Latin American Independence
In 1781 Tupac Amaru laid siege to Cuzco. This mestizo chief, a direct descendant of the Inca emperors, headed the broadest of messianic revolutionary movements. The rebellion broke out in Tinta province, which had been almost depopulated by enforced service in the Cerro Rico mines. Mounted on his white horse, Tupac Amaru entered the plaza of Tungasuca and announced to the sound of drums and pututus that he had condemned the royal Corregidor Antonio Juan de Arriaga to the gallows and put an end to the Potosí mita. A few days later Tupac issued a decree liberating the slaves. He abolished all taxes and forced labor in all forms. The Indians rallied by the thousands to the forces of the “father of all the poor and all the wretched and helpless.” He moved against Cuzco at the head of his guerilleros, promising them that all who died while under his orders in this war would return to life to enjoy the happiness and wealth the invaders had wrested from them. Victories and defeats followed; in the end, betrayed and captured by one of his own chiefs, Tupac was handed over in chains to the royalists. The Examiner Areche entered his cell to demand, in exchange for promises, the names of his rebel accomplices. Tupac Amaru replied scornfully, “There are no accomplices here other than you and I. You as oppressor, I as liberator deserve to die.” Pg 44-45

The plunder continued down the years and in 1969, when agrarian reform was announced in Peru, reports still appeared in the press of Indians from the broken mountain communities coming with flags unfurled to invade lands that had been robbed them or their ancestors, and of the army driving them away with bullets. Nearly two centuries had to pass after Tupac Amaru’s before the nationalist general Juan Velasco Alvarado would take up and apply Tupac’s resounding, never forgotten words: “Campesino! Your poverty shall no longer feed the master!” pg 45

Eduardo Galeano--
--Open Veins in Latin America--
Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla led the Mexican independence movement against Spanish rule in 1810 and unleashed a torrent of political passions that rocked Mexico for the first sixty years of its history as a nation. Born in May 1753 in Guanajuato, Hidalgo entered the priesthood in 1779, eventually pasturing a parish in Dolores. For the next quarter of a century, he performed his duties as a spiritual shepherd, but also read texts on political theory.

In 1808 Hidalgo became a leader of an underground independence movement centered around literary clubs where the talk centered on emerging ideas on nationalism and political liberty. When authorities moved to arrest him, he gathered together his followers and his parishioners and issued the “Grito de Dolores” on September 16, 1810, a de facto declaration of independence. He quickly gathered an insurgent army that rampaged through central Mexico. Almost immediately the violence turned on issues of race, and his high-minded revolution turned bloody and excessive.

Spanish troops checked Hidalgo’s forces near Mexico City ending two months of lurid battles and massacres. For the next nine weeks Royalist forces hounded the Mexican insurgents and eventually scattered the rebels. Hidalgo became a fugitive and headed for the northern frontera, apparently hoping to escape into the United States or to stage a counter-attack from a remote base. Spanish troops intercepted him and Catholic authorities happily stripped him of his ecclesiastical protections.

Hidalgo died before a firing squad in Chihuahua in the summer of 1811 but the forces he had released would rage Mexico for decades to come. Mexico gained its independence in 1821.

http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/biographies/hidalgo_costilla.html
“Lately, though, the bishop had been concerned to hear that Hidalgo was under investigation by the Holy Inquisition. The investigation stemmed from indiscreet remarks made at a gathering in 1800. Hidalgo had supposedly declared disbelief in Christ’s virgin birth. Hidalgo’s educational views, too, were branded unorthodox—influenced by the French thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Hidalgo had supposedly declared himself in favour of “French liberty.” In fact, his house in the parish of San Felipe had acquired the nickname “Little France” because, according to witnesses, Hidalgo Gathered all sorts of people there in a spirit of equality, without due attention to caste distinctions or social hierarchies. Hidalgo’s legendary parties at Little France included dancing, theatricals, and card playing, as well as serious discussion. Hidalgo made fun of church rituals and incense, discovered the inquisitors. His assistant, another French-reading radical priest who often substituted for Hidalgo at mass, had to be alert for his superior’s practical jokes. On more than one occasion, when the faithful were already kneeling; the assistant found out that Hidalgo had hidden the communion wafers. In addition, Hidalgo declared fornication to be not so bad, and he put that conviction into practice. Over the years, he lived with several women who bore him children. Josefa Quintanilla, one of these women, commonly appeared with leading roles in the theatricals that Hidalgo liked to stage at his house from time to time.”

from: Americanos: Latin America’s struggle for independence by John Charles Chasteen
After the excommunication and decapitation of Father Miguel Hidalgo on July 30, 1811, Father José María Morelos took over the leadership of the movement of Independence. In doing so, he rose from being an obscure village priest in Michoacán to the figure that towered over the insurgent leadership from 1811 to 1815. As the leading insurgente commander, he dealt the Spanish Royalist army a series of defeats in 1812 and 1813, from Orizaba in the east and Oaxaca in south to Acapulco on the Pacific coast. Under his military leadership, the insurgent leadership was optimistic that it was only a matter of time before all of Mexico would be free of Spanish rule.

To prepare for that moment, insurgent delegates met in September 1813 to draft a Constitution for the future government of an independent Mexico. This gathering of insurgents was known as the National Constituent Congress of Chilpancingo, but also as the Congress of Anáhuac, the ancient name of the Valley of Mexico. More than anyone Father Morelos influenced the early course of this gathering that declared Mexico independent from Spain. A mestizo-mulatto and son of a carpenter, he represented the most radical wing of the insurgent leadership. His political ideas and vision of the future of Mexico are to be found in “Sentimientos de la Nación,” a document containing twenty-five points that Congress needed to entertain in the drafting of the constitution. Presented on September 13, this document highlights Morelos’ radical emancipatory views, a fusion of popular Catholicism, egalitarian republicanism, and indigenismo. Up to this time “Sentimientos de la Nación” represented the most radical proposal for nationhood in the Western Hemisphere (with the exception of Haiti).

Father Morelos inaugurated the Congress of Anáhuac with an opening speech that outlined the justification for Mexico’s Independence:

“The spirit of Moctezuma, Cacamatzin, Cuauhtémoc, Xicontecate, and Calzontzin take pride in this August assembly, and celebrate this happy moment in which your sons have congregated to avenge your insults. After August 12, 1521 came September 8, 1813. The first date tightened the chains of slavery of México-Tenochtitlan; the second one broke them forever in the town of Chilpancingo. We are therefore going to restore the Mexican empire and improve the government… we are going to be free and independent.”
Mexico first president an emporer?

ITURBIDE, AGUSTÍN DE (1783–1824). Agustín de Iturbide, emperor of Mexico from May 1822 to March 1823, was born on September 27, 1783, at Valladolid (present Morelia, Michoacán), Mexico. He joined the provincial regiment of his native city in 1797. In 1810 he refused a post in Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla's revolutionary forces and joined the Royalists. Because of his part in the defeat of the revolutionaries in the battle of Valladolid in December 1813, he was given command of the military district of Guanajuato and Michoacán, but in 1816 charges of extortion and violence led to his recall. In 1820 Iturbide associated himself with a revolutionary movement against the liberal Spanish Constitution of 1812 and issued the Plan de Iguala for a Mexican empire on February 24, 1821. After the treaty of Córdoba gave Mexico her independence, Iturbide entered Mexico City in September 1821 and on May 19, 1822, was proclaimed Agustín I, emperor of Mexico. His regime proved arbitrary and extravagant, and in December 1822 Antonio López de Santa Anna led a revolt against him. On January 4, 1823, Iturbide signed the first permit for the settlement of Anglo-Americans in Texas for Stephen F. Austin's colony. He abdicated on March 19, 1823, and on May 11 sailed for Italy. His plan for the Austin colony, however, was permitted to continue with little change. Ignorant of a decree of death awaiting his reappearance in Mexico, Iturbide sailed from Europe on May 11, 1824, and landed at Sota la Marina on July 15. He was recognized, captured, and shot at Padilla, Tamaulipas, on July 19. In 1838 his remains were moved to Mexico City, where they are enshrined in the national cathedral.

https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/f010
At the turn of the century America was seething, and he was its crucible. The America of those days still stirs and rears its head, a huge larval creatures like worms under the bark of old roots. From France and North America, under the priests cassocks and in the minds of worthy travelers, the revolutionary message has been coming to revive the discontent of the educated and well-bred Creole, governed from across the seas by the law of tribute and the gallows. In the measure that the rebellion grew in high places, leavened the rebellious and in a certain sense democratic unrest of the second-born disinherited Spaniards, the Argentine guaco, the Chilean roto, the Peruvian cholo, and the Venezuelan llanero—all were touched where their common affections lay. In the muffled upheaval, their defenseless faces furrowed by tears, bands of Indians wandered through the forests, taking comfort in pillage, like tongues of flames licking at some colossal funeral pyre. American independence came bleeding from the past century; our America springs neither from Rousseau nor Washington, but from itself! Thus, in the sultry and fragrant nights of his manorial garden at San Jacinto, or along the banks of the mirrored waters of the Arauco where he may have guided the tiny feet of his wife who died in her prime, Bolivar would see, with fist clenched against his bosom, the specters come and go through the air, and they can find no rest until their task is finished! In the dusk at Mount Avila, he must have seen the bloody retinue.
Enshrined And Oft-Invoked, Simon Bolivar Lives On
Simon Bolivar is often called the George Washington of Venezuela — and of Bolivia, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador and Peru. Washington threw colonialists out of one country; Bolivar liberated six from Spanish rule. The latter was also considered an artful military strategist with a vision of history and a passion for freedom.

Marie Arana has written a biography of the warrior statesman whose name is often invoked, but whose history is often little understood. It’s called Bolivar: American Liberator. Arana is also a columnist for The Washington Post, as well as a novelist and author of her own memoir. She joins NPR’s Scott Simon to discuss Bolivar’s legacy.

Interview Highlights

On how Bolivar came to be known as El Libertador, or “The Liberator”

“It happened almost exactly 200 years ago. The revolution had failed once. He decided, ‘OK, I can’t free my own country [Venezuela], but I’ll go and try to free Colombia and then come back into Venezuela,’ which is exactly what he did. So he came in and the moment he entered with his liberating forces — which were largely Colombian soldiers — he was proclaimed ‘The Liberator.’ And he routed all the Spaniards before him, all the way to Caracas. And so, with a battalion of hundreds to go up against thousands ... to manage to really strike fear into the heart of the Spanish military machine was quite an accomplishment at the time.”

On the biggest difference between Bolivar and the American Founding Fathers: his belief that you couldn’t fight a revolution for freedom if you kept slavery

“Bolivar really admired the American Revolution, the American will to independence. But when he traveled to the United States, he landed in Charleston, [S.C.,] which was the largest slave market going in the United States. And this irked Bolivar and he understood at that time when he went back that that was something that made his country and his continent very, very different from the United States. And though he loved George Washington — and by the way, George Washington loved him — he couldn’t do things the same way.”

On why Bolivar’s vision of a Gran Colombia — a state covering much of modern Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, northern Peru and northwest Brazil — didn’t materialize

“Bolivar was very good at making war and moving through liberating the countries. But what happened, of course, whenever he left one country to go to the next, people who were left in place to rule, they wanted to have their own little fiefdom. So it was very hard for him to get that notion of unity going, even though he knew — and he was very, very advanced for his time — if these countries could unify, they could be far more powerful in the world.”

On the resuscitation of Bolivar’s reputation and legacy

“It took more than a dozen years [after Bolivar’s death] for Venezuela to realize that it had really lost a great man. And so they asked for his body back from Colombia. And Colombia said, ‘We’ll give you his body, but we’ll keep his heart.’ So here comes eviscerated Bolivar back to Venezuela, as a hero. He was entombed, of course, in a great pantheon, and similarly was enshrined in every country that he liberated. But it took many, many years for that to happen.”

On the late Hugo Chavez’s attempt to associate himself with the image of Bolivar

“He was not the first. I mean, there were many presidents who used Bolivar’s name, because it’s a name that is almost chameleon-like, you know. You can use Bolivar if you’re on the left; you can use Bolivar if you’re on the right. That he would be used in such a way, for a specific ideology — which was, in Hugo Chavez’s case, a socialist ideology — would have been very remarkable to Bolivar himself.”

On Bolivar’s lasting relevance

“I say this all the time, you know, we don’t have a George Washington Party in this country. But in this day, in South America, there is the Bolivarian Party; you do go down the street yelling Simon Bolivar’s name. He’s very much alive.”

http://www.npr.org/2013/04/13/176783269/enshrined-and-oft-invoked-simon-bolivar-lives-on
OTHER LIBERATORS OF THE TIME

Toussant L’Overture

Bernard O’Higgins

Jose San Martin

Antonio Sucre

Vicente Guerrero
CHRONOLOGY

1799  Humboldt begins his travels in America

1806  Renegade invasions at Buenos Aires Coro

1807  Napoleon’s troops enter Iberian Peninsula
       Portuguese crown flees Lisbon for Brazil

1808  Spanish crown falls into Napoleon’s hands
       Crises of the Spanish monarchy begins; juntas form in Spain
       Cabildo abierto in Mexico City, Iturrigaray deposed

1809  Central Junta coordinates Spanish resistance to Napoleon
       Napoleon completes conquest of Spain except for Cadiz
       Who should rule in America? Debate proliferates
       Small rebellions in the Andes: Chuquisaca, La Paz, Quito

1810  Cortes and Regency established in Cadiz
       Juntas formed in Caracas, Buenos Aires, Bogota, and Santiago
       First army sent by Buenos Aires to Upper Peru
       Hidalgo’s multitude sweeps through New Spain

1811  Miranda declares an independent republic in Venezuela
       Civil war begins in Venezuela, New Granada, and Chile
       Hidalgo captured and executed; Morelos takes over
       Forces of Buenos Aires defeated in Paraguay, Upper Peru
       Peru becomes base for Spanish reconquest of Andes
       British and Portuguese forces retake Portugal from Napoleon

1812  Napoleon’s grip on Spain loosens as well
       The Cortes of Cadiz promulgates a liberal constitution
       The first Venezuelan republic collapses
       Morelos survives Cuautla, captures Oaxaca

1813  Bolivar declares “War to the Death”
       Buenos Aires again defeated in Upper Peru
       Morelos loses momentum besieging Acapulco
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>Fernando VII restored, annuls 1812 constitution, dissolves cortes</td>
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<td>Spanish forces from Peru reconquer Chile</td>
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<td>Defeated by Boves, Bolivar leaves for exile</td>
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<td>1815</td>
<td>Major reconquest force arrives from post-Napoleonic Spain</td>
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<td>Artigas confederation united against Buenos Aires</td>
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<td>Joao VI’s United Kingdom makes Brazil equal to Portugal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Morelos captured and executed</td>
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<td>1816</td>
<td>Spanish reconquest of America complete, except for Rio de La Plata</td>
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<td>1817</td>
<td>San Martin crosses the Andes from Mendoza to Chile</td>
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<td>Bolivar’s comeback begins in Venezuela</td>
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<td>Pernambucan rebellion reveals “liberal contagion” in Brazil</td>
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<td>1818</td>
<td>Guerrero renews the spirit of rebellion in New Spain</td>
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<td>San Martin prepares his assault on Lima</td>
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<td>1820</td>
<td>Constitutionalist revolutions in Spain and Portugal</td>
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<td>Major Spanish reconquest expedition aborted</td>
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<td>San Martin’s seaborne invasion of Peru begins</td>
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<td>1821</td>
<td>Cortes of Lisbon forces Joao VI return to Portugal</td>
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<td>Iturbide and Guerrero join under the Plan de Iguala, enter Mexico City</td>
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<td>Central America joins the Plan de Iguala, declares independence</td>
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<td>Bolivar wins at Carabobo, while San Martin bogs down in Peru</td>
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<td>1822</td>
<td>Prince Pedro declares Brazil independent, crowned emperor</td>
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<td>Iturbide acclaimed emperor Agustin I of independent Mexico</td>
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<td>Bolivar and San Martin meet in Guayaquil</td>
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<td>1823</td>
<td>Absolutist counterrevolutions seize both Spain and Portugal</td>
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<td>Agustin I overthrown, Mexico becomes a republic</td>
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<td>Bolivar’s Peruvian campaign begins</td>
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<td>1824</td>
<td>Pedro I consolidates power in the Brazilian Empire</td>
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<td>Battle of Ayacucho, final Spanish defeat in America</td>
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