World Regional Geography

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Lesson 6

MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC QUALITIES

- Physiography is dominated by the Andes Mountains and the Amazon Basin.
- Population is concentrated along the periphery.
- Cultural pluralism exists in most countries and is expressed regionally.
- Regional economic interaction has been minimal in the past.

SOUTH AMERICA: CONTINENT OF EXTREMES

- Precipitation
- Temperature
- Vegetation
- Elevation
- Income
- Population

SOUTH AMERICA

PLATE TECTONICS

Precipitation

AVERAGE ANNUAL PRECIPITATION OF THE WORLD

- 0-10
- 10-20
- 20-25
- 25-30
- 30-40
- 40-50
- 50-60
- 60-70
- 70-80
- 80-90
- 90-100

2000 Miles
3000 Kilometers

**TEMPERATURE**
- It is over 7,000 km (4,400 miles) long, 500 km (300 miles) wide in some parts and of an average height of about 4,000 m (13,000 feet).
- Highest mountain range outside Asia, with the highest peak, Aconcagua, rising to 6,962 m (22,841 feet) above sea level.

**VEGETATION**
- South America has a shoreline length of 144,966.8 miles including beaches, mangrove swamps, and rocky cliffs.

**ELEVATION**
- South America has a shoreline length of 144,966.8 miles including beaches, mangrove swamps, and rocky cliffs.

**INCOME**
- Brazil (example)
  - Largest income gap in the realm
  - Wealthiest 10% of the population own 2/3 of the land and control over 50% of the country’s wealth

**POPULATION**
- A Hollow Continent
  - Why?
  - Physiographic Barriers
  - Non-complementary Economies
  - Lack of Developed Infrastructure
  - Individual Countries Oriented Towards Europe and the US—not towards each other
  - 78% - Urbanized Continent-wide in South America

**THE INCA EMPIRE**
- Culture Heart-Intermontane Basin Around Cuzco (1200-1535 A.D.)
- Altiplanos were key to settlement patterns.
- 20 million subjects at its zenith.
- Transportation networks and integration efforts were most impressive.
- A Highly Centralized State
- Pachacuti-Inca Yupanqui - 8th ruler of the Inca Empire
The Inca road system covered approximately 22,530 km (14,000 mi) and provided access to over three million km² of territory.
The Huaorani

The Huaorani people are a people shrouded in mystery. They speak a language unrelated to any other (in fact it has yet to be even classified). Additionally, their pottery designs do not resemble those of their past or present neighbors. It is only known through their own folklore that they migrated from “down river” a long time ago, “fleeing the cannibals.”

They revere the jaguar and call themselves, Huaorani which means “human beings” or “the people,” and refer to everyone else as cowode or “non-humans.” Up until four decades ago the Huaorani still used stone axes and maintained a thoroughly traditional hunter and gather lifestyle in their extremely isolated and monkey-rich rainforest haven.

However, in the 1950’s all of this changed. First the missionaries came. Then concomitant with the global demand for oil came the demand to find new oil reserves, and as fate has it the world’s 1,200 Huaorani live right on top of one of Ecuador’s biggest oil deposits. Since this discovery, the Huaorani have been forced to deal with the encroachment of oil companies and cowode on the land they have called home for at least a millennium.

However, like indigenous people all over the world who learn that they have natural resources other nations want, they are forced by those who make the rules to adapt as best they can to changing realities. One Huaorani clan, the Tagaeri, has moved deeper in the forest to shun all contact with the outside world. Other Huaorani communities have adopted ecotourism as a way to maintain control over their land, culture and resources.

CULTURE SPHERES

- Tropical-plantation
- Resembles Middle America’s Rimland
- Locations, soils, & tropical climates favor plantation crops, especially sugar.
- Initially relied on African slave labor
The most "Latin" part of South America includes the Pampas - temperate grasslands. Economically most advanced, transportation networks and quality of life are excellent.

Correlates with the former Inca Empire. Feudal socioeconomic structure persists, and includes some of South America’s poorest areas. Subsistence agriculture must contend with difficult environmental challenges.


Characteristics are difficult to classify. Sparsely populated. Isolation and lack of change - notable features. Development of Amazonia may prompt significant changes.

**BARRIERS TO INTEGRATION**
- A HOLLOW CONTINENT
- WHY?
- PHYSIOGRAPHIC BARRIERS
- NON-COMPLEMENTARY ECONOMIES
- LACK OF DEVELOPED INFRASTRUCTURE
- INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES ORIENTED TOWARDS EUROPE AND THE US – NOT TOWARDS EACH OTHER

**POLITICAL MAP**
**URBANIZATION**
- The movement to and clustering of people in towns and cities
- The percentage of a country’s population living in cities
- 78% - Continent-wide in South America
- South America’s increase based on rate of “natural increase” and internal migration

**GLOBAL URBANIZATION**
![Graph showing urban population as a percentage of total population in different areas of the world, 1950-2000](image)

**REGIONS OF THE REALM**
- Caribbean North: Cuba, Curaçao, Haiti, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands
- Andean West: Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia
- Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay
- Brazil

**BRAZIL**
- South America’s Giant
- World rankings:
  - Population size - 5th
  - Territory - 5th
  - Economy - 8th
  - Industrial base - 8th

**BRAZIL**
- Contains half the continent’s land and people
- A federal republic of 26 states
- Ethnic diversity - mixture of European, African, and Amerindian peoples
- Portuguese - speaking & Roman Catholic adherents
- Substantial mineral resources: iron, aluminum ore, manganese, oil, and gas

**A Two Class System?**
- GNP per capita - $4,630
- Largest income gap in the realm
- Wealthiest 10% of the population...
  - own 2/3 of the land
  - control over 50% of the country’s wealth
- Poverty has increased by 50% since 1980
BRAZIL

- GREAT CITIES
  - RIO DE JANEIRO - Cultural Focus
  - SAO PAULO - Industrial
  - BRASILIA - A “Forward Capital”
- Developing the Amazon
  - “Growth Pole” Concept
  - Environmental Concerns

FORWARD CAPITAL

- Capital City Positioned in a Contested or Potentially Contested Territory
- Usually near an International Border
- Confirms the State’s Determination to Maintain Its Presence in the Territory Under Contention
  - ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA
  - ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN
  - BRASILIA, BRAZIL (Internal Frontier - “Growth Pole Concept”)

GROWTH POLE THEORY

- Aims to Promote Growth in the Hinterlands
- Augmented by Investment Support in an Attempt to Spread Economic Activities and Benefits
  - Create Jobs in Depressed Areas
  - Reduce Uneven Concentrations of Wealth
  - Decentralize Industry
  - Sets off “Ripples” of Development

THE NORTH (CARIBBEAN SOUTH AMERICA)

- VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA, GUYANA, SURINAME, FRENCH GUIANA
- Regional Character: Coastal locations, early European plantation development, forced migration of black laborers
- VENEZUELA - 25.2 million people
  - Oil from Lake Maracaibo is chief resource
  - CARACAS & VALENCIA - Key cities

CARIBBEAN SOUTH AMERICA

- COLOMBIA - 41.6 million people
  - COFFEE, OIL & COAL - Major exports
  - COCAINE - Leading economic activity
  - Torn by Internal Violence
  - BOGOTA & MEDELLIN - Key cities
- THE GUIANAS (FRENCH GUIANA, GUYANA, SURINAME) - Populations < 1.5 million
  - Ethnically diverse
  - Poverty-stricken
  - Face environmental crisis

THE NORTH (CARIBBEAN SOUTH AMERICA)

- POPULATION
  - Under 250,000
  - 250,000 - 500,000
  - 500,000 - 1,000,000
  - 1,000,000 - 2,000,000
  - Over 2,000,000
- Capital cities and highlights

THE NORTH (CARIBBEAN SOUTH AMERICA)
THE WEST
(ANDEAN SOUTH AMERICA)

- PERU, ECUADOR, BOLIVIA
- REGIONAL CHARACTER: AMERICAN POPULATIONS, SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURE, MOUNTAINOUS ENVIRONMENTS, POVERTY
- PERU - 28.3 MILLION PEOPLE
  - LIMA IS ITS PRIMATE CITY
  - ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES - FISHING, IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE, SUGAR, COTTON, RICE, FRUIT, OIL, MINERALS (AN EMERGING ECONOMY!)

- ECUADOR - 13.1 MILLION PEOPLE
  - MAIN EXPORTS: OIL, COFFEE, CACAO, BANANAS
  - GUAYAQUIL - LARGEST CITY AND COMMERCIAL CENTER
  - QUITO - CAPITAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

- BOLIVIA - 8.6 MILLION PEOPLE (DISPERSED)
  - LANDLOCKED
  - MAIN EXPORTS: TIN AND ZINC

THE SOUTH
(MID-LATITUDE SOUTH AMERICA)

- THE SOUTHERN CONE: ARGENTINA, CHILE, PARAGUAY, URUGUAY
- HEART OF EUROPEAN-COMMERCIAL CULTURE SPHERE

- ARGENTINA - 37.8 MILLION PEOPLE
  - 90% URBANIZED, PERIPHERAL
  - BUENOS AIRES (12.9 MILLION) - A CLASSIC PRIMATE CITY
  - EXPORTS: CEREALS, MEATS, VEGETABLE OILS

- URUGUAY - 3.3 MILLION
  - MONTEVIDEO - CLASSIC PRIMATE CITY
  - MOST EUROPEAN OF SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES
  - EXPORTS: HIDES, MEATS, TEXTILES

- PARAGUAY - 5.8 MILLION
  - 95% MESTIZO
  - LANDLOCKED LOCATION
  - CHILE - AN “ELONGATED STATE”
  - EXPORTS: COPPER AND NITRATES
CULTURAL ASSESSMENT

BRAZIL – Children are treated affectionately, and kissing a child is preceded by inhaling (smelling).
- The attitude of the Father may be the most significant factor in breastfeeding.
- The finger sign for OK in the U.S. is a crude sexual invitation in Brazil.

CHILE – Many believe that a woman should have as many children as God gives her.

COLOMBIA – Illness may be caused by punishment from God for transgressions.
- The Father usually determines whether a pregnancy is terminated or not.

PARAGUAY – Close friends of both sexes may walk arm-in-arm.