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LATIN AMERICA

NINTH EDITION

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LATIN AMERICA

NINTH EDITION

Dr. Paul B. Goodwin Jr.
University of Connecticut, Storrs

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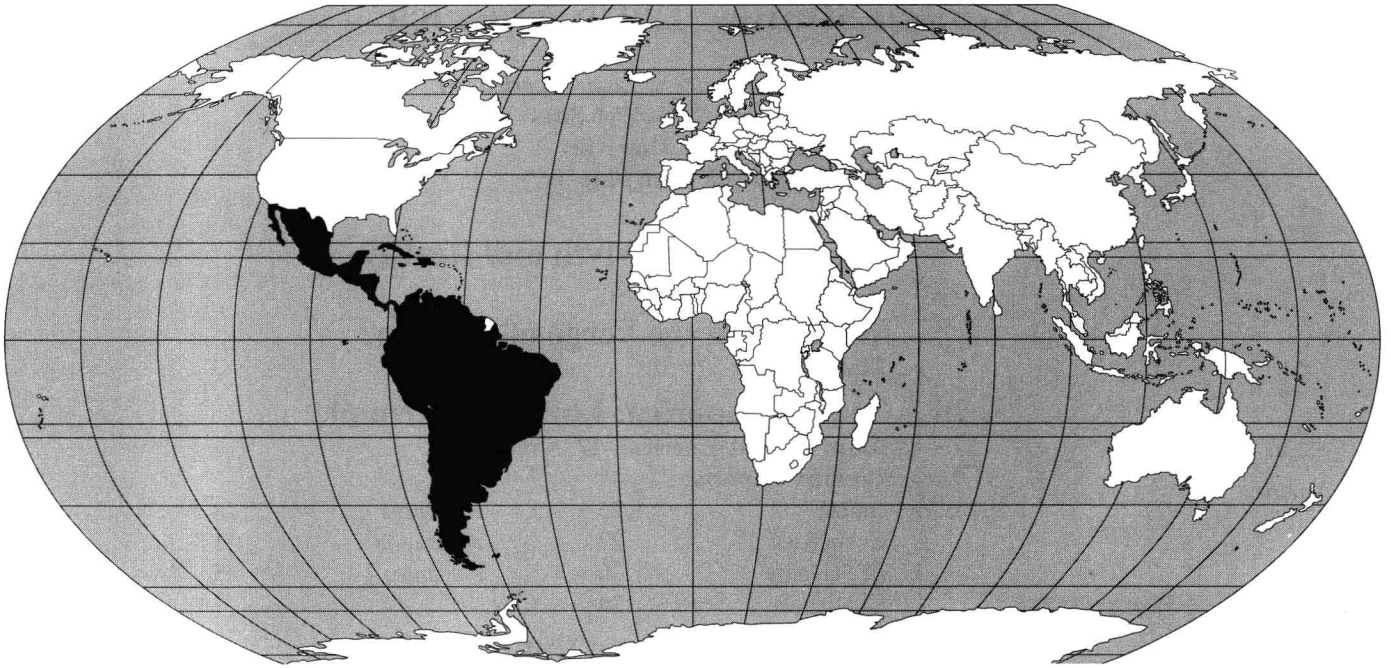
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Latin America



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The author/editor of *Global Studies: Latin America* is Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut at Storrs. Dr. Goodwin has written, reviewed, and lectured extensively at universities in the United States and many other countries. His particular area of interest is modern Argentina and Anglo–Latin American relations. Dr. Goodwin has lectured frequently for the Smithsonian Institution, and he has authored or edited three books and numerous articles.

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Using Global Studies: Latin America

THE GLOBAL STUDIES SERIES

The Global Studies series was created to help readers acquire a basic knowledge and understanding of the regions and countries in the world. Each volume provides a foundation of information—geographic, cultural, economic, political, historical, artistic, and religious—that will allow readers to better assess the current and future problems within these countries and regions and to comprehend how events there might affect their own well-being. In short, these volumes present the background information necessary to respond to the realities of our global age.

Each of the volumes in the Global Studies series is crafted under the careful direction of an author/editor—an expert in the area under study. The author/editors teach and conduct research and have traveled extensively through the regions about which they are writing.

In this *Global Studies: Latin America* edition, the author/editor has written an introductory essay on Latin America as a whole, several subregional essays, and country reports for each of the countries included.

MAJOR FEATURES OF THE GLOBAL STUDIES SERIES

The Global Studies volumes are organized to provide concise information on the regions and countries within those areas under study. The major sections and features of the books are described here.

Regional Essays

For *Global Studies: Latin America*, the author/editor has written several essays focusing on the religious, cultural, sociopolitical, and economic differences and similarities of the countries and peoples in the various subregions of Latin America. Regional maps accompany the essays.

Country Reports

Concise reports are written for each of the countries within the region under study. These reports are the heart of each Global Studies volume. *Global Studies: Latin America, Ninth Edition*, contains 33 country reports, including a Mexico report, seven reports for Central America, 12 for South America, and 13 for the Caribbean. The reports cover each *independent country* in Latin America.

The country reports are composed of five standard elements. Each report contains a detailed map visually positioning the country among its neighboring states; a summary of statistical information; a current essay providing important historical, geographical, political, cultural, and economic information; a historical timeline, offering a convenient visual survey of a few key historical events; and four “graphic indicators,” with summary statements about the country in terms of development, freedom, health/welfare, and achievements.

A Note on the Statistical Reports

The statistical information provided for each country has been drawn from a wide range of sources. (The most frequently referenced are listed on page 206.) Every effort has been made to provide the most current and accurate information available. However, sometimes the information cited by these sources differs to some extent; and, all too often, the most current information available for

some countries is somewhat dated. Aside from these occasional difficulties, the statistical summary of each country is generally quite complete and up to date. Care should be taken, however, in using these statistics (or, for that matter, any published statistics) in making hard comparisons among countries. We have also provided comparable statistics for the United States and Canada, which can be found on pages viii and ix.

World Press Articles

Within each Global Studies volume is reprinted a number of articles carefully selected by our editorial staff and the author/editor from a broad range of international periodicals and newspapers. The articles have been chosen for currency, interest, and their differing perspectives on the subject countries. There are 20 articles in *Global Studies: Latin America, Ninth Edition*.

The articles section is preceded by an annotated table of contents as well as a topic guide. The annotated table of contents offers a brief summary of each article, while the topic guide indicates the main theme(s) of each article. Thus, readers desiring to focus on articles dealing with a particular theme, say, the environment, may refer to the topic guide to find those articles.

WWW Sites

An extensive annotated list of selected World Wide Web sites can be found on the facing page (vii) in this edition of *Global Studies: Latin America*. In addition, the URL addresses for country-specific Web sites are provided on the statistics page of most countries. All of the Web site addresses were correct and operational at press time. Instructors and students alike are urged to refer to those sites often to enhance their understanding of the region and to keep up with current events.

Glossary, Bibliography, Index

At the back of each Global Studies volume, readers will find a glossary of terms and abbreviations, which provides a quick reference to the specialized vocabulary of the area under study and to the standard abbreviations used throughout the volume.

Following the glossary is a bibliography, which lists general works, national histories, and current-events publications and periodicals that provide regular coverage on Latin America.

The index at the end of the volume is an accurate reference to the contents of the volume. Readers seeking specific information and citations should consult this standard index.

Currency and Usefulness

Global Studies: Latin America, like the other Global Studies volumes, is intended to provide the most current and useful information available necessary to understand the events that are shaping the cultures of the region today.

This volume is revised on a regular basis. The statistics are updated, regional essays and country reports revised, and world press articles replaced. In order to accomplish this task, we turn to our author/editor, our advisory boards, and—hopefully—to you, the users of this volume. Your comments are more than welcome. If you have an idea that you think will make the next edition more useful, an article or bit of information that will make it more current, or a general comment on its organization, content, or features that you would like to share with us, please send it in for serious consideration.

Selected World Wide Web Sites for Latin America

All of these Web sites are hot-linked through the *Global Studies* home page:
<http://www.dushkin.com/globalstudies> (just click on a book).

Some Web sites are continually changing their structure and content, so the information listed may not always be available.

General Sites

1. CNN Online Page—<http://www.cnn.com>—U.S. 24-hour video news channel. News is updated every few hours.
2. C-SPAN Online—<http://www.c-span.org>—See especially C-SPAN International on the Web for International Programming Highlights and archived C-SPAN programs.
3. International Network Information Center at University of Texas—<http://inic.utexas.edu>—Gateway has pointers to international sites, including all Latin American countries.
4. International Business Resources on the WWW—<http://ciber.bus.msu.edu/busres/intrade.htm>—Connect to several international business links from this site. Included are links to a glossary of international trade terms, exporting data, international trade, current laws, and data on GATT, NAFTA, and MERCOSUR.
5. The Latino Connection—<http://home.tampabay.rr.com/latinoconnect/>—Individual Latino/Hispanic countries data include country information, government, history and culture, economy, business, travel, arts, higher education, and related Web pages.
6. Library of Congress Country Studies—<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html#toc>—An invaluable resource for facts and analysis of 100 countries' political, economic, social, and national-security systems and installations.
7. Political Science Resources—<http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk>—Dynamic gateway to sources available via European addresses. Listed by country name, this site includes official government pages, official documents, speeches, election information, and political events.
8. ReliefWeb—<http://www.reliefweb.int>—UN's Department of Humanitarian Affairs clearinghouse for international humanitarian emergencies. It has daily updates, including Reuters, VOA, and PANA.
9. Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG)—<http://sosig.esrc.bris.ac.uk>—Project of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). It catalogs 22 subjects and lists developing countries' URL addresses.
10. United Nations System—<http://www.unsystem.org>—The official Web site for the United Nations system of organizations. Everything is listed alphabetically, and data on UNICC and Food and Agriculture Organization are available.
11. UN Development Programme (UNDP)—<http://www.undp.org>—Publications and current information on world poverty, Mission Statement, UN Development Fund for Women, and much more. Be sure to see the Poverty Clock.
12. UN Environmental Programme (UNEP)—<http://www.unep.org>—Official site of UNEP. Information on UN environmental programs, products, services, events, and a search engine.
13. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)—<http://www.info.usaid.gov>—Graphically presented U.S. trade statistics with Latin America and the Caribbean.
14. U.S. Central Intelligence Agency Home Page—<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>—This site includes publications of the CIA, such as the World Fact Book, Fact Book on Intelligence, Handbook of International Economic Statistics, CIA Maps and Publications, and much more.
15. U.S. Department of State Home Page—<http://www.state.gov/www/ind.html>—Organized alphabetically Hot Topics (i.e., Country Reports, Human Rights, International Organizations, and much more).
16. World Bank Group—<http://www.worldbank.org>—News (press releases, summary of new projects, speeches), publications, topics in development, and countries and regions. Links to other financial organizations are available.
17. World Health Organizations (WHO)—<http://www.who.ch>—Maintained by WHO's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, the site uses Excite search engine to conduct keyword searches.
18. World Trade Organization—<http://www.wto.org>—Topics include foundation of world trade systems, data on textiles, intellectual property rights, legal frameworks, trade and environmental policies, and recent agreements.

Mexico

19. The Mexican Government—<http://world.presidencia.gob.mx>—This site offers a brief overview of the organization of the Mexican Republic, including the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches of the federal government.
20. Documents on Mexican Politics—<http://www.cs.unb.ca/~alopez-o/polind.html>—An archive of a large number of articles on Mexican democracy, freedom of the press, political parties, NAFTA, the economy, Chiapas, and so forth can be found on this Web site.

Central America

21. Central America News—<http://www.centralamericanews.com>—Access to data that includes individual country reports, politics, economic news, travel, media coverage, and links to other sites are available here.
22. Latin World—<http://www.latinworld.com/centro/index.html>—Connecting links to data on the economy and finance, businesses, culture, government, and other areas of interest are available on this site.

South America

23. South America Daily—<http://www.southamericadaily.com>—Everything you want to know about South America is available from this site—from arts and culture, to government data, to environment issues, to individual countries.

Caribbean

24. Caribbean Studies—<http://www.hist.unt.edu/09w-blk4.htm>—A complete site for information about the Caribbean. Topics include general information, Caribbean religions, English Caribbean Islands, Dutch Caribbean Islands, French Caribbean Islands, Hispanic Caribbean Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
25. Library of Congress Report on the Islands of the Commonwealth Caribbean—<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cxtoc.html>—An extended study of the Caribbean is possible from this site.

We highly recommend that you review our Web site for expanded information and our other product lines. We are continually updating and adding links to our Web site in order to offer you the most usable and useful information that will support and expand the value of your book. You can reach us at: <http://www.dushkin.com/>

The United States (United States of America)

GEOGRAPHY

Area in Square Miles (Kilometers):

3,618,770 (9,578,626) (slightly larger than China)

Capital (Population): Washington, D.C. (567,100)

Environmental Concerns: air pollution resulting in acid rain; water pollution from runoff of pesticides and fertilizers; desertification; habitat loss; other concerns

Geographical Features: vast central plain, mountains in the west; hills and low mountains in the east; rugged mountains and broad river valleys in Alaska; volcanic topography in Hawaii

Climate: mostly temperate; wide regional variations

PEOPLE

Population

Total: 270,312,000

Annual Growth Rate: 0.87%

Rural/Urban Population Ratio: 24/76

Major Languages: predominantly English; a sizable Spanish-speaking minority; many others

Ethnic Makeup: 83% white; 12% black; 5% Asian, Amerindian, and others

Religions: 56% Protestant; 28% Roman Catholic; 2% Jewish; 14% others or no affiliation

Health

Life Expectancy at Birth: 73 years (male); 80 years (female)

Infant Mortality Rate (Ratio): 6.44/1,000

Average Caloric Intake: 138% of FAO minimum

Physicians Available (Ratio): 1/381

Education

Adult Literacy Rate: 97.9% (official) (estimates vary widely)

Compulsory (Ages): 7–16; free

COMMUNICATION

Telephones: 1 per 1.6 people

Daily Newspaper Circulation: 228 per 1,000 people; approximately 63,000,000 circulation

Televisions: 1 per 1.2 people

TRANSPORTATION

Highways in Miles (Kilometers): 3,906,960 (6,261,154)

Railroads in Miles (Kilometers): 149,161 (240,000)

Usable Airfields: 13,387

Motor Vehicles in Use: 200,500,000

GOVERNMENT

Type: federal republic

Independence Date: July 4, 1776 (from the United Kingdom)

Head of State: President William ("Bill") Jefferson Clinton

Political Parties: Democratic Party; Republican Party; others of minor political significance

Suffrage: universal at 18

MILITARY

Military Expenditures (% of GDP): 3.8%

Current Disputes: none

ECONOMY

Per Capita Income/GDP: \$30,200/\$8.08 trillion

GDP Growth Rate: 3.8%

Inflation Rate: 2%

Unemployment Rate: 4.9%

Labor Force: 136,300,000

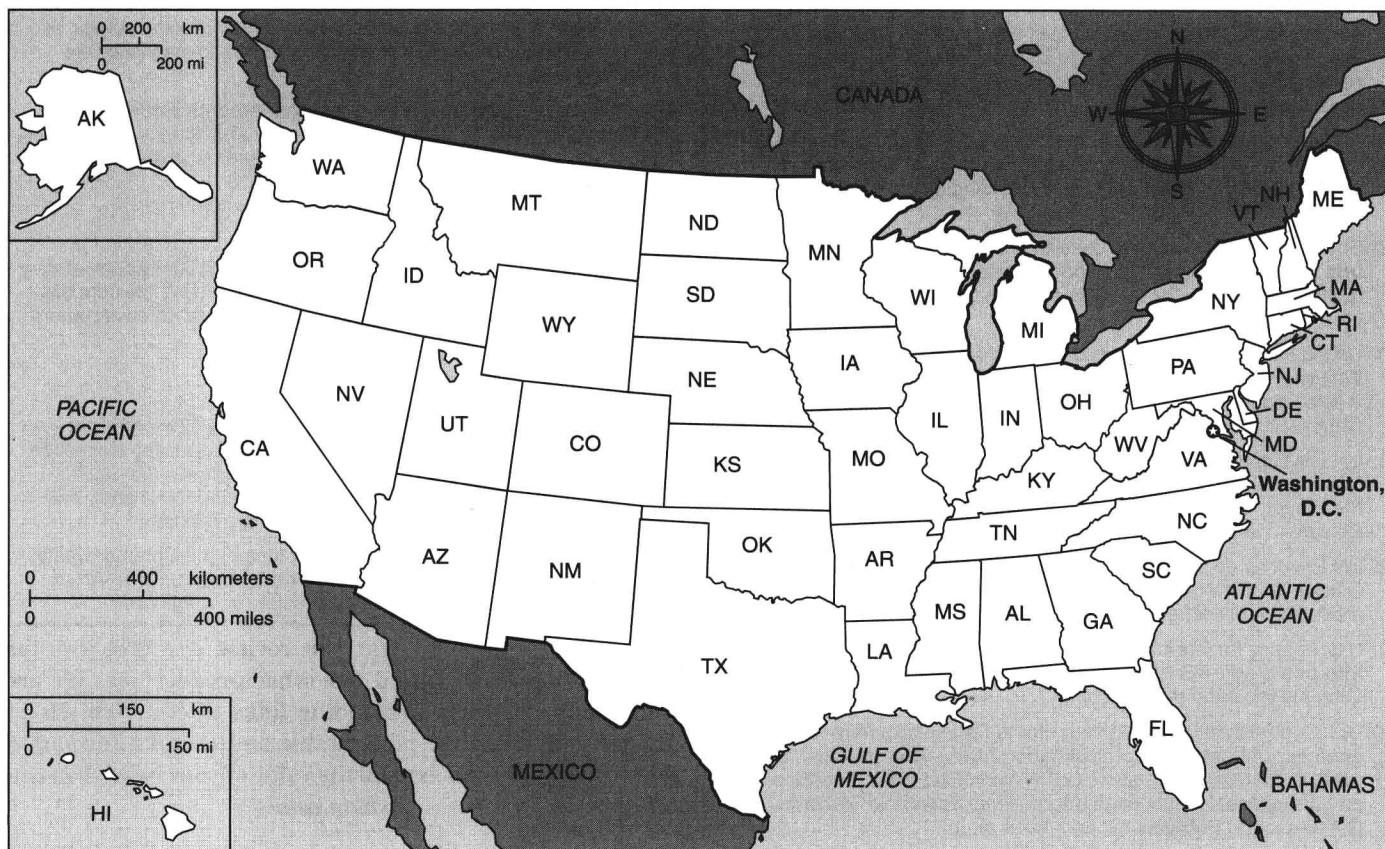
Natural Resources: metallic and non-metallic minerals; petroleum; natural gas; timber

Agriculture: food grains; feed crops; oil-bearing crops; livestock; dairy products

Industry: diversified in both capital- and consumer-goods industries

Exports: \$625.1 billion (primary partners Canada, Western Europe, Japan, Mexico)

Imports: \$822 billion (primary partners Canada, Western Europe, Japan, Mexico)



Canada

GEOGRAPHY

Area in Square Miles (Kilometers):

3,850,790 (9,976,140) (slightly larger than the United States)

Capital (Population): Ottawa (1,000,000)

Environmental Concerns: air pollution and resulting acid rain severely affecting lakes and damaging forests; water pollution

Geographical Features: permafrost in the north; mountains in the west; central plains

Climate: from temperate in south to subarctic and arctic in north

PEOPLE

Population

Total: 30,676,000

Annual Growth Rate: 1.09%

Rural/Urban Population Ratio: 23/77

Major Languages: both English and French are official

Ethnic Makeup: 40% British Isles origin; 27% French origin; 20% other European; 1.5% indigenous Indian and Eskimo; 11.5% others, mostly Asian

Religions: 46% Roman Catholic; 16% United Church; 10% Anglican; 28% others

Health

Life Expectancy at Birth: 76 years (male); 83 years (female)

Infant Mortality Rate (Ratio): 5.59/1,000

Average Caloric Intake: 127% of FAO minimum

Physicians Available (Ratio): 1/464

Education

Adult Literacy Rate: 97%

Compulsory (Ages): primary school

COMMUNICATION

Telephones: 1 per 1.7 people

Daily Newspaper Circulation: 189 per 1,000 people

Televisions: 1 per 1.5 people

TRANSPORTATION

Highways in Miles (Kilometers): 637,104 (1,021,000)

Railroads in Miles (Kilometers): 48,764 (78,148)

Usable Airfields: 1,139

Motor Vehicles in Use: 16,700,000

GOVERNMENT

Type: confederation with parliamentary democracy

Independence Date: July 1, 1867 (from United Kingdom)

Head of State/Government: Queen Elizabeth II; Prime Minister Jean Chrétien

Political Parties: Progressive Conservative Party; Liberal Party; New Democratic Party; Reform Party; Bloc Québécois
Suffrage: universal at 18

MILITARY

Military Expenditures (% of GDP): 1.53%

Current Disputes: none

ECONOMY

Currency (\$U.S. Equivalent): 1.53 Canadian dollars = \$1

Per Capita Income/GDP: \$21,700/\$658 billion

GDP Growth Rate: 3.5%

Inflation Rate: 1.8%

Unemployment Rate: 8.6%

Labor Force: 15,300,000

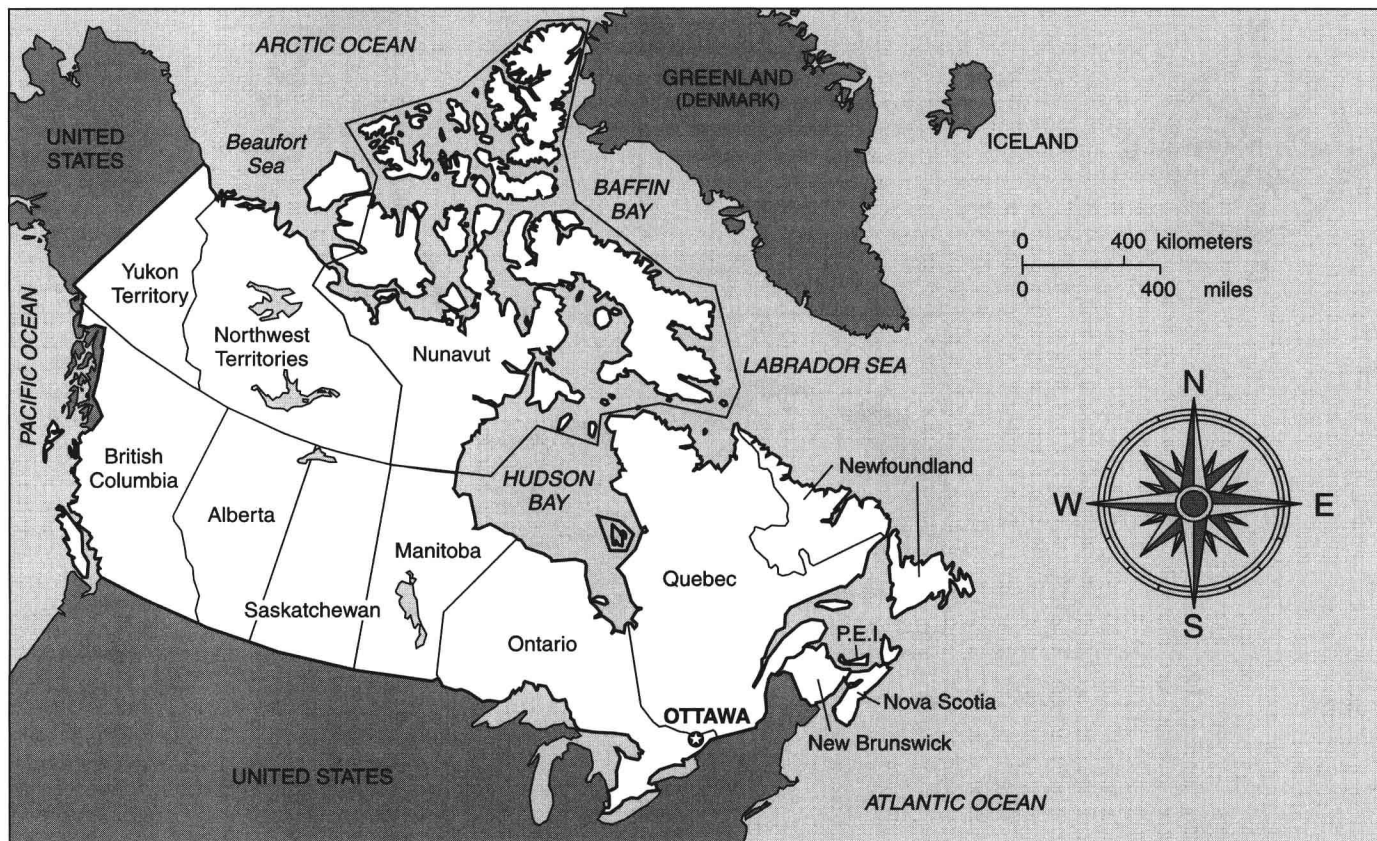
Natural Resources: petroleum; coal; natural gas; fish and other wildlife; minerals; cement; forestry products

Agriculture: grains; livestock; dairy products; potatoes; hogs; poultry and eggs; tobacco

Industry: oil production and refining; natural-gas development; fish products; wood and paper products; chemicals; transportation equipment

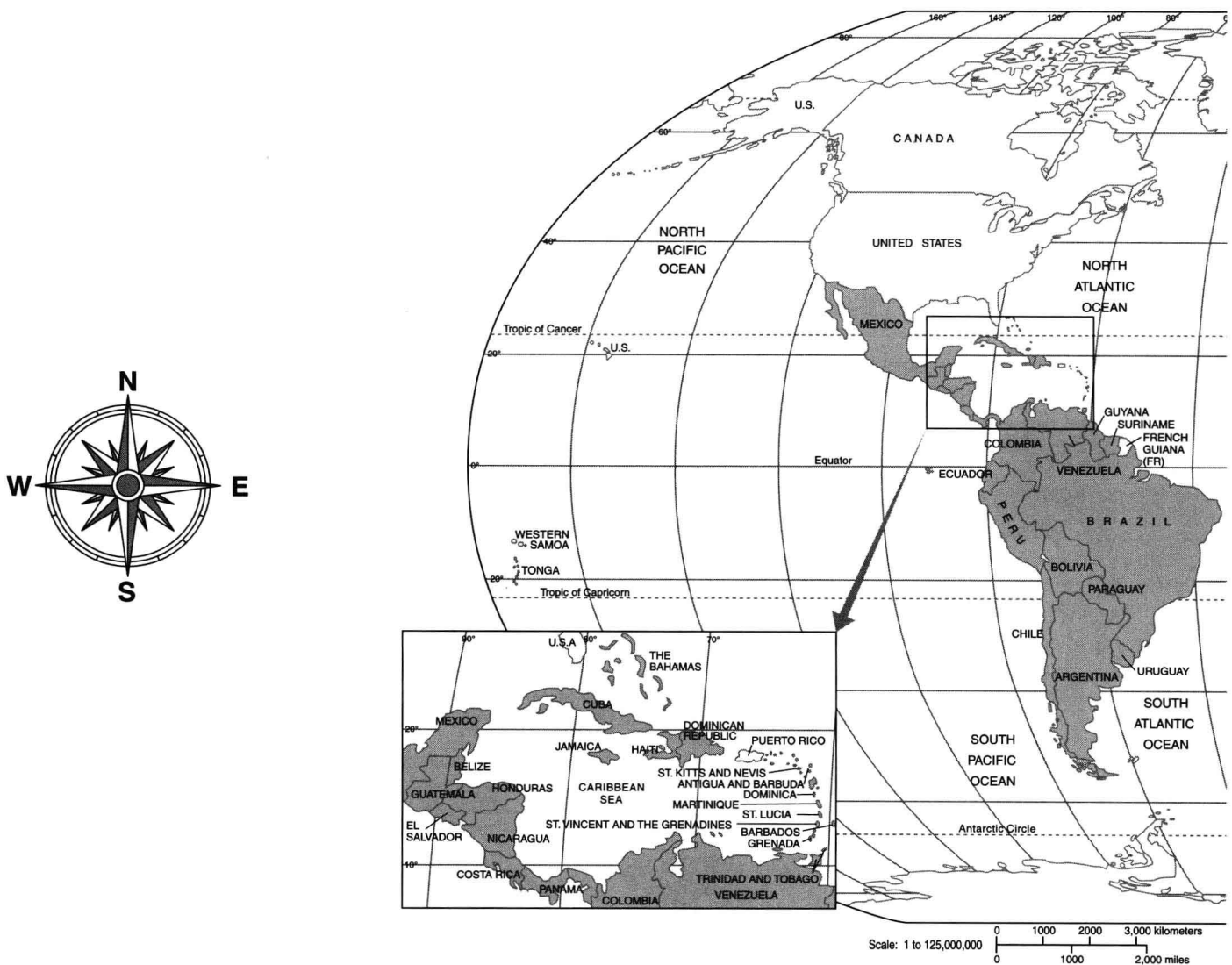
Exports: \$208.6 billion (primary partners United States, Japan, United Kingdom)

Imports: \$194.4 billion (primary partners United States, Japan, United Kingdom)



GLOBAL STUDIES

This map is provided to give you a graphic picture of where the countries of the world are located, the relationships they have with their region and neighbors, and their positions relative to the superpowers and power blocs. We have focused on certain areas to illustrate these crowded regions more clearly.



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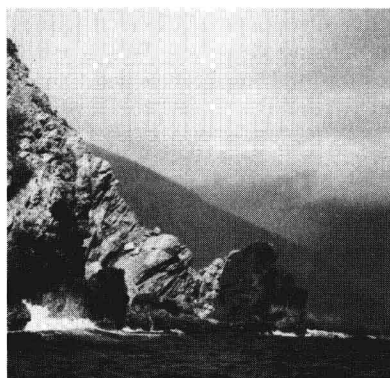
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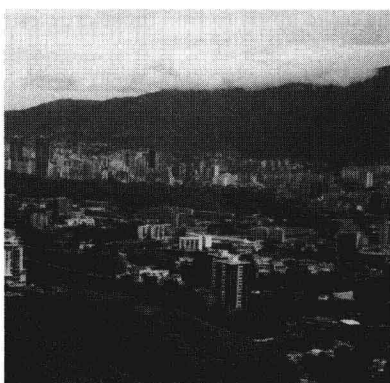
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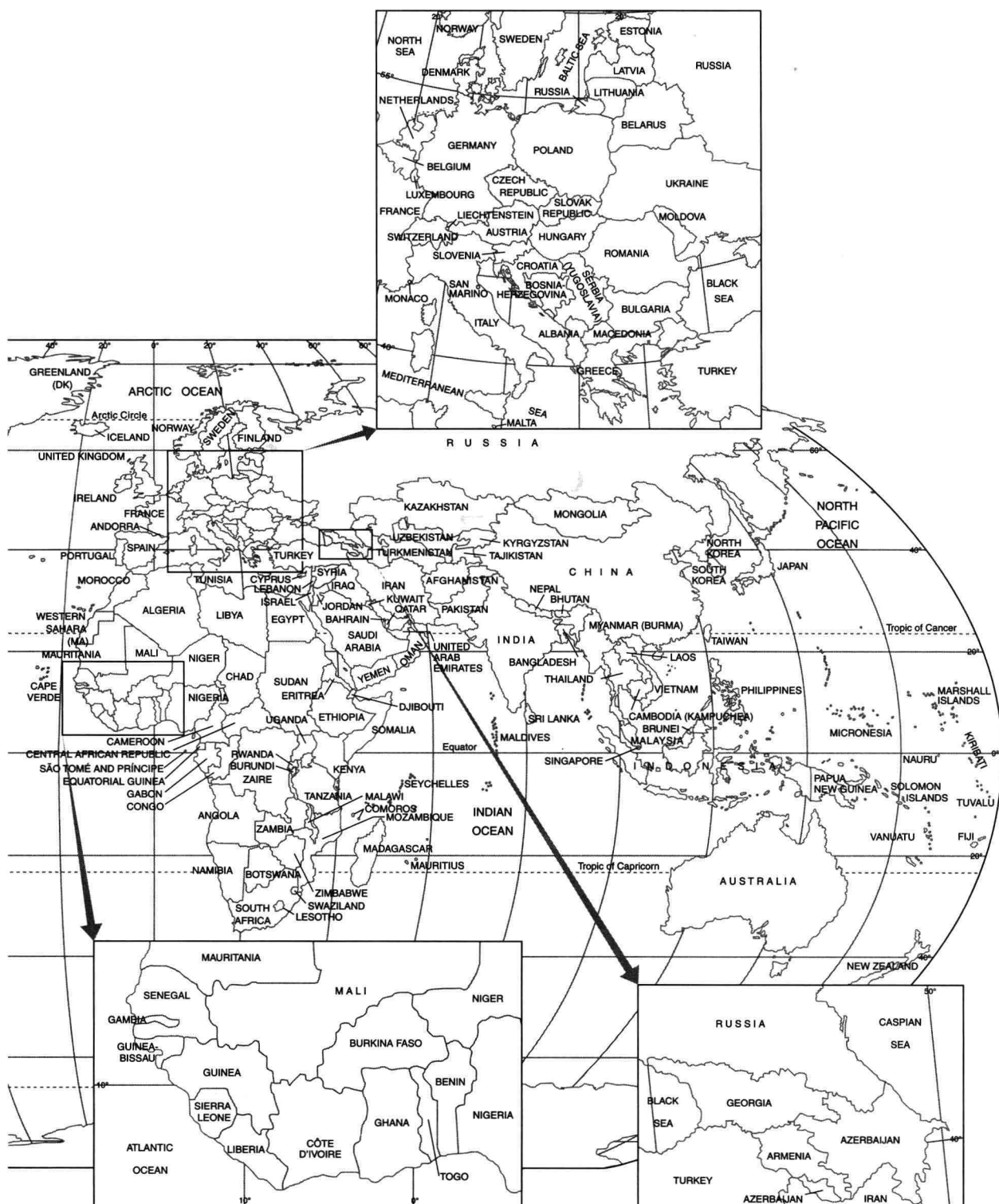
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Latin America



Latin America: Myth and Reality

Much of the world still tends to view Latin Americans in terms of stereotypes. The popular image of the mustachioed bandit sporting a large sombrero and draped with cartridge belts has been replaced by the figure of the modern-day guerrilla, but the same essential image, of lawlessness and violence, persists. Another common stereotype is that of the lazy Latin American who constantly puts things off until *mañana* ("tomorrow"). The implied message here is that Latin Americans lack industry and do not know how to make the best use of their time. A third widespread image is that of the Latin lover and the cult of *machismo* (manliness).

Many of those outside the culture find it difficult to conceive of Latin America as a mixture of peoples and cultures, each one distinct from the others. Indeed, it was not so long ago that then-U.S. president Ronald Reagan, after a tour of the region, remarked with some surprise that all of the countries were "different." Stereotypes spring from ignorance and bias; images are not necessarily a reflection of reality. In the words of Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset: "In politics and history, if one takes accepted statements at face value, one will be sadly misled."

THE LATIN AMERICAN REALITY

The reality of Latin America's multiplicity of cultures is, in a word, complexity. Europeans, Africans, and the indigenous people of Latin America have all contributed substantially to these cultures. If one sets aside non-Hispanic influences for a moment, is it possible to argue, as does historian Claudio Veliz, that "the Iberian [Spanish and Portuguese] inheritance is an essential part of our lives and customs; Brazil and Spanish America [i.e., Spanish-speaking] have derived their personality from Iberia"?

Many scholars would disagree. For example, political scientist Lawrence S. Graham argues that "what is clear is that generalizations about Latin American cultural unity are no longer tenable." And that "one of the effects of nationalism has been to . . . lead growing numbers of individuals within the region to identify with their own nation-state before they think in terms of a more amorphous land mass called Latin America."

Granted, Argentines speak of their Argentinity and Mexicans of their *mejicanidad*. It is true that there are profound differences that separate the nations of the region. But there exists a cultural bedrock that ties Latin America to Spain and Portugal, and beyond—to the Roman Empire and the great cultures of the Mediterranean world. African influence, too, is substantial in many parts of the region. Latin America's Indians, of course, trace their roots to indigenous sources.

To understand the nature of Latin American culture, one must remember that there exist many exceptions to the generalizations; the cultural mold is not rigid. Much of what has happened in Latin America, including the evolution of its

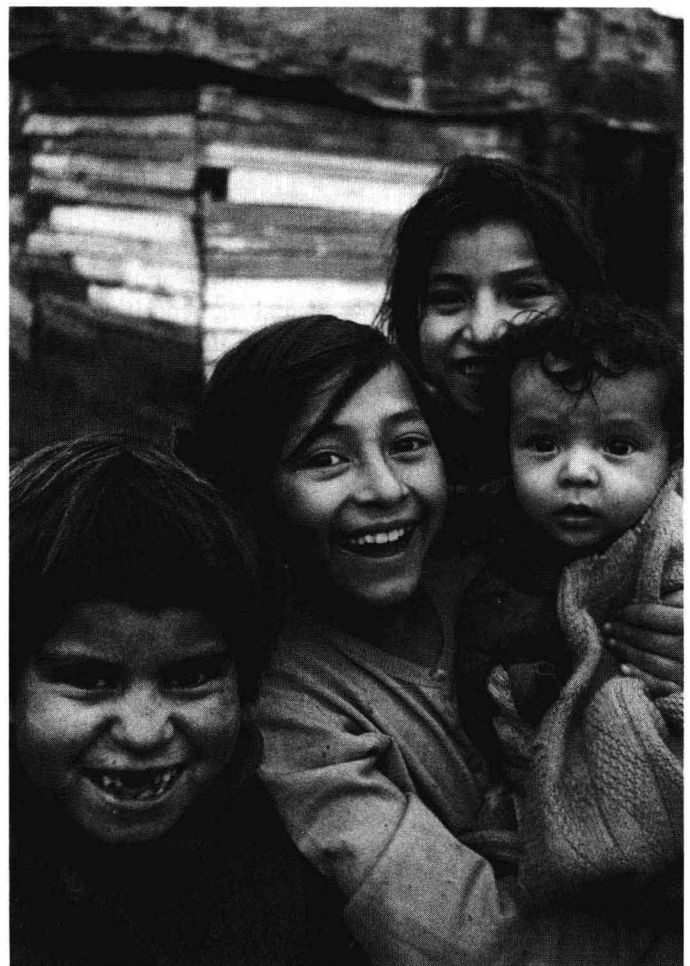
cultures, is the result of a fortunate—and sometimes an unfortunate—combination of various factors.

THE FAMILY

Let us first consider the Latin American family. The family unit has survived even Latin America's uneven economic development and the pressures of modernization. Family ties are strong and dominant. These bonds are not confined to the nuclear family of father, mother, and children. The same close ties are found in the extended family (a network of second cousins, godparents, and close friends of blood relatives). In times of difficulty, the family can be counted on to help. It is a fortress against the misery of the outside world; it is the repository of dignity, honor, and respect.

AN URBAN CIVILIZATION

In a region where the interaction of networks of families is the rule and where frequent human contact is sought out, it is not surprising to find that Latin Americans are, above all, an



(United Nations photo)

In Latin America, the family is an important element in the cultural context. These loving children live in a poor section of Santiago, Chile.

urban people. There are more cities of more than half a million people in Latin America than in the United States.

Latin America's high urban population is unusual, for urbanization is usually associated with industrialization. In Latin America, urban culture was not created by industrial growth; it actually pre-dated it. As soon as the opportunity presented itself, the Spanish conquerors of the New World, in Veliz's words, "founded cities in which to take refuge from the barbaric, harsh, uncivilized, and rural world outside. . . . For those men civilization was strictly and uniquely a function of well-ordered city life."

The city, from the Spanish conquest until the present, has dominated the social and cultural horizon of Latin America. Opportunity is found in the city, not in the countryside. This cultural fact of life, in addition to economic motives, accounts for the continuing flow of population from rural to urban areas in Latin America.

A WORLD OF APPEARANCES

Because in their urban environment Latin Americans are in close contact with many other people, appearances are important to them. There is a constant quest for prestige, dignity, status, and honor. People are forever trying to impress one another with their public worth. Hence, it is not unusual to see a blue-collar worker traveling to work dressed in a suit, briefcase in hand. It is not uncommon to see jungles of television antennas over shantytowns, although many are not connected to anything.

It is a society that, in the opinion of writer Octavio Paz, hides behind masks. Latin Americans convey an impression of importance, no matter how menial their position. Glen Dealy, a political scientist, writes: "And those of the lower class who must wait on tables, wash cars, and do gardening for a living can help to gain back a measure of self-respect by having their shoes shined by someone else, buying a drink for a friend . . . , or concealing their occupation by wearing a tie to and from work."

MACHISMO

Closely related to appearances is *machismo*. The term is usually understood solely, and mistakenly, in terms of virility—the image of the Latin lover, for example. But machismo also connotes generosity, dignity, and honor. In many respects, macho behavior is indulged in because of social convention; it is expected of men. Machismo is also one of those cultural traits that cuts through class lines, for the macho is admired regardless of his social position.

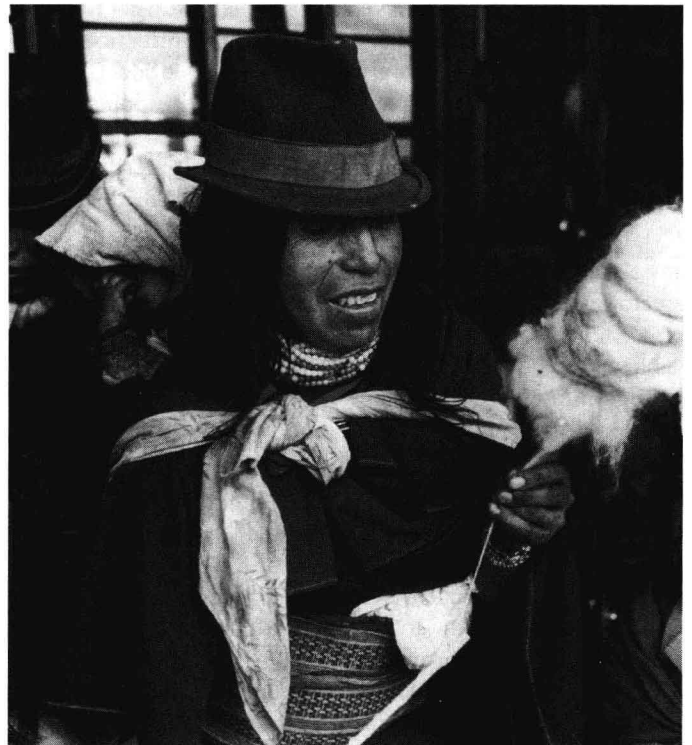
THE ROLE OF WOMEN

If the complex nature of machismo is misunderstood by those outside the culture, so too is the role of women. The commonly held stereotype is that Latin American women are submissive and that the culture is dominated by males. Again, appearances mask a far more complex reality, for Latin

American cultures actually allow for strong female roles. Political scientist Evelyn Stevens, for example, has found that *marianismo*—the female counterpart of machismo—permeates all strata of Latin American society. Marianismo is the cult of feminine spiritual superiority that "teaches that women are semi-divine, morally superior to and spiritually stronger than men."

When Mexico's war for independence broke out in 1810, a religious symbol—the Virgin of Guadalupe—was identified with the rebels and became a rallying point for the first stirrings of Mexican nationalism. It was not uncommon in Argentine textbooks to portray Eva Perón (1919–1952), president Juan Perón's wife, in the image of the Virgin Mary, complete with a blue veil and halo. In less religious terms, one of Latin America's most popular novels, *Doña Barbara*, by Rómulo Gallegos, is the story of a female *caudillo* ("man on horseback") on the plains of Venezuela.

The Latin American woman dominates the family because of a deep-seated respect for motherhood. Personal identity is less of a problem for her because she retains her family name upon marriage and passes it on to her children. Women who work outside the home are also supposed to retain respect for their motherhood, which is sacred. In any conflict between a woman's job and the needs of her family, the employer, by custom, must grant her a leave to tend to the family's needs. Recent historical scholarship has also revealed that Latin



(United Nations photo/Bernard P. Wolff)

The role of the indigenous woman in Latin America has been defined by centuries of tradition. This woman is spinning wool, in Chimburazo, Ecuador, just as her ancestors did.

American women have long enjoyed rights denied to women in other, more “advanced” parts of the world. For example, Latin American women were allowed to own property and to sign for mortgages in their own names even in colonial days. In the 1920s, they won the right to vote in local elections in Yucatán, Mexico, and San Juan, Argentina.

Here again, though, appearances can be deceiving. Many Latin American constitutions guarantee equality of treatment, but reality is burdensome for women in many parts of the region. They do not have the same kinds of access to jobs that men enjoy; they seldom receive equal pay for equal work; and family life, at times, can be brutalizing.

WORK AND LEISURE

Work, leisure, and concepts of time in Latin America correspond to an entirely different cultural mind-set than exists in Northern Europe and North America. The essential difference was demonstrated in a North American television commercial for a wine, in which two starry-eyed people were portrayed giving the Spanish toast *Salud, amor, y pesetas* (“Health, love, and money”). For a North American audience, the message was appropriate. But the full Spanish toast includes the tag line *y el tiempo para gozarlos* (“and the time to enjoy them”).

In Latin America, leisure is viewed as a perfectly rational goal. It has nothing to do with being lazy or indolent. Indeed, in *Ariel*, by writer José Enrique Rodó, leisure is described

within the context of the culture: “To think, to dream, to admire—these are the ministrants that haunt my cell. The ancients ranked them under the word *otium*, well-employed leisure, which they deemed the highest use of being truly rational, liberty of thought emancipated of all ignoble chains. Such leisure meant that use of time which they opposed to mere economic activity as the expression of a higher life. Their concept of dignity was linked closely to this lofty conception of leisure.” Work, by contrast, is often perceived as a necessary evil.

CONCEPTS OF TIME

Latin American attitudes toward time also reveal the inner workings of the culture. Exasperated North American businesspeople have for years complained about the *mañana*, *mañana* attitude of Latin Americans. People often are late for appointments; sometimes little *appears* to get done.

For the North American who believes that time is money, such behavior appears senseless. However, Glen Dealy, in his perceptive book *The Public Man*, argues that such behavior is perfectly rational. A Latin American man who spends hours over lunch or over coffee in a café is not wasting time. For here, with his friends and relatives, he is with the source of his power. Indeed, networks of friends and families are the glue of Latin American society. “Without spending time in this fashion he would, in fact, soon have fewer friends. Addi-



(United Nations photo/Jerry Frank)

Agriculture is the backbone of much of Latin America’s cultures and economies. These workers are harvesting sugarcane on a plantation in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil.

tionally, he knows that to leave a café precipitously for an 'appointment' would signify to all that he must not keep someone else waiting—which further indicates his lack of importance. If he had power and position the other person would wait upon his arrival. It is the powerless who wait." Therefore, friends and power relationships are more important than rushing to keep an appointment. The North American who wants the business deal will wait. In a sense, then, the North American is the client and the Latin American is the *patrón* (the "patron," or wielder of power).

Perceptions of time in Latin America also have a broader meaning. North American students who have been exposed to Latin American literature are almost always confused by the absence of a "logical," chronological development of the story. Time, for Latin Americans, tends to be circular rather than linear. That is, the past and the present are perceived as equally relevant—both are points on a circle. The past is as important as the present.

MYTH AND REALITY

The past that is exposed in works of Latin American literature as well as scholarly writings reflects wholly different attitudes toward what people from other cultures identify as reality. For example, in Nobel Prize-winning writer Gabriel García Márquez's classic novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*—a fictional history of the town of Macondo and its leading family—fantasy and tall tales abound. But García Márquez drew his inspiration from stories he heard on his grandmother's knee about Aracataca, Colombia, the real town in which he grew up. The point here is that the fanciful story of the town's origins constitutes that town's memory of its past. The stories give the town a common heritage and memory.

From a North American or Northern European perspective, the historical memory is faulty. From the Latin American perspective, however, it is the perception of the past that is important, regardless of its factual accuracy. Myth and reality, appearances and substance, merge.

POLITICAL CULTURE

The generalizations drawn here about Latin American society apply also to its political culture, which is essentially authoritarian and oriented toward power and power relationships. Ideology—be it liberalism, conservatism, or communism—is little more than window dressing. It is the means by which contenders for power can be separated. As Claudio Veliz has noted, regardless of the aims of revolutionary leaders, the great upheavals in Latin America in the twentieth century have without exception ended up by strengthening the political center, which is essentially authoritarian. This was true of the Mexican Revolution (1910), the Bolivian Revolution (1952), the Cuban Revolution (1958), and the Nicaraguan Revolution (1979).

Ideology has never been a decisive factor in the historical and social reality of Latin America. But charisma and the

ability to lead are crucial ingredients. José Velasco Ibarra, five times the president of Ecuador in the twentieth century, once boasted: "Give me a balcony and I will be president!" He saw his personality, not his ideology, as the key to power.

In the realm of national and international relations, Latin America often appears to those outside the culture to be in a constant state of turmoil and chaos. It seems that every day there are reports that a prominent politician has fallen from power, border clashes have intensified, or guerrillas have taken over another section of a country. But the conclusion that chaos reigns in Latin America is most often based on the visible political and social violence, not on the general nature of a country. Political violence is often local in nature, and the social fabric of the country is bound together by the enduring social stability of the family. Again, there is the dualism of what *appears to be* and what *is*.

Much of this upheaval can be attributed to the division in Latin America between the people of Mediterranean background and the indigenous Indian populations. There may be several hundred minority groups within a single country. The problems that may arise from such intense internal differences, however, are not always necessarily detrimental, because they contribute to the texture and color of Latin American culture.

SEEING BEHIND THE MASK

In order to grasp the essence of Latin America, one must ignore the stereotypes, appreciate appearances for what they are, and attempt to see behind the mask. Latin America must be appreciated as a culture in its own right, as an essentially Mediterranean variant of Western civilization.

A Latin American world view tends to be dualistic. The family constitutes the basic unit; here one finds generosity, warmth, honor, and love. Beyond the walls of the home, in the world of business and politics, Latin Americans don their masks and enter "combat." It is a world of power relationships, of macho bravado, and of appearances. This dualism is deep-seated; scholars such as Richard Morse and Glen Dealy have traced its roots to the Middle Ages. For Latin Americans, one's activities are compartmentalized into those fitting for the City of God, which corresponds to religion, the home, and one's intimate circle of friends; and those appropriate for the City of Man, which is secular and often ruthless and corrupt. North Americans, who tend to measure their public and private lives by the same yardstick, often interpret Latin American dualism as hypocrisy. Nothing could be further from the truth.

For the Latin American, life exists on several planes, has purpose, and is perfectly rational. Indeed, one is tempted to suggest that many Latin American institutions—particularly the supportive network of families and friends—are more in tune with a world that can alienate and isolate than are our own. As you will see in the following reports, the social structure and cultural diversity of Latin America add greatly to its character and, paradoxically, to its stability.