

## La entrevista de Morelos e Hidalgo (official second grade reading)

Según cuentan las gentes, un día se le presentó Morelos a Hidalgo y le dijo:

-Señor, quiero ser capellán del ejército insurgentes.

Hidalgo le replicó: -¿Entonces abandona su curato, padre?

-Si, señor, ya lo he abandonado.

-¿Está decidido a unirse a nuestra causa, no obstante los peligros que va a correr?

-Mi decisión es antigua. Vine a Valladolid para cerciorarme del movimiento y también para ver una vez más, con mis propios ojos, las injusticias que sufre el pueblo. Por todo esto estoy dispuesto a unirme a los que luchan por la patria.

Entonces el cura Hidalgo, tendiéndole los brazos le dijo: -Mejor que capellán, será usted general en nuestros ejércitos.

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Y “and” changes to *e* before words that begin with the *i* sound, to avoid running the two “ee” sounds together in speech.

Colloquially, several words are used to loosely mean “priest”. *Cura*, literally “parish priest”; *padre* (“father”); and *sacerdote* (dictionary definition of “priest”).

Pedantically, *la gente* is a singular collective noun meaning “people”. Colloquially, however, it is often used in the plural, even by educated people. Its meaning remains the same.

This reading also illustrates how quotes are typically handled in Spanish writing. No quotation marks; the quotes are just identified by a dash.

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla was a priest in the village of Dolores, Guanajuato, who was the first “*insurgente*” of Mexico. [*Insurgente* as used in Mexico means something like “independence fighter”]; one of Mexico City’s major thoroughfares is *Insurgentes*. At dawn on September 16, 1810, Hidalgo issued his famous “*grito de Dolores*” [call of Dolores] from his church, and ignited the independence wars which finally resulted in independence from Spain in 1821. For Hidalgo, however, the story didn’t have a happy ending. His “army” was in fact little more than a mob, and was guilty of numerous atrocities. In 1811, Hidalgo was captured, defrocked, and executed. On the anniversary of this date every year, the President of Mexico reenacts the “grito” from the balcony of the presidential palace in front of a crowd of tens of thousands.

Jose María Morelos y Pavón, revolutionary priest who assumed leadership of the Mexican independence movement after Miguel Hidalgo’s 1810 rebellion and subsequent execution. Morelos has both a state and a major city (Morelia) named after him. There is, of course, no historical record of any such meeting between the two men.

To learn more about this fascinating period in Mexican history, you might want to read a good history of Mexico. We recommend several on our website.