


Chapter 9

Cultural Geography of Latin America



Chapter 9, Section 1

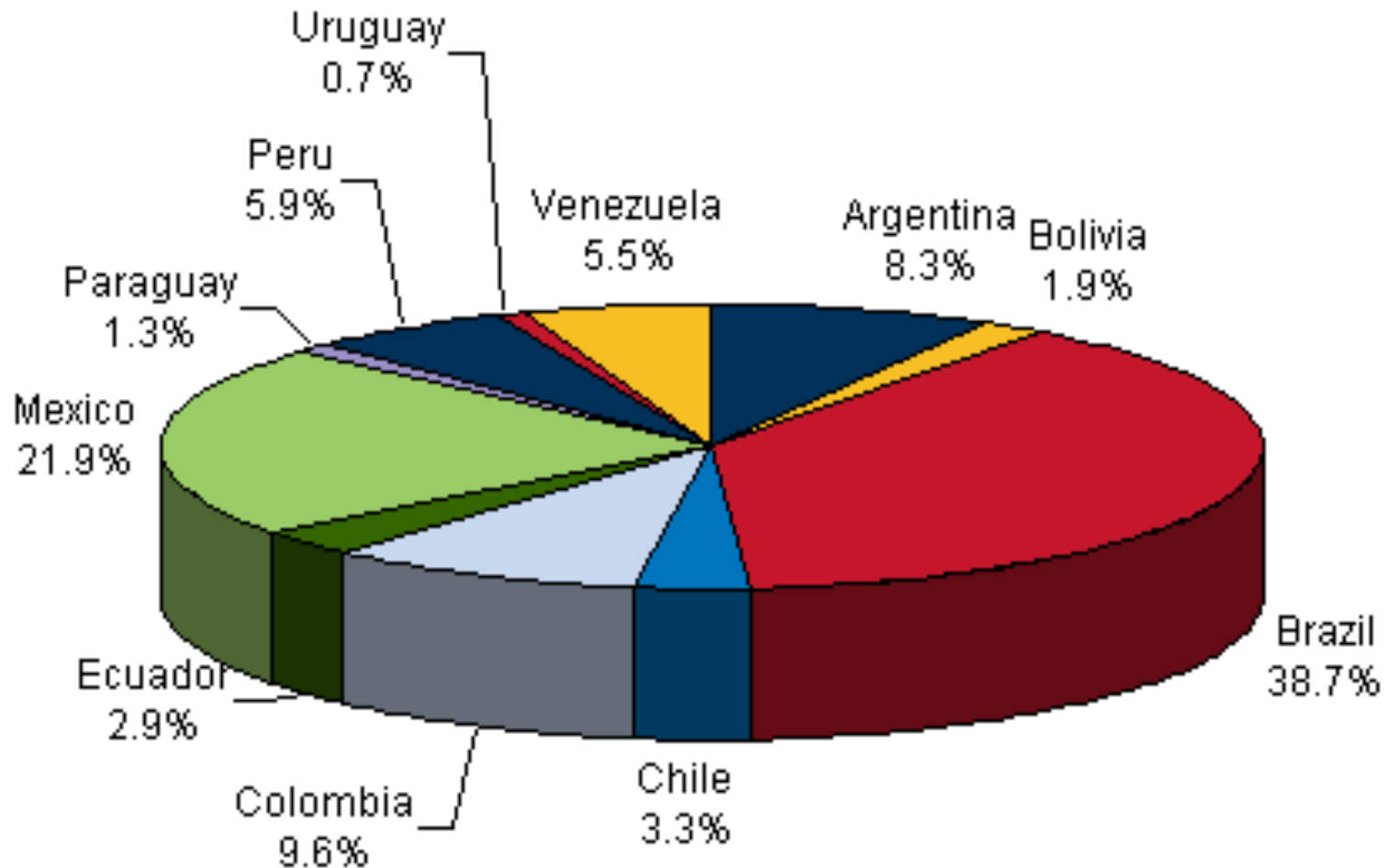
Population

Patterns

Population Patterns

-
- ✦ Latin America makes up 9% of the world's population
 - ✦ very ethnically diverse
 - ◆ Native Americans
 - ◆ Europeans
 - ◆ Africans
 - ◆ Asian
 - ◆ Mixed races

Distribution of Population in Latin America, 2004



*Density Of Population
(Persons per Sq.Km)*



Blending of Peoples

- ✦ Native Americans - first to settle Latin America
- ✦ 3 major indigenous groups
 - ◆ Maya—Yucatan Peninsula
 - ◆ Aztec—central Mexico
 - ◆ Inca—Peruvian highlands

Blending of Peoples

✦ Early culture hearths

- ◆ traditional cultures are still preserved and many Native Americans still live in Mexico, Central America, Ecuador, Peru & Bolivia

Europeans

- ✦ Spanish & Portuguese colonized in late 1400s after Columbus' discovery of the New World
- ✦ other European groups immigrated to Latin America later
- ✦ Italians, French, British, Germans
- ✦ Argentina & Uruguay are still considered immigrant nations

Africans

- ✦ came as slaves in 1500s
- ✦ mainly in Brazil & the Caribbean Islands
- ✦ late 1800s — slavery ended and many Africans stayed (families had been there for generations)
- ✦ added their cultural influence to food, music, arts & religions of Latin America

Asians

- ✦ came as temporary workers in the 1800s and stayed
- ✦ **Guyana** — almost half of the Asian population is of South or SE Asian descent
- ✦ **Argentina** — 85% of the Asian population is South or Southeast Asian
- ✦ **Peru, Mexico, Cuba** — there are many Chinese immigrants
- ✦ **Brazil & Peru** — Japanese immigrants; Peru even had a Japanese Prime Minister

Language

- ✦ Mostly adopted from **European** countries that colonized the area
 - ◆ **Spanish** — most common language spoken
 - ◆ **Portuguese** — in Brazil
 - ◆ **French & English** — also spoken in many Caribbean Islands

Language

- ✦ **dialects** — forms of a language unique to a particular place or group
 - ◆ many countries have different dialects of the same language
- ✦ millions still speak Native American languages
- ✦ many Latin Americans are bilingual
- ✦ others speak one of many forms of **patois** — dialects that blend elements of indigenous, European, African & Asian languages

Romance languages in Latin America:

Orange - Portuguese

Green - Spanish

Blue - French



Where Latin Americans Live

- ✦ High rate of population growth presents a unique challenge to Latin America because most of the population live on only 1/3 of the region's land because of varied climates and landscapes
- ✦ Most people live along the coasts & inland plateaus

Brasilia, Brazil



Where Latin Americans Live

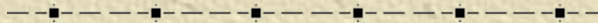
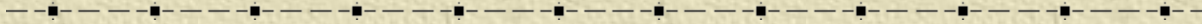


- ✦ Coastal regions have better climate, fertile land & access to transportation
- ✦ Few live in inland areas, the Patagonia, & the eastern coast near the Amazon

Migration — major force shaping population patterns in Latin America

- ✦ Latin Americans emigrated to the United States for better economic opportunities
- ✦ Many Asians have immigrated to Latin America
- ✦ Internal migration into cities is causing rapid urbanization

History of Latin America





3 Native American Empires

Inca

- ◆ lived in the Andes mountain ranges of South America
- ◆ used precise cut stones to build temples & fortresses; ex: Machu Picchu

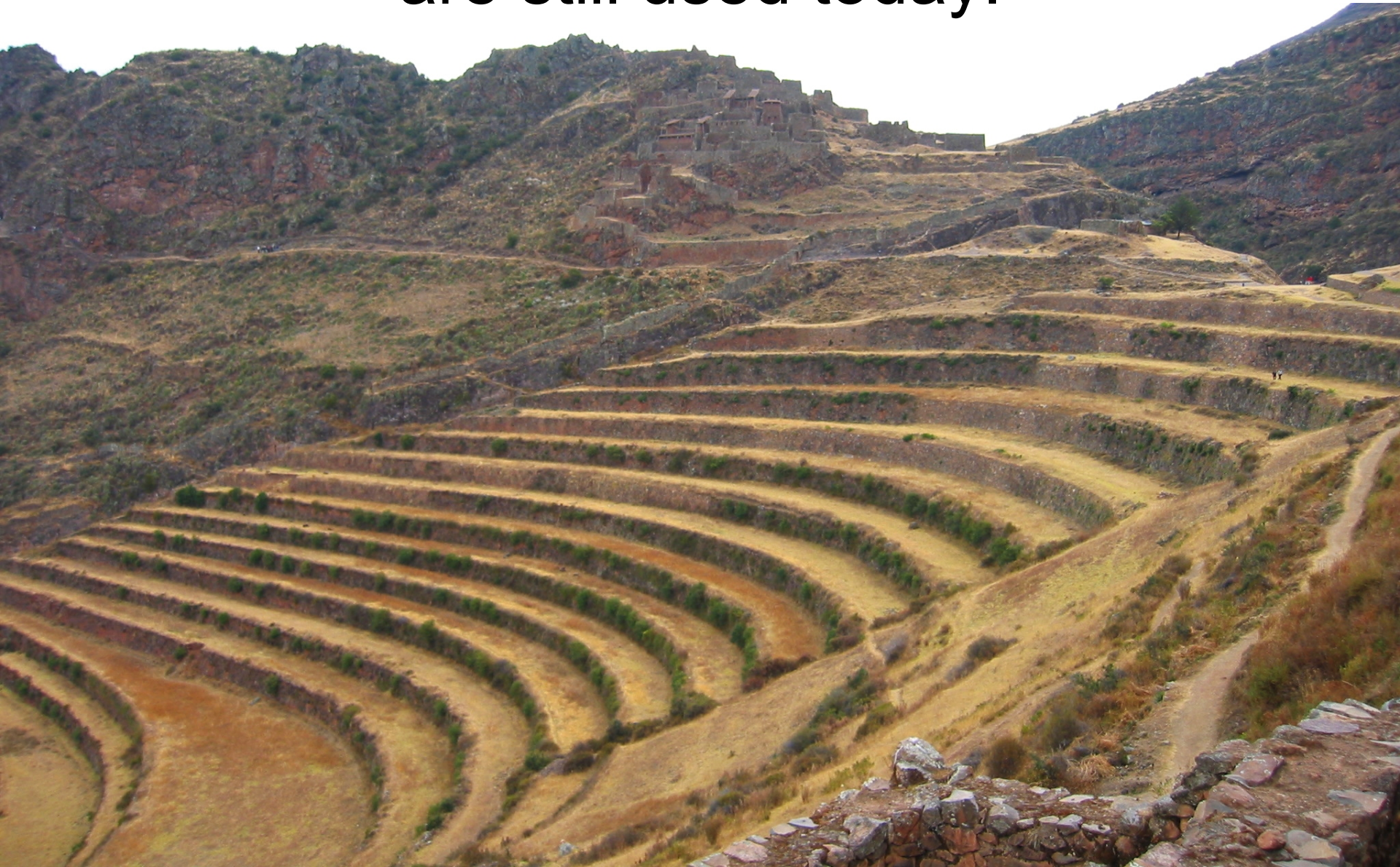




Temple of the Sun



The Incan terraces at Písac
are still used today.





✦ Incas

- ◆ cut terraces for farming; built irrigation systems
- ◆ domesticated alpacas & llamas
- ◆ used a quipu

✦ Mayans



Aztecs

- ◆ **Mandatory Education for all genders and ages**
- ◆ **Were a warrior society**
- ◆ **Created farming technique of Chinampa: floating islands for crops**

Empires to Nations

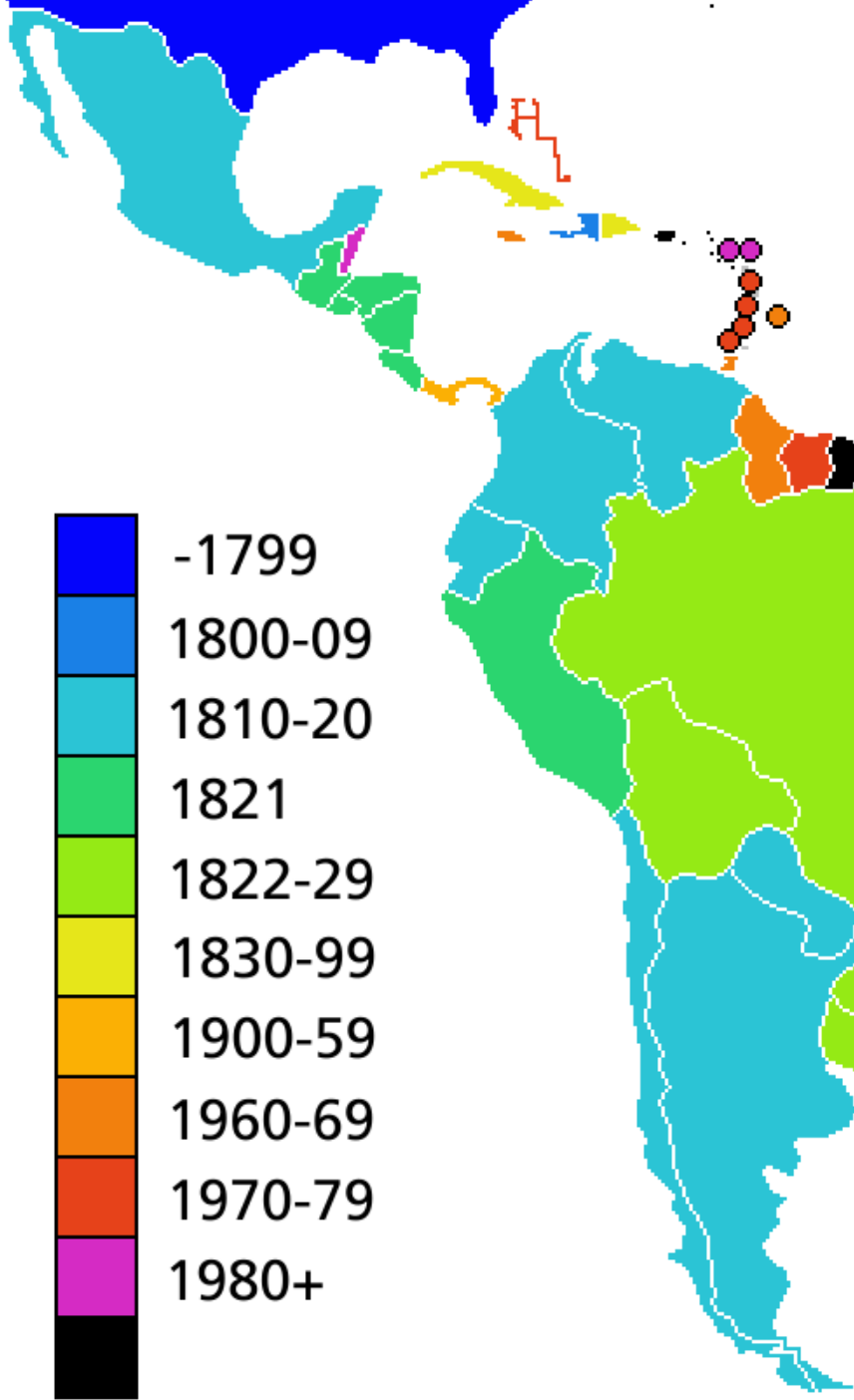
- ✦ European colonies began shortly after Columbus' voyages
- ✦ Colonies were sources of wealth for home countries
- ✦ silver & gold
- ✦ coffee, bananas & sugar cane plantations
- ✦ farms & cattle ranches

Empires to Nations

- ✦ Cities and towns were built as trade centers to send goods back to Europe
- ✦ Native Americans were forced to work on plantations; disease & hardship dwindled their numbers
- ✦ African slaves were then brought over

Move Toward Independence

- ✦ Began in the late 1700s because resentment against European rule
- ✦ Revolutions in the US and France inspired them



Independence of Latin American countries

Move Toward Independence

✧ Caribbean Islands — last to achieve independence (except Haiti)

✧ many still under foreign control

◆ Ex: Martinique — France

Cayman Islands — Great Britain

Puerto Rico & Virgin Islands — U.S.

Dictatorships

- ✦ Political & economic instability spread after wars for independence
- ✦ Power remained in the hands of a few — like in early Native American civilizations and European nations
 - ◆ Oligarchy

Dictatorships


- ✦ Written constitutions were ignored, revolts started
- ✦ Military control was necessary
- ✦ Gave rise to caudillos or dictators; corrupt politics

Movement for Change

- ✦ Revolution in Cuba — Fidel Castro overthrew the government and established a Communist state in 1959 that remains intact today
- ✦ Rest of Latin America — military dictatorships gave way to democratically elected governments

Movement for Change

- ✦ still political instability in some countries
- ✦ still trying to end corrupt politics throughout Latin America



Chapter 9, Section 3

Cultures &

Lifestyles

Religion

- ✦ Most Native Americans became Christians during the colonial era
- ✦ Now most Latin Americans are still Christians with the majority being Roman Catholic
- ✦ Other religions in the region include:
 - ◆ Traditional Native American & African religions sometimes mixed with Christianity
- ✦ In West Indies & parts of South America — Islam, Hinduism & Buddhism practiced by Asian immigrants

Roman Catholicism

- ✦ influences daily life of many Latin Americans
- ✦ In the early Catholic church, church leaders played significant roles in political affairs too.
- ✦ The Catholic church backed the wealthy & powerful during fight for independence.
- ✦ rise in Protestantism in late 1900s
 - ◆ b/c people could play a major role in their religious life unlike in Catholic faith

Roman Catholicism

✦ In the late 1900s, the Catholic church finally turned to supporting the poor & oppressed helping make improvements in education & healthcare

✦ mixed religions—syncretism—
blending of beliefs & practices from different religions into a single faith
(mostly in the rural areas – why?)

The Arts

- ✦ reflect a blend of European style with Native American & African cultures
- ✦ traditional arts: weaving, pottery, metalwork
 - murals — wall paintings
 - mosaics — pictures or designs made by setting small bits of colored stone, tile or shell **into mortar**

Colonial times

- ✦ Art reflected Christian themes
- ✦ Architecture was done in Spanish & Portuguese designs with ethnic details
- ✦ Africans brought rhythms, songs, & dances that evolved into calypso, reggae, samba

Modern Arts

✦ **Diego Rivera** — acclaimed Mexican Artist known for murals

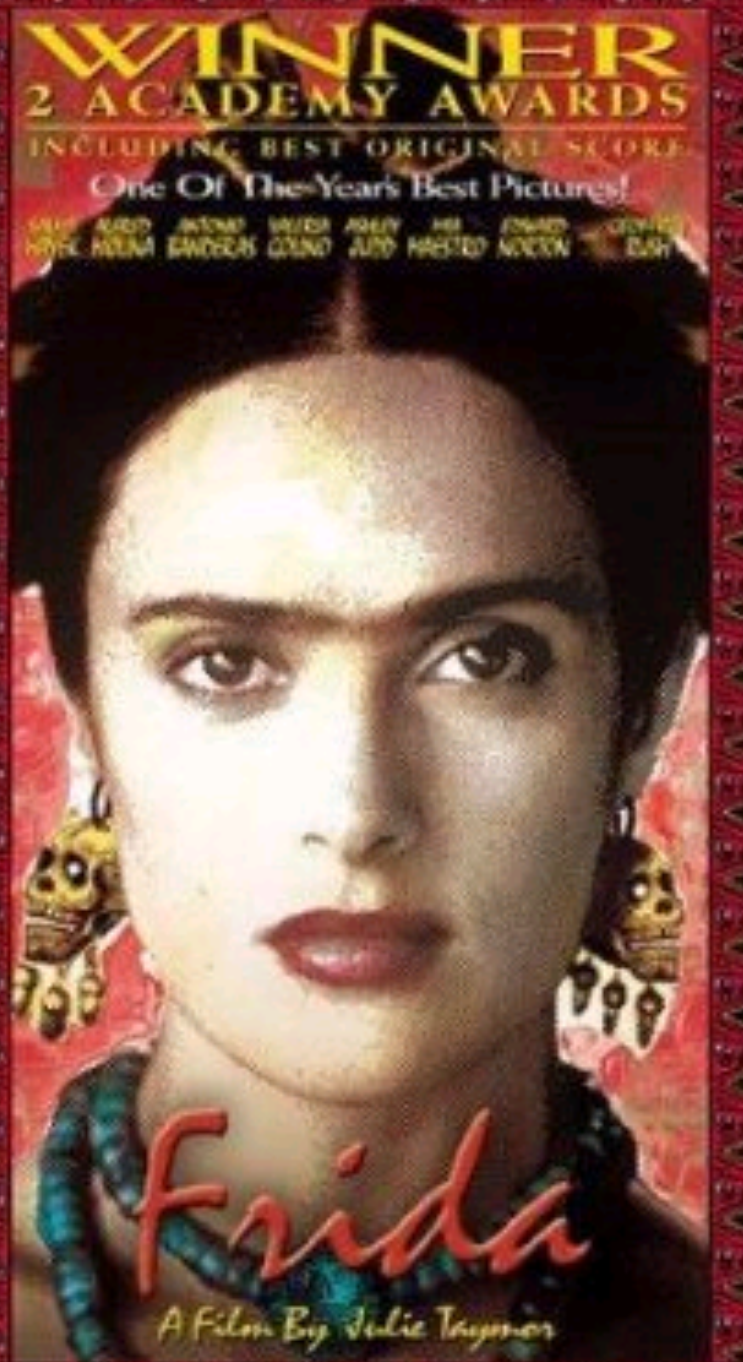
✦ **Frida Kahlo** — self-portraits



**Diego
Rivera**



Frida Kahlo



There
was a
movie
made
about
Frida in
2002.

Frida Kahlo
had a volatile
marriage with
the Diego
Rivera.

They were
both active
communist!



Everyday Life

- ✦ **Families** — most are very large, with extended family living together
 - ◆ strong sense of loyalty within families
- ✦ **machismo** — Spanish & Portuguese tradition of male supremacy
 - still evident in Latin America
 - women's rights are improving
 - more women attending universities & holding professional jobs

Education

- ✦ Education varies throughout Latin America
- ✦ most children are required to complete elementary school
- ✦ schools are often far away & families have no money for clothing & supplies
- ✦ many drop out to help their families
- ✦ Education is improving & literacy rates are rising
- ✦ Computer literacy is still low, but the Internet is changing some countries

Healthcare

- ✦ linked to poverty, lack of sanitation & malnutrition
- ✦ Infant mortality rates have decreased.
- ✦ Access to clean drinking water has increased.
- ✦ MDCs: prosperous countries with high standards of living have access to better healthcare systems & people live longer
 - ◆ Ex: Chile
- ✦ In LDCs: disease is prevalent & life expectancy is low
 - ◆ Ex: Haiti

Sports

- ✦ **Futbol** — most popular sport in Latin America
 - ◆ national sport in most countries
- ✦ Other popular sports: volleyball, basketball & baseball (in Caribbean Islands)
 - ◆ Ex: Sammy Sosa, Carlos Beltran
- ✦ **Jai alai** — a favorite sport among Mexicans & Cubans that is a fast paced game much like handball, played with a ball & a long, curved basket strapped to each players wrist

Jai alai



Leisure Activities

- ✦ similar to the US & other countries
- ✦ watching TV, listening to the radio & attending movies, concerts and plays
- ✦ celebrating: fiestas, festivals & parties
- ✦ best known is Carnival (like Mardi Gras)
- ✦ celebrated the week before Lent
- ✦ People come from around the world to Brazil to celebrate & participate in **Carnival**