



Spanish-Speaking South America

Main Ideas

- Native peoples and settlers from Spain have shaped the culture of South America.
- Regional economic cooperation will help raise people's standards of living.

Places & Terms

Inca **Mercosur**
Quechua

CONNECT TO THE ISSUES

INCOME GAP The countries of South America are trying to find ways to narrow the gap between rich and poor.

A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE In the early 1500s, the Inca empire was at the height of its glory. Then Spanish soldiers under the command of Francisco Pizarro invaded the South American empire. The Spanish attacked the Inca army, killed many of its warriors, and took the emperor prisoner. The Spaniards held him for ransom. Although the Inca filled a room with silver and gold to win his release, the Spanish executed the emperor. This broke the spirit of the Inca nation, already weakened by civil war, and the Spanish conquered the rest of the empire. As in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, the Spanish conquest would have a deep effect on the history and culture of South America.

Conquest and the End of Spanish Rule

South America is divided into two main regions, based in part on whether the people speak Spanish or Portuguese. In this section, you will learn about Spanish-speaking South America. This region is composed of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Suriname is a Dutch-speaking country. French Guiana is a part of France.

THE INCA One of the great civilizations of the Americas arose in the rugged Andes Mountains of Peru. This civilization was created by the **Inca**—descendants of people who came across a land bridge from Siberia to Alaska and eventually crossed the Isthmus of Panama into South America. When they reached the west coast of South America,

South America after the Spanish Conquest

1532–1533

Francisco Pizarro invades and conquers the Inca empire in Peru.

Image not available for use on this CD-ROM. Please refer to the image in the textbook.

1608

Jesuit state of Paraguay is established.

1739

Spanish establish viceroyalty of New Granada, encompassing all territory between Orinoco and Amazon rivers.



1550

This **ceremonial goblet** from Cuzco shows a jaguar, sacred to the Inca.

1647

Santiago, Chile, is destroyed by an earthquake.

they found the Andes Mountains, which rise to heights of more than 20,000 feet in some places. In spite of the harsh terrain, the Inca were able to build an advanced civilization.

They built their empire on the foundation of earlier cultures. From their capital at Cuzco in Peru, the Inca extended their power. They brought other tribes under their control and built a great empire.

By 1500, the Inca empire extended 2,500 miles along the west coast of South America. It ran from present-day Ecuador in the north to Argentina in the south. A road system that was about 20,000 miles long crossed mountains and deserts to link the empire. ◀A

THE SPANISH CONQUEST As you read earlier, Pizarro and his soldiers invaded and conquered the Inca empire. The Spanish were primarily interested in claiming the gold and silver of the Inca.

The Spanish settlers forced the natives to work in mines and on farms and ranches. The Spanish landlords received the rights to the labor of the natives from officials in Spain, who passed laws to protect the Indians. But in spite of the laws, many of the settlers abused the natives or worked them to death.

The presence of the Spanish had an important geographic effect on the Inca, who were forced to move from their villages to large plantations. This disrupted and destroyed Inca families and communities, and made the region difficult to govern even into the 20th century. ◀B

The Spanish forced their own language and religion on the conquered peoples. The **Quechua** (KEHCH•wuh) language of the Inca was overshadowed by Spanish as the settlers became the dominant culture. Likewise, the Inca religion of the native peoples was replaced by the Catholic religion of the conquerors as the official religion. Spanish rule in the region continued for almost 300 years. But one lasting legacy of the Inca is that millions of native peoples still speak Quechua.

INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS Inspired by the American Revolution (1776) and the French Revolution (1789), the countries of South America sought their independence from Spain in the first half of the 19th century. Two great leaders of independence movements in the region in the first half of the 19th century were Simón Bolívar and José

Geographic Thinking

Seeing Patterns

A How might a road system have helped to hold the Inca empire together?

CONNECT TO THE ISSUES
DEMOCRACY

B What effect might the disruption of Inca life have had on the development of democracy in the region?

1777
Spain and Portugal resolve disputes about colonies in South America.

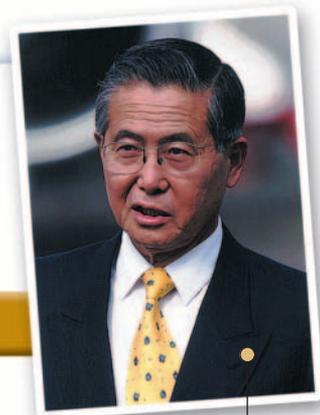
1820s
Simón Bolívar leads many countries of South America in their fight for independence from Spain.

1946
Juan Perón is elected president of Argentina.

1780
Peruvian Indians rebel against Spain.

1873
Peace treaty fixes frontier between Argentina and Chile along the ridge of the Andes.

2000
Alberto Fujimori resigns as president of Peru.



Connect TO THE Issues

DEMOCRACY

Coup in Chile

The socialist Salvador Allende became president of Chile in 1970 in a democratic election. However, his victory displeased the wealthy and powerful in Chile.

In 1973, a group of military officers overthrew Allende's democratically elected government. The coup was led by General Augusto Pinochet, who succeeded Allende in 1973. Under Pinochet's 17-year rule, thousands of people are believed to have been killed by the military government. A democratically elected government succeeded Pinochet in 1990.

de San Martín. Bolívar helped to liberate the countries of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia. José de San Martín helped to free the countries of Argentina, Chile, and Peru from Spanish rule.

Argentina and Chile were the first to achieve independence because they were the farthest from Lima, the center of Spanish control. However, once independence was achieved, geography contributed to the failure of various countries to unify or work together for common goals. The continent has tended to be populated around its edges, with mountains and rain forests limiting interaction. This has contributed to underdevelopment and political instability. 

GOVERNMENT BY THE FEW Oligarchy (government by the few) and military rule have characterized the governments of many of the countries of South America since they won their independence from Spain. In fact, before his death in 1830, Simón Bolívar had become discouraged about the future of democracy in Latin America.

Throughout South America, authoritarian rule—which stresses obedience to authority over individual freedom—delayed the development of democracy. Although many South American nations gained freedom in the 1800s, hundreds of years of colonialism had their effects. Strong militaries, underdeveloped economies, and social class divisions still exist in the region today.

CONNECT TO THE ISSUES

DEMOCRACY
 How might better interaction and communication affect the development of democracy?

A Cultural Mosaic

South America is one of the most culturally complex regions in the world, due in part to the region's isolation after independence. These countries form a cultural mosaic—a number of societies with different cultures living near each other but not mixing.

LITERATURE Spanish-speaking South America has a strong literary heritage. Particularly in the last quarter of the 20th century, South American writers claimed the world's attention with their extraordinary novels. Perhaps the most famous of these writers is Gabriel García Márquez of Colombia, who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1982. Among his best-known novels are *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) and *The General in His Labyrinth* (1989), a novel about Simón Bolívar.

MUSIC Popular music and folk music are important artistic traditions in South America. You can hear street music everywhere throughout the region. Musicians play drums, guitars, marimbas, maracas, and flutes, among other instruments. This music combines Indian, African, and European elements to make a thick cultural brew, as can be heard in the tango of Argentina. Classical music is also important in the region. Many cities in South America have symphony orchestras and opera companies.

ARTS AND CRAFTS Beautiful craftwork and handmade items can be found throughout Latin America. Pottery, textiles, glasswork, and metalwork all manage to combine beauty and usefulness. Many handmade

Arts and Crafts in South America



A native woman displays a variety of goods for sale at a crafts market in Chinchero, Peru. Her wares include blankets, pottery, and items of clothing.



Handmade furniture is still found throughout the region. This carpenter shows a chair that he has made in his workshop in Sicuani, Peru.



A Cotopaxi native woman weaves a basket at an open market in Alameda Park in Quito, Ecuador.

items are decorated with folk art or Indian religious symbols. Beautiful examples of handmade items can be found in tools and other household items throughout the region. Indian weavers, for example, make ponchos from the wool of the animals of the region, such as llamas and alpacas.

Economics: Resources and Trade

Most economies in South American countries are based upon agriculture and the mining and extraction of resources such as oil and minerals. However, the income gap between rich and poor reflects the region's poverty and failure to develop economically after independence. Economic development of the entire region holds out the hope of improving the lives of millions of people.

ECONOMIES OF THE REGION One of the advantages in the region is that it produces a wide variety of products. This is because of its unique combination of resources, landforms, climate, and vegetation. In the north, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana grow crops for export on large farms. Colombia and Venezuela both have huge oil reserves that are probably their greatest economic asset.

In the west, Peru has an important fishing industry. Ecuador exports huge quantities of shrimp. Bolivia has deposits of tin, zinc, and copper.

In the south, Argentina produces great quantities of grain and livestock on its vast pampas. Uruguay is a prosperous agricultural country that has major farming and grazing areas in its portion of the pampas. Paraguay exports products such as soybeans, cotton, and animal hides.

The Mercosur Trade Group



Geographic Cooperation: A Common Market

- **Mercosur** is an economic common market that began operating in the southern cone of South America in 1995.
- Goals of a free-trade zone among member nations:
 1. to make member economies more stable;
 2. to increase trade within region and thereby decrease dependency on unstable global markets;
 3. to channel some of the profits of improving economies to those people and groups that most need help.
- The name Mercosur is formed from the Spanish phrase *Mercado Común del Sur*, which means Southern Common Market.
- There are more than 220 million consumers in this market.
- The combined Gross Domestic Product of the member nations is more than one trillion dollars a year.

SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1 **REGION** How many countries in South America are not full members of Mercosur?
- 2 **LOCATION** What characteristics do the members of Mercosur share in terms of location?

CHILE'S SUCCESS STORY Chile is South America's greatest economic success story. It has been able to participate in the global economy by trading the products of its mines and fields with nations as far away as Japan. The export of fruit and vegetables to North American markets is an important part of Chile's economy because its harvest comes during the Northern Hemisphere's winter. Chile also has huge deposits of copper, which remains its largest export. However, Chile has recently begun to focus on its own hemisphere. It has been a leader in working for economic cooperation in the region, where it is an associate member of Mercosur. (See the chart and map above.) Associate members (Chile and Bolivia) are countries with free-trade agreements with Mercosur.

Education and the Future

The people of Spanish-speaking South America face a number of challenges. Education is a critical issue as young people move to the cities in search of jobs.

LITERACY IN SOUTH AMERICA The countries of Spanish-speaking South America have higher literacy rates than do the countries of Central America and the Caribbean, or Mexico and Brazil. In Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, for example, literacy rates are higher than 90 percent. Moreover, the literacy rates for women are about the same as for men in those three countries; in fact, in Uruguay, the rate is slightly

higher for women. Most of the countries of South America support colleges, universities, and technical schools that train students for careers. As measured by the number of students in school and copies of daily newspapers and books published per capita, most of the countries of the region show high rates of education and literacy.

THE CASE OF CHILE Chile's literacy rate for the total adult population is around 95 percent. For young people between the ages of 15 and 19, it is even higher—close to 98 percent. The number of books and daily newspapers sold and read is very high—approximately 46 copies of daily newspapers are sold for every 100 people.

Education is very important in Chile. When they are between the ages of 6 and 13, all children must attend school, and public education is free. Higher education has suffered because of political unrest. The universities had been independent and of high quality. Then a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet overthrew Salvador Allende's government in 1973. Afterwards, the military introduced reforms that undermined higher education. Nonetheless, since Pinochet's departure from power in 1990, universities have regained some of their independence and standards. Today, there are many business schools in Chile that have contributed to the country's economic success.

In the next section you will read about Brazil. This Portuguese-speaking country is the giant of South America, both in terms of population and land area.



REGION The writer Isabel Allende, niece of Salvador Allende, is an important novelist in Latin America. Her most famous book may be *The House of the Spirits* (1982).

SECTION 3 Assessment

1 Places & Terms

Identify and explain the importance of each of the following.

- Inca
- Quechua
- Mercosur

2 Taking Notes

PLACE Review the notes you took for this section.



- Which countries besides Spain sent settlers to South America?
- Which countries in South America have the highest literacy rates?

3 Main Ideas

- What have been some obstacles to democratic government in South America?
- What was the extent of the Inca empire in South America?
- What are some of the arts and crafts of the region?

4 Geographic Thinking

Drawing Conclusions Why might the southern cone of South America have decided to form a trade group?

Think about:

- the geography of the region
- the region's economies

S See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R5.



SEEING PATTERNS Pair with a partner and draw a **sketch map** of South America. Fill in the map with the names of the various countries and the dominant language spoken in each.