

Independence in Latin America, 1800–1830

Causes of Latin American Revolutions

1. Enlightenment Ideas → writings of John Locke, Voltaire, & Jean Rousseau; Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine.
2. Creole discontent at being left out of government jobs and trade concessions.
3. Inspiration of American and French Revolutions.
4. Preoccupation of Spain & Portugal in fighting the Napoleonic Wars.

Napoleon on the March



Provides a model & a diversion!

Latin American Revolutions!



Reasons for Nationalist Movements

- Latin Americans resented restrictions that forbade them to trade with countries other than Spain.
- Latin Americans resented restrictions that prevented them from manufacturing their own goods.
- The American and French Revolutions encouraged freedom and self-rule.

- Wealthy colonial residents of Latin America were frustrated by the political and economic power of colonial officials and angered by high taxes and imperial monopolies.
- They were inspired by the Enlightenment thinkers and by the examples of the American and French Revolutions

- The Portuguese royal family fled to Brazil, where King John VI maintained his court for over a decade
- Napoleon's invasion of Portugal and Spain in 1807 and 1808 led dissenters in Venezuela, Mexico, and Bolivia to overthrow Spanish colonial officials in 1808–1809

- The Spanish authorities quickly reasserted control, but a new round of revolutions began in 1810

Spanish South America, 1810–1825

- A creole-led revolutionary junta declared independence in Venezuela in 1811.
- Spanish authorities were able to rally free blacks and slaves to defend the Spanish Empire because the junta's leaders were interested primarily in pursuing the interests of creole landholders

- Simón Bolívar emerged as the leader of the Venezuelan revolutionaries.
- Bolívar used the force of his personality in order to attract new allies (including slaves and free blacks) to his cause and to command the loyalty of his troops

- Bolívar defeated the Spanish armies in 1824 and tried to forge Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador into a single nation.
- This project was a failure, as were Bolívar's other attempts to create a confederation of the former Spanish colonies

Bolívar's Failure

- 💣 After uniting Venezuela, Columbia, & Ecuador into Gran Columbia, he left to help free the rest of Latin America.
- 💣 He died a year later, with his goal of uniting all of South America unfulfilled!

- Buenos Aires was another important center of revolutionary activity in Spanish South America
- In 1816, after Ferdinand regained the Spanish throne, local junta leaders declared independence as the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata
- The new government was weak and the region quickly descended into political chaos.

Mexico, 1810–1823

- In 1810, Mexico was Spain's richest and most populous colony
- However, the Amerindian population of central Mexico had suffered from dislocation due to mining and commercial enterprises
- Also they suffered and a cycle of crop failures and epidemics

- On September 16, 1810 a parish priest, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla urged the people to rise up against the Spanish authorities.
- The resulting violent rebellion took place under the leadership of Hidalgo and then, after Hidalgo's capture and execution, under José María Morelos.
- Loyalist forces defeated the insurrection and executed Morelos in 1815

- In 1821, news of a military revolt in Spain inspired Colonel Agustín de Iturbide to declare Mexico's independence with himself as emperor.
- In early 1823 the army overthrew Iturbide and Mexico became a republic

Brazil, to 1831

- King John VI of Portugal ruled his kingdom from Brazil until 1821, when unrest in Spain and Portugal led him to return to Lisbon.
- King John's son Pedro remained in Brazil, where he ruled as regent until 1822, when he declared Brazil to be an independent constitutional monarchy with himself as king

- Pedro's liberal policies (including opposition to slavery) alienated the political slave-holding elite
- He incurred heavy losses of men and money as he attempted to control Uruguay by military force.
- Street demonstrations and violence led Pedro I to abdicate in favor of his son, Pedro II, who reigned until republicans overthrew him in 1889

Results of the Latin American Revolutions

1. Independence for Spanish & Portuguese Latin America

 By the mid-1820s, revolts create many newly-independent nations.

§ Toussaint L'Ouverture - Haiti

§ Bolívar, San Martín, & O'Higgins in:
Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Peru,
Bolivia, the United Provinces of Central
America, and Gran Columbia!

2. *No Unity!*

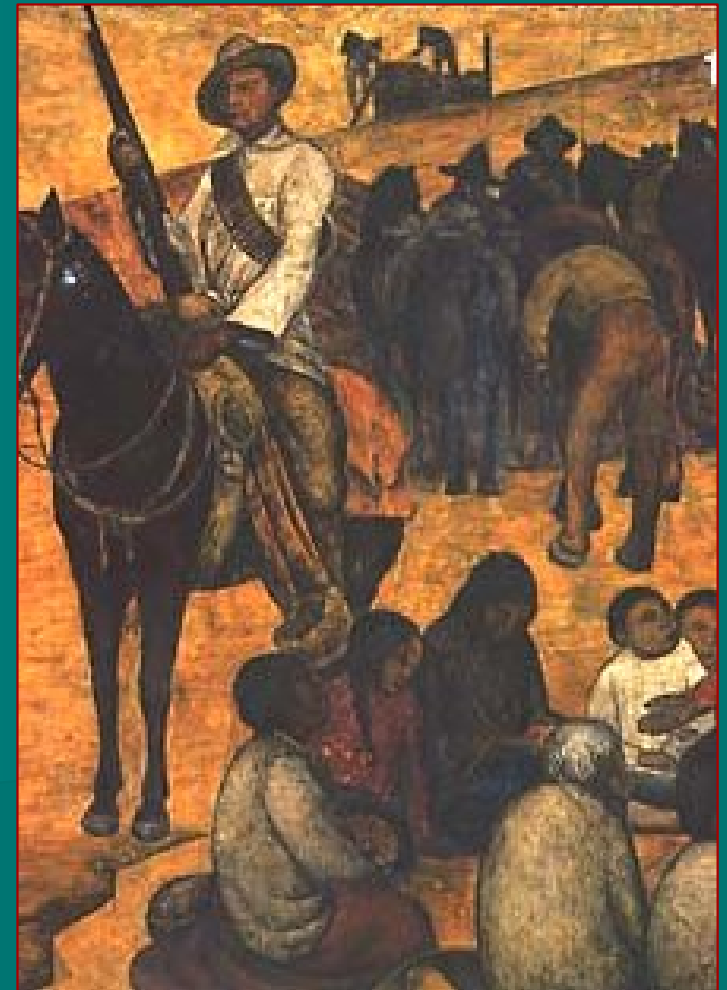
 Failure of Bolivar's dream for a united South America:

§ Many newly independent countries struggle with civil wars.

 By 1830s, geographic factors (mts., the Amazon, etc.) plus cultural differences defeated attempts at unification.

3. *Independence Brought More Poverty*

- 💣 The wars disrupted trade.
- 💣 The wars devastated the cities and the countryside.



4. *Left Many Countries in the Control of Caudillos*

WHO WERE THEY?:

- § Mid-19c dictators → military authoritarianism.
- § Mostly wealthy *creole* aristocrats.
- § Immediately followed the fight for independence.
- § Posed as reformers with goals to improve the economy and better the lives of the common people.

4. *Left Many Countries in the Control of Caudillos*



WHO WERE THEY?:

- § BUT...Overthrew governments and took away basic human rights.
- § Some attempted to make improvements, but most just cared about themselves and their families and friends [nepotism].
- § Power changes usually occurred at bayonet-point [*coup d'etats!*]

Additional Problems

5. Feuds among leaders.
6. Geographic barriers.
7. The social hierarchy continued from the past.
8. Conservatives favored the old social order.
9. Liberals wanted land reform.
10. Dependence on foreign nations for capital and for economic investments.

The Problem of Order, 1825–1890, Constitutional Experiments

- Leaders in both the United States and in Latin America espoused constitutionalism.
- In the United States, the colonists' prior experience with representative government contributed to the success of constitutionalism;
- In Latin America, inexperience with popular politics contributed to the failure of constitutions

- In Canada, Britain responded to demands for political reform by establishing responsible government in each of the provinces in the 1840s.
- In 1867 the provincial governments of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia entered into a confederation to form the Dominion of Canada with a central government in Ottawa.

- In Latin America, lack of experience with elected legislatures and municipal governments led the drafters of constitutions to experiment with untested and impractical political institutions.
- Latin American nations also found it difficult to define the political role of the church and to subordinate the army and its prestigious leaders to civilian government

Personalist Leaders

- Successful military leaders in both the United States and Latin America were able to use their military reputations as the foundations of political power.
- Latin America's slow development of stable political institutions made personalist politics much more influential than it was in the United States

- The first constitutions of nearly all the American republics excluded large numbers of poor citizens from full political participation.
- This led to the rise of populist leaders who articulated the desires of the excluded poor and who at times used populist politics to undermine constitutional order and move toward dictatorship.

- Personalist leaders dominated national politics by identifying with the common people, but in practice, they promoted the interests of powerful property owners.
- Personalist leaders were common in both the United States and Latin America, but in Latin America, the weaker constitutional tradition, less protection of property rights, lower literacy levels, and less developed communications systems allowed personalist leaders to become dictators

The Threat of Regionalism

- After independence the relatively weak central governments of the new nations were often not able to prevent regional elites from leading secessionist movements
- In Spanish America, all of the post-independence efforts to create large multistate federations failed.
- Central America split off from Mexico in 1823 and then broke up into five separate nations; Gran Colombia broke up into Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador; and Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia declared their independence from Argentina

- Regionalism threatened the United States when the issue of slavery divided the nation, leading to the establishment of the Confederacy and the U.S. Civil War
- The Confederacy failed because of poor timing; the new states of the Western Hemisphere were most vulnerable during the first decades after independence.
- The Confederacy's attempt to secede from the United States came when the national government was well-established and strengthened by experience, economic growth, and population growth

Foreign Interventions and Regional Wars

- During the 19th century wars between Western Hemisphere nations and invasions from the European powers often determined national borders, access to natural resources, and control of markets.
- By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile had successfully waged wars against their neighbors and established themselves as regional powers.

- European military intervention included the British attack on the United States in the War of 1812, the United States' war with Spain in 1898–1899, French and English naval blockades of Argentina, an English naval blockade of Brazil, and Spanish and French invasions of Mexico.
- When the French invaded Mexico in 1862 they ousted President Benito Juárez and established Maximilian Habsburg as emperor. Juárez drove the French out in 1867; Maximilian was captured and executed.

- The United States defeated Mexico and forced the Mexican government to give up Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado in 1848.
- Chile defeated the combined forces of Peru and Bolivia in two wars (1836–1839 and 1879–1881). Chile gained nitrate mines and forced Bolivia to give up its only outlet to the sea.

- Argentina and Brazil fought over control of Uruguay in the 1820s, but finally recognized Uruguayan independence.
- Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay then cooperated in a five-year war against Paraguay in which Paraguay was defeated, occupied, lost territory, and was forced to open its markets to foreign trade.

Native Peoples and the Nation-State

- When the former colonies of the Western Hemisphere became independent, the colonial powers ceased to play a role as mediator for and protector of the native peoples.
- Independent Amerindian peoples posed a significant challenge to the new nations of the Western Hemisphere, but Amerindian military resistance was overcome in both North and South America by the end of the 1880s.

- In the United States, rapid expansion of white settlements between 1790 and 1810 led to conflict between the forces of the American government and Amerindian confederations like that led by Tecumseh and Prophet in 1811–1812.
- Further white settlement led to the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which forced the resettlement of eastern Amerindian peoples to land west of the Mississippi River.

- Amerindians living on the Great Plains had become skilled users of horses and firearms, and thus offered more formidable resistance to the expansion of white settlement.
- Horses and firearms had also made the Plains peoples less reliant on agriculture and more reliant on buffalo hunting.
- The near extinction of the buffalo, loss of land to ranchers, and nearly four decades of armed conflict with the United States Army forced the Plains Amerindians to give up their land and accept reservation life.

- In Argentina and Chile native people were able to check the expansion of white settlement until the 1860s, when population increase, political stability, and military modernization gave the Chilean and Argentinean governments the upper hand.
- In the 1870s the governments of both Argentina and Chile crushed native resistance and drove surviving Amerindians onto marginal land.

- In Mexico, plantation owners in the Yucatán Peninsula had forced Maya communities off their land and into poverty.
- In 1847, when the Mexican government was busy with its war against the United States, Maya communities in the Yucatán rose in a revolt (the Caste War) that nearly returned the Yucatán to Maya rule.

“The Colossus of the North”

US dominated affairs in the Americas.

- ❑ 1823 - **Monroe Doctrine**.
- ❑ US takes Texas and Mexican Cession.
- ❑ US gains independence for Cuba.
- ❑ **Roosevelt Corollary** - US will police the America.
- ❑ US sent troops to Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua.
- ❑ US built **Panama Canal** - “Yankee imperialism.”