

BREVE HISTORIA CULTURAL HISPÁNICA



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Brief Hispanic Cultural History

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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1.1: The Iberian Middle Ages



tens: *tens*
villages: *peoples*
AEC (before the Common Era): period before year one. Traditionally, the abbreviation BC (before Christ) is used.
later: then
loot: to *sack*
point out: to *signal*, to indicate

There are vestiges of human presence in the Iberian Peninsula dating back tens of thousands of years. The peninsula received this name because the Greeks called the peoples who had lived there since ancient times “Iberians”. Between 900 and 650 BCE, groups from Central Europe known by the generic name of “Celts” entered. Later, the Phoenicians colonized Mediterranean areas of the peninsula between the 8th and 6th centuries BCE, the Greeks from the 6th century BCE, and the Carthaginians from 500 BCE. In 205 BCE, the Romans expelled the Carthaginians and by the years 20 BCE they had consolidated the Romanization of the entire peninsula, a territory they designated with the name of Hispania, a term of probable Phoenician origin. The Romans dominated for more than four hundred years and imposed their language, Latin, which centuries later would become the Romance languages of today, such as Castilian, Catalan and Galician. A number of emperors were of Hispanic origin, including Theodosius, who in 380 CE declared Christianity the official religion of the empire. In 409, Hispania was invaded by Germanic peoples —Swabians, Vandals, Alans— and in 410 another Germanic people, the Visigothic, sacked Rome, signalling the decline of the Western Roman Empire. This event traditionally marks the beginning of the European Middle Ages.

The Visigothic Monarchy (415-711)

because: *because agricola*
:
agricultural
servant: *serf*
sir: *lord*

To resist the Suebi, Alans and Vandals, the Romans of Hispania joined forces with the Visigoths, who began to invade almost the entire peninsula in 415. However, since its power was based on a pact with the Hispano-Romans, who were the majority of the population, Latin continued to be the predominant language. But the Roman empire continued to deteriorate and, by the end of the 5th century, the Goth kings were autonomously governing much of the peninsula, although areas remained under the control of other groups. The Visigothic regime emphasized agricultural production, and the Germans were the owners of most of the farmland. This agricultural economy favored the progressive disappearance of slavery and generated a large peasant class. Thus, the old slave system was gradually replaced by feudal-type modes of production: agricultural workers (the serfs) were economically and legally dependent on the owner of the land (the feudal lord).

bishop: *bishop*
kingdom: *kingdom*

[Iberia 560-pt.svg: Medievalist derivative work: Rowanwindwhistler, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)>The Visigoths, many of whom were Christians before, adopted the majority Catholic religion as their creed. They based their legal system on it, and in the name of Catholicism they managed to unify a monarchy with its capital in the city of Toledo, although different areas of the peninsula operated with feudal autonomy. By the year 630, much of the territory, called by some “Spain”, was under the authority of a Gothic monarch in Toledo, where regular meetings of bishops (representing the educated Hispano-Roman population) were held to agree on the laws of the kingdom. This association between religion and political power generated an increasingly intolerant society towards non-Christians. Many Jews, whose ancestors had lived for centuries on the peninsula (which they called Sefarad), had to convert, emigrate or practice their religion in secret, and in many cases lost their property and were forced to live in closed communities (later called aljamas and Jewish quarters). This repression reduced commercial activity, since a large part of the merchant class was Jewish.



as well as: <i>as well as</i>	Struggles for power between feudal lords, as well as various internal conflicts and economic crises, led to the weakening of central power. In 711, Muslims, encouraged by the opponents of the Visigothic king Rodrigo, entered the peninsula from Africa, starting a domination that would last more than seven hundred years.
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Al-Andalus (711-1492)

starting from: <i>beginning in</i> tras: after caliphate: <i>Islamic form of government, led by a caliph, who was initially elected by a council, but since the 700s became a dynasty.</i> Support: <i>Support</i> Strait: <i>Strait</i> Defeat: <i>To Defeat</i> Strengthen: To Consolidate	Starting in 711, the Umayyad Caliphate, which had been expanding after the death of Mohammed in 632, began to invade the Iberian Peninsula from the south, with the support of some opponents of the Visigothic power. Many Jews and poor peasants also saw Muslims as an opportunity to improve their marginalized or poor situation. Under the command of Tarik Ibn Ziyad (who gave his name to Gibraltar: Gebel Tarik, Mount Tarik), about seven thousand men, mostly from the Berber people of North Africa, crossed the Strait and defeated Rodrigo, the Gothic king, taking parts of the south of the peninsula to his capital, Toledo. The following year, another expedition of some eighteen thousand men, mostly Arabs, continued the conquest of almost all of the peninsular territory. Its rapid expansion to the north was finally stopped by the defeat of Poitiers, in the south of France, in 732, which put an end to the spread of Islam to the rest of Europe. The Muslims called the peninsular territories that were under their control al-Andalus. Initially, they were a province of the extensive caliphate of the Umayyad dynasty that had its capital in Damascus (Syria), from where Arab governors were appointed. The Islamic occupation was consolidated through pacts and gestures of tolerance, such as allowing Christians and Jews to practice their religion and hold administrative positions. But there were tensions, especially between Arabs (from Syria and Yemen) and Berbers (from North Africa, considered socially inferior). The Visigoths, for their part, regained control of the northern part of the peninsula.
featured: <i>outstanding</i>	When the Damascus caliphate disintegrated, the Umayyad heir Abd al-Rahman fled Syria in 749. In 756 he reappeared in the Iberian Peninsula and became the emir (governor) Abderrahman I, who established the capital of the emirate in Córdoba, in the south of the peninsula, with an efficient administration, with great encouragement to the arts and commerce. Al-Andalus was transformed into a prominent economic and cultural power.
Tras: after overcoming: <i>overcome</i> zeal: <i>zeal</i>	In 929, after overcoming strong internal political tensions, the eighth Umayyad emir, Abderrahman III, proclaimed himself an independent caliph, beginning a period of great stability and prosperity for al-Andalus. By 1031, however, the caliphate was fragmented by socio-political rivalries. About twenty kingdoms of taifas (groups) were formed, which, divided, facilitated the advance of Christian armies from the north and the occupation from Africa by Berber militias (Almoravids and Almohads), who practiced a much more intolerant religious zeal, forcing the conversion of Jews and Christians to Islam. This further weakened them politically. After a key victory in 1212, Christian armies gained control over more and more territory, and regions governed by Muslims (whom Christians called “Moors”) were shrinking until the last area to the southeast, Granada, capitulated in 1492.



Map of al-Andalus in the year 732, during its greatest extension

The Christian Kingdoms (722-1400)

take advantage: to capitalize on reach: to reach heir: heir	After the Muslims invaded the peninsula in 711-17, some Visigothic leaders took refuge in the mountains to the north, where they won their first victory under Pelayo in 722, at the Battle of Covadonga. For several generations, Christian nobles took advantage of ethnic conflicts between the Muslims themselves to annex other territories to the north, until they reached the Douro River as a border in 910. But in general, these northern kingdoms did not plan a religious reconquest or the permanent union of their crowns. On the contrary, a monarch frequently divided his possessions between two or more heirs, giving rise to dynastic crises that sometimes allowed Muslims to regain territory. The different kingdoms and fiefs united, divided and changed borders periodically according to different marriages, wars and pacts.
Swear: to swear ante: in front of amo: master	An example of this can be seen when King Ferdinand I, around 1065, divided his territories among his sons: Castile for Sancho II, León for Alfonso VI, Galicia and Portugal for Garcia, and the dominion of all the monasteries for his daughters. The brothers fought each other until the kingdoms were united in 1076 under Alfonso who, accused of murdering Sancho, had to swear his innocence before the legendary commander of the Castilian army, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (El Cid). The latter, because of suspicions between León and Castilians, had to go into exile and serve a Muslim master in Zaragoza.



Milestone: Milestone Rewind: Retreat Fortress: Fortress	The reign of Alfonso IV marked a milestone when, in 1085, he occupied the strategic city of Toledo, in the center of the peninsula. Thus, it established the hegemony of the new Castile (merged with León) and began its progressive expansion to the south of the peninsula, full of advances and setbacks, with Portugal to the west and Aragon to the east as allies and competitors. This process, which centuries later was called “the reconquest”, became a coherent political project for Christian kingdoms: a way to obtain more wealth and power, to control internal conflicts, and to sustain an economy of war and land allocation. It also inspired a tradition of songs about the struggle of frontiers (romances) and a unique cultural configuration. Many of the famous castles, for example, were initially fortresses built by Muslims. Christian nobles adapted or built their own according to their needs, which sometimes included defense against their own governed.
War: related to warfare	The social structure of the different Christian kingdoms had many elements similar to the feudalism of the rest of Europe: an economy based on land, a hierarchy of three fundamental groups—the nobles, the clergy and the common people—related by values of loyalty, and an ideology centered on religious and warlike discourse. However, the prolonged contact and confrontation with Muslim society determined crucial differences with French or British feudalism: there were more numerous and populated cities, peasant sectors that owned their own land, and there was a need to establish strong monarchies with a significant naval industry.
on the one hand: one one hand, increasingly: ever more	Ideologically, this contact produced two opposite effects. On the one hand, there were periods when much emphasis was placed on cultural dialogue between Jews, Mohammedans and Christians, such as at the court of Alfonso X of Castile, the Wise (1252-1284), who cultivated an influential school of translation and academic production. On the other hand, a sense of nationality based on confessional belonging was reinforced: the Iberian Peninsula was presented as the center of an irreconcilable struggle between those who would go to heaven thanks to Catholicism and those who were condemned for not converting. This increasingly authoritarian vision made relations between different religious groups generally hostile from the 14th century, until the creation of the Inquisition in 1478 and the expulsion or forced conversion of Jews and Muslims from 1492.

Chronology

Brief chronology of the Iberian Peninsula from the time of the Celts to the Middle Ages (approximate years)	
900-650 BCE*	The Celts penetrate the Iberian Peninsula
700-600	Phoenician colonization
600	Greek colonization
500	Carthaginian colonization
205	Roman colonization
100-300 EC	Christianity reaches Hispania.
380	Christianity becomes the official religion of the Roman Empire.
409	Hispania is invaded by Germanic tribes, of which the Visigoths dominate.
576	The Visigoths establish their capital in Toledo
587	The Visigothic monarchy converts to Catholicism. Jews are progressively marginalized.
711	The Muslims invade and defeat the Visigothic king Rodrigo.
718-32	The Visigoths protect their northern domains and contain the Muslim advance.

756	The Umayyad Emirate begins. Abderrahman I becomes the first emir with Cordoba as its capital.
929	The Caliphate of Córdoba began under Caliph Abderrahman III. Economic and cultural splendour.
1031	The caliphate is fragmented into Taifa kingdoms.
1085	Alfonso VI of Castilla-León annexes Toledo to his kingdom.
1139	The Kingdom of Portugal was born to independent life.
1212-1462	The Muslim kingdoms, weakened, are losing territory to the Christian kingdoms of the north.
1479	Union of Castile and Aragon with the Catholic Monarchs, Isabella and Ferdinand.
1492	The Christians take Granada, the last Muslim kingdom on the peninsula. Jews are expelled.

* The acronym AEC (before the Common Era) is the non-denominational way of referring to the period before year one that the Catholic Church designated as the birth of Christ. Traditionally, the abbreviation BC (before Christ) is used. For later years, D.C. (after Christ), A.D. (Anno Domini) or, in a non-denominational way, EC (Common Era) are used.

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1.2: Civilizations on the American continent up to 1492

height: **height**
barely: *barely*
reach: **to reach, to attain**
also: *furtherly*

Before the arrival of Europeans, the continent that we now call America had one of the most varied human mosaics in the world, made up of numerous racial, linguistic and cultural groups. From the Eskimos in the North Pole to the Mapuches in Patagonia, there were more than 1,700 languages. The variety of human types is evident if we compare, for example, the tall stature of North American Sioux (1.80m = 6 feet) with Colombian and Venezuelan motilones (Caribs), which barely reach 1.40m (four feet and two inches).

The indigenous cultures that have received the most attention in the West are those of the Mayans, the Aztecs and the Incas, because the three civilizations were imperial, urban and had some form of writing or historical record. In this sense, they had similarities with the European civilizations that invaded the continent starting in 1492. In addition, all three have had a particular significance in the construction of the national identities of several Latin American countries, especially Mexico, Guatemala, Peru and Ecuador.

Mesoamerican Civilizations



Mesoamerica. Image: © Sémhur,
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both... and: *both... and agricola:*
agricultural later: *later on*
feathered snake
: feathered **snake**

The civilization that the Mexica called [Olmec](#), one of the oldest in America, developed on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico approximately between 1200 and 400 BC, and extended to the Central Valley of Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador. The astronomy, architecture, and art of this ancient culture influenced both the Mayans and the Nahuas. The Olmecs are famous for the monumental stone head sculptures, the small sculptures in stone and in bluish jade, the hieroglyphic writing, and the irrigation systems that crossed cities and supported agricultural production. The game of ball and the cult of the jaguar-boy were two of the symbolic characteristics of this ancient civilization.

Later, between 200 BC and 500 AD, a culture developed in the Central Valley, whose main city was Teotihuacán. It preserves its pyramids of the Sun and the Moon and the famous temple to Quetzalcoatl (the feathered serpent, called *Kukulkán* or *Gukumatz* among the Mayans), an important heroic figure and embodiment of the divine for Mesoamerican cultures.

The Mayans

, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)">



Mayan region. Image:
[Simon Burchell](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

famous: *very famous as well: in the same way as bas-relief:*
bas-relief codex: *manuscript with pictograms*

The Mayan culture had two periods of expansion. Initially, between the 4th and 9th centuries, they inhabited areas of what is now Honduras and Guatemala, and joined the Quiché culture, which lived in the mountains of Guatemala. In its second era, between the 9th and 14th centuries, the Mayan epicenter was in the Yucatan Peninsula, south of what is now Mexico. When the Spanish arrived in the early 16th century, the Mayan cities were already abandoned, and most of the population lived in rural areas.

The Mayan calendar is famous, one of the most precise of those days, divided into 18 periods of 20 days and an additional period of 5 days of bad luck called *Uayeb* ("nameless"): $18 \times 20 = 360 + 5 = 365$ days. There was also a sacred calendar (*Tzolkin*) of two hundred and sixty days that included the exact calculation of the solar year, of the eclipses, and of the cycles of planets and stars. The mathematical system was also very complex, based on 20 symbols (just as the Western system has ten numbers) that included zero.

In addition to advanced astronomy and mathematics, Mayan architecture produced the most perfect pyramids in the Americas. The squares, formed by square or round columns, were sculpted in bas-relief. The ruins of the religious centers of Chichén-Itzá and Palenque (Mexico), Tikal (Guatemala) and Copán (Honduras) are eloquent testimonies of this admirable monumental architecture.

The writing was hieroglyphic and has been collected in codices, although it also appeared in elaborate murals. Two famous texts were compiled during the Spanish colony in Mesoamerica, with valuable data on the Mayan vision of the world and history: the *Popol Vuh* ("book of the community" in the Quiché language), a sacred text that narrates the origin of the human being, made of corn; and the *Chilam Balam*, a book about mythology, prophecies and outstanding events.

The Nahuas

">



Mexican Empire. Image:
Yavidaxiu, CC BY-SA 3.0
nopal: prickly pear
urbe: large city
rubber: rubber ring; turkey ring:
*turkey ring: turkey: **turkey***

In the Central Valley of Mexico, around Lake Texcoco, a group of cultures that spoke different variants of the Nahuatl language arrived approximately in the 13th century, and for this reason they can be generically named as the Nahuas. According to their legends, they came from the Toltec culture (which means artist or craftsman) and, in the middle of the 12th century, the Chichimecas (a word that connoted “barbarian” or “savage”) invaded from the north, without imposing their own beliefs.

In effect, the **Mexica** (often called Aztecs) came from a legendary northern region called Aztlán (in what is now part of the United States). They founded their capital in the center of a lake because there, according to legend, they found the sign indicated by the gods: an eagle and a snake fighting over a nopal tree. The city, founded around 1325, was called Tenochtitlán. This, by 1428, formed a triple alliance with two other cities —Texcoco and Tlacopán—, consolidating what we now call the great Aztec empire. By 1519, when the Spanish arrived, Tenochtitlán was one of the most impressive cities in the world, with nearly 250,000 inhabitants. Strategically located on an island in Lake Texcoco, the capital was connected to the mainland by means of a series of bridges, which allowed for more efficient defense and control for an empire that had frequent wars.

Among young Mesoamerican nobles, the ball game (ollama), which also had a ritual character, was common. It was played with a ball the size of a soccer ball, made of rubber (rubber). The field was in the shape of a double T or an H, which demarcated the territories for the two teams by means of a central line. The game consisted of propelling the ball and passing it through a hoop in the opposite field without it touching the ground of the field itself, but you couldn't use your hands or feet. That's why players wore skin protectors on the most vulnerable parts of the body, such as the genitals, hips, knees and head. *Among the Aztecs, the field was called the tlachtli.*

Several of its codices and poems are preserved from the Aztec culture, as well as numerous words that are now part of Spanish (chocolate and tomato, among many). The basis of their diet was corn, and they domesticated animals such as dogs and turkey (guajolote). As agriculture was a central activity, an owner lost his right to the land if he stopped cultivating it for two consecutive years.

The Inca Empire

navel: *navel*
 reliefs: *relays*
 accounting: *accounting*
 get ready: *to get ready*

The Inca civilization developed approximately in the 15th century, based on the heritage of several previous cultures. There is evidence that a great urban civilization, with immense constructions, existed on the coast of what is now Peru almost three thousand years before Christ. This civilization then moved to the Andes and from it, later, other important cultures were derived: Chavín de Huantar, Mochica, Nazca, Chimú, Huari and Tiahuanacu. By 1470, the Incas had conquered vast territory and annexed many neighboring cultures.

The empire was called Tahuantinsuya (which means the four regions of the earth), and it occupied everything from what is now southern Colombia to northern Chile, with about ten million inhabitants. The imperial capital was Cuzco, which means “the navel of the world”. The official language was Runasimi, which means “general language”, also called Quechua. The basis of the social structure was a group of families that worked as a community, and it was called the Ayllu. A third of the harvest was for the king (the Inca), another portion for religion, and the other part was distributed among the families of each Ayllu according to their needs.

One of the foundations of Inca imperial success was the efficient construction of nearly 18,000 miles of roads and bridges that linked the capital to the various areas. The *chasquis* were messengers whose mission was to carry orders from the Inca and news to all regions of the empire. They ran long distances and had a relay system in which the quipus were passed, which were instruments composed of knots of different colors and shapes to keep track of the accounts and preserve the memory of the news. The *amauta* (wise man) had the mission of preserving and presenting the historical tradition of the empire on special days.

The two important divinities were Inti or Viracocha (the sun), who fertilized his wife Pacha Mama (the earth) with her rays. A daily greeting from the Incas, which reveals their ethical code, was: “*Ama sua, ama lluclla, ama quella*”, which means “don't steal, don't lie, don't be lazy”. A few years before the Europeans arrived in 1532, the last emperor, named Huayna Cápac, had died without appointing a successor. For this reason, his two sons, Huáscar and Atahualpa, each governed half of the empire, and were at war to unify the Tahuantinsuyo once again. Finally, Atahualpa had defeated his brother and was preparing to proclaim himself sole monarch when Pizarro and his Spanish soldiers arrived.

, via Wikimedia Commons">



Inca Empire. Image: Norki156, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikicommons

The Mayans, Aztecs and Incas were not only influential pre-Columbian empires, but they are also part of the symbolic construction of many Spanish-American nations. In food, too, they left an outstanding legacy for all Western culture: what would European or American cuisine be without Mesoamerican tomatoes and chocolate or without potatoes or Andean potatoes? In addition, their contemporary descendants still make up a significant part of the Mexican, Guatemalan, Ecuadorian, Peruvian and Bolivian population. Quechua, for example, with fourteen million speakers, is the fourth most spoken language in America, and the agricultural, artisanal, artistic and literary production of these peoples constitutes a fundamental element of the economic and cultural heritage of their respective countries.

Other Civilizations

As was said before, mentioning the number of cultures that originated in what we now call the American continent (or Western Hemisphere) is something that goes beyond the limits of this brief history. However, here are some facets of different groups to give a general idea of their great diversity.

Táinos and Caribs

Labrado : carved
stake: swampy stake:
swampy besiege: to
besiege influenza: rising flu:
growing

Columbus' expedition was first found in the country of the Táinos, what today we call The Bahamas, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and Cuba (an island they shared with the Siboneyes).

Although with different linguistic characteristics and customs, Táinos and Siboneyes were peaceful fishing villages that were transported in canoes of various sizes, usually carved in one piece. Some had a capacity for forty rowers. The families lived in palm or cane houses that they called *caneyes* when they were on the ground, or *barbecues* when they were built on a platform of stakes, in the marshy lands. Barbecues were mainly used to store food, such as cassava, and prevent it from deteriorating. Often several families lived in a caney, and the houses were organized around a central square. Festivals and rituals were often held there, in which people danced, theatrical performances were performed with a poetic and historical character, and tobacco was burned as incense or ritually smoked in long wooden pipes. The political leaders were called *caciques*. Most of the members of these peaceful groups disappeared a few decades after the arrival of Europeans, besieged by slavery, violence and diseases for which they were not physiologically prepared, such as influenza and syphilis. Today, however, there are a growing number of activists seeking to recover Taino roots.

Much more belligerent were the **Caribs**, who lived in the Lesser Antilles and on the Atlantic coast of South America, and offered tenacious resistance to European domination. The inhabitants of Lake Maracaibo lived in houses built on stakes over the water (barbecues), and circulated in canoes. Because of its similarity to the Venetian canals, the conquistadores gave this region the name of Venezuela. Because the Caribs fought tenaciously with the Spanish and had a civilization based on war, they became famous as anthropophagous, and from their name comes the term "cannibals".

Music or chibchas

size: size
craft: handicraft

Belonging to the extensive **Chibcha** language family, the Muisca lived in the mountainous area of what is now Colombia. Their economic and social organization was based on agricultural activities, for which they developed sophisticated cultivation techniques in the mountains and in swampy areas, planting corn, tomato, numerous potato varieties and other crops. All of these elements are still part of the contemporary Colombian diet. They had two types of chiefs, depending on the size of the regional community: the *Zaques* led the smaller communities, and the *Zipa* was the leader of the central community, which lived in the *Bacatá* savannah (today Bogotá).

They developed trade using salt as currency (abundant in the mines of Zipaquirá, a few kilometers south of Bogotá), and emeralds (which were abundant in the southeast, in Boyacá). They were also a metallurgical town, and their gold and silver crafts were distinguished by the sophistication of details and miniatures. One of the Chibcha legends that most fascinated the conquistadores was that of *El Dorado*, a mythological place full of gold. As a symbol of its power, the Zipa covered its body with powdered gold, radiating like the sacred sun or Sua, and bathed in the waters of the Guatavita lagoon. The houses also had various gold and silver decorations depending on the social class of the families.

Tupíes and Guaraníes

village: <i>village</i> hunting: <i>hunting</i> fishing: <i>fishing</i> sell out: <i>to get exhausted</i> rubber: <i>rubber</i> environment: <i>environment</i>	Inhabitants of the central part of South America, almost all of what is now Brazil and parts of Paraguay, these two groups belong to a common linguistic family. The Tupí lived in coastal areas close to the Pacific Ocean, and the Guaraní lived in the plateaus and jungle areas of the interior. They were semi-nomadic cultures that founded temporary villages called Tabas. They stayed there for a few months, until hunting, fishing and fruit gathering were exhausted, then they moved to another region. They cultivated yuca or cassava, the basis of their diet, and used yerba mate for medicinal, ritual and stimulating purposes. They also benefited from rubber, which they used for footwear and clothing. Although their entire environment had sacred and divine value, they worshiped a higher power called <i>Tupá</i>, which means “Who are you?” , <i>and to whom the priest-doctors known as Pagés were consecrated</i>. Guaraní culture has an important presence in Paraguay, where the missions of Jesuit priests were very influential during the colony. Today, Guaraní is one of the country's official languages.
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Mapuches (or Araucans)

leadership: <i>leadership</i> drum: <i>drum rattlesnake</i> : jingle rod: <i>cane whistle:</i> whistle cane: <i>whistle</i>	The civilization of the Mapuches (whom the Spanish called “Araucans”) still survives today in regions of Chile and Argentina, thanks to their skills for war and their defensive strategies. <i>The name Mapuche is made up of two parts: “mapu”, which means land, and “che”, which means town (people)</i>. The value of freedom constitutes one of their cultural centers, which they knew how to protect against Incas and Spaniards alike. For them, every culture is vital to the survival of the planet, which dies a little when a civilization disappears. Therefore, it is their responsibility to keep the Mapuche tradition alive, for the well-being of the entire planet. Although before the arrival of the Europeans their priests were men, with the Spanish invasion it became necessary to reorganize their society, and that is how women began to exercise spiritual leadership, with the title of <i>machis</i>. <i>Traditionally lovers of partying, which includes the abundant consumption of an alcoholic beverage called molle, their music includes instruments such as the cultrún (type of drum), cascahuillas (bells tied to the fingers), the trutruce (a kind of cane flute), the pifilca (similar to a whistle) and the trumpet, which uses the throat and mouth as a soundboard</i>. Their language is <i>Mapudungun</i>, which is made up of “mapu” (land) and “dungun” (speech). The Mapuche presence, in particular in poetry, traditional medicine and politics, has gained a place of greater respect and recognition in Chile in the 21st century.
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Some native languages

Some indigenous languages have many speakers, although many are in danger of disappearing because of the pressure to learn the country's dominant language. Two have traditionally been official along with Spanish: Quechua in Peru and Guaraní in Paraguay, and many have been included as a national language in constitutional reforms of the nineties and the 21st century. The following table presents some of the most spoken, although these numbers include speakers of the different dialectal variations of these languages and correspond approximately to the 1990s (Kaufman, Terrence. “The native languages of Meso-America.” and “The native languages of South America.” In Christopher Moseley and R.E. Asher, (eds.), *Atlas of the World's Languages*. London: Routledge, 1994. 34-76):

Idioma	Países	Número de hablantes (1990)
Quechua	Perú, Brasil, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia	8,5 millones
Guaraní	Paraguay	3 millones
Kekchí	Guatemala	1,3 millones
Nahua	México	1,3 millones
Otomí	México	261.000
Totonaco	México	215.000
Miskitu	Nicaragua, Honduras	200.000
Ílvaro	Ecuador, Perú	50.000
Kuna	Panamá	50.000
Emberá	Panamá, Colombia	40.000
Ticuna	Perú, Colombia, Brasil	21.000

To review and think

1. What are some of the reasons why Mayan, Aztec, and Inca cultures have received more attention in the West than other indigenous civilizations in America?
2. What modes of writing and/or recording memory did these three cultures have? Cite a few examples.
3. What are some of its most famous intellectual, aesthetic, religious and social manifestations?
4. What aspects of other, less famous cultures do you find interesting?
5. Explain each of the following words, and indicate what culture they belong to:

amauta - Nahuatl - *Popol Vuh* - Tahuantinsuyo - runasimi - chasquis -
Tenochtitlán - codices - Cusco - Quetzalcoatl - Ayllu - Mapudungún - zipa - Tupá - cacique

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1.3: The 15th Century in Spain

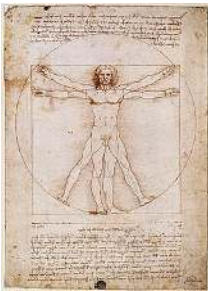


During the 15th century, a way of life different from the feudal system that had been hegemonic in Christian areas until the 14th century took hold in Europe. For this reason, many historians have marked the end of the Middle Ages with significant events of the 15th century: the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453; the invention of printing by Gutenberg around 1455; the creation of central powers united with cities and merchants, the basis of modern States, in Italy (Florence, Venice and Milan dominated around 1406), France (Louis XI prevailed after 1461), Spain (Castile and Aragon were united in 1479), and England (the Tudor dynasty began in 1485); or the great commercial expansion, also called the “Era” of the Discoveries”, in Africa (which Portugal began in 1415) and America (since 1492). It was a period of transition to a new configuration of Western Europe at the economic (mercantilism), political (nation-states) and ideological (Renaissance) levels.

The decline of the feudal system

descent: <i>fall, descent</i> servant: <i>serf</i> lord: <i>lord</i> knight: <i>knight clergy:</i> <i>theocentric</i> clergy: <i>god-centered</i> bishop: <i>Bishop</i>	To put it simply, the feudal system was based on three social classes: the serfs, who worked the land; the lords or knights, who defended the land; and the clergy, who conferred authority on the lords. It was based on a theocentric and hierarchical ideology that legitimated the power of lords and clergy: authority came from God (the Lord) and his representatives: the Pope, the Church, the feudal lords. Life on earth was a path to heaven. Being submissive and loyal to the Lord was the most admirable virtue. Academic activity was focused on the Church—monks, bishops—and on founding or teaching Christianity. Wars, carried out by feudal lords, were justified in the name of religion (the Crusades, for example) or of the protection of serfs.	
famine: <i>famine bubonic</i> plague: <i>black death</i> labor: <i>labor support:</i> <i>to support weakening:</i> <i>weakening strengthening:</i> <i>strengthening</i> landowner: <i>land owner</i> Netherlands: <i>Netherlands</i> growing: growing	But the hegemony of feudalism suffered severe blows in the 14th century. Agriculture, the basis of the economy, was negatively affected by climate changes that generated periodic famines (1315) and by the bubonic plague (1348), which drastically reduced labor. Unhappy with the famines and realizing their chance to earn more, farm workers and city dwellers rose up in popular revolts across Europe. The Catholic Church itself experienced strong internal divisions (in 1378, for example, there were two rival Popes supported by different areas of Europe), which generated wars between princes, peasant protests, the weakening of papal power and the strengthening of national Churches. In addition, given the crisis of the agricultural economy, the merchant class achieved greater prominence, giving rise to an economic system that gradually became predominant and today is known as mercantilism or precapitalism. The group of people dedicated to the growing commercial activity was a kind of middle class that was not poor or dependent like the serfs, but neither was it a landowner nor a warrior like the nobles or the clergy, and did not live in fiefdoms but in villages, also called burgos. That is why they were known as the bourgeoisie, and they began to constitute an economically and socially powerful class. This mercantile process was logically faster and stronger in regions close to coasts and ports, for example in the Italian Peninsula, in Catalonia and in the Netherlands (Flanders, Holland). The combination of these factors, together with the frequent wars and protests that made the countryside unsafe, produced the urban growth of activities such as banks, textile industries and the manufacture of weapons. In this way, in a spiral, cities and fiefdoms began to compete strongly with each other, generating civil wars. The political result was an increasing centralization of power to resolve these struggles. Thus, leaders such as Louis XI in France (1461), the Catholic Monarchs in Spain (1479), or Henry VII in England (1485), began to unify large territories under their authority, creating the first modern monarchical nations, financed for the most part by sectors of the bourgeoisie.	

The Renaissance

Oligarchy: <i>Government by the Rich</i> Fines from: <i>Nearing the Ending of</i>	By the beginning of the 15th century, Italian villages had become powerful city-states —especially Milan, Venice and Florence—functioning as oligarchic republics, that is, controlled by rich bourgeois. Artistic and intellectual production in these thriving cities is associated with a series of cultural changes that reach the present, beginning a period that historians called “Modernity”. The initial period of European Modernity, from approximately the end of the 14th to the 16th century, is known as “the Renaissance” (from the Italian <i>Rinascimento</i>), because in cities a particular interest in Greek and Roman classics as well as in scientific knowledge was reborn. While the medieval academic interest in classical antiquity was mainly aimed at establishing Christian didactics, the Renaissance sought in the classics the foundations for a philosophy of life here on Earth, changing medieval theocentrism with modern anthropocentrism (life centered on the human being). 
sponsor: <i>to sponsor</i> the afterlife (beyond) set: <i>group, set</i>	Renaissance intellectuals used the humanistic method in their studies and explored the complexity of human perception in art. It's not that they rejected Christianity. On the contrary, many of his works were dedicated to religion and were sponsored by the Church. But they no longer conceived of life as a mere bridge to the afterlife, but as a set of experiences to be explored and appreciated in the present (<i>Carpe Diem</i>) [1]. Values are changing. If in feudalism land, hierarchy, loyalty and religion are what give value to life, in mercantilism gold, pleasure, freedom and innovation are more desirable.
earthly: <i>earthly, worldly</i> advance: <i>to advance</i> secular: <i>non-religious</i> such as: <i>such as</i> was happening: <i>started</i> happening cult: <i>cultured</i> pleasurable: <i>pleasurable</i>	The anthropocentric vision is developed within humanism (the <i>Studia Humanitatis</i>), a method of education and thought inspired by Greco-Latin sources, many of which were accessible thanks to the work of intellectuals from al-Andalus in the 12th century, such as Maimonides and Averroes. The aim was to develop all the disciplines (the liberal arts) that would help to better understand human and earthly life. The new humanists began to question medieval political theory, which was based on the authority of God. For example, Dante Alighieri (Florence, 13th century), in his work <i>De Monarquía</i>, defended civil authority over ecclesiastical authority. Other thinkers also advanced this political secularization, such as William of Ockham (an English monk of the 14th century) and Nicholas Machiavelli (Florentine philosopher of the 15th century), who proposed the total separation of powers between Church and State. A parallel separation took place in the field of science, which began to question theological principles based on direct observation, as in the anatomy and botany of Da Vinci (1452-1519) or the astronomy of Copernicus (1473-1543). Cultured arts and literature also distanced themselves from religious-didactic interest and emphasized the human perspective, pleasant harmony and technical or mathematical knowledge (geometry, perspective), as in the case of the famous Florentine artists (Da Vinci, Botticelli, Michelangelo) paid by the bourgeois Medici family.

In short, the Renaissance is the European period during which feudalism, the predominant land-based mode of rural production, begins to decline in the face of mercantilism (precapitalism), a rising mode of urban production based on gold or money. The dogmatic and hierarchical ideology, the basis of feudal sociopolitical cohesion, is questioned by a humanist and liberal thinking fostered by the expansion of trade.

Schematically, these changes can be viewed as follows:

Feudalism (Middle Ages)	Mercantilism (Renaissance and Modernity)
Agricultural economy: owning land is the basis of wealth.	Mixed economy: gold (money) is increasingly important.
Political system: Monarchies or unified cities (governed by noble dynasties, supported by merchants).	Political system: Monarchies or unified cities (governed by noble dynasties, supported by merchants).
Core values: loyalty, hierarchical authority, tradition	Core values: individuality, refinement, innovation

[1] Some historians consider that the bubonic plague was one of the factors that influenced the thinking of the time: people began to concentrate more on present life, because at any moment they could die. Other important events that encouraged the dissemination of classical works and new ideas were the Islamic invasion of Constantinople in 1453 (which forced many Byzantine scholars to emigrate to Western Europe) and the introduction of printing (by Gutenberg, around 1440, with a sociocultural impact comparable to that of today's Internet), which gave access to many sources previously available only to a few.

The Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century

as well as: as well as
uprisings: upheavals

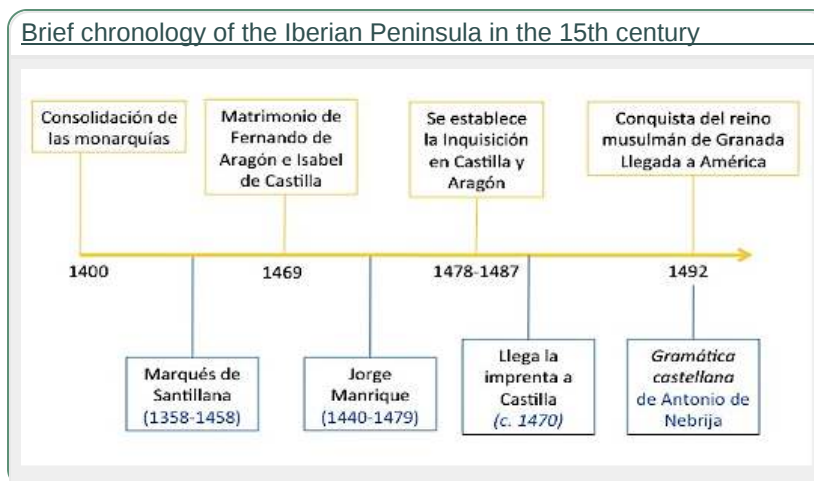
Although the Iberian Peninsula had a very different political and cultural configuration from the rest of Western Europe due to the long presence of Muslim kingdoms—with larger cities, ethnic diversity, greater trade and technology, great academic activity—by the end of the 14th century most of the peninsula was governed by Christian nobles who had a feudal mentality comparable to that of France or England. The reign of Henry III (1390-1406) had laid the foundations for a unified and strong monarchical power in Castile. It governed most of the Peninsula in the 15th century (the other kingdoms were Navarre to the north, Aragon to the east, Portugal to the west, and Granada to the south). During the reign of his successors, John II (1406-54) and Henry IV (1454-74), there were violent internal tensions between nobles, as well as uprisings of cities and peasants, which paradoxically also underscored the convenience of a unifying monarchy.

Image: [Corona de Castilla 1400 es.svg](#); [TyKreinos Antiguo Régimen.jpg](#); Ángel Luis Alfaroderivative work by Mileniouro, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.



mix: <i>Mixture</i> Facing: <i>In Opposition to</i> Chronicler: Courtier Chronicler Verse : Stanza	Part of the monarchy's success was the creation of a large administrative apparatus—the courts—mostly made up of nobles. An important part of court life was the cultivation of study, history, arts and letters, as well as tournaments, parties and shows that included dance, song and poetry. In this artistic and cultural production, a change in mentality is manifested, a mixture between typically feudal values confronted with Renaissance interests. In this sense, the figure of the chronicler and court poet Juan de Mena (1411-1456) is iconic. His masterpiece, the <i>Laberinto de Fortuna</i> (1444), is a 297-stanza poem that celebrates “Spanish” unity under King John II and the ideal of “reconquering” Muslim territories for the Peninsula, and incorporates Greco-Latin sources as the basis of secular authority. This is how it looks, for example, in the dedication: To the very arrogant Don Juan the second, the one with whom Jupiter had such zeal, that he made as much of his part of the world as he did of heaven; to the great king of Spain, to César Novelo, the one who with Fortuna is very fortunate, the one who has room for virtue and reign; to him, the knee stuck by floor. <i>To the very powerful Sir John the second, whom Jupiter loved with such zeal as to set apart for him [king John] a portion of the world as large as the portion he set apart for himself in heaven. To the great king of Spain, the new Caesar, the one who enjoys the favor of Fortune, the one who can hold both virtue and rule. Before him, my knee on the ground forever.</i>
was achieved: <i>was achieved</i> in the finals: <i>towards the end</i> becomes: <i>it becomes</i>	This dreamy Spanish unity was achieved at the end of the century with the marriage (in secret, in 1469) between Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, who united the two crowns in 1479 and obtained the title of Catholic Monarchs from the Pope. His kingdom, which began to be officially called “Spain”, seeks to consolidate its ideological unity through Catholicism, founding the Inquisition around 1478 and expelling or forcing the conversion of Arabs and Jews around 1492. It also promotes linguistic unity by systematizing the use of Spanish, whose first grammar and dictionary were commissioned to Antonio de Nebrija and published in 1492. Simultaneously, it turned from kingdom to empire with the arrival of Columbus to America in the same year.

Chronology



To review and think

1. What economic phenomena began to gain strength in Europe during the 15th century? How does that change political and cultural life?
2. What is the “Renaissance”? Why is it called that? How is it different from the medieval mentality? What values do you emphasize?
3. What was the objective of “the Reconquest” in the Iberian Peninsula? What role did King John II play in it?

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: XVI-XVII Centuries

[2.1: The 16th Century in Spain](#)

[2.2: The Colonial Era in Spanish America](#)

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2.1: The 16th Century in Spain

1500 1600
Renacimiento - **Edad Moderna** - **"Siglo de Oro"** ▶ Barroco

The beginning of Modernity in Spain is conventionally marked by a series of very significant events from the last decades of the 15th century. Spanish unity was achieved with the marriage (in secret, in 1469) between Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, who united the two crowns in 1479 and obtained the title of Catholic Monarchs from the Pope in 1496. [His monarchy, which began to be officially called "Spain", seeks to consolidate its ideological unity through Catholicism, founding the Inquisition around 1478 and, in January 1492, absorbing the last Muslim territory \(Granada\) as well as expelling or forcing the conversion of Jews in July of that same year \[1\], and of Muslims in 1502.](#) The kingdom also promotes linguistic unity by systematizing the use of Spanish, whose first grammar was published by Antonio de Nebrija in 1492. Simultaneously, it became an empire with the arrival of Columbus in America. This expansion, already during the 16th century, brought into circulation wealth and commercial activity in quantities inconceivable until then in Europe. Mercantilism becomes the predominant mode of production and a monetary economy based on international financial relations is on the rise (capitalism is emerging).

The largest kingdom in Europe

Netherlands: *Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg*
 sunset: *set down the sun*

During the 16th century, the Spanish crown became the largest kingdom in Europe. Charles I, grandson of the Catholic Monarchs born in Flanders (Belgium), inherited immense territories in the Iberian Peninsula, Southern Italy, the Netherlands, Austria and Germany, as well as America (the West Indies). This is how Emperor Charles V (1519-1556) became. A little later, his son, Felipe II (1556-1598), also annexed Portugal and the Philippines (named after the Spanish king). His monarchy thus became a global empire, with possessions on five continents, "where the sun didn't set". It was, however, an empire with different laws, languages, administrations and societies for its various components.



European dominions inherited by Charles V of Habsburg (Charles I of Spain) in 1519.

, via Wikimedia Commons">



Spanish empire under Philip II, king of Spain, Portugal (and his possessions in Africa and India), Naples, Sicily, the Indies, the Philippines and the Netherlands (Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium).

[Image: [Trasamundo](#), , CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons]

Pastoral: *of Shepherds*
 face: *to face*
 enjoy: *to enjoy source:*
 source

The reign of Charles V is a paradigm of the rise of the modern centralist state: financed by the bourgeoisie (merchants, bankers) and politically and militarily led by the aristocracy (the nobles). The wealth of the New World was used largely to finance wars with other European kingdoms, to quell internal uprisings, and to pay for an expensive administrative apparatus. Paradoxically, Castile itself continued to be an agrarian and pastoral country with strong class tensions and little industrial development to face rampant inflation. The Spanish army, on the other hand, enjoyed great prestige because of its military victories, but it was the source of great costs and debts for the crown, especially from the second half of the 16th century onwards.

challenge, challenge: challenge reject: to reject avoid: to avoid Council: a major summit of Bishops to reform the Church to entrust: to trust, to put in charge censorship: censorship heretic: heretic, non-believer both... and: both... and...	Politically, a challenge for Charles V was to face the Protestant Reformation (Luther, Calvin and others) associated initially with serious challenges to imperial authority in areas of what is now Germany, such as mass peasant revolts (1524-26) and the military confrontation with princes who had rejected Catholicism (1531-44). Charles V won this confrontation in 1547, although he later legalized Lutheranism there in 1555). To prevent such wars in the name of religion from happening in other parts of its empire, the Spanish administration promoted the Council of Trent (in Italy, 1545-63). This enacted a series of changes in Catholicism known as the Counter-Reformation. One of them was to entrust to the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits, founded by the Basque Saint Ignatius of Loyola in 1539) the intellectual and peaceful struggle against Protestantism. This encouraged the study and production of texts, as well as a renewal of Christian practices with the new individual and precious spirit of the era that had begun a few decades earlier. The Inquisition was also especially reinforced in Spain, with the official mission of guaranteeing Catholic orthodoxy through the censorship, often violent, of books, people and ideas. This institution had also served formerly unofficial functions, such as strengthening political authority, facilitating ideological and territorial unity, and enriching the Crown by confiscating the properties of convicted heretics (for example after expelling many Jewish bankers and merchants in 1492). Philip II further emphasized this connection with Catholicism, of which he proclaimed himself a defender, both against Protestants and Turks (Ottoman Empire).
versus: facing, regarding	Another significant element for European life in the 16th century was the colonization of the Indies (America) and the supervision of world explorations. Faced with these processes, a controversy develops in Spain about the morality of colonialism and how “Indians” should be treated. But at the same time, a rapid invasion of the American continent is being financed — one of the few options for social promotion for many inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula. In addition, a series of explorations, such as the famous one by Fernando Magallanes that went around the world, brought the kingdom considerable wealth.
Muslim: Muslim cleanliness: cleanliness, purity moriscos: Spanish Muslims	At the same time, Spanish society experienced deep regional, ethnic and legal divisions. The situation of Jewish and Muslim converts (forced to practice Christianity) was one of those hotbeds of division, with times of tolerance and times of hostility. By 1547, many civic and religious institutions adopted a policy of “blood cleansing” that treated the descendants of converts as second-class citizens and privileged “old Christians” (not of Jewish or Muslim descent). Many nobles and members of the clergy opposed it, including the founder of the Jesuits, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, favoring a policy of peaceful assimilation. But influential sectors of the Crown and the Inquisition often insisted on this bloodletting. There were also rebellions, such as that of the Moors in 1568, which were violently suppressed.
values: values focused: focused	Within these tensions and transformations, a redefinition of values took place. The concept of honor, for example, which had been as significant in the feudal era as the characteristic of courageous nobles, is now connected with the cleansing of blood from “old Christians”. Critically, several literary works of the time represent with irony the contradictions between appearances and real behavior, in many cases promoting the idea that honor should not be based on class, race or reputation, but on inner virtue. In a similar way, rituals and religious hierarchies are questioned with humanistic principles and with a conception of spirituality that is more focused on inner experience.

[1] Edict of Granada: “We have decided to order that all Jews, men and women, leave our kingdom, and never return. With the exception of those who agree to be baptized, all others must leave our territories on July 31, 1492 to stop returning under penalty of death and confiscation of their property (...).” This decision had also been economically motivated, but paradoxically it delayed banking development in Spain,

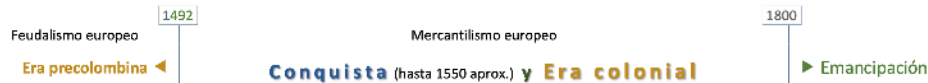
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2.2: The Colonial Era in Spanish America

Spanish America in the 16th and 17th Centuries



play: to play (a role)
news: present time
saying: telling
delicacy: valuable
delicacy: valuable
valuable
current: current,
present not to
mention: not to
mention

The European invasion of what is now America plays a very significant role in the way in which European and American cultures are imagined and related today. What we call America would not exist and could not be thought of without foreign exploration and colonization. And today's Western Europe, too, was profoundly modified and shaped by that same history. The examples of the diet are simple but telling. The food of many European countries, from Italy to Ireland, wouldn't be the same without the South American potato or the North American tomato. *And even further: one of the delicacies among Caribbean populations was a fruit called pineapple.* Because of its shape similar to pine fruits, the Spaniards called it pineapple, and the Europeans spread it across five continents, until it became a fundamental element of the cuisine of Thailand and Cambodia. The economy, sociopolitical structures, diet, arts and letters, as well as the general self-perception of these populations, are marked by colonial history.



Christopher Columbus's arrival in America, by Théodor de Bry, 1594.

Objectives of colonization

[achieve: to accomplish - moros: Moors - ensure: to secure - reward: to reward - because, since - it had to: one had to - from overseas: overseas]

By 1492, Spain had established itself as one of the first European nations to be unified under a central government in the modern era. This had been achieved after several centuries of armed struggle against the Arab presence in the Iberian Peninsula. With the expulsion of the last Moors from the south, in Granada, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon—the Catholic Monarchs—secured their domination of the new unified kingdom that was now Spain. Also in that year, the expulsion of Jews (or their forced conversion to Christianity) was decreed, and the first Spanish grammar was published (Antonio de Nebrija 1441-1552).

These data reveal three of the ideological and political bases on which Spanish expansion began in America:

1. First, there was a very organized army eager for new heroic conquests in the name of Christianity.
2. Secondly, Catholicism, the Spanish language and the absolutism of the Crown were the unifying elements of the new national identity.
3. And a third factor, no less important, was expansive ambition, in search of wealth to reward the heroes of the Reconquest and sustain an economy based on war and land ownership. As trade began to flourish in Europe, the buying and selling of goods was a fundamental social dynamic that used gold and silver as currencies of exchange.

Thus, the colonization of America had, in the ideological sphere, an evangelizing mission: to heroically Christianize the world, through conversion or fear. On a political scale, their role was to expand the dominance of the Spanish Crown, consecrated to the Catholic faith. In the economic field, we had to find precious metals, compete commercially with the rest of Europe, and give land to Spanish heroes and to the Church. That is why the conquest was fundamentally a military operation, but also an evangelizing one, which advanced in search of gold and silver to the extreme south of the continent, in the hope of finding the legendary “gold”. Typical are the images of the Spanish conquistadores with their armors and horses, always accompanied by Catholic priests, converting the indigenous people or fighting them, and founding cities in the name of God and the king.

Once vast terrain had been conquered, the military effort soon focused on neutralizing the intervention of other powers in the area, such as the English buccaneers. In addition, the Spanish Crown established a strong commercial monopoly over its overseas territories, and an authoritarian, bureaucratic and hierarchical structure that lasted more than three centuries. This structure, which considered the domination of Europeans over indigenous people and Africans to this day, continues to influence the culture, economy and politics of the region in many ways.

Cultural impact of the conquest

involved: *involved*
currency: *currency as*
well as: *as well as*
famous: *famous*
for having: *for having*

besieged: *to siege*
achieve: *to manage to*
instead: *in contrast*

gift: *gift*
a kind of: *a sort of*

The geography of Latin America is full of references to the characters involved in the conquest. The name of Colombia and the Costa Rican currency, the Colón, are the most obvious allusions to the famous Genoese navigator who started this process. The central park of the city of San Diego, California, as well as the Panamanian currency, are named after the Spanish Vasco Núñez de Balboa (1475-1519), an explorer of the Pacific Ocean. An important city in Chile honors the name of Pedro de Valdivia (1500-1553), who explored that southern region and also founded the city of Santiago. But the two most famous conquistadores, for having led the conquest of the two vast indigenous empires, are Hernán Cortés (1485-1547) and Francisco Pizarro (1478-1541).

Cortés began the famous conquest of the Aztec empire from Cuba in 1519, with only five hundred soldiers and about sixteen horses. In just over a year, with the help of other indigenous peoples who were dominated by the Aztecs, the Spanish besieged and succeeded in dominating the city of Tenochtitlán. Two important names in this process are: 1) Moctezuma II, the Aztec emperor who received the Spaniards as superior beings, fell prisoner to them and died in 1521, shortly after the so-called “sad night”, in which the Spaniards were besieged by the Mexica; and 2) Prince Cuauhtémoc, who continued to fight to the end resisting the seizure of Tenochtitlán and was finally executed by Cortés in 1525. It is ironic that there are no monuments to Hernán Cortés in Mexico, and instead there are plenty of streets and parks named in honor of the young Cuauhtémoc, considered a national hero. Even today, the legendary indigestion that visitors to Mexico City suffer when they drink local water is called “Moctezuma's revenge”.

Another key figure in the conquest of Mexico is La Malinche, one of the nineteen women that the chief of Tabasco, in Yucatán, gave to the Spanish as a gift in 1519. It seems that her title in Nahuatl was Malintzin, and she was born into the Aztec culture, but from a very young age she had been handed over as a slave to the Tlaxaltecs (Mayans) of Yucatan. Cortés made her his lover, baptizing her with the name of Doña Marina. She became essential as a translator because, in addition to Mayan languages, she also spoke the Nahuatl of the Mexica and soon learned Spanish as well. Cortés, in one of his letters, noted that, after God, his victory over the Aztecs was due to Doña Marina. She had a son named Martín Cortés, whom the conquistador recognized as his own. The figure of La Malinche has become a very important symbol, a kind of Mexican Eva: the mother of miscegenation because of her relationship with the conquistador. In this country, until a few years ago, the adjective “malinquista” was synonymous with “traitor”. *A very famous representation of this character as a symbol of the social tensions that originated from the conquest in Latin America is the painting made around 1926 by the muralist José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), called Cortés and La Malinche.* More recently, his figure has been claimed as a symbol of the mixes and negotiations that the oppressed need to carry out in order to survive and resist. These versions articulate the limitations of this woman as a slave, and her constructive role as mediator is emphasized, acquiring particular literary and historical relevance for the Chicano and Latino populations of the United States who, like her, have to navigate between two cultures and languages in conditions of inferiority.



find out about: *to find out*
 after: *after*
 threat: *threat*
 bodyguard: *bodyguard*
 because: *because*,
 since the facts themselves :

the facts themselves
 imply: *to involve*
 quoted: *quoted*
 codex: *codex*
 relation: *account, narration*
 mistreatment: *mistreatment*
 amazement:

Amazment

Pizarro began the famous conquest of the Inca Empire from Panama in 1531, with two hundred soldiers and about 65 horses. By 1532, the Spanish had crossed the Andes Mountains to the Inca town of Cajamarca, where they learned that the Inca army had thousands of soldiers. There, the conquistadores requested an interview with the Inca Atahualpa, who shortly before had been crowned emperor after a civil war against his brother Huáscar. The Sapa Inca (supreme chief), considered a demigod among his people, was not particularly concerned about the threat of foreigners and, after making them wait several days, arrived with about three hundred lightly armed bodyguards. But, upon their arrival, the Spanish attacked and took prisoner the emperor, who agreed to have a 17x22x10-foot room filled with gold and silver to pay his ransom. However, once the payment was received, Pizarro decided to execute Atahualpa and installed easily manipulated Inca leaders. By November 1533, the Spanish marched on Cuzco, the capital of the Tahuantinsuyu (Inca Empire), without meeting resistance. But because Cuzco was too remote in the mountains, Pizarro decided to found in 1535 near the coast a new capital for the Spanish empire, the city of Lima. There he died, murdered by other Spaniards, in 1541.

As important as the events themselves is the impact that the chronicles of the conquest had on the European and Latin American imagination. Latin American literature, from the colonial era to the 21st century, is full of allusions to these chronicles and to the perception they implied. The best known and most cited about Mexico are the *True History of the Conquest of New Spain* (1568) by Bernal Díaz del Castillo (ca. 1495-1584) and the codices of indigenous texts (such as the Florentine codex of Bernardino de Sahagún [1500-1590] and others). The most read about Peru are the *New Chronicle and Good Government* (1615) by the Andean Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, and the *Royal Commentaries* (1609-1617) by the mixed race Garcilaso de la Vega, the Inca (1539-1616). Regarding the Caribbean area, where colonization began, the most controversial chronicle is that of the Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), whose *Very Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1552) strongly criticized the mistreatment of indigenous people and became a forerunner of human rights as we know them today. These are the beginnings of a literature in which fiction and history are mixed, as are races and worldviews from diverse backgrounds. Today's Latin American cultures are clearly the product of these encounters full of violence, wonder, outrage and mutual learning.



Political and social structures

[viceroy: *Viceroy* - hearer: *court official* - desire: *eagerness* - profit: *profit* - comply: *to acknowledge* - landowner: *large land owner* - owner: *owner* - wealthy: *with a lot of money*]

A few decades after the arrival of Columbus in 1492, the Spanish administration already had a very organized hierarchy in the Indies (today America), which were considered part of the national territory. The king directly delegated his authority to a Spanish nobleman with the title of viceroy. During the 16th century, two viceroyalties were established: that of New Spain, created in 1535 with its capital in Mexico City, included all the territory of old Mexico (from New Mexico, Texas, California to what is now Guatemala); and that of Nueva Castilla, established in 1543, whose capital was Lima, which replaced the Inca Empire (today Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia). With a lower political hierarchy, there were more militarized territories, governed by captains: the captaincies of Guatemala (up to what is now Panama), of Cuba (which included Hispaniola and Puerto Rico), of Venezuela and of Chile. In the 18th century, two other viceroyalties were created: La Nueva Granada, with its capital in Bogotá (1739), and Buenos Aires, with its capital in La Plata (1776).

In addition to the viceroys, there was a judicial institution in America called the Audiencia, made up of about eight hearers who controlled the political authorities. Viceroys, in addition, were frequently visited by representatives of the king to monitor their loyalty to the Crown. This complicated political apparatus responded, in part, to the Spanish Crown's constant concern to control its territories in America. But it also reflected the internal debates of the Spanish government, which on the one hand encouraged the

profit motive and forced labor of indigenous people and Africans, but on the other hand enacted laws to protect the Christian rights of indigenous people and prevent abuse. Authority was contradictory and diffuse. A common saying in the colonies was: “the law is obeyed but not enforced”, that is, the king’s mandate was recognized, but his laws had little impact on practice. For example, for religious and political reasons, slave trafficking was prohibited in all Spanish territories — the slave traders were English, French, Portuguese and Dutch — but in reality the buying and selling of African slaves was a fundamental part of the colonial economy.

The social pyramid of the Iberian colonies was quite fixed, and was based on a clear unequal distribution of wealth, work and race. At the top of the pyramid, with the greatest political and economic power, were the Spaniards who came from Europe. Along with them, but with less political influence, were the Criollos: Spanish “thoroughbred” Americans who were generally landlords and had full access to education. In the middle stratum, almost always artisans or small landowners, were the Mestizos: these were a mixture of indigenous and Spanish. On a descending scale, there were a large number of other “castes” or racial mixes: mulattos (black and Spanish), zambos (black and indigenous), etc. Finally, at the base of the pyramid and destined for the hardest jobs in mining and agriculture, were indigenous people and African slaves.

These political and social structures were also expressed in urban development. The cities were organized around a central main square, where the weekly market was held, and where the government palace and the main church or cathedral were located. Near the square lived the most influential personalities—authorities, wealthy Spanish and Creole families—and there were convents and universities. The lowest-ranking citizens lived in the periphery: mixed race, mulatto, indigenous people. Thus, the cities reflected the stratification of the colony, based on the “purity” of Spanish blood, and with very few possibilities to climb the social ladder. But this structure also expresses the continuous contact between different classes and groups in the Plaza Mayor, for the market, the Audiences, and the religious festivities that, in addition to sexual contact between the different castes, created the cultural and racial syncretism that today characterizes Latin America.

Economic and Cultural Life

[sugar mills: sugar refineries - labor: manual labor - unworthy: despicable - plow: to plow - rooted: deeply rooted - through: by means of - brick - town: common people - censorship: censorship - carol: religious song - play: play]

The colonial economy had three bases: agriculture, mining and trade. The greatest wealth came from the exploitation of gold and silver mines, such as that of Potosí in Bolivia, or that of Zacatecas in Mexico. Cotton crops and sugar mills were also of great importance, especially in the Caribbean and Brazil. The Spanish and the Creoles were the owners and managers of the lands, while the indigenous people and the African slaves were the labor force, both in the mines and in the agricultural crops. It was typical for Spanish colonists to consider physical labor unworthy, as Hernán Cortés stated when he arrived in America: “I have not come to plow the land as if I were a peasant.” This tradition of maintaining a privileged minority in political power and a poor majority dedicated to agricultural and manual labor is still rooted in the social organization of most Latin American countries.

The indigenous people, who were not slaves but citizens, were obliged to work through institutions based on taxes or military “protection”. These institutions were la mita (taxes paid with working time) and la encomienda (land “protected” by a Spaniard who had to ensure the welfare of the indigenous people, who in return worked for him for free). The Spanish metropolis had a monopoly on the market, so the trade between some colonies and others was prohibited: they all sent their goods directly to Spain. However, smuggling and piracy were common practices. Industry was never a very significant part of this monopoly, and it was mainly concentrated on the manufacture of some products for domestic consumption (clothing, food, bricks, etc.). Creoles and mixed race people generally control these types of local industries.

But not everything in the colony was economic exploitation or political bureaucracy. Cultural life also manifested itself through educational institutions (controlled by the Church), art and religious festivals, newspapers, scientific expeditions, the creation of a new and varied diet, architectural production, a rich tradition of oral legends, and literary production based on chronicle and poetry. In parallel with the social structure, the Spanish viceroyalties in America had few educational institutions for the people in general, but they established prestigious universities very early on for the Spanish and the Creoles, the future administrators. In Lima, for example, the University of San Marcos was founded in 1552, which has continued to operate until today.

The censorship of books by the Catholic Inquisition was stricter in America, where all novels, including the famous work of Miguel de Cervantes, were banned. Therefore, literary cultivation was concentrated on historical chronicles and poetry. In practice, however, there was a continuous smuggling of European novels: it has been discovered that in 1605, the same year that Don Quixote was published, there were numerous volumes of this work in Cartagena (Colombia) and Lima (the law is complied with but not enforced!). In addition, since 1535, many printing presses were operating in Hispanic cities in America. The most famous

writer of the colonial era, and probably one of the most brilliant minds to produce the New World, was Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651-1695), who from a young age impressed the court of New Spain with her vast knowledge. This brilliant writer, who became a nun in order to cultivate intellectual activity without the restrictions of marriage, was famous for her baroque poems, carols and plays, as well as for her *Response to Sister Philotea of the Cross* (1691), which defends women's right to education.

It was this multiple and contradictory heritage, full of possibilities and limitations, that shaped what is now called Latin America. Its baroque aesthetic, its ethnic diversity, its economic and social paradoxes, find their roots in colonial history, in which the new European powers fought for the land and labor of indigenous and African people. In the process, both America and Europe transformed and influenced each other, in vertical relations in terms of political and economic power, but horizontal or oblique in relation to cultural heritage.

Literary activity

[deeds: heroic deeds - viceroyalty: viceroyalty - seat: seat, head office - bishop: bishop - worldview: world view - playwright, dramatist]

Spanish colonization advanced rapidly through what we now call America, which in those centuries was known in Spain as “The Indies”. Around a first period of exploration, a Renaissance epic developed with extensive poems and detailed chronicles of the deeds of conquest, such as the *Elegies of Illustrious Men of the Indies* (c. 1590) by Juan de Castellanos or *La Araucana* (1569-90) by Alonso de Ercilla. These texts record the intellectual impact that the exploration of an unknown continent had on the European psyche, including the amazement at new products and ways of life, as well as the ethical dilemma faced with unknown cultures. The epic highlights the spirit of adventure and heroism, particularly among the Spaniards, who on the one hand had few opportunities for social promotion under the Christian feudalism of the peninsula, and on the other hand remembered the long wars against Muslims. In the New World, the Spanish monarchy found the riches and inspiration that enabled it to become the political arbiter of Western Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. On the other hand, some Nahua and Inca texts are preserved that narrate the conquest from the point of view of the invaded. A well-known Nahuatl poem is the anonymous “After the Defeat”, which narrates the disasters of the European conquest from an Aztec point of view (by Anonymous of Tlatelolco, 1528, trans. Ángel María Garibay).

[Carmen San Luis Potosí Temple, Orobroy1, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)>In a second phase, already properly colonial, two main seats of government were established on the basis of the great Mexico and Inca empires: in Mexico, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, in 1535; and in Lima, the Viceroyalty of Peru, in 1542. Both were governed by direct representatives of the king (the viceroys), with institutions modeled after the image of Spain. Lyric poetry flourishes around these administrative centers, with great prestige and abundance. Numerous events, contests and ceremonial occasions (such as visits by viceroys or bishops) offered poets the opportunity to publicly present their works. Baroque poetry, cultivated in the courts and universities of the New World, is dressed in the color and themes of the American people and lands.

This is how the “Baroque of the Indies” or New Hispanic (of New Spain) was formed. Baroque - a style characterized by complexity, paradox and abundance - was the conquering imperial art: it was used in the evangelization of the natives, and for this reason it accentuated their religious character many times. But it also merged in various ways with local —indigenous— arts and worldviews, thus producing mixed-race works of art, making the levels of complexity and paradox even richer.

Baroque is also where the idea of the American as Spanish and indigenous at the same time appears for the first time, as can be seen in numerous works of architecture, including pre-Columbian figures superimposed on angels and European saints. Playwrights such as Juan Ruiz de Alarcón (Mexico 1572-1639) and poets such as Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz wrote most of their work in Spanish, competing in talent with Spanish authors, without antagonizing them, but with the implicit intention of demonstrating that the Criollos (the Spanish of America) were as ingenious and talented as the peninsular authors. Some of them, at the same time, composed works in languages or with indigenous symbols, pointing out that they belonged to a hybrid, Hispanic but also indigenous world.

The narrative was, in general, prohibited by the Inquisition in Latin America. For this reason, the essay was the most cultivated prose, especially in the form of letters, which represented some of the fundamental debates about power, the role of religion and laws, the rights of American subjects and the Spanish vision of civilization in its territories of the Indies.



Brief chronology from the time of the Spanish conquest to the beginning of the colonial era

1492-1504	Four Columbus voyages exploring areas of the Caribbean, Central and South America. Columbus dies thinking he has explored areas of Asia (“The Indies”).
1507	For the first time, the name America is used (in Germany) because of the fame of explorer Americo Vespucci’s letters about his journey to what he calls a “New World”.
1513	Vasco Núñez de Balboa discovers the “South Sea”, which will later be called the Pacific Ocean.
1519	Ferdinand Magallanes begins his first trip around the world.
1519-22	Conquest of Mexico under the leadership of Hernán Cortés.
1532-33	Conquest of Peru under the command of Francisco Pizarro.
1535	The viceroyalty of New Spain (today Mexico) is created.
1538	The University of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) is founded.
1543	The Viceroyalty of Peru (Nueva Castilla and Nuevo Toledo) is created.
1553	The universities of Mexico and Lima are founded.

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2.3: The 17th Century in Spain



increasing: growing
size: size
weaken: to weaken
 references: **referents**,
 objects to represent
 and process

If in the 16th century the Spanish crown became the largest and possibly the richest kingdom in Europe, thanks in part to its colonial expansion, which made immense quantities of gold, silver and other valuable products available, by the end of the 17th century rising inflation; internal regional, economic and ideological tensions; tactical errors within complex European politics; political corruption and the size of the administrative apparatus, among other factors, were weakening Spanish power. The aristocratic class, however, generally enjoyed great wealth in these two centuries and, especially in the arts and letters, had a great influence in Europe. That is why this period is known as “The Golden Age”, with well-known figures to this day, such as El Greco (1541-1614), José de Ribera (1591-1652), Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664) and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682) in painting, mystical poets (Teresa de Ávila, Luis de León, Juan de la Cruz), baroque poets (Luis de Góngora, Francisco de Quevedo), and the playwrights Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca and Tirso de Molina. It is also the century of Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616). The great influx of wealth, merchandise and references during this period, in which people were moving from small feudal or Renaissance kingdoms to powerful imperial monarchies, generated an awareness of complexity and an aesthetic of excess, today known as the Baroque [1].



“In Ictu Oculi” (*In the Blink of an Eye*), by Juan de Valdés Leal, 1672.

The Baroque: multiplication of commodities, of references, of meanings

The truth, the more difficult, the more pleasant it is,
 and the knowledge it costs is more valued.”
 —Baltasar Gracián, conceptist from Aragon (1601-1658)

*The most difficult truth is, the most enjoyable,
 and when knowledge takes effort, it is more highly valued.*

Netherlands: Netherlands
increasingly: more and more
provide: to contribute
loan: loan
underline: to underline
around: around
malestar: unrest soul: soul
regarding: with respect to the
tradition of rupture: a tradition of breaking with tradition (a concept coined by Mexican thinker Octavio Paz).
label: seal, mark
imbalance:

During the 16th and 17th centuries (1500-1700), Western Europe was in full expansion of mercantilism or precapitalism, that is, an economy based on international trade. Having large quantities of precious metals (gold and silver) determined financial hegemony, because with them large armies and all kinds of basic and luxurious products could be paid for. This mercantile process was particularly strong in the most colonialist nations such as Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, England and France, with access to workers and mines in many parts of the world. The absolute monarchy made it possible to neutralize part of the power of the feudal lords and facilitated commercial monopolies. Although the bourgeois social class was increasingly economically and socially powerful, characterizing what we now call “Modernity”, the aristocratic class (the nobles) still had a lot of political power. For this reason, the monarchical model was successful, since at the same time it respected aristocratic hierarchies, it allowed the influence of the bourgeoisie (bankers, merchants, incipient industrialists) through the money they provided in taxes and loans to the Crown. It also unified currency, language, military, and laws across larger territories, facilitating and protecting commercial exchange. Already in *The Prince* (1513), the Italian Macchiavello had emphasized the need to have strong states, unified around common interests.

Ideologically, it is a period of great scientific, aesthetic and philosophical innovation. It is time to consolidate a new model of life in response to the constant changes introduced by commercial and colonial expansion, and also in dialogue with the unrest caused by these changes. The Earth is no longer the center of the universe (Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler); a scientific (Pascal, Newton) and

artificial *lack of balance* :
contrived, affected
contrapposite (it.) :
counterpoise: a human figure standing with most of its weight on one foot.
restlessness: *restlessness*
because: thus
challenge: reflection (thought)
reflection: reflection (thought)
reflection: reflection (mirror image)
Bet: *to bet*
impressive: *imposing*
both... and
what it should: *what it should*

Defeat: *defeat*

to crumble: *to crumble*

As can be expected: *as can be expected*

Ingenious: *witty*

hyperbole: *exaggeration*

Hyperbaton: *Alteration of Normal Word Order, Use of Latin Syntax*

cult: *cultured*

Lutheranism: *Lutheranism*

a kind of heresy: *a sort of heresy*

philosophical (Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Spinoza) revolution is taking place that seriously questions the religious conception of the world. It is an epistemological and ethical crisis. Observation begins to be more important than faith, logic more than dogma, money and ostentation more than land or loyalty, the individual more than authority. The concept of humanity is a moral and ideological battlefield: are the colonized as human as the colonizers? What defines us as human: the soul or the capacity to think? What gives us Europeans the authority to dominate other parts of the world, where does our superiority come from? Self-reflection is a notable feature of thinking in this era. There is a multiplicity of stimuli: more books, more objects, more languages, more stories, more people and exotic products that we didn't know anything about a few decades ago.

In art and literature, originality is increasingly important, the creation of styles that fascinate a refined public and that demonstrate novelty compared to what was in fashion a few decades earlier. A "tradition of rupture" begins. Many painters, architects, musicians and writers must now exhibit not only extreme virtuosity in their field, but also the ability to leave a personal stamp, to create their own and influential style, or to attract different types of audiences (not only court nobles but also rich bourgeois). Thus, the Western aesthetic of this time seeks to innovate in the face of Renaissance styles, which tended to naturalness and balance. In contrast, many creators are now looking for beauty in imbalance and artificiality. This aesthetic of excess is sometimes classified into successive periods called Mannerist (16th century), Baroque proper (17th century) and Rococo or Late Baroque (18th century). If the Renaissance *counterpart* suggested calm and equanimity, for example, the Baroque exaggerates it to inspire restlessness and agitation. If Renaissance were associated with the harmony of the circle, Baroque would be the eccentricity of the ellipse.^[2]

It is understandable that in this era of abundance and passionate debates, an aesthetic characterized by excess appears: pomp, exploration of the infinite, the challenge of limits, intensity, constant self-reflexivity (the works are like mirrors of themselves or reflections on representation). This excess can be associated with the tremendous amount of merchandise, technical advances and presences of other cultures that invade Europe. It is also linked, of course, to rising economic inflation. The value and authenticity of everything is questioned: of things, of principles, of words, of life. The fascination with complexity (of forms, of concepts, of references, of construction) and ostentatious ornament are characteristic. The baroque key is the counterpoint, the decentralized, the difficulty.

Another factor that contributes to the shaping of this aesthetic, especially in painting, is the Counter-Reformation of Catholicism. The Council of Trent (1545-63), which celebrated the Catholic Church in response to Protestant reforms in Germany, Switzerland and England, among others, emphasized the importance of using art to teach doctrine without direct recourse to the Bible, and of associating strong emotions with devotion to the Christian faith. Dramatism then became a desirable stylistic note, in particular for works paid for by Catholic patrons. This would explain, in part, why many of the earliest manifestations of Baroque appeared in Catholic Europe (Spain, France, Italy). Questioned at its core, ecclesiastical authority is committed to ostentation: an extreme passion for radical values (reform of religious communities, mysticism), for the defense of dogma (the Inquisition), for imposing luxury and spectacularity (immense churches, full of gold and famous art; great rituals). Monarchical culture also promotes similar values, such as pomp, majesty, and exhibitionism. Paradoxically, both the Church and the monarchy are in crisis: they no longer fully believe in what they represent. Money and citizen participation support them materially, but ideologically they are justified by anachronistic values such as lineage and vertical authority. Representation is in crisis, nothing seems to mean what it should, the senses are multiplying, there is no coincidence between words and things.

The situation of Spain in the Baroque era is paradoxical. It begins during the energetic reign of Philip II (1554-98), when the Spanish Empire "didn't set the sun" because it had lands all over the world, and goes approximately to Charles II (1665-1700), the last king of the Habsburg dynasty, when the Spanish crown lost control of Portugal (1668) and shortly before losing the Netherlands (1713), among other territories. It is a time of great wealth for the elite, largely because of the metals and products of the Spanish-American territories, but also of great poverty for the people, because of widespread corruption; of military power and international politics, but also of serious defeats and constant challenges against other nations in Western Europe; of strong authoritarianism, but of profound internal

fragmentation; of splendour in literature and painting (it is the “Golden Age”), but also of pessimism because of the feeling of living in an empire that is crumbling under inept rulers; of great cultural influence over Europe and America, but also of religious dogmatism that hinders intellectual development; of commercial monopoly over the Indies, but also of smuggling and piracy; of great colonial exploitation, but also of strong internal debates about the ethics of slavery and the treatment of indigenous people; of great ethnic diversity, but of obsession with the cleansing of blood and doctrinal purity.

As is to be expected, a very notable feature of Spanish literary baroque is its taste for paradox, debate and satire. In Spain at that time, there were two schools vying for poetic hegemony. **Conceptism**, more associated with Castile and Aragón, preferred to be fast, ingenious, relatively concise, and to use word games and hyperbole to convey the complexity of unconventional concepts. Its main representative was Francisco de Quevedo from Madrid. **Cultheranism**, more associated with Andalusia, was very ornate, extensive, full of cultured references and hyperbaton to show off formal complexity and scholarship. Its main representative was Luis de Góngora from Córdoba. Spanish Baroque poetry then seems almost like a dramatic work between famous rival poets, enemies. In fact, the term “cultheranism” was invented by its opponents, in a typically conceptist game, combining “cult” with “Lutheranism”, to present it as a kind of poetic “heresy”. Both schools, however, are a clear expression of baroque aesthetics —decentered, excessive, in internal debate, dynamic—, of the epistemological crisis that occurred in Western Europe during these centuries, and of the privileged role that poetry played as a discursive genre in articulating this crisis.

[1] The word baroque was used by later critics to refer to this artistic era. That is, the creators of the XVI-XVIII centuries did not call their style “baroque”. For a long time (18th and 19th centuries) it had a pejorative meaning with the meaning of excessive and irrational. The term possibly comes from the Portuguese word “barroco” (in Spanish it would be “barrueco”), which means “irregularly shaped pearl”, or “fake jewel”.

[2] The Cuban writer Severo Sarduy suggests this image in his essays on the Baroque. The geometric ellipse has two “eccentric” foci, and becomes a circle when the eccentricity is zero. It’s no coincidence that Baroque architecture frequently uses elliptical arches. *Cuban writer Severo Sarduy suggests this image in his essays on the baroque. The geometrical ellipse has two “eccentric” foci. It becomes a circle when the eccentricity of its foci is equal to zero. It is no coincidence that baroque architecture often used elliptical arches.*

Renaissance vs. Baroque

Renacimiento Ascenso del mercantilismo (siglos XIV-XVI)	Barroco Mercantilismo colonialista (siglos XVI-XVII)
armonía, sobriedad , exactitud innovación con moderación, imágenes sugerentes creciente sello individual, equilibrio en el estilo énfasis en lo humano, en el presente hedonismo, fascinación con el cuerpo tendencia realista, presentación de valores diferentes a la lealtad feudal	exceso, descentramiento, escepticismo experimentación formal (innovación, juego con la sintaxis y la estructura) y extrema originalidad énfasis en la auto-reflexividad, fascinación con lo infinito y la complejidad conceptual tendencia especulativa, cuestionamiento de las apariencias y también de la realidad

Chronology

Brief chronology of the Spanish Golden Age

1479	Union of Castile and Aragon under the Catholic Monarchs — “Kings of Spain”
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1492	The Catholic Monarchs annex Granada, the last Muslim kingdom on the peninsula. Jews are expelled. Nebrija publishes the first grammar of Spanish. Columbus arrives in America.
1517-1556	Reign of Charles I, first of the Habsburg dynasty in Spain.
1519	Charles I of Spain is elected German emperor with the name of Carlos V. Ferdinand Magellan begins his first trip around the world.
1519-22	Conquest of Mexico.
1532-33	Conquest of Peru.
1556-98	Reign of Philip II and Spanish military hegemony in Europe
1565	Colonization of the Philippines
1580	Philip II becomes king of Portugal.
1598-1621	Reign of Philip III. The Spanish State has huge debts and a lot of inflation.
1609	Expulsion of the Moors. Some 300,000 inhabitants leave Spain.
1618-48	Thirty Years' War (between Catholics and Protestants — between European powers).
1621-65	Reign of Philip IV.
1640	Lisbon uprising. Portugal is once again an independent kingdom. Rebellion of Catalonia.
1648	Independence of the Netherlands.
1665-1700	Reign of Charles II, last king of the Habsburg dynasty. Great political decline.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3:18th Century

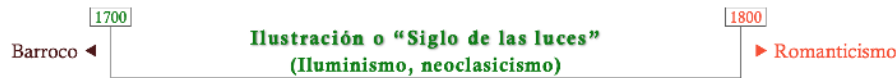
[3.1: The Enlightenment \(18th century\)](#)

[3.2: The 18th Century in Spain](#)

[3.3: The 18th Century in Latin America](#)

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3.1: The Enlightenment (18th century)



The 18th century is also known as the "Century of Enlightenment". The development of capitalism, based on industry but also on colonialism, led to radical changes in political structures, such as the French, American and Haitian revolutions. Accordingly, Enlightenment thinking (also called "The Enlightenment") rejected aristocratic privileges based on family names and promoted equal rights before the law, privileged reason over traditional beliefs, and trusted that research, science and industrial development would produce happier societies.

, via Wikimedia Commons" class="right">



The development of the steam engine marked a milestone for industrial development.

The Rise of Capitalism, the Enlightenment, and Neoclassicism

"Is there anything more tiring than the company of those who don't appreciate a man for what he is, but for what his grandparents were?"
—José Cadalso (1741-1782), in *Moroccan Letters*, 34 (1789).

Could there be a more tiresome thing than being in the company of those who don't appreciate a man for what he is, but for what their forefathers were?

axis: *axis*
banking: *banking*
profit : *profit*
was being made: *it was becoming*
pump:
steam pump : steam
raw materials: *raw materials*
indebted: *in debt*
stockist: wholesaler taste:
taste

Mercantilism from the 15th to the 17th centuries had changed the economic axis of much of Western Europe. The economy based on land and agricultural production (feudalism) was transformed into a system dominated by commercial expansion (mercantilism), which already in the 18th century can be clearly called capitalism. The development of banking and industry are the indicators of this new system. In a consumerist and profit spirit, it was a priority to generate greater and faster means of production with technical advances such as the mining pump and the steam engine. There was also competition for the mass and efficient transport of raw materials to offer new and more sophisticated products to societies that were always interested in consuming more.

The engine of the new economic system was the bourgeoisie —the merchants who lived in the "burgos" or cities—which became a very prominent class. Many bankers, for example, could influence highly indebted monarchies and nobles. Urban growth was also notable, encouraging the enrichment of occupations such as stockists, artisans, doctors, lawyers, journalists and court employees, who could afford luxury clothes, cuisine, theater and books, among other things, and thus influence collective tastes.

give rise to: <i>to result in</i> professor: <i>scholar</i> mid-century: <i>mid-century</i> welfare: <i>welfare</i> Enlightenment, Enlightenment, Age of Enlightenment: <i>Enlightenment.</i> to become fashionable: <i>to become fashionable</i>	The political system that developed in conjunction with mercantilism was the centralized monarchy, which eliminated excess borders between small fiefdoms, facilitated trade, and favored imperial projects around the world. These monarchies gave rise to complex national states that needed an increasing rationalization of their institutions, promoting the relevance of the professional middle class (lawyers, professors, state employees). But in the 18th century, the hierarchical authoritarianism of these monarchies was more an obstacle than an advantage for the bourgeois classes, who sought a more direct influence in the control of the State. In this spirit, the revolutions of England (1688), the United States (1786) and France (1789) occurred, which sought to give political power to “ordinary” citizens, economically dominated by merchants and industrialists. This is how democracy was reinvented in the name of capitalist values: economic freedom (to trade), political equality (to undo aristocratic hierarchies), social fraternity (circles of political and economic support). In the field of ideas, the mercantile economy favored scientific experimentation and humanism, gradually supplanting hierarchical and theocentric ideology by empirical observation and rationalist logic. By the middle of the 18th century, bourgeois liberalism was the vanguard of Western thought with three basic beliefs: 1) reason was a “light” capable of solving all the problems of life; 2) the government must take responsibility for the well-being of its people; and 3) the individual had the right to educate himself and to defend himself from political, religious and ideological authoritarianism. These were the postulates of the Enlightenment, whose most famous exponents were from the two economic-military powers of the time: Great Britain (John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith) and France (René Descartes, Charles de Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, François de Voltaire). In fact, French is becoming fashionable and owning the French language becomes a sign of high culture.
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milestone: <i>milestone</i> lay: <i>secular, lay</i> included: <i>even</i> go to: <i>to turn to</i> source: <i>source</i> sanity: <i>sanity</i> rudeness: <i>rudeness</i> measured: <i>moderate, restrained</i>	A milestone in the influence of the Enlightenment was the publication of the first Encyclopedia in France, between 1751 and 1765, designed as an instrument to educate society and thus ensure the end of the Old Regime, arguing that monarchical absolutism was based on the ignorance of the people to dominate it. Thus, the European intelligentsia developed a system of ideas that made bourgeois power convenient and logical, and aristocratic power unjust and impractical. The lights of reason would make the world (centered on Europe) “progress”, removing it from the superstition, irrationality and tyranny attributed to the so-called “Dark Ages”, that is, the feudal and aristocratic era. In several senses, then, it can be said that the Enlightenment of the 18th century constitutes the hegemonic consolidation of what had begun with the Renaissance of the 15th century. The bourgeoisie, which was a rising minority class in the Renaissance, became the politically and ideologically ruling class in the 18th century. Faith is transferred from God to man (anthropocentrism), and progress gives meaning to life: what is modern is better than what is traditional. A secular and even anti-clerical culture (secularization) is favored. Reason and rigorous observation (rationalism and empiricism) are the basis of truth and of what is credible for purposes useful to social improvement. The philosophy of utilitarianism and pragmatism is developed, under the formula of obtaining “the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people” (Epicurus). We are looking for principles and knowledge that are applicable always and everywhere (universalism, encyclopedism). Greco-Roman sources are used as the basis for scientific, philosophical, legal and political thought (classicism). It believes in democracy, freedom, equality and fraternity (liberalism). In Western arts, one manifestation of the Enlightenment is neoclassicism. If the Renaissance, in order to oppose feudal theocentric aesthetics, claimed the humanist heritage of the Greek and Roman classics, the Enlightenment revalued the restraint and balance of this classical heritage to oppose the excess of the Baroque, associated with aristocratic ostentation. Instead, they seek harmony, balance and symmetry. Everything that is disproportionate and exaggerated is considered monstrous in neoclassical aesthetics. The arts in general must have a useful purpose, which can be didactic (teaching), moral (to purify passions) or social (satire of bad habits, to correct them). That's why fables, essays, satires come into fashion. The theater seeks to build customs with comedy and to cleanse the soul of passions with tragedy. Originality is considered a defect, and it is estimated that masterpieces can be achieved with rational formulas, imitating Greco-Roman models in architecture, sculpture, painting and literature. Academicism prevails and creativity must be subject to clear rules. Theater and narrative, for example, must return to the three units established by Aristotle: of action, place and time; the French add the unity of style. “Good taste” (bourgeois) requires rejecting the vulgar and the exaggerated: the arts must represent a stylized, idealized reality, in which elegance is as important as sanity. The language does not admit rudeness, it must be friendly, measured, clear.
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Baroque vs. Neoclassical aesthetics

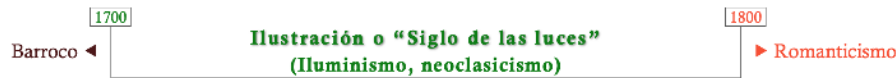
Barroco Estética aristocrática durante el mercantilismo (siglos XVI-XVII)	Neoclasicismo Estética burguesa durante el Iluminismo (siglo XVIII)
exceso, descentramiento, escepticismo experimentación formal (invención de palabras, juego con la sintaxis) erudición, ostentación, exuberancia innovación artificiosa, énfasis en la complejidad de la experiencia y de la psique humana	medida, equilibrio, racionalismo perfección formal (exactitud en la aplicación de reglas académicas) refinamiento, elegancia, claridad innovación dentro de normas preestablecidas, énfasis en la razón

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3.2: The 18th Century in Spain



By the end of the 17th century, Spain had lost its political and military hegemony in Europe due to inflation, internal tensions, tactical errors and the complicated administrative apparatus, among other factors. While capitalism was rising in new powers such as France and England, the Spanish empire used the wealth it brought from its colonies for war and to consume imported products, not to develop local industry. The kingdom also had immense debts to bankers from other European countries, which affected its domestic and foreign policy. So, in a debate with the baroque mercantilist mentality that resisted the new winds of rationalist industrialization, the 18th century was for Spain a period characterized by the effort to incorporate and catch up with the new economic and ideological system of the rest of Western Europe.



“Allegory of Industry”, by Francisco de Goya (1746-1828).

Political and Cultural Life

“Without the rules of the art, whoever gets something right is by chance.”
—Tomás de Iriarte (1750-1791), in *Literary Fables*, VII (1782).

Without Rules in Art, No One Can Get It Right But by Chance

scope: *extent*

until: *even*

coming from: *originated*

Suspicion: *Suspicion*

The sociopolitical system under the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal limited the reach of the Enlightenment in the Iberian Peninsula and in Ibero-America. In these regions, monarchical absolutism, the power of the Catholic Church, the agro-mining economy and the socioeconomic hierarchy dominated, manifestations fundamentally contrary to the liberal tendencies of the Enlightenment. The middle or bourgeois class was much less numerous, rich and influential than in France or England. In addition, these two nations, in which the Age of Reason flourished, were competitors and even enemies of the Spanish Empire, so the ideas coming from there were viewed with suspicion in Iberian circles of power. However, during the 18th century there were political reforms to rationalize monarchy, and the French Enlightenment made itself felt, not without profound ambiguities, especially among the educated officials of the peninsula and the colonies.

In 1700, Philip V, of the powerful French Bourbon dynasty (to which King Juan Carlos still belongs today), began to reign in Spain. Philip had been named successor by his uncle, King Charles II, of the Habsburg dynasty, who had no heirs and hoped to please King Louis XIV of France—Philip's grandfather—to avoid the division of the Spanish empire. For this reason, the 18th century began in Spain with the War of Succession (1700-13), between the supporters of the Habsburgs and those of the Bourbons, which resulted in the loss of Spanish territories in various parts of Europe. The Bourbons impose and emphasize authoritarian centralism. Philip V reigned until 1746, was succeeded by his son Ferdinand VI until 1759, this was succeeded by his brother Charles III until 1778, and finally Charles IV, who handed power to Napoleon in 1808. The administration of the Bourbon kings was characterized by economic and political reforms in the spirit of “enlightened despotism”, that is, the justification of monarchical authoritarianism to manage the country efficiently and rationally (in the Enlightenment style), although centralist and despotic. Intellectuals gain prestige in court, new institutions of science are established, and attempts are made to develop the economy in a strategic and centralized manner. However, the crown continues to lose power to other powers with greater capitalist development.

Word: term Tertulia: <i>Literary</i> <i>Gathering</i> inn: restaurant subject: <i>issue, topic</i> farce: <i>farce, a comic drama using buffoonery.</i>	Spanish intellectual life followed French and English trends in the 18th century, although in a contradictory way and with its own touches. In the name of clarity and rational authoritarianism, typically neoclassical institutions, the Royal Academies, are established, which seek to regulate history, law and the arts. In 1713, the Royal Spanish Academy of Language was founded to “fix the voices and words of the Spanish language in their greatest property, elegance and purity”, promoting normativity, first in language, but later also in literary production. In a similar way, literature follows French neoclassical models, seeking to subject the imagination to rational norms, with clarity and order. But the Spanish versions of these efforts maintain some ironic distance from the rationalism, secularism and faith in progress typical of the Age of Enlightenment. Another Enlightenment custom, that of English cafés and French literary salons, translates into the very Spanish tradition of “get-togethers”, meetings of intellectuals in inns and cafés to discuss current issues as well as the works of classical and contemporary authors. In the theater, Leandro Fernández de Moratín (1760-1828) adapts Molière's works into Spanish and writes a large number of dramas. In the prologue to the edition of his works, Fernández de Moratín defines comedy with a clearly neoclassical spirit: “he paints men as they are, imitates existing national customs and [them]. form a believable, instructive and pleasant fable” to educate in “good manners”. Following these rules, his most successful comedy, <i>El Sí de las Niñas</i> (1801), develops the action in one place and in less than twenty-four hours. In a fun and quite obvious way, he criticizes the education of the young women of his time, who were taught to obey their parents without questioning, and instead defends freedom and the right to think independently. Entertainment for ordinary people is also exemplified by the numerous sainetes — brief farces about urban life. One of the most famous authors of sainetes was Ramón de la Cruz (1731-1794), who incorporated typical figures of the time, such as the petimetres (people concerned about being fashionable), the majos and the manolas (working-class youth).
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Fable: fable stage: to stage illustrated: <i>learned ones</i> Put on stage: to stage late: backward approach: approach increasingly: more and more still: even	Another important literary genre of Spanish neoclassicism, due to its didactic value, its classical base and its connection with French rationalism, was the fable, widely cultivated by Tomás de Iriarte (1750-1791) and Félix María Samaniego (1745-1801). The Spanish fables of this time depict the conflict between religious authoritarianism and liberal rationalism that was raging in the Peninsula, and in which the enlightened had, in general, less economic and political influence than the despots. The Spanish ambiguity with regard to neoclassicism and the Enlightenment is also highlighted in the painting of one of the artists considered most important today in the history of Western art: Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828). While he was a court painter and became the official portrait painter of Charles IV, Goya was a friend of the Illuminists and a supporter of liberal reforms, which led him to voluntarily exile himself in France in 1824 after the failure of a movement against the Spanish monarchy. Aesthetically, too, Goya made the “journey” of his country in that century: he began by cultivating the ornate aesthetics of Rococo (a form of Baroque); then he adopted for a time the harmonic simplicity and good taste of neoclassicism in his youth; and, in his maturity, he combined his knowledge of the Spanish pictorial tradition, the profound observation of his people and the sensitive response to historical conflicts in his own style with characteristics that can be associated with romanticism, realism and even expressionist and innovation and even expressionist and innovation and surrealist of the 20th century. Thus, paradoxically, within a “backwater” nation, Goya regains his “own” Spanish vision by avoiding the imitation of neoclassical models and formulas and emphasizing a personal and analytical approach to his objects, resulting in a certain way more “modern” —less restricted by academic rules— than the orthodox Enlightenment and neoclassicists. The Enlightenment in Spain became increasingly weak during the reign of Charles IV, a frail monarch dominated by the aristocrat Manuel Godoy, the queen's lover. The French Revolution created even greater anxiety against Enlightenment ideas, perceived as a threat to the kingdom, interrupting a process of reforms that was just beginning. This process was definitively frustrated by Napoleon's political maneuvers, which culminated in the French occupation of Spain and Portugal in 1808.
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Neoclassical aesthetics



Facade of the Prado Museum, Madrid, 1786-1819.

Emilio J. Rodríguez Posada, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Because of its practical utility and its impact on social secularization, architecture was a favorite art form of neoclassicism. The buildings privilege secular institutions for the public good, such as hospitals, libraries, museums, theaters, parks, and historical monuments, rejecting baroque ornamentation and drawing inspiration from classical motifs in search of an architectural model of universal validity. Functionality and serene harmony are essential, as can be seen in the Prado Museum building, designed in 1785 by the Spanish architect Juan de Villanueva. It is also symbolic of the difficulties and contradictions of the Age of Enlightenment in Spain. It was commissioned by King Charles III as part of his Enlightenment reforms. Initially it was to be the headquarters of the Academy of Sciences and the Office of Natural History, a symbol of the importance of this knowledge during the Enlightenment, but it was destined for an art museum in 1814, a sign of the decline in support for science in the Spanish monarchy. Its construction began in 1786, still indicating the solvency of the Spanish crown, but it could not be inaugurated until 1819 due to the French invasion of Spain, thus also indicating the decline of the Iberian empires.

Baroque vs. Neoclassical aesthetics

Barroco Estética aristocrática durante el mercantilismo (siglos XVI-XVII)	Neoclasicismo Estética burguesa durante el Iluminismo (siglo XVIII)
exceso, descentramiento, escepticismo experimentación formal (invención de palabras, juego con la sintaxis) erudición, ostentación, exuberancia innovación artificiosa, énfasis en la complejidad de la experiencia y de la psique humana	mesura, equilibrio, racionalismo perfección formal (exactitud en la aplicación de reglas académicas) refinamiento, elegancia, claridad innovación dentro de normas preestablecidas, énfasis en la razón

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3.3: The 18th Century in Latin America



The 18th century in Latin America was marked by nonconformism in the face of monarchical rule, in particular against the reforms of “enlightened despotism” carried out by the Bourbon kings, which reinforced the Spanish commercial monopoly, tightened the collection of taxes, and limited Americans' access to administrative posts. In addition, the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, which reached universities, literary academies and economic societies, fostered ideals contrary to the Monarchy and eager for more democratic structures and free trade.



A community member in protest (1781).

Winds of Change

debt: *debt* increase
: to increase before: *facing*,
before

abounding: *to be widespread*
comunero: *commoner*, a
member of a certain
community or trade

motto: *slogan*
pattern: *master, boss, owner*

support: *support*
illustrious: *learned*
Infuse: *to fill with*
orphan: *orphan*

In the 18th century, Spain and Portugal were no longer rich empires. Both kingdoms had immense debts to bankers from other European countries, affecting their domestic and foreign policies. In addition, despotic government, population growth, and the influence of liberal ideas caused great social instability. For their part, the Iberian colonies in the New World produced immense wealth that increased the power of the Creole elite (descendants of peninsular Spaniards), who bought government posts as if they were merchandise. Smuggling and piracy became common practices that English merchants exercised with great skill.

Faced with these colonial tensions, rebellions by indigenous people, slaves and mixed race or mulatto peasants abounded, who made up 85% of the population. Among the protests of mixed-race “comuneros”, the most famous are the one in Asunción (Paraguay) in 1731, and that of Socorro (Colombia) in 1781, who violently revolted against new taxes and economic restrictions. Also in 1780, there was an immense indigenous uprising that spread to areas of Peru, Bolivia and northern Argentina. The leader of this rebellion, which gathered an army of 60,000 indigenous people, was José Gabriel Condorcanqui, who proclaimed himself the new Inca monarch with the title of Túpac Amaru II, and with the motto: “Peasant: the boss will no longer eat from your poverty”. In all these cases, Spanish repression was relentless, subjecting the rebels to bloody torture. In Haiti (1791) there was also a slave rebellion—there were more than 70,000—which culminated, not without great violence and repression by France, Spain and England, in the independence of the island (including what is now the Dominican Republic).

There were also many disagreements among the Creole elite, and liberal ideas were flourishing in the colonies despite imperial repression. The reforms of Carlos III de Borbón in the Spanish dominions, which sought to strengthen peninsular authority, produced great dissent among the Creoles, who now had higher taxes and less participation in the government. The Jesuits, expelled from America in 1767, carried out in exile an open opposition to the absolutist regime. *In addition, by the end of the 18th century, America had recognized scientists, restless intellectuals and internationally renowned liberal journals, such as the Havana Newspaper (1790-1804) and the Peruvian Mercury (1791-95).* By 1794, Bogotá's Antonio Nariño had translated and published the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* into Spanish, and Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816) from Venezuela had participated in the French Revolution and in the War of Independence of the United States, then traveling through Europe in search of weapons, money and support for American independence. In 1796, the illustrious Simón Rodríguez (1769-1854) was responsible for the education of the liberator Simón Bolívar (1783-1830), the richest orphan in Venezuela. Rodríguez showed him the hard lives of the thousand slaves who worked for the Bolívar family, took him to discover the Venezuelan countryside, and infused him with subversive ideas: “schools must be opened to ordinary people with mixed blood”; “boys and girls must study together. First, because in this way men learn to respect women, and second, because women learn not to be afraid of men”; “equality, freedom, fraternity is the ideal of good government” (Rumazo González 1980:147).

Creole aesthetics: European sources, American themes

“Let us all come together under the banners of freedom. Justice fights for us.”
—Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816), in *Proclamation to the Peoples of the Colombian Continent, alias Hispanic America* (1801).

Let us all join together under the banner of freedom. Justice fights on our behalf.

Chord: <i>in accordance with</i> wealthy: <i>well-off</i> philologist: <i>grammarian</i> raise: <i>raise (funds)</i> chain: <i>chain</i> idealize: <i>romanticize</i>	Since the 18th century, the emancipatory and rationalist ideas of the Enlightenment, as well as the didactic formalism of European neoclassicism, were also developing in Hispanic America, particularly among the cultured elite made up of peninsulars and creoles. Many Spanish-American writers were interested in promoting a present and a future in keeping with Enlightenment ideals. In this sense, they continued to emphasize the ethical capacity of art, a neoclassical concern. But his writing was also inspired by Romanticism to represent the emotions of rebellion and fervor in the struggles for independence, so it is often inaccurate to apply the classification of European aesthetic schools to the Americas without modification. The Spanish-American artistic and literary production of the Emancipation era is a mixture or alternation between neoclassicism and romanticism, between enlightened reason and nationalist passion, with distinctive contents depending on the region. At the same time, the Spanish-American intellectual elite of that time considered for the most part that European ideas and fashions, particularly those that prevailed in France and England, were the most refined and advanced, and they had to be learned, imitated or adapted. Many Creoles with wealthy family members traveled to Europe and there they sought inspiration to build their nations, returning to govern or to teach, to publish or to found new companies in America. This was the case of one of the most influential intellectuals of the beginning of the 19th century in Latin America, and one of Simón Bolívar's teachers, the poet and philologist Andrés Bello (Venezuela, 1781 - Chile, 1865). In 1810 he was sent to London by the revolutionary forces to raise funds and establish political contacts in favor of the independence cause, and he stayed in the British capital until 1829, when he was invited by the Chilean government to establish the new educational system, remaining in Santiago until his death. During his London period, he became familiar with the works of Romanticism, and later he lucidly commented on the main elements of this new aesthetic movement. Although he opposed romantic emotional extremes, he also distanced himself from the strict rules of neoclassicism, recognizing the importance of freedom in politics and literature and rejecting "the chains with which the poet was imprisoned in the name of Aristotle and Horacio" (speech at the University of Chile, 1843). Bello published in London one of his most famous poems, "The Allocution to Poetry" (1823), considered as a declaration of cultural independence for Latin America. The speaker invites poetry to leave Europe, corrupt and authoritarian, and come to live in America, where virgin nature and the high ideals of freedom still reign, creating heroes comparable to those of European antiquity. The style of this <i>silva</i> (a form cultivated in ancient Rome and later in the Italian Renaissance) is clearly neoclassical because of its balance, clarity and didactic tone. However, the content is related to the romantic tendency to idealize geography and patriotism, and is a vehement defense of American dignity, which some European intellectuals had classified as inherently inferior. The following passage reflects this aesthetic difference:
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Oh who with you, kind Poesia, will take me from Cauca to the shores, and the soft breath breathing gave me the ever-fresh spring [.] and from the distant drum to my ears would come the sound of the loving yaraví! (v. 169-88)	<i>Or, I wish someone would take me with you, lovable Poetry, to the edge of the Cauca river, and let me take in the ever young spring's soft breath . And let the music of the loving Inca song (yaraví) come to my ears from the distant Inca lodge (drum)</i>
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Observe the feeling of nostalgia for this South American river (Cauca), the idealization of its climate (always spring), the personification of the season (a young woman breathing), and the evocation of typical and exotic elements such as the drum and the yaraví (of Incan origin). All this responds to a romantic sensibility, despite the fact that Bello's training had been purely neoclassical.

Even less conventional is the Peruvian **Mariano Melgar** (1791-1815), who had indigenous blood. Following didactic neoclassicism, he writes fables in verse such as "The *Quarryman and the Donkey*", but his message is more social than moral, more passionate than rationalist: he draws a parallel between the abused donkey and the indigenous one exploited by the colonial regime. This is what the furious ass says:

"you always have us badly eaten under the burden, and so do you demand verve? And with a whip and stick you intend to drive us? And do you still blame us for being stupid when you're the reason?" [...] An Indian, if he could, wouldn't he say the same thing? (v. 22-40)	<i>"You keep us hungry, always loaded, and want us to be strong? Do you intend to lead us with whip and stick only? And you even blame us for being slow, when it is your doing? [...] Wouldn't an Indian, if he could, say the same?"</i>
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The poem expresses outrage and irony, because here the donkey, who can at least speak, is better off than the silenced indigenous. More than a didactic fable, the text can very well be read as a romantic defense of the exploited. In his search for new forms, Melgar—who in his short life was a priest, a revolutionary soldier, and died on the battlefield against the Spanish—wrote poems based on Yaraví, a lyrical and romantic genre of Quechua origin.

These brief examples illustrate how European aesthetic movements, such as neoclassicism and romanticism, take their own forms and paths in Latin America, marked by their own sociocultural environment. The poetry of these creoles and mixed-race people responded to a reality in many ways different from that of Europe, and in many ways it also fully participated in Western culture.



Miguel Mateo Maldonado y Cabrera (1695—1768) was a renowned Mexican painter. His series “castes” represents the hierarchy of social classes based on the race of the parents. Thus, for example, Criollos were born to Spanish parents and were at the top of the social pyramid. Someone born to a Spanish father and an indigenous mother was called “mixed race” and had a lower social status. Even further down were the mulattos, a mixture of Spanish and African. Then below were the Zambos, a mixture of indigenous and African, and so on.

This painting represents a mixed-race girl, more united to her indigenous mother than to her Spanish father, whose face is not shown, indicating that they were generally secret unions or out of wedlock.

The sobriety of the neoclassical style is evident, among other things, in the geometric balance of the figures and a certain serenity in the faces. At the same time, there are baroque elements in the density of women's clothing and in the complexity of the looks. And a romantic element of emancipation inspires the entire series, which functions as a protest against extreme social stratification based on blood and not on personal merit.

“Of Spanish and Indian, mixed race”, Miguel Cabrera, 1763.

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Fuentes

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4:19th Century

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4.1: The 19th Century in Spain



The Spanish 19th century is characterized by the decline of the empire and the crisis of power, in the midst of a violent debate between monarchy and democracy, tradition and modernization.

How lonely the nation was to one day
 populate so many people!
 The nation whose empire stretched from Dusk to
 the East!
 You shed tears, unhappy now,
 sovereign of the world, and no one from your charming face can
 erase deep pain
 !
 —José de Espronceda (1808-1842),
 in “To the Fatherland” *Lyrical Poems* (1840).

*How lonely the nation that, one day
 was populated by great people!
 The nation whose empire covered
 from West to East!
 Tears you are dropping, now unhappy,
 ruler of the world,
 and nobody from your lovely face
 can erase the deep pain!*



“The family of Charles IV (1801).

Sociopolitical life

At the end of the 18th century, Charles IV of Bourbon (1778-1808) ascended the throne, who did not take direct control of State affairs, but left the government in the hands of his minister Manuel Godoy, favorite of his wife, Queen María Luisa. A famous portrait, *The Family of Carlos IV*, by Francisco de Goya, shows the fragmentation of the royal family and the crisis of monarchical power in Spain (note that each person is looking in a different direction). The former Spanish hegemony in Europe is now a thing of the past.

Minister Manuel Godoy's collaboration with Napoleon Bonaparte caused years of war and destruction. At the beginning of the 19th century, Spain declared war on England and, in the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), Spanish and French squadrons were destroyed. Charles IV abdicated in favor of his son Ferdinand VII (1813-1833), but the French army invaded Spain in 1808, and Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, reigned until 1813. Many Spaniards fought for their country's freedom in the War of Independence (1808-1814), Ferdinand VII regains his crown, and French troops withdrew in 1814. The Spanish people receive Ferdinand VII as king despite his collaboration with Napoleon, but his reign is characterized by brutal repression against liberals. *These years of internal chaos are also complicated by the wars of independence in Latin America (1808-1824), during which Spain lost most of its territories in America (except Cuba and Puerto Rico).*

After the death of Ferdinand VII (1833), his daughter Isabel II (1833-1868), who was then three years old, inherited the throne and her uncle Don Carlos does not recognize her as queen. This is why two strong civil conflicts took place: the Carlist Wars (1833-1840; 1847-1849). Thus, the first half of the 19th century in Spain was one of economic crisis, political upheaval and social violence. Around 1833, many political exiles who had taken refuge in England and France returned to Spain, bringing with them the new trends of European thought, which were driving Spanish romanticism.

During the 1860s and 70s, sociopolitical instability continued in which the aristocracy was weak to maintain power, but the bourgeoisie was not strong enough to impose itself. Liberals rebelled against the monarchy in the so-called “Glorious Revolution of 1868” that overthrew Queen Elizabeth II, and in 1869 a republican (democratic) constitution was voted on, but immediately afterwards the Carlists began a new civil war. In 1873, the First Republic was proclaimed, which lasted a very short time; it ended in 1874 when the supporters of Alfonso XII named him king and restored the monarchy. However, the new king died very young, and his widow María Cristina remained regent during the minority of her son Alfonso XIII. At the end of the 19th century, Cubans and Filipinos rose up against the Spanish government, and the United States declares war on Spain in the so-called Cuban War (1898). In this war, known in English as “*The Spanish-American War*”, Spain will lose its last colonies: Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam. These events bring about a profound revision of the national identity that marked cultural production and political life at the turn of the century.

Romanticism

A reaction against Enlightenment rationalism had begun in Germany and England since the 1770s, which valued unscientific knowledge, the irrational, the emotive and the mysterious. This reaction, later called romanticism, spread throughout the Hispanic world from the beginning of the 19th century, channeling the nationalist and passionate ideals that accompanied the struggles for independence and the founding of new nations or political systems.

In general terms, the literary movement of Romanticism opposes the rationalist and neoclassical normativity of the 18th century, defending instead originality, emotionality, and both creative and political freedom. The first Romantics were well-known poets and playwrights such as Schiller and Goethe in Germany, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats in England, or Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo in France. From the latter is the famous phrase: “Romanticism is liberalism in literature”, which emphasizes unfinished (unpolished) and passionate work against strict academic rules. The basic features can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The conception of the work as an expression of the creative self and its subjective world (as opposed to neoclassical objectivism).
- 2) The cult of individualism and the originality of the artist (contrary to the Enlightenment emphasis on order and clarity of expression).
- 3) The predominance of emotions and the use of nature as a means to reflect them (versus eighteenth-century rationalism).
- 4) The modern ideal of political and personal freedom, with a strong nationalist or patriotic tendency that emphasizes local language (as opposed to encyclopedic universalism and enlightened despotism).
- 5) The idealization of the past (medieval, baroque, pre-Columbian) and of the people (as opposed to the cult of Greco-Roman classicism).
- 6) Exoticism and at the same time the taste for the typical, the picturesque and the folkloric, which was something “exotic” for intellectuals (in contrast to rationalist didactics).
- 7) Search for new metric combinations in poetry, with freer rhymes, such as assonance.

Romanticism, then, can be considered as an individualistic rebellion that seeks to emphasize the emotional in the artistic sphere. Romantics have a great appreciation for the personal, almost a cult of self and national character. This is why romantic heroes are often prototypes of rebellion (Don Juan, the pirate, Prometheus) and authors seek freer and more popular rhymes. Likewise, there is a renewal of themes and environments. The nightly and sordid environments are appreciated, looking for the fantastic and exotic stories that the enlightened and neoclassical people ridiculed. And it is because of this individualism and desire for originality that the movement has different, sometimes opposing, characteristics in each country and in each poet.

In Spain, Romanticism represents an ideologically liberal movement that values individualism and the exaltation of the “I”, as well as feeling, freedom and the national past. The works are often read as an expression of emotions in the landscape they describe. *Among the writers of the romantic era are the poet José de Espronceda, whose “Pirate Song” (1840) is still taught in many Hispanic schools, as well as the playwrights Don Ángel de Saavedra, better known as the Duke of Rivas, author of Don Álvaro or La Fuerza del Fino (1835), and José Zorrilla, author of the well-known play Don Juan Tenorio (1844), inspired by the famous “Don Juan”, which had been converted into a classic by the baroque playwright Tirso de Molina two centuries earlier in The Burler of Seville (c. 1603).*

Romantic poetry from the second half of the 19th century, which some critics describe as post-romantic, is characterized by its lyricism and musicality, as is the case of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer and Rosalía de Castro. Because of their sonorous and simple language, the works of both, but especially that of Bécquer, announce a new trend in Spanish poetry. *The governmental chaos of this era is also reflected in the political fragmentation of writers and intellectuals, who are divided into two camps: liberals such as José de Espronceda or the novelist Benito Pérez Galdós, and conservatives such as the Duke of Rivas or the poet Ramón de Campoamor, known for his sentimental poems collected in Las Humoradas (1886-1888).*

Neoclassical vs. Romantic Aesthetics

Neoclasicismo Estética burguesa durante el iluminismo (siglo XVIII)	Romanticismo Estética aristocrática y burguesa durante el capitalismo temprano (siglo XIX)
mesura, equilibrio, racionalismo exactitud en la aplicación de reglas académicas refinamiento, elegancia, claridad énfasis en la razón	emoción, pasión, subjetivismo énfasis en la originalidad y la espontaneidad creativas exotismo, irracionalidad, misterio interés en la complejidad de la psique humana

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4.2: National Independencies in Latin America



The era known as “Emancipation” or of national independence in Latin America began around 1780 with the famous rebellions of comuneros and that of Túpac Amaru, and it can be said that it ended around 1821, when the independence of Peru and the Mexican Empire was definitively declared. During these decades, all of Spain's continental territories in America, from what is now Mexico to Argentina, became independent from Madrid and began to form national states. Both dates are approximate, because in many countries wars and rebellions continued in favor of Spanish forces until the 1830s. The Caribbean territories of Cuba and Puerto Rico continued to be part of Spain until 1898.



“The Battle of Ayacucho”, by Martín Tovar (1827-1902).

The processes of independence

At the beginning of the 19th century, political tensions in the Spanish territories of America were explosive. The rivalry between the Creoles and the Peninsulars who represented the Crown in America (disparagingly called “chapetones” or “gachupines”) was evident. The inequalities and injustices of American societies also exacerbated social tensions. Consequently, the triumph of the French Revolution and the new government of Napoleon Bonaparte unwittingly triggered the processes of independence in the Spanish-American continent. When Napoleon took over the Spanish monarchy (1808-13), many Creoles declared their autonomy from the Peninsula and, after bloody wars that lasted until 1825, most of the new Spanish-American countries became independent (with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico, which did not separate from Spain until 1898). The Creole elite that led these struggles and who were in charge of the new governments, sought to create republics in the style of the French or Anglo-Saxon Enlightenment.

In the absence of a legitimate monarch since 1808, the Spanish-American colonies had to decide who to obey, and this brought to the surface existing social tensions. By 1811, Buenos Aires, Bogotá and Caracas had declared autonomous governments to replace Napoleon's captive king.

In Mexico, Father Miguel Hidalgo led a rebellion from the northern town of Dolores on September 16, 1810. The rumor spread, and nearly eighty thousand indigenous and mixed race people, under the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, rose up to fight for the freedom of the country, with the aim of improving its precarious social situation. This led to a hardening of the Creole elite, who remained faithful to Spain until 1821. Something similar had happened in Peru: after the uprising of Tupac Amaru II, the Creoles had become allies with the colonial government, and it was only in 1824 that independence was declared, achieved by two armies that came from outside.

The wars for independence from Spain lasted almost fifteen years in South America, led from the north by the Venezuelan Simón Bolívar, and from the south by the Argentinian José de San Martín, who are therefore called the “Libertadores”. After difficult and heroic campaigns by Creole generals under the command of indigenous and mixed race soldiers, the armies of Bolívar and San Martín met in Lima and declared the definitive independence of the Spanish mainland colonies. Paradoxically, the South American elites decided to accept independence to avoid the liberal reforms that began in Spain in 1820 and that endangered the privileges of the Creoles. Thus, political independence did not involve profound social reform but, in general, a way of continuing the domination of the local elite. This was one of the reasons why it was not possible to unify the nations of Central and South America, because the Creoles were used to imposing their local authority almost like feudal lords and there was no established democratic tradition.

The disasters of violence did not end in 1824. Wars of separation between new nations, conflicts between political parties and local interests, mixed-race groups that claimed privileges thanks to their new military status, and indigenous and Afro-descendant sectors that were looking for a place in the new configuration of power, were the constant cause of violence and political instability throughout most of the 19th century in Latin America. Frictions between liberals (merchants) and conservatives (ranchers) were common, regions vied for the dominance of the central government and, in sum, many social conflicts in the colony remained unresolved, creating a volatile social environment. In a few decades, the four Spanish vicerealties were transformed into eighteen sovereign countries, many of them with repeated civil wars. It is not surprising that, shortly before his death in 1830 and after seeing the division of his long-awaited Gran Colombia into three different countries, Simón Bolívar said: “America is ungovernable. Those of us who have served the revolution have plowed in the sea” (Winn 83).

Heroism and Romanticism

The modern ideal of political and personal freedom, with strong nationalist or patriotic emotions, was a predominant note of American Romanticism, which seeks to emphasize the emotive in the artistic sphere.

An influential poet of this period was the Ecuadorian **José Joaquín Olmedo** (Guayaquil 1780-1847), who greatly contributed to the independence processes in South America. One of his poetic ambitions was to sing the epic of revolutionary battles, especially in “The Victory of Junín” (1825), which seeks to build a neoclassical hero presenting Simon Bolivar as “the son of Colombia and Mars” (God of War in classical mythology, v. 112), but it is also an aesthetic full of romantic patriotism:

We saw that when the flags are deployed
from Peru and Colombia, the haughty legions
are disturbed, the fierce dismayed Spaniard
flees, or asks for surrendered peace.

Bolívar won, Peru was free,
and in triumphant pomp Sacred Freedom
in the Temple of the Sun was placed.

(v. 41-48)

*We saw that, when the flags
from Peru and Colombia were unfolded,
the arrogant legions fear,
the furious Spaniard flees in panic
or, defeated, begs for peace.
Bolívar won, Peru got free,
and holy Freedom, with triumphant pomp,
was placed in the temple of the Sun.*

There is in this poem a didactic spirit that uses forms that are out of fashion in Europe, but which respond to the efforts of these poets to demonstrate their knowledge of the classics, and at the same time they express a nationalist and libertarian romantic passion that goes beyond neoclassical rationalism.

Other artists and writers seek to develop an American “me” of their own, incorporating non-Hispanic forms from their regions. For example, as mentioned in a previous chapter, the Peruvian **Mariano Melgar** (1791-1815), who had indigenous blood, wrote poems based on Yaraví, a lyrical and romantic genre of Quechua origin, like this one:

Come back, because I can no longer
live without your love.
Come back, my popcorn, go
back to your sweet nest.
Look, there are hunters
who, with an evil zeal, will put
you in their attractive
deadly nets;
and when they have arrested you they will give you cruel martyrdom
.

(v. 1-14)

*Come back, for I can't
live without your loving anymore.
Come back, little dove,
return to your sweet nest.
Watch Out, For There Are Hunters
Who, With Malign Intentions,
Will Place
Mortal Bait For You In Their Nets
And, After Putting You In Prison,
They Will Cruelly Torture You*

With a romantic sensitivity to individual feeling and to the search for the typical or the folkloric as well as for its formal freedom, this poem goes beyond the aesthetic classifications of Europe, and could be considered as a precursor to indigenism. Notice the double level of meaning, at the same time talking about a personal relationship and the oppressive social situation in which the speaker and his beloved live.

A third example of this romantic sensitivity in relation to political emancipation is the poetry of **José María Heredia** (Cuba, 1803 - Mexico, 1839), who fought unsuccessfully for the independence of Cuba and was therefore exiled, represents the progressive rise of romanticism. In his first poems, his passion for justice and freedom are balanced with didactic notes and rationalizations typical of the neoclassicism he learned during his long education. However, he was also a translator of famous romantic poems by Chateaubriand and Byron, and his own later poetry develops a very passionate poetic self, focused on nostalgia and the idealization of his homeland. This is evident in his famous ode to “Niagara” (1825):

I never felt my miserable isolation,
my abandonment, my regrettable heartbreak as
I did this day... Could
a passionate and stormy soul
without love be happy...? Oh! If a beautiful woman
worthy of me loved me
and out of this abyss on the turbulent edge,
my vague thought
and my solitary walk would accompany me!
Which one will enjoy looking at her face covered
with slight paleness, and being more beautiful
in her sweet terror, and smiling as she holds her in my loving arms
...!
Delusions of virtue...! Ouch! , banished,
without homeland, without love, I
only look before me tears and sorrows.

(v. 113-128)

*Never like today I felt
my sad isolation and loneliness,
my regrettable lack of love...
Could a passionate and turbulent soul
be happy without love? ... Or, if a beautiful lady,
worthy of me, could love me
and accompany my vagrant thoughts
and my lonely wandering in this abyss, turbulent edge!*

*How would I enjoy her face become
softly pale in watching this, become more beautiful
when sweetly scared, and then smiling
while I support her in my loving arms! ...
Illusions of Virtue!... Wings! Exiled,
homeless, loveless,
all I see before me is weeping and pain!*

This stanza is charged with emotion and completely focused on a self around whom the world revolves: for him there is Niagara, for him there should be his lover (“worthy of me!”), and to feed their sensitivity and inspiration are absence and loneliness, nostalgia and vague thinking, and even exile and

longing for a homeland. There is a certain baroque spirit in this dark, passionate, melancholic environment, and a fascination with complex subjectivity, with unsatisfied individual desire. Here the beautiful is the sad, the intense. A good example of nineteenth-century romantic sensibility (from the 19th century).

This is how the cultural production of the beginning of the 19th century in Latin America was shaping a space of autonomy from Europe, but of full belonging to Western tradition. The adventure of shaping new nations in the midst of conflicting forces was just beginning. This is what Bolívar wrote in his “Letter from Jamaica” (1815), a classic essay from this period:

It is difficult to foresee the future fate of the New World, to establish principles about its policy, or to prophesy the nature of the government it will eventually adopt. [...] We are a small human race; we inhabit a separate world, surrounded by vast seas. We are new to almost all the arts and sciences, although somewhat old in the uses of civil society. [...] We have hardly any vestiges of what it once was, and we are not Indians or Europeans, but rather a mixed species between the rightful owners of the country and the Spanish usurpers. In short, we are Americans by birth, but we get the rights of Europe. Rights that, however, we have to dispute and at the same time fight against the invaders. So we are in the most extraordinary and complicated case.

It is difficult to foresee the future fate of the New World, to set down its political principles, or to prophesy what manner of government it will eventually adopt. [...] We scarcely retain a vestige of what it once was, and we are neither Indian nor European, but a species midway between the legitimate owners of this land and the Spanish usurpers. In short, we are Americans by birth, but we derive our rights from Europe. However, we have to assert these rights, and at the same time we must defend ourselves against the invaders. This places us in a most extraordinary and complex situation.

Neoclassical vs. Romantic Aesthetics

Neoclasicismo Estética burguesa durante el iluminismo (siglo XVIII)	Romanticismo Estética aristocrática y burguesa durante el capitalismo temprano (siglo XIX)
mesura, equilibrio, racionalismo exactitud en la aplicación de reglas académicas refinamiento, elegancia, claridad énfasis en la razón	emoción, pasión, subjetivismo énfasis en la originalidad y la espontaneidad creativas exotismo, irracionalidad, misterio interés en la complejidad de la psique humana

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4.3: Republican Era and Spanish-American Romanticism



The so-called republican era, or era of the constitution of national republics, was a turbulent period for Latin America, with numerous civil wars and changes of government. Forming new relatively democratic nations was a huge challenge, due to the tremendous diversity of their people (indigenous, Afro-descendant, Eurodescendant and their mixtures), the authoritarian and class colonial heritage, the lack of communication between regions and the economic dependence as a result of international debts.

Cultural production sought, in general, to incorporate the aesthetic developments of Europe (especially France and England) and at the same time to propose its own models of nation, coexistence and expression.

, via Wikimedia Commons" class="left">



"The Battle of Angostura", civil war in Costa Rica, by Lorenzo Fortino (1860).

National Storms

In most of Latin America, the first seventy years of the 19th century were marked by sociopolitical conflicts and internal wars. One of these was the progressive regional disintegration. After more than ten years of battles with the Spanish army (approximately 1810-1822), seven independent states had been formed: the Mexican Empire, Gran Colombia, the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata, Chile, Peru, the Republic of Bolívar and Paraguay. However, a couple of decades later, these territories were divided into fifteen countries (the same as in the 21st century, with the exception of Panama, which separated from Colombia in 1903; it should also be remembered that, in the Caribbean, Cuba and Puerto Rico were still part of Spain and the Dominican Republic separated from Haiti in 1844 and then from Spain in 1865). Border wars between these countries were also abundant.

But even within these countries, there were frequent conflicts between regions and between sectors of the population with opposing interests. So the list of civil wars and rebellions is copious. The enslavement of people of African descent, for example, which leaders like Bolívar had aspired to abolish since the 1830s, continued for several decades in many of these countries. The situation of indigenous people and peasants did not necessarily improve with the new independent governments, but in many cases, it worsened. In addition, the Creole elite was divided, sometimes violently, between two national development projects: those that favored a land-based economy (generally associated with conservative sectors) and those whose wealth was derived from domestic and international trade (liberal sectors). Another factor in this political instability was the weakness of the States, because they had little money and had to pay high debts to European banks, acquired during the wars of independence and later.

The nation-building debate

The new Spanish-American countries maintained the social class structure that had existed during the Spanish colonial era. There was a privileged minority (5%) of European descent (the "Criollos"), with almost all the economic power, in contrast to an impoverished majority, made up of mixed-race, indigenous or African-American peasants. The ruling classes faced a central problem: how to convert former colonies, with their different ethnicities and social classes, into coherent nations? For many enlightened Creoles, the answer was to identify with European "civilization", where wealth, democracy, the light of reason and progress were located. It would then be necessary to eliminate or transform (educate) indigenous, African or mixed race "barbarism". But that "barbarism" was the majority and had very different characteristics from those in Europe. Thus, a fundamental debate about the literature—and of the turbulent political life—of the 19th century in Latin America revolved around what cultural, political and socioeconomic place the various sectors of the population should have.

Many educated Creoles embrace the values of individualism, freedom and nationalism of European romantic aesthetics. Many liberal creoles — often urban residents — viewed the lower and rural classes as a wild and chaotic force that threatened to destroy everyone's freedom and the ideals of forming European-style republics. This is how the Argentinian **Esteban Echeverría** (1805-1851) emotionally represents the indigenous people in the epic poem "La Cautiva" (1839):

Listen! The band
of savages is approaching, roaring
all the neighboring countryside.
[...]
See that the ugly tips of their spears, because
of their spoils, carry human heads!

(v. 140-57)

*Listen! The group of savages
is getting closer now, thundering
through the neighboring fields.
.
See how the proud points
of their Spears
carry human heads as spoils*

Echeverría is also the author of the story “The Slaughterhouse”. Because of its rich construction, which draws a parallel of spaces, concepts and characters (between the bull and the unitary; the slaughterhouse and the nation; barbarism and tyranny), as well as because of the social complexity it represents, this story has been established as one of the key works of the Spanish-American narrative. Although his connection with scenes and situations from his historical moment, such as the dictatorship, links style to realism, the fascination with the grotesque and the passion for a national debate are romantic. As was typical of the political controversies of the republican era, the story represents the confrontation between two sectors of the elite, in their effort to dominate other sectors of the population and justify this domination in the name of civilization and the defense of institutions.

For a sector of Creole liberals, it was then evident the need to eliminate or assimilate this “band of savages” in order to build “civilized” nations, that is, similar to French or Anglo-Saxon models. That’s why some governments organized campaigns against indigenous populations and encouraged European immigration to bring white people to the country. In Argentina, liberals tended to favor a centralist government from Buenos Aires, to encourage trade, industry and a way of life comparable to that of Paris or London.

At the same time, there were other social sectors with different ideas on the subject. On the one hand, many conservative Creole aristocrats had a paternalistic relationship with the peasant population—in some places of indigenous descent and in others of mixed race—who worked on their estates, and tended to favor a federal government that would give them more autonomy to manage their lands according to their interests. On the other hand, independence struggles and trade had opened up opportunities for a large mixed race that was decisive in the many civil wars for political power. Many of these mixed race people were peasants and were the subject of romantic idealization in poetry, presented as the basis for a model of nation that could integrate their local cultures. In the novel, which was finally able to be cultivated freely after centuries of colonial prohibition in Spanish America, narratives appear that, while representing romances and subjective experiences as typical romantic themes, function as allegories of the nation. ***This is the case, among others, of María (1867), of the Colombian Jorge Isaacs (1837-1895) —who, together with a tragic love relationship, idealizes the regional geography and the ways of life of peasants—; of Cumandá or A Drama Among Savages (1879), in which the Ecuadorian Juan León Mera dramatizes a love between a woman from the Zápara culture (Amazon) and a man from a landowning family; and of Sab (1841), of the Cuban Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, a story of love between a slave and a Creole woman who at the same time serves as a complaint against slavery and discrimination based on socioeconomic class.***

Two extensive and narrative poems that idealize marginal groups and peasants, became particularly famous and are today considered to be very representative works of Spanish-American romantic poetry. One is *Tabaré* (1888), a famous epic poem by the Uruguayan **Juan Zorrilla de San Martín**, which tells a love story “in the wild spring of America”, at the time of the European conquest, between an indigenous man and a Spanish woman. The other is the epic work of the Argentinian **José Hernández**: *El gaucho Martín Fierro* (1872) and *La Vuelta de Martín Fierro* (1879), about the figure of the gaucho, the famous cowboy from the Pampa who had both indigenous and Spanish traditions. Hernández writes his work within the tradition of Gaucho poetry, which had appeared since the time of the struggles for independence at the beginning of the 19th century and celebrated the patriotic heroism and the local and distinctive culture of the cowboy from the Argentinian and Uruguayan plains.

The following stanza from “Martín Fierro” summarizes the romantic and sociopolitical ideals of freedom that sustained Spanish-American countries in their turbulent life during the 19th century:

My glory is to live as free
as the bird in the sky; I
don't nest on this ground,
walk, there's so much to suffer;
and no one should follow me
when I take flight.

(v. 91-96)

*It is my glory to live as free
as a bird in the sky:
I make no nest on this ground
where there's so much to be suffered,
and no one follows me
when I take to flight again.*

*["walk", colloquialism for "where";
"naides", colloquialism for "nobody"]*

Aesthetic context: romanticism

channeling: channeling

unfinished: unfinished,
unpolished

environment: surroundings.

A reaction against Enlightenment rationalism had begun in Germany and England since the 1770s, which valued unscientific knowledge, the irrational, the emotive and the mysterious. This reaction, later called **romanticism**, spread throughout the Hispanic world from the beginning of the 19th century, channeling the nationalist and passionate ideals that accompanied the struggles for independence and the founding of new nations or political systems. In general terms, it opposes the normativity of Enlightenment neoclassicism, which emphasized the precision, balance and didactic value of art based on clear rules. The Romantics, on the other hand, defended originality and both creative and political freedom. The first Romantics were such well-known authors as Schiller and Goethe in Germany, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats in England, or Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo in France. From the latter is the famous phrase: “Romanticism is liberalism in literature”, which emphasizes unfinished and passionate work against strict academic rules. The basic features can be summarized as follows:

1) **Subjectivism:** the work is conceived as an expression of the creative self and its subjective world; the individualism and originality of the artist are emphasized; emotions predominate and the environment is used to reflect them.

2) **Nationalism:** the modern ideal of political and personal freedom, with a strong nationalist or patriotic tendency, is highly valued; local language is incorporated; the typical, the folkloric and the popular are idealized as the basis of “the authentic”.

3) **Escapism:** alternative realities such as the past (medieval, baroque, pre-Columbian), the exotic, the mysterious, the nocturnal, the morbid, the erotic are explored; there is fascination with the labyrinths of the human psyche.

Romanticism, then, can be considered as an individualistic rebellion that seeks to emphasize the emotional in the artistic sphere, with great appreciation for personal and national subjectivity. This is why romantic heroes are often prototypes of rebellion. Likewise, there is a renewal of themes and styles. The nightly and sordid environments are appreciated, looking for the fantastic and exotic stories that the enlightened people ridiculed. And it is because of this individualism and desire for originality that the movement has different, sometimes opposing, characteristics in each country and in each author.



“The Death of Abel”, Santiago Rebull, 1851.

National Museum of Art, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

As we have seen, a part of the Spanish-American socioeconomic elite sought to form nations based on the models of France and England. In many cases, the training of the artists, and the commissions they received, were based on themes, tastes and expectations associated with Europe, as seen in this painting by the Mexican Santiago Rebull (1829-1902). The romantic aesthetic is evident in the emotional intensity of the characters, to which the dark environment and the management of light and shadow also correspond.

Part of Rebull's work was paid for by Emperor Maximilian I, who was “imported” from Austria by conservative leaders and governed Mexico between 1863 and 1867, a clear case of political “Europeanization”. Strangely enough, he was succeeded, by civil rebellion, by President Benito Juárez, of indigenous descent. This historic episode is representative of the violent tensions between proposed nations, social classes, ethnicities and power groups that characterized most of the 19th century in Latin America, and which often could only be stabilized through authoritarian governments or dictatorships.

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4.4: Second half of the 19th century in Spain



In the second half of the 19th century, Spain experienced a pendulum between maintaining its imperial and monarchical ideal (for example by protecting its possessions in Africa and the Caribbean) and developing a capitalist economy with more democratic systems of government. Narrative, painting and other arts are moving away from romantic passions and seeking a less sentimental representation of everyday experience, in an aesthetic known as “realism”, also practiced in other parts of Europe and America. Some realistic painting and narrative direct their attention to past or contemporary history, seeking to offer a dimension of observation or social analysis. This painting by the Catalan Mariano Fortuny represents the wars (and victories) of the Spanish army in North Africa, but the style offers an analytical vision, both of the victorious and the defeated and of the social effects of the war itself.



Detail of *The Battle of Tetouan* (Africa), 1864, by Marià Fortuny (1838-1874).
 Maria Fortuny Marsal, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Sociopolitical life

on the one hand: on one hand
army: army to
implement: to institute, to implement
sexenium: six-year period
after: after
arrangement: gradual
compromise:
 Gradual

In the second half of the 19th century, two ruling classes fought for Spanish political power with two nation projects in conflict. On the one hand, there was the aristocratic class, based on a traditional and colonialist agricultural system, with the support of the Church, military control, and a monarchical and conservative ideology centered on Castile. On the other hand, there was the emerging mostly liberal and urban bourgeois class, based on trade and an incipient industry, which expanded significantly in the 1850s and 60s.

By 1868, the monarchical system collapsed amid looting and revolts. Faced with the uprising of the army, Queen Elizabeth II goes into exile, and typically liberal measures are implemented, such as the separation of Church and State, civil marriage, popular vote and freedom of expression, industry and trade. This period is known as the “democratic six-year term”, because for six years various models of republic were tested (parliamentary monarchy, federal republic, unitary dictatorship). By 1875, however, this first republic was dissolved, and the army chose to restore the monarchy.

Queen Elizabeth II decided to abdicate in favor of her son, Alfonso XII, a more conciliatory figure. Thus, after almost a decade of sociopolitical tensions, the constitution of 1875 allowed an arrangement between the two ruling classes organized in the conservative and liberal parties, although the crown retained much of the executive power. With moderate reforms and a parliamentary system similar to English, this new government achieved two decades of stability known as “the Restoration”. However, the great economic disparity between classes continued to generate tensions in which an activist proletariat, resulting from gradual industrial development, would become a third political force at the beginning of the 20th century.

Realistic and naturalistic aesthetics

secular: non religious
profitable: useful, profitable to
entrust: to comment, to entrust
environment: environment,
 surroundings

Capitalist development (the Industrial Revolution) in Europe generated secular societies that privileged scientific reason and knowledge based on observation and empirical data (positivism). In the field of the arts, the manifestation of this trend translates into an aesthetic of observation and realism: studying and credibly representing social scenes, attitudes and conflicts “typical” of particular times and places. Instead of the romantic interest in mystery and metaphysics, realism adopts the hegemonic perception, associated with bourgeois pragmatism, that what is observable and profitable is “real”. Towards the end of the century, a literary trend led by the French novelist Emile Zola —naturalism—took realistic aesthetics to a more radically “scientific” level, entrusting literature with a mission to diagnose and possible remedy social ills through the detailed description of the environment and its impact on human behavior.

Among the characteristics associated with realistic aesthetics, the following can be highlighted:

- 1) Taste for the detailed description and presentation of causes and consequences.
- 2) Longing to “portray”, without excessive emotional expressions, ways of life and geographical environments.
- 3) Extensive use of examples to explore different profiles of what is represented.
- 4) Taste for everyday life and for social issues, considering the relationships between the individual and their social environment.
- 5) Evaluation of the empirical, the observable through the senses.

In Spain, realism was widely disseminated in narrative, painting and theater during the second half of the 19th century. The economic expansion made a publishing industry flourish with serial publications that achieved commercial success with episodic narratives accessible and attractive to a wide

audience. **At the time of the Restoration (1875-1898), the realist novel developed on an unprecedented scale, with renowned authors such as Juan Valera (1821-1905), Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920), Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) and Leopoldo Alas, “Clarín” (1852-1901).** This rich novelistic represents social situations of rural and urban life in various parts of the country, with particular attention to the daily lives of ordinary people. In painting, money from trade and industry made it possible to finance projects involving portraits, landscapes and historical scenes. Some prestigious painters were Ramón Martí Alsina (1826-1894), Eduardo Rosales (1836-1873) and Mariano Fortuny (1838-1874).

With a similar basis in the greater purchasing power of a sector of the population, realist drama was rich and abundant in the second half of the 19th century in Spain. The anxiety of the upper bourgeoisie over its political and economic stability led to public debate in a theatrical documentation of social life. Many works take place in offices and living rooms where the characters tell each other's confidences, detail the lives and loves of the elite, or discuss current issues such as divorce, education, science and rebellion. Although better known for his narrative work, Benito Pérez Galdós was one of the most influential realist playwrights of the time, constantly contrasting with (neo) romantic theater, which was also very popular, cultivated by writers such as **José Echegaray** (1832-1916), the first Spaniard to receive the Nobel Prize for literature (1904), for “keeping alive the great tradition of Hispanic drama”.

In poetry, realism had little space. Strongly associated with Romanticism, in the eyes of many authors of the time the lyric genre seemed out of place in the era of science and progress. But the success of the realist narrative influenced several poets to adopt a more direct language, a measured emotionality, and a dimension of observation or social analysis. Part of the poetry of the conservative intellectual **Ramón de Campoamor** (1817-1901) reflects the intention of representing experience with less emotion than Romanticism. He elaborates a lyric closer to rational observation, seeking to “arrive at art through the idea and express it in common language, revolutionizing the substance and form of poetry”, as Campoamor himself proposes in his *Poetics* (1883). Part of his work expresses the pragmatic, wise and ingenious ethics of the bourgeois middle class. His most acclaimed creation are his short poems, which he calls *Humoradas*, *Doloras* and *Pequeño Poemas*, in a style in dialogue with the moment, prosaic, ingenious, skeptical, secular and in some cases ironic, without metaphysical intentions. The following “little poem”, entitled “The Express Train” (1872) portrays well the rupture of realism with romantic sentimentality and the taste for expressing trivial or everyday thinking in an era of technological development:

Having stolen my agency,
a love as unfortunate as mine, and having regained my reason and mind,
I was returning from Paris by express train.

*Having lost my free will
to a love as unfortunate as mine,
once I recovered my reason and my mind,
I returned from Paris on the express train.*

Romantic vs. realistic aesthetic

Romanticismo Estética aristocrática y burguesa durante el capitalismo temprano (siglo XIX)	Realismo y naturalismo Estética burguesa durante el desarrollo industrial (fines del siglo XIX, comienzos del XX)
emoción, pasión, subjetivismo énfasis en la originalidad y la espontaneidad creativas exotismo, irracionalidad, misterio interés en la complejidad de la psique humana	racionalismo, observación “objetiva” énfasis en la descripción detallada y el análisis social o lógico ejemplificación, orden, claridad interés en lo cotidiano y en las relaciones entre individuo y entorno

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4.5: Exporting Era and Hispano-American Modernism



In the last decades of the 19th century, many Spanish-American countries focused their economic development around one or two export products, thus experiencing a period of relative prosperity and political stability. This generated a growth of the middle classes and urban centers. Part of the Latin American elite became an exporting bourgeoisie with greater entrepreneurial impetus, valuing efficiency, technical innovation and commercial success.

Social and intellectual production then had to dialogue with this modernizing ideology —inspired by European and American prototypes of progress—while at the same time seeking to assert its own models in the fields of thought and social organization. The painting on the left, by the Uruguayan Carlos Federico Sáez, illustrates this image of financial and urban modernization: a taste for elegance and a certain exoticism that characterized part of the aesthetics of this period, which is known as “Spanish-American modernism”.



“Portrait of Mr. J.C.M.” (1899), by Carlos Federico Sáez (Uruguay 1878-1901).
Carlos Federico Sáez, Public Domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The export boom

boom: boom, rise, peak
around: around
commodities: raw materials
market: market
investor: investor
trader: trader, business person
businessman: entrepreneur
landowner: large land owner
luxury: luxury

In the second half of the 19th century, many Spanish-American countries reorganized their economies around the export opportunities that opened up with the European Industrial Revolution. Cities in northwestern Europe were growing rapidly and their demand for agricultural products increased; expanding industries required greater quantities of raw materials; and commercial activity was looking for new markets. And many European investors partnered with Latin American merchants and entrepreneurs to take advantage of these opportunities.

After strong regional tensions between elites with different interests (especially between landlords who sought to preserve the rural economy and merchants who favored economic liberalism), in the last decades of the 19th century, many Latin American countries specialized in exporting specific products to France and England, and little by little to the United States, such as coffee from Brazil, meat and wool from Argentina, copper from Chile or sugar from Cuba, among others. At the same time, almost all textiles, machines, armaments and luxury items were imported at high prices, making local economies dependent on international banks and foreign investors. There was a trend towards the “Europeanization” of cultural production, because that was the way to become part of the civilized world, in particular for most of the educated elite. Many governments, within this mentality, favored European immigration and English or French investment in banking and infrastructure.

Hispano-American Modernism

label: label
pose: to present, to pose

In the 1880s, a group of works that represented a unique aesthetic mix until then in Spanish began to spread and were later grouped together under the label of “Hispano-American Modernism” (approximately 1880-1920). This literary and artistic trend, more associated with poetry, was described as “modernist” because it was innovative in style and because it posed a tense dialogue with the new sensibilities and values of bourgeois society, urban life and importing exoticism. *It is important to note that this “Hispano-American Modernism” predates and differs from Brazilian modernism (1920s) and European and North American “Modernism” (1900-30); these last two correspond more to what in the Hispanic tradition is known as “vanguard” (avant-garde).*

link: to link boil: to boil angry: irate, enraged restlessness: concern underlie: to underlie via: path, way heteroclite: irregular, unorthodox vario: diverse confused: uncertain aun: even to a certain extent to a certain extent crucible: melting pot	One of the first authors to be associated with Modernism today is the Cuban José Martí, who in 1892 synthesized the need for an art that responds to the changes of the time: “Nobody has their faith secure today. New blood is boiling in everyone and they are angry and hungry, by Insecurity, Vague Hope, and Secret Vision” (“Prologue to the Niagara Poem”, 1892). These are the intensity and restlessness of modernist aesthetics that reject immediate circumstances. Underlying their “Vague Hope” is an enthusiasm for idealistic values against the utilitarian simplification of existence associated with capitalism. In contrast, a “Secret Vision” is explored to capture the mystery, the “aura” of life or “the inner kingdom” that cannot be reduced to scientific or economic formulas. Their “Insecurity” is related to the socioeconomic, ethical and cognitive debates generated by the Industrial Revolution in Europe and America. To aesthetically elaborate this crisis of trust in bourgeois positivism, modernist authors develop new formal techniques of symbolism and poetic diction that aim to embody alternative ideals, especially that of beauty: art as a way to save humanity from social mechanization. Although opposing rationalism has a lot of (neo) romantic, Spanish-American Modernism no longer focuses on representing ideas or emotions as in the past, but on communicating sensations (Shaw 196). This revitalizes and transforms the modes of poetic expression in Spanish, proposing a “heteroclite sum of styles through whose integration the varied, confusing and even contradictory spirit of an entire era is manifested: that of the end of the 19th century” (Jiménez 19). In effect, this aesthetic trend is a syncretism of styles that in Europe had been successive or divorced and, in their dramatic mixture, results in a unique and distinctive product, to a certain extent comparable to the racial and cultural melting pot that characterizes Latin American societies. In their mix, modernists affirm the Spanish-American by creating models that broke with those of the Spanish poetry of their time, expressing “a desire for cultural autonomy and the desire to achieve a feeling of equality” with their counterparts in Western Europe (Jrade 37).
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Modernists were fundamentally inspired by two different and partly contradictory French poetic schools: Parnassianism [1] and symbolism [2]

. And this was the most striking thing for his time: he freely incorporated, in Spanish, the innovative literary techniques of France, crystallizing his own dynamic style. This can be summarized in the following characteristics:

- fascination with the beautiful or the precious understood as formal perfection, finesse and exoticism;
- search for the ideal, elaborate, elegant and harmonious expression;
- high sophistication of the style, emphasizing musicality, feel, innovation;
- trust in the saving power of art, with its ritual value as a refuge and protest against consumerist or mechanized societies that devalue the poet and the human being;
- elaboration of existential puzzles and non-rational experiences;
- search for an expression “proper” or distinctive to Latin America and a feeling of solidarity between their countries and authors.

The movement can be divided into two moments with their own characteristics. A first group of poets, who today can be classified as “early modernism”, seem romantic in their nationalist and tragic impulse. However, rather than romantic emotions, they explore sensations (physical and metaphysical) as an alternative mode of knowledge. This trend is observed, for example, in the first stanzas of the poem “My mourners” (1890) by the Mexican Manuel Gutierrez Nájera (Jiménez 108):

Sadness descends taciturn to the bottom of my soul, and numb, ragged witches, with black nails, they dig into my life. Blood is the color of their pupils, their tears are snow; deep dread they instill... I love them because they are the only ones that accompany me. (v. 1-10)	<i>Sorrows Descend, Gloomy, onto the Bottom of My Soul, and Numb, Ragged Witches with Black Fingernails Scratch My Life.</i> <i>Of blood is their pupils' color, of snow are their tears made; a deep fear they inspire... I love them because they are the only (or lonely) ones who accompany me.</i>
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Here, emotions (sadness), although important, are used to develop correspondences between perceptions — black nails, the color of blood, tears of snow — that go beyond the expression of the speaker's individual feelings: they are a way of knowing. It is also not difficult to establish a connection with the “gothic” of nineteenth-century authors such as Edgar Allan Poe (who was the inspiration for French symbolism). The form is flexible, with an assonant rhyme that seeks a music that is inner to the language itself.

The four most famous names of this first modernist generation are José Martí (Cuba 1853-95), Manuel Gutierrez Nájera (Mexico 1859-95), Julián del Casal (Cuba 1863-93) and José Asunción Silva (Colombia 1865-96).

A second group of authors, who we can classify as “high modernism”, distance themselves more from romanticism, preferring form over feeling. What is important to them is the design of rhythms, symbols and themes that develop the pure, ideal beauty, and meaning of existence against capitalist materialism or positivist simplification. The author most associated with this second generation is the Nicaraguan poet **Rubén Darío** (1867-1916). Its great symbol is the swan, whose whiteness and elegance represented the poetic ideal, and whose neck, shaped like a question mark, represented the enigma of existence (see Shaw). The sonnet “The Swan”, published in 1896, summarizes these interests:

It was at a divine hour for mankind.
 The swan used to sing only to die.
 When the accent of the Wagnerian Swan was heard, it was in the middle of an aurora,
 it was to revive.
 Over the storms of the human ocean
 you can hear the swan song; you keep hearing,
 dominating the hammer of the old German Thor or the trumpets that sing the sword of
 Argantir.
 Oh Swan! Oh sacred bird! If before the white Helen
 in Leda's blue egg sprouted with full grace, and
 Beauty was the immortal princess,
 Under your white wings, the new Poetry
 conceives in a glory of light and harmony
 the eternal and pure Helena that embodies the ideal.

Swan: swan
 the human race: human kind
 Wagnerian: a reference to the symbolism of the swan in
 Wagner's Lohengrin, as beauty incarnated
 ocean: notice the lack of the accent so that the word can rhyme
 with "German" dominating... German: overpowering
 The hammer of the ancient Germanic Thor, God of Thunder
 trumpets
 Argantir: a hero in Teutonic mythology who had a glowing
 sword harmony: harmony in the musical sense only, as rhythm
 incarnate: to embody, incarnate Helena, Leda: in Greek
 mythology, Helen of
 Troy was
 conceived by Princess Leda, who had been seduced by Zeus in
 the guise of a swan. Helen was a symbol of beauty. Note that the
 swan's egg is blue here.

This "high modernism" tends to prefer exoticism, but some of its exponents return to civic themes and highlight the pride of being from Latin America, in an ideology that is known as Americanism or Mundonovism (pride of the New World, America). **Other poets of this second modernist generation are Ricardo Jaimes Freyre (Bolivia 1868-1933), José Juan Tablada (Mexico 1871-1945), Guillermo Valencia (Colombia 1873-1943), Leopoldo Lugones (Argentina 1874-1938), José María Eguren (Peru 1874-1942), Julio Herrera y Reissig (Uruguay 1875-1910), José Santos Chocano (Peru 1875-1934) and Delmira Agustini (Uruguay 1886-1914).**

[1] **Parnasianism:** a trend of poetry in the 19th century that rejected the emotional excesses of Romanticism and defended formal perfection and "art for art's sake" (the idea that art has value in itself and does not need to justify its usefulness). Its name comes from Mount Parnassus, the home of the Muses in Greek mythology (inspirers of music and poetry). Her concept of beauty is related to fine, exotic or precious objects (swans, marble, the Far East, etc.). Two famous French Parnassians are Théophile Gautier (1811-72) and Charles Leconte de Lisle (1818-94).

[2] **Symbolism:** a poetic trend from the end of the 19th century, characterized by free verse, sophisticated musicality, interest in the mysterious or the mystical, and the construction of subjective and ambiguous symbols to evoke emotions through synesthesia (correspondence between the sensory world and the interior). It was a reaction against the formal perfectionism of the Parnassians and understood art as a way of knowing metaphysical or psychological realities. Four famous French symbolists are Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), Paul Verlaine (1844-96) and Arthur Rimbaud (1854-91).

Romanticism vs. Spanish-American Modernism

Romanticismo	Modernismo hispanoamericano
Estética aristocrática y burguesa durante el capitalismo temprano (siglo XIX)	Estética mundonovista de fines del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX
emoción, pasión, subjetivismo énfasis en la originalidad y la espontaneidad creativas exotismo, irracionalidad, misterio interés en la complejidad de la psique humana	expresión ideal, elaborada, elegante énfasis en la musicalidad, las sensaciones y la innovación perfección formal, finura, exotismo elaboración de enigmas existenciales y de un estilo hispanoamericano "propio" o distintivo

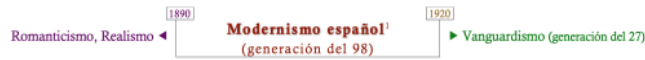
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4.6: The Turn of the Century and Spanish Modernism



During a period known as “the Bourbon Restoration” (the return of the Bourbon family to the monarchy), the last twenty-five years of the 19th century were of institutional stability in Spain, with a liberal model of the State and the rise of social and political movements, the fruit of industrial development. Within this model, the inhabitants of the Spanish territories in the Caribbean obtained some regional autonomy and the same civil rights as the peninsular ones. However, after decades of struggles for independence, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines secede from Spain after the war against the United States. This “disaster of 98”, as it was then named, generated an in-depth reflection on national identity and the political path for the country.

The painting on the right is part of the aesthetics that emerged in this period, which investigates how we construct individual and collective perception. Many thinkers and activists set out to rediscover “deep Spain”, the inner, local and daily life of the people, to generate a sense of national identity based more on appreciation for what is close rather than on imperial, military or colonialist glories.



Enganchando la Barca (Valencia), 1899, by Joaquín Sorolla (1863-1923).
 Ángel M. Felicísimo from Mérida, Spain, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Sociopolitical life: 1875-1925

on the one hand: on one hand
army: army
inequality: inequality
arrangement:
gradual compromise: gradual
defeat: defeat loss:
loss dismantle:
dismantling
coup d'état: coup d'état
support: support
landowner: large land
owner lousy: terrible

As we have seen, in the second half of the 19th century, two ruling classes fought for Spanish political power with two competing nation projects. On the one hand, there was the aristocratic class, based on a traditional and colonialist agricultural system, with the support of the Church, military control, and a monarchical and conservative ideology centered on Castile. The army maintained control of territories in Africa, Asia and America. On the other hand, there was the emerging bourgeois, liberal and urban class, based on trade and incipient industry, strongest in northern Spain. These conflicting models accentuated regional inequality, with movements that emphasized local autonomy in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Catalonia, the Basque Country and the Philippines. The constitution of 1875 allowed a settlement between the two dominant elites organized into the conservative and liberal parties, although the crown retained much of the executive power. As a result of gradual industrial development, a proletariat was formed—which would become a third political force—, social activism achieved greater dynamism, urban life gained prominence in the national imagination, and the middle class became more numerous, although not the majority.

The defeat against regional independence fighters and the United States, known as “the disaster” of 1898, in which Spain lost its last territories in America and Asia (Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam), also promoted a spirit of change. This loss put the colonialist economy and national identity in crisis. In the field of ideas, a revision of what Spain should be and the confrontation of the country's official image—the imperial monarchy—with the harsh realities of poverty and social conflict was encouraged.

In this climate of conflict, Alfonso XIII ascended the throne in 1902. Working class movements presented serious challenges to traditional centralism and bourgeois hegemony. At the same time, the militaristic mentality, seeking to vindicate the army, wanted to strengthen central authority by force and restore the imperial destiny of Spain with the few remaining dominions in Africa. During the First World War (1914-18) the Spanish government remained neutral, busy with this internal debate. In those years, serious revolts took place until, in 1923, General Miguel Primo de Rivera staged a coup d'etat. Their power was consolidated with the support of the king, the armed forces, the Catalan bourgeoisie and the Andalusian landlords.

The Primo de Rivera dictatorship was presented as “a men's movement” against political corruption, with the idea of creating a more modern and functional nation. It suspended the constitution and suppressed political, journalistic and educational activity. Following the example of Mussolini's fascism in Italy, a vertical union was created in the 1920s, which made some concessions in terms of salaries and labor protection. Migration to cities accelerated and unemployment declined. In addition, around 1927 the Spanish army regained control of Spanish areas in Morocco. All of this generated popular support for the regime. At the same time, however, working conditions continued to be terrible and many sectors continued to actively oppose authoritarianism and social inequality. There were broad sectors that yearned for a democratic or even socialist system of government.

Spanish Modernism and the “Generation of 98”

Intellectuals who share the idea of symbolically using the date of 1898 (end of the empire) to reflect on “the being of Spain” are known as the “Generation of 98”. The group included world-renowned writers such as Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (1867-1928) and

Antonio Machado (1874-1939). The latter synthesized in his poems the dualist perception, prevalent at the time, of “the two Spains”: one Catholic, authoritarian, aristocratic and centralist, heir to the old empire and as if dreaming of the past; the other, the working, poor, struggling people. This is how it is seen in the last (L VIII) of his “Proverbs and Songs” (1917):

There is already a Spaniard who wants to
live and begins to live,
between a Spain that dies
and another Spain that yawns.
Spaniard that you come
into the world, God save you.
One of the two Spains
must freeze your heart.

*There is now a Spaniard who wants
to live, and begins to live,
between a dying Spain
and another Spain that is yawning.
Baby Spaniard, you who are coming
to the world, may God protect you.
One of the two Spains
shall be freezing your heart.*

To make the life of this “Spaniard” viable in a deliberate and dignified future that will not “freeze [his] heart”, these intellectuals travel around the country, study its landscapes and traditions, revalue the experience of the people and propose alternative visions of the social and cultural history of Spain. Although they include the different regions, they often use the austere and rural landscape of Castile as a metaphor for the Spanish people (Méndez-Faith 290). They reflect on Spanish in response to the collapse of the imperial project, the crisis of monarchical politics, and the new social and ideological forces of an increasingly industrial and secular country.

But his themes and aesthetics are not limited to Spain's “profound social trauma” (Gagen 91). His literary production is in dialogue with European and American trends, generating a trend that can be more inclusively called “Spanish Modernism” because, like Hispano-American Modernism, he is innovative in all literary genres, he seeks in art a self-conscious space to investigate metaphysical or intuitive experiences, and he questions bourgeois positivism [1].

In fact, there was significant interaction with Latin American modernists, especially through Rubén Darío. In both cases, it is an intellectual middle class negotiating its place—and that of art—in societies that are torn between aristocratic tradition and less developed bourgeois progress than in the hegemonic centers of the north, where the most influential decisions are made. In both, there is an evocative search for spiritual transcendence through art, related to French symbolism^[2]: “not painting the thing itself, but the effects it produces” (Mallarmé). It is considered that poetic vision can and must intuitively illuminate the path of nations and seeks to communicate the sensation of beauty.

But there are also important differences. On the one hand, northern Spain is industrializing more rapidly, giving a less foreign meaning to “cosmopolitanism” (which was almost clearly imported in Latin America) and fostering a vigorous worker-socialist movement. This allows for an aesthetic modernism that has a more dynamic contact with its own social context. It promotes anti-bourgeois innovation in arts of public participation such as the theater by the Galician Ramón del Valle Inclán (1866-1936) and the architecture of the Catalan Antonio Gaudí (1852-1926). In poetry, more flexible forms are produced, the philosophical and social dimension is emphasized, and brief forms of popular tradition such as the proverb or the song are adopted. They prefer a language close to everyday speech, with a shorter syntax; they recover the lexicon of the people, in an effort to work in harmony with the distinctive character of “the Spanish” (the *Geist* of historical romanticism). In this regard, most Spanish modernists are far from the exoticism and preciosity of their Spanish-American counterparts.

Spanish modernism, with its intention to create new art, is made public through widely distributed cultural magazines. *His titles suggest the spirit of the time, such as the Contemporary Magazine (1875-1907), Modern Spain (1889—1914), Spanish Alma (1903-05), Don Quixote (1892-1902), Germinal (1897-1899), Vida Nueva (1898-1900), and the magazine Nuevo Teatro Crítico, by the influential feminist writer Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921).* Alternative theater was cultivated by several of the most important authors of this era, such as Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, Concha Espina (1869-1955), Pío Baroja (1872-1956) and Azorín (José Augusto Trinidad Martínez Ruiz 1873-1967). He was opposed to the realistic and bourgeois drama that was so successful on stage, exemplified in the traditional works of the Álvarez Quintero brothers —Serafin (1871-1938) and Joaquín (1873-1944) —who represent a light tone in an intellectual period more influenced by Castilian and tragic

[1] It is important to note that Hispanic Modernism predates and differs from Brazilian modernism (1920s) and from European and North American “Modernism” (1900-30); these last two correspond more to what is known in the Hispanic tradition as “vanguard” (avant-garde).

[2] **Symbolism**: a poetic trend from the end of the 19th century, characterized by free verse, sophisticated musicality, interest in the mysterious or mystical, and the construction of subjective and ambiguous symbols to evoke emotions through synesthesia (correspondence between physical and psychological sensations). It was a reaction against the formal perfectionism of the Parnassians and understood art as a way of knowing metaphysical or psychological realities. Four famous French symbolists are Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), Paul Verlaine (1844-96) and Arthur Rimbaud (1854-91).

Romantic vs. Modernist Aesthetics

Romanticismo Estética aristocrática y burguesa durante el capitalismo temprano (siglo XIX)	Modernismo español Estética de reconfiguración identitaria (1890-1930)
emoción, pasión, subjetivismo énfasis en la originalidad y la espontaneidad creativas exotismo, irracionalidad, misterio interés en la complejidad de la psique humana	observación, exploración de la sensibilidad colectiva énfasis en la indagación e innovación a partir de formas tradicionales incorporación de lo nativo y regional, sensaciones, formas memorables interés en lo filosófico y los procesos de construcción social de la realidad

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: Twentieth Century

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5.1: Early 20th Century in Latin America



The 20th century in Latin America can be summarized as a pendulum between the effort to change and the tendency to prolong the conditions of extreme inequality and economic dependence inherited from the colony and not overcome during the 19th century. Improving the conditions of marginalization for the people and achieving more national sovereignty was the great explicit (although not necessarily practical) concern of most intellectuals and many politicians, but preserving the interests of minority elites was the practical (though rarely explicit) mission of almost all governments, in economies defined by foreign investment.

The painting on the right is part of the aesthetics that emerged during the first decades of the century, which, after the exoticism associated with the modernist style, prefers to explore everyday, local and non-European history, with the aspiration to redefine more inclusive national identities. The "birdman" was a gold icon that, according to legend, buried people from what is now northwestern Colombia, to protect them from the greed of the conquistadores. It is a good symbol of the effort to "unearth" the history and culture of marginalized sectors of the population.



Bird Man (1936), by Pedro Nel Gómez (Colombia 1899-1984).
GOJUKA, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Economic Expansion and Social Changes

raw materials: raw materials
worker: industry worker
support: support
after
dismantling: to dismantle
strengthening: strengthening
strike: strike
as well as: as well as

In many Latin American countries, the 20th century began with an economic expansion in the export of raw materials, which produced considerable urban growth and an increase in the middle and working classes. Some sectors of the business elite favored political reforms to gain the support of a larger sector of the population. In Argentina, voting was opened for middle-class men in 1912; Uruguay convened a constituent assembly with the participation of all citizens; Chile adopted a parliamentary system; Brazil, after the dismantling of the monarchy in 1889, began a period of electoral politics; and in Mexico, a group of liberals rebelled against the state monopoly of the positivist dictatorship. On the other hand, worker and peasant activism, connected with the worldwide strengthening of left-wing movements, became very important, since strikes and protests had a crucial impact on the economy. Thus, labor mobilization—anarchist, syndicalist, communist—made itself felt during these years. This mobilization led to processes of redefining the national sphere, as in the case of the Mexican Revolution (1910-19), which had an immense cultural influence in the region. Debates and initiatives to redefine the place of traditional working classes such as indigenous or Afro-descendant, as well as the impression that the European model was not necessarily superior, increased interest in local demonstrations and in alternative visions of the destiny of nations.

This redefinition of national identities and of the arts also responded to the changes that Western Europe experienced in the first decades of the century. Until the end of the 19th century, Western culture was considered a superior civilization force for progress and social harmony. At the same time, especially with Karl Marx (1818-1883), the principles of capitalism and bourgeois society began to be strongly questioned. Consciousness scholars such as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) disputed the empire of reason (the Enlightenment idea that man was a rational animal) and emphasized the importance of other aspects of the psyche, such as the unconscious, dreams and emotions. In 1905 and 1915, Albert Einstein (1879-1955) published his theories of relativity, generating a total revision of how reality was conceived. On the other hand, *The Decline of the West* (1918-22), the work of the German philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), posited the aging of European civilization and its need to renew itself in contact with other cultures. The nightmare of the First World War (1914-18) seemed to confirm these theses and undermined confidence in European superiority, also questioning the value of colonialist or imperial projects. All of this contributed to a radical self-examination of Western culture and arts, as well as to a nationalist feeling and pride in the non-European in the Americas.

in line with: *in keeping with*
breaking through: *to make*
one's way

In line with these modernizing forces, there has also been a growing organization and political participation of women since the end of the 19th century, who have had to negotiate the traditional role of sacrificed and virtuous mothers (the model of the Virgin Mary, or “Marianism”) to break through in public life. At the beginning of the century, the protest against legal, political and economic inequality between the sexes was often articulated through teachers' organizations, since they were an educated middle class sector with a clear awareness of the discrimination they suffered. For example, the academics and educators who participated in the scientific congresses of the Southern Cone between 1898 and 1910, promoted discussions about sexual inequality in education, public health, nutrition and child rearing. The visibility of many intellectuals, writers and artists also increases thanks to these initiatives.

Impact of the Mexican Revolution

give rise to: *to give way to*
gremial: *trade- or guild-*
related instead of:

instead of often:
often campo:

field, realm Occidente: *the*
West
boil: *to boil*

speech:

popular speech: *from*
ordinary people

engraving: *engraving*

source: *source*

the truth: *what is certain*
marked a milestone: *became*
a milestone

The armed mobilization of the years 1910-25 did not radically transform the economy or the class structure in Mexico. But it did give rise to new forms of citizen participation between 1920 and 1940: peasant leagues, unions, union organizations. All this produced mass politics very different from the autocratic and personalist style inherited from the colony. The balance of power was fundamentally altered in a country that would soon have the largest Spanish-speaking population in the world. Instead of a “dictatorship of the proletariat” as in Russia and China, the State became an arbiter between three social classes — the peasants, the workers and the liberal bourgeoisie — with the limits imposed by strong American influence, often in alliance with the traditional elite. The Mexican model, although it was not repeated in any other country, had a great impact on the political and social thinking of Latin America, from Brazil to Guatemala.

In the cultural field, Mexico became an epicenter of the process of redefining collective identities that took place in the West during the 1920s and 1930s. Social protest was also boiling in many countries on both continents and States had to discuss how to integrate working people into national identity. Europe itself, decentered, sought aesthetic values in other cultures. The Mexican experience of the 1920s and 1930s, with the enthusiasm to build a new society and with an emphasis on education and artistic production, then had a lot to tell the world. This is how the Dominican intellectual Pedro Henríquez Ureña summarized it in a speech to Argentine students in 1925: “Mexico is now in one of the active moments of its national life, a time of crisis and creation. He is criticizing his past life, affirming his own character, declaring himself fit to form his type of civilization” (11). It was an era of popular affirmation and creativity, in which symbolic warfare and the building of heroes were as important as armed confrontation.

The flourishing and activism of the plastic arts was one of the most eloquent manifestations of this spirit. Dozens of artists of both sexes flooded the national imagination with murals, paintings and engravings with criticisms of Western civilization and, above all, trying to learn from the indigenous past and present in order to present a constructive, combative and often idealized vision of the people as the source of a new type of society. Several of these artists —such as Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros— received great international recognition: “For the first time, Latin American artists found in their own home something that fascinated Europe: the indigenous, the African, the land” (Franco 102). The Mexican experience thus also fostered a feeling not only of nationalism, but of affirmation of Latin America as a whole.

As the Mexican poet and Nobel Prize winner for literature Octavio Paz stated in 1986, “The Mexican Revolution was the discovery of Mexico by Mexicans. A revelation” (229). The word “discovery” suggests the decolonizing scope of this rebellion, which transformed the way the country conceived of itself. The word “revelation” alludes to the difficulty of naming a phenomenon that many question as a “real” revolution. The truth is that this “response to the wound of the Conquest” (Fuentes 209), of global significance, marked a milestone in the long and incomplete process of building just and autonomous societies in Latin America.

Indigenism, Negrismo, regional soap opera

As part of the redefinition of national identities at the beginning of the 20th century, intellectual production (art, literature, studies) related to non-Western cultural elements in America, which already had a history of centuries, achieved particular visibility and fruitful development. ***In countries with large populations of pre-Columbian origin, there was a proliferation of critical, literary and visual works on native peoples, known as indigenism.*** Its central and explicit objective was to highlight the relevance of native peoples to the sociopolitical and cultural identity of these countries. This objective distinguishes it from romantic and sentimental representations (known as “Indianism”) that did not seek to denounce the historical exploitation of this population or to delve into the causes of its frequent rebellions. In 1924, for example, the Peruvian Raúl Haya de la Torre founded the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance -APRA-, a grassroots trade unionist movement that proposed lifting the indigenous population out of poverty and making a more equitable distribution of wealth. At the same time, Peruvians César Vallejo, in poetry, Martín Chambi, in photography and, in the narrative, José María Arguedas and Ciro Alegría, among many others, incorporate in a fruitful and perceptive way part of the experience and aspirations of that indigenous presence. Similar works and initiatives emerged, through all aesthetic and social manifestations, in countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador and Bolivia.

In the Caribbean, ***Negrismo*** sought to recognize the presence of African origin in national culture with figures such as Nicolás Guillén (Cuba), Aimé Césaire (Martinique) and Marcus Garvey (Jamaica). In the Caribbean, anthropologist Fernando Ortiz (Cuba 1881-1969) disseminated studies on African cultures transplanted to the Americas. *Around that time, the taste for North American jazz also developed in Europe, and political-cultural initiatives gained ground to vindicate the African presence in the United States (Harlem Renaissance), Jamaica (Marcus Garvey) and the French West Indies (Aimé*

Césaire and the Négritude movement), among others. A Spanish-American expression of these interests was the literary movement of “**Negrismo**”, which sought to recognize the population of African origin and its meaning in national culture, and to reciprocally enrich aesthetic production with the cultural fruitfulness of that presence in many Hispanic countries. Negrismo had a particular impact on poetry, since it incorporated Afro-Caribbean rhythms and sounds, one of the most notable aspects of the cultural production of slaves and their descendants. Thus, a poetic vein of great beauty and novelty was produced in those years of formal experimentation, although with different levels of exoticism. Some prominent figures in Negro poetry in the first half of the 20th century were Luis Palés Matos (Puerto Rico 1898-1969), Manuel del Cabral (Dominican Republic 1907-1999), Emilio Ballagas (Cuba 1908-1954), Adalberto Ortiz (Ecuador 1914-2003) and Jorge Artel (Colombia 1909-1994). Among them, the one with the greatest international resonance was the Cuban Nicolás Guillén (1902-1989). Afro-Hispanic literature has continued to deepen as a fundamental sector of cultural production throughout Latin America, and of specific relevance to the immense Afro-descendant population in the Caribbean (which includes the Caribbean islands and coasts of Mexico, Central America and North South America), Brazil, Uruguay and the Pacific coast of Peru, Ecuador and Colombia.

In areas where the peasant population was mostly mixed race, such as in Argentina, Venezuela and Colombia, the **novel about the land** (also called regional or telluric) sought to investigate the “autochthonous” and propose visions of national development that took into account the distinctive character of South American geography and ethnicity. Authors such as Romulo Gallegos (Venezuela 1884-1969), José Eustasio Rivera (Colombia 1888-1928), Ricardo Güiraldes (Argentina 1886-1927), Mariano Azuela (Mexico 1873-1952), Alcides Arguedas (Bolivia 1879-1946) and José de la Cuadra (Ecuador 1903-1941), investigated in their novels the regional life and views of various sectors of their peoples, becoming national references for their respective countries. Part of his aesthetics is based on the literary and pictorial realism that had flourished in Europe since the end of the 19th century, and which had had influential developments in the narrative of the Spanish-American social theme, with authors such as Clorinda Matto de Turner (Peru 1852-1909) and Manuel de Jesús Galván (Dominican Republic 1834-1910), to mention just two.

Poetry after modernism

Already during the second decade of the 20th century, an important group of poets began to distance themselves from modernist aesthetics. The poem “Twist the Swan's Neck” (1911) by Mexican Enrique González Martínez (1871-1952), has served as an emblem of this detachment, since it criticizes the imitative use of the most visible symbols of that movement: swans, princesses, jewels. But the spirit of innovation and the freedom to combine different trends in dialogue with the modernizing processes of their time remained in force.

The poetics immediately following Modernism can be grouped in two directions based on this renewing character. *The first, known as **Spanish-American postmodernism** [1], emphasizes formal simplification and accessible images as opposed to modernist opulence; the second, **avant-garde**, radicalizes exploration of the critical place of art in modern societies with intense formal experimentation.* These and other trends coexisted and intersected in a wide range of regional and personal variants.

What would later be called “postmodernist poetry” in Latin America was not the result of a programmatic movement but of an almost always gradual change in style and in thematic interests. A group of young poets joins the renewed interest in affirming local cultures and environments (as in the regional or land novel). Although they continue the Americanist project of a part of Modernism, they are opposed to its solemn aesthetic. One case is the Venezuelan Andrés Bello Blanco (1897-1955), who prefers popular legends and nearby landscapes in a literary project he calls “Colombism”, that is, discovering the American world anew, like Columbus. Emulating the popular song or “Trova” with a lexicon accessible to a reading public that continues to expand along with the middle class, the poet from *Tierras Que Me Oureron* (1921) conceives himself as a painter of landscapes and people:

If there remains a painter of saints,
if there remains a painter of the heavens,
let him make the sky of my land,
with the tones of my people,
with his fine-haired angel,
with his medium-haired angel, with his carian angels,
with his brown angels,
with his little white angels,
with his little Indian angels, with his little angels,
with his little angels
blacks,
who eat mango
in the slums of heaven.

(“Paint me little black angels” v. 35-47).

*If there is a painter left
who paints saints, who paints skies,
let that painter do my land's sky
with the colors of my people,
with its angel of fine pearl,
with its small time angel,
with its blond angels,
with its colored angels,
with its white little angels,
with its Indian little angels,
with its black little angels.
Paint them while eating mangoes
through the heavens shanty towns.*

The language, tone and interests here are very different from those of the modernists. There is a desire to connect the poetic adventure with the visibility gained by the working classes in those years and with the search for alternative cultural models. The style imitates popular traditions and incorporates localisms such as “catires”, colloquialisms such as “medium-haired” and family references (mango, slums).

Postmodernist poetry therefore opts for a less ornate and more direct style. In contrast to modernist musicality or preciosity, “an emotion that meditates on itself” (Quiroga 339) is staged with a sober tone. One sector emphasizes the rural, where many of its authors come from. Another group develops urban experiences. But in both, there is a desire for formal purification and to lower the poetic voice from its grandiloquent pedestal to instead create an intimate atmosphere, shortening the distance between the poetic voice and the reading public.

There are many poets and styles that have come under the umbrella of Spanish-American postmodernism. [2] An interesting facet of this aesthetic period is the large number of authors who are classified under this label and who broaden the lyrical horizon of their time. This can be explained in part because few were part of a programmatic poetic movement and therefore fall under this somewhat vague denomination. But at the same time, it indicates and allows us to explore a greater visibility of women in the political and intellectual life of nations in the process of industrializing. Some prominent names are Alfonsina Storni (Argentina 1892-1938), Juana de Ibarbourou (Uruguay 1895-1979), Dulce María Loynaz (Cuba 1902-97), Julia de Burgos (Puerto Rico 1914-53) and Yolanda Bedregal (Bolivia 1916-99). In all of them, one can trace, among a variety of topics, the desire to configure less restrictive identities and more egalitarian relations between the sexes. The most outstanding poet of Spanish-American postmodernism was Gabriela Mistral (Chile 1889-1957), the first Latin American person to receive the Nobel Prize for literature (1945) and one of the creative forces of UNESCO. The Chilean writer develops a poetics of powerful simplicity, both in its form and in its content, which creates “an ennobled modality of ordinary speech” (Franco 274). Part of her work elaborates themes and genres proverbially associated with the feminine and the rural (such as lullabies or ballads), subtly modifying the meaning of the traditional roles assigned to women and the working classes. For example, it represents mothers beyond the domestic sphere, underlining their power to influence all of humanity, and peasants as the source of an alternative future.

[1] It is better to talk about “Spanish-American postmodernism” to avoid confusion with “*Post-Modernism*”, a term that applies to a type of global cultural production from the end of the 20th century (which some call postmodernity).

[2] Among them are the Puerto Rican Luis Llorens Torres (1874-1944), the Chilean Carlos Pezoa Véliz (1879-1908), the Colombian Porfirio Barba Jacob (1880-1942), the Argentinian Baldomero Fernández Moreno (1886-1950) and the Mexican Ramón López Velarde (1888-1921).

Modernist vs. Postmodernist Aesthetics

Modernismo hispanoamericano Estética mundonovista, fines del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX	Posmodernismo hispanoamericano Estética localista, comienzos del siglo XX
expresión ideal, elaborada, elegante énfasis en la musicalidad, las sensaciones y la innovación perfección formal, finura, exotismo elaboración de enigmas existenciales y de un estilo hispanoamericano "propio" o distintivo	expresión sencilla, directa énfasis en un tono meditativo y sobrio intimidad, deseo de acortar la distancia con el público lector elaboración de sensaciones y reflexión sobre el entorno local (rural o urbano)

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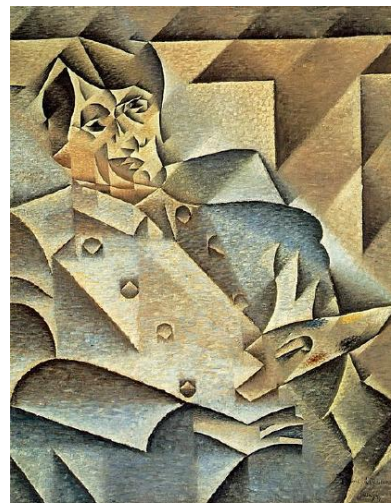
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5.2: Spain in the first half of the 20th century



The conflict between two models of nation—one monarchical and centralist as opposed to the other democratic and pluralistic—violently marked the first half of the 20th century in Spain. After the dictatorship of the “restoration”, the country experienced a brief left-wing republican era, and then faced a civil war that staged the confrontation of powers and ideologies soon after manifested in the Second World War. The harsh civil war culminated in 1939 one of the right-wing dictatorships that lasted thirty-five years, one of the longest in Europe.

The painting on the right illustrates one of the experimental lines of aesthetics of this period, cubism, grouped under the name of “avant-garde” or “avant-garde movements”. As in this portrait by Juan Gris of Pablo Picasso, the sense of reality, identity and nation was fragmented and reconsidered, both in Spain and in Europe and the Americas, at a time of intense questioning of faith in science and progress, of the validity of models of social development and of the unity of the “I”, both personal and collective.



Portrait of Pablo Picasso (1912), by Juan Gris (Madrid, 1887- Ile de France, 1927).

Juan Gris, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Sociopolitical life

challenge: challenge
performance: performance,
return
coup d'etat: coup d'état
union: terrible labor union:

terrible inequality: inequality

hit: blow
resign: to resign avoid:
to
avoid secular: secular,
nonreligious

nonconformism:
nonconformity,
discomfort

From the end of the 19th century in Spain, working class movements presented serious challenges to traditional centralism and to a monarchy weakened by regional tensions, pressure from the bourgeoisie, loss of colonies and military power, low economic performance and political anachronism. The triumph of the Russian Revolution (1921) was also a motivator for radical left-wing sectors. In those years, serious revolts took place until, in 1923, General Miguel Primo de Rivera staged a coup d'etat. The dictatorship, with a language of protection of imperial traditions, suppressed political, journalistic and educational activity. But it was able to attract industrial progress and give an impression of labor justice. Following the example of Mussolini in Italy, a vertical union was created in the 1920s that made some concessions in salaries and benefits for workers. Migration to cities accelerated and unemployment declined.

But working conditions remained terrible and many sectors continued to actively oppose authoritarianism and social inequality. The final blow to the regime was the global economic recession of 1929. In 1930, Primo de Rivera resigned, and in 1931 the pro-monarchist parties lost elections in the major cities. To avoid a civil war, King Alfonso XIII went into exile, and a democratic state was proclaimed in Spain.

This “Second Republic” (there was a brief first republican period in 1873) governed until 1939 with a tense alliance between radical liberal, socialist, anarchist and Catalan and Basque nationalist political forces. The ambitious Constitution approved in 1931 proclaimed Spain as “a secular republic of workers of all classes” with equality before the law, civil marriage and divorce, separation between Church and State, voting for all citizens of both sexes over 23 years of age, and powers to redistribute property and nationalize public services. But there were deep internal divisions between left-wing groups, great nonconformism on the part of powerful sectors of the Church, the aristocracy and the army, and a rise in fascist ideologies.

a third: <i>a third</i> painful: <i>painful to</i> last side: side, <i>faction</i> back: <i>to back in fact:</i> in fact suspect: <i>suspect</i> syndicalists: <i>labor</i> union members eager to: <i>anxious for</i> kingdom: <i>kingdom</i>	In July 1936, a group of generals, from the Spanish possessions in Africa, staged a coup d'etat that could only control a third of the peninsular territory. Thus began the painful civil war that would last until 1939. The two sides facing territorial control were called the national and the republican. The former, associated with the right, generally had the support of Catholicism, landowners, part of foreign investors, and military forces from Portugal, Germany and Italy. The latter, associated with the left, defended the legal and partly anti-clerical government of the Popular Front and were supported by communist groups, by workers' movements, by regionalist sectors in Catalonia and the Basque Country, and by the revolutionary governments of the Soviet Union and Mexico. In this way, the Spanish Civil War staged the confrontation of powers and ideologies that would soon lead to the Second World War (1939-45). In fact, it was used by Hitler as a laboratory for his war capacity. Picasso's famous painting of the German air force's attack on the Basque town of Guernica, or the works of important authors such as the North American Ernest Hemingway, the British George Orwell, the Chilean Pablo Neruda, the Peruvian César Vallejo or the Cuban Nicolás Guillén, are testimony to the global dimension of the conflict. The bloodiest aspect of the civil war were the thousands of executions against those suspected of sympathizing with the enemy. Nationals persecuted trade unionists, politicians and intellectuals; republicans, fascists and members of the elite or clergy. The military superiority belonged to the nationals, who had at their service the army trained to maintain the domination of Morocco as well as Italian aviation. In April 1939, the head of the national forces, Generalissimo Francisco Franco, declared victory against the Republicans and assumed command of the government, which he would keep for more than thirty-five years. Large sectors of the elite and the people, eager for stability, saw in Franco a legitimate representative of the traditional armed forces who had "reconquered" Spain from atheistic barbarism to reunify it as the centralist and Catholic kingdom that it had been for more than four centuries.
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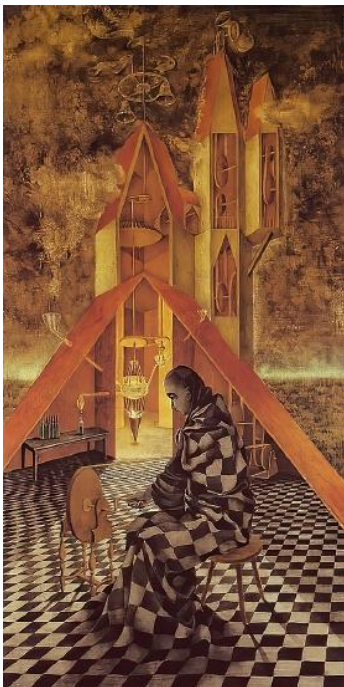
Franco strengthened his authority with the suspension of civil rights, the elimination of political parties, the establishment of vertical unions controlled by the State, the strict censorship of information and the concentration of power. The army took over the functions of police, with strong repression against the "reds". Thousands of Republicans were executed, imprisoned, or sentenced to forced labor on railroads, canals, and public works. Many escaped into exile, including a large number of intellectuals. Until the 1960s, the Franco dictatorship experienced, partly as a result of its own strategy and partly as a result of the reaction of other countries, a long period of ideological, political and economic isolation from the rest of Europe. Franco died in 1975, leaving power to King Juan Carlos I of Bourbon, who consolidated the process of democratization that began in the early 1970s, creating the open, stable and participatory political system that characterizes today's Spain.

European avant-gardes

Although the sociopolitical events and aesthetic developments in Spain respond to their own circumstances, they are also closely connected to broader processes. Industrial expansion had produced profound changes in Western civilization, such as the increase in the size and influence of the working class, urban growth, the political strength of the bourgeoisie, the refinement of sciences, technical inventions, the economic-military hegemony of England and France, and the gradual emancipation of colonial territories. There was great enthusiasm for everything that science could achieve, and Western Europe thought of itself as the force of progress, freedom and justice par excellence. Cultural production was logically in dialogue with this expansion, and in particular with the awareness of innovation, self-criticism and individualism that accompanied this increasingly rapid industrial progress. Ideologues such as Karl Marx and Henri de Saint-Simon had proposed political programs and historical visions that sought to extend the benefits of industrialization to the entire population, and proposed substantial criticisms of capitalism. Important questions to reason and science also appeared in philosophy and in the new social disciplines, which disputed the benefits of capitalism and emphasized that the sources of arbitrariness, irrationality and violence were also present in Western Civilization. The aesthetics of modernism and of the '98 generation were a manifestation of this critical consciousness in Hispanic cultures—as were symbolism or impressionism in France—in search of new ways of artistically articulating the values and contradictions of modernization, and associated with urban and bohemian life, as antagonists of conventional bourgeois culture associated with imperialism, profit, positivism and faith in progress. Trust in the goodness of science suffered a severe blow in the First World War

(1914-18), when many Europeans were able to see in their own land the horrors that technology allowed to produce (airplanes, gas attacks, etc.).

By the beginning of the 20th century, worker activism—in its Marxist version or in its nascent nationalist-fascist version—, as well as technological advances, had a strong impact on the value systems of the intellectual and urban world. They wanted to “be at the forefront”, to innovate, to protest, to fight for rights, to proclaim manifestos, to break with tradition, to be cosmopolitan, to shake up the bourgeois mentality. In artistic production, taking even further what the bohemians of the 19th century had begun, this impact was elaborated in very visible ways through movements that are grouped under the generic name of “the Vanguard” (*avant-garde*), an appropriately military and militant term that became fashionable in France to indicate this combative desire to be at the forefront of changes and participate in social transformation. Many groups of artists and poets drew up their manifestos or organized themselves into movements. Famous in Europe were Fovism (1905), Cubism (1907), Futurism (1909), Dadaism (1916), and Surrealism (1924). Each of these “-isms” defines its own aesthetic priorities, but in all of them, formal experimentation and a level of activism against the traditional or conventional predominate. Almost all of them seek a self-definition of the arts and an inquiry into the processes of representation: they seek to affect the public (reader, spectator), making them aware of how the medium (the word, painting, etc.) influences what is represented, and how social relations affect what is considered beautiful or artistic at a given moment. All are animated by the enthusiasm to propose new expressive possibilities that will accompany the rapid pace of sociocultural changes.



Useless Science or The Alchemist (1955), by Remedios Varo.

[Astarmarket](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Possibly the avant-garde movement that had the most impact and duration was surrealism. Inspired by the discovery of the unconscious that Sigmund Freud made famous in his *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), surrealist aesthetics investigates non-rational subjectivity in evocative images, often associated with the dream world.

The work of Remedios Varo (Spain 1908 - Mexico, 1963) is representative of this aesthetic movement. In the 1930s, Varo was part of the Logicophobista Group, a Catalan movement that sought a synthesis between spiritualism and surrealism. With the Spanish civil war, the artist settled in Paris and then, with the Nazi occupation, she went into exile in Mexico, where she remained for the rest of her life. The painting on the left illustrates several surrealist elements: questioning scientific validity, a dreamlike environment, the incorporation of varied symbolologies, and challenges to perspective and perception. These strategies highlight a central concern of the avant-garde: opening the mind to the possibilities of generating alternative experiences of reality and thus impacting personal and collective experience.

The literary avant-gardes in Spain

Many Spanish artists and writers participated in these innovations, although they were partly limited by the dictatorship and the more rural nature of their society. The socioeconomic dynamism of the 1920s generated an intellectual flourishing that has been called the “silver age” of Spanish cultural production, with such well-known figures as Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866-1936) in theater, Luis Buñuel (1900-83) in cinema and Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) in music, among many others. Spanish painting played a leading role in two European avant-garde movements:

Cubism. In the analytical phase (1907-12), he sought to show the object from different perspectives, to explore the limits of realism, fragmenting and recomposing the image with paintings in which a geometric vision predominated. In the synthetic phase (1913-30), the forms were simplified; more vivid colors were used and the recreated object became more abstract. The main exponent of Cubism was the Spanish Pablo Picasso (1881-1973).

Surrealism. Influenced by the discoveries of psychoanalysis, surrealists are especially interested in free association, dreams, inner life, alternative understanding of reality and mythological perception of the world (archetypes). The Spanish painters Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) and Joan Miró (1893-1983), and the director Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), are some of its most influential representatives.

The questioning of realism and the “pitfalls” of representation had an important development in Spanish theater. The search for renewal promoted transformations in four fundamental areas: 1) expansion of the thematic universe to include issues of sexuality and social justice; 2) non-commercial programs and companies, funded by the State or by community subscription; 3) modernization of the scenarios with technological innovations (such as rotating platforms and lighting games) that opened up the possibilities of creativity and were in dialogue with the challenges of cinema; 4) the staging of avant-garde works, both Spanish and from other parts of Europe, who were experimenting with concepts of space, stage design and impactful strategies. Since 1905, the actress María Guerrero had started a campaign of “poetic theater” and in the years of the Republic (1932-36), the Spanish Municipal Theater in Madrid also promoted the dissemination of experimental works.

By the 1920s and 1930s, a considerable number of playwrights such as Jacinto Grau (1877-1958), Federico García Lorca (1898-1936) and Rafael Alberti (1902-1999) were producing avant-garde theater. Alberti's *The Uninhabited Man* (1931), for example, included monstrous masks to recreate the story of the creation of the Bible in an urban and modern place, where God is a malevolent night watchman of a building under construction. Innovation in theater is especially associated with the playwright, poet and storyteller Ramón del Valle-Inclán. Considered a key author of the 20th century, Valle-Inclán was an innovator and left-wing intellectual, initially heavily influenced by Spanish-American modernist aesthetics and later the creator of experimental, self-aware dramas and a profound critique of Western European civilization. *His theater questions modern rationalism, showing the irrational, violent and dehumanizing face of Western mentality, as in the conjunction of historical parody, political condemnation and linguistic and spatial innovation in his “Barbarian Comedies” (a trilogy produced from 1907 to 1922) or of Divine Words (1920). He is also famous for the creation of “esperpentos” (grotesque figures), a type of parodic works that distort conventional perception to present hidden realities, humanizing objects or animals and objectifying or animalizing human beings, who often present themselves as puppets, as happens in Lights of Bohemia (1920-24) and Carnival Tuesday (1930).*

In poetry, a specifically Spanish avant-garde movement was **Ultraism** (1918), focused on representing the essence of poetics in its primary element: the creation of images, freed from useless adjectives and outdated rules. This kind of “pure poetry” experimented with various typographic arrangements, with neologisms and technological terms, and with synthetic, shocking metaphors. Spanish poets who participated in this movement are Rafael Cansinos Assens (1882-1964) and Guillermo de Torre (1900-1971). *Ramón Gómez de la Serna from Madrid (1888-1963) is also a significant figure of innovation in poetry, with very brief poems that he calls “Greguerias” (1917-35), such as: “The doors get angry with the wind” (Doors get angry with the wind).*

The large group of poets that had been producing transformative lyrics since the 1910s was called the “**Generation of 27**” in reference to the fact that in that year they celebrated their literary renewal on the occasion of the anniversary of the poet Luis de Góngora (1561-1627), one of the symbols of the Spanish impact on Western aesthetics. Among the best-known names are: León Felipe (1884-1968), Pedro Salinas (1891-1951), Jorge Guillén (1893-1984), Gerardo Diego (1896-1987), García Lorca, Vicente Aleixandre (1898-1984), Concha Méndez (1898-1986), Dámaso Alonso (1898-1990), Luis Cernuda (1902-1963), Alberti, Ernestina de Champourcín (1905-1999), Manuel Altolaguirre (1905-1959), Josefina de la Torre (1907-2002). Most of them enthusiastically participated in the democratic transformation of the Second Republic (1931-36) and connected with the aesthetic debates of that time in Europe. They all claimed a new type of image, echoing the idea that “poetry is today the higher algebra of metaphors” (quoted in Gies 555) by the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955), whose ideas had a great influence on this group of poets.

During the civil war (1936-39), poetry combined avant-garde concerns with traditional forms such as romance—in its only epic and lyrical contemporaneity—to inspire struggles, denounce crimes and encourage reflection in the face of that crucial moment for the nation. A group of younger poets who elaborated the process of internalization generated by situations of imprisonment, exile and repression during the war and the subsequent military government, were called the “**Generation of 36**” because in that year they celebrated the fourth centennial of Garcilaso de la Vega (c. 1498-1536), whose Renaissance aesthetic was a model for them. Poets such as Miguel Hernández (1910-1942) and Luis Rosales (1910-1992), among many others, resist the experimentalism of “pure poetry” and demand a more sober connection with immediate circumstances towards a reflection on the human condition.

A dialogue between Picasso and García Lorca

A good way to illustrate the avant-garde movement in Spain is this interesting parallelism between the poem “The Guitar”, by Federico García Lorca, and the works of guitarists painted by Pablo Picasso, such as this “Old Guitarist” (1903). The poem proposes a surreal exploration, with associations similar to those experienced in dreams. The painting is part of Picasso's so-called “Blue Period”, when he began his aesthetic exploration that would take him from impressionism (modernist) to cubism (avant-garde). Both works capture a melancholy that can be associated with the identity breakdown of Spain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and explore an iconic musical instrument for the Iberian Peninsula, which also arrived through the Arab presence (“sand of the hot south”), a distinctive aspect of Hispanic cultures in contrast to other areas of Europe. Both represent a fragmentation of perception, a willingness to propose alternative ways of thinking about reality and experience, both personal and collective.



La guitarra [Poema del cante hondo, 1931]

	Empieza el llanto de la guitarra.	el llanto: <i>the crying, the weeping</i>
	Se rompen las copas de la madrugada.	madrugada: <i>dawn</i>
5	Empieza el llanto de la guitarra.	
	Es inútil callarla.	
10	Es imposible callarla.	
	Llora monótona como llora el agua, como llora el viento sobre la nevada.	nevada: <i>snowfall</i>
15	Es imposible callarla.	
	Llora por cosas lejanas.	
20	Arena del Sur caliente que pide camelias blancas.	flecha: <i>arrow</i>
	Llora flecha sin blanco, la tarde sin mañana, y el primer pájaro muerto sobre la rama.	blanco: <i>target</i>
25	¡Oh guitarra! Corazón malherido por cinco espadas.	rama: <i>branch</i> malherido: <i>badly wounded</i>

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5.3: Avant-garde Movements in Latin America



During the first half of the 20th century in Latin America, a significant part of artistic production elaborated the impact of social activism and of the profound ideological changes that occurred in the Western world during those years. *These movements, parallel to the European ones, were grouped under the generic name of “avant-garde”, which share characteristics with what is known in the Anglo-Saxon world as Modernism in the field of aesthetics.*

The painting on the left illustrates the rich development of avant-garde aesthetics in Latin America. With surreal elements, which take advantage of the symbolism of the unconscious, of dreams and of the ancestral heritage, the complex relationship between social classes, cultural roots and visions of personal and collective identity that characterized the experimentation of avant-garde movements, in dialogue with innovations from different geographies, fields of knowledge and historical sources, is represented here.



“The Two Fridas” (1939), by Frida Kahlo (Mexico 1907-1954).

Ideological-political context

raw materials: raw materials
worker: industry worker
support: support
strengthening: strengthening
strike: strike as well as

As we have seen (§5.1), the 20th century began in many Latin American countries with an economic expansion in the export of raw materials. This generated considerable urban growth and an increase in the middle and working classes. Some sectors of the business elite favored political reforms to gain the support of a larger sector of the population. On the other hand, worker and peasant activism had a particular influence, not only because it was connected to the worldwide strengthening of left-wing movements, but because any strike affecting export infrastructure had a crucial impact on the economy of Spanish-American countries. Thus, labor mobilization led to processes of redefining the national sphere. The debates and initiatives advanced by the working classes, as well as the impression that the European model was not necessarily superior, increased interest in local demonstrations and alternative visions of the destiny of nations.

This redefinition of national identities and of the arts was in part a response to the changes that Western Europe experienced in the first decades of the century. Until the end of the 19th century, Western culture imagined itself as a superior civilization force for progress and social harmony, with technical advances that were transforming transportation, communication and mass production. But the horrors of the First World War (1914-18) were a major blow to this positivist vision and generated distrust of science and rationalism. Even before, especially with Karl Marx (1818-1883), the principles of capitalism and bourgeois society were strongly questioned. *Consciousness scholars such as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) disputed the empire of reason (the Enlightenment idea that man was a rational animal) and emphasized the importance of other aspects of the psyche, which the father of psychoanalysis demonstrated in dreams and in the erotic aspects of the unconscious, as in his book on The Interpretation of Dreams (1900).* In 1905 and 1915, Albert Einstein (1879-1955) unveiled his theories of relativity with which he integrated time into the three dimensions of space, generating a total revision of how reality was conceived. On the other hand, *The Decline of the West* (1918-22), the work of the German philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), posited the aging of European civilization and its need to renew itself in contact with other cultures. The nightmare of the First World War confirmed these theses and also undermined the

value of expansionist, colonialist or imperial projects. All of this contributed to a radical self-examination of Western culture and the arts.

In connection with workers' activism and with this revision of culture, certain values became prevalent in the intellectual and urban world: "being at the forefront", innovating, protesting, fighting for rights, proclaiming manifestos, breaking with tradition, being cosmopolitan, shaking up bourgeois comfort. And artistic production elaborated this impact in very visible ways through movements that are grouped under the generic name of "the Vanguard" (avant-garde), an appropriately military and militant term that was used fashionable in France to indicate this combative desire to be at the forefront of changes and to participate in social transformation.

Many groups of artists and poets drew up their manifestos or organized themselves into movements. Famous in Europe were Fovism (1905), Cubism (1907), Futurism (1909), Dadaism (1916) and Surrealism (1924). Each of these "-isms" defines its own aesthetic priorities, but all were animated by the enthusiasm to propose new expressive possibilities that would accompany the rapid pace of sociocultural changes. In avant-garde aesthetics, the following predominate:

- experimentation with expressive forms and possibilities (breaking norms, playful sense);
- a level of activism or emancipation contrary to the traditional or conventional;
- self-definition: each movement produces its own definition of "what is art";
- questioning the "I" as a unit and of authority as something just or desirable;
- and an inquiry into representation processes:
 - they seek to affect and "shock" the public (reader, spectator), they are anti-sentimental;
 - show how the medium (the word, the painting, etc.) influences what is represented, and
 - show how social relations influence what is acceptable, beautiful or artistic.

Four avant-garde European movements that were widely disseminated in Latin America were:

Cubism. In the analytical phase (1907-12), he sought to show the object from different perspectives, to explore the limits of realism, fragmenting and recomposing the image with paintings in which a geometric vision predominated. In the synthetic phase (1913-30), the forms were simplified; more vivid colors were used and the recreated object became more abstract. [A famous exponent of Cubism was the Spaniard Pablo Picasso \(1881-1973\), formerly a member of the Fovista group \[1\].](#)

Futurism. In 1909, the "Futurist Manifesto" appeared in Italy, imitating political activism to defend an artistic trend against traditionalism and in celebration of modernization, speed, technology, violence, youth and industry. It was a literary and plastic arts movement launched by Filippo Tomasso Marinetti (1876-1944). The aim was to portray the dynamic character of the 20th century by glorifying war, danger and machines. In literature, the free imagination, the rupture of syntax, the subversion of orthographic signs, the use of inks of different colors, the disordered arrangement of letters, words and verses were defended. In 1918, the "Futurist Political Party" joined Mussolini's fascism.

Expressionism. Already in the early years of the 20th century, several German and Northern Western European artists sought to represent pain and violence before and after the world wars, exploring subjective perception to evoke ideas and moods and to innovate in creative possibilities. His aesthetic emphasizes individual freedom, emotional expression, irrationalism, and impactful or taboo subjects such as morbid, demonic, fantastic or sexual. In several of these characteristics, it resembles French fovism [\[1\]](#).

Surrealism. As a movement, it was founded on the basis of a manifesto promoted in 1924 by the Frenchman André Breton (1896-1966). The name comes from a work by the poet Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918), a strong critic of the World War, subtitled by him "surrealist drama" (*Les mamelles de Tiresias*, 1917). Influenced by the discoveries of psychoanalysis, surrealists are especially interested in free association, dreams, inner life, alternative understanding of reality and mythological perception of the world (archetypes). The Spanish painters Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) and Joan Miró (1893-1983), and the director Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), are some of its most influential representatives. In Latin America, surrealism had a life of its own, enriched by indigenous and African cultural sources. In the painting of the Cuban Wilfredo Lam (1902-1982) and of the Mexican Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), this type of Latin American or "post-colonial" surrealism is found, which, by taking the implications of the European movement further, breaks with it and affirms the creative force of cultural sources that were previously underestimated.

Of all these movements, the one that had the most lasting impact on 20th century literature in general, and in the Hispanic world in particular, was surrealism. This is explained, in part, because it is less restrictive in terms of its formal postulates: it is more interested in researching a type of experience than in imposing a specific way of representing it. It also articulates in its aesthetics the three basic criticisms of modern societies: 1) injustice and social violence; 2) rationalism; and 3) Eurocentrism or colonialism. In addition, it explores the part of the human experience that most concerns artistic and literary production as understood in the

contemporary era: subjectivity, consciousness, identity. The most influential thing is his conception of the work, not as an expression of emotions or of the rational authorial self, but as a space for experimentation and discovery, in which other forces are manifested (the unconscious, cultural archetypes, the mechanics of language). Among the many names that could be mentioned in the cultivation of Latin American surrealism, the Cuban painter Wilfredo Lam (1902-1982), the Guatemalan novelist Miguel Ángel Asturias (1899-1974), the Chilean narrator María Luisa Bombal (1910-1980), and the Mexican painters Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) and Rufino Tamayo (1899-1991) stand out. The latter is also associated with expressionist aesthetics, with which the artists Débora Arango (Colombia 1907-2005) and Oswaldo Guayasamín (Ecuador 1919-1999) stood out, among many others.



[H3kt0r, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)>

Detail of a mural by the Ecuadorian Oswaldo Guayasamín, a sample of muralist art that developed since the 1920s after the Mexican revolution and spread across Latin America with a mixed avant-garde aesthetic.

[H3kt0r, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)

[1] Fovism or *Fauvisme* (1905) had emphasized emotional intensity through the distortion of forms and the dissonant use of colors. Its most outstanding exponent was Henri Matisse (1869-1954).

Avant-garde Spanish-American poetry

The poetics immediately following Modernism can be grouped in two directions. *The first, known as **Spanish-American postmodernism**, emphasizes formal simplification and accessible images with a localist spirit; the second, **avant-garde**, radicalizes exploration of the critical place of art in modern societies with intense formal experimentation and a cosmopolitan spirit.*

A large part of the Latin American intelligentsia participated in the process of aesthetic and cultural self-revision of the first half of the 20th century in the West. To the renewing enthusiasm of Spain, with the government of the Second Republic (1931-39), for example, important Spanish-American poets such as Pablo Neruda and César Vallejo contributed. To give another example, Mexican surrealism had as much vitality as the Parisian one, with world-famous creators such as the painter Frida Kahlo, the filmmaker Luis Buñuel (who lived in Mexico since 1949) and the poet Octavio Paz (1914-1998). If magazines were created to disseminate these ideas, to defend them, multiple manifestos were written and disseminated. In most cases, however, the normativity of “-isms” was not strictly followed, but rather their renewing and experimental spirit was adopted to break conventional molds and open fruitful paths to poetry: the importance of studying the non-European art that cubists and fovists had promoted, the introduction of the technological language advocated by the futurists, and the revolutionary or liberating value of non-conscious creativity invigorated by the surrealists, among other directions.

In 1914, the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro presented his poetic manifesto “Non serviam” in Santiago, where he elaborated the foundations of the movement that he later called **creationism**, which consisted of conceiving poetry as a creation of reality, not as a representation of it. His proposals became more radical when, with avant-garde artists from Paris, he collaborated on the magazine *Nord-Sud* (1917-18). His works from this period, such as “Landscape”, experiment with the visual dimension of the poem to expand their possibilities of representing and suggesting multiple meanings:

Paysage [de Horizon Carré, 1917]



Paisaje

AL ATARDECER NOS PASEAREMOS POR RUTAS PARALELAS

La Luna
es
donde
mira

EL ÁRBOL
ERA
MÁS
ALTO
QUE LA
MONTAÑA

PERO LA
MONTAÑA
ERA TAN ANCHA
QUE EXCEDÍA
LOS EXTREMOS
DE LA TIERRA

EL
RÍO
QUE
CORRE
NO
LLEVA
PECES

CUIDADO CON
JUGAR EN EL PASTO
RECIÉN PINTADO

UNA CANCIÓN CONDUCE A LAS OVEJAS HACIA EL APRISCO

VICENTE HUIDOBRO

In 1918, in Madrid, Huidobro helped to found **Ultraism**, a movement that was also joined by the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) who lived in Spain at that time. Upon returning to Argentina, Borges and other young writers spread ultraism with the premise of eliminating (modernist) ornamentation and reducing poetry to its fundamental elements: image, typography, linguistic innovation. The movement also wanted to capture modernization through neologisms, references to technical advances, parody and the incorporation of regional experiences. Borges later renounced this type of aesthetics in favor of philosophical meditation and dialogue with universal culture.

The Latin American avant-garde movement spread especially through literary magazines that encouraged controversy and celebrated striking innovation. In Argentina, *Prisma* (1921), *Proa* (1922-25), *Martín Fierro* (1924-27) and, a few years later, *Sur*, founded by the writer Victoria Ocampo (1890-1979); in Cuba, the *Revista de Avance* (1927-30); in Peru, *Amauta* (1926-30), founded by the Marxist and indigenist thinker José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930). In those years, **stridentism** also appeared in Mexico (c. 1922), with an aesthetic influenced by futurism, whose most outstanding exponent was the poet Manuel Maples Arce (1898-1981). Soon after, the group of “contemporaries” was formed, gathered around two important magazines: *Ulises* (1927-28) and *Contemporaries* (1928-31). Among them, Carlos Pellicer (1897-1977), José Gorostiza (1901-73), Jaime Torres Bodet (1902-74), Xavier Villaurrutia (1903-50) and Salvador Novo (1904-1974) stand out, several of whom were also playwrights. This group incorporated the avant-garde impulse, proposing suggestive directions for the dialogue between poetry, the other arts, the psyche and society.

At the beginning of poetic avant-gardism in Latin America, the Mexican modernist José Juan Tablada (1871-1945) stands out, who introduced the plasticity of Japanese *hai-ku*; the Argentines Silvina Ocampo (1903-1993), Norah Lange (1905-1972) and Oliverio Girondo (1891-1967), who explored cubist concepts and surrealist possibilities in cosmopolitan and self-conscious poetry; Vicente Huidobro (1893-1948), the theorist and most constant defender of creationism, visual poems and radical search —of life and of aesthetics— that represent the avant-garde movements in the world; and the Peruvian César Vallejo (1892-1938), whose varied work, which connects avant-garde combativity with the aspirations of the proletariat in a deeply personal and suggestive way, continues to have a profound influence on Latin American (and global) poetic production. The [Negro and indigenist movements](#) also incorporate avant-garde aesthetics into their proposals.

Posmodernismo hispanoamericano Estética localista, comienzos del siglo XX	Vanguardias Estética de choque, primera mitad del siglo XX
expresión sencilla, directa énfasis en un tono meditativo y sobrio intimidad, deseo de acortar la distancia con el público lector elaboración de sensaciones y reflexión sobre el entorno local (rural o urbano)	experimentación con múltiples posibilidades expresivas énfasis en los procesos de representación activismo, ruptura de lo cómodo o convencional cuestionamiento de lo unitario, predefinido, autoritario o aceptado

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5.4: Spanish America 1930-1969



From the 1930s to the beginning of the 1970s, Latin America experienced an intense confrontation between aspirations for radical social change inspired by communist inspiration and the maintenance of capitalist development within existing structures. The nationalist era, which until the 1950s even manifested itself in a limitation of imports to strengthen local industry, gave rise to a “Latin American” era, of enthusiasm for social change and the debate about which side to be on during the Cold War.

The triumph of the Cuban Revolution (1959) became a reference, both for left-wing and right-wing ideologies, in the debate about what place Latin American countries would occupy in the distribution of world power and what their sociopolitical model should be. For this reason, the artistic and literary production of Latin America received great international attention in those years.



Mural of the Communist Youth in Havana, Cuba (1960s).
 This mural illustrates the cultural framework of “study, work and gun” (intellectuals, workers and guerrillas) with which a part of the population aspired to generate radical changes and which another part of the population saw as a threat to stability, prosperity and security.

Nationalism and Populism

overcome : to overcome achieve: to attain sovereignty: sovereignty weaken: to weaken raw materials: raw materials landowner: large land owner often : often army: army coup (military): coup	After the economic expansion of the first three decades of the 20th century, the exporting bourgeoisie weakened with the depression experienced by world capitalism during the 1930s. International demand for agricultural products and raw materials fell by half. The pendulum then returns to the conservative right. The traditional landowning elite regains government control, suppressing left-wing activism, often with support from the military. During the 1930s, there were military governments or coup attempts in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras. ^[1] The army thus regains its influential role in Latin American politics. In connection with this militarism and the economic crisis, some nationalist wars that recall those of the 19th century also reappear: Bolivia-Paraguay (1933-38); Colombia-Peru (1932-34); Peru-Ecuador (1941-42). To respond to unemployment and the scarcity of imported products, the strategy of encouraging the development of domestic manufacturing is generalized in a protectionist policy that was called “industrialization by import substitution” (ISI). To this end, governments raised taxes on imports, founded or financed new industries, kept wages low, and reduced taxes on household products. Nationalist propaganda, efforts to regain domestic control of natural resources, and a sense of pride in one's own in the face of foreign affairs were also encouraged. Industrial owners grew richer and could influence politics, but unions also grew larger and political parties that won their support had an electoral advantage. Control, then, had to be fundamentally negotiated between three power groups: 1) the interests of the traditional landowning elite, often associated with the Church; 2) the emerging commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, with growing economic and social influence; 3) the working class and the unions, whose support (or control) was crucial to continuing industrial expansion. In many cases, the balance was tipped in favor of the sector that obtained military support and/or that of Washington. But in certain countries and times, left-wing parties achieved a lot of influence, such as in Chile in the 1950s and 1960s. The different forms of government in Latin America during these decades represent different strategies for combining these power groups. One of these formulas was a pro-industrial and pro-military alliance that tried to incorporate the interests of businessmen and at the same time satisfy some workers' demands under the magnetism of an authoritarian and charismatic leader. This was the recipe for <i>populism</i>, applied by Perón in Argentina, Vargas in Brazil, Rojas Pinilla in Colombia and, to a certain extent, Arbens in Guatemala, Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador and Cárdenas in Mexico. The problem was that they tried to represent two emerging groups with conflicting interests (the workers and their employers), one of whom sooner or later felt betrayed, and were unsustainable in times of economic austerity. Its stability was also endangered if the reforms threatened the interests of landowners or North American companies. In other cases, different political parties included the two emerging groups (Chile), they were excluded by force of dictatorships (Venezuela, Nicaragua, Paraguay), or coalitions were generated between sectors of the middle class, workers and peasants for armed resistance (Colombia, El Salvador). In some cases, these coalitions managed to seize power and carry out liberal reforms for a time, such as in the 1936 Revolution in Paraguay, the 1944 Revolution in Guatemala, and the 1952 Revolution in Bolivia. However, such revolutions would become increasingly difficult as part of aggressive US policy to ensure the loyalty of the continent in “The Cold War”.
unemployment: unemployment scarcity scarcity taxes: taxes	
owner: owner union: labor union advantage: worker advantage: industry worker	
entrepreneur: business owner recipe: recipe to a certain extent: to a certain extent sooner or	
later: sooner or later jeopardize: to be in danger threaten: to threaten company: enterprise, company every Once more: ever more	

[1] The great exception has been Costa Rica, whose party government established a progressive system of social security and worker protection and, a decade later, eliminated the national army.

Cold War and Left-Wing Activism

large: <i>quite large</i> investment: <i>investment</i> as: <i>as (process)</i> achieve: <i>to achieve</i> headquarters: <i>headquarters</i> dubbing: <i>covert dubbing: under cover</i> by: <i>in favor of</i> overthrow: <i>overthrow</i> meanwhile: <i>in the</i> meantime cabinet: <i>cabinet</i> starting from: <i>starting in</i> durable: <i>lasting as well as: as well as</i> environment: <i>climate, environment</i> scope: <i>sphere, field</i> Gospel: <i>Long</i> Term Gospel: <i>In the Long Run</i>	The most important impact of World War II for Latin America was its definitive inclusion within Washington's sphere of power. By 1945, Western Europe had had to liquidate its investments in America to pay for the war, and its influence was greatly reduced. The United States, on the other hand, consolidated itself as a global political, economic and military power, with large investments across the continent. As its relations with the Russians cooled, the Truman administration succeeded in getting almost all Latin American countries to break relations with the Soviet Union and for several governments to declare local communist parties illegal — which also coincided with the interests of the economic elite. In 1948, the Organization of American States (OAS), based in Washington, was created in Bogotá to promote common policies on the continent. During the following years, the Pentagon strengthened its influence over Latin American armies, strengthening and expanding its military bases in the region. The United States became the Hemisphere's main trading partner. And, in the cultural field, North American television and film production, with efficient dubbing systems, flooded markets across the continent. Covert CIA interventions became common, usually on the part of the elite and against popular movements. Two of these interventions—which fueled anti-American sentiments on the left—led to the overthrow of the reformist president Jacobo Árbenz of Guatemala in 1954 and of the Chilean Salvador Allende in 1973, despite the fact that both had been democratically elected in their respective countries. Meanwhile, popular support for communist parties grew in many Latin American countries, gaining the presence of power in the Chilean cabinet and congressmen in more than nine governments during the 1940s. Armed resistance in the form of guerrillas, already understood by the high levels of poverty, acquired a radical nationalist dimension from the 1950s onwards: the “liberation” of US imperialism and capitalist exploitation. And starting in the sixties, the Soviet Union and China also did their part to tilt Latin America towards their sphere, helping to finance revolutionary guerrilla movements in the region. The lasting victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 was a wake-up call for Washington and for the elites, as well as a motivation for “national liberation struggles” to proliferate in rural and urban guerrillas across Latin America. For popular activists, for the first time it seemed possible for workers and peasants to take control of the State and obtain the right to health, education and a decent standard of living. As in the student movement in France or the struggles for civil rights in the United States, many students and the Latin American <i>intelligentsia</i> joined the activist enthusiasm that characterized the sixties in the world. The most famous intellectuals of the time represented in their works the history of marginalization and repression of the people as well as the aspirations for more egalitarian and participatory societies. One of the books that were widely disseminated was <i>The Open Veins of Latin America</i>, by the Uruguayan Eduardo Galeano (1940-2015), which reviewed the history of injustice and human exploitation on the continent. In Chile, a left-wing coalition (the “Popular Unity”) won the elections in 1970, and Salvador Allende, the new president, nationalized the copper mines that were in the hands of foreign companies, raised workers' salaries and froze the prices of basic necessities, among other socialist-type reforms. The Cuban government also undertook, with extensive Soviet funds, a campaign to disseminate socialism throughout America. But both failed to consolidate prosperous economies for all over the long term.
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The Latin Americanism of the 1960s

As we saw, the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 became a motivation for the proliferation of “liberation struggles” in rural and urban guerrillas in Central and South America. The term “Latin America”, understood as unity between peoples with the same aspirations and a history of oppression, then served to promote the struggle for social change and for political and cultural sovereignty, particularly with a leftist line. This utopian spirit was also manifested in the conviction that, from Mexico to the Southern Cone, these peoples shared a colonial past, a present of dependence and the same destiny of liberation (the “Latin American identity” or “Latin Americanism”) and therefore must unite in a common struggle against two enemies: Washington's interests at the service of Wall Street, and the local ruling class associated with those interests. Thus, the 1960s marked a time of

immense creativity, enthusiastic unification and international diffusion in the arts and intellectual production for Latin America. Large numbers of young people across the continent sang to the rhythm of musical movements such as the South American *Protest Song* and the Cuban *Nueva Trova*, sympathized with left-wing groups in their countries, and participated in avant-garde poetic movements. Novels that translated these ideals into a novel, vibrant and critical narrative were read with admiration. All this made many Latin Americans feel that they had their own innovative voice that captured European and North American attention because of their difference.

The type of discourse that prevailed in these years is summarized in one of Che Guevara's speeches at the beginning of the decade:

<i>to predominate:</i>	<i>to predominate</i>	“There is no small enemy or negligible force, because there are no longer isolated villages. As established in the second declaration of Havana, no people in Latin America are weak, because they are part of a family of two hundred million brothers who suffer the same miseries, harbor the same feelings, have the same enemy, all dream of the same destiny, and have the solidarity of all honest men and women in the world. This epic before us calls for the hungry masses of Indians, of landless peasants, of exploited workers, the progressive masses, the honest and brilliant intellectuals that abound in our long-suffering lands of Latin America ” (https://youtu.be/EktbVnKPx6o).
<i>negligible: insignificant</i>		
<i>isolated: isolated:</i>	<i>to suffer: to suffer to harbor:</i>	
<i>to house abound: to exist in abundance</i>		

Workers', peasant and guerrilla movements gained strength in many countries. In fact, there was a spirit of unification among the middle and lower classes around the ideal of building sociopolitical models—such as the triumphant Cuban revolution or the democratic socialism of Salvador Allende in Chile—that would benefit the majority of the population and not just the elite.

Liberation theology, created by Christian philosophers from Central and South America such as the Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez and the Brazilian Leonardo Boff, proposed to apply the principles of the Gospel to the active search for social justice. The pedagogy of liberation, proposed by the Brazilian Paulo Freire, created an educational practice designed to promote political action and value the knowledge of people who have suffered socioeconomic suppression for several generations. Thinkers such as Leopoldo Zea (Mexico) and Enrique Dussel (Argentina) developed a rigorous and alternative philosophy for thinking about “the Latin American” in its specificity and dignity. Economists and sociologists such as Enrique Cardoso (Brazil) and Alonso Quijano (Peru) produced a systematic critique of development understood as an imitation of European or American modernization, developing an alternative thesis called the Dependency Theory, which emphasized the structural change of economic relations both globally and nationally. For their part, the most famous writers, composers, filmmakers and artists of the time represented in their works the history of marginalization and repression of the people as well as their creative strength and aspirations towards more egalitarian and participatory societies.

The “Boom” of Narrative

barely: <i>barely</i> launch: <i>to launch</i> until then: <i>until then</i> become: <i>to become</i>	Latin America has occupied the interest of the world since 1961, when the communist-led government protected by the Soviet Union in Cuba was stabilized, challenging Washington's hegemony in the hemisphere. The region had become a zone of contention for the Cold War. Both in Europe and in the United States, Latin American study programs multiplied, focusing on producing knowledge about that part of the continent that, a few years before, was barely studied. The Kennedy government launched the “Alliance for Progress”, an investment initiative for the (capitalist) development or modernization of Latin America, and began to appoint some Puerto Ricans as ambassadors to several Spanish-speaking countries, to strengthen their affinity with the region. The year 1967 was a decisive year for Latin American literature, until then generally ignored on the world stage. That year, the Guatemalan Miguel Ángel Asturias (1899-1974) became the first Latin American novelist to receive the Nobel Prize for literature (the Chilean Gabriela Mistral had received it for her poetry in 1945). <i>Also in June of that year, the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude appeared, by the Colombian Gabriel García Márquez (1927-2014), which in a few months became a worldwide bestseller.</i> It was the pinnacle of the “Boom” in the Spanish-American novel, which had begun a few years earlier with the great popularity of <i>Rayuela</i> (1963) by Argentinian director Julio Cortázar (1914-1984), and which also included the work of Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa (1936-) and that of Mexican Carlos Fuentes (1928-2012), among others. For the first time in history, Latin American literary production played a leading role on the international scene and, by the year 2000, four other writers had received the Nobel Prize for literature: Pablo Neruda (Chile) in 1971, García Márquez in 1982, Octavio Paz (Mexico) in 1990 and Derek Walcott (St. Lucia) in 1992.
cusp: <i>peak</i> Hopscotch : <i>Hopscotch</i>	The writers who made up the novel's “Boom”, almost all with left-wing ideology, garnered worldwide attention with a literature that brilliantly combined modern experimentation with distinctive elements of Latin American life and culture. The jungle, the myth, the oral tradition, the indigenous and African presence, the turbulent politics, the paradoxical history and the insatiable search for identity were integrated into monumental novels whose poetic language managed to capture many of the contradictory experiences of Latin America that were exotic or innovative for the First World. It was in a way a replication of what Mexican painters such as Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and José Clemente Orozco had achieved in the 1920s and '30s.
to Capture, to Monopolize	The “normal” for Europeans and North Americans was described as something “magical” for the narrative gaze, and the unheard of or the magical for the first-world view was described as an ordinary everyday life: “García Márquez conjured up a world in his native Colombia where magic was as real as money and ice as magical as dragon's eggs” (Winn 400). And this generation had also assimilated the influence of international literature as well as modern mass culture, with novels that included Hollywood plots, tango stories or soap operas. The new novel sought to represent the heterogeneous and diverse experience of their peoples, and to propose alternative models of reality. In this effort, a common ideal was perceived, which reinforced the idea of “Latin American” unity.
They Had Achieved: Had Accomplished Unheard of: Unheard of, Extraordinary	
First World: <i>Form the First World</i>	
plot: <i>plot soap opera: soap opera</i>	

Years before, in the prologue to the novel *The Kingdom of This World* (1949) —which narrated the Haitian revolution—Cuban musicologist and novelist Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) had proposed the term “the real marvelous” to designate this new fiction that re-created American historical reality in its fertile combination of mythologies and cultural models, from indigenous and African to European and mixed race. Carpentier said:

by: <i>because of</i> landscape: <i>landscape</i> Faustic: <i>like Goethe's Faust, tragic, debased out of stock: to exhaust</i>	“Because of the virginity of the landscape, because of the formation, because of the ontology, because of the Faustic presence of the Indian and the Negro, because of the Revelation that constituted their recent discovery, because of the fruitful interbreeding that it fostered, America is far from having exhausted its wealth of mythologies. What is the whole history of America if not a chronicle of the real-wonderful?” (12).
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The Guatemalan Miguel Ángel Asturias (1899-1974) had published in that same year his novel *Hombres de Maize* (1949), which shared this effort to find a language appropriate to the “magical” or surreal experience and to express the need for social transformation. This novel combined surrealist techniques with traditional legends to create a magical reality, capable of representing the story of Mayan resistance to the advance of Western culture, interpreting it in its own terms. For their part, Juan

Rulfo (1918-1986) and Elena Garro (1916-1998) had explored the bittersweet legacy of the Mexican revolution, which had not lifted most of the population out of misery, in a narrative that questioned the divisions between the ghostly and the historical. Similar to Octavio Paz, the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) differed in his political ideas from left-wing writers, and sought universal themes in his fictions and poems. His work, however, had an undeniable influence on the “Boom” generation, both in its questioning of a unanimous reality and in the experimentation of labyrinthine stories that combined cultural heritages as diverse as the Latin American population itself.

At the beginning of the 1960s, there was already a wide reading audience in Latin America. The expansion of cities and educational opportunities guaranteed that a growing middle class of professionals and university students avidly read the novels of their favorite authors, with whom they shared ideals of radical transformation of social structures. This enthusiasm was confirmed by the apparent success of the Cuban revolution, which helped to spread across the continent a “Latin American” spirit of transcending national borders and creating an awareness of political change among the masses. Several Spanish and French publishing houses also carried out a major dissemination campaign that gave preference to left-wing writers and encouraging multi-national forums. Thus, three factors were combined in the sixties: first, painting, poetry and novels had prepared a Latin American consciousness and an avid reading public; second, the political left gained great strength in many countries of the continent; third, European publishers stimulated the publication of Latin American works because of the public's interest in following the processes of change in Latin America during the Cold War.

And it was this combination of factors that allowed brilliant novelists such as Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, Gabriel García Márquez, Ernesto Sábato (Argentina 1911-2011), Juan Carlos Onetti (Uruguay 1909-1994) or José Donoso (Chile 1924-1996) to disseminate their works to hundreds of thousands of readers in Latin America, Europe, Asia and the United States, becoming world stars. Like Borges, they criticized the “provincial” novels of social realism, and embraced literary experimentation in dialogue with the boldest trends of the First World.

Unlike Borges, a central theme of the “Boom” was Latin American history, the critique of the continent's sociopolitical conditions and the promotion of a regional identity. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* can be read as an allegory of Colombian history in the plot of the Buendía family, and Macondo has been interpreted as a metaphor for Latin America.

By the mid-1970s, military repression grew more severe across the region, Fidel Castro's government was less popular, and revolutionary enthusiasm waned. The writers of the “Boom” then delved into historical issues and the figure of the dictator. Carlos Fuentes, in *Terra Nostra* (1975), criticized the use of history to legitimate the injustice of the present. *The Paraguayan Augusto Roa Bastos* (1917-2005) ridiculed historical documentation and explored the figure of the leader José Gaspar of France—who had ruled his country for forty years in the 19th century—as a metaphor for Stroessner's dictatorship in a copious novel entitled *Yo, El Supremo* (1974). García Márquez also parodied the endless talk of caudillism in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975). Starting in the eighties, the era of literary experimentalism and great collective metaphors came to an end, and all these writers adopted a more realistic and easy-to-read style, in line with the commercial demands of the global era. An example of this ideological and aesthetic diversity is the career of Vargas Llosa, recognized with the Nobel Prize in 2010. His narrative included social condemnation in the sixties and seventies, and later incorporated humor, historical research and neo-liberal theses.

The legacy of the “Boom” continues to be present in various manifestations today associated with the ambiguous “magical realism”, a term that has served to describe the combination between orality and writing in other parts of the world, such as in Toni Morrison's novels in the United States. In addition, during the eighties and nineties, a significant number of women writers have also enjoyed international recognition. Luisa Valenzuela in Argentina, Isabel Allende and Marcela Serrano in Chile, Laura Restrepo in Colombia, Laura Esquivel in Mexico, Gioconda Belli in Nicaragua and Nélida Piñón in Brazil, are some of the narrators who maintain international attention on Latin American letters and have taken up a literary scene that was traditionally dominated by male figures.

According to many Latin American writers today, it no longer makes sense to associate the continent with a specific style, because they are diverse, complex and plural cultures, in which the supposed “magical realism” —fascinated with the exotic— is only one possibility among many of literarily elaborating the heterogeneous experience of each region and each individual. Today, moreover, most of them are primarily urban and are closely connected to the processes of commercialization and opening-up of the 21st century.

However, the Theory of Dependency, the Philosophy, Theology and Pedagogy of Liberation and the aesthetics of “the real marvelous” or the “Boom” of the novel were important cases in which intellectual production from Latin America influenced First World thought during the sixties and seventies, promoting processes of cultural and political decolonization. All three were cases in which a substantial group of Latin Americans looked at each other, knew each other, named themselves as subjects (agents) of

knowledge, instead of the traditional situation of the colonized, which is to be looked at, to be known, to be named by others as an object (patient) of knowledge. Although this Latin Americanism did not produce the radical socioeconomic changes that many expected, it marked a fundamental milestone in the trajectory of collective self-definition in the region. Even today, hip hop groups such as *Calle 13* (Puerto Rico) celebrate “the Latin American” by taking up the songs of the “New Song” of the sixties (<http://youtu.be/rqlmJdsfCJc>). Many are still working towards that Latin American unification and justice that the Chilean poet Violeta Parra summarized in 1964:

My life, the American peoples,
my life, feel heartbroken,
My life, because the governors,
my life, have them so separated.

When will that be when, Mr. Prosecutor,
for America to be just a pillar.
Only one pillar, oh yes, and one flag,
to end the messes at the borders.

For a handful of land I don't want war.

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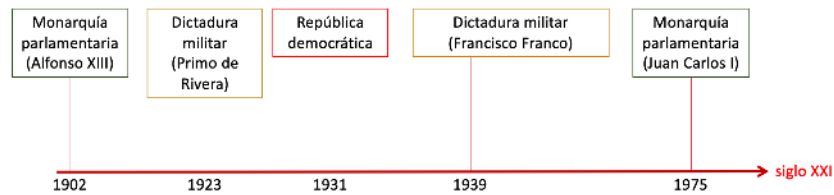
To review and think

1. What values and circumstances created the Latin American enthusiasm of the sixties?
2. How could the concept of “Latin Americanism” be defined or explained? What ideological movements does it include in theology, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, etc.? What values and what drawbacks does it have as a political ideal?
3. What were some of the reasons why Latin American novels were so successful in Europe and the United States during the 1960s? In what sense (s) is this phenomenon paradoxical?
4. How could the concept of “Magical Realism” be defined or explained? What values and what problems do you have as an aesthetic characterization of Latin America?
5. Who were some of the writers and musical movements that became famous during the novel's “Boom” in the sixties? How has this landscape changed in subsequent decades?

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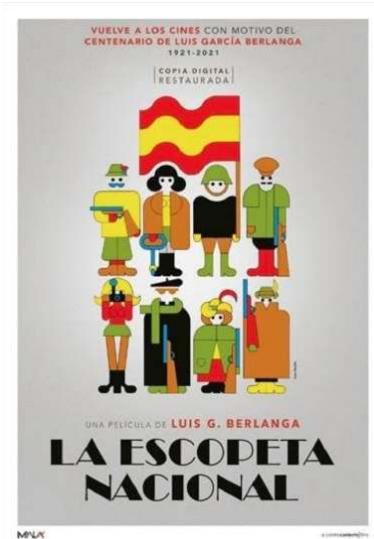
5.5: Spain in the second half of the 20th century

Sistemas de gobierno en España durante el siglo XX



Spain began the 20th century as a parliamentary, almost fundamentally agrarian and conservative monarchy that clung unsuccessfully to its imperial past; today it is a decentralized and liberal society, with one of the largest economies in the European Union. By the end of the century (1975), the King of Spain had much to teach the world about how to use authority to promote democratic openness. But these changes were not gradual. From an anti-clerical democracy so opposed to the authoritarian tradition that it led to social chaos (1931-36), it went on to a violent civil war (1936-39) that was a prelude to the Second World War. Later, Franco's centralist and Catholic dictatorship (1939-1975) gave stability to the country, but kept it economically, politically and culturally isolated for decades. The transition to a democratic system with territorial autonomy in its political division marked a vibrant cultural process.

Spanish cinema is one of the fields of cultural production that has achieved the greatest international diffusion since the end of the 20th century, and it is a good indicator of sociocultural changes, especially since the 1960s. The comedy *The National Shotgun* (1978), for example, humorously represents the confusing experience of the democratic transition, with greater freedom of expression, but still marked by the Franco dictatorship.



The National Shotgun (1978), directed by Luis García Berlanga (1921-2010).

The Franco era (1939-1975)

Command: <i>Command</i> <i>Support:</i> Support <i>Desioso: Anxious for</i> <i>Reino: Kingdom</i> <i>Decree: Decree Forced Labor</i> : Forced Labor <i>Was Reducing: Gradually Faded</i> <i>explode: to detonate</i> <i>reject: to reject</i> <i>agreement: agreement</i> <i>facilities: facility, facilities</i> <i>advantage: advantage</i> <i>when finished: upon the end</i> <i>despite: in spite of</i> <i>isolation: isolation</i> <i>self-sufficiency: charitable</i> <i>self-sufficiency</i> : charitable <i>aid: help distinct from: different from teaching:</i> <i>lifelong teaching: for life</i> <i>true: a certain degree of</i> reliable: reliable in exchange: to leave behind in exchange: <i>to leave behind</i> <i>according to: According to the</i> <i>guideline: guideline</i> <i>currency: monetary unit</i> <i>so much poverty that: so much poverty that</i> <i>grandson: grandson</i> leadership: leadership even: <i>Even</i> While I Had: As Long As It Had Cried: Mourned	As we saw, after three years of civil war, Generalissimo Francisco Franco, head of the right-wing military forces (the nationalists), assumed command of the government, with the support of sectors of the elite and the people, eager for centralist and Catholic stability. The regime consolidated its authority with the suspension of civil rights, the elimination of political parties, the establishment of vertical unions controlled by the State, the strict censorship of information and the concentration of power: the dictator governed by decree. The army assumed police functions, with strong repression in executions, imprisonment and forced labor. Thousands of citizens escaped into exile. Some formed a rural guerrilla group (the Maquis) that was reduced until it disappeared in the early 1960s. In September 1939, the Second World War broke out in Europe, in the face of which the Franco regime found itself in an ambiguous situation. His two power bases in Spain had contradictory positions before the Nazis: the fascist phalanx favored him and Catholicism rejected him. Nor were the precarious internal conditions conducive to intervening in another war. At his 1940 meeting, Hitler was unable to reach an agreement with Franco about his possible entry into the Italo-German Axis, because the generalissimo asked for a lot and offered little. Spain then adopted an opportunistic and non-belligerent position. In the first years of Nazi victories, it allowed Axis ships to use some naval facilities on the Peninsula or for Spanish volunteer troops (the Blue Division) to fight alongside the Germans against the Soviets. When the Allies took advantage, Franco emphasized his neutrality, extended diplomatic protection to some Jewish refugees, and superficially reformed his regime as an “organic democracy” (he created a legislative parliament clearly controlled by the dictatorship). At the end of the war in 1945, Spain was not admitted to the United Nations, despite the fact that the Franco regime had created two laws (on citizen rights and on referendums) that gave the appearance of greater civil guarantees. Isolation was also the economic policy of the 1940s in Spain, with a strategy of self-sufficiency (“autarchy”) that had served the war regimes in Italy and Germany well. The large number of people living in misery received charitable help from the “Social Aid” of Catholic organizations, which regained their traditional prestige in education, politics and the economy. Commodities were regulated by the State, and the interests of the domestic oligarchy and foreign financiers were preserved. Under the slogan “Spain, one, great and free”, a centralist policy of repression was applied against regional autonomy. The use of languages other than Spanish was prohibited, the teaching of religion, physical education and civic culture was imposed for the whole country, and a strict system of censorship was implemented over all artistic and journalistic production. In 1947, the regime stabilized its legal status by declaring Spain a kingdom of which Franco would be the Head of State for life. In the 1950s, Franco's regime gained some international recognition thanks to its reliable anti-communism in the midst of the Cold War. The United States established military bases in Spanish territory and, in exchange, Spain received technical and economic assistance, being admitted to the United Nations in 1955. The policy of autarky was left behind, and a team of Catholic professionals implemented an economic stabilization plan according to the guidelines of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which devalued the currency, stimulated foreign investment and reduced public spending. Initially, the plan produced so much poverty that almost two million Spaniards emigrated in search of work to other parts of the world. But in the 1960s, tourism, industry and the service area grew rapidly, and prosperity brought a wave of modernization and consumption. Traditional patriotic and Catholic rhetoric was losing prestige. In 1969, at 76 years of age, Franco formally recognized Juan Carlos de Borbón, grandson of Alfonso XIII, as his successor at the head of state. In the 1970s, however, Franco's regime had lost much authority. Students, labor unions and regional activism were mobilized in Catalonia, as well as extreme left-wing terrorist groups (the Basque ETA, the Maoist GRAPO). Even the Church and the financial community, which had been its pillars of support, were already less enthusiastic about the regime. Catholicism, renewed by the Second Vatican Council, distanced itself from the authoritarian rhetoric of the government. And the business sector regretted that Spain could not join the European Economic Community as long as it had a dictatorial regime. After his death in 1975, the Generalísimo was mourned by millions, but millions also celebrated the end of his term of office.
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Democratic Spain

Swear: <i>to swear</i> mas: <i>but</i> cult: <i>worship</i> camera: <i>chamber</i> manifestation: <i>(social)</i> <i>demonstration to</i> become: <i>to become</i>	King Juan Carlos I swore to respect the rules of Franco's regime and assumed the throne in November 1975. But it was within these same norms that, by referendum, the Political Reform Law was approved in 1976, elections were called in 1977 and Spain had a new Constitution in 1978, with the Parliamentary Monarchy as its system of government. The so-called “constitution of consensus” established modern civil rights, freedom of worship without an official religion, a two-chamber parliament elected by the people, and a decentralized State that recognized autonomous rights to its seventeen territorial divisions (which were establishing their statutes between 1978 and 1995). This process of democratization was tense—with strikes and demonstrations by the left as well as with resistance from the right and the army, which attempted a new coup d'etat in 1981—but firm. The next thirty years were characterized by political stability in which moderate parties of the left and the right alternated in power peacefully. In the last decades of the century, Spain became a member of NATO (1982) and of the European Union (1986), hosted the Olympic Games and the World Expo in 1992, and achieved a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that is among the highest in the world. The remarkable economic dynamism made the country the second with the highest immigration in the world, after the United States. More than three and a half million immigrants (almost ten percent of the total population) arrived from Europe, Africa, Asia and America in the 1990s and 2000s. This presence is the subject of social and economic debate, especially in the period of recession that began in 2008, but it is also a source of vibrant cultural production. Along with the freedoms and rights acquired after the dictatorship, these changes have also generated a diverse and relatively tolerant society. Spanish cultural production represents a wide range of lifestyles in which self-criticism, parody and the superposition between the cult and the popular, the mass and the local, the domestic and the exotic, come together in divergent aesthetics. Pedro Almodovar's films or the novels by Rosa Montero and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán take place in a Spain very different from the agrarian and imperial Spain that had begun the 20th century.
headquarters: <i>venue, seat</i> GDP: <i>GDP</i> convert: <i>to transform</i>	
together with: <i>along with</i> range: <i>gamut, range</i> the cult: <i>high cultured the</i> popular: the folk converge: <i>to converge they</i> develop: <i>are produced, take place</i>	



Autonomies, one of the major changes introduced with the Constitution of 1978, to favor a pluralistic type of integration in the country.

Rodriguillo, edited by Nnemo, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons



Since the 1970s, the inhabitants of Spain have frequently and vigorously exercised their right to public protest.

Public demonstration in Madrid, May 2011.

Fuentes

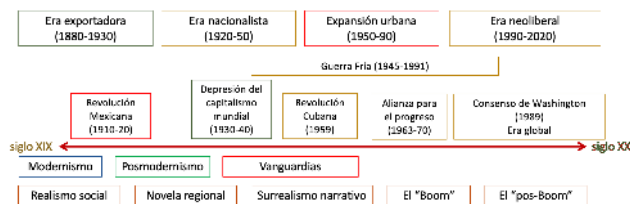
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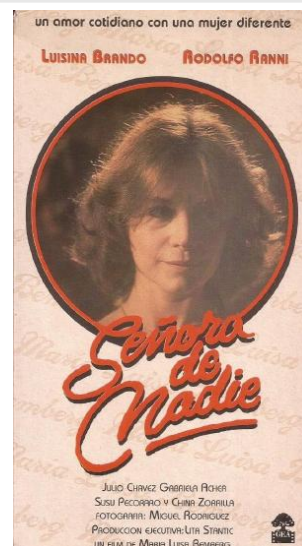
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5.6: Hispanic America 1970-2010

Referentes históricos para Hispanoamérica durante el siglo XX



The last decades of the 20th century mark a progressive integration of Latin America into the “global era”, and at the same time a growing diversity in the history and cultural production of each country and region. From an era of dictatorships in the 1970s, we gradually passed to a period of democratic governments that favored foreign investment, in what was called the “neo-liberal era” or economic openness in the 1990s. Mainly urban societies continue to face the challenge of allowing the majority of the population to have access to employment, education, health and consumption. Cinema has been one of the fields of cultural production with the greatest international diffusion since the end of the 20th century, and is a good indicator of sociocultural changes, especially since the 1960s. The film *Señora de Nadie* (1982), for example, represents in Leonor, the main character, the growing participation of women in personal and social destinies, as well as the will —and difficulty— of the inhabitants of Latin America to build autonomous societies. At the same time, it symbolizes in Fernando, her husband, the difficulty in believing in governments that, as an unfaithful husband, often betray the interests of their own countries for the benefit of foreign investors.



Señora de Nadie (1982), directed by María Luisa Bemberg (Argentina 1922-1995).

The 1970s

owner : owner
company: business, enterprise
support: support
faced: conflicting

after: after a search:

Raid
threatens: threat to
leave: to leave
press: press measures:

lender
measures: lending (adj.)
to a large extent: to a large extent
indebtedness: debts
oil: oil (for gas)
loan: loan
rate: rate
avoid: to avoid

As we saw, the global environment of the Cold War of the years 1960-80 fostered ideological polarization in Latin America and the world. For many leftists, the solution to poverty did not consist in reforming capitalist institutions, but in replacing them with the socialist system of production towards communism, in which all citizens would own the means of production. For many rightists, the only way to preserve institutions and companies was to stifle left-wing movements through military repression. Both received support from the respective opposing world powers (the United States and the Soviet Union).

After Latin Americanism and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the 1960s, the Latin American ruling classes favored anti-socialist regimes, often through military dictatorships. By 1976, the army was in command of almost all Latin American countries, some of them populist (Peru), others of the extreme right (Chile). The only exceptions in Spanish America in the 1970s were Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, with poorly participatory democracies that satisfied the expectations of Washington and the elite, controlling — often with strong military repression — the activism of the popular sectors under the “National Security Doctrine”. In those years, thousands of raids, threats, torture, disappearances and massacres were reported against dissidents, many of whom went into exile (Argentinian Adolfo Pérez Esquivel received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his activism against this type of abuse). On the other side of the spectrum, Cuba lost credibility as a “free territory of America” because it was unable to eliminate its economic dependence on the Soviet Union. The Castro government also took a harder line against internal dissent, increasing the number of political prisoners and becoming increasingly dictatorial. Press censorship and anti-democratic measures were thus widespread in the region. In the most aggressive and best-financed dictatorships, such as in Chile and Argentina, the political left was practically dismantled. In the case of Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, which did not have the industrial or urban development of other regions, left-wing rural guerrillas continued to gain strength in the face of the deplorable conditions of the peasants.

In the economic field, the governments of the 1970s sought to control inflation—with the consequent and anti-popular effective reduction in wages—and to favor the expansion of multinational corporations (IBM, Philips, Volkswagen, Bayer, ITT). In response to the lending of North American and European entities such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the economic growth of these years was largely dependent on external indebtedness. International banking relied on the million-dollar deposits made by Middle Eastern tycoons because of high oil prices, and was looking for reliable customers in need of capital to make loans at lucrative interest rates. In addition, within the Cold War, it was important to finance the social control efforts of Latin American governments to prevent them from falling into the Soviet sphere. Thus, Latin America increased its external debt in the 1970s from 27 thousand to 231 billion dollars.

The 1980s

size: size

headquarters: headquarters

get worse: to get worse

breeding ground: breeding ground

drug trafficking: drug trafficking

literacy: literacy

illiteracy: illiteracy investing: to

invest impoverished:

impoverished on your part: in turn

Defeat: Defeat

Agreement: Agreement

At the beginning of the 1980s, international banks raised interest rates to limit the amount of loans to Latin America, as agricultural and mining exports from this region had fallen in price. The largest debtors (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico) declared themselves unable to pay, and the region's total economy declined cumulative by 10%. Lenders, especially the IMF, prescribed strict economic reform measures: liquidating domestic protectionism, reducing the size of the State (privatizing public services, for example), promoting new exports and, above all, facilitating free markets and foreign investment. These reforms are known as Neoliberalism or "the Washington Consensus" (headquarters of the international financial organizations that championed these policies).

The political and economic strategies of the previous decade worsened the living conditions of high percentages of the population. This was the breeding ground for desperate activities such as organized crime and terrorism. Drug trafficking, for example, a transnational and multi-million dollar business (about 110 billion dollars a year in the nineties) that began to offer alternatives for prosperity in the late seventies, has had a tremendous corrosive impact on societies such as Colombia and Mexico, to mention just two. Partly financed by this business, illegal armed groups from the extreme left or right emerged or gained new strength in Colombia (FARC, self-defense groups) and Peru (Sendero Luminoso, MRTA).

The event that popular activism most enthusiastically received in the 1980s was the Nicaraguan Revolution. The Sandinista guerrilla group (MSLN) won victory over the dictator Anastasio Somoza in 1979, and the new government began a series of socialist-type projects (agrarian reform, medical and literacy campaigns) with economic and technical support from the United States, Cuba, Germany, France and Spain. But the Cold War still counted and the Ronald Reagan administration began a campaign in 1981 against "the Marxist-Sandinist takeover of Nicaragua" (commercial embargo, military and financial support for counterrevolutionaries). For the next eight years, the Sandinista government had to invest more resources in defending itself than in improving the conditions of the impoverished majority. The economy was in crisis (inflation in 1988 reached 33,000 percent) and the Sandinistas lost the elections in 1990. Initially encouraged by the Nicaraguan victory, revolutionaries in El Salvador and Guatemala had strengthened their struggle during the 1980s (although Washington, for its part, was now giving more support to right-wing governments). However, the Sandinista defeat in the elections made clear the impossibility of a victory for the left in Central America. By the mid-nineties, Salvadoran and Guatemalan guerrillas had demobilized and signed peace agreements with their respective governments, an effort that had begun in the 1980s and for which the president of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987.



Nearly 80% of the Spanish-American population lives in cities, several of which are among the most populated in the world.

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Buenos Aires, Argentina

User:SKING, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

, via Wikimedia Commons">



Mexico City

Alejandro Islas Photograph AC, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

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Santiago, Chile

Deensel, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

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Lima, Peru

Juanpis16, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

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Bogota, Colombia

Avenger1, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

The 1990s and 2000s

as: <i>as</i>	As world communism lost credibility and the Soviet Union dissolved, dictatorships were left without their main justification (“National Security”) and without the support of Washington. In addition, one of the neo-liberal premises (and a condition of the IMF) was to attract foreign investment, which tends to prefer constitutional stability. Civilian protests by the middle sectors in favor of human rights also put internal and external pressure on democracy. Thus, almost all Latin American countries, except socialist Cuba, had presidents elected by direct vote in 1991, including governments as accustomed to dictatorship as Haiti and Paraguay.
used to: <i>familiar, accustomed to</i>	In the following years, almost all of these democracies were strengthened and expanded, with ups and downs depending on the circumstances of each country. Three general categories can be identified. (1) On the one hand, there are the most open governments, with generally fair free elections and acceptable respect for the rights of expression and civil organization, as in Costa Rica, Uruguay and Chile. (2) At the other extreme, there are very restricted and unstable democracies, as in Suriname and Guatemala. (3) Between these two poles, in most countries there are partial democracies with more or less limited civil rights. Notorious cases of presidents elected by popular vote who later acted as dictatorships are the Fujimori regimes in Peru in the nineties or Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in the 2000s. However, the trend of many democratically elected governments has been toward free and fairer elections in which well-prepared civilian candidates, many from the middle class, are running. Political reforms have been carried out towards more participatory democracies, as in the constituent assemblies of Colombia and Ecuador in the nineties, or in the electoral opening of Mexico, which for the first time “dethroned” the PRI in 2000, after seventy years of political monopoly.
strengthen expand: <i>to widen</i> ups and downs: <i>ups and downs</i>	
Tras: <i>after</i>	

parties: <i>political parties</i>	Another factor in this democratic expansion has been the revival of social activism, which has changed the power dynamics of parties. Organizations of women, people of African descent, homosexuals, human rights defenders, among many others, have highlighted the socio-cultural heterogeneity of the region, disputing the idea that there is only one answer to popular needs (revolution, socialism). The most notable is the indigenous movement which, already separated from the political framework of the Marxist left and with the support of international organizations, in countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia is a pressure group impossible for the State to ignore. Key moments of this strength were the fall of President Jamil Mahuad in Quito in 1999 and the rise of President Evo Morales in La Paz in 2006. A comparable demonstration, although with different strategies, is the Zapatista Movement of Chiapas, in Mexico, which since 1994 had a significant influence on the dynamics of power in that country. The Nobel organization recognized the global impact of indigenous activism by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Guatemalan Maya-Quiché woman Rigoberta Menchú-Tum in 1992. This greater visibility, national and international, of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples has led many intellectuals and activists to question the adjective “Latino” to refer to this part of America.
highlight: <i>to highlight</i> remarkable: remarkable, <i>of note</i>	A thermometer of the dynamism of popular movements has been the electoral strength of left-wing coalitions in almost all countries, which have come to the presidency in many of them, something that Washington would not have allowed in previous decades. This trend of the first decade of the 21st century has been known as “the <i>Pink Tide</i> ”, because it represents a more moderate ideology than the “red” communism of the 20th century. The political tone is different in each case, but between 2000 and 2009, two lines can be identified: one similar to the populism of the 20th century with nationalist initiatives, authoritarian tactics and acts of accelerated constitutional transformation (Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua), and another more centrist with policies that seek to maintain economic growth, favor private investment and gradually improve the distribution of wealth (Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Jamaica, Haiti). Both trends favor trade integration between regions with comparable economies (Caricom, Mercosur), but they distrust free trade agreements between economies that are too unequal (NAFTA, CAFTA).
turn: <i>turn,</i> swerve equity: equity, fairness	This shift to the left is related to the mixed results of the neo-liberal reforms imposed by international banking. On the one hand, inflation was controlled and trade openness, which included a strengthening of free trade agreements and an increase in foreign investment (Spain alone invested more than one hundred billion dollars), produced respectable rates of economic growth: 3.5% on average for Latin America in the nineties. On the other hand, unemployment did not fall, social investment declined to cut government spending (less public access to health services, education and housing, for example), the overall number of indigent people increased, and the gap between rich and poor deepened. Latin America has continued to be the region with the worst distribution of wealth in the world: in the nineties, 10% of the richest households received 40% of their income. That's why it stands to reason that many voters supported platforms that promised greater social equity. Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano summarized this sentiment as follows: For us, capitalism is not a dream to be realized, but a nightmare realized. Our challenge is not to privatize the State, but to deprivatize it. [...] And the market is, for us, nothing more than a pirate ship: the freer, the worse. [...] We live in a region of European prices and African salaries, where [...] capitalism is undemocratic, with or without elections: most people are gripped by necessity and are condemned to violence” (<i>Notes for the End of the Millennium</i>. Ecuador: The Rabbit, 1979. 71). <i>Capitalism, to us, is not a dream to make true, but a nightmare made true. Our challenge is not how to privatize the State, but how to make it nonprivate. [...] And the market, to us, is but a ship of pirates -the freer, the worst. [...] We live in a region of European prices and African salaries, in which capitalism is anti-democratic, whether with elections or not. Most people are prey to necessity and condemned to violence.</i>

unemployment: <i>unemployment</i> axis: <i>axis</i> measures: <i>measures</i> itself: <i>itself</i> add: <i>to add</i> figure: <i>figure</i> income: <i>income</i>	Unemployment and the increase in poverty have also contributed to the increase in drug trafficking and emigration. Paradoxically, one of the axes of Washington's policy towards the Americas after the cold war has been to respond to these two phenomena, which were unintentionally aggravated by the measures recommended by the “Washington consensus” itself. The “war on drugs” of the eighties and nineties gave the Pentagon a reason to keep part of the military investment in Latin America (which had been in the millions during the Cold War). The invasion of Panama in 1989 was justified in these terms. In the 2000s, however, the “war on terror (ism)” sustained the military argument, so that trafficking in illegal substances stopped being treated as a war issue. But its increase on the Mexican border caused the issue to be reanalyzed from the point of view of security in the United States. Adding another dimension to the concept of “globalization”, the high number of Latin Americans who have emigrated —with or without a visa— to the United States since the 1970s, and to Europe and Asia since the nineties, is also changing the very concept of Latin America. The 2000 census revealed the surprising fact that the United States had nearly 40 million Spanish speakers, surpassed only by Mexico, Colombia and (possibly) Argentina. [1] Just to give an economic example of their impact, the Inter-American Development Bank calculated that in 2006 these emigrants sent nearly US\$62.3 billion from the United States to their countries, a figure higher than that year's foreign investment in the region (López-Córdova & Olmedo, p.1). For some nations, this income is almost as significant as that of exports. Politically and culturally this presence, which in the U.S. The US is associated with the term “Latinos”, it is equally transformative, since it alters the American electoral game and promotes a continental conscience, no longer through treaties between governments, but through daily coexistence, which is not always harmonious. [1] A part of these 40 million did not immigrate, but are descended from those who lived in the Mexican territories that the United States annexed in the mid-19th century (Texas, California, New Mexico, etc.).
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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: Accessories

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[6.3: Minimal History of Spain](#)

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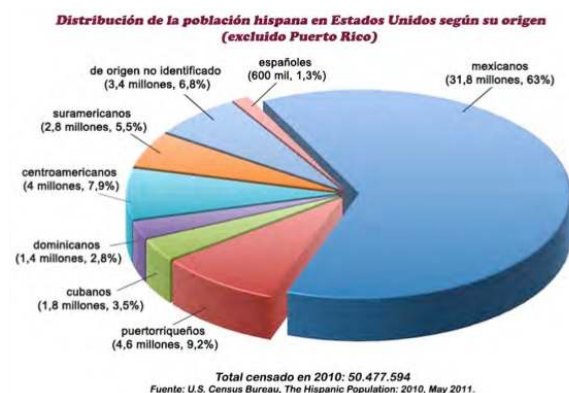
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6.1: Latino presence in the United States

The 1990 census surprised many with the fact that nearly ten percent of the U.S. population was of Hispanic origin. In 2010, there were more than 50 million, 16.3% of the population (in addition to the 3.7 million Hispanics living in Puerto Rico).¹ To give an example of the economic impact of this presence, the Inter-American Development Bank calculated that in 2006 these Latin Americans sent nearly \$62.3 billion to their nations, a figure higher than the foreign investment that year in the region (Lopez-Cordova and Olmedo 1). For countries like El Salvador and the Dominican Republic, this income is almost as significant as that of exports. The political and cultural impact is equally transformative, as it alters the electoral game, affects the national definition of all American countries and promotes a continental awareness based on daily coexistence. Americans and Latin Americans today experience more clearly than ever the continuity that exists between their problems and destinies.

data: *piece of data*
almost: *almost*
population: *population*
given that: *given that*
follow: *according to*
said: *such, send: to send*
about: *nearly*
figure: *figure*
income: *income*
because: *because*
coexistence: *living side by side*

¹ Since, according to the census office, approximately 75% of them spoke Spanish at home (Ramírez 10), that is, more than 38 million, the United States would have been in 2010 the third or fourth country in the world with the highest number of Spanish speakers after Mexico (107 million), Spain (46 million), Colombia (45 million) and, possibly, Argentina (40 million).



La presencia latinoamericana en Estados Unidos responde a una combinación de factores históricos desiguales. Muchos inmigran, legal o ilegalmente, con la esperanza de encontrar las oportunidades económicas que no tienen en sus países de origen. Otros han llegado como refugiados de la violencia política en busca de garantías civiles. Pero otros (los puertorriqueños y muchos mexicanos del suroeste) no son inmigrantes, sino ciudadanos a consecuencia de la expansión territorial de Estados Unidos. Aunque hay grupos de muchas nacionalidades diferentes dispersos por todo el país, las poblaciones más numerosas según el censo de 2010 son las de origen mexicano (63%), puertorriqueño (9,2%), cubano (3,5%), salvadoreño (3,3%), dominicano (2,8%), guatemalteco (2,1%) y colombiano (1,8%) (Ennis et al 3). Las tres primeras son también las de más larga historia en territorio estadounidense, y estudiarlas brevemente permite comprender por qué estos grupos no son fácilmente comparables a las oleadas de inmigración que vinieron desde otras partes del mundo en el pasado.

From Mexico to the United States

The Hispanic population in the southwestern United States is the largest in the country. This presence is the result, not only of immigration, but above all of the fact that this region was part of Spain and then of Mexico until 1848. Spanish conquistadores began to explore and colonize what is now the southwest as early as 1530 (long before English colonists founded Jamestown in 1607). All of these territories became part of Mexico at the beginning of the 19th century, although the central government did not pay much attention to them. The first Americans started arriving around 1800. In 1830, the Mexican government, responding to fear of the growing foreign presence in the area, banned immigration from the United States.

At this time, there were also strong tensions with Anglo-Saxon immigrants from Texas, who did not approve of Mexico having abolished slavery in 1829 and opposed the dictator Antonio López de Santa Anna. The territory of Texas rebelled in 1836, achieved independence and eight years later became part of the American union. Due to conflicts between borders and wanting to expand its markets, in 1846 the United States declared war against Mexico, winning in 1848, through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the territories of New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of California, Utah, Nevada and Colorado. The neighboring country was compensated with fifteen million dollars, and Mexicans living in that area had to choose between leaving the territory or becoming citizens of the United States. The majority chose the second option. These were the first *Mexican-Americans*, who became so not because of deliberate immigration but because of the war between countries.

Many Mexican ranchers welcomed their annexation to the United States, whose government was more stable and whose army offered better control over the region's indigenous people. But, although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo recognized the original rights to property, in practice economic power passed into the hands of the Anglo-Saxons, among whom there was considerable racism against Hispanics. Between 1865 and 1920, there were more lynchings of Mexicans than of African-Americans in the Southwest. The gold rush and railroad construction in the second half of the 19th century attracted a growing number of English-speakers, and by 1900 the inhabitants of Mexican origin were in the minority. Many, without land or specialized training, became cheap labor for mine owners, landlords, corporations and railroad workers. Working in the fields isolated them from the rest of society and the fact that the

coming from: *originating from*

become: *to become*

they became: *became citizens*

whose: *whose*

workers moved from one place to another in search of crops made it almost impossible for their children to educate. To this day, new immigrants, many illegal immigrants, are constantly arriving from Mexico, who are willing to work for any salary in temporary jobs. [1]

The mechanization of agriculture during the first half of the 20th century caused many agricultural workers to move to urban areas, where there was more employment in the commercial and industrial sectors as well as better access to education, health and housing, especially after the Second World War (1939-1945). Nearly half a million of them also served in the war and became aware of their rights as “Americans”. However, even though their standard of living had improved, they remained socially subordinate. The prevailing mentality until the 1950s segregated Mexicans as an inferior population. In many schools and workplaces, it was recommended not to speak Spanish or to maintain family or religious traditions that were considered obstacles to material progress. Many families, in order to find their way into the middle or upper classes, presented themselves as “Spanish”, not Mexican.

Since the late 1950s, Mexican-Americans have joined the minority struggle for full civil rights. The activists defined themselves as “Chicanos”, an abbreviation for “Mexican” that had been used in the past as a derogatory term, and which they now used as a combat name. The movement was organized to demand social reforms, to obtain better working conditions and to promote the ethnic pride of “la Raza”, a people that now perceived themselves united by a common history, a shared cultural heritage and a political purpose. The activist César Chávez succeeded in the fields organizing a union with migrant workers; numerous writers and artists disseminated his own aesthetic that has left its mark on both Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon literary traditions; in universities, especially those in California, Chicano studies programs were established; in 1970 the United Race Party was formed to support Chicano political candidates; in the neighborhoods of *East Los Angeles* and Pilsen, Chicago, this activism is expressed through large street murals that elaborate on the Chicana experience. A large part of the literary production of authors of Chicano origin also joins this project of inclusion without assimilation, to build hybrid identities and presences: Mexican and American, indigenous and Hispanic, Spanish and English speakers.

Today, however, although most Chicanos live better than their parents or grandparents, their average income is still much lower than that of the Anglos. Worse still, the late 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century saw a political and social resurgence of hostility towards those who do not speak English well or are not legal immigrants. Paradoxically, some sectors of the American population are reacting in a similar way to the one that, in 1836, moved the Mexican government to prohibit the immigration of English-speakers to Texas and that would result in the loss of half of its national territory in 1848.

railroad: railroad

landowner : large land owner

isolate: to isolate

harvest: willing crop: willing

Open field : to make one's way

join: to join

full: full

demand: to demand

union: trade union

footprint: trace, mark as

much... as: both... and

support: to support

even worse: what's even WORSE

[1] Logically, there were differences in social class and way of life among the inhabitants of Mexican origin in the region. While in New Mexico and Southern California, many Hispanic ranchers retained ownership of their land until the beginning of the 20th century (and had low-income Mexican or indigenous workers), in Texas, Arizona and Southern California, Anglo-Americans became owners of land and mines, in one way or another, starting in the 1860s or earlier. The need for Mexican labor varied according to the number of indigenous people willing to work for less pay.

Puerto Rico became a United States territory in 1898, after a brief war with Spain. The island, which its inhabitants (the “Puerto Ricans”) often refer to by the affectionate indigenous name of Borinquen, was attractive because of its strategic value and its coffee, sugar and tobacco crops. For the next twenty years, its inhabitants were in legal limbo: they were not North American citizens, but they were not an independent country. In 1917, the Jones Decree (*Jones-Shafroth Act*) gave them American citizenship, but kept them as a colony: Washington retained control over laws, the monetary system, immigration, the postal service, defense, and international relations. The education system was configured according to American criteria and English was imposed as the language of instruction.

Many Puerto Ricans continued to fight for independence or greater autonomy, and in the late 1940s, the island became a Commonwealth, giving them greater administrative control. But their responsibilities and privileges continued to differ from those of other U.S. citizens. Although they don't pay federal taxes, they don't benefit from all national education and health programs. They vote in the presidential primary elections, but cannot participate in the general elections. They can serve in the military (and were previously required to), but their representatives to Congress have no vote.

During the first three decades of the 20th century, the mortality rate in Puerto Rico fell by 50 percent, and living conditions generally improved for many. However, North American commercial interests encouraged the growth of sugar plantations, concentrating land ownership in a few hands (of some Puerto Rican ranchers and American companies), and the number of small farms was reduced. With the economic recession of the 1930s, thousands of unemployed jibaros began to migrate to North American cities, especially in the Northeast, where they were employed in tobacco and textile industries, or to serve in ports, restaurants, homes and hotels.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the first governor of the Commonwealth, Luis Muñoz Marín, instituted an economic improvement program called Operation Bootstrap, which stimulated industrial development. Family income increased by 600 percent, reaching the highest in Latin America (although only half the US average); 85 percent of young Puerto Ricans attended schools, where Spanish was once again the official language; Puerto Rico became the fourth country in the world in terms of the number of young people attending universities or technical institutes (19 percent); and the rate of mortality among young people in the world in terms of the number of young people attending universities or technical institutes (19 percent); and the rate of child mortality in legogonism to be the lowest in all of Latin America. But rapid industrialization did not eliminate unemployment (twice as high as in the United States), and more than a third of the population continued to live below international levels of poverty, many in the misery of slums and depressed rural areas. These were the root causes of migration to New York since the 1950s.

In 1940, it is estimated that there were about eighty thousand Puerto Ricans in the continental United States; in 2010, on the other hand, 4.6 million were registered, almost a million more than on the island. The largest group was established in New York City, particularly in East Harlem (“The Spanish Harlem” or *the neighborhood*), Lower East Side (loisaida), and parts of Brooklyn and the Bronx. Most of the migrants arrived without education, without economic resources and without proficiency in English.

Their living conditions were deplorable: 50% lived below poverty levels, 87% of young people dropped out of school, and unemployment was 9.9% (in contrast to 4.3% for whites and 6.9% for African Americans). They also faced economic exploitation in an environment with a racist mentality. *Two New York journalists described Puerto Ricans as follows in 1947: “mostly crude farmers, subject to congenital diseases... they turn to guile and wile and the steel blade, the traditional weapon of the sugar cane cutter, mark of their blood and heritage” (Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, N.Y. Confidential, Chicago: Ziff Davis, 1944. 126-132).* The stigma of criminality and violence was yet another obstacle to face.

Some fair-skinned people escaped to the middle class by denying their origin or presenting themselves as generic “Latin Americans”, just as some Mexicans presented themselves as “*Spanish*” (many of them still appear in the census under the category of “other Hispanics”). Other Puerto Ricans considered their situation temporary. Borinquen is nearby and there is no need for a visa, so many are circular migrants, who arrive to look for work when the island's economy is struggling and return when they have been able to save some money. For this reason, although they recognize the importance of learning English, they are not willing to give up their Spanish, and they maintain a sense of closeness to their homeland.

Tras: *after*
often: *often*

army: *army*

rate: *rate*
improve: *to improve*

jibaro: *peasant*

just: *barely return to: again*

unemployment: *unemployment*

arrabal: *slum, shanty town instead:*

in contrast

domain: *mastery*

face: *to face*

return: *to return*
save: *to save*
featured: *remarkable*

As in the Chicana community, the civil rights struggles of the 1960s motivated political awareness, cultural pride and determination to improve their situation among the Puerto Rican community. Today they have considerable political representation in local administrations in the Northeast. The arts, especially music, poetry and painting, are very visible in Chicago, New Jersey and New York, where several cultural centers stimulate their production, such as in the famous Neighborhood Museum in East Harlem. The “Nuyorican” aesthetic is a rich product of the Puerto Rican experience in New York with prominent poets such as Miguel Algarín and Pedro Pietri (who described himself as “a native New Yorker born in Ponce, PR”). Similar to the term “Chicano”, for activists of Mexican descent in the Southwest, the word “Latino” became during the era of the struggle for civil rights (the sixties and seventies) a new denomination to represent that sense of unity, cultural resistance and continuity with Latin America, not only of Puerto Ricans, but of Caribbean immigrants and later of the population of Latin American origin throughout the United States. The development of “salsa” in New York, which would later become one of the most famous musical rhythms in the world, was during the seventies a symbol of this presence and a platform for spreading this social dynamism.

Cuban waves

Like Puerto Rico, Cuba passed into North American hands in 1898 as a result of the war with Spain, but in 1902 it became an independent republic, although heavily dominated by U.S. interests. During the first half of the 20th century, similar to the Puerto Ricans, although without the advantages of North American citizenship, many Cubans came to work in tobacco industries in Florida and the Northeast. By 1959, there were an estimated 79,000 Cubans in the United States.

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 directly affected the interests of the commercial and professional elite. Nearly 273,000 left the island in the 1960s and were welcomed by Washington as political asylees. A second group arrived in April 1980, when nearly ten thousand Cubans took refuge in the Peruvian embassy and were finally admitted to the United States. And a third wave, of almost 120,000, was authorized by the Castro government to travel by boat from the port of Mariel to La Florida for the next six months (known as “Los Marielitos”, some were mentally ill, homosexuals or criminals that the Cuban government used to take out of the country). To these large groups we must add the hundreds of refugees who escape from Cuba every year and who cover a wide socioeconomic sphere.

The sudden appearance of Cubans in the United States was unusual in the history of Hispanic immigration. The initial group of the sixties was primarily upper class and many had capital or received support from the North American government to found businesses, especially in Florida (although there are smaller groups in New York, New Jersey, California and Illinois). In Miami, they were able to form a well-established community (“Little Havana”), obtained the right to bilingual education, and quickly achieved political representation in Washington. His interest in overthrowing the revolutionary government in Havana coincided well with the anti-Soviet policy of the United States.

Another aspect that makes this immigration unique is that, for the most part, it has been systematically counted and observed. It is known, for example, that the wave of the sixties was 94% white, was on average 34 years old, and had received a good education (14 years of schooling). The second group in April 1980 was 80% white, younger and poorer. And of the Marielitos, even younger and poorer, 60% were white. The latter arrived in an atmosphere of resentment because the sensationalism of the press emphasized the number of criminals and because they were perceived as a burden on the budget of Miami and of the Cuban community in particular. In November 1980, the “English Only” movement gained new strength in Florida and to this day there are strong tensions in that State between Hispanic communities (which also include a large number of Colombians and Central Americans), Afro-American and Caucasian communities from different social classes.

as a result: *as a result*
advantage: *advantage*

criminal: *army*
take advantage of: *rate*
add: *to improve*

sudden: *sudden*

support: *barely*
achieve: *again*
overthrow: *unemployment*

cargo: *burden*
budget: *budget*

“Latino” diversity



The “surprise” of the 1990 census on the percentage of the Hispanic population in the United States made it clear that this minority had become a social and political force, with a population growth rate (24.3%) much higher than the national average (6.1%). But it is an economically disadvantaged group: the 2000 census revealed that Hispanic families had an average income of about thirty-four thousand dollars, in contrast to the national average of fifty thousand dollars, and the percentage of poverty was 22.6% (27.5% among Dominicans versus 14.6% among Cubans), compared to 12.4% nationally (Ramírez 14). It should also be noted that the number of people who identified themselves as “Hispanic or Latino” in the 2010 census may have been affected by the format of the questions, which were clearer and more inclusive than in the 2000 survey (Ennis et al 2). It is also possible that many people of Hispanic origin who previously did not identify themselves as “Hispanic” for political or social reasons, decided to do so in 2010, as the perception of “the Latino” has been more positive in recent years. What does seem clear is that the Hispanic or Latino population was younger in 2009 (27 years old) than the national average (36 years old) and that almost 63% were born in the United States.

The inability to see them as a group was related to the prevailing bipolar racial consciousness in the United States (or black or white), in which the Latin American rainbow had no place. Segregationist practices against Mexicans in the Southwest, for example, were little studied, because they were not black. *Until the 1960s, census forms did not include the “Hispanic/Spanish” category in their questions (they simply asked to identify: “Race or Color”).* In addition, society and government considered each nationality separately. Puerto Rican or Dominican urban workers were thought to have nothing to do

with Mexican or Guatemalan rural workers, Cuban businessmen, middle-class Chilean and Argentinian exiles, or refugees from Nicaragua or El Salvador.

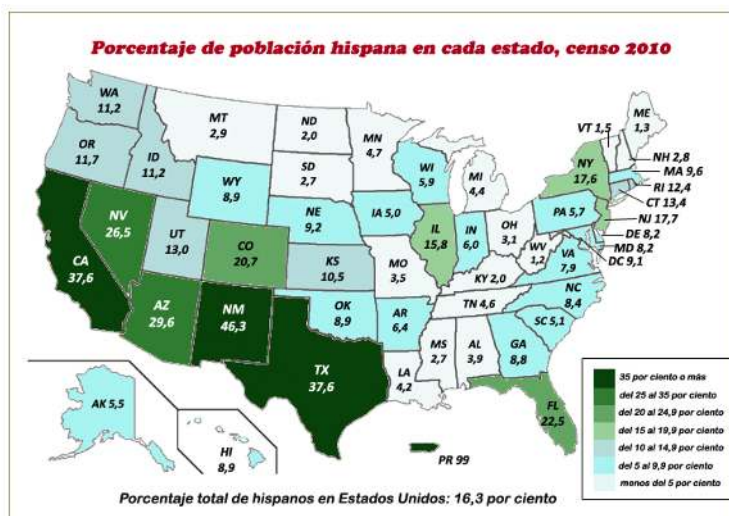
The differences between nationalities are important and yet everyone identifies first with their nation and then with the more general category. In fact, Latin American immigrants become North American citizens at a lower rate than those from other backgrounds. But more than 60% of Latinos or Hispanics in the United States were born here, and the trend of recent decades has been towards self-identification as a plural unit. Politically, journalistically and academically, they are more thought of as a joint presence that has common interests and characteristics and that remains in close contact with Latin America.

It is in this sense that the term “Latino” has come to refer to them (and to make them fashionable) as a single group whose cultural influence is evident today in its kaleidoscope of contradictions. Knowing, exposing and relying on their “Latino consciousness” (always in flux) has become their way of integrating —without being assimilated—into the American imaginary. This is how the Chicano Francisco Alarcon expresses it in one of his bilingual poems (quoted in Stavans 42):

I
always carry my
roots
with me
rolled up
and they serve as a pillow

*I Carry
My Roots
With Me
All The Time
Rolled Up
I Use Them
As My Pillow*

In this way, Latinas and Latinos envision a future that is based on their past and tradition but that is not doomed to perpetuate the subordination that unites them. They build an identity that doesn't unify them, and they make their home in a society that is changed by them but is still not sure who they are or if it wouldn't be better to send them back home.



6.2: Nahua and Quechua Poems

▮ [More poems in: Poetry exhibition in Nahuatl and Quechua.](#)

When Europeans arrived on the American continent in 1492, there were numerous human groups with very different ways of living and thinking. All of these civilizations had their own songs, poetry and narratives. Two civilizations that caused great admiration among Europeans at the time were the Aztec in the Valley of Mexico (whose official language was Nahuatl, also spoken by other neighboring cultures and with almost two million speakers today), and the Inca (whose language is Quechua or Runasimi, today spoken by almost ten million people), in what is now Peru, northern Chile and Argentina, Ecuador, southern Colombia and parts of Bolivia.

Although it is practically impossible to access the original version of this poetry (which occurred mainly orally), from the 16th century to the present there have been efforts to transcribe, reconstruct and partially translate numerous texts from pre-Columbian cultures. The relevance of these literary works is not only social —to recognize the cultural and political presence of today's indigenous groups—, but also aesthetic-cultural: part of the current Latin American idiosyncrasy is influenced by this cultural heritage, and many writers of the 20th and 21st centuries have incorporated this heritage into their literary experimentation, such as Octavio Paz from Mexico (Nobel Prize 1992), Miguel Ángel Asturias from Guatemala (Nobel Prize 1967), José María Arguedas from Peru, and Elicura Chihuailaf from Chile, among many others.

Nahuatl poetry

"I understood it at last: I
hear a song; I see a flower:
Oh, may they never wither!"

- Attributed to Nezahualcoyotl, ca. 1450

In Nahuatl, poetry was called "tlor y canto" (in *socitl*, in *cuicatl*), a rich compound name that simultaneously described several aspects of poetic activity: a natural, visual, spontaneous and expressive aesthetic of the sacred and of hope (the flower), and at the same time elaborate, collective, ritual and musical (the song) [1]. "The flower-and-song" consisted of a dialogue with one's own heart, with the divine, with the world and with the people, and it was very important in Aztec society. Poets were princes or priests who represented the feeling of the community through words, music and dance. For them, art was the way to imitate the divine creator, Omeothéotl, a double entity, father (Ometecuhli) and mother (Omecihuatl), also called Lord and Lady of the intimate and the near. Although the songs celebrated love, beauty and heroism in war, among other themes, the fundamental objective of poetry was to dialogue about the value of life: "only for a brief time we borrow each other on Earth". Remembering the ephemeral nature of life on Earth and affirming the possibility of transcending and enduring are two essential goals of Nahuatl poetry.

[1] Nahuatl is characterized by this type of double and metaphorical expressions. Other examples are: "the face and the heart" = personality; "black and red ink" = wisdom; "to carve faces" = educate.



"Nowhere can it be
the house of the supreme arbiter;
everywhere he is invoked,
everywhere he is worshipped.
Only by his side and next to him
Can there be life on Earth." ("Song to Ometéotl", by the poet Moyocatzin)

Left: Representation of Ometecuhli and Omecihuatl in the Borgia Codex. [Unknown Author](#)[Unknown author](#), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Songs and stories were learned by heart, but there were large posters (the codices) with designs and phonetic signs that the priest-poet indicated with his finger while he sang the corresponding poem. This choreographic activity was called "singing paintings", and was presented as a mandatory show for the town on special days.

These performances were of great social importance. For this reason, from the age of twelve many young Aztecs of both sexes, if they were not dedicated to war or agriculture, studied at a very rigorous institution for teaching poetry (music, language and dance) called the *cuicacalli* ("house of singing").

Nahuatl poetry has very ancient roots, possibly from the Olmec era (400 BC). However, most of the poems we know today were composed in the century before the Spanish conquest (15th century). His most common images are flowers, a symbol of beauty, hope and divine creation, precious stones, a symbol of wealth and power, and birds, a symbol of divine wisdom. Two basic stylistic elements were diffrassism (the expression of concepts through two more or less equivalent terms: "let's live in peace, in harmony"), and parallelism (presenting two consecutive phrases that are repeated and complementary: "let's go, we'll look for flowers; let's go, we'll cut flowers"). There were also compositions of various genres:

- The *Teotlatolli* were about the origins of the world and the divine universe.
- The *Theochicatl* were hymns in honor of the gods.
- The *Xopancuicatl* were songs to life, to joy and to the beauty of the world.
- The *Xochicuicatl* exalted friendship and human nobility.
- The *Yaocuicatl* were warrior and heroic songs.
- The *Ichnocuicatl*s expressed anguish, sadness and reflection on death.

As an exercise, and while enjoying Nahuatl poetry, can you identify the genre of the following three fragments? what images or ideas do you find interesting and why? What characteristics of Nahuatl poetry are presented in each fragment? (From *Anthology of Pre-Columbian Indigenous Poetry*, ed. Jorge Eduardo Paniagua).

Excerpt 1. Gender: _____

[chance: maybe - hummingbird: *hummingbird* - emerald: emerald color - aureo: gold color - corolla: the group of petals of a flower]

*I consult with my own heart:
Where will I take beautiful fragrant flowers?
Who will I ask?
Am I asking the green shimmering hummingbird, the emerald fly bird?*

*Am I asking the golden butterfly?
Yes, they will know: they know where the beautiful fragrant flowers open
their corollas.*

Fragment 2. Gender: _____

[cob: the fruit of corn - fart: get confused or excited - kill: plant - first-time: first, it begins - get stronger: get stronger]

*My God Cob, with his face held high for
no reason, he panics.
I am the tender forest of corn:
from your mountains I come to see you, I your God.
My life will be refreshed:*

*the first-time man grows stronger, the man who rules the war was born
!*

Fragment 3. Gender: _____

Which : how - quetzal: Central American bird with beautiful green feathers, sacred among the Aztecs and Mayans - plume: feather ornament - feathers: feathers - loan: loan

Although united with me we are in the world,
like quetzal feathers in a plume,
although we are like stones of the same necklace,
.....
only once does our life pass.
In one day we leave,
in one night we are from the kingdom of the dead.
Oh, here we have only come to know each other, we
only have the land on loan.
Let's live like this in peace, let's live in harmony.

Chalco Women's Song

The "Song of the Women of Chalco" is attributed to the poet Aquiahtzin, considered a wise man, who lived in the 15th century, before the arrival of the Spaniards. Here are a few excerpts. As you read them, can you think about what they reveal about gender relations and eroticism? (from Mexican Songs, trans. Miguel Leon Portilla):

Get up: <i>get up!</i> Extend: <i>spread around</i> shield: <i>shield</i> men crave: <i>are desired by men</i>	Get up, my little sisters, let's go, let's go, we'll look for flowers, let's go, let's go, we'll cut flowers. Here they spread, here the flowers of water and fire spread, the flowers of the shield, those that seem to men, those that give prestige: those of war.
Anhelo: <i>Longing</i> Hilar: <i>To Thread, To Spin</i>	They are beautiful flowers, with the flowers that are on me I adorn myself, they are my flowers, I am from Chalco, I am a woman! I desire and desire flowers, I desire and desire songs. I am longing here in the place where we spin, in the place where our life goes.
intone: <i>to intone</i> weave: <i>to entwine</i> surround: <i>to surround, surround</i> bed: <i>bed</i>	I sing his song to the Lord, little Axayácatl. I weave it with flowers, with them I surround it. Like a painting the beautiful song, like fragrant flowers that give joy, my heart cherishes them on earth. So too do I cherish your word, companion in bed, you, little Axayácatl. With flowers I weave it, with flowers I surround it. This way I will give pleasure to my partner in bed.
Make it stand up what makes me a woman: <i>have what makes me a Woman Rise</i> <i>de Veras: truly</i> light up: <i>to fire up delight:</i> <i>delight to deflower: ejaculate, penetrate</i> <i>Breastfeed: breast-feed</i>	Companion, small companion, Mr. Axayácatl. Make what makes me a woman stand out, make a lot of it really turn on. We will laugh, we will rejoice, there will be delight, I will have glory. But no, you haven't faded yet, buddy, you, sir, little Axayácatl. You want to suck on my breasts, almost in my heart.
Accept yourself: <i>get comfortable</i> chance: <i>by any chance</i> achieve: <i>to accomplish</i>	Comrade, my little boy, we are going to be together, take a seat next to me, make your being like a man speak. Don't I know, have no experience of your enemies, my little boy? But now abandon yourself to my side. Even if we are women, you may not achieve anything as a man.

Stir me up: <i>stir me</i> completely: <i>completely</i> mat: <i>mat deliver: give yourself</i>	Flowers and songs from the pleasure companion, you, sir, companion, my little boy, stir me like corn dough. I completely offer myself to you. I have come to give pleasure to my blooming vulva, my small mouth. I wish the Lord, little Axayácatl. Look at my flowery painting, my breasts, let 's have pleasure on your flower mat. And where you exist, little companion, slowly give in to sleep, be calm, my little boy, you, Mr. Axayácatl.
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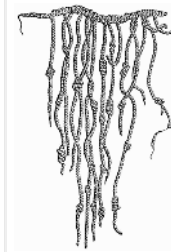
Quechua poetry

The official language of the Incas and the peoples that belonged to their empire was *Quechua* (from *qishwa*, “temperate zone”), also called *Runasimi* (rune: people, *simi*:speech, mouth). This culture, like the Aztec one, also gave great importance to poetry, which was present in all social activities: agriculture, funerals, official ceremonies, love. But unlike the Nahuatl codices, the Incas had no known writing system, so there is no clear documentation of their original literature.

The only system of signs known until today is that of the *quipus*, which were cords with knots of colors and shapes distributed in such a way that they could be “read” to remember historical information, numbers, etc. Thus, the only documents we have today about Quechua poetry come from colonial chronicles, for example by Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, Father Cristóbal de Molina, or the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.

Left: Incan Quipu.

[Unknown Author](#)[Unknown author](#), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



According to the testimonies recorded by the chroniclers, the Inca nobles also received a thorough literary education at an institution called the *Yachayhuasi*. There, *amauts*, historians and philosophers taught, who also created historical, epic and sacred poetry. Finally, the *Haravicus*, or “inventors of poetry”, were the specialists in the art of language and music. *Haravicus* did not necessarily belong to the noble class, and not only helped to embellish epic or sacred poems, but also composed other types of poetry that were more lyrical, personal or popular. Among the poetic genres of the Incas are: the *Jailli*, a hymn sacred to the gods, heroism and agricultural tasks; the *Arawi*, intimate, loving or melancholic poetry; the *Wawaki*, a poem in dialogue between the two sexes; the *Qhashwa*, a song of dance and joy; and the *Wayñu*, a collective poem that included dance and music.

As an exercise, and while enjoying Inca poetry, can you identify the genre of the following three fragments? what images or ideas do you find interesting and why? What characteristics of Inca poetry are presented in each fragment? What similarities and differences do you find with the Nahuatl poetic style? (From *Anthology of Pre-Columbian Indigenous Poetry*, ed. Jorge Eduardo Paniagua).

Excerpt 1. Gender: _____ (Transcribed by Guamán Poma, 1615)

[*meanwhile*: meanwhile - “yours”: extraction of a seed. - *dove*: dove - meadow - meadow]

*The time will come to cheer up our Inca.
We'll dance with him under the full moon.
The sweetest song we'll sing.
The time will come to dance with our Inca.

Meanwhile, my yours, my golden dove,
don't be afraid of the full moon.
Let's meet in the flowery meadow
to play under the gold star.*

Fragment 2. Gender: _____ (Transcribed by Molina, 1575)

[**Viracocha**: Creator, supreme God of the Incas. - **the being**: the being - **with only**: just by - **be**: may it be (command) - **may I live** (request)]

*Cause of being, Viracocha,
God always present,
Judge who is in everything,
God who governs and provides,
Who creates simply by saying:
“Be a man, be a woman”.
May the being you put up and
raised live freely and in peace.
Where are you?
Outside or inside?
In the cloud or in the shade?*

Fragment 3. Gender: _____ (Transcribed by Guamán Poma, 1615)

[*tender*: tender - *delicacy*: delicious food - *tear*: tear - *drag*: drag - *push*: push]

My brunette, brunette,
tender delicacy, the smile of the water,
your heart doesn't know sorrows
and your eyes don't know tears.

Because you are the most beautiful woman,
because you are my queen,
because you are my princess, I
let the water of love drag
me into its current, I
let the storm
of passion push me.

A Wawaki

The following is an example of *Wawaki*, which was sung in two choirs, one by men and the other by women. As you read, think about how genders are defined and thought about in this poem:

Shine: to shine, to shine	The princes Because you're a star, yes! flashes of the night, yes! Well, under the fire of the sun, yes! I'm looking for you in vain. Yes!
Squint: Half-Close One's Eyes	The princesses If I am a star, no! Open your heart, no! and under the fire of the sun, no! squint your eyes. No!
simulate: to intend to get closer: to get close change: to change into	The princes Only in the moonlight, yes! Call me simulates, yes! and when I get closer, yes! You're screwing in the snow. Yes!
Hurry up: please rush to respond echar: to pour into	The princesses And if I call you pretend, no! hurriedly come. No! If I go bartering in snow, no! Give me your fire. No!

The rich poetic production of the native peoples is part of the Latin American cultural tradition, not only as a history, but as a source of creation in the present. Famous poets of the 20th and 21st century have integrated this tradition into their literary creation. In addition, today's indigenous cultures continue to elaborate their collective experience through poetry, literature, and art in general.

Review Questions

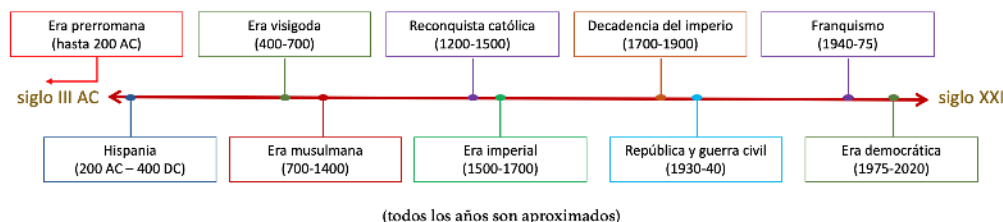
1. What language did the Aztecs speak? What region did they live in?
2. What language did the Incas speak? What region did they live in?
3. What was poetry called in Nahuatl? What ideas does this name evoke?
4. What was the fundamental purpose of Nahuatl poetry? Give an example.
5. What was the social importance of Nahuatl poetry? How was it disseminated?
6. What are some characteristics of the style and imagery of Nahuatl poetry?
7. What was the social importance of Quechua poetry? How was it disseminated?
8. What was an *amauta*? What was a *haravicus*?
9. What are some characteristics of the style and images of Quechua poetry?

▢ [More poems in: Poetry exhibition in Nahuatl and Quechua.](#)

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6.3: Minimal History of Spain

Referentes históricos para España hasta el siglo XXI



The first inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula, dating from prehistoric times, are known as Iberians. The paintings of several caves on the peninsula, including those of Altamira, in the north, are a famous testimony to the oldest human presence in these regions. Several civilizations developed over the centuries, as a result of a constant series of invasions. The Phoenicians brought the alphabet and their knowledge of navigation. The Celts introduced the use of bronze and other metals. Finally, the Romans left behind a profound cultural and linguistic influence.

Hispania

In 218 BC, the Iberian Peninsula became a province of the Roman Empire, which imposed its language, culture and government. They built cities, roads, bridges and aqueducts, with Seville and Córdoba being the most important urban centers. Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 BC-65 AD) was born in this region, a philosopher, statesman, orator and playwright who became the most important intellectual figure in first-century Rome, with particular political influence in the early years of Nero's rule. As in other Roman provinces, Christianity spread little by little in Hispania, and in the 4th century it became the religion of the majority.

The invasion of the Visigoths

The crisis of the Roman Empire facilitated the invasion of Hispania, starting in 409 AD, by several Germanic peoples such as the Vandals and the Visigoths, in a period known as the “barbarian” invasions (the Greeks and the Romans called foreigners “barbarians”). In the year 587, the Visigothic king Recaredo converted to Roman Catholicism and, with him, all his people. The political and economic system of the Visigoths, which we know today as feudalism, was hierarchical, based on land ownership (fiefdoms) and war.

The Muslim presence

In the year 711, Muslims from North Africa invaded Hispania, and within a few years they conquered most of the peninsula. The city of Córdoba became an intellectual center of Islamic culture. There, advances were made in science, literature, crafts, agriculture, architecture and urban planning. Muslims generally maintained a regime of ethnic and religious tolerance towards Christians and Jews during the eight centuries that they occupied the peninsula.

The Reconquest

The Visigoths, who had to take refuge in northern Spain, always maintained their determination to reconquer the entire peninsula, and much of their history focuses on these wars. The figure of El Cid Campeador, whose poem is considered one of the founding Spanish texts, is an emblem of this period. Finally, in 1492, the last Muslim kingdom fell in Granada to the troops of the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile.

The year 1492 also had great significance because of the political and territorial unification that resulted from the victory over the Muslims (known as “Moors”), the expulsion of Jews who refused to convert to Christianity, and the publication of the first grammar of the Spanish language. Thus, the first modern European nation was constituted on the basis of linguistic (Spanish) and religious (Catholicism) homogeneity. In addition, the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the lands he named “The Indies” implied an impressive expansion for the new Spain, which would become the first empire of the Modern Age.

The first world power

In 1516, the grandson of the Catholic Monarchs, Charles of Habsburg, assumed the throne of Spain with the title of Charles I and, in 1519, he was appointed emperor of the Holy Roman Empire with the name of Charles V. His empire was so extensive that in his

domains “the sun never set”: a large part of the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Austria, parts of France and North Africa, in addition to the territories of America and later the Philippines.

Thus began an era of enrichment and impressive military and political power for Spain. However, instead of using gold and wealth from America to boost the development of its economy, the Spanish government used them to pay for continuing European wars and to buy imported products.

The reign of Philip II

In 1556, Charles V divided his empire between his brother Ferdinand and his son Philip II, who received Spain, the Netherlands and the possessions of America and Italy. Felipe turned Spain into the center of opposition to Protestantism and maintained constant religious wars, he moved the capital from Toledo to Madrid in 1561, and in 1557 he had the palace-convent known as El Escorial built. He defeated the Turks in the naval battle of Lepanto, but the defeat of the Invincible Armada (1588) against England marked the beginning of Spanish decline.

Between 1550 and 1650, Spanish art and literature had a great influence in Europe, in a period that is now known as “The Golden Age”. Great painters such as El Greco, Velázquez and Murillo, and writers such as Santa Teresa de Jesús, Fray Luis de León, San Juan de la Cruz, Cervantes, Quevedo, Lope de Vega, Góngora, and Calderón de la Barca, among many others, stood out.

The Fall of the Spanish Empire

During the mediocre reigns of Philip III (1598-1621) and Felipe IV (1621-1665), Spain's economy and empire went into crisis: the State lacked efficiency and lost many of its European territories, silver in the New World declined, wars had high costs, and inflation grew unchecked, along with taxes.

By 1714, after a war of succession, the French Bourbon family took possession of the monarchy, and imposed reforms and fashions in France, building beautiful buildings and avenues. The Bourbon kings also founded academies, libraries and museums, and undertook a reorganization of the empire, liberalizing trade between Spain and its American colonies.

However, in 1807, Napoleon's French troops invaded Spain, starting a popular rebellion and a power vacuum, leading to the expulsion of the French in 1814. Francisco de Goya, an exceptional observer of this entire Bourbon period, testified to this situation in his impressive painting. In the midst of confusion, most of the Spanish territories in America took advantage of it to achieve their independence. With the Battle of Ayacucho (1824), Spain lost all its control over mainland America.

The crises of the 19th century

Throughout the 19th century, there was a constant struggle between liberals, who were trying to establish a democratic republic, and monarchists, who wanted to maintain the traditional structures of the nobility. Thus, during the long reign of Elizabeth II (1833-1868), six different constitutions were enacted and there were fifteen military uprisings. In 1873, the First Republic was proclaimed, which lasted only twenty-two months.

In 1898, as a result of the Cuban War, Spain ceded its last Caribbean and Asian colonies to the United States (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines). Around this event, a literary and philosophical reflection of great importance took place in the peninsula, known as the “Generation of 98”, which includes influential authors such as Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) and Antonio Machado (1875-1939).

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)

The political crisis continued into the 20th century. In 1931, the Second Democratic Republic was proclaimed. But political trends polarized and, in 1936, a military rebellion divided Spain into two enemy groups: on the one hand, the republican forces that were later supported by the Soviet Union and Mexico, and on the other the nationalist forces supported by German and Italian fascism.

The Nationalists, under the leadership of General Francisco Franco, defeated the defenders of the Republic in 1939. One of the first victims of the war was the poet Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), who was shot dead in Granada by the nationalists.

Franco's regime

Generalissimo Francisco Franco held power in Spain for thirty-six years, exercising a regime of censorship, extreme control, Catholic traditionalism and strict surveillance by the Guardia Civil. The defeat of Germany and Italy in World War II isolated their government internationally, but the Cold War improved their strategic situation. In 1953, the Spanish-American pact was signed, allowing the establishment of North American military bases in Spain. In the sixties there was great tourist and industrial development.

The Return of Democracy

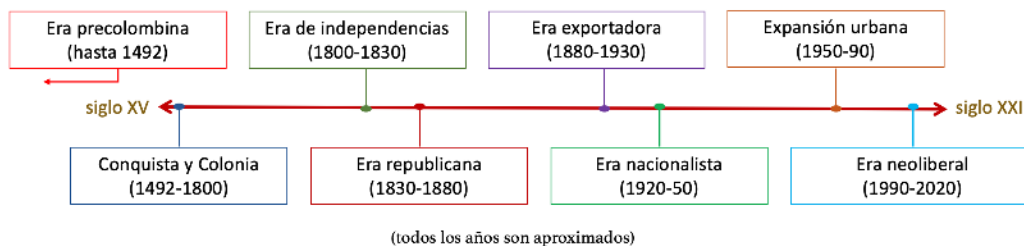
After Franco's death in 1975, the young king Juan Carlos I worked from the outset for democracy, which was approved in the new constitution of 1978. It designated Spain as a State of Autonomies, seventeen in total, with its own parliaments and governments, thus recognizing the internal diversity of the Spanish people.

In the last decades of the 20th century and the first decades of the 21st century, Spanish society was profoundly transformed, fully integrating itself into the European Union and the democratic and globalized world. The euro economy became part of it, it developed significant international investments, and its culture was widely disseminated in Europe and the world through cinema, literature, arts and music. Many African and Latin American immigrants have sought a more prosperous future in today's open and progressive Spanish society.

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6.4: Minimal History of Latin America

Referentes históricos para Hispanoamérica hasta el siglo XXI



The indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere were numerous and had enormous linguistic and cultural diversity. By the 15th century, two great empires occupied much of what is now Spanish America (the part of America where Spanish is spoken): the Aztec empire (Nahuatl culture) in Mesoamerica and the Inca empire (Quechua language) in South America.

Conquest

Since 1492, the Spaniards carried out an immense military, religious and commercial campaign to explore, subdue, assimilate and take advantage of the territories discovered by the Christopher Columbus expedition, which they called “The Indies” and which Christians considered theirs by divine right. Thousands of Spaniards, most with little education and opportunities in their country, embarked on this adventure to improve their living conditions and collaborate in the conversion of “the Indians” to the Catholic religion, considered the only door to heaven. With this mentality, still quite feudal, a rapid process of invasion, evangelization and establishment of governments, cities and centers of commerce began, especially in what is now Cuba, Mexico and Peru. By 1550, the two great Aztec and Inca empires were under the control of Spain, which extended its dominions from present-day California to Patagonia, with the exception of Brazil, which was granted to Portugal (along with Africa) through the Treaty of Tordesillas from 1494.

Colonial era

Between approximately 1525 and 1825, all of the Spanish-American territory was part of the Spanish kingdom. Two main centers of government were Mexico and Lima, from where two direct representatives of the king, the viceroys, governed. In the 18th century, two other viceroyalties were created: La Nueva Granada, with its capital in Bogotá (1739), and Buenos Aires, with its capital in La Plata (1776). With the exception of cities, where there were systems of government (courts) comparable to those of the Peninsula, most of the territory was governed by the military. The economy was mainly extractive and agricultural: mines and crops to be sent to Spain and from there sold to Europe or to the rest of the world. The labor force was almost always composed of indigenous people and Africans —and of the ethnic mixes with them—who generally received only what was necessary for their survival for their work. Madrid had a policy of strict commercial monopoly, although, in practice, piracy and illegal smuggling existed throughout the American territory (“The Indies”). An active cultural life—with numerous universities, architectural initiatives and study centers— and diverse —with cultural influences from Africa, America and Europe—was encouraged, but also restrictive. In general, only Creoles (children of Spanish couples) and some mixed race (a mixture of Spanish and indigenous) had access to education and to positions of relative power, and the highest authorities were usually sent and appointed from the Peninsula.

Starting in the 17th century, when other European kingdoms became more prosperous (thanks, in part, to the African slave trade, military victories and industrial and commercial development), vast regions of the Spanish empire in America became a zone of contention for occupation and smuggling, especially with England, France and the Netherlands, in particular the Caribbean and the Atlantic coast of North America. Spain did not participate in the slave trade from Africa—although it was legal to own them in its territories— nor did it promote the development of manufacturing (because it had the gold to buy it from other countries), with which capitalism in the Hispanic Indies developed more slowly and unevenly than in other regions of the world. Knowing these colonial processes allows us to understand many aspects of the mentality and social structure of Spanish-American countries up to the 21st century.

Era of Independencies

During the 18th century, non-conformism grew — often violent — against the economic and political structures imposed by Madrid. Starting in 1808, when the King of Spain was imprisoned by French forces, many citizens of the Indies decided to organize independent governments. However, in 1814, the absolutist monarchy was restored in Spain, and troops were sent to America to re-establish control of the crown. After long wars, by 1825 the entire mainland of Spain had been reorganized as a group of independent nations, proud of their heroic campaign. Only the Caribbean territories of Cuba and Puerto Rico remained part of Spain until 1898. The wars were costly and unequal, and the new countries faced multiple internal divisions—social, political and territorial— as well as considerable debts to international banks, especially the English one.

Republican era

From approximately 1825 to 1875, Spanish-American life focused on the organization of national governments. Most countries opted for republican (not monarchical) forms of government, but with democracies restricted to peoples accustomed for centuries to the vertical regime of the colony, peoples whose ethnic, cultural and social diversity was difficult to unite in a sense of national identity, at a time when communication through difficult geographical conditions was slow and when both regional leaders (warlords) and ethnic and union communities demanded local autonomy, by arms if necessary. The elite was also deeply divided between those who favored trade and modernization and those who wanted to maintain their aristocratic privileges as landlords. In addition, economies did not compete well with capitalist dynamics, and financial dependence on foreign powers such as France and England, considered the model of civilization to be imitated, deepened. Numerous civil wars, changes of government, fragmentation of territories and the rewriting of national constitutions were the central characteristics of the sociopolitical life of that period, from Mexico to Argentina.

She was an exporter

Around the 1870s, many Latin American countries reorganized their economies around the opportunities that opened up with the European and North American Industrial Revolution, exporting specific products to France and England, and little by little to the United States, such as coffee from Brazil, meat and wool from Argentina, copper from Chile or sugar from Cuba, among others. This marked a period of relative prosperity and political stability, the growth of the middle classes and the progressive development of urban centers. At the same time, almost all textiles, machines, armaments and luxury items were imported at high prices, making local economies dependent on international banks and foreign investors. Latin America had found its “niche” in the international economy, as a supplier of raw materials for the industrial development of what in the 20th century would be called the First World. There was a trend towards the “Europeanization” of cultural production, and part of the Latin American elite became an exporting bourgeoisie with greater entrepreneurial impetus, valuing technical innovation and commercial success. But the productive base was still agrarian and mining, with the colonial scheme of paying for labor only the minimum for the workers' survival, so that most of the town had little purchasing power. Prosperity, however, led to uprisings towards social change, as was the case of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1919) or the Thousand Day War in Colombia (1899-1902), to mention just two examples. At the same time, American influence on the continent was on the rise — and would continue to increase throughout the 20th century. Politically, for example, Cuba and Puerto Rico separated from Spain in 1898 and Panama from Colombia in 1903, to enter the North American sphere of power.

He was a nationalist

With the depression of world capitalism during the 1930s, international demand for agricultural products and raw materials was halved, the exporting bourgeoisie weakened, and the traditional landowning elite regained government control, often with military support through authoritarian governments in most countries. The army thus regains its influential role in Latin American politics, and some nationalist wars reappear, such as those in Bolivia-Paraguay (1933-38); Colombia-Peru (1932-34); Perú-Ecuador (1941-42).

To respond to unemployment and the scarcity of imported products, the strategy of encouraging the development of domestic manufacturing is generalized in a protectionist policy that was called “industrialization by import substitution” (ISI). To this end, governments raised taxes on imports, founded or financed new industries, kept wages low, and reduced taxes on household products. Nationalist propaganda, efforts to regain state control over natural resources, and a sense of pride in one's own in the face of foreign affairs were also encouraged. One of the formulas was populism, a pro-industrial and pro-military alliance that tried to incorporate the interests of businessmen and at the same time satisfy some workers' demands under the magnetism of an authoritarian and charismatic leader, such as Perón in Argentina, Vargas in Brazil, Rojas Pinilla in Colombia and, to a certain extent, Arbens in Guatemala, Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador and Cárdenas in Mexico. In other cases, different political parties included

several emerging groups (Chile), were excluded by force of dictatorships (Venezuela, Nicaragua, Paraguay), or coalitions were generated for armed resistance through guerrillas (Colombia, El Salvador). In some cases, these coalitions managed to seize power and carry out liberal reforms for a time, such as in the 1936 Revolution in Paraguay, the 1944 Revolution in Guatemala, and the 1952 Revolution in Bolivia. However, these types of revolutions would become increasingly difficult within aggressive American politics to ensure the loyalty of the continent in “The Cold War” (1945-1991).

Era of urban expansion

With industrialization and rural violence, cities grew rapidly: between 1950 and 1970, many capitals doubled in size and number of inhabitants, and the Latin American population went from being rural to mostly urban. Economic expansion also benefited from U.S. investment, which, after World War II, became the Hemisphere's main trading partner, while Western Europe had to liquidate its investments in America to pay for the war. Thus, Latin America fully entered Washington's sphere of power during the Cold War, in many cases breaking relations with the Soviet Union and declaring local communist parties illegal — which also coincided with the interests of the economic elite.

Meanwhile, popular support for communist parties grew in many Latin American countries, and armed resistance in the form of guerrillas acquired from the 1950s onwards a radical nationalist dimension: the “liberation” of US imperialism and capitalist exploitation, sometimes with funding from the Soviet Union and China. The lasting victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 was a motivation for the proliferation of “national liberation struggles” throughout Latin America. For popular activists, for the first time it seemed possible for workers and peasants to take control of the State and obtain the right to health, education and a decent standard of living through communist governments. The 1960s were one of revolutionary enthusiasm and “Latin Americanism”. In Chile, a left-wing coalition (the “Popular Unity”) won the elections in 1970, and Salvador Allende, the new president, nationalized the copper mines that were in the hands of foreign companies, raised workers' salaries and froze the prices of basic necessities, among other socialist-type reforms. This was a wake-up call for Washington and the elites, who had tried reform policies in the 1960s with funding from Kennedy's “Alliance for Progress”, but now opted for militaristic repression to protect “national security”, taking advantage of Nixon's hard line. By 1976, the army was in command of almost all Latin American countries, some of them populist (Peru), others of the extreme right (Chile), and repressive policies became common, even in democratically elected governments.

In the economic field, the governments of the 1970s sought to control inflation and favor the expansion of multinational corporations. The economic growth of these years was largely dependent on external indebtedness, which in just ten years increased from 27 thousand to 231 billion dollars. At the beginning of the 1980s, the biggest debtors (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico) declared themselves unable to pay, and the region's total economy declined cumulative by 10%. The lenders prescribed strict economic reform measures: liquidating domestic protectionism, reducing the size of the State (privatizing public services, for example), promoting new exports and, above all, facilitating free markets and foreign investment. These reforms are known as neo-liberalism or “the Washington consensus” (headquarters of the international financial companies that defended these policies). Such political and economic strategies worsened the living conditions of high percentages of the population. This was the breeding ground for desperate activities such as organized crime and terrorism. Drug trafficking, for example, became a transnational, multi-million dollar business that began to offer alternatives for prosperity in the late 1970s. Partly financed by this business, illegal armed groups of the extreme left or right emerged or gained new strength in Colombia (FARC, self-defense groups) and Peru (Sendero Luminoso, MRTA).

Neoliberal era

With the end of the Cold War in 1991, global communism lost credibility and left-wing guerrillas weakened. Dictatorships were also left without their main justification (“National Security”) and without the support of Washington. In addition, foreign investment tended to prefer constitutional stability, and civil protests by middle sectors in favor of human rights also put internal and external pressure on democracy. Thus, almost all Latin American countries, except socialist Cuba, had presidents elected by direct vote in 1991. Economic policy was once again open to trade, as in the years of liberalism at the end of the 19th century, so this era has been called the “neo-liberal era”.

In the following years, almost all of these democracies were strengthened and expanded, with political reforms towards more participatory democracies, as in the constituent assemblies of Colombia and Ecuador in the nineties, or in the electoral opening of Mexico. This democratic expansion allowed the revival of social activism. Organizations of women, of African descent, of homosexuals, of human rights defenders, and many others, highlighted the socio-cultural heterogeneity of the region, disputing the idea that there could be only one answer to popular needs (revolution, socialism). A thermometer of the dynamism of popular

movements was the electoral force of left-wing coalitions that came to the presidency in many countries, in a trend that has been known as “the *Pink Tide*”, because it represents a more moderate ideology than the “red” communism of the 20th century. The political tone is different in each case, but between 2000 and 2009, two lines can be identified: one similar to the populism of the 20th century with nationalist initiatives, authoritarian tactics and acts of accelerated constitutional transformation with negative economic consequences (Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua), and another more centrist with policies that sought to maintain economic growth, favor private investment and gradually improve the distribution of wealth (Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia). Both trends favor trade integration between regions with comparable economies (Caricom, Mercosur), but they distrust free trade agreements between economies that are too unequal (NAFTA, CAFTA).

This shift to the left is related to the mixed results of the neo-liberal reforms. On the one hand, inflation was controlled and trade openness produced respectable rates of economic growth. On the other hand, unemployment did not fall, social investment declined, the overall number of indigent people increased, and the gap between rich and poor deepened: in the nineties, 10% of the richest households received 40% of income. These conditions also contributed to the increase in drug trafficking and emigration. Adding another dimension to the concept of “globalization”, the high number of Latin Americans who have emigrated —with or without a visa— to the United States since the 1970s, to Europe and Asia since the nineties, and from Venezuela to all of Latin America since the 2010s, alters the electoral game in Washington and fosters a continental consciousness. Just to give an economic example of their impact, the Inter-American Development Bank calculated that in 2006 these emigrants sent to their countries a figure higher than that year’s foreign investment in the region. In this way, and adding the dimension of the “orange” or virtual economy, as well as the political impact of social networks, the place of Latin America in the world economy and culture is increasingly fluid and seems to have before it interesting possibilities for autonomy and integration.

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