The system of castas is not, however, about such logic. Casta paintings as a series present a clear causal progression that includes the albino as a predictable and known casta. Neither author ever thoroughly addresses this category in terms of the casta series, although Katzew offers an interesting discussion of the albino as described by two Spanish authors in relation to "whiteness and blackness" (pp. 47-48).

The casta series cannot fully operate without the terms used to designate each of the castas, yet in some ways the paintings are fundamentally different from the names of the categories that are written on the canvases. As Katzew and Carrera make clear, many of the names have no legal status and derive from street jargon. Some terms are ultimately not understandable. They become something that is identifiable only through the images themselves, the pictured bodies. The differences and distinctions implied by such names can only be imagined as substantial by a comparison of the figures in one painting with the other figures in the series. The castas must then

be painted in a series because this is the crucial and defining element of the genre. In fact, one cannot think of the genre in terms of individual works. It is always a set of works that conveys a sense of ordered, understandable relationships, especially for someone not versed in the patois of Mexico City. This is important, as many of the series did not stay in New Spain but were taken to Spain. Painting is infinitely more thorough and economic in its capacity to make real and convincing the racial distinctions than are terms such as coyote, lobo, cambujo, torna altrás, and so on. The illusion of the paintings is that somehow one can recognize by means of appearance the category to which an individual might be assigned. As both authors assert, the painted bodies, like these terms, are a fiction of racial discourse. Nonetheless, the reality of that fiction begins with a legal set of binaries between Indian, Spaniard, African. (2) It is from their intermarriage that the first new people of the New World were begotten and whose subsequent intermarriages begot ever more "new people."

Casta paintings began to be made in the eighteenth century, with the earliest set dated to 1711, and they continued to be produced into the early republican period. Katzew has identified more than a hundred sets, which range widely in size and quality (pp. 63-64). Many of the series are anonymous, a condition common to much colonial art and architecture, but a number of the sets are signed by some of the most distinguished eighteenth-century Mexican painters, an indication that this was a seriously desired genre. Some of the earliest series were commissioned by viceroys and ecclesiastical functionaries as a way of presenting the different racial mixtures of New Spain to the king (Katzew, p. 69). This function continued to be important, so that the only known series produced in the viceroyalty of Peru was commissioned by the viceroy Manuel de Amat y Junyent, to be sent to Carlos III in 1770. (3) More interesting, perhaps, is that only one Spanish-born artist, Francisco Clapera, is known to have painted a casta series (Katzew, p. 23). The rest were painted by Mexican artists, many of whom were of mixed lineage. It is as if the local artist could best give vision to each painting, understanding the subtleties of difference. One might say then that these Mexican artists, through the act of painting, performed the habitus of colonial values assigned to racial relationships. Katzew only hints at this at the conclusion of her book. For Carrera, the artist is an almost meaningless category. But it was the artist who first stood before his series, which when properly arranged, created in sum the hierarchy of social being as determined by birth, beginning with a Spaniard and an Indian.

Both books attempt, in different ways, to situate the creation and development of the casta paintings within the discourse of race in colonial Mexico but without ever asking why they occurred only in New Spain, which is a serious flaw. Casta paintings are not an intrinsic expression of Spanish colonialism of the eighteenth century, and Mexico was but a small part of the Spanish Empire at the beginning of the century, yet both authors treat the casta paintings as an element of a universal Spanish colonial culture. The particularities and the conditions of possibilities by which the casta paintings were produced are never articulated. Instead, each author seeks to contextualize the casta paintings within the broad discourse of race and color theory, as if their creation and popularity in Mexico were a natural condition of a univocal colonial discourse. Or, as Carrera writes, "the visual practice of casta genre painting was an extension and a perfect tool of the late-colonial discourse of New Spain" (p. 135). If it were true that casta painting was such a perfect tool, then we need to know how late colonial discourse was different elsewhere such that casta painting was not a perfect tool. And/or we need to know more about artistic practices and expectations in New Spain such that casta painting became so popular. Unfortunately, Carrera's discussion of the discursive range is much too narrow in scope, making her analysis less convincing in terms of how the paintings might be understood. She looks to the archival record primarily as a social historian rather than as a social art historian and therefore lays stress on such documents as cédulas reales (royal decrees), bandos (edicts), ordenanzas (ordinances), as well as court cases and baptismal records. For example, Carrera begins with a historical anecdote concerning the successful attempt of a criollo (someone of direct Spanish descent on both sides and born in the

Americas), Cristobal Ramon Bivian, to have his wife, Dona Margarita, be recognized as a criolla (pp. 1-6). It was argued that her name had been entered into the wrong baptismal book, a *libro de color quebrado* (literally, book of broken color, or book of those born with mixed blood), and that she should have been registered in the baptismal book of Spaniards with clear descent from either side (*limpieza de sangre*). He won the case, and the court ordered that her name be erased from the *libro de color quebrado* and entered into the *libro de espanoles*. This vignette is interesting, as it demonstrates the critical aspect of racial identification in New Spain and elsewhere in the Spanish viceroalties. More important, it also points to one of the major conceptual weaknesses of both books.

Agency concerning racial construction is always located within written documents, especially legal ones, and the paintings seem to have had a passive role, a reflection, as Carrera writes. What I mean by agency here is a rather straightforward reading of J. L. Austin's concept of performative language in which the legal utterance has performative force. That is, the simple existence of the statement (text) literally changes the reality of worldly existence by saying (writing) it. In this case, the literal reinscription of a name from one book to another changes the racial and therefore the social identity of a human being. Casta painting cannot do this, although other paintings can change reality by their coming into being, such as a map of boundaries or a miraculous image, the Virgin of Guadalupe being the most important miraculous painting in eighteenth-century New Spain. It is not, however, in the ontological nature of casta paintings to change reality. Casta paintings do something else, although the reader of either book is never sure what it is they do and where they do it. Neither author presents a description of a real space where the paintings were ever seen. They instead exist freely as an archive of paintings that are viewed by no one but the painter, the rare patron, and the even rarer collector, most often in Spain. Thus, any phenomenological understanding of these paintings as objects within the world does not exist in either book. One wonders how a series was displayed. Were they all hung at once as a series on a wall? Were any of the sets quickly disassembled and displayed individually? Many series are now dispersed; when did such a dispersal begin? There is much empirical work still to be done, despite the accomplishments of Katzew and Carrera.

It must be recognized that Katzew's book begins with a much more thorough historical approach, and her dating and discussion of the paintings earns more trust because of this. Based on original research in archives and collections throughout the world as well as a comprehensive reading of more recent studies, the book offers a more nuanced and provocative reading of the paintings as the book progresses to look at other discursive forms and practices. She concludes that casta paintings as a genre had a multiplicity of meanings (p. 201), and her chapter 5 teases out these various meanings in relation to other works. But it all begins with Katzew's careful tracing in the first chapter of the development of casta paintings as a genre, starting by identifying the earliest known set of casta paintings (1711) by one of the Arellano brothers. This first known series is composed of single figures, but it clearly inspired Juan Rodriguez Juarez four years later in his painting of the next two series of multiple figures. As Katzew demonstrates, not only are his figures modeled on Arellano's earlier series but also there is a historically documented relationship between the Arellano brothers and Juan Rodriguez Juarez. Katzew goes on to provide a number of new series as well as the historical documentation that links the artists and their production. Both authors convincingly discuss the changes that occur throughout the century, in which the compositions begin to depict greater details of social status. However, the casta paintings and their development are not an unmediated reflection of reality that "changed through time to reflect shifting circumstances," as Carrera suggests (p. 52). When one falls back on the idea of reflection as an explanatory framework, then what is reflected becomes the foreground of the analysis, which is the case in Carrera's book. Hence, Carrera's book contains much less investigation about the casta paintings (only a handful are mentioned), whereas Katzew's book is an in-depth art historical study of the genre and its sources. Katzew is then able to create a much broader contextual view, drawing

on a much wider range of evidence, such as unpublished satirical manuscripts that complicate how the casta paintings might have resonated in New Spain.



Manuel Arellano

Juan Rodríguez Juárez

And so the question becomes: What do these paintings do that such texts cannot? Are they simply illustrative, with no effect? These questions are never fully explored in either of these books. What is put on view is not portraiture in the terms of its likeness to a specific individual but rather individual traits that are categorical, such as degrees of color and facial features. Carrera is particularly mistaken, I believe, to jump too quickly to a comparison between portraits and casta paintings in chapter 1. The mistake lies in not delineating first the characteristics of the casta genre and then outlining the differences between the two genres, what a portrait is and does, and what a casta painting is and does. And this could easily have been accomplished, as the text of the 1711 painting of a mulata by Arellano, the earliest known casta painting, makes the genre's intention clear. To the left of the figure a simple instructional text, not framed by a cartouche, is written: "(The) Rendering of (a) Mulata, daughter of a Black and a Spaniard in Mexico City, Capitol of America, on the 22nd of the Month of August of 1711." The text makes clear that the subject of the painting is a type of person who is racialized through a specific kind of marriage in a specific place. The painting is a "rendering," as indicated by the term *diceno*. The text ensures that there is no confusion as to what the painting is and what it is about. It decidedly declares that it is not a painting of a specific individual, not a portrait. That is, the early text of Arellano's painting of a mulata must be read in relation to the other major genre, portraiture, to which Carrera compares casta paintings. The portraits in New Spain very often also declare themselves textually in terms of their subject and their genre. The portrait by Juan Correa of Fray Melchor Lopez de Jesus (ca. 1695-1700), for example, has the following text written below the figure: "El retrato del R. Fray Melchor Lopez de Jesus, predicador del Colegio de Misiones de Santa Cruz de Queretero" (Portrait of Friar Melchor Lopez de Jesus Preacher of the School of Missions of Santa Cruz de Queretero). The indexicals ("retrato" and "Fray Melchor") used here are different from those in Arellano's painting (*diceno* and *mulata*), if we refer to linguists C. S. Pierce and C. Morse, who both define indexicals as signs whose interpretation depends on the coexistence of the sign form and the object. Both casta painting and portrait present a double indexicality in terms of word and image. For Correa's work, the term *retrato* refers to the genre to which the specific painting belongs. That is, the word has a causal relation to the painting, as *retrato* declares what



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kind of painting it is. The visual image, through its likeness of the subject, is the paradigmatic icon for Pierce, as it represents its object mainly by its similarity. Carrera's rather loose comparison of the castas and portraits also keeps her from making a critical analysis of one of the most interesting paintings in any of the casta series. Yet Katzew's analysis also falls short, as her focus is more intent on the historical and art historical contextualization of the casta paintings as a whole than it is on a close analytical look at any one painting.

As in any genre, there are some paintings that in some fashion supersede the boundaries of the genre to take on the conventions of the genre on its own pictorial terms. A closer look at the painting entitled *De Espanol y de India, Mestisa* by Miguel Cabrera would, I believe, reveal that this artist was not just mechanically reproducing another series, albeit of the highest caliber, but engaging the very premises of the casta series. This painting initiates one of the most beautifully painted and complex series of all, full of richly textured details, as described by both Carrera (pp. 27-29) and Katzew (pp. 94-109). Painted in 1763 and signed by Cabrera, one of New Spain's most important artists of the eighteenth century, this painting confounds the genre and its intentions to delineate the visual characteristics of the various castas. Cabrera does it using the techniques of the painter in order to put into question the critical, underlying relation between text and image. The text reads, "From a Spaniard and an



Indian, a Mestiza." And so we see presented to us a rather coy Indian woman, dressed in a rich combination of textiles, whose right hand gently rests on the head of her mestiza daughter. The young girl looks up at her father, the Spaniard, who according to Carrera is "exercising his elite male prerogative to be seen in public spaces. A Spanish man, marked by his European-style clothing (complete with tri-corner hat and white wig), is placed in a unique and curious profile stance, with his head turned toward the Indian woman...." (p. 28). Katzew adds that Cabrera and his contemporary Juan Patricio Morlete Ruiz "initiated a trend of using clothing to indicate a broad range of socioeconomic class and ... the supremacy of the Spaniard is emphasized by portraying them with their families in sumptuous dress...." (p. 106). She concludes that "the difference between earlier casta sets and those produced after 1760, such as Cabrera's ... seems to correspond to the elite's increasing concern over the impossibility of discerning the different social groups in colonies, owing partly to the fact that clothes were often used to disguise identity" (p. 109).

Both descriptions and analyses address the painting directly, but it is as if neither author has looked at the painting's composition in relation to what they have written. How do we know this is a Spaniard? The figure has his back to the viewer. There is no "surveillance" to be had, a term that Carrera often uses. (4) The viewer does not see a profile face but a head turned looking into the canvas, with only a partial sight of the side of the face, hidden in shadow. We clearly see that the figure wears a wig and sumptuous clothes. But cannot these be a disguise? The only reason either

author identifies the figure as a Spaniard is because the word "Espanol" is written as an identifying marker. Yet it may not be a Spaniard at all, and the figure may not even be a man. Are the hands more masculine than the woman's hands? We suppose the figure to be a Spanish man because we are told so and because by 1763 the genre is so well established that anyone should know that the first canvas is almost invariably composed of a Spaniard, an Indian, and their child, a mestiza. However, can we tell if his hands--the only features we see clearly--are lighter than those of the wife and daughter? Perhaps, or at least, the open palm of the left hand is. This painting initiating the series does not definitively declare itself visually in terms of the main protagonist's physiognomy. The turning of a figure into the picture plane is, of course, a rather common painter's compositional trick to entice the viewer into the space of the canvas. And so we look, following along, toward the mother and daughter who stand before a stall stacked with bolts of rich textiles, each labeled "Xilotepeque," probably stating the kind of cloth or place from which it came. A table appears in the foreground on which are two pineapples, labeled "Pina," one whole and the other sliced, and one slice, half eaten, is held in the child's hand. All is so perfectly legible, both textually and visually, that one never questions if this figure really is a Spaniard or is someone dressed up to pose as a Spaniard. Yet both authors discuss the sumptuary laws and their need to unmask pretenders. Is the text's claim truthful? If we were to look again at the expressions of the daughter and wife, what would we see registered? Are they seeing the same thing as the viewer who registers seeing a Spaniard's back? Perhaps none of these were issues for Cabrera, but perhaps they were, and perhaps this artist was putting into question the underlying assumptions of the casta. At the very least, a painting such as this, among all the others, deserves a closer look by art historians.

Because the casta genre displays the sistema de castas as a divinely inspired hierarchy with the "Spaniards occupying the pinnacle of the social pyramid," we tend to see it from this point of view (Katzew, p. 201). However, throughout the New World there are alternative views to this hierarchy that were expressed differently but not so visually. One of the most impassioned was published in 1609 by El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a mestizo of the first generation of the conquest, the child of a Spanish Conquistador and an Inca princess. Baptized Gomez Suarez de Figueroa, he took up the name of the great Spanish poet Garcilaso de la Vega as an author of Peru's Inca and colonial history. In the last section of the first volume he penned the chapter "Nombres nuevos para nombrar diversas generaciones" (The New Names for Naming the Different Generations), in which he wrote:

We are forgetting the best that has come to the Indies which are the Spaniards and the Negroes, who have since been brought here as slaves in order to serve them [the Spaniards] because before then they were unknown in my land. From these two nations have been created others there [Peru], mixed in all sorts of manner, they are called by different names, in order to distinguish among them.... The children of a Spanish mother and father, born there [America], are called Criollo, or Criolla, which means that they are born in the Indies. This name was invented by the Negroes as its use shows. It means among them [those] Negroes who are born in the Indies; they invented it to distinguish those who come from here, born in Guinea, from those who are born there, as they hold those who are born in their country in greater esteem and higher rank [calidad] than those who are born outside of it, and the parents take offense if they are called Criollos. Similarly the Spaniards have introduced this word into their language in order to name those who are born there [the Americas]. Thus, both Spaniards and Africans born in the New World are called Criollos. For the Negro who comes from here is simply called Negro or Guineo. For the child of a Negro and Indian they say Mulato or Mulata. Their offspring are called Cholo, which is a word that comes from the Island of Barlovento, and means dog.... For the children of Spanish and Indian parents, we call ourselves Mestizos, which means, we are a mixture of both nations: [the term] was given by the first Spaniards who had children with Indian wives, and as it is a name given by our fathers, and because of what it

signifies, I call myself [mestizo] publicly and with great honor. However, in the Indies, if someone says thou art a Mestizo, or you are a Mestizo, it is taken as an insult.... Of the children of a Spaniard and a Mestizo, they are called a Quattraluos, which means that [they] have one [a fourth] Indian and three parts Spaniard. For the children of Mestizos and Indians they are called Tresaluos meaning that they have three parts Indian and one part Spaniard. All these names and others that I have left out, have been invented in my land in order to name the generations that have been [created] since the Spaniards arrived and therefore we can say that they have brought them with the other things that did not exist before.... (5)

This is an extraordinary statement by an extraordinary author. El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega does not use the term *casta* but rather *generacion* for two reasons. Generation is, in fact, the system that the *casta* paintings represent, but El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was writing in Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and *casta* was understood to be something different than it was in the eighteenth century. In 1611 Sebastian Covarrubias, the author of the first and extremely erudite Spanish vernacular dictionary, defined *casta* as "meaning noble lineage, 2, *castizo* he who is from a good line and descent; not withstanding that we say he is of Buena *casta* and mala *casta*." (6) The concept of noble lineage of the seventeenth century is nowhere to be seen in *casta* paintings. *Casta* paintings always begin with a Spaniard and an Indian and their child, a *mestizo*. That is, the notion of *casta* in the paintings does not begin with a Spanish or *criollo* couple and their child, an African couple and their child, or an Indian couple and their child, through whom "a noble lineage" is maintained. These are three sets of families that are presupposed and represented only insofar as the offspring of one set must marry the offspring of another. The way that the series begins and the fact that there is a sequential system that is numbered implicitly creates a hierarchy descending from the Spaniard who intermarries with either an Indian or an African. But race is a constructed set of categories that can be seen from radically different views. And El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a *mestizo* and perhaps the most widely read voice of America, presents a view that is not seen in the *casta* paintings but that is nonetheless a part of them as an antithesis. El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega employs many of the critical terms discussed by Carrera and Katzew, such as *calidad*, in their discussion of *casta* paintings, but he uses the terms differently and with a decidedly different inflection. Most important, El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega reverses the concept of the principal category of the *casta* paintings and articulates a pride in being a *mestizo*. He does so in his narrative by shifting person and place and by self-identification. His voice is therefore different from what Carrera and Katzew assume as the natural locus of enunciation of racial categories: the point of view assumed in the *casta* paintings, which is that of the Spaniard. From the point of view of someone such as El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the African and the Spaniard are the same. They are imports, like asparagus and wheat, rats and sugar, wheat and chickens, all things also brought to the Americas and described in the preceding chapters. Africans and Spaniards are both *criollos*, a concept named by Africans. The true honor of being in the Americas, *la calidad*, is to be a *mestizo*, a distinction of pride, for they are the first Americans. (7) This pride does not seem to appear in the *casta* series, for, as Katzew points out, artists such as Ibarra, Morlete Ruiz, and perhaps Cabrera, who all painted at least one *casta* series, were either *mestizo* or *mulatto*, but as they rose to be prominent painters in eighteenth-century Mexico City, they became "Spaniards" in the census of 1753 (p. 202). It is also important to note that that edition from which I quoted Garcilaso de la Vega was the second, published in 1723 and widely circulated in the Americas. These terms and concepts were already sixteenth-century concerns, and they also appear in the eighteenth century. His book is said to have been read by Andean elites, descendants of the Inca and *mestizos* such as Tupac Amaru, who led a rebellion in 1780 that almost drove the Spanish royal government from the southern highlands in Peru, or just seven years after the only *casta* series was painted in Peru.

By reading Katzew and Carrera, one comes away with a much better understanding of the tremendous complexities of art production in eighteenth-century New Spain. Katzew's book is the richer of the two, both in historical detail and broader contextualization, but Carrera's discussion of

the casta paintings as a developing visual practice opens up ways of thinking about late colonial painting as historical dialectic. Finally, Yale University Press, Katzew's publisher, must be congratulated on producing a truly beautiful book, with many excellent color illustrations. Because so many of these works are either little known or previously unknown, this publication is a great service to the field in general, especially at a time of publication cutbacks. Of the two books, it is clear that because of the quality of the research as well as the stunning reproductions Katzew's book will be the major source for years to come for anyone who wishes to study casta painting.

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Notes

1. Recent exhibitions of casta paintings include *El mestizaje americano*, Madrid Museo de America, 1985; *Las castas mexicanas: Un genero pictorico americano*, Museo de Monterrey, San Antonio Museum of Art, and Museo Frans Mayer, Mexico City, 1989-90; *New World Orders: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin American Painting*, Americas Society, New York, 1996; *Los cuadros de mestizaje del Virrey Amat: La representacion entografica en el Peru colonial*, Museo del Arte de Lima, 1999-2000; *Inventing Race: Casta Painting and Eighteenth-Century Mexico*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 2004. All but the last were accompanied by substantial exhibition catalogs. Katzew's book served as the catalog for the last exhibition.
2. A free urban black labor force already began to outnumber the slave population in New Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and by 1646 the free African and mulatto population numbered 116,529 in New Spain; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran, *La poblacion Negra de Mexico: Estudio etnohistorico* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1946), 219. Too late for either author to consult, Herman Bennett's *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness 1570-1640* (Bloomington: Indiana State University Press, 2003) would have brought the issue of Africans and intermarriage into greater relief in both Katzew's and Carrera's books.
3. See Natalia Majluf, ed., *Los cuadros de mestizaje del Virrey Amat: La representacion entografica en el Peru Colonial* (Lima: Museo del Arte de Lima, 1999).
4. Carrera suggests that surveillance is a strategy that organizes the paintings (pp. 82, 101-2) and that her overall argument is that casta paintings can be understood as "a set of visual practices embedded in broader regulatory narratives that simultaneously observed and constructed the late-colonial body" (p. 54). This idea derives ultimately from Michel Foucault's work, especially *Discipline and Punishment*, and its subsequent rereading by Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. Carrera specifically cites Bhabha's discussion of Foucault's analysis of the Panopticon that posits that "omnipresent surveillance is a colonial practice that makes all visible while keeping the observer invisible" (p. 18). Bhabha is detailing a particular kind of colonialism, and it is, I believe, dangerous to see the history of colonialism as a universal set of practices. Thus, Jeremy Bentham's infamous Panopticon is, as often is the case in art history, carelessly introduced as a kind of rhetorical trope about the nature of eighteenth-century visuality. It would be better, in Carrera's last chapter in which she discusses the end of casta paintings in the nineteenth century, to read Bentham's own thoughts on Mexico at the end of colonial Mexico, as it is here that history meets theory. Bentham had met with Aaron Burr in 1808 in London, where he listened to Burr's harebrained ideas of a Mexican empire in which Burr would be emperor and Bentham the legislator. While Bentham quickly passed on Burr's wild schemes, he saw the possibilities of Spanish America as testing area for his utilitarian ideas and became increasingly

interested in Simon Bolivar and in Venezuela and Colombia, where he hoped he might institute his Panopticon prison plan. Miriam Williford, *Jeremy Bentham on Spanish America: An Account of His Letters and Proposals to the New World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 5, 41. Bentham's correspondence with Bolivar is fascinating, especially his essay on the extended use of the subjunctive in Latin American writing and its implications for the future. But Bolivar, who may have been mulatto, mestizo, Spanish, or castizo, and his portrait are equally as interesting, for as he is embraced as a national hero in Venezuela, Bolivar's portrait features become ever increasingly whitened or darkened depending on how he was desired to be seen.

5. El Inca, Garcilaso de la Vega, *Primera parte de los comentarios reales* (Madrid: Nicolas Rodriques Franco, 1723), 339-40: "Lo mejor de lo que ha pasado a Indias, se nos olvidava, que son los Espanoles, y los Negros, que despues aca han llebado por Esclavos, para servirse dellos, que tampoco los avia antes en aquella mi Tierra. Destas dos naciones se han hecho alla otras, mezcladas de todas maneras, y para las differenciar, les llaman por diversos nombres, para entenderse por ellos.... A los Hijos de Espanol, y de Espanola nascidos alla, dicen Criollo, o Criolla, por decir, que son nascidos en Indias. Es Nombre, que lo inventaron los Negros, y asi lo muestra la obra. Quiere decir entre ellos, Negro nascido en Indias: inventaronlo para diferenciar los que van de aca, nascidos en Guinea, de los que nascen alla, porque se tienen por mas honorados, y mas calidad, por aver nascidos en la Patria, que no sus Hijos, por que nascieron en la agena, y los Padres se ofenden si les llaman Criollos. Los Espanoles, por la semejanca, han introducido este Nombre en su Lenguage, para nombrar los nascidos alla. De manera, que al Espanol; y al Guineo, nascidos alla, les llaman Criollos, Y Criollas. Al Negro, que va de aca, llanamente le llaman Negro, o Guineo. Al hijo de Negro, y de India, o de Indio, y de Negra, dicen Mulato, y Mulata. A los hijos de estos llaman Cholo, es vocablo de las Islas Barlovento, quiere decir Perro.... A los Hijos de Espanol, y de India o de Indio y Espanola, nos llaman Mesticos, por decir, somos mezclados de ambas Naciones: fue impuesto por los primeros Espanoles, que tuvieron hijos en Indias; y por ser nombre impuesto por nuestros Padres, y por su significacion, me lo llamo Yo a boca llena, y me honrro con el. Aunque el Indias, si a uno dellos le dicen, sois un Mestico, o es un Mestico, lo toman por menosprecio.... A hijos de Espanol, y de Mestica, o de Mestico y Espanola, llaman Quatralvos, por decir, que tienen quarta parte de Indio, y tres de Espanol. A Hijos de Mestico y de India o de Indio, y de Mestica, llaman Tresalvos por decir, que tienen tres partes de Indio, y una de Espanol. Todos estos Nombres, y otros, que por escusar hastio dejamos de decir, se han inventado en mi Tierra, para nombrar las Generaciones, que ha avido, despues de los Espanoles fueron a ella, y podemos decir, que ellos los llevaron con las demas cosas, que no avia antes...." Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.
6. "Casta vale linaje noble, 2, castizo el que es de Buena linea y descendencia: no embargante que decimos es de Buena casta y mala casta." Sebastian de Covarrubias y Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o espanola* (Madrid: Luis Sanchez, 1611). The term *casta* comes from the Latin term *castus*, meaning pure or chaste. *Casta* therefore is transformed by the colonizing global project to become something different in the Americas. The Portuguese, however, used *casta* in a slightly different way to term Indian society, but to the same effect of categorizing racial and social differentiation. From this sense comes the English colonial term *caste*.
7. Here El Inca anticipates the twentieth-century Mexican ideologue Jose Vaconcelos, who proposed for the ruling intellectual and political elite of Mexico the idea of the *raza cosmica*, or racial melting pot.

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