

# RICHARD BYERS

## Latin America: Economy & Culture

- Culturally, the leading feature of the new society was pervasive Catholicism. Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries arrived immediately after the conquest period, and began a systematic effort to undermine indigenous religion & replace it with Christianity.
- 2 factors encouraged this process
- ① Power & success of Spanish conquests
  - ② Gentler aspects of Christianity, particularly its humanitarian aspects, presented a favorable contrast to blood sacrifice & arbitrary power of native priestly elites. There were also opportunities for syncretism - many earlier gods & goddesses were merged with Catholic Saints

### ↳ Economy ①

2 types of economic activity prevalent in Early Latin America.

- ① Village economy - composed primarily of Indians & mestizos - people of mixed Spanish & Indian descent - produced corn & other foods, largely for local needs.