

DIMENSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

History, Community, and Change in Allpachico, Peru

Dimensions of Development traces the effects of development projects on the Andean community of Allpachico, Peru. Allpachico is a *comunidad campesina*, governed by a locally elected council of residents who manage communal property and organize collective work. Over the past twenty-five years, however, development processes have inexorably furthered capitalism in the community. Susan Vincent examines four aid projects that took place in the area between 1984 and 2008 within the context of wider state and global political and economic systems. The projects followed international trends in the field of development, aiming first to improve agricultural production and income and later to teach skills to local women. More recently, the focus has shifted to developing infrastructure in the form of a potable water distribution system and promoting participatory planning by involving community members in the decision-making process about which projects to fund. Vincent examines how these projects played out and the ways in which they reformulated the notion of community to serve the different strategic goals of both local residents and the government and development actors who implemented them.

A unique historical ethnography, *Dimensions of Development* illustrates how state and NGO projects have drawn Allpachiqueños deeper into capitalism and have brought about challenges to the local political structure. However, as Vincent reveals, the *comunidad campesina* remains the group's preferred form of representation. This book details conflicts and contradictions endemic to capitalism, as well as those that result from the incompatibility between capitalist and non-capitalist value systems and how the concept of community is altered along the way. Vincent provides a local-level analysis of the complexities of development processes on the margins of global capitalism.

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SUSAN VINCENT

Dimensions of Development

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For the people of 'Allpachico' and for Marc

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1 Development in History in Peru

A young girl runs up the hill carrying a *manta*, a square cloth used for carrying loads on the back. She wanders along paths and fields looking for *bosta*, dried cow dung, for her mother to use as stove fuel. She comes back, herding the cattle belonging to her parents and grandparents, which had been grazing on the stubble of a harvested field all day. The faded manta on her back is full.

The girl was my god-daughter, Melia,¹ a lovely happy child. In 1998 when I watched her set off laughing after school and meander back, I thought of how this peasant image might appear to someone unacquainted with this community and its history.² The scene might appear bucolic to some, redolent of tradition and continuity, the strength of family, and mutual support. Another observer might decry the appearance of poverty, the use of child labour, the burning of unhygienic cow dung for cooking, the smoke polluting the Andean air.

Melia and other children her age helped their families with the myriad tasks associated with peasant life on top of their school attendance and homework. Older villagers compared what these children did with the wide range of responsibilities they had had in their youth, worrying that the rural agricultural lifestyle they had known was disappearing. To them, rather than being a typical, unchanging scene, Melia's task was an insignificant fraction of what she should be learning if she was going to continue the family farm.

Bosta could stand as an emblem of how the people of the Peruvian peasant community (*comunidad campesina*) of the place I call here Allpachico (hence, the people are Allpachiqueños) have engaged with the national economy. When I first did fieldwork in Allpachico in the

1980s, most people cooked on kerosene stoves. As inflation rose, and merchants strategized around the sales of kerosene under government price controls, the problems of dealing with quickly worthless money and the lineups involved to get staple goods pushed many women to turn to bosta and whatever twigs they could gather. Bosta became a valued product, and Melia's grandmother Tina, who had several cattle, explained to me one day that it was her 'bank,' allowing her to trade for the services of women who had no cattle of their own. Tina's husband, Jorge, worked in a mining smelter, living in a town 80 kilometres away, and she often needed help to get household and agricultural chores done. His income enabled them to buy the cattle. Bosta helped to mediate exchanges between those with wage income, however uncertain, and those with time to work and who needed money. By the 1990s inflation was under control, but government price controls had vanished and the high prices meant that kerosene and the propane that some wealthy households now preferred were out of reach for many. Bosta, the dung of an animal imported by European colonizers some 450 years earlier, perhaps itself once considered an effective and innovative replacement for the dung of the indigenous camelids, had once again become established as a common stove fuel.

History and prehistory, in more conventionally attractive forms than bosta, figure centrally in the image of the Andes. The mountains themselves look old with their worn rocks and scattered fossils of sea creatures. The ancient cultures that inhabited them in the past are constantly present in romantic configurations that inhabit the pragmatic policies for the future – tourist brochures, politicians, and rebels select from the panoply of prehistoric riches to appeal to their various audiences. In the popular rueful description of Peru as a beggar on a pile of treasure,³ the country is presented as having been magnificent, and having the potential for a spectacular future, while in the throes of a miserable present.

In this conception, development is the process intended to join past and future. Through development, current ills are diagnosed and treated, in order that the promise embedded in the past can be fulfilled. A host of authors (e.g., Ekholm Friedman and Friedman 2008; Nash 2001; Sider 1988; G. Smith 1989; Wolf 1982) has provided excellent models for understanding how the past helps to shape the future. In Gavin Smith's words (1989: 25–6) 'culture is an engagement with the present mediated by the past.' In this approach history is not determinative but rather sets out patterns to guide possibilities and inform decision mak-

ing. As Ferguson (1994) points out, history is all too often missing from development practice. In contrast, the present work firmly positions Allpachiqueños in time and place.

This study examines how processes of development have appeared in one Andean community, that of Allpachico, Peru. Allpachico is a legally recognized *comunidad campesina*, a designation that gives it rights to a specific territory, to be governed by a council elected by members of the *comunidad* (or *comuneros*). This council administers the territory and people, managing communal property (land as well as livestock or other *comunidad* enterprises) and organizing collective work on this property. Although by law all residents should be registered as *comuneros*, in practice in Allpachico only a fraction bother to do so. The rest, most of whom do little or no farming, judge that the benefits of membership (e.g., access to collective resources) are not worth the costs (e.g., having to participate in *faenas* – work bees). The term ‘community’ can also be used to refer to other forms of local collectivity apart from the *comunidad*. This book acknowledges these different collectivities, some of which are simply based on the self-identification of residents and migrants as Allpachiqueños, and some of which are organized by development processes, such as the groups of women who perform service for food handouts that I discuss in Chapter 6. I will refer to the legal polity as the *comunidad* and to the other forms as ‘community,’ ‘collective,’ or ‘collectivity.’

Allpachico comes under the political jurisdiction of a small district municipality I call Piedra Blanca. In Peru’s nested political structure, the next level above the municipality is the province, then the region, and finally the state. Allpachico lies at the roots of this political tree, and most of its interactions with other levels of government take place through the municipality. We will see one important instance of this in the discussion of participatory budgeting in Chapter 8.

Allpachico is situated in the Quebrada del Mantaro, or Mantaro Canyon, upriver from the flat, fertile Mantaro Valley (see maps 1 and 2). Unlike areas in the valley, Allpachico has little flat, lower altitude agricultural land; the territory lies between an altitude of 3,500 metres above sea level beside the river and 4,200 on rocky promontories, limiting what can be grown. Not only is Allpachico’s land marginal, there is little of it; only slightly more than 1,000 hectares, of which perhaps 200 are arable and 600 usable for pasture. The rest is too rocky for agriculture. The population is split among the main village, also called Allpachico, located beside the river, near the highway and railway; the

smaller village of Colibrí, also beside the river, highway, and railway a kilometre farther upriver; and two small highland hamlets called Trebol, a half hour's walk uphill, and Kutru, more than an hour's walk uphill. The lack of resources inside community territory has meant that Allpachiqueños have taken advantage of other features of the region, especially labour migration. The location of the community along the central highway and railway has facilitated migration employment in the regional mining and transport industries and formal and informal sector work in Lima, about 300 kilometres to the west. Over the past century, agricultural production has gradually lost importance relative to other locally based economic activities, and out-migration has increased dramatically. The population of the community has declined from about 600 in the 1980s to about 350 after 2000. Nevertheless, migrants often return to Allpachico during personal or national economic crises.

This analysis of development in Allpachico focuses on experiences between 1984 and 2008, the period over which I have carried out anthropological fieldwork there. I have made twelve trips of between one and seven months, for a total of about two years. My methods have been anthropological: I have carried out participant observation; recorded events and the appearance of the community with photographs and video; regularly carried out censuses of the households in the main village; reviewed community archives and documents; discussed life histories with older residents; and undertaken interviews among both residents and migrants to get specific comparative data. The people of Allpachico have been invariably generous with their knowledge, which is the basis of this book.

By focusing on one place, the community of Allpachico, I am countering some recent trends towards 'multi-sited' ethnography.⁴ Works such as Crewe and Harrison's (1998) examination of development practice in places throughout the world have been particularly useful in uncovering some of the key assumptions of development practice. There are also excellent studies of the history of particular projects in single locations (e.g., Ferguson 1994; Gardner 1997; Mosse 2005). In contrast to these, the present work studies multiple development projects in one place over time in order to explore how past projects affect future ones and to trace the impact of these development processes on the people. In addition to allowing a glimpse of the historicity of the moulding of social life, a long-term study of one place also provides for examination of the variety of development practices and processes

that have manifested themselves there. Thus, this is not an examination of one type of development practice or process across space, but of various types in their sequential appearance in a certain place.

Not all current or past trends in development practice will be represented in this study, so this is not an exhaustive critique of development practice. Further, there is insufficient space here to discuss all that has happened in the form of development in Allpachico, even if I had information about it all. Allpachico, as a poor peasant community, is a constant target of some form of development practice, if only distantly from some state or multilateral agency policy. A broad definition of development, however, has been used in tracing the history of Allpachico presented here. State projects, policies and structures, international investment, international and national non-governmental projects, along with the collective endeavours of the people themselves all make an appearance, some more briefly than others. Some of the experiences are clearly imposed from outside the community, others arose through bipartite negotiation, and yet others were engendered within the community. Despite this generality, the emphasis here is on specific community or people-oriented forms of development projects, as opposed to policies focused more generally on such goals as increasing national gross domestic product, or building large-scale infrastructure.

Because how specific projects and programs were interpreted in the community was a result of earlier experiences, the presentation is chronological. In this way, the philosophy and intentions of each innovation and intervention are examined not as abstractions, but rather in the concrete ways in which they were implemented in one place. In particular, I trace changes in both the technical and social ways in which people engage in productive processes. In this, I follow the lead of scholars such as Nash (2001), Roseberry (1989), G. Smith (1989, 2006), and Wolf (1982). These writers outline a political economy approach which acknowledges the uneven path resulting when systems of production with distinctive logics of operation are engaged in by real people with historically and culturally patterned goals and strategies, who must deal with both the advantages and the crises devolving from these systems. The plot of this history of change is thus neither inexorable nor predictable – I am interested in how and what happened, rather than in trying to model why certain events occurred (G. Smith 1989: 25).

Thus, this book applies a political economy analysis to long-term historical change in order to trace the social forms of production in

Peru – before the advent of capitalism, but mostly on its continuing advance. Over the past twenty-five years that I have known Allpachico, development processes have inexorably furthered capitalism in the community. To some extent this has happened in agricultural production, although poor land and market conditions have limited the rise of small scale capitalist farming. The people have certainly become increasingly interested in both production for capitalist markets and purchase of commodities, and we will see both of these trends through the book. Most clearly, however, the advance of capitalism has meant that Allpachiqueños have come to conceptualize their labour as a commodity in ever more contexts, including in communal faenas. This involves not simply the happenstance exchange of work for money, but planning and value calculation around the exchange. Significant differences have arisen within Allpachico in terms of property and wealth – the stuff of class. These differences are noted in the analysis below. I do not see these local class fractions as the major dynamic, however. Rather, the most obvious class configuration is the positioning of the bulk of the population as labour. At the same time, it is important to point out that none of these strands of capitalist transformation are complete. This book details conflicts and contradictions endemic to capitalism, as well as those that result from the incompatibility between capitalist and non-capitalist value systems. The book thus provides a local level analysis of the complexities of development processes on the margins of global capitalism.

Plan of the Book

This book explores development over the history of settlement in the region. In Chapter 2, I present the framework that guides the analysis of the material, by outlining a definition of development and its current intertwining with capitalism. I also reflect on the relationship between anthropology and development. Chapter 3 establishes firmly that the people of Allpachico are not without history. The region has been inhabited for about 15,000 years. Over that time different technologies were adopted, invented, dropped, adapted, and imported by the people who lived there and moved around, out of and into the area. There is no linear progression through stages of social organization and no predictable pattern. Nevertheless, both the technology and the sociopolitical structures became more complex while autochthonous or conquering elites devised ways to extract surplus from working

commoners for their own consumption and to mitigate the effects of crisis. These processes changed form and direction after the Spanish Conquest, as they had under earlier Inca and Huari ones. Thus, the chapter argues that change is not recent and that an understanding of history does not mean a search for an authentic essential social form, but rather involves recognition that the transformations of the past contextualize the present. It can also give a new perspective on the meaning of development. Thus, a comparison of the dire conditions in Peru in the 1560s and 1570s and the solutions proposed by the Spanish with today's discussions of development points to some significant similarities alongside the obvious differences.

Chapter 4 picks up the historical tale with the early twentieth century legal re-establishment of the indigenous community and continues through the now-you-see-it-now-you-don't waning and waxing of community development in different forms. As Cowen and Shenton (1996) observe, community is frequently reinvoked in development policy to address the ills caused by earlier forms of development. Tracing the trail of community forms in Allpachico shows that it is not only reinvoked, but reformulated to serve different strategic goals of its members and the government or development actors who implement it.

With the discussion of community in Chapter 4 we begin our perusal of people-oriented development strategies. Chapter 5 examines an Integrated Rural Development project with the goal of improving agricultural production and income. Occurring during the worst years of economic and political upheaval at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, the project did not, and probably could not, achieve its goals. It had effects, however, in informing how Allpachiqueños viewed future projects, as well as leaving resources that could be invested in them.

While the community as a constituted political entity, that is, as the *comunidad*, was the subject of the Integrated Rural Development project, in the 1990s more projects were targeted at individuals such as women and children. This form of development intervention is the focus of Chapter 6. Selecting individuals with a specific identity trait, in this case women, to receive benefits both undermined the strength of the *comunidad* and fed into higher levels of political networking. The contradictions of empowering the marginalized recipients of these projects are clear as the women learned to navigate ephemeral and clientelistic collectivities. The skills they learned were pragmatically valuable,

if not entirely what was envisioned in the theory. The training also incited closer integration into capitalist markets.

After these two decades of experience-seeking projects, having them fail to materialize, or managing to derive what benefit they could from projects in disarray, Allpachico received an infrastructure project to build a potable water distribution system in the early 2000s. This project, led by a non-governmental organization (NGO), is the subject of Chapter 7. The emphasis on infrastructure, while around since Robert McNamara's 1970s Basic Human Needs blueprint, has been reinvigorated with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to be met by 2015. In the current iteration, community participation (that is, contributions of labour, materials, and money) has been identified by the World Bank as essential to reaching the goals and ensuring sustainability (Coirolo et al. 2001). The position is contradictory, however, in assuming on the one hand that there are intimate supportive bonds of community and, on the other, that people will apply capitalist economic rationality. In Allpachico the NGO's insistence on equal treatment of all participants actually called attention to inequalities among them. This project also demonstrates the growing tendency of Allpachiqueños to calculate the exchange value of their labour. Finally, it invoked a new way of understanding community – one defined geographically and infrastructurally as those who will benefit from a specific spatial service grid.

Communities were rethought once again as the post-Fujimori regime after 2001 threw Peru into the era of governance in development, manifested through structures to decentralize political decision making and finances to regional and local governments. Chapter 8 examines how this began to play out in Allpachico as budget priorities in the municipality were set through a participatory process. The interplay of possibility, the desire for political display, and new structural and practical forms of community are leading to certain kinds of projects being prioritized, others being funded, and yet others, which were recently deeply desired, being relegated to lower places on the list. In the process, we see how participatory budgeting, while theoretically promoting an accounting system that allots scarce resources to prioritized needs, is actually distorted by the varied interests of politicians and Allpachiqueños.

The conclusion will return to the theoretical foundations of Chapter 2, to which I now turn.

2 Anthropology, Development, and Capitalism

In this chapter I set out the concepts that underpin the analysis in this book. I begin by sketching the structure of capitalism, with a brief note on the unfolding of capitalism in Peru. This is followed by a discussion of definitions of development, with an emphasis on how development is linked to capitalist expansion. I then map the main development actors to show how they are linked to general historical trends. Finally, I discuss the relationship between anthropology and development, and use a famous development project in Vicos, Peru, to illustrate a history of trends in development practice.

Capitalism and Commodification

This account of development in Allpachico demonstrates how people of this region have dealt with attempts to extract their labour as well as how various political and productive risks have been addressed over millennia, more particularly focusing on the percolation of the logic of capitalism into the lives of these community members over the past twenty-five or thirty years. Capitalism constitutes a form of what Wolf (1999: 5–6) calls ‘structural power.’ It sets up social relations of production that impel and constrain action, and informs models of understanding. The classic Marxist industrial model (e.g., Wolf 1982: 77–9), pits two classes against each other: the capitalists who own the means of production (e.g., land, factories, machinery) and the workers who use these resources to do the actual production. The workers, without access to a means of surviving through their own property, must sell their labour power to the capitalists in return for a wage. The capitalists, in paying wages that are below the value of

what the workers produce, extract surplus value, while the workers seek to retain this as part of their wages. Capitalist investors, forced by competition to lower production costs, try to lower wages and use technology to achieve ever-higher productivity.

So far this system is presented as a mechanical model set in motion by the impersonal demand for capitalist profit. However, as Roseberry (1989: 173) points out, the mechanically driven necessities of the model are implemented by humans who engage to protect what they see as their interests. It is through the struggles of capitalists to derive profits and workers to gain or improve access to livelihood that actual historical capitalist social formations – which may bear only tenuous similarity to the model – arise and are transformed. Both Wolf and Roseberry contend that, as a result, capitalist development is uneven. The focus of both is on the expansion of capitalism to other regions with distinct productive systems, for example, through European expansion. Their insistence on capitalism as a system of *production* is asserted in opposition to the dependency and world systems theory claims of Frank (1967) and Wallerstein (1974), who claimed that the poverty of the underdeveloped world was because of these countries' marginal position with respect to capitalist *trade* with the central dominant capitalist countries. Further, against Rey's outline of how capitalism articulates with non-capitalist modes of production, leading inevitably to the supremacy of capitalism, Roseberry (1989: 162–9) points out that this was only one possible result that Marx envisioned of such an encounter. The other two possibilities involved leaving the non-capitalist system in place and extracting wealth through tribute, and a new synthesis of the two. It is this last that Roseberry finds most interesting and with the most relevance for understanding the current complicated mixture of production systems in Latin America, and accords a role to historical cultural experience. The mixture is not of distinct systems that interact, but of new syntheses arising from the clash of those involved. Building on Fried's discussion of tribes as 'secondary sociopolitical phenomena,' brought into being as a result of the intervention of a state or other complex form of society, Wolf (1982: 76) declares 'I believe that all human societies of which we have record are "secondary," indeed often tertiary, quaternary, or centenary.' That is, capitalism, like other productive systems, slithers along diverted by the people who engage in it, deepening here, mixing with other forms of labour extraction there, experimenting with new forms to overcome the crises resulting from its own contradictions¹ or

the vagaries of human action, all elastically governed by the rules of capital accumulation.²

In this view, variations of capitalist production relations not only spread, they also infiltrate as those who encounter the system re-evaluate their labour power (e.g., Chevalier 1982; Taussig 1980), various goods³ and services⁴ and their relations with others.⁵ Along with class formation mentioned above, the process of commodification is a central element in capitalism. It is complex and can focus on different things in different cultural contexts. Castree (2003) provides an overview of the range of dimensions that have been identified as manifestations of a process of commodification. These are the following: privatization, alienability, individuation, abstraction, valuation, and displacement. These features are visible in the chapters to come and so merit definition here. For a thing to be a commodity, it must be privately ownable, rather than a free social good. Naturally occurring goods such as water and land, for instance, have come to be privatized. This is required for a good to be sold by the person who produced it, that is, to be alienable. Individuation means that the good can be separated from its supporting context – as might happen if a religious icon, for instance, were taken from its shrine, or water from its source. Abstraction refers to the means by which one item is deemed equivalent to another similar item for purposes of replacement or valuation. For example, a mining company that contaminates one lake may create an artificial one in replacement. Valuation is a very key aspect of commodification and one that will receive much attention below. This refers to the calculation of an exchange value for an item, rather than simply its use value as something that can be consumed. Further, this value is linked to wider capitalist processes, such as the drive to achieve profits. The valuation of labour in particular is critical to the calculation of the exchange value of other commodities. Finally, displacement hides the labour that goes into a commodity, making the value of the commodity appear as a property of the thing itself, rather than arising from the human-wrought form of its production.

Commodification and class formation are intertwined, as labour power is a basic commodity in this system. As we will see in the book, there is no general template, consistency, or inexorability to how these processes unfold. Sometimes commodification is resisted – as Taussig (1980) argued for Colombian peasant-workers; and at other times people energetically engage in transforming whatever they can find into

commodities, as might happen in the informal sector⁶ (Hart 1973; MacEwan Scott 1979). Employers may endeavour to attract a labour force free from ties to land or other productive forces in order to control them better, as occurred during the development of capitalism in Europe. Alternatively, they may resist the conceptualization of their workers as pure workers, such as when employers of child care givers use the idiom of family to justify low wages and tight surveillance. Thus, resistance to capitalist commodification may come from either workers or employers.

The Peruvian process has been particularly uneven, fragmented, and disrupted. I focus here on the central highlands where Allpachico is located. As described by Manrique (1988: 138–9), a merchant capitalist class developed on the coast of Peru in the nineteenth century, but was checked by the War of the Pacific with Chile (1879–83). During the war's campaign in the central highlands, crosscutting interests pitted the indigenous peasantry (who fought the Chilean invaders) against the large landowners (who tended to see Chilean victory as inevitable). There is a debate about the motivations of the peasantry, reflecting, as numerous analysts have observed, that the politics of class formation have been complicated by the politics of race (Flores Galindo 2010; Mallon 1995; Manrique 1987, 1988; Thurner 1995, 1997). Geographic location is another important factor. After the war, the balance of power shifted away from the large landowners in the central (but not the southern) highlands, when many peasant communities were rewarded for their patriotism by greater political autonomy (Manrique 1988).

At the end of the nineteenth century, a new factor entered the dynamic as foreign investment in mining constituted a powerful force of capitalist expansion in the central highlands. Again, the effects were various. In one tendency, Mallon (1983) and Laite (1978) observe that peasants in some communities used wages from periodic work in the mines to support small capitalist farms and businesses, fomenting class divisions within communities, even while they resisted the pressure to proletarianize. Another pattern took hold in Allpachico, where the lack of land and resources has tended to support proletarianization rather than significant internal class divisions. Both of these tendencies were disrupted by a prolonged series of economic crises between 1975 and 1990 that negatively affected both agriculture and industry (Hopkins 1998: 89).

This book seeks to examine more closely the local level manifestation of the fraught unfolding of capitalism in Allpachico. I turn now to

how development practice is embedded in this context of uneven capitalist development.

Development in Capitalism⁷

Development has, apparently, failed. Raymond Apthorpe (1972), a famed development anthropologist, was already scathingly critical of what had been accomplished by the end of the First U.N. Development Decade in the 1960s (see also Pitt 1976a), and development was again resoundingly denounced in the 1990s in works by Escobar (1995), Rahnema and Bawtree (1997) and Wolfgang Sachs (1992). Ferguson (1994) takes it as a given that development will fail and concerns himself instead with examining what its effects are. These writers understand development in the sense of an intentional intervention, through policy or project, in the lives of poor people living in poor countries. The failure is manifested, in the words of Escobar (1995: 4) in 'massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and oppression. The debt crisis, the Sahelian famine, increasing poverty, malnutrition, and violence are only the most pathetic signs of the failure of forty years of development.' The cause of this failure is traced to the development industry instigated after the Second World War by the United States and Western Europe. Escobar's solution is to look for alternatives to capitalist development, locatable in societies relatively unscathed by capitalism.

Alternatively, in the view of Jeffrey Sachs (2005), development has been a success. Whereas the whole world was poor in 1800, now 'five-sixths of the world's population is at least one step above extreme poverty' (J. Sachs 2005: 51). Furthermore, all areas of the world have achieved at least some economic growth over the past two hundred years (29–30). Thus, Sachs sees development as synonymous with progress. Still, he is preoccupied by the inequalities of growth, and particularly by the one-sixth still in extreme poverty. Why did some countries not achieve the growth that others did?

The poorest [countries] did not even begin their economic growth until decades later, and then often under tremendous obstacles. In some cases, they faced the brutal exploitation of dominant colonial powers. They faced geographical barriers (related to climate, food production, disease, energy resources, topography, proximity to world markets) that had not burdened the early industrial economies like Great Britain and the