Central America Presentation

Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua
Map of Central America
Agenda

• This week
• Guatemala
• Honduras
• Next week
• El Salvador
• Nicaragua
Guatemalan Flag
Guatemala Administrative Map - 22 Departments
Guatemalan Basics

- 17.2 Million people
- Area 42,042 square miles (about the size of Louisiana)
- Between 480,000 and 1.4 million Guatemalans live in the U.S.
  - Cincinnati communities in Springdale and Price Hill
  - San Marcos is the most common origin
- 93% speak Spanish 21 Mayan languages
- Turbulent recent history
- Only 74.5% of population over 15 is literate
- Very low education levels, particularly in highland
History of Guatemala

• 12000 BC first evidence of human habitation: hunter-gatherers
• Pre-classic period (2999 BC to 250 AD), classical (250 to 900 AD) (height of Mayan civilization collapsed in 900 AD drought?)
• 1519-1821 era of Spanish colonization
  • Epidemic devastated local populations
• 15 September 1821 independence declared
• Mid 19th to late 19th century chronic instability, civil strife
• Early 20th century United Fruit Company enters Guatemala and supported a series of dictators
History of Guatemala

• 1944-1954 period of economic reform ended by a US-backed military coup which installed a dictatorship

• 1960-1996 bloody civil war between US-backed government and leftist rebels
  • 450 Mayan villages destroyed, 1 million people became refugees 200,000 may have died
  • 83% of the victims were Mayan Indians

• 2012-2015 corrupt regime of retired general Otto Pérez Molina

• 2016 Jimmy Morales assumes presidency (former comedian)
  • In some ways a Guatemalan Donald Trump
Climate in Guatemala: Highlands

• Generally 72 to 82 degrees during day, 54 to 63 at night
• Rainy season May to October, dry November to April
Climate Change forces Guatemalans to Migrate

• Drought and shifting weather are making it very difficult for many small-scale farmers to feed their families
• Guatemala listed among the 10 most vulnerable to climate change
• 2014 saw increased interceptions of Guatemalan migrants at the border
• Severe El Niño related drought conditions in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador
Education in Guatemala

• 25% of the population is illiterate, up to 60% of indigenous population
• Students have 4.1 years of education on average
• 2 Million do not attend school at all
  • Mostly indigenous females
• Classes conducted in Spanish but 40% of indigenous population does not speak Spanish
• Many males drop out due to the need to work for financial stability
• Spending on education among lowest in the world
Roads very primitive
El Norte: Movie about immigrants

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPoqBCvyG9k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPoqBCvyG9k)
- An indigenous Mayan coffee picker Arturo is murdered because he attempts to organize a union during the Guatemala civil war. Enrique, his son, and Rosa, his sister
- A man posing as a coyote attempts to rob them.
- They cross through a sewer pipe laden with rats. Rosa later dies of infection.
- Working as a domestic, Rosa is puzzled by a washing machine.
- Rosa is nearly caught in an immigration raid.
- “The Devil’s Highway” immigrants died in the desert
Guatemalan Music: Marimba
Marimba Music

• First documented existence in 1680
• May have been originated by Afro-Caribbean slaves as early as 1550
• Wooden box resonators replaced gourd resonators
• Several types of marimba instruments
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXt7QKvi_Kk
Guatemalan Painting mural Carlos Mérida
El Verano 1981– Carlos Mérida

Cubism – abstract art
Carlos Mérida Life

- Born 1891 in Guatemala City
- Trained in music and art but loss of hearing steered him toward art.
- Made several trips to Europe and the United States
- 1910-1914 lived and worked in Paris (no opportunity in Guatemala)
- 1920 First exhibition in Mexico of easel and mural works
- Relocated to Mexico at the end of the Mexican Revolution
  - Worked with Diego Riviera
- 1950 returned to Europe to study Venetian mosaic
- 1985 mural for Benito Juarez housing project in Mexico City destroyed in earthquake. He died the same year in Mexico City.
Carlos Mérida

• Arguably Guatemala’s most famous artist

• Three styles
  • Figurative
  • Surrealistic
  • Geometric figures and forms developed in the 1940’s
  • Works exhibited in Guatemala City’s Museum of Modern Art
Guatemalan Textiles

• Multi-colored
• Fundamental part of Mayan culture
• Hand-woven
• Weaving is a semi-sacred action for Mayan women
• May depict information about their history
• Looms are hand-crafted from local wood
Mayan Weaver
Guatemalan Textiles
Guatemalan Textile
Cemetery in Chichicastenango, Guatemala
Folk Dancing in Guatemala
Monument to Massacre
Guatemalan Civil War

• Began 1960 ended 1996
• 1954 U.S. backed coup d’état installed military regime of Carlos Castillo Armas (Institutional Democratic Party).
• Other dictators followed
• Insurgency among indigenous peoples protesting inequalities
• 40,000 to 50,000 forced disappearances of the government’s political opponents
• Early 1980’s killings considered genocide
Guatemalans a little shorter
“Chicken bus”
Antigua: Favorite Tourist Destination

• Spanish Baroque-influenced architecture
• World Heritage site
• 1541 volcanic eruption
• 1543 – 1776 capital of Guatemala
• Suffered several earthquakes (1717, 1751, 1773)
• Heavy damage caused capital to be moved in 1775-76
• Several Spanish language schools
Antigua - colonial city
View of Antigua from above
Antigua
A street in Antigua
Church near Antigua
Catholic Church
Lake Atitlan
Live Volcano near Antigua
Volcanic Ash
At a live volcano
Cooperative for Education

• https://coeduc.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjwkqPrBRA3EiwAKdtwk0uWokzf1fb41VkwVNjY7_AdnX0ObrxzwcrljtVwrBbruYD02XoRBoCQpQQAvD_BwE
Delivering Textbooks with Coop
Kids gather at school
Folk Dancing
Peasant family we visited
Antigua-based organization
Students on the bus Probigua
Monterrico Beach – Pacific
Guatemalan problems
IS IT SAFE?

• Guatemala has a level 2 advisory: exercise increased caution
• Several zones have level 3 advisories due to increased crime:
  • Including Quetzaltenango
  • The Guatemala City airport is located in a zone 3 advisory area
What is this?
Honduras
Flag of Honduras
Honduras

• 9 million people
• Mostly mountainous with narrow plains on the coast
• 43,000 sq. miles (about size of Ohio)
• Agricultural economy
• Mestizo population
• Natural resources
  • Minerals, coffee, tropical fruit, sugar cane, textiles
• World’s highest murder rate
  • Drug cartels, gangs
Wide variety of species
Honduran History

• Pre-Columbia times
  • Mayan civilization in the west
  • Archeological sites such as Naco, Los Naranjos and Yarumela
• 1524 Spanish conquer Honduras and add it to the kingdom of Guatemala
• 1821 Honduras gains independence
• 1821-23 first Mexican empire
• 1823-38 United provinces of Central America
• 1838 Honduras becomes an independent republic
Honduran History (2)

• 1870’s international trade began
• Late 19th century fruit and infrastructure companies granted land in exchange for developing the north
  • Fruit companies drew workers north
  • Self-sufficient, tax-exempt sectors
• 1954 general strike paralyzes north for 2 months
• 1963 Military coup unseats democratically elected Ramón Villeda Morales
• 1969 El Salvadoran army invades Honduras
• 1974 Hurricane Fifi strikes: severe damage
• 1979 civilian rule returns
• 1998 Hurricane Mitch destroys 70% of crops, 70-80% of transportation network, 5,000 killed
• 2009 coup by head of Congress leads to suspension by OAS, UN
• 2017 crackdown on protests following the November election resulted in the death of at least 22 civilians and 1,300 detentions. Journals, environmental activists, and LBGT people are vulnerable to violence.
• 2018 President Juan Orlando Hernández announced a commission on police reform which removed 5,000 of 10,000 officers evaluated
• Prison conditions are inhumane
Crafts in Honduras

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRBU_0W2CYQ
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvWst_QE-Uc
Topographical Map of Honduras
Topography of Honduras

- **Mountainous interior**
  - 80% of total area
  - Difficult to traverse and not highly developed
  - Soil lacks volcanic ash in Guatemala

- **Western mountains border Guatemala**

- **Eastern mountains border Nicaragua**

- **Caribbean Lowlands or north coast most developed region**
  - Site of Puerto Cortés, largest port and San Pedro Sula, industrial capital
San Pedro Sula
Puerto Cortés
Education in Honduras

• Until 1957, only private schools for the upper class
• Public education free and compulsory for nine years (elementary school)
  • Only 34% of working children complete primary school and 51% of those registered
• Secondary school consists of
  • Common cycle (grades 7 – 9)
  • Diversified cycle (grades 10 – 13)
• Little vocational education
• One public university: National Autonomous University of Honduras
• Only 30% of Honduran children go to high school
Health Care in Honduras

• Public and private sector
• Most municipal garbage dumps pollute the soil
• 17% of Hondurans do not have regular access to health services
  • Hard to access in rural areas
  • 0.37 physicians per 1,000 people (U.S. 2.4)
• Ministry of Health serves entire population but only 50% - 60% of Hondurans regularly use these services
• 9 out of 10 people are not covered by health insurance
• Fertility rate 3.7 per woman in 2009 (U.S. 1.73)
U.S. Involvement in Honduras

- 1857 American adventurer William Walker attempted an invasion
- Late 19th century United Fruit Company and infrastructure companies granted land.
  - Companies controlled the north and did not pay taxes
- American troops landed in Honduras 1903, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1924, and 1925.
- Early 1980’s U.S. used as a base to support El Salvador and the Nicaraguan Contras
- 2007 US military intervenes to fight drug cartels at invitation of Honduran President
- Peace Corps had major presence but was withdrawn in 2012 due to safety concerns.
Los Naranjos Arceological Site
Honduran Music

• Common rhythms: Caribbean salsa, merengue, reggae, and reggaeton
• Banda Blanca Sopa de Caracol (snail soup)
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Omk-vfXi0tU
Honduran Art

• Arnando Lara
  • Born in Lima on Honduran North coast
  • Highlights aspects of reality which are inhumane
Armando Lara
Surrealism of Arnando Lara
Is it safe

• U.S. State department level 3 travel advisory
  • Reconsider travel to Honduras due to violent crime and violent gang activity
  • If you decide to go to Honduras
    • Avoid demonstrations
    • Avoid walking or driving at night
    • Be extra vigilant when visiting banks or ATMs
    • Do not wear expensive jewelry
    • Exercise caution using cell phones in public
Next week

• El Salvador
• Nicaragua
El Salvador
United Provinces of Central America

• Made up of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica
• Despite 1824 constitution, only lasted from 1821-1838
• Poor communication and loyalty at the local level
• Francisco Morazin, a Honduran, assumed power in 1829
  • Too sudden and broad reforms resulted in rebellion
  • In 1838 government reverted to localism
Map of El Salvador
El Salvador

- 6.34 million people
- 8124 square miles (a little larger than Massachusetts)
- 780 people per square mile (Honduras has 207 per square mile)
- 90% of population Mestizo
- Economy formerly coffee-based diversified into manufacturing
- High poverty and crime
- Mostly mountainous (3,500 to 5,000 feet) with volcanic range
- Indigenous language Nahuati has largely died out
- 50% Catholic 36% protestant
- Currency: U.S. dollar
Topography of El Salvador

• Mainly mountainous
• 191 miles of Pacific Coastline
• Flat coastal belt and central plateau
• Rainy season from May to October
• Dry season November to April
Topo map of El Salvador
Pan-American Highway

• A network of roads which extends from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska to the southernmost reaches of South America

• 100 miles Darien Gap can only be navigated with all-terrain vehicles
Map of Pan-American Highway
Government and Politics

• President elected in a fixed-day election must win over 50%
  • If no majority, run off within 30 days

• Unicameral legislature
  • 84 deputies elected by popular vote for 3 years
  • Multiple representatives in each of 14 departments
  • 20 elected nation wide
  • Can run for immediate reelection

• Supreme Court with broader functions than the U.S.
Supreme Court of El Salvador

• 15 judges and 15 substitutes
• Elected by legislative assembly every 3 years (2/3 vote required)
• Legislature designates one judge
• Constitution Court with 5 judges
• Administrative Disputes court with 4 judges
• Civil Court (3 judges)
• Criminal court (3 judges)
Political Parties in El Salvador

• Two major parties
• ARENA party (right-wing) (National republican alliance) won 4 consecutive elections until 2009
• Farabundo Marti National Liberation (FMLN) left-wing party which won in 2009 and 2014
• 2019 Nayib Bukele (Grand Alliance for National Unity) won on an anti-corruption platform
  • Claimed to be Muslim (his father is Muslim) but claims to be Roman Catholic
  • Took office 6/1/2019
History of El Salvador

• Prehistoric indigenous populations
  • Cuzcatlecs
  • Lenca
  • Olmecs
    • Pyramids in western El Salvador
  • Mayans
    • Chased out by volcanic eruptions
  • Pipil migrated from Mexico

• 1522-25 Spanish incurred resistance but ultimately prevailed
  • 1522 Spanish admiral Andres Nino landed on Meanguera Island
  • 1524 Captain Pedro de Alvarado of Spain launched a war to capture Cuzcatlán
  • 1525 Alvarado conquered El Salvador and formed village of San Salvador

• Colonial period: El Salvador part of Captaincy General of Guatemala
• 1811 independence movement
• 1821 independence granted
  • Joined Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua in Federal Republic of Central America
El Salvador History

• 1841 FRCA dissolved, El Salvador independent
• 1896 joined Honduras and Nicaragua in Greater Republic of Central America, which lasted 2 years
• 1932 Salvadoran peasant uprising led to La Matanza, massacre of 32,000 peasants (1931-1979 Era of Military Dictatorships)
• 1969 Football War
  • Thousands of El Salvadorans expelled from neighboring Honduras
• 1979-92 Salvadoran civil war Revolutionary Government Junta deposed President Carlos Humberto Romero in a military coup
  • Fearing communism President Carter supported the new government
El Salvador History (3)

- 1980 Oscar Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, executed by right wing death squads
- 75,000 killed in civil war, many disappeared
- El Mozote massacre US-trained Atlacati Battalion killed 800 civilians
- 1992 peace accord
  - Amnesty for all who had committed atrocities
- High crime rate due to gangs largely deported undocumented Salvadorans living in the United States
- 2 million Salvadorans live abroad
  - Remittances largest source of foreign currency
Education in El Salvador

• Public, private, and religious schools
• 21% of men, 27% of women illiterate
• 9 years of basic education
  • Only 82% of children make it to ninth grade
• 3 years of secondary school
  • Only 33% of children go
• Two public universities
• Public schools free but underfunded
Health Care in El Salvador

• Public and private systems
• All citizens w/o health insurance eligible for public system
  • State covers 79% who can not pay hefty medical bills
• Only 20% have health insurance policies
• Per capita spending on health care is only $100, far less than $3,000 regional average
• A few private not-for-profit hospitals in rural areas
Gangs and Violence

• 2015 6,657 murders “murder capital of the world”
• Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and Barrio 18 gangs
  • Originated on the streets of Los Angeles
  • Fighting for control of territory for extortion
  • Many gang members deported from the United States bring US-style gang structure to El Salvador
  • Estimated 60,000 gang members
  • Up to 600,000 believed to be in groups extended network
  • Gangs control entire areas so much that police are afraid to enter
  • A person living in an MS-13 zone can’t take a job in a Barrio 18 zone

• https://www.courthousenews.com/violent-gangs-saturate-el-salvador-from-top-to-bottom/
Salvadoran Immigration

• Many originally came during Salvadoran civil war
• Currently about 1.35 million Salvadorans in the U.S. (pop. 6.3 million)
• Temporary protected status granted after 2001 earthquake
• 200,000 are to lose TPS by January 2020
• Largest Salvadoran community in Los Angeles
Jewel of Cerén archeological site

• Pre-Columbian Mayan farming village
• Preserves a classical period buried by eruption of Loma Caldera A.D. 600
• UNESCO world heritage site
• First instance of manioc cultivation
  • Third-largest source of food carbohydrates
• Other crops guava, agave cacao
Plaza de Cerén
Plaza de Cerén (2)
Tazumal
Tazumal

• Most impressive Mayan ruin in El Salvador
• First settled about 5000 BC
• Abandoned about 1200 AD
• Important center of trade
Tomayate Paleontological Site

https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomayate
El Salvadoran Art – Fernando Llort Painting
El Salvador Street Art
El Salvador Street Art

• https://jonovernon-powell.com/street-art-el-salvador-10-11-17/
Music of El Salvador

• Marimba music very popular
• Marimba Atlacati “Lágrimas de Amor (Tears of Love)”
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCJs80Uisqc&list=PLxgaA20CUa3H-q3alZmT_n-Uirx4yZ8ie&index=2&t=0s
Cumbia El Salvador

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaTS0Y30djs
Is it safe?

• Level 2 State Department advisory due to gang violence
Nicaragua
Map of Nicaragua
Topo Map of Nicaragua
Granada, colonial city
León, Nicaragua

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le%C3%B3n,_Nicaragua
Nicaragua

- Terrain full of lakes, volcanos, and beaches
- 6 million people largely Mestizo, 50,000 square miles (between Louisiana and Mississippi)
- Paleo-Americans as far back as 12,000 BCE
- Macro-Chibchan hunters –gatherers –fishing- slash & burn agriculture
- 1502 Columbus discovered
- 1522 González Dávila initial expedition driven off by the Chorotega
- 1524 first permanent Spanish settlement by Hernández de Cordoba
  - Grenada and León founded
- Spanish clashed in “War of the Captains” but ultimately prevailed
History of Nicaragua (2)

• Spanish conquerors married took indigenous partners, beginning Mestizo tradition
• Many indigenous killed due to infectious diseases brought by Spaniards
• 1610 León destroyed by Momotombo volcano
• 1821 Independence
  • Civil war between liberal elite of León and conservative elite of Granada
  • 1852 Managua chosen as capital
• 1855 American William Walker declares himself president of Nicaragua- other Central American countries drove him out
History of Nicaragua (3)

• 1912 President Adolf Diaz asked America to intervene
  • 1912-33 U.S. Marines occupied Nicaragua
• 1927-1979 Hereditary dictatorship of the Somoza family
  • Somoza family came to power due to U.S. induced pact
• 1972 earthquake destroyed 90% of Nicaragua
  • Somoza Debayle siphoned off most of the relief money
• 1979 Sandinista revolutionary group ousted Somoza
  • Most middle class, wealthy landowners, and professionals left, many for U.S.
• 1980 Contras formed in opposition to Sandinistas
  • Reagan authorized CIA to help them with funding, armaments, and training
  • Contras destroyed health centers and schools
  • May have committed murder and rape
  • Reagan administration imposed economic embargo against Sandinistas
History of Nicaragua (4)

- 1983 Congress forbid funding of the contras
  - Iran-Contra affair
- 30,000 died in war between Contras and Sandinistas
- 1990 Anti-Sandinista coalition wins
- 2006 Ortega and Sandinistas return winning elections in 2011 and 2016
- 2018 Mass demonstrations call for Ortega’s resignation
  - Ortega kills many
Government of Nicaragua

• Constitutional democracy
• President elected for five years appoints cabinet with legislative approval
• Unicameral National Assembly members elected for 5 years by proportional representation
  • 20 elected nationally, 70 represent departments, outgoing President, presidential runner-up
• Courts
  • 16 judges on Supreme Court nominated by political parties and elected by legislature to five year term
  • Four chambers (administrative, criminal, civil and constitutional) (similar to El Salvador)
The canal that wasn’t

• Proposed as early as 1551
• 1825 Considered by the Federal Republic of Central America and in 1826 by the United States
• 1897 U.S. Nicaraguan Canal Commission proposed and the U.S. leased the land to build it
• 1902 the United States decided to build it in Panama
• Today: project still gets batted around
• Panama canal is 50 miles long
• Nicaragua canal would be 170 miles long
Immigration from Nicaragua

• Fueled by oppression of Ortega government

Political Parties

• Sandinista National Liberation Front (socialist)
  • Ruling party since 2007
• Constitutional Liberal Party conservative
• Independent liberal party middle of the road
• 2014 constitutional change eliminated ban on re-election of the president
León Viejo

- Founded in 1524 by Spanish explorer Francisco Hernández de Córdoba
- 16th Century colonial city with a grid system with a main square at its center
- Located near volcano Momotombo
- Three monasteries, “La Merced”, “San Pedro and “San Francisco”
- Monasteries damaged by natural disasters
- Pre-Hispanic ceramic remains found
- Relocated in 1610 due to volcano, earthquake
Crafts in Nicaragua

• https://www.nicaragua.com/tag/crafts/
Music in Nicaragua

• Mixture of different cultures from indigenous tribes, Europeans, and African slaves

• Palo de Mayo (Maypole) on Caribbean coast
  • A celebration welcoming rain

• Punta is a popular music of the Garifuna community
  • Can be performed at wakes
  • Struggle to felt by the indigenous population

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roX1nMwl40w
Education

• Somoza regime
  • Poorly funded
  • Only 65% of primary-school age children attended school
  • Secondary schools private and expensive
  • Of those who entered, only 22% completed six grades of primary school
  • Illiteracy 50% of population

• 1979 Sandinistas
  • 1980 literacy campaign reduced illiteracy from 50% to 23% of population
  • Double proportion of GNP spend on pre-college education
  • Triple college enrollment
  • Politicized education as an instrument of ideology
Education

• 1980’s Sandinistas
  • Civil war against Contras strained resources
  • 1980-1990 school age children increased 35%
  • Literacy reduced from the rate after 1980 campaign

• 1990 election won by more conservative Chamorro Government
  • More conservative values in the curriculum
  • New textbooks developed with aid from U.S. Agency for International Development
Health Care

• Pre-Sandinista
  • Nurses and doctors concentrated in Managua
  • Low life-expectancy and high infant mortality

• Under Sandinistas
  • Single national healthcare system available to all
  • New primary healthcare facilities and 10% of budget to healthcare

• Today
  • More market-oriented
  • Continued concentration of health care professionals in Managua
  • GPs poorly paid (even in comparison to neighboring countries)
Health Care

• Traditional high fertility rate due to lack of access to contraception
  • Was 3.27 in 2000
  • Now down to about 2.20 and may be as low as 1.89
How can I help: FINCA

• https://finca.org/our-impact/improved-lives/
Next week: Cuba