



## Latin American Independence Movements

Mexico, Venezuela, and Brazil

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## Learning Goals

- Compare and contrast independence movements in two Latin American countries, including the reasons for the movements.
- Discuss the military campaigns and their impact on the outcome – Chacabuco, Maipu, Ayacucho, Boyaca, Carabobo.
- Analyze the contributions of leaders to the process of independence.
- Evaluate the position of the United States toward Latin American independence, including the reasons for the emergence of the Monroe Doctrine.
- Understand the impact of independence on the economies of the Americas, including new perspectives on economic development.
- Understand the impact of independence on Native Americans, African Americans, and creoles.

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## A Different Socio-Political Scene

- The British colonies united against one enemy for political rights
- Latin American independence was about social rights and equality
- Geographically and politically divided
- Fought against Napoleonic France, Spain, and each other




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## Spanish America

- *Peninsulares* dominated as a result of the Bourbon reforms
- Creoles resented this and wanted change
- *Castas* also wanted political and social equality
- Wars were long, bloody and often caused more conflict and tensions




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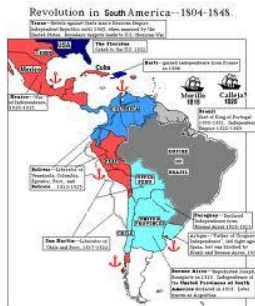
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## Balkanization

- Influenced by the U.S. and French revolutions and terrified by the Haitian Revolution
- The creation of workable political structures meant breaking up the viceroalties into smaller countries




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## Napoleon's Brother

- The new king of Spain Joseph Bonaparte was not acknowledged by the creoles
- They were loyal to the Bourbons
- Without a king, as they believed, the people were sovereign
- Like the 13 colonies, creoles wanted more autonomy before they pushed for independence




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## Juntas

- **Junta:** a group of people controlling a government, especially after a revolutionary seizure of power.
- Formed as a response to what was happening in Spain during the Napoleon era
- Juntas ruled until Fernando VII was restored

Primera Junta



Rio de la Plata 1810

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## Juntas

- *Peninsulares* did all they could to prevent creoles from establishing these political units
- This pushed the creoles closer to the desire for independence
- When they lost confidence in imperial leadership, they revolted

Junta Grande



Rio de la Plata 1810

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## Demography and Geography

- The nature of independence wars varied from place to place
- Each area had its own leaders, agendas, and philosophies
- Father Hidalgo in the northern viceroyalty of New Spain tried to spur a social revolution
- In New Granada, leaders were trying to preempt a slave uprising like they saw in Haiti
- Each area had to address issues relevant to their local resources

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Grito de Dolores



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### Mexican Independence

- New Spain has largest most ethnically diverse population
- September 16, 1810 – Father Miguel Hidalgo begins the Mexican revolution
- His call appealed to creoles, Native Americans, mestizos, mulattos, free blacks and more
- Called for redistribution of land, abolition of slavery, and an end to Indian tribute

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### Hidalgo's Forces

- The creoles and *peninsulares* were terrified by the 80,000 revolutionaries he recruited
- They were not disciplined or organized
- The creoles and *peninsulares* took advantage of the chaos and defeated Hidalgo's fighters with the royal and local militias
- Hidalgo was captured and executed in 1811

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## Father José Maria Morelos

- Fought against the royal army
- 1814 – wrote the Constitutional Decree for the Liberty of Mexico
  - Infused with Catholicism
  - Included abolition of slavery
- Guerilla warfare and war of attrition
- Mexican elites knew independence would happen
- Took the opportunity to preserve their power

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## Plan de Iguala

Led by Agustín de Iturbide

*Promised three things ...*

1. Independence from Spanish Crown
  2. Supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church
  3. Equality for *peninsulares* and creoles
- Iturbide continue success on the battlefield
  - Treaty of Cordoba recognizes and independent Mexico (1821)

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## Plan de Iguala

- Plan preserved the social order, which delays civil war
- Establishes a sovereign state
- Calls for a monarchy, but Bourbons refused to send any family members
- 1822 Emperor Iturbide (2 yrs)
- Dissolves congress when they criticize him → not a good idea on his part → the end




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## Venezuela

- Like in Mexico, creoles are united by class interests and desire from national sovereignty
- 1811, Creoles declare an independent Republic of Venezuela
- Eliminate slave trade but not slavery – makes it a creole revolution, thus a civil war, too
- Spain uses this against the creoles by recruiting non-whites

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## Venezuela

- Jose Tomas Boves – Spanish officer who brings down the republic in 1814 with a mixed-race army and a reign of terror
- Spain sends 11,000 troops in 1815 amid the chaos
- This revitalizes the independence movement
- Simon Bolivar welcomes all races into his armies – he even frees his slaves

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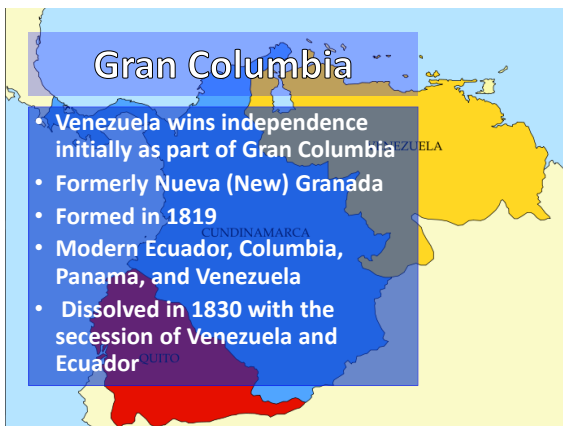
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## Foreign Intervention

- British were initially an ally of Venezuela
- When Napoleon invaded Spain, Britain became an ally of Spain
- US gov't is not officially an ally but the public was on their side, providing some assistance
- Help (money, guns, volunteers) from Haiti under the condition that Bolivar fight to liberate slaves

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### Foreign Legions

- British Legion units, consisting of Napoleonic War veterans, helped Bolivar
- Two British legions and an Irish Legion
- Several significant battles are credited to the legions by Bolivar, calling them, "the saviors of my country"

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### Simon Bolivar



- Political goal is a unified South America
- Imposed "able despotism"
- Dictatorship to enforce legal equality to overcome racial inequality
- Wanted democracy but could not overlook the political reality of Latin America
- Always away fighting battles
- Awarded land to strong military leaders
- Renounces his presidency and dies in 1830

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## Jose de San Martin

- After serving as a Spanish officer, he joins the Argentine army
- His army joins O'Higgins' army in Chile
- Liberate Chile and moves to Peru where he meets Bolivar's advancing army in 1822
- Resigns after the meeting and moves to France where he dies in 1850




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## Bernardo O'Higgins

"We can live with honor, or die with glory! He who is brave, follow me!"

- Battle of Chacabuco, 1817
- O'Higgins is credited with a brave charge against the royal forces – to avoid being trapped against a hill
- The victory meant the Chilean forces could enter Santiago and retake control over Chile for the first time since 1814



Pedro Subercasseux, 19<sup>th</sup> Cent.

*The liberator of Chile*

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## Brazil

- Unlike other movements, it did not meet imperial resistance
- Like other imperial powers, Portugal imposed mercantilism
- No social friction like Spanish colonies

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## New Privileges for Brazil

- When Napoleon invaded Portugal in 1807, the royal family moved to Brazil
- National bank, library, universities, printing presses
- Ports were opened to foreign trade
- Manufacturing was less restricted
- When the British liberated Portugal, the court remained in Brazil

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## Portuguese Revolution

- Portuguese were mad and wanted their king to move back to Portugal
- In 1820, rebellion led to the revolution that created a Junta, demanding the king's return
- King returned in 1821, leaving his son in Brazil as regent
- Portuguese decided to return Brazil to colony status

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## Brazil's Independence

- Brazilians like their new status and decided to move toward independence
- Dom Pedro declares independence in 1822 and is crowned emperor
- An assembly established a liberal government in 1823
- Dom Pedro doesn't like the limits to the emperor so he dissolves it and asks his advisors to draft a constitution

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## Brazil's Centralized Government

- Constitution of 1824
  - Bicameral legislature
    - Lower house indirectly elected by male suffrage
    - Upper house selected by emperor, served life terms
  - Emperor could veto all legislation
  - Emperor could dissolve legislature at any time
  - Provincial presidents appointed by the emperor
  - Catholicism was the state religion with the emperor head of the church
  - Monarchy ended in 1889

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## Brazil's Independence

- *How was Brazil's independence different than other movements in Latin America?*

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## Potential Exam Questions

- Considering the goals and causes of the Latin American Wars of Independence, in what ways were their results a success and/or failure?
- Compare and contrast the roles of Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin in the struggles for independence in Latin America, and explain why each of these liberators died a disappointed man.
- Explain how Mexico achieved its' independence from Spain, and evaluate how its experience was different and/or similar to the rest of Spanish America.
- How did the policies and actions of countries outside the region influence the Wars of Emancipation in Latin America.
- Evaluate the nature and importance of the role of Creoles in the Latin American Wars of Emancipation.
- In what ways could the Independence movement in Mexico be seen as both unique and similar to other movements in the region, and in what ways did events in the 50 years after independence reflect this same dichotomy?

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## Potential Exam Questions

- What similarities and what differences do you find in the causes of the American Revolution (1776) and the Latin American Wars of Independence (1810 and after)?
- "Haiti's achievement of independence was unique in the hemisphere." How far do you agree with this judgment?
- By what groups and for what reasons was independence opposed in the United States in 1776 and in one Latin American country in 1810 and after?
- "Wars of independence in the Americas were primarily caused by political factors." To what extent do you agree with this statement for the period 1775 to 1850?
- "Most revolutions in the Americas merely replaced the colonial rulers with a home-grown political elite." How valid is this claim that Wars of Independence in the Americas during the eighteenth and nineteenth century did not mark a radical change from the past?
- "Wars of Independence in the Americas were primarily caused by economic grievances." Discuss how far this claim is justified with reference to any one war of independence in the region in the period 1775 to 1850.

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