

Summary

The participation of women in conquer and colonization of Central and South America by Spaniards in 16th century.

The aim of the thesis is to show the role of women during the conquer and colonization of territories of Central and South America for Spanish Crown. The research concentrated on the participation of women in so dominated by men endeavour like Conquest, also on them being the key players and their ability to cope with difficult conditions. The main characters of my thesis are the women who assisted the conquerers, took part in the conquests and even lead the excursions themselves or had leading positions in colonies, some were also seen as heroic. They have their part in history by their impact on creating an overseas Spanish Empire. The chronological range of this thesis is mainly 16th century, the time of discoveries, conquest and starting the settlement on newly discovered territories, however there are also references to the previous times (15th century, connected both to the reasons of discoveries and the first explorations of Christopher Columbus) and later (some problems are connected with the first years of 17th century). I was focused only on explorations organized by Spaniards, excluding conquerers of other nationalities. The main characters of my thesis are Spanish and Indian women. Those of African origin are shown in a marginal way. The thesis has chronological- problem orientation.

The thesis is divided into three parts - chapters. The first one shows the aspects of travelling to the New World, the reasons of emigration, proportions of quantity- travelling men and women, the conditions of sailing expeditions and brief description of what happened to those who reached their destination. In this chapter I also present the effects of my reaserch concerning migration of women to America. They are mainly concentrated on the first half of the 16th century, taking into consideration that the directories of passengers travelling to India date back to 1509. I also analyzed many aspects of migration to the New World, presented by charts and diagrams, illustrating those problems.

The second part shows the conquest. In this chapter I pictured the women taking part in explorations, taking into account their origin (Indian or Spanish) because it influenced their role and the way of showing them in the references. Another problem, described in this chapter is the women taking part in conflicts taken place in colonies after the end of the main

phase of conquest. They were both conflicts with Indians and fights about the power between Spaniards. The second chapter describes the women in the situations of those battles, during explorations, it shows the element of danger and the way those women coped with difficult situations, threatening their lives or safety.

The third part describes aspects connected with colonization, the form of organized life and shows many forms of women activity after the first phase of creating Colonial Empire. This chapter also pictures the place of woman in emerging community of the New World.

All of those parts- chapters have the same layout: introductory information of general nature which forego subsections describing the contribution of women to the conquest and colonization.

Thesis also has appendixes. They contain short descriptions of the women showed in the thesis and also the pictures of them. Because of the chronological- problem orientation of the thesis, information about the women mentioned were separated into different chapters. In order to sort information and make sense of direction easier among many *conquistadoras* I decided to enclose the list of women who took part in conquest and colonization. In appendixes there is also part of statistical data concerning emigration, which was to detailed to be included in the first chapter. Visuals are supposed to make the thesis more interesting.

This thesis is about to give more information about the conquest- the new element concerning the role of women in the conquest and colonization of the New World. It should present many different actions of the women and how important impact they had on creating overseas Spanish Empire.

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