



Toussaint L'Ouverture

# Independence for Latin America



Reader

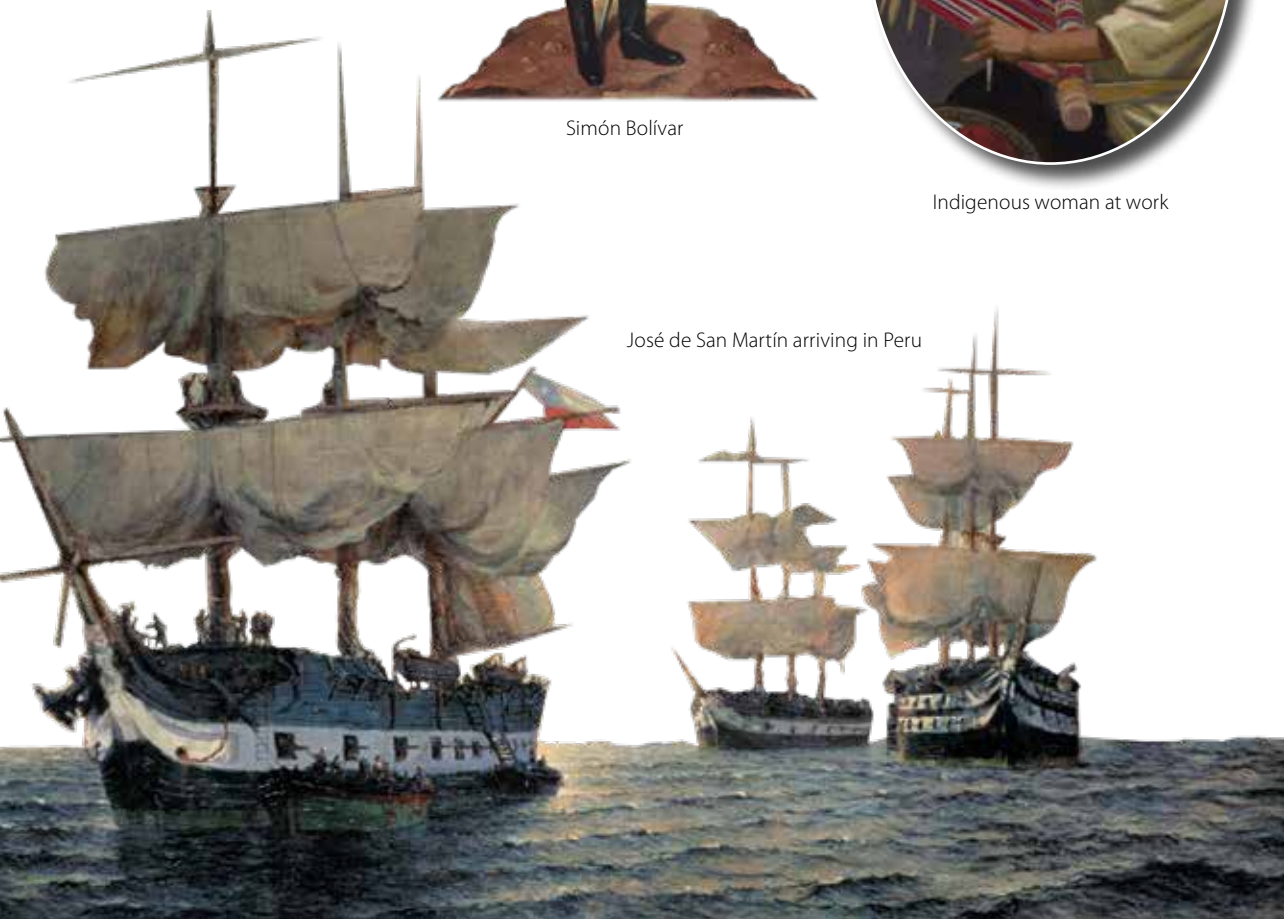


Simón Bolívar



Indigenous woman at work

José de San Martín arriving in Peru



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# Independence for Latin America

Reader



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# Independence for Latin America

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# **Independence for Latin America Reader**

Core Knowledge History and Geography™

# Chapter 1

## Revolutions in America

**The Struggle for Independence** Why do we celebrate Independence Day on the Fourth of July? Well, it is the day that represents when the original thirteen English colonies declared their independence from Great Britain in 1776.

### The Big Question

Why did European colonies in North and South America want their freedom?

Declaring independence was one thing, but achieving it was not quite as easy. The Declaration of Independence led to a bloody seven-year war between Great Britain and the colonies.

As you know, the colonies won that war and created the United States. What you may not know is that most of the other countries in North and South America were once colonies and also declared their independence from colonial powers. They too revolted and fought wars to become free. Many struggled to gain independence from Spain, but others declared independence from France, Portugal, and the Netherlands. (The people of the Netherlands are commonly referred to as the Dutch.) Each of these countries has a national holiday when its citizens celebrate their independence, just as Americans do on the Fourth of July. In this book, you will read about these countries—located in a part of the world called Latin America—and how they won their freedom.



# Colonies in Latin America, 1700



## Why Did the Revolutions Happen?

Imagine what it would have been like to live in Latin America in the 1700s. Society was divided into social **classes**, with Europeans having a great deal of power, and native peoples and enslaved people having little or no power. People were born into a class, and for most of them, it was difficult to move beyond that class. If you were a French plantation owner, you would have little to complain about, because you were in charge. And the same would have been true for a Spanish **aristocrat** who was born in Spain and moved to one of the Spanish colonies in Latin America. But if you were a member of the lower classes, it was a different story. (It's important to note, however, that the class system in Latin America was not quite as rigid as the one that existed in Europe, which was based on birth. There, no matter how rich you might become, if you were not born of the nobility, you would never be accepted as one of them.)

### Vocabulary

**class**, n. a group of people with the same social or economic status

**aristocrat**, n. a person of the upper or noble class whose status is usually inherited

**indigenous**, adj. native to a particular region or environment

Let's examine the class system in Spanish Latin America in the 1700s. In the Spanish colonies, the people considered to be the highest class were born in Spain and then moved to the Americas. These people made up only a tiny percentage of the population, but they held most of the power, enjoyed special privileges, and controlled most of the wealth.

Creoles (/kree\*ohlz/) were the next highest social class. Creoles were people who were born in America but whose parents or ancestors had been born in Spain. Some of the Creoles were rich and well educated, but they were not often given important jobs in government. The Creoles resented the Spaniards because of the limitations they imposed on them.

Below the Creoles were the mestizos (/mes\*tee\*zohs/) who were partly **indigenous** and partly Spanish. Some of these people worked as craftspeople or shop

owners. Others held minor jobs in the Church or worked as managers in mines or on plantations. Few were rich, and few had the opportunity to improve their lives. Nevertheless, mestizos had better lives than the truly indigenous people and the enslaved people who occupied the classes below them. Within this social structure, there were a significant number of free people of color—those of African descent—who lived independent lives, had businesses, and farmed.



Indigenous people were among the most oppressed people in Spanish Latin America.

In most colonies, the truly indigenous people made up the great majority of the population. Some continued to live in the mountains, forests, and places farther away from the colonial settlements. These rural people had little to do with the colonial society. But others lived in **missions** founded by Spanish **priests**. These indigenous people worked as personal servants or as laborers on plantations. Some also worked in the mines. Almost all of them were poor and had few rights. Occasionally, they would rise up, and some of the rebellions had a certain degree of success.

## Vocabulary

**mission**, n. a settlement built for the purpose of converting Native Americans to Christianity

**priest**, n. a person who has the training or authority to carry out certain religious ceremonies or rituals

Finally, there were the enslaved Africans. The Spanish had used enslaved Africans in their American colonies since the early 1500s. However, the use of enslaved Africans was not widespread in the Spanish colonies. In 1800, there were about eight hundred thousand enslaved Africans in all of Spanish America, with many living on the islands of the Caribbean. Nevertheless, they were the most oppressed group of people.

The lower three classes made up the vast majority of people living in Spanish America. If you belonged to one of these classes, you were almost certainly poor. You would have had few rights and little chance to get an education. Worst of all, there was little hope that things would ever change for you, your children, or your grandchildren.

The details of the class system varied from colony to colony. French and Portuguese colonies differed from Spanish colonies, and Spanish colonies differed from each other. The Dutch had their own class system, too. However, the general situation was much the same all over Latin America: the Europeans were on top and the indigenous peoples and enslaved people were on the bottom.

## Foreign Influences

Now imagine how the people of Spanish America felt when they heard the ideas of John Locke, Voltaire, and the other writers of the Enlightenment. What would they have thought when they learned of the successful American Revolution? This revolution gave the people of the United States independence, freedom, justice, and opportunities that most people in Latin America had never dreamed of having.

Then there was the French Revolution, which began in 1789. Here was another case in which people rose up against their rulers and demanded rights. The people of Latin America saw these events and drew inspiration from them. They began to demand their own rights.

Events in France influenced the Latin American independence movement in another way, too. In 1799, the revolutionary military leader Napoleon Bonaparte (/boh\*nuh\*part/) came to power in France. By 1808, he controlled Italy, the Netherlands, part of Germany, and many European territories. In that year, he invaded Spain and Portugal. Napoleon removed the Spanish king and put his brother Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne. This event had an unusual result. It allowed the Spanish colonies in America to declare independence from Spain without having to be disloyal to their deposed Spanish king.

Revolution broke out throughout Spain's American colonies in 1810. It usually began within the local governments in each colony. These governments were in the hands of cabildos (/kah\*bihl\*dohz/), or city councils.



John Locke believed those who served in government and those in positions of power had a responsibility to protect the natural rights, or liberties, of the people. If they failed to do so, he believed that the people had a right to demand new leaders.





The Spanish king, Charles IV, was removed from power in 1808.

These city councils decided the time was right to proclaim their independence from Spain. Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, started the revolution in April 1810. Buenos Aires, the capital of Río de la Plata, which includes present-day Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia, followed in May. Next came Bogotá, the capital of New Granada in July. Quito (/kee\*toh/), which became the capital of Ecuador (/ek\*wuh\*dawr/), rebelled in August, and Santiago, the capital of Chile, joined the revolutionary movement in September. The big exception to this trend of city councils leading the fight for independence was in Mexico, where a Creole priest named Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (/mee\*gel/hih\*dal\*go/ee/kohs\*tee\*yah/) started Mexico's fight for independence in September 1810.

The people you will learn about in this book, such as Toussaint L'Ouverture (/too\*san/loo\*ver\*toor/) of Haiti, Simón Bolívar (/see\*mawn/boh\*lee\*vahr/) of Venezuela, and José de San Martín (/hoh\*say/de/sahn/mahr\*teen/) of Argentina, wanted to create governments based on the same principles as those of the U.S. government. Many of these leaders had been to the United States or Europe. They wanted governments that would give the people of Latin America those same rights of freedom, justice, and opportunity. They believed that revolution was the only way to get what they wanted.



# Chapter 2

## Toussaint L'Ouverture and Haiti

**The Night of Fire** It was August 1791. In St. Domingue (/san/duh\*mang/), the sound of drums echoed from mountain to mountain and across the plain. St. Domingue was a French colony in the Caribbean, on the island of Hispaniola (/hiss\*pahn\*yoh\*luh/). Its French plantation owners heard the dim sound of the drumbeats in the distance but were not worried. They had heard them before.

### The Big Question

How would you describe the battle for freedom that occurred in Haiti?







This painting shows the city of Cap-Haïtien, which was known at the time as Cap-François (/frahn\*swah/).

It was no secret that escaped enslaved Africans hid in the mountains. There they practiced their ancient African religion called *voodoo*.

The drums really were celebrating a voodoo rite, but it was not the usual ceremony the planters thought it was. The enslaved Africans were plotting a rebellion!

Deep in the mountains an enslaved African worker and voodoo priest named Boukman led the ceremony. Around him were gathered the leaders of the enslaved people from across the Plain du Nord (/plen/duh/nor/), the northern plain of Haiti.

Boukman was not a field hand like most enslaved people. He had been a **foreman** who managed field workers. Later, he worked his way up to being a **coachman**. That was an important job on a plantation. Moreover, Boukman was a huge man who commanded respect through size alone. All eyes followed Boukman as he gave his instructions and inspired his followers to have courage.

One week later, on August 22, 1791, some fifty thousand enslaved people rose up and swept across the Plain du Nord. Armed with machetes (/muh\*shet\*eez/) and scythes (/sythz/), the enslaved people moved in an unstoppable wave across the land. They killed plantation owners and their families. They set fire to houses and barns and even to crops. The fires spread, covering the horizon and sweeping across fields, plantations, and forests. The night became as bright as day. The rich plantations were in ruins, and the army of enslaved people controlled the countryside.

Over the next few days, this army destroyed all the plantations on the Plain du Nord. Most of the surviving French took shelter in Cap-Haïtien—the capital of the **province**.

### Vocabulary

**foreman**, n. a person who oversees other workers

**coachman**, n. a person who drives a coach, a type of four-wheeled vehicle drawn by a horse

**province**, n. an area or region similar to a state



This image shows the rebellion that broke out in the French colony of St. Domingue.

The night the rebellion began became known as the Night of Fire. It marked the beginning of a thirteen-year struggle to turn the colony of St. Domingue into the country of Haiti, the first black republic in the world and the first independent state in Latin America. It began as a rebellion against slavery.

## Before 1791

Before August 1791, when the revolution began, St. Domingue was the richest colony in the Caribbean. A century earlier, French planters had taken over the western third of the island of Hispaniola from the Spanish.



During the 1700s, tens of thousands of African peoples were captured and enslaved as a result of warfare between neighboring nations. They were then traded to and brought in chains to North and South America and the Caribbean. Many of those enslaved people were taken to St. Domingue. There, they were put to work clearing the forests and planting crops like sugar, coffee, cotton, and indigo. Indigo is a plant that produces a deep blue dye and was used to dye cotton cloth made in England.

The crops the enslaved people planted were sold in Europe, where there was a high demand for sugar, coffee, cotton, and dyes. The French landowners became wealthy beyond their wildest dreams. Of course, the more money they made, the more land they cleared, and the more enslaved people they needed.

About seven hundred thousand enslaved people produced the crops that made the French landowners rich. The French population of about thirty-five thousand included landowners, plantation managers and supervisors, colonial officials, soldiers, priests, nuns, and shopkeepers. In addition, there were some forty thousand free people of mixed race.



Enslaved people in St. Domingue, the colony that became Haiti, worked under harsh conditions on the many plantations there.

For every French person in the colony, there were about twenty who were enslaved. With so many more enslaved people than French people, you might think that rebellion was a constant threat. But the French were not worried. They did not think the enslaved people could carry out a successful uprising. Additionally, the French controlled all the guns. Against the well-armed and highly trained French soldiers, the enslaved people would not have a chance—at least, that’s what the French thought.

## The Struggle Continues

Boukman’s uprising and the Night of Fire shocked the French, but they fought back. If the enslaved people had been brutal and savage in their rebellion, the French were even worse in their revenge. Thousands of enslaved people were killed. The rest were chased into hiding in the mountains. Soon, northern St. Domingue was divided into two parts. The rebellious slaves controlled the mountains, and the French soldiers held the coastal towns where the planters and French officials had fled during the uprising.

The uprising spread to the western part of the island. There, the planters discovered what had happened in the north and put up greater resistance. Port-au-Prince, the capital of the west, was saved, and the rebellion was largely controlled.

Meanwhile, in the north, Boukman was killed in battle. He was replaced by two other former enslaved men, Biassou (/bee\*ah\*soo/) and Jean François (/zhahn/frahn\*swah/). They proved to be poor leaders. Would the revolution become just a failed slave uprising?

## Toussaint L’Ouverture

A new leader emerged from the confusion. His name was François Dominique Toussaint. Later he added L’Ouverture at the end of his name. He is usually known as Toussaint L’Ouverture. *L’Ouverture* means “the opening” in French.

It is said that Toussaint's enemies gave him that name because he could always find an opening in their defense to attack them.

Toussaint was born in 1743 on a plantation in northern St. Domingue. There is a legend that Toussaint's father was an African chief who was captured and enslaved. No one knows for sure if that is true. However, Toussaint's father did teach him that there is power in knowledge. His stepfather, a priest, helped Toussaint gain that power. He taught Toussaint how to read and write French and Latin and how to use herbs and plants for healing.

Toussaint was not among the enslaved people who participated in the first hours of the Night of Fire. He certainly saw the fires from the plantation where he lived. And when the rebellion reached the plantation, his first concern was to get his wife and children to safety. Then Toussaint drove the family of the French plantation manager to safety. The manager had given Toussaint his freedom years before.

Once he had taken care of his personal responsibilities, Toussaint enthusiastically joined the revolution. "Those first moments," he later said, "were moments of beautiful delirium [wild excitement], born of a great love of freedom."

Because of his knowledge of healing, Toussaint's first service in the slave revolt was as a doctor. Soon, however, he was giving military advice as well as medical care. The army of enslaved people was ruthless and undisciplined. They destroyed everything in their path, including the crops. After the army passed through, there was nothing remaining to eat.



**Toussaint L'Ouverture was a great revolutionary leader in Haiti. He urged the leaders to teach the troops discipline and to stop destroying the crops and other things they needed for themselves.**



## Toussaint Leads the Rebellion

Within a short time, Toussaint was made a commander of part of the revolutionary army. He taught his soldiers discipline and trained them like a professional army. However, Toussaint was faced with a problem. Not only were Biassou and Jean François poor leaders, they were also disloyal. In December 1791, when it looked as though the French might put down the revolt, Biassou and Jean François struck a deal to turn over members of the revolutionary army in return for their own freedom. Toussaint would have no part of this. Instead, he organized his men into an army that fought according to African-style warfare, attacking the French when they least expected it.

After each attack, Toussaint's men would disappear back into the forests and mountains. There, they would wait until Toussaint found another opportunity for a surprise attack. His army attacked the French with amazing speed and from unexpected directions. The French could never catch them, and they could never relax. They never knew when or where Toussaint's army would appear.

Toussaint was a memorable figure as he rode before his troops. He was a superb horseman who chose to ride without a saddle. He dressed in the splendid uniform of a captured French officer, often with a handkerchief wrapped around his head. Under his coat he kept a box filled with small knives and tweezers, herbs, ointments, and other supplies. Besides leading his soldiers, he was ready to repair their wounds and ease their pains from battle injuries.

Toussaint won several victories over the French. He promised the French



**Toussaint was a skilled horseman.**

townspeople that he would treat them well if they surrendered. They trusted Toussaint, and so several towns did surrender to him.

Of course, the enslaved were fighting for their freedom—this was the initial purpose of the Haitian rebellion. But no matter how many victories they won or how many towns surrendered, the French government refused to free them.

While the enslaved people continued to fight for their freedom against the French in St. Domingue, Spain and Great Britain were also at war with France. Toussaint believed the Spanish could help him win. As a result, he joined the Spanish forces in Santo Domingo, the eastern part of Hispaniola. He was named a general and won battles for the Spanish. Still, he had been raised in a French colony and felt some loyalty to France.

In 1794, France passed a law freeing all enslaved people. When he heard about the French action, Toussaint switched sides and began fighting for France. Toussaint was made lieutenant governor, the second in command of the colony, and he succeeded in driving the Spanish troops from St. Domingue.

By 1795, Toussaint was the most important man in St. Domingue. He was worried that the economy of the island would collapse if he did not do something—four years of revolution had destroyed most of the plantations and driven off the owners. He asked the former enslaved people to come back and work in the fields and the sugar mills. But now they were free—they would not be punished and they would share in the profits.

Slowly, Toussaint began to create a new government in St. Domingue. A constitution was written. The constitution did not claim independence from France but did declare slavery to be ended forever. Toussaint negotiated treaties with Great Britain and the United States, and began to trade sugar for arms.

# TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE AND THE REVOLUTION IN SANTO DOMINGO



TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE



NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

During Toussaint's battle for freedom, Napoleon Bonaparte had become the ruler of France.

In 1801, Toussaint became ruler of the entire island of Hispaniola in the name of France. All of Toussaint's plans were beginning to succeed, or so it seemed. But Toussaint had not dealt with Napoleon Bonaparte, who now ruled France.

## Napoleon's War

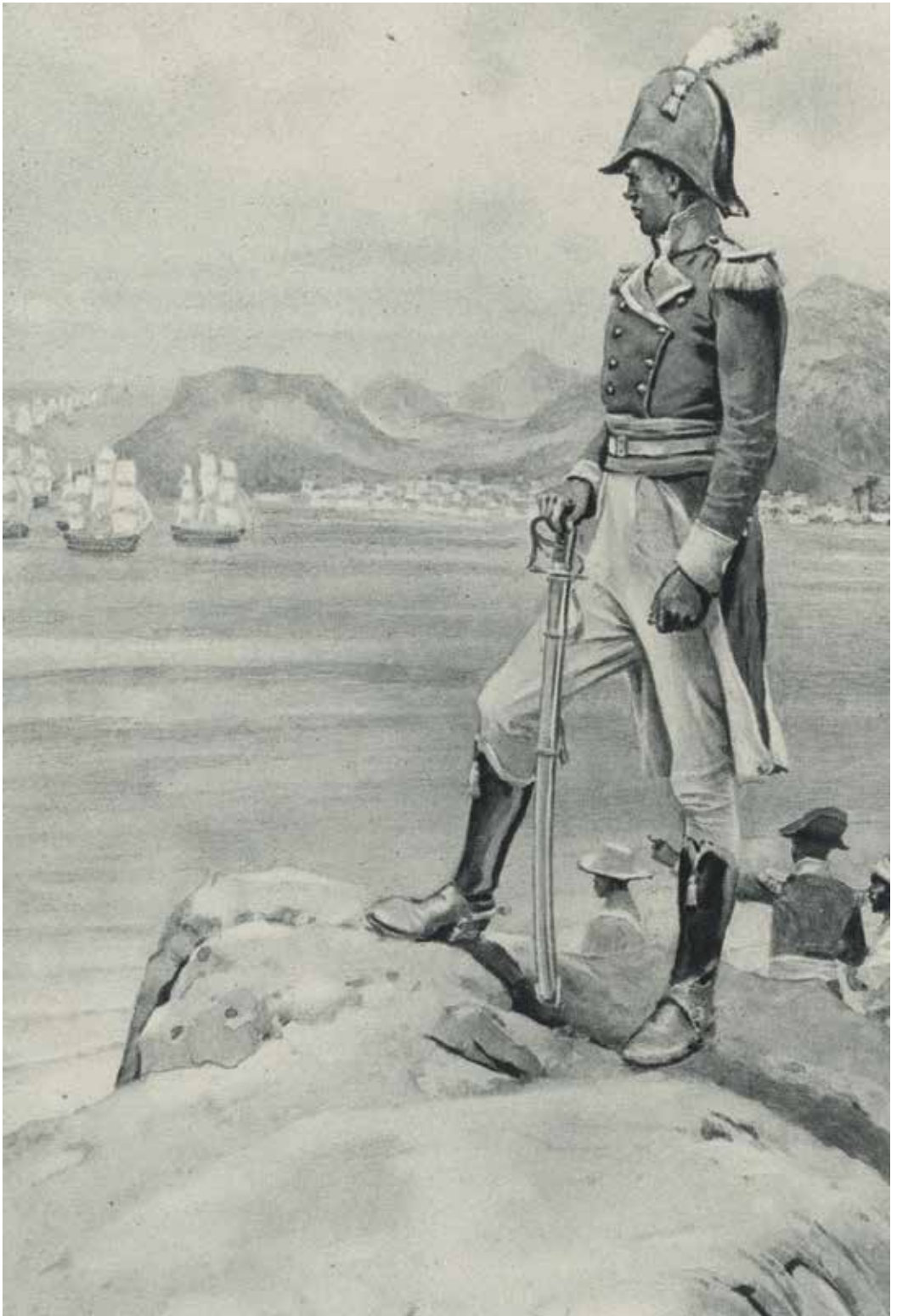
Napoleon was at the height of his power. He had conquered much of Europe and was carrying on a prolonged war with Great Britain. Battles were fought around the world. To support his war efforts, Napoleon needed the vast wealth that St. Domingue had once produced. He thought that the island's economy could only be restored by bringing back slavery.

Napoleon even had ambitions in North America and planned to use St. Domingue as a base of operations. Napoleon organized an invasion of St. Domingue led by his brother-in-law, General Victor Leclerc. Leclerc had an army of 43,000 soldiers, the largest invasion force in the history of France.

Spies reported Napoleon's plans to Toussaint. A wise man, he was not surprised by the betrayal, but it caused him great sorrow. Toussaint had shown great loyalty to France, but Napoleon was not interested in the freedom of enslaved people thousands of miles away. "I counted on this happening," Toussaint said. "I have known that they would come and that the reason behind it would be that one and only goal: reinstatement of slavery. However, we will never again submit to that."

Toussaint immediately began making preparations. He imported weapons from the United States and reinforced his forts. He had pits and trenches dug in the forests for his soldiers, and he drafted all young men twelve years old and over to train for his army.

Despite his preparations, Toussaint almost lost courage when he saw the French fleet. It is said that he cried: "Friends, we are doomed. All of France has come. Let us at least show ourselves worthy of our freedom."



Napoleon sent an army thousands of miles to regain control of the French colony. Here, Toussaint watches the arrival of Napoleon's fleet.



As soon as the French army landed, bloodshed and violence returned to the island. Toussaint ordered his army to burn everything, including entire cities, rather than turn anything over to the French. The fighting was intense. The French general Leclerc described the desperate rebels in a report to Napoleon: "These people here are beside themselves with fury. They never withdraw or give up. They sing as they are facing death, and they still encourage each other while they are dying. They seem not to know pain. Send reinforcements!"

## Toussaint Captured

Leclerc knew the fight to take control of St. Domingue would be long and hard as long as Toussaint was leading the rebels, so Leclerc tricked Toussaint into meeting with one of his officers. Toussaint and his family were captured and put on a ship for France. As Toussaint stood on board the ship, he said: "In overthrowing me you have cut down in St. Domingue only the trunk of the tree of liberty. It will spring up again from the roots, for they are many and they are deep." Toussaint and his family were separated, and he was sent to a prison in the mountains near Switzerland.

Toussaint, who had spent his entire life on a tropical island, must have been miserable in the Swiss mountains. He was separated from his family and living in a cold, damp prison. Of course, there would not have been any heat, even in the winter. The French did not execute Toussaint because they knew that would lead to more problems in St. Domingue.



Leclerc knew that without Toussaint, the rebels would be much weaker.

However, if the rebel leader died in prison, well, that was not their fault. They certainly were not unhappy when Toussaint, who had been such a great leader of the Haitian people, caught pneumonia and died in 1803.

## France Loses St. Domingue

Back in St. Domingue, the French were experiencing new problems. The former enslaved people were not strong enough to fight the French army head on, but they continued to fight the way they had been trained—attack when it was least expected. The French killed thousands of them, but this only made things worse. The more they killed, the greater the resistance became. The main leader of the former enslaved people was now Jean Jacques Dessalines (/zhahn/zhahk/day\*sa\*leen/). He was born in Africa and brought to St. Domingue



Jean Jacques Dessalines

as a slave. Unlike Toussaint, he had no loyalty to France. He wanted to do more than just end slavery. He wanted to make St. Domingue an independent country.

Dessalines continued Toussaint's policy of burning farms and towns rather than letting the French capture them. The resistance caused great problems for the French. Nevertheless, they had thousands of troops and far superior weapons. It was only a matter of time, the French believed, before they would regain control of St. Domingue. But, as it turned out, time was about to run out for the French.



## The Fall of the French

Yellow fever, a deadly disease carried by mosquitoes, began to spread through the French army. Thousands of French soldiers died. Reinforcements were sent, but they died, too. Even General Leclerc fell victim to the disease.

Finally, unable to conquer the **epidemic**, the remains of the French army left St. Domingue in 1803. Of the forty-three thousand men France had sent to the island, only eight thousand lived to sail back home.

### Vocabulary

**epidemic**, n. a situation in which a disease spreads to many people in an area or region



This illustration shows Jean Jacques Dessalines riding at the head of some of his officers.

Why didn't the people in St. Domingue suffer as much from yellow fever as the French? The answer is that they had lived with the disease longer. They had brought it to the island from Africa. The Africans caught yellow fever just like the Europeans. However, most Africans survived the disease while most Europeans died from it.

On January 1, 1804, Dessalines declared St. Domingue independent. He gave the country a new name: Haiti. That was the name for the island before Europeans settled there.

Haiti was in ruins. Thirteen years of war had destroyed towns and farms. Dessalines knew he would have to do something to rebuild. He told the people they would have to go back to the farms and work harder than they had when they were enslaved. It was the only way.

Sadly, Dessalines became a **dictator**. In October 1804, he proclaimed himself Emperor Jacques I. The economy began to improve, but the people did not like being forced to work on the hated plantations. They were free, why should they be forced to work just as before? In October 1806, two and a half years after he declared Haiti's independence, Dessalines was murdered.

Haiti never had another leader like Toussaint L'Ouverture. Instead, the men who ruled the country were more like Dessalines.

### Vocabulary

**dictator**, n. a ruler who has total control over the country

# Chapter 3

## Mexico's Fight for Independence

**Independence Day** Every year, in the month of September—September 15 to be exact—hundreds of thousands of people gather in the Zócalo, the open plaza in the center of Mexico City. It is quite a sight!

They come to listen to the president of Mexico who speaks to the crowd and reminds them of their history. After the speech, at precisely 11 p.m., the president rings a great bell that hangs in the arch high above the main entrance to the National Palace. The bell that the president rings is called Mexico's Liberty Bell. The president calls out, "*Viva México!*" ("Long live Mexico!"), and the crowd answers back, "*Viva México, Viva la independencia!*" ("Long live Mexico! Long live independence!").

Everywhere, the colors red, white, and green are displayed—the national colors of Mexico. The National Palace is draped with red, white, and green cloth, and colored lights display a giant Mexican flag. People wave small Mexican flags.

And so each year, the people of Mexico are reminded of their long struggle for independence and the sacrifices made by thousands of Mexicans. This gathering marks the beginning of the Mexican celebration of their independence from Spain. The War for Independence officially began on, September 16, 1810.

### The Big Question

Why did the people of Mexico rise up against Spanish rule, and how and why did Miguel Hidalgo become a revolutionary leader?





Mexican Independence is celebrated on September 15, the eve of the outbreak of the long struggle for freedom, and on September 16.

## The Start of a Revolution

At the time that the revolution began, Mexico did not exist at all. It was part of New Spain—the Spanish-speaking areas of Central and North America. The revolution itself began with a group of men who called themselves the Literary and Social Club of Querétaro (/keh\*ray\*tah\*roh/). (Querétaro is a city in central Mexico.) In reality, it wasn't a social and literary society at all. The members were plotting a revolution against Spain. Many people in what became Mexico were unhappy with Spanish rule.

Indigenous people were unhappy because they did not have enough land. Many of them were forced to work on the big **haciendas** (/hah\*see\*en\*dahs/), or farms, for little or no pay. The haciendas were so large that the workers were forced to buy the things they needed from the landowners, and ended up owing them money. They could not leave the haciendas until their debts were paid. Generally, indigenous people never earned enough money to do that, so they were trapped.

The mestizos, people who were partly indigenous and partly Spanish, were unhappy because they were poor and often had low paying jobs. Some people looked down on them. They hoped that if they could achieve an independent country, they might finally have more respect and more power. With more power they would also have a better life.

The Creoles, although native born with Spanish ancestry, were often shut out of the most powerful positions, as was typical across Spanish America. Even though many landowners, professionals, and other important people were Creoles, the Spaniards held the real power. If they could drive the Spanish out, they would control their own government.

**Padre** (/pah\*dray/) Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla was a leading member of the Literary and Social Club. Padre Hidalgo was also a priest in the village of Dolores.

### Vocabulary

**hacienda**, n. a large estate or plantation

**padre**, n. literally, father; the title given to a Spanish priest



Hidalgo was a Creole who had lived the first twelve years of his life on a hacienda where his father was manager. When he was twelve, Hidalgo went away to school. He was very bright and determined to learn. Hidalgo spent the next twelve years studying. Then, he became a priest and a teacher. He held several important posts at the Catholic college in Valladolid (/val\*uh\*doh\*lihnd/). Eventually, he became the rector, or head, of the college. He did important work, was paid well, and was highly respected. His life was a success, but it was about to change.

You see, Hidalgo was becoming a bit of a troublemaker. He began to question authority; instead of teaching the traditional material, he was spending more and more time talking about ways to improve government. He also proved himself to be a poor manager of money. He spent too much money on food and housing for students. The people in charge of the college were not happy with this unexpected debt. It seems he also liked to gamble.

Hidalgo was eventually forced to leave his job at the college. By all accounts, it was because of his revolutionary ideas. He was sent to serve as a priest in a very small village.

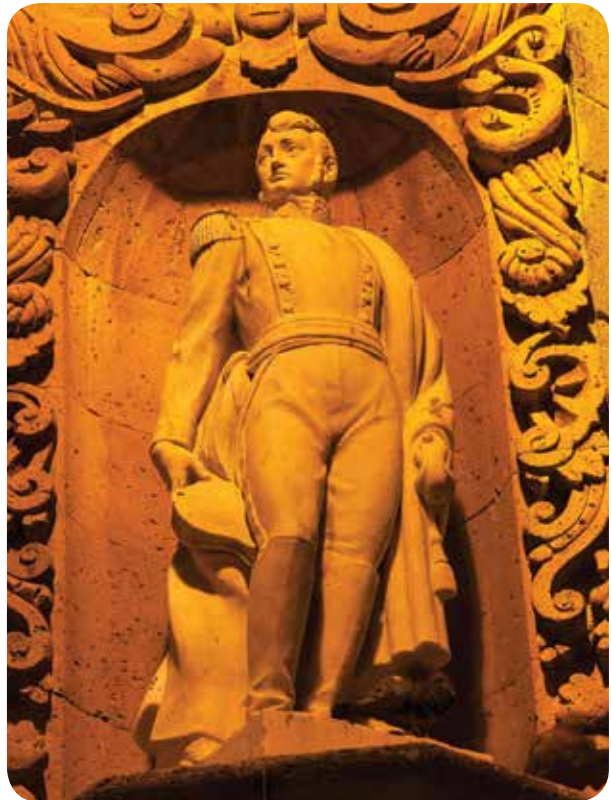


**Padre Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla became a revolutionary hero.**

## A Good Priest

Hidalgo spent ten years in this village before moving on to a somewhat larger church in the town of Dolores. The people considered him a good priest who worked hard to improve their lives. In Dolores, he helped the Otomi people plant grapevines and mulberry trees. The Otomi farmers could use the grapes to make wine, which they would sell. Also, they could sell the silk thread from the cocoons of the silkworms that lived on the mulberry trees. There was only one problem: It was illegal for the Otomi people to do these things. The Spaniards wanted to keep these profitable activities for themselves. Padre Hidalgo became a beloved figure in Dolores because he was willing to break the law in order to help the indigenous people. In return, the people loved him because he was unafraid to break rules when he thought they were wrong.

When he went to Querétaro, Hidalgo would meet with his friends in the Literary and Social Club to talk about the problems of the country. One of his best friends was Ignacio Allende (/eeg\*nah\*syoh/ ah\*yehn\*day/), a captain and commander of the local army post. He was a Creole, like Padre Hidalgo, and he did not like Spanish rule either. Juan Aldama (/hwahn/ ahl\*dah\*ma/) was another military officer opposed to Spanish rule. He was a good friend of Hidalgo and Allende.



Here you can see a statue of Ignacio Allende. Today, he is considered a hero in Mexico.

## Revolutionary Times

By 1810, the area of New Spain that would become Mexico had been under Spanish rule for almost three hundred years. The injustices, inequality, and dissatisfaction that members of the Literary and Social Club discussed were not new. Why, then, did revolution break out at this time?

You will recall that events in Europe made this time especially ripe for revolution in Latin America. Napoleon, the ruler of France, had invaded Spain and overthrown the king. His brother Joseph Bonaparte now ruled there. The mighty colonial power of Spain had been weakened. The time had come. Rebels like Hidalgo and Allende could claim that they were fighting against France, not Spain. Of course, they really wanted to form the nation of Mexico and make it free and independent.

So the members of the Literary and Social Club plotted their revolution. They were men of **conscience**. They knew that the Spaniards had mistreated people, and they wanted to improve people's lives. But they also wanted to replace the Spaniards at the top of the social ladder.

The plotters in Querétaro had been planning for about a year—since the fall of 1809. By September 1810, the plans were almost complete. The date set for the uprising was to be October 2. Then something went wrong. The plot was discovered!

Some members of the **conspiracy** had already been arrested, and the government was searching for the others. When the news reached Hidalgo, Allende, and Aldama on September 15, they were in Dolores. They had to decide what to do. Should they run? Should they start the revolution early? Some things were still not in place. If they began the uprising early, would the people support them?

### Vocabulary

**conscience**, n. a sense or belief a person has that a certain action is right or wrong

**conspiracy**, n. a group of people working together secretly to achieve a specific goal

While the others argued frantically over what to do, Hidalgo sat quietly. He had made his decision. During a pause in the debate, he declared, "In action everything is accomplished; we must not lose time; you will all see the oppressor's [tyrant's] **yoke** broken and beaten into the ground."

### Vocabulary

**yoke**, n. a harness used to restrain work animals; something that takes away people's freedom

It was then nighttime on September 15. Padre Hidalgo ran to the church tower and began to ring the bell. The people of Dolores knew something important was about to happen. When a crowd had gathered in front of the church, Hidalgo told them it was time to take up arms. If they threw out the Spaniards, they would get land. They would not have to work on the haciendas anymore. As his speech came to an end, Hidalgo shouted, "Independence and Death to the Spaniards! Long live the Virgin of Guadalupe!" The Virgin of Guadalupe was an image of Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was especially important to indigenous people who made up most of his audience.



Hidalgo's words are called the *Grito de Dolores* ("Cry of Dolores"). They are repeated every year on the night of September 15 by the president of Mexico. In this painting, you can see Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla leading the people against the Spanish colonists.



Hidalgo's speech inspired his listeners. They ran home to get whatever weapons they could find. Most of them had machetes that were used for farm work. Others grabbed hoes and other farm tools, sticks to use as clubs, and even stones to throw. By now it was the morning of September 16. Almost eight hundred men were gathered outside Hidalgo's house. They were the beginning of the revolutionary army.

## **An Undisciplined Army**

News of Padre Hidalgo's rebellion spread quickly to other villages. Soon the whole province was up in arms. Groups of indigenous people saw their chance for revenge, and they took it. Within just a few days, thousands of people had joined the revolution. Padre Hidalgo became the leader, and Ignacio Allende and Juan Aldama were his aides, or assistants. Within a week, twenty-five thousand rebels had joined the army.

Hidalgo seemed an unlikely man to lead a revolutionary army. He was already fifty-seven years old when the revolution began. He had no military experience. He was of medium height with rounded shoulders and a dark complexion. Hidalgo's green eyes were quick and lively, but his movements were slow and thoughtful. He was nearly bald, with just a little white hair. Hidalgo wore the simple clothing of a village priest. And yet, despite his appearance, the people loved Hidalgo and confidently followed him as their revolutionary leader.

The army quickly captured several towns and villages. Then, on September 28, they attacked the rich mining city of Guanajuato (/gwahn\*uh\*hwaht\*oh/). The Spaniards had prepared for the attack by turning the strongest building in town, the Alhóndiga (/ahl\*ohn\*dee\*gah/), into a fort. This huge grain storage building was big enough for all the leaders, the soldiers, the Spanish citizens, and other sympathizers.

The Spanish soldiers were well trained and armed with guns and swords, but there were only a few hundred of them. They had no chance against the thousands of rebels that threw themselves into the attack. No matter

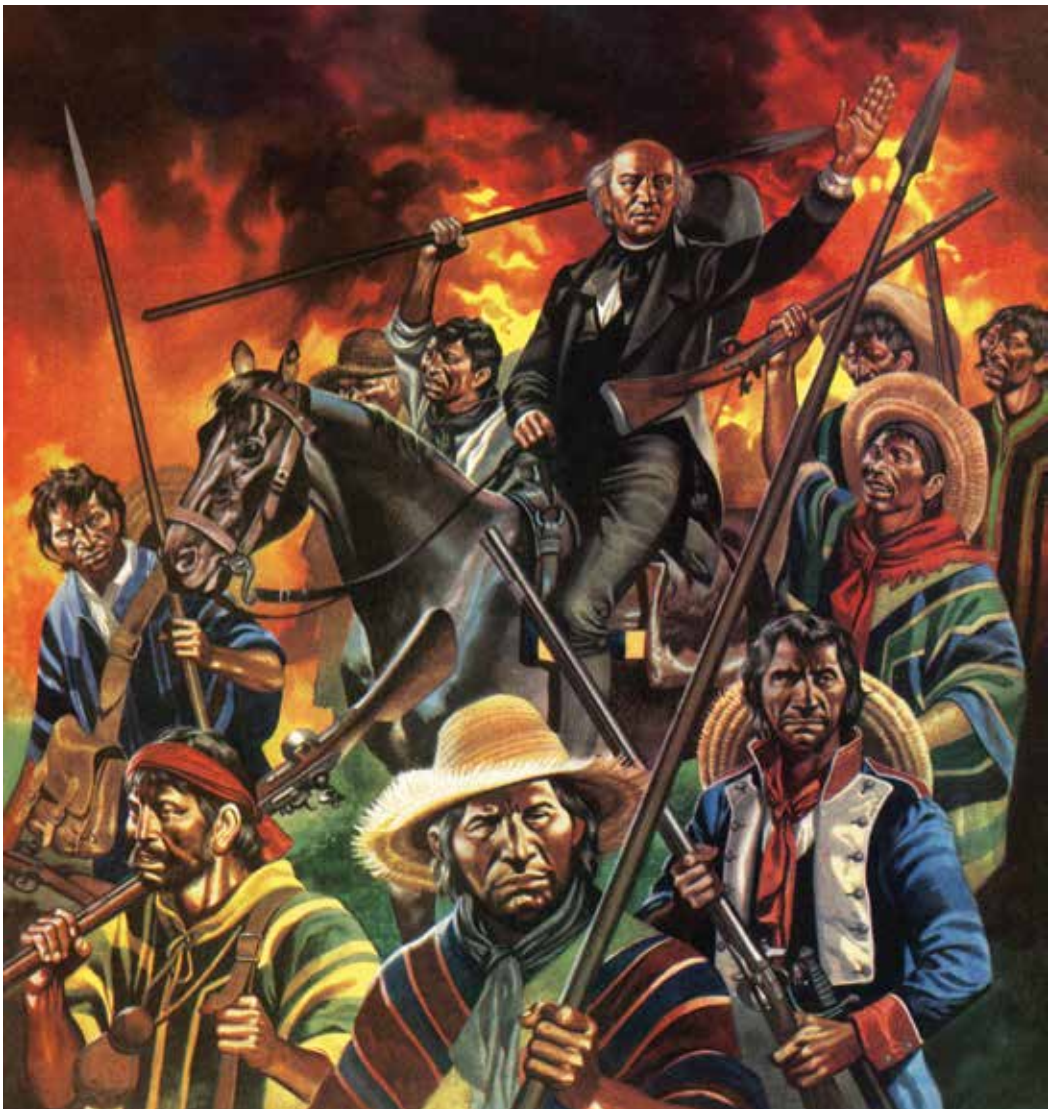


how many were killed, the rebels kept coming. Soon they broke into the Alhóndiga. Hidalgo could not control the unruly troops, who fell quickly on the Spaniards. All but a few of the five hundred Spaniards were killed. Nearly two thousand of Hidalgo's rebels died, too.

The town was now defenseless, and the rebels could not be controlled. The army **looted** the entire city, tore up homes and businesses, and destroyed mining equipment. Two days later,

### Vocabulary

**loot**, v. to steal or take something by force



The people who followed the first leaders of the fight for Mexican independence were untrained and were difficult to organize and to discipline.

Hidalgo ordered the army to stop, but the order was ignored. The army had become a **mob** that laid waste to the city.

The army's lack of discipline was a significant problem, and Hidalgo and the other leaders did not know how to solve it. Hidalgo, in fact, thought the rebels should be allowed to loot as a reward for joining the revolution. "We have no arms but theirs with which to defend ourselves," he said, "and if we begin to punish them, we shall not find them when we need them."

Whether it was a mob or an army, the rebels continued to win battles. And with every victory, more people joined the revolution. But Miguel Hidalgo was a priest, not a soldier. The victory in Guanajuato was won because there were few Spanish soldiers to defend the city. A large and well-prepared Spanish army would be a lot harder for the undisciplined rebel army to defeat. Ignacio Allende, who was a soldier, tried to warn Hidalgo of the danger. But the priest was convinced he could beat the Spaniards.

### Vocabulary

**mob**, n. a large, unruly group of people

**dwindle**, v. to decrease, or to slowly become smaller

## The Revolution Stumbles

In October, Hidalgo began a march toward what we now call the capital of Mexico, Mexico City. If he could capture the capital, it would end most of the Spanish resistance. However, as he advanced closer to the capital, Hidalgo discovered that not everyone supported his rebellion. Few people in this region would join his army. Many, in fact, feared him and disliked the destruction that followed his army. In the end, Hidalgo decided not to attack Mexico City. Instead, he led the army toward Guadalajara (/gwah\*duh\*luh\*hahr\*uh/), an important city in the west.

Meanwhile, the soldiers in his army began to leave. Many of the rebels were farmers, and it was time to plant crops. Without corn to eat, the men did not know how they and their families could survive. So the army **dwindled**. By the time

Hidalgo reached Guadalajara, he had only about seven thousand soldiers left. He was, however, greeted like a hero; bands played as city leaders greeted him.

Hidalgo, Allende, and Aldama used the time in Guadalajara to gather more soldiers, to train their army, and to make cannons and other weapons. But the Spanish army was also preparing and soon marched on Guadalajara. The rebels went out to meet them.

Allende had feared that the rebel army would be no match for the trained Spanish troops, but the battle was evenly fought for six hours. Then a lucky shot from a Spanish cannon struck one of Hidalgo's **ammunition** wagons. A huge explosion occurred, and the dry grass of the battlefield caught fire. The rebel army became confused at first and then panicked and fled. Hidalgo, Allende, and Aldama could do nothing but flee with their army.

The survivors fled north to the city of Saltillo (/sahl\*tee\*yoh/), an old mining center. There, the rebels were lured into an **ambush** and captured. The leaders were tried and sentenced to death. Hidalgo was shot by a firing squad on July 31, 1811, less than a year after he began the revolution.

Hidalgo was a priest, not a soldier, and he ultimately

### Vocabulary

**ammunition**, n.  
bullets or shells

**ambush**, n. a  
surprise attack



This mural by Diego Rivera shows the struggle for freedom. Padre Hidalgo and Ignacio Allende are among the great revolutionary leaders shown here.

failed to win the revolution. Still, he is a main hero of Mexico's long struggle for independence. In the National Palace in Mexico City there are great murals painted by Diego Rivera (/dee\*ay\*goh/ree\*veh\*rah/), one of Mexico's most famous artists, that depict accounts of Mexican history.

## **José María Morelos**

After the capture of Hidalgo, the rebel army fell apart, but the revolution did not end. Instead, it was fought in small battles by bands of soldiers. There were lots of leaders, but many were little more than bandits. One leader did stand out, though. He was José María Morelos (/hoh\*say/mah\*ree\*ah/moh\*ray\*lohs/).

Morelos had been a friend of Hidalgo and had commanded an army fighting in the south while Hidalgo was in the center of the country. Morelos did not think that the revolutionaries could hope to win the revolution by fighting the Spaniards in open battle. That is why he used similar tactics to the ones used by Toussaint in Haiti.

Morelos led a war in the south for five years. He assembled a strong army of about nine thousand men. And unlike Hidalgo's army, Morelos's army was well disciplined and well equipped. Eventually, he controlled most of what is today southern Mexico.

Morelos was different from Hidalgo in another important way. He had a specific plan for the revolution, while Hidalgo had just made vague promises. Morelos said the government should treat everyone—the indigenous population, mestizos, and Creoles—equally. To make sure that Spaniards would not gain control again, he wanted a law that would allow only people born in Mexico to hold government offices. These policies earned Morelos the loyalty of the lower classes who hoped to improve their lives.

But the most revolutionary thing of all that Morelos did was to say he would take the land away from the big hacienda owners and give it to the workers. The Creoles did not like the idea of equality. They hated that Morelos had



promised to break up the haciendas. After all, most of the haciendas were owned by Creoles.

So the Creoles did not support Morelos. This was his downfall. After five years of fighting, he was captured on November 15, 1815. The Creoles could have sent an army to keep him from being captured by the Spaniards, but they



**Morelos did not have the full support of the Creoles. He was captured and killed.**

did not. Morelos was shot, just as Hidalgo had been. Two great heroes of the War for Independence had been killed, and freedom from Spanish rule had not yet been attained.

## The Long Road to Victory

By the time of Morelos's death, the country had been at war for five years. People were suffering badly. Crops had failed because hacienda owners had been driven from their land or had run away. Many poor farmers had left their land to fight. There were bandits everywhere, many of whom were soldiers who deserted the rebel army when things got bad. Roads were not maintained and businesses could not get products to sell.

In spite of everything, the war continued. The Spanish army was not strong enough to defeat the rebels, and the rebels never managed to build up enough power to defeat the government. Finally, in 1821 a Spanish army officer named Agustín de Iturbide (/ah\*goos\*teen/de/ee\*toor\*bee\*day/) joined the rebels. Initially he had been sent to fight Vincente Guerrero, who took over after Morelos died. Guerrero, who was partially of African descent, was a skillful soldier who was able to persuade Iturbide to switch sides. Iturbide brought



## Mexico, 1821



This map shows the extent of Mexico after it won its independence from Spain in 1821.

his army unit into the war on the side of independence. That turned the tide in favor of the rebels. Iturbide led the revolutionary army into Mexico City on September 27, 1821, and declared Mexico a free and independent country. After eleven years of fighting, the independence movement that had begun with Padre Hidalgo's "Cry of Dolores" had finally achieved its goal.

# Chapter 4

## Mexico After Independence

**Mexico's Turbulent History** Mexico provides a good example of the difficulties that many Latin American countries encountered after gaining independence. In Chapter 3, you read about how Agustín de Iturbide and his soldiers completed the work begun by Padre Hidalgo and continued by José María Morelos and Vincente Guerrero. It was Iturbide who finally enabled Mexico to secure its independence in 1821.

### The Big Question

What kinds of challenges did Mexico face after gaining its independence?

### Vocabulary

**ambitious**, adj.  
having a strong desire  
to be successful

Unfortunately, Iturbide's victory led to a new set of problems. Iturbide turned out to be very **ambitious**. He had himself declared emperor of Mexico, and he appointed his friends to help him rule the country.

The emperor's friends abused their positions of power and spent the country's money freely. Bribery and corruption became common practices.

Then things went from bad to worse. The country ran out of money, and Iturbide was overthrown and exiled from Mexico. He was told he would be shot if he ever came back. Nevertheless, he did come back, hoping to regain power. He was captured and shot in 1824.



Agustín de Iturbide helped liberate Mexico from the Spanish. However, he did not bring democracy to Mexico.

After the execution of Iturbide, the Creoles took over the government. They tried to make Mexico a republic and adopted a constitution partly based on the U.S. Constitution. This constitution sounded good on paper, but it was a struggle to put it into practice.

One problem was that while the Mexicans had removed the Spanish, they had not rid themselves of the old Spanish class system. The Creoles had replaced the Spaniards at the top, but the mestizos and indigenous people were treated just as badly as before. Many continued to **toil** on the haciendas, and few had any land of their own. To members of these lower classes it seemed that the revolution was only half complete. It had brought them independence but not justice or equal rights.

### Vocabulary

**toil**, v. to work hard

**caudillo**, n. a regional strongman in a Spanish or Latin American country

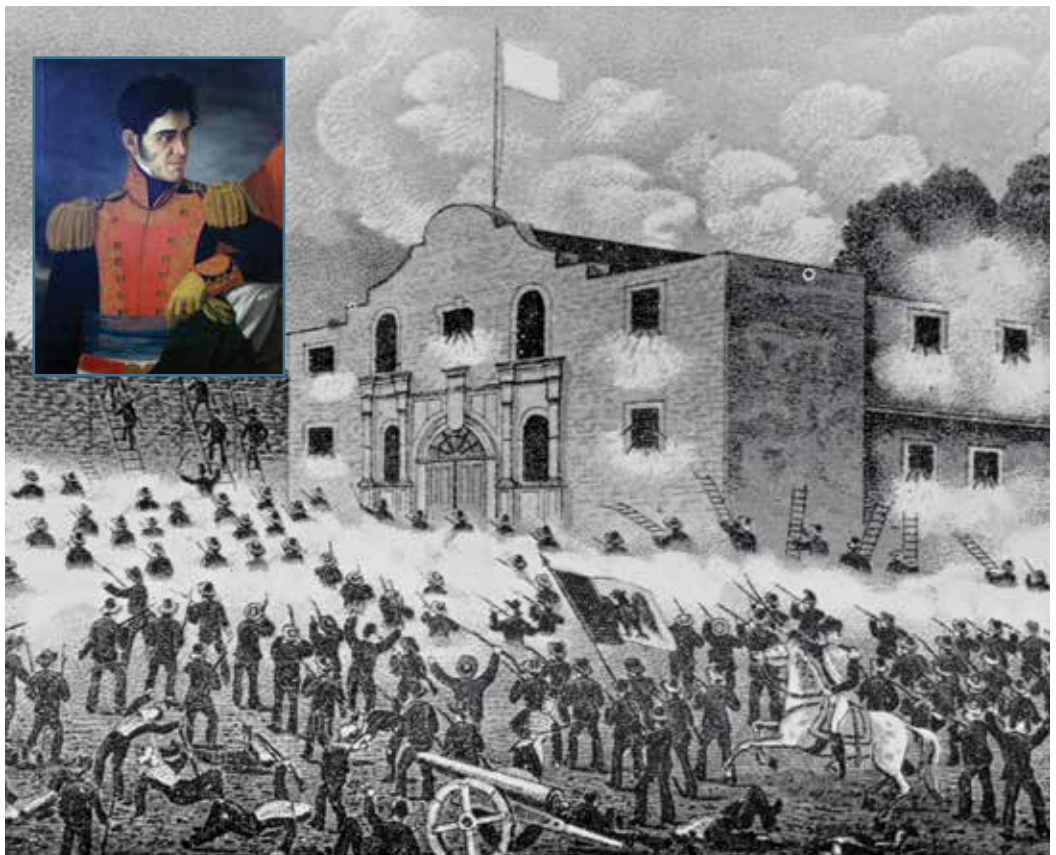
## General Santa Anna

Another problem was that the government the Creoles created lacked stability and was vulnerable to military takeovers by **caudillos** (/kaw\*dee\*yohss/). Over the next few decades Mexico ran through a series of strongmen. To be fair, Mexico, just like other countries, struggled between republicans who were against monarchy and wanted democracy, and conservatives who wanted a strongman like a king who supported “traditional ways” which included keeping the lower classes and races in their place, maintaining elites in economic power, and supporting the Catholic Church.

The most notorious and most persistent strongman in Mexico was General Antonio López de Santa Anna. Santa Anna was president or virtual ruler of Mexico eleven different times during a span of thirty years. Each time the opposition ran him out of power, he would find a way to get back in.

Santa Anna was a proud man who was always commissioning statues of himself. He wore elaborate uniforms and forced the Mexican people to address him as “Your Most Serene Highness.”

During one of Santa Anna's several stints as ruler of Mexico, white American settlers moved in to the Mexican state of Texas and brought their enslaved workers with them. Slavery was now illegal in Mexico. The settlers knew this but they brought them there anyway. The settlers also refused to learn Spanish and to become Catholic, which they had agreed to do in order to live in Texas. When, in 1836, the American settlers rebelled against the Mexican government and demanded independence, Santa Anna led an army to Texas to enforce Mexican law. Santa Anna's army was made up of four thousand men, while the Texan force was small, and was holed up in a mission known as the Alamo, in San Antonio, Texas. Santa Anna won the battle but eventually lost the war. The Texans, inspired by their battle cry, "Remember the Alamo!", went on to defeat Santa Anna and gain independence for Texas.



Santa Anna led an army against a small Texan force inside the Alamo.



A decade later, Santa Anna lost another war, this time with the United States. By the end of the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848, Mexico had lost roughly half of its territory to the United States. It gave up California, New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of several other southwestern states. These losses weakened Santa Anna, and he was overthrown for the last time in 1855.

## Benito Juárez

Benito Juárez (/be\*nee\*toh/hwah\*res/), a lawyer from southeast Mexico, was the minister of justice in the government that followed Santa Anna's expulsion. Juárez had opposed Santa Anna for many years and was about as different from Santa Anna as could be imagined. Juárez came from a poor, indigenous family and always wore a plain black suit. He was famous for his honesty and sympathy for the poor, and for his belief in democracy and freedom of speech.

As minister of justice, Juárez led a sweeping political reform movement designed to guarantee equal rights for all Mexicans. He also helped create Mexico's constitution of 1857. The following year Juárez became president, according to the provisions of the new constitution. As president, Juárez continued to work for reform. But powerful opposition to his reforms soon forced him to leave Mexico City.

Three years of fighting followed. By late 1860 the opposition was



Benito Juárez was a champion of the poor in Mexico. He was the first indigenous person to become the president of Mexico.

defeated, and Juárez could return to the capital city. At that time, Mexico faced extreme financial difficulties. Constant wars had left the country deeply in debt to France, Spain, and Great Britain. Juárez decided to stop payments on the debt. Of course, these countries were not happy about his decision, and in 1862 they sent troops to Mexico. The British and Spaniards soon left, but the French remained. Napoleon III, the ruler of France, now ordered his troops to conquer Mexico.

## Cinco de Mayo

French troops marched on Mexico City. On May 5, 1862, a small Mexican force won a glorious victory over a much larger French army near the city of Puebla. One of the leaders of the Mexican army that day was Porfirio Díaz (/por\*feer\*ee\*oh/dee\*ahz/), a man who would play a major role in Mexico's history. Today, that victory is celebrated as a national holiday called Cinco de Mayo (/seeng\*koh/de/mah\*yoh/), or the Fifth of May.

Unfortunately, this great victory was not enough to keep the French from occupying Mexico City. As the French army closed in on the Mexican capital, Juárez sadly prepared to leave once again. He kissed the Mexican flag and shouted to a cheering crowd, "Viva Mexico!" He fled to the north and spent the next few years traveling through the countryside, avoiding capture and rallying the support of the Mexican people.

In 1864, at the invitation of conservatives in Mexico City who yearned for a king, Napoleon III named a young Austrian prince, Maximilian, emperor of Mexico. French troops kept Maximilian in power for three years, but when Napoleon called his troops home, Maximilian could no longer hold off the supporters of Juárez. Maximilian was soon captured, convicted of treason, and executed by a firing squad. Mexico's constitutional government was restored, and Juárez was once again reinstated as president.



A small Mexican force was victorious at the Battle of Puebla, on May 5, 1862. This victory is celebrated each year as Cinco de Mayo.

Juárez worked hard to rebuild a country weakened by civil wars and foreign invasions. His government built schools and roads, and did what it could to improve the lives of the poor. Juárez died in office in 1872. Today, he is honored as a great lawmaker and patriot, and as the man who saved Mexico's independence.

You might think that Juárez's triumph would signal the end of Mexico's troubles. Unfortunately, it did not. After Juárez died, Mexico fell into the hands of yet another caudillo, Porfirio Díaz. Díaz ruled Mexico, with one brief intermission, from 1876 until 1911. He modernized Mexico by building railroads, mines, and factories. Modernization was certainly needed, but foreigners and wealthy Mexicans benefited more from Díaz's modernizing programs than the poor. During Díaz's reign, a single Mexican family owned

more than seven million acres of land, and the American newspaper owner William Randolph Hearst had a Mexican ranch as large as Delaware and Maryland put together. But the indigenous people, whose situation had begun to improve under Juárez, sank back into poverty. The vast majority still lacked both land and the political rights they had hoped independence would bring.

In the 1910s, another wave of revolt swept through Mexico. The revolutionaries wanted to “complete” the revolution that had begun way back in 1810 and push beyond the reforms of Juárez by obtaining land and rights for indigenous people. Two figures who played crucial roles in these events were the leaders Pancho Villa (/pahn\*cho/vee\*yah) and Emiliano Zapata (/eh\*mee\*lee\*yah\*noh/zah\*pah\*tah/).

## Pancho Villa

Pancho Villa was a cattle **rustler** and bandit who eventually joined the fight against Díaz. He was a violent man but also very brave, and his followers were passionately devoted to him. Villa and his men won military victories in northern Mexico that helped to topple Díaz from power. But Villa quickly lost his faith in the new government, which he believed had betrayed the cause of the poor people. So Villa became an outlaw and waged war on the new government, just as he had waged war on the old one.

### Vocabulary

**rustler**, n. a person who steals cattle or other livestock

**“guerrilla tactics,”**  
(phrase) fast-moving, small-scale actions, such as hit-and-run attacks, used by a small, independent fighting force

Villa’s great military success was due to his outstanding knowledge of the land and his use of **guerrilla tactics**. Rather than fight like regular soldiers, Villa and his men would stage lightning raids and then disappear into the hills.



When the United States backed the government Villa opposed, Villa staged a raid across the United States-Mexico border. In 1916, he and his troops killed sixteen Americans in Columbus, New Mexico. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson sent a search expedition to find and capture Villa. But the clever Villa outran the army scouts who had been sent to find him. Villa's knowledge of the land and his ability to disappear into the night helped him avoid capture.

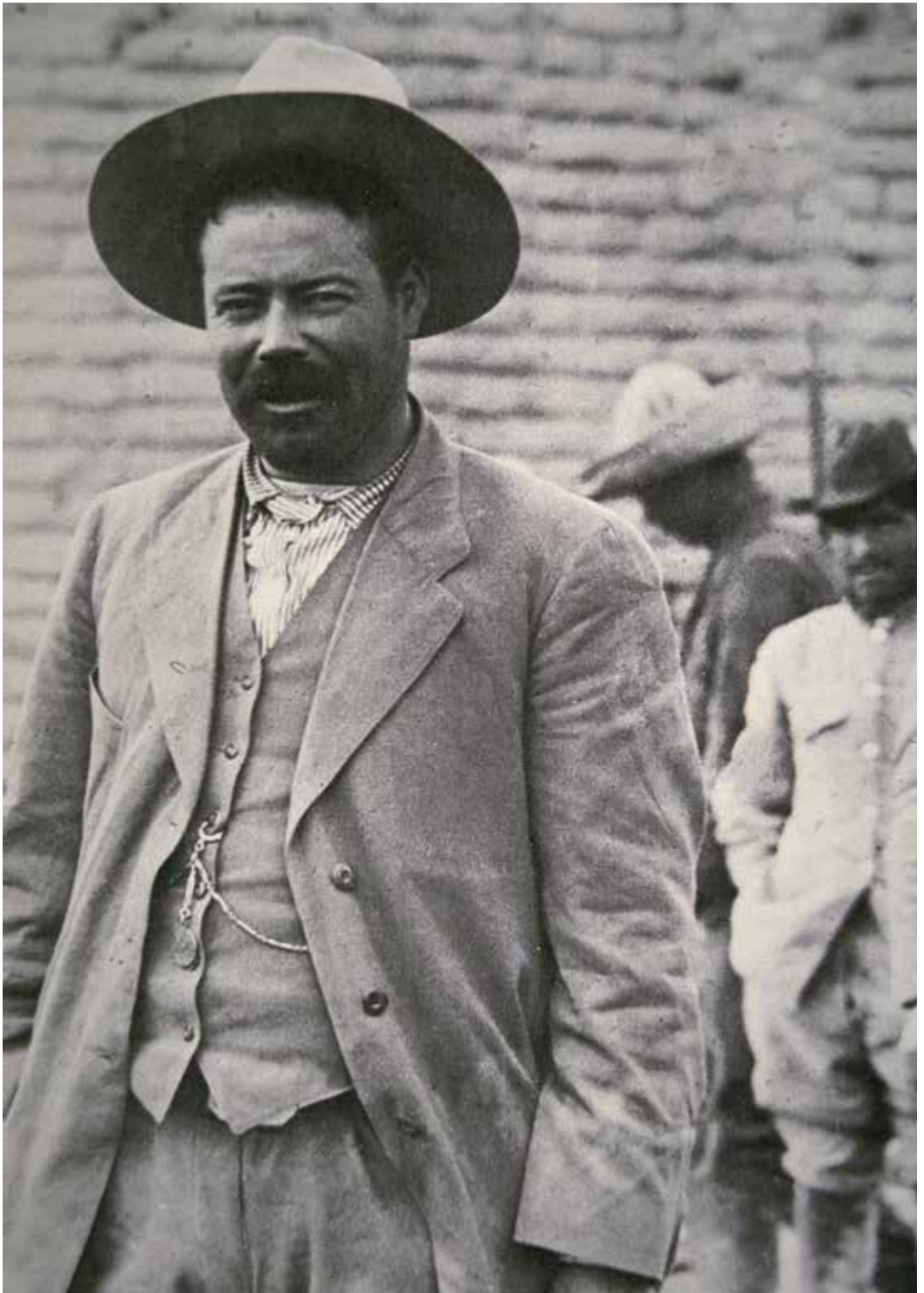
## Emiliano Zapata

Emiliano Zapata was a guerrilla leader from the south of Mexico. Zapata was a mestizo who also joined the fight against Díaz. Early in the struggle, Zapata called for the government to take land from the wealthy landowners and give it to poor, landless indigenous people. The culture of the haciendas was still alive in Mexico. Wealthy landowners controlled almost all the land. Poor Mexicans had no lands and could earn their living only by working for the wealthy landowners under very difficult conditions. Zapata feared the wealthy landowners, especially those in northern Mexico, might try to take control of the government.

Like Villa, Zapata was a first-rate guerrilla leader. He rallied people to his cause and assembled an effective fighting force. Also like Villa, Zapata fought for, and then against the government, when he concluded that it had no intention of giving land to the people. What Zapata wanted most was land reform.



Emiliano Zapata joined forces with Pancho Villa.



Pancho Villa's raid was a deliberate act to show the Mexican people that the United States was willing to cross the border into Mexico and involve itself in Mexican politics. Villa used his knowledge of the landscape to hide from and fight the authorities.

Unlike other leaders, Pancho Villa did support Zapata's plan. He and Zapata teamed up, promising to fight together until a government that was supportive of the people and of land reform was established.

During this time, Zapata's power grew until it extended throughout southern Mexico. Zapata and Villa's armies were strong enough to march into and occupy Mexico City in 1914. But they were not strong enough to take and hold on to power. Villa retreated to the north and Zapata to the south, where they continued to fight government forces.

Villa and Zapata had the successes they did because they fought for the causes of poor people—land, freedom, and justice. Many Mexicans saw them as fighting for the same things that had led Padre Hidalgo to start Mexico's first revolution more than a century earlier.

Like Villa, Zapata was disappointed when the United States supported the Mexican government he opposed. Zapata wanted people to know of the justness of the cause he was fighting for. That was why he was cheered by an article written by a U.S. official who had visited southern Mexico and had seen the Zapatistas (followers of Zapata) with his own eyes. The American wrote that compared with the disorganization of the Mexican national government, "the true social revolution [could] be found only among the Zapatistas." When Zapata read these articles, he declared, "Now I can die in peace. Finally, they have done us justice."

Shortly afterward, Zapata was tricked into meeting with the leaders of the army on the other side. The soldiers misled Zapata into thinking that they would join him and support his reforms. Instead, they ambushed him at a hacienda in southern Mexico and killed him. However, Zapata had accomplished much. He had created farm **commissions** to distribute land to the people and had established Mexico's first **agricultural credit bank**.

### Vocabulary

**commission**, n. a group of people assigned to find information about something or control something

**"agricultural credit bank,"** (phrase) a lending institution that provides loans to farmers

His enemies regarded him as a pillaging bandit, but the indigenous people hailed him as a revolutionary reformer and hero.

## **Toward Equality**

By 1920, a new government managed to establish law and order. But the costs of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to 1920 were staggering. As many as two million Mexicans died in the fighting, and another million crossed the border into the United States. The Mexican Revolution is still the deadliest war ever fought on the American continent—more deadly even than the American Civil War.

The new government sought to heal the wounds caused by a decade of war. It convinced Pancho Villa to retire from revolutionary activity and settle on a ranch in northern Mexico. But Villa's enemies did not forget him. In 1923, he was shot to death by some of his political opponents.

Neither Villa nor Zapata lived to see all of their political wishes fulfilled, but they did help move Mexico closer to the goals of equality and justice for all. And the fame of the two outlaw guerrillas continues to this day. Both Villa and Zapata are celebrated in countless stories, legends, movies, and songs.



# Chapter 5

## Simón Bolívar the Liberator

**A Marriage Ends in Tragedy** Maria Teresa was dying, and all Simón Bolívar could do was stand by helplessly and watch. She was the love of his life. He had met her just two years before, in 1801, while they were both living in Madrid, Spain. They fell in love immediately and wanted to marry right away. Bolívar was only seventeen, however, and Maria Teresa's father insisted that they wait. But she did become his wife. Now, less than a year after their marriage, she lay dying.

### The Big Question

What were the achievements and failures of Simón Bolívar?

In some ways, Bolívar must have blamed himself for her death. As soon as they married, Bolívar had brought Maria Teresa back to Venezuela, where he had been born and owned property. Soon after, Maria Teresa caught yellow fever and died. If only he had stayed in Spain, he thought, it would not have happened.

### **Vocabulary**

**liberator**, n. a person who frees others from oppression

But if Bolívar had stayed in Spain, and if Maria Teresa had not died, the history of South America would have been much different. He would not have become the most famous and successful **liberator** of South America.



Simón Bolívar is known throughout South America as “The Liberator.” If Maria Teresa had lived, Bolívar might not have returned to Europe, and he almost certainly would not have devoted his life to fighting to liberate South America. “My wife’s death,” he later admitted, “led me early in my career onto the road of politics.”

At the time of Maria Teresa's death, Bolívar was only twenty years old. He became restless and left Venezuela once more to travel in Europe. There, he lived for some time in France, where Napoleon now ruled. It was 1803. Bolívar read the works of important Enlightenment writers, such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, and John Locke. His experiences in France and the rest of Europe convinced him that Venezuela must become independent. During a visit to Italy in 1805, Bolívar climbed to a religious shrine high above Rome. "I swear," Bolívar said, "by the God of my fathers and the honor of my country, I will not rest, not in body or soul, till I have broken the chains of Spain."

## **Failed Rebellion**

In 1807, Bolívar finally returned to Venezuela. He went back to his family's hacienda and took up the life of a wealthy Creole farmer. However, Bolívar's quiet life would not last long. Revolution was in the air, and he would be at the center of it.

Bolívar was not the first Venezuelan to try to liberate the Spanish colony. In 1806, Francisco de Miranda, another Venezuelan, had tried to start a revolution against Spain. Miranda had traveled through the United States and Europe for years. He was a soldier and an adventurer. He had served in the armies of Spain and France. He had fought in the French Revolution and had become a general. He had traveled to the United States and met many leaders of the American Revolution, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson. Miranda was convinced that Venezuela and the rest of Spain's American colonies should be free.

Miranda arrived in Venezuela in February 1806 with 150 men and a fleet of three ships, two of which he got in Santo Domingo, and the third from the British navy. The Spanish authorities were alerted and stopped him before he could land on Venezuelan soil. He lost two of the ships and sixty of his men.

Venezuelan independence was a lifelong dream for Miranda, however, and he refused to accept defeat. He went to Barbados, an island in the Caribbean, where the British gave him more ships and more men. This time, Miranda landed his troops in Venezuela but found little local support. The Creoles, in particular, refused to rally behind him.

Miranda had spent a lifetime talking about independence, yet he failed now because he lacked support in his native land. The problem was that

he had talked too much about equality. He had even suggested freeing the enslaved. Most Creoles in Venezuela, as in Mexico, did not want equality. They enjoyed the power of being second only to the Spaniards and did not want their relationship with the lower classes to change. All the Creoles wanted was to get rid of the upper class, the Spaniards. And so, unable to inspire these powerful Venezuelans with his zeal for independence, Miranda was driven away once more.



To the Creoles, Miranda was a troublemaker who might ruin them all.

## The First Venezuelan Republic

You know that in 1808, Napoleon overthrew the Spanish king and placed his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne. For Venezuelans, this meant they no longer had to worry about being disloyal to the true Spanish king if they pursued independence.

By 1810, a group of Venezuelan Creoles was beginning to think Miranda was right about Venezuelan independence. Simón Bolívar became one of the leaders of these **conspirators**.

### Vocabulary

**conspirator**, n. a person who plans or participates with others in a crime



The conspirators first threw out the highest-ranking Spanish officer in the colony who had been appointed by Napoleon's brother, Joseph. As a result, the conspirators could declare that they were acting out of loyalty to Ferdinand VII, the deposed Spanish king. Of course, they really intended to make Venezuela independent.

Bolívar was sent to get help from Great Britain. He failed to get any money, but he did convince Miranda to come back to Venezuela and lead the revolution. By this time, Miranda was sixty years old, an advanced age for someone at this time. Miranda still believed in his dream of South American independence. Despite his age, he was also an able and experienced military leader. The would-be revolutionaries needed that experience to lead them in a fight against the Spanish army.

On July 5, 1811, the leaders of the rebellion declared Venezuela's independence and established what has become known as the First Republic. Meanwhile, the



The Venezuelan patriot, Francisco de Miranda, signed Venezuela's Act of independence on July 5, 1811. However, the fight was not over. Venezuela would not become completely free of Spanish rule until 1821.

Spanish forces in Venezuela were organizing. In addition, many Venezuelan Creoles still opposed independence. Together, the Spanish troops and royalists fought back against the rebels. Royalists were people who supported the king and opposed independence.

The revolutionary army gained important victories, but there was no overwhelming support for the new government. At the same time, Bolívar and Miranda began to argue. Bolívar's supporters were Creoles. Miranda's strength came from the mestizos and the indigenous people. The two men had different views. Most important, perhaps, they were both strong-willed and proud, and each wanted the glory and the power of being Venezuela's leader. While the royalists gained strength, the quarrel between Miranda and Bolívar deepened.

The problems within the revolutionary movement were matched by uncertainty among the people. They were unsure of whom to support, the republicans or the royalists. Soon, an unexpected event gave them their answer.

## The Earth Shakes

March 26, 1812, was an extraordinarily hot day, even for steamy Venezuela. Except for a pattering of rain, all was unusually quiet. Suddenly, the earth began to shake violently. A low rumble broke the silence as houses and buildings cracked and then collapsed. The screams of trapped and injured people pierced the air.

A huge earthquake had struck Venezuela. Caracas, the capital, and other areas under rebel control were hit the hardest. Nearly twenty thousand people were killed, including most of the rebel soldiers in Caracas. The capital and several other cities were nearly flattened, but the royalist-controlled towns were spared. The **archbishop** of Caracas, who was a royalist, preached that the earthquake was a message that God was on the side of the Spaniards. In the chaos that followed, the revolutionaries were defeated.

### Vocabulary

**archbishop**, n. a high-ranking official in the Catholic Church

Miranda tried to negotiate with the Spanish authorities to let the rebels leave the country, but Bolívar and some of the other young officers claimed he was being disloyal. They turned him over to the Spaniards. Miranda died four years later in a Spanish prison. Meanwhile, the Spanish officials let Bolívar and his allies leave the country.

## War to the Death

Bolívar had to flee Venezuela, but he was not through fighting. He went to New Granada, the colony next to Venezuela. Rebels in the capital, Bogotá (/boh\*guh\*tah/), had declared independence in 1811. Bolívar joined the rebels of New Granada. He was given command of a troop of soldiers at a place called Cúcuta (/koo\*koo\*tah/), near the Venezuelan border. He defeated the Spanish **garrisons** there and earned a promotion to general in the rebel army.

### Vocabulary

**garrison**, n. troops stationed in a town or fort for the purpose of defense

Bolívar then convinced the leaders of New Granada to let him lead an army to liberate Venezuela. He met little resistance at first, but soon the fighting became brutal. Spanish commanders often executed the rebels they captured. Finally, Bolívar proclaimed: "Those executioners who call themselves our enemies have broken international law. . . . But the victims will be avenged [and] these executioners exterminated. . . . Our hatred knows no bounds, and the war shall be to the death!"

The fight became bloodier. Both sides committed acts of terror and cruelty. But Bolívar's declaration of "war to the death" aided the rebels. Venezuelans could no longer remain undecided about the war around them. They had to make up their minds, "Am I for independence, or am I for Spain?" Those who failed to choose a side could be mistaken for the enemy. Many joined the revolution.

Bolívar continued his march through Venezuela. He won major battles and reached Caracas in three months. The pro-independence people of

## New Granada and Venezuela in the Early 1800s



The territory of New Granada would become the present-day countries of Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador.

Venezuela regarded Bolívar as a hero. That is when people first began calling him “The Liberator.”

Bolívar had earned a quick victory, but the war was far from over. And it became even bloodier and crueler than it had been before.

The Andes Mountains form a high barrier on the western edge of South America bordering the Pacific Ocean. To the north lie vast plains called the Llanos (/yah\*nohs/). The Orinoco River, one of South America’s largest rivers, flows through the Llanos.

The Llanos were divided into huge ranches. Cowboys, called llaneros (/yah\*neh\*rohs/), tended the cattle. These llaneros organized a formidable army that supported the royalists. They were master horsemen, armed with long poles with knives strapped to the end. Their leader, José Tomás Boves (/hoh\*say/toh\*mahs/boh\*ves/), was a Spaniard, and he may have been the most bloodthirsty and ruthless leader in any of the wars for independence.





**The Andes Mountains have the highest peaks in the Western Hemisphere.**

Boves showed no mercy in war. Prisoners were automatically executed. In July 1814, Boves drove toward Caracas and forced Bolívar's troops to retreat back to New Granada. Things were not going well in New Granada, either. The French were recently driven from Spain, and King Ferdinand VII returned to the throne. Determined to restore his empire, Ferdinand sent an army of eleven thousand men to regain control of Venezuela and New Granada. It was the largest army Spain had ever sent to Latin America, and the rebels were overwhelmed. The Spanish commander was ruthless in destroying the rebels and their leaders. Bolívar escaped to Haiti, which had been independent since 1804.

## **Bolívar's Daring Plan**

Bolívar may have been defeated, but he never gave up! He immediately began assembling a new army in Haiti, where he had the strong support of

Pétion (/pay\*tyawn/), the Haitian president. Pétion had once been enslaved, and he asked two things in exchange for his support. First, Bolívar must recognize Haiti's government once he established his own government in South America. Second, Bolívar must free all enslaved people. Bolívar agreed, and Pétion provided support that made the next stage in the Venezuelan independence movement possible.

Bolívar left Haiti with just two hundred soldiers in seven small ships. He tried to land on the Venezuelan coast, but the effort failed. He needed the Venezuelans to join his army, but most either supported the royalists or were indifferent to the war altogether. Realizing that he could not succeed, Bolívar changed his strategy. By this time, the llaneros were unhappy with Spanish rule. If he could gain their support, Bolívar might still win the war.

In July 1817, Bolívar sailed up the Orinoco River and set up headquarters in the town of Angostura (/ang\*guhs\*toor\*uh/). It was a small, isolated town where the rebels could reorganize without interference from the Spaniards and royalists.



The Orinoco River is one of the longest rivers in South America.

The plan worked. The llaneros now favored independence and joined Bolívar. In addition, more than four thousand British volunteers joined the revolution. These troops were among the best in the rebel army. Now Bolívar was ready to try again to win independence for Venezuela and New Granada.

## On to Bogotá!

Bolívar decided on a bold move. He would attack Bogotá, the capital of New Granada. Bogotá was tucked safely away in the distant Andean highlands. The Spanish leaders thought no rebel army would be able to cross the hundreds of miles of trackless country and climb the mountains to attack such an isolated place. But that is exactly why Bolívar did it.

In May 1819, Bolívar left Angostura with 2,500 men. Crossing the Llanos was worse than facing the Spaniards. The army endured rain, wind, and floods. Their clothing rotted, and their saddles and boots fell apart. One soldier later recalled, "For seven days we marched in water up to our waists." Soldiers were swept away in floods, lost in quicksand, and killed by disease.

### Battles for South American Independence, 1817–1825



Forces led by Bolívar and Sucre defeated the Spanish and liberated, or freed, Venezuela and New Granada.

Matters got worse when they reached the mountains. All the horses died, and Bolívar lost many men. Hundreds died from exhaustion. The army abandoned everything but its guns. Even the **artillery** was left on the narrow, snow-covered, and icy mountain trails. But still, the army struggled on until finally, exhausted and out of supplies, they descended from the mountains into New Granada. There they were given fresh supplies and horses.

### Vocabulary

**artillery**, n. large guns that are used to shoot across long distances

As Bolívar had hoped, his army surprised the Spanish troops. The battle of Boyacá (/boi\*yah\*kah/) was one of the most important in the entire campaign. The main Spanish army was beaten, and Bolívar marched into Bogotá almost without resistance. The people of Bogotá cheered Bolívar and welcomed him as a liberator.



Bolívar's army defeated Spanish troops and reached Bogotá. This painting shows Bolívar on route to the city.

Bolívar left behind a general from New Granada to establish a government there and then turned once again to the liberation of Venezuela.

Bolívar returned to Angostura where he joined forces with a new llanero chieftain, José Antonio Páez. The two of them led an army that met the royalists in the battle of Carababo. Once again, Bolívar surprised the royalist forces by attacking from an unexpected direction. The victory ended most of the Spanish resistance in Venezuela. Four days later, on June 28, 1821, Bolívar marched into Caracas. Venezuela's independence had been won.

## **Bolívar's Dream**

After more than ten years of struggle, two battles had turned the tide, winning independence for New Granada and Venezuela. With their independence, Bolívar was able to set in motion another dream for South America. He admired the United States and was impressed that the thirteen British colonies had united to form a single country. He dreamed of doing the same thing in South America. Uniting New Granada and Venezuela was the beginning. The new country was called Gran Colombia. Its first constitution was written in 1821, and Bolívar became the first president. However, this was just the beginning.

Bolívar next turned his attention to the south. Lima (/lee\*muh/), Peru, had been the capital of Spanish South America for centuries, and it was a royalist stronghold. Capturing this city was a major objective on the road to independence for all of South America. But to get to Peru, the rebels would have to take the important city of Quito. Today, Quito is the capital of Ecuador.

José Antonio Sucre (/hoh\*say/ahn\*tone\*yoh/soo\*kray/) was a native of Venezuela. He joined the revolution in 1810 and had followed Bolívar ever since. In 1821, Bolívar sent Sucre to Guayaquil (/gwye\*ah\*keel/), the main port city of Ecuador. There, he gathered an army to attack the Spanish forces stationed in Quito.



Sucre's army met the Spanish forces on May 24, 1822. The Spanish were defeated, and Ecuador was liberated. Now only Peru remained to be liberated. However, another liberator was already there!

José de San Martín had been fighting since 1813 to liberate southern South America. By 1821, his army had reached Lima. Although San Martín declared independence for Peru, his army was not strong enough to beat the large Spanish forces that remained in mountain fortresses.

San Martín and Bolívar met in Guayaquil in July 1822. San Martín wanted Bolívar's help in liberating Peru. No one knows for sure what was said at the meeting. Afterwards, however, San Martín took most of his army and marched to Chile—leaving behind some soldiers to help liberate Peru.

Bolívar went to Lima in September 1823. However,



José Antonio Sucre was a skillful and experienced soldier.



José de San Martín fought for many years to remove the Spanish from southern South America.

something was different: The Peruvians did not trust him. He was a Venezuelan, and he was the president of Gran Colombia. No one in Lima wanted Peru to become a part of Gran Colombia.

Bolívar feared that, if he left the city to pursue the Spanish army, the people of Lima would turn against him. As a result, he asked Sucre to once again lead the liberation army. Sucre's force met and defeated the Spanish army near the city of Ayacucho (/ah\*yah\*koo\*choh/) on December 9, 1824. Peru was finally freed from Spanish rule.

With the liberation of Peru, only an area called Upper Peru remained under Spanish control. By this time, Bolívar believed that Lima was safely under his control. He handed over the command to Sucre, who freed upper Peru in 1825. This victory completed the liberation of South America. The leaders of Upper Peru wanted their homeland to become independent. They named the new country Bolivia (/buh\*lihv\*ee\*uh/), in honor of Bolívar, the Liberator. He wrote a constitution for the country, and Sucre became its first president.



This painting shows the Spanish officially surrendering to Sucre's forces. This action allowed Peru to become an independent country.

## The End of Bolívar's Dream

Bolívar had brought liberty to much of South America. He had really hoped to achieve a united South America. Nevertheless, he had achieved a great deal. But then, in his moment of triumph, things turned against him.

Following his victory in Bolivia, Bolívar returned to Lima and found the Peruvians plotting against him. Bolivia had already established itself as an independent nation, and now Peru wanted to be independent as well. Back in Gran Colombia, conflicts were also arising. Bolívar hurried back to try to calm the storms that were raging there. He faced rebellions in Venezuela and unhappiness in Colombia. On top of all this, Bolívar was sick.

Bolívar proved to be a better general than he was a president. Bolívar's rule in Gran Colombia was too harsh, and he was resented by many of his former supporters. Finally, in 1830, Gran Colombia broke up into the three countries of Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. Bolívar's dream of a united South America had failed.

Bolívar, near death and discouraged, resigned as president and left Bogotá for the coastal city of Santa Marta where he planned to take a ship to Europe. When he got to Santa Marta, he discovered that his old friend General Sucre had been killed by political rivals. Bolívar was heartbroken. He canceled his trip and went to stay with a friend. He died there in December 1830.

At the end, when it was clear that South America would never be united, Bolívar was very disheartened. His reported last words show the sting of rejection he felt. "Let us go!" he whispered with his last breath. "Let us go!—the people do not want us in this land!"



# Chapter 6

## Revolution in the South

**Trouble in Buenos Aires** Buenos Aires (/bway\*nohss/eye\*rayss/), Argentina, was a prosperous city and busy port in the early 1800s. Then, one morning in 1806, the residents of this Spanish city woke up to see ten large British warships anchored in their bay. You can imagine their surprise and their anxiety. What did this mean? What should they do?

### The Big Question

What successes did José de San Martín achieve as a military leader?

They decided to wait to see what the Spanish **viceroy** would do. This official was appointed by the king of Spain to govern the colony. But as soon as he saw the British flags flying from the ships, he packed up and fled. Now, you can imagine how this made the citizens of Buenos Aires feel.

### Vocabulary

**viceroy**, n. a person who rules a colony on behalf of a king or queen

**treasury**, n. a place where the money and other riches of a government are kept

The British ships had in fact come to capture Buenos Aires. The British and Spanish had been rivals and enemies for many years. The British seized this moment to attempt to take this valuable colony away from Spain. The small Spanish army post was overcome, and the British marched into the city.

British troops stayed in Buenos Aires long enough to steal the money from the **treasury** and send it back to Great Britain.





The British captured Buenos Aires on June 27, 1806.



Within two months, the people of the area organized a **militia** to resist the British invasion. The leader was Santiago de Liniers (/sahn\*tyah\*goh/de/lee\*nyers/), the commander of the Spanish fleet that had been away when the British first arrived.

### Vocabulary

**militia**, n. a group of armed citizens prepared for military service at any time

The militia was an army made up largely of Creoles who lived near Buenos Aires. There were about eight thousand militia members along with one thousand regular Spanish soldiers from Montevideo. Montevideo is on the opposite side of the Río (River) de la Plata from Buenos Aires and is today the capital of Uruguay.

The militia soon drove off the British troops and the British fleet. The cabildo, or city council, of Buenos Aires then refused to let the old viceroy have his position back. Instead, they elected Santiago de Liniers as the new viceroy. This was a revolutionary act, because only the king had the right to appoint a viceroy.

Soon Great Britain sent a larger fleet with twelve thousand men to retake the city. This time, the citizens were ready. They fought bravely and defeated the larger and better-trained British force. Everyone helped drive off the enemy. Even those who could not fight helped by bringing food and water to the men who were fighting and by tending the wounds of those injured in battle.

After the British sailed off, the citizens of Buenos Aires began wondering why they needed the Spanish government at all. Hadn't they defended themselves? Couldn't they govern themselves?

In recognition of his success defending Buenos Aires, the Spanish king made



Santiago de Liniers was chosen to lead the resistance against the British.

Santiago de Liniers the temporary viceroy. Liniers understood how important trade was to the people of Buenos Aires. He allowed British ships to come into the port and trade. People began to make money, and everyone was happy. But Liniers was only the temporary viceroy. After a few months, the king sent a permanent viceroy. The new viceroy began enforcing the old trade rules. Now the British ships could not trade legally, and people made less money and had less to spend.

## Independence in Río de la Plata

As you know, events in Europe had a big effect on the politics of the South American colonies beginning in 1810. By that time, Napoleon Bonaparte had conquered Spain and replaced the king with his brother Joseph Bonaparte. The people of Buenos Aires were unhappy with the new viceroy and his policies, and now they had lost their king. They met to decide what to do.

A Creole lawyer named Mariano Moreno (/mah\*ryah\*noh/moh\*ray\*noh/) became a leader of the cabildo. He was a man of great energy who had the courage to voice his opinions. He convinced the city council to remove the king's viceroy and send him into exile. Moreno and the cabildo wanted Río de la Plata to be independent. Río de la Plata included the present-day countries of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia. Buenos Aires was the capital of Río de la Plata. The people of Buenos Aires knew they could run their own affairs after having twice defeated the invading British forces. The strong leadership of Mariano Moreno also helped.



**Mariano Moreno was a strong leader who spoke out against Spanish rule in Argentina.**

Unfortunately, Moreno died in 1811. Though Río de la Plata still was not independent, the cabildo of Buenos Aires ruled without interference from Spain. However, people in other parts of Río de la Plata began to worry about being dominated by the capital. Uruguay and Paraguay had local leaders who refused to accept the rule of Buenos Aires. Upper Peru, which would become Bolivia, was still under Spanish rule. Other provinces were also uneasy and threatened to establish their own government. Buenos Aires was busy trying to keep them under its control.

## José de San Martín Returns

José de San Martín would become the main leader of the revolutions in southern South America. San Martín, a Creole, was especially suited to his role. He was born to Spanish parents in a small town about five hundred miles north of Buenos Aires. His father was a soldier and an administrator on the Río de la Plata frontier. When San Martín was six years old, his father took his family back to Spain.

San Martín went to school in Spain and became an officer in the Spanish army. He was a loyal and capable officer. He fought in several wars, including the war against France when Napoleon invaded Spain. Then, in 1811, he retired from the army, and the next year he returned to Río de la Plata.

This must have been a difficult decision for San Martín. He was at the height of his career as a military officer. He was needed by both Spain and his king; and he had always shown great loyalty to both. Somehow, though, he decided to



**José de San Martín was the principal leader of the revolts against Spain in the southern parts of South America.**

turn his back on all of this. Many years later, San Martín explained that he gave up his career because Río de la Plata needed him. He had not been there since he was six years old, but it drew him like a magnet.

After leaving the Spanish army, San Martín went first to London. There, he met Francisco de Miranda and other revolutionaries. You may remember that Miranda had also been a soldier. The two men must have compared their experiences fighting in different wars. No other Latin American revolutionary leaders had as much military experience as they did. Then, in January 1812, San Martín left for South America.

In September of that year, San Martín married Maria de los Remedios (/mah\*ree\*ah/de/lohhs/re\*meh\*dee\*ohs), the young daughter of a Spanish merchant in Buenos Aires. Although newly married, San Martín would spend most of the next ten years away from home.

Maria de los Remedios's new husband and the other revolutionaries faced many problems. The leaders in Buenos Aires had hoped to go through Upper Peru to get to Lima, Peru, the capital of Spanish power in South America. But Spain had large armies in those colonies, so freedom would not be easy to win. Chile had declared independence in 1810, but Spain had defeated the rebels and held power in the capital, Santiago.

San Martín argued that Río de la Plata's troops should liberate Chile first. Then they could go by sea to Lima. This would be better than attacking Upper Peru and facing the strong Spanish force there. Because San Martín had more military experience than any of the other leaders, they followed his advice.

## **Independence Comes to Chile**

San Martín planned his campaign carefully. It started with a trick: he pretended to be sick. That was his excuse for being sent as governor to the province of Cuyo (/koo\*yoh/). It appeared to be a restful job where he could recover. Actually, Cuyo shared a border with Chile and was a key to routes through the Andes. San Martín spent two years in the province getting troops ready to invade Chile.

He thought he could surprise the Spanish army by going over the highest part of the mountains. No one would expect an attack from there.

San Martín worked hard to make sure his plan would succeed. He sent spies to Chile to discover where the Spanish army camps were and how many soldiers they had. In addition to learning more about the Spanish army, the spies planted false rumors about possible rebellions and encouraged support from Chilean patriots.

Then San Martín did the cleverest thing of all. He invited a group of Pehuenche (/pay\*wen\*chay/) people, who lived near a low pass in the Andes, to a meeting. He gave them gifts and asked for permission to cross their territory into Chile. This would have been the easiest way to go over the Andes. After all the secrets, why did San Martín act so openly? Because the clever general knew the Pehuenche would tell the Spanish officials about the meeting. This would make the Spaniards expect an invasion from the south. But San Martín had other ideas. He would cross the Andes over the highest pass and attack from the east.



What San Martín and his army achieved by crossing the Andes was truly remarkable.



Finally, on January 18, 1817, San Martín's army left Mendoza (/men\*doh\*zuh/), the capital of Cuyo. The army had nearly four thousand soldiers and one thousand men to carry ammunition and food. In addition, it had 10,600 mules, 1,600 horses, and 700 head of cattle. Cannons were carried in pieces on carts, but they actually had to be hauled by hand much of the way. What these troops did ranks as one of the great military accomplishments in history.

### Vocabulary

**bluff**, n. a cliff; a landform with steep and flat walls, usually along the edge of water

San Martín's army crossed the Andes in the shadow of 22,800-foot-high Mount Aconcagua (/ak\*un\*kahg\*wuh/), the highest mountain in the Americas. They passed through narrow canyons, along sheer **bluffs**, and through passes that were twelve thousand feet above sea level. By the time the army reached Chile on the western side of the mountains, they had only 4,300 mules and 511 horses left, and all were in bad shape. Nevertheless, San Martín's army had crossed the Andes in only twenty-one days. And they were well armed and had enough supplies to continue the attack.

The daring gamble paid off. The Spanish leaders knew an attack was coming, but they were not sure where it would be. They divided up their army to cover different routes. But they never expected an army could cross the Andes as San Martín's forces had done. San Martín surprised and defeated a large Spanish army in a battle south of Santiago near a place called Chacabuco. San Martín's army captured six hundred Spanish soldiers along with all their artillery and supplies.

The road to Santiago was open, and San Martín marched into the city along with a Chilean, one Bernardo O'Higgins, who had commanded a division in the battle of Chacabuco. Bernardo O'Higgins was named governor of Chile. Spanish resistance continued for more than a year, with O'Higgins and San Martín leading the Chilean forces. Chile declared its independence on February 12, 1818, but fighting continued for another two months before the last Spanish troops were defeated.



Bernardo O'Higgins joined San Martín in the fight against the Spanish. He was of Spanish and Irish ancestry. There was significant Irish migration to Latin America as Irish immigrants were generally Catholic, and for a time, were less welcome in the United States.

## Failure in Peru

Now, San Martín faced his greatest challenge. The way was clear for an attack on Peru, where Spain had its strongest forces. San Martín assembled a fleet. In August 1820, he sailed to southern Peru with an army of more than four thousand. Awaiting him was a Spanish army of twenty-three thousand men. San Martín knew he could not defeat the larger Spanish force in battle. He hoped the Peruvians would revolt against Spain and that the Spanish troops would desert. In fact, some



On August 20, 1820, San Martín and his forces arrived in Peru.

Spanish soldiers did desert, but the Peruvians did not rise up in rebellion. Still, San Martín was able to move his army to Lima.

With the protection of San Martín's army, Peru declared independence on July 28, 1821. San Martín could protect Lima, but he knew his army was not strong enough to defeat the Spanish forces elsewhere in the country. But all was not yet lost to San Martín. As you know, Simón Bolívar was at the same time hoping to liberate Peru. San Martín sailed to Guayaquil in July 1822 to meet with Bolívar. He hoped that together they could defeat the Spanish and bring independence to Peru.

You know, however, that the meeting did not go as San Martín had hoped. San Martín left Guayaquil a disappointed man. He immediately returned to Lima, resigned as the city's protector, and took his army back to Chile. Bolívar and José Antonio Sucre completed the struggle for Peruvian independence.

San Martín went back to Mendoza, where he had a small farm. There, news of yet another tragedy reached him. He learned in 1823 that his wife had died in Buenos Aires. He returned to that city, but his enemies controlled the government. San Martín knew he could have no role in the new government, so he took his young daughter and sailed for Europe. San Martín had gained nothing from his years of work. He had no money. The countries he freed did not even offer him a **pension** until long after he had left. He visited France and Great Britain and lived for several years in Brussels, Belgium. In 1838 he moved to a small town in France, where he died in 1850.

### Vocabulary

**pension**, n. a set amount of money paid by a company or the government to a person who is retired, or no longer working

San Martín, like Bolívar, had hoped to unite all of Spain's South American provinces. In the end, neither of these great heroes of independence realized this dream.

# Chapter 7

## Brazil Finds Another Way

**A Ruler's New Home** Never had a European ruler and monarch set foot in the Americas until João (/zhwow/), prince of Portugal, traveled to Brazil in 1808. Moreover, João had not arrived in Brazil just for a visit. He had decided to make it his home and the capital of the Portuguese empire.

### The Big Question

How did Brazil's way of gaining its freedom differ from the other South American countries you have learned about?

Why was João moving permanently to Brazil? Like much that happened throughout Latin America during this period, this action was set in motion by Napoleon Bonaparte. Portugal is a small country in Europe. Traditionally, it had a close alliance with Great Britain. But when Napoleon, as part of his war with Great Britain, demanded that the king of Portugal close Portuguese ports to British ships, take away all property belonging to British citizens, and arrest all British citizens, João knew that he was in trouble. For one thing, João did not want to take orders from Napoleon. He may even have hoped that Great Britain would defeat the French. In any case, João did close his ports to British ships, but he refused to do more.

Napoleon was not satisfied, so he invaded Portugal. He requested and was given permission to pass through northwestern Spain in order to reach Portugal. João had already considered the possibility of moving his capital to Brazil. So, knowing that Napoleon and his army were about to invade, João prepared to leave.



Eventually Prince João became King João VI of Portugal in 1816, after the death of his mother Queen Maria I.



On the very day that Napoleon's troops entered his capital of Lisbon, Portugal, João boarded a British ship and set out for South America.

It took a fleet of thirty-six ships to hold all the royal treasures—jewels, important papers, books, paintings and statues, and thousands of other things. Along with the royal treasures, came more than ten thousand people. These were the nobles and lords of the court, along with their family members, servants, and helpers. The fleet was escorted by British warships to protect it from Napoleon's navy.

The voyage was terrible. The ships were filled with rats, fleas, and lice. The quarters were cramped and smelly. It was made even worse because the ships were crowded. Some of them carried three times as many people as they were intended for. The voyage in lumbering sailing ships took nearly two months.

To make matters worse, a storm struck the fleet, and some ships became separated. The destination was originally Rio de Janeiro (/ree\*oh/dee/zhuh\*ner\*oh/), the capital of Brazil. Because of the rough voyage, many of the ships, including the king's, stopped first in Salvador da Bahia, the capital of a northern province in Brazil. As you can imagine, the visit came as a complete surprise to the townspeople.

## In Bahia

Bahia had no paved streets. There were no hotels or places fit for a king and his nobles. The royal family and all the members of the court had to stay in the houses of the citizens of Bahia. João's wife, Carlota, got lice on board the ship,



Queen Carlota did not enjoy the voyage from Portugal to Brazil, nor was she happy when they finally arrived.

so they had to shave off all her hair. She was furious. From that time on, she disliked Brazil.

Although João did not stay long in Bahia, he already began acting as though Brazil was home. Soon after his arrival, he was visited by the governor of Bahia. The governor asked João to open Brazil's ports to international trade. For the past three hundred years, Portugal had kept a tight rein on the trade of its colonies. Now, João had a new view of matters. He could see that restricting the trade of the colony was bad for the economy and the people. He immediately opened the ports to all nations. The change had a rapid effect on Brazil. During the following three years, Bahia alone increased its **exports** by 15 percent and its **imports** by 50 percent.

### Vocabulary

**export**, n. a product that is sent away to sell in another country

**import**, n. a product that is brought into one country from another country

## Rio Becomes Capital of the Portuguese Empire

After the brief stop in Bahia, João and his court traveled on to Rio de Janeiro. João made this city the capital of the Portuguese empire. All the provinces of Brazil, along with the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia, were ruled from Rio. The taxes from this vast empire now streamed into Rio. People from all over Europe arrived to be near the Portuguese court and to do business with the empire. More than twenty-four thousand Portuguese, along with many French and English people, arrived in Rio. Within ten years the population of the city doubled.

There was a lot of work to be done to make the city look worthy of the Portuguese empire. João ordered that buildings be built for the treasures he had brought from Portugal—a library, an art museum, an institute of natural history. A naval and a military academy, a medical school, and an academy

of fine arts were also constructed. Elementary and secondary schools were encouraged. Printing presses began operating, and new newspapers were established.

João also helped the Brazilian economy. In addition to opening the ports to world trade, he encouraged Brazilians to develop **industry** and agriculture.

Brazilians soon learned that there were other changes in store for them. Because it was the center of the empire, many **government offices** were established. There was the Council of State, the Treasury Council, and many others. The people of Rio became familiar with government structure. They found that it was much easier than before to get the government to listen to them and to hear what they needed. On the other hand, they also found that their activities were under close observation.

At first, many of the people in João's court may have believed their stay in Brazil was temporary. Surely, they must have thought, we'll return to Europe as soon as Napoleon is gone from Portugal. They were wrong. Napoleon, in fact, was forced to withdraw from Portugal by the end of 1808, just months after his invasion. By that time, João had already learned to love Rio and Brazil. He had no intention of leaving. Years passed. In Portugal, people wondered why João was delaying his return.

In 1815, Napoleon's hold on Europe finally ended with his defeat at Waterloo. His threat to Europe was over for good. But still, João and his court remained happily in Rio. To help justify his stay in Brazil, João changed the name of his empire. It became the United Kingdom of Portugal and Brazil. Now, Brazil was the equal of Portugal, and João continued to rule his empire from Rio.

For the people of Brazil, this new title gave them a sense of pride. It fed their desire for independence.

### Vocabulary

**industry**, n.  
manufacturing;  
large-scale  
production of goods

**"government  
office,"** (phrase) a  
position or job in  
the government



King João VI was happy to rule the United Kingdom of Portugal and Brazil from his royal court in South America.

## Brazil Becomes an Empire

João prolonged his stay in Brazil. He loved Rio de Janeiro and probably could have been happy staying there forever. But Portugal was itself undergoing a revolution. Leaders of the revolution wanted to write a new constitution and limit the power of the monarchy. They demanded that King João return. If he did not go back, he might lose his crown. So, in 1821, João reluctantly took his court and sailed for Portugal. João's son Pedro stayed behind in Brazil to rule in his place.

Meanwhile, Brazilians knew all about the revolutions that had occurred in the Spanish colonies. Some of Brazil's leaders wanted to make their colony free, too. King João knew this when he left, and he warned his son, "If Brazil demands independence, proclaim it yourself and put the crown on your own head." In other words, the king advised his son to revolt against Portugal if necessary.



**Pedro I, the son of King João of Portugal, ruled Brazil from 1821 to 1831.**

Portugal's revolutionary leaders demanded that Pedro return to Portugal. Instead, Pedro followed his father's advice. He tore the Portuguese flag off his uniform and declared, "Independence or death!" A small Portuguese army post at Bahia tried to defend the colony for Portugal, but the Brazilians soon overwhelmed it. Brazil became independent in a nearly bloodless revolution, but it did not have a democratic form of government—it had an emperor instead.

Pedro I, as he came to be known, declared himself emperor of Brazil. The country had become an empire. Brazil is a huge country, and there was a danger that it would break up into several smaller independent countries as the former Spanish colonies had done. Pedro I managed to keep that from happening. The country did not break up, and Pedro and his son ruled Brazil for more than sixty-five years. Finally, in 1889, Pedro I's son, Pedro II, was forced to give up his crown, and Brazil became a republic. Interestingly, one of the reasons why Pedro II was forced out was because under his rule, slavery was abolished in Brazil in 1888. The upper classes, the elites, were furious as slave labor helped support the Brazilian economy.



## What Independence Did Not Do

By 1830, most of the countries of Latin America had won their independence. The Haitians had driven out the French, and the Mexicans had expelled the Spanish. Bolívar and San Martín had liberated Spanish-speaking South America, and Pedro I had broken with his native Portugal to rule an independent Brazil.

However, independence did not solve all of the problems facing the people of Latin America. For one thing, independence did not bring unity. Both Bolívar and San Martín had hoped that the various colonies of South America would combine under a single **federal government**, like the states in the

### Vocabulary

**“federal government,”**  
(phrase), a national government that shares power with state or regional governments

### Independence in Mexico and Central America



The countries of Central America won independence twice: once from Spain in 1821 and then from Mexico in the 1830s.

United States. But that did not happen. South America split into a number of independent countries.

The same thing happened in Central America. The colonies of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica became independent of Spain in 1821, along with Mexico. At first these colonies were part of Mexico. Within two years, however, they declared their independence a second time and formed a country of their own called the United Provinces of Central America. Once again, the idea was to form a group of states on the model of the United States. But once again the plan failed. The provinces became independent countries between 1838 and 1840.

Independence also proved easier to achieve than **stability**. Many of the newly independent countries in South and Central America had trouble establishing stable governments to replace the Spanish colonial government. In many countries, strongmen, the caudillos, competed for power at different times. Even so, during the 1800s, a lot of investment was made in Central and South America. Investment was followed by immigration in large numbers for the same reasons there was immigration to the United States—opportunity.

### Vocabulary

**stability**, n.  
consistency; the  
ability to remain  
unchanged

However, class issues did persist. Remember how Creoles throughout Latin America felt that they were treated unfairly by Spanish-born rulers? Well, when the Spanish were defeated, the Creoles ended up running many of the new Latin American countries. But not much else changed. The Creoles often refused to treat the mestizos and the indigenous people as equals. So independence by itself did not necessarily ensure justice or political equality.

## South America



Independence did not solve all of the challenges faced by the countries of South America, but it did allow people to decide for themselves what their future should be.

# Glossary

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## A

**“agricultural credit bank,” (phrase),** a lending institution that provides loans to farmers (50)

**ambitious, adj.** having a strong desire to be successful (40)

**ambush, n.** a surprise attack (36)

**ammunition, n.** bullets or shells (36)

**archbishop, n.** a high-ranking official in the Catholic Church (57)

**aristocrat, n.** a person of the upper or noble class whose status is usually inherited (4)

**artillery, n.** large guns that are used to shoot across long distances (63)

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## B

**bluff, n.** a cliff; a landform with steep and flat walls, usually along the edge of water (75)

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## C

**caudillo, n.** a regional strongman in a Spanish or Latin American country (42)

**class, n.** a group of people with the same social or economic status (4)

**coachman, n.** a person who drives a coach, a type of four-wheeled vehicle drawn by a horse (12)

**commission, n.** a group of people assigned to find information about something or control something (50)

**conscience, n.** a sense or belief a person has that a certain action is right or wrong (31)

**conspiracy, n.** a group of people working together secretly to achieve a specific goal (31)

**conspirator, n.** a person who plans or participates with others in a crime (55)

---

## D

**dictator, n.** a ruler who has total control over the country (25)

**dwindle, v.** to decrease, or to slowly become smaller (35)

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## E

**epidemic, n.** a situation in which a disease spreads to many people in an area or region (24)

**export, n.** a product that is sent away to sell in another country (81)

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## F

**“federal government,” (phrase),** a national government that shares power with state or regional governments (85)

**foreman, n.** a person who oversees other workers (12)

---

## G

**garrison, n.** troops stationed in a town or fort for the purpose of defense (58)

**“government office,” (phrase),** a position or job in the government (82)

**“guerrilla tactics,” (phrase),** fast-moving, small-scale actions, such as hit-and-run attacks, used by a small, independent fighting force (47)

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## H

**hacienda, n.** a large estate or plantation (28)

---

## I

**import, n.** a product that is brought into one country from another country (81)

**indigenous, adj.** native to a particular region or environment (4)

**industry, n.** manufacturing; large-scale production of goods (82)

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## L

**liberator, n.** a person who frees others from oppression (52)

**loot, v.** to steal or take something by force (34)

---

## M

**mission, n.** a settlement built for the purpose of converting Native Americans to Christianity (6)

**militia, n.** a group of armed citizens prepared for military service at any time (70)

**mob, n.** a large, unruly group of people (35)

---

## P

**padre, n.** literally, father; the title given to a Spanish priest (28)

**pension, n.** a set amount of money paid by a company or the government to a person who is retired, or no longer working (77)

**province, n.** an area or region similar to a state (12)

**priest, n.** a person who has the training or authority to carry out certain religious ceremonies or rituals (6)

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## R

**rustler, n.** a person who steals cattle or other livestock (47)

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## S

**stability, n.** consistency; the ability to remain unchanged (86)

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## T

**toil, v.** to work hard (42)

**treasury, n.** a place where the money and other riches of a government are kept (68)

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## V

**vicero, n.** a person who rules a colony on behalf of a king or queen (68)

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## Y

**yoke, n.** a harness used to restrain work animals; something that takes away people's freedom (32)

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Jose Maria Teclo Morelos y Pavon (1765–1815), right, Mexican Roman Catholic Priest who became leader of the revolutionaries after the execution of Miguel Hidalgo. Capture of Morelos by Royalist supporters, 5 November 1815. He was executed by firing squad on 22 December. Mexican War of Independence (from Spain) 1810–1820. / Universal History Archive/UIG / Bridgeman Images: 38

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Portrait of Francisco Miranda (1750–1816), Venezuelan patriot who along with Bolivar proclaimed Venezuelan independence, July 5, 1811. Venezuela, 19th century. / De Agostini Picture Library / M. Seemuller / Bridgeman Images: 55

Portrait of Toussaint Louverture (1743–1803) on horseback, early 19th century (colour engraving), French School, (19th century) / Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France / Archives Charmet / Bridgeman Images: 17

Queen Carlota Joaquina mother of emperor Dom Pedro 1st and wife of king of Portugal Joao VI John VI in exile in Brazil in 1821 watercolor by Jean Baptiste Debret / Photo © Tallandier / Bridgeman Images: 80

Signing of the Act of Independence on 5th July 1811 (oil on canvas), Lovera, Juan (1776–1841) / Collection of the Concejo Municipal, Caracas, Venezuela / Index / Bridgeman Images: 56

Simon Bolivar (1783–1830) and Francisco de Paula Santander (1792–1840) travelling to Bogota with the army of the 'Libertador' after the victory of Boyaca, 10th August 1829 (oil on canvas), Alvarez, Francisco de Paula (fl.1829) / Private Collection / Archives Charmet / Bridgeman Images: 63

Spanish army surrendering to General Antonio Jose de Sucre Peru after Battle of Ayacucho, December 1824, Peruvian War of Independence, Peru, 19th century / De Agostini Picture Library / M. Seemuller / Bridgeman Images: i, iii, 66

The Battle of Puebla, 5 May 1862 (oil), Mexican School, (19th century) / Museo Nacional de Historia, Castillo de Chapultepec, Mexico / Bridgeman Images: 46

The city of Cap Francais (modern day Cap-Haïtien) in Haiti, 1778, painting by Louis-Nicolas Blarenbergh. / De Agostini Picture Library / G. Dagli Orti / Bridgeman Images: 10–11

The death of poor Toussaint L'Ouverture draws near, the negro leader watches the coming fleet sent by Napoleon for his destruction (litho), English School, (20th century) / Private Collection / © Look and Learn / Bridgeman Images: 21

The Embarkation of the Liberating Expedition of Peru on the 20th August 1820, under the Command of Captain General Jose de San Martin (1778–1850) (oil on canvas), Abel, Antonio A. (19th century) / Instituto Sanmartino, Buenos Aires, Argentina / Index / Bridgeman Images: Cover D, 76

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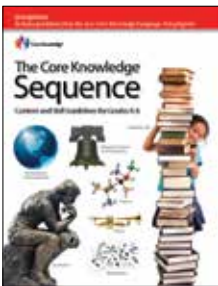
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