



Mexico Today

Chapter Ten Section Three



Four Regions For Study

- ★ Mexico is divided politically into 31 states and a capital district
- ★ When studying Mexico it is easiest to divide the country geographically into four regions
 - 1. Greater Mexico City
 - 2. Central Mexico
 - 3. Gulf Lowlands and Southern Mexico
 - 4. Northern Mexico





Greater Mexico City

- ★ Greater Mexico City is the political, cultural and economic center of Mexico
- ★ The metropolis contains about 1/4 of Mexico's entire population and generates much of Mexico's GDP.
- ★ Major industries in the Greater Mexico City region include cement, chemicals, construction, plastics, textiles and tourism
- ★ Mexico City is also home to the Mexican Stock Exchange and the headquarters of the Federal govt.



Challenges facing Mexico City



- ★ Mexico City has a steady stream of people moving in and looking for work.
- ★ There are too few jobs for the number of workers
- ★ The unemployed and underemployed often wind up in settlements of shacks built from scrap wood and sheet metal with no electricity, plumbing or safe drinking water.
- ★ Pollution in the city is horrible partly because the city is surrounded by mountains that trap the pollution from factories and cars.



Central Mexico

- ★ Central Mexico stretches northwest from Mexico city across the Mexican Plateau
- ★ Mexico's 2nd largest city Guadalajara is located in the region
- ★ Fertile valleys dot central Mexico where agriculture is a mix of small family farms and medium size commercial farms
- ★ Commercial farmers grow a variety of cash crops= crops for sale in the market place
- ★ In recent years new factories have been built



Gulf Lowlands and Southern Mexico

- ★ The gulf lowlands between Campeche and Tampico have been historically sparsely settled
- ★ People living there have traditionally used the tropical rainforests and savannahs for grazing animals and growing sugar cane
- ★ In recent times...large parts of the rainforest have been cleared for commercial farming and ranching
- ★ Veracruz- a city in the region that is an important seaport and communications center



Oil in the gulf lowlands

- ★ Rich deposits of oil and natural gas are key to the region's economy
- ★ Oil refineries, pipelines, petrochemical plants, ports and fertilizer plants all contribute to the economy





Southern Mexico

- ★ Southern Mexico includes the mountainous area south of Mexico city and the plains of the Yucatan Peninsula
- ★ Southern Mexico is Mexico's poorest area
- ★ The area has few cities and little industry
- ★ Transportation and telephone service are poorly developed and schools are inadequate





Traditional southern Mexico



- ★ Southern Mexico is Mexico's most traditional region
- ★ Village life has changed little over the last 100 years
- ★ Subsistence agriculture is still common and handicrafts provide much of the cash income
- ★ Mexican Indians make up about 1/2 of the area's population- many, like the Mayan still speak their native languages.



Northern Mexico



- ★ Northern Mexico is a large dry area that has become one of the most prosperous regions in the country
- ★ Much of the region's infrastructure is new and modern
- ★ Monterrey is the great industrial city of the north
- ★ Many other cities have industrialized and grown rapidly
- ★ Northern Mexican factories and commercial farms draw migrant workers from all over Mexico



Border towns in Northern Mexico

- ★ The part of Mexico along the border has many links with the United States.
- ★ American companies own many maquiladores- American factories on the Mexican side of the border
- ★ The maquiladores employ hundreds of thousands of Mexicans and produce many products from auto parts to toys.
- ★ Irrigated farms in the region provide fruits and veggies to American and European markets in the winter months
- ★ The Spanish spoken in the area is full of american words



Challenges in Mexico's future



- ★ Economic inequality creates many problems for Mexico
- ★ Many Mexicans are very poor and much of the wealth of the country lies in the hands of a few wealthy people
- ★ Mexican Indians have fewer economic opportunities than other Mexican citizens
- ★ Reducing poverty might help bring greater political stability and improve the economy of Mexico



More problems for Mexico



- ★ Migration out of Mexico to the United States is common and drains skilled workers out of Mexico's economy

- ★ Reducing crime is another challenge



- ★ Mexico is the main route for smuggling illegal drugs into the United States

- ★ Profits from the drug trade have tempted Mexican politicians and law enforcement people to break the law



- ★ Many roads and RR's are old and worn and many communities do not have clean water and modern sewage systems