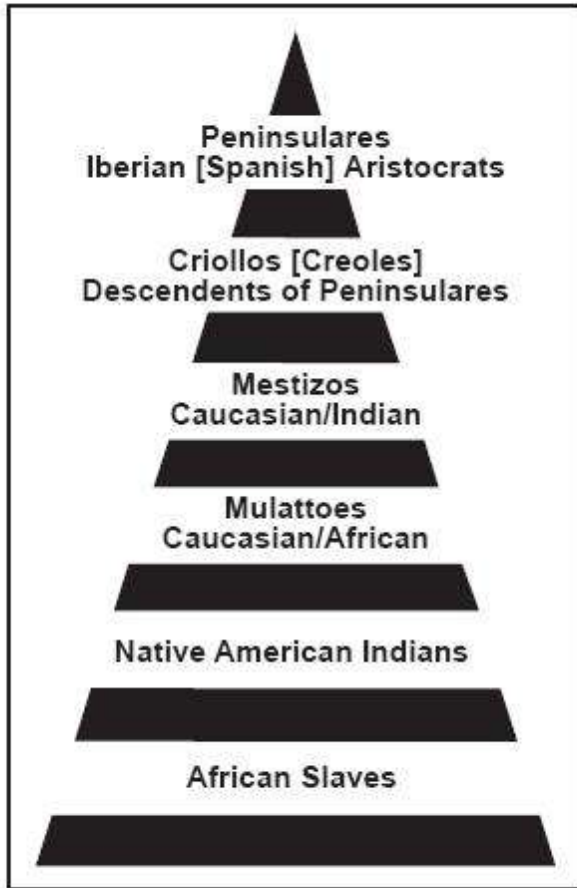


Document 1—Encomienda System

Social Classes in Spanish Colonies



Source: John Osborne et al., *Global Studies*,
N & N Publishing (adapted)

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. Which people had the lowest status under the Encomienda system?
3. Which people had the highest status under the Encomienda system.
4. Only Peninsulares had access to leadership in the colonies. Why do you think that was? (ie. Why would Spain only empower those who were born in Spain to rule?)
5. Only Peninsulares had access to leadership in the colonies. How do you think this made the Creoles feel? Why?

Document 2—Creoles

The reforms imposed by the Spanish Bourbons in the 18th century provoked great instability in the relations between the rulers and their colonial subjects in the Americas. Many Creoles (those of Spanish parentage but who were born in America) felt Bourbon policy to be an unfair attack on their wealth, political power, and social status. Others did not suffer during the second half of the 18th century; indeed, the gradual loosening of trade restrictions actually benefited some Creoles in Venezuela and certain areas that had moved from the periphery to the centre during the late colonial era. However, those profits merely whetted those Creoles' appetites for greater free trade than the Bourbons were willing to grant. More generally, Creoles reacted angrily against the crown's preference for peninsulars in administrative positions and its declining support of the caste system and the Creoles' privileged status within it. After hundreds of years of proven service to Spain, the American-born elites felt that the Bourbons were now treating them like a recently conquered nation.

In cities throughout the region, Creole frustrations increasingly found expression in ideas derived from the Enlightenment. Imperial prohibitions proved unable to stop the flow of potentially subversive English, French, and North American works into the colonies of Latin America. Creole participants in conspiracies against Portugal and Spain at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century showed familiarity with such European Enlightenment thinkers as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The Enlightenment clearly informed the aims of dissident Creoles and inspired some of the later, great leaders of the independence movements across Latin America.

Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. Why were the Creoles in Latin America frustrated with Spain? (use evidence from the text to support your answer)
3. Why do you think the Spanish Empire prohibited the flow of Enlightenment materials to Latin America?
4. Which Enlightenment ideas were the Creoles familiar with? (use evidence from the text to support your answer)

Document 3—American Revolution

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident:

That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world....

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. What are the natural or inalienable rights of all men? (Use evidence from the text to support your answer)
3. What is the ultimate result/purpose of this document?(Use evidence from the text to support your answer)
4. Why do you think the Spanish Empire prohibited documents like this in Latin America?

Document 4—French Revolution

The Oath of the Tennis Court (June 20, 1789)

“The National Assembly, considering that it has been called to establish the constitution of the realm, to bring about the regeneration of public order, and to maintain the true principles of monarchy; nothing may prevent it from continuing its deliberations in any place it is forced to establish itself; and, finally, the National Assembly exists wherever its members are gathered.

Decrees that all members of this assembly immediately take a solemn oath never to separate, and to reassemble wherever circumstances require, until the constitution of the realm is established and fixed upon solid foundations; and that said oath having been sworn, all members and each one individually confirm this unwavering resolution with his signature.

Bailly: I demand that the secretaries and I swear the oath first; which they do immediately according to the following formula:

We swear never to separate ourselves from the National Assembly, and to reassemble wherever circumstances require, until the constitution of the realm is drawn up and fixed upon solid foundations”

Source: Gazette Nationale, ou Le Monituer universal

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. What was the oath sworn by these people? (Use evidence from the text to support your answer)
3. What is the ultimate result/purpose of this document?(Use evidence from the text to support your answer)
4. Why do you think the Spanish Empire prohibited documents like this to Latin America?

Document 5—Haitian Independence

In 1791, a slave revolt erupted on the French colony, and Toussaint-Louverture, a former slave, took control of the rebels. Gifted with natural military genius, Toussaint organized an effective guerrilla war against the island's colonial population. He found able generals in two other former slaves, Dessalines and Henri Christophe, and in 1795 he made peace with revolutionary France following its abolishment of slavery. Toussaint became governor-general of the colony and in 1801 conquered the Spanish portion of island, freeing the slaves there.

In January 1802, an invasion force ordered by Napoleon landed on Saint-Domingue, and after several months of furious fighting, Toussaint agreed to a cease-fire. He retired to his plantation but in 1803 was arrested and taken to a dungeon in the French Alps, where he was tortured and died in April.

Soon after Toussaint's arrest, Napoleon announced his intention to reintroduce slavery on Haiti, and Dessalines led a new revolt against French rule. With the aid of the British, the rebels scored a major victory against the French force there, and on November 9, 1803, colonial authorities surrendered. In 1804, General Dessalines assumed dictatorial power, and Haiti became the second independent nation in the Americas.

Source: History Channel, This Week in History series

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. According to this document, what happened in Haiti in the late 1700s and early 1800s?
3. Why do you think the Spanish Empire tried to keep news of this event from reaching its colonies in Latin America?
4. What advantages and/or disadvantages would there be to fighting an enemy from across the sea?

Document 6—King of Spain

Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808 was the event that finally triggered the struggle for Latin America's independence from Spain. Napoleon invited Charles IV, the king of Spain, and his son and heir to the throne, Ferdinand, to Bayonne, France. Once there, Napoleon had them detained, and he delivered the crown of Spain to his own brother, Joseph. The people of Spain were not happy about this, and, starting in Madrid, they rose up in rebellion against the French troops. Juntas sprang up in various towns, and in the absence of the desired monarch, these councils assumed provisional sovereignty, eventually placing them under the authority of a Supreme Junta at Seville.

The installation of Joseph Bonaparte as king of Spain also produced crisis in the Americas. The Spanish colonies there were, strictly speaking, kingdoms in their own right, constitutionally distinct from Spain but sharing a common monarch. When the monarchy in Spain suddenly lost its legitimacy when Bonaparte took over, it became unclear who had authority over the Americas. One option was for the creoles to set up juntas in the same manner as in Spain and assume provisional sovereignty. This would be the first time in history the creoles could legitimately exercise power in America without either deferring to a viceroy or being disloyal to the king. This option was favored by the creoles who wanted to eventually move towards autonomy from Spain, but there were many creoles that would have preferred to stay loyal to the Spanish throne.

As the fighting continued in the Iberian peninsula, the course to be taken by the creoles in Spanish America remained unclear. Then in 1810, as Spanish resistance to Napoleon was about to collapse completely, creole patriots in Venezuela, New Granada, Argentina, and Chile rebelled and formed juntas similar to those formed in Spain.

Source: Latin American Studies summary, George Mason University

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. Why were Creoles in America put into crisis by the installation of Joseph Bonaparte as king of Spain? (Use evidence from the text to support your answer)
3. Why do you think the Creoles in America chose to rebel just when the Spanish rebellion/resistance was crumbling?
4. How do you think the Creoles responded to the restoration of the Spanish throne after the Congress of Vienna? (ie. Do you think they gave back the power to the mother country?)

Document 7-Social Unrest in the Americas

[I]f the Creoles had one eye on their masters, they kept the other on their servants. The Creoles were intensely aware of social pressure from below, and they strove to keep the coloured people at a distance...white superiority was not unchallenged; beyond it defenses swarmed Indians, mestizos, free blacks, mulattos and slaves...

Traditionally the elite looked to Spain to defend them...[But] when the monarchy collapsed in 1808, the Creoles could not allow the political vacuum to remain unfilled, their lives and property unprotected. They had to move quickly to anticipate popular rebellion, convinced that if they did not seize the opportunity, more dangerous forces would do so.

Source: Leslie Betheli, *The Independence of Latin America* 1987

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. According to this document, were the lower classes in Latin America content to let the Europeans rule? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
3. How do think this kind of pressure affected the kind of reforms Creoles would possibly make? (ie. Would they support radical liberal ideals like democracy and equality for all?) Explain.

Document 8-Economic stresses in the Americas

Spanish restrictions on travel and commerce sealed America off from the rest of the world [limiting] our basic personal and property rights... We in America are perhaps the first to be forced by our own government to sell our products at artificially low prices and buy what we need at artificially high prices. This is the result of the Spanish commercial monopoly system, combined with taxes and official fees. And because the official monopoly on transatlantic trade would naturally lead us to produce more in America, the government has been careful to place limitations on what we can legally produce...

..Spain could have left us the administration of our own affairs, one would think. Americanos, being those most concerned by affairs of America, logically ought to fill the public offices of their own country for the benefit of all concerned. But that has been far from the case.

Source: Juan Pablo Viscardo, An Open Letter to America, written in 1791 and published in Latin America in 1801.

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. What economic system is being described in this document? Support your answer with at least 3 pieces of evidence.
3. According to this author, who should be in charge of making economic decisions for the American colonies and why?
4. How do you think these issues contributed to the desire for independence from Spain? (min. 3 reasons)

Document 9—Simon Bolivar

We are not Europeans; we are not Indians; we are but a mixed species of aborigines and Spaniards. Americans by birth and Europeans by law, we find ourselves engaged in a dual conflict: We are disputing with the natives for titles of ownership, and at the same time we are struggling to maintain ourselves in the country that gave us birth against the opposition of the invaders. Thus our position is most extraordinary and complicated.

Source: Simon Bolivar, February 15, 1819 at the Congress of Angostura

1. What kind of document is this, primary or secondary? How do you know?
2. What social class is Bolivar addressing in this speech? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. How do you think this issue contributed to a desire for independence from Spain? (min 3 reasons)