

Decolonisation in Latin America

Simón Bolívar (age 32) around 1815



Simón Bolívar around the time of his death (age 47) in 1830, in a sketch by José María Espinosa



From Colonies to Independent Nations in 15 years. . . (1810-1825)

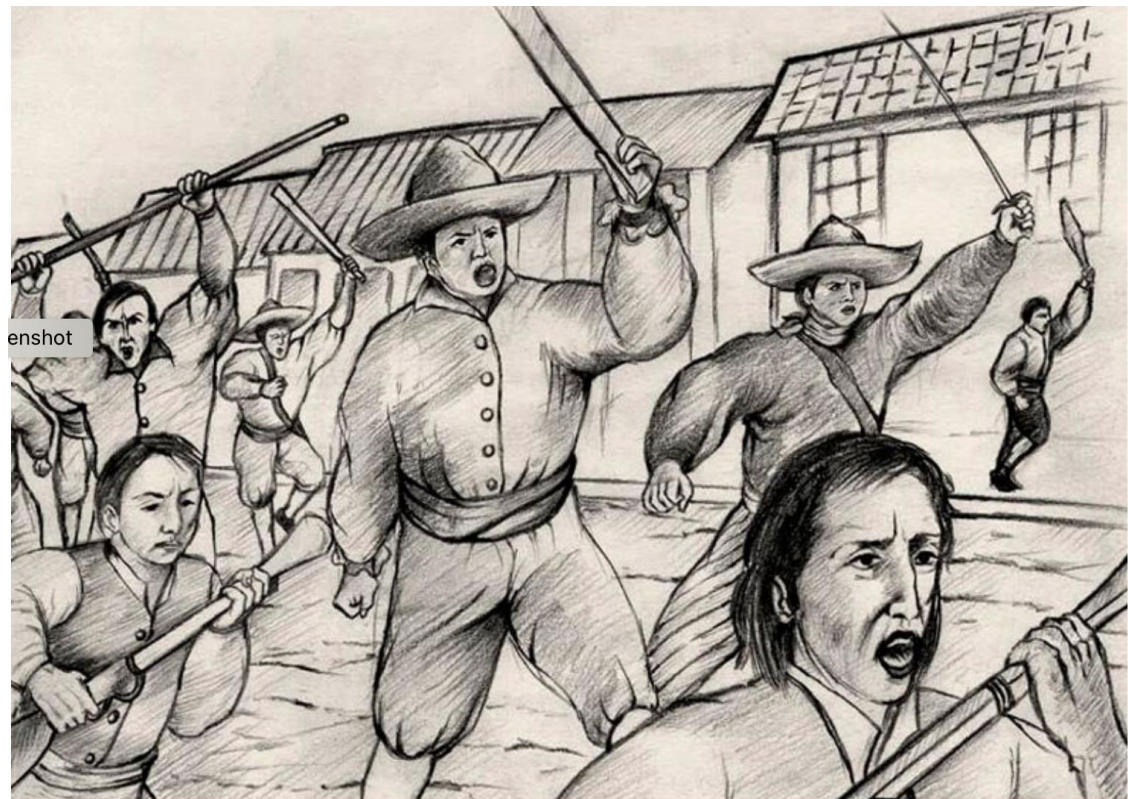


GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

1. **Region** What two European countries held the largest colonial empires in Latin America in 1800?
2. **Region** Comparing the two maps, which independent countries had emerged by 1830 from Spanish territory in the Americas?

Version 1

Buildup of anti-Spanish feeling (late 18th century) as a result of the Bourbon Reforms, etc.

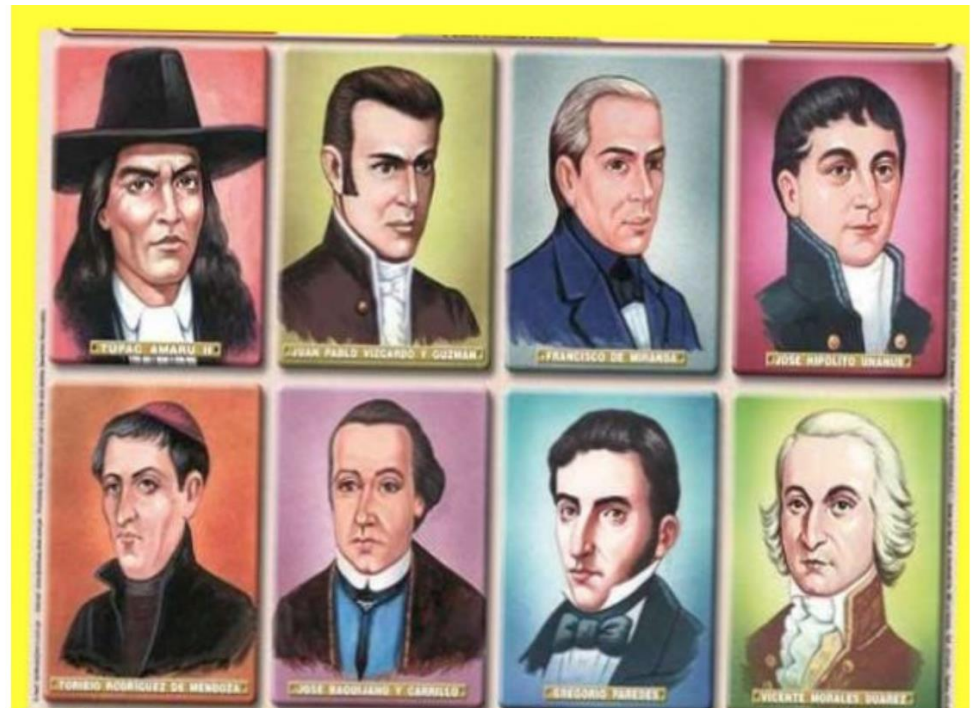


A colonial
rebellion...

Version 1

The buildup of anti-Spanish feeling (late 18th century) as a result of the Bourbon Reforms, etc.

... led to anti-Spanish independence movements in 1810.



A drawing of the 'precursors and heroes of Peruvian Independence', with Tupac Amaru as a precursor.

version 1

This version stresses the significance of events in the 18th century such as the global, multi-cultural **Enlightenment:**

- circulation of ideas and discourses across the Atlantic (republicanism, natural laws, citizenship)
- emergence of new identities (creole patriotism)

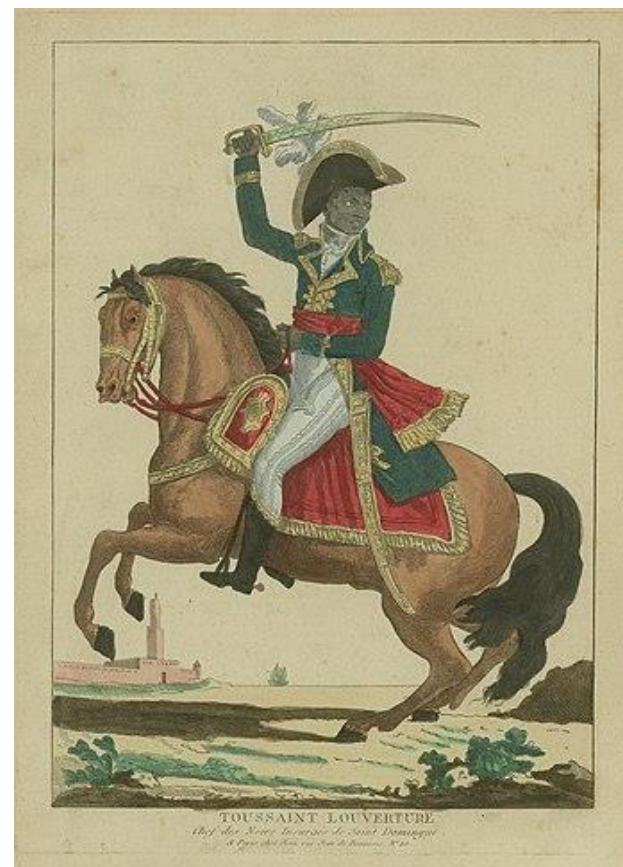
The circulation of ideas in the 18th century Atlantic world

In 1791 the Peruvian newspaper *Mercurio Peruano* republished the French scientist Antoine Lavoisier's chemical system.

'*Toussaint Louverture Chef des Noirs Insurgés de Saint Domingue*' –an 1802 French print showing the leader of the Haitian Revolution.

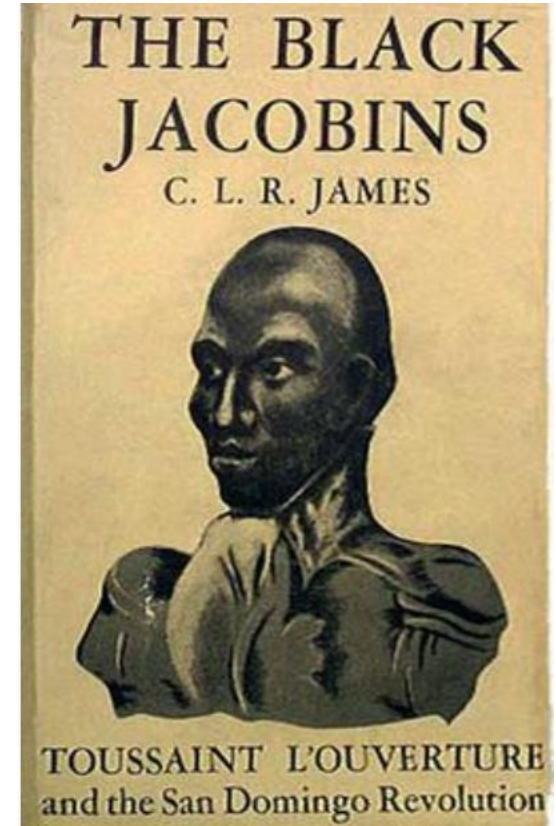
TABLE DE LAS COMBINACIONES BINARIAS DEL OXIGENO CON LAS SUBSTANCIAS METALICAS O no metalicas, oxidables y acidificables de Mr. Lavoisier

Combinaciones del oxigeno con	Primer Grado de Oxigenacion,		Segundo Grado de Oxigenacion,		Tercero Grado de Oxigenacion	
	Nombres nuevos.	Nombres antiguos.	Nombres nuevos.	Nombres antiguos.	Nombres nuevos.	Nombres antiguos.
El Calórico	El gas oxigeno	El ayre deflogisticado				
El Hydrogeno	El agua					
El Azote	Óxido nitroso	Gas nitroso	Ácido nítrico	Acido nítrico fumante	Acido nítrico	Acido nítrico
El Carbono	Combinacion Inconocida		Acido carbonoso	Desconocido	Acido tartárico	Ayre fijo
El Azufre	Óxido de azufre	Azufre	Acido sulfuroso	Acido sulfúrico	Acido sulfúrico	Acido vitriólico
El Fósforo	Óxido fosfórico	Resubido de la combusti. del fosf.	Acido fosforoso	Acido volátil del fósforo	Acido fosfórico	Acido fosfórico
El Radical muriático	Óxido muriático	Desconocido	Acido muriático	Acido muriático concentrado	Acido muriático	Acido muriático
El Radical fosfórico	Óxido fosfórico	Desconocido			Acido fosfórico	Acido del azúcar
El Radical borácico	Óxido borácico	Desconocido			Acido borácico	
El Antimonio	Óxido gris de antimonio	Cal de antimonio	Óxido blanco de antimonio	Cal blanca de antimonio	Acido antimoniaco	
La Plata	Óxido de plata	Cal de plata				
El Arsenico	Óxido gris de arsenico	Cal gris de arsenico	Óxido blanco de arsenico	Cal blanca de arsenico	Acido de arsenico	Acido arsenical
El Bismuto	Óxido de gris bismuto	Cal gris de bismuto	Óxido blanco de bismuto	Cal blanca de bismuto		
El Cobalto	Óxido gris de cobalto	Cal gris de cobalto	Óxido blanco de cobalto	Cal blanca de cobalto		
El Cobre	Óxido rojo de cobre	Cal roja de cobre	Óxido verde y azul de de cobre	Cal blanca de cobre		
El Estaño	Óxido gris de estaño	Cal gris de estaño	Óxido blanco de estaño	Pedra de estaño		
El Hierro	Óxido negro de hierro	Espeja marcial	Óxido amarillo de hierro	Ocre ó moho de hierro		
La Manganesa	Óxido negro de manganesa	Cal negra de manganesa	Óxido blanco de manganesa	Cal blanca de manganesa		
El Mercurio	Óxido negro de mercurio	Etiopa mineral	Óxido amarillo y rojo de mercurio	Turbid mineral, precipitado rojo		
La Moliódena	Óxido de moliódena	Cal de moliódena			Acido moliódenico	Acido de la moliódena
El Nickel	Óxido de Nickel	Cal de nickel				
El Oro	Óxido amarillo de oro	Cal amarilla de oro	Óxido rojo de oro	Cal roja de oro		
La Platina	Óxido amarillo de platina	Cal amarilla de plata				
El Tungstena	Óxido gris de tungstena	Cal de tungstena			Acido tungstáico	Acido del tungstena
El Zinc	Óxido gris de zinc	Cal gris de zinc	Óxido blanco de zinc	Pedálina		
El Plomo	Óxido gris de plomo	Cal gris de plomo	Óxido rojo de plomo	Mimo		



Haitian Revolution (1791-1804)

- Enslaved workers overthrew French colonial rule and the plantation system based on enslaved labour.
- Led by people of colour such as Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743-1803).
- Resulted in the establishment of a new, independent state: Haiti.
- Influence of the French Revolution



version 1: In summary...

Bourbon reforms combined with new ideas about equality and citizenship eroded the **'colonial pact'** and led to widespread dissatisfaction with Spanish rule



proto-nationalism



breakdown in colonial hegemony and start of the wars of independence

version 2

Napoleonic wars, and especially Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1807...



A scene from the Peninsular War (1807-1814)

version 2

Napoleonic wars, and especially Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1807 . . .

led to breakdown in political consensus in the Hispanic world.

Version 1 stresses the longer-term antecedents to the actual outbreak of conflict in the Americas in 1808.

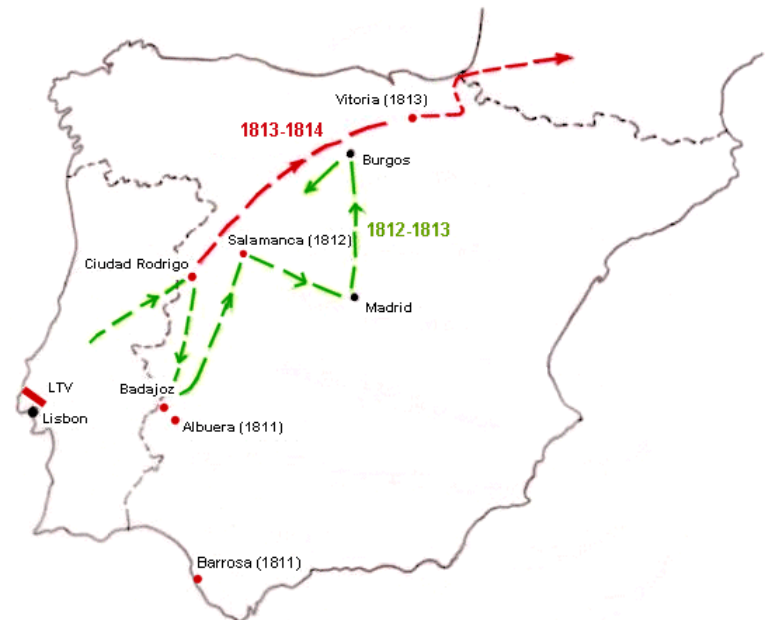
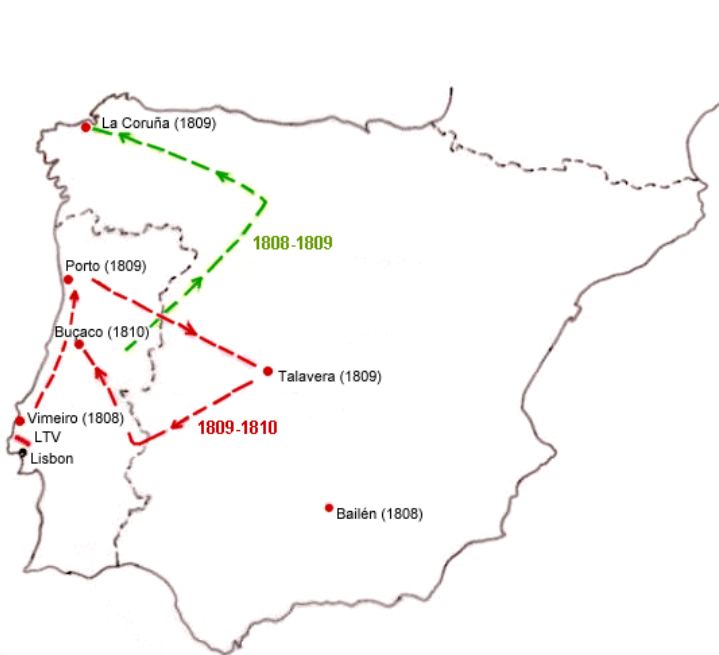
Version 2 stresses the contingent, conjunctural nature of the collapse of colonial rule.

Version 2

Contingent, conjunctural events—
crisis in the Hispanic world:

Crisis in the Iberian world

1807: Napoleonic troops invaded the Iberian peninsula, leading to the **Peninsular War (1807-1814)**



Francisco Goya, *The Third of May, 1808* (1814)



Crisis in the Iberian world

Two consequences of the Peninsular War

#1

In 1807 the Portuguese royal family fled to safety in Brazil.



Portugal was governed from Brazil until the defeat of Napoleon.



-The departure of the royal family of Portugal to Brazil (detail), attributed to NicolasLouis-Albert Delerive. National Coach Museum, Lisbon 18

Crisis in the Iberian world

Two consequences of the Peninsular War

#2

Breakdown
in colonial
authority in
Spanish
America



'Crisis of authority' in the Americas

As news of the 1808 French capture of the entire Spanish royal family reached the Americas, colonial administrations reacted in various ways:

--Some cities set up 'juntas' (local governing bodies) to govern until the return of the 'legitimate' Bourbon monarchs.



Pedro Subercaseaux, *El Cabildo Abierto del 22 de mayo de 1810* [The Town Meeting of 22 May 1810 in Buenos Aires] (1910)

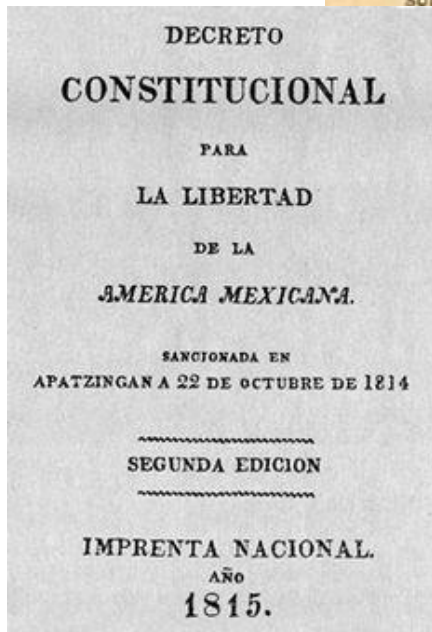
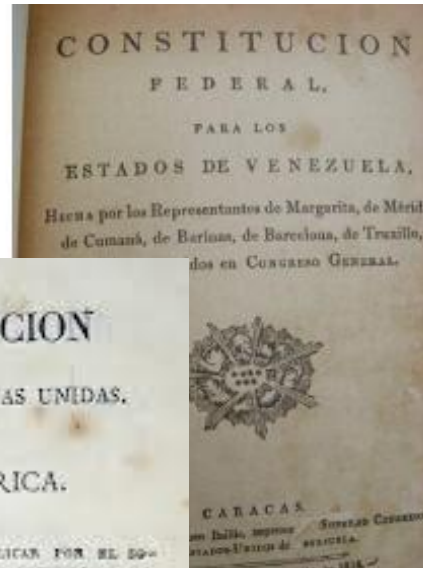
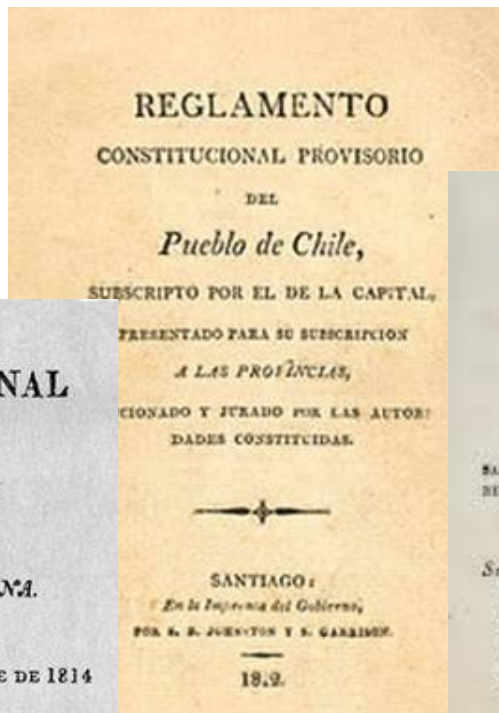
'Crisis of authority' in the Americas

--in other regions colonial authorities maintained control and condemned these *juntas* as illegitimate and seditious.

Conflict quickly broke out between these different groups.

'Crisis of authority' in the Americas

By 1812 many regions had declared outright independence from Spain



'Crisis of authority' in the Americas

The period from 1810 to 1815 was characterised by outright civil war between loyalists and insurgents.

Venezuelan
insurgents confront
the royalist army, in a
19th-century
engraving



The Spanish 'Reconquest'

Spain sent thousands of troops to the Americas in an attempt to quell rebellion. The largest contingent of about 12,000 troops was dispatched in 1814. Nonetheless, most of the royalist troops fighting against the insurgents were locals.



General Pablo Morillo (1775-1837) led the army sent from Spain in 1814 to fight against the insurgents

Spanish South America

Simón Bolívar (1783-1830), a wealthy creole from Venezuela, led insurgent forces in northern South America.



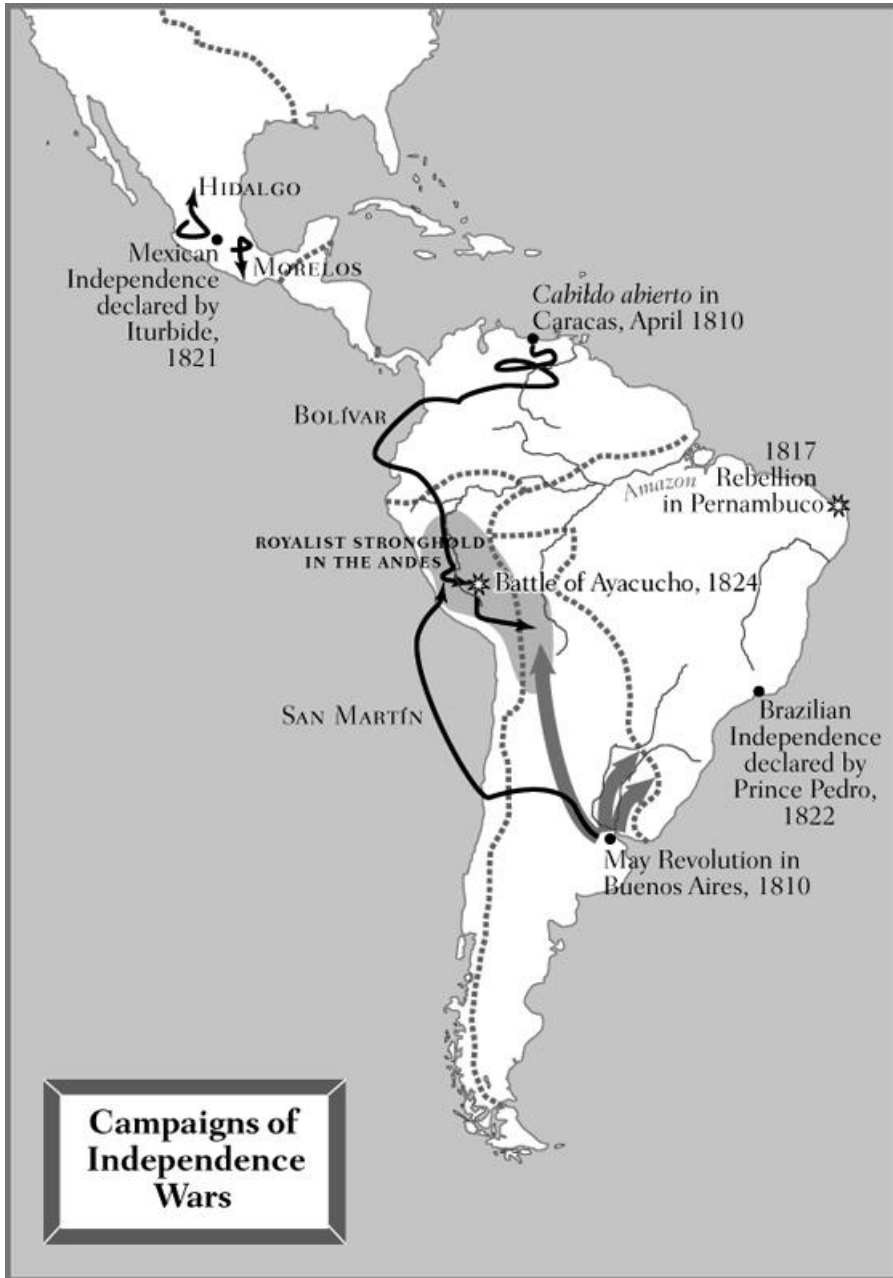
José Gil de Castro, *portrait of Simón Bolívar*

Spanish South America

José de San Martín (1778-1850), a professional soldier, led the insurgent campaign in southern South America



José Gil de Castro, *Portrait of José de San Martín* (1818)



Decolonisation in Spanish South America: a Brief Chronology

Spanish
'reconquest' 1815-
1821

Ultimate military
victory by insurgent
forces

'Last' battle:
Ayacucho (1824)

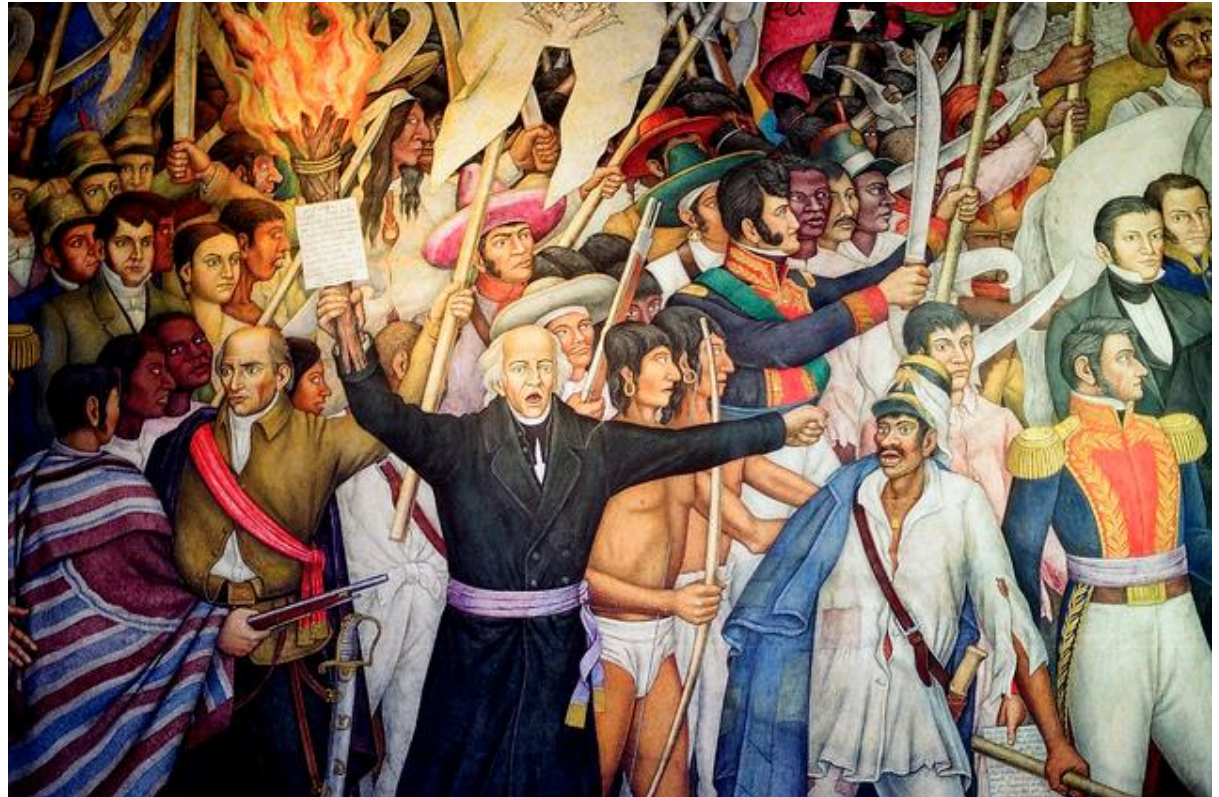


Martín Tovar y Tovar, *The Battle of Ayacucho* (1827)

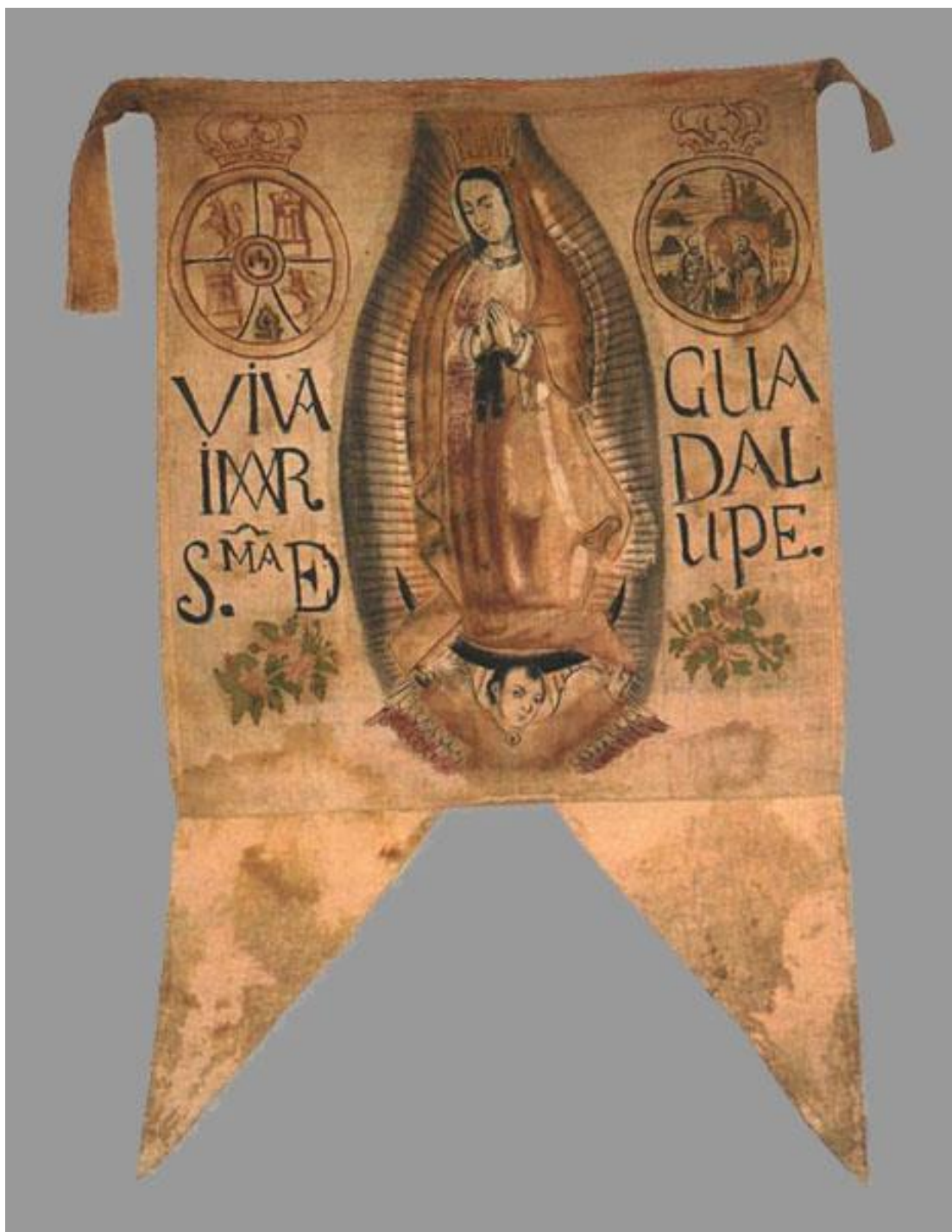
Decolonisation in Mexico

Parish priest
Miguel
Hidalgo
(1753-1811)

‘Grito de
Dolores’ [The
Cry of
Dolores]
(1810)



Juan O’Gorman’s mural of Miguel Hidalgo’s uprising, painted circa 1960.



**Hidalgo's flag,
showing the Virgin
of Guadalupe**

Decolonisation in Mexico

Hidalgo was
executed in 1811.

The rebellion
continued under
other leaders such as
José María Morelos
(1765-1815)



Decolonisation in Mexico

1821 Treaty of Córdoba ended conflict.

Agustín de Iturbide (1783-1824), former royalist officer turned insurgent, became emperor of a newly independent Mexico.

Allegorical depiction of the Coronation of Agustín de Iturbide as Agustín I of Mexico (1822)



Brazil

In 1807 the Portuguese royal family decamped to Brazil.



Henry L'Evêque,
*Departure of H.R.H. the
Prince Regent of Portugal
for the Brazils (1812)*

Brazil

The Portuguese royal family resided in Rio de Janeiro until the defeat of Napoleon in 1815.

The Portuguese resistance government then asked the royal family to return to Portugal.

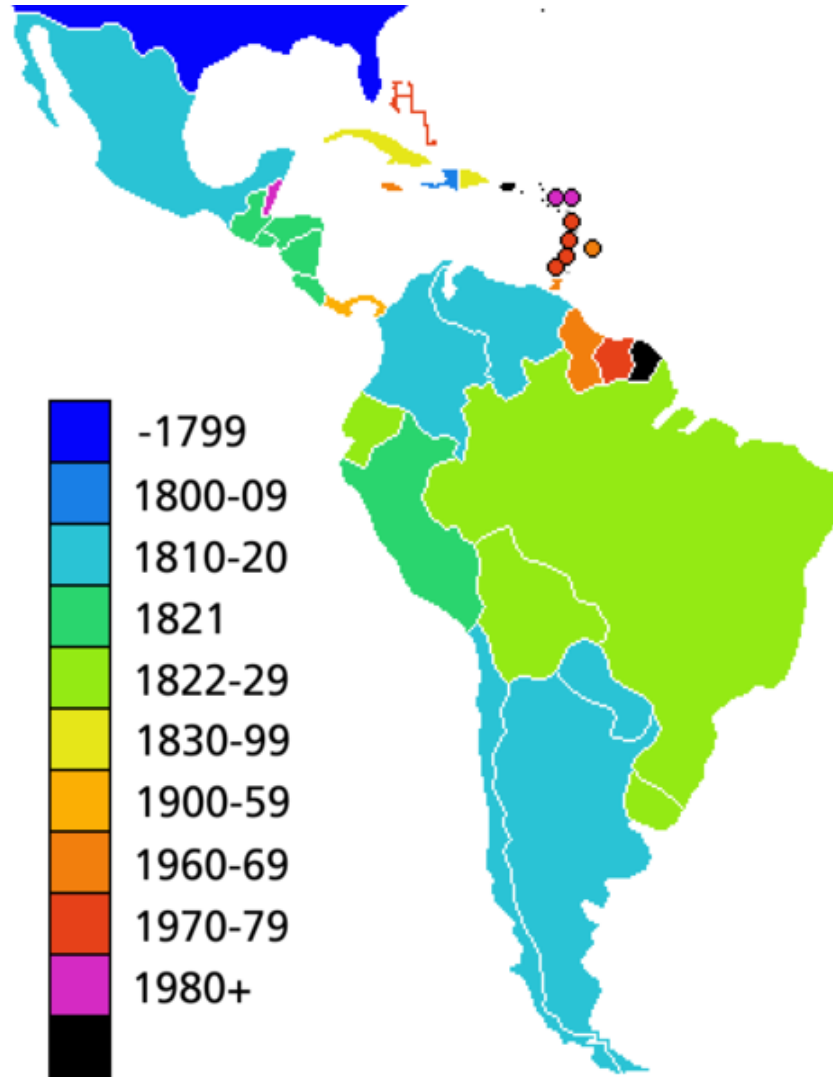
All returned aside from the crown prince Pedro.

The 'Fico' ('I stay.')

1822



Timing of Political Independence

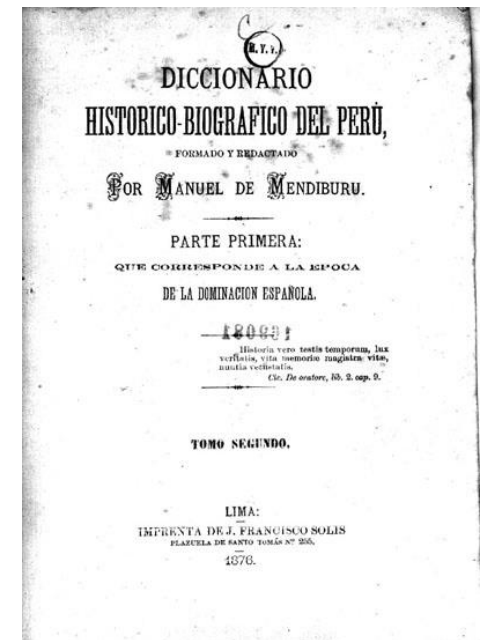


How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

1. Nationalist historiographies focused on creating a pantheon of national heroes and founding fathers, producing grand, romantic narratives, and naturalising the nation state as the unit of analysis.

--written from the 1820s onwards

--search for 'precursors' and 'antecedents'



How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

2. Structural analyses of underlying economic and political forces.

--breakdown of the 'colonial pact' through the Bourbon reforms.

--late colonial riots not seen as precursors but as disputes about the best way to govern.

--less focused on the nation; more interested in class

--written particularly from the 1960s onwards

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

2. **Structural analyses**, continued

--these works often viewed independence not as a triumph of nationalism or decolonialism but as a crisis in the ancien régime caused by the inability of existing economic models to cope with capitalism or modernity.

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

3. Analyses of **political culture**

--focus on the development of modern political structures such as elections and constitutions, and the rise of a public sphere.

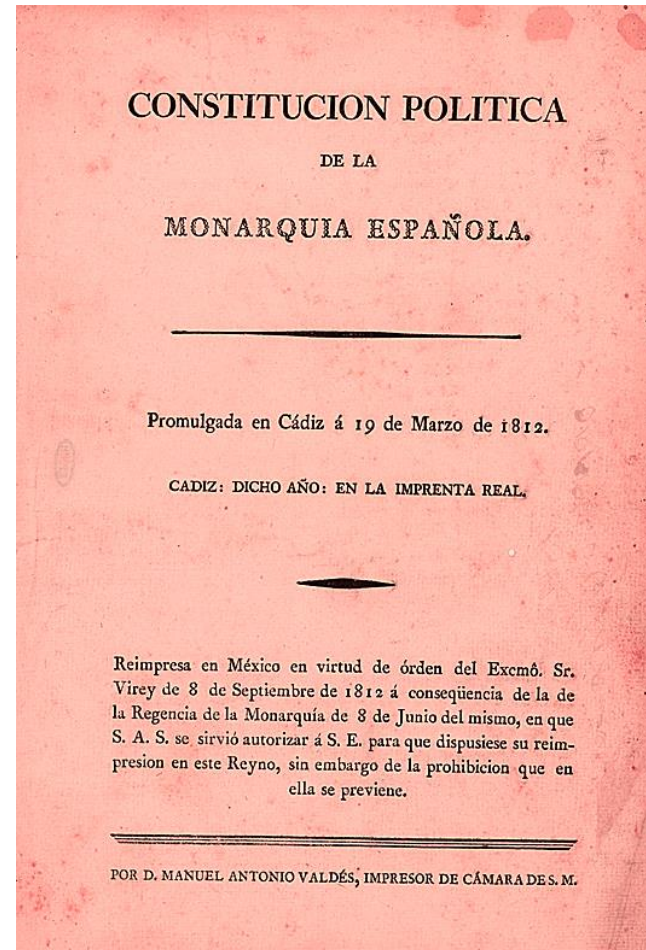
--finds evidence for widespread engagement with these new political practices.

--view Spain and its colonies holistically: all experienced the advent of modernity (i.e. modernity wasn't 'imported' from Europe to Latin America)

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

3. Analyses of **political culture,** continued

--particular
emphasis on the
rise of electoral
democracy during
the Peninsular War.



Constitution of Cádiz (1812)

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

4. **Social histories** of independence

--a 'history from below' focused on the experiences of non-elite groups such as enslaved people or indigenous communities.

--questions whether political independence resulted in significant change to social structures.

--challenges the importance of independence as a watershed (1750-1850)

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

Some areas of current interest:

-- the rise of new political practices such as elections and the extent to which these practices were embraced by non-elites.

--changes in social structures such as those related to gender norms

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

Some current areas of interest, continued:

--the importance of the Atlantic context: the US war of independence, the French Revolution and the Haitian Revolution



Battle of Vertières 18th November 1803 the Haïtiens defeat the French troops

How Have Historians Approached the Wars of Independence?

Some current areas of interest, continued:

--legacies, commemorations, resonances,
memories

State commemoration

1865 Mexican
stamp
commemorating
Miguel Hidalgo



1974 Peruvian stamp
commemorating the battles of
Junín and Ayacucho



Popular memories

Toussaint L'Ouverture



Nicolas-Eustache Maurin
lithograph of Toussaint
L'Ouverture, early 19th century



Jacob Lawrence, from the
Toussaint L'Ouverture Series,
1936-38

popular memories

graffitis in Bogotá (Colombia)



graffiti in Caracas (Venezuela)



political appropriation?



**Venezuelan president
Hugo Chávez in front
of a portrait of Simón
Bolívar**