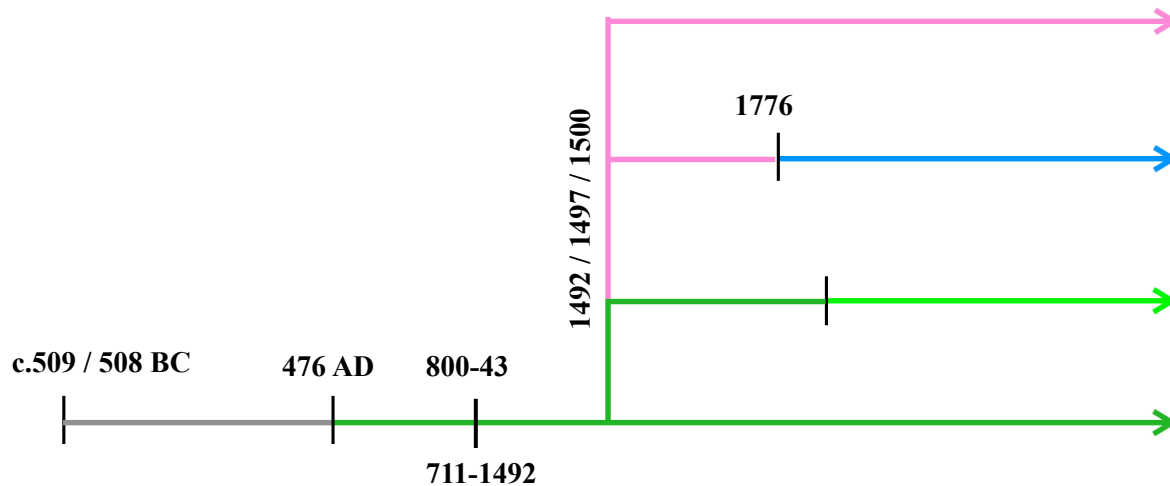


## E. Greco-Roman Roots

1. The Europe of *nations* that impelled globalization was exclusively governed according to the archaic norm of monarchy. Tribal kingdoms, such as that of the Franks, had grown into national monarchies, frequently at war with one another.
2. How then did Western civilization become the champion of “democracy” and constitutional government in the modern world?
3. The short answer is: in **1776**, the United States created a precedent, which was then adopted to some extent in France and elsewhere, and which became the new normal in the Western world.
4. The full answer, however, requires knowing that Western Civilization is rooted in Greek and Roman culture, and that modern Western government is deeply indebted to both Greece and Rome.
5. As for Greece, it is the ancient city-state of Athens in particular that deserves the credit for originating the concept of *democracy*, if we understand democracy to be a form of government in which all citizens participate and in which laws are determined by majority vote.
6. Athenian Democracy was an innovation of a lawgiver named Cleisthenes **c.508 BC**, whose goal was to help Athens avoid the pitfalls associated with monarchy that are to be found wherever that system is relied on, including the tyranny of kings and their supporting caste (known as an aristocracy).
7. Athenian Democracy became an example of how a society can negotiate and debate its social contract in an open, inclusive way.
8. Rome, for its part, contributed the powerful, related idea, that governments—even popular governments—must be limited by a set of fundamental laws (a *constitution*) in order to even more effectively avoid tyranny.
9. The Roman Republic was founded **c.509 BC** as a system of government with two elected officials called “consuls,” who functioned as co-presidents for one year at a time, and who were responsible for upholding the constitution, which came to be known as the *Laws of the Twelve Tables*.
10. A constitutional system is the most important mechanism for preventing democracy from devolving into mob rule, as sadly happened to Athens. Thus Rome’s model was very important to America’s founding fathers and later political leaders who often designated their governments as *republics*, even though “democracy” has become the watchword of modern politics.
11. Armed with the context of America’s modern example and of the ancient precedents of Greece and Rome, we are ready to explore the unique story of Mexico (and the wider Ibersphere) and Canada (and the wider Anglosphere).



## F. Mexico and the Bolivarian Ibersphere

1. Following the discovery of the Americas by Columbus (for Spain) and Cabral (for Portugal), further exploration continued for decades, with the main goal being to get *around* America and continue on to Asia, until it was clear that there were actually some civilizations in Mexico (the Aztecs and Mayans) and Peru (the Incas).
2. When it was learned that these empires possessed significant amounts of gold and silver, Spanish adventurers known as “conquistadors”—fresh from the final triumph of the Reconquista—set out to conquer them and plunder their resources.
3. The Aztec empire of Mexico became the target of a conquistador named Hernan Cortes, who from 1519-1521 recruited other native tribes and took advantage of his more advanced weaponry and tactics to defeat and enslave the Aztecs.
4. The same pattern played out in South America, and in most cases, the tribal people of the various regions were too primitive to be able to resist the tide of European colonization.
5. For nearly three hundred years, the colonial Ibersphere was a society patterned after Europe, with military rulers owning the land, which a large caste of poor peasants worked for them, and with the added element of slaves imported from Africa.
6. The Catholic priests of Spain and Portugal tried to make conditions more humane for peasants and slaves, but they were never able to actually dictate the social contract.
7. Nor were they able to help make a new social contract when the Ibersphere became independent from Iberia during the Napoleonic period. The military rulers took advantage of the fact that Napoleon had conquered Iberia to declare and fight for their independence in the **Iberian-American Wars of Independence (1808-33)**.
8. In Mexico, the military commander who led the charge for independence and took over the government was Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. In Venezuela, it was a general called Simon Bolivar. In Brazil, it was Prince Pedro I.

9. The culture that arose was dubbed “Bolivarianismo” by one of the later leaders of Venezuela. It is evidently named after Simon Bolivar. The motto of that culture was perfectly stated by Prince Pedro I in his *Cry of Ipiranga*: “Independence or death!”
10. What the *Cry of Ipiranga* reveals, unfortunately, is that unlike the American Revolution, where the motto was “Give me *liberty*, or give me death!” the **Iberian-American Wars of Independence (1808-33)** did not have a foundation of liberty as the core value.
11. Independence itself has always been the main priority of this cultural group, with some countries like Cuba and Venezuela especially independent, and others like Mexico and Panama accepting closer relations to the United States.
12. For Mexico, relating to the United States has always been the main issue, especially since Texas broke away from Mexico, leading to the **Mexican-American War (1846-8)**, in which the United States took over all the land from Texas to California.
13. Mexico had lagged behind America in terms of freedom and prosperity since becoming independent. It only experienced a genuine revolution about a hundred years ago. The **Mexican Revolution (1910-20)** finally produced a relatively democratic system, but it has taken nearly a century for that system to truly provide the kind of political freedom that Americans have known from the start.
14. Mexico, like the rest of Iberosphere, was so focused on its independence from the rest of the world, that it played only a very minor role in the world wars.
15. Unfortunately, in modern times, the focus of *Bolivarianismo* has mainly been to avoid become too connected to America—the self appointed world police power, but ever since the fall of communism, the relationship between America and the Bolivarian Iberosphere has become gradually smoother. The future should generally be one in which these two cultural blocks become more closely linked.

