

Versatility in Hospitality Industry Around Globe

A Case Study on Cultural and Cuisine-El Salvador

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Abstract: Coffee grown in the mountains and cane grown on the coast provide the rural population with paid labor; in the central valleys, corn and beans are grown for priEl Salvador "the Savior," was named by Spanish conquistadors. Guanaco, a type of bird, is a slightly derogatory nickname used by other Central Americans and some Salvadorans. Location and Geography. El Salvador is a country of 8,260 square miles (21,040 square kilometers) in Central America, between Guatemala and Honduras. Mountains separate the country into the southern coastal belt, the central valleys and plateaus, and the northern mountains. These regions have created slight cultural variations because of the different crops vate consumption and for sale. Most industry is in the center, where the capital, San Salvador, is located. Other large cities include San Miguel in the east and Santa Ana in the west. Demography. In 1999 the population was estimated to be 5,839,079, making El Salvador one of the most densely populated countries in the Western Hemisphere. Over a million persons have migrated, starting in the early 1980s during a civil war. Legal and illegal emigration has continued at a high rate since the end of the civil war in 1992. Linguistic Affiliation. Almost all residents speak Spanish, which was brought in by the conquistadors. Before the Spanish conquest, the area was inhabited by the Pipil Indians. Very few Salvadorans now speak the indigenous language, which virtually disappeared after 1932, when General Maximilio Hernández Martínez suppressed rural resistance by massacring 30,000 mostly Indian rural peasants. Those who survived la Matanza ("the massacre") hid their Indian identity by changing their dress and speaking only Spanish. Some remnants of the Pipil language remain in everyday Salvadoran Spanish. Symbolism. The flag consists of two blue horizontal stripes with a white stripe in the middle. In the center is a coat of arms inscribed "1821," the year of independence. Salvadorans in the United States often have plaques that contain the flag, as a symbol of national pride.

Keywords: Principality, Romanian, Autonomous, Cultural

I. INTRODUCTION

Emergence of the Nation. Before the Spanish conquest, the area that is now El Salvador was made up of two large Indian states and several principalities. Most of the area was inhabited by the Pipil. Spain's first attempt to conquer the area failed as the Pipil forced Spanish troops to retreat. In 1525, the district fell under the control of the Captaincy General of Guatemala, a colony of Spain, which retained authority until independence in 1821. During the colonial period, the Spaniards replaced the communal property of the indigenous population with a system of private property. The encomienda system obliged Indians to work for the Spanish in order to pay a large tax. At the top of the colonial hierarchy were the Peninsulares, Spaniards born in Spain. Under them were the criollos, Spaniards born in the Americas. The mestizos were people of mixed Spanish[1]

El Salvador

El Salvador and indigenous descent, who had some rights but could not hold private property. The indigenous peoples were exploited and mistreated.

Independence from Spain (1821) was sought by criollos who were inspired by the American and French revolutions. They gained support from the Indians and landless peasants by promising to end the abuses committed by landowners. After the revolution, Indians and peasants remained impoverished and largely without land or legal rights.

When the Central American provinces were joined with Mexico in 1822, El Salvador insisted on the autonomy of the Central American countries. Guatemalan troops that were sent to enforce the union were forced out in June 1822. In 1823, José Manuel Arce's army was defeated by the Mexicans. However, in February of that year, a revolution in Mexico ousted the emperor, and a new congress granted independence to the Central American provinces. That year the United Provinces of Central America were formed from five Central American countries. When that federation dissolved in 1838, El Salvador became an independent republic.

The first decades of independence saw uprisings by poor mestizos and Indians to protest their impoverishment and marginalization. Before the cultivation of coffee was introduced in the late nineteenth century, indigo was the principal export crop. In 1833, an Indian rebellion of indigo sowers and cutters led by Anastasio Aquino demanded distribution of land to the poor and the just application of the penal laws, the only laws applied to the poor. The rebellion was crushed by the government. Thousands of rural peasants were displaced as new laws incorporated their lands into large "modern" coffee plantations where peasants were forced to work for very low wages. This created a coffee oligarchy made up of fourteen families. The economy is still controlled by a wealthy landowning caste (1 percent of the population still owns 40 percent of the arable land).

The civil war in the 1980s led to a huge population upheaval, with up to 40 percent of the population relocating and close to 20 percent leaving the country. Estimates of deaths in the twelve years of civil war have reached 80,000, including twelve thousand civilians killed in 1981. In 1982, mutilation killings, particularly decapitations, of adults

Motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians crowd a busy street in downtown San Salvador.
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and children were used as mechanisms of social terror.

Much of that repression was in response to the political organization of the people in the 1960s and 1970s as workers, peasants, women, students, and shanty town dwellers developed organizations to demand political and economic rights. Many political activists felt that "legal" political organizing would not lead to political change and began organizing the clandestine guerrilla units that formed the nucleus of the FMLN in 1980. By 1979 the FMLN was perceived as a threat by the military dictatorship.[2]

A new spirit of activism emerged within the Catholic Church. Rural peasants and church workers formed Christian "base communities" and agricultural cooperatives in the 1960s and 1970s. Progressive priests and nuns formed Bible study groups in which peasants reflected on local conditions in light of biblical texts. This organization was considered communist and subversive and became a target of government repression.

A group of young officers staged a military coup and formed a cabinet consisting of civilians from a wide spectrum of political parties. However, the military and the oligarchy frustrated attempts at change. Three more juntas followed, but each was incapable of implementing reform and stopping atrocities.

In 1980, the archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero, who had become a forceful critic of military oppression, was assassinated while saying Mass. This led many people in the base Christian communities and political organizations to turn to armed resistance. Five revolutionary armies joined together to form the FMLN.

In November 1989, the FMLN launched a bloody nationwide offensive, taking parts of the capital. International coverage of the offensive increased the pressure for a negotiated settlement to the conflict. On 31 December 1991, the government and the FMLN signed an agreement under the auspices of the United Nations, and a cease-fire took effect in 1992. The peace accords called for military reforms including a reduction in the size of the military, a new armed forces doctrine stressing democratic values and prohibiting an internal security role, and the banning of paramilitary groups. The National Civilian Police was established to replace the repressive National Police. Judicial, electoral, and social reforms included land reform and government-financed loans for land purchases.

Ideological polarization between the two sides in the conflict has made reconciliation difficult, and the government has failed to prosecute human rights abusers, or address the social injustices. Many Salvadorans, especially rural peasants, do not trust the nation's political leaders.

National Identity. Salvadoran national identity is a mix of indigenous and Spanish influences expressed in food, language, customs, and religious beliefs.

II. SUMMARY

Indians were at the bottom of the social hierarchy in colonial times and subject to massacre and exploitation well into the twentieth century. Ninety-seven percent of the population in El Salvador is now "mestizo." However, those who have more indigenous features suffer some discrimination and are referred to by the derogatory terms "indios" (Indians) or "negros" (blacks).

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Rural houses are typically made of adobe, with a large front porch (corredor) where people spend most of their time when at home. The insides of houses are used mainly for sleeping and storage, and families of seven or eight people may live in one or two small rooms. Urban houses built during the colonial period typically have outdoor space in the middle of the house, making family life more private. Modern urban middle-class and upper-class houses often have a small garden in front instead of in the middle, with the house and garden surrounded by a large wall that often is topped by barbed wire and glass. These houses often cannot be seen from the street. This type of architecture was used in the 1970s for security reasons. Houses for the lower classes are often less protected, with entrances onto the street. Many of the poorest families have houses made of discarded materials such as cardboard and sheet metal.

Food and Economy

Food in Daily Life. Corn is the staple of the diet and is most often made into thick tortillas that are eaten at every meal and also are served as tamales and in a thick corn drink called atol. Small red beans are the other staple. A variety of fruits and vegetables are eaten, including mango, papaya, tamarind, oranges, bananas, watermelon, cucumber, pacayao, lettuce, tomatoes, and radish. Salvadorans also eat rice, eggs, chicken, pork, beef, fish and seafood, and some game. Coffee is the most common drink, along with highly sugared fruit drinks. Elotes (new corn) are eaten in September before the corn hardens. Restaurants are most often cafeterias, comedores, where food is ordered from a menu near the kitchen or a buffet table and waitresses bring the food to the table. There are fast food restaurants in the cities which are more expensive, and expensive restaurants where food is ordered from a menu at the table.

Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions. Tamales are often eaten on special occasions, as is chumpe, turkey stewed in a sauce.

Basic Economy. Corn, beans, and rice, are among the principal crops, but El Salvador relies on the importation of these staples.[3]

Land Tenure and Property. The land reform started in the early 1980s transferred land to former combatants who were mostly the rural poor. The purchase of land was financed by a United States-assisted land bank. However, many people find it difficult to sustain their families on small plots of infertile land.

Commercial Activities. Major commercial activities include shoe and textile production.

Major Industries. Major industries include food processing, beverages, petroleum, chemicals, fertilizer, textiles, furniture, and light metals.

Trade. El Salvador is a large exporter of agricultural products, but exports of sugarcane, cotton, and coffee have declined. The nation exports only half the quantity of goods it imports. Traditional exports include coffee, sugarcane, and shrimp. Nontraditional crops include manufactured goods, principally shoes and textiles. Textiles produced in maquilas (foreign-owned sweatshops) have replaced coffee as the leading export. However, dollars sent from Salvadorans in the United States to their families provide more income than do any exports.

Division of Labor. Professional jobs, including elementary school teaching, require a university education and are limited mainly to the middle and upper classes. Clerical or technical jobs usually require a high school diploma, which is received by only a small percentage of the population. Semi-skilled jobs such as construction and plumbing generally require a period of apprenticeship but not of formal study. Access to education corresponds to the possession of wealth, and poor families are often limited to unskilled positions in industry, agriculture, and small businesses. Others are employed in the informal economy selling candy, fruit, or tamales.

A modern sculpture in front of a building in San Salvador. The Salvadoran capital features a mix of modern amenities and extreme poverty.

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on the streets and at bus stops. The majority of working women are employed in the informal sector, along with many children.

Social Stratification

Classes and Castes. About half the population lives below the national poverty line, able to buy food but not clothing and medicine. Over half of these families live in a situation of extreme poverty. Forty-seven percent of the population does not have access to clean water.

The difference between the incomes of the most wealthy and the poorest are extreme and increasing. The poorest 20 percent receive only 2 percent of the national income, whereas the richest 20 percent receive 66 percent. The distinction between the rich and poor is no longer ethnic, as the vast majority of the population is now mestizo (about 97 percent).

Symbols of Social Stratification. The rich have more access to American goods and typically dress like Americans. They also have access to education at home and abroad and often speak English, as well as a more grammatical form of Spanish.

Political Life

Government. The constitution provides for a representative government with three independent branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The president is popularly elected and must receive a majority of the vote. The president is limited to a single five-year term but exercises significant authority in appointing a cabinet with the advice and consent of the assembly. This assembly has one chamber of eighty-four popularly elected deputies who serve three-year terms and may be reelected. The supreme court is the highest court of appeals, with other civil and criminal courts in each of the fourteen departments.[4]

Leadership and Political Officials. Political parties include those of the extreme right, the left, and more central parties. The Partido Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA), founded in 1981, was associated with the death squads. It continues to have enormous influence. The party has moved from the extreme right to supporting neoliberal structural adjustment policies since the war. More extreme members of ARENA have joined the Partido de Conciliación Nacional (PCN), which was founded in 1961.

People washing clothes in a lagoon. About half the population of El Salvador lives below the national poverty line.

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The FMLN formed a political party after disarming at the end of the war. It has gained political ground since the end of the war, winning a majority of Assembly seats and the mayor's office in San Salvador in 1997. The FMLN is considered a socialist alternative to ARENA, which is seen as protecting the interests of the rich. There has been internal dissent within the FMLN. The Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC), which was formed in 1960, failed to address human rights atrocities. Other parties include the Partido Convergencia Democrática, founded in 1993; the Partido Liberal Democrático, founded in 1994; the Partido Popular Laborista, founded in 1997; and the Partido Unión Social Cristiano, founded in 1997.

Social Problems and Control. The number of violent deaths resulting from crime in 1996 was greater than the number of deaths resulting from the conflict during any year of the civil war. In that same year, the murder rates in some parts of the country were among the highest in the Western Hemisphere. Many crime victims do not report crimes to the authorities because of continuing mistrust of the courts and police. The National Civilian Police have poorly trained officers and few resources to investigate crimes. Corrupt courts release criminals, who then seek revenge on those who reported them to the police. Vigilante groups have formed to fight crime by assassinating criminals. Most residents feel that these groups bear a strong resemblance to the former death squads.

Military Activity. The military and paramilitary forces have had an enormous influence on the national culture. From 1932 to 1993, every president but one was an army general. During the civil war the country was highly militarized, with 32,000 soldiers. In spite of the current demilitarization, the culture remains militarized, as evidenced by the high rate of violent crime, armed guards in front of most urban businesses, and the presence of vigilantes.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Government expenditures on health and education programs declined during the war. The government committed to large expenditures in social welfare programs with the signing of the peace accords to end the civil war. There has been increased spending in health and education, and a number of rural schools have been opened through a special government program. Some health care is provided to students through the Escuela Saludable program. El Salvador has paid for these programs in part through generous foreign aid. The government has also tried to pay for some of these social welfare programs through more efficient collection of the value added tax (VAT).

The transfer of land back to the people at the end of the war and the implementation of agricultural loans also represent massive government and United States-supported social change programs.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) flourished during the war as a result of the civil population's desire for peace, democracy, and development. The NGOs continued to support alternative political, economic, and social projects in the areas which had been most affected by the war and have begun to coordinate their efforts on a national level.[6]

Since the signing of the peace accords, NGOs have grown in importance and experience, particularly in rural zones. They often are connected to the FMLN and have helped distribute land to former combatants, and have represented rural communities politically. They are often involved in rural education, various development projects, agricultural or small business loans, technical assistance, veterinary services, and health services.

Gender Roles and Statuses

Division of Labor by Gender. During the civil war, many women began to take leadership positions outside the traditional domestic sphere, becoming leaders in popular organizations and base Christian communities. While women were often placed in "supportive roles," cooking for the troops and sewing, many became combatants and held key military and political leadership positions in the FMLN.

Although women often work outside the home generating income, they are exclusively responsible for housework and child care.

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Women also began to realize that the revolution could not end the inequalities in society without addressing inequality between men and women. Each of the five branches of the FMLN has its own women's organizations. In those organizations women have fought for women's rights to work outside the home; loans for women's cooperatives and small, women-owned businesses; education; medical care; and economic support for children.

Fathers' abandonment of families increased after the war, and economic support for children is still rare. Families headed by single women often live in extreme poverty, and women are forced to work for low wages. Women's mean salary is 28 percent lower than men's and almost one-third of girls under age sixteen work to support the family. Women are also under-represented in politics.[6]

Violence toward women occurred during the war, and has continued at an alarming rate. Violent crime including murder and rape increased after the signing of the peace accords. Domestic abuse, along with alcohol abuse, is said to be prevalent.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Marriage. Among the poor, marriage is the decision of the couple. The most common kind of marriage is informal: a man and a woman set up a household and have children without a civil or church service. These unions are recognized under law but can be dissolved easily. However, men are now required to support children conceived in common law marriage as well as with women with whom they have no formal relationship.

A marriage performed in a church is considered irreversible, and many people wait until they have children to marry. Couples must be 18 years old to marry unless the woman is pregnant or already has children. In both civil and religious marriages, divorce law requires a separation and a cause. The Catholic Church and many Evangelical churches never condone divorce.

Domestic Unit. The domestic unit generally consists of a couple and their children, although other relatives also may live in the household. The man is nominally the head of the household, but women, especially in poorer families, often provide economic support for their children. A large proportion of families are headed by single women.

Kin Groups. The extended family is very important in the national culture. A woman can count on her cousins, uncles, aunts, and grandparents on both sides for support. The Family Code recognizes the importance of the extended family and requires various categories of kin to support their relatives with food, clothing, housing, health care, and education. Either spouse may be required to pay support to the other. Grandparents may be asked to support grandchildren, and vice versa. Parents must support their children, and brothers and sisters may be required to pay support to their siblings. A road through the village of El Jocotal. Rural housing is typically built of adobe and features a large front porch. A road through the village of El Jocotal. Rural housing is typically built of adobe and features a large front porch.

Socialization

Infant Care. Infants in poor families are cared for by their mothers, who take them along on their daily tasks. They sleep in a room with their parents, in a crib or hammock of their own or in the parents' bed. People are affectionate with babies and play and talk with them often. They are breast-fed on demand and are not weaned until eighteen months or two years of age. In the upper middle and upper classes, child care often is delegated to a nanny.

Child Rearing and Education. Children are expected to show "respect" to their elders, which involves using respectful greetings and terms of address. They are expected to be obedient and comply with requests from adults immediately. Children may be hit or reprimanded after age six or seven years for not complying with adults' requests, complaining, or answering back. Shaming is another method used to discipline children. Parents loudly complain about a misbehaving child to another adult or child, within earshot of the offending child. Shaming most often occurs in regard to completing assigned tasks, school performance, and propriety in matters such as dress.

Basic education is compulsory until age thirteen, but half the children ages six to sixteen in the poorest families do not attend school. Nine of ten children of the richest families attend school, and a quarter go on to study at a university. Poor families often cannot afford to pay school fees or pay for shoes and school supplies.

Higher Education. Higher education is not emphasized and accounts for a small part of the government budget. Professors and students at the Universidad Centroamericana and the National University were killed in the war, and neither university has been given the resources to recover. There has been an explosion of private colleges offering professional and technical degrees, but these schools are not respected and prepare students badly.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Respect is due to older persons from younger persons, and to higher-status persons from lower-status individuals. This includes using titles of respect before people's names and using the formal "you" ("usted"). Women must show respect to men, should not raise their voices to them, and must serve them food on demand. Greetings are necessary upon entering a store or, in small towns and communities, passing someone on the street. Failure to greet a person is considered offensive.

A Salvadoran man works on his fishing net. Many Salvadorans are employed in low-paying, "informal economy" jobs. A Salvadoran man works on his fishing net. Many Salvadorans are employed in low-paying, "informal economy" jobs.

Religion

Religious Beliefs. El Salvador is 75 percent Roman Catholic but has a growing Protestant movement. The Catholic Church returned to its traditional conservative stance after the end of the civil war. Among Protestant denominations, Pentecostal and fundamentalist sects—called evangelical churches—have had the largest growth. There are a number of reasons for the growth of evangelical churches in the last two decades of the twentieth century. First, Catholics were often targets of government repression for their "subversive" involvement in base Christian communities, while evangelicals were safe from government repression. Second, the evangelical emphasis on personal conversion is considered apolitical. Finally, small evangelical churches provide their members with a strong sense of community and family.

Religious Practitioners. While the Catholic Church has allowed greater participation of religious lay workers, the possibilities for leadership in the laity are restricted. There are more possibilities in the evangelical churches for nonspecialists to rise to leadership positions. Such positions are restricted to men. Death and the Afterlife. Catholics devote nine nights of prayer for deceased persons so that the souls of the dead can be purified and they can rise from purgatory to heaven.

Medicine and Health Care

Most Western-trained doctors who work in clinics and hospitals are located in the metropolitan areas. In the rural zones, most health issues are dealt with by health promoters or midwives who receive some training through the Ministry of Health, a foreign organization, or a local NGO. Salvadorans often treat themselves with modern medicine bought in pharmacies or from ambulatory salesmen. There are traditional remedies for some folk illnesses. The ojo , or "evil eye," is said to affect babies with fever. It is cured when the person who gave the eye chews various herbs and spits them into a liquid that is rubbed on the baby's body. Traditional healers are called curanderos

Secular Celebrations

Independence is celebrated on 15 September with parades. It is the only secular holiday, although many religious holidays have become secularized. Many people spend Holy Week, the week preceding Easter, at the beach.

The Arts and Humanities

Literature. Salvadoran literary production in the latter twentieth century has been concerned with a re-examination of national history. Notable works include the novels and poetry of Manlio Argueta, the poetry of Roque Dalton, and the short stories of José Marie Mendez. The country suffers from a lack of publishing facilities.

Graphic Arts. The village of LaPalma has become famous for a school of art started by Fernando Llorca. Images of mountain villages, campesinos, and Christ are painted in bright colors on a variety of wooden objects. The town of Ilobasco is known for its ceramics, while San Sebastián is known for its textile art.

Performance Arts. Most of the music on Salvadoran radio is standard pop fare from the United States, Mexico, and various Latin American countries, but there is a small underground movement of folk music which draws its inspiration from current events in El Salvador.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Academia has suffered much from the war and has not been given the resources to recover. However, there has recently been increased social science research on social problems such as crime, violence, and social and economic inequality. There has also been increased interest in research on the environment. Much of this research is being conducted with funds from foreign agencies.

IV. CONCLUSION

Although women often work outside the home generating income, they are exclusively responsible for housework and child care.

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Women also began to realize that the revolution could not end the inequalities in society without addressing inequality between men and women. Each of the five branches of the FMLN has its own women's organizations. In those organizations women have fought for women's rights to work outside the home; loans for women's cooperatives and small, women-owned businesses; education; medical care; and economic support for children.

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