

A satellite view of the Earth from space, showing the Americas. The text is overlaid on the image.

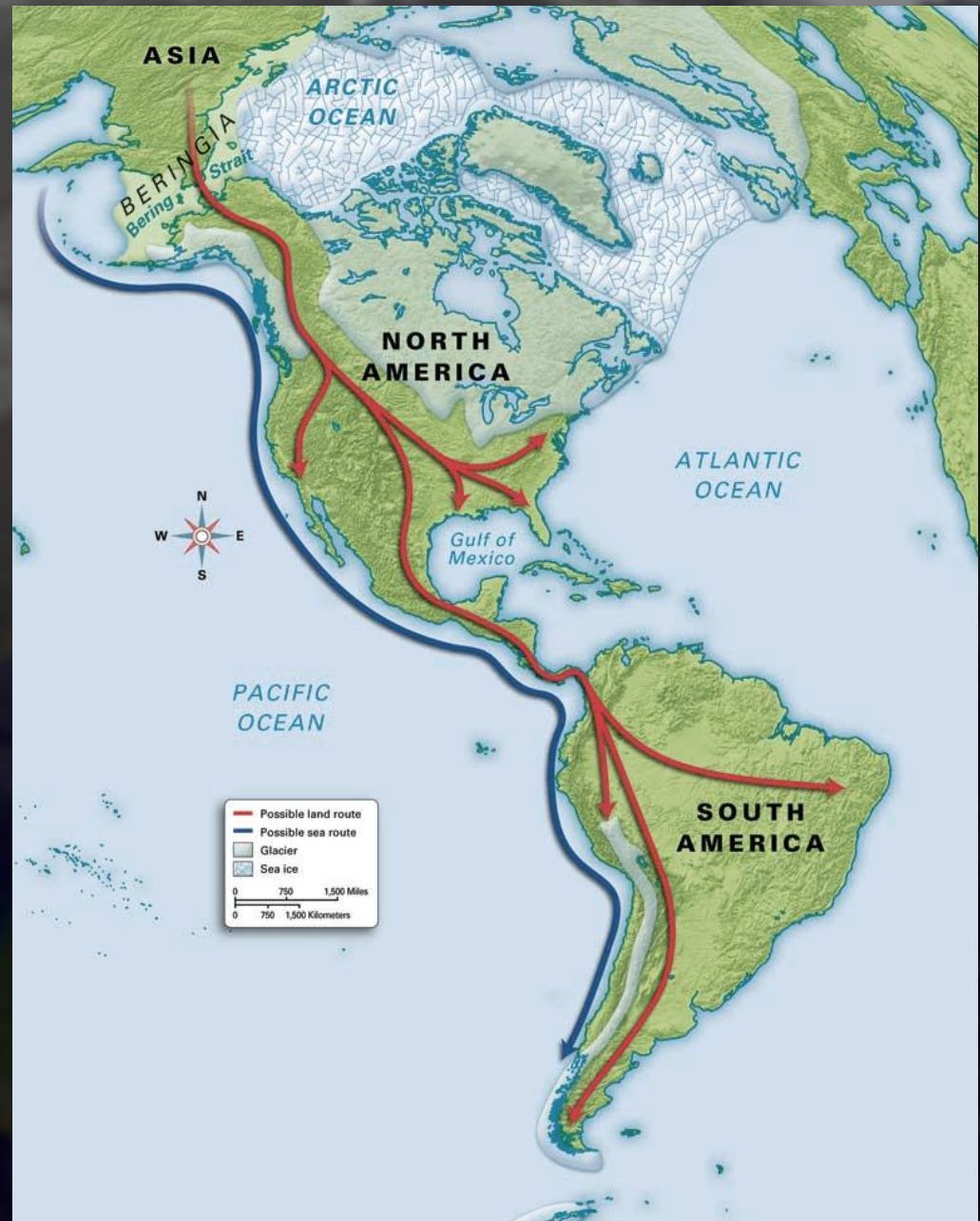
The World of The Ancient Americas

OLMEC & CHAVIN

1500 B.C. – 500 B.C.

Bering Land Bridge

Possibly how
human populations
migrated to the
America's around
13,000 B.C.





By the **3500s B.C.** maize
(corn) has become a
major **domesticated crop**
in Mesoamerica

By the 1,000s B.C. a few
major civilizations
developed in Mesoamerica
& South America

Mesoamerica

Olmec

South America

Chavín

A topographical map of Mexico and Central America is shown against a dark blue background. A green arrow-shaped callout points to the southern Gulf Coast of Mexico, specifically the area of modern-day Veracruz and Tabasco. The word "Olmec" is written inside this callout.

Olmec

Timeframe: 1200 B.C to about 400 B.C.

Location:

- Mesoamerica in the jungles of southern Mexico.
- They lived along the Gulf Coast of Mexico, in the modern-day Mexican states of Veracruz and Tabasco





An aerial photograph of a vast, mountainous landscape. The terrain is covered in dense green vegetation, likely tropical forest or jungle. Several valleys are visible, some containing small, cleared areas that appear to be agricultural fields or small settlements. The mountains are rolling and layered, with some peaks in the distance appearing hazy. The sky is filled with white, fluffy clouds, suggesting a bright, sunny day.

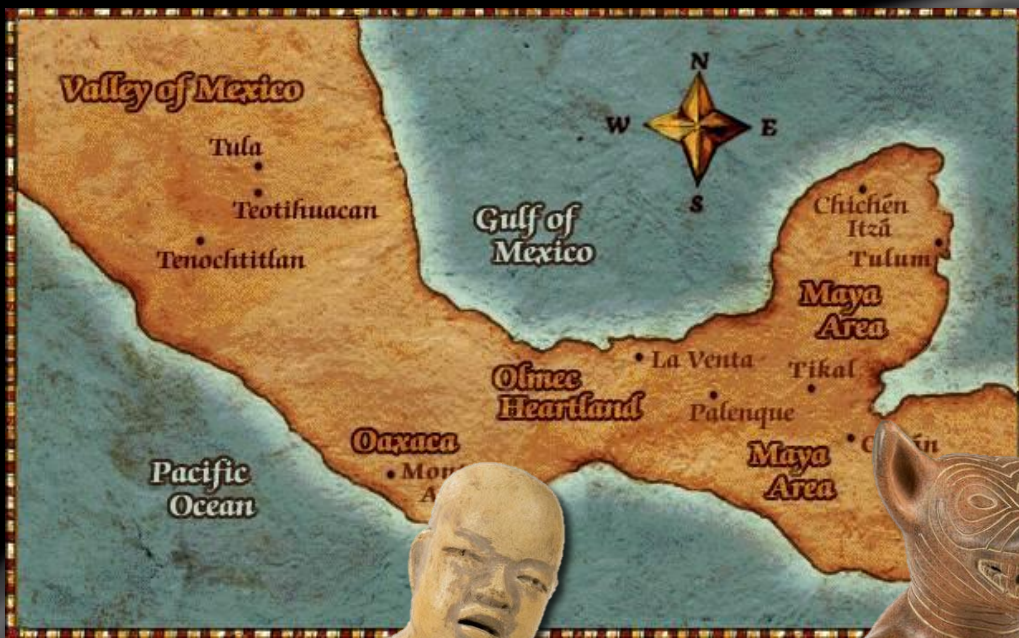
ENVIRONMENT

- hot & humid and covered with swamps and jungle
 - 100 in of rainfall
 - flooding
- Abundant deposits of salt, tar, clay, rubber, and stone

ENVIRONMENT

- Rivers = routes for transportation
- Flood plains = fertile land for farming

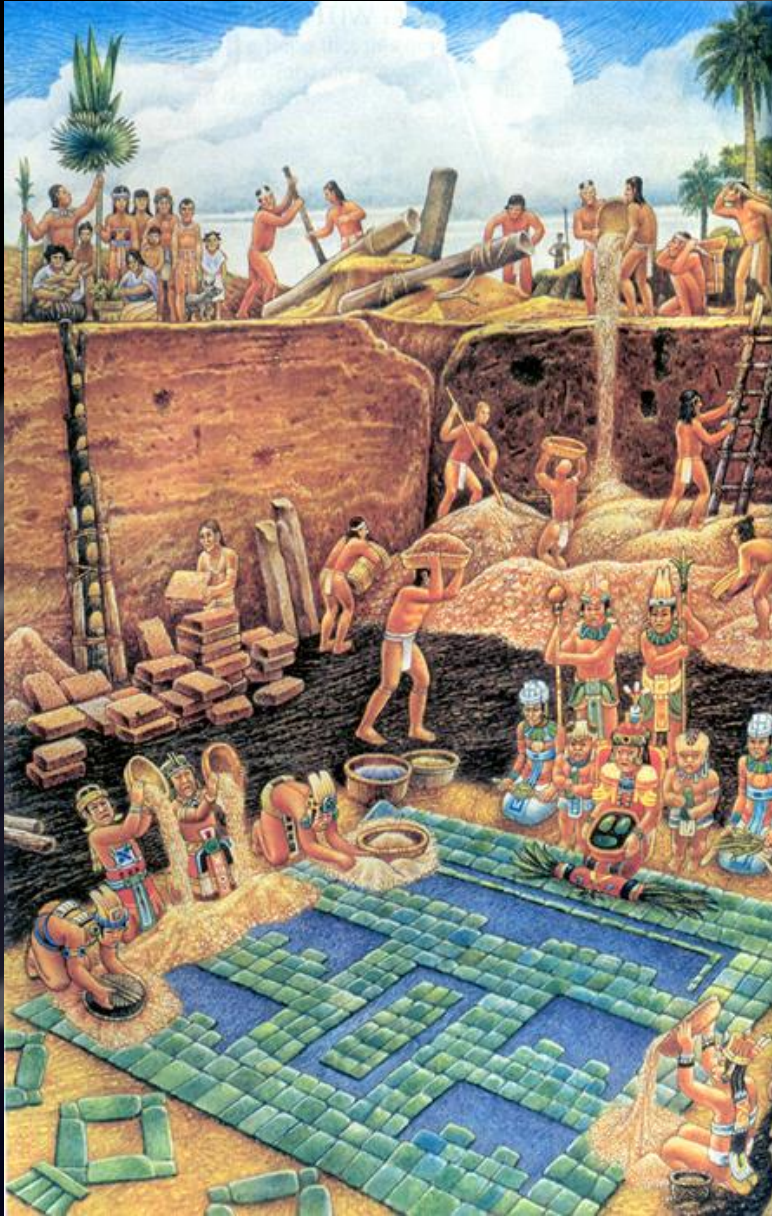




SOCIETY

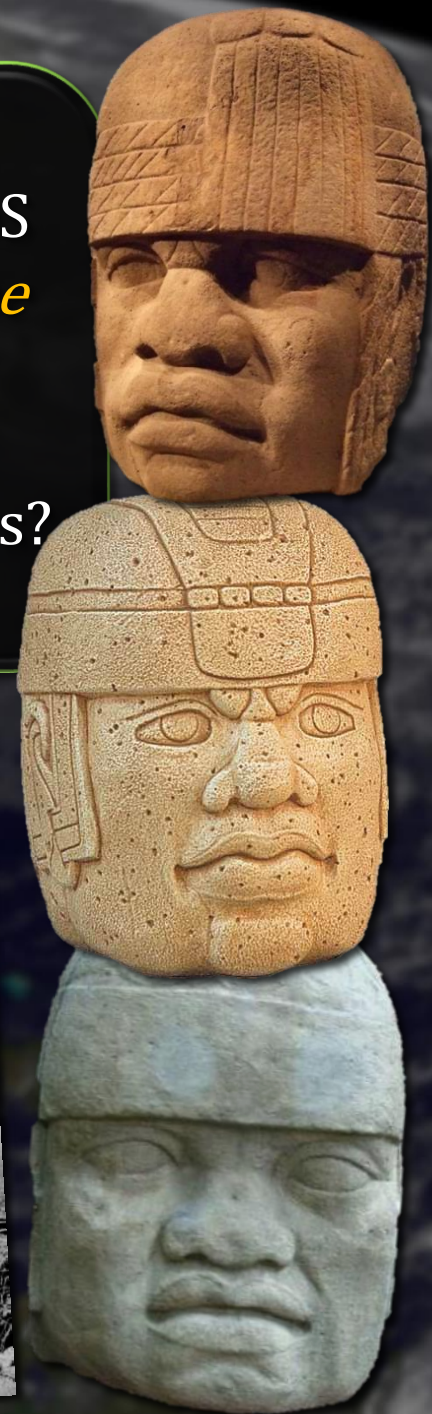
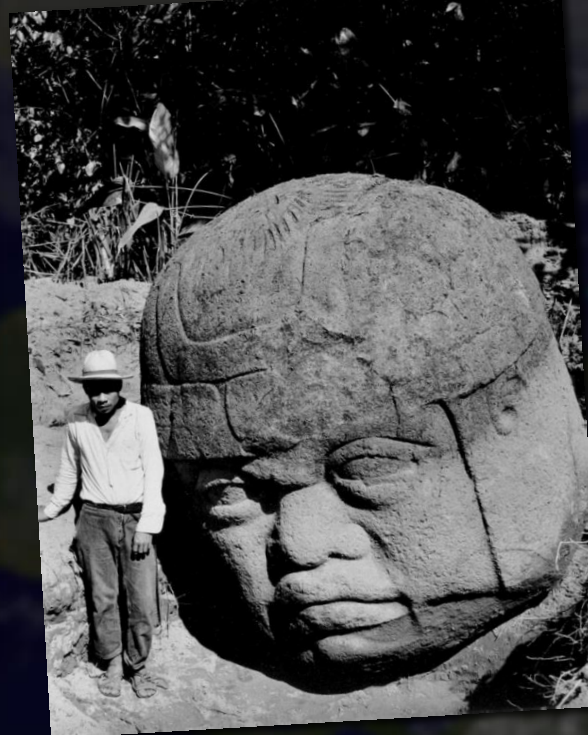
- Collection of city states or a single kingdom?
- Class developed due to growth of trade & job specialization
- Leadership may have been priest-kings





SOCIETY

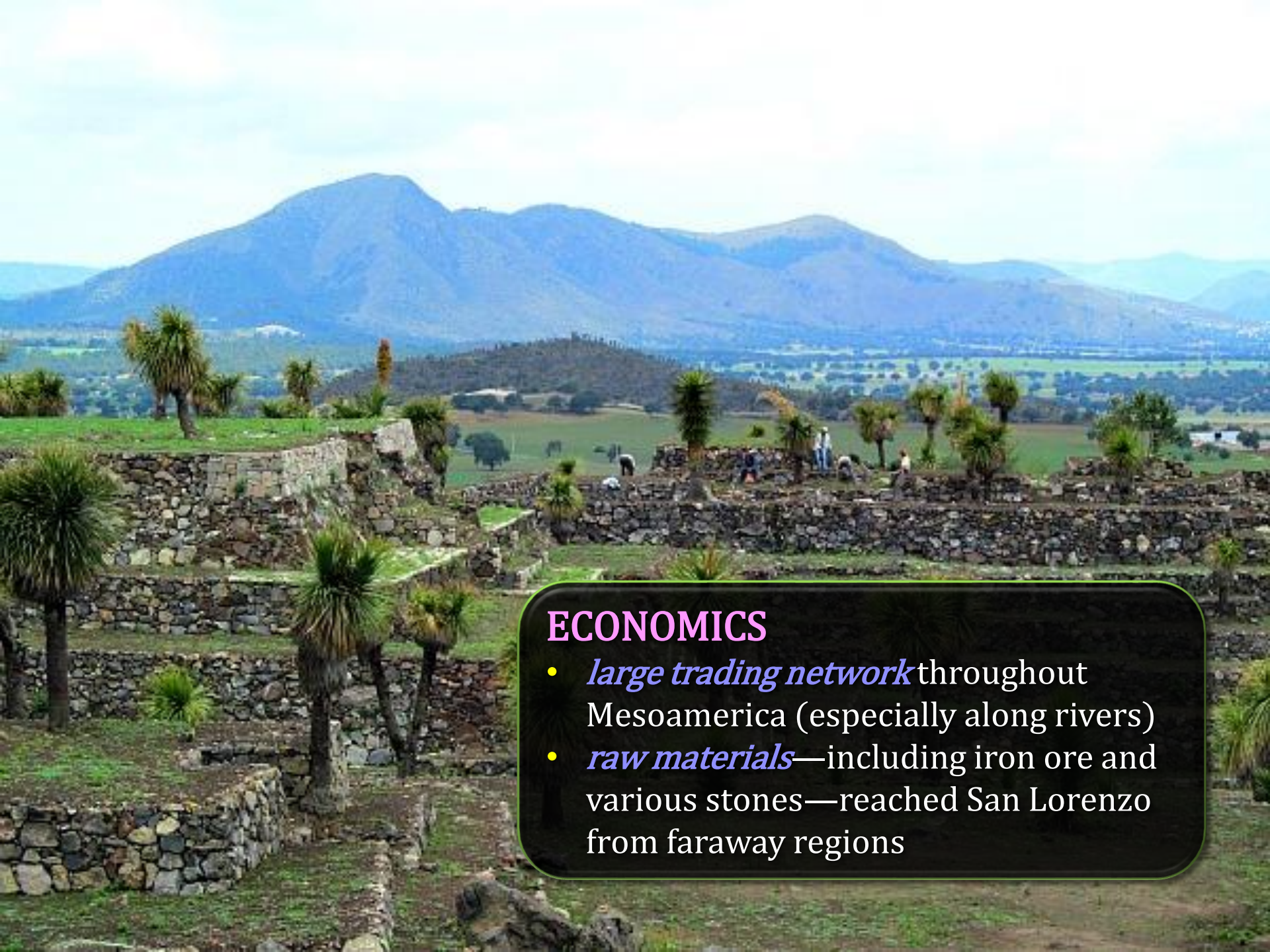
- COLOSSAL HEADS
 - Purpose? *Maybe Represented:*
 - Rulers?
 - Sports-players?
 - gods?



SOCIETY

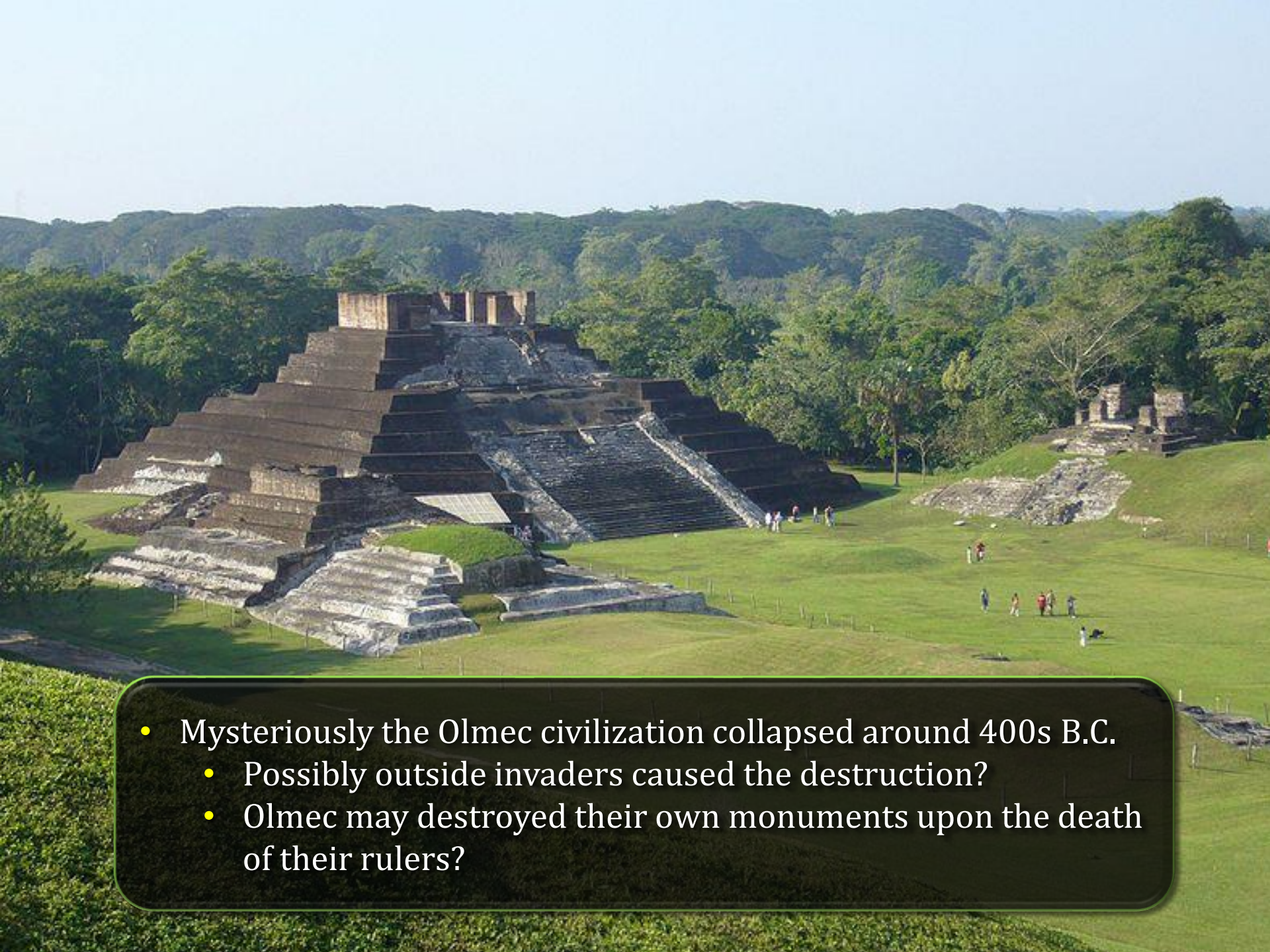
- Religion was polytheistic: both male, female and animal gods
- Jaguar spirit is a prime example (rain god? Representing religious leader?)
- Blood letting and human sacrifice
- ceremonial centers central in the cities





ECONOMICS

- *large trading network* throughout Mesoamerica (especially along rivers)
- *raw materials*—including iron ore and various stones—reached San Lorenzo from faraway regions



- Mysteiously the Olmec civilization collapsed around 400s B.C.
 - Possibly outside invaders caused the destruction?
 - Olmec may destroyed their own monuments upon the death of their rulers?












LEGACY

- Domestication of maize (corn)
- Development of a calendar
- Cultural influence spread wide and would endure for centuries
- “mother culture” of the Mayan & Aztec

A topographical map of South America with Peru highlighted in yellow. A yellow arrow points to the highlighted area.

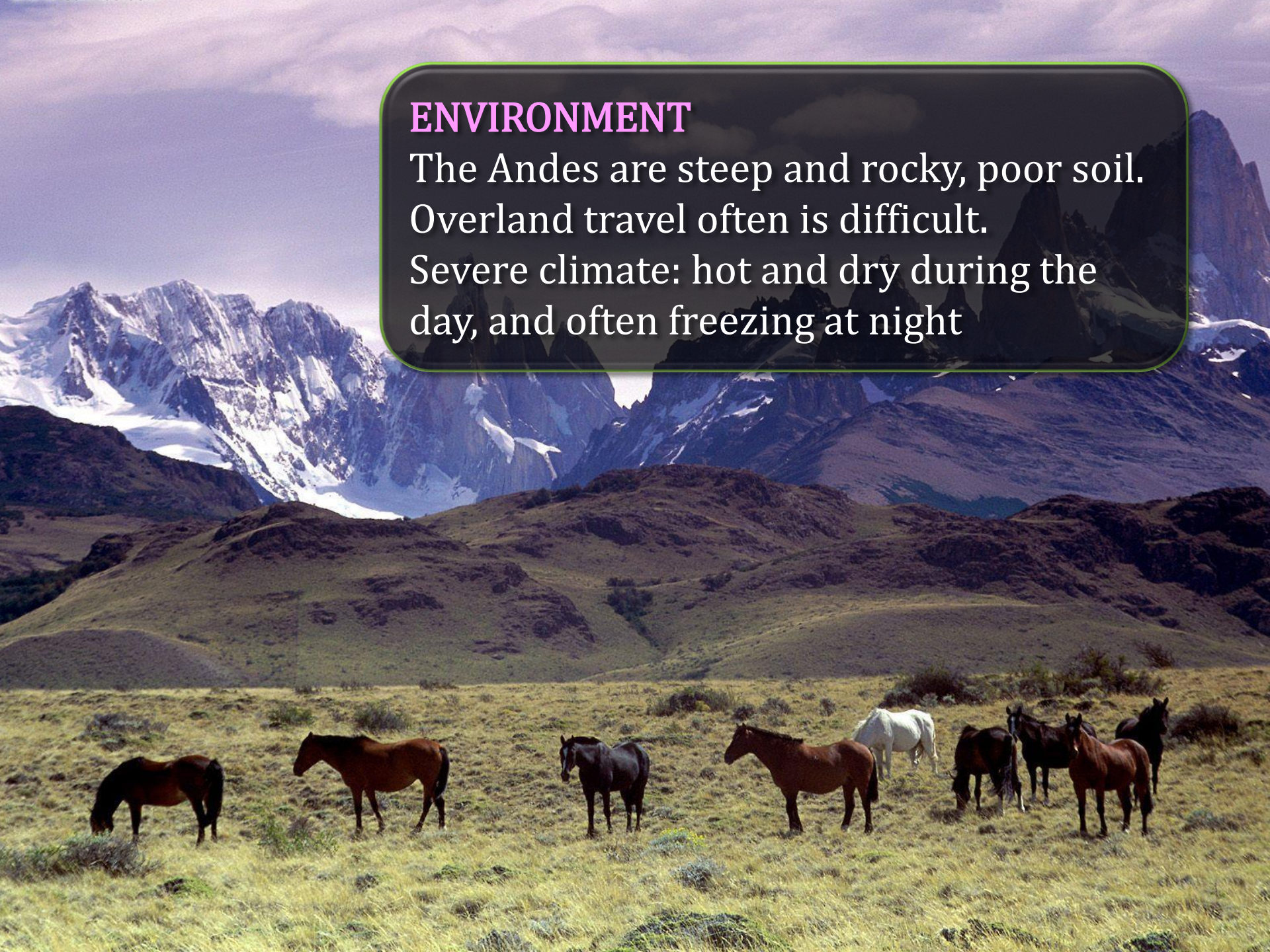
Timeframe: 900 B.C to about 200 B.C.

Location: Located in the Andes Mountains
Modern day Peru

Chavín

ENVIRONMENT

The Andes are steep and rocky, poor soil.
Overland travel often is difficult.
Severe climate: hot and dry during the
day, and often freezing at night



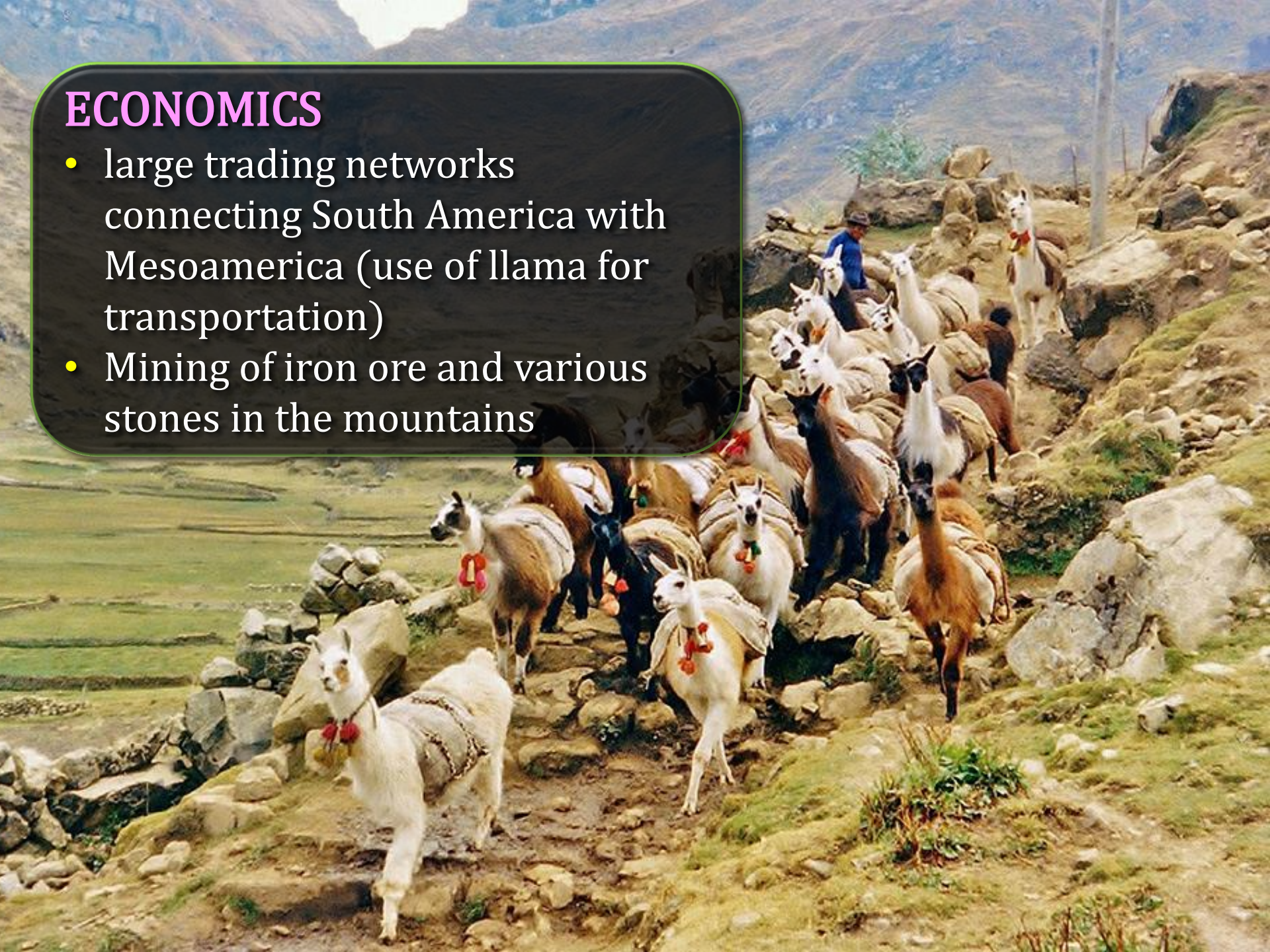


SOCIETY

- Leadership– A class of priests evolved to direct religious life
- Cities were center of worship for surrounding areas
- Large worship centers & a focus on the jaguar spirit (same as Olmec)

ECONOMICS

- large trading networks connecting South America with Mesoamerica (use of llama for transportation)
- Mining of iron ore and various stones in the mountains













LEGACY

- Metallurgy in the Western Hemisphere first developed in this region around 500 B.C.
- Llama domesticated as a beast of burden, trade vehicle, as well as being used for wool and a meat source
- Use of the coca leave to deal with the effects of high altitude living and labor
- “mother culture” of the Moche, Nazca & Inca

