

ensuring minority representation, unifying divergent political interests into a few parties, and providing proportional representation to a wide variety of political positions. Thomas Hare developed a system of proportional representation called the single transferable vote, which is widely viewed to be the fairest, in that every individual's vote will count toward the electoral outcome. One puzzle that appears to outrun the ability of political scientists to illuminate, however, is why individuals vote at all. The irony of representation is that it allows the expansion of democracies over such large numbers that the likelihood of any single individual's vote being the tie-breaker is so infinitesimal that there seems to be no instrumental reason to vote. With or without large voter turnouts, however, the representative structure continues to confer and confirm the legitimacy of most modern governments.

See also *Democracy; Political Science*.

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REPRODUCTION. See **Biology**.

REPUBLICANISM.

This entry includes two subentries:

Latin America
Republic

LATIN AMERICA

Republicanism advocates a government headed by commoners rather than a hereditary monarchy. It is similar to democracy in that it favors a representative form of government that receives its legitimacy from the people it rules, but democracy in theory also champions political, social, and economic equality. All of the Latin American countries (as well as the United States) are established as republics, while in the Caribbean some former colonies retain the British and Dutch monarchs as their heads of state. Republicanism no longer has the rhetorical appeal that it did two centuries ago, but related key constitutional

issues relevant to the concept of republicanism, including the division of governmental power, political participation, distribution of wealth, and extension of civil and social rights, continue to be important.

During the colonial period, hereditary absolute monarchies in Europe ruled over Latin America. In the nineteenth century, growing resentment at centralized control designed to benefit Europe and leave people in the colonies with little economic or political power led many patriots in Latin America to reject monarchy in favor of a republican system. Republican rhetoric was sometimes more of an opportunistic positioning to remove the entrenched Habsburg and Bourbon rule, which brought little benefit to the colonies, rather than serious commitment to the ideology itself. Conservative leaders, particularly those associated with the Catholic Church and the military, believed that a strongly centralized system was necessary to retain order in the newly founded independent republics. Some conservatives advocated the retention of a monarchy as a way to prevent social disintegration.

Republicanism in Latin America is often, though somewhat mistakenly, associated with movements for independence from Iberian colonial control during the early nineteenth century. Political independence brought few significant changes to the region's social, economic, and cultural structures. Often the new governments were as authoritarian as, if not more so than, the absolute monarchies they replaced. One concrete republican change that did come with independence was the abolition of titles of nobility and *fueros* (privileges extended to members of the church and military). But while a flourishing of liberal ideals brought an end to formal racial discrimination, it did not necessarily end the institution of slavery nor result in an extension of rights to women, Indians, or peasants.

Although women were active participants in the struggles for independence, they still remained legally subjugated to male control. They could not vote or hold public office and could not work or enter into legal contracts without a husband's or father's approval. Without the crown's paternalistic protection, Indians found themselves to be worse off under new republican regimes as creole elites preyed on their communal landholdings, further narrowing the base of landholders. Republicanism witnessed the continued dominance of elite, aristocratic values—with few economic or social advances for subalterns. This resulted in a long struggle by Africans, Indians, women, and other marginalized populations for full and equal participation in affairs of the new republics.

The history of Haiti, Mexico, and Brazil underscores the difference between independence and republicanism in Latin America. In Haiti, Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe briefly set themselves up as monarchs after gaining independence from France. In Mexico, Agustín de Iturbide was a royal general who combined forces with creole leaders in a conservative declaration of independence to free Mexico from a liberal-controlled Spanish government. For a brief period of time after independence in 1821, Iturbide ruled Mexico as an emperor (Agustín I) in a constitutional monarchy; it was not

until 1824 that Mexico became a republic. In the 1860s, Mexico once again returned to a monarchy when the French imposed archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Habsburg as king after occupying the country. In 1867, Mexico once again became a republic after the liberal leader Benito Juárez defeated the French occupying forces and executed Maximilian.

The gap between independence and republicanism is even more dramatic in the case of Brazil. In 1808, Napoleon's occupation of Portugal had driven King João VI's royal court from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. In 1821, João returned to Lisbon, leaving his son Dom Pedro as regent of Brazil. When Portugal attempted to curtail Brazilian autonomy, Pedro refused to comply. In his famous September 1822 *fico*, he declared that he would stay in Brazil—bringing a bloodless independence to the colony. Nevertheless, under Pedro I and his successor Pedro II Brazil remained a monarchy, although they ruled in a rather enlightened manner. In 1889, the military overthrew the monarchy, finally bringing a republican form of government to Brazil.

According to Thomas Millington, the persistence of monarchic rule in Brazil undermined a commitment to republicanism in Latin America. Specifically, he argues that Simón Bolívar's refusal to challenge the monarchy in Brazil, something that was within his reach, translated into a wider failure to challenge European influences in the New World—including authoritarianism and elitism. This allowed Bolívar to replicate authoritarian aspects of the Brazilian system, including the goals of order and progress, in the Spanish-American republics. In a sense, Millington contends, the new republics lacked a functioning civil society that provided the consensus necessary for a functioning republican system. Ironically, the Brazilian monarchy implemented a more liberal and "enlightened" system than that existing in the Spanish republics.

Political historians have traditionally portrayed the emergence of republican ideologies at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries as a revolution in political culture. Popular participation in government replaced a hereditary monarchy allied with clergy and military interests. Social historians, however, have demonstrated just how exclusive citizenship rights were, as creole elites consolidated economic and political power in their hands. Economically, independence represented a transfer of wealth from peninsular to creole elites. Politically, the republican constitutions established legal equality but provided for little change in power relations. Without a broadening of suffrage, a very small elite continued to rule over the rest of the population. Even with representative government, there was not more participation in power. Ideologically, republicanism drew on positivist ideologies with its emphasis on liberty, order, and progress. The dissolution of central authority with the elimination of the European crown left nothing in its place, leading to struggles to determine who had the right to rule.

Deep social, economic, and geographic divisions also led to political instability following independence. Large and diverse countries divided physically, culturally, ethnically, and

linguistically, in which people who lived in one area had little to do with those in another area, led to relatively small groups of powerful men using force to assert their will. Small, individual factions with differences in values and ideals fought for control, resulting in rapid changes in power and the appearance of extreme political instability. Stable centralized governments did not emerge until perceived national interests surmounted the economic interests of regional leaders.

Peter Guardino, Mark Thurner, Charles Walker, and others have stressed the importance of examining these transitions to republican forms of government from a peasant perspective. Walker, for example, examines the critical and often unacknowledged role the indigenous peasantry played in battles for independence. Far from employing mindless mob actions, these dissidents engaged in thoughtful political and legal actions and cultivated coalitions with sympathetic outsiders. Rather than being passive or disengaged, Indians were active agents who “imagined” an alternative vision of the nation that conflicted with that of the dominant culture. Walker criticizes historians who “have far too often accepted contemporary views that deemed Indians incapable of political consciousness and indifferent to the battles over the state.” Rather, he sees indigenous peoples as “key to understanding the turbulent transition from colony to republic” (p. 2).

While voicing republican rhetoric, creole elites feared a militant and mobilized indigenous population. Walker argues that despite significant indigenous participation in independence movements, elites intentionally denied them citizenship rights, with the result that republican rule did little to improve their lot in life. Guardino challenges histories of Mexico’s transition to a republican government told from the point of view of the palace, instead stressing the critical role peasants played in this process. Historians are also gaining an increasing appreciation for the previously understudied role that subalterns played in shaping emerging state structures, a role that was significant despite their marginalization within elite conceptualizations of those state structures.

As these examples illustrate, although theoretically informed by liberal ideologies that favored equality under the law, Latin American republicanism did not lead to universal citizenship by any means. Despite variations in constitutions throughout the hemisphere, almost all created exclusionary systems that limited political participation based on literacy, property, gender, and sometimes religious beliefs. Even though property and religious restrictions were generally relaxed during the nineteenth century, it was not until well into the twentieth century that some countries extended suffrage to women and Indians (who had generally been targeted with literacy restrictions). Thurner plays off this imagery in his book *From Two Republics to One Divided*. Colonial administration deliberately divided society into two “republics”: one for Spaniards and another for Indians. Creole elites terminated this bipartite division in the independent republics, but the goal was to abolish separate ethnic identities through assimilation of Indians into a mestizo culture rather than respecting or preserving indigenous peoples’ unique traditions. As Thurner notes, these colonial divisions “were more fictional and juridical than they were actual,” but

“these imagined constructs had real historical consequences” (p. 6). They resulted in wide gaps between the liberal ideals of universal citizenship and the cold reality of highly exclusionary republican governments.

The history of Latin America since independence can be written as a story of subalterns fighting for full citizenship rights that republicanism had promised but never delivered. Women, Africans, Indians, peasants, and others subverted the language of elite rhetoric in order to demand popular sovereignty, political rights, and active citizenship so that they would also have a say in how the government was structured. Theoretically, elections form the base of a republic, as they express the will of the populace. The gap between theory and reality reveals the failure of republican systems in Latin America, but it is a failure slowly being overturned thanks to the efforts of those originally excluded from the political system. Ongoing political activism on the part of Indians, blacks, women, and the poor demonstrates that the republican ideal is still being realized for many.

See also Anticolonialism: Latin America; Authoritarianism: Latin America; Pluralism; Populism: Latin America.

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REPUBLIC

The term *republic* derives from the Latin phrase *res publica* (“matter” or “thing of the people”). Most generally, the word refers to any political regime in which no king or hereditary dynasty rules over subjects in a state of submission or servility. A republic is thus populated by “citizens” who enjoy some manner of political and legal rights to govern themselves through collective political mechanisms and processes. Because citizens are self-governing, liberty is associated with and regarded as emerging from republican regimes. Yet republicanism must also be distinguished from democracy: the idea of a republic entails the imposition of fixed and strict limits on the power of the people. Consequently, a republic involves a constitutional system that provides checks and balances or a mixture of authorizing agents. Stated simply, the liberty of the citizens must be weighed against the maintenance of a common public good that is best identified by leaders who are insulated from the unchecked passions of the people.

Liberal democracies, also known as constitutional democracies, are built on the principles of free and fair elections, a competitive political process and universal suffrage. Liberal democracies can take on the form of constitution republics, such as France, India, Germany, Italy and the United States, or a constitutional monarchy such as Japan, Spain or the U.K. The U.S. political system today is primarily a two-party system, dominated by Democrats and Republicans. The country has been a two-party system for more than a century, although independents such as Ralph Nader and Ross Perot have sought to challenge the two-party system in recent years.