

CHAPTER
25
SECTION 4

Note Taking Study Guide

ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Focus Question: How did Latin American nations struggle for stability, and how did industrialized nations affect them?

A. As you read this section, complete the chart below to identify multiple causes of instability in Latin America. Then, give an example of how each cause affected Mexico.

Instability in Latin America	
Causes	Mexican Example

B. As you read "The Economics of Dependence" and "The Influence of the United States," complete the chart below to identify effects of foreign influence on Latin America.



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Section Summary
ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Many factors undermined democracy in the newly independent nations of Latin America. Constitutions in these nations guaranteed equality before the law, but inequalities remained. With no tradition of unity, **regionalism** also weakened the new nations. Local strongmen, called *caudillos*, assembled private armies to resist the central government. Power remained in the hands of a privileged few. Mexico is an example of the challenges faced by many Latin American nations. Large landowners, army leaders, and the Catholic Church dominated Mexican politics. The ruling elite was divided between conservatives and liberals. Conservatives defended the traditional social order. Liberals saw themselves as enlightened supporters of progress. Bitter battles between these two groups led to revolts and the rise of dictators. When **Benito Juárez** and other liberals gained power, they began an era of reform known as **La Reforma**. Juárez offered hope to the oppressed people of Mexico. After Juárez died, however, General Porfirio Díaz ruled as a harsh dictator. Many Indians and mestizos fell into **peonage** to their employers.

Under colonial rule, Latin America was economically dependent on Spain and Portugal, which had prevented the colonies from developing their own economies. After independence, the new Latin American republics did adopt free trade, but Britain and the United States replaced Spain as Latin America's chief trading partners.

As nations like Mexico tried to build stable governments, the United States expanded across North America. To discourage any new European colonization of the Americas, the United States issued the **Monroe Doctrine**. The United States then issued a series of policies claiming "international police power" in the Western Hemisphere. Under these policies, U.S. companies continued to invest in the countries of Latin America. To protect these investments, the United States sent troops to many of these countries, which made the United States a target of increasing resentment and rebellion. When the United States built the **Panama Canal** across Central America, it was an engineering marvel that boosted trade and shipping worldwide. To people in Latin America, however, the canal was another example of "Yankee imperialism."

Review Questions

1. What limited democracy in the independent nations of Latin America?

2. Why did the new Latin American republics remain economically dependent after independence?

Which Mexican leader offered hope to the oppressed people of Mexico?

READING CHECK

What does the word *enlightened* mean in the underlined sentence? Break the word into its word parts. Circle the root word, or the word part without the prefix and suffixes. Use the meaning of the root word to help you figure out what *enlightened* means.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

Identify what caused the United States to issue the Monroe Doctrine and what its effects were on Latin America.

READING SKILL
