

**Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada**

**The South:**  
Diverse Landscapes of Southeastern North America

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Chapter 6 and parts of 4, 8, 13, 15

**Regional Landscape Studies**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ NORTHLANDS</li> <li>✓ NORTHEAST COAST</li> <li>✓ MEGALOPOLIS</li> <li>✓ CANADA'S NATIONAL CORE</li> <li>✓ AMERICA'S HEARTLAND</li> <li>✓ APPALACHIA and the OZARKS</li> <li>➤ <b>THE SOUTH</b></li> <li>☐ PLAINS and PRAIRES</li> <li>☐ MOUNTAINS and PLATEAUS</li> <li>☐ DESERT SOUTHWEST</li> <li>☐ NORTH PACIFIC COAST</li> <li>☐ HAWAII</li> </ul>	<p>◀◀◀For each region:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know its physical geography.</li> <li>2. Identify its unique characteristics.</li> <li>3. Be able to explain the human imprint.</li> <li>4. Discuss its sequence occupancy and economic development.</li> </ol>
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**The South's Sub-regions**

**Major sub-regions:**

- Atlantic Coastal Plain
- Piedmont
- Florida Peninsula
- Gulf Coastal Plain
- Mississippi Delta

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**The South**

When you think about this region, what images come into your mind?

Vacation area  
Heat and humidity  
Growing cities  
Hurricanes  
Southern cooking  
Mississippi R delta  
Civil War  
Plantations  
Beaches/ resorts  
Bible Belt

**Overlapping Vernacular Regional Terms of the South**

- ❖ **Old South:** area of the five southern plantation colonies (MD, VA, NC, SC, GA).
- ❖ **Deep South:** area from South Carolina to east Texas, excluding peninsula Florida but including the Mississippi Delta region
- ❖ **Upland South:** Piedmont and lower elevations of the Southern Appalachians.
- ❖ **Mississippi Delta:** ancient delta of Mississippi River, extending S from the Ohio River confluence to the Gulf of Mexico (not just the deltaic landform of Louisiana at mouth of Mississippi River)
- ❖ **Southern Coastlands:** Atlantic and Gulf coastal plain, including peninsula Florida.

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**Other Vernacular Terms**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Bible Belt:</b> Coined by a journalist during the 1925 <i>Tennessee vs Scopes</i> teaching-of-evolution trial. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A region whose people espouse <b>religious fundamentalism</b> and the literal interpretation of the Bible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is a "Bible Belt" landscape?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Dixie:</b> origin is uncertain. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Could be from French Louisiana currency (dix = 10) or the Mason-Dixon Line (area south of the line). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ During the American Civil War, the song "<b>Dixie</b>" became the unofficial anthem of the Confederate States of America. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is a "Dixie" landscape?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## OVERVIEW: The South

- ✓ **Characterized by heat and humidity.**
- ✓ **Strong sense of regional identity:** similar beliefs, customs, attitudes throughout the region.
- ✓ **Long standing relationship with the land:** rural population and agricultural orientation.
- ✓ **Regionalism is reinforced from the outside:** often perceived/portrayed superficially and in caricature by outsiders.
- ✓ **Diversity within the regionalism:** many sub-regions with their own version of "southern culture".
- ✓ **Coastal South is faced with increased danger from natural hazards:** severe storms; flooding; sea level rise; coastal erosion.

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## OVERVIEW: Physical Landscape

W  
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R

- **Humid subtropical climate (Cfa):** long summers/mild winters
- **Low-lying coastal area focused on the sea:** natural harbors that become ports; susceptible to storm surge/sea level rise.
- **Continental shelf off the coast is wide:** prime areas for fishing (commercial/sport) and mineral exploration (Gulf of Mexico)
- **Sandy barrier islands and lagoons parallel the coast:** allowed for the creation of a sheltered coastal waterway system and the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of vacation homes/resorts.
- **Coastal plain has relatively flat terrain with slow flowing rivers, swamps and marshes (bayous):** insect/reptile pests. Historically focused human attention away from the coast.
- **Piedmont section of the Appalachians:** cooler, less humid, better water supply; variety of trees. **Fall Line** marks the sharp boundary between the Piedmont and Coastal Plain.

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## OVERVIEW: Economic Landscape

**Five Economic Sub-regions**

1. **Atlantic Coast:** tourism, vacation homes, port facilities (import-export trades)
2. **Piedmont:** manufacturing, R&D, finance
3. **Gulf Coast - East:** recreation, agriculture, retirement communities, sport fishing
4. **Gulf Coast - West:** resource extraction, industrial production, commercial fishing, trade (break-of-bulk and transshipment)
5. **Mississippi Delta Region:** agriculture (cotton and rice), transportation services, food processing

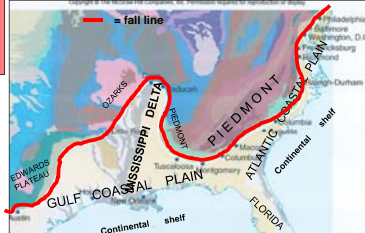
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## OVERVIEW: Changing Cultural Landscape

- **Growing urbanization.**
- **Growing "non-Southern" population.**
- **New manufacturing enterprises.**
- **New agricultural orientations.**
- **Improved race relations.**
- **"Southern way" of doing things has been altered** (by Federal law and in-migration).
- **Feeling less regional and more national.**

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## Physical Landscapes



- **Continental Shelf:** the undersea extension of the continent; wide and relatively shallow ocean areas.
- **Coastal lowlands:** generally flat to rolling terrain inland, with a low-lying, marshy, indented shoreline.
- **Mississippi Delta Region:** ancient delta of Mississippi R.; now a flood plain with very fertile alluvial deposits.
- **Piedmont:** Part of the Appalachian system. **Fall Line** divides the Piedmont from the Coastal Plain.

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## Climates



- ❖ **Cfa - Humid Subtropical - throughout the region;** hot humid summers, mild winters; year-round precipitation.
  - **Very long growing season** (over 270 days)
  - **Altitude cools** the Piedmont (vertical zonation) differentiating it from the rest of The South.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- **South Florida is Aw:** tropical savanna (winter dry).
- **South Texas is BS:** hot semi-arid

- **Tornados** especially in spring and autumn.
- **Thunderstorms** throughout the year; Tampa Bay area is #1 in US
- **Hurricane** threat annually.
- **Global warming** with rising sea levels is a concern.

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### Hurricane Hazard Zone

**Major Hurricane History**

Hurricane strikes by county. Red is most, blue is least. Source: NOAA

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/data/tcr/index.php?season=2016&basin=atl>

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### Hurricane Damage

Galveston, TX  
Ike, 2008

Outer Banks, NC  
Irene, 2011

South Florida,  
Andrew, 1992

THE MINNEAPOLIS JOURNAL  
340 KNOWN DEAD IN HURRICANE.  
PENSACOLA AND MOBILE STRUCK  
Hurricane of 1928

AUG 28 92  
PM 3:00

### Coast to Mountains

Geologic cross-section of North Carolina from Cape Hatteras to the Blue Ridge Mts.

Blue Ridge    Piedmont    Coastal Plain

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS  
BLUE RIDGE FRONT  
PIEDMONT PLATEAU  
Fall Line  
Cape Hatteras  
FAMILICO SOUND  
TRIASSIC BASIN

INNER PIEDMONT BELT  
CHARLOTTE BELT  
CAROLINA SLATE BELT  
GNEISS AND SCHIST  
GRANITE AND GNEISS  
UNCONSOLIDATED SEDIMENTS

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### Piedmont

- ❖ **Piedmont** = foothills of the Appalachian Mts. forested area; varied resources; good water.
- **Vertical zonation of climate** is evident across the region. This allowed colonists to get relief from the heat and humidity of the coastal plain.
  - **Inland region subject to occasional severe weather:** frost, freezing rain, ice storms and snow in winter; thunderstorms, flooding rains and tornadoes in spring, summer and autumn. Southern edge of the zone of interaction between tropical and polar air masses.

### Coasts in Crisis

Because of five interrelated factors, sandy shorelines are altered and barrier islands form, change shape and disappear.

Then came Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

[http://www.ladigitalcoast.uno.edu/PDFs/ider1887-2005\\_shrlnchna.pdf](http://www.ladigitalcoast.uno.edu/PDFs/ider1887-2005_shrlnchna.pdf)

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### Barrier Island Coastline

- ❖ **Barrier island:** long, narrow sand island with a low profile; runs parallel to the mainland and is separated from it by a lagoon

Built of **sandy sediment** moved by water and wind (no rock base).  
Shaped by long shore currents, waves and wind.  
Subject to **overwash** and **breach** during severe storms.

*They are temporary geologic features.*

### Barrier Island Landscape

Offshore Louisiana

Galveston, TX

Offshore Pensacola, FL

Hilton Head, SC

### The Outer Banks

North Carolina

The **Outer Banks** is a 200 mi long string of barrier islands.

**Cape Hatteras** lighthouse had to be moved 1500 ft. inland (1999) to save it from collapsing into the sea. Offshore area is called the "graveyard of ships."

Area of tidal lagoons and low-lying tidal marshlands

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### Intracoastal Waterway

Created by improving the channels between the barrier islands and the mainland. Extends from TX to NJ and shelters barges and small craft from ocean influences.

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### Bayou

❖ **Defined as either:**

- Wetland (swamp) or body of water found in flat, low-lying areas.
- Extremely slow moving stream with a poorly defined shoreline.

Probably comes from the Choctaw word **bayuk** (a small stream), and applied by French Acadian immigrants to any waterway.

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### Landscape of the Ancient Delta Region

Meandering Mississippi River

Extremely flat area (low gradient) subject to frequent flooding, sediment deposition and shifting channels.

A portion of the Mississippi River boundary between the state of Mississippi (right) and Arkansas and Louisiana. 23

### Meander and Oxbow Lake Formation

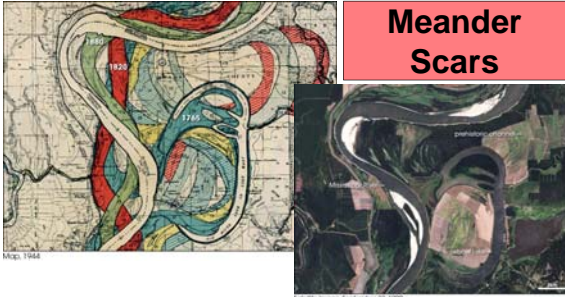
Process of a meander bend

Where there is less water on the inside there is more friction and slower flow. Bank of Bend. Deposition.

Outside of Bend. Erosion. Fast flowing water with lots of energy is directed to the outer bank.

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### Meander Scars

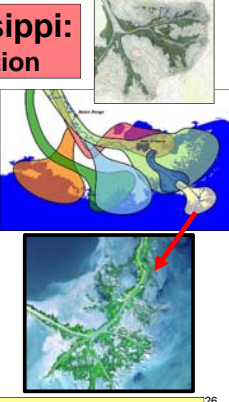


- ✓ Stream channels change course, especially in times of flood.
- ❖ A **“meander scar”** is created when the old channel dries up.
  - Scars tend to have fertile soil and are used for farming.

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### Mouth of the Mississippi: Bird's foot delta formation

- Southern tip of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain.
- Saltwater/freshwater interface where the river meets the gulf.
- **Constantly changing:** sediment dependent (inland and longshore) and subject to coastal storms, waves, currents and sea level.
- **Largest and most diverse natural wetland habitat** of N. America.
- **Home of unique cultural groups** influenced by inaccessibility.



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### Satellite View of New Orleans



**New Orleans:** most important port of the region and focus of trade to continental interior via Mississippi River. Portions are below sea level due to subsidence.

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### Sink Holes

A Menace from Florida to Texas

High annual precipitation plus a limestone bedrock allows for the creation of sink holes.

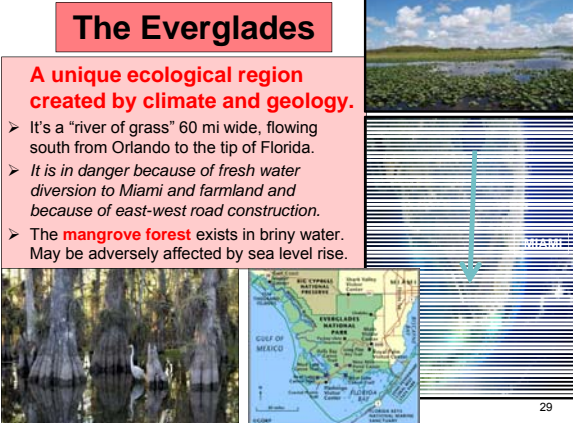


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### The Everglades

**A unique ecological region created by climate and geology.**

- It's a “river of grass” 60 mi wide, flowing south from Orlando to the tip of Florida.
- It is in danger because of fresh water diversion to Miami and farmland and because of east-west road construction.
- The **mangrove forest** exists in briny water. May be adversely affected by sea level rise.



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### South Florida Conflict Zones





**Burmese python, an invasive species**

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## Florida Keys


**Florida Keys:** a 130 mi chain of **CORAL ISLANDS**, NOT SAND, linked by causeways from Key Biscayne to Key West.  
**Florida Key Formation is the world's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest barrier reef.**  
**cay or key:** low coral island (Sp. *cayo* = shoal)

US Route 1, the Overseas Highway, connects the Keys with the U.S. mainland.

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## Exploration of the Southeast



- **Spanish explorers** traveled inland from the Gulf Coast. Spain claimed Florida and the Gulf coastal area.
- **The French** moved downstream along the Mississippi River to its mouth. France and Spain contested the Mississippi River Basin.
- **English colonists** settled coastal areas between Virginia and Georgia. They claimed all land west to the Pacific Ocean.

Influences of all three are found on the South's visual and cultural landscapes.

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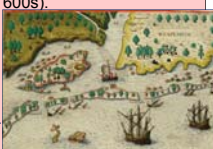
## Settlement Sequence

- **St. Augustine, FL** was the site of the **first permanent** European settlement in North America (Spain, 1565).
- **Jamestown, VA** and **Roanoke Island, NC:** sites of the earliest **English** settlements (early 1600s).

❖ **Early settler goals were commercial and exploitative.**

➢ **Geographical advantages:**

- ✓ Areas were suitable for agriculture.
- ✓ Game was plentiful.
- ✓ Navigable rivers allowed movement away from coast and access to interior forests and resources as far as the Fall Line.

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## Distinctive Demography

❖ **High in-migration since 1980s.**  
 Most residents of today's South were born elsewhere.

- ✓ **A large very "non-southern" population.**
- ✓ **Mix of refugees** (Cubans, Haitians) and **retirees.**
- ✓ **Snowbirds:** People from the northern states and Canada who spend the winter in Florida.
- ✓ **Pull Factor:** favorable climate and tax rates


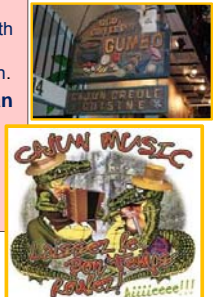
❖ **Unique historic local cultural groups:**  
 Creoles, Cajuns, Gullah

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## Creoles and Cajuns

❖ **Creoles:** people of French/Spanish/Afro-Caribbean descent usually from the West Indies. Associated with speaking a pidgin language combining words from other languages with French.

❖ **Cajuns:** people of French Canadian descent. They were expelled after the French and Indian War. Settled in U.S. **Remain distinctive:** French dialect, Catholic religion, food.

Red = high % of French-speakers







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## Gullah

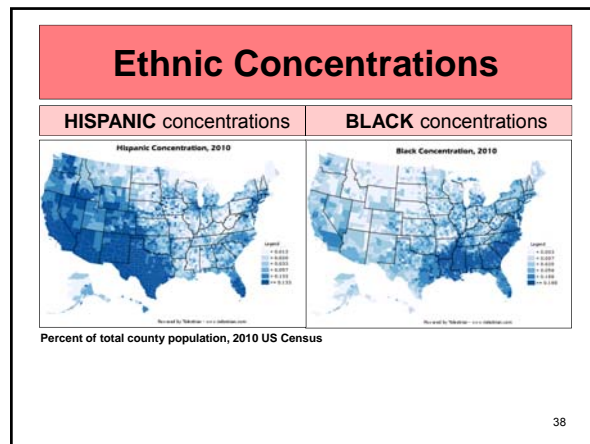
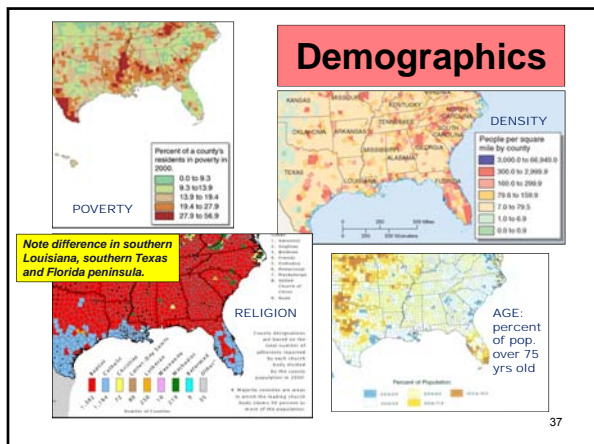
❖ **Gullah:** descendants of African slaves brought to cotton plantations on the Sea Islands.

Noteworthy for their **distinctive African language and culture**, which has been handed down by generations relatively intact.

➢ **Once isolated, their unique culture is now threatened by development and tourism on the coastal islands.**

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## Hispanics and Caribbean Islanders

- Hispanics** (South Texas and South Florida)
  - From Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Rep
  - Social/cultural landscape remains distinctive:
    - Spanish-speaking
    - Catholic
    - Cuisine
- Caribbean Islanders** (South Florida)
  - From Haiti and the West Indies
  - French, English and South-Asian backgrounds

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## Native Americans

With the spread of white settlement there was a forcible removal of local Indians to Oklahoma (1830s).  
**Descendants of those who escaped relocation remain in the South:**

- Eastern Cherokee (NC)
- Choctaw (MS)
- Seminole (FL)

**Tribes of the Southeast**  
Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Choctaw, Natchez, Seminole

MUSEUM OF THE CHEROKEE INDIAN

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## Plantation Agriculture

- Plantations grew specific cash crops that could not be grown in Europe.
  - Highly structured agricultural organization
  - Usually tied to a single cash crop for export.
  - Were self-sufficient units: needed much land and a large labor force requiring people with many different skills.
- Small local populations led to use of slave labor: first local Indians and indentured Englishmen, then Africans. (Europeans have a history of using forced labor.)
  - Only the richer plantations had mansions.
  - Most plantations had their own docks. Frontage on a deep, protected waterway was important.

rice  
tobacco  
cotton  
indigo  
sugar

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## Triangle Trade Route

See maps in historical atlas

The Triangular Trade  
© J. Edgar, South-Central

Sailing ships on the Triangle Trade route (1600s-1800s) used global winds and ocean currents to cross the Atlantic.

c.12 million Africans were taken as slaves and brought to the Western Hemisphere.

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### James River Plantations VIRGINIA

Labels on map: Sherwood Forest, Westover, Shirley, Evelyn, Berkeley

### Boone's Hall Plantation near Charleston, SC

Main entrance to manor house

Slave quarters were located off the main entrance road near the manor house.

### Economics: North vs. South

A Quarreling People 1820-1860

Before the Civil War, slaves were found in all Southern states except the counties within the Appalachian Highlands.

Greatest concentration of slaves was in the plantation areas of the coastal plain and lower Mississippi Valley – areas producing cotton, rice, sugar cane and tobacco.

North's economy was based on industry and trade.

South's economy was based on plantation agric.

Demand for cotton increased the need for laborers to work the fields.

See map, p. 41 of Historical Atlas

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### Civil War Aftermath

See Section 5 of Historical Atlas

Civil War Battle Maps

- ❖ Most Civil War battles (1860-1865) were fought on Southern soil = much destruction.
  - Confederate currency/bonds were worthless.
  - Railroads were disrupted or in disrepair.
  - Equipment was confiscated or destroyed.
  - Shipping terminals were in ruins.
- Large portion of the labor force was eliminated.
  - Emancipation of slaves
  - White labor pool decimated by Civil War fatalities/injuries.
- Large land holdings were heavily taxed and/or subdivided.
- Reconstruction began.

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### Post-Civil War Transition (1865-1880s)

- Southern White reaction to emancipation was institutionalized segregation.
- Few opportunities for blacks until World War I (Great Migration to northern areas).
- Greater national isolation of the South.
- Persistent regional poverty:
  - Destruction of economic infrastructure and plantation economy by Civil War battles
  - Lack of economic development incentives.
- Few jobs outside of farming
  - Poor farmers (both blacks and whites) made arrangements with land owners.
- ❖ Sharecropping System
  - Rent and repayment of loans for a share of the crop.
  - Debt perpetual, sharecropper bound to land until paid.
  - Reinforced by "Black Codes" restricting black movement.

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### Monumental Landscapes Lauding the Confederacy

MD, LA, GA, MS, SC, AL

Hundreds of monuments remembering the Confederacy can be found throughout the South. In addition, numerous national and state battlefield parks tell the story of Civil War events.

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### Delayed Urban Development

- **The South did not experience the influx of the urban Europeans as did the Northeast.**
  - Little immigration from Europe during 1800s; very small proportion foreign-born by 1900.
  - No receiving ports; no industry.
  - Cities developed late.
- **Ports/small market centers developed in 1800s.**
  - Collection/transshipment points for cash crops
  - Little contact with each other; orientation was to the North or to Europe
  - Distinctly local allegiances
  - Most people lived in isolation on farms
- **Areas remained strongly rural until late 1900s.**

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### Development of Manufacturing early 1900s

- **Attractions of Piedmont South:**
  - High levels of *underemployment*
  - Opportunity to modernize operations
  - Lower taxes
- **Cotton textile industry**
  - Originally based in New England
  - Shifted south after the Civil War
  - Carolina Piedmont and N. Georgia
  - Drew other industries (clustering)
  - Economic impact
    - Workers paid low wages
    - Low land tax rates
    - Less regulations



### Other Industrial Developments

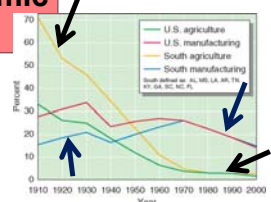
- **Railroads:** construction, other public improvements increased access
- **Cigarettes:** manufacturing; local tobacco farms: NC, VA
- **Timber resources:**
  - Furniture manufacturing (NC, VA)
  - Pulp and paper
- **Atlanta (GA) - Birmingham (AL) - Chattanooga (TN) Triangle**
  - Resources plus low wages encouraged manufacturing



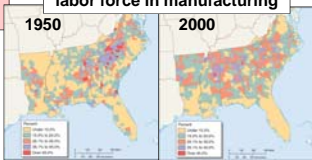
### Changes in Economic Landscape

The South's economy has become **more national in structure** and less regional since the 1970s.


Has greatly **diversified:** automobile, pulp and paper, textiles and apparel, oil refining, aluminum, petrochemicals, food processing. **Plus** tourism, banking and finance.



**Percent non-agricultural labor force in manufacturing**



### Agricultural Setting



**Humid subtropical climate**


- Long growing season (from 9-12 mo.)
- Average rainfall greater than 50 in./yr

Oranges ↑ N

Grapefruits ↑



Lemons ↓ S

Limes ↓


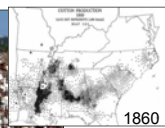
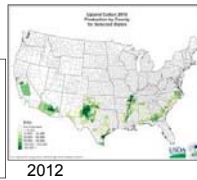



❖ **Advantages for agriculture**

- Can grow crops that cannot be grown elsewhere as citrus and sugar cane: **Introduced by Spanish in the 1500s.**
  - Produced only in **Florida, Texas** and Calif.
  - Double-cropping possible
  - Winter vegetables

### Harvesting Cotton

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## Florida Tourism

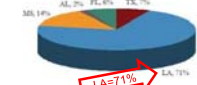



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## Fishing

### Commercial Fishing

Distribution of Commercial Fishing Landings

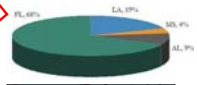


LA=71%




### Sport Fishing

Distribution of Marine Recreational Fishing Trips




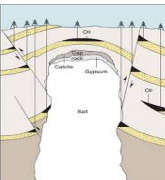

FL=68%



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## Mineral Resources

- ✓ Oil and gas fields located in LA and TX and under the continental shelf Gulf of Mexico area contains extensive oil and gas deposits.
- ✓ Rock salt – from underground salt domes
- ✓ Sulfur – from cap rock over salt deposits
- ✓ Phosphorus – deposits in Florida.
- ❖ Proximity to coal fields of Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee gives the region access to cheap coal for power plants.
- ❖ Political issues and environmental problems related to the extraction and use of resources.

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## Oil Refinery Louisiana




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## Houston

**Houston: 4<sup>th</sup> largest US city.** It is a major business and industrial center and focus of the oil industry.

**Port of Houston** is located 40 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico, linked to it by the **Houston Ship Channel** (1873).





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# NEXT

## The Great Plains and Prairies

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