

# Latin american revolution

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



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During the early 18th century the creoles played a major role in the Latin America revolution. Several countries were fed up with the Spanish control because of the reforms forced onto them. Keeping in mind this occurred while they faced oppression from the natives' due to the fact they were not accepted as natives themselves.

This on top of economic, social and political struggles sent them over the edge. The creoles wanted to be at the top of the social class for a change instead of at the very bottom and they thought independence would gain them power and the strength needed to defeat peninsulares.

As a result, the South American continent banded together to overcome Spain's corruptive rule. The movements prospered under leaders Simn Bolivar (the Liberator) of the North and Jos de San Martin of the South. Following their efforts, came the independence these colonies had been waiting for. Majority of the region implemented sovereign nations and could now make their own decisions as they saw fit. Thanks to the creoles courage to stand up against the Spanish, Latin American countries got the chance to experience freedom!!

There were 4 major causes of the Latin American Revolution. First were the problems of the Spanish Empire. Starting with their political problems, the colonies were run by Spanish governors who were dictators. One person made all the rules and the rules were set up to benefit the Spanish governors which was not good. Spain had the first right to colonial goods and resources; therefore, all the goods went to Spain first. This made the

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colonies mad that they produced all these goods but could not even enjoy them. Colonies could only trade with Spain too, and they set all the prices for goods.

Quite a bit of racism took place towards people who were not blood born Europeans. In the social hierarchy, Native Spaniards (Peninsulares) were the highest class. The peninsulares made up a very small percentage of the population. Underneath them were the people of pure European blood who were born in the new world (creoles). Combing African + blood born Europeans (Mulattos) and Indian + blood born Europeans (Mestizos) made up the third class. Lastly came the pure Indians and Africans sitting at the bottom. They had no right or privileges and were shunned against by the rest of the community.

Another cause was the enlightenment (a new way of thought in Europe). The people believed God placed Kings in royal position and he was the only one. After being enlightened people thought the government was meant to be based on a contract between the king and the people. Rights of life, liberty and property were to be protected under any circumstances and if they were not, citizens have the right to rebel.

Next the American Revolution gave hope to Latin America that they were capable of overthrowing their mother country.

And lastly but certainly not least, The French Revolution again proved success could be found in fighting for Independence. The Haitian Revolution came to existence because of social disagreements between Gens de couleur (free people of color) and the French settlers. Slaves ended up

overthrowing the French settlers thanks to the former slave and military leader Toussaint Louverture. Religion was used as a tactic to initialize the revolution. Specifically, Haitians Vodou priest Boukman who inspired slaves to rebel

French Military leader and emperor Napoleon Bonaparte helped give the South American colonies a blueprint towards Independence to follow after. With his powerful imperial army Napoleon invaded Spain and Portugal highlighting Spain's weakness in the process. Venezuela felt that they did not owe their obedience to Spain anymore and this gave a push for the movement.

Argentina was the first region to make a move towards independence. Jos De San Martin a creole himself from northeastern Argentina, stepped up to bring his home country justice once and for all. San Martin had an epiphany that the only thing standing between Argentina and success was, the liberation of the Andes provinces. Immediately putting the plan into action, he began training the Army of the Andes which consisted of a large portion of black and mulatto (people of west African-European descent) volunteers. Once they were prepared they crossed the mountains into Chile, freeing them from the royalists.

He guided his locals against Britain with a victory, also taking Uruguay down with it. Now they had come to a great realization, Spain's protection was no longer needed for them to prosper. Unfortunately, his social reforms failed so San Martin went back to Argentina to fight remaining Spanish troops.

Contrasting to the viceroyalty of La Plata (Argentina) the viceroyalty of New Granada in northern South America had less creoles. They were made up of the countries Venezuela, Columbia, Ecuador, and Panama. In order for the fight for independence to be successful they had to get assistance from the pardos. Strong armies were built up by Simn Bolivar who liberated northern South America. Bolivar was born in Venezuela into a wealthy Creole family. After watching Napoleon's legacy, Bolivar longed for a constitutional republic and the ideals of liberty and popular sovereignty. He participated in the congress of juntas that declared outright independence for Venezuela in 1812, against the resistance of royalists. San Martin decides to leave to live in Spain and by 1824 Bolivar defeats all remaining Spanish forces. Simon helped Venezuela revolt in 1820 by bringing in his troops to defeat the royalist army. He resigned positon as President in 1830.

Jos de San Martin and Sim? n Bolvar did not see eye to eye in the reshaping of Latin America. They met in 1822 to settle how to remove the Spanish from Peru and the following was addressed. It was noted that Bolvar was in a better geographic location than San Martin to send military forces into Peru. However, Bolvar was not one hundred percent confident in his military's abilities because they were not used to fighting in the high altitudes. San Martin favored monarchical rule while Bolvar preferred republicanism and Creole Oligarchic rule. When San Martin resigned from his duties it was concluded he probably concluded that it was not likely for South America to have a monarchy. Meanwhile Bolvar's vision came true that Latin America would see small independent republics in the near future.

Six years later Spanish forces are defeated by Peru and they gain their independence as well. It took a few decades for Peru, Chile and Bolivia to work out territorial disputes; The War of Pacific brings the feud to an end resulting in Chile annexing Peruvian and Bolivian lands. The tragic part was the damage left behind in Peru from Chilean troops. Years of work put into their economy was pulled right out from under them and it was only partly replenished. Political stability finally came around under the presidency of Nicolás de Piérola who brought reforms to fix the brokenness.

Revolutionists from the outside freed Bolivia, also known as Upper Peru. Creole uprisings continued to be unsuccessful from 1808 until 1814. It was not until 1822 once Bolívar took interest in Upper Peru and sent two expeditions into the region, that success was found. Bolivia finally claimed their independence on January 5, 1825. Three months later the last of the royalists were defeated and Bolívar was named Father of Upper Peru. August 25, the country became Bolivia as we call it today in honor of the Liberator and his great contributions to the country.

In 1854 Justo José de Urquiza became the new caudillo. Buenos Aires and Urquiza forces went into conflict. After defeating Urquiza Buenos Aires becomes the national capital of Argentina. The government welcomed European immigrants to the Pampas; which were divided into 3 estates (estancias). Gauchos worked on the land and railroads while any leftover American Indians were taken to Patagonia and exterminated. Traditional farming methods such as rounding up wild livestock and taking it to the

market, were replaced with modern methods like ranching cattle, sheep and goats.

Cuadillos from the landowning Creole families removed each other at a fast pace. Between 1830 through 1899, there were approximately 41 presidencies and 30 insurrections. Not much was done and a large portion of the money from foreigners went to the leaders. Rivalries kept being refueled mainly because of failure to agree on federalism or tighter control.

Father Miguel Hidalgo wants to lead a land reform movement; he calls for the Indians to rebel. Planning to lead a group to Mexico City, much to his surprise he is captured and executed. His body is left in the middle of the street to warn other attackers to think twice and go back to where they came from. During this time things are spiraling out of control throughout Latin America. Napoleon loses in Europe, a civil war breaks out in Spain, a dispute going on in Haiti, and Jose de San Martin & Simon Bolivar are rebelling against the Spanish in Argentina.

Two prominent individuals Vicente Guerrero and Agustn de Iturbide came up with a solution called the Iguala Plan. The plan was based on civil rights between Mexicans and peninsulares, reverence for the church and groundwork for independence. By 1820 Augustin de Iturbide declares Mexico independent from Spain. The Spanish monarchy has no more say so in Mexico. However, the poor people are back at square one; Mexican or Spanish nobles are still there. No benefits were seen for the poor people in the Haitian and Mexican Revolutions.

The Portuguese monarchy fled from Napoleon and made Rio de Janeiro the nation capital in 1807. Brazil is the new home of the Portuguese crown, establishing a Portuguese kingdom. A couple years later the people change their mind and want to be their own democratic independent republic. Of course, this was determined on the condition that the Portuguese kept their power, title and wealth.

At the end of the wars the new states had been established: Mexico and the United Provinces of Central America, Viceroyalty of New Spain; Great Columbia, territory of New Granada (Columbia, Venezuela and Ecuador); Peru, Chile, and Bolivia, Viceroyalty of Peru; and the United Provinces of the River Plata and Paraguay made from the Viceroyalty of La Plata.

The Creoles were very seldom given the opportunity to exercise their political rights. Part of the problem was that a large majority of the people were illiterate and miniscule with anything that had to do with the government. By no means were they ever prepared to one day have to make decisions for themselves and govern their own people. For years they became comfortable with being obedient to the Spanish who told them everything to do. Now they were fearful when faced with responsibility. The election of executive officers was usually granted to men who were well put together and veterans from the war. Sadly, these men had nothing to bring to the table because they were clueless on political theory. As they tried to create an effective government they turned back to military experience since they were conditioned again to receiving orders from someone else. A government where peace and harmony coexisted was simply not obtainable



for the creoles. Tensions were rising between them and the Mestizos because of racial antagonism. Violence proved to be the only method that got through to people.

Nothing changed in the social class except the creoles replacing peninsulares at the top. Everyone else was still at the bottom. All revolutions began with a popular power base from the middle to lower class; they fueled the revolutions. Going back to what Aristotle said he who controls the middle-class wins is proved to be true. Nations felt that they should be defined not by ancient dynasties but by their own actions. The United States became a democracy for the first time since Republican Rome.

Before the wars manufacturing was not encouraged due to the fact that authorities did not want competition with the mother country. Following the revolution mineral and agricultural production declined, and industrialization took its place. Trade was no longer limited to Spain so the United States and Great Britain became the new countries' trading partner. America was the primary source for exporting cash crops and other raw materials; manufactured goods were imported too. Once the Spaniards were driven out the government annexed their lands and immediately put them up for sale. The ironic part was the creoles were the only ones who could afford the land; yet they were still frowned upon by the rest of society because of their distinction.

Latin America's population saw a drastic increase during the 18th century. Labor was in high demand still because the land-person ration did not change. One of the most notable solutions was the introduction of forced

labor; specifically designed for American Indians in the Andes. Slavery was a direct correlation to forced labor and begun making its debut among different regions. Wages were unacceptably low because of Mine operators and landowners who controlled all wealth distribution. The government decided it was necessary to engage in a selective mass immigration to assist with labor shortages. Common immigrants consisted of indentured laborers recruited from India and China (coolies). They were on 5 to 10 year contracts working off the coasts. Peru, Cuba and Costa Rica hosted 235, 000 Chinese immigrants; who were placed to work on sugar and cotton plantations, railroads and silver mines.

Looking at the Latin American Revolution from one perspective an individual could say it was a good thing it happened. The South American countries became independent. If they had not the United States would not have many of the imports Americans love. Machinery, motor vehicles, chemicals, metals, plastic and plenty others. On the other hand, someone could also say it did not help and the world would have been better without it. Most of the countries had to work hard to rebuild their tarnished political and economic foundations.

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