

1962

PERU

A Background Paper



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Brooklyn 10, N. Y.

1962

P E R U

The study of Peru opens up tremendous opportunities to students in social studies classes. Its long history affords opportunities to see the development of a highly developed local civilization and its conquest by the Spaniards. Its geography enables pupils to see a wide range of land forms, from the coastal desert and its oases to the enormous Andes Mountains and the selva or jungle area. Its people are also varied and provide insights into the life of Indians, mestizos, and those of European background. Its economy is also inclusive of everything from the large haciendas to modern industrial plants. Sociologically it is also fascinating, with the problems of rural life; small, isolated villages; and the large city of Lima. Politically it is also interesting because of the attempts at change and the need for further modernization and democratization. In music and in the arts and crafts, there are few places to equal it in interest. Altogether this is a fabulous part of the world to study.

Official Name. Republica del Peru.

Location. 3700 miles from New York City in western South America. South of the Equator.

Longitude 0 degrees and 18 degrees.

Latitude 68 degrees and 82 degrees.

Neighboring countries:

To the north - Colombia and Ecuador.

To the south - Chile.

To the east - Brazil and Bolivia.

To the west. - The Pacific Ocean.

Its Size. Almost twice the size of Texas or three times the size of California.

The third largest country in South America in area.

496,223 square miles.

Includes 30 islands.

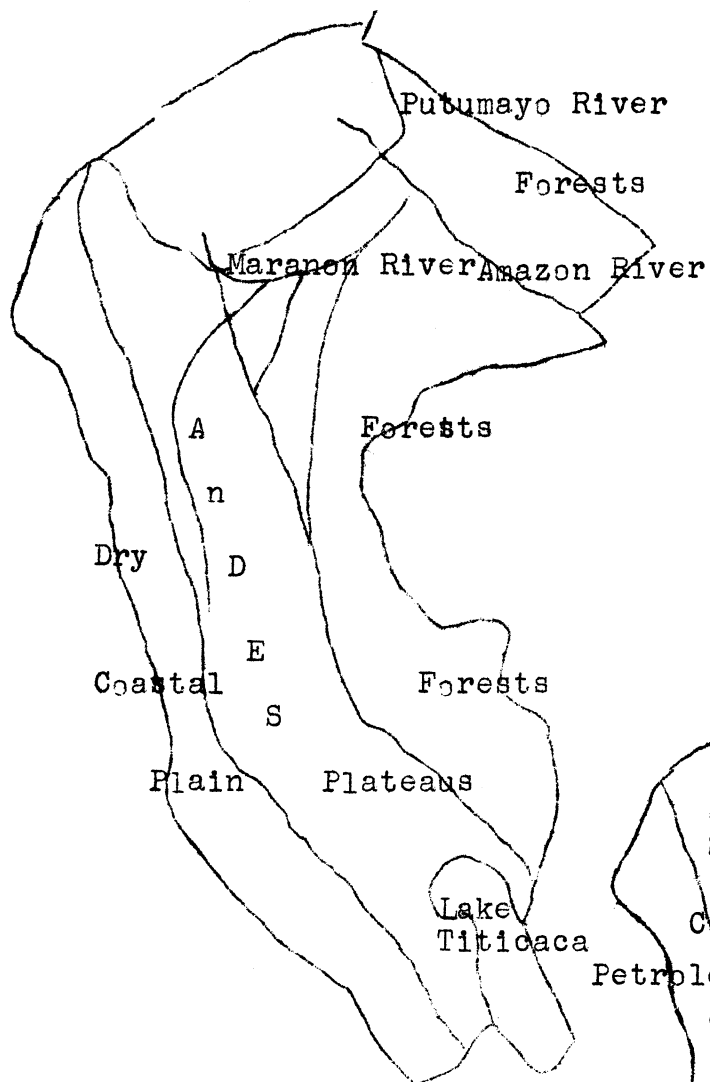
Symbols of the Country.

The flag is composed of three vertical stripes of equal width---red, white and red (from left to right)
The national coat of arms is displayed in the middle stripe.

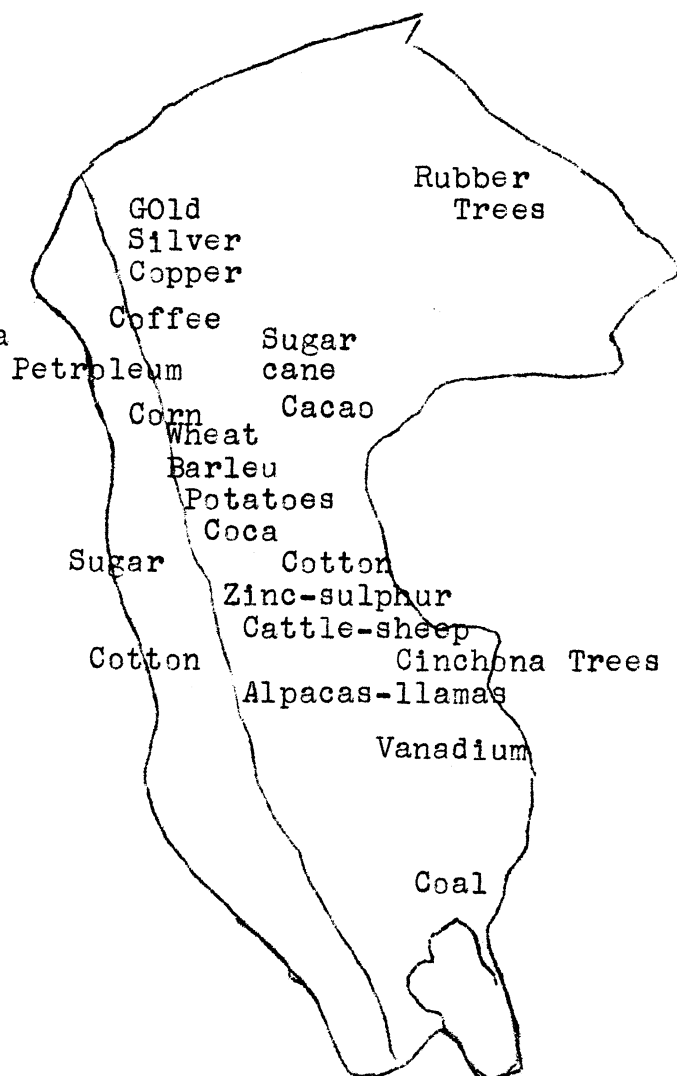
The national anthem is "We are Free, Let Us Remain So Forever". The music is by José Barnado Alcedo and the words by José de la Torre Ugarte. The song was selected by General José de San Martín in 1821.

Independence Day is celebrated on July 28.

Principal Topographic Features



Principal Products



The Major Geographical Regions of Peru

Peru can be divided easily into three major regions - the Coastal Area, the Sierra, and the Oriente, Montana or Selva.

1. The Coast .

A narrow strip, 20 to 100 miles in width on western side of Peru.

Contains most productive agricultural areas in oases in what is otherwise a vast desert. 60 or so small rivers which are fed by the snows on the Andes form these oases or fertile river valleys. Only about 10 have water the year round.

The rest of the area is an arid, treeless, dreary desert. About 25% of Peru's people live in this area.

2. The Sierra.

A great table land lying in the plateau area of the Andes mountains. Generally 12,000 to 15,000 feet high.

Constitutes about one-third of the total area of Peru.

Agriculture carried on in terraced plots of ground.

Some people work on their own plots of ground; many on large haciendas.

Large grazing areas for cattle, sheep, llamas and alpacas.

Home of a large percentage of the Indian population.

(Quecha-speaking Indians).

3. Oriente, Montana, or Selva Region.

In the eastern part of Peru (oriente means east).

Eastern foothills of the Andes and the Amazon flood plain.

Vast area, highly underpopulated.

Contains about two-thirds of the territory of Peru.

Wide variety of trees in this region

Wild rubber, chicle (for gum), cinchona, and others.

Contains much rich, well-watered soil.

Some tropical fruits.

Skins of wild animals also trapped and sold.

Petroleum or crude oil found in this section.

Contains the headwaters of the vast and extensive Amazon River system.

Major city is Iquitos

Was once a boom town in the days of rubber exporting.

Great possibilities for development in the future for this region.

The Water and Lake System and the Climate

Rivers.

The larger rivers are found in the montana or selva section:

1. Marañon river.
2. Huallaga river
3. Ucayali river

These rivers unite to form the Amazon.

50 or 60 small rivers flow across the coastal plain.

They are small and water is intermittent.

Most of them dry up at some time during the year.

The largest lake is Lake Titicaca, in the southeastern part of Peru.

12,500 feet above sea level.

Highest lake of its size in the world.

Partly in Peru, partly in Bolivia.

Many other smaller lakes fed by heavy rains and melted snow from the snow-fields and glaciers in the plateau country.

Climate.

In the coastal zone.

The Humboldt current from the Antarctic keeps the coast from having great extremes of heat or cold. Average around 90 degrees.

Generally dry. Less than 10 inches of rain per year. Heavy mists from May to October.

In the sierra zone.

Climate depends upon the altitude.

Temperatures range from torrid to frigid within a few thousand feet.

Rainy season, October to April, is called "winter".

Dry season, May to October, is called "summer".

Perpetual spring at elevations of 3,000 to 8,000 feet.

In the montana or selva region.

Temperature from 75 to 95 degrees.

Warmer weather in the lowlands. Sometimes excessive heat and humidity.

The Humboldt Current

A cool stream in the Pacific which gets in the Antarctic and flows northward along the west coast of South America. Winds chilled by it, thus cooling much of the coastal area.

The People

Total Population. Approximately 10,500,000.

Division Into Groups.

Estimates vary widely because of the difficulty of classifying people according to their backgrounds.

One author says:

49% Indian
37% Mestizo
15% European
1% African and Asian

Another author says:

46% Indian
53% Mestizo
1% Others

The People of the Coastal Area.

A melting pot of many races.

Spanish mixed freely with coastal Indians.

The largest percentage of people with European background live in Lima and other cities and in the river valleys of the Coastal area.

Wealth, rather than color is the basis of class systems largely.

Some Negros, descendants of slaves brought here in 16th and 17th centuries.

Some Asians, largely Chinese, brought here in the 19th century

The People of the Sierra Region.

A predominance of Indians and Mestizos.

Indians of the Quechuas language and a smaller group around Lake Titicaca, known as Aymaras.

The People of the Montanas or Selva Region.

Largely Indians of independent and isolated tribes.
Many of them lead a very primitive existence.

Homes

A great variety of homes, as in many parts of the world.

Some made of cane , especially in the coastal area.

Some houses made of grass in jungle region.

Many houses made of adobe, with roofs of tertera reeds.

Landowners homes follow the tradition of the Spanish "Great House" with tile roofs, balconies, grilled windows, inner courts.

Some small skyscrapers, luxury apartments, and beautiful homes in Lima.

Also many slum dwellings in Lima and Callao, especially. Even some people living in the sides of hills.

Some building of housing projects, including new Credit Union homes started in 1955 by a Maryknoll priest.

Heat used in homes includes llama dung, kerosene, and wood in a few places, although scarce in other regions.

Electricity in the larger towns.

Food

Native cuisine characterized by highly seasoned dishes.

Tamales, made of ground corn, seasoned with chile, wrapped in plantain leaves, and boiled.

Frijoles, black kidney beans.

Potato dishes, causa and carapulca.

Meat dishes; caucau (made of tripe) and ollucos con charque (a stew of dried meat).

Fruits of both the tropical and temperate zones available.

Fish popular along the coast.

Deserts and confections:

Picarones-fritters.

Manjarblanco-pudding.

Mana-almond paste.

Mazamorra morada--purple corn mixed with fruit.

Alcoholic beverages:

Aguardiente, made from distilled sugar-cane juice, the most popular drink.

Pisco, a native brandy, popular with foreigners.

Chicha de jora - a corn liquor.

Transportation and Communication

Most of the transportation of goods is still on the backs of human beings. Pay around 50¢ for a ten hour day.

Some cars and busses in the cities. Number is increasing rapidly.

Thousands of miles of roads along the coast and in the Sierra region.

Roads almost non-existent into the interior; start made in recent months, with aid from the United States, in building roads into the selva region.

Pack trains of mules and llamas used extensively. Llamas especially in the high altitudes as they are the only animal that can live there.

Railroads.

1500 miles total; 60% of this mileage in ~~two~~ railroads.

Central-highest standard gauge road in the world

Southern in Lake Titicaca area, for transporting grain and livestock.

Airplane Transport.

Has leapt ahead of road transportation, because of the difficulties in building roads.

10,000 miles of air lines.

Very modern airport for Lima, at Limatambo on the outskirts of the city.

Water Transport.

1400 miles of coast on the Pacific plus the upper reaches of the Amazon.

Many small boats and a small Peruvian merchant fleet.

Mail service slow; telephones limited to about 70,000 persons and companies.

Languages.

Spanish is the official language.

About half of the population speak one of the two major Indian languages:

1. Amaya
2. Quechua

High percentage of illiteracy (see education) so not many newspapers and magazines.

How Peruvians Earn a Living

Agriculture

Peru is primarily an agricultural country.
Two-thirds of the people engaged in farming of one kind or another.
37% of the wealth of the country comes from agriculture.

Some people farm their own tiny plots of ground.
Thousands of persons work on large estates , called haciendas.

Cotton.

The most important single crop in Peru.
Dates back 200 years.
Much excellent, long-stable cotton grown.
Cotton textiles popular
By-products include cotton seed oil, cake and seed-paste,
cattle fodder, and fertilizer.

Sugar.

Second most important crop.
Introduced by the Spaniards.
Africans used originally as laborers in plantations;
later the Chinese.
Grown in coastal area.
60,000 to 80,000 workers

Fishing.

Some fishing in the Pacific Ocean.
Tuna, anchovy, sea bass, herring, mackerel, swordfish,
bonitor and other types of fish.

Livestock

Some cattle and sheep raising.
Wool from alpaca, llamas, and vicuna important for local
use and for export.

Coca

Became a government monopoly in 1949. Is grown for the
Indian population and also for manufacture into cocaine,
principally for export.

Other crops.

Grapes, made into world-famous Pisco brandy.
Rice
Some wheat
Corn and beans grown on small plots for family foods.
Potatoes supposed to have come from Peru originally.
Some barley grown.
Some vegetables and other fruits than grapes (see above).

Copper.

Peru's most valuable mineral since 1906.

Developed by an American firm.

Largely sold in the United States

Mined at high altitudes, around 14,000 feet in one mine.

Difficult work, done by Indians.

Refining mines often 2000 feet below the surface.

All vegetation for miles around killed by sulphur fumes.

Vanadium.

Ranks second in the world in its production of vanadium,
following the United States.

Other Minerals.

Lead and zinc the two most important, after copper.

Iron ore--used as the basis of a small steel industry
at Chimbote. Exported since 1953.

Also some bismuth, tungsten, antimony, manganese, tin,
molybdenum, cadmium, indium, mica, sulphur, and uranium.

Small amounts of gold in several sections of Peru.

Minerals found in an area 150 miles long, north to south,
through the Andean highlands. Also in a few other places.

Petroleum.

Talara is the center of oil exploitation, by a Canadian
firm, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey.

Manufacturing

Smelting industry--copper, lead, zinc, bismuth and other metals.

Some refining of oil.

A small steel industry.

Some textile plants

Sugar mills,

Processing of foods.

By product of sugar cane used to make paper and wallboard.

Many small plants for making cement, bricks, paints, furniture,
household goods and toilet articles.

Quinine made from cinchona bark; insecticides from cube.

Peru has a vast hydro-electric potential, barely tapped to date.

Some coal reserves.

Religion

The Constitution of Peru states that "the state protects the Apostolic Roman Catholic Religion".

Freedom of worship, however, is huaranteed.

Over 90% of the people are Catholics, but knowledge of the religion is limited.

Health

Life expectancy very low.

High rate of illness owing to poor sanitation, in large part.

Major diseases:

- Yellow fever
- Tuberculosis
- Typohoid
- Amebix dysentery

A few hospitals in Lima and elsewhere, but far too few and generally poorly equipped.

Chewing coca, from which cocaine is made, carried on by many Peruvians to ease suffering caused by intense cold in the mountains. But dulls the brain.

Visitors affected by soroche, altitude sickness. High altitude produces high blood pressure.

Some medical help coming from missinnaries and World Health Organization, through the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, its Latin American branch or affiliate.

Clothes

In the cities, western style clothes. predominate.

Rural areas:

- Indian women wear bowlers or derbys for hats, multiple colored skirts, shawls. Ear-rings popular.
- Men wear warm western clothing. Panchos seen at festivals and in rural areas.
- Headgear---men weat close fitting woollen caps, topped off by felt hats with bring, turned up an the front.
- Old custom of wearing tassels and fringe on headress.

Education

In the past education has been the responsibility of the Church.

Education has been highly academic, private, and limited to the few.

Attempts being made to develop a strong public school system.

Some of the barriers include:

- Transportation problems to get pupils to school.
- Language barriers
- Poverty and ill-health.
- Lack of teachers and inadequately trained teachers

Attempts being made now, often with U.S. help, to increase education, especially in the rural areas.

Much use of the idea of nuclear or central schools.

Emphasis upon better agriculture, health, and languages

Some work in adult illiteracy also underway.

Includes work in health, recreation, better family and community living, and civic and religious training.

Some schools run by outside groups:

Lima High School for girls, run by Methodists.

American School of Lima, co-educational and non-denominational.

Anglo-Peruvian School

Several universities in Peru.

University of San Marcos, founded in 1551. 17,000 students.

Universities in Cuzco, Trujillo, and Arequipa.

Catholic University in Lima.

Schools are controlled nationally; curriculum is determined by the Ministry of Education. For parochial as well as public schools.

In high school boys have two hours a week of compulsory military training.

Examinations are given orally by government representatives.

This often means political bias for the pupils.

Approximately 50 % illiteracy, although constantly being decreased.

Widespread use of the schools for public health measures such as inoculation against malaria.

Some use of demonstration projects to improve agricultural practices.

The Cities

- Lima. The capital of Peru. Means the City of Kings.
 Founded by Pizarro.
 Population approximately 1,200,000.
 Commercial and social center of Peru.
 Located in the southm, central part of Peru. 10 miles from the coast.
 A beautiful city, combining the old and the new.
 Small skyscrapers intermingled with old structures.
 Many of the old buildings are stucco in pastel shades, with wooden balconies
 Many beautiful flowers in the yards; some flowering shrubs and trees.
 Several old churches, dating back for centuries, in Spanish architecture.
 Site of the University of San Marcos, the oldest university in the Americas. Founded in 1551.
- Callao. The port city, in the south, central part of Peru, ten miles from Lima.
 Handles 75% of the imports; 25% of the exports of Peru.
 A manufacturing center.
 Population approximately 130,000.
 A recent \$5,000,000 project improved harbor and port.
- Arequippa. In southeastern Peru. At the foot of Misti volcano. 7,000 feet high.
 Means "Here We Rest".
 Founded by Pizarro in 1540.
 Population of approximately 125,000.
 Connected with Lima by a section of the Pan American Highway.
 Important as a trading center in the midst of farming and livestock area.
- Cuzco. Ancient Incan capital and now the "archaeological capital" of South America.
 Near ancient center of Machu Picchu.
 At height of 10,000 feet.
 Population of 70,000.
- Trujillo. Also founded by Pizarro. A city of 60,000 persons.
 Near the ruins of the Chimu Kingdom.
 Center of the sugar district.
- Cerro de Pasco. In the central part of Peru.
 Center of the mining district for copper and silver.
 At an elevation of 14,300 feet. Population of 30,000.
- Chiclaazo. Most rapidly growing northern city. 50,000.
 Center of cotton, rice, and sugar.
 Includes some industry.
- Iquitos. In the northeast.
 An Upper Amazon port city of 50,000. 90% Indian.
 Chief commercial center of the sierra, montana areas.

Present Form of Government

President and two Vice-Presidents, elected for six year terms.

Chamber of Deputies, elected for 6 years by direct vote.

Senate.

Supreme Court of 16 members , elected by Congress.

Suffrage. Literate males between the ages of 21 and 60, or
18 if married. Compulsory.

Literate women in municipal elections only.

Military service: Compulsory and universal

Administration:

Peru is divided into 23 departments.

Each department governed by a prefect appointed by President
with Congressional approval.

Departmentsdivided into 140 provinces

Provinces divided into 1,302 districts, administered by
governors.

Sub-prefects and governors appointed by the Ministry of
Government and Police.

Some Basic Problems of Peru

Education

Development of transportation

Opening pp of the eastern territory

Land reform

Breaking of caste and class barriers

Outside capital without undue foreign influence

Expert planning

The History of Peru

This part of the world has one of the longest and most illustrious histories of any part of our globe. A brief sketch of this history follows; more detailed accounts can be found in many places such as Anne Peck's The Pageant of South American History.

Pre-Incan Period

Several locations:

- Chavin in the Central Sierra.
- Tiahuanaco on the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca.
- Mochica or Chimu on the North Coast.
- Pachacamac and Lima on the Central Coast.
- Paracas and Nazca in the South.

Achieved great heights in art, political organization, and religion.

Reached their highest development in the Mastercraft Period, 600 to 1000 A.D. Traces of this found in

- Golden plates and goblets.
- Plumes, tweezers and knives.
- Carved wooden digging sticks.
- Carved bone spatulas.
- Bronze and gold masks.
- Figurines and animals.
- Musical instruments.
- All objects bore a touch of beauty.

The Incan Empire.

Incas ruled from 1200 to coming of Spaniards in 1933.

Paracuti consolidated the Incan Empire in 1438.

Ruled over what is now Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the northern parts of Argentina and Chile.

Areas called The Four Regions.

Tremendous ability in organization, administration, communication and architecture.

Had a messenger system and a widespread road system like the Romans.

Ruled over 6 to 10 million people.

Cuzco the capital, with 200,000 inhabitants.

Fortress city at Machu Picchu.

Adept in agriculture. Used

Terracing, manuring, soil conservation, irrigation.

Advanced work in weaving, pottery, metalwork.

Spanish Rule.

1531 Arrival of Francisco Pizarro of Spain, with 183 men and 37 horses.

Capitalized upon insurrection at that time in Incan Empire.

1532 Incan empire fell

1535 Lima founded by Pizarro; Peru became a vice royalty of Spain ruled from there.

1544 Peru became vice royalty of Spain.

Two hundred years of Spanish rule, often with barbarous practices, followed.

1780-1782 Unsuccessful revolt of Indians under Tupac Amaru.

1820 Independence movement gained headway.

1821 (July 28th) Peru declared independent by General Jose de San Martin, an Argentinian.

Negro slaves freed.

Incas became Peruvians.

1855-1862 Numerous internal reforms under President Ramon Castilla.

1860 Adoption of a centralist, republican constitution. Remained in effect until 1920.

1920 New more liberal constitution adopted.

1933. April 9 Another new constitution after a revolution.

Throughout recent history there has been a coalition of the army and the wealthy classes against the reform groups represented by Apra, the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, headed by Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, which demanded reforms, including education, land reform, the breaking of caste, and higher standards of living.

Peru's Wars With Neighbors
and Others

1828-1829 With Colombia

1936-1839 With Chile and Argentina.

1864-1866 With Spain

1879-1883 With Chile Lost the provinces of Tarapaca and Arica and its nitrates.

Arts and Crafts in Peru

Peru has had a long history of arts and crafts. Among the many forms its takes today are the following:

Jewelry - gold with semi-precious stones, solid gold with Incan motifs.

Sterling silver flatware, platters, trays, pitchers.

Ceramice tiles--hand painted, with Incan motifs.

Leather goods, hand bzgs, mens' belts, luggage.

Vicuna fabrics, hand painted, with Incan motifs, made up as place mats and skirts.

Native art--dolls handmade in native costumes.
arrows made by Indians from the jungle area.

Much interest in painting, in literature, and in the theater.

Native dances and music.

Recreation

Cock-fights.

Horse racing

Bull fights.

Peruvian dances during fiestas especially.

Birthdays, weddings, births especially celebrated.

Holidays of the church accompanied by festivals, fiestas.

Much visiting in the closed circles of friends and relatives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PERU

Readers are reminded of the importance of encyclopedias such as Childcraft, Britannica Jr., Book of Knowledge, and the World Book. A clipping file should be kept of materials from current events papers and newspapers. Pictures might well be mounted on cardboard to use in the opaque projector and to retain in good shape.

A. Booklets and Magazine Articles

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