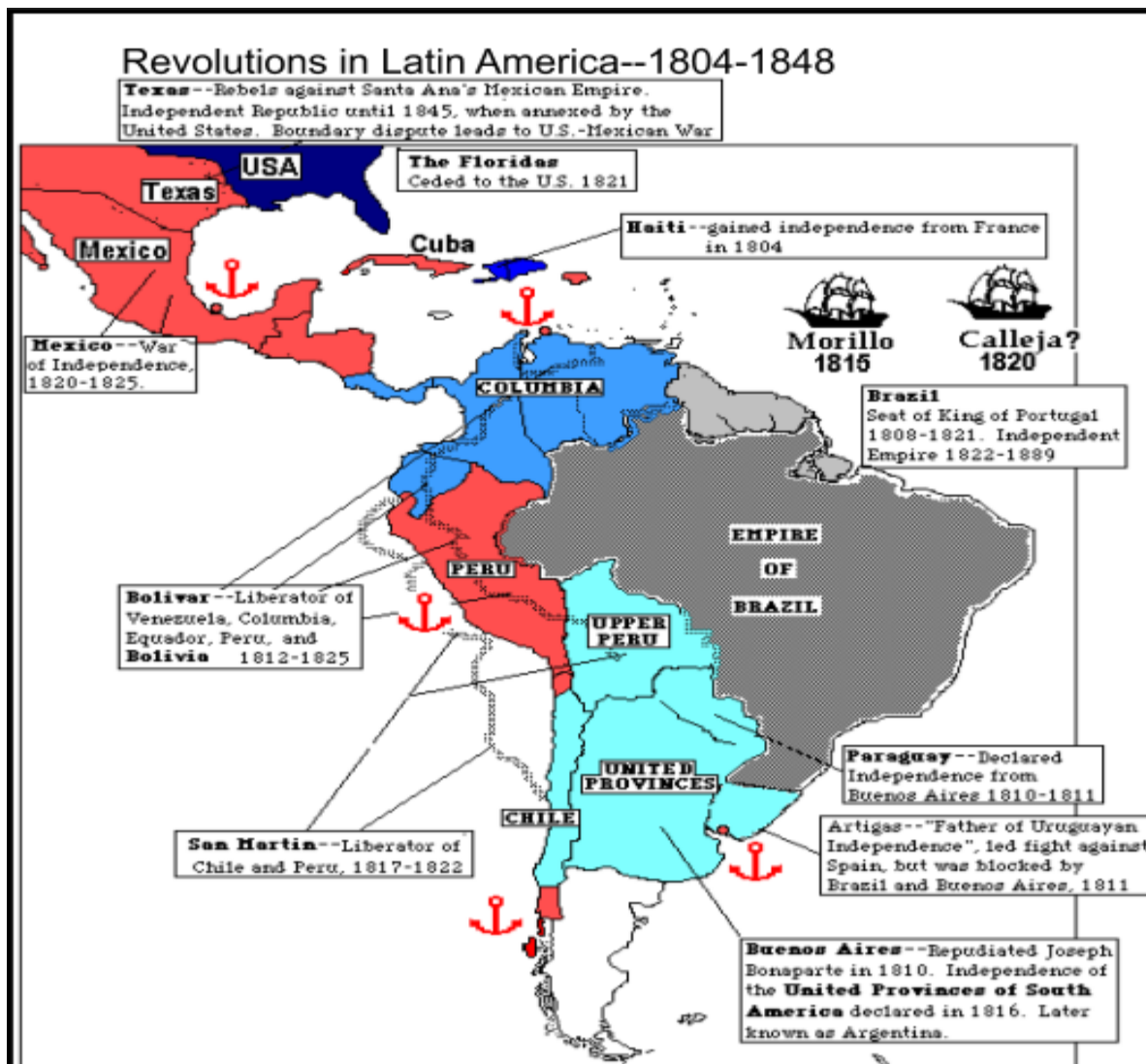


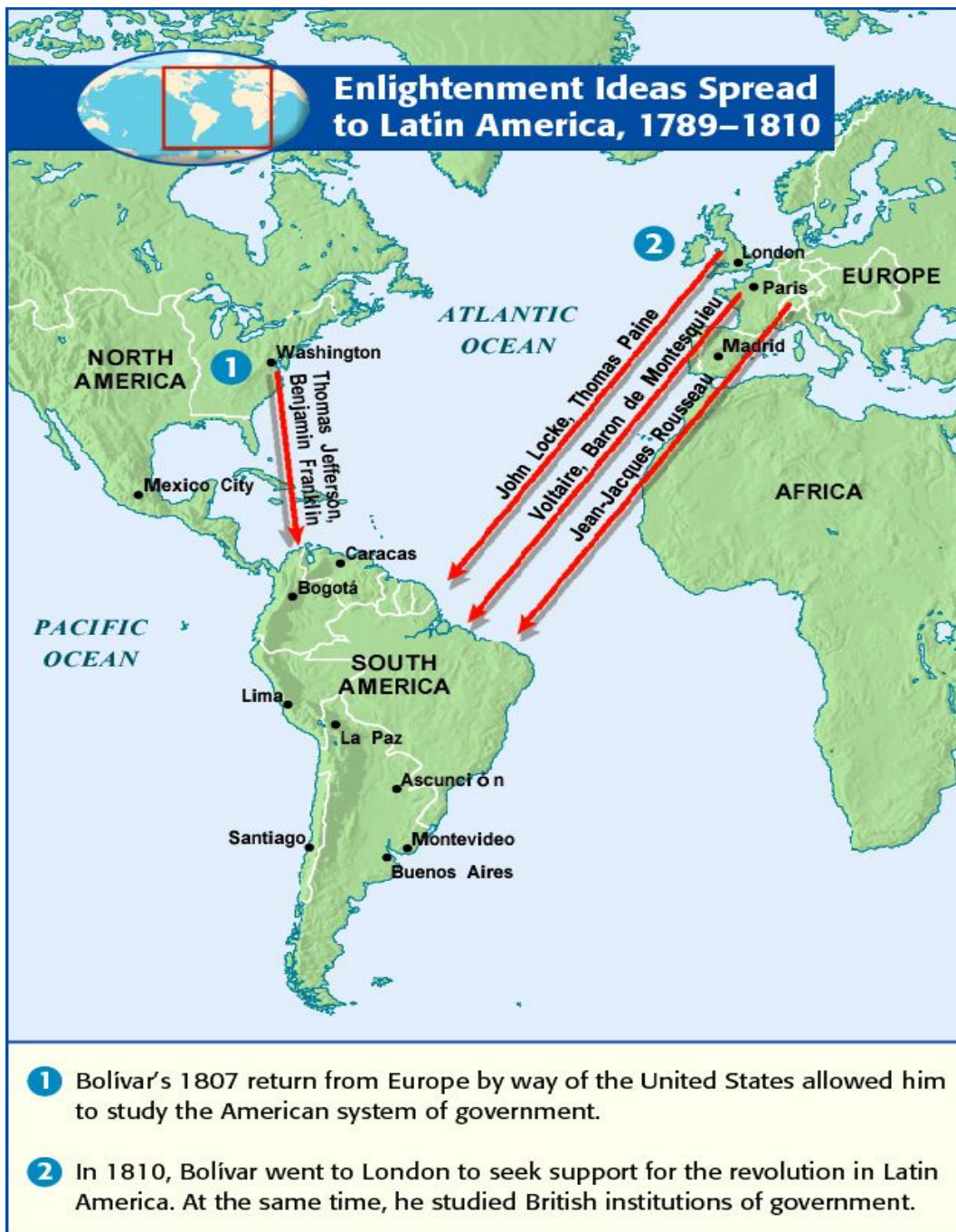
Unit 4C: Revolutions of Latin America

Global exchanges are characterized by interaction within and between societies. As these exchanges increased, economic, political, and social revolutions occurred resulting in fundamental changes to economies, governments, and social hierarchies around the world.



The global spread of democratic ideas and nationalist movements occurred during the nineteenth century. The effects of the revolutions in America and France could be felt internationally.

The Haitian, Mexican, and South American revolutions were inspired by the Enlightenment, American Revolution, the spread of nationalism, and the revolutions in Europe. The ideas of liberty and equality inspired independence throughout Latin America.

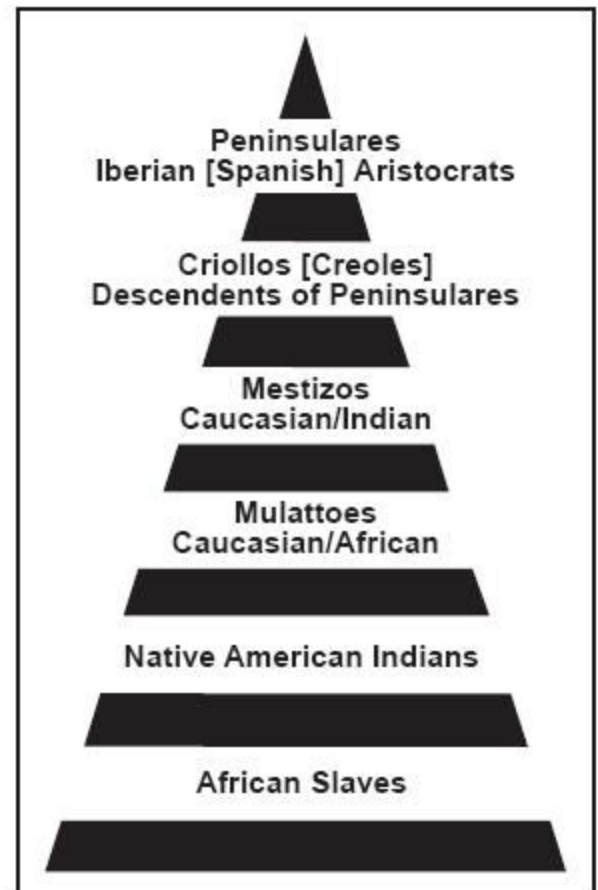


Similar to the French Revolution, **social class struggles** and discontent played a large role in Latin American independence movements. The **peninsulares**, the wealthy Spanish-born citizens, made up the smallest percentage of the population yet were the most powerful group and could hold political offices. The **creoles** were Spaniards born in Latin America who could not hold political office but could be military officers. They were often jealous of the status the peninsulares held. Together, these two classes possessed the wealth, power, and land in Latin America. Beneath them in the social hierarchy were the **mestizos** (a mixture of European and native ancestry), **mulattos** (a mixture of European and African ancestry), and the slave class.

Having been educated in Europe and exposed to Enlightenment and revolutionary ideals, **creoles** led the majority of the independence movements throughout the rest of Latin America. As these ideals spread in Latin America, many **mestizos** and other lower classes were inspired by the ideas of equality and freedom as well.

Haiti makes up the western third portion of the island of Hispaniola. The **Haitian Revolution** was inspired by the American Revolution. It was also the first successful slave revolt. This French colony, which was known as Saint-Dominique (French) or Santo Domingo prior to its independence, had a large slave population, most of whom were treated brutally and lived in poor conditions. In 1791, a group of 100,000 slaves revolted, and **Toussaint L'Ouverture**, a former slave, soon became their leader. By 1801, L'Ouverture had gained control of the island and freed all the enslaved Africans. In 1802, France sent troops to deal with the situation and remove L'Ouverture from power. L'Ouverture was captured and sent to a prison in France, where he died in 1803, but the French were still unsuccessful in stopping the rebellion. In 1804, Haiti declared its independence, thus making this the only successful slave revolt in history.

Social Classes in Spanish Colonies



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





In **Mexico**, the independence movement was initially led by the mestizos. **Padre Miguel y Costilla Hidalgo** (Father Miguel Hidalgo), inspired by Enlightenment ideals, called for rebellion, and a crowd marched toward Mexico City. They were defeated in 1811 by the upper classes, who feared losing their power to the lower classes. Another attempt at revolt four years later also failed. Mexican independence finally was attained in 1821 when Mexican creoles, fearing the loss of their power, declared independence from Spain. Agustín de Iturbide became emperor of Mexico. In 1823, the nations of Central America, including Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica declared their independence from Mexico.

The revolutionary spirit was contagious in **South America**. **Simón Bolívar** was a creole general who led the independence movements throughout South America beginning in his home country in 1811. Bolívar then moved into Colombia and Ecuador, where he met **José de San Martín**, who had recently freed Chile. Together, the two men combined forces under Bolívar's command to **liberate** (free) Peru. Bolívar's dream to unite the Spanish colonies of South America into a single country, known as **Gran Colombia**, was a reality for a short time as Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador were temporarily united. But political issues soon separated the countries once again into their own independent states.

Review Questions

1) What three things inspired revolutions in Latin America?

2) Where were Creoles born?

3) What type of position could they hold?

4) Why did France seek to capture Toussaint L'Ouverture?

5) Where did the only successful slave revolt achieving independence take place?

6) What social class was exposed to the ideas of nationalism and led the majority of independence movements throughout Latin America?

7) What nation did Jose de San Martin liberate?

8) What was the goal of Simon Bolivar's Gran Colombia?

9) What country did José de San Martín *and* Simón Bolívar liberate from Spanish control?

10) What goals were shared by Toussaint L'ouverture, Miguel Hidalgo, and Simon Bolivar?