

## READING 1

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Candice Goucher, Charles LeGuin, and Linda Walton, *In the Balance: Themes in Global History* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1998), selections from chapter 16, "Dual Revolutions: Capitalist Industrialism and the Nation State."

**Abstract:** This essay explores the evolution and development of the modern nation-state. Beginning with the English Civil War of the seventeenth century and moving to the American, French, Haitian, and Latin American revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it demonstrates how notions of the state shifted toward a contractual relationship between ruler and ruled. Such a relationship was supposed to guarantee legal equality and personal freedom. At the same time, while most revolutions discussed here drew inspiration from the same Enlightenment ideals, their particular shape depended on the creative adaptation of these ideals to local realities

The term "state" is derived from the word "estate," which reflects the fact that the monarchical governments of the eighteenth century originated in an earlier era when rulers did not distinguish between their private and public domains. Absolute monarchs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as Louis XIV of France (r. 1642–1715), thought of themselves as the embodiment of the state. The concept of proprietorship continued to be embodied in the notion of the state: not only did the state "belong" to the monarch, but many of its institutions and much of its wealth was still the property of private persons, and social and political power were virtually indistinguishable.

The redefinition and transformation of the state took place in a variety of ways. The evolution of the modern nation state in England was catalyzed by revolutionary changes in the seventeenth century, and the American and French Revolutions in the eighteenth century produced modern nation states in the United States and France. These political transformations were based on the concept of the state as a social contract, the idea of a compact between rulers and ruled as the basis for the state. States based on the social contract can be distinguished as nation states, those that the state is the property, not of the ruler alone, but of all people who make up the nation. The nation state thus represents a common historic and cultural identity of ruler and ruled.

### **The Transformation of The English Monarchy: Civil War and Revolution**

The transformation of the English monarchy from absolutism to constitutional monarchy, that the king shared power with a representative body called parliament, was a long-term process that encompassed evolutionary change, civil war, and revolution. The Magna Carta, granted by

King John in 1215, declared that the king was subject to the same laws as those he ruled and could not arbitrarily impose his will. In 1295 Edward I summoned the first or “model parliament,” an assembly of nobles and representatives from the cities, to lend support for his war with France. Over the centuries the summoning of parliaments became regularized, though they remained elite bodies whose role in governing was controlled by strong kings. For example, Tudor monarchs, such as Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547) or Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), could not dispense with parliament; but by their use of political pressure and economic favors, they were able to manipulate parliament so that it interfered very little with their absolute power.

### ***Parliament and Civil War***

Like their sixteenth-century predecessors, seventeenth-century Stuart monarchs of Great Britain held a paternalistic and absolutist view of the role of the king. James I (r. 1603–1625) buttressed his authority by proclaiming that kings ruled by divine sanction, though both James and his successors found themselves increasingly at odds with their parliaments. Disagreement with Charles I (r. 1625–1649) led parliament to draw up a Petition of Right (1628) requiring the king to address grievances such as arbitrary taxation and imprisonment. Though Charles assented to the petition, he paid little attention to what he considered an interference with his rights. When parliament challenged him again, he dissolved it, governing for the next eleven years without summoning a parliament. When political and financial troubles forced Charles to summon a new parliament (1640), the confrontation between him and parliament was renewed. This confrontation was ultimately resolved by a dramatic civil war (1642–1649) that culminated in the capture, trial, and execution of the king by parliamentary armies (1649).

Parliament’s victory was a frontal assault on the divine-right monarchy, and for a decade parliament and its army under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell (r. 1653–1658), himself a member of parliament, governed England. During Cromwell’s interregnum, parliament was transformed into a permanent institution. Though the monarchy was restored in 1660, when parliament called Charles II to the throne, it was monarchy with a difference. Two factors circumscribed the powers of the later Stuarts (Charles II [r. 1660–1685] and James II [r. 1685–1689]): first, the trial and beheading of Charles I by parliament demonstrated that body’s power; second, Charles II owed his throne to parliament.

### ***The “Glorious Revolution”***

The reign of James II, a Roman Catholic monarch who sat on the throne of a country that was increasingly Protestant, further clarified the role of king and parliament. When the birth of a son to James’s second, and Catholic, wife

presented the prospect of a Roman Catholic Stuart dynasty in Protestant England, dynastic tradition gave way to religious prejudice. Parliament took up arms against the king again, exerting its right to determine the religion of the ruler. Parliament offered the throne to the Protestant daughter of James's first marriage, Mary Stuart, and her husband, the Dutch William of Orange, who landed in England in November 1688 to help drive James out of England. This event came to be known as the "Glorious Revolution."

By defeating James (who left for exile in France) and choosing his successor, parliament had made an emphatic statement of its dominant role in the governance of the kingdom. The Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689 clearly and irrefutably defined the relation of king and parliament in Great Britain. That relationship is best described by the concept "king in parliament," according to which the king was expected to act in and through parliament and only with parliamentary approval and support. Among the legislation resulting from the Glorious Revolution was a Bill of Rights, the earliest guarantee of individual rights and liberties.

### John Locke and the Glorious Revolution

The Glorious Revolution inspired the English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) to suggest that anyone in authority who exceeds the power given to him by the law or who encroaches on the rights of individuals forfeits the right to rule. Having done so, he may be opposed and resisted just as "any other man who by force invades the right of another." In this way Locke justified the Glorious Revolution and provided a justification for revolution in general.

As a result of Cromwell, the Glorious Revolution, and legislation making up the Revolutionary Settlement (1701), by the eighteenth century the roles of parliament and the king were clearly defined in England. During the eighteenth century, parliament, including the hereditary House of Lords and the elected (by a very limited franchise) House of Commons, worked out the political mechanisms of government. Because George I (r. 1714–1727), the first of the German Hanoverian dynasty who succeeded to the English throne in the eighteenth century, spoke no English, had little interest in or understanding of English politics, the ministers he chose in effect governed for him. Between 1721 and 1742 the council of ministers or cabinet was headed by Sir Robert Walpole, who became the first or prime minister, though he never held that formal title. Walpole's authority – and that of his successors as prime minister – rested on his command of the support of a majority of the members of the House of Commons and the favor of the king. This dual source of authority defined parliamentary government in England, though parliamentary support ultimately became more important than royal favor.

## The American Revolution and the Nation State

While the forms of parliamentary government were being worked out in England, British colonists in the Americas rebelled against English rule in what became known as the American Revolution (1776–1783). The American Revolution occurred soon after the apex of British imperial power in the Americas was reached in the mid-eighteenth century when the British gained control of most of the North American continent by their victory over the French (1763).

### **Colonial Conflicts**

The thirteen British colonies along the Atlantic seaboard flourished in the eighteenth century. They were as populated as most European states at the time and soon began to expand their borders westward toward the Appalachians. When the British government closed the area west of the Appalachians to settlement by the seaboard colonists, they were frustrated. The colonists were further angered by treaties that the British negotiated with Native Americans of the trans-Appalachian area and by the Quebec Act (1774), which reserved the Ohio Valley for the French communities of Quebec and which the seaboard colonists interpreted as a southward extension of Canadian frontiers that would block their own westward expansion.

Discontent mounted as innumerable specific incidents further exacerbated relations between the seaboard colonies and the British imperial government. Discontent fueled resistance, and resistance became rebellion. Colonists became more radical as they convinced themselves that the liberties they believed belonged to them as British subjects were endangered. They embraced the concepts of the social contract proposed by Locke and were influenced by such Enlightenment thinkers as Montesquieu and Benjamin Franklin, one of their own.

The Atlantic seaboard colonists and the imperial government in London had incongruent economic interests and differing opinions as to how North America should be governed. The British monarchy, assuming that the colonists should pay their proper share of the costs of defense and common imperial concerns, undertook to impose new tax measures to assure this (a stamp tax and duties on paper, glass, and tea). Many colonists, particularly those in the towns involved with trade, saw these as unilateral acts by an imperial legislature, an assault on their custom of raising revenues by their own colonial assemblies. Thus the issue of whether the legislative sovereignty of the British parliament also extended to the colonies came into focus.

Americans who took the lead in the debate, and some British politicians, assumed the position that no taxes should be levied on the colonists by a legislature that they were not represented. Their rallying cry, “No taxation

without representation,” produced boycotts and riots, such as the famous Boston Tea Party – largely a protest against British mercantilism – that colonists dumped tea into Boston harbor in defiance of the tea tax. The issue of whether parliament in London could enforce laws in the colonies got out of hand as neither side was willing to compromise or retreat.

### ***The Continental Congress***

In September 1774 the colonists summoned a Continental Congress to which twelve of the thirteen colonies sent delegates (only Georgia held back). The brightest of colonial leadership assembled in Philadelphia amidst ceremony and banquets. Though the delegation from Massachusetts was regarded with suspicion on account of its radical views, the congress approved the Massachusetts resolutions refusing obedience to objectionable acts passed by the London parliament and detailing ways to defy them. Before the congress dissolved, it also agreed to sever commercial relations with Great Britain by adopting a policy of nonimportation and nonexportation. A “continental association” was set up to facilitate communication between the colonies and to enforce the congress’s decisions.

The gap between the British imperial government and the colonies widened. Parliament responded to the actions of the Continental Congress by hurrying through a Restraining Act that forbade the colonists to trade with each other or with any British dominion. Boston was heavily occupied by British troops, and in the Massachusetts countryside militiamen drilled and stored military supplies. On the night of April 18, 1775, the British sent an expedition to seize and destroy military stores at Concord, twenty miles or so from Boston. Along the way 700 British infantrymen were met at the village of Lexington by a line of minutemen, 75 volunteer militiamen determined to resist the British advance. A shot – the “shot heard around the world” – was fired (by which side is unknown), and the first action of the American Revolution had taken place.

### ***The War for American Independence***

The war between the colonists and Great Britain flared up simultaneously in several places, and on May 10 a second Continental Congress met to organize the conflict and make sure that all the colonies had a stake in it. The long and difficult struggle might have had a different outcome had the colonies not received foreign aid. After two years of indecisive campaigns, the Americans were joined by European powers who saw in the struggle an opportunity to weaken British global power.

France, eager to revenge its defeat in the mid-century wars, joined the Americans in 1778, followed by Spain (1779) and the Netherlands (1780). The British were unable to maintain a successful struggle against such a coalition,

and in 1781 at Yorktown, Virginia, they surrendered. Peace negotiations at Paris, concluded in 1783, recognized the independence of the thirteen colonies. The British had lost the war because of geographical factors (distance and inability to adapt their military strategy and tactics to the American environment), thanks to the aid the Americans received from Great Britain's European opponents, and perhaps because it was difficult to wage a total war against the colonists whom many English considered to be fellow countrymen.

### Declaration of Independence

The Americans made their case in a Declaration of Independence approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) of Virginia, this document distilled eighteenth-century ideals of rights common and equal to all and the concept of the social contract: “all men are created equal . . . [and] endowed with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. . . Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.” The Declaration explicitly justified the American rebellion: “To secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men . . . whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government.” Jefferson's words became the ideological base on which the new American nation state was to rest.

It took the Americans nearly a decade to agree upon the principles and structures for their nation and embody them in a contract, the Constitution of 1789. Like the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution reflects eighteenth-century ideas and ideals, such as separation of church and state (secular rationalism) and the separation of powers suggested in Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws* (1748). The makers of the Constitution seemed to realize that it was not a perfect document, and so they provided means for amending it. This first phase in the construction of the American nation state occurred from 1776 to 1815, roughly from the time of the Declaration of Independence to the end of the War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States, a brief struggle that confirmed American independence.

## The French Revolution and the Nation State

John Locke's justification of revolution not only supported the American revolutionaries who sought independence from England and its king but also foreshadowed the upheavals of the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. Though the first French parliament, known as the “Estates General” and representing the three “estates” of clergy, nobility, and commoners, was summoned at about the same time as the English model parliament, the French parliament never evolved into a body that actively participated in governing. When it questioned royal policy, it was simply

dismissed; following the dismissal of the Estates General of 1614, the body was not called for another 175 years.

### Louis XIV and Absolute Monarchy

Though royal power was often hampered by powerful aristocrats, ambitious kings such as Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715) sought to extend their authority by keeping the aristocracy at court where they could be controlled more easily and by creating a new aristocracy drawn from the lesser nobility or wealthy commoners who could buy offices that ennobled them. The phrase “L’etat c’est moi” (“I am the state”), attributed to Louis XIV, expressed the king’s ambition – though not necessarily the reality – that all political authority in France emanated from him.

Following Louis XIV’s reign, the political power and rights of the aristocracy, against which he had struggled, continued and broadened, as those who purchased noble rights were as jealously protective of them as were the hereditary aristocracy of theirs. During the reigns of Louis XV (r. 1715–1774) and Louis XVI (r. 1774–1793), the aristocracy attempted to shape institutions such as the courts (*parlements*) to protect privilege and power, especially the exemption of nobles from taxation. Wars and uncontrolled expenses of the court strained the royal treasury and pitted the aristocracy and the government against each other. The tensions were exaggerated by demographic and economic crises. A series of bad harvests and growing fiscal difficulties forced Louis XVI in 1789 to do what no king had done since 1614: summon the Estates General.

### ***The Estates General of 1789***

The traditional purpose of the Estates General was to advise the king on the state of the kingdom and to support such measures as he should propose to it. The serious fiscal crisis that led Louis XVI in 1789 to summon the Estates General to Versailles offered the opportunity for expanding the role of the Estates General and for examining the whole nature of the French state. Deputies of the “third estate,” generally young and ambitious commoners, were quick to take advantage of this opportunity.

From its initial session the Estates General of 1789 clearly had no intention of conforming to the king’s expectation that it would limit itself to dealing with the fiscal crisis. The earliest indication that the Estates General intended to go far beyond its stated purposes occurred when it declared itself to be a National Assembly (June 10, 1789). This act was a major step in replacing the traditional monarchy in France with a nation state based on the principle of the social contract. Outside the halls of the Estates General, increasing public action constituted a popular revolution to which both the king and deputies had to pay heed. Such popular revolutionary action as the storming of the

Bastille prison in Paris (July 14, 1789) in search of arms and gunpowder or the women's march on the royal palace at Versailles (October 1789) which demanded bread and resulted in the removal of both the king and the deputies to Paris, where they were henceforth under the watchful eyes of the citizens of Paris, moved the revolution in more radical directions.

### Rousseau and the Social Contract

The most powerful ideas underlying the actions of the deputies of the third estate came from the writings of Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu (1689–1755) and, above all, of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), whose *Social Contract* became the guiding principle of the third estate. Rousseau argued that the social contract between rulers and ruled required rulers to obey the “general will” of the people. If they failed to do so, then the people had the right to overthrow them. These ideas were embodied in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, which was adopted on August 26, 1789. This “solemn declaration of the natural, inalienable, and sacred rights of man” declared that sovereignty is located in the people who constitute the nation, and that “no body, no individual can exercise authority” unless it is granted by the people. Frenchmen, the declaration proclaimed, “are born and remain free and equal in rights,” and it proclaimed that the purpose of law, which was defined as “the expression of the general will,” was to preserve the rights of Frenchmen, those rights being defined as “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.”

### ***From Constitutional Monarchy to Republic***

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen was the reference point for various efforts during the revolution to create a new French social contract. The first effort, the Constitution of 1791, was invalidated by continued tension between the king, who was not committed to it, the deputies, who were divided among themselves, and the many elements of the population who felt themselves excluded by it (for example, women, the poor “passive citizens,” who were denied full civic rights because they did not own property) and whose conditions were not improved.

The war between revolutionary France and traditional European monarchies that broke out in March 1792 (and would last with only brief intermissions until 1815) brought the problems of the constitutional monarchy created in 1791 to a crisis. On August 10, 1792, as a result of popular insurrection in Paris, the king was overthrown and, following the defeat of invading Austrian and Prussian armies, a new assembly, the Convention, proclaimed the first French Republic. The first business of the Convention was to try Louis XVI, who was condemned to death and executed. The Convention then drew up a new constitution, one much more closely reflecting Rousseau's

concept of a social contract based on the general will. The Constitution of 1793 provided universal male suffrage, freed slaves in France and its territories, and gave citizens the right to work and the right to revolt.

### ***The Jacobins and the Reign of Terror***

The 1793 constitution reflected the vision of Rousseau's social contract held by revolutionaries known as "Jacobins" (named after the hall where they met), whose spokesman was Maximilien Robespierre (1758–1794). The imposition of the Jacobin constitution on France produced a power struggle that led to the expulsion of more moderate factions from government and the concentration of power in Jacobin hands. The needs of prosecuting the war against European monarchies (including England, which had joined following the execution of Louis XVI) consolidated Jacobin control, but competing interests and power conflicts remained. The conduct of the war, economic tensions, and personal ambitions all tested Jacobin leadership. In order to maintain their control and impose their version of the general will, Robespierre and his associates resorted to force and violence against their opponents during the period of the revolution known as the "Reign of Terror" (1793–1794).

### **Journees**

Reaction against the Jacobin government reached its height in the spring of 1794; it was finally toppled by the *journees* (days of insurrection), which resulted in the execution of Robespierre and other Jacobin leaders and in turn led to the creation of yet another republican constitution (1795). *Journees*, as instruments of the popular revolution, consistently influenced the direction the revolution was to take; they helped account for the Jacobin triumph in 1793 just as they contributed to the Jacobin overthrow in 1794.

### ***Women in the French Revolution***

Though women were denied civic rights and equality with men, even in the more radical Jacobin constitution of 1793, they took active roles in the popular revolutionary *journees*, which were often inspired by hunger and began as bread riots led by women. For example, the October 1789 women's march on Versailles brought the royal family – popularly referred to as "the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's son" – back to Paris. Participation in *journees* provided women with political opportunities and experience. Militant women responded to being shut out of the political process by organizing political clubs and exerting pressure by speaking out at rallies and during riots. One militant woman revolutionary, Olympe de Gouges (1748–1793), responded to the Declaration of the Rights of Man by publishing a Declaration of the Rights of Women (1791), which proclaimed that "woman is born free and lives equal to man in her rights."

When the Constitution of 1793 did nothing to extend full rights to women, militant women felt betrayed and turned on the Jacobin leadership, who responded by trying to discredit them, attacking their personal lives, and forbidding their political activities. Olympe de Gouges was sent to the guillotine in 1793; she and other radical women like her were accused of overstepping the bounds of feminine decency with their radical political activities.

### ***The Counterterror***

The Jacobin effort to create a state based on its interpretation of the general will ended in failure. It was followed by a movement known as the “counterterror,” by which many whom the Jacobins had dispossessed and silenced regained control of the republic. The men who gained control of France in 1794 expressed their vision of the social contract in the Constitution of 1795, a document much less advanced than that of 1793. The Directory, established by the constitution, concentrated authority in men of property, who proved less successful than the Jacobins in solving continuing domestic problems – economic difficulties, taxes, efficient administration – and in dealing with the republic’s external enemies. Popular support for the Directory rapidly eroded, and it was attacked by a continuous series of *journees*.

Robespierre and his Jacobin associates had shown that a single voice could be imposed on the state, that the general will need not rise from universal and common consent, but could be extracted by strenuous pressure and violent enforcement. It was a message understood by Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), a young Corsican artillery officer, as he witnessed the disintegration of the republic in the years following the adoption of the Constitution of 1795. Internal struggles and the dangers posed by external enemies – revolutionary France had been at war with the rest of Europe since March 1792 – offered Napoleon his opportunity to seize power. As a result of an insurrection in October 1799, Napoleon (r. 1799–1815) assumed power. He was the ultimate co-opter of the “general will.”

### ***The Napoleonic Revolution***

Napoleon was a child of the French Revolution. He paid lip-service to the ideals on which the revolutionary French state was based while modifying them to his own ends. Napoleon’s control of the army enabled him to control the state and even to convert it from a republic to an empire, but he accepted the revolutionary ideal that “sovereignty is located in essence in the nation” and that “law is the expression of the general will.” Recalling the period of Jacobin control, Napoleon also realized that neither sovereignty nor law had to originate in the nation, rather that the nation could merely be asked to ratify law and confirm sovereignty. Accordingly, Napoleon based his rule on

universal male suffrage, but his rule did not include popular participation. Napoleonic France was governed by plebiscite, popular referenda on laws that were presented to the electorate, rather than originating from them.

Napoleon used his power and popularity to deal effectively with major domestic problems unresolved by and inherited from ten years of revolution. Among his many achievements were the establishment of fiscal stability, the codification of laws, the creation of efficient administrative systems that would remain a permanent fixture in France, and the making of peace with the Church. Thanks to his political achievements and his continued military success, Napoleon received approval by plebiscite in 1804 for transforming the revolutionary French republic into a hereditary empire. The Napoleonic empire was not, however, a traditional monarchy. The codification of French law in 1804, later known as the “Napoleonic Code,” confirmed revolutionary ideas such as legal (male) equality by which all men were equal before the law and could compete for jobs, rewards, and power on the basis of talent rather than birth or wealth.

Napoleon’s twofold achievement was to define and institutionalize a social contract for France by resolving the conflicts of ten years of revolution and to protect France from external enemies. Though he had consistent success in his campaigns against other European powers, Napoleon was finally defeated and exiled in 1814. When he returned to power from exile in 1815, he was again defeated and sent to the rocky South Atlantic island of St. Helena, where he died in 1821.

## **Revolution and Nationalism in the Caribbean: The Haitian Revolution**

Across the Caribbean region, from Brazil to Hispaniola, earlier Spanish and Portuguese hegemony had been challenged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by other European imperialist powers, especially the Dutch, French, and English. These territories were linked together by the commonality of their experience of plantation slavery and colonial rule. The indigenous Caribbean peoples and the Africans who were forcibly brought to the area also experienced the effects of European domination and were influenced by revolutionary changes in Europe.

### ***The Influence of the French Revolution***

Eighteenth-century European ideals, such as “men are born free and equal in rights,” and “liberty, equality, and fraternity,” (the rallying cry of the French Revolution) promptly reached Caribbean shores, where they were translated into the issues of property, labor, and race. Soon after the outbreak of the French Revolution (1789), white planters in St. Domingue (the western third of the island of Hispaniola) were given control of colonial assemblies and a

large measure of autonomy. Then in 1791 the National Assembly in Paris, responding to pressures from a European abolitionist society, *Les Amis des Noirs* ("The Friends of Blacks"), further extended rights to all free persons, including mulattoes (those of mixed race), decreeing that "persons of color, born of free parents" should have voting rights in the colonial assemblies. White planters demanded the law be repealed and threatened to join the British Empire if it was not. Both whites and mulattoes began to arm themselves, and the conflict that broke out between them offered slaves their opportunity to revolt.

The potential threat of slave revolt on St. Domingue was great. Most of the slaves were African born, and they formed the majority population, outnumbering other ethnic groups by a ratio of thirteen to one. Since the colony's mountainous interior afforded ample inaccessible hiding places, there were numerous maroon (freedom-fighter) communities. Common beliefs, such as the African-derived religion of Vodun, and shared myths and heroes united diverse slave populations. Heroes, such as the martyred Francois Machandal, who had plotted to contaminate the water supplies of the white plantocracy (ruling class) provided inspiration and example for slaves. Machandal was burned alive, but a legend surrounding his death held that he had actually escaped by changing into a mosquito and flying away. The oppressed believed that the mosquitoes that long afterward plagued French troops (and caused death by spreading malaria) constituted the vengeance of their hero.

### ***Toussaint L'Ouverture and The Slave Revolt***

In August 1791 slaves in northern St. Domingue demanded their own liberty and rebelled; during much of the period from 1791 to 1792, slave strikes and revolts spread across the island. Reluctantly, France sent troops in. Attempts at negotiation to restore colonial order failed to gain the support of slaves. In 1793 the French National Assembly granted emancipation to the slaves, an act further angering both the planters and the free coloreds, who accepted aid from the British (who were alarmed at the possibility that the slave rebellion might spread to their colonies) against the rebellious slaves.

More than 100,000 slaves participated in the rebellion under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture (ca. 1746–1803), the educated son of African slave parents. In his efforts to liberate his fellow black slaves, Toussaint fought for a decade against intervention and blockades by slave-owning nations (France, Britain, Spain, and the United States) and even against mulatto opposition. By 1801 he controlled the entire island of Hispaniola, but many more battles were fought before a final victory established the independent nation state of Haiti.

Once Napoleon was firmly in control, he dispatched a huge army to invade St. Domingue. L'Ouverture was induced to meet with the French, treacherously seized, carried to Europe, and imprisoned, where he died in 1803. Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe continued the struggle in Haiti, and black strength and yellow fever defeated the massive French effort to regain control of St. Domingue. The failure of Napoleon's design for restoring a French empire in the Americas made him agreeable to selling the Louisiana Territory to the United States.

### ***Haitian Independence***

On January 1, 1804, the independence of the western half of Hispaniola was proclaimed, and the new nation was given the name Haiti. But the only successful slave revolution came at a high price. By this time the country was bankrupt, its population cut by 25 percent, plantations destroyed, the ecology damaged, and the economy staggered. The pattern of civil war, instability, and outside intervention has continued relentlessly for almost 200 years, and even today jeopardizes the stability and development of the Haitian republic.

### **Language and Revolution**

The language of the Haitian revolution provides historical insight into its complexity. Toussaint L'Ouverture, it is claimed, spoke French and was literate, but Generals Dessalines and Henri Christophe were not literate. Some of the most famous rhetoric of the revolution attributed to Dessalines was contained in a document written in French by his secretary-general. Dessalines probably spoke Creole, a blending of French, English, Spanish, and Taino (a Native American language) with African-derived vocabularies and syntax from multiple sources. Creole was imposed as the national language, and Dessalines, rather than the francophile Toussaint, was canonized by the indigenous Vodun religion (he is the deity Papa Dessalines). Furthermore, Dessalines reportedly went into battle covered with talismans believed to be magical substances to make him invulnerable. Upon independence he tore out the white of the French flag. He called the new nation "Haiti," after the Amerindian word for the island (Ayti) that referred to the mountainous landscape. Although the experience of the French Revolution was the catalyst for events in Haiti, the language was the polyglot of resistance.

## **National Revolutions in Spanish America**

The language of Central and South America may have been more uniformly divided between the colonizers' Spanish and Portuguese, but the region's experience of revolution and nationalism was just as complex a mix of issues and injustices as that of the Caribbean. Like the British colonists in North America who rebelled against the British imperial government in the late

eighteenth century, descendants of Spanish colonists and Native Americans rebelled against Spain beginning in the early nineteenth century.

### ***The Spanish and Portuguese Imperial Systems***

In the sixteenth century, a century before the English, French, and Dutch colonized North America, Spanish and Portuguese conquistadors established themselves in a wide geographic range, from the southern parts of North America to the tip of South America. Following the conquests of Mexico and Peru, a well-organized colonial administration, which was controlled from Spain by the Council of the Indies, supported the mercantilist goals of the kingdom, selling goods in America and shipping to Spain as much precious metal as possible.

By the eighteenth century, the Spanish monarchy had established “viceroalties,” administrative units presided over by the king’s representative (the viceroy), in New Spain (Mexico); New Granada (Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela), from which one for Peru was separated; and finally Argentina (1776). Viceroys, responsible to the Council of the Indies and the European king, headed the well-defined hierarchical system with an easily recognizable chain of command. A similar system was set up in Portuguese Brazil, though the Portuguese monarchs were more prone to appoint Brazilians to high office in the viceroyalty of Brazil than Spanish monarchs were willing to name Americans to elevated offices in Spanish America. And because Portugal had fewer resources to devote to its Brazilian viceroyalty, it granted captaincies to private persons and permitted them to exploit the region.

### **Colonial Society**

The viceregal and mercantilist system by which Spain and Portugal controlled their American colonies tended to create a European elite in Latin America, consisting of *peninsulares* (those who had come to America from the Iberian peninsula) and *creoles* (Iberians who were born in America) who controlled wealth and exercised power, neither of which they willingly shared with *mestizos* (a “new race” resulting from European and native American unions). Both the European monopoly on wealth and power and the complicated relations between the native populations of South America and the Europeans became important components in the nationalist struggles in Latin America during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

### **Bourbon Reforms in Spanish America**

Change in Spanish America began partly as the result of the ascent of a new dynasty to the Spanish throne. When the last Spanish Hapsburg died in 1701, his Bourbon successors undertook programs bearing the hallmarks of

eighteenth-century “enlightened” ideas, and changes in Spain included attempts at reform in the colonies. The Spanish Empire was reorganized: the two earliest viceroalties (New Spain and New Granada) became four, and the closed mercantilist commercial system was relaxed.

Traditionally, only Spaniards were allowed to trade and settle in Spanish America; the eighteenth-century reforms limited the Spanish monopolies and allowed controlled access to Latin American trade to other Europeans. The latter change may have been a means to prosperity for the Spanish colonies and profits for other than Spanish merchants, especially the British, but it also loosened Spanish political dominance by introducing the possibility of political influence and ideas from other countries.

The efforts to reform the Spanish Empire did not correct all the tensions and ills, and during the eighteenth century, a series of insurrections threatened Spanish control. To meet them, the imperial government had to arm colonials, a development that touched upon one of the most fundamental problems of colonial society, the deep division that existed between *peninsulares*, whose loyalties were primarily to Spain, and creoles, who, being born in Latin America, had divided loyalties and a strongly independent streak. Arming the creoles and providing them with military training may have been necessary to defend Spanish control against mestizos and foreign intervention, but it also created a force that could be used against the Spanish Empire. The possibilities of being armed and trained was not lost upon the creoles, many of whom found inspiration in the revolutions in North America and France.

### ***Independence in Latin America***

The turmoil of the French Revolution and Napoleonic decades led to the collapse of the Spanish Empire in the Americas. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Spain was severely weakened in Europe as well as in its colonial possessions in the Americas. In 1807 Napoleon invaded the Iberian peninsula, causing the Portuguese king to seek refuge in his Brazilian colony and replacing the Spanish king with Joseph Bonaparte. Spain’s sea power had been destroyed, a development fatal to an overseas empire and one that gave especially the British the opportunity to expand their commercial intrusion into Latin American trade.

The disarray of the Spanish monarchy enabled Latin Americans to liberate themselves from Spanish control. Many leading creoles whose loyalties to the lands of their birth were greater than to Spain and who saw independence as a chance to replace *peninsulares* in power, took leading roles in the uprisings that became wars of independence. The Spanish government was unable to win over the rebels by either compromise or force, and a number of Latin American revolutions substantially ended Spanish imperial control in the Americas.

## Bolivar

Simon Bolivar (1783–1830), educated in Caracas, Venezuela, and in Spain, was one of the heroes of the struggle for South American independence from Spain. Like so many of his contemporaries in North America and Europe, Bolivar was influenced by Enlightenment ideas such as the social contract of Rousseau; these ideas inspired his efforts to achieve independence for his homeland. In his fight against Spain in Venezuela, Bolivar was defeated many times before independence was finally achieved in 1817. During the struggle against Spain, he visited Haiti seeking support, and while living in temporary exile in Jamaica in 1815, Bolivar composed a letter to the island's British governor that he eloquently stated his views on independence:

Americans either defend their rights or suffer repression at the hands of Spain, which, although once the world's greatest empire, is now too weak, with what little is left her, to rule the new hemisphere or even to maintain herself in the old. And shall Europe, the civilized, the merchant, the lover of liberty allow an aged serpent, bent only on satisfying its venomous rage, devour the fairest part of our globe? . . .

[I]f she [Spain] will fix herself on her own precincts she can build her prosperity and power upon more solid foundations than doubtful conquests, precarious commerce, and forceful exactions from remote and powerful peoples.

Two years later Bolivar led his army across the Andes to liberate Colombia, which was then united with Venezuela. In 1822 Ecuador was liberated, followed by Peru, the southern part of which was named Bolivia.

Bolivar was aided in the liberation of Latin America by others, such as Jose de San Martin (1778–1850), an Argentine who led an army of liberation across the Andes in 1817 and with the Chilean leader Bernardo O'Higgins (1778–1842) freed Chile in 1818, invaded Peru, and captured Lima in 1821. Bolivar had a vision of a united Latin America and tried to achieve political unity among the territories he liberated from the Spanish. His dream was destroyed by political factionalism and rivalry between liberation leaders, by tension and suspicion between Latin Americans of European origin and native Americans and also between classes (creoles and mestizos, for example), all of which were inherited from the colonial era. The idea of a Latin American state collapsed, and Bolivar died a disillusioned leader.

## Brazilian Independence

Portuguese Brazil, like Canada in North America (see Chapter 17) and unlike its South American neighbors, did not break away from its imperial master as a result of a nationalist revolution. When the French invaded the Iberian peninsula in 1807, the Portuguese government simply moved to Brazil, and Rio de Janeiro, instead of Lisbon, became the seat of Portuguese government. In 1815 King Joao declared the viceroyalty was a kingdom and decided to

remain in Brazil even though the French occupation of Portugal had ended. In 1820 leaders of a revolution in Portugal demanded that the government return to Lisbon and that Brazil be reduced to colonial status. When Joao returned to Lisbon, he left his son, Pedro, to continue Portuguese control; but in 1822 when independence was declared, Pedro became emperor of Brazil, which kept the monarchical government until 1889.

## Mexican Independence

The liberation of Mexico from Spanish control was considerably more complicated than that of the South American republics established in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Miguel Hidalgo (1753–1811) was a priest who devoted himself to improving the conditions of his mainly native American parishioners. In 1809 he joined a secret society dedicated to overthrowing the Spanish colonial government; in 1810 holding aloft a banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico who had revealed herself to an Indian peasant, Hidalgo led a crusade that captured the towns of Guanajuato and Guadalajara. His peasant army was routed by Spanish soldiers, and Hidalgo was captured and executed. After Mexican independence was finally achieved (1821) and a republic established, Father Hidalgo was revered as a martyr for independence.

## Juarez

The next generation of leaders in Mexico is represented by Benito Juarez (1806–1872), a Zapotec Indian who was educated as a lawyer and became governor of the state of Oaxaca in 1847. When the Mexican general Santa Anna seized the national government in a coup in 1853, Juarez fled to Louisiana, but he returned to Mexico in 1855 to take part in the revolution that overthrew Santa Anna, which was followed by a civil war. When Juarez was elected president of Mexico in 1861, he faced the fiscal chaos that was the result of years of revolution and civil war. When he suspended payments to foreign creditors, the major European powers to whom Mexico was indebted – France, Spain, and Great Britain – intervened, and the French dispatched an army that marched inland and captured the capital, Mexico City.

The French set up a puppet empire in Mexico and installed Maximilian, an Austrian archduke, as emperor. Juarez assumed a leading role in Mexican resistance to Maximilian. When the French withdrew, the puppet regime was easily overthrown and Maximilian was executed (1867). Juarez, who had become a national hero, returned to serve a second term as president (1867–1872). Like the priest Hidalgo, the lawyer Juarez is venerated as one of Mexico's greatest national figures. Among Juarez's notable achievements during his terms as president was the subordination of church and army to a secular state. Both Church and army resented the government's policy, and though the Church reluctantly acquiesced, the Mexican republic, like other

Latin American countries, continued to be troubled by political interference from the military. National revolutions in Mexico and South America established independent nation states and freed the region from the political bonds of the Spanish Empire, but not from cultural, social, and economic ties to the colonial past.

## Summary

Beginning with the transformation of the English monarchy in the seventeenth century and the American and French Revolutions in the eighteenth, the personal ties that bound the privileged aristocracy to their rulers in dynastic states were replaced in nation states by the abstract ideal of a constitutional contract regulating the relationship between ruler and ruled. The contractual nature of society was acknowledged by political guarantees of legal equality and personal freedom, though gender and social class often determined the extent to which these principles were enacted. National revolutions in Latin America, although inspired by European events and ideas, were directed by indigenous leaders and were shaped by the particular cultural context of each region.