

Guatemala and Global Trade, 1500s-1950s

OLLI Guatemala PPT 3

Today we will talk about Guatemalan export produce – especially indigo, cochineal and coffee.

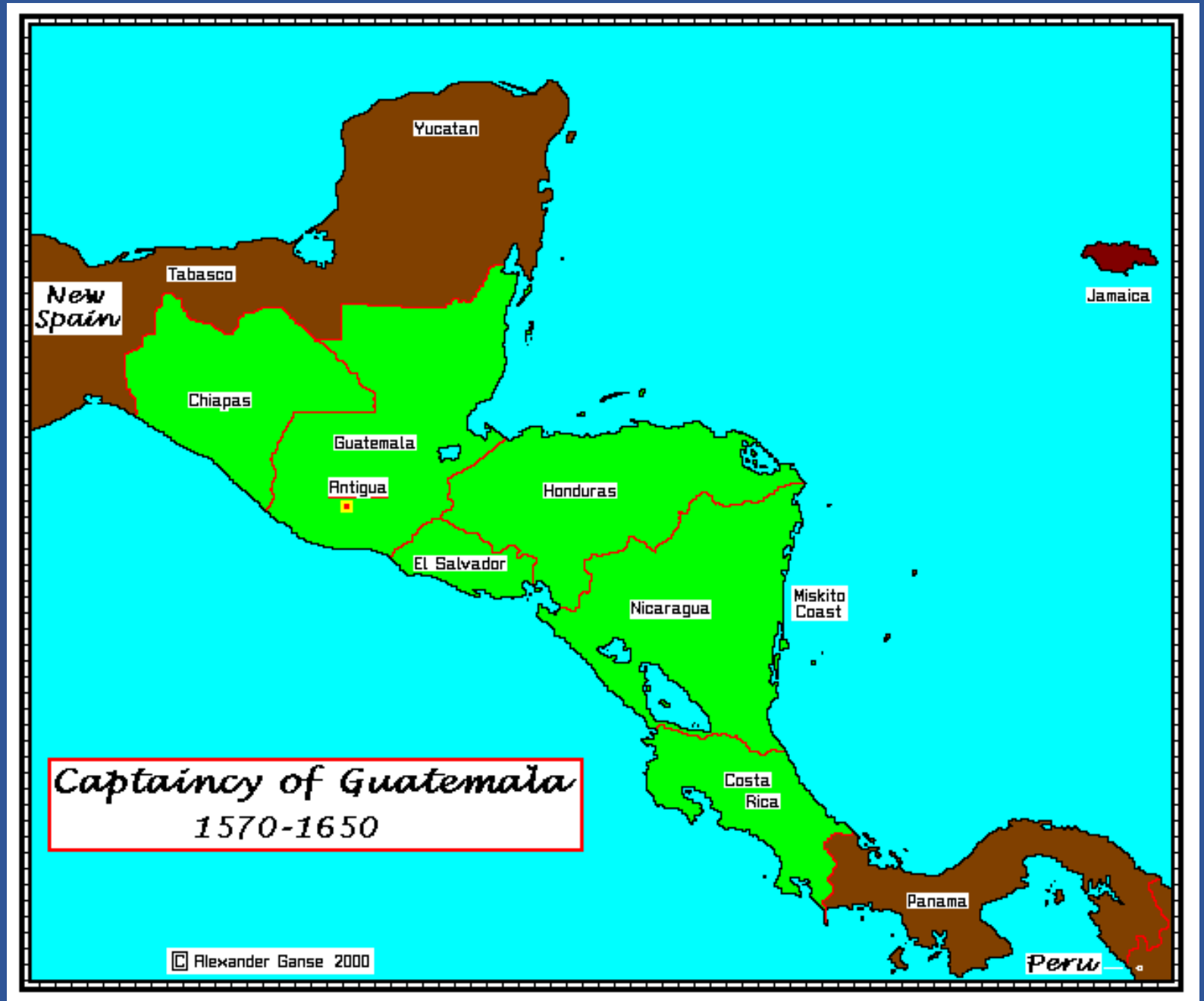
In this photo women protest the construction of a Hydroelectric Dam in Santa Cruz Barillas, 2014.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2015/07/damming-dissent-community-leaders-behind-bars-in-guatemala-after-opposing-hydro-projects/>



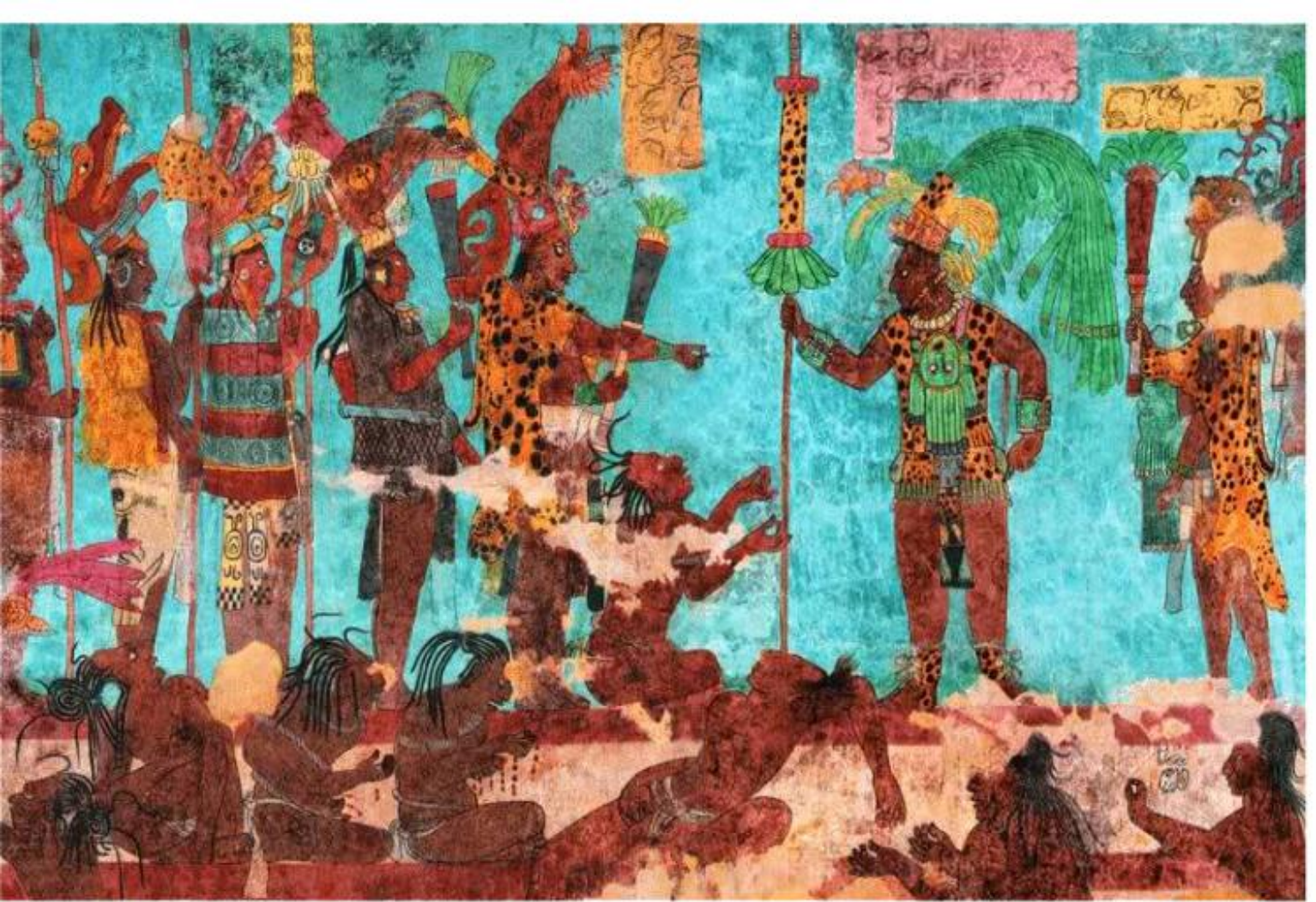
Colonial Guatemala included Central America, Chiapas in Southern Mexico and much of Yucatan (notice there is no “Belize” in the Spanish view)

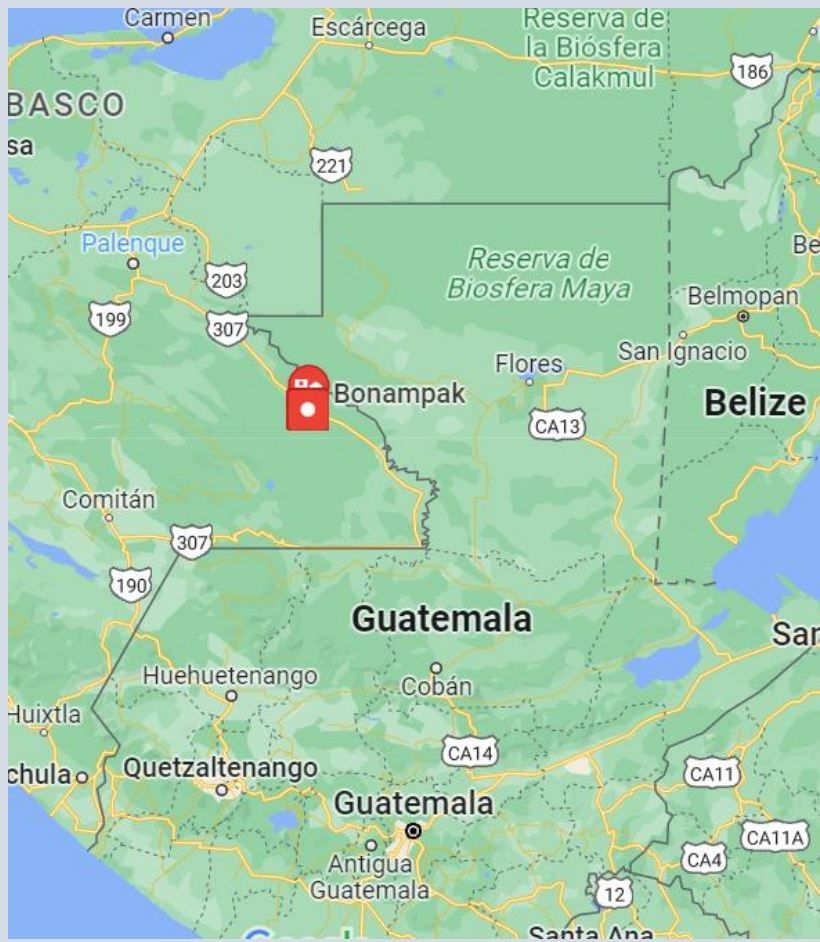
Mayan resistance continued in the Yucatan and the Nicaraguan/Honduras coast through the 1800s



Bonampak Mural showing Mayan use of Indigo c. 600 ce

Indigo was a Mayan product, but became an export product and the regulation of labor, production and export of Indigo one of the preoccupations of the Spanish Government.





Bonampak site and Mural reconstruction at Anthropology Museum, Mexico City.



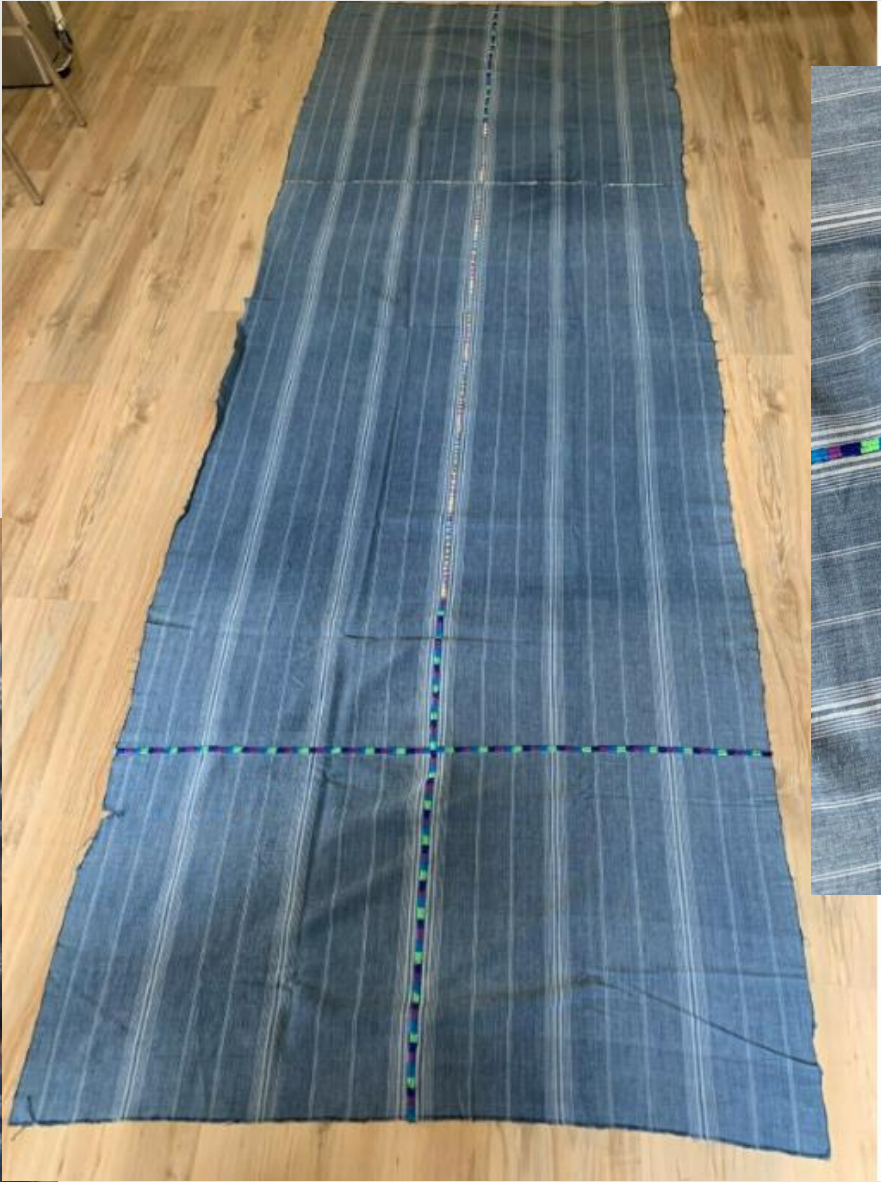
Another
Bonampak
Mural!

(because they
are so beautiful I
can't resist)

Traces of blue on the Rain god, Chac at Chichen Itza, and on Palenque sculpture. Indigo was used to denote the sacred in Mayan art.



Guatemalan Indigo cloth
for sale on Ebay, 2023.
These are old pieces but
some indigo is still
produced in Guatemala



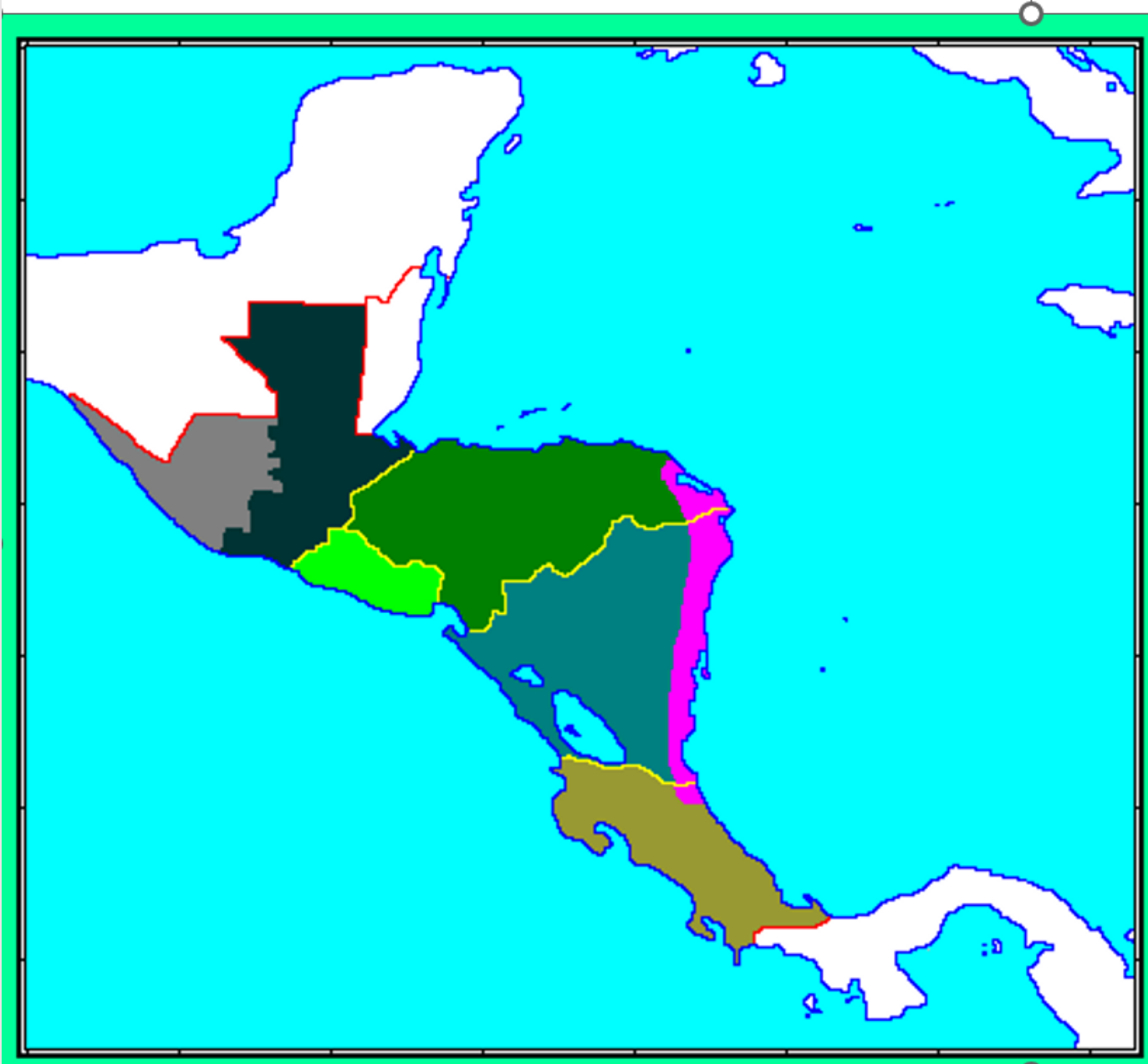
Cochineal (Red Dye made from insects gathered from the Nopal cactus) became a second export product in colonial Guatemala



Fig. 1. Indio que recoge la Cochinilla con una colita de Venado, *Fig. 2.* dicha. *Fig. 3.* Xicalpeste en que apanan la Cochinilla.

Like indigo, some weavers still use locally-made dyes of cochineal today. <https://www.heifer.org/blog/indigenous-women-guatemala-carmine-cochineal-insect-dye.html>



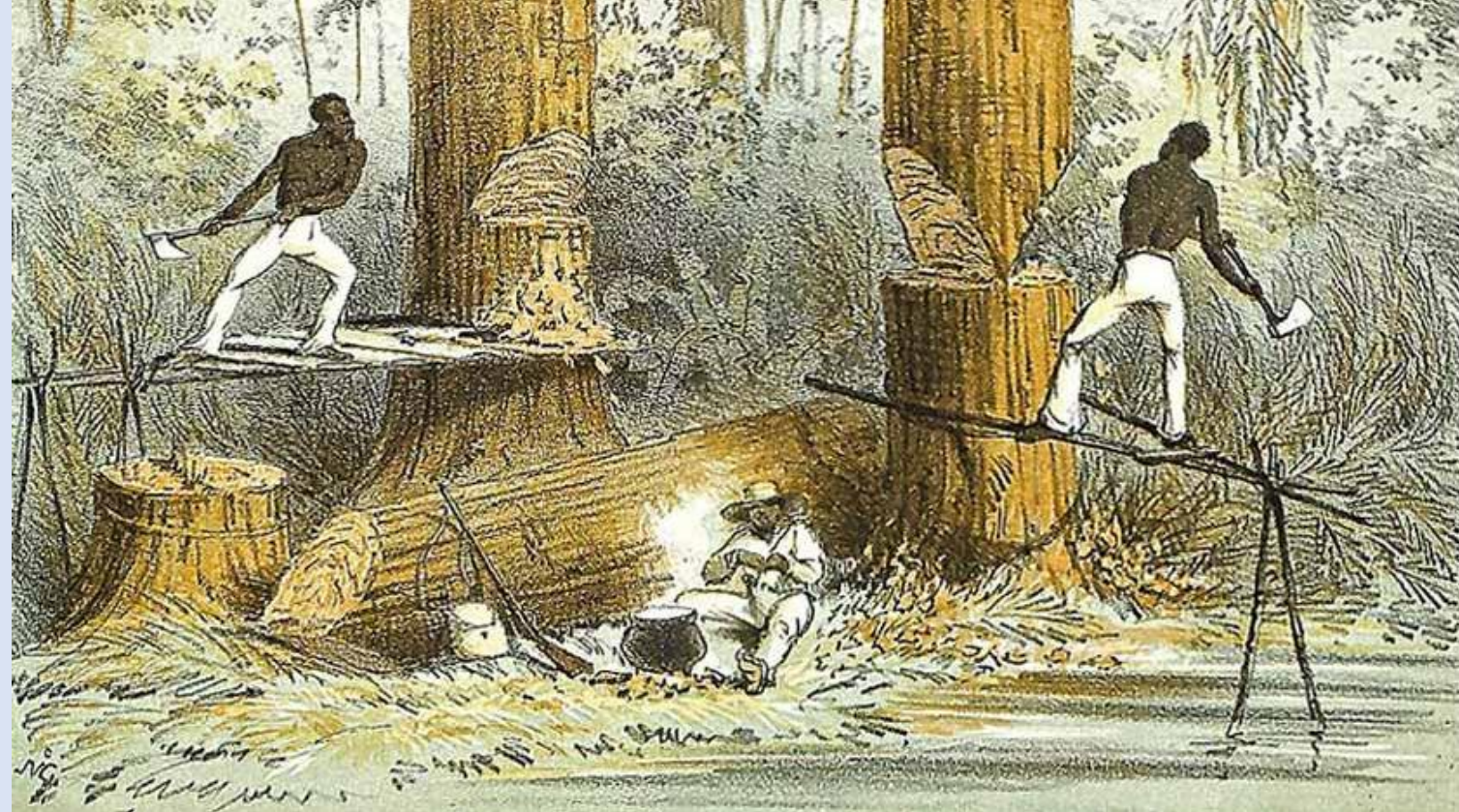
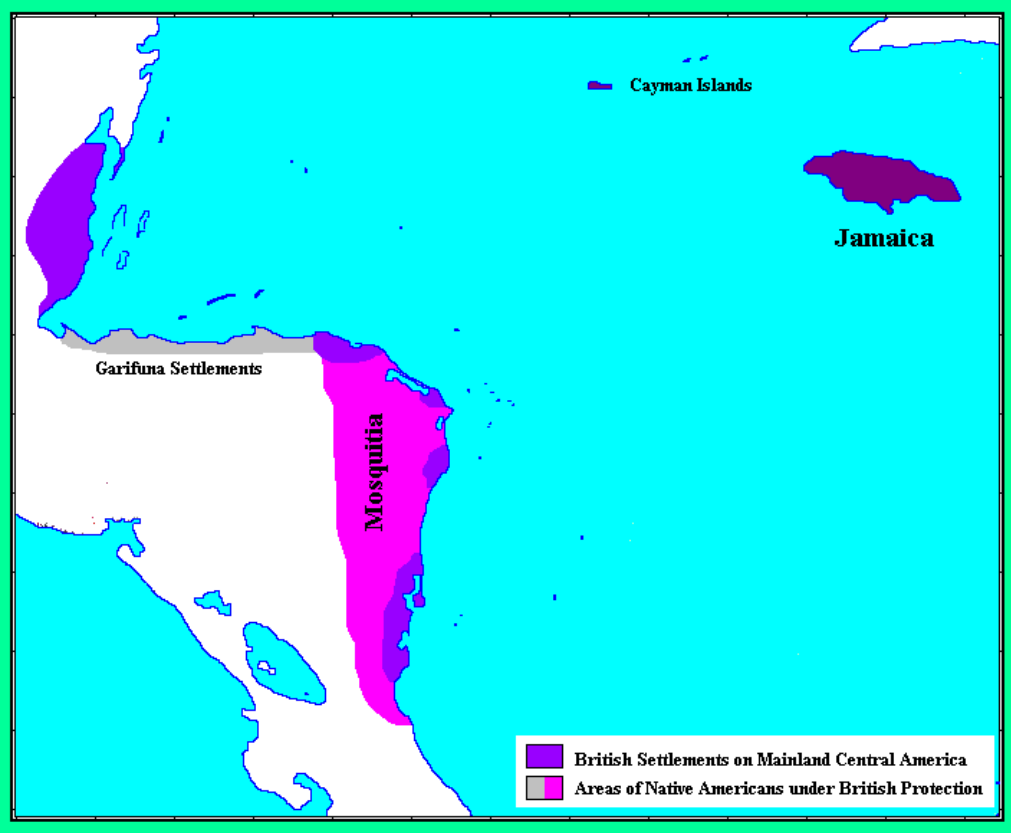


From the Colonial World to independent States:

During the colonial era, 1523-1821 Central America part of Mexico. Mexico City was the capital for everything north of Panama (including Cuba, Puerto Rico and Florida).

From 1821 to 1824 Central America was a province of a newly independent Mexico. (Mexico likes to remind them of this....). Britain began making claims on Belize and the Miskito coast (pink)

By 1830s the states of Central America were separating.



Control of piracy, mahogany logging and Marrons (escaped slave communities) motivated involvement by the British crown 1700s in Belize and Mosquitia.

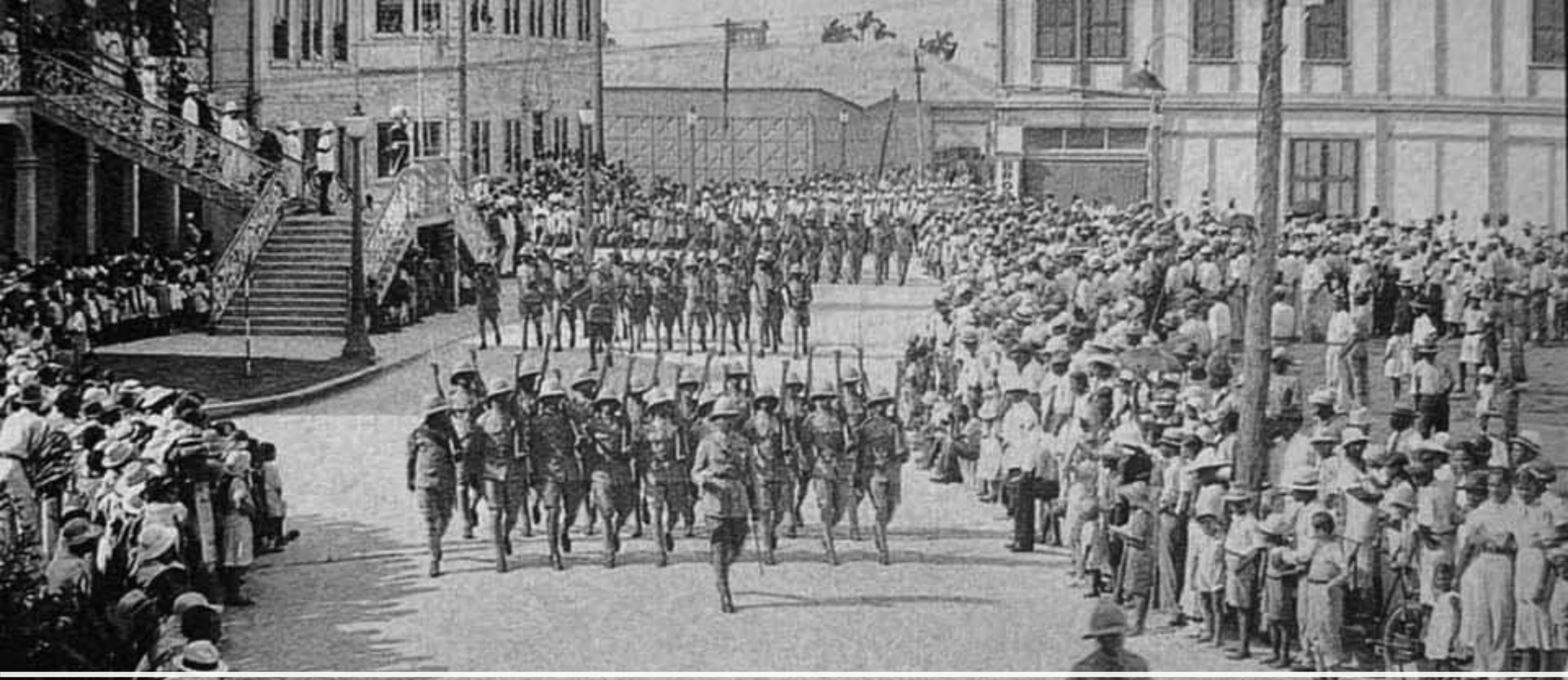
British planters sought to preserve slavery despite Central American (1820s) and British (1830) emancipation laws. British slaveholders driven from Honduras fled to Belize with their enslaved labor.

The Garifuna of Belize are a population that has West African and indigenous Caribbean heritage.

They are found along the Eastern coast from Belize to Costa Rica.

You can hear recordings of Garifuna music at <https://folkways.si.edu/traditional-music-of-the-garifuna-of-belize/american-indian-world/album/smithsonian>





British Honduras, WWI contingent



Not quite the role they expected. Sent to Cairo, not the Western Front, employed in labor, not combat.

“it’s against British tradition to employ aboriginal troops against a European enemy.”

“...when they arrived in Cairo and marched into camp whistling *Rule Britannia*, they were stopped by British officers. One Black Soldier report being asked: “Who gave you Ni..... authority to sing that? Clear out of this building-only British troops admitted here.”

1919: Riots broke out on return to Belize after “colonials” left out of armistice ceremonies. Marcus Garvey arrived to organize UNIA chapter.

<https://ambergriscaye.com/photogallery/210116.html>

Indo-Belizeans

1830s as the British phased out slavery in the Caribbean, they imported Indian labor

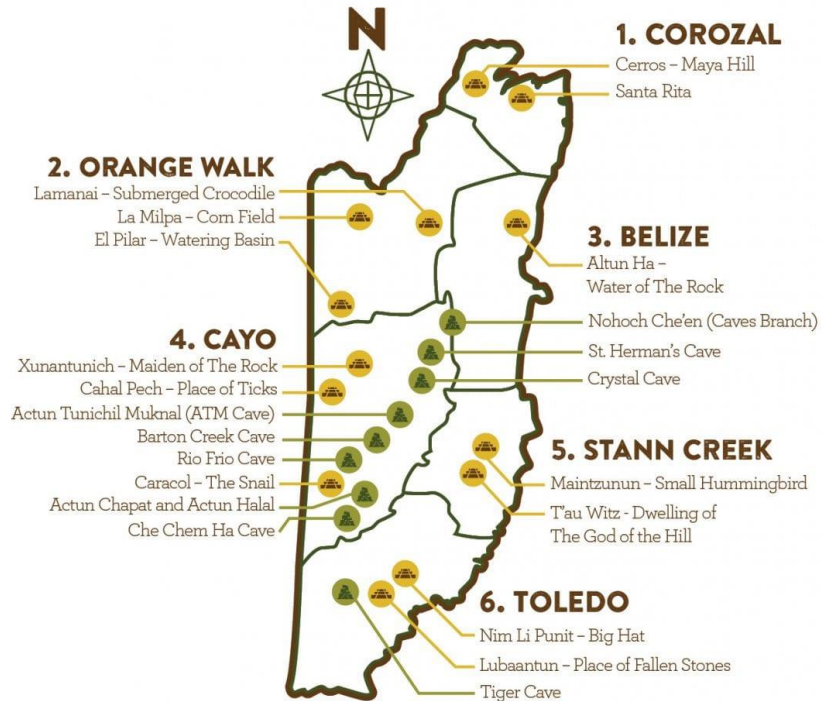
While Belize was a colony the Gurkhas (Nepalese soldiers recruited into British Indian army after 1820s) policed the borders.

Gurkha regiments still serve in the British army, and Belize is still used for training in jungle warfare.

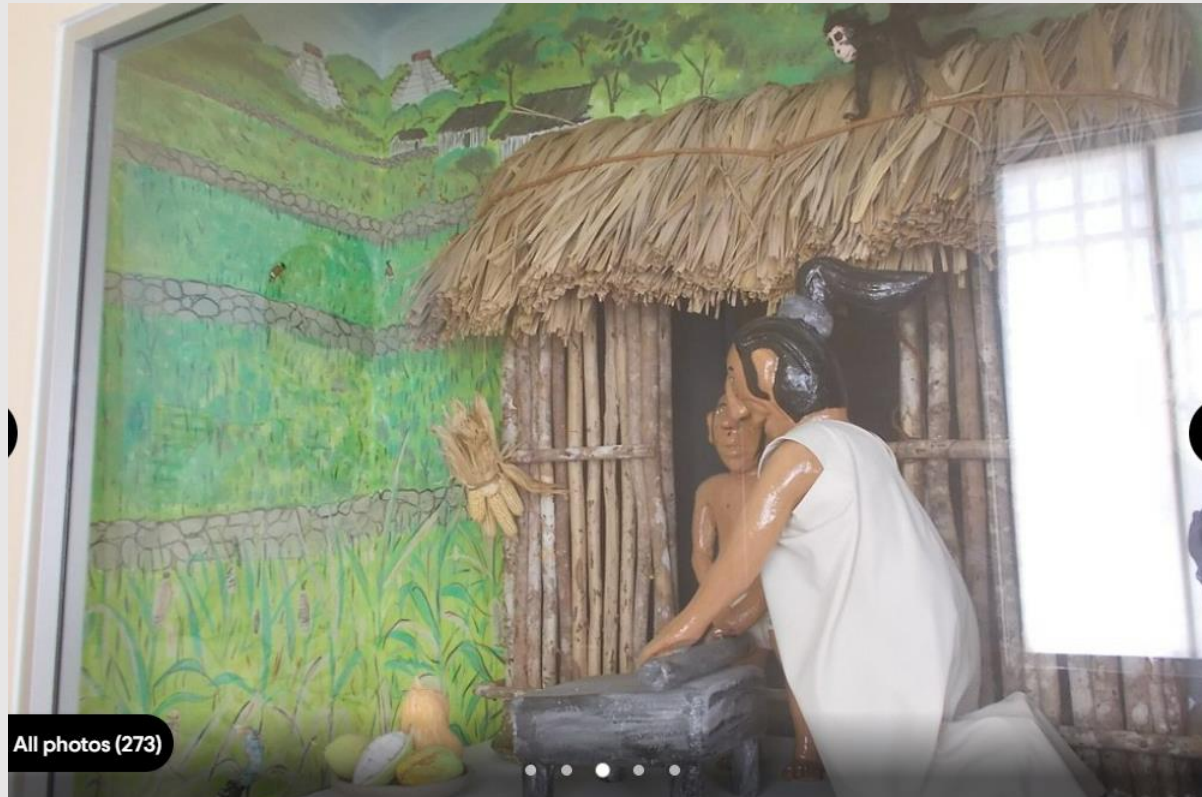


Despite the many Mayan ruins (and people) in Belize, the government shows little interest in the Mayan heritage.

Ancient MAYA SITES of Belize BY DISTRICT



.....
The Museum of Belize, Belize City is a good example of the priorities. No mention of the Maya as an advanced civilization, but you can see a British pith helmet!



Recent reviews of this attraction



debannh2022



“Not worth the time hard to find parking”

I was dissapointed in the musuem had hoped to see some Mayan artifacts they were not on display are stored in a vault somewhere. The slavery part was interesting less



Mayan Reality Uncomfortable for Contemporary Belize?

The National Archaeology Museum, (Belmopan), has been in the planning stages since 1970s. It is still on hold in 2023!

“As of 1996 the Belmopan Vault in the Department of Archaeology held some of the archaeological remains of the country. Most of the display consisted of ceramic vessels from across Belize. They were packed tightly and did not have labels....

At that time the vault was open in the afternoon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday by *prior appointment*. A 1997 guide said that the Archaeology Vault in Belmopan, which had been open for visitors to see a large collection of Mayan artifacts, had been closed for lack of funding.”

Allegations of corruption, theft of artifacts, and a general lack of state interest in Mayan heritage shape Belizean treatment of the Maya and their history.

The Second Conquest: Coffee in the 1860s

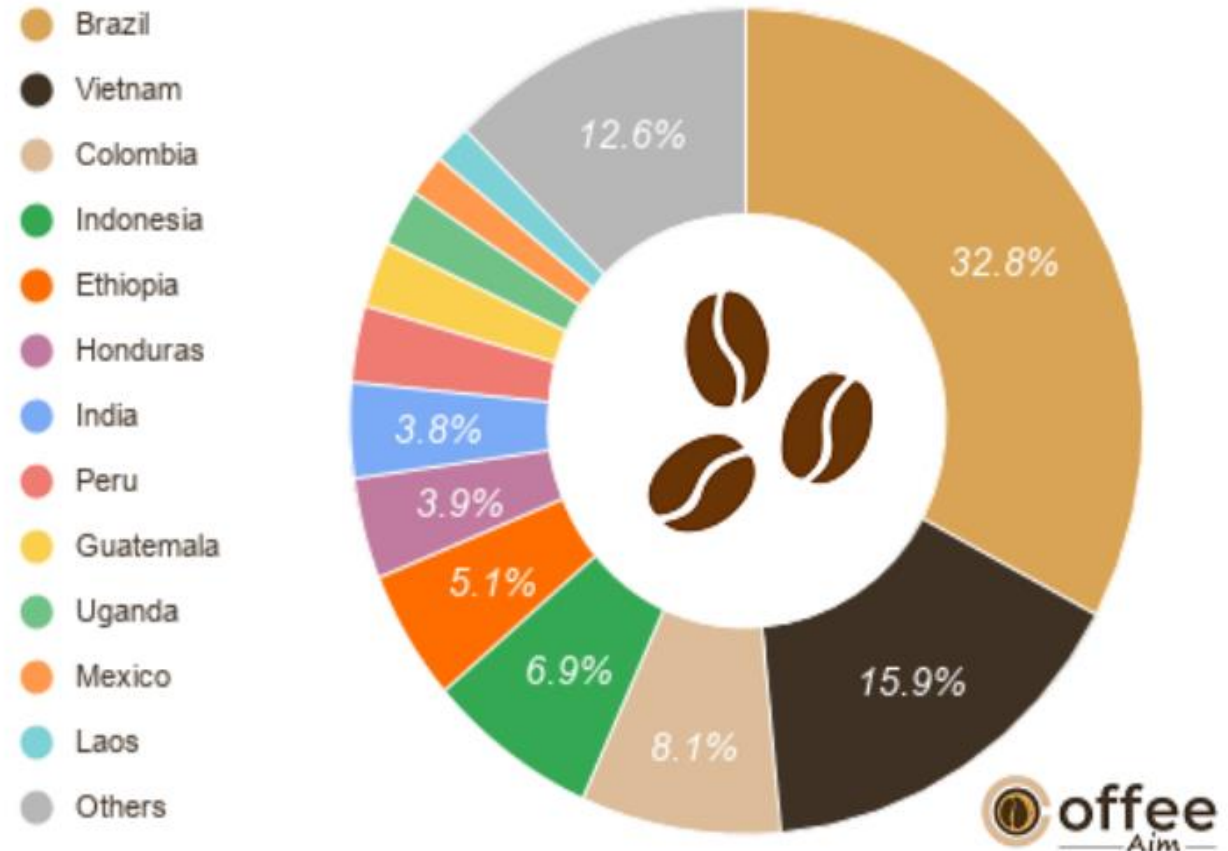
In the 2000s Guatemala fell from being the 5th global producer of coffee to 10th

Why? Environmental challenges (rain, rust on plants, and competition from Vietnam) were key issues.

The collapse in coffee prices one of the drivers of migration from the highlands today.

Top 12 Coffee Producing Countries

Source: ico.org

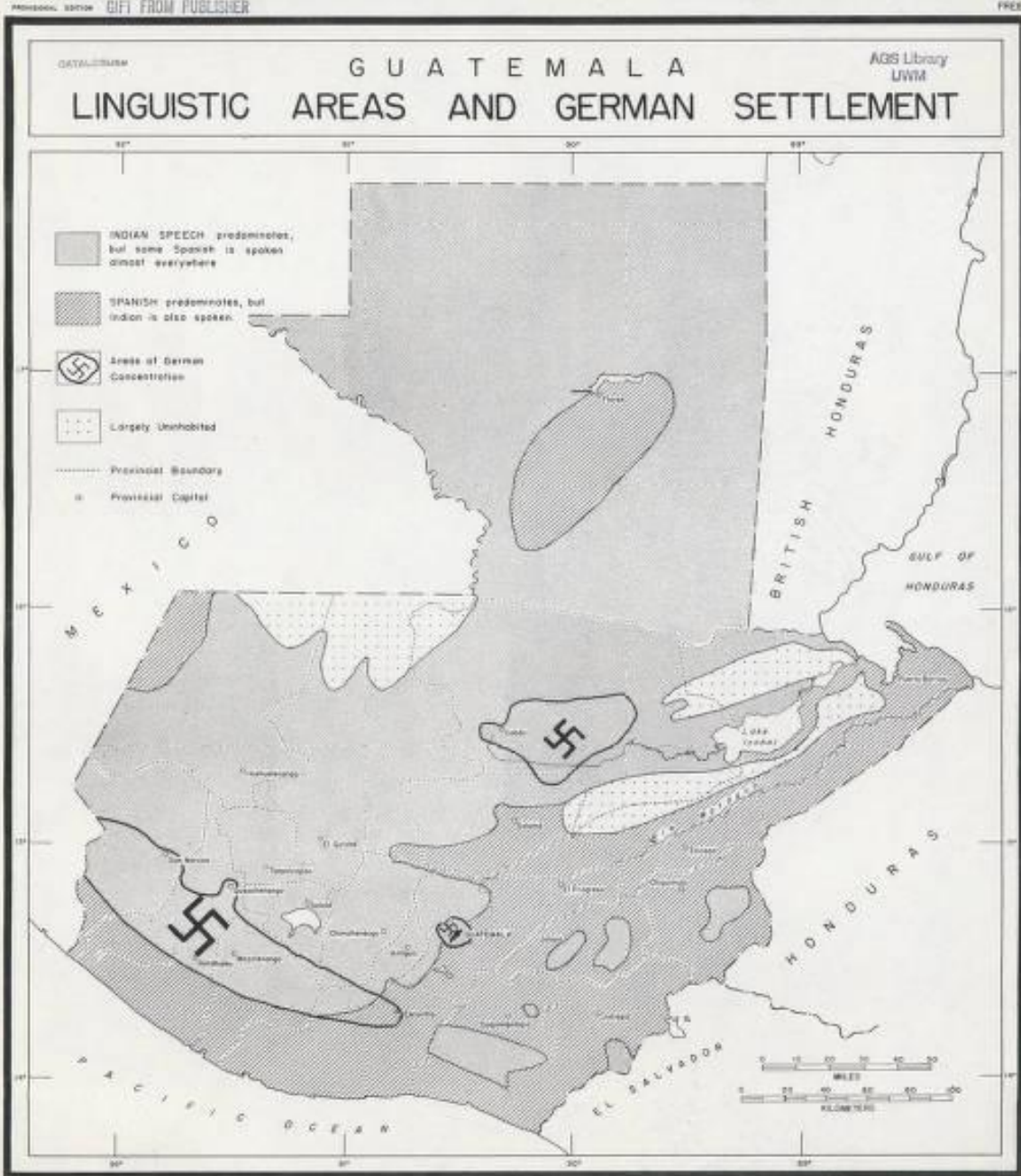


2021 Chart

1860s the Tipping point for Coffee and the Maya

- 1860s Steamship lines open new export options
- 1870 Liberal Reforms enabled privatization of indigenous lands; “Public lands” sold to investors.
- 1870 Labor Law required Mayans to carry labor documents; institutionalizing temporary migration from the highlands to coffee areas. It was safer to have a permanent contract with one export farm than risk arrest, a charge of “vagrancy” and a sentence of forced labor building roads, etc.
- In the highlands, villages switched to less labor-intensive corn and beans. Generational divisions also increased as young people entered the cash economy.
- 1930s Vagrancy and labor laws remained in place until the 1944 Revolution

German immigrant-founded Coffee Farm, Huehuetenango



1945 map of German heritage in Guatemala matches the coffee areas. Europeans grew to dominate the industry due to access to funding, transport and processing technology.

OSD-6
B-Var
OSS 2183
1943

2183



Pay day, 1890 on Santa Rosa Finca

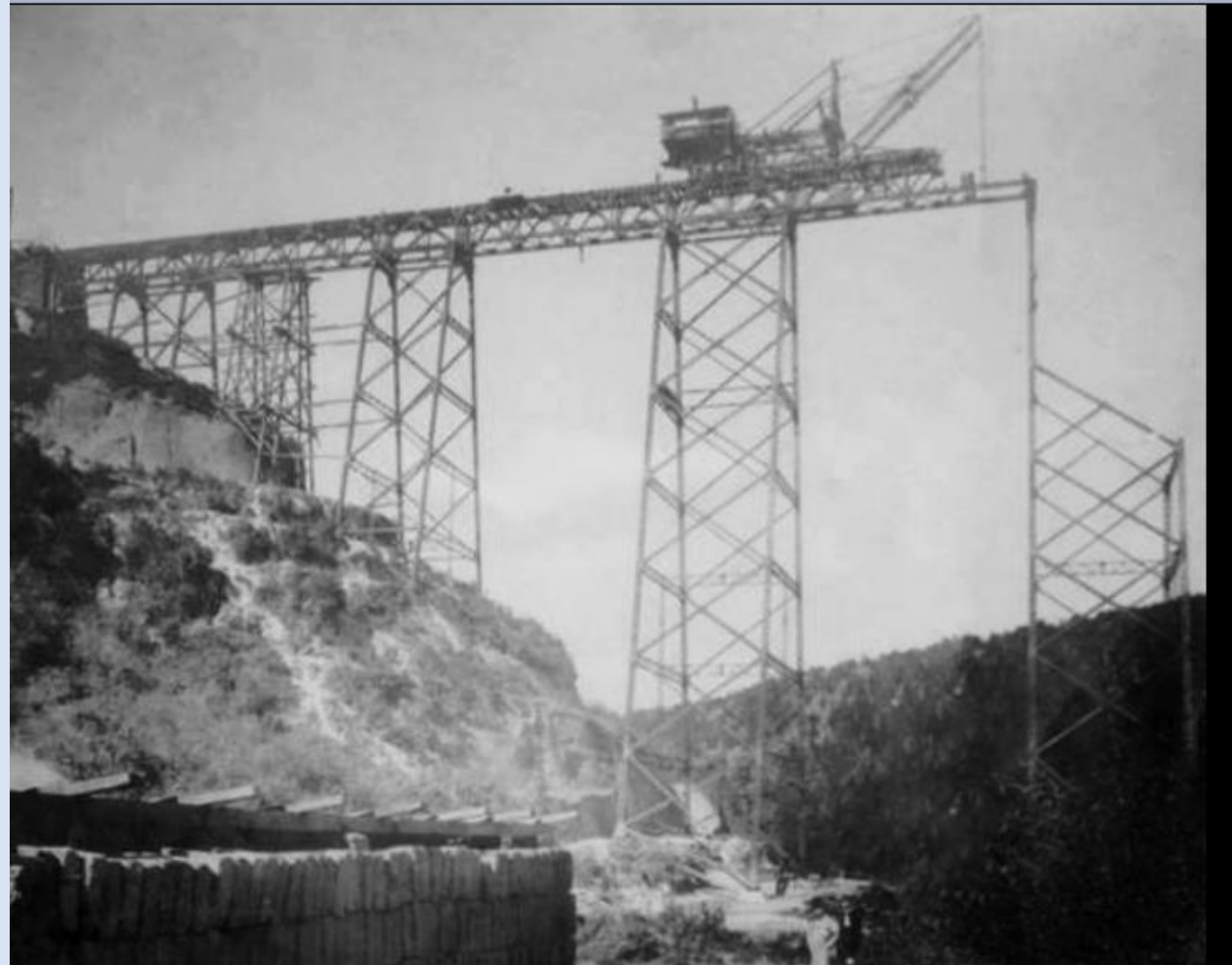


The National Penitentiary, 1870s, part of the Liberal Reforms to modernize Guatemala

Another kind of modernization: Railroads, paid for with land concessions used to farm bananas.

The Bananas + Rail + port + steamship line proved a winning combination for the company that eventually became United Fruit.

They first cultivated bananas to feed RR workers, but then began to ship them to the US to pay off debt. They acquired steam lines and US trade outlets.....



Guatemala City Roundhouse, 2007 photo

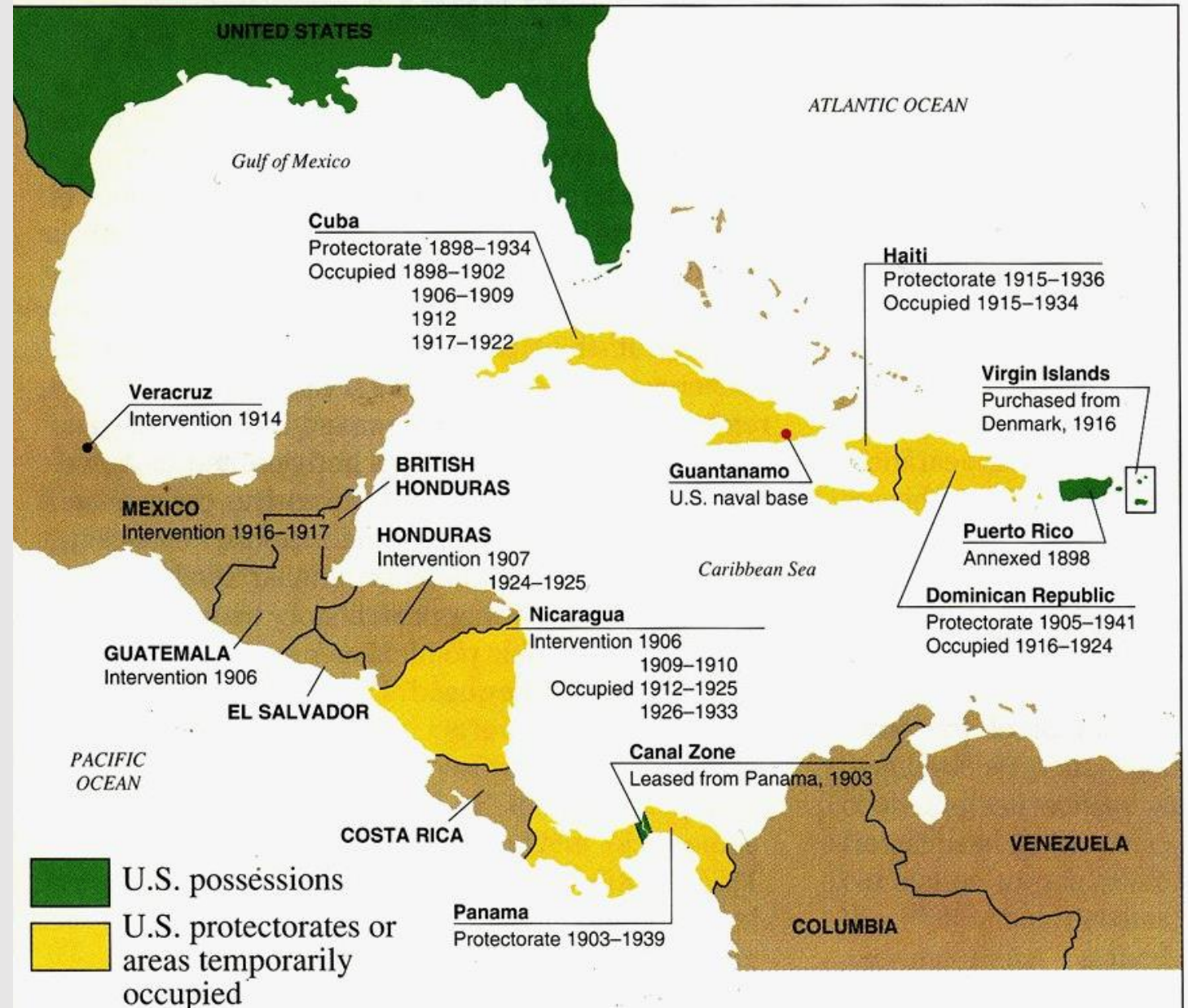


United Fruits expansion coincided with a US foreign policy shift, 1898-1930s.

US military and diplomatic involvement followed US expanding economic interests in the region. Beginning with the 1898 Spanish American War (gaining US “colonies” in Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico); the US began to see intervention as normal.

Sometimes the intervention was seen as an effort to disrupt European, especially German, expansion in the region, other times to provide financial and military guidance which Progressive foreign policy actors saw as an extension of Progressive reforms at home. Occupations were followed by a slew of financial and military reforms that were thought of as “state building” (to use a modern phrase). But because they never addressed power inequities, they merely created new financial and military tools for the elites to stay in power. They brought stability for businesses, including US investments, but not reform.

United States Involvement in Central America and the Caribbean, 1898–1939



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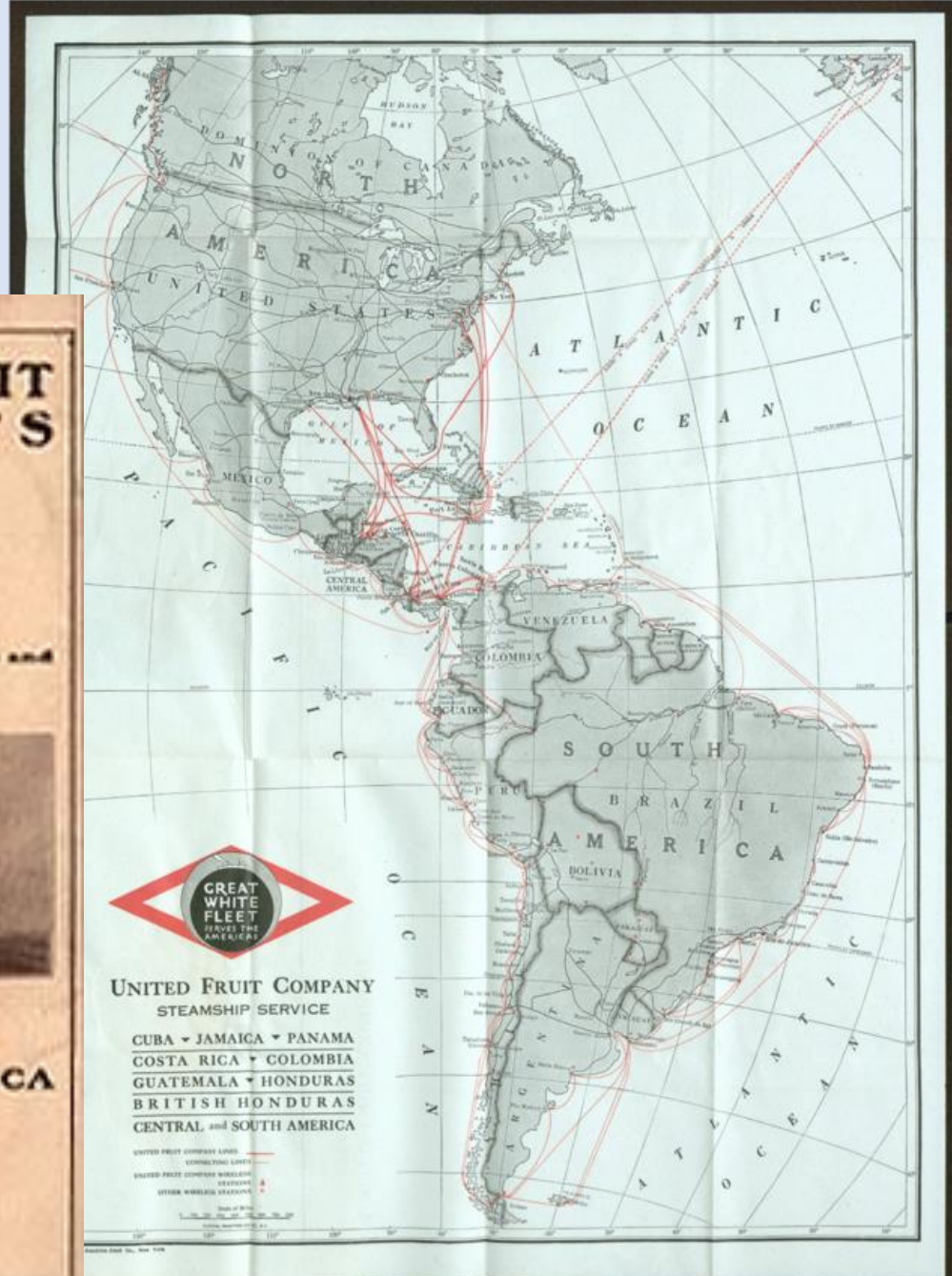
SCHEDULES

December 1, 1901

Subject to Change without Notice and to Quarantine Regulations



**JAMAICA
PANAMA, COSTA RICA
NICARAGUA
SPANISH HONDURAS
GUATEMALA
BRITISH HONDURAS**



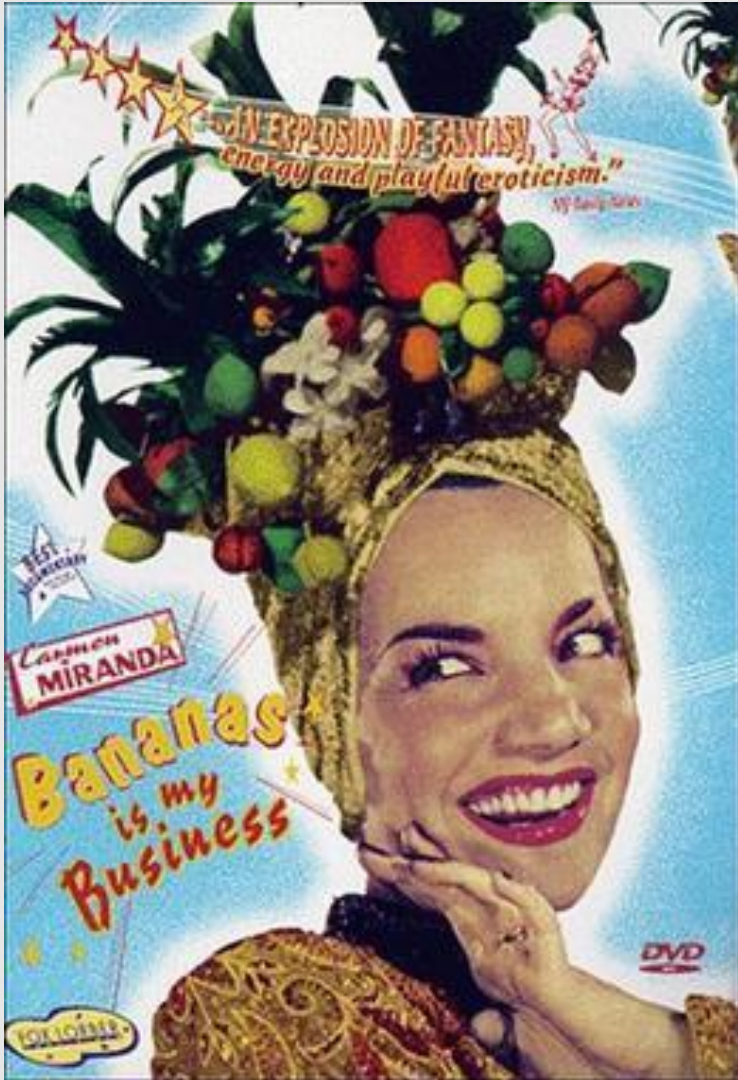
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1930s – The Good Neighbor Policy and the “Non Intervention Pledge”



Roosevelt cruised to Brazil in 1936 and became concerned with poor US-Latin relations. Years of intervention had not won friends for the US!

With worries about a future European War, the US initiated the “Good Neighbor Policy” to rebrand the US a protection against intervention! The new policy was accompanied by cultural programming.

Films, Radio programming, Cartoons (even Walt Disney was brought in to create Saludos Amigos), celebrity tours....all to build good relations. Carmen Miranda career received a US boost with Good Neighbor programming.

Flying Down to Rio (1933) with Rodgers and Astaire
an early example of the new Latin movies.
Down Argentine Way (1940)

The lady in the Tutti Frutti hat film clip
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLsTUN1wVrc>

