Independence in Latin America

Roots of Revolution
- Beginning of Revolution
  - Colonial residents frustrated by power of colonial officials – taxes & imperial monopolies
  - Inspired by Enlightenment & American & French revolutions
  - Napoleon’s invasion of Spain leads to overthrow of colonial officials – beginnings of revolution

Spanish South America
- Creole led revolutionary junta declares independence in Venezuela
  - Interested in pursuing the interests of creole land owners
  - Simon Bolivar emerges as leader
- Uses his strong personality to attract new allies (including slaves and free blacks) to his cause and to command loyalty to his troops
  - Bolivar defeats the Spanish armies and tries to create a confederation of the former Spanish colonies
- Will be a failure – colonies will begin to rule themselves as independent nations (similar or different from North America?)

Mexico
- Mexico was Spain’s richest and most populous colony
- 1810 priest Miguel Hidalgo urges people to rise up against Spanish; he is captured and executed
- Army general Iturbide declares Mexican independence – declares himself emperor
- 1823 Mexican army overthrows and creates a republic

Brazil
- Portuguese king rules from Brazil – problems at home force him to return
- Son rules as regent, declares Brazil’s independence and himself as king
- Liberal (enlightened) policies – such as opposition to slavery alienates him from the elite.

Problems of Order
- Latin America & US both espouse Constitutionalism; Latin America’s inexperience with popular politics contributes to failure of constitutions
- Latin America also found it difficult to define the political role of the church and subordinate the army and its leaders to the govt
**Personalist Leaders**
- Military leaders were able to use their reputations as the foundations of political power. Latin America’s slow development of stable political institutions made personalist politics much more influential than the US
- Latin America’s first constitutions excluded large numbers of the poor
  - Leads to the rise of populist leaders who articulated the desire of the excluded poor while undermining constitutional order and movement towards dictatorship
- Jackson in US and Paez in Venezuela are examples --> They would identify with the common people but in practice they promoted the interests of powerful property owners

**Threat of Regionalism**
- In Spanish South America attempts to create large multi-state federations failed
- Also threatens the US --> Civil War

**Foreign Intervention**
- British tries to attack and take back the US in 1812
- France invades Mexico in 1862 – oust Juarez and puts in place Maxmillain Habsburg
  - 1867 Santa Ana & Juarez drive out the French

**Development & Underdevelopment**
- US was the only one to industrialize
- European and US corporations developed mining in Latin America but the costs of this development led to increased dependency on foreign capital
- Lack of development in Latin America
  - Weak government
  - Political instability (civil wars)
  - Deepening dependency on foreigners