

Chapter 10

Geography of Mexico

- Hernan Cortes - Spanish explorer who conquered Mexico
 - Described physical features of Mexico as: Crumpled piece of paper
- Mountain ranges –
 - Sierra Madre Occidental – _____ coast
 - Sierra Madre Oriental – _____ coast
 - Plateau (area of high, flat land) lies between
- The Heartland Region
- Natural Hazards
 - Central plateau is geologically unstable
 - Mexico is located at the intersection of _____ tectonic plates – North American, Caribbean, Pacific, and Cocos plates
- Climate Factors
 - Low precipitation to the north, moderate to the south
 - Higher elevation keeps temperatures mild, even though it is in the tropics

The Four Coastal Regions

1. Northern Pacific Coast
 - Dry, hot, and little population
 - Some of countries best farmlands – because of irrigation
 - Baja California – mostly mountainous desert
2. Southern Pacific Coast
 - Smaller mountain ranges
 - Little farmland
 - Large tourism business
3. Gulf Coast Plain
 - Vast deposits of petroleum and natural gas along the plain and offshore
 - One of world's major oil-producing regions
4. The Yucatan Peninsula
 - Generally flat
 - Limestone bedrock that creates underground caverns, Landscape is dotted with _____

- A Place of Three Cultures
- Plaza de las Tres Culturas
 - The Three Cultures – is located on the site of an Aztec center that fell to the Spanish in a 1521 battle
 - In the center there are restored ruins of an Aztec temple pyramid
 - One side has a 1609 Spanish church
 - Another side has twin office buildings of glass and concrete
 - A busy eight-lane highway runs past the plaza
- 3 Cultures
 1. Native American
 2. Spanish
 3. mestizo
- Aztecs and Spaniards
- Early 1400's, Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was center of an empire
 - Built on an island in a lake, current site of Mexico City
- The Spanish Conquest
 - Hernan Cortes, with 600 soldiers, marched into Tenochtitlan in 1519
 - Spaniards destroyed the Aztec empire within 2 years
 - Became colony of New Spain
- New Spain
 - Four social classes emerged
 1. Peninsulares – born in Spain
 2. Criollos – Spanish ancestry born in America
 3. Mestizos – mix of Native American and Europeans
 4. Indians – Native to America
- Road to Democracy

What events led to the eventual development of Democracy in Mexico?

- Resentment between classes
 - _____ – a criollos priest
 - Sparked a war for independence
- Independence did not mean democracy

- 100 years to achieve democracy
- End of 1800's, Mexico stable enough to attract foreign capital and industry
 - Oil reserves developed
- Gap between rich and poor grew even bigger

The Mexican Revolution

- 1910, peasants and middle-class Mexicans rebelled, standing up to the military dictator
 - By 1920, a new president and a new constitution
- Social Conditions
 - Rural Life
 - After the revolution, the government began program of buying out landowners and breaking up large haciendas – _____
 - **Ejidos** – farmland owned by members of a rural community practiced **subsistence farming**
 - 1/3 of Mexican farms are _____ (large commercial farms)
 - 3-4 million rural families are **migrant workers**
 - Urban Life
 - ¾ of Mexico's population live in cities
 - Better opportunity for jobs
 - Majority of people are very poor
 - Economic Activities
 - 1993, **NAFTA** (North American Free Trade Agreement) was designed to compete with the European Union, a free-trade network in Europe
 - Major Industries
 - Petroleum
 - _____ – the "smokeless industry"
 - Border Industries
 - _____ - factories that assemble products almost exclusively for consumers in the U.S.
 - Responsible for large amount of air and water pollution