Central American History Second Semester Exam Study Guide

KINGDOM OF GUATEMALA (Modern day Central America)

-Captaincy General: Captaincies general were established districts that were under serious pressures from foreign invasion or Indian attack. They were under the jurisdiction of a Captain General.

-The Region Included modern day: Chiapas, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica

- The Capital was Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala (Modern day Antigua Guatemala): the word Guatemala originated from Quauhtemallan which is a Kaqchikel Maya word for “Forested land/area”.

-All trade was through Spain they created monopolies and colonies were prohibited to trade with each other

-Spain gave permission to create factories such as shoes, soap, glasses but discouraged them

-Central Americans had to respond to the policies by doing fraud, tax evasion, and contraband

![Map of Central American Provinces](image)

Bourbon reforms in the 1700s


-During the Napoleonic wars the Spanish allowed trade with the British, BOSTON and PHILADELPHIA but after the wars ended in the 1800s it prohibited trading again, enraging CA.

-Napoleon invaded Spain in 1808 and forced Ferdinand VII (king) to abdicate his throne.

-In a show of support, when the king was deposed Central Americans swore allegiance to the junta (colonial government that represented Ferdinand). Ferdinand was restored in 1814.

-Mexico and South America wars raged 1808-1821 which distracted the Spanish crown from rebellions in Central America. In Central America rebellions flared but they lacked support because of the distance between the provinces.

-Despite the challenges Central Americans obtained independence on September 15th 1821 BUT Central America was annexed to Mexico under the emperor AGUSTIN ITURBIDE

- In 1821 Mexican troops appeared at the border of the provinces to demand Central American annexation to the Mexican Empire. CA DID NOT RESIST because they did NOT HAVE RESOURCES!

-Liberals opposed annexation BUT Conservatives favoured annexation

Federation of Central America

-United Provinces of Central America: The Central American congress declared Central America as a sovereign country under the banner “God, Unity, and Liberty”. The provinces united because they were too small and economically weak to survive alone.

The end of the Federation
Causes: 1. liberals financed their army and policies by forced loans from the church and aristocrats; 2. they implemented new taxes that created political dissatisfaction and natives saw it as a demand for tribute; 3. Cholera outbreaks affected Guatemala and when Mariano Galvez sent medicine to villages, priests told natives and peasants that the government poisoned the wells; 4. the priests encouraged peasants to revolt throughout CA following the theme ‘Long live religion’.

**Brief introduction to American Independence**

-In response to unfair taxation and legislations delegates from each American colony met in NEW YORK in 1765 to fight against British oppression. They decided that each colony had the right to their own taxes; therefore, protecting their economy.

-Despite many just fighting for more rights. Radicals such as Samuel Adams encouraged acts of vandalism including the Boston Tea Party in 1773. He wanted the 13 colonies to obtain complete independence. The USA declared independence on July 4th 1776. The declaration was drafted by Thomas Jefferson. Despite the declaration the war continued and the French forces joined American forces in 1778. Peace came in the Treaty of Paris of 1783 in which the British recognized American independence.

**A New “Boss” in the New World**

**Monroe Doctrine 1823 *****:** State of the Union address to congress that rejected European expansion in the Western Hemisphere. The declaration blocked the Spanish from reconquering or obtaining new territories in the New World. Stopped British influence or conquest of new areas.

**Manifest Destiny:** Expressed the belief that the United States was ordained to expand to the Pacific Ocean and into Mexican and Native American territory.

**Back to Central America: Conservative take over**

-Conservatives enacted the following changes: elites monopolized importation again; the church got their privileges back; the government expenses were reduced; they stopped mass education and direct taxation.

- They believed that Central America was NOT ready for democracy.

-Conservatives BELIEVED that CA needed need a firm grip and created DICTATORSHIP governments.

-The Caudillo “leader” (dictators): The leadership of a “charismatic”, forceful strongman which later formed into military dictatorships. Governed through a system of informal of obedience based on paternalistic relationship between subordinates and the leader.

**Passage through the Sea**

-The USA needed a speedy communication between their colonies and economic interests in the Pacific and the Atlantic.

By 1848 The fastest way of travelling from New York to California was through Central America (before the transcontinental railroad in 1869)

-In 1849 Nicaragua granted exclusive transit rights to the USA

- The proposed route: through the Rio San Juan from Greytown to Castillo, Forth San Carlos, Lake Nicaragua, Rivas and ended in Britos on the Pacific side. *****

- Colombia feared British annexation and in 1850 to 1855 allowed Americans the exclusive rights over a railway

-The Nicaraguan route faded because Americans completed the transcontinental railroad across the USA

- Neo-colonialism: the economic and political policies by which a great power indirectly maintains or extends its influence over other areas or people.

**The National War in Nicaragua**

**William Walker: The American imperialist (filibuster)*****
A filibuster: Someone who engages in an unauthorized military expedition into a foreign country or territory to foment or support a revolution. Nicaraguan Liberals invited him in 1855 to aid in the ongoing civil war in Nicaragua. He agreed to join in exchange for land and power and he hoped to take control of the canal.

The USA wanted to incorporate Nicaragua as a slave state and the USA sent 2,500 mercenaries to join Walker’s army.

Conservatives United for Nicaragua

- Conservatives in Nicaragua united with the four other countries to fight Walker
- Rafael Carrera got funds, ammunitions and troops for the National Army of Liberation which was lead by Costa Rican President Juan Mora.
- The war lasted a year. The British blocked some American supplies to reach Walker. Mora offered Walker’s mercenaries amnesty and free passage home

The Coffee Republics: Liberal Take Over in the 1870s

- Liberals continued having dictators in CA

Coffee Investment

- Costa Rica began (1830) cultivating coffee in the highland valley and Pacific slopes. England invested and controlled the Coffee Industry in Costa Rica and shipped to Europe and USA. Created a single crop dependence and Central America from world market price fluctuations.

Land Reforms

- Removed lands from the church to transform into coffee fincas; sold public lands; forced natives to rent and sell communal lands (ejidos forced to extinction in 1882); all nations granted land to foreigners in exchange for modernization projects.

Banana Republics

- Minor Keith worked in a railroad construction. While building the railroad he planted bananas on the sides. In 1880 he joined with others to form the Boston Fruit Company and in 1899 the United Fruit Company was created. It expanded to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

How did the UFC dominate?

- Illegal activities to buy out politicians. Bought large amounts of lands in Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The company had intermediaries to rent lands from native land owners.

US Imperialism

- The US experienced a new surge of imperialism from 1880 to 1900s. They saw imperialism as a threat to US interests in the world because they wanted to establish overseas naval bases. The US supported imperialism to protect economic interests.

-- Expansionists: persons who wanted the USA to acquire overseas colonies. They looked at new possessions as a chance for missionaries, teachers, and charitable organizations to develop a better life and leaders in colonies. They also found it safer to invest monies in factories, plantations and public works in territories controlled or monitored by the USA. ***

- Isolationist: persons who thought that the US should not interfere in other nation’s affairs. They believed that ruling colonies conflicted with the spirit of their own political system that focused on “All men are created equal”. They were also fearful of immigration. ***

Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe

-- Theodore Roosevelt was an outspoken expansionist. In 1904 the USA declared that they would be policeman of the Americas. They would continue the Monroe Doctrine and not allow Europeans to intervene in American affairs.

- A corollary: a proposition that follows from (and is often appended to) one already proved.

- The USA stated that “Latin Americans managed their affairs so badly that they gave European powers a genuine reason to interfere.”****
- Panama Canal: the USA boosted its economic strengths in the region, they needed a speedy communication between their colonies and trading interests in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

- A French Company (Philippe Buneau-Varilla) had surveyed the 80 km and started digging. The company was broke and sold their assets for $40 million to the USA. The French Company organized a few Panamanians to work towards independence (1903). Buneau-Varilla signed a treaty with John Hay (US Secretary of State). Panama became independent and the USA had the right to build the Canal.

**The Big Stick in Nicaragua*** How is Nicaragua and example of the Big stick Policy

- The BIG STICK IN HONDURAS: Rival banana companies instigated many of the conflicts (United Fruit Company, Standard Fruit Company, Cuyamel Fruit Company). Each corporation bribed Central American governments for favors, and if that method failed, they paid for coups and conflicts that would give them the desired result.

- The USA mediated between US companies and Zelaya (Nicaraguan President) over the rights over the canal area. Zelaya was restrictive (to maintain control) and the USA went to construct a canal in Panama.

- Zelaya hits back to the USA moving to Panama: Zelaya invited other world powers to build the canal. But the USA considered his action as anti-American: a European-owned canal would threaten its political dominance of the isthmus.

- Americans hit back at Zelaya: They campaigned against Zelaya ARGUING that Zelaya posed a threat to democracy on the isthmus and undermined the wellbeing of his own people. Theodore Roosevelt tried to garner support for an intervention: they supported rebellions.

- Zelaya resigned in 1909 after foreign businesses in the Mosquitía sponsored a conservative party revolt that was aided by the presence of U.S. officers.

- THE USA INTERVENED: They placed Adolfo Diaz as a puppet president but was not liked by either liberal or conservatives. So Howard Taft sent the Marines to “keep Peace”, the marines protected the puppet president, and took control of the customs office, national bank and railroads.

- Peace came with the BRYAN-CHAMORRO TREATY IN 1916: the treaty declared Nicaragua a US protectorate and gave the USA sole rights over a potential canal and marines occupied up to 1933.

**Unrests in Central America**

- Dictators in the 1930s repressing their people: 1. Tiburcio Andino (Honduras) budgeted for the military and payment of US debts 2. Jorge Ubico (Guatemala) gave concessions to companies and terrorized his own people. 3. Maximiliano Hernandez (El Salvador) killed Agustin Farabundi Marti who lead a peasant uprising.

- GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY: Intervention was too costly and dictators cared for US interests more than marines did. So Franklin Delano Roosevelt made the policy stating: “In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbour—the neighbour who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others.”

**NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION**

**Alliance for Progress**

- THE Cold War: In the 1950s to 1990s the western powers grouped in organizations to compete against the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

- The USA in central America: The USA supported dictatorships seeking to eradicate communism but when Vice-President Nixon visited riots broke out throughout Central America.

- The USA established the School of Americas: U.S. military advisers were sent to train and assist the local military and police in counterinsurgency tactics in other nations. It was also known as a “School of Assassins” in Panama.

**Liberation Theology**

- Church’s change of policy: In the 1960s the Church focused on their Social Mission the lay persons committed themselves to work among the poor and charismatic bishops and priests encouraged the calls for progress and national modernization. The church focused on the Improvement of standards of living. ***

- Priests were sympathetic of Guerilla movements and Liberationist priests believed that a restructuring of society was necessary to eliminate institutionalized violence against the poor.
-Oligarchies were upset with priests: In El Salvador they created a slogan “Be A Patriot, Kill A Priest”

**Introduction to the Nicaraguan Revolution**

-USA occupied Nicaragua: The USA Supervised the election in Nicaragua in 1925 and a Conservative (Solorzano) became president. However, Solorzano was removed by a Coup but liberals resisted and a civil war started and the USA offered a third candidate as a solution.

-The US also faced Nicaraguan resistance: Augusto Cesar Sandino, a NATIONALIST, opposed USA’s solution to the civil war. He opposed foreign intervention and to the concentration of land in the hands of a small elite group.

-USA reacted to the resistance by sending 4000 US marines to fight against guerrillas. Nicaraguans and other central Americans reacted negatively to US intervention. Therefore, the USA pulled their forces but created the NATIONAL GUARD.

-The National Guard: The USA withdrew in 1933 leaving Anastacio Somoza as the leader (who became president). His sons became president as well= dynasty of 43 year rule.

-When the USA withdrew Sandino stopped his hostilities then in 1934 he was killed by Somoza.

**A dictatorship made in the USA**

-In 1936 Somoza initiated the most corrupt and brutal dictatorships in Latin America. He was sustained by the National Guard.

-Economic Causes of the revolution: the Cotton and Coffee cultivation flourished but it was controlled by a group of people (Somoza’s friends) and large numbers of small farmers became peasant workers. **

-Natural causes of the revolution: In 1972 an earthquake destroyed Nicaragua’s capital (Managua). The earthquake stimulated the economy and international, public, private funds and insurance created financing for new developments. BUT Somoza enriched himself by organizing his own banks, insurance company, construction firms and financial firms and he borrowed large sums from international banks. *

-Opposition to Somoza: The Liberal party and conservative formed a solid bloc to resist the dictatorship in 1956 a Young poet and patriot killed Anastacio Somoza and Civil war ensued but the USA came to support Luis Somoza’s candidature.

**Lesson # 5 Armed Movements**

-Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) Operated isolated in the wilderness and in 1974 launched a commando raid in Managua. However, Somoza reacted by declaring martial law, and military and press censorship.

-Unions created to fight Somoza: Democratic Liberation Union[DLU] was led by Pedro Chamorro and the FSLN continued resisting by kidnapping high ranking official’s family. BUT Somoza attacked with brutality: student protests were suppressed and started the goal of annihilating the FSLN. ***

-FSLN attacks: In 1977, the FSLN launched a series of assaults on the National Guard barracks in Ocotal and San Carlos. When Chamorro (the leader of DLU) was killed by Samosa in 1978, the FSLN attacked again although they failed they gained respect.

-Somoza tried to appease the people by providing annual bonuses to workers, raising the minimum wage, providing social security and promoting national dialogue with opponents. BUT PEOPLE WERE NOT SATISFIED The FSLN Terceristas on July 20th 1978 fired rockets to the National Guard Headquarters. On August 22, the Guerilla took control of the National palace and kidnapped high ranking officials who were later traded for 5 million dollars, the publication of a magazine and the release of FSLN prisoners.

-Somoza reacted by bombarding insurgent towns, FSLN leaders were tortured, any persons suspected of supporting FSLN was tortured and assassinated. ***