

## Causes of the Latin American Wars for Independence

A: We are not Europeans; we are not Indians; we are but a mixed species of aborigines and Spaniards. Americans by birth and Europeans by law, we find ourselves engaged in a dual conflict: We are disputing with the natives for titles of ownership, and at the same time we are struggling to maintain ourselves in the country that gave us birth against the opposition of the invaders. Thus our position is most extraordinary and complicated.

-Simon Bolívar, *An Address of Bolívar at the Congress of Angostura*, 2/15/1819

B: Spanish restrictions on travel and commerce sealed America off from the rest of the world [limiting] our basic personal and property rights. ... We in America are perhaps the first to be forced by our own government to sell our products at artificially low prices and buy what we need at artificially high prices. This is the result of the Spanish commercial monopoly system, combined with taxes and official fees. And because the official monopoly on transatlantic trade would naturally lead us to produce more in America, the government has been careful to place limitations on what we can legally produce. ... Spain could have left us the administration of our own affairs, one would think. Americanos, being those most concerned by affairs of America, logically ought to fill the public offices of their own country for the benefit of all concerned. But that has been far from the case.

-Juan Pablo Viscardo (a Creole born in Peru), *An Open letter to America*, published in 1801

1. How are documents A and B similar in their interpretation of the causes of the Latin American Wars for Independence?
2. How are documents A and B different in their interpretation of the causes of the Latin American Wars for Independence?
3. Although both documents reference Spanish rule in the Americas, can either or both interpretations explain Brazil's revolt against Portugal? Why or why not?
4. In reference to either document A or B, what is the document's value and limitation as historical evidence?