Revolutions in Latin America (19c - Early 20c)

European Empires: 1660s

Causes of Latin American Revolutions

I. Enlightenment Ideas


2. Give people rights → life, liberty, property!

3. Make fair societies based on reason possible.

Causes of Latin American Revolutions

2. Creole Discontent

- Mestizos hoped to move up in society
- Creoles felt that they built the colonies and therefore wanted to rule them

Influences on Latin American Independence Movements


Inspiration of the American & French Revolutions

Create discontent at being left out of gov't jobs, higher place in society, economic opportunity.
3. Inspiration of American & French Revolutions

Declaration of Independence, 1776

Declaration of the Rights of Man & of the Citizen, 1789

Causes of Latin American Revolutions

- Spain & Portugal's preoccupation with domestic & European affairs (see Napoleonic Wars)
- Creole discontent at being left out of good jobs, higher social status
- Inspiration of the American & French Revolutions

4. Preoccupation of Spain & Portugal In Fighting Napoleonic Wars
Napoleon on the March

Provides a model & a diversion!

Latin American Independence Leaders

Toussaint L’Ouverture Leads a Revolution in Haiti (1804)
Miguel Hidalgo

- The head figure and chief instigator of the Mexican Independence movement
- Priest of the small town of Dolores.
- Promote the idea of an uprising by the native and mixed-blood peasantry against wealthy Spanish landowners and aristocrats.

Simón Bolívar: “El Libertador”

- Creole leader of the revolutions in Venezuela.
- Born into wealth in SA
- Educated in Spain
- Became a military revolutionary leader in fight against Spain
- Ruled in newly independent Peru & later Colombia until his death in 1830

Jose de San Martín

- Argentine general and the prime leader of the successful struggle for independence from Spain of the southern nations of South America.
- Together with Simón Bolívar in the north, San Martín is regarded as one of the Liberators of Spanish South America. He is a national hero of Argentina.
After uniting Venezuela, Columbia, & Ecuador into Gran Columbia, he left to help free the rest of Latin America.

He died a year later, with his goal of uniting all of South America unfulfilled!
Results of the Latin American Revolutions

1. Brazil Freed from Portugal
2. Independence for Spanish & Portuguese Latin America
3. No Unity!
4. Independence Brought More Poverty
5. Left Many Countries in the Control of Caudillos
The Caribbean: An “American Lake”

- US dominated affairs in the Americas.
- 1823 – Monroe Doctrine.
- US takes Texas and Mexican Cession.
- US gains independence for Cuba.
- Roosevelt Corollary – US will police the America.
- US sent troops to Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua.
- US built Panama Canal – “Yankee imperialism.”

Causes of Latin American Revolutions

- Enlightenment Ideas: John Locke, & Jean Rousseau; Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine.
- Spain & Portugal’s preoccupation with domestic & European affairs (see Napoleonic Wars).
- Inspiration of the American & French Revolutions.
- Create discontent at being left out of govt jobs, higher place in society, economic opportunity.