

Chapter 13

Mexico (Estados Unidos Mexicanos)

Chapter Preview

People

Vicente Fox, Hernán Cortés, Montezuma, Miguel Hidalgo, Antonio López de Santa Anna, James Gadsden, Benito Juárez, Archduke Maximilian, Porfirio Díaz

Places

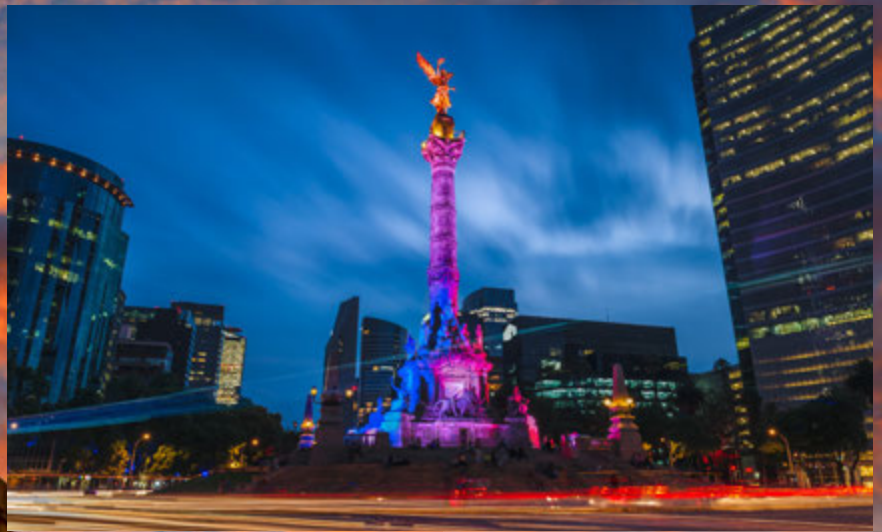
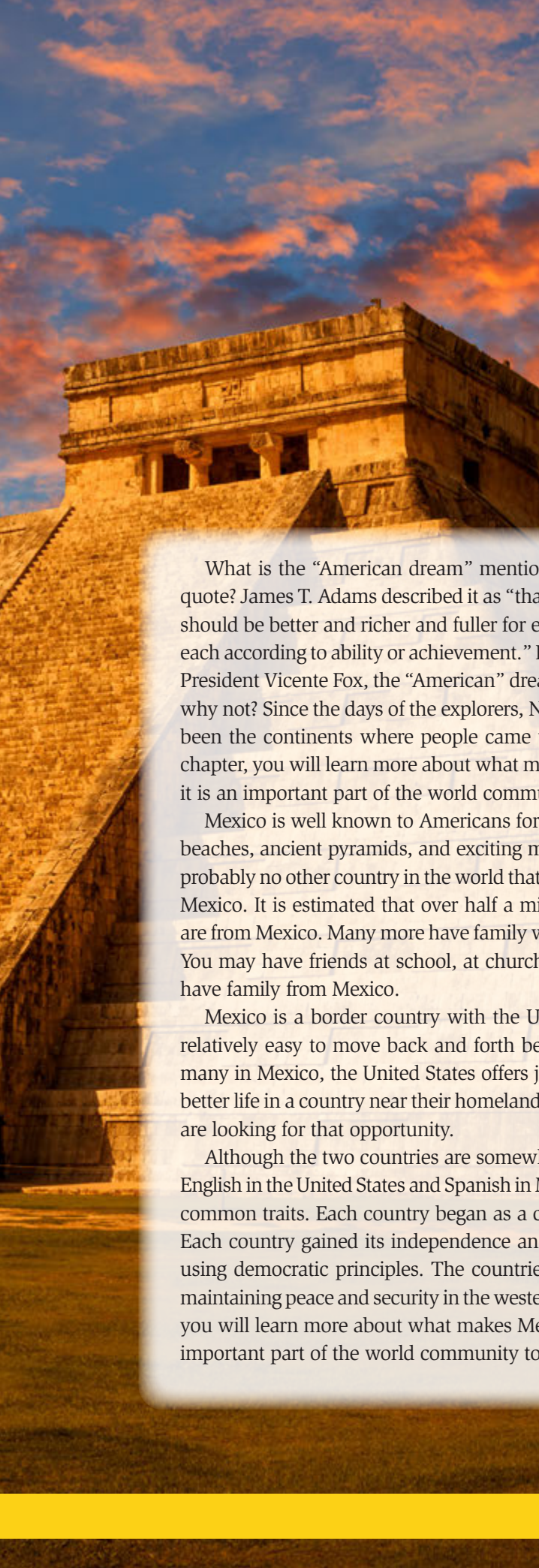
Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, Tropic of Cancer, Sierra Madre Mountains, Central Plateau, Mexico City, Pacific Ring of Fire, Popocatépetl, Citlaltépetl, Rio Grande River, Tenochtitlán, Nueva España

Terms

isthmus, plateau, tropical rain forest, smog, archaeologist, viceroy, Gadsden Purchase, drug cartel, federal government, National Congress, monopolist, market economy, life expectancy, Mexican peso, border region, Mérida Initiative

Top: Valle de los Cirios (Valley of the Candles) is a wildlife protection area on the Baja California peninsula.

Background: El Castillo, or the Temple of Kukulcan, is a step pyramid at the Chichen Itza archaeological site in the Mexican state of Yucatán.



What is the “American dream” mentioned in this chapter’s opening quote? James T. Adams described it as “that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement.” For the grandfather of Mexican President Vicente Fox, the “American” dream was found in Mexico. And why not? Since the days of the explorers, North and South America have been the continents where people came to fulfill their dreams. In this chapter, you will learn more about what makes Mexico special, and why it is an important part of the world community today.

Mexico is well known to Americans for its delicious food, palm-lined beaches, ancient pyramids, and exciting music, art, and dance. There is probably no other country in the world that has closer ties to Georgia than Mexico. It is estimated that over half a million people living in Georgia are from Mexico. Many more have family who were born in that country. You may have friends at school, at church, or in your community who have family from Mexico.

Mexico is a border country with the United States. This means it is relatively easy to move back and forth between the two countries. For many in Mexico, the United States offers jobs and the opportunity for a better life in a country near their homeland. Mexicans moving to Georgia are looking for that opportunity.

Although the two countries are somewhat divided by language, with English in the United States and Spanish in Mexico, the two countries have common traits. Each country began as a colony of a European country. Each country gained its independence and has worked to govern itself using democratic principles. The countries share the important role of maintaining peace and security in the western hemisphere. In this chapter, you will learn more about what makes Mexico special, and why it is an important part of the world community today.

“

I (am) part of this great nation because my grandfather was born here, in Cincinnati, Ohio. He took a horse, back in 1895, and ride [sic] it all the way down to Guanajuato, looking for his American dream. No penny in his pocket, only dreams in his head. And he was an immigrant coming from the States into Mexico. And he found his American dream in Mexico.

- Vicente Fox,
former president
of Mexico

Top: Modern office buildings surround the Angel of Independence statue in Mexico City.

PASSPORT



Official Name: United Mexican States (Estados Unidos Mexicanos)

Capital: Mexico City (Ciudad de México)

Form of Government: federal presidential republic

Head of Government: President

Head of State: President

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Currency: Mexican peso (MXN)

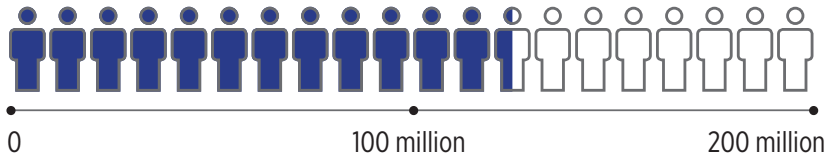


Top Right: Andrés Manuel López Obrador became president of Mexico in 2018. **Middle:** The National Palace (Palacio Nacional) is the seat of the federal executive in Mexico City. **Right:** Colorful banknotes of Mexico.



CULTURE CONNECTION

POPULATION

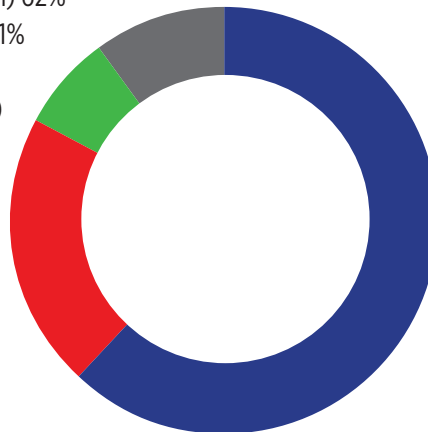


Mexico
123,166,749 (est. July 2016)
Population Rank 11

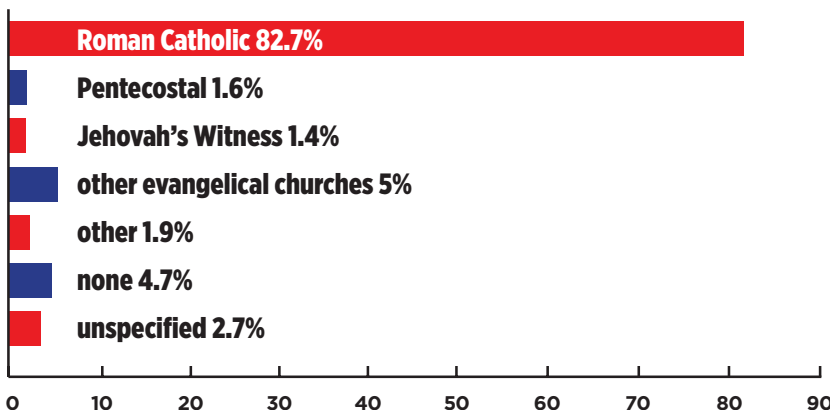
United States
324,386,000 (est. 2017)
Population Rank 3

ETHNIC GROUPS

- Mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 62%
 - Predominantly Amerindian 21%
 - Amerindian 7%
 - other 10% (mostly European)
- Note: Mexico does not collect census data on ethnicity.



RELIGION



FUN FACTS

The border between Mexico and the United States is the second-longest border in the entire world. Only the US-Canadian border is longer.

Official Language:
no official language
Spanish-only speakers at 92.7%

Words different from American English

- Hello** – Hola
- Goodbye** – Adiós
- Good morning** – Buenos días
- Good afternoon** – Buenas tardes
- Thank you** – Gracias
- You're welcome** – De nada
- Yes** – Sí
- No** – No

LIFE EXPECTANCY

Average 75.9 years
Male 73.1 years
Female 78.8 years

EDUCATION

Literacy 94.4%
Education Expenditures 5.2% of GDP
Rank 72

Top Left: Hernán Cortés was a conquistador who defeated the Aztecs.

Bottom Left: The Mexican army has worked with the United States government to stop the illegal drug trade in Mexico. **Background:** The Temple of the Sun at Teotihuacán near Mexico City is over 2,000 years old.



TIMELINE

OF MEXICO HISTORY



Figure 13.1

1300

1325 Aztecs saw an eagle as a sign to build their city Tenochtitlán

1500

1519 Spanish explorers, led by Hernán Cortés, invaded Mexico

1521 Aztec Empire ended with the fall of Tenochtitlán

1700

1753 Miguel Hidalgo born

1800

1808 Napoleon invaded Spain

1810 Miguel Hidalgo's Grito de Dolores

1811 Miguel Hidalgo was captured and executed as a traitor

1821 General Santa Anna fought and won Mexican independence

1824 Constitution of 1824 written

1835 Texas revolution

1836 Santa Anna won the Battle of the Alamo

1846 Mexican-American War began

1853 Gadsden Purchase set the northern border of Mexico

1861 Benito Juárez elected president of Mexico

1864 French installed Austrian Archduke Maximilian as Mexican emperor

1867 French driven out of Mexico; Benito Juárez returned as president

1877 Porfirio Díaz became president of Mexico

1900

1911 Mexican Revolution

1917 Constitution of 1917 written

2000

1994 NAFTA signed by Mexico, the United States, and Canada

2008 Mérida Initiative began

2012 Mexico joined Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations

2014 43 college students murdered by a drug gang



Map 13.1
Mexico

Map Skill: What is the name of the long peninsula on the western side of Mexico?

For More Maps
 See Pages 444-445

Area: 758,449.43 square miles
Area Rank: 14

Natural Resources: petroleum, silver, copper, gold, lead, zinc, natural gas, timber

Environmental Issues: scarcity of hazardous waste disposal facilities; rural-to-urban migration; natural freshwater resources scarce and polluted in north, inaccessible and poor quality in center and extreme southeast; raw sewage and industrial effluents polluting rivers in urban areas; deforestation; widespread erosion; desertification; deteriorating agricultural lands; serious air and water pollution in the national capital and urban centers along US-Mexico border; land subsidence in Valley of Mexico caused by groundwater depletion

Note: The government considers the lack of clean water and deforestation national security issues.



Section 1

The Geography of Mexico


 Setting a Purpose

As you read, look for

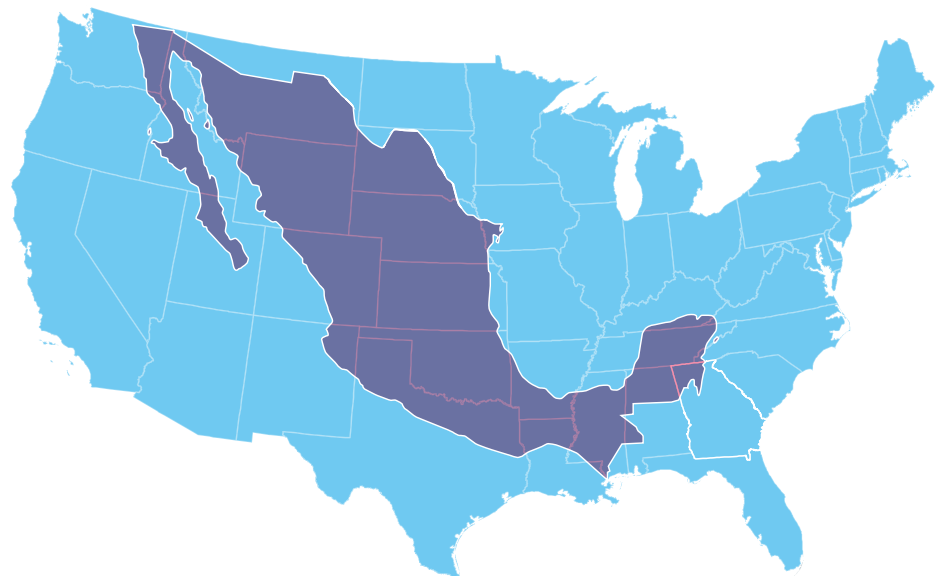
- ▶ the location and size of Mexico;
- ▶ how Mexico's climate affects where people live;
- ▶ Mexico's many natural resources;
- ▶ the dangers of Mexico's location on the Pacific Ring of Fire;
- ▶ causes of and solutions to Mexico City's air pollution problem;
- ▶ terms: **isthmus**, **plateau**, **tropical rain forest**, **smog**.



Location and Size of Mexico

Mexico is the second-largest country by population and third-largest by area (square miles) in Latin America. It is found in the northern and western hemispheres. The country is located directly south of the western United States, and the two countries share a nearly 2,000-mile-long border. Mexico's neighbors to the southeast are Belize and Guatemala.

Mexico's location between the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea to the east gives it the opportunity to trade with all parts of the world. A connection with the Atlantic Ocean through the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea provides a trading route to Europe, Africa, the east coast of South America, and the Caribbean nations. The Pacific Ocean is a major highway of trade with Asian countries, Australia, and the western side of South America. Seven major seaports in Mexico welcome ships from all over the world.



Above: This sea lion enjoys the cool Pacific waters of Mexico's west coast.

Mexico's location also makes it a physical and cultural bridge. Mexico unites the continent of North America with the narrow strip of land that eventually connects to South America at the Isthmus of Panama. An **isthmus** is a narrow strip of land connecting two larger land areas. Culturally, Mexico is a part of Latin America, which extends southward through Central and South America and the Caribbean. In this way, Mexico connects the United States and Canada with the Latin American region.

Climate of Mexico

Examine the map of Mexico, and notice it is divided by the Tropic of Cancer, an imaginary line of latitude. This line marks the most northerly location where the sun can be directly overhead. This latitude is associated with hot summers and warm winters. South of this line is the region of the world known as the tropics, while north of the line is considered subtropical.

Tropical and subtropical regions can offer the warm, sunny climate of a dream vacation. However, Mexico is also host to many other climate zones. The Sierra Madre Mountains have a climate that changes with altitude. The average temperature is lower in the high mountain elevations. For instance, above 14,000 feet, the average temperature is less than 32°F. Some of these altitudes are high enough to create snowcapped volcanoes!

There are also deserts in the north, plains, jungles, and **plateaus** (broad flat areas of high land). Rainfall varies according to location, with some tropical areas receiving more than 40 inches of rain a year. Desert areas in the north remain dry most of the year. Due to the harsh climate in the north near the US border, most people live in the center of the country in an area called the Central Plateau. Mexico City, one of the world's largest cities, is in this region. There is arable land in this region, and there is usually enough rain to grow a variety of crops. The closeness to the Equator means this area also has a longer growing season for crops.



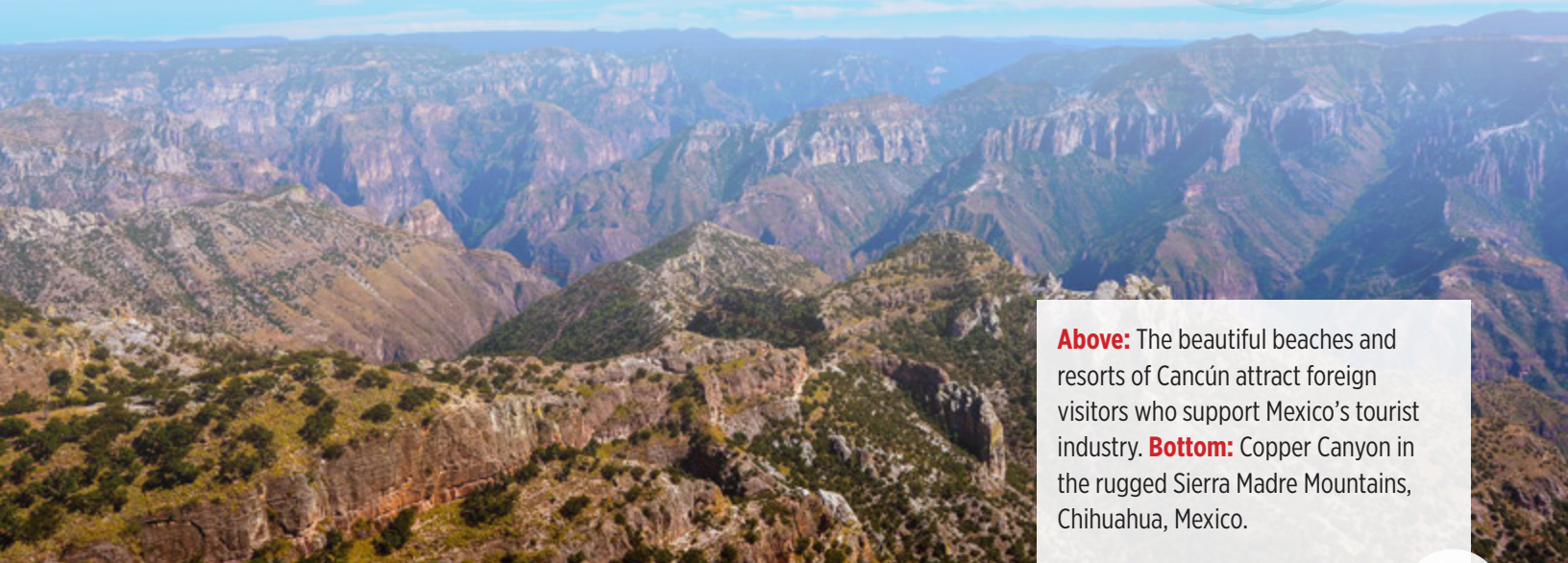
DID YOU KNOW?

Mexico has the largest Spanish-speaking population of any country in the world.



DID YOU KNOW?

According to the United Nations, the Mexico City region, with a population over 21 million in 2016, is the 7th-largest city in the world.



Above: The beautiful beaches and resorts of Cancun attract foreign visitors who support Mexico's tourist industry. **Bottom:** Copper Canyon in the rugged Sierra Madre Mountains, Chihuahua, Mexico.

DID YOU KNOW?

Tourism is a big industry for Mexico, attracting more than 32 million international visitors in 2015.



The tropical climate is also helpful for attracting millions of tourists every year. Because Mexico is located between two large bodies of water, there are plenty of beaches to enjoy. The dense **tropical rain forests** (woodlands with high annual rainfall and very tall evergreen trees) draw many tourists, mostly Americans.

Distribution of People in Mexico

The majority of the country's population lives in central Mexico between the states of Jalisco on the Pacific Ocean and Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico. About one-fourth of the population lives in and around Mexico City. That is roughly 21 million people who live in Mexico City's higher altitude where the average temperature is a mild 59°F throughout the year. The northern part of the country is dry and sparsely populated, but there are large cities such as Monterrey, Tijuana, and Ciudad Juárez along the US border. Overall the country's population density is about 168 people per square mile. The federal district of Mexico City is much more densely populated with nearly 4,000 people per square mile.

Natural Resources of Mexico

The people of Mexico use their natural resources to trade with other countries. Oil is one of their most important exports. Mexico is the 13th-largest oil exporter in the world. Money from the sale of oil provides about one-third or about \$19 billion of the Mexican government's budget. Oil and oil products are used throughout the world in the automobile industry and in factories to keep the machines running.

Another famous natural resource from Mexico is silver—a precious metal worn by people all over the world. Silver is plentiful in the area and has been seen in history all the way back to the early civilizations of Mexico. Silver mines in Mexico produce about 15 percent of the silver sold in the world each year. Silver jewelry from Mexico is popular in tourist cities and straw markets.



Top Left: Hillside slums at Tijuana, Baja California, near the international border and San Diego, California. **Above Left:** Interior of the shop and factory called Maestros Plateros (Silver Masters) dedicated to the selling of silver articles. **Above Right:** Offshore oil rigs like this one near Ciudad del Carmen help meet Mexico's demand for energy. **Bottom:** Tropical rain forests in southern Mexico receive much more rainfall than the desert regions further north.

Besides oil and silver, Mexico has a number of other natural resources, such as copper, gold, and natural gas, which are shipped to manufacturing destinations in the western hemisphere. Mexico's long growing season and its arable land allow farmers to produce many crops for export. Fruits, vegetables, coffee, and cotton are some of Mexico's exported crops. Timber is also a valuable resource in the more tropical southern states of Mexico. Woods such as cedar, mahogany, oak, pine, and rosewood can be found there.

Physical Features of Mexico

Mexico's most dramatic physical features are dominated by its location on the Pacific Ring of Fire. The Ring is a long chain of volcanoes that runs from New Zealand, around the Asian Pacific countries to Alaska, then south along the Pacific coast to the southern tip of South America. There are over 450 volcanoes along the Ring that can have volcanic eruptions and can be a source of earthquakes. Mexico is home to one of the most dangerous of the volcanoes in the Ring of Fire, Popocatepetl. This active volcano is located near the capital, Mexico City. It has erupted about once every 33 years since the explorers came from Spain. The volcano is over 17,000 feet in altitude and has a snowcapped cone. Small eruptions in 2016-2017 led to plumes of smoke and ash being spewed onto nearby residents. A major eruption could be catastrophic to the more than 21 million people living in the region. The tallest mountain in Mexico at over 18,000 feet is Citlaltépetl (also called Pico de Orizaba), a dormant volcano.

The volcanic mountains in the west of Mexico, the Sierra Madre Occidental, run roughly north to south. At the southern tip of Mexico at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec are the Southern Highlands with several mountain ranges. On the eastern side of the country are the Sierra Madre Oriental mountains. Mexico's mountain regions produce timber, copper, zinc, and silver.

In between mountain ranges on the west and east is Mexico's largest region, the Central Plateau. This is the most densely populated region in Mexico and includes Mexico City. At the northern end of the plateau are deserts and grasslands. However, to the south there is fertile soil and a wetter climate.



DID YOU KNOW ?

The sapodilla trees of Mexico were originally the source of chicle used to make chewing gum.



DID YOU KNOW ?

The Rio Grande on the border between the United States and Mexico is known in Mexico as Río Bravo del Norte.

Above: Morning sun lights the plume above Popocatepetl volcano in Mexico.
Left: Soil and climate work together to allow farmers to grow coffee in parts of Mexico.

Environmental Issues of Mexico

In the early 20th century, Mexico City was known for its clear skies and views of distant snowcapped mountains. Today, Mexico City is known as one of the world's worst areas of air pollution. The air is so bad that children are more likely than average to have breathing problems and develop lung disease when they grow up. Older adults and young children often must stay indoors and limit activity. On most days, the hazy, polluted sky blocks the view to the mountains.

In this large metropolis are thousands of factories and over 10 million vehicles. These sources send pollution such as lead, sulfur dioxide, and carbon monoxide into the air. The particles cannot completely disperse in the atmosphere, so they become part of the environment. Many of the cars are older models that lack the technology to control what the vehicle emits into the atmosphere. About 90 percent of the air pollution is from cars. In 2016, the government banned about 20 percent of the cars from the city's roads each day in an attempt to reduce pollution.

Geography plays a role in the city's problems. The altitude of the city is over 7,000 feet, seven times the altitude of Atlanta, Georgia. This means the atmosphere is thinner and holds less oxygen to begin with. Added to that is the fact that the city is built in a bowl-shaped crater of an extinct volcano. As a result, the exhaust from cars and factories becomes trapped in the city. **Smog**, a combination of smoke and fog, forms on many days, and the intense sunlight helps to push the pollution to higher altitudes.

The government of Mexico City is working on several solutions to this problem. Drivers must leave their cars at home one day each week. Citizens are encouraged to ride buses and trains or to carpool to work. Cars are inspected more often. Those with very bad exhaust problems must be repaired. On the days of highest pollution levels, certain factories may be closed. Because the population continues to grow, Mexico City must continue to find ways to clean its air. The government is looking for ways to improve the fuels used for energy. It is also working to increase the number of cars that produce little or no air pollution.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2016, the Oakland Raiders and Houston Texans played an American football game in Azteca Stadium in Mexico City. The thin, polluted air was a major concern for the players' health.

Reviewing the Section

1. In what way is Mexico a physical and cultural bridge?
2. How is Mexico's location good for trade?
3. What are the causes of air pollution in Mexico City?

Top: There are over 10 million vehicles in Mexico City. About 90 percent of the city's air pollution comes from cars.

Bottom: Mexico City's smog blocks the view of the suburban hills in the distance.

special Feature

Día de los Muertos

A popular holiday in Mexico is Día de los Muertos or the Day of the Dead. The celebrations date back over 2,500 years to the traditions of the indigenous (native) people of Mexico. It was celebrated before the Spanish arrived in Mexico. Over time, the indigenous beliefs have mixed with Roman Catholic beliefs to form the celebrations of the Day of the Dead. Today it is observed throughout Latin America, but its roots are in Mexico. Areas south of Mexico City practice fully the Day of the Dead celebrations, while areas north of Mexico City tend to spend time participating in church services and cleaning gravesites.

“Day of the Dead” doesn’t really sound like a celebration. However, it is a major commemoration of death and rebirth. It is based on the belief that the spirits of people who have died can return to earth to visit with their families once a year. Even though it is called Day of the Dead, it is actually two days. Beginning on the night of October 31, families decorate the graves and hold an all-night vigil by the graves of loved ones and friends. They stay up all night talking about their memories of their deceased loved ones and sharing stories with each other. November 1 is the first official day of the celebrations. That is when the spirits of infants and children are believed to visit their families. On November 2, the spirits of deceased adults are believed to visit their families.

The traditions and decorations are very important in the celebration. Families set up altars in their homes or by graves to invite the spirits home. Traditionally, each altar must have representations of the four elements of the earth: water, wind, fire (candles), and earth (flowers). Sometimes families also include favorite foods of the deceased. Mexican marigolds are the most common flowers used to decorate graves and altars. They are a traditional symbol used to honor the dead. The Day of the Dead celebrations can be very expensive. In fact, many of the rural indigenous people spend up to two months’ worth of income on the celebrations each year.

Skulls are the most recognizable symbols of the Day of the Dead. They can be seen as masks used in parades or as sugar skulls (*calaveritas*) left at altars. Sugar art dates back to the 17th century when Italian missionaries brought it to Mexico. Another form of skulls, or *calaveras*, are short poems that make fun of the epitaphs on the grave markers or tell funny stories about the deceased as a way of remembering and honoring them. What do you think about the Day of the Dead? Do you think it is something you would like to celebrate?



Above: These people in Oaxaca are dressed and painted for the Día de los Muertos celebration. **Background:** Colorful ceramic skulls are sold in markets across Mexico as decoration for the Día de los Muertos.

Section 2

A Brief History of Mexico



Setting a Purpose

As you read, look for

- ▶ the rise, accomplishments, and fall of the Maya and Aztec Empires;
- ▶ Mexico's years as a Spanish colony;
- ▶ the role of Miguel Hidalgo in Mexico's independence movement;
- ▶ wars with the United States and with France;
- ▶ successes and failures of Mexican self-rule;
- ▶ terms: **archaeologist**, **viceroy**, **Gadsden Purchase**, **drug cartel**.



Indigenous Empires Meet Europeans

The land that is Mexico was once part of the Aztec and Maya Empires. The Mayan people lived on the Yucatán peninsula in the rain forests bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Their pyramids and other ruins are an attraction for tourists and **archaeologists** (scientists who study ancient artifacts to learn about early people) today. The empire of the Aztec was in central Mexico centered on the area around today's Mexico City. Both the Aztec and the Mayan people were skillful at building with stone and constructing roads. They traded with nearby people and grew crops for themselves.

Above: A native Mayan performs in the street in Mexico City. **Bottom:** This ancient Mayan tomb wall displayed in the city of Mérida helps visitors understand the skill of the Mayan stoneworkers.



Left: This 18th-century church in the Mexican state of Sonora is an example of a colonial-era church. **Bottom:** A model of a Spanish galleon that would have transported goods and people from Spain to Mexico.

The Maya are known to have developed a calendar that accurately represented a year with 365 days. They also had a writing system for their language, but the Maya had declined in population and power by the time the Spanish explorers arrived in 1519. The Aztec, however, were at the height of their power when Hernán Cortés and his 600 soldiers arrived in Mexico from Spain. Cortés and his men found a fantastic city, Tenochtitlán, with floating gardens, lakes, and beautiful pyramids. The Aztec and the Spanish fought, and within a few years, the Aztec leader Montezuma and other leaders were dead. The Aztec population declined dramatically because of smallpox and severe lack of food.

Mexico had many resources that made it an attractive colony for Spain. There was gold and silver to be mined. Farmland was available for crops and cattle. Missionaries were sent by the Roman Catholic Church to convert the natives to Christianity and to minister to the colonists. Through the 17th and 18th centuries, Mexico was the center of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, or Nueva España. Mexico was ruled by a **viceroy** who was chosen by the monarch of Spain. This arrangement, which lasted 300 years, did not allow for much citizen participation. The Spanish were able to mine gold and silver in abundance, and the metals brought great wealth to the Spanish crown. Colonial-era buildings such as cathedrals, forts, and missions demonstrate the wealth of New Spain. The American and French Revolutions, however, were known to the people in Mexico. Many of them began to believe it was not right for a small group of Spanish nobles to rule everyone. But how could independence be won?



special Feature

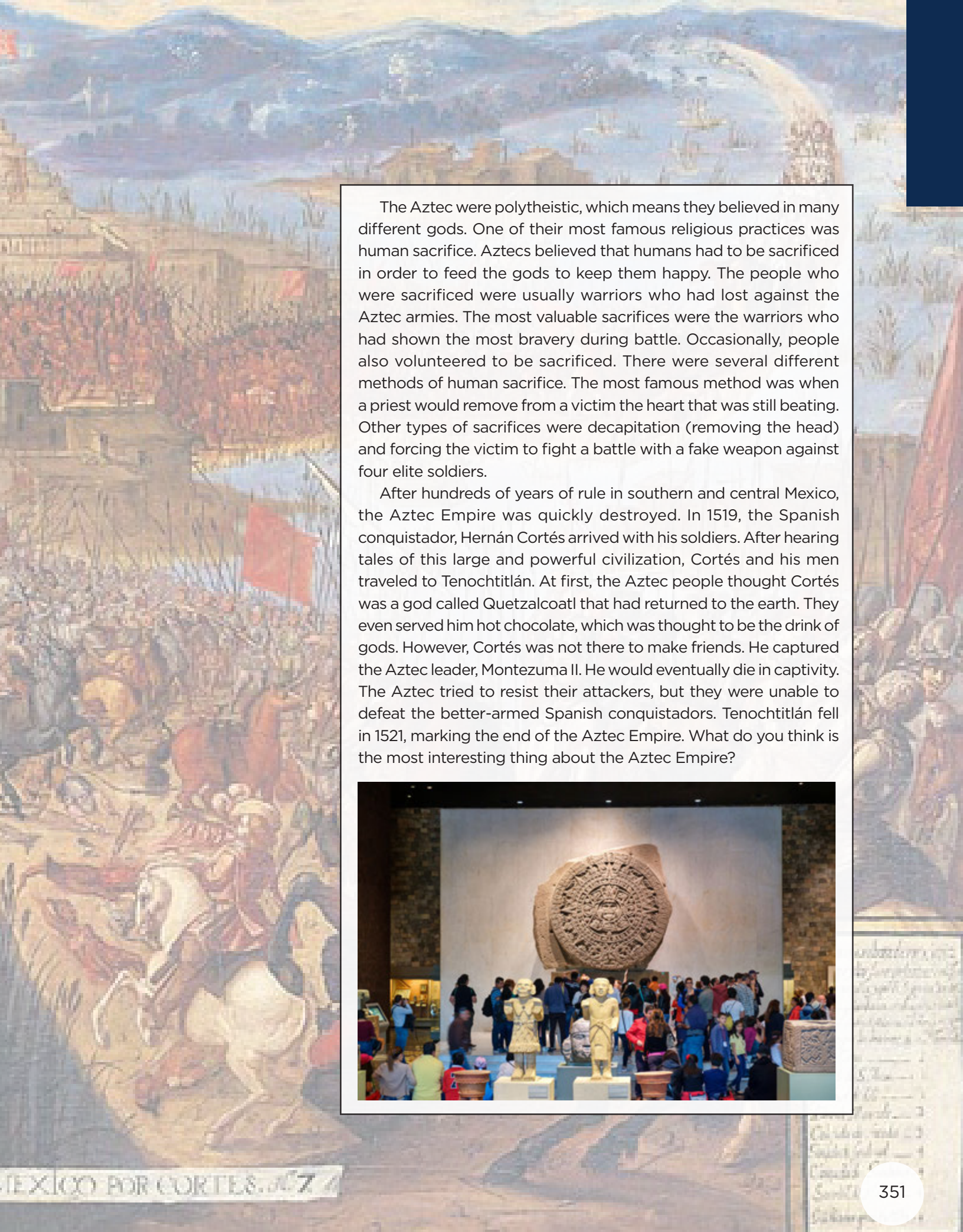
The Rise and Fall of the Aztec Empire

The Aztec Empire was one of the most powerful empires ever to exist in pre-Columbian Central America. Historians are unsure where the Aztecs originated, but it is clear when they began their domination of parts of what would become Mexico. In 1325, the Aztecs saw an eagle perched on a cactus on marshy land near Lake Texcoco. They took this as a sign from their gods that they should build their first city there. After draining the land and building islands for agriculture, the Aztec people began constructing the buildings of Tenochtitlán. Eventually Tenochtitlán would cover 5 square miles and house over 140,000 people. The empire itself grew to cover 80,000 square miles with approximately 6 million people. The ruins of Tenochtitlán are still visible in parts of downtown Mexico City.

The Aztec people had advanced farming and irrigation practices that allowed them to grow many crops like maize (corn), beans, squash, potatoes, tomatoes, and avocados. Aztec society was set up into very strict social classes with the nobles and rulers at the top, peasants in the middle, and slaves at the bottom. It was very hard to change social classes. It is interesting that in Aztec society every home had a steam bath. At this point in European history, bathing was not a frequent practice.

Top Right: The city of Teotihuacan was established around 100 BC by a culture earlier than the Aztecs. The Aztecs saw its ruins, like this step pyramid, and claimed a common ancestry with its people and adopted parts of its culture. **Bottom Right:** Close-up view of an Aztec pyramid. **Background:** This painting shows the Spanish view of their defeat of the Aztecs. **Opposite Page:** Visitors to the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City view the Aztec calendar known as the Stone of the Sun.





The Aztec were polytheistic, which means they believed in many different gods. One of their most famous religious practices was human sacrifice. Aztecs believed that humans had to be sacrificed in order to feed the gods to keep them happy. The people who were sacrificed were usually warriors who had lost against the Aztec armies. The most valuable sacrifices were the warriors who had shown the most bravery during battle. Occasionally, people also volunteered to be sacrificed. There were several different methods of human sacrifice. The most famous method was when a priest would remove from a victim the heart that was still beating. Other types of sacrifices were decapitation (removing the head) and forcing the victim to fight a battle with a fake weapon against four elite soldiers.

After hundreds of years of rule in southern and central Mexico, the Aztec Empire was quickly destroyed. In 1519, the Spanish conquistador, Hernán Cortés arrived with his soldiers. After hearing tales of this large and powerful civilization, Cortés and his men traveled to Tenochtitlán. At first, the Aztec people thought Cortés was a god called Quetzalcoatl that had returned to the earth. They even served him hot chocolate, which was thought to be the drink of gods. However, Cortés was not there to make friends. He captured the Aztec leader, Montezuma II. He would eventually die in captivity. The Aztec tried to resist their attackers, but they were unable to defeat the better-armed Spanish conquistadors. Tenochtitlán fell in 1521, marking the end of the Aztec Empire. What do you think is the most interesting thing about the Aztec Empire?



DID YOU KNOW?

Miguel Hidalgo is known as the Father of Mexican Independence.



Independence from Spain

Spain had prosperous colonies at the end of the 18th century and was both rich and powerful. Its rivals, Great Britain and France, were in constant competition for wealth and power. People of the New World were being forced to take sides along with the countries of Europe.

In 1808, France invaded Spain, the Spanish king was removed, and the emperor of France, Napoleon, made himself ruler of Spain. This created problems in Mexico. People were not sure they supported the new French government. Others did not support the old Spanish government. Others thought it was time for Mexico to be independent.

One of those who called for independence was Miguel Hidalgo. He was a priest of the Roman Catholic Church. Hidalgo was born in 1753. His family

saw that he received a good education. As he grew up, he read books with ideas on freedom and equality. He saw that there was not equality for the peasant workers in Mexico. He also saw that those born in Spain received special treatment compared to citizens born in Mexico. After training to be a priest, he worked among the native people and peasants. In 1810, Hidalgo and his group became the first to openly call for Mexican independence.

His most famous speech is known as the Cry of Dolores (*Grito de Dolores*). It was given in the village of Dolores Hidalgo

on September 16, 1810. *Grito de Dolores* became the slogan of Hidalgo's followers. The speech was given at his church to an audience of the poor—mostly indigenous—people and *mestizos* (persons with mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry). Hidalgo challenged his congregation: “Will you free yourselves? Will you recover the lands stolen 300 years ago from your forefathers by the hated Spaniards? We must act at once.”

Although his group of rebels won early victories, they were eventually defeated by the Spanish army. Hidalgo was captured and executed as a traitor in 1811, but

he became the symbol of the Mexican independence movement. In fact, Independence Day in Mexico is celebrated each year on September 16.



Top Left: Painting of Miguel Hidalgo, leader of Mexican independence from Spain. **Right:** King Ferdinand VII was king of Spain in the early 19th century when Mexico gained independence.

Mexican independence finally came in 1821. General Antonio López de Santa Anna had fought in the Spanish army, but he switched sides and fought for Mexican independence. Unlike the American colonies, which had some experience with self-rule and choosing leaders, Mexico had been ruled by the viceroy. Following independence, Mexico created a republic, but Santa Anna and other military leaders controlled much of the government. Santa Anna was popular and was elected president for a time, but his governing was less democratic than many Mexicans wanted.

Problems with Mexico's Northern Neighbor

In its early years, Mexico had problems developing a stable government. It also had problems along the border with the United States. In 1835, there was a revolution in Texas, which was a part of Mexico. Santa Anna led the attack to put down the rebellion. The famous Battle of the Alamo (1836) took place in San Antonio, Texas. Although Santa Anna won the battle, he later lost Texas to Sam Houston and the Texas army. After a short time as the independent Lone Star Republic, Texas became a state of the United States of America.

A larger conflict with the United States was the Mexican-American War. From 1846 to 1848, the two countries fought to settle the boundary between Texas and Mexico. In the end, the Rio Grande River became the dividing line. The United States gained lands that are now part of the American Southwest, including California. In exchange, Mexico received \$15 million.

Just five years later, the United States was working to build a transcontinental railroad. The best route seemed to be through a part of northern Mexico. Santa Anna negotiated the sale of lands with US Ambassador James Gadsden. Known as the **Gadsden Purchase**, the land in southern Arizona and New Mexico was sold for \$10 million. This action in 1853 set the northern border of Mexico where it lies today.



DID YOU KNOW ?

The reference to “the Halls of Montezuma” in the “United States Marines’ Hymn” refers to the Battle of Chapultepec during the Mexican-American War. The Marines stormed Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City near the ancient home of the Aztec emperors.



Above: General Antonio López de Santa Anna. **Left:** The Alamo in San Antonio, Texas.

DID YOU KNOW ?

The popular Cinco de Mayo (5th of May) holiday commemorates a victory by the Mexican army over the stronger French army on May 5, 1862.

The triumph boosted the Mexicans' morale and strengthened their resistance for a time. These days in the United States, Cinco de Mayo is a day to celebrate Mexican culture.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Pancho Villa was a hero to the Mexican poor in the early 1900s. Like the legendary Robin Hood,

Villa was known for stealing from the rich to give to the poor.

Above Right: Benito Juárez was Mexico's 26th president. **Bottom Left:** Porfirio Díaz, the 29th president of Mexico, was in office for 27 years. **Bottom Right:** This 1913 photograph shows Pancho Villa, a famous revolutionary fighter in the Mexican Revolution.

Problems from Europe

Benito Juárez was elected president of Mexico in 1861. He became a popular leader for his efforts to expand fairness, honesty, and democratic principles in the government and guarantee the right to freedom of speech. Juárez was a Native American, and his government worked to expand the rights of the poor. However, wealthy landowners and the military did not support him.

While Juárez tried to get his country's finances in order, he stopped loan payments to European countries. France decided to invade Mexico as a response. The French army took over the country and installed Austrian Archduke Maximilian as emperor in 1864. The time, expense, and tragedy of the US Civil War focused Americans' attention in the early 1860s, so Mexicans were left to fight against the French on their own. By 1867, the French were driven out, and Maximilian was executed. Juárez was returned as the elected president.

The wealthy landowners gradually returned to power after Juárez left office. By 1876, the country was being run by a dictator known as General Porfirio Díaz. Known as Mexico's "Iron Man," Díaz ruled from 1877 to 1911. He kept power by granting favors to the powerful, but he did not work for the rights of the poor. In 1911, the masses of the poor revolted in the Mexican Revolution. The war that followed killed more than a million Mexicans. The Constitution of 1917 was another result of the revolution. It forced the distribution of land ownership to farmers working the land. It required higher wages and better working conditions for workers.





Mexico Today

Today Mexico is an active, industrial country with a democratically elected leadership. The country still continues to work to develop a government that is fairly elected and honest in its dealings with the people. Its government is divided into three branches with a president leading the executive branch. Mexico is working to build modern industry and to keep a positive relationship with the United States and improve the lives of its people.

Poverty remains high in the country, and violence due to the activities of **drug cartels** (criminal drug-trafficking organizations) is an ongoing problem. The US government estimates that, from 2006 to 2015, more than 80,000 killings committed by organized crime groups occurred in Mexico. It also suggests that Americans spend up to \$29 billion on drugs coming from Mexico every year.

Reviewing the Section

1. Why is Miguel Hidalgo considered the Father of Mexican Independence?
2. What role have the poor in Mexico played in developing their presidential democracy?
3. What are some issues faced by the Mexican government today?



Top Left: Antidrug special forces police on duty in Veracruz in eastern Mexico. **Above:** Mexicans celebrate the Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe with a festival in Mexico City. Festivals and celebrations are part of the culture of modern Mexico.

Section 3

The Government of Mexico



Setting a Purpose

As you read, look for

- ▶ divisions of power in Mexico's government;
- ▶ how the president of Mexico is elected and governs;
- ▶ rights and duties of Mexican citizens;
- ▶ how corruption interferes with government and business;
- ▶ terms: **federal government, National Congress, monopolist.**

Structure of Government

The government of Mexico is divided into the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. It is classified as a federal government. Being a **federal government** means power is divided between the national government and the state and local governments. Does that sound familiar? The United States shares this type of government. The basis of the federal representative democratic republican system was established with the Constitution of 1824. The constitution currently in force in Mexico was approved by their Congress on February 5, 1917.

Mexico is also a presidential democracy. The citizens freely elect the president, who can serve one 6-year term. Unlike the US president, the Mexican president cannot be reelected. The executive office of the president governs in agreement with the requirements of the legislative branch. The president has the legal obligation to appoint his closest advisors as secretaries of state (cabinet members) and attorney general of the Republic.

The federal public administration is in charge of the secretaries of state and administrative departments. Citizens also elect members of the legislature, which is called the **National Congress**. Citizens of Mexico have many freedoms, and they also have the right to vote. Men and women who are citizens age 18 years or over may choose to vote.



Above: New Senate building in Mexico City. **Right:** The National Palace in Mexico City has offices for the Mexican president.



The political division of Mexico consists of 32 states, and the capital Mexico City. There are many political parties in Mexico. Most political parties have particular beliefs that attract followers. Others center on support of particular individuals. Mexico is a country that enjoys an average level of freedom compared to other countries in the world. The court system is managed by the central government and is not totally independent of the president.

Citizen Participation

In Mexico, citizens have the right to vote for those who will represent them in office in the larger government. Citizens vote for members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies to represent them in the National Congress.

Citizens may hold a job of their choosing, and they must pay taxes. The citizens of Mexico have many of the same rights and responsibilities we enjoy in the United States. They have the freedom to go to college after high school or to join the workforce. They can be an entrepreneur and start their own business. Businesses in Mexico are becoming more competitive in global markets, and it is up to private citizens to operate those businesses. While the government does have control of oil and electricity companies, many private businesses are increasing their value in the Mexican economy.

There are some problems with how businesses are run in Mexico. There is a large amount of corruption in both the government and business sectors. This type of unethical business practice includes governmental **monopolists** (those who want to control the enterprise) and organized crime members. In 2014, 43 college students were murdered by a drug gang after a political protest. This long history of violence has a lasting impact on how citizens choose to voice their opinions and run their businesses.

Reviewing the Section

1. What is the government structure of Mexico?
2. What type of democracy does Mexico have? Who is the head of the government?
3. How do the citizens of Mexico directly play a role in the national government?



Top Left: The Chamber of Deputies meets in Mexico City. **Above:** Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is shown exercising his right to vote during an election in 2003.

Section 4

The Economy of Mexico


 Setting a Purpose

As you read, look for

- ▶ Mexico's market economy;
- ▶ the effects of NAFTA and other agreements on trade;
- ▶ improvements in Mexicans' standard of living, and gaps that remain;
- ▶ terms: **market economy**, **life expectancy**, **Mexican peso**.

Economic System Today

Mexico is an example of a Latin American country with a **market economy**. Individuals and corporations own most of the businesses and farms in Mexico. The Mexican government does own and operate the energy companies. Private businesses employ people to build a variety of goods that are sold in Mexico and other countries. Individuals and

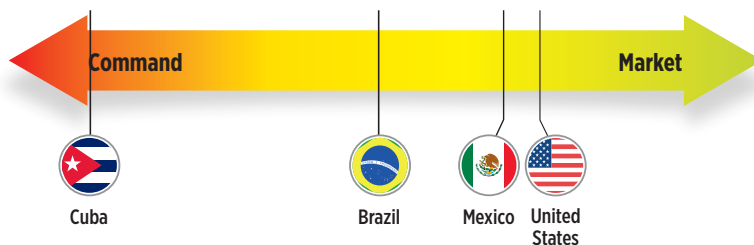
corporations also sell services to people. These individuals and businesses are free to decide what to sell. The government provides some laws to make sure businesses run smoothly and fairly. The Mexican government does not set prices for goods and services, and it does not own businesses and farms. The private business owners and the consumers,

interacting with each other, determine how much consumers are willing and able to pay for goods and services.

The region has many manufacturing centers that provide jobs. About 80 percent of the people in Mexico live in urban areas. This allows them to have jobs in manufacturing or service industries. About 13 percent of Mexicans are choosing to work on farms.

Figure 13.2

Economic Systems in Latin America



Below: Headquarters for banks, insurance and real estate companies, and the Mexican Stock Exchange make Mexico City the most important financial center in Latin America.



Trade

In 2017, Mexico was reported to have a \$2.2 trillion economy. In 2019, Mexico approved the revised United States-Mexico-Canada (USM-CA) Agreement to replace NAFTA in hopes of increasing trade with its North American neighbors. Mexico also has free trade agreements with 46 other countries, putting more than 90 percent of its trade under free trade agreements. In 2012, Mexico formally joined the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations and also formed the Pacific Alliance with Peru, Colombia, and Chile.

The long-term goal of the government is to improve growth across the Mexican economy. The economy is expected to experience stronger growth as a result of increased investment and stronger demand for Mexican exports. However, growth is predicted to remain below potential because of corruption.

The economy is vulnerable to global economic problems such as lower demand for Mexican goods and services, rising interest rates, and low oil prices. Approximately 30 percent of government revenue comes from the state-owned oil company, PEMEX, so a downturn in demand for oil decreases the government's ability to provide citizens public goods and public services. Mexico has invested in new industries and is looking to new resources that could make the economy less sensitive to changes in oil prices.

Standard of Living

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the standard of living has improved for Mexicans in the 21st century. Education levels have improved although a large portion of the population only attends school for eight years. Access to good education, housing, health care, and jobs remains low but has improved. There is a large gap between the rich and poor in Mexico, with the richest 20 percent earning nearly 14 times the income of the bottom 20 percent.

Only 34 percent of adults have completed high school, and employment is at about 60 percent. **Life expectancy** (the average life span of an individual) in Mexico is about 75 years. This is lower than the average of 80 years for OECD countries due to the health problems related to air pollution.

In 2013, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was estimated at about \$16,000. This is much lower than the United States' GDP per capita, which was estimated at about \$53,000.

Currency

Currency is the money people use to make trade easier. In the United States, the US dollar (\$) is used to buy goods and services. Mexico uses the peso (\$ or Mex\$). The **Mexican peso** is one of the oldest traded currencies in the world. It came from Spain to the New World with the Spanish explorers during the 16th century. It has had many versions, both coin and paper bills, but remains one of the top-ten most traded currencies in the world.

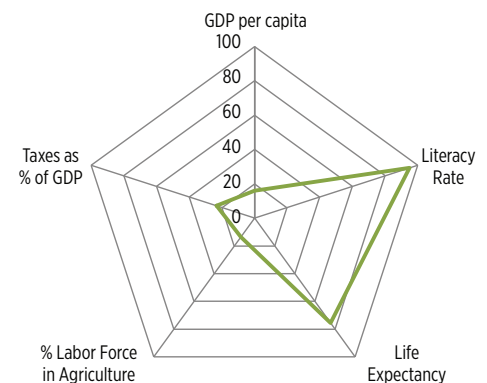
Reviewing the Section

1. Describe the economic system of Mexico.
2. How might improvements in education help Mexico's economy?
3. What evidence is given that shows Mexico is working to grow its economy?



Figure 13.3

Mexico Spider Graph



Top: This gas station in Cancún is owned by PEMEX, the national oil company of Mexico. **Above:** The port of Ensenada on the Pacific side of Mexico accommodates cargo and cruise ships.

special Feature

The Zapatista Movement

The Zapatistas are a group of Mexicans who support improved rights and living conditions for Mexico's indigenous people. The group is named after Emiliano Zapata, who lived in the early 20th century and fought for the rights of native people. In the late 20th century, the Zapatistas were known for harassment and sabotage against the government.

On January 1, 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect. This was an agreement to allow free trade among Mexico, the United States, and Canada. This plan was intended to create jobs and improve trading conditions to stimulate the economies of the countries involved. Some people in Mexico did not like this plan. They thought NAFTA would allow cheap farm goods to come into Mexico from the United States. The farmers in Mexico who depended on trade with the United States believed they would not be able to compete with the cheaper food.

On the day NAFTA took effect, the Zapatistas took over several towns in southern Mexico by force. The Mexican army was sent in to quickly remove the Zapatistas, but the fighting lasted for several weeks. A cease-fire finally ended the fighting. The Zapatistas did not go away, however. Agreements between the Zapatistas and the government have not solved the problems the people have with the government. Indigenous Mexicans still suffer from poor education, health care, and housing conditions. The Zapatistas have control of some small parts of southern Mexico. The Zapatistas argue that the indigenous people of Mexico need more help to improve their quality of life and find suitable jobs. The Zapatistas have formed friendships with groups in other countries that have similar goals. Their mission is to increase the quality of life for Mexico's native people and be a voice for them to the government. Do you agree with the Zapatistas' tactics?



Top Right: Emiliano Zapata. **Middle:** Subcomandante Marcos, the spokesman of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, strikes a pose on horseback while smoking a pipe in Chiapas in 1996. **Right:** This sign in a Zapatista-controlled village warns that "You are in rebel Zapatista territory."

Section 5

US-Mexico Relations




As you read, look for

- ▶ ways the United States and Mexico cooperate to solve border issues;
- ▶ the importance of the Mérida Initiative;
- ▶ the benefits of trade with Mexico to people of the United States and Georgia;
- ▶ terms: **border region, Mérida Initiative.**

Problems at the Border

The **border region**, defined as the 10 US and Mexican states along the international border, represents a combined population of nearly 100 million people and the world's fourth-largest economy. Cooperation between the United States and Mexico along the border includes a process for state and local problem-solving, transportation planning, and collaboration on resource, environmental, and health issues. For example, the Executive Steering Committee for 21st Century Border Management works to ensure a modern, secure, and efficient border. The US-Mexico Binational Group on Bridges and Border Crossings meets three times a year to improve the efficiency of existing crossings and coordinate planning for new ones. The 10 US and Mexican border states are active participants in these meetings. The Border Liaison Mechanisms operate in sister city pairs and have proven to be an effective means of dealing with a variety of local issues.



Bottom: A Border Patrol vehicle patrols along the fence of the international border between San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Mexico, in order to stop illegal crossing.



The United States and Mexico have a long history of cooperation on environmental and natural resource issues. Particularly in the border area there are serious environmental problems caused by rapid population growth, urbanization, and industrialization. Cooperative activities between the United States and Mexico take place under a number of arrangements. Some of these are the US-Mexico Border 2012/2020 Program, the North American Development Bank and the Border Environment Cooperation Commission, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the Border Health Commission, and a variety of other agreements that address border health, wildlife and migratory birds, national parks, forests, and marine and atmospheric resources.

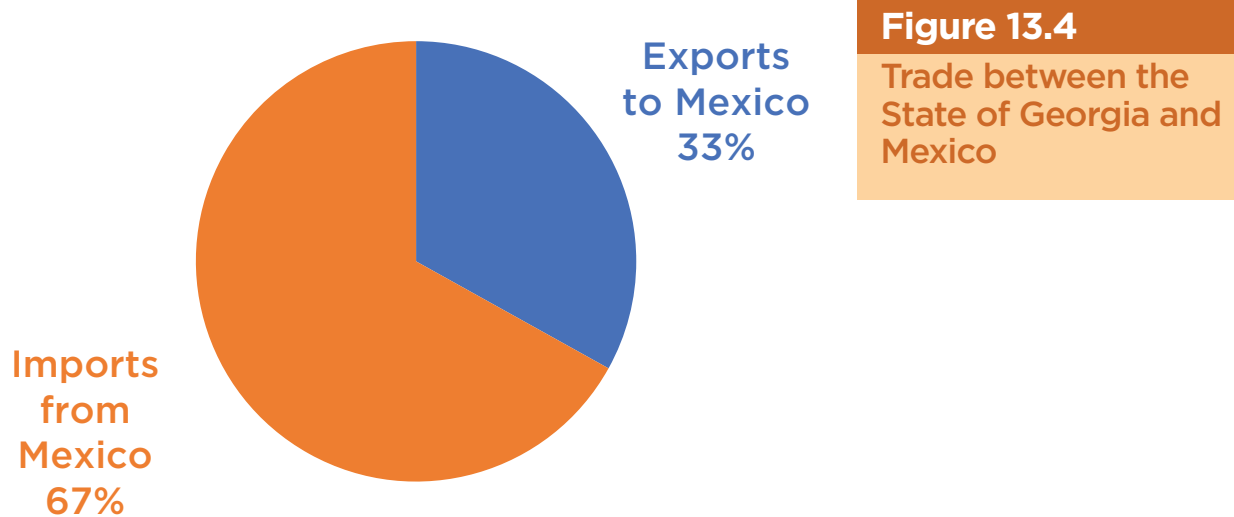
US Security Cooperation with Mexico

The **Mérida Initiative** is a partnership between the United States and Mexico to address violence and crime while strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Mérida Initiative cooperation was organized with four goals: disrupt the capacity of organized crime to operate; help Mexico's government and institutions keep the rule of law; improve border controls to stop the flow of drugs, arms, and cash; and build strong communities.

US cooperation with Mexico under the Mérida Initiative supports programs to help Mexico train and equip its police, promote a culture of lawfulness, implement key justice reforms, and modernize Mexico's borders. The US Congress has provided Mexico \$2.15 billion to support the Mérida Initiative. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) programs under the Mérida Initiative support Mexican efforts to address challenges to improving the safety of its citizens and to protect citizens' rights.



Top: Cars line up for inspection at a US-Mexico border crossing. **Above:** A survey marker on the border between the United States and Mexico. **Bottom:** The US government agreed to provide funding to help fight the drug war, including the purchase of 11 Black Hawk helicopters such as this one.



Bilateral Economic Relations

US trade relations with Mexico are strong and vital. In 2016, the United States and Mexico traded nearly half a trillion dollars in goods. A large part of this trade is in the state of Georgia. Mexico is the state's fourth-largest trading partner. This generates over 150,000 jobs in the state. An estimated 20 million US tourists traveled to Mexico in 2013, making Mexico the top destination of US international travelers. Over 14 million Mexican tourists traveled to the United States in 2013, and they spent an estimated \$10.5 billion.

Mexico is the second-largest market for US exports and the third-largest source of imports. In 2013, Mexico was the third-largest supplier of foreign crude oil to the United States, as well as the largest export market for US refined petroleum products. It is also a growing market for US natural gas. Top US exports to Mexico include electrical machinery, nuclear equipment, motor vehicle parts, mineral fuels and oils, and plastics.

The United States and Mexico, along with Canada, are partners in the United States-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) Agreement and enjoy a growing trade relationship. Mexico is a champion of free trade, having more free trade agreements than any other country in the world, including pacts with Japan, the European Union, and many Latin American partners.

Reviewing the Section

1. What evidence is there of strong economic ties between the United States and Mexico?
2. How was the Mérida Initiative supposed to help Mexico and the United States?
3. Why is it important for the United States and Mexico to work together to promote a culture of lawfulness in border areas?

Top: Total trade between the state of Georgia and Mexico in 2014 was about \$9 billion.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Section 1: The Geography of Mexico

- Mexico's direct access to oceans and its position connecting North and South America make it a good candidate for trade.
- The climate of Mexico varies because of the country's mountains, plateaus, and location on the Tropic of Cancer.
- Mexico has many natural resources and is one of the largest exporters of oil.
- One of the most dangerous volcanoes in the Ring of Fire is located in Mexico.
- Mexico City is one of the world's worst cities for air pollution, which is caused by the city's high altitude, its location in a bowl, and harmful car emissions.

Section 2: A Brief History of Mexico

- The Maya and Aztec Empires were incredibly successful with astronomy, building, and farming until the arrival of Spanish explorers.
- The Spanish wanted the land in Mexico because of its deposits of gold and silver, which they mined persistently to enrich the Spanish monarch.
- In 1810, Miguel Hidalgo was the first person to fight for Mexican independence. Although he was unsuccessful, he became the symbol of independence.
- After gaining independence, Mexico and the United States fought over land, and Mexico lost all its territory north of the Rio Grande River.

Section 3: The Government of Mexico

- The Mexican government is similar to the US government because they are both presidential democracies with a federal government.
- The legislative branch is named the National Congress.
- All citizens over age 18 can vote for one of Mexico's many political parties.

Section 4: The Economy of Mexico

- Mexico has a market economy that allows individuals and private companies to make their own decisions.
- Most Mexican people live in urban areas and have manufacturing jobs to meet the export demand created by NAFTA and other free trade agreements.
- The standard of living for Mexicans has been improving as the country's GDP continues to grow.

Section 5: US-Mexico Relations

- The United States and Mexico have a long history of cooperation especially in the unique economy and culture found in the border region.
- The two countries also work together to address organized crime and security concerns in Mexico under the Mérida Initiative.
- Mexico and the United States trade extensively, especially in Georgia, where 150,000 jobs are created specifically due to Mexican trading.
- Mexico is the third-largest supplier of crude oil to the United States.

Activities for Learning

Reviewing People, Places, and Things



Imagine you are a journalist. Using your knowledge of Mexico, write a realistic headline for each of the words below.

archaeologists
National Congress
Mexican peso
border region
Popocatépetl
Día de los Muertos
life expectancy
drug cartel

Understanding the Facts



1. What is Latin America?
2. Name four of Mexico's natural resources.
3. What empires were in Mexico before the arrival of Spanish explorers?
4. What is a viceroy?
5. Who is Benito Juárez?
6. How many states does Mexico have?
7. What is PEMEX?
8. What is the border region?

Developing Critical Thinking



1. The United States government estimates that up to \$29 billion in drug money goes from the United States to Mexico each year. Explain what this means using economic terms. Who is the consumer? What is the good? How is this an example of supply and demand? How do you think this money supports drug cartels?
2. Bilateral trade between the United States and Mexico creates 150,000 jobs in Georgia alone. Based on your knowledge of economics, how do you think NAFTA encourages job creation and improves the standard of living for Mexicans and Americans?

Writing across the Curriculum



Mexico City suffers from concentrated and unhealthy air pollution. Based on what you learned about the causes of air pollution, what would you do to solve this problem? Explain why.

Applying Your Skills



Create a map of Mexico that shows the country's various terrains and geographical features. Include a legend to identify each terrain and properly label geographical features.

Exploring Technology



Use Google Maps including street view to look at the Mayan archaeological sites of Palenque and Chichen Itza. What characteristics are most impressive? Does anything surprise you about these archaeological sites?