Venezuelan War for Independence

By Caiden Brady and Jaisse Swan
Causes

Political, Economic, Social, Religious, and Enlightenment
Revolutionary leaders were able to gain control of Venezuela's government with little difficulty or conflict because of how disorganized the Spanish government was.

In 1808, when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain and put his brother Joseph as ruler. Venezuela didn’t know how to react.
- Revolutionary leaders were able to gain control of Venezuela's government with little difficulty or conflict because of how disorganized the Spanish government was like Francisco Miranda.

- Creoles were also fed up with how disorganized and corrupt the government was. Royal Bureaucrats would monopolize the top governing posts and Spanish would dominate the top positions in the church offices.

- In 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain and inserted his brother Joseph as king. Venezuela was majority still loyal to King Ferdinand, and didn’t know how to react to the new ruler. Some went for limited independence where they would take care of their own affairs until Ferdinand would resume his throne. In January 1809, a representative of Joseph’s government arrived in Caracas, demanding that taxes continued to be paid and that Venezuela would recognize Joseph as their monarch. Carcas, obviously exploded, people in the street were shouting their loyalty to Ferdinand. A ruling junta was declared and the Captain-General of Venezuela (Juan de las Casas) was deposed. Things began simmering down and Las Casas established control when the news reached Carcass that the loyalist Spanish government was created in Seville in opposition to Napoleon. On April 19, 1810, but when the news arrived to Carcass that the government had been crushed by Napoleon.
The city was once again, in chaos. Patriots who wanted independence and loyalists who were loyal to Fernadid both agreed that they would not tolerate French rule. Creole patriots confronted the new Captain-General Vicente Emparan and demanded self-rule. He was peeled from authority and sent back to Spain. A patriot named Jose Felix Ribas, rode through Caracas, telling Creole leaders to meet in the council chambers. They agreed on Provisional independence from Spain: they were basically rebelling against Joseph and not the Spanish crown, and would control their own affairs until Ferdinand was restored. All over Venezuela, cities settled on either to follow Carcass or not. Many cities chose to remain under Spanish rule. This led to a civil war in Venezuela. Simultaneously, exiled patriot Francisco de Miranda returned, and young Simon Bolivar, who favored full independence, gained influence.
Economic

- **Mercantilism**
  - Spain controlled the coffee and cocoa trade of Venezuela. Making them dislike the Spanish government which limited them from gaining access to the best markets to sell crops.

- **Corrupted Trade**
  - The peninsulares, ordered by Spain, controlled all aspects of money flow and trade in Venezuela.

- **High Taxes**
Economic Causes Script

In the first two and half of centuries of colonial rule, Venezuela lacked political unity because they had no economical importance. But by the late 16th century, Agriculture became Venezuela’s chief economic activity. The plentiful farmlands of the Andean region, the valley surrounding Caracas, and the western llanos of Venezuela agriculturally self-sufficient and also provided an oversupply of a number of products for exportation. Wheat, tobacco, and leather were some of the early products exported from colonial Venezuela. However, the Spanish crown showed very little interest in Venezuela’s agriculture. They were obsessed with deriving precious metals from other territories to finance wars. Venezuela took the opportunity to secretly sell the bulk of the excess surplus agricultural goods to French, British, and Dutch traders, who under the Spanish crown’s medieval notions of commerce based on bureaucratic control and mercantilism, were identified as smugglers. In the 1620s until the 1820s, Cocoa became Venezuela’s leading export. It’s sizable profit appealed to, for the first time, Spaniards and poor Canary islanders. Cocoa also caused a great demand for African slaves. Huge revenue obtained by the triangular trade of African slaves for Venezuelan cocoa made the Venezuelan coast a routined port for Dutch and British merchants.
In 1728, Venezuela gave exclusive rights to a Basque corporation called the Caracas Company, so they eliminate illegal intercolonial trade. Venezuela’s cocoa growers became dissatisfied. The Basque monopoly paid them significantly lower. This uneasiness was evidenced in the growing number of disputes between Basque and the farmers and low-class Venezuelans. In 1749, this erupted in a rebellion led by Juan Francisco de Leon. Rebellion was encouraged quietly by the Elite in Caracas. Troops from Santo Domingo and Spain suppressed the revolt.

Another thing is how Spain is controlling the economy of Venezuela. The peninsulares, ordered by Spain, controlled all aspects of money flow and trade in Venezuela and high-taxes.
“Do you wish to know what our future was? We were mere consumers, confined to the cultivation of indigo, grain, coffee, sugar, cacao, and bottom; raising cattle on the empty plains; hunting wild game in the wilderness; mining in the earth to produce gold for the insatiable greed of Spain.”
~Simon Bolívar
The unequal distribution of power in the social hierarchy

- Creoles felt they were the underdogs. The Peninsulares had the right to rule by blood. They had better government positions and top positions on the boards of trade. Although the Creoles resented the Peninsulares, they did not empathize with the lower class. Instead, they remained cautiously aware of the trouble from the lower class and employed a variety of means to keep them at a safe distance.
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Reforms in the eighteenth century affected race relations by increasing the social mobility of the lower-class. This time, Pardos (people of mixed origin) were allowed to join the militia, get an education, purchase legal certification of their “whiteness”, hold public office, and enter priesthood. These adjustments eliminated most of the distinctions that set them apart. Already feeling tenuous from the Peninsulares, the Creoles felt threatened from the lower-class. Most Venezuelan Creoles refused the social policy of the Bourbons and established themselves in the forefront of the revolution.
All of Venezuela before the colonial period was Roman Catholicism. The church has never been as prominent in Venezuela as Colombia. Although, due to colonization by Spain, Christianity was now the predominant religion. However, in the time of the Venezuelan war of independence, protestants were the one who were forced out of Venezuela from Spain.
Influencement of Enlightenment Ideas

Simon Bolivar received an education in Europe, thus was influenced by Enlightenment ideals, especially by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In 1807, he went back to Venezuela with the ideas of self-governance and citizen rights. In the Government, he supported the idea of separation of powers. He agreed with equal-rights and took steps to end slavery in Gran Columbia.

Francisco de Miranda got ideas from the European enlightenment. He battled alongside with George Washington for American independence and fought along with Napoleon during the French Revolution. He brought these ideas to Venezuela where he designed the first flag of the self-proclaimed independent Republic of Venezuela.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, some Venezuelans began to grow resistant to Spain’s control. The neglect of their control contributed to Venezuelan intellectuals’ increased their zest for learning. Venezuela had more “external sources” than any other Spanish-americans colonies, so the creoles elites had access to a solid education. They began learning about their rights. So in 1797, Venezuelans Creoles began the first organized conspiracy. It was directly inspired by the French Revolution. It failed but it would inspire the first Latin American Revolution.
1810-1815

○ Revolutionary Leader Francisco Miranda joins the ruling Junta
  □ Francisco Miranda was a revolutionary leader who had served under George Washington and acted as a general in the french revolution. He was invited to take charge of the ruling junta in venezuela. The Junta was the committee that was formed after revolutionary leaders had taken control of the colony.

○ Declaration of independence (1811) with Miranda declared as president
  □ Drafted constitution
    ○ “Venezuela declared Independence on July 5, 1811 with Francisco de Miranda as president. The new nation is now based on equality and freedom of expression. Seven out of ten provinces of Captaincy General of Venezuela were independent from Spanish rule while Maracaibo Province, Coro Province, and Guayana Provinie opted to stay under the Spanish rule.
  □ Miranda signed armistice with Spain
    ○ During Miranda's Presidency he signed an Armistice with Spain, agreeing to stop fighting for a short period of time. This angered many revolutionary leaders and Miranda lost some of his support.

Francisco Miranda
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_de_Miranda
1810-1815

- Caracas Earthquake (1812)
  - Shortly after Venezuela a first declaration of independence and Miranda's presidency Venezuela was struck by a massive earthquake. This reaffirmed many people's fear of separating with Spain. Viewing the earthquake as a sort of divine punishment.

- Battle of San Mateo (1812)
  - The Battle of San Mateo followed these events. It took place on July 25 in 1812. Miranda surrendered under the conditions of a ceasefire. It was ignored and many revolutionary supporters were killed and Miranda was imprisoned.
  - Francisco’s imprisonment, (dies in Prison in 1816)
    - He would be transported to several prisons before his eventual death in 1816.

- Simon Bolivar appointed leader of Venezuelan armed forces following Miranda’s absence

- Bolivar’s Military Campaigns
  - Bolivar led a total of seven military campaigns against the loyalist and spanish forces in Venezuela in the following years, all of which were successful. This includes the Battle of Betioca, Battle of Caracha, the battle of Niquitas, Battle of Varmas, Battle of Barquisimeto, Siege of San Mateo, Battle of Carabobo. The leader of the spanish loyalist had been no major threat to Bolivar and his forces. However a band of cowboys called the llaneros who had sided with the loyalists were a very powerful opposing force. Bolivar's army would see its first major loss in the Battle of La Puerta against the Laneros.
1810-1815

○ Spanish General Pablo Morillo reconquest of Venezuela
  ○ General Pablo Morillo had been sent by King Ferdinand VII to reconquer Gran Colombia.

□ Siege of Cartagena (1815)
  ○ Morillo led the siege of Cartagena in 1815 against Bolivar. This followed the string of three Patriot losses that began with the battle of La Puerta. This forced Bolivar and his remaining forces into excel in Jamaica.

□ Bolivar’s Capture and Banishment to Jamaica
  ○ Although Bolivar exile and banishment was short lived during this time he wrote his Famous “Letters from Jamaica”. In which he detailed his thoughts and opinions on the current political state of Venezuela in his absence.
By 1816 Loyalists and the Spanish had gained control of Venezuela

Final battle, Battle of Puente (1816)

Simon Bolivar returns to Venezuela (1817)

Gained support from former loyalist elites and cowboy group called Llaneros

Bolivar knew that the key of winning the War of Liberation was to gain support from the plains. The Llaneros were listed by toying with their hate of the Creoles and the independence movement. He offered Freedom of Movement and food.

Received aid from new Haitian government, a legion of the British army, and a group of Irish mercenaries

Bolivar received aid from the Haitian Government under Alexander Petition for military campaigns. He gave him 4,000 muskets, 15,000 pounds of flints, powder, and a printing press and in return, Bolivar would free South American slaves. Bolivar’s agent Luis Lopez Mendez in May 1817 recruited British retired or active soldiers. The soldiers were offered equivalent pay to the British Army and promotion of one rank above where they were in the army. In 1819, Gran Colombia was ready for a revolution. One problem is they had to cross the flooded plains. Many Irish and British mercenaries suffered from altitude sickness. The Irish mercenaries saw military action as legionnaires in Simon’s Bolivar army and fought in Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia.
1816-1823

- Republic of Gran Colombia declared again (1819)
  - Bolivar as President

  Gran Colombia was ready for the revolution. The Spanish were deeply resented by the people. For many years, they were controlling men into the army, extracting "loans" from the wealthy Creoles, worried they might revolt. On May 23, Bolivar called a meeting in a ruined hut in the abandoned village of Setenta. Bolivia intended to cross the flooded plains and then cross the Andes at the Paramo de Pisba pass. On July 6, Whoever survived the journey, marched into the village of Socha, barefooted and half-naked. Bolivar recruited more volunteers and made a plan to invade Bogota. On August 7, The Battle of Boyaca began. The battle only lasted two hours: at least 200 royalists were murdered and 1,600 were captured, including General Barreiro. New Granda was finally free with money left in the treasury. Bolivar was the president from 1819 to 1823.

- 2nd Battle of Carabobo (1821)
  - Huge Patriot Victory

  On June 24, 1821, The Battle of Carabobo was a Patriots win on the plains to West of Caracas. It virtually freed Venezuela from Spanish control. Following the order of the liberal government in Spain, General Pablo Morillo signed an armistice with Bolivar. On November 20, the Patriots broke the armistice by moving against Garrison on Lake Maracaibo. At Carabobo, Bolivar led about 6,500 troops, along with Volunteers in the British Isles, llaneros, British, and Irish volunteers.
1816-1823

- **Loyalist forces surrender (1823)**
  With the central Royalist force crushed in Venezuela, Independence was ensured. On July 24, 1823, the Battle of Lake Maracaibo and in November 1823 Jose Antonio Paez settled in Puerto Cabello on October 9, 1823 where the last royalist surrendered.

- **The Monroe Doctrine (1823)**
  The Monroe Doctrine was declared on December 23, 1823 by James Monroe. The Doctrine was created because the United States and Britain were concerned that Spain would attempt to restore their Latin American colonies. The United States was also concerned that Russia yearning to colonize U.S Northwest coast territories. The British Minister, George Canning, proposed that they did a joint U.S-Britain that prevents/forbid colonizing in Latin America. This is important because it made sure that the European powers won’t colonize additional territories. In return, the United States wouldn’t interfere in the colonial conflicts of Europe.
1824-1935

- Bolivar leads army into Peru
  - Upper Peru (Modern Bolivia) is freed from Spanish Rule (1825)
    - The following year after the Battle of Carabobo. Bolivar army advanced south to liberate upper Peru from Spain. General Sucre became president. Venezuela suffered with the most casualties during the wars than any other Latin American country because the battles were on their own soil.
- Venezuela Breaks away from Gran Colombia (1829)
  - Bolivar’s absence in Gran Colombia was detrimental to Gran Columbia and eventually due to a lack of stability Venezuela would break away in 1829. Bolivar would die a year later.
- Bolivar Dies (1830)
- Many other areas of Gran Colombia separate in his absence.

Map of Gran Colombia

https://www.britannica.com/place/Colombia/Revolution-and-independence
1824-1935

- Period Of Caudillo Rule (1830-1935)
- Venezuela left in charge to Jose Antonio Paez (Constitutional Term)

- Economic and political impact
  - Jose Antonio Paez was conservative dictator who used his military power to have great influence in Venezuela politics from 1830-1840. Paez had worked to lead the initial separation movement from Grand Columbia and called a constitutional convention for Venezuela. Paez allied himself with large landholders and merchants while also implementing a number of policies. Such as property requirements for voting, support for slavery, freedom of trade, and political punishment. Despite Paez’s more questionable actions Venezuela experienced economic growth and political stability compared to the years that followed.
Jose Tadeo Monagas was introduced into the presidency following Paez. Mongas ran as a conservative but introduced many liberal policies. He outlawed slavery, capital punishments, and limited interest rates. Despite this Mongas lead as a dictator and allowed his brother the position as president which they shared. During his period of rule, the economy experienced massive decline and Mongas was eventually kicked out of office after trying to implement a new constitution that would extend the length of the presidency.

Unsuccessful Overthrow of Monagas lead by Paez

In 1848-1849 Paez tried to lead a rebellion against Mongas however it was unsuccessful and Paez would be exiled.

Conservative Vs. Liberal conflict

Period of Civil War

In the 1850s there was a period of civil war between the liberal and Conservatives.
This image depicts Jose Antonio Paez leading his troops against the Spanish cavalry in the Battle of Las Queseras. We see Paez rallying the llaneros, a group of local cowboys to fight the oncoming army. The Battle of Las Queseras was a notable victory for the Patriots as Paez was significantly outnumbered. It is said that while fleeing the incoming Spanish forces Paez ordered his troops to turn around and attack the Spanish, resulting in a huge casualty on the loyalist side with little fatality for the patriots. The time of Paez’s final term as president and the beginning of Michelena’s life lineup, making Paez an no doubt substance historical figure in his life.
# Travel Brochure

## Why should you move to Venezuela?

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<th>- Free Trade</th>
<th>- abolished ecclesiastical privilege and cut off state subsidies to the Roman Catholic church</th>
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<td>- Developed modern government bureaucracy</td>
<td>- legalized civil marriage</td>
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<td>- nationwide system of public primary education and promoted states support for secondary and higher education.</td>
<td>- National Pantheon, the Capitol, and the Municipal</td>
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<td>- More modern infrastructures for communication and transportation- roads, railroads, port facilities, and telegraph lines which provided vital support for the expanding export of agriculture.</td>
<td>- Proclaimed Religious liberty</td>
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