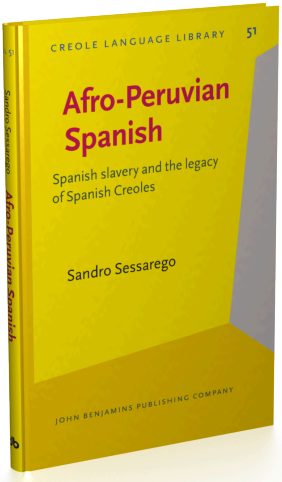
Creole Language Library
51

Chapter 5. Black slavery in Peru

https://doi.org/10.1075/cll.51.05ch5



Pages 79–116 of
Afro-Peruvian Spanish: Spanish slavery and the legacy of Spanish Creoles
Sandro Sessarego
[Creole Language Library, 51] 2015. xvi, 184 pp.

CHAPTER 5

Black slavery in Peru

5.1 Introduction

Black slavery lasted in Peru for almost four centuries. It was originally brought over from the Iberian Peninsula with the Spanish invasion, during the first decades of the 16th century, and was officially abolished only in 1854, under the presidency of Ramón Castilla y Marquezado, several decades after independence from Spain in 1824. However, as in the rest of Latin America, the official abolition of slavery, in practice, did not provide Afro-descendants with the same degree of freedom enjoyed by the white and mestizo sectors of the population. In fact, until the Agrarian Land Reform, which took place during the years 1963–1979, the majority of the Afro-Peruvians working on rural estates lived as peons, in a semi-feudal system: they were forced to work for free on haciendas four days a week, did not own land, and were provided with a small lot to work for their own benefit during their time off. These working dynamics long deprived Afro-Peruvians from social security and education. The wide-spread illiteracy resulting from this situation systematically excluded the black community from political representation until 1979, when the new constitution extended the right of voting to the uneducated sector of the population. Even today, the living conditions of black Peruvians are far from being optimal. A part of them live in urban suburbs, where they usually have blue-collar jobs, or work as domestic maids and guards; the rest predominantly inhabit the coastal rural regions of the country (e.g. Yapatera and Chapica, Department of Piura; Zaña and Bigote, Department of Lambayeque; Loredo and Cartavio, Department of La Libertad; a variety of other villages in the Departments of Ica, Moquegua and Tacna), where they typically make a modest living by growing cotton, grapes, sugarcane and rice on the small land parcels they were assigned after the Land Reform (cf. Cuba 2002: 17).

As Carlos Aguirre (2005) states, black slavery is a long-lasting "scare" in Peruvian history, and since it spans across a period of almost four hundred years, it cannot be studied in a homogeneous way. For this reason, I will attempt to examine this unfortunate episode of Peruvian history by breaking it down into three main phases, which may facilitate the analysis of the Afrodescendants' position in the Peruvian society over time and the consequent evolution of their language until the present day.

The first period is characterized by the arrival of a number of black slaves and freedmen, who participated with the Spaniards in the many campaigns of invasion and conquest during the 16th and the 17th centuries (roughly 1530–1650). These people proceeded primarily from Spain and from other American colonies under Spanish control (e.g. the Caribbean); at that time, the number of *bozales*[14] was quite reduced. The first blacks to enter the Andean territory were typically identified with the term *ladinos*,[15] which meant they had learned the Spanish customs, were Christians, and could speak Spanish fairly well. The second phase (1650–1760) saw an increase in the number of *bozales* introduced in Peru. They were primarily used in urban centers as domestic servants or skilled artisans and on coastal rural plantations as farmers. Lastly, the third phase (1760–1980) consisted of a gradual decline in African-born slave importations and a progressive acquisition of civil rights by Afro-Peruvians.

5.2 Slavery in the Spanish world before and during the American conquest

Before offering an analysis of black slavery in colonial Peru, it is fundamental to provide a brief account of the geopolitical situation that regulated slavery in the Spanish world before and during the American conquest.

During the fifteenth century, slaves could commonly be purchased in Spain. Some of them proceeded from the Caucasus and were brought into the region by Italian merchants; some were Moorish war prisoners, while others were blacks, generally captured in Africa and sold in the Peninsula by Arab traders (Watson 1989). In the 1450s, the Portuguese started breaking the Arabs' monopoly of trading in blacks since during the years they came in touch with new tribes along the Western coasts of Africa. By the 1460s, a considerable number of blacks had been introduced into Spain by the Portuguese. Some Spanish merchants tried to compete in this business with their Lusitanian neighbors, but after a few years of dispute, the Spanish Crown decided to cede the rights on the exploitation of the African mainland to Portugal in exchange for the Canary Islands. In 1493, one year after Columbus' 'discovery' of the Americas, by means of the papal bull *Inter Caetera*, Pope Alexander VI assigned to Spain the right of exploration of any territory discovered one hundred leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands.

---

14. A *bozal* was a slave born in Africa, not familiar with the Spanish language and customs.

15. A *ladino* was a slave born either in Spain or in the Americas, thus he could speak Spanish and was familiar with the Spanish traditions and lifestyle.

However, a year later, the agreement was revised and the monarchs of Spain and Portugal (with the support of the Catholic Church) drew a new document – the Treaty of Tordesillas – which established that the subdivision of the 'New World' between Spain and Portugal would have been along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, rather than just 100 leagues as previously stipulated (Bowser 1974: 2). Portugal, in this way, obtained the exploitation rights of what would become Brazil, the non-interference of Spain in Africa, as well as the possibility of reaching India by circumnavigating the African continent. In return, Spain obtained the rights to the rest of the Americas. This deal definitively formalized the non-intervention of Spain in the colonization of Africa and, therefore, its subsequent incapacity of directly providing its American colonies with black slaves.

In 1526, Charles V, the King of Spain, prohibited the enslavement of Indians, even in the case of war prisoners; the only exceptions that were made to this regulation happened in 1564–1569 for the Caribs, and in 1607 for the Indians of Chile, since these two native groups were considered extraordinarily aggressive (Andrés-Gallego 2005). Since Spain did not have its own African colonies; the Kings granted *asientos* 'trading licenses' to several foreign companies to supply Spanish America with black slaves. During most of the 16th century, *asientos* were assigned to a variety of Italian, Spanish and Dutch merchants. However, due to the subsequent union of the Spanish and Portuguese royal families, from 1580 to 1640 *asientos* came to be systematically assigned to Portuguese slave traders, who could directly import Africans from their enslaving forts along the Western African coast. In 1640, after the Portuguese declaration of independence from Spain, the Crown started reducing the employment of Portuguese traders, at the same time, it began to rely more and more on the French, the English, and the Dutch. From 1701 to 1711 the French Royal Guinea Company predominated in the business, which then passed to the English South Sea Company for the following thirty years, and then eventually to Dutch traders (Bourne 1904: 269–281; Colmenares 1997: 34).

5.3 Conquest and colonization (1530–1650)

Slavery had been present in Spain since Roman times, and when the Spaniards 'discovered' the Americas, they took this institution with them. Since the beginning of the Peruvian colonization, in the first decades of the 16th century, the Spanish conquerors brought with them a considerable number of black slaves, who were used as soldiers in the many campaigns of exploration and settlement. According to Torres Saldamando (1900: 409):

> El primer negro que pisó tierra peruana fue el que en 1526 desembarcó en Tumbes con Alonso de Molina cuando fue reconocido este puerto por los de Pizarro. (The first black person who entered Peru disembarked at Tumbes with Alonso de Molina when that port was reconnoitered by Pizarro's men).

What is also commonly reported about the Spanish arrival to Tumbes is that when the local Indians saw this black soldier, they were amazed by the color of his skin; they could not believe it and tried to wash it away by vigorously scrubbing what they thought to be dye on his body (Helps 1900: 310; Bowser 1974: 4).

These first blacks to enter the Andean region were usually Christians, who could speak Spanish, and had a good understanding of Spanish customs. They were typically born in the Iberian Peninsula or, if they were born in Africa, they had generally spent some time with their masters in Spain or in already settled Latin American colonies, so that they were for the most part *ladinos* (Bowser 1974: 3).

The Spanish Crown controlled a monopoly on slave trading to its colonies. As a result, this business was highly constrained. In fact, the Crown granted only a limited number of *asientos* to few trading companies. Moreover, for each slave transaction, it charged *almorjarifazgos* 'import taxes' and *alcabalas* 'sales taxes'. Such a strict regulation played an important role in limiting the introduction of Africans into Spanish America. This kept the ratio between the black and white populations relatively low in several colonies (see for example Díaz-Campos & Clements 2008 for Venezuela; Sessarego 2011a, 2013d for Bolivia and Ecuador; and Clements 2009: 68–101 for Cuba).

In the early reports of the conquest of Peru, black servants appear on several occasions. Soon after discovering Tumbes, Pizarro returned to Spain to seek military and financial support for his conquering enterprise. In 1529, he was granted royal support and, among other things, he received fifty-two black slaves free from duty charges (Bowser 1974: 4). Several other conquerors and settlers were given similar permissions to import a certain number of blacks. According to Bowser (1974), between 1529 and 1537 the Kings released at least 363 import licenses, of which 258 were given to Pizarro and his relatives.

Even though blacks were active participants in the invasion and colonization of the Americas, observers of the time rarely report their proper names in these military adventures; they often are just classified as *negros* 'blacks', thus generalizing their identity and depriving them of personality. Restall (2000: 184) analyzes Pedro de Cieza de León's mid-sixteenth century description of the conquest of Peru. He shows that Afrodescendants are mentioned in this historical account thirteen times for the Peruvian campaign and six times for the Chilean one; however, in none of these missions are blacks called by name. The author (2000: 174, 184), nevertheless, was able to trace back the identities of three of these black men. These soldiers were called Juan García, Juan Valiente, and Miguel Ruiz (cf.

Figure 5.1 A Spanish conquistador with his black servant (Guman Poma de Ayala 1615)

Lockhart 1968: 6–15, 380–384; Cook & Cook 1998: 243; Boyd-Bowman 1968: 134–151; Sater 1974: 16–17). Restall was able to reconstruct the biographies of two of them. I report this information here, since I believe it can provide us with important insights about the lives of the first blacks who entered the region, as well as about the language that they were likely to use (see Table 5.1 and Table 5.2).

The data reported for Juan García and Juan Valiente appear to support the claim that the first blacks involved in the colonization and settlement of the Andean region were probably *ladinos* who were born in the Iberian Peninsula or

Table 5.1 Biography of Juan García (Restall 2000: 186)

c. 1495?	Born free, near Jaraicejo (near Trujillo, Extremadura), probably of mixed black-Spanish parentage though later referred to by other Spaniards as "black".
1530	Recruited in Trujillo to join Pizarro expedition to conquest to Peru; leaves behind a wife and two daughters.
1531–34	Footman member of Pizarro-led expedition of conquest that leaves Panama in January 1531; holds the posts of crier (*pregonero*) and piper (*gaitero*) and is made responsible for weighing gold and silver at Cajamarca; present at the division of gold and silver at Coaque in 1531, at Cajamarca in 1533 (where he buys an enslaved native Nicaraguan woman from a fellow conquistador), and at Cuzco in 1534.
1534–35	One of the founding citizens of Spanish Cuzco, where he then resides.
1535–36	Travels to Lima, where he spends time preparing his return to Spain, then to Nombre de Dios (Panama) and back to Extremadura; takes with him his share of gold and silver and probably his illegitimate daughter and her native Andean mother, one of his servants.
1536–45	Lives in the Jaraicejo-Trujillo area to at least 1545, calling himself Juan García Pizarro; date of death unknown.

Table 5.2 Biography of Juan Valiente (Restall 2000: 187)

c. 1505?	Probably born in Africa.
Pre-1533	Resident in Puebla (Mexico) as the slave of Alonso Valiente.
1533	Leaves Puebla, with written and notarized permission from his owner to join conquest campaigns as soldier for four years; travels to Guatemala.
1534	Joins Pedro de Alvarado's expedition from Guatemala to Peru; Alvarado is bought out by Diego de Almagro but Valiente stays in Peru.
1535	Member of Almagro's expedition to Chile.
1540	Member of Juan de Valvidia's expedition to Chile, as a vested partner with his own horse; gains title of captain.
1541	His legal owner in Puebla sends a nephew with power of attorney to sell Valiente his freedom; the nephew apparently never finds his uncle's conquistador slave.
1546	Granted an estate near Santiago de Chile.
Pre-1548	Married Juana de Valvidia, probably an ex-slave of the conqueror Valvidia.
1550	As governor, Valvidia grants Valiente an encomienda near Concepción; he commissions a royal official to negotiate his legal freedom in Peru or Mexico, but the official returns to Spain instead.
1553	Killed by native Andeans at the battle of Tucapel; his son inherits his *encomienda*.[16]

16. The Spanish Crown granted *encomiendas* to Spanish settlers in the Americas. An *encomienda* provided the colonists with the right to demand tribute and forced labor from the Indians living in the region.

had at least spent some time in previously settled colonies before moving to the Andes. They were people the Spaniards could trust; they helped them in the colonization of the region and received precious metals or *encomiendas* as payment. These blacks could probably speak Spanish natively or a good second language variety of it.

In these early times, before the New Laws of 1542–1543, which established that Indians could not be reduced into slavery, some Central American natives were forcibly taken to Peru to work as servants. Even though these Indian slaves were not from the Andes, they could more easily blend in and socialize with the local populations than blacks. African descendants, in fact, have always been perceived by the natives as foreigners; they could not integrate easily in the local context and, for this reason, they often identified more with their masters than with the indigenous people. This situation led to a reciprocal hostility between the Indians and the Africans, which turned out to be greatly beneficial to the Spaniards – and also partially to the blacks. Bowser (1974: 7) comments on the fact that blacks soon came to occupy an intermediate social position between the Spanish colonizers and the natives. Blacks were often used to repress Indian uprisings or to help local priests and *corregidores de indios*[17] (see Figure 5.2); moreover, since they were expensive, they came to symbolize economic wealth and many Spaniards wanted to possess them as domestic servants to show economic status and acquire prestige in society (cf. Lockhart 1968: 181).

Over time, black slaves started being used for other jobs. In particular, they were put to work in the construction of streets, churches and other public infrastructures. Those who had specific working skills were oftentimes exploited for a variety of commercial purposes that would provide their masters with good revenues (cf. Bowser 1974: 125–146).

Recent analyses of slave demographics have shed further light on the kinds of blacks who were introduced into Peru in this early colonial phase. Restall (2000: 190–191) reports the comments of one royal official, Alonso López de Cerrato, who wrote to the Crown about how many Spaniards in the Caribbean "made a living by buying Africans [bozales], teaching them some trade [alguna industria] and then selling them at a profit on the mainland" (cf. Aguirre Beltrán 1946: 20).

Bowser (1974: 355 fn. 12) further supports the claim that the majority of the blacks found in Peru before 1560 were neither from Spain nor from Africa; rather

17. *Corregidores* 'correctors' from *corregir* 'to correct': Spanish public officers who had legal power over Indian communities.

Figure 5.2 A black servant helping a Spanish *corregidor de indios* punish a native (Guman Poma de Ayala 1615)

they were probably Spanish speaking *ladinos* from already settled colonies (in partial contrast to what previously suggested by Lockhart 1968: 171–198):[18]

18. This claim goes against what indicated by Lockhart (1968: 173–175), who argues that the majority of the early arrivals were probably *bozales* who, however, would learn Spanish quickly because of their reduced number and their strong dependency on the Spaniards.

> It would have been perfectly logical for black slaves whose surnames identified their African origin to have been taken from (say) Hispaniola and to have served there for a number of years before coming to Peru […]. The *ladinos* may well have preserved the surname that indicated African birth, but this does not prove direct importation from that continent to Peru or any other colony.
>
> Further, it is difficult to believe that the volume of the slave trade between Africa and Peru before 1560 was sufficiently high to have made bozales preponderant in the colony. My own sampling of slaves sold in Lima during 1560–1562 show a total of 70 bozales among 276 blacks offered for sale; the sample for 1564–1566 yields 23 bozales out of a total of 239 slaves. By this date, of course (and as Lockhart indicates), a generation of Peruvian-born blacks would have reached salable age, perhaps reducing a still-modest demand for slaves and therefore momentarily cutting direct importation from Africa.

For the years 1560–1650, Bowser (1974: 72–73) indicates that the majority of the slaves entering the colony did not proceed directly from Africa; rather they were mainly imported from Spain and/or the Caribbean, where they had resided for some time with their masters and had learned the Spanish ways. He reports data for a sample of 444 slaves sold in Lima between 1560–1650, the only true *bozales* – in his view – are those reported as proceeding from Tierra Firme (current Panama).

The journey that black captives had to go through to reach Peru was extremely strenuous. Slaves were imported from Africa and from the Iberian Peninsula. They were shipped to the port of Cartagena, on the Caribbean coast of Colombia. From there, they were taken to the Caribbean side of the Isthmus of Panama. After crossing the isthmus, they were shipped again to the ports of Piura and Callao, and then resold and distributed in the Peruvian region. Another route that became common from 1605 was from Buenos Aires. In this case, slaves arrived directly to Argentina from Africa and Brazil, they were taken through the Río de la Plata region to the Chilean coast, and then from there shipped to Callao (cf. Mellafe 1959; Romero 1987: 82). This second route was illegal and thus free from royal duties; merchants managed to introduce slaves from Argentina and Chile by corrupting local government officials (cf. Studer 1958: 87–100). Several government attempts were made to eliminate this traffic; for example, in 1646 an official Chilean law forbade slave trade to Peru; however, the business seems to have continued during most of the seventeenth century.

Importing Africans into Peru was a complicated and risky job. Due to the strenuous journey, many casualties occurred among the enslaved population. These difficulties inevitably resulted in higher costs for the Peruvian buyers. If the price of a slave in Cartagena and Buenos Aires in the 17th century was 200–240 pesos (Colmenares 1997; Brockington 2006), in Lima the same slave could be sold

Table 5.3 Countries of origin of a sample of slaves sold in Lima (1560–1650) (Bowser 1974: 73)

Area	Number of slaves
Spain (esp. Sevilla)	97
Tierra Firme Panama	75
Hispaniola	60
New Granada (esp. Cartagena)	50
Portugal	45
Mexico	41
Chile	25
Ecuador	17
Puerto Rico	10
Guatemala	7
Nicaragua	5
Cuba	5
Bolivia (upper Peru)	4
Venezuela	2
Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Tucumán (Argentina), and Brazil	1
Total	444

for 500–600 (Bowser 1974). Owning slaves in the Andes was perceived as a sign of social and economic power, it represented an ostentation of wealth (cf. Crespo 1995). Since black slaves were expensive, Spanish businessmen tended to rely as much as possible on the Indian workforce. The natives could not be enslaved, but *encomienderos* could demand forced working duties to those living on their lands through a system called *mit'a*. The *mit'a* was a pre-Columbian working system used by the Incas. According to the *mit'a*, each man from a given native community had to work for a certain period of time on a given task. This was a rotational system, which implied that periodically different groups of Indians would be required to take on certain working duties.

Bozales proceeded mainly from Western Africa; in particular, from Guinea and later also from Angola. Some came from other regions, such as Congo and Biafra (Bowser 1974: 42–43). According to Lockhart (1968: 173), the following African ethnic groups were the most common during the first decades of colonization: Wolof, Biafra, Bran, Berbrsi, Mandinga, Terranova and Congo. Bowser analyzes the period 1560–1650 and provides this list of ethnicities: Angola, Bran, Biafra, Bañol, Folupo, Mandinga and Bioho (1974: 42–43) (see also Aguirre 2005: 26).

Slaves were shipped to Peru in small groups during this period. Records of the time show that between Panama and Peru, especially in the early decades of

1 Cartagena 2 Buenos Aires 3 Callao (Lima)

Figure 5.3 Slave trade routes to Peru
(adapted from <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/latin_america.gif>)

colonization (1530–1560), there was not an established business route. Indeed, in these early days, blacks came with their permanent owners, or sometimes with some merchants that would take a couple of them at a time along with other commercial items. Data confirm that the largest cargoes would import at most ten or twenty slaves at a time (Lockhart 1968: 177), and that slaves used to be sold in small transactions; usually sales of one at a time, and more sporadically of two or three (1968: 178).

Lockhart also tells us that buying and selling small numbers of slaves became a "conscious process of capital formation" (1968: 178). In fact, as reported by Racall for the case of the Caribbean, artisans would purchase untrained slaves, teach them a profession, and then sell them for a higher price. Lockhart (1968: 183) provides the example of a tailor shop in Lima in 1550, consisting of a Spanish master,

four trained slaves and four other workers who were being trained (three blacks and one Indian). Another case is the one of a confectionary in 1552, which included a Spanish confectioner, a trained slave and three other captives who were learning the profession.

Some of the jobs that black slaves did in urban centers like Lima were piper, gatekeeper, guardian, constable, auctioneer, executioner, master of weights and measures among others. However, the most common position held by Peruvian blacks was probably the job of crier (*pregonero*). Lockhart (1968: 380) even stated on this specific point: "Spanish social conventions demanded that criers be black or mulatto".

Figure 5.4 A *pregonero* selling bread (Periodismo en el Perú 2012)

Skilled slaves soon became very popular 'goods' among those who could afford them: not only Spaniards, but also Indians and Afro-descendants themselves. Skilled slaves would represent a fairly safe investment for their masters, since their work would provide a good influx of revenue. At the same time, black captives with a profession of this kind would be able to improve their social status over time. In fact, they would be able to keep some of the revenue for themselves and, therefore, they could purchase their freedom and eventually start their own business.[19]

In certain cases, black workers became so successful that white artisans felt their businesses were under threat. In more than one occasion, white citizens appealed to the local government to prevent blacks from running taverns, tailor shops, and carpentry shops, among other businesses; often they did that by recurring to the claim that Afro-descendants would cheat customers by providing them with lower quality services (Bowser 1974).

One of these successful black businesspeople was Catalina de Zorita, a free black who owned a bakery and a confectionery in Lima in the 1550s. Another case, probably one of the most successful ones, was Juan de Fregenal, a black person who obtained his freedom in 1547. In a few years, he became a prosperous businessman who purchased dilapidated properties, improved them, and sold them to make a profit. His real estate enterprise went so well that he collected enough capital to diversify its business and venture into agricultural commerce by buying lands in the proximity of Lima on which free and enslaved blacks would work for him (Lockhart 1968: 194–195).

The exact number of the blacks who entered the Peruvian region during this period is impossible to calculate. However, it has been estimated that between the 1530s and the 1540s, some 2000 Afro-descendants arrived with the Spanish invaders (Restall 2000: 183). Restall (2000: 185) also suggests that despite the mortality of the conquest and the civil war of the 1540s, the number kept growing in the following decades, so that by 1550s there were probably 3,000 blacks in this colony, with approximately 1,500 in Lima, the capital (cf. Bowser 1974: 11). Bowser indicates that this number was not a large figure but, at the same time, he admits that the Spanish population was probably not much larger.

The author also relies on a variety of archival demographic data for the city of Lima and traces the evolution of the capital's ethnic groups until 1640 (cf. Bowser 1974: 337–341). He reports the 1593 census, which estimated the black/mulatto population to be 6,690 out of a total of 12,790. He also offers the demographic figures for 1600, 1614, 1619 and 1636 (see Tables 5.4–5.7).

---

19. This is a key piece of information for understanding the dynamics of slave manumission in Spanish America vs. other European colonies. We will return to this point in Chapter 6.

Table 5.4 Population demographics for Lima in 1600 (Bowser 1974: 340)

Category	Men	Women	Total
Spaniards	3,949	3,244	7,193
Blacks and mulattoes	3,203	3,428	6,631
Indians	306	132	438
Total	7,458	6,804	14,262

Table 5.5 Population demographics for Lima in 1614 (Bowser 1974: 340)

Category	Men	Women	Total
Spaniards	6,165	5,702	11,867
Mestizos	97	95	192
Mulattoes	326	418	744
Blacks	4,529	5,857	10,386
Indians	1,116	862	1,978
Total	12,233	12,934	25,167

Table 5.6 Population demographics for Lima in 1619 (Bowser 1974: 340)

Category	Men	Women	Total
Spaniards/Mestizos	5,728	3,978	9,706
Mulattoes	510	656	1,166
Blacks	6,135	5,862	11,997
Indians	755	651	1,406
Total	13,128	11,147	24,275

Table 5.7 Population demographics for Lima in 1636 (Bowser 1974: 341)

Category	Men	Women	Total
Spaniards	5,109	5,649	10,758
Mestizos	142	235	377
Mulattoes	276	585	861
Blacks	6,544	7,076	13,620
Indians	812	614	1,426
Chinese	22	–	22
Total	12,905	14,159	27,064

The author highlights how the number of mulattoes and mestizos in these tables is 'impossibly low' (Bowser 1974: 340) indicating that many people were probably trying to pass for Spaniards. In particular, if the censuses of 1619 and

1636 are compared, the number of mulattoes seems to have shrunken. Nevertheless, this apparent decline in the *mulato* population was not real; rather, it was probably due to the attempt of the free colored population to avoid paying the tributes that the government had imposed on this group.

As Bowser suggests, by this time, Lima was the place with the highest black/mulatto concentration in Peru, probably two-thirds of the whole Afro-descendant population in the colony lived there (1974: 341). Data indicate that in Lima this group was probably as large as the Spanish/mestizo segment. However, we have to consider that mulattoes as well as mestizos could probably speak Spanish natively.[20] Moreover, the group labeled as 'blacks' was for a good part composed of Iberian-born slaves, *ladinos,* and *criollos*, with true *bozales* making up only a limited percentage of this sector. It is therefore likely that Spanish would have been the main means of communication within the Afro-descendant community. In an urban setting like the city of Lima, where the nature of the jobs performed by slaves often implied interracial contact and, therefore, consequent language acquisition, the emergence and stabilization of a creole language as a potential means of interethnic communication was probably highly reduced.

Bowser argues that the number of free blacks increased steadily during this phase. This was due to the fact that manumission was a common practice. Slaves, by law, could purchase their own freedom; they were entitled to own private property, and could keep part of their revenue. These financial means allowed slaves to save money and manumit themselves over time. Additionally, masters would often concede manumission to female slaves with whom they were having love affairs (Bowser 1974: 272–323). Usually, children born by interracial relations of this sort were manumitted at birth. Futhermore, many slaves were manumitted by their owners' testaments. In fact, it was relatively common practice for Spaniards to free the most trustworthy slaves in their last will, on condition that the slaves would have prayed and arranged periodic masses for the soul of their dead masters (Bryant 2005).

Due to the relative easiness of obtaining manumission in the Spanish system, the free Afro-descendant population of Peru progressively augmented. In 1576, the Crown attorney in Lima indicated, without reporting any statistics, that the free Afro sector of the population was large (Bowser 1974: 23). A decade later, in 1687, Lima's taxation reports show that the number of free blacks in the capital achieved a significant number, nearly a quarter of the total Afro-Hispanic population (932 out of 4000), and probably even more, since many former slaves would avoid the census to try not to pay taxes (Bowser 1974: 301).

---

20. Since a mulatto is a person with one white and one black parent, and a mestizo is a person with one white and one indigenous parent, it is likely that they grew up speaking Spanish.

Apparently, this fast-growing free population had all the ambitions that Spaniards had: acquiring a house, creating a family, and owning material goods – including slaves (Lockhart 1968: 192). Free blacks did all the jobs that slaves did, with the only difference that they would keep the wages for themselves. Lockart indicates that a regular wage for a free Afro-descendant could range from 50 to 150 pesos a year, similar to that of an unskilled Spaniard. Some free blacks even managed to acquire haciendas. Lockhart mentions the case of Carabaya where some successful blacks owned lands on which Indians were working as employees (1968: 192). In Lima, several blacks owned houses; some of them were also landlords. They rented out properties and loaned money, usually to other blacks but also to white people (Bowser 1974: 272–323).

While blacks could be found in cities working as domestic servants, *pregoneros*, or in a variety of other skilled and less skilled jobs, in the rest of the country, excluding the coast, Afro-descendants were not commonly found. In fact, whenever possible, Spaniards relied on the native workforce, which was abundant and inexpensive in the early period of colonization. The *mit'a* was particularly strenuous on the natives. These harsh working conditions combined with the introduction into the region of European diseases caused the native Peruvian population to fall from 6,000,000 to 1,500,000 between 1525 and 1571 (Bowser 1974: 18). Bowser also estimates that by the end of 1540s, ninety per cent of the native coastal population had probably died (approximately 1,000,000 individuals).

This compelled the Spanish settlers to force entire Indian communities from the cold highlands to the warmer coastal regions to work on plantations and thereby supply the nearby urban centers with crops. The forced movement of aboriginal workers from cold to warm regions further increased the number of casualties among the Indians. This fact pushed the Spanish King in 1563 to forbid the use of natives in regions with a climate different from the one they were used to. This regulation, however, passed unobserved for several years because not using the natives would have implied relying more heavily on Africans, who represented an expensive and risky investment.

Over time, nevertheless, blacks came to populate the warmer coasts and gradually complemented the Indian workforce on the plantations. The first documentation of a visible black workforce along the costal territory comes from 1560s, when slaves are mentioned in government reports (Bowser 1974: 21). Lockhart suggests that blacks complemented Indian labor on small and medium-sized farms. Large-scale plantations employing black workers were not significant in the sixteenth century. The only case he could find of a significant use of a black workforce was for an estate in Nazca, where apparently some forty blacks were used (1968: 145). Keith (1976: 70) describes the medium-sized farm in the proximity of Lima in 1574. It consisted of 190 acres cultivated with corn, beans and

cereals. The author also mentions a vineyard, 124 pieces of livestock, three slaves and one house for the supervisor (cf. Aguirre 2005: 50). Bowser (1974: 88–89) reports that until the end of the sixteenth century the number of slaves in the agricultural sector was relatively low, and that the slave workforce was usually combined with other types of native workers: *mitayos*,[21] *yanaconas*[22] and *forasteros*.[23]

After 1580 the agricultural sector benefitted more significantly from an African labor force. Gradually, in order to respond to growing urban needs, agricultural commerce started relying more and more on bigger estates, where the black workforce progressively became predominant. Bowser provides a survey of the slaves used in agriculture in this period. He starts by describing the town of Trujillo and the surrounding area. The regional economy was mainly based on the production of sugar, wheat flour, and other crops; this business relied on both Indian and black labor. The city of Trujillo alone in 1604 had 1,073 blacks (121 were free), 1,021 Spaniards and 1,094 Indians. Bowser suggests that in the countryside blacks were probably even more numerous. Another costal town was Salta, with some seventy Spanish families using slaves in the livestock business. However, the highest concentration of coastal slaves was probably in the valleys outside Lima where "many Indians and blacks" (Bowser 1974: 92) were used to produce fruit, corn, sugarcane and potatoes, among other agricultural products. An observer of the time described this region by saying that "on every farm they have a Negro village for the exploitation of the vineyards […] every Negro costs at least 500 pesos" (Vázquez de Espinosa 1942: 28, cf. Bowser 1974: 92). Blacks were often employed in vineyard work; the Ica Valley relied on some 8,000–10,000 slaves for wine production in the early 1600s. Proceeding south along the coast, slaves could also be found working in vineyards in the proximity of Nazca and in the Valleys of Camaná and Vitor.

Finally, Bowser summarizes the analysis of this survey based on a sample of forty-one coastal haciendas. He states that even though in some regions the black inhabitants were numerous "the size of the slave population resident on most estates during this period was relatively modest and rarely exceeded forty slaves of all ages" (Bowser 1974: 94). He provides the following table to show that "only three plantations had more than forty slaves, and only one of these more than 100" (Bowser 1974: 95).

These data appear to contradict McWhorter's interpretation of Bowser's report, since McWhorter (2000: 37) states that "in the early 1600s, slave forces of

21. Indian subject to the *mit'a* system.

22. Tribute-paying Indians.

23. Indian enrolled for a certain local work, who originally proceeded from a different region.

Table 5.8 Population demographics for Lima in 1636 (Bowser 1974: 95)

Number of slaves	Number of estates	Number of slaves	Number of estates
0–5	3	21–25	4
6–10	8	26–30	4
11–15	6	31–35	4
16–20	7	36–40	2

Table 5.9 Demographic figures for the city of Potosí (Crespo 1995: 28)

Year	Afro-descendant population	Total population	Afro-descendant population (percentage)
1611	6,000	160,000	3.75%
1719	3,206	70,000	4.66%
1832	1,142	224,000	0.51%

more than 20 were typical, while some plantations had 40 or more slaves" (Bowser 1974: 89, 94–95). Conversely, only three plantations had more than forty slaves, while, as Table 5.8 shows, the majority of the haciendas (24 out of 38) had in between zero and twenty captives.

While a black workforce – even if expensive – appeared to be suitable to the warmer coastal climate, the same cannot be said for the colder highland environment where Africans were likely to die. Indeed the few attempts to introduce blacks to the highlands systematically failed. The fact that Africans were not suitable to work at the high altitudes in a frigid climate is expressed in a current Peruvian idiomatic expression saying *el gallinazo no canta en puna* 'the black buzzard does not sing in the highlands' (Bowser 1974: 14).

For this reason, in 1578 it was decided that 14,248 Indian men every year would serve as *mitayos* in Potosí, the richest silver mine of the Americas. Since the local native population quickly shrunk, to achieve the labor force levels needed, people from surrounding regions as far as Cuzco and Tarija were forcibly relocated in the Potosí area. It is unlikely that within the *mit'a* system a creole language spoken by African slaves could have emerged, at least in the mining centers of the colony. Records of the time, in fact, show that in such areas blacks were never a significant percentage of the population as shown by the figures reported in Table 5.9 (Crespo 1995: 28).

In summary, the socio-historical information available for the period spanning from the early colonization of Peru (first decades of the 16th century) until 1650 does not seem to indicate that a fully-fledged creole language was likely to emerge amongst the Afro-descendent population of this region. In fact, logistic

and economic restrictions did not allow for the massive introduction of Africans into the colony; rather, their introduction happened gradually – blacks were usually *ladinos* proceeding from Spain or other settled colonies, and masters usually acquired one or two slaves at a time (Lockhart 1968). Overall, it has been noted that the locally-born Afro-population grew steadily during this phase (Bowser 1974).[24]

It has been observed that the two-thirds of the black population resided in Lima, where they were often performing skilled jobs and had opportunities to improve their social status. Moreover, manumission was quite common, such that many blacks were free. A limited number of slaves were employed in the mines, while the remaining part was used on the coastal plantations, which were usually small and middle-sized. Working and living conditions on plantations were probably worse than in the urban setting; however, given that haciendas were usually of a small scale and the majority of the blacks introduced into the colony during this phase were not *bozales* (Bowser 1974), we may assume that the acquisition of Spanish might have been favored over the development of a stable creole language.

The aforementioned factors characterizing early Peruvian plantation settings are of fundamental importance for an understanding of the evolution of an Afro-Hispanic contact variety in the years to come. In fact, socio-historical data appear to suggest that with all likelihood the language spoken on these haciendas was not a creole but a variety relatively close to Spanish. This would have served as the primary target language for the following waves of slaves. According to the Founder Principle, in fact, a large proportion of the structure of today's contact languages was determined by the varieties of the founder populations (Mufwene 1996). The aforementioned socio-historical analysis, then, may already be seen as a robust factor that would reduce the possibility of a Spanish creole forming in colonial Peru.

5.4 Second phase (1650–1776)

During this second phase a concomitance of factors played an important role in constraining the use of black slaves in the colony. In particular, the Spanish Crown's monopoly on slave trading and the logistic barriers to introducing Africans into Peru implied that the local buyers had to pay a very high price to acquire

24. Schwegler (p.c.) agrees that this hypothesis seems reasonable. However, he points out the possibility that some slaves may already have arrived with knowledge/use of a creole, adopted in Cartagena (for instance). This situation might have been possible. Nevertheless, we do not really have any evidence supporting such a possibility, while all the sociohistorical and linguistic data *available* appear to suggest that a creole language was not spoken in Peru.

black captives. As a result, in general, they could not afford to purchase slaves in big cargoes. Nevertheless, it has to be said that during this phase the use of blacks in the coastal region gradually increased, since the native population had been decimated in the region and had to be replaced by a new workforce (Flores Galindo 1984: Ch. 2).

While on coastal plantations the number of African slaves progressively increased during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the urban centers the black population gradually decreased. MacLean y Estenos (1947: 30) and Centurión Vallejo (1954: 3) show this reduction by reporting demographic figures for Lima's Afro-descendants. In 1614, Afro-descendants represented 40% of the total population; while, in 1720, they were 17%. Apparently, the Afro-group continued to shrink during the eighteenth century, such that they were only 13% of the population by 1820. This progressive reduction in the black urban population was partially due to the fact that black slaves were also gradually transferred from urban centers to more rural areas. In fact, throughout this phase of agricultural commercial growth, it made sense for slave owners in cities to employ their captives on rural haciendas or to rent them out to other planters. Indeed, black slaves, unlike Indigenous workers, were seen as *piezas* 'tokens' of "mobil capital" (cf. Bryant 2005: 14, 104), who could be transferred from one place to another without too much trouble. This piece of information is important for understanding what language variety might have been introduced on these early plantations. If a good part of the slaves were *criollos*, or *bozales* who had spent some time in urban centers, rather than captives proceeding directly from Africa, then the likelihood of a creole language forming on haciendas would have been quite reduced.[25]

During this second phase, the overall number of captives owned by slaveholders remained low. Viceroy Count of Monclova, who governed Peru from 1689 to 1705, in 1700 calculated that 30% of Lima's nuclear families owned slaves. However, of these slaveholders, 70% had one to four slaves, while only 6% had more than ten (Jouve Martín 2003: 106). An analysis carried out by Flores Galindo (1984: 123) about a collection of last wills drafted in the 1770s led to similar conclusions: 67% of the masters owned one slave, 23% had two, 10% possessed between six and twenty-one, while only six people had more than that (cf. Aguirre 2005: 31).

---

25. Schwegler (p.c.) suggests that a creole language might have formed in a close-knit neighborhood of some urban centers and then be transplanted to some countryside hacienda. Again, as I stated in previous footnotes, in theory almost everything is possible; however, based on the *available* evidence we have, there is no likely way that such a situation might have actually occurred.

The reason why Peruvian families did not usually own many slaves has to be found in their high price during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Harth-Terré and Márquez Abanto (1961: 19–20, cf. Aguirre 2005: 32) indicate that a skilled slave could be easily sold for more than 1,000 pesos in Lima, while to purchase a cheap unskilled slave, the price ranged from 600 to 800 *jornales*, which approximately correspond to what a regular worker would make in two years of uninterrupted activity. The Royal Crown's monopoly on *asientos* also highly constrained the introduction of slaves during this phase. Even when the Crown decided to liberalize the business (in 1795), Peruvian citizens could not afford to buy several captives at a time. Flores Guzmán (2003: 22) provides a breakdown of the slave transactions in Lima (the biggest Peruvian slave market) during the years 1770–1801 (see Figure 5.5). As can be noted, 76.9% of the transactions concerned one slave, while only 6.1% involved the purchase of more than five captives at a time. This suggests that even in this phase of agricultural expansion, the introduction of slaves into the colony was not massive, but rather for the most part it was highly constrained.

Slaves' urban life during this second phase did not differ much from before. They continued to be involved in several economic activities. At home, they were often employed as domestic servants; in particular, black women were commonly used as *amas de leche* 'wet nurses' (Arrelucea 2004: 36). Slaves employed outside of home often carried out a variety of skilled and less-skilled works for their masters' economic benefit. During this period, they were often rented out on a daily basis to people in need of a labor force. This practice was called *esclavitud a jornal* (Aguirre 2005: 81). According to this working system, slaves were paid a certain amount of money for their daily work. Most of this income was for the master, while the remaining part was for the slaves themselves. Flores Galindo (1984: 122) reports the presence of 363 *jornaleros* in Lima in 1777; however, Aguirre (2005: 81)

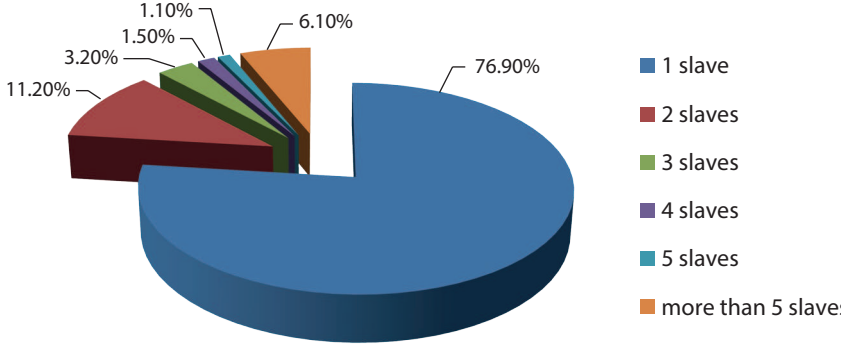


Figure 5.5 Slave purchases (1770–1801) (Flores Guzmán 2003: 22)

indicates that with all likelihood the number of *jornaleros* was significantly higher. As in the previous phase, urban slaves also performed a variety of other jobs: they were cooks, *pregoneros*, carpenters, tailors, street vendors, etc.

Some blacks even became successful students; especially in the fields of Medicine and Surgery. Apparently, a significant number of Afro-descendants managed to earn an education in these subjects, to the point that in 1737 a *mulato* applied for a position of professor of Medicine at the University of Lima, although his application was rejected by the Viceroy for racial reasons (Andrés-Gallego 2005: 128).

Andrés-Gallego (2005: 208) points out that in Peru it was very common for urban slaves to recur to the *protector de negros* to sue their masters. The *protector de negros* was a lawyer who would assist blacks in courts without charging them any fees. In fact, in order to be able to adequately defend their rights during trials, a royal law of 1528 assigned a *protector de negros* to any black in need of legal assistance (Andrés-Gallego 2005: 65). One such case is exemplified by the slave José de la Trinidad, who sued his master in Lima in 1765, because he made him work without rest to the point where he injured himself and lost a leg (2005: 208). Another case is the one of the slave Domingo Barrueta, who took his master to trial because the latter wanted to move away from Lima and take Domingo with him. Domingo did not like this idea because he was married to a woman in Lima. Eventually, he managed to force his owner to sell him to another master in order to stay closer to his beloved (2005: 211).

Andrés-Gallego even hypothesizes that, since judges were forced to listen to blacks' complaints by law, it could happen that in certain cases slaves sued their owners just to gain time off. He supports this claim by saying that, in fact, it was common for slaves to run away and then file a lawsuit against their masters for ill treatments. In this way, until the judge had made a decision on the case, slaves did not have to go back to work. This was apparently what master Don Julián de Aramburu said to the judges to defend himself when he was accused by two of his female slaves of mistreatment (2005: 210).

Andrés-Gallego states that of all the legal cases he examined during the decade 1760–1770, the vast majority was favorable to the slaves' requests (2005: 218–219). Obviously, the lawsuits carried out by Afro-descendants were not always victorious. One instance of a loss is the case of a freed slave, María Josefa Olivares, who wanted to obtain freedom for her sons. However, since they were born before she achieved her own manumission, by law they were born into slavery; thus they could not be set free unless manumitted (2005: 218).

Interracial sexual relations have always been common-practice in Spanish America, especially between white men and their black female domestic slaves.

Aguirre (2005: Ch. 3) suggests that in many cases these relations led to manumissions. Manumission was also commonly obtained by means of *coartación* or as a masters' concession in their last will. Aguirre (2005: 89) suggests that the free sector of the black urban population kept growing during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While in 1586 they were almost one fourth of the Afro-descendants, and consisted of 10% of the total Lima's population; in 1792 they represented 20% (Jacobsen 1974: 84). A reason for such a relative increase is that many individuals by this time were born free. They were locally-born *criollos*, the descendants of former slaves, manumitted in previous generations. If we compare this information to the data about the overall size of the Afro-descendant group provided by MacLean y Estenos (1947) and Centurión Vallejo (1954), we can conclude that while the urban Afro-population was shrinking, its freed sector was growing.

While the percentage of black Limeños decreased, the black population living in the coastal region grew, but not massively and not in every *hacienda*. Due to the decline of the native population, the black workforce *gradually* came to complement and substitute the Indian laborers in the coastal valleys of Peru. Cushner (1980: 82) suggests that "black slaves formed the bulk of the stable labor force from the middle of the seventeenth century on". However, it is important to state that even though there were some large haciendas in colonial Peru, "most slaves worked on medium-sized plantations of 20–50 slaves" (Aguirre 1997: 501).

In the valley surrounding Lima, the eighteenth century saw a systematic shift from small-scale haciendas to medium and large-scale ones. For example, in 1773, out of 224 haciendas in the Caraballo, Magdalena, Surco, Pachacamac and Lurigancho valleys, 114 remained small properties (less than 60 *fanegadas*[26]), 57 became medium properties (61–180 fanegadas), while 5 became large plantations (181–280 fanegadas) (Vegas de Cáceres 1999: 111–112; cf. Aguirre 2005: 52). Flores Galindo (1984: 108–109) suggests that some of these haciendas employed hundreds of slaves; for example Villa had 400, while Bocanegra used 270. These cases, however were quite exceptional; a survey of Lima's valleys around 1837 reports that out of a total of 152 plantations, only four had more than 100 slaves, while 136 had no more than 20 (Aguirre 1993: 53). Moreover, on those plantations, the working force was never completely composed of captives; rather, depending on the haciendas, a certain part of the workers consisted of free blacks, *yanaconas*, *peones*, and *jornaleros* (Aguirre 2005: 71).

The shift to larger plantations was also partially driven by the fact that sugarcane could not be cultivated on small haciendas. Rather, it needed bigger lands

26. A unit of land measure that consists of 1.75 acres.

to allow for the systematic rotation of the fields, typical of such a crop. During this period, in fact, sugarcane crops became more widespread due to the increasing demand for raw sugar and *aguardiente*[27] in foreign markets (e.g. Panama and Chile). Sugarcane was difficult to grow and needed expert workers who could take care of such a high-maintenance job. Such workers had to be trained. Planters tended to prefer *ladinos* over *bozales*, since they could learn the job without too much trouble. After carrying out an analysis of the type of labor force employed in these early Peruvian sugarcane haciendas, historian Flores Galindo (1984: 28) concludes:

> La caña de azúcar llevó a la formación de algunas haciendas extensas, pero sobre todo hizo imperativo disponer de trabajadores estables. La siembra de la caña debía realizarse cuidadosamente […]. Este proceso era imposible si no se disponía de una fuerza de trabajo, para los términos de la época, "calificada". Ante la escasez de población indígena en la costa y ante la imposibilidad de sujetar a los mestizos, la caña exigió el recurso a la fuerza de trabajo que podían proporcionar los esclavos. Dado el aprendizaje que requería el cultivo, se prefirió a los negros que conocían el español y estaban habituados a las costumbres del país: los "ladinos" en lugar de los "bozales".
>
> (Sugarcane implied the formation of some larger haciendas, but in particular it made it necessary to employ stable workers. Sugarcane planting had to be done carefully […]. This process would have been impossible without a skilled workforce. Since the native population was shrinking in the coastal region and since it was impossible to convince whites or *mestizos* to carry out such work, sugarcane cultivation had to rely on the labor force that only the slaves could provide. Given the agricultural techniques that farming sugarcane implied, planters preferred to rely on the blacks who could speak Spanish and knew the Spanish ways, they preferred *ladino* slaves over *bozales*).

What Flores Galindo reveals in this paragraph is fundamental to understanding the type of language which was introduced on these early plantations. This suggests that the bases for the formation of a Spanish creole were probably lacking in these haciendas, since the workers who carried out the job could speak relatively advanced varieties of Spanish.

It was common for the slaves used on these plantations to receive a small lot of land on which to grow produce or to farm animals as a sort of personal revenue. These little properties were called *chacras de esclavos* 'slaves' fields'. Flores Galindo (1984: 110) and Aguirre (2005: 68) mention the case of the slave Dionisia de Jesús, who had been assigned a *chacra* on La Huaca plantation where she farmed 200 chickens. Dionisia could sell the animals in the town market of Chancay and keep

27. Sugarcane liquor.

the money she earned. Aguirre highlights the importance of these lots to slave families. In fact, slaves could improve their dietary intake by producing supplementary food and – most importantly – they could generate financial revenues to purchase their freedom over time.

Aguirre (2005: 54) further highlights that even though the economic structure of the Peruvian coast during the colonial period experienced a gradual increase in the number of large properties, for the most part, it remained based on small and medium-sized businesses, which employed a limited number of slaves. In fact, only a few laymen had the material resources to develop large-scale agricultural commerce. The only organization that could really afford to rely on a considerable number of black slaves was the Catholic Church, in particular, the Company of Jesus. The Jesuits, in fact, became the largest slaveholder in the colony. By 1767, year of their expulsion from the Spanish territories, the Company of Jesus owned 5,224 black slaves in Peru. The majority of them worked on coastal sugarcane haciendas (62.3%), almost one third was employed in vineyards (29.8%), and the remaining slaves were used in highland farms (Macera 1966: 36; cf. Aguirre 2005: 56).

Aguirre (2005: 55–71), in fact, takes the Jesuit plantation as the prototypical example of how larger colonial haciendas might have looked. He relies primarily on Macera's (1966) and Cushner's (1980) accounts to show how the Jesuits ran this business.

Macera (1966) provides a detailed analysis of the Jesuit haciendas in Peru. He shows how the Jesuits were able to implement an enslaving system that, on the one hand, would provide the Company of Jesus with the most out of the captives' labor force, while on the other hand, it was able to make the blacks feel less exploited or mistreated. The goal, in fact, was to create among the captives a sense of community, so that no uprisings would take place. Macera (1966: 38–39) states[28] that:

> La importancia económica del esclavo determinó el desarrollo de una política por parte de sus amos tendiente a procurar el mayor rendimiento de la inversión. Los jesuitas fueron en esto verdaderos maestros y precursores pues se ingeniaron para aplicar normas demográficas, morales, de alimentación y trabajo que de un lado, les procuraba la lealtad del esclavo y de otro, les garantizaba la eficacia de su esfuerzo.
>
> (The slave's economic value implied the development of a owner's strategy leading toward the maximization of the profit on the investment. The Jesuits were great masters in this matter and applied demographic, moral, feeding and working techniques that, on one hand, would provide the slave's loyalty while, on the other, they would ensure the efficiency of the effort).

28. See also Sotomayor Roggero & Aranda de los Ríos (1979: 9–10).

As far as the demographic norms are concerned, the Company of Jesus did its best to support nuclear families and slave reproduction. For this reason, whenever possible, haciendas would have an almost equal number of males and females. This was seen as a key prerequisite to favor marital unions and thus increase the number of births (Macera 1966: 39).

The Jesuits took very seriously the moral and religious side of their enterprise. Macera (1966: 30) indicates that "La hacienda jesuita […] estaba fundamentalmente al servicio de Dios y existían por tanto, al margen del negocio, ciertos deberes que cumplir" (The Jesuit hacienda […] was working for God and, therefore, there were certain duties that had to be accomplished independently of the business activities). Jesuit haciendas, in fact, provided slaves with a variety of religious services, which were seen as fundamental to the Jesuit mission: *bozales* had to be catechized and instructed in the faith; weekly catechism had to be provided to children and adults; there were collective prayers, 10 masses for the death of each slave, religious celebrations (Easter, Christmas, etc.), confessions and communions, daily religious classes for the children, etc. (1966: 30). As far as this last point is concerned, it is interesting to note one of the comments made by a Jesuit while writing a document concerning the administration of these haciendas in 1673 (1966: 30):

> Haya mucho cuidado de enseñar a los esclavos y a la gente de servicio que aquí hubiere la doctrina cristiana todos los sábados en la noche y a los muchachos y muchachas todos los días sin que en esto haya falta ninguna.
> (It is crucial to teach the slaves and the other people working here that every Saturday night there will be a Christian celebration for them, while the children will have to attend it every single day, without any exception).

All these data certainly contradict McWhorter's (2000: 37) claims regarding the fact that on Peruvian plantations "religion was withheld even to the point of denying slaves their last rites", at least for the haciendas run by the Company of Jesus, which was the biggest slaveholder in the country.

The great emphasis posed by the Jesuits on Christian education probably had significant linguistic repercussions on the means of communication developed on these plantations. In fact, religious instruction may have favored Spanish acquisition both as an L1 (for locally-born children) and as an L2 (for *bozales*). In particular, if young captives were taught into the faith every day from a very early age, they probably did not face many problems learning Spanish.

The Jesuits also tried to feed their slaves well enough to maintain labor efficiency. For this reason, the slave's diet was based on food with a high caloric content. It primarily consisted of corn and beans and, to a lesser extent, meat.

Slaves were provided with tobacco and honey, and, during festivities, *aguardiente* (Macera 1966: 45).

As far as the working schedule was concerned, slaves were provided with several days off (all Sundays and religious holidays), because the days dedicated to God could not be used to take care of wordly tasks (1966: 30). A prototypical working day would usually last from 8 am to 5 or 6 pm, interrupted by a lunch break around noon.

Slaves were also generally provided with *chacras de esclavos*, where they could grow their own produce and farm their own animals. These pieces of land were given as awards to the well-behaved slaves, who could, in this way, enrich their dietary intake. In certain cases, these lots of land became so productive that slaves would sell their goods in the markets near the haciendas. Over time such a habit came to be perceived as a problem by many Jesuits, because it implied that slaves could leave the hacienda complex to take care of their business, thus providing captives with too much freedom and more chances to run away. Another complaint that certain Jesuits expressed was that in several haciendas slaves were not very productive since they would use their energies to work on their own *chacras* (1966: 45).

The information provided by Macera offers a picture of the Jesuit enterprise as a complex of haciendas where slaves' living and working conditions were probably not as harsh as those of black captives in other American colonies. The managerial activities implemented by the Company of Jesus, in particular their dedication to religious education, may have favored Spanish language acquisition; moreover, the fact that in certain cases slaves could travel to local markets to sell their own products indicates that at least certain captives were also exposed to the Spanish spoken outside of the plantation. All these elements appear to contradict McWhorter's claims on the nature of Peruvian plantations, which – in his view – would have been well-suited for the development of a Spanish creole.

Cushner (1980: 81–112) indicates that native *mitayos* and *yanaconas* were not commonly used on Jesuit coastal haciendas. On the other hand, the Company of Jesus relied mainly on black slaves, native *jornaleros*, and also some whites and mestizos, usually employed as skilled laborers and professionals. Regular *peones* received up to 40 pesos a year, skilled and professional workers were paid more; for example a *mayordomo* 'overseer' could earn 200–300 pesos yearly. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the haciendas owned by the Company of Jesus grew both numerically and physically, so that a parallel increase in the employed labor force was needed.

Cushner (1980: 95) suggests that the slave's dietary intake in these haciendas was relatively good. It was primarily based on vegetables, rice, and corn, with an average of seven portions of meat a month. The author indicates that during most

of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, black populations were small in Jesuit haciendas and black families lived in crude huts; however, in the following years, due to an increase in the number of workers, dormitory-type accommodations substituted individual huts. This detail concerning the evolution of slave accommodations appears to be in line with what has been suggested by other authors who indicate a gradual – and never complete – shift from small and middle-sized farms to larger haciendas in certain coastal areas (cf. Bowser 1974; Aguirre 2005). If even the Company of Jesus, which apparently was the only organization with enough financial resources to rely significantly on an enslaved labor force, did not import African captives abruptly and massively, but rather, in a first phase it relied on smaller groups of slaves, then, it is likely that the vast majority of the Peruvian planters would not have either.

Cushner also provides records showing that in the eighteenth century married couples were living in units separated from the rest of the population. Preserving the familiar nuclei, in fact, had always been a priority on Jesuit plantations, so that families were never divided, and could develop a stronger connection to the hacienda (see also Brockington 2006 for Bolivia and Bouisson 1997 for Ecuador). Cushner (1980: 89) offers a demographic analysis of the evolution of the enslaved population on the eight biggest Jesuit plantations between 1665 and 1767 (see Table 5.10).

These eight big plantations experienced a significant increase in the enslaved workforce. They began with an average of 98.8 slaves each for the period 1665–1680; the haciendas increased steadily in the number of workers for the next 30 years, up until 1710 (174 slaves; net growth: +2.5 slaves per year). Subsequently the number of captives shrunk for the following 30 years, totaling 121 in 1740 (–1.8 slaves per year); this decrease was probably due to a series of earthquakes and diseases that affected Peru during that period (cf. Cushner 1980; Andrien 1995). From 1740 to 1767 the enslaved labor force grew in size and achieved an average of 256 slaves per hacienda (+5 slaves a year).

Table 5.10 Average growth of slave population in the eight major haciendas, 1665–1767 (Cushner 1980: 89)

Years	Slaves per hacienda	Net population growth per year
1665–1680	98.8	
1680–1695	139.6	+2.7
1695–1710	174.0	+2.3
1710–1725	129.0	–3.0
1725–1740	121.0	–0.5
1740–1755	217.7	+6.4
1755–1767	256.0	+3.3

Table 5.11 Slaves' births and deaths in four haciendas (Cushner 1980: 102)

Years	Haciendas	Slaves	Births	Deaths	Net population growth per year
1749–1778	Bocanegra	245	374	324	+1.7
1714–1775	Huaura	253	410	574	–2.7
1753–1775	La Huaca	233	207	188	+0.9
1759–1769	San Juan	115	298	159	+13.9
	Totals	846	1289	1245	

Cushner (1980: 101–110) analyzes the demographic data from the baptismal and burial records for black workers in the period 1714–1778 for the four biggest Jesuit coastal plantations; namely, Bocanegra, Huaura, La Huaca and San Juan totaling together some 1,200 slaves.

An analysis of the data indicates that overall the population increased, but not to a great extent (1,289 births vs. 1,245 deaths). The author suggests that part of the numerical increase in the enslaved working force in the years to come was driven by new purchases, rather than natural growth. Such considerations are certainly true; however, a closer look at the data presented by Cushner indicates that the introduction of slaves was not massive, not even for these haciendas that were selected for being the biggest and the most populated by slaves. In fact, in Table 5.11, three haciendas out of four (Bocanegra, La Huaca, San Juan) show a natural increase in the number of workers. The average is of +0.4 slaves per year.[29] If we take out of the calculation San Juan, which has very high rates of natural birth (maybe due to miscalculations, cf. Cushner 1980: 103), the overall average is –0.8.[30] This range (0.4 ~ –0.8) is perfectly in line with the trend reported in Table 5.10, which ranges from –3.0 to +6.4 slaves per year; thus it does not imply massive slave purchases. The only hacienda with a negative natural growth in Table 5.11 is Huaura (–2.7 slaves per year). However, the period analyzed for this plantation spans from 1714 to 1775; thus it includes the phase of earthquakes and diseases that affected the colony (cf. Cushner 1980: 108). If we calculate the demographic trend of Table 5.10 for that period (years 1710–1767), we discover that the overall trend is +1.4[31] slaves per year. When we subtract the total yearly net growth (+1.4) from the estimated natural growth (–2.7), we get an idea of the number of slaves purchased every year per plantation during the 1710–1767 phase. Such a number is not massive but rather quite constrained (+4.1 slaves per year).

29. 0.4 = (1289–1245) / [(1778–1749) + (1775–1714) + (1775–1753) + (1769–1759)]

30. 0.8 = (991–1086) / [(1778–1749) + (1775–1714) + (1775–1753)]

31. 1.4 = (256.0–174.0) / (1767–1725)

What all these demographic considerations indicate is that, indeed, new slaves had to be introduced in these plantations to achieve the numerical growth obtained across the years 1665–1767; nevertheless, even for the biggest plantations in the colony, massive and abrupt importations of enslaved workers never took place. Rather, we see an average of at most +5 slaves per year, even during the most intense importation phase (1740–1767). Moreover, if we consider that with all likelihood not all the new slaves were *bozales*, but to a good extent they were probably locally born (cf. Flores Galindo 1984: 28), then the chance of a creole language development was probably quite reduced.[32]

The relatively low natural population growth found on rural plantations appears to be in sharp contrast to what has been found for urban areas at the same time. Cushner (1980: 102) reports that the Cercado Parish in Lima, during the years 1711–1770, registered 2,332 births and 1,187 deaths. In fact, we must keep in mind that even if during this phase the black urban population shrunk while the rural one grew, black slavery in Peru has always been a predominantly urban phenomenon, which, nevertheless, represented only a small sector of the whole Peruvian population.

Aguirre (1997: 501) states that:

> At any given moment […] the number of slaves was only a small fraction of the population of the viceroyalty. In 1791, for instance, there were only 40,347 slaves in Peru, representing 3.7 percent of the population. Of those slaves, 73.3 percent (29,763) lived in the Lima administrative area, and most of them (13,479) lived and worked in the capital, where they constituted about a quarter of the city's population.

Cushner indicates that no slave uprisings took place on Jesuit plantations during the eighteenth century. He attributes this to several factors: (1) disobedient slaves were quickly sold; (2) slaves usually did not form a coherent and organized group; rather, they were often divided into a hierarchical structure; (3) slaves were encouraged to create families; (4) slaves were taught in the Catholic faith; in particular, the Jesuits stressed the importance of hierarchical obedience. Slaves, in fact, were encouraged to believe that by obeying their masters they would have

32. Schwegler (p.c.) claims that a creole could have been introduced in this region form Cartagena and then transmitted from generation to generation as a means to preserve black identity. This is a valuable observation, which I cannot either prove or disprove. Based on the demographic and social data I could collect, I find it difficult to believe that a creole language, if introduced by some Cartagena slaves in these Peruvian haciendas, may have been passed on from generation to generation. In addition, it must be said that no traces of such a hypothetical language have ever been reported.

followed God's direction and therefore "their reward for this would come in heaven" (Cushner 1980: 100).

It is true that the Jesuit management was family-oriented and incentivized local population growth; however, it must be said that working conditions on these plantations must have been quite demanding on the slaves, especially in sugarcane haciendas. Corporal punishment was often applied to the captives, even though there were clear limits: a certain number of lashes were seen as an acceptable punishment by the Jesuits, while harsher treatments (e.g. burning slaves with candles, etc.) were not permitted (Cushner 1980: 89–90).

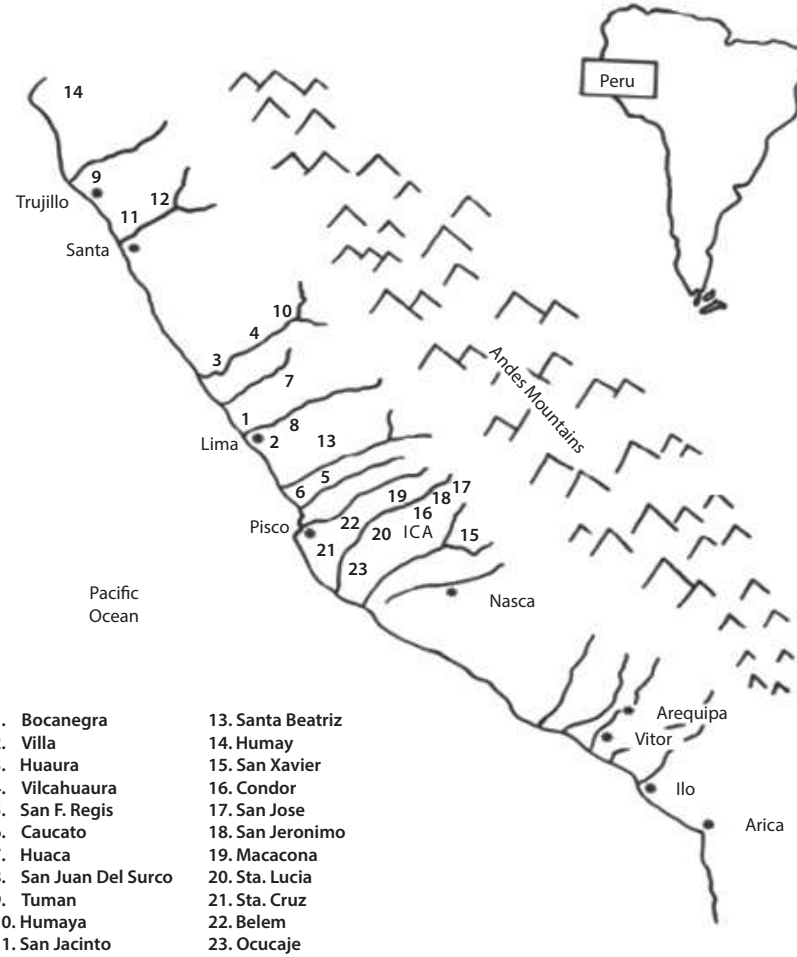


Figure 5.6 Jesuit haciendas in coastal Peru (Cushner 1980: ii)

Unfortunately, after the Jesuits were expelled from the Spanish colonies in 1767, the lives of their slaves did not improve. Conversely, the Jesuit haciendas passed to the control of the *Temporalidades* council, the body in charge of selling the former properties of the Jesuits. Eventually, these lands (and their enslaved workforce) were acquired by private landlords, who frequently did not even bother preserving the integrity of black families and tried to sell family members individually, as tokens.

Aguirre (2005: 151) reports the existence of several revolts that took place in the former Jesuit haciendas of San Jacinto and San José in Napena Valley in 1768. The reasons for these uprisings had to do with administrative changes introduced by the *Temporalidades*. The council, in fact, imposed harsher working conditions and wanted to take back from the slaves the lots of land that they were using as *chacras de esclavos*. Eventually, the revolts were suffocated by the government troops and the slaves responsible for them were punished.

In summary, the data encountered for the second phase (1650–1767) seem to suggest that the conditions for a creole language to develop in the colony were generally not in place. In fact, several geographic and financial factors appear to have limited the introduction of slaves in Peru so that their importation was never massive. Moreover, the presence in the country of thousands of other blacks, who arrived during the first phase (and their locally-born offspring), may be seen as an additional factor reducing the possibility of creole formation, in line with Mufwene's (1996) Founder Principle.

In the cities, where their living conditions often allowed slaves to obtain manumission and sometimes to succeed economically, the Afro-descendant population diminished, while the number of its freed members kept increasing. On the other hand, on the rural coastal plantations the number of slaves increased. However, the introduction of slaves happened gradually, with slave owners acquiring only a few slaves at a time (Flores Guzmán 2003). Aguirre (2005) also points out that the majority of the coastal haciendas were not large-scale plantations, but rather small and medium farms using only a limited number of blacks, usually combined with an Indian and Spanish workforce. The entrepreneurs who used the greatest number of slaves in their haciendas were the Jesuits, who, in some cases employed hundreds of them. However, some doubts must be cast on the possible evolution of a creole language on these plantations. In particular, this is the case if we consider that even in the largest haciendas the introduction of new slaves was neither abrupt nor massive (cf. Cushner 1980; Aguirre 2005), and that coastal planters generally preferred to rely on *criollos* rather than *bozales* for sugarcane cultivations (cf. Flores Galindo 1984).

Slaves' living conditions were probably less harsh in Peru, and in particular in Jesuit haciendas, than those of black captives in other plantation settings

throughout the Americas. In fact, even if corporal punishment and strenuous labor were present on these plantations, the Company of Jesus was highly concerned with Christianizing the slaves and supporting nuclear families (Macera 1966). The managerial techniques used by this religious organization to achieve its objectives are likely to have favored the acquisition of Spanish by the black captives. The concomitance of all these factors contrasts with the hypothesis that depicts colonial coastal Peru as the perfect breeding ground for the formation of a Spanish creole (against McWhorter 2000).

5.5 Third phase (1776–1970)

After the departure of the Jesuits, uprisings similar to those mentioned above from Nepena Valley, where slaves wanted to re-establish the rights that they had acquired over time, became more and more common (Aguirre 2005: 154). Sala i Vila (1989: 509–511) mentions similar cases for the Luya hacienda (Trujillo), in 1785, and for the Punat and Mollocope haciendas (Saña) in 1802 and 1811 respectively. Black slaves also took part in Túpac Amaru's revolt against the Spaniards. The indigenous leader, in fact, proclaimed blacks' freedom in 1780 and, in this way, enrolled in his armed group some Afro-descendants. However, since Túpac Amaru was defeated, Peruvian blacks remained slaves for several decades longer.

The war of independence between Peru and Spain provided Peruvian slaves with more promise of freedom. In 1816, Commander Bolívar proposed that any black who enrolled in the Independence Army would become a free man. Soon afterwards, General San Martín, the independence leader who supported Bolívar in Peru, proclaimed the same with the goal of enrolling as many people as possible in his army. Peru signed the abolition of slave trading in 1821. Moreover, in the same year, soon after the declaration of independence (15 July, 1821), San Martín implemented the *libertad de vientres* law, so that from that moment, any person born from an enslaved mother would be considered free (Sales 1974: 103). However, soon after the battle of Ayacucho (1824), which established the definitive independence of Peru, a set of regulations tried to constrain black freedom again. The most important action taken by the government in this direction was probably the *Reglamiento Interior de las Haciendas de la Costa* 'Coastal Haciendas' Internal Regulation' which guaranteed planters that slavery would not be abolished in the short term. In 1830, a law established that manumitted blacks would not become free until they were 21 years old, and in 1839 that age was postponed to 50 years (Aguirre 2005: 167). These pro-slavery regulations were lobbied by the landowners, who claimed that the elimination of slavery would cause a collapse in the agricultural commerce of the country. Landowners even managed to lift

for a brief period the regulation sanctioning the abolition of slave trading, for this reason, in 1845, 500 slaves were introduced in the country from Colombia (Blanchard 1992: 52–57).

Slaves responded to these new restrictive laws by trying to obtain their freedom by legal or illegal means. As for the first case, the number of self-purchased manumissions increased significantly, as well as the number of legal actions undertaken by the *protectores de negros* to sue slave owners (Trazegnies 1981; Lavallé 1999). In the second scenario, blacks oftentimes ran away from their masters and created bandit gangs to make a living (Aguirre 2005: 172).

Since slaves could not be imported any longer and the number of manumissions increased over time, the enslaved group shrunk during the nineteenth century. Aguirre (1993: 47; 2005: 178) reports that in Lima the number of slaves was 12,263 in 1813, 8,589 in 1820, 7,922 in 1839 and 4,500 in 1845. A similar trend also took place in rural areas where some *haciendas* lost up to 70–80% of their enslaved black workforce during the same span of time.

In 1854, Ramón Castilla, who had served as president of the Republic during the years 1845-1851, started a revolution against the new government, run by José Rufino Echenique. At this point, in order to enroll soldiers in his army, Echenique proclaimed that any slave who joined his troops would become free. Soon afterwards, on December 3rd, 1854, Ramón Castilla declared all Afro-descendants free with only one condition: they should not serve in Rufino Echenique's army. At the same time, Castilla guaranteed slaveholders that they would receive government reimbursement for the lost value of the freed slaves. Castilla won and black slavery was abolished. However, once again, true freedom was not conceded to Peruvian blacks. In a law of January 1855, it was established that they had to forcibly work for their former owners for a minimal wage; a few months later, the government assigned to a group of planters the task of designing a set of rules to regulate the black workforce in the *haciendas*. According to observers of the time, the result of such a legislative effort was "worse than the recently abolished slavery system" (Távara 1855: 34; cf. Aguirre 2005: 187). At the same time, the government provided former slaveholders with 300 pesos for every manumitted slave. In this way, planters gained twice: they retained the price of the slaves and, at the same time, they could continue to rely on a cheap workforce. An additional advantage was that now they could decide whom to hire and on whom to fire, and they were relieved from taking care of sick or elderly blacks, who were no longer fit to work. Blacks who remained in these rural areas kept working for the haciendas belonging to their former masters until the Land Reform (1963–1979), which turned them into small landlords. Other slaves left the plantations to look for better working conditions in cities. They often ended up living in the poorest urban neighborhoods performing underpaid working-class jobs.

5.6 Sugar plantations in Chincha

The socio-historical information so far provided does not seem to indicate that, overall, a creole language was likely to develop on Peruvian colonial plantations. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that in the Chincha region the situation might have been different. This section provides a socio-historical account of the plantation setting that characterized the Afro-communities examined in the present study (San José, San Regis, El Carmen and El Guayabo) to see to what extent a creole hypothesis might be feasible for them.

The earliest piece of documentation available for these villages belongs to the second phase (1650–1767), more precisely to the year 1688. It consists of a wedding act stating that Rosa Josepha de Muñatones y Aguado married Don Andrés de Salazar, bringing as her dowry the San José hacienda, including the village of El Guayabo, which was then turned into a sugar plantation with 87 slaves (CHSJ 2012: 4).

We also know that, by the end of the century, the property was surrounded by Jesuit haciendas; one of which was San Regis, which was dedicated to the cultivation of sugarcane and wine production. Macera (1966: 21), in fact, shows that the Jesuits began their agricultural enterprise in the region in 1692, when they acquired the first lands belonging to San Regis, and then kept increasing their properties by purchasing the nearby hacienda called Betlem in 1724, and Guachaqio in 1744.

San José was then sold in 1735 to Don Augustín de Salazar y Muñatones, the first count of Monte Blanco. During the 1760s, the Monte Blanco's property grew, since the family purchased the hacienda San Regis, which had been previously expropriated to the Jesuits, from the *Temporalidades* Council (CHSJ 2012: 4).

Macera (1966: 8–9) indicates that in 1767 the value of this Jesuit property amounted to 237,962.6 pesos. The reason for such a high price had to do with the fact that the plantation included 1654 fanegadas, was of *extension enorme y excepcional* 'huge and exceptional size' (1966: 9), and included 302 slaves (1966: 43). However, the author indicates that only 166 of the slaves were in the age range that would have allowed the full exploitation of their work (18–50 years of age), while 77 were too young (0–18 years of age), and 55 were too old (more than 51 years of age).[33]

The presence of such a high number of young slaves suggests that they were probably locally-born. In fact, *bozal* children were not usually shipped to Peru since the strenuous journey from Africa would almost certainly kill them (cf.

33. There must have been some minor miscalculations in Macera's (1966) data. In fact, when we add all the numbers, we obtain a total of 298, which is 4 short of 302.

Sessarego 2013c: Ch. 2). Furthermore, the presence of a good number of old captives may suggest that slaves' life expectancy was quite long and, therefore, living conditions might not have been too harsh, as for example, in other plantations societies, where slaves would not usually live much longer than 30–35 years (cf. for example Migge 2003 for Suriname).

Another element that seems to suggest that living conditions on these Jesuit plantations were not as harsh as on other haciendas, is the fact that during the 18th century many slaves working on nearby farms would oftentimes run away from their owners to find shelter in the Jesuits' complex. Such a migratory flux ended when the Jesuits left in 1767, as Sotomayor Roggero & Aranda de los Ríos (1984: 10) point out:[34]

> Con la salida de los jesuitas San [Regis] dejó de ser un lugar en el cual buscaban refugio los esclavos que huían de las otras haciendas.
> (When the Jesuits left, San Regis ceased to be the place where the slaves fleeing other haciendas would take refuge).

After the Jesuit departure, one of the places where slaves tried to hide from their masters would become El Carmen (CHSJ 2012: 5). Flores Galindo (1984: 108) also briefly reports the number of slaves encountered in San Regis during this period. His number matches the one indicated by Macera (1966: 43): 302 slaves. Moreover, Flores Galindo re-states that this population, as well as the majority of the slaves introduced in coastal plantations, was likely composed of *criollo* captives (1984: 109):

> Los grandes propietarios de la costa […] preferían a los negros criollos: con ellos era más factible desarrollar los lazos paternales y, además, se podía esperar que estuvieran entrenados en cultivos tan laboriosos como la caña o tan delicados como la vid.
> (The big coastal landlords preferred *criollo* blacks: with them it was easier to develop paternal connections, moreover, one could expect that they were more familiar with the sugarcane and winery cultivation, which required highly skilled labor).

This piece of information, in addition to the data provided by Macera (1966) concerning the religious indoctrination and the working and moving flexibility

---

34. The original quote states "San José" rather than "San Regis". This is because Sotomayor Roggero & Aranda de los Ríos (1984) claim that San José belonged to the Jesuits after 1692 (cf. also Cuba 2002: 18–19 on this point). Nevertheless, a close analysis of Macera's (1966: 21) work, in addition to the data found in Boschetti (2006) and CHSJ (2012), appears to suggest that the Jesuits did not own San José; rather, they owned San Regis and rented their lands to the Monte Blanco family, which was already in possession of the nearby hacienda San José.

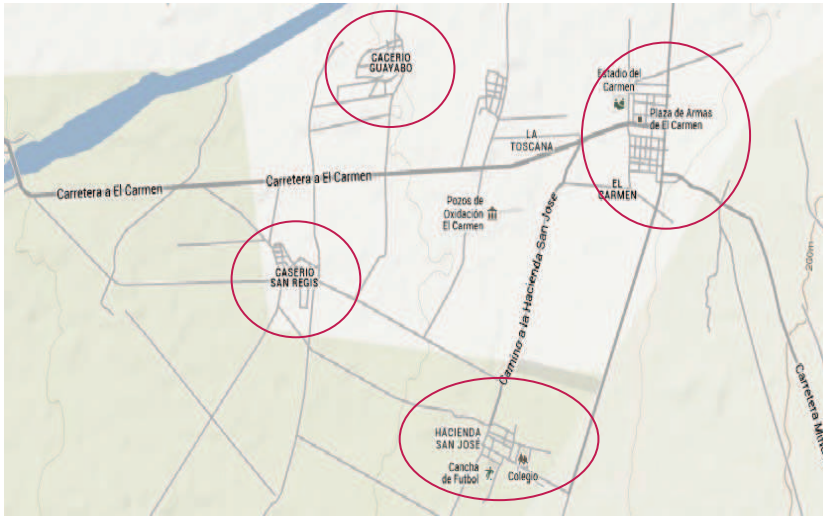


Figure 5.7 Overhead view of San Regis, San José, El Guayabo and El Carmen (adapted from: <https://www.google.com/maps/@-13.5047264,-76.0683455,15z>)

related to the *chacras de esclavos* (see Section 5.4), further reduces the likelihood of a creole language spoken in the region.

During the Peruvian War of Independence, in 1821, many of the slaves working on the plantations belonging to the Monte Blanco family ran away or joined San Martín's troops. The owner, Fernando Carrillo Albornoz y Salazar, fled to Spain, and his property was expropriated by the government. His wife, Petronilla Zavala, was able to recover the haciendas only in 1827. Even though slavery had been officially abolished in 1854, in practice, the living conditions of hacienda workers did not change much. In fact, they kept working on the same plantations as unpaid peons (CHSJ 2012: 5).

A few decades later, another war affected the haciendas belonging to the Monte Blanco dynasty. This time it was the War of the Pacific (1879–1883), which involved Bolivia, Peru and Chile. As soon as the war began, an uprising took place in the hacienda San José and the owner, Carrillo de Alboroz, was murdered. Soon after the tragic fact, his widow, Catalina del Valle y Osma, sold the hacienda to Roberto Legía, the Peruvian President's son, who resold it to Manuela Eguren de Cillóniz in 1913 (CHSJ 2012: 6; Sotomayor Roggero & Aranda de los Ríos 1984). The new owners turned the hacienda into a cotton plantation and ran it until the 1960s, when the Agrarian Reform expropriated parts of their lands to give them to the black *peones* who had been working on them until that point (Boschetti 2006: Ch. 8).

After the Land Reform (1963–1979), basic education and mobility reached almost all Afro-Peruvian communities, so that today many young Afro-Peruvians do not work any longer in the fields but prefer to study and move from the countryside to urban centers to look for better jobs. Nevertheless, Afro-Peruvians still constitute a highly discriminated minority, cut off from any position of power, whose members' standards of living are on average much lower than those of white and mestizo citizens.

Even though the socio-historical information provided in this chapter has shown that a creole language probably never developed in Chincha or in other Peruvian coastal regions, I agree with McWhorter's point (2000: 39) that "something broader was at work" and that a case-by-case argument for each Afro-Hispanic dialect of the Americas seems to miss such a wider generalization. The goal of Chapter 6 is to offer a new socio-historical perspective – rooted in the comparative analysis of American slave laws – that draws a connection among these apparently "unconnected […] constellations" (2000: 39) of dialects. Therefore, while up to this point this study has primarily focused on Peru, in the following chapter I will propose a hypothesis that attempts to highlight some common patterns typical of all Spanish colonies in the Americas. This – I hope – will cast some new light on the Spanish creole debate and on the history of these mysterious "Missing Spanish creoles".