

The Cultural Compass:

**Cultivating Curiosity for
Our Students and Beyond**



Intro Page

Welcome to the CalWORKs Family!

For those of you who don't know who or where we are, we are located in building 38E near the sand volleyball court. The CalWORKs Department's mission is to uplift and support parents working to gain their education. Our student population is incredible, comprising primarily but not limited to single parents, immigrants, refugees, and survivors of domestic violence.

In the planning of this book, we tried to think of a name that represented our philosophy of remaining curious and committed to continued learning about the students we serve. Our department decided to name this book the

Cultural Compass because, while a GPS delivers its user to a definite destination, a compass merely gives you some information to guide its user.

The CalWORKs Cultural Compass includes a general overview of selected cultures, history, languages, religions, and so on, curated by persons of the same culture or with help from the specific community. Our hope is that it fuels your curiosity to explore and continue learning from all the incredible people in our community, both in Grossmont College and San Diego County as a whole.



GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA
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Afghanistan

**Arab, Aymaq, Baluch, Brahui,
Gujur, Hazara, Nuristani, Pachaie,
Pashtun, Qirghiz, Qizilbash, Uzbek
and Tajik, Turkman;
Afghanistan has dozens of other
small ethnic groups.**

Languages: Afghan Persian or Dari (official), Arabic, Balochi, English, Nuristani, Pachaie, Pashto (official), Turkmani, Urdu, and Uzbeki

Religions: Islam (Sunni, Shia)

Population: 38 million

About Afghanistan + Major Historical Events

Afghanistan is located in Asia and is a landlocked country which borders Turkmenistan, China, Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The majority of its population are Muslim, and the official languages spoken in the country are Pashto and Dari. As of 2022, the country's population is 39.2 million.

The country has been inhabited by various empires and tribes, including the Achaemenids, Mauryas, Greeks, Kushans, Sassanids, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, and British. It became an independent nation in 1919, after defeating the British after a three year war between the 19th and 20th century. Since then, it has faced significant challenges, including political instability, economic instability, and war.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was created in 1965 which led to a civil war against Afghan freedom fighters who are known as the Mujahideen. One Mujahideen member who is considered a hero amongst many Afghans, is Ahmad Shah Massoud; being from the province of Panjshir, he was also known as Lion of Panjshir.

Afghanistan

About Afghanistan + Major Historical Events

Shortly after, Soviet Forces invaded the country in 1979 and did not leave the country until 1989. However the civil war continued throughout 1992 after the fall of PDPA. When the Soviet Union Forces left Afghanistan, differences in beliefs regarding the future of Afghan society between Mujahideen members began to cause a drift within the members. This disagreement caused members from the Mujahideen to split into their own group, in which the Taliban was formed in 1994. Various groups took this opportunity to try to invade and take control of the country, only with the Taliban succeeding with military aid provided by Pakistan. The United States intervened in Afghanistan in 2001 primarily in response to the Twin Towers attacks on September 11th, which were orchestrated by the group Al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden. The United States launched military action in Afghanistan shortly after to deconstruct Al-Qaeda and Taliban operations held in Afghanistan. In response to this, Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces sought refuge in Pakistan, which ended the Taliban's reign over Afghanistan.

The country's first president, Hamid Karzai, was elected in 2004, however the government was not able

to extend its authority past the capital, Kabul, due to Taliban resistance. After a 20 year war in Afghanistan, the U.S. troops were removed from the country in August of 2021 by U.S. President Joe Biden. The withdrawal of U.S. troops caused the Taliban to overtake the country and reimplemented their previous practices. The Afghan government soon collapsed. The U.S. military troops were sent to the country one last time to assist in evacuating American diplomats and U.S. embassy staff from Kabul.

According to The UN Refugee Agency, Afghan refugees make up one of the most displaced populations, with over two-thirds of its population in need of protection and humanitarian assistance. Since 2021, after the Taliban takeover, over 8.2 million Afghans have been displaced from their homes, and driven out of their communities. The conflict brought devastation to women and girls residing in the country. The ongoing crisis occurring in Afghanistan is prompting efforts to support Afghan refugees. Bordering countries such as Iran and Pakistan have been host communities that have taken in about 750,000 Afghan refugees.



Afghanistan

Culture

Afghanistan is known for its traditional music, dance, poetry, and storytelling that have been passed on for many generations. Family values and tribal affiliations are also essential aspects of Afghan culture. The cultural name for people who live in Afghanistan are known as Afghan, which includes those who are multiethnic and multicultural.

Afghan food is served with hospitality, with a blend of Asian, Pakistani, Mediterranean, and Eastern African influences. The national dish that is often enjoyed by Afghans is Qabili pulao, which is traditionally served with rice, lamb, and topped off with raisins and carrots. Another popular dish for Afghans is Mantu which are dumplings filled with minced beef and topped off with yogurt, split pea curry, and spices. Tea, sweets, and fruit are also a customary part of meals and get-togethers.

Holidays celebrated in Afghanistan: Eid-Al-Fitr which is celebrated after a month of fasting for Ramadan, Eid Al-Adha/Qurban which is celebrated to commemorate the devotion to God by Prophet Abraham and is celebrated alike Eid Al-Fitr; other major Holidays celebrated are Jeshyn-Afghan (Independence) Day and Nowruz (New Year marking the first day of Spring).

Artistic expression has been banned by the Taliban, however culture is kept alive in neighboring Pakistan and Tajikistan where refugees are able to practice cultural circles, have concerts, exhibit arts, and join in courses in music, painting, and poetry. Afghanistan has a rich history of the Arts. One of the most famous artists was Rumi was a Sufi mystic and poet, born in Balkh, Afghanistan in the year of 1207. He was known to use Persian and Arabic in his poetry, as well as Greek and Turkish. Countries such as Türkiye, Tajikistan, and Iran all have great respect for him. His poetry has major cultural influences in these countries. Globally, his poetry and popularity even reached the United States and Western Europe. His life experiences of longing, loss, and love turned him into a great poet. One of his most famous poems is The Guest House.

Another famous artist amongst Afghans is Ahmad Zahir. He was an incredibly famous singer and known as the "Elvis of Afghanistan". He began his music career in the 1960s and was killed in 1979, but many people continue to reference his lyrics and make their own covers of his songs to this day. Afghanistan has a rich cultural heritage that is deeply influenced by its geography and history. The country's cultural heritage is rooted in Islamic traditions, tribal structures, and patriarchal values.

Afghanistan

Religion

Islam is the primary religion practiced in Afghanistan with the majority of the population following the Sunni sect; there is also a small percentage of Shia Muslims as well. The country is deeply shaped by Islam and the government is established as the Sunni Islamic Republic. Islam is deeply rooted

in Afghanistan's culture; this can be seen through their dress code, dietary codes, daily prayers, and use of language. Afghans often bring up God in casual conversation where they praise Allah (God) and wish blessings upon the person they are speaking or referring to.

Etiquette

Some etiquettes practiced by Afghans include, younger individuals must address elders by a title or often a word of endearment after their name, hospitality is strongly valued, when men meet they shake hands and place their right hand over their heart, physical contact is avoided by opposite

sexes so greeting each other is done from a distance as they place their right hand over their heart, and expressing affection may include customary practices of showing pretense bitterness and complaint when not receiving any news about their loved ones.

Education

Prior to the Soviet Union invasion, the takeover of the Taliban, and the U.S military presence, many Afghans were able to attend school and had stable jobs. Due to decades of war and unrest, Afghanistan's economy has continued to plummet- leaving Afghanistan as one of the poorest countries in the world. Due to financial instability, many children (many under the age of 10), are forced to work to help provide for their families and are unable to obtain an education. Higher education in the country is not common to its citizens presently,

and Afghans often have to travel abroad for education. Children receiving a primary education is as little as 5 percent of the country's population. According to UNICEF, education in Afghanistan has been devastated due to three decades of conflict within the country. There is still a lack of education for many. Due to traditional norms, girls and women are often not allowed to attend school depending on the region they reside in. Another cause for low school enrollment is shortage of schools and transportation, especially for those who live in rural areas.

Afghanistan

Migration History to San Diego

The aftermath of the departure of the U.S. military from Afghanistan in 2021, prompted an urgent evacuation of Afghan allies and others out of the country. Migration to the U.S. began in the early 1980's following political instability and invasion by the Soviet

Union with the largest population of Afghans in the United States residing in Fremont, California. However, from 2015-2019, over 3,000 Afghan immigrants settled in San Diego, and continue to do so today.

Working With This Population

Refugees from Afghanistan often face many barriers and have a high prevalence of mental health illnesses due to decades of conflict and displacement. However, there is a significant stigma attached to seeking counseling. Traditional healers and religious leaders often provide mental health support to the population. Many people believe that mental illnesses are a form of weakness, and seeking help might bring shame to themselves and their families. Moreover, religious and cultural values often dictate that emotional distress should be resolved through prayer, religious practices, and social support networks. Culturally, there is often generational trauma among Afghans, as they are often taught to face trauma they experience and to carry on. Addressing the cultural and historical context of Afghanistan is necessary to provide effective mental health care. Understanding and respecting individual and collective values, beliefs, and practices are essential for building trust, reducing stigma, and promoting mental health in this diverse and complex society.

Community-based initiatives that involve imams, community leaders, and family members in mental health treatment have shown promising results in reducing stigma and increasing acceptance of professional help. Additionally, vocational training, income-generating activities, and family counseling are essential components to address the social and economic causes of mental health problems in refugees and immigrants. Counselors who have previously worked with refugees, found that utilizing Maslow's Hierarchy of needs pyramid, and creating a visual aid, often due to language barriers, were helpful in understanding client needs. Basic needs are most important when assisting refugees. Some helpful resources would be to refer them to local public assistance services such as CalFresh for food, CalWORKs for cash aid and housing assistance/referral, Medi-Cal for health services, and other local agencies based on their needs. Being an advocate for refugees and immigrants is important not only for their mental health, but also for their human rights.

Afghanistan

San Diego Resources

ACIC – The Afghan Community Islamic Center

acicmasjiddatawheed.com

Jewish Family Service Refugee Resettlement

<https://www.jewishfamilyservice.org/resettlement>

ACCC – Afghan Community Culture Center

afghanccc.org

Afghan Assistance Resources | The Administration for Children and Families

hhs.gov

Office of Refugee Resettlement- Afghan Assistance Resources

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/programs/refugees/afghan-assistance-resources>

Office of Refugee Resettlement- Legal Services for Afghan Arrivals (ILSAA)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr>

Afghanistan

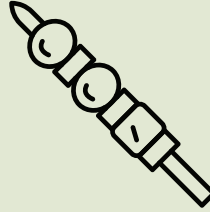
Restaurants

Khyber Pass Zarparan Restaurant

523 University Ave,
San Diego, CA 92103
<https://khyberpasszarparan.com/>

Kabul Kabob House

1255 E Main St Suite A,
El Cajon, CA 92021
<https://kabulkabobsd.com/>



Kabul Kabob House

1255 E Main St Suite A,
El Cajon, CA 92021
<https://kabulkabobsd.com/>

Kunduz Kabob & Pizza

12128 Woodside Ave,
Lakeside, CA 92040
<https://kunduzkabob-n-pizza.com/>

Reviewer: Sahar Mohammadi

African Americans

African American/Black, Gullah Geechee, Louisiana Creole

Also Identified as: ADOS (African Descendants of Slaves),
Black Americans, FBA (Foundational Black Americans)

Languages: AAVE (African American Vernacular English Dialect),
Geechee, Gullah, Louisiana Creole

Religions: Black Hebrew Israelite, Catholic Christian, Hoodoo, Islam,
Jehovah Witnesses, Judaism, Protestant Christian (Baptists, Methodists,
Pentecostals), Voodoo

Population: 41.6 million

About African Americans + Major Historical Events

The history of African Americans' arrival to America can be debated, however it is largely believed that the first African Americans arrived in the Americas in the late 1619 as indentured servants, along with Irish indentured servants. However, the desire to keep servants beyond their time sentenced led to the large-scale enslavement of Africans. Europeans saw an opportunity to buy slaves to perform free labor when they realized that African empires captured and kept slaves. The conflicts between the empires produced many captives who were forced into local slavery. The Europeans convinced the African traders and leaders to allow them to take African slaves for the Atlantic Slave Trade, beginning the sale of African slaves to Europeans by African leaders. Africans were captured off the west coast of Africa, shackled and loaded on ships and human trafficked across the Atlantic Ocean to be sold in chattel slavery. These slaves were used for forced free labor in the new world, and the journey became known as the Middle Passage. The Maafa

is also a Swahili term used to describe this experience and the history of atrocities inflicted on African people. The journey to the new world was extremely rough due to the vile conditions that the Africans were subjected to, including being chained together below deck with hardly any room to move. Many died along the initial voyage out of Africa, with about one third unable to survive the journey across the Atlantic due to disease and choosing death over bondage. Once they arrived in America, these Africans were faced with the horrors of chattel slavery, being auctioned off to new 'owners' where they would face gruesome treatment. Africans were also 'seasoned', where they were taught basic English-speaking skills, obedience, and laboring methods. Eventually, African Americans would lose their culture of origin and develop a new culture based on the remnants of their past and the experience of their present.

The free and forced labor of African Americans was the foundation for building

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About African Americans + Major Historical Events

America's economy; working plantations that produced indigo, cotton, rice, tobacco and sugar allowed the economy to thrive. Slaves themselves were also a means of profit and also contributed to growing the economy. In addition to this, enslaved Africans also played a significant role in fighting for American independence from Great Britain, fighting alongside their slave owners. Their support garnered many African American soldiers their freedom, and slavery was even abolished in the North. However, with the ratification of the US Constitution, slavery became legally entrenched in a newly independent America, especially in the South. The Constitution only counted enslaved African Americans as three-fifths of a human, denying them the human rights listed in the Constitution itself. The Constitution also prohibited the abolition of slavery and required the return of runaway slaves to their owners. In 1808, President Thomas Jefferson signed a law to end the Atlantic slave trade, but allowed domestic trading of slaves to continue to thrive. With the lack of merchandise, owners began breeding slaves to reproduce and sell the children to continue to gain from the free labor source. Girls as young as 13 were raped and forced to be separated from their children.

The harsh conditions of slavery resulted in the desire to escape their circumstances. Although slave codes allowed owners to have total control of slaves, which resulted in many attempted revolts. Notably, the revolt led by Nat Turner was one that caused much fear for white slave owners, understanding that it was possible for slaves to gain their freedom. Other slaves took the route of escaping the harsh reality of plantation life by traveling North, with help of

abolitionist along the Underground Railroad famously led by Harriet Tubman.

The North was a refuge for African Americans who sought freedom due to slavery being abolished in the North. This did not last long as legislation allowed slavery within all territories of the US. The North feared that the entire country would become controlled by slaveholders, and the South desired to protect its way of life. This disagreement led to the American Civil War, which ultimately led to the ending of slavery. The end of slavery did not happen intentionally, but as a way to keep the country together, as President Lincoln originally intended on gradual emancipation. However, the Emancipation Proclamation was signed after the Civil War, requiring all slaves to be freed. In response to support African Americans adjust as free citizens, the US went through a Reconstruction period from 1865-1877. In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment was passed and officially gave African Americans citizenship and Constitutional rights and in 1870 the Fifteenth Amendment was passed and allowed Africans Americans the right to vote. Even with these new rights for African Americans, many were still subjected to oppression as these rights were often ignored. The Freedmen's Bureau was established by the government to support new freedmen as they often lacked resources, food, clothing and work. The bureau supported African Americans with food, jobs, and housing. The bureau also established hospitals, schools and higher learning institutions. Reconstruction also opened the doors for African Americans to have political power for the first time, with the leaders of the community being the voice of the people. However, this didn't last long as

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the South began to regain its influence on the rest of the country, and African Americans were kept away from the polls. The South also passed Jim Crow laws in order to keep African Americans separate and second-class citizens. African Americans continued to be oppressed despite their continued contributions to society as a whole. The mounting stress of 200 years of oppression gave way to the Civil Rights movement. This movement was launched in the 1940s and 1950s and was a strategic movement that sought to maintain and expand African American rights. The NAACP, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Congress of Racial Equity led the movement and targeted policies that were oppressive to African Americans. Their efforts were often met with white resistance and many times this caused physical implementation of new policies difficult. However, the Civil Rights Act of 1957 was passed, allowing the government to take legal measures against the denial of voting rights. Peaceful protesting and sit-ins also helped to propel the civil rights of African Americans as well. By the 1960s, African Americans began to create militant groups to protect their communities and to provide support that the community was lacking. These groups included the Revolutionary Action Movement, Deacons for Defense and the Black Panther Party. During this era, the slogan 'Black Power' was popularized and used to uplift African Americans. This new found pride was rooted in reconnecting to their African roots, exemplified through traditional garb and afros. It was also the fuel behind African American students demanding black studies and teachers, and

resource facilities. In the 1970s, the civil rights movement began to take a new focus once many legislations in favor of African American rights had passed. President Lyndon Johnson implemented the Great Society plan, which was established as a War on Poverty that tried to respond to issues of poverty. This plan also set forth welfare programs and Affirmative Action which addressed the issues of discrimination in job hiring processes and school admissions. However, although these policies made significant changes, African Americans still faced severe social and economic problems. In the following decades, African Americans faced continued discrimination, poverty, and police brutality.

Regardless of the oppression that still exists for African Americans, major strides have continued to be made. In 2008, President Barack Obama became the first black president of the US, breaking one of the most difficult barriers to break for African Americans.

After hundreds of years of slavery, an African American took the highest office to hold in the US, giving a sense of more equality for people of color. Although many drastic changes weren't made, this opened the door for more political power for the African American community. Following in President Obama's footsteps was Kamala Harris, becoming the first African American woman to hold office as Vice President. Unfortunately, these milestones in equality failed to eliminate continued discrimination, prejudices and racial violence. The fight for justice and equality is one that is continued today within the African American community.

African Americans

Culture

African Americans lost much of their cultural identities through their experience of the slave trade and chattel slavery. However, many attempted to preserve as much of their original culture as they could. What emerged through this preservation is a unique African American culture with roots in African traditions blending over time with American traditions. Traditionally, African culture included storytelling, music, dance and art. These expressions of the culture remained prevalent in African American culture as well. In addition, African American communities' function like most African communities, with a strong sense of communalism and a shared sense of community. It is common for African Americans to live, engage and prosper with extended family members and community members.

African Americans have always loved to express themselves through fashion, art and music. Initially, slaves were only given access to tactical clothing that was suitable for long days of work. Over time, slaves who had rich owners or who were considered 'house slaves' had access to better clothing. This was also a sign of status. Once slavery ended, African Americans were able to dress more like their white counterparts, allowing them to move away from slave status through their image. Over time African American fashion continued to develop parallel to white fashion trends. By the late 1900s, African American fashion trends also began to affect mainstream fashion. In the 1980s, it was common for African Americans to wear large gold earrings, bright colored outfits, big hair, afros and large accessories. In the 1990s, long braid styles, flat top haircuts, fitted hats, baggy clothing, and boomboxes became staples of African American culture.

Today much of these styles have influenced mainstream culture, and many people in the US and around the world have adopted African American fashions.

African Americans' influence on the arts has also impacted the mainstream art culture in the US. Africans have a vibrant artistic history, and this is something that Africans in the slave trade took with them to the lands they were enslaved in. African Americans often used art as a way to express their experience due to the silencing of their voices. Slavery and racism prevented development of artists, however there were still some self-taught African Americans who produced art in the form of paintings and sculptures. Even through art, self-taught artists exemplified the resourcefulness of African Americans. In the early 1900s, African Americans in large numbers produced various forms of art speaking to the African American existence. This time period was called the Harlem Renaissance, and was a time of awakening for African Americans. The Harlem Renaissance was an exhibit of different self-expressions of African Americans and many creative writers, singers and performers also emerged during this time. With access to education and paying jobs, African Americans were able to use other mediums to continue to express their experience. Writers and musicians often spoke of the current social and emotional state of African Americans. Music was and is largely the medium of expression for African Americans. Because the slave trade divided Africans from the same countries and tribes, traditional forms of music began to blend together to form music created by African American slaves. Soon, slaveholders realized the power of African Americans coming together even

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in the form of art, so oftentimes slaves were not allowed to play music. Over time, these African forms of music were either lost or blended with other types of music. The initial form of African American music was the negro spiritual, which was directly a response to the American experience and often used as a way to heal from their circumstances. Music continued to develop, and African Americans were responsible for many different genres of music including country music with the hymns and spirituals blended over a banjo, ragtime with syncopated beats, the blues speaking of slavery and segregation, jazz a mix of the blues and Black New Orleans music style, gospel music that blended negro spiritual lyrics with blues rhythms, rock 'n roll that had blues and RnB roots with an up-tempo and rap/hip-hop whose complex style included blends of traditional African American music with Caribbean styles. Each form of African American style of music was influenced by styles that came before. Since its existence, African American music has played a major role in American mainstream music, and has significantly influenced music throughout time. Along with music, dance was undeniably an integral part of African American culture. Dance was also forbidden by slaveholders in the early years as a mechanism of control and to distance slaves from their original identities. These traditional dances from their homeland in Africa still managed to find their way into African American culture. An early form of maintaining their dance tradition was the juba dance, and to imitate complex rhythms of their homelands, this dance included slapping thighs, shuffling feet, and patting hands as they were not allowed to use drums. Similar to the juba dance, the cakewalk developed out of the slave experience and was a dance

slaves performed imitating their masters. As time progressed, the famous dance called the 'Charleston' developed in which dancers improvised to fast beats and kicked their legs in rhythm. This dance eventually formed into the lindy hop, swing dancing and 'kid n play' which was originally called the funky Charleston. In the 1980s and 1990s, dance continued to be a popular medium of self-expression and an important part of African American culture. During this era, dances like the wop, the running man, the Steve Martin, the camel walk, the chicken head, the monastery were popular within African American communities. During the 2000s, we see dances like krumping, crank that, the dougie, the stanky leg/nae nae, dabbing, hit them folks, and many more become the trends throughout African American communities, as well as American culture as a whole. To this day, African American dance trends continue to rapidly blossom and make a significant impact on mainstream American culture.

Hair is more than just hair in the African American community. Hair holds identity, meaning, and beauty. Hair represents who African Americans are and exemplifies the evolution of African American culture over time. During enslavement, slaves innovated with their hair and actually used styles as a means to escape to freedom. Slaves would braid patterns in their hair that were actually maps to freedom. Slaves were also made to wrap their hair to make themselves less attractive to their masters and to represent their status. The oppression African Americans faced continued beyond emancipation and many women often tried to hide their hair or manipulate their hair to match the styles of their white counterparts. Hair was often processed and straightened in an attempt to change their

African Americans

Culture

curly, hair in order to be received well in the workforce. Eventually, traditional African American hairstyles were banned in the workplace, and today, legislation protects the ban on these hairstyles in the workplace. Nevertheless, African Americans have continued to embrace their natural hair and

traditional styles, which have started to reach mainstream culture. Locs, braids, twists and natural styles hold more importance than just the beauty and protection of African American hair, they also represent the experience, pride and resilience of African Americans.

Religion

The spirituality of African Americans was deeply rooted far beyond their arrival to the US. However, although many attempted to preserve the beliefs of their ancestors, over generations many found faith in other religions. In the early years of the US, most Black Americans turned to Christianity, following either the Baptist or Methodist denominations. Many black churches were founded even before the Constitution was signed, making these churches older than the United States itself. In addition to these denominations, many also followed Pentecostalism. As opposed to Baptist and Methodist westernized ways of worship, Pentecostal followers practiced an African American folk influenced worship style. From the Pentecostal faith came the Church of Christ in God, which is predominately African American and is influenced by the Holiness movement. The COGIC denomination is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the United States today. African Americans also found themselves converting to Jehovah's Witnesses by the early 20th century after the founder of the religion decided it would be in their best interest to start allowing African Americans to join the religion. Originally, the founder of the religion felt that African Americans were too inferior to join the religion, yet nonetheless through successful

recruitment, a large number joined the religion. Religion had long been used as a weapon against African Americans, and was a method of control. Another one of the religions was Catholicism. In 1693, while the Spanish still had land in the US, enslaved African Americans were promised their freedom if they converted to Catholicism. Because of this, African Americans were able to establish the first town for freed slaves in St. Augustine, Florida. Since then, many African Americans have continued to become Catholic. Eventually, in 1839 Pope Gregory XVI condemned the slave trade and called it inhumane. Today, many African Americans continue to practice Catholicism. Islam was a religion long practiced by African Americans since the beginning of slavery. During the time of the transatlantic slave trade, as many as 10 percent of Africans that were transported practiced Islam and brought these practices with them.

By the 1860s, another wave of Muslims migrated to America after the Civil War, due to the large influx of Arabs. The majority of African Americans who practice Islam are a part of the Sunni sect as a result of their original practices and the influx of Arab immigrants. Another branch of Islam that many African-Americans adopted was the Nation of Islam. The Nation of Islam was

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founded by Wallace D. Fard Muhammad in Detroit, Michigan in 1930. The goal for founding this sect of Islam was to improve the social, spiritual, and mental experience of African Americans. The Nation of Islam was distinctly different from the original form of Islam, as they believe that Allah 'came in the person of W. D. Fard'. Some of those who initially followed the Nation of Islam but developed different views resorted to becoming a Five Percenter, which still held some beliefs of the Nation of Islam. The Five Percent Nation, also known as the Nation of Gods and Earths, was founded by Clarence 13X in Harlem, New York in 1963. Clarence joined the Nation of Islam and attended Temple No. 7 under the leadership of Malcolm X. Like Malcolm X, he eventually left the Nation of Islam when they weren't receptive to his ideas, as he didn't believe Wallace D. Fard to be Allah himself. He then created the Five Percent Nation, using similar beliefs, yet claiming that all black men were God, or Allah and black women were queens, or Earths. The Five Percenters believed that the black community should be self-sustainable through education, dignity and self-understanding. Similarly, African Americans have practiced Judaism long before their journey to America. It is believed that some Africans that were taken from their homes practiced Judaism in their land of origin. Many slaves attempted to maintain their faith in the new world, however over time they were forced to take on the faith of their owners. A number of slaves were forced to convert to Christianity, but a small number of African Americans took on the Judaism religion from their owners. Although many African Americans

Jews exist today, they are often treated as an 'other' and have to justify their religious identity. African Americans have also formed the Black Hebrew Israelites, after believing that they were the lost tribe of Israel. This was formed after an increasing belief that African Americans were descendants of the Jews who were freed in Egypt. Today, they have formed a community in Israel and many different sects developed in the US. Their beliefs are different from the original Judaism beliefs; they practiced things like polygamy and veganism. Other traditional spiritual practices were also practiced by African Americans including Voodoo and Hoodoo. These practices are often associated with negativity and 'evil' practices; however, they are both a system of traditional folk practices. These two systems are distinctly different although they are both based on spirituality. The Hoodoo practice is an American based folk religion in which its practitioners work with spiritual forces as a method of achieving one's desire. Although misunderstood, Hoodoo is a complex system of magic, herbalism, divination and witchcraft. As opposed to Hoodoo, Voodoo is originally a West African religion that eventually made its way to the Western world through the slave trade. Voodoo followers believe in one Creator God and many deities which they show respect to through religious ceremonies and practices. Overall, religion and spirituality are very important aspects of African American culture.





African Americans

Etiquette

Maintaining proper manners and etiquette within the African American community is important. When one does not engage proper manners and etiquette, it is considered that the person was not properly trained at home by their family. It was said that during the time of slavery, house slaves were tasked with the etiquette training of their masters' children. In addition, the importance of etiquette and manners in the African American community was also seen as a way to elevate their status and impose their humanity on the oppressive majority. Much of common etiquette within the African American community includes addressing someone older than you as ma'am or sir. It is also customary to address family members by their family role, as in Auntie or Uncle, followed by their first name. When greeting each other, men usually shake hands, or handshake and hug. Women tend to handshake or hug each other. Men and

women may shake hands or hug depending on how comfortable or close they are. When engaging in conversation, it is respectful to maintain eye contact as this is seen as respect and interest. When young people enter a space, it is expected that they introduce themselves to the adults. Also, if entering someone's home, many African Americans expect the guest to remove their shoes before entering to prevent the spread of outside dirt. African Americans also appreciate etiquette related to dining. In the community, women typically eat first. Men are also likely to make plates for the elders of the community and it is customary for younger people to clean up after elders. When dining, having elbows on the table is seen as ill mannered. It is also expected that each person cleans up after themselves and guests offer to clean their dish. In any situation, it is seen as well-mannered to say please and thank you.

Education

Noting the value of education, the oppressors weaponized education against African Americans. Anti-literacy laws existed long before the establishment of the United States and dated as far back as 1740. Enslaved African Americans were forbidden from receiving an education and many slaves had to try to gain an education in secret through 'snatching learning'. Regardless, they strived to gain an education in creative ways, but if caught they were subject to harsh punishment. Those in power often saw educated slaves as those equal to free people, due to the threat of their knowledge. Even after the United States gained its independence, education was reserved for white citizens

only, yet 10 percent of enslaved blacks managed to become literate and became leaders of the community. Following the start of the Civil War, African Americans sought to change anti literacy laws to allow access to education for all. Their strife led to the formation of 'native' schools that existed in Contraband Camps (refugee camps for slaves in the Union occupied parts of the south), Freedmen's Bureau schools, then eventually schools in the public sector. With the formal access to education, African Americans filled the classrooms during day and night schools. With more access to education, African Americans were met with much resistance and violence from white people who believed that although they

African Americans

Education

were free, they should not have access to education. This caused many to still seek their education in secret.

Teachers were seen as important leaders in the community as they were in the forefront of educating the community and helped protect the dream of freedom, which education was key to.

Freedom from slavery allowed African Americans to live a more dignified life, but did not force whites to see them as their equals. Segregation laws following the Civil War disseminated into the public-school systems. Although the government enacted the 'separate but equal' ideology following the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling, the quality of education for African Americans hardly mirrored the quality of education for whites. Resources usually were funneled into white schools, and there was very little access to accredited high schools for African Americans in the South, making it difficult to move on to higher education institutions. By 1954, the unfair practice of education was challenged in the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Supreme Court case. The Supreme Court ruled that segregation in education was unconstitutional, and initiated the integration of African Americans into public schools. African Americans still faced concerns about educational content supporting racial biases, and having more influence on the education their children receive. Having more influence on the education being received was also a concern of high education. Following the Civil War, many institutions for higher education for freed slaves were created in the south. These institutions were where most African Americans received their higher

education and became known as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, or HBCUs. After the desegregation of public schools, African Americans also began attending predominantly white institutions in large numbers as well, continuing to increase the number of those who became educated at higher levels.

Public schools did not refrain from the continued oppression of African Americans. The school to prison pipeline system was informally implemented in public schools and is still in existence today. The school to prison pipeline is the implementation of harsh punishments of students that end up pushing students out of school. When these students are disproportionately punished, they tend to repeat a grade, drop out of school and/or end up in the juvenile justice system. Through data collected from the U.S. Department of Justice, it was found that young African American boys tended to receive more discipline in grades K-12. Policies like 'zero tolerance' that were meant to address violence and drugs on school campuses, actually punished any behavior no matter how minor as a way to send a message that any undesired behaviors will be punished. This caused the issue of leading students to end up in the justice system rather than trying to help reform and address underlying causes of behaviors.

Regardless of the many years of struggle in relation to receiving an education, African Americans have made great strides in gaining educational rights, impacting the education system, as well as continuing to make change.

African Americans

Migration History to San Diego

African Americans have participated in migration from the South in pursuit of a better life, with many heading to the North and Midwest. Of those who went west, some ended up in San Diego. The first African Americans arrived in San Diego as early as 1820, with ambitions of entrepreneurship, innovation, and sports. Over time, African Americans continued to migrate to San Diego, adding to the culture of the city.

Today, African Americans continue to share their rich culture with the city of San Diego. It is important to note that many non-whites who came to America have benefited from the plight and demand for civil rights by African Americans. Without their efforts, many non-whites would not have privileges that they have today.

Working With This Population

Traditionally, African Americans have not necessarily resorted to traditional American ideologies of mental health and counseling. Although the African American experience is different for all, there is the common ground of an overall shared cultural experience. Within this shared experience, African Americans have dealt with racism, inequity, discrimination and being treated as less than. Due to systemic racism, accessing the treatment they needed was challenging, and their experience was often overlooked or pathologized. Because of this among other reasons, African Americans resorted to family, community and religious support, and expressing oneself through spirituality, art, dance, and music. African Americans may use these outlets traditionally as a way to deal with stress, depression, anxiety or other concerns.

African Americans are more likely than whites to report emotional distress,

according to Health and Human Services of Minority Health. The stigma behind mental illness also exists among the African American community which has hindered many from seeking traditional support. Due to feeling worried about being seen as weak, many people seek support from religious leaders. In addition, the lack of trust many African Americans have toward the health system due to mistreatment and discrimination, also plays a part in many choosing not to seek medical help.

It is important to consider that there are many barriers when working with African Americans. When working with this population, consider the values of African Americans and their communal nature. It may be helpful to implement group style activities or treatment, including others from their community, support network, and work cooperatively.

African Americans

San Diego Resources

Jacobs Center

404 Euclid Avenue
San Diego, Ca 92114
<https://www.jacobscenter.org/>

Logan Heights Community Development Corporation

3040 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, Ca 92101
<https://www.loganheightscdc.org/>

Neighborhood House Association

5660 Copley Drive
San Diego, Ca 92111
<https://www.neighborhoodhouse.org/>

Paving Great Futures

404 Euclid Avenue Suite 119
San Diego, Ca 92114
<https://www.pavinggreatfutures.org/programs/>

RISE San Diego

404 Euclid Avenue Suite 329
San Diego, Ca 92114
<https://www.risesandiego.org/about>

Urban League of San Diego

4305 University Avenue Suite 360
San Diego, Ca 92105
<https://sdul.org/programs/>

The Community College Equity Assessment Lab

5500 Campanile Drive EBA Building 210
San Diego, Ca 92182
<https://www.cceal.org/>

Reality Changers

4251 37th Street
San Diego, Ca 92105
<https://realitychangers.org/>

Reviewers: Jordan Nash, Ojore Bushfan,
Theron Page, Uhmbaya Laury

Connect All

9605 Scranton Road #110
San Diego, Ca 92121
<https://connect.org/connect-all/>

I Am My Brother's Keeper

6601 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, Ca 92114
<https://www.iambkcdc.org/>

The San Diego Black LGBTQ Coalition

<https://www.sdblackcoalition.org/about>

Black Tech Link

1240 East Plaza Boulevard Suite 604-452
National City, Ca 91950
<https://blacktechlink.org>

San Diego Workforce Partnership

<https://workforce.org/>

Depositing Empowerment Through Outreach & Urban Redevelopment (DETOUR)

404 Euclid Avenue Suite 329
San Diego, Ca 92114
<http://detourempowers.org/>

Just In Time for Foster Youth

4560 Alvarado Canyon Road Suite 2G
San Diego, Ca 92120
<https://jitfosteryouth.org/>

Blue Heart Foundation

<https://theblueheartfoundation.org/>

Albania

Albanian, Aromanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Gorani, Greek, Macedonian, Roma, and Serbian

Languages: Albanian (Tosk and Gheg dialects), smaller dialect groups

Religions: Islam, Roman Catholic, Orthodox

Population: 2.8 million

About Albania+ Major Historical Events

Albania is a country located in Southeastern Europe with a population of around 2.8 million people. The country has a rich history that dates back to ancient times. In modern history, during World War II, Albania was occupied by Italy and Germany. After the war, it became a communist state under the leadership of Enver Hoxha. Albania remained politically, culturally, and economically isolated under communist rule, which lasted until 1991.

Under Ottoman rule from 1385 to 1912, Albania experienced significant economic and cultural growth. The Ottomans built roads and infrastructure, developed agriculture and industry, and established a system of law and order that brought stability to the region. Albanians also played important roles within the Ottoman Empire, with many serving in the Ottoman military and government.

The Ottoman Empire began to weaken in the 19th century, and in 1912, Albania declared independence from the Ottoman Empire. However, beyond these historical aspects, Albania faces contemporary challenges in terms of how it is perceived. There is a significant gap between being a “part of the west” and actually being considered as such. This disparity often gives rise to stereotypes and discrimination. Some portray Albanians as aggressive or working-class laborers, while others orientalize the culture, viewing it as an outside, eastern culture in contrast to Western Europe.

Today, the Ottoman legacy can still be seen in Albania’s architecture, cuisine, language, and

cultural traditions. Since the fall of communism, Albania has undergone significant political and economic changes, transitioning to a multiparty democracy and market economy. Presently, Albania is a member of NATO and is actively seeking membership in the European Union. The country has a diverse cultural heritage, shaped by influences from its layered past.

Albania has a diverse religious makeup, with Islam and Christianity being the two main religions practiced in the country. Islam is the largest religion in Albania, accounting for around 60% of the population. The majority of Albanian Muslims are Sunni, although there is also a significant Bektashi minority, a Sufi order with a distinct form of Islam that combines elements of Shia and Sunni traditions. Christianity is the second-largest religion in Albania, with around 17% of the population practicing the Eastern Orthodox faith and around 10% practicing Roman Catholicism. There are also smaller communities of Protestant Christians and members of other Christian denominations.

In addition to Islam and Christianity, there are also small communities of Jews, Baha’is, and members of other religious groups in Albania.

Despite the diversity of religious beliefs in Albania, the country is known for its religious tolerance and coexistence. Religious discrimination is rare, and Albanians of different faiths often live and work together in harmony. This is due in part to Albania’s history of governmental secularism and its tradition of religious tolerance, which dates to the Ottoman Empire.



Albania

Culture

Albanian culture is a blend of ancient traditions, Ottoman heritage, and more recent Western influences. The country's unique cultural heritage is reflected in its language, literature, music, dance, art, cuisine, and festivals.

Language is an important part of Albanian culture, with Albanian being the official language of the country. Albanian is a unique language that has its roots in the Illyrian language, although it has been heavily influenced by other languages over time. Albanian literature has a rich history, with works dating back to the Middle Ages. The country's most famous literary figure is Ismail Kadare, a novelist and poet who has received numerous international awards for his work.

Music and dance are also important parts of Albanian culture, with a rich tradition of folk music and dance that has been passed down through generations. The music often features traditional instruments such as the çifteli, a small stringed instrument, and the lahuta, a bowed instrument.

Albanian cuisine is known for its hearty, meat-based dishes, such as grilled lamb and beef, stuffed peppers, and savory pies. Seafood is also popular in coastal areas, and the country's dairy products, such as feta cheese and yogurt, are widely enjoyed.

Festivals and celebrations play an important role in Albanian culture, with many festivals celebrating religious holidays, cultural traditions, and national holidays. Some of the most important festivals in Albania include Albanian Independence Day, celebrated on November 28, and the Tirana International Film Festival, held annually in the capital city.

In the post-communism era, Albania has also been culturally receptive to globalization, with a growing fashion and music scene, as well as an expanding film industry. Hand in hand, the country has maintained a strong sense of cultural identity, with a rich cultural heritage that continues to thrive today.

Religion

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Albania

Etiquette

In Albanian culture, etiquette plays a significant role in shaping social interactions and relationships. Respect for elders is fundamental, and younger individuals are expected to show deference to their elders through gestures like standing up when they enter a room or offering them the best seat. Hospitality is highly valued, and guests are often welcomed with warmth and generosity, with abundant food and drink being offered. During meals, it is customary to wait for the

host to begin eating before starting, and praising the food is considered polite. Additionally, maintaining eye contact during conversations is seen as a sign of sincerity and respect. In formal settings, a firm handshake and a courteous greeting are appropriate. Removing shoes when entering someone's home is also a common practice. Overall, Albanian cultural etiquette emphasizes courtesy, hospitality, and respect for others, creating a strong sense of community and interconnectedness.

Education

Education is compulsory in Albania from the age of 6 to 16, and the country has made significant progress in expanding access to education in recent years. However, Albania still faces challenges in providing quality education to all its citizens.

According to the United Nations, the literacy rate in Albania is around 97%, which is one of the highest in the region. However, access to education is not evenly distributed across the country, with rural and remote areas facing greater challenges in providing education to their populations.

The Albanian education system is divided into three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Primary education lasts for 9 years, while secondary education is divided into a 3-year lower secondary level and a 3-year upper secondary level. Tertiary education in Albania is provided by universities and other institutions of higher education and includes both

undergraduate and graduate programs. The country has made significant progress in expanding access to tertiary education in recent years, with a growing number of Albanians attending university and other post-secondary institutions.

Despite these advances, Albania still faces challenges in providing quality education to all its citizens. The country's education system has been plagued by issues such as underfunding, inadequate facilities, and a shortage of qualified teachers. Additionally, corruption in the education system remains a challenge, with issues such as nepotism and bribery affecting access to education for some Albanians.



Albania

Migration History to San Diego

The history of migration and resettlement of Albanian immigrants in San Diego County, California, is a relatively recent phenomenon compared to other immigrant communities in the area. The significant wave of Albanian immigration began in the late 1990s and early 2000s, mainly driven by political instability, economic challenges, and social upheaval in Albania and neighboring Balkan countries. San Diego County, with its reputation for offering economic opportunities and a welcoming environment for newcomers, became an attractive destination for Albanians

seeking a fresh start. The community started small but steadily grew with the support of local organizations, cultural centers, and community networks that provided assistance in the resettlement process, helping with language learning, job placements, and navigating the new cultural landscape. Albanian immigrants have since become an integral part of the diverse fabric of San Diego County, enriching the region with their unique traditions, customs, and contributions to the local economy and society.

Working With This Population

In Albania, there is still some stigma associated with seeking therapy or psychiatric treatment, although attitudes are slowly changing. Traditionally, mental health issues have been seen as a private matter that should be dealt with within the family, rather than seeking outside help. However, with increased awareness and education, more Albanians are starting to recognize the benefits of therapy and psychiatric treatment, and seeking professional help for mental health issues is becoming more common.

One reason for the stigma surrounding therapy and psychiatry in Albania is a lack of understanding and awareness about mental health issues. Many Albanians may not recognize the symptoms of mental illness or may view them as a personal failing, rather than a medical condition. Another factor contributing to the stigma around therapy and psychiatry in Albania is a lack of access to mental health services. There is a shortage of mental health professionals in the country, and many Albanians may not have the resources or support they need to seek help for mental health issues.

Despite these challenges, there are efforts underway to improve mental health services in Albania, including training more mental health professionals and raising

awareness about mental health issues. As attitudes and awareness continue to shift, it is likely that seeking therapy and psychiatric treatment will become more widely accepted in Albania.

In Albania, traditional modes of therapeutic counseling tend to focus on interpersonal relationships and family dynamics, rather than individual issues. Therapy is often conducted by someone within the family or community, such as an elder or religious leader, rather than a trained mental health professional.

One traditional mode of counseling in Albania is known as besa, which is based on a concept of trust and honor. Besa is a form of mutual respect and trust that is deeply ingrained in Albanian culture. In Albania, there is still some stigma associated with seeking therapy or psychiatric treatment, although attitudes are slowly changing. Traditionally, mental health issues have been seen as a private matter that should be dealt with within the family, rather than seeking outside help. However, with increased awareness and education, more Albanians are starting to recognize the benefits of therapy and psychiatric treatment, and seeking professional help for mental health issues is becoming more common.

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One traditional mode of counseling in Albania is known as besa, which is based on a concept of trust and honor. Besa is a form of mutual respect and trust that is deeply ingrained in Albanian culture, and it is often used to resolve conflicts and restore relationships. Family therapy is also a common mode of counseling in Albania, with an emphasis on resolving issues

within the family unit.

Family members may work together with a counselor or mediator to address conflicts and find ways to improve communication and understanding.

Religion also plays a significant role in traditional counseling in Albania, with many seeking guidance and support from religious leaders. Religious leaders may offer counseling and advice to members of their community, drawing on the teachings of their faith to provide guidance and support.

The effects of events such as the fall of Communism in Albania and subsequent migration waves have also contributed to the mental health landscape in the country. Large migration waves, including those after the Kosovo conflict, have led to significant losses and challenges. Many Albanians have not processed the impact of these events on their mental well-being, and there has been a historical tendency to avoid discussing mental health due to families underestimating its importance. However, recent discourse, particularly among younger generations, has opened up conversations about mental health and the need for support.

While traditional counseling approaches have their merits, they might not be sufficient for addressing complex mental health issues. As awareness about mental health grows in Albania, there is an increasing need for trained mental health professionals who can provide evidence-based therapy and treatment tailored to the unique challenges faced by individuals and communities in the country.

San Diego Resources

**Limited San Diego resources, as the main center of the United States-based Albanian community exists in NYC and Detroit.*

Albanian American Association of San Diego

Facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Albanian-American-community-of-San-Diego/100063482873745/>

Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC)

Around 250 ethnic groups, categorized by Bantu, Hemba, Hunde, Hutu, Lega, Lendu, Mangina, Mangutu, Nande, Nilotic, Pygmy, Sudanic, Tutsi, Ubangian.

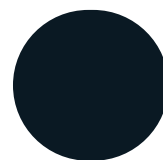
Languages: French is the official state language, with the four national languages being Kikongo (Kituba), Lingala, Swahili, and Tshiluba. In total, there are around 200 distinct languages and 500 dialects.

Religions: Predominantly Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Traditional African religions, Islam.

Population: 95 million

About the (DRC) + Major Historical Events

The region that is now the DRC was inhabited by various indigenous groups, including Bantu-speaking tribes. Powerful kingdoms such as the Kongo and Luba developed intricate political systems and engaged in trade with Arab and European merchants. In the late 19th century, European powers, particularly Belgium under King Leopold II, sought control over the region. Leopold's personal exploitation of the territory, known as the Congo Free State, resulted in widespread abuse, and forced labor, causing millions of Congolese to suffer and perish. Eventually, the international outcry led Belgium to assume direct control over the colony, renaming it the Belgian Congo.



About (DRC) + Major Historical Events

The quest for independence gained momentum in the mid-20th century, and in 1960, the DRC gained independence from Belgium. However, political instability and power struggles plagued the country. Patrice Lumumba, the first elected Prime Minister, was deposed and assassinated in 1961. Colonel Joseph Mobutu seized power through a military coup in 1965 and ruled for over three decades, renaming the country Zaire. Mobutu's regime was characterized by autocracy, corruption, and economic decline, leading to widespread poverty and discontent. The collapse of Mobutu's regime in 1997 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of conflict and turmoil. The First Congo War (1996-1997) saw the ousting of Mobutu and the rise of Laurent-Désiré Kabila as president. However, Kabila's rule was marred by rebellions and the

involvement of neighboring countries. The Second Congo War (1998-2003), often called Africa's Great War, involved multiple armed groups and foreign interventions, causing immense human suffering, and claiming millions of lives.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated in 2001, and his son Joseph Kabila assumed power. A peace agreement was signed in 2003, leading to a transitional government and subsequent elections in 2006 and 2011. Joseph Kabila remained in power until 2019 when Felix Tshisekedi won a disputed presidential election. Despite the transition to democracy, the DRC continues to face challenges such as political instability, corruption, poverty, armed conflicts, and issues related to governance, infrastructure, and healthcare.

Religion

Most of the population identifies as Christian, with Roman Catholicism and various Protestant denominations being the dominant Christian groups. Christianity plays a central role in the lives of many Congolese, shaping their moral values and social structures.

In addition to Christianity, traditional African religions hold a significant place in Congolese culture, particularly in rural areas. These indigenous belief systems vary across different ethnic groups and often involve the veneration of ancestors, spirits, and natural elements. Rituals, ceremonies, and communal gatherings are important aspects of traditional African religions in Congo.

Islam is practiced by a minority of the Congolese population, primarily in the northeastern regions of the country. Muslim communities in the DRC include Sunni Muslims, Sufis, and Ahmadiyya Muslims.

It is important to note that religious beliefs and practices in Congo can be fluid and often incorporate syncretic elements, blending aspects of Christianity, traditional African religions, and other spiritual practices. The religious landscape of Congo reflects a rich tapestry of faith traditions, which contribute to the cultural diversity and spiritual life of its people.

Culture

Congolese art is renowned for its creativity and craftsmanship. Traditional art forms include wood carving, sculpture, pottery, basket weaving, and mask making. These artistic expressions often depict elements of mythology, ancestral spirits, daily life, and significant cultural events. Contemporary Congolese artists have also made significant contributions to the fields of painting, sculpture, and mixed media, exploring themes of identity, history, and social commentary.

The cuisine of the country is diverse and reflects its agricultural abundance. Staple foods include cassava, maize, rice, plantains, and yams, which are often accompanied by various stews, sauces, and vegetables. Popular Congolese dishes include fufu (a dough-like food made from cassava or plantains), kwanga (fermented cassava), pondou (cassava leaves stew), and saka saka (a dish made from ground cassava leaves).

Fish, meat, and chicken are commonly consumed sources of protein in Congolese meals.

Music also holds a special place in Congolese culture and has gained international recognition. The country's music scene is vibrant and diverse, characterized by a fusion of traditional rhythms, Afro-Cuban influences, and modern styles. The Congolese rumba, popularized by artists like Franco Luambo Makiadi and Tabu Ley Rochereau, is a cornerstone of Congolese music. Soukous, a genre derived from rumba, gained immense popularity in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, various music styles such as ndombolo, soukous, rumba rock, and hip-hop continue to shape the Congolese music landscape. Ndombolo dance has also gained international popularity. Musically, Congolese musical reach has impacted rumba from Cuba to elements of hip-hop and reggae in the west.

Etiquette

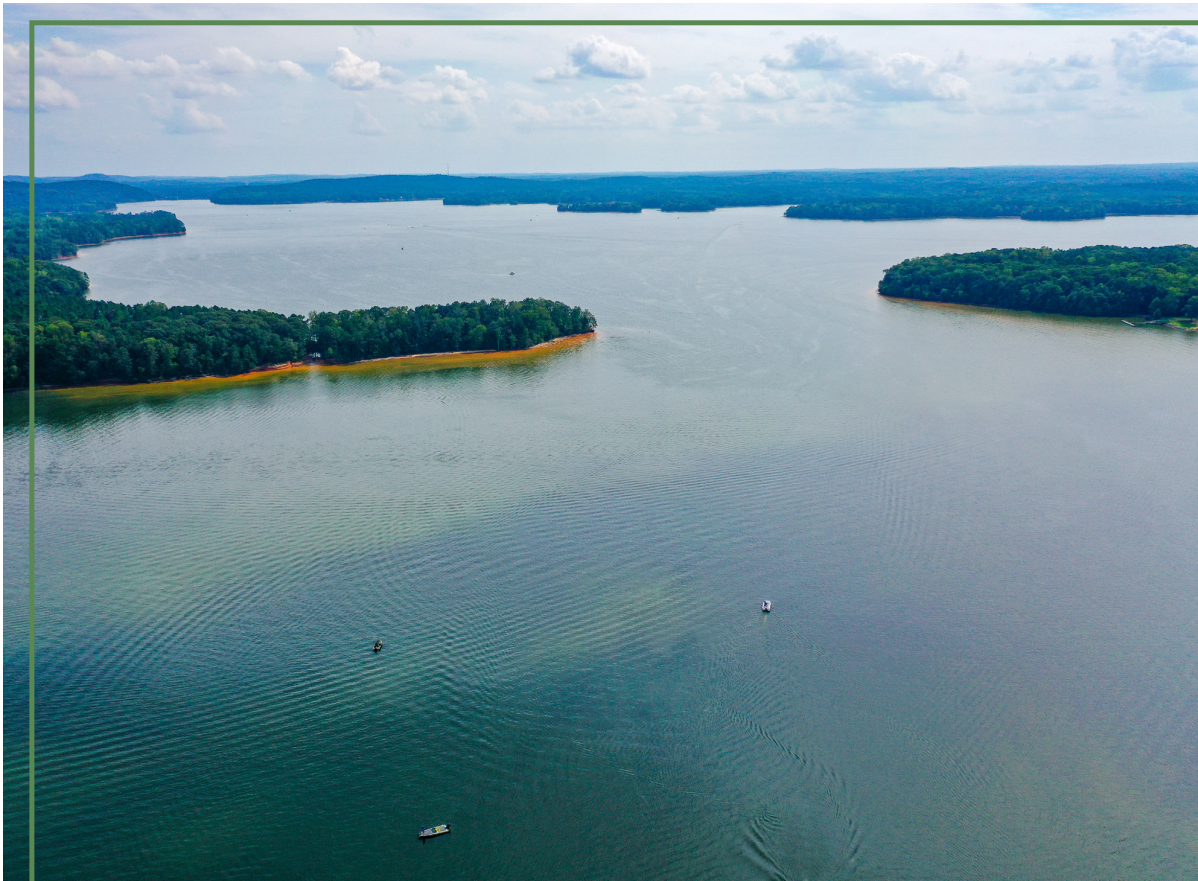
Typically, when greeting in Congolese culture, a handshake and warm greeting, as well as inquiries of one's family, is standard and respectful. Politeness and the frequent use of "please" and "thank you" is well-received, and honorifics and deference to older individuals is expected. Respecting and honoring elders is deeply ingrained in Congolese culture, so showing deference

and avoiding interrupting or contradicting elders is important in Congolese etiquette. Additionally, politeness and modesty are appreciated, and one is expected to avoid boastful or arrogant behavior. Overall, showing genuine interest in others, demonstrating humility, and observing traditional customs are integral to demonstrating proper cultural etiquette in Congolese culture.

Education

Literacy rates in the DRC remain low compared to global averages. According to UNESCO, the adult literacy rate in the DRC is estimated to be around 88.5% for males and 66.5% for females as of 2020. These rates reflect disparities between urban and rural areas, with urban centers generally exhibiting

higher literacy levels. Efforts to improve literacy rates have been made through government initiatives and collaborations with international organizations, but there is still much work to be done to ensure universal access to quality education and increase literacy rates in the country.



Migration History to San Diego

Since the 1980s especially, the Congolese community in San Diego has been an ever-growing demographic as a result of immigration, refugee, and popular trends of resettlement in the county due to unrest and conflicts in the country. City Heights is a large cultural center for the Congolese population, and they have become integral and vibrant members of the community through entrepreneurship, community building, and social contributions to the city as a whole. As a more recent and rapidly growing part of the county's tapestry, the Congolese community continues to strengthen the county's multicultural fabric while forging connections that promote understanding and solidarity among diverse groups.

Working With This Population

Traditional healing practices play a significant role in Congolese society, and many people seek guidance and support from traditional healers. These healers often incorporate spiritual and holistic approaches to address mental and emotional issues. Traditional healing is deeply rooted in cultural beliefs, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the body, mind, and spirit. Many Congolese people view mental health challenges through a spiritual lens and seek healing that integrates spiritual and traditional practices.

There is generally limited awareness and understanding of mental health issues in Congo. Stigma and misconceptions surrounding mental health can hinder discussions and seeking professional help. Mental health concerns are often attributed to supernatural or spiritual causes, which may lead individuals to turn to traditional healers rather than seeking psychiatric or psychological interventions.

San Diego Resources

The Congolese Community Of San Diego

Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/CCOFSD/>

SoCal Congolese

Community Organization

<https://socalcongolese.org/>

Reviewer: Issa Songoro

Eritrea

Afar, Bejan, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre, Tigrinya

Languages: Afar, Beja, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Saho,
Tigre, Tigrinya

Religions: Christian, Islam

Population: 3.5 Million

About Eritrea + Major Historical Events

Eritrea, located in Northeast Africa on the Red Sea, has a population of 3.1 million from a rich diversity of ethnicities. Its name originates from the ancient Greek name of the Red Sea, Erythra Thalassa. The people of Eritrea consist of many different ethnic groups, that being Tigrinya, Afroasiatic (Sah, Hedareb, Afar, Bilen), Nilotic (Kunama, Nara), Arabic Rashaida, Italian Eritrean, and Ethiopian Tigrinya. There's also a wide variety of languages spoken, having many national languages such as: Tigrinya, Tigre, Afar, Amir, Beja, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, and Saho; however for the languages that hold more value because of communication standards and job opportunities would be Tigrinya, Arabic, and English. The country as of right now is under a dictatorship with Isaias Afwerki as the president as of 1993 following their independence from Ethiopian occupation. The religious practices of Eritrea are mainly from Christianity and Islam with an almost 50/50 split. Christianity is one of the oldest practiced religions with one of the first monasteries built, Debre Sina, and is still held up today, however with the merging of countries, Islam became just as common to practice.



Eritrea

Culture

The culture of Eritrea is very rich with one of the most notable practices being their coffee ceremony. The ceremony is typically performed by the women of the household where it is taking place and it is considered an honor to run the ceremony. The ceremony can last around two hours with many families creating a consistent time to meet to hold the ceremony. When brewing and serving the coffee, there are three servings throughout the whole process and light snacks are provided as well. The ceremony is meant to bring people together and enjoy each other's company.

For the country's cuisine, their foods share similar qualities to Ethiopia with subtle differences like types of protein. Eritrean cuisine also fuses Italian influence due to their occupation which influenced foods such as pasta with curry spices. Their national dish is Zigni, which is a spicy stew made of tomatoes, red onion, and Berbere spice served with a protein of their choosing and is served with Injera, a fermented pancake-like flatbread.

Music in Eritrea is very diverse with each ethnic group having their own unique style, and in the present, fusing traditional with contemporary

styling. Music was also used as a means of revolution and speaking up about socio-political problems with the country. The live music scene is very popular with piano bars, where people play either their original or remixes of songs and where many musicians get their start. The Sibrit Cultural Troupe created waves with the diverse representation of Eritrea, performing music from all nine major ethnic groups of the country with the goal to represent the country and create nation building with other countries.

As for media consumed by the country, there are only two television channels that are aired and run by the Ministry of Information and mainly aired in Arabic, English, Tigre, Tigrinya with few programming in other local languages; and host three radio stations with a wider variety of languages. Both television and radio broadcast mainly news for the people, along with physical newspapers that are distributed throughout the country. However, in 2001, the government banned all private media which stunted the development of modern media being available in the country and limited the "freedom of speech/press" promised in their constitution.





Eritrea

Religion

The religious practices of Eritrea are mainly from Christianity and Islam with an almost 50/50 split. Christianity is one of the oldest practiced religions with one

of the first monasteries built, Debre Sina, and is still held up today, however with the merging of countries, Islam became just as common to practice.

Etiquette

Understanding Eritrean etiquette is vital for respectful interactions. Greetings hold significance, with handshakes and respect for elders being crucial. Addressing people with their titles and showing deference to elders is customary. Eritreans are known for their warm hospitality, so when visiting homes, it's polite to accept food offerings graciously in the case that you are gifted a taste or dish.

Respect religious diversity, remove shoes when entering places of worship, and be cautious with photography. Lastly, maintain polite and indirect communication, avoid political discussions, and understand that punctuality can be flexible. Adhering to these customs will help foster positive interactions and show respect for Eritrean culture.

Education

The education system in Eritrea is free and compulsory from ages 7-13/14, which is about 7 years in primary school. In primary school, teachers and lesson plans provide students with the necessary skills to speak the language and become functioning members of society. Though education is free and compulsory, the educational infrastructure is lacking in the country as well as taboos and financial hardships that prevent families from having access to education. The literacy rate of the country is about 84% and 89% for individuals between 15-24, which has been increased

due to the new education policy added for the young generations. However, primary school education only offers around 4 hours each day for their students, due to the lack of skilled teachers in their schools but is enough to support the basic education the children need. The education system in the country promotes private sector schooling, equal access to everyone that prevents gender/ethnicity/class discrimination, and continuing education for those who may not have had an easier access to education in the past before the government sanctioned education policy.

Migration History to San Diego

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Eritrea

Working With This Population

Counseling services in Eritrea date back to the Italian colonization of the country, where the first psychiatric services were offered. Today, counseling services are becoming harder to access. The government has created policies in order to provide citizens better access to mental health services in local communities and aims to destigmatize and integrate these services in primary care facilities. However, there is no active legislation to enact these changes. The country is focused on providing better access to basic needs such as clean water, hunger, sanitation, and diseases. There is one main mental hospital located in Asmara and a community facility for those who may not need critical care, however, these facilities only serve a fraction of the population. The country does offer essential psychotropic medicines at low prices/free for patients who need it, yet again there is still limited access to these medications due to the location of the patients. For those who cannot access these facilities, family and caregivers take action. It's an important role to serve in

the country but it can develop problems as the care is very intensive and can also lead caregivers to face more problems. Stigma against mental health is one of the reasons why seeking and receiving care isn't taken seriously. It is believed that those who develop mental illness are being punished by God and that they should not be trusted which leads to those individuals to become isolated and even affects their families as many believe that they will become the same. Stigma often overrules seeking help for their illness, which creates a divide between the government and citizens from getting what they need versus what society thinks. In order to combat this, communities are now coming together to take care of those who may not have an outlet for care in hospitals and destigmatize on a local level as a start. As well as creating educational materials, such as seminars and workshops, in many languages in order to reach the masses in the country in collaboration with everyone.

San Diego Resources

In the San Diego area, the Eritrean Community Center, they aim "to help and assist the Eritrean Community of San Diego through translation, financial support, Community service and Community activities to help foster the culture of the Eritrean community". Additionally, at the University of California San Diego (UCSD), the Eritrean and Ethiopian Student Association brings together and creates "community amongst Eritrean & Ethiopian students and allies at UC San Diego and in the greater San Diego area, to celebrate and enrich our knowledge on our respective cultures; and provide service to those in our community".

Eritrean and Ethiopian Student Association

<https://www.instagram.com/eesaucsd/>

Reviewer: Dr. Eillen Tecle

Ethiopia

Afar, Amhara, Gurage, Oromo, Sidama, Somali, Tigray, Wolaita, etc (there are more than 77 ethnic groups. Amhara, Oromo, and Tigray makeup $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population)

Languages: Amharic (official), Arabic, English, Guragigna, Oromigna, Somali, Tigrinya

Religions: Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, Indigenous beliefs, Protestant, Sunni Muslim

Population: 120.3 Million

About Ethiopia + Major Historical Events

Ethiopia is one of the world's oldest countries with its territorial borders varying throughout its existence. It is the largest and most populated country in Eastern Africa with a total of 106,359,000 people residing there. The migration story of Ethiopians coming to the United States began when a Civil War broke out in 1974. This was initiated by the governmental group, called Derg, which staged a coup d'état against the emperor, Haile Selassie. This war was simultaneously happening during the Angolan Civil War as well as the war for independence between Ethiopia and Eritrea. On top of that, Ethiopia was impacted by severe famine as recurring drought, failed harvests, food scarcity, and being unable to receive aid as certain areas were blocked off by occupied territories. During this time, many Ethiopian families sought refuge in other countries to escape the dangers of war. The largest numbers of Ethiopians live in California, Virginia, Maryland, Minnesota, and Texas; wherever they decided to reside, the Ethiopian population remained together and established close relationships amongst each other.

Culture

In Ethiopia, Coffee is the national drink and the national dish is called Wat. It is a hot spicy stew accompanied by Injera (traditional large spongy pancake made of Teff flour and water).

Ethiopian men and women wear this traditional clothing called Gabbi or Netella. Women often wear dresses (Kemis) and Netella with borders of coloured embroidered woven crosses, but other designs are also used. With Ethiopia being the second largest country in Africa, cultures may vary considerably; depending on the region, the ethnicity, and religion of the population, the culture and traditions all differ from one another. Ethiopia has never been colonized so their customs have been deeply rooted within the country for centuries.

A shared sentiment amongst Ethiopians is the love for their national drink- coffee. This globally loved drink has its origins in Ethiopia, specifically the Kaffa region, where its name is derived from. The coffee plants grow in this region organically and are commonly found in the highlands of forests where they bloom in abundance.

Coffee is highly regarded in Ethiopian society, so much so, that in some regions, many homes host a coffee

ceremony to symbolize their love and respect for their guests. The social event may take from two to three hours to complete in which the woman of the home conducts the ceremony. The ceremony has various props to set up for the ritual. For instance, a table with food is set up for guests to indulge in. Freshly cut grass and flowers cover both the table and the floor while incense is burned to purify the area from evil spirits. A coffeepot (jebena) is filled with water and is placed over a small fire. Then green coffee beans are cleaned in a pan over a small fire as she stirs and shakes the debris out of the coffee beans. Then, in the same pan, she slowly roasts them until they change in color to a medium brown or until its oils rise to the surface. Once this step is finished, she will grind the beans in a mortar-like tool (mukecha) until the beans are coarse powder from its pestle (zenezena). The coffee is then mixed with the water from the jebena and is heated until brought to a boil. The coffee is then poured into coffee cups without breaking the stream when switching cups. In some cases, the youngest may serve the first cup to the eldest in the room and then the hostess serves the rest. After this, the guests will compliment the hostess on her coffee-making skills

Religion

Ethiopia has a long historical connection to both Christianity and Islam. Around two-thirds of the Ethiopian population follow Christianity while one-third practice Islam. Ethiopia consists of a very religious society in which they follow their faith whole-heartedly; while there is religious diversity throughout the country, Ethiopians have a great respect for one another's beliefs and practices.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is a very important place of worship and has a dominant role in Ethiopian culture and politics. Ethiopians find pride in the fact that they were amongst one of the only African nations who were not introduced to Christianity through European colonists; they were actually one of the first countries to claim

Christianity as the official state religion in 333 CE. While Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity has the largest following in the nation, many also follow other branches of Christianity, with Protestant Christians being the second largest.

Islam is the second most followed religion in Ethiopia. Islam was introduced to Ethiopia in the 7th century and now presides more so in the Northern and Eastern lands of Ethiopia. Muslims partake in the common practices of praying five times a day, fasting during holy months, paying Zakat (obligatory charity), and other forms of worship. As Christian and Muslim Ethiopians have historically lived peacefully with another, it is also common for them to intermarry without conversion.

Etiquette

Age is an important factor in regards to social behavior; the elderly are shown the utmost respect, which can be seen in some rural areas of Ethiopia where people will kiss their hands to show their regard for them.

Ethiopians typically extend an invitation several times when offering something to another individual. The person initially denies the offer during the first time, however they can accept during the second or third offer. This

exchange is supposed to show the hospitality and kindness of the person offering while the individual accepting is meant to show humbleness during their initial denial.

Men and women typically socialize in the same setting, however in many Muslim households, they may separate into separate rooms or discussions. Many of the house visits last at least for an hour, but oftentimes they will stay for much longer.

Education

The Ethiopian education system was traditionally religion based where it was conducted in monasteries and church schools to mostly male students. Most major church schools still conduct their schooling in higher education; graduating from these schools can lead to a position in priesthood or the church hierarchy.

However, when realizing that there is a lack of personnel for educators, the imperial government imported teachers and education advisors from Egypt and France to help build a more modern education system. This type of education system was introduced by emperors

Menilek II and Haile Selassie I, who established a system of primary and secondary education. Also, colleges of liberal arts, technology, public health, building law, social work, business, agriculture, and theology were opened as well.

The country's oldest university is the Addis Ababa University which was founded in 1950 and is now considered the national university of Ethiopia. There are also many other universities in Ethiopia such as, Alemaya University, Debub University, Jimma University, Mek'ele University, Bahir Dar University, and many more.

Migration History to San Diego

Ethiopians began to migrate to the United States in the 1980s after the Refugee Act was passed, with the largest population living in Washington, DC. The International Rescue committee had a strong presence during that time in San Diego, which is why many resettling efforts had gone towards bringing Ethiopians to San Diego as well.

Working With This Population

Ethiopians place great emphasis on generosity, selflessness, consideration, modesty, and patience. There is a term called yilugnta, which has no English equivalent, but can be described as being considerate of someone else's feelings or being aware of how one's actions are seen by others. This concept encourages Ethiopians to be more patient and respectful towards others and encourages them to be community-minded. This can be related to how Ethiopians may be reluctant to show

negative emotions since they don't like to cause any offense unless a situation really escalates. This type of patience can also be attributed to religious beliefs, whether Christian or Muslim, because both preach that life events are fated or altered by God.

According to a research study, there is a stigma about mental health in Ethiopia for the majority of its residents. The study was divided amongst three separate groups to see how much their views differ from one another.



Working With This Population

Amongst a group discussion between religious leaders, health workers, and community participants, the common causes of mental illnesses were: the individual being controlled by evil spirits due to a violation of God's rules, attacked by devil spirit, grief from loss of a loved one, poverty, too much thinking, and substance abuse.

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controlled by evil spirits due to a violation of God's rules, attacked by devil spirit, grief from loss of a loved one, poverty, too much thinking, and substance abuse.

A study conducted in the rural parts of the country revealed gender-related differences. Participants expressed feelings of sympathy and pity towards women who were visibly ill in public areas- the reason being, due to consideration of the impact that a woman's domestic role and ability to take care of her family can have a detrimental effect.

According to a another study among health workers, traditional healers, and community members, the reasons behind mental illnesses were related to culturally unacceptable behaviors, violating social customs, unfavorable attitudes, lack of socially acceptable values, and much more. It was a common consensus that stressful events or social stressors were strong factors in developing mental illnesses.

Mental health services are not well developed, but are in the process of being more included within the healthcare system. Since many Ethiopians hold the belief that mental health issues are a form of punishment from God, they tend to resort to traditional healers to receive help. However, there are motions for mental health services to be provided within the healthcare system in which the healthcare provider leads a "behavior change" education, identifies signs and symptoms, and provides referrals to specific treatments.

San Diego Resources

San Diego Ethiopian Community

<https://ecssd.org/>

Awash Ethiopian Restaurant

2884 El Cajon Blvd, San Diego, CA 92104
<https://www.awashethiopiansandiego.com/>

Lucy Ethiopian Restaurant

4155 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105
<https://lucysd.com/>

Addis Market

3643 El Cajon Blvd, San Diego, CA 92104
<https://www.addis.market/>

Axum Market

4487 El Cajon Blvd, San Diego, CA 92115

Mercato Market

4154 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105

Muzita Abyssinian Bistro

4651 Park Blvd, San Diego, CA 92116
<https://www.muzita.net/>

Red Sea Ethiopian Restaurant

4717 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105
<https://www.redseasandiego.com/>

Yohed Coffee

4160 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105

Reviewer: Alem Yemane

Haiti

Afro Haitian, Afro European

Languages: Haitian Creole (Kreyòl), French

Religions: Catholic, Protestant, Voodoo

Population: 12.5 million

About Haiti + Major Historical Events

Haiti is a country on the island of Hispaniola, solely accompanied by The Dominican Republic. Haiti was known as 'Ayiti' which translates to 'flower of highland'. Haiti's history began long before the arrival of European settlers. Haiti was originally inhabited by its native peoples, the Taino, who's society was considered softhearted and friendly. Their society was a highly organized hierarchy led by a 'cacique' which usually consisted of men.

When Christopher Columbus reached the island, there were a total of five societies or kingdoms. Within these kingdoms, families often lived together under one roof, however the cacique and his families lived in their own home. In the center of each of the villages, there usually was a courtyard that was used for religious and cultural

events as well as entertainment. On the Island, the community didn't have access to various types of meat as there was not an abundance of large mammals to hunt.

The Tainos diet mostly consisted of fish and meat found from small animals on the island. In addition to this, they often relied on corn, squash, beans, peppers, sweet potatoes, yams and peanuts. To produce these crops, the Tainos used a maintenance free method of agriculture, using a 'conuco'. A 'conuco' is a large mound stuffed with leaves to protect the soil from corrosion. These 'conucos' were sowed with a variety of crops to ensure something would grow throughout the year. The most important crop to the Taino people was the cassava plant which is a root plant that must

Haiti

About Haiti + Major Historical Events

be drained of its poisonous juices, then baked like bread. Because of the surplus time acquired through low maintenance agriculture, the Taino people created an extensive religious system. The polytheistic system consisted of 'zemis' who controlled various aspects of the universe. The Tainos worshiped, danced, and relied on medicine men and priests.

Eventually this system was dismantled and eradicated with the arrival of European colonizers and settlers. The European settlers came with an intention of claiming the land and using its native people as a free labor source. Upon this arrival, Tainos lost control of their homeland and became slaves to the new settlers. In addition, with the arrival of Christopher Columbus and other Europeans, many Tainos were subjected to new diseases that they were not immune to, especially smallpox. These diseases, along with the harsh and forceful working conditions expected of them as slaves, drastically wiped out the Taino population on the island. Today, there are very little traces of the Taino population besides artifact remains.

As the Taino population began to decline, a new labor source was needed for the European economy growing on the island. The French had decided to buy the colony from Spain in the seventeenth century and continued its quest to build wealth in the Western world. The French began importing West Africans to the island to make up for the loss of labor source, and thus became apart of the Atlantic Slave Trade. At this time, Haiti was a very profitable colony for the French, and possibly the richest in the world at the time, therefore being known

as 'the pearl of the Antilles'. Although profitable for the French, the slaves faced dire conditions and were treated less than human. As opposed to slavery conditions in the US, conditions for slaves in Haiti proved to be much more extreme. In Haiti during the slave trade, mortality and violence rates were much higher. Due to high demand and high mortality rates, an estimated 800,000 slaves were imported to Haiti from Africa, which is almost twice the amount imported to North America. The conditions of slavery provided motivation for slaves to revolt and gain independence from such a treacherous system. From 1791 to 1804 the enslaved people of Haiti staged a rebellion against the French colonizers. here were previous revolts, however this revolt was the most successful. The enslaved Haitians, led by Toussaint Louverture, fought off invasions from Spain and Great Britain, and also liberated slaves from the Spanish half of the island. Although initially successful, France gained control of the island once again in 1802. But the determination of the Haitians, led this time by Jean-Jacques Dessalines, finally defeated the French. In 1804, Haiti was officially announced worldwide as a new country, regardless of their resistance to acknowledging a black nation created by slaves. In order for their freedom as a nation to be acknowledged by the French king, King Charles X, Haitians were ordered to pay \$150 million in reparations, which would equal about \$21 billion in today's currency. In order to cover these costs, Haiti was forced to take high interest loans from America, Germany and France. Although France eventually reduced the reparations to \$90 million in 1838, Haiti only made its final payment in 1947.



Haiti

About Haiti + Major Historical Events

Haiti's history following its independence was not without much turmoil. In 1915, the US invaded Haiti to protect its financial interests in the country after its leader, Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam was assassinated. Eventually the US withdrew its presence in 1934. Just three years later, President Rafael Trujillo sent Dominican forces to the border zone where they killed an estimated 30,000 Haitians.

This was known as the Parsley massacre, and was yet another event that devastated Haitians. In the 1950s, Haiti was then hit with the devastating Hurricane Hazel, which wiped out coffee and cocoa crops as well as killed approximately 1,000 Haitians. Following the hurricane, François "Papa Doc" Duvalier gained power as the president of Haiti, yet his reign was not without much violence and oppression. Duvalier created death squads to prevent those who opposed him from ousting him. Duvalier had declared himself the president of Haiti for life, and was able to maintain this title until his death in 1971. Following his death, Jean Claude Duvalier succeeded his father at the young age of 19 and also declared himself the president of Haiti for life. A large revolt resulted in him fleeing Haiti and Lieutenant-General Henri Namphy became the leader of Haiti.

In the following years, Haiti's political climate would continue to have its challenges establishing a strong leader without uprisings or coups. However, Jean-Bertrand Aristide came to power in 1990 after the country's first democratic elections. Although Aristide implemented things like increased access to healthcare and education, food distribution, improved judicial and much more; his term in office was still met with opposition and a coup.

In addition to a difficult political history, Haiti is a country that has experienced many natural disasters. One of the most devastating natural disasters was the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that hit the island in January 2010. Due to Haiti's infrastructure, the earthquake damaged much of the country and impacted most of its residents. Although many donors pledged to donate up to 5.3 billion to rebuild Haiti and support those affected, many failed to follow through on their pledges. In addition, many funds that were received were misappropriated by leadership, causing very little progression following the earthquake. During this time, the country also experienced a cholera outbreak, which was deemed the worst in recent history with a reported 820,000 cases and approximately 10,000 deaths. It wasn't long before Haiti would experience another tragic natural disaster. In 2016, Hurricane Matthew hit the island, much stronger than any previous hurricane since 1964. This hurricane destroyed crops, further damaged Haiti's infrastructure and left 200,000 families without a home. Once again following this disaster, Haiti is failed by the world community as the UN only was able to meet 30% of its funding goal and donors failed to follow through on donation commitments. In 2020, Haiti's financial situation was further impacted by income loss related to the COVID pandemic. In addition to this, political turmoil continued as many were concerned with President Moïse refusing to leave office. Moïse was later assassinated in his home, and Ariel Henry then became prime minister and acting president. After the shift in power, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti once again, thus becoming the largest natural disaster to hit Haiti since the earthquake of 2010.

Haiti

Culture

The culture of Haiti is a unique mixture of indigenous Taino, African and French traditions. Traditionally, Haitians are very friendly and typically greet everyone they come across. Men usually shake hands while women throw kisses when meeting someone new. When greeting someone familiar, Haitians tend to kiss each other on each cheek. In addition, Haitians value respect and tend to show their respect in ways like calling older people 'aunt' or 'uncle' even when they are not related to them.

Haitians are communal people, and extended families often work and live together. A 'lakou' is a traditional type of housing consisting of a courtyard surrounded by a family compound. Within the home, the family usually works as a team, with the father being the head of the household and responsible for providing for the family. For the mother, she is typically responsible for taking care of the home as well as teaching the children about religion and morality.

Food is a large part of their culture and way of keeping community. For those who can afford to, it is typical to eat 3 meals a day, with the midday meal being the most important. Traditionally, Haitians will eat together at a table, serving themselves from the plates. However, as a sign of respect, Haitians typically have guests serve themselves first. When there are no guests present, everyone usually waits for the mother or the head of the household to serve themselves before beginning to make their own plates.

The most common meal Haitians eat daily are beans and rice, however, when feasible, the meal would usually include a meat, salad and/or vegetable dish. The most common meat eaten by Haitians are chicken, pork, goat, guinea pig and seafood. Haitians love spicy foods so garlic and 'piman zwazo'

(small, hot pimentos) are usually included in each dish. Haitians also like to snack on meat filled pastries and are known for their delicious pressed juices.

Art and music bring a lot of vibrance to Haitian culture as these are integral parts of daily life. Traditional music of Haiti includes music performed during Voodoo ceremonies, 'rara' or music played before Lent, and rhythmic music called 'merengue'. In addition to traditional music, Haitians composed classical music for over 100 years. In addition to music, oral storytelling with songs, proverbs and riddles is also a very popular form of expression in Haiti. More modern types of music in Haiti include rap Kreyòl or Haitian hip hop, rasin which is traditional music blended with rock, jazz or reggae, chanson française (traditional French music), and kompa for dance music. Haitian artists have also contributed to the colorful Haitian society. Artists are known to create striking pieces and use bright colors, making their art prominent in the Caribbean

Holidays are also a big part of Haitian culture, and each holiday is often celebrated with family and friends at large community events, including music and dance, or religious rituals.

The most widely celebrated holidays in Haiti include New Years Day, which is also Independence Day, National Heroes Day on January 2nd, Easter, Flag Day, All Saints Day on November 1st, Fèt Gede (Day of the Dead) on November 2nd, and Christmas. In addition to these holidays, Haitians also celebrate Catholic holidays including Kanaval (Carnival) celebrated before the lent period, Good Friday, Ascension Thursday, and the Feast of Assumption. During these times, Haitians often engage in elaborate ceremonies and share food and drink with family and community.

Haiti

Religion

Within Haiti, people practice multiple religions. The most practiced religions are Catholicism, followed by Protestantism with the smallest number of people practicing Voodoo. Catholicism was first introduced to Haitians in the 1500s through European missionaries. In 1697, Catholicism became the official religion once France gained control of Haiti, up until 1987 when the dictators Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier decided to remove Catholicism as the official religion of Haiti.

Although Catholicism was no longer the official religion, many Haitians still practiced the religion, as well as integrating parts of their traditional spiritual beliefs. In the 1970s Haitians began practicing Protestantism on a larger scale. For many Protestants, personal conversion and having a strong faith was the center of their spirituality. Many express their faith through worship and lively music. By 1985, Jean-Claude Duvalier acknowledged Protestantism as a religion of Haiti. Many Haitians of the diaspora found it easy to maintain

their Protestant religion as there were many Protestant churches in the United States. Although Haiti is often referenced when speaking of Voodoo, only about two percent of Haitians currently practice the religion solely. Voodoo has its roots in Yoruba and indigenous Haitian traditions that have been blended with some Christian traditions. Voodoo is mostly based on rituals performed by its followers, using dance, drumming, music and art. Initially, Voodoo was practiced by native Haitians, and was even said to be the launch of the revolution against slavery. Following the revolution, Voodoo would be widely banned in the 1800s due to the belief of its revolutionary power. Although the religion was banned, many followers still maintained their practices, and by 2003 President Jean Bertrand Aristide acknowledged Voodoo as a religion of Haiti. Although many Haitians practice other religions, these Haitians may still practice or associate with Voodoo along with the other religion. It is often said that Haiti is “70% percent Catholic, 30% Protestant and 100% Voodoo.

Etiquette

Haitians have a set of etiquette practices that are common among each other. When greeting each other, men will shake hands while maintaining direct eye contact. Women generally shake hands and may give one kiss on the cheek if they are close to each other. Men and women also shake each other's hands or may give each other a kiss on the cheek if they are close as well. As for children, it is important that they greet their family when they enter the home, kissing their mom and shaking their father's hand. It is also respectful to ask someone about their family and how they are doing. Haitians also keep personal

boundaries and tend to stand an arm's length apart, however, when conversing with others it is common to engage in light touching. Also, it's common to see people hold hands in public, but not engage in other displays of affection. Using direct eye contact, especially while in conversation, is a sign of interest and respect. Although in other cultures staring might be considered rude, it is not considered rude in Haitian culture. It is also not considered rude to be late as people are okay with arriving when they can. Haitians do not appreciate whistling or pointing at someone and believe this to be rude.

Haiti

Education

Traditionally, education in Haiti was modeled after European colonizers' educational system. Originally, education was taught through traditional Taino practices. However, once Spanish colonizers arrived on the island, education, if any was given, was mostly based on the Catholic education system. Eventually, education systems became modeled after French and British processes. Students start out going to kindergarten, following with six years in primary school, then seven years in secondary school. Students usually enter primary school at age six, and after completing the last year of primary school, students must pass the Examen de Certificat, a national exam to move on to secondary school. In addition, in secondary school, students must pass exams after the third, sixth and seventh years in order to complete secondary school, however these exams are not necessarily easy for students to pass due to the education system not adequately preparing students. Many schools have a high need for qualified teachers due to lack of good pay. The lack of necessary school supplies and the school years often being interrupted by political unrest taking place in the streets impacts the quality of education.

The Haitian education system has also been impacted by other countries. During the American occupation in the early 1900s, education became focused on vocational and agricultural training. During the time education was largely impacted by Europeans and Americans, native Haitians who were poor didn't have much access to education and most schools were private schools. During the

Duvalier regime, more public schools opened up, however there was still a large increase in private education. By 1997, a National Plan on Education and Training (PARQUE) was implemented to shift the educational model from the French model. In addition, this program increased civic studies to improve national unity. In 2007, MENFP Reforms made changes to the Ministry of Education, which increased its presence in all 10 of its departments. These improvements to the education system in Haiti continued, including the Operational Plan. The Operational Plan was created to implement a five-year plan after the earthquake to provide more funding to schools that follow the national standards. Although many improvements have been made to provide better education and access to education for citizens, education today in Haiti is still largely provided by non-profits, private schools and civil society. In addition, recent unrest and COVID have also impacted the quality and access to education. Although education is highly valued, it is still largely unattainable to most of society due to affordability since about 80% of schools are private and public schools are based on lottery placement.

For those who are fortunate enough to receive an education, it is also customary for Haitian students to stand at the flag before the beginning of the school day and sing the Haiti national anthem. In addition, students stop what they are doing when the Haitian military are singing the national anthem while they pass as well.

Haiti

Migration History to San Diego

Due to the many devastating events in its history, many Haitians have migrated from the country for many years. However, more recently a higher influx of Haitians have been migrating from Haiti mostly to the US. Many Haitian migrants have decided to start migrating from Haiti to San Diego, California. Although they enter into the United States

through the San Diego-Mexico border, many plan on traveling to Florida in order to settle down, often with family. For those who have stayed in San Diego, a community was created through mutual support, religious centers, and sharing of their home culture with each other.

Working With This Population

When it comes to the concept of therapy, counseling or psychiatry, many Haitians traditionally seek religious support due to their understanding of mental illness. Most Haitians associate mental illness with supernatural causes. Oftentimes, if someone is experiencing a mental illness, it is believed that this person is experiencing a spell. When someone may be experiencing a psychotic break, many believe that this is the result of a curse, failure to honor spirits of dead family members or neglect of the Loas (Voodoo Gods). In addition, if someone is experiencing a depressive episode, it can be attributed to a person who is jealous and tries to curse you. However, victims of curses can try to summon the Loas for healing. When seeking healing, this is usually done through a Houngan, who is consulted numerous times. But in some cases, if the

Houngan is unsuccessful, Haitians will reach out to mental health professionals for help. Contrary to many other countries outside of the western world, mentally ill Haitians are well cared for by their communities, receive a lot of support and are protected by legal rights as well.

For Haitians, members of the community who are mentally ill are seen as victims of a powerful spiritual force and need protection. Although these individuals are protected, they still face a level of discrimination due to their symptoms. Still, there are a few Haitians who believe that mental illness is more closely related to biological reasons as opposed to spiritual reasons. Because of how Haitians view the concept of mental health, it may be difficult for Haitians to receive support that doesn't align with their customs.

San Diego Resources

Haitian Bridge Alliance

4265 Fairmount Avenue #280

San Diego, Ca 92105

<https://haitianbridgealliance.org/>

Haitian Methodist Church

3295 Meade Avenue

San Diego, Ca 92116

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064833062734>

International Rescue Committee

5348 University Avenue #205

San Diego, Ca 92105

<https://www.rescue.org/taxonomy/term/47>

Reviewer: Romel Laguerre

Hmong

Ethnic Groups: Hmong

Languages: Hmong Dawb (White) and Hmong Ntsuab (Green)

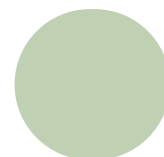
Religions: Animism, Christianity, and Shamanism

Population: Approximately 7.49 Million (worldwide)

About Hmong + Major Historical Events

The Hmong people are an ethnic group who inhabit parts of China, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos. Before their migration, the Hmong people are believed to have originally come from the Siberian mountains, and what is present day Mongolia. The Hmong have been recorded to live in China since 2700 B.C. and eventually migrated out of China due to conflict with the Han Dynasty. Once they migrated out of China in effort to preserve their cultural identity, they ended up settling in parts of Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. Presently, there are approximately 6,000,000 Hmong in China, 788,000 in Vietnam, 315,000 in Laos, 124,000 in Thailand, 250,000 in the US with the rest believed to be living in Burma, France and Australia. The Hmong fled China from the late 1700s to the late 1800s, going into Burma, Laos and Thailand and Vietnam. In some of those communities, like in Laos, the Hmong lived separately from the local people. Although they weren't very much respected by the locals in Laos, they were favored by the French colonials who enlisted them as liaisons and representatives. During the Vietnam War from 1963-1975, the Hmong were recruited by the Pathet Lao communist regime by leader Lo Faydang.

The Hmong were also recruited for the CIA's Secret War in Laos against Laoitan Communist. The CIA sought out the Hmong for their military skill, establishing a partnership with Hmong General Vang Pao and the Royal Lao Government. They were credited by CIA Director Colby for saving thousands of American lives by halting the expansion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail into Laos by the Northern Vietnamese. Although their efforts were eventually recognized, the CIA did not initially credit the Hmong for their support until the early 1980s, which caused many Hmong-Lao to have to flee the country in the mid 1970's to escape the Lao Communist. Many of these Hmong refugees fled to neighboring Thailand through the Mekong River, however, the conditions in



the refugee camps were dreadful. This led to many Hmong refugees to flee outside of Southeast Asia, with the first to begin arriving in the United States around 1975. Throughout the late 1970s and into the late 1980s, the Hmong continued to arrive into the United States as refugees seeking a better outcome. For the Hmong who have stayed in Thailand, their experience has become secluded to isolated mountain areas as the government has tried to require them to return to Laos. Many elders of the Hmong community have devastating stories regarding their experience during this war time, including trauma and displacement.

The Hmong history expresses itself in its long-standing linguistic culture. History and traditions are passed down orally due to a lack of written language. The Hmong language is a tonal based language with eight tones and complex phonology. The Hmong language is a part of the Hmong Yao language family, along with Hmu and Kho Xyong. The Hmong Yao family of languages are sometimes known as Sino-Tibetan languages, regardless, they are known to be primarily spoken by people residing in highlands and isolated areas of China, Laos, and Thailand. There are two major Hmong dialect groups known as Green and White Hmong, which were based on the cultural clothing of the women. Within the Hmong, there are many common words that are shared with the Chinese, Thai, Lao, French, and English. The history of the Hmong spoken language is vast, with oral traditions and storytelling through clothing. They did not have a written language until the 1950s, which was developed by the Chinese and the Thai. Later, the Hmong adopted a Roman based script introduced by Christian missionaries, however, few Hmong are

actually literate in the Roman based script.

Despite the trauma and hardship that followed the experience of the Hmong due to war and displacement, many Hmong thrived in their host countries. One notable Hmong diaspora was Paul C. Lo, who became the first Hmong judge in the United States. Lo was an 11-year-old refugee when he came to the United States with his family. Growing up, Lo resided in the mountains of Laos, rarely ever having entered the main cities. When he arrived in the United States, he and his family relied on public assistance, while he and his parents worked difficult jobs to make ends meet. Despite facing discrimination, difficulty learning the language and adapting to the culture, Lo was able to become the first Hmong judge of Merced County Superior Court of California. This achievement was one that had made a lasting impact on his Hmong community, allowing others to feel as though they too could accomplish such prestigious dreams.

Suni Lee also served as a model of success and triumph to the Hmong community. Suni Lee became the first Hmong American to be a member of the United States Olympic Team. Suni's parents were Hmong immigrants who were born in Laos, and eventually immigrated to the United States due to the Vietnam War. She and her family are originally from Minnesota, where the largest population of Hmong exists in the United States. Suni is a representation of hard work, determination and perseverance, one trait that the Hmong people have long held due to their experiences. Suni is a testimony to the continued perseverance and strength of the Hmong people.

Culture

Hmong cultural practices and traditions have been long lasting for hundreds of years. The Hmong society is based on patrilineal lineage, and status is based on age and lineage. The center of Hmong life is the household and clan that they are associated with. Rather than expressing loyalty to a village or region, the Hmong hold loyalty to their clan and household. The Hmong rely on their clans for social, economic and emotional support. The Hmong also receive their last name according to their clan's name and are able to trace their clan back to a mythical ancestor. The Hmong society also includes subdivisions, which receive their name in relation to the cultural dress. These subdivisions include White, Green (sometimes called blue) and Striped. Although their languages somewhat differ in dialect, they are mutually comprehensible and all recognize the same clans.

The Hmong are known for the vibrant story cloths and needlework squares with unique intricate designs. Needlework squares are usually given to parents and parents-in-law with a blessing, with these pieces being placed in a coffin at the event of someone's death. The pictures created on the cloths usually depict Hmong daily life, with scenes like farming, feeding animals or working in rice fields. Some of these cloths have a storyline throughout their pictures, with many modern cloths depicting

war, exile and migration. Along with embroidery, singing and chanting are renowned talents within Hmong communities. Traditional songs include ritual songs, courting songs and teaching songs, which are passed from one generation to another. An important instrument that is utilized for many important ceremonies, including weddings, funerals, and celebrating the New Year, is the Qeej (Kheng). The existence of the Qeej can be dated as early as 3000 B.C. in Chinese scriptures. The Qeej is an instrument made from 6 bamboo reeds, which are carved and hollowed out, bound together with tree bark straps, and a copper mouthpiece. Each note or sound played by the instrument corresponds to a spoken word.

The tradition of marriage and courting differs from many other cultures. Courting between young people is highly encouraged, where young people are to enjoy a 'golden period of life' allowing premarital sex. In most villages, it is common to find youth houses where young unmarried people could meet. Usually, at the first pregnancy a marriage will take place. Young people who are hoping to marry one another may also play a courting game called 'pov pob', where they dance and sing songs during the Hmong New Year's Festival. When a couple decides to marry, the groom is expected to pay a pride price to the bride's family, consisting of silver

Culture

and animals. The marriage is then officiated with a pig. The wedding is then celebrated in a two-part ceremony, beginning at the bride's family home followed by a procession to the groom's family home. In some cases, a chicken may be killed in front of the bride and groom. If the eyes of the chicken turn out identical, it means that the couple will have a happy marriage. If the eyes of the chicken turn out different, it is seen as a bad sign and wedding plans are usually canceled.

The traditional clothing of the Hmong is famous for their vibrancy and embroidery. The Hmong identify their dialect/regional groups based on clothing. The Green, White and Striped Hmong are groups based on the traditional clothing of women. The Green Hmong women wear short blue skirts with unique batik patterns and hundreds of tiny little pleats, worn with a black long-sleeve blouse, leggings and a black apron. The White Hmong women wear black pants or white pleated skirts and a black blouse with an embroidered collar at the back of the neck. The Striped Hmong wear blouses with striped sleeves. Women headdresses may also indicate which Hmong group they are from.

Women commonly wear pleated skirts with a black tunic,

or calf-length black trousers with a short black skirt. Women also wear maroon or colored jackets or shirts with colorful vests with silver jewelry. They commonly adorn themselves with a turban headdress decorated with dangling coins, and silver rings around their necks. Colorful aprons are also worn over their clothing and women believe that dipping this in water and using it as a wash cloth will heal their husbands of illnesses. The Hmong women in Laos traditionally wear an embroidered skirt with a silver chain around their waist, a black blouse and a tight black turban. Hmong men traditionally wear black short-sleeve tunics with embroidery around the chest and black baggy trousers with a deep crotch. Men usually drape a sash or bandolier like belts with silver coins around their shoulders and waist. Turbans, satin skull caps with pink pom poms or caps that resemble a fez or yamaka are common for men. Some men also wear silver loops around their neck, with bronze bracelets and a dagger in their belt.



Culture

The Hmong hold festivals and ceremonies to celebrate holidays. One of the most important holidays for the Hmong is the Hmong New Year, which is celebrated in the first four days of the tenth lunar month. The New Year celebration usually falls in December after the rice harvest season and it is the biggest event of the year. The New Year is celebrated by a community festival, with food, music and ceremonies to honor household and ancestral spirits. During this time, courting songs are sung and prospective couples play the courting game. Each home prepares

a feast after sacrificing an animal and cleans and prepares the family altar. On New Year's Eve, the oldest male in the home calls on the spirits to come home, he then throws out the evil and bad words of the previous year. Following this, the family welcomes the new year and it is named after the first animal they hear cry out. The New Year celebration signifies the end of the rice harvest cycle, and the beginning of a new year, but symbolizes that a new life can begin as the cycle of life continues.

Religion

Religion within the Hmong culture is central to their traditional daily lives and values. One traditional religion Hmong people practice is Animism. The intricate belief system includes the belief in the spirit world and of the interconnectedness of all living things. The Hmong believe that spirits inhabit all living things, and often perform animal sacrifices and rituals to honor the spirits. In addition to this, they also practice the veneration of their ancestors. The Hmong believe that there are a variety of spirits related to home, nature and ancestors. The Hmong also believe in gods and deities including Saub, a deity called on for help, Siv Yis or Txiv Yawg, the first shaman and the two underworld kings Ntxwj Nying and Nyuj Vaj Tuam Teem. The spirits that reside

in sacred groves, wells, stones, caves and bridges are known as 'tian', and are different from the 'neeb' who are called upon by Shamans. The spirits that protect homes and villages are also sometimes thought of as dragons. Most households contain an altar called the seej khab, in the front room where most rituals related to the family and home are held and annual ceremonies during Hmong New Year regenerate protection of the household and ancestor spirits. The spirit of the door of the household is also important to the wellbeing of the home and those living in it, so the Hmong hold annual ceremonies and sacrifice to maintain protection. These ceremonies can be led by the head of the household or ordinary priests.



Religion

The Hmong also believe that these spirits are usually the cause for illnesses, and must be treated by a Shaman or have a sacrificial ritual. Hmong Shamanism is the traditional healing practices of a 'txiv neeb', where the shaman enters a trance like state and is able to communicate with and travel through the spirit world in order to provide healing. The shaman is usually chosen by spirits who give them special knowledge. The first shaman known as Siv Yis was sent down to earth to help the humans who were suffering from illnesses and diseases released onto them by evil spirits. Although traditionally people seek shamans for healing, the Hmong have also integrated western healing practices for their health. Many Hmong people converted to Christianity due to belief this may allow them more rights or protection from the governments in their host countries. It is believed that about 10 to 20 percent of Hmong in Laos and Thailand are Christian. Although many chose to convert out of necessity, this caused a threat to clan ties as those who still practiced their traditional religion were under attack by Christian converts. In addition, many Hmong who are in the diaspora also converted to Christianity in order to adjust to Western life more smoothly.

Etiquette

Within Hmong culture, showing respect through etiquette is important. Many practices display the level of respect a person has. For example, it is common to address the head of the household when speaking to a Hmong family. It is also customary to maintain humbleness, and some Hmong might not feel comfortable expressing their feelings or giving definitive answers that another person may not like. Hmong people also consider it rude and inappropriate to look someone directly in their eyes, and people may tend to look away when talking or listening. Smiling is considered a warm welcome, however, laughing or talking aggressively is considered rude. When visiting a Hmong home, it is common to show up without an appointment and considered rude if the guests are refused. Before entering however, it is customary to ask if visitors are allowed as traditional families may have just performed a ritual. Some homes may be marked with a sign to protect the home from evil spirits, in which you should not knock or enter the home. In addition, when entering the home, a seat will be offered, but if it is refused the family may think that there is something wrong with the furniture or the guest considers themselves to be better.

When you are offered food or drink, it is rude to decline although you may not be hungry or thirsty, and the family will most likely also send you home with some food.

Education

Education within the Hmong community has always been highly regarded. Traditionally, Hmong education was conducted in the home or among their clan. The education was based on traditions or oral history or learning by doing. Due to the Vietnam War, there weren't many opportunities for formal education for the Hmong people. For the Hmong in Laos, it was typical for young boys to gain a formal education up until about the fourth grade, as opposed to young girls who completed the first grade at the most. For the Hmong who migrated to the United States, education became the most important need for children as they understood that this was important to obtaining employment and becoming self-sufficient. A study done in San Diego by the US Department of Health and Human Services, "The Adaptation of Southeast Asian Refugee Youth: A Comparative Study", found that Hmong students accomplished higher GPAs than the white majority and

were least likely to drop out of school or become involved with the justice system. These accomplishments in education were believed to be associated with Hmong cultural values of education, strong work ethic and discipline. Many Hmong students are among the Minneapolis and St Paul school districts of Minnesota, where these districts identified barriers for Hmong students.

The barriers for students include: older students who lack basic math and English skills, communication between schools and parents, parent-child relationships, married students with dependent children, access to teachers of color, and the need for academic and career counseling.



Migration History to San Diego

San Diego has been a hub for immigrants who are seeking a new life for decades. Among these groups of people were the Hmong. In the 1970s and 1980s, a large wave of about 5,000 Hmong moved their families to San Diego in order to escape political conflict. Many new residents learned to adjust to the new way of life, drastically different from living in the

mountains of Southeast Asia. Their contribution to San Diego culture may be subtle, but the Hmong have shared lots of their traditions with the greater San Diego area, enhancing the diverse blend of cultures. Today, approximately 1,700 Hmong people live in San Diego County.



Working With This Population

Although the Hmong acknowledge that illnesses can arise due to outside natural forces, many traditionally attribute illness to evil spirits, spells, curses and violations of a taboo. Many also believe that illness may be the result of the soul wandering from the body. Also, the Hmong believe that the liver is the regulator of human emotions and is related to mental health and personality. To heal from these illnesses, Hmong people often seek a shaman, ritual healers or folk medicinal doctors. Common illnesses are usually treated with at home therapies.

Mental health is not addressed in the traditional western manner. For the Hmong community, there is a stigma surrounding the

need for mental health services along with the lack of awareness.

Due to traditional beliefs, mental illness can be related to spirits and must be treated by a traditional healer or shaman. In addition to this, the Hmong believe it is shameful to discuss your emotions with others. When working with people of Hmong background, it is important to consider their traditional belief in the spirit world and how this may impact their use of resources. In addition, it may be helpful to understand their belief system and incorporate this in your work

San Diego Resources

Hmong SoCal Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2400352990262247/>

Lao-Hmong Family Association of San Diego

info@lhfasd.org

Muang Lao Market #1

110 47th St, San Diego, CA 92102

San Diego, CA 92102

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/muang-lao-market-1-san-diego-2?osq=hmong+food>

San Diego Hmong Church

4434 Dawson Avenue

San Diego, Ca 92115

<http://www.sdhmongchurch.com/>

San Diego Hmong Language Project

<http://hmong.ucsd.edu/>

Sang Dao Restaurant

5421 El Cajon Blvd

San Diego, CA 92115

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/sang-dao-restaurant-san-diego-2?osq=hmong+food>

So Saap | Chinese cuisine - San Diego, USA

4710 Market St

San Diego, CA 92102

<https://www.sosaaprestaurant.com>

Union of Pan Asian Communities

1031 25th Street

San Diego, Ca 92102

<https://www.upacsd.com/about/>

Iraq

Arab, Armenians, Assyrian-Chaldean, Kurdish, Mandaeans, Turkmen, Yazidis

Languages: Arabic, Aramaic, Assyrian, Kurdish (Sorani, Kurmanji, and Badini), and Mandaean

Religions: Islam, Judaism, Orthodox Christianity, Roman Catholicism (Chaldean), Yazidism

Population: 43 million

About Iraq + Major Historical Events

Iraq is a country located in the Middle East, bordered by Turkey to the north, Iran to the east, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to the south, and Syria and Jordan to the west. Its capital is Baghdad, and its population is approximately 40 million people.

The region that is now Iraq has a rich history dating back to ancient Mesopotamia, considered by many to be the cradle of civilization. The Sumerian civilization, which emerged around 4000 BC, developed many of the world's earliest systems of writing, agriculture, and government. Other notable civilizations that inhabited the region include the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Persians.

Iraq became a modern nation-state in 1932, after gaining independence from Britain, which had ruled the area as a mandate after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The country has experienced significant political turmoil and conflict in recent decades, including the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), the Gulf War (1990-1991), and the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein.

In the aftermath of the US invasion, Iraq has struggled with sectarian violence and political instability. The country is currently led by a parliamentary system with a president and a prime minister, but its government has faced significant challenges in maintaining stability and addressing the needs of its people.

Iraq is a country with a diverse population, consisting of several ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group in Iraq is the





About Iraq + Major Historical Events

Arab population, which comprises about 75-80% of the population. The second largest ethnic group in Iraq is the Kurdish population, which makes up about 15-20% of the population. Kurds are concentrated in the northern part of the country and have a distinct language, culture, and history. They have long sought greater autonomy and independence from the central government in Baghdad.

Other ethnic groups in Iraq include the Turkmen, who are concentrated in the north and have close cultural ties to Turkey, as well as smaller groups such as Assyrians, Armenians, and Yazidis. These groups have their own distinct languages, cultures, and histories, and have also faced discrimination and persecution at various times in Iraq's history.

Ethnic tensions have been a significant source of conflict in Iraq, particularly between the Arab and Kurdish populations. The Kurdish region in northern Iraq has been a relatively stable and prosperous area in recent years, but tensions between the Kurdish government and the central government

in Baghdad over issues such as oil revenues and territorial control have at times escalated into violence. over three decades, until his death in 1993. He also founded the union of African Farmers, who developed the interterritorial African Democratic Party. Félix Houphouët-Boigny was unsuccessful in maintaining the peace between the regions. The conflict during this time rose from the division of religious beliefs between the Muslims in the North and Christians in the South. This caused the first Ivorian Civil War, which took place from 2002-2007, which was led by President Gbagbo, and supported by France and the United States. They fought against the Forces Nouvelles de Côte d'Ivoire, led by Guillaume Soro, who were supported by Russia, Bulgaria, and Burkina Faso. The first Civil War ended on March 4th, 2007, and peace was in place until the second Civil War which began in 2011 and continues to this day. The current president is Alassane Dramane Ouattara. Moving forward, Ivory Coast continues to strive for social unity, political solidity, and continued economic advancement.

Culture

Iraqi culture is characterized by its hospitality, generosity, and strong sense of community. Family and social relationships are highly valued, and social interactions are often marked by warmth and friendliness.

The dominant religion in Iraq is Islam, which plays a central role in Iraqi culture and daily life. Islamic traditions and practices are reflected in many aspects of Iraqi culture, including language, art, music, and literature.

Iraqi cuisine is also an important aspect of the country's culture, with a rich

and diverse array of dishes and flavors. Iraqi cuisine is influenced by neighboring countries such as Turkey, Iran, and Syria, as well as ancient traditions of Mesopotamia. Some popular dishes include kebabs, falafel, and kibbeh.

Iraq also has a rich tradition of music, poetry, and literature. Traditional Iraqi music is characterized by its use of stringed instruments such as the oud and the qanoon, as well as rhythmic percussion instruments such as the darbuka and the daff. Iraqi poetry and literature are also highly regarded, with a rich history of epic

Culture

poems, love poetry, and mystical literature.

Art and architecture are also important aspects of Iraqi culture, with a rich tradition of Islamic art and design. Iraq is home to many important historical sites and architectural landmarks, including the ancient city of Babylon, the ziggurat of Ur, and the famous arches of Ctesiphon.

Despite its rich cultural heritage, Iraq has faced significant challenges in recent decades due to war, sanctions, and political turmoil. Many aspects of Iraqi culture have been disrupted or destroyed, and there is ongoing work to preserve and restore the country's cultural heritage.



Religion

Iraq is a country with a rich history of religious diversity, with Islam being the predominant religion. The majority of Iraqis are Muslims, with about 65-70% identifying as Shia and 30-35% as Sunni. There are also small populations of Christians, Yazidis, Mandaeans, and other religious minorities.

Shia Islam is the dominant religion in southern Iraq, while Sunni Islam is more prevalent in the north and west. Both communities have coexisted in Iraq for centuries, but tensions between the two have flared up at various times throughout history. For example, the Sunni-dominated regime of Saddam Hussein oppressed the Shia community during his rule, while the Shia-dominated government that followed his ouster has struggled to address the concerns of Sunnis who feel marginalized.

In addition to Islam, Christianity has a long history in Iraq, with several ancient Christian communities still present in the country. The largest of these is the Chaldean Catholic Church, which has more than 500,000 members in Iraq. There are also smaller communities of Assyrian, Armenian, and Syrian Orthodox Christians.

The Yazidi religion, which is unique to the region, has been subject to persecution and violence in recent years. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) targeted Yazidis during its occupation of parts of Iraq, with many Yazidi women and girls taken as slaves. Overall, Iraq's religious diversity is an important aspect of the country's identity and history, but it has also been a source of tension and conflict at times.

Etiquette

Cultural etiquette in Iraqi culture emphasizes respect, hospitality, and strong family values. Greetings are an essential part of Iraqi customs, with handshakes between men and verbal greetings with women being common, and it is essential to show deference to elders by addressing them with proper titles. When visiting someone's home, removing shoes before entering is customary, as is bringing a small gift or sweets

for the host. Iraqi society places a significant emphasis on family ties, so maintaining close relationships with relatives is highly valued. In social settings, it is polite to offer food and drink to guests, and accepting such offerings is considered a sign of appreciation. Overall, being respectful, warm, and mindful of cultural norms is crucial when engaging with the Iraqi community.

Education

Iraq's education system has a long history, with its universities and schools once being some of the most prestigious and well-regarded in the region. However, decades of war, sanctions, and political turmoil have taken a toll on the country's education system, and today it faces significant challenges.

According to the World Bank, Iraq has made progress in increasing access to education in recent years, with primary school enrollment reaching nearly 100% and secondary school enrollment reaching over 70%. However, there are significant disparities in access to education between different regions and socio-economic groups, and the quality of education is generally poor.

Iraq faces a shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in subjects such as mathematics, science, and English. Many teachers are poorly trained and poorly paid,

and there is little oversight or accountability for the quality of teaching. This has resulted in a significant skills gap, with many young Iraqis lacking the basic literacy and numeracy skills necessary to succeed in the workforce.

In addition to these challenges, the education system in Iraq has been further disrupted by conflict and displacement. Many schools have been damaged or destroyed, and large numbers of children have been forced to flee their homes and schools. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on education in Iraq, with schools being closed for extended periods and many students struggling to access remote learning.

Overall, while Iraq has made progress in increasing access to education in recent years, significant challenges remain in ensuring quality education for all Iraqis.

Migration History to San Diego

The history of migration and resettlement of Iraqi immigrants in San Diego County, California, is a multifaceted and complex tale. The influx of Iraqi immigrants to the region began in the late 1970s, with a significant surge during the 1990s and early 2000s due to political unrest, economic instability, and wars in Iraq. The first wave of immigrants primarily consisted of professionals and intellectuals seeking safety and opportunities in the United States. San Diego County, known for its diverse and welcoming communities, became an attractive

destination for many Iraqis seeking to rebuild their lives. Over the years, community support networks, religious centers, and nonprofit organizations played a crucial role in assisting Iraqi newcomers in their resettlement process, providing language classes, job training, and cultural integration programs. Despite initial challenges, the Iraqi immigrant community in San Diego has thrived, contributing to the region's cultural diversity and enriching its social fabric through their traditions, cuisine, and entrepreneurial spirit.

Working With This Population

The cultural perspective on therapy and psychiatry in Iraq is complex and can vary depending on the individual, their background, and their beliefs. In general, mental health is not widely discussed or understood in Iraq, and there is often a stigma attached to seeking help for psychological issues.

Traditionally, mental health issues have been seen as a private matter to be dealt with within the family or community, rather than seeking help from a mental health professional. This can make it difficult for individuals to seek treatment or support for mental health problems.

In addition, there are cultural factors that may impact how mental health issues are viewed in Iraq. For example, some may view mental illness as a punishment from God or a result of moral failing, which can make it difficult for individuals to seek help without feeling shame or guilt. There is also a general lack of trained mental health professionals in Iraq, particularly outside of major cities. As a result, those who do seek help may have limited options for treatment, and the quality of care may be variable.

Working With This Population

Despite these challenges, there are efforts underway to improve access to mental health services in Iraq. Non-governmental organizations and international organizations are working to raise awareness about mental health issues and reduce stigma, and some mental health clinics and hospitals have been established in recent years.

Traditional modes of therapeutic counseling in Iraq vary depending on the region, culture, and individual preferences. In general, traditional healing practices in Iraq are often deeply rooted in religion, spirituality, and community support.

One traditional form of counseling in Iraq is called “hakim,” which refers to traditional healers who use a combination of herbal remedies, physical therapies, and spiritual practices to treat physical and mental ailments. Hakims may be consulted for a variety of issues, including depression, anxiety, and other psychological problems. Another traditional form of counseling in Iraq is “ruqyah,” which involves reciting

verses from the Quran and using prayer to treat spiritual and psychological ailments. This form of counseling is often practiced by religious leaders and may involve individual or group sessions. Additionally, family and community members may provide emotional and practical support to individuals experiencing mental health problems, and may also help connect individuals to other resources, such as religious leaders or traditional healers.

Overall, while the cultural perspective on therapy and psychiatry in Iraq can be challenging, there is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health and efforts to improve access to care. It's important to note that while traditional forms of counseling in Iraq may be effective for some individuals, they may not be appropriate or effective for everyone. In some cases, seeking professional mental health services from trained therapists or psychiatrists may be necessary to address mental health problems effectively.

San Diego Resources

Chaldean and Middle-Eastern Support Services

<https://www.syhealth.org/services/chaldean-and-middle-eastern-support-services>
https://sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh/services/agency.aspx?pid=sanysidrohealthchaldeanmiddleeasternsocialservices_61_2_0

Majdal Center

<https://linktr.ee/majdalcenter>

License to Freedom

<https://licensetofreedom.org/>

San Diego Arab Film Festival

<https://sandiegoaff.org/>

Reviewer: Hamsa Al Mashhadani

Ivory Coast

(Cote d'Ivoire)

Akan, Baoule, Krou, Northern Mande, Southern Mande, Voltaique/Gu and non-Ivorian.

Languages: French is the official spoken language of the Ivorian people, with 60 native dialects of which Dioula is most spoken.

Religions: Catholic, Christian, Evangelical, Methodist, Muslim and traditional beliefs (ancestral worship).

Population: 29.3 million as of 2022

About Ivory Coast + Major Historical Events

Prior to French rule of Ivory Coast, the country mostly consisted of various small kingdoms including the Kong, Bouna, Bounkani, Senufo, Malinke and Baule among others. Colonized by France in 1842, Ivory Coast became part of the French Federation of West Africa. Ivory Coast was first colonized in the late 19th century by France and During this colonization, cash crop plantations for cocoa and coffee were established which led to economic development in the country. Ivory Coast finally gained independence on August 7th, 1960 and became a sovereign nation. The country keeps close ties to France, given the country's name change to the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire in 1986, and nickname of Paris of West Africa. The country also follows a French based civil law system. A distinguished politician, Félix Houphouët-Boigny became the country's first president and held office for over three decades, until his death in 1993. He also founded the union of African Farmers, who developed the interterritorial African Democratic Party. Félix Houphouët-Boigny was unsuccessful in maintaining the peace between the regions. The conflict during this time rose from the division of religious beliefs between the Muslims in the North and Christians in the South.

About Ivory Coast + Major Historical Events

This caused the first Ivorian Civil War, which took place from 2002-2007, which was led by President Gbagbo, and supported by France and the United States. They fought against the Forces Nouvelles de Côte d'Ivoire, led by Guillaume Soro, who were supported by Russia, Bulgaria, and Burkina Faso.

The first Civil War ended on March 4th, 2007, and peace was in place until the second Civil War which began in 2011 and continues to this day. The current president is Alassane Dramane Ouattara. Moving forward, Ivory Coast continues to strive for social unity, political solidity, and continued economic advancement.

Culture

Ivory Coast is located in Western Africa, bordering the Northern Atlantic Ocean and countries of Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia and Guinea. The country's name reflects the intense ivory trade that took place in the region from the 15th to the 17th centuries. There are two capitals in the Ivory Coast. The official capital has been Yamoussoukro since 1983, named after Queen Yamoussou who ruled in 1929 in the village of N'Gokro during the French colonization, and Abidjan is the administrative and economic capital. The government is a presidential republic. The culture name for people who live in the Ivory Coast are known as Ivorian. French is the official spoken language of the Ivorian people, with 60 native dialects of which Dioula is the most spoken. The largest ethnic populations in Ivory Coast are Akan, Baoule, and Voltaique/Gur, followed by Northern Mande, Kru, Southern Mande, and non-Ivorian. Large populations of immigrants from Burkina Faso and other neighboring countries increased due to the need for labor for the flourishing of the cocoa and coffee industry. The most common religions practiced in Ivory Coast are Muslim, Catholic, Evangelical, Methodist, Christian, and traditional beliefs (ancestral worship). As of 2022, the population of the Ivory Coast is around 29.3 million.

Traditional cuisine of the Ivorian

people is similar to its neighboring countries in West Africa, using cassava and plantains in many dishes. A popular dish is allococo which is a plantain fried in palm oil and spiced with onions, chilies, commonly eaten with fish or eggs. Ivory Coast's cuisine also includes a mix of West African and French influences, with its national dish being attiéké, grilled fish, and tomato sauce. The country is also known for its coffee and cocoa production, which is an essential part of the country's economy. Food is an important part of ceremonies that often celebrate coming of age, funerals, and religious practices. The Akan people celebrate the Yam festival for the remembrance of discovering yams and good harvest. The Festival of Masks is widely celebrated throughout the country every February. Major holidays include Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr which are both Muslim holidays. Many also still practice native traditions such as offering ancestral spirits food and drinks.

The country's history, religion, music, art, and cuisine have helped shape its cultural identity over the centuries. Traditional outfits that are made from Kita or Kente, which are colorful woven fabrics made from cotton. The Baoulé, Kita or Senufo fabrics which originated from the Ashanti Kingdom, continue to dress the Ivorians in their celebrations and ceremonies. Music is also important



Culture

and many Ivorian ethnic groups have their own unique music genres, all have strong vocal polyphony. Talking drums are commonly used, which are hourglass shaped, with two drumheads that mimic the tone and prosody of human speech. These drums have been used since the 18th century mostly to send messages that can travel up to 4-5 miles distances. Villagers are commonly known to create wooden carvings and masks, which are used for ceremonial purposes. Ivory Coast also has a popular sport known as association football, better known in

the U.S. as Soccer. Their team is the Les Elephants popular sport and has gone to the World Cup in 2006, 2010, and 2014. The country also has the largest church in the world, the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace of Yamoussoukro and resides in the Ivory Coast. Ivory Coast's culture is diverse and rich, with a mixture of traditional and modern influences. Today, Ivory Coast remains a vibrant and dynamic country that values its traditions while embracing new ideas and influences from around the world.

Religion

The most common religions practiced in Ivory Coast are Muslim, Catholic, Evangelical, Methodist, Christian, and traditional beliefs (ancestral worship).

Etiquette

Some etiquettes practiced by Ivorians include, greeting others with intent in asking about their health, family, and work, men shake hands when greeting one another, women greeting other women kiss each other three times alternating each cheek, it is polite to shake everyone's hand when entering and leaving events, staring is considered rude and eye contact is often avoided especially between father and child, and giving gifts is customary. Some etiquettes

practiced by Ivorians include, greeting others with intent in asking about their health, family, and work, men shake hands when greeting one another, women greeting other women kiss each other three times alternating each cheek, it is polite to shake everyone's hand when entering and leaving events, staring is considered rude and eye contact is often avoided especially between father and child, and giving gifts is customary.

Education

The education system in Ivory Coast is structured into three levels: primary, secondary and higher education. Primary education is compulsory and is provided for free by the government. However, the country faces a shortage of trained teachers, insufficient classrooms and materials which makes it challenging for all children to access education. Secondary education is divided into two categories: general education and technical education. General education consists of a three-year cycle of lower secondary education and a three-year cycle of upper secondary education. Students choose between two streams: the scientific or literary stream. Technical education is provided through vocational schools which provide training in various technical and professional fields such as agriculture, commerce, and crafts. Higher education is provided by universities, professional schools, and specialized schools. The University of Abidjan is the largest and most well-known university in the country. While higher education is relatively affordable compared to other countries, limited capacity and resources make admissions highly competitive. Despite efforts to improve education in Ivory Coast, the country faces challenges such as low enrollment rates, high dropout rates, low literacy rates, and inadequate resources. The government and international organizations continue to work towards improving the education system to ensure a brighter future for the youth of Ivory Coast.

Migration History to San Diego

As of 2020, the population of migrants that came to the United States from Ivory Coast is around 42,000.

Working With This Population

Counseling practices in Ivory Coast are influenced by traditional beliefs and practices, as well as by Western counseling approaches. In traditional Ivory Coast communities, individuals seek guidance from community elders, spiritual leaders, or diviners to resolve personal or interpersonal problems. These traditional healers often use rituals, prayers, herbs, and other cultural practices in their counseling sessions. In recent years, there has been an increased recognition of the importance of mental health and the need for professional counseling services in Ivory Coast. Western counseling approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, psychoanalysis, and person-centered therapy, are gaining popularity among psychologists and counselors in the country. However, there are still challenges to providing effective counseling services in Ivory Coast. These challenges include inadequate funding and resources, a shortage of trained counselors, stigma associated with seeking help for mental health, and cultural barriers to accessing mental health services. When working with all refugees and immigrants, please refer them to basic needs resources on and off campus.

West African Grocery Stores

Although there are no local restaurants for Ivorian cuisine, see the listed grocery stores below for West African foods.

Abule Afro Market & Eatery

abuleafromarket.com
3727 University Ave
San Diego, CA 92105

African Caribbean Food Market

acmsandiego.com
4811 El Cajon Blvd,
San Diego, CA 92115

Côte d'Ivoire | International

Rescue Committee (IRC):
<https://www.rescue.org/country/ivory-coast>



San Diego Local Resources

Côte d'Ivoire | International Rescue Committee (IRC)

<https://www.rescue.org/country/ivory-coast>

Libya

Arab, Berber

Languages: Arabic, Libyan Arabic (dialect)

Religions: Islam

Population: 6.74 Million

About Libya + Major Historical Events

The country of Libya, located in the Maghreb region of North Africa and bordered by the Mediterranean Sea, houses a population of 6.735 million. The name Libya originates from the generalized identity given to the ancient East “Libyan” Berbers and tribes around the regions of Cyrenaica and Marmarica. However over the years, “Libya” evolved from the words “Libu” or “Libúē” which encompassed the people of Cyrenaica and Marmarica. The ethnic groups that make up Libya are Arab and Berber with the language being Arabic and a local dialect, Libyan Arabic. The current state of the government is in a provisional government, Government of National Unity, in order to unify the rivaling governments and create a middle ground in order to rebuild post-Gaddafi.

Libya has had a very long history of occupation where many countries occupied the country with the Ottoman Empire lasting the longest time from about 1551–1911 which followed occupation by Italy from 1934-1943. Libya gained independence a few years later from Italy in 1947 and the Kingdom of

Libya was formed in 1951. The Kingdom of Libya was led by Monarch Idris I and had a decent time of rule as a “free country”. During this time, the country discovered an oil reserve that they were able to profit from and not rely on international aid to support and build their country back up. This however did not last long before a lack of political leadership which influenced the coup d’état of Muammar Gaddafi came and had the country in a very harsh rule which did not end until 2011 when the Civil War against Gaddafi took place which lasted a 8 months which led to the end of the Gaddafi era which he was captured and killed. However, a second Civil War emerged a few years later when rival governments that ruled Libya post first Civil War had conflicts due to the lack of security in the country. The war ended in 2020 with a cease fire and the creation of the Government of National Unity (GNU), however there are still issues within the country as a humanitarian crisis due to the clashing of GNU and local governments and people.



Libya

Culture

The culture of Libya was very vibrant pre-Gaddafi era and with his rule, the country was very limited in practices which in turn led to Libya still developing a modern culture. During the Gaddafi rule, many media outlets were limited and even the local language of Berber was forbidden. Additionally, there was a lack of foreign media being circulated, closing off the rest of the world to the country. Pre-Gaddafi however did not diminish folk culture which is still very prevalent in the country through music and dance at festivals.

One of the country's notable practices is their culture of hospitality/giving. Many families often follow this collective culture which focuses on the well being of others, creating harmony and keeping a sense of dignity, honor, and reputation. A drawback of this type of practice is ignoring individual feelings and needs for the good of your family/group. These two factors play into each other that can both be seen as good and bad practices, where it can be seen as caring for others and wanting the best for them by not creating drama/problems, however this can lead people to be excluded at time when they have hardships that may affect the dynamic of the family/group.

Television programming offered in the country mainly covers news, culture, and music/entertainment in Libya. About 76% of the country's citizens prefer television as their main source of entertainment. Most programs are in Arabic however there are programs each evening that broadcast news in French and English. Most of the population however prefer watching videos or foreign stations via satellites nowadays. In 2012, there was a shift to "free media" due to the

removal of censorship laws that were in place by Gaddafi, which introduced more diverse programming to the citizens. This shift became the starting point to modern Libyan media culture since they have the tools now to do so.

Music from Libya has been very traditional but has transformed into something new. Andalusi is one of the most popular traditional genres of music, using traditional instruments and lyrics from poems. Tuareg is another popular genre which has its roots in the Berber and Amazigh populations of south Libya and is practiced mainly by women. This genre later sprung into the use of political ballads and has transformed over the years into a more diverse genre with many sub genres following suit. There is little to no pop music in the country, however through the population getting their media through satellites to stream foreign media, there is still foreign influence to their music taste.

The cuisine of Libya has influences from the countries that have occupied their territory in the past; these influences include Italian, Bedouin, and Mediterranean. For instance, pasta is widely consumed in the west compared to the east where rice is more common. The main ingredients used are olives, dates, grains, and milk. A common dish would include a tomato sauce, lamb or chicken, served with couscous, zucchini, chickpeas, cucumber, lettuce, and/or olives. Bazeen is one of the most well known traditional dishes in Libya and is served mainly at weddings and festivals and is eaten communally. The dish is made with unleavened bread that is often served with a tomato sauce, eggs, potatoes, and meat.

Libya

Religion

The country's main religion is Islam, with about 97% of the population practicing the religion. Most of the Libyans who practice Islam are a part of the Sunni sect. Islam arrived in Libya in the seventh century with resistance from Berbers diminishing in the eighth century. Once resistance had ceased, the country had expanded Islamic centers. The large-scale conversion of natives did not occur until the eleventh century. Due to the later conversion and existence of an original religion, parts of the previous religion practiced in Libya eventually blended with Islam. This included beliefs in jinns (spirits), evil eye, rites to ensure good fortune, and veneration of local saints. The educated nobles often practiced a more formal orthodox version of Islam. Religion is a cornerstone for spirituality as

well as a guide for government policy, as followers and citizens prefer. Under the Gaddafi regime, Gaddafi reaffirmed the Islamic state and laws.

However, there are still minor parts of the region that practice Christianity (Coptic Orthodox Christianity) due to the neighboring country Egypt founding the denomination. The largest population of Christians is Coptic Orthodox. Interestingly, Coptic Orthodox Christianity had arrived in Libya before the westward expansion of Islam. In addition to Coptic Orthodox, Libyans in minority also practice Catholicism, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, and Serbian Orthodox. Although Christians are the minority, there are peaceful connections with the Islam community

Etiquette

Some etiquettes practiced in Libya include: greetings are warm and enthusiastic, when men meet men a handshake is common, however if men meeting women, women must extend her hand out first, and the most common greeting is "Assalamu alaikum" which translates to "peace be with you" and must be responded with "wa alaikum salam" which translates to "and peace be with you." Eye contact is also a sign of respect among men, however it should not be a long contact. Public displays of affection are not acceptable in any way or form and individuals usually stand about an arms length from one another as a sign of personal space respect.. If invited to a Libyan's home, it is customary and

respectful to bring sweets or some type of pastry. When giving a gift, it must be presented with both hands or your right hand, and the gift is not usually opened right away when received. Dining etiquettes for Libyians include: greeting elders first, accepting offers of tea or coffee, being on time, bowl of perfumed water is often passed around before a meal takes place and you must dip three fingers into the water as a form of cleansing, short prayers are said before and after a meal, honored guests are served first, must eat with right hand only, and leave a small amount of food on your plate once you are done eating to show that your host has shown you much generosity and abundance of food.

Libya

Education

Education in Libya is free and compulsory for ages 6-15. When the 9 years of basic education is completed for students, they are offered two paths: continuing into secondary school or joining the workforce. Most students choose to go into vocational schools which can get them into the workforce with more security and practical skills while the others go towards a more academic focused track with their schooling. Libya has a better infrastructure of education even after recovering from the rule of Gaddafi and his education system, where he centered it around the Green Book, the philosophy of Gaddafi himself. There was also an increase of students seeking post-secondary education at either university and technical/vocational schools, however these students would all become employees

in the public sector in order to support the Gaddafi regime. In the post-Gaddafi era, many students from the universities have stated that the quality of education was unsatisfactory. Moving forward, the new education ministry reformed the curriculum and is teaching the history of the country as is, without the influence of propaganda. The education system dispersed the job opportunities for vocational school students to expand more into private sector jobs in order to improve international relations and offer scholarships to those who have fought in the militia, women, and people with disabilities.



Migration History to San Diego

The Libyan community in the U.S. has been very limited, however that doesn't mean that there aren't Libyans that have migrated. During Gaddafi's rule and the Civil War, many people tried to seek asylum to neighboring countries as it was easier to get there but few took the route to migrate to the U.S. Libya has made it into the conversation when former President Trump enacted a travel ban targeting Muslim communities across the world, which Libya was included in the list of countries affected by it. California has the largest Libyan population compared to most of the country. The University of California system took in many of the graduate students from Libya in order for them to help build back their communities at home studying topics like environmental sciences. Libyans who have migrated to the U.S. during the Gaddafi

era have also sparked many community events to uplift the voices of the suppressed and supported their country overseas in order to claim their freedom. Since the rule of Gaddafi, many organizations in the U.S. have formed in order to provide the necessary resources to the community not only through legal matters which include organizations like the Libyan American Organization that aims to "To help members of the Libyan American community connect and support one another and the larger Libyan community through educational, cultural and charitable programs". Other organizations such as the Libyan American Association of Southern California aim to bring together the community through news and community events and support.

Libya

Working With This Population

Counseling services offered in Libya have become very scarce over the years. There have only been two psychiatric units in the whole country that are only located in centralized areas as well as lacking trained staff who can provide adequate care for its patients. Many patients who are administered into these units are usually in the later stages of their illness since seeking help for these types of services is often stigmatized. Family members or care workers are the first in line to help until they cannot. Spiritual healing is often the next option, then going to general practitioners, and psychiatric help is the last resort for these patients. With the poor infrastructure of mental health care, many practitioners and medical students in the country often take general or specialized practices but do not undergo training that tackle the topic of psychiatric care due to the country needing to provide critical physical care for the population.

Though psychiatric hospitals are available, care in those facilities are often unsupervised which leads patients to be mistreated with unhygienic and inhumane conditions. The way they are treated goes to show the lack of formal training for the practitioners as well as the stigma that many of the citizens hold for those with mental illness. In order to combat this neglect of mental health services, the World Health Organization in partnership with the Ministry of Health in Yemen has created a 4-year mental health strategy from 2015-2019 in order to shift the country's institutional to a community based care system in order to help those in remote/under-served areas, by thoroughly evaluating staff members, destigmatizing mental health, and acknowledging the generational trauma created by war and ways to heal these scars.

San Diego Resources

Embassy of Libya

1460 Dahlia Street NW,
Washington, DC 20012
<https://ly.usembassy.gov/>

Libyan American Alliance

1800 K Street
Washington, DC
<https://libyanamericanalliance.org/>

Libyan American Association of Southern California

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1100001193358960/>

Libyan American Organization

https://www.facebook.com/p/Libyan-American-Organization-LAO-100067447549706/?paipv=0&ev=AfYoR3fP7KDmmj2HjQ8ryEmTAjQD-grUKbRX3-THC_MQxL4y8uG603m2LTOpUGl8llw&_rdr

International Resource Committee of San Diego

5348 University Avenue #205
San Diego, Ca 92105
<https://www.rescue.org/taxonomy/term/47>

Reviewer: Ibrahim Salah

Mexico

Amerindian, Mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish), other (mostly European)

Languages: Spanish (Most spoken), Nahuatl and Yucatec Maya

Religions: Roman Catholicism, Protestant

Population: 126.7 Million

About Mexico + Major Historical Events

In 1810, Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who is also known to be the “Father of Mexico”, initiated the call for Mexico to be independent from Spain. This demand for Mexico’s independence led to an uprising which is known as the Hidalgo Rebellion; while it may not have been successful, the persistence continued for independence. While this was happening, the United States and Spain were fighting over their territories, but were able to come to an agreement where the border between Spanish Land and the Louisiana Territory. In 1821, Mexico was able to gain independence from Spain due to the Treaty of Cordoba.

In 1845, The Mexican-American war was fought over Texas as a territory because of migration issues. The United States also wanted to extend their territory more because they believed it was rightfully theirs due to the Manifest Destiny. They wanted the Rio Grande River to be the border between Mexico, which would make Texas a part of the United States. Mexico refuses the United States’ offer for Texas, which ensued in a great deal of fighting and thousands of deaths.

After Mexico City was seized in 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American war which led to Mexico to cede territory that would become Arizona, California, and Nevada. In return, the United States would pay Mexico 15 million dollars in compensation for the damages caused by war. This treaty also protected the property and civil rights of 80,000 Mexicans who were living in U.S. territories.

Culture

Mexican society is very centralized on the responsibilities and caretaking of their families; they follow a collectivistic framework in which decisions are made for the greater good of the family versus the individual alone. The typical dynamic for a Mexican family is often being large in number, following traditional gender roles, and extensive involvement in familial affairs whether it's the immediate or extended family. It is not unusual to host family gatherings often and for them to socialize on a daily basis; they put great emphasis on the importance of their bonds and familial ties.

Furthermore, families have great influence on individual members in regards to their identity, choices, and mannerisms. Since Mexican families are very involved with each other's lives, it may be difficult to have private matters, even after they have become independent adults. However, it is also notable to mention that especially during difficult times, families will often come together to support one another in those circumstances. It is remarkable how tight knit the family structure is in Mexico and how they all manage to maintain strong bonds from all generations.

Religion

Mexico has not claimed an official religion, however the most dominant religion practiced by the majority of Mexicans is Roman Catholicism; it is estimated over 80% of the population identify as Catholic. Numerous Mexicans find being Catholic as a significant part of their identity and is almost considered to be a part of their cultural heritage. Although there are many Mexicans who do not follow the Catholic faith, they find themselves participating in Catholic-oriented celebrations since it is deeply rooted in their traditions.

There are several customs that Mexicans follow everyday to pay their respects to their faith. For instance, many Mexicans will draw a cross with their hand when they pass by a church or altar. Other events such as baptism, the first communion, confirmation, marriage, and extreme unction are also widely revered for Catholic Mexicans. Phrases like: "Si Dios quiere" (God willing), "Dios te bendiga" (God bless you),

and "Gracias a Dios (thank God) are often used and heard throughout Mexico.

Followers of Evangelicalism have increased over the years in Mexico as a result of outreach efforts by the Church members. Many of its members say it is due to their close community and their bonds that help with bringing in more members into their Church. They believe they should hold each other accountable for when they are partaking in acts that are considered inappropriate to indulge in as a follower of the religion; such as drinking, smoking, gambling, and other morally questionable actions.

Whereas the Catholic Churches are filled with relics of the saints of whom they praise, the Evangelical Church do not have any so they are able to focus solely on the Bible. While there are some stark differences between the followers of Catholicism and Evangelism, they are able to live in harmony while they practice their own beliefs and traditions.

Etiquette

Mexicans take hospitality very seriously as they focus on accommodating their guests during their visit. Guests are meant to relax and socialize, however it is considered polite to help the host to cook and clean up. It is also important to thoroughly say goodbye when leaving a

function; leaving quickly may give the impression that the company or visit was not enjoyable.

There is a great emphasis on respecting elders in Mexico. It is polite for children and young adults to offer their seats to elders and to attentively listen to them speak.



Education

There are six systems of higher education institutions that Mexico is formed of: public universities, technological institutes, technological universities, private institutions, teacher training colleges, and other public institutions.

In 1940, Mexico only had 8 universities until that number was raised in 1980 to 124 institutions. About two decades later in 1998, the number of higher education institutions increased to 213. Fast forward to 2023, Mexico now has around 1,250 institutions comprising the six different systems of higher education mentioned before.

Many institutions will require people to take admission exams in order to evaluate their knowledge in specific

areas of academia; however, several public institutions may allow people to be admitted into the university simply by applying. Enrollment numbers have increased throughout the years and that may be due to public universities and technological institutes making education more affordable. Tuition is free, though there are still some fees that students would have to pay for administrative duties. It is reported that the fees for some technological institutes may only amount to \$150 per semester. While public institutions appear to be more affordable, private institutions have their own fees and may equate to the amount of out-of-state universities charged by US universities.

Migration History to San Diego

During the early 1900s, Mexican migration to San Diego increased because of the immense demand for labor in industries such as manufacturing, railroad construction, and agriculture. Although factors such as political instability in Mexico could have been a reason for Mexicans to come to the United

States, economic opportunity was most likely the central cause for the migration to San Diego. While Mexicans make up 30% of the population in San Diego, the second largest population of Mexicans reside in Los Angeles, California with New York City, New York having the first largest.

Working With This Population

Mexicans are family oriented and believe that family comes second after God. They are raised to be close to not only their immediate family, but also their extended family as well. Most families live in multigenerational households and have incredibly close bonds with one another; it is important to note how family plays a significant role in their lives. In many cases, the lead male figure of the family will speak and make the decisions for the overall family. Mexican families tend to address a situation amongst themselves

instead of seeking help from outside sources. For this reason, it may be difficult for someone to open up about their personal issues. It is important to practice patience and understanding while Working with this Population because of their fear of speaking to outsiders about their family whom they are so close to.

Traditional healing methods are common in Mexico as mental health services are not as developed or accessible for everyone. Curanderismo is the practice of traditional

Working With This Population

healing through the means of religion and natural resources. They believe that their gift of healing comes from God and they specialize in restoring the spiritual balance in an individual's life. Having stability in one's life is also a significant concept in Curanderismo beliefs. People hope the Curandera can bring back the balance into their lives through God's will and they will be cured of their ailment.

Furthermore, the causation of illness in the Curanderismo mindset stems from the devil having a great presence in their lives which causes an internal imbalance between good and evil. Curanderas place great importance on the balance of good

and evil because too much of evil can corrupt a person's well being. In other words, illness can be physical, mental, social, or psychological- but is often believed that it occurs from being separated from the spiritual self. The healers often claim that everything they do as a healer and as a counselor are supposed to be in the name of Jesus; it is very common that curanderas never separate their healing methods from their faith.



Resources

Border Angels

<https://www.borderangels.org/>

Mana SD

<https://manasd.org/>

Las Cuatro Milpas Restaurant

1857 Logan Ave, San Diego, CA 92113

<http://www.las-cuatro-milpas.com/>

Old Town Mexican Cafe

2489 San Diego Ave, San Diego, CA 92110

<https://oldtownmexcafe.com/>

Reviewer: Zulma Heraldez

Morocco

Amazigh, Sahrawis, Arab, Moors

Languages: Arabic, Amazigh/Berber, French, Spanish

Religions: Islam with Christian and Jewish communities

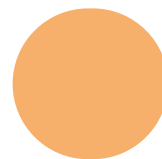
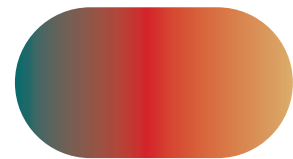
Population: 37 million

About Morocco + Major Historical Events

Morocco is a country located in the northwestern region of Africa. It is known for its vibrant cities, including the capital Rabat, the economic hub of Casablanca, and the historic city of Marrakech. The country has a rich history, culture, and diverse geography, ranging from the snow-capped peaks of the Atlas Mountains to the golden sands of the Sahara Desert. Over the centuries, the country was ruled by various dynasties and sultanates, including the Almohad and Almoravid empires, before becoming a French protectorate in 1912.

The country gained independence from France in 1956 and has since developed into a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. The country's economy is driven by agriculture, mining, and tourism, and it has a rich cultural heritage that is reflected in its music, art, architecture, and cuisine.

Several ethnic groups make up Morocco and contribute to its culture, history, and identity. The largest ethnic group in Morocco is the Arab-Berber population, which is estimated to make up around 80% of the total population. In addition to the Arab-Berber population, there are also several other ethnic groups in Morocco, including the Haratine, who are people of African descent, and the Gnawa, who are a distinct ethnic group known for their music and dance traditions. There are also small communities of Europeans, including French, Spanish, and Portuguese, who have lived in Morocco for many years.





Culture

The culture of Morocco is rich and diverse, reflecting the country's long and complex history and the influence of a range of different cultures and traditions. Morocco is known for its colorful markets, or souks, its delicious cuisine, which includes tagines, couscous, and pastries, and its traditional arts and crafts, such as its architecture and design, pottery, weaving, and metalwork.

Moroccan culture is heavily influenced by Islam, which is the dominant religion in the country, as well as by the Berber and Arab ethnic groups that have lived in the region for centuries. The country is also home to a significant Jewish population, which has played an important role in shaping the country's cultural identity.

One of the most distinctive features of Moroccan culture is its architecture, which is characterized by

intricate tilework, ornate carvings, and bright colors. Moroccan architecture also often incorporates elements of Islamic design, such as domes, arches, and calligraphy.

Morocco is also known for its vibrant music scene, which includes a range of traditional and contemporary genres. Traditional Moroccan music features the use of instruments such as the oud, qanun, and ney, and is often accompanied by traditional dance forms such as the chaabi and the gnaoua.

Moroccan cuisine is another important aspect of the country's culture and is known for its use of spices and flavors such as cumin, saffron, and harissa. Popular Moroccan dishes include tagines (slow-cooked stews), couscous (a type of grain), and pastilla (a savory pie made with pigeon or chicken).

Religion

Morocco is predominantly an Islamic country, with over 99% of the population adhering to Sunni Islam, which is the official state religion. Islam was introduced to Morocco in the 7th century by Arab conquerors, and it has played a significant role in shaping the country's culture, history, and identity.

The Moroccan government supports and promotes the practice of Sunni Islam and provides funding for the construction and maintenance of mosques throughout the country. The King of Morocco also holds the title of Amir al-Muminin, or Commander of the Faithful, which gives him a symbolic religious authority.

In addition to Sunni Islam, there are also small communities of other religions in Morocco. These include Christians, Jews, and Baha'is. Christians make up less than 1% of the population and are mostly foreign residents or expatriates. The Jewish population has decreased significantly over the years due to emigration, and now makes up less than 0.2% of the population. Baha'is are a very small community, estimated to be less than 1,000 people. Overall, Morocco is a religiously tolerant country, and the constitution guarantees freedom of worship to all citizens. However, Islam is deeply ingrained in the country's culture and social customs, and it is important to be respectful of local traditions

Religion

and beliefs when visiting or living in Morocco.

Despite their small numbers, the Jewish community in Morocco continues to play an important role in the country's cultural and religious landscape. Moroccan Jews have preserved their unique traditions

and rituals, and their contributions to Moroccan music, cuisine, and art are celebrated throughout the country. The Moroccan government has also taken steps to preserve the country's Jewish heritage, including the restoration of synagogues and other historic sites.

Etiquette

In Moroccan culture, cultural etiquette is highly valued and plays a significant role in social interactions. Politeness and respect for others are fundamental aspects of Moroccan etiquette. When meeting someone, a firm handshake among men and warm greeting between women is customary, followed by inquiries about one's health and family. It is essential to show interest in others' well-being and to engage in friendly small talk before getting to business matters. During conversations, interrupting or speaking too loudly is generally considered impolite. When dining, it is customary to wash hands

before and after the meal and to use the right hand for eating, as the left hand is traditionally seen as unclean. Guests are often offered tea, and accepting such hospitality is a sign of appreciation. When visiting someone's home, it is polite to bring a small gift, such as pastries or fruit. Overall, Moroccan culture places a strong emphasis on graciousness, hospitality, and thoughtfulness in interactions, making cultural etiquette a vital part of everyday life.

Education

Morocco has made significant progress in improving its education system in recent years, but there are still some challenges to be addressed. According to UNESCO, the literacy rate in Morocco was estimated at around 71% in 2018, with slightly higher rates for men than for women.

Primary education is compulsory and free in Morocco, and the country has made progress in expanding access to education at this level. However, access to education is still limited in some rural areas and for disadvantaged groups, such as girls and children from low-income families. The

Moroccan government has made efforts to improve the quality of education at all levels, with a particular focus on teacher training and curriculum reform. However, there are still concerns about the quality of education in some areas, including a lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, and outdated teaching methods.

At the secondary and tertiary levels, access to education is more limited, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. While there are some excellent universities and colleges in Morocco, including public and private institutions,

Education

access to higher education is still limited for many students, and there are concerns about the quality of some programs.

Overall, education levels in Morocco have improved in recent years, but there is still work to be done

to ensure that all children have access to quality education, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status.



Migration History to San Diego

While the largest community of Moroccans in the United States currently resides on the East Coast, with its largest populations being in Massachusetts and New Jersey, there is a small but strong community in Southern California that continues to grow between Los Angeles and San Diego. Over the years, the community has grown steadily, with members originally arriving in the mid-

20th century for educational, professional, and economic opportunities. Local institutions and support networks played a crucial role in assisting Moroccan immigrants in adapting to their new environment, offering language assistance, job placement services, and community integration programs.

Working With This Population

In Morocco, traditional cultural beliefs and values play an important role in shaping attitudes towards therapy and psychiatry. Many Moroccans view mental health issues as being closely linked to spirituality and religion, and seek help from religious leaders or healers, rather than from mental health professionals. There is also a stigma attached to mental illness in some parts of Moroccan society, which can make it difficult for individuals to seek help or discuss their mental health issues openly. Some people may fear being labeled as "crazy" if they seek treatment for mental health issues.

Despite these cultural beliefs and attitudes, there is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health in Morocco, and an increasing number of people are seeking help from mental health professionals. The Moroccan government has also taken steps

to promote mental health services and increase access to treatment, particularly in urban areas.

However, there are still challenges to be addressed in terms of improving access to mental health services, addressing stigma, and promoting greater awareness of mental health issues in Morocco. Mental health professionals in Morocco often face challenges in terms of limited resources, insufficient training, and a lack of awareness among the public about the value of mental health services.

Overall, while traditional cultural beliefs and values continue to shape attitudes towards therapy and psychiatry in Morocco, there is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health and a need for greater investment in mental health services and awareness campaigns.

Working With This Population

In Morocco, traditional modes of therapeutic counseling often involve a spiritual or religious component, reflecting the cultural values and beliefs of the society. These traditional forms of therapy are often used in conjunction with modern Western medicine and counseling practices.

One traditional mode of therapy in Morocco is the use of herbal remedies and other natural remedies to treat physical and mental health issues. Many Moroccans use herbs and spices, such as ginger, mint, and saffron, for their therapeutic properties, and may seek the advice of traditional healers or herbalists for guidance. Another traditional mode of therapy is the use of spiritual healing practices, such as recitation of religious texts, prayers, and rituals. Many Moroccans believe that mental health issues are linked to spiritual

issues and may seek the guidance of religious leaders or holy men for help with their problems.

In addition, some traditional therapies in Morocco involve physical manipulation of the body, such as massage or cupping therapy, which are believed to help improve circulation and relieve stress and tension.

Overall, traditional modes of therapeutic counseling in Morocco reflect the importance of spirituality and holistic approaches to health and well-being and are often seen as complementary to Western counseling and medical practices. While there is growing recognition of the value of modern therapy and counseling practices in Morocco, traditional forms of therapy continue to play an important role in many people's lives.

San Diego Resources

Moroccan American Association of California

Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/28553878288/>

Majdal Center

<https://linktr.ee/majdalcenter>

License to Freedom

<https://licensetofreedom.org/>

San Diego Arab Film Festival

<https://sandiegoaff.org/>

Reviewer: Laurent Mansouri

Nepal

Brahman-Hill, Chamar/Harijan/Ram, Chhettri, Damai/Dholii, Gurung, Kami, Limbu, Magar, Nepalese, Newar, Chhettri, Tamang, Teli, Koiri/ Kushwaha, Thakuri, Tharu, Sarkis, Yadav, other smaller groups.

As of 2011 there were 125 ethnic groups residing in Nepal, per census recording.

Languages: Nepali, Limbu, Maithili, Newar, Angika, Tharu, Gurung, Tamang, Magar, Sherpa, Kiranti, Sunuwar, Bhojpuri, Bajjika, Rajbanshi, Doteli, Urdu, Avadhi, Gurung, Baitadeli, and others.

Religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Kirant

Population: 30.9 million as of 2023

About Nepal + Major Historical Events

Nepal has a complex and ancient history that spans over several millennia. Archaeological evidence suggests that human settlements existed in the Kathmandu Valley as early as 9,000 BCE during the prehistoric era. During the Kirati Dynasty, the Kirati people ruled over Nepal from around 800 BCE to 300 CE. Their legendary first king was Yalamber. The Licchavi Dynasty of the Licchavi period (300-879 CE) marked a significant development in Nepal's history. The Licchavi rulers brought a form of governance influenced by Indian culture, and their reign witnessed advancements in art, architecture, and trade. The Malla era (1200-1769 CE) was characterized by multiple city-states ruled by different Malla kings. The Malla period saw a flourishing of arts, architecture, and religious practices, and the construction of many impressive temples and palaces. Nepal was first a kingdom, lasting almost 250 years, ruled by a King, known as the Shah by its people. King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the ruler of the small principality of Gorkha, gradually conquered neighboring kingdoms and unified Nepal into a single kingdom in 1768. His conquest of the country involved territorial clashes for land with the Chinese in the 18th century and British in the 19th century, but managed to maintain Nepal's independence.

During the Rana Regime which led from the mid-19th century until 1951, the Rana family held executive power in Nepal. They ruled as hereditary prime ministers, while the monarchy had a ceremonial role. The Rana regime was marked by autocratic rule and limited political freedom. In the early 1950s, popular





About Nepal + Major Historical Events

movements led to the overthrow of the Rana regime, and Nepal transitioned to a constitutional monarchy. King Tribhuvan played a crucial role in the democratic movement, and his grandson, King Birendra, implemented democratic reforms in the 1990s.

In 1963 Nepal abolished the Caste System, which is a 3,000 year old Hindu tradition that divided its people by four social hierarchies: Dalits, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The Kshatriyas were the highest in the hierarchy and those included were warriors and rulers. Second highest in the hierarchy was the Vaishyas, which included farmers, traders, and merchants. The Shudras consisted of laborers and was third in the hierarchy. At the bottom of the hierarchy were the Dalits, who were known as the outcastes, and included street sweepers and latrine cleaners. The Caste System was unfair and did not provide equal opportunities for all.

From 1996 to 2006, Nepal experienced a decade-long armed conflict between the government and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The

insurgency resulted in significant political and social changes. Following the end of the conflict, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in 2006. Nepal abolished the monarchy in 2008 and became a federal democratic republic. The country adopted a new constitution in 2015, establishing a federal system of governance. Nepal has witnessed ongoing political changes, including the formation of various governments and adjustments to the federal structure. The country's current government is a Federal Parliamentary Republic. Nepal's first woman president is Bidhya Devi Bhandari who was elected in October 2015. She made it a priority during her run as president to campaign for women's rights. The current president is Ram Chandra Poudel, who was elected in March 2023. Nepal's economy is primarily agrarian, with agriculture employing a significant portion of the population. Major crops include rice, wheat, maize, millet, and potatoes. However, due to low employment availability, many Nepalese migrate to neighboring countries to look for work. The country is working towards stability and effective governance.

Culture

Nepal has a diverse and spirited culture that reflects the country's ancient history, ethnic diversity, and religious beliefs. Nepal celebrates many festivals throughout the year. Some of the most prominent celebrations include: Dashain, Tihar, Holi, Teej, and Bisket Jatra. Bikram Sambat is Nepal's New Year's Day which is celebrated on April 14th in the Nepali calendar. These festivals are celebrated by intricate rituals, lively processions, music, dance, and feasts. They provide an opportunity for people to celebrate together. During celebrations and holidays, traditional attire of Nepal varies across ethnic groups. The national dress for men is the "Daura Suruwal," a knee-length garment with a shirt and a folded cap called a "Dhaka Topi." Women often wear the "Sari" or the "Gunyo Cholo," a long blouse paired with a wraparound

skirt. Music and dance also play an integral role in Nepalese culture and celebrations. Folk music, classical music, and religious hymns are popular forms of expression. Traditional musical instruments such as the tabla, sitar, sarangi, and flute are used. Various dance forms, including the famous masked dances of the Newar community, are performed during festivals and cultural events.

Nepalese cuisine is influenced by its neighboring countries, particularly India and Tibet (China). Nepalese commonly only eat two meals a day which is usually an early breakfast and a late dinner. Food in Nepal is similar to Indian traditional foods but is usually less spicy. Traditional foods integrate many commonly used Indian spices such as turmeric, chilis,

Culture

cumin and coriander. Chinese ingredients are also commonly used in Nepalese foods. Many dishes in Nepal are vegetarian but meats that you may find in this cuisine are chicken, sheep (mutton), water buffalo, and pork. Common foods enjoyed by Nepalese are: rice, aloo (potatoes), roti (flatbreads), Momos (steamed dumplings filled with spices, meats, and vegetables), and dhedo (stiff boiled flour porridge). Some special dishes in Nepal are: daal bhat, which is a rice dish enjoyed with a lentil stew, chatamari, which is a thick pancake that is similar to a pizza, made from rice flour topped with onions, vegetables, meat, eggs, and different types of spices. Meals are usually served on leaf plates. Cows are considered sacred animals in Nepal and are worshiped. It is actually illegal to slaughter a cow in Nepal. A common food etiquette in Nepal is using only your right hand to eat, which must be thoroughly

washed and has not touched anything else.

Arts and architecture in Nepal showcase a unique blend of Hindu and Buddhist religions. Intricate wood carvings, stone sculptures, and metalwork can be found in temples, palaces, and historical sites. The Kathmandu Valley is particularly renowned for its UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa, and Patan Durbar Square. Standing as the tallest mountain in the world, and one of the seven natural wonders, Mount Everest lies in the Himalayan region, bordering Nepal, China, and Tibet. Nepal is also known to house 8 of the 10 highest mountains on earth. Nepal's culture is a tapestry of diverse traditions, customs, and beliefs that have evolved over centuries. It continues to thrive, providing a unique identity and sense of pride to its people.

Religion

Hinduism makes up the largest religion practiced in Nepal. The second most practiced religion is Buddhism. Some Nepalese practice both Hinduism and Buddhism. Other religions practiced in Nepal are: Christianity, Islam, and Kirant.

Buddhism was introduced in the late 17th century B.C.E by Mongolian tribes called the Kiratis, and Hinduism was later implemented in the late 3rd century C.E. by the Indo-Aryan people called the Licchavis during the Mughal period. Unification of the people in the late 18th century under Rana rule made Hinduism the dominant religion. Nepal is considered the birthplace of Gautama Buddha. Other religions, such as Islam,

Christianity, and various indigenous beliefs, are followed by minority communities.

Nepal's religions practiced by its people vary from region to region. It is also common to practice more than one religion. More than 80 percent of Nepalese practice Hinduism which is a religion that came from India. Hinduism consists of daily prayers and offerings and may be practiced at any time. Buddhism is the second highest practiced religion in Nepal, and the most common form of Buddhism practiced is Tibetan Buddhism. Nepalese commonly practice both Hinduism and Buddhism, and even often share deities (divine beings) and temples.

Etiquette

Etiquettes practiced in Nepal include: customary greetings of placing your palms together in front of their chest and stating "namaste" which means "I greet the god within you", hand shaking is common among men, and physical contact and affection with opposite sexes are inappropriate in public. Nepalese people are known for their warm hospitality and

friendliness. Welcoming guests with a smile, offering food and drinks, and showing respect to elders are common cultural practices. It is customary to remove footwear before entering temples, monasteries, and homes. It is also an insult to hit or point at others with a shoe, and disrespectful to step over someone.

Education

Education in Nepal has made significant progress over the years, but challenges and disparities still exist. Nepal's education dates back to ancient times during the Gurukula system and went through significant changes during British rule and after gaining independence from Britain. Nepal's current education system is structured into primary, secondary, and higher education, which is governed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. Formal education is the mainstream system, delivered through schools and colleges. Non-formal education programs cater to individuals who may have missed formal education opportunities or require additional skills. These programs include literacy classes, vocational training, and adult education. The government has made efforts to improve access and enrollment rates. However, Nepal continues to face challenges in education, particularly in rural and remote areas. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, gender disparities, socio-economic barriers, and limited access to quality education for marginalized communities. Efforts are being made to address these issues through government policies, community involvement, and international collaborations.

Basic education is divided into two levels: primary (grades 1 to 5) and lower secondary (grades 6 to 10). Primary education is free and mandatory. The curriculum in Nepal includes a mix of subjects, including mathematics, science, social studies,

languages (Nepalese and English), and optional subjects like computer science and vocational education. Nepali is the primary language of instruction, with English being taught as a compulsory subject. After completing the lower secondary level, students can choose from different streams in higher secondary education, including science, management, humanities, and education. This specialization prepares students for university studies or vocational training. Nepal has universities, colleges, and institutions that offer undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Tribhuvan University is the oldest and largest university in Nepal, and named after King Tribhuvan. Other universities include Kathmandu University, Pokhara University, and several private universities. Higher education institutions offer degrees in various disciplines, including humanities, science, engineering, medicine, business, and more. The literacy rate in Nepal has been steadily increasing. According to the World Bank, the literacy rate for individuals aged 15 and above was around 67% in 2019.

Efforts are being made to improve literacy rates, with initiatives targeting both children and adults. While significant progress has been made in education in Nepal, there is still work to be done to ensure inclusive and quality education for all Nepalese citizens. Ongoing efforts aim to address the existing challenges and improve the overall education system in the country.

Migration History to San Diego

As of 2019, the Nepalese population in the U.S. is 198,000, with the largest settlement in Dallas, Texas. In California, the largest Nepalese population is in the city of Weaverville. The Nepalese population in San Diego only makes up less than one percent.



Working With This Population

Counseling services in Nepal have been evolving over the years to address the mental health needs of the population. Counseling services in Nepal are typically provided by mental health professionals such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and licensed counselors. Counseling services are offered in various settings, including government hospitals, private clinics, counseling centers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Urban areas, such as Kathmandu, have a higher concentration of counseling services compared to rural areas, where access to mental health services may be limited. Nepal's counseling services take into account the country's cultural context and values. Professionals aim to provide culturally sensitive counseling that respects and integrates cultural beliefs, traditions, and social norms. This includes understanding the influence of religion, family systems, and community dynamics on mental health. Nepali is the primary language used in counseling services, but there are also professionals who provide counseling in English and other regional languages. In some cases, counseling services in Nepal

may integrate traditional healing practices, such as mindfulness meditation, yoga, and Ayurvedic approaches. These practices are often seen as complementary to Western therapeutic techniques and are utilized to promote holistic well-being.

Efforts are being made in Nepal to raise awareness about mental health issues, reduce stigma, and promote the importance of seeking counseling services. Organizations and initiatives are working towards destigmatizing mental health problems and advocating for the integration of mental health services into the overall healthcare system. It's important to note that while counseling services are available in Nepal, there may still be challenges in terms of accessibility, especially in rural areas. Efforts are ongoing to expand and improve mental health services across the country to meet the growing needs of the population. When working with all refugees and immigrants, please refer them to basic needs resources on and off campus.

Local Restaurants

Dancing Yak by Taste of the Himalayas

9474 Black Mountain Rd Ste g/h San Diego, CA 92126

dancingyaksd.com

Himalayan Cuisine

7918 El Cajon Blvd Ste P La Mesa, CA 91942

himalayancuisineone.com

Everest Himalayan Cuisine

745 S Coast Hwy 101 Ste 103J Encinitas, CA 92024

everesthimalayansd.com

San Diego Resources

Consulate General of Nepal in San Diego, United States

embassypages.com

San Diego Nepalese Association - SDNA

<https://www.facebook.com/people/San-Diego-Nepalese-Association-SDNA/100070284827389/>

Philippines

175 ethnolinguistic groups

Languages: Filipino and English official, 120 and 170 distinct indigenous languages.

Religions: Roman Catholicism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

Population: 109 million

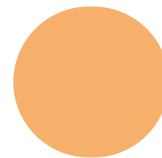
About The Philippines + Major Historical Events

The Philippines is an archipelagic country located in Southeast Asia, comprising over 7,100 islands and a population of over 110 million people. The Philippines has a rich history influenced by its various colonizers, including the Spanish, the Americans, and the Japanese. The country gained independence from the United States in 1946 and has since established itself as a democratic republic.

Filipino culture is a blend of indigenous, Malay, Chinese, Spanish, and American influences. The national language is Filipino, which is based on Tagalog, and English is widely spoken and used for government and business transactions.

The Philippine economy is also diverse, with industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services contributing to its growth. The country is known for its natural resources, including minerals, forests, and marine biodiversity. Tourism is also a significant contributor to the economy.

The Philippines is a melting pot of different religions, with most of the population being Roman Catholic. Other major religions include Islam, Protestantism, and Buddhism. The country is also known for its colorful festivals, which reflect its rich cultural heritage.





Culture

The culture of the Philippines is a unique blend of Southeast Asian, Spanish, and American influences. The country's long history of colonization and trade has resulted in a diverse and multicultural society with a rich tradition of art, music, dance, and cuisine.

One of the most distinctive features of Philippine culture is its strong emphasis on family and community. Filipino families are typically close-knit and often include extended relatives, godparents, and close family friends. This emphasis on family is also reflected in many cultural traditions, such as the celebration of important life events like weddings, baptisms, and fiestas. The extended family unit is a vibrant example of tight-knit support systems, where individuals help one another no matter the exact blood proximity.

Music and dance are also an important part of Philippine culture. Traditional dances like the Tinikling, which involves dancers jumping over bamboo poles, and the Singkil, which is a royal court dance, are popular forms of cultural expression. Music plays a significant role in Philippine culture as well, with traditional instruments like the kulintang and the kudyapi being used in many different musical styles. In contemporary music, B-boy bands

have gained immense popularity in the Philippines, captivating audiences with their high-energy dance routines and dynamic performances. Their unique blend of hip-hop, acrobatics, and storytelling has had a significant cultural impact, inspiring a new generation of dancers and contributing to the vibrant hip-hop scene in the country.

The Philippines is also known for its rich and diverse cuisine, which features a fusion of indigenous, Spanish, and Asian flavors. Popular dishes include adobo (a savory meat stew), sinigang (a sour soup), and lechon (a roasted pig dish). Filipino cuisine has gained significant international recognition in recent years, with its unique blend of flavors and diverse culinary traditions captivating the taste buds of food enthusiasts worldwide. Particularly, the rising popularity of ube, a vibrant purple yam used in various desserts and dishes, has played a pivotal role in introducing Filipino flavors to a global audience and further establishing Filipino cuisine as a prominent player in the international culinary scene.

Overall, the culture of the Philippines is a colorful and diverse mix of traditions, beliefs, and practices that reflect the country's rich history and multicultural society.

Religion

The Philippines is known for its religious diversity, with Christianity being the predominant religion. Approximately 80% of the population identifies as Catholic, a legacy of the country's colonial past under Spain, which introduced Christianity to the Philippines in the 16th century.

Aside from Catholicism, there are also significant Protestant and Evangelical Christian communities in the country, making up around 10% of the population.

These groups include the Iglesia ni Cristo, the Philippine Independent Church, and various Baptist and Methodist denominations.

Islam is the second-largest religion in the Philippines, with around 5-6% of the population identifying as Muslim. Most Muslims in the Philippines are concentrated in the southern part of the country, particularly in the provinces of Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan.

Philippines

Religion

There are also significant populations of Buddhists and Taoists, particularly among the Chinese-Filipino community, as well as smaller communities of Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews.

In recent years, there has been a

growth in non-religious or secular belief systems in the country. However, religious belief and practices remain an important aspect of daily life and cultural identity for many Filipinos, and religious festivals and traditions are celebrated throughout the year.

Etiquette

Filipino culture places significant importance on respect, hospitality, and close-knit family ties, which are reflected in its cultural etiquette. When interacting with others, Filipinos commonly use "po" and "opo" as expressions of respect, particularly when addressing elders or individuals in authority. It is customary to greet others with a warm smile and a handshake, often accompanied by "Mano po," a gesture of respect where one takes the hand of an elder and places it on their forehead. Family gatherings and communal meals are essential aspects of Filipino culture, and it is considered polite

to accept food and drinks when offered, even if just a symbolic amount, as a sign of appreciation. Removing one's shoes before entering someone's home is a common practice to show cleanliness and respect for the household. Additionally, Filipinos value modesty and humility, so it is considered respectful to avoid boasting or drawing excessive attention to oneself. Overall, exhibiting kindness, consideration, and a sense of community are fundamental aspects of cultural etiquette in Filipino culture.

Education

The Philippines has made significant progress in improving access to education over the past few decades. Basic education in the country consists of six years of primary school and six years of secondary school, with a mandatory kindergarten year before primary school. The government provides free education in public schools up to the secondary level, while private schools charge tuition fees.

However, despite these efforts, access to education remains a challenge, particularly for students in remote or impoverished areas. With the cultural norm of children working alongside parents to support the family financially as a whole, money in low-income communities is often prioritized over a child's education in order to meet

day-to-day essential needs. Dropout rates are also relatively high, with around 10% of primary school students not completing their education, and around 12% of secondary school students not graduating.

Higher education is also available in the Philippines, with universities, colleges, and technical schools offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) regulates higher education institutions in the country and aims to ensure that the quality of education meets international standards.

According to the World Bank, the literacy rate in the Philippines was around 98.3% in 2019, indicating a relatively high level of education attainment among the population. However, there are still significant

Philippines

Education

disparities in educational attainment between urban and rural areas, as well as between different socioeconomic groups. Additionally, there are concerns about the

quality of education in the country, with some students graduating from high school without the necessary skills to succeed in college or in the workforce.

Migration History to San Diego

The influx of Filipino immigrants to San Diego began in the early 20th century when the United States acquired the Philippines as a territory. Many Filipinos initially came as farm laborers, working in the agricultural industry, but later waves of immigrants arrived seeking better economic opportunities, education, and escape from

political turmoil. During the 1930s and 1940s, many Filipinos faced discrimination and challenges due to restrictive immigration laws, yet they persevered and established close-knit communities, centered around places like the historic “Manila Village” in National City.

Working With This Population

In the Philippines, there is a cultural perspective on mental health that emphasizes the importance of family and social support networks. Traditionally, Filipinos may seek advice from family members, religious leaders, or traditional healers for emotional or mental health issues. However, over the years, attitudes towards therapy and psychiatry have become more positive and accepting. Therapy and counseling are becoming more common in urban areas, particularly among younger generations who may be more open to seeking professional help for mental health concerns.

There is also a growing recognition of the importance of mental health and the need for access to mental health services. However, mental health services are still limited and often inaccessible to many Filipinos, particularly those in rural areas. There is also a stigma attached to mental illness, with many Filipinos still associating

mental health concerns with weakness or a lack of faith.

In addition, cultural factors such as the emphasis on “pakikisama” (maintaining harmonious relationships with others) and the importance of the family unit may affect how Filipinos perceive and approach therapy. Filipinos may prioritize the needs and expectations of their family and community over their individual needs and may view seeking help for mental health concerns as a personal failure or a burden on their loved ones.

Overall, while there is a growing awareness and acceptance of therapy and psychiatry in the Philippines, there are still cultural factors that may affect how Filipinos perceive and approach mental health concerns and treatment.

Traditional modes of therapeutic counseling in the Philippines are often

Philippines

Working With This Population

rooted in the country's cultural and spiritual beliefs. Some examples are Pagpapahid, the practice of using herbal medicines and ointments to treat physical and emotional ailments. The belief is that the application of these natural remedies can help heal the body and mind. Hilot is a form of traditional massage that is often used to relieve physical pain and discomfort. It is also believed to help promote emotional and spiritual well-being. Pasyon is a form of Catholic religious chanting that is often used in healing rituals. The chanting is believed to have spiritual power and can help alleviate physical and emotional pain. Faith healing is popular, in which people believe that prayer and divine intervention can help heal physical and emotional ailments. Faith healers are often sought after for their ability to connect with the divine and provide spiritual guidance.

There is a concept for inner dialog and self-reflection called Usapang Pangkalooban, which refers to the thoughts, emotions, and reflections that a person experiences within themselves. It can also refer to conversations or discussions about one's inner self or personal issues with oneself or with others. Essentially, it pertains to the private and intimate conversation one has with oneself or with others regarding personal and sensitive topics.

It's important to note that while these traditional modes of counseling may be helpful for some individuals, they should not be used as a substitute for professional mental health services. In cases of severe mental health conditions, it is important to seek help from licensed mental health professionals who can provide evidence-based treatment and support.

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Philippines

San Diego Resources

Filipino-American Community Development Center (FACDC)

<https://filipinocdc.org/>

Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS) San Diego Chapter

<http://fanhs-national.org/filam/>

San Diego Filipino Cinema (SDFC)

<http://fanhs-national.org/filam/>

Samahan Health Centers

<https://www.opsam.org/>

Filipino-American Lawyers of San Diego (FALSD)

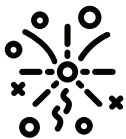
<https://falsd.org/>

Philippine American Association of San Diego (PAASD)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/46035993837/>

San Diego-based Filipino Student Associations

<https://filipinoorganizations.com/us/california/san-diego>



Reviewer: Joseph Dizon

Puerto Rico

Afro-Latino, Latino/e, White

Languages: Multilingual English and Spanish

Religions: Catholic, Christianity

Population: 3.1 million as of 2022

About Puerto Rico + Major Historical Events

Puerto Rico's history is shaped by a blend of indigenous, European, African, and American cultures. The island was first inhabited by indigenous people, known as the Taíno people, for more than over a thousand years before Christopher Columbus claimed it for Spain in 1493. Puerto Rico was first named San Juan Bautista by Christopher Columbus, but was renamed Puerto Rico (rich port) soon after, when an abundance of gold was found in the rivers of the island. The Taíno culture was almost completely wiped out by the Spanish conquest and the diseases brought by the Europeans. Prior to being colonized, the Taíno people worshiped many gods, were deeply spiritual, and relied and prayed upon their natural surroundings and resources. New religions were imposed on the Taíno people when Spanish settlers overtook the country. Christianity was introduced during the late 1400s by Christopher Columbus, and Catholicism was introduced in the early 1500s by Ponce de Leon. Puerto Rico was a Spanish colony for over 400 years. The Spanish brought slaves from Africa to work on plantations and slavery was sadly part of Puerto Rican's history, until slavery was finally abolished in 1873. Another important part of Puerto Rican history was the Grito de Lares, which occurred during 1868, where a rebellion against Spanish rule was led by Ramón Emeterio Betances and Segundo Ruiz Belvis. Although the uprising was unsuccessful, the event is remembered as a symbol of Puerto Rican nationalism.

In 1898 the United States took possession of the island as part of the Treaty of Paris agreement after the Spanish-American War. This is the same time when the United States also took control of Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam. The US occupation lasted until 1952, when Puerto Rico became a commonwealth of the United States with a measure of self-government. The Foraker Act was established by the civil government in 1900 which granted the island with limited self-governance. The United States established a naval base and military government on the island, but Puerto Ricans were not granted U.S. citizenship until 1917. Although Puerto Ricans may gain U.S. citizenship, they are still not able to vote.

Throughout its history, Puerto Rico has been a melting pot of different cultures. The Spanish colonizers brought with them their language, religion, and customs, which remain dominant on the island. African slaves were brought over to work on plantations, and their cultural influence can be seen in the music, dance, and food of Puerto Rico. The United States also left its mark on the island, particularly in terms of language and popular culture. Despite its challenges of ongoing economic struggles and natural disasters, like Hurricane Maria and Fiona which damaged many parts of the island in 2017 and 2022, Puerto Rico remains a proud and resilient culture with a unique identity and history.



Puerto Rico

Culture

Puerto Rico is located in the West Indies and is a large Caribbean Island that is about 3,500 square miles. Puerto Rico means rich port. The capital of Puerto Rico is San Juan. The official language of Puerto Rico is Spanish and English. As of 2022, the country's population is about 3.1 million. Ninety-nine percent of Puerto Ricans are ethnically Latinos, from Spanish descent, and they commonly call themselves Puertorriqueños. However, many Puerto Ricans identify as White, due to their European background. Puerto Rican culture includes a blend of Taino, Spanish, and African cultures. Catholicism and Christian are the primary religions practiced in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico's rich culture comes from the diversity of immigrants from Italy, France, Germany, Cuba, Lebanon, Scotland, Ireland and Dominican Republic. The island is known for its beautiful beaches, tropical climate, and colorful festivals, such as the annual Carnaval de Ponce and the Fiestas de la Calle San Sebastián. The music of Puerto Rico includes: salsa, merengue, and reggaeton, and is famous all around the world. American holidays are celebrated in Puerto Rico, however food customs are different. For example, for Thanksgiving, Puerto Ricans cook their turkey with a local seasoning mix known as adobe. Other ceremonial and common cuisine enjoyed by Puerto Ricans include: Pernil/lechón asado, which is a spit-roasted pork; pasteles, which is a plantain or yucca

tamales; and arroz con gandules, which is rice with pigeon peas. Sugarcane and coffee plantations help the economy of Puerto Rico. Today, Puerto Rico remains a vibrant and diverse society, and continues to be rich in traditions and customs.

Puerto Rico has made significant contributions to popular culture and music on both the national and international stages. Puerto Rico is known to be the Salsa Capital of the World, incorporating Cuban and Afro-Caribbean music that has been deeply rooted on the island. A few legendary musicians are Héctor Lavoe, Willie Colón, and Tito Puente who have made significant contributions to the music genre.

A popular group of salsa musicians known as the Fania All-Stars have also played a pivotal role in popularizing salsa worldwide. Reggaeton is another music genre on the island that became popularized in the late 20th century, combining elements of hip-hop, dancehall, and Latin rhythms. Popular artists such as Daddy Yankee, Don Omar, and Wisin & Yandel are some of the genre's pioneers and global ambassadors. Another known popular artist is Bad Bunny. Reggaeton has become immensely popular internationally, with its influence extending to mainstream pop music. Music from the island continues to thrive worldwide and has been topping many music charts.



Puerto Rico

Religion

Prior to being colonized, the Taíno people worshiped many gods, were deeply spiritual, and relied and prayed upon their natural surroundings and resources. New religions were imposed on the Taíno people when Spanish settlers overtook the country.

Christianity was introduced to the country during the late 1400s by Christopher Columbus. Catholicism was later introduced in the early 1500s by Ponce de Leon. Catholicism and Christianity are the primary religions practiced in Puerto Rico.

Etiquette

Some etiquettes practiced in this Puerto Rico include: indirectness is considered rude unless you are a close friend with boundaries of respect maintained, public expressiveness is common and welcomed as long as it is not excessive, greeting each other with kisses is

customary, and *relajo* is a common practice to joke or tease used to criticize others indirectly. We also must remain mindful that some words in Puerto Rican differ from Mexican-Spanish; some words have very different meanings and it is best to ask than to assume.

Education

Puerto Rico's education system is governed by the Puerto Rican Department of Education, which oversees the operation of both public and private schools on the island. Public education in Puerto Rico is free and compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 and 18. Puerto Rico's education system is modeled after the United States, with English and Spanish being the primary languages of instruction. However, there has been ongoing debate over the extent to which English should be prioritized in the classroom, with some arguing that Spanish should remain the primary language of instruction due to its cultural and historical significance in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is

home to several universities and colleges, including the University of Puerto Rico, which has multiple campuses throughout the island. However, the island's education system has faced significant challenges in recent years, with budget cuts, political instability, and the aftermath of Hurricane Maria all impacting the quality of education in some areas. Additionally, many Puerto Rican students face linguistic and cultural barriers that can make it difficult for them to succeed in the classroom. Despite these challenges, efforts are underway to improve the education system in Puerto Rico and ensure that all students have access to high-quality, equitable educational opportunities.

Migration History to San Diego

From 2017 to 2018, following Hurricane Maria, more Puerto Ricans have moved to the mainland United States, with

the largest settlement being in Florida. As of 2019, the total population of Puerto Ricans residing in San Diego is about 10,900.

Puerto Rico

Working With This Population

Counseling practices in Puerto Rico are similar to those in the United States, as it is a U.S. territory. Licensed counselors, therapists, and psychologists provide mental health services, including individual and group counseling. However, Puerto Ricans also have a unique cultural background with high regard in family values, and counseling practices may reflect this. Many Puerto Ricans value close-knit families and community support, so counselors may emphasize the importance of seeking help and support from loved ones or community members, as often

Puerto Ricans tend to try to resolve any issues within the family first. Religion is also an essential part of many Puerto Ricans' lives, and some counselors may integrate spirituality and faith-based practices into counseling sessions. Counseling practices in Puerto Rico aim to provide culturally sensitive and effective mental health services to individuals and communities. When working with all refugees and immigrants, please refer them to basic needs resources on and off campus as needed.

Local Restaurants

- **Wanda Puerto Rican Cuisine**

Wanda Padilla (@wandapuertoricancuisine) • Instagram photos and videos

- **JIBARITO'S DE LA ISLA**

Jibaritos De Isla (jibaritoisla.com) • 5080 BONITA RD, BONITA, CA 91902

- **Tainos Puerto Rican Cuisine**

Tainos Restaurant | 619-708-8381 | Chula Vista, CA 91910

San Diego Resources

House of Puerto Rico

<https://houseofpuertorico.com/>

National Conference of Puerto Rican Women

<https://www.nacoprw.org/home>

Somalia

Bantu, Somali

Clans: The four dominant clans are Darod, Dir, Hawiye, and Isaaq

Languages: Arabic, Gosha, Somali

Religions: Sunni Islam

Population: 17.07 Million

About Somalia + Major Historical Events

The Somali Civil War began in the late 1980s and ended with an overthrow of the government in 1991. As a result of all the fighting, political instability, and danger, many Somalis sought refuge in other countries for safety. This meant that an estimate of over 2 million Somalis are refugees throughout the world, several of which are still residing in refugee camps. The number of Somali refugees in the US is counted as 150,000, 40,000-80,000 of which reside in Minnesota. While Minnesota is home to most of the Somali population in the US, many have found their homes in San Diego.



About Somalia + Major Historical Events

Several Somalis have based their location on the idea of being close to family or individuals they have close relations to. In the early 1980s, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) helped resettle many Ethiopians fleeing war, with many of them being ethnically Somali from an Ethiopian territory called Ogaden. The idea that a resettlement

agency and familial/cultural ties already existed in San Diego, many Somalis decided to relocate there. Currently, an estimated 20,000 Somalis reside in San Diego, where the dominant population live in City Heights, which has been dubbed as “Little Mogadishu” (the capital of Somalia).

Culture

Somalia is community based in terms of their cultural practices. Somalis pride themselves in the fact that they are generally a friendly society as they can form close friendships with just about anyone. It is common for Somali families to open their homes for friends, especially during hardships; this notion is also expected to be reciprocated by the friends as well. People can typically find Somali men socializing in tea shops and in the local streets, whereas Somali women can be found spontaneously visiting their neighbors. This type of social life can be a factor as to why generosity is a key value in Somalia.

Generosity is a core principle in Somali society as they find fulfillment in being helpful, charitable, and hospitable to everyone they come across. They take helping others very seriously as they will aid with money, food, time, housing, and personal connections to make sure others are being supported during difficult times. It is a usual occurrence to see Somalis spontaneously help others as they like to focus on what they can do in the present rather than just focusing on how it could affect them in the future. This type of generosity can be seen when an individual pays for a stranger's food or when traveling alone and the locals will be hospitable to them during their stay.



Religion

Islam is the presiding religion in Somalia which is practiced by 99% of the population. Most of the population follow the Sunni branch of Islam, however there are followers of the Sufi and Shia branches as well. Practicing their faith is a central aspect in their daily life as Islam is strongly linked to their identity and ways of living. The practices of Islam are also taken into consideration in regards to their government legislation in which laws are created based on Sharia law where certain behaviors that are not Islamically appropriate become illegal in law.

Since religion is a fundamental aspect in Somalia, it is unusual to see a “non-practicing Muslim” as it is so ingrained into their society. Somalis practice in several different ways during their daily lives: through their clothing, diet, prayers, and speech. It is common and natural for Somalis to speak words of praise of God in casual conversation. For Muslims, it is important to always remember God and his blessings, so it is very normal to use phrases such as inshAllah (God willing), mashAllah (God willed it), barak Allahu feek (may God bless you), and many more.

Etiquette

Being late is common amongst friends and family- it does not imply disrespect. Somalis are considered to be patient, so they typically do not worry about waiting for a guest to arrive. However, being late is considered inappropriate in professional settings.

Somalis have great respect for their elders; it is considered rude to openly disagree with an elder or telling them what to do. Children and young

adults must stand up when an elder enters the room and should even offer their seats to them.

When offering to pay for a meal, it is considered to be polite by initially refusing. However, after a couple of attempts of insisting, it is okay to accept the offer and to show gratitude.

Education

Somalia's education system was impacted by the civil war that began in 1991. Since then, reformations were less focused on rebuilding academic institutions and more centralized on reconstructing homes, businesses, and the economy. Since several people left the country to seek safety, the amount of qualified professionals in Somalia also decreased. When academia was still taking place, it meant that the classroom was not filled with resources to succeed and instructors were less qualified to teach the curriculum. However, in recent years, there are more efforts to improve the education system as Somalia is receiving more funding and support from international organizations. As of 2019, the United States Agency for International Development promised to give 50 million dollars in aid to rebuild and improve the education system; this

sentiment is also being followed by other foreign countries as Somalia's education system is in dire need of funding.

While academic institutions are still in the process of being rebuilt, there are many universities that are still producing graduate students. For instance, the University of Somalia, located in Mogadishu, reports around 14,355 graduated students as of 2022. There are currently 10,810 students enrolled for their undergraduate studies and 905 postgraduate students, with 405 faculty instructing their education. The University of Somalia also has the largest programs for health science, computer science, and business administration in Mogadishu.

Migration History to San Diego

The idea that familial/cultural ties already existed in San Diego pushed many Somalis to relocate there. Currently, an estimated 20,000 Somalis reside in San Diego, where the dominant population live in City Heights, which has been dubbed as "Little

Mogadishu" (the capital of Somalia). The largest population of Somalis live in Minneapolis-St. Paul Bloomington, Minnesota.

Working With This Population

Somalis do not have a word in their language for mental health; there are no words for depression, anxiety, PTSD, or many other mental health issues. There are only two spectrums for a person to fall in: sanity or insanity. Mental health is not spoken about at all amongst their communities and for this reason, many don't seek help. It is important to note that with Somalis not having terms to define these mental health issues, it may be a challenge to have conversations with them in regards to that. It would be best to practice patience and skillfully explaining what each mental health issue entails to learn what the individual may be enduring.

Somalis often view mental health on the idea of an individual being "crazy" (waali) or "not crazy"; their interpretation of mental health does not seem to have a spectrum since an individual can only be categorized as the two with no in between. With this notion, Somalis may often internalize their struggles with mental health as there is a current stigma surrounding mental illnesses. However, it appears

that mental health and treatment are still newer concepts to Somalis as they don't have specific translations in Somali for names of mental illnesses. More often, mental health providers will describe the illness through its evident symptoms rather than giving it an actual name. As healthcare providers are slowly integrating mental health care in their practice, it is more common to resort to traditional healing.

Somalis believe that many ailments are caused by spiritual causes so it is important to recite verses from the Quran to bring healing; another method is to use herbs and oils to help with the ailment. Traditional healers, elders, or religious leaders are called upon to help in these instances so that the individual with the illness is able to get treatment through Islamic means.



Restaurants

Faridas Somali Cuisine

1754 Euclid Ave, San Diego, CA 92105

<https://places.singleplatform.com/faridas-bistro/menu?ref=google>

Fatuma Restaurant

4869 University Ave, San Diego, CA 92105

<https://fatumacuisine.menufy.com/>



Resources

Somali Family Service

5348 University Avenue, Unit 203

San Diego, CA 92105

<http://www.somalifamilyservice.org/>

Somali Community San Diego

<https://www.guidestar.org/profile/91-2065038>

Reviewer: Sabrin Farah

Southern California Indigenous People: Kumeyaay

Languages:

Yuman Language Group: Kumeyaay Language.
Two Dialects: Northern and Southern.

Religions: 'Tiipay Stories (Creation Stories)

Population: As of 2016, according to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival Blog, about 4,250 Kumeyaay people.

Major Historical Events - Pre-Contact

Kumeyaay People did not have a written language, so their method of passing knowledge down was through oral traditions. From these tellings, there are historical facts that were preserved over the generations. For instance, Kumeyaay People believe they are on the land from the beginning of time and it is where they originated from. They believe that their creator gave them all of the knowledge to successfully live on the land, which can be seen through their practices and traditions throughout the year.

Kumeyaay People were known to always be outside- everything was done outdoors whether it was cooking, basketry, pottery, knapping, and many other

activities. However, they did have a shelter, called an 'Ewaa, where they would sleep; the Spanish term, Ramada, is used today to refer to their shade or rain structures. Traditionally, men and boys wouldn't wear any clothes, except for a belt or pouch where they could hold their tools. Women and girls would wear willow bark skirts, which wasn't used for modesty, but was utilized as a cushion from the hard ground they would sit on while grinding acorns. Everything Kumeyaay People did was out of respect for those around them as well as their environment- while the resources helped take care of them, they also took care of the resources.

Southern California Indigenous People: Kumeyaay

Major Historical Events - Post-Contact

In 1769, Spain sent priest Junia Serra and soldiers to Alta California in which the establishment of the first mission in the region was created; this showed Spain's dedication to colonization and spreading the word of Christianity. This major development had immense consequences for the indigenous Kumeyaay People, as their way of life had gone through irreversible changes. The arrival of Spanish colonizers and the missions brought changes to the Kumeyaay People's way of life, culture, language, beliefs, and economic practices.

In 1775, Kumeyaay People revolted against the Spanish colonizers when they set the San Diego Mission on fire. This act of resistance was a response to the significant changes and disruptions caused by the Spanish colonization and the establishment of missions in the region. The Kumeyaay felt the pressure with the intrusion of their land and the transformative intentions of the mission system, so they staged an uprising that resulted in the destruction of the San Diego Mission.

From 1821 to 1848, Kumeyaay People were under Mexican rule. The Mexican influence subjugated the Natives to harsh conditions which affected much of their livelihood. After Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1821, many of the established missions were secularized in 1833; they went from being religious institutions to

cattle ranches where the Natives were forcefully used as laborers.

In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed to end the Mexican-American war as well as to transfer the SouthWest lands to the US. In 1850, the Act for the Government and Protection of Indians was enacted. While this sounded like an act in favor of the Native people, it actually facilitated removing Kumeyaay People from their traditional lands. While there is uncertainty about the population of Kumeyaay People during pre-contact, it has been found that 90% of Native population died from diseases brought by the outsiders as well as by genocide post-contact.

The land was never ceded, meaning Kumeyaay People never formally transferred their land to another group; all of this happened without the consent of Kumeyaay People. Kumeyaay People have had to endure over 250 years of newcomers taking over their traditional lands and forcing them to assimilate and adapt their cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. It is crucial to note that Kumeyaay People resisted the attempts of assimilation and still practice their traditional ways.



Southern California Indigenous People: Kumeyaay

Pre-Contact Culture

Acorns were a great source of food because of their longevity and durability; when they are still in their shells, they can stay edible for up to 2-3 years before they go rancid. For this reason, acorns were an important staple in their food and were often a side dish to their main meals which consisted of big horned sheep, deer, rabbits, lizards, and more. Kumeyaay People would gather the acorns during the Fall and would begin to prepare it as a dish called Shawii, while saving the surplus that was left over for upcoming years. They would begin by removing the acorns from their shell, grinding them until very fine and with the consistency of flour, then clean them by leaching them. Leaching is a method of using a traditional leaching basket that is lined with leaves, then pouring hot water over the flour multiple times (usually around 7 washes) until the bitter taste is gone.

The acorn flour would then be cooked in a basket, which is tightly woven and can hold water, to make the Shawii.

Pottery was also an integral part of Kumeyaay culture and practices. There were several different functions for the pottery they created, which came in different shapes and sizes. A couple of different pottery were water pots, doublâe mouth pots, and seed pots. The water pots have small openings at the top to prevent water from sloshing out while walking from a river or a stream. The double mouth pot had two openings on each end and it was meant to be used as a canteen. The seed pot had a very small opening at the top which was to prevent mice or any other animals from reaching in and taking the seeds. These pots were all handmade and fire-hardened in an outdoor fire pit and would often have fire clouds on them from the heat of the fuel.

Philosophy

Kumeyaay People believe in a persisting connection to the land, maintaining that they have been present on their ancestral territories since the beginning of time. Their cultural beliefs emphasize a deep spiritual connection to the land, viewing it as an essential part of their identity and existence. According to Kumeyaay oral storytelling traditions, their creation stories often represent

their arrival from the Earth or other natural elements, emphasizing the idea that they have an ancient and natural relationship with the land. This belief in a persisting presence on the land from time immemorial not only shapes the Kumeyaay worldview but also highlights their deep connection to the landscapes they have inhabited for countless generations.



Southern California Indigenous People: Kumeyaay

Etiquette

When greeting someone from the Kumeyaay community, it is common to shake hands and ask about their wellbeing as well as their family's. While many Kumeyaay individuals don't mind handshakes, there are a number that prefer traditional greetings- it is important to follow their lead when unsure of how to properly or respectfully greet them.

Showing respect to elders in the community is very important because it is believed that elders hold significant wisdom and are seen as community leaders. It is often encouraged to use honorifics when speaking to them or about them in conversation.

Education

According to a research study done by Ricardo Rafael Ramos in 2021, Kumeyaay college students felt that they did not feel welcome in the institutions as an Indigenous person. They often had to contradict their professors when learning about California history because it was often taught through a Eurocentric perspective and diminished the lived experiences of the Indigenous peoples. Students also experienced microaggressions during their time

in college and felt that they did not have a support system. Several of the participants in this study believe there needs to be representation and open minded faculty where alternate perspectives could be heard without judgment.

The participants also felt that having a strong Native community on campus can build a sense of belonging and will help motivate them to achieve their goals.



Southern California Indigenous People: Kumeyaay

Working With This Population

A sobriety gathering in the Kumeyaay community is an event or ceremony that promotes a sober and healthy lifestyle amongst the people. These sobriety gatherings are held to support Kumeyaay members who are currently in recovery from alcohol or substance abuse; it is meant to encourage others to stay resilient and continue to work on themselves as individuals.

These ceremonies are a great opportunity for community support; it creates a safe and understanding environment for those who are in recovery and lets them know that

they are not alone in their journey. Through these gatherings, they are able to share their stories on how they are continuously overcoming addiction and how they have persevered through the challenges. Today, Kumeyaay People come together for traditional gatherings to sing traditional songs, dance, play traditional games, and perform certain ceremonies. They often strengthen the bond of the community while also spiritually connecting with one another.

San Diego Resources

Barona Cultural Center & Museum

<https://www.baronamuseum.com/>

- As San Diego County's first museum on an Indian reservation dedicated to the perpetuation and presentation of the local Kumeyaay-Diegueño Native culture

National Indigenous Women Resource Center

<https://www.niwrc.org/>

- Dedicated to Restoring Sovereignty and Safeguarding Native Women and Children

First Nations Development Institute

<https://www.firstnations.org/our-values/>

- First Nations Development Institute improves economic conditions for Native Americans through technical assistance & training, advocacy & policy, and direct financial grants

Reviewers:

- Jennifer Stone,

Barona Museum

- Laury June Wesley,

Abenaki Tribe, lives in San Carlos Apache Reservation

Syria

**Arab, Kurdish, Assyrian, Armenians,
Circassian, Chench, Turkish**

Languages: Arabic, Kurdish, Aramaic, Assyrian, Syriac,
Armenian, Turkmen

Religions: Alawi, Druze, Islam, Ismaili, Orthodox Christian,
Catholic, Protestant, Judaism, Yazidi

Population: 18.6 million

About Syria + Major Historical Events

Syria has a long history being that it is known to be one of the oldest regions with human findings dating back as far as 700,000 years ago. Many human remains have been found in the Dederiyeh Caves, also placing Neanderthals in this region at this time.

Through archeology, scientists have been able to learn somewhat about the early people of Syria. Scientists have found ceramics and crude tools among the human remains, as well as indication that there was a history of migration. The indication of migration at this time is indicated by the changes observed in ceramics and tools found in the area. However, due to a lack of recorded history, these changes could have also been a result of exchanges with other tribes or development in manufacturing goods, rather than migration.

In its earliest recorded history, Syria was known as Eber Nari, or 'across the river' by the Mesopotamians, and included the areas now known as Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. The name Eber Nari is recorded in the Bible, as well as in the scribes of Assyrian and Persian kingdoms. Although there are many theories as to where Syria has gotten its modern name from, it is commonly agreed by scientists that it most likely derived from Herodotus, who called the entire area of Mesopotamia 'Assyria'. Eventually, the name would then just be changed to Syria, as it is called today.

As Syria began to grow, Ebla and Mari became two of the most important cities in Mesopotamia. The cities of Ebla and Mari were developed as early as 3000-4000 BCE and were large trade centers.

About Syria + Major Historical Events

By 2334 BCE, the region was conquered by Sargon the Great, and became a part of his Akkadian Empire. During its time under the Akkadian Empire, the cities experienced much damage and many things were destroyed. Following the collapse of the Akkadian Empire, Syria became under the control of Amorites, and was known as the Land of Amurru. Syria would then go on to be ruled by different Mesopotamian Empires including the Kingdom of Mittani and the Hittite Empire. During its time under Mesopotamian rule, Syria would be seen as a prized trade center with ports on the Mediterranean. Due to its strategic location and access to ports, it was definitely sought after by other empires as well, including Egypt. During the rule of the Hittites, Egypt would often find itself in battle with the empire. Both empires presented strong armies, so neither would really win a battle. These types of battles with surrounding empires would continue until the fall of Assyria in 612 BCE.

Following the fall of the empire, the region was then controlled by Babylon. In later years, the region would fall under the control of the Roman Empire by 332 BCE under Alexander the Great. While being ruled by the Romans, Syria was an integral part of the empire and the republic owing to the lucrative trade routes and Mediterranean ports. Eventually, the Roman Empire fell and Syria would later become part of the Eastern Byzantine Empire and remained an important area of trade. Syria would then be conquered by Muslims in 637 CE, leading Syria to join the Rashidun Caliphate. Many Syrians were Christians at this time, however the change in power did not necessarily have a negative impact. The Muslim conquerors allowed people to practice the religion of their choice in peace. Although there was still religious freedom, many Syrians began to convert to Islam.

Following the Muslim dynasties, Syria found itself under the control

of France. France was able to secure control over Syria after the Battle of Maysaloun in 1920, and won the approval of the League of Nations. The French rule lasted for about two decades, before gaining independence in 1946. The Syrian Republic was then formed in 1932 and based on a parliamentary system with the official authority coming from legislation. In the first year of the new governmental system, Ali Abed was named the country's first president, followed by Hashim Atassin in 1936. Soon after, the relationship between the state of Syria and the French began to experience some strain and Syrians began resisting the French domination. Eventually, the international communities came to the agreement that France should withdraw its troops from Syria. In 1946, President Shukri Quwatli announced the independence of Syria.

Syria unfortunately experienced some civil turmoil as the country tried to develop its own government. The first coup in 1939 was led by military leader Husni Zaim, who's administration only lasted 138 days. Although short, the foundation for the Syrian legislative system was laid and civil, commercial and criminal codes were created, as well as rights for women recognized. Once Zaim was deposed, power continued to shift between civilian and military groups. By 1970, President Hafez Al-Assad took office and many changes to the dynamic of government followed. Power became concentrated on the executive branch of government, and Syria was now recognized as a presidential republic.

In addition, the country began to move towards limiting the private sector, which would benefit business men and allow the expansion of the public sector. The Syrian economy began to grow as the country gained from the rising costs in oil as well. Along with the profits from oil and foreign aid, Syria was also able to initiate an infrastructure program which allowed the country to build in benefit

Syria

About Syria + Major Historical Events

of its citizens. In addition, Syria also attempted to regain the area of Golan Heights during a war with Israel, although unsuccessful, Syria regained control over the Quneitra. However, in the 1980s, Syria faced political and economic challenges and began forming connections with the Soviet Union. As the prices in oil began to drop, as well as the foreign aid began to decrease, this further created a crisis for the state of Syria. In an attempt to address this, the government decided to restrict foreign trade. By the 1990s and following the end of the cold war, Syria encouraged more private investments and had improved its relationship with the US due to its support of ousting Iraqi forces from Kuwait and participation in the Madrid Conference following its conflict with Israel. In the 2000s, Bashar Al-Assad took office as President and due to the decline in oil reserves the economy started to shift towards a social structure that also tried to incorporate a market economy. The initiation of legislation in relation to commerce, industry and finance led to the increase of private investments, including investments for Syrians in the diaspora. At this time, Syria also signed the Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement with other Middle Eastern nations, however, these relationships eventually terminated. As things progressed through the 2000s, the relationships between Syrians and the US and well as other Middle Eastern countries began to stall. While there was some hope for repair during the Obama Administration, this didn't last very long and the relationship between Syria, Iran, Russia and China began to become stronger. Following this, political unrest ensued in 2011, and since then, Syria has experienced many different conflicts. Many citizens began to

protest for pro-democratic rights as they felt that there was no political freedom under President Al-Assad.

In response, the government used violent force to deter the protests. The violent response only led to protests throughout the nation calling for President Al-Assad to resign. As the conflict between the government and citizens increased, the country was led into a civil war. In 2013, the country saw a rise in Islamist power through military seizing of cities in Syria. This conflict also included the layer of Kurdish Syrians who were seeking to self govern, but have not engaged in the conflict against the government. Syria began to see years of unrest as the country moved into war and other nations began to intervene. As other nations like the US and Russia became involved, conflicting reports of what these interventions consisted of began to surface. In addition, many protests occurred as citizens to regain a better quality of life. By 2017, the Islamist began to retreat, although there were still military offenses that followed. In 2020, President Assad removed Imad Khamis following protests from citizens. By 2021, it was estimated by the United Nations Human Rights Office that approximately 306,887 Syrians have died since the start of the conflict in 2011. Currently, the government has regained control of major cities in Syria, however some cities are still under the control of Islamist and Kurds. Many Syrians have migrated from Syria and have become refugees due to the conflict. More than five million people have fled Syria in general, and 1,000 of the people fled to San Diego, California by 2017. Currently, there is a significant population of Syrians in San Diego, California.

Culture

Syria is a country with a rich culture. Most of the culture surrounds the family and religion. It is common for family and friends to engage in daily meals, holidays, and religious practices together. Major holidays like Eid al-Fitr and Christmas are often celebrated by gathering with family and having elaborate meals. It is also common for neighbors of different religions to maintain friendships and share celebrations. The food of the Syrian culture includes a wide range

of ingredients with staples like lemon, garlic, onion and many different spices. It is common for Syrians to have a mazzah, a spread of smaller dishes served together that usually includes flat bread, cheeses, olives and salads. Common dishes in Syrian cuisine include kibbeh, a ball or diamond shaped shell stuffed with ground beef or lamb and spices, and meat patties. It is also common to have grapevine leaves stuffed with beef or lamb, rice and spices.



Syria

Culture

The traditional clothing of Syrians is an expression of the people and its culture. Men traditionally wear a thawb, a long cloak like dress that falls down the their feet and is usually made of cotton. Those who choose not to wear a thawb may wear a shirwal, a wide loose trouser usually tied at the top with a leather like fabric. Men also wear a taqiyah, which is a three piece headdress that provides protection from the sun, sandstorm and cold. For women, an abaya, a long loose dress that is made in different colors, is often worn. Women also wore a headdress called margruna, often coordinated with the abaya.

Art in Syrian culture is a depiction of the arabesque designs. Many structures and paintings often depicted intricate geometric designs. Following the first World War, art began to be taught in schools and many talented artists began to develop and sculptures began to adorn the country. In addition to the visual arts, story writing and poetry flourished. Television shows and cinema also gained much popularity through popular actors and comedians. In addition, the music in Syria is the traditional Arab style music and often uses the oud. Much of Syrian music is listened to throughout the Middle East.

Religion

Syria has been known to be one of the first nations to adopt the Christian faith as far as two thousand years ago. On the road to Damascus, the Apostle Paul was converted to Christianity after coming across villagers who still spoke Aramaic, the language of Jesus. His conversion led to the introduction of Christianity to Syrians. Christianity spread into the cities of Antioch and Damascus, and these cities became the center of Christian worship. Today, the largest denomination of Christianity is Eastern Orthodox, yet some of the population also follow Catholicism and Protestantism denominations. A total of 8% of the Syrian population identifies as one of these denominations. Catholicism was introduced by missionaries in the 17th centuries as they traveled to Aleppo and other parts of Syria. By the end of the century, Catholicism had begun to spread to much of the Orthodox Christian population and began to grow as a largely followed denomination. Today, the Syriac Catholic church has more than 200,000 members. The largest religious group in Syria are Sunni Muslims.

In the early days of Islam, Syria was introduced to the religion through the early caliphates. Following the death of the Prophet Mohammed in 632 AD, the Muslim community did not originally agree on who should succeed the prophet. Abu Bakr was

chosen as the successor by the leaders of the Muslim community, although some members of the community favored Ali, the Prophet Mohammed's cousin. Abu Bakr however became the recognized successor, and was followed by two other successors before Ali finally became the caliph or successor.

This was short-lived as a civil war broke out during this time and Ali was killed. Following this civil war, Muawiyah claimed himself as the caliph in Damascus. The Shiat Ali, those who were followers of Ali refused to recognize Muawiyah as caliph and thus the Shia sect of Islam was created. Alawi sect is a variation of the Shia sect that does not require its followers to follow the basic Islamic duties. This group is relatively small and concentrated in a small area of Syria. The Ismailis are also a variation of Shia sect although some of their beliefs differ. In some of their beliefs related to conservatism, Ismailis may relate more to Sunni Muslims. In addition to Christianity and Islam, the religion of Druze is also followed in Syria. This religion consists of a blend of the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Although Islam is incorporated in Druze, followers do not follow the Five Pillars of Islam, fast during the month of Ramadan or make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Another blended religion practiced in

Syria includes Yazidi, a mix of ancient

Religion

Iranian religions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Although this group is a minority numbering somewhere between 200,000 to 1,000,000, they have a strong structure and appoint a chief sheik as their religious leader. Notably, these blended religions included Jewish influence, and this was due to the history of Judaism in Syria. Judaism had been introduced to Syrians thousands of years ago. During this time, Syria was given the

same laws as Israel by the Jewish sages.

However, by the time Christianity was the state religion, Judaism followers decreased. When the state of Israel was created, Syrian Jews moved to Israel and today there are approximately only 40 Jews in the country. Although turmoil exists today among religious groups, Syria has a history of religious peace among different religions.

Etiquette

Practicing basic etiquette in Syrian culture is a way to show respect to the people within the culture. It is common for Syrians to be generous, especially to their guests. When you are offered something by a host, it is tradition to refuse the offer initially, only accepting after the host insists. This is to show humbleness by not accepting too quickly as well as the generosity of the host who insists. When someone older than you enters a room, it is customary to stand and offer them your seat. It is also normal for Syrians to visit friends

and family without invitation and it is expected that the host stops what they are doing and shows hospitality. Physically, it is seen as inappropriate to show the soles of your feet or place them on top of a table. Also, Syrians traditionally kept the use of the hands separate as the left hand is strictly used for cleaning or removing dirt whereas the right hand is preserved waving, eating or offering things to others. It is also respectful for men not to curse in front of women, or for anyone to spit in front of others.

Education

Education in Syria was mostly traditional until the establishment of a school system. By 1967, Syria's schools and universities were under the control of the government, and led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The primary schooling of Syrians goes on for six years, followed by three years of lower secondary schooling. Once students complete this, they move on to three years of upper secondary schooling. Secondary education prepares students for entrance into college or university, and the last two years are divided by literary and scientific paths. However, during the 1980s under the rule of the Baath Party, the education system was used to indoctrinate students with beliefs of the party and train students for needs of the country. The state of the education system continued to change. From 1970-1998, as education continued to progress, there was an increase in the amount of girls and women who began to attend school. In 2002, education was made more accessible to everyone, and grade one through nine was made free.

Syria's education system is mainly taught in Arabic, but English and French are also taught as secondary languages. In 2007, the census recorded that about 98% of schools in Syria were public, 1.8% were private and 0.2% were United Nations Relief and Works Agency schools. These numbers continued to grow and was estimated to have had at least a one million increase in students by 2015.

As the war in Syria continues, the education system has suffered although many developments were made in the past. Currently, formal and non-formals methods of education have been in use. There are many factors contributing to the quality of education in the nation. These challenges include lack of funding and resources, training for teachers, educational supplies and a decrease in operating school sites leading to overcrowded classrooms. The lack of materials, funding, training, and schools sites has impacted the learning experience and contributed to the number of students enrolled in school.

Migration History to San Diego

In December of 2024, Syrian rebels managed to dismantle the Assad Regime. This marked an end to an era of conflict and a new beginning for Syria and its people. Many Syrians have migrated from Syria and have become refugees due to the conflict.

More than five million people have fled Syria in general, over 12 million Syrians remained forcibly displaced in the

region, including almost 6.8 million within the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) and 5.4 million living as refugees in neighboring countries, a slight decline from 5.7 million in 2021. About 1,000 of those seeking refuge fled to San Diego, California by 2017, with this number only changing slightly in the past years. Currently, there is a significant population of Syrians in San Diego, California.

Working With This Population

Traditionally, in the mental health or counseling aspect, Syrians do not have a westernized concept. In Syria, it is not common to have a formal method of addressing mental health. However, it may be beneficial to incorporate certain cultural practices when working with the Syrian community. First, it is important to understand what language the student speaks as not all Syrians speak the same language. Also, take some time to learn about the students culture before beginning to work with them.

Many people are willing to share, so it is important that you also take some time to ask questions of curiosity so that you may learn more about the culture. In addition, it is important to understand the current social and political climate in Syria as this will affect the student and their families. Students who have immigrated also face challenges becoming accustomed to the cultural norms in the US and may need support in feeling comfortable as they settle in.

San Diego Resources

Kurdish Human Rights Watch

1109 East Washington Avenue
El Cajon, Ca 92019

Kurdish Community Center

1357 Broadway,
El Cajon, Ca 92021
<https://www.facebook.com/kurdishcommunitycenterofsandiego/>



Chaldean-Middle Eastern Social Services

343 East Main Street Suite 201
El Cajon, Ca 92020
<https://www.syhealth.org/services/chaldean-and-middle-eastern-support-services>

Madjal Community Center

327 East Main Street
El Cajon, Ca 92020
<https://majdalcenter.org/>

International Rescue Committee

5348 University Avenue #205
San Diego, Ca 92105
<https://www.rescue.org/taxonomy/term/47>

Reviewer: Wael Sawah

Yemen

Arab, Afro-Arab, Somali

Languages: Arabic (official); other Semitic languages: Bathari, Hobyot, Mehri, Razhihi, Soqotri

Religions: Islam, Judaism

Population: 34.4 Million

About Yemen + Major Historical Events

Yemen is located in Western Asia and is situated on the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula, with the population being at 29.8 million people. The name Yemen originates from different words, all providing a history of the country, those being Yamnat: the southwestern coastline of the Arabian peninsula and the southern coast of Aden and Hadramout and Yamn/Yumn: meaning “felicity” or “blessed”.

There are a handful of ethnic groups in the country: Arab, Afro-Arab, and Somali with the main language being Arabic. As for the religious demographics, the country practices Islam with variations of Sunni and Zaidiyyah Shia. Islam is the official religion, with a very small percentage of the country following other religions such as Judaism. The current state of the country for their government is at a unitary provisional Islamic republic or emergency government due to the political problems that arose.

The history of Yemen has a rich history of many kingdoms and dynasties, with a thriving population involved in the trading of local and international goods and with the advent of Islam, which shifted the whole dynamic of the country. As for their occupation, the Zaydis and Ottomans wanted to keep Yemen as a safeguard for Mecca and Medina, as they are Islamic holy cities, and to take advantage of the trade routes. The British later took rule of the country





About Yemen + Major Historical Events

from 1959-1963 with the southern region of Yemen since the Ottomans had split the country into two and used the country to stop the attacks from pirates that interfered with the trade routes with Britain. The northern region was still free but the influence of the southern region from the British. Post British rule led to the division of the country having another conflict of interest but later was “resolved” through the creation of the Yemen Arab Republic in 1968 and years later into the unification of the two states in 1990. There were still problems that

arose from the country since the country was free from foreign rule which created many instabilities in the political and ruling system. The government instability took its toll on the people creating the Yemeni Crisis where many of the country’s citizens are not able to live stable lives with the lack of support for the people and the corruption of the government which leads to things such as cholera and famine. However, in early 2022 the Presidential Leadership Council took power in order to combat the issues of the country.

Culture

Yemen’s culture is plentiful and is still flourishing in the modern day. Since Yemen’s roots are from being a diverse trading hub, it is natural for the country to have a diverse cultural experience. For instance, the music of the country is known for pan-Arab pop stars. Traditional Yemeni music was mainly played in the home of its citizens and were more so readings of poetry with the accompaniment of music and enjoyed as a community. There have been resources available in the country as well such as the Yemen Music House which provides resources to develop the music scene in the country.

Due to the low literacy rate in Yemen, many of its citizens use television as a means of learning, and the government has lessened the restraints on media from previous years as separate states. Many of these channels air news to the country. Radio and newspaper productions have also been available but not as popular as television but have increased in production post unification. Additionally, the film industry is growing over the years, taking a very neorealist approach, which is a popular genre for those recovering from hardships and is greatly present in film festivals. However, many of the country’s residents prefer to use their satellites to consume media from abroad.

The cuisine of Yemen is traditional with not that many foreign influences affecting their foods. They follow a Middle Eastern palate with

some influence in parts of the country such as Ottoman and Indian influence, which has not lost its roots. Food practices revolve around sharing and offering foods. For example, when a guest rejects food from a host, it is considered as an insult but plays into the hospitality culture of the country. Dishes revolve around ingredients such as tomatoes, onions, and potatoes. As for protein, chicken, goat, lamb, and camel meat are staples to include; beef is not as common due to the price and fish is eaten more in coastal areas due to its availability. The national dish of Yemen is Mandi, a rice and meat dish typically consisting of lamb, chicken, beef, or goat that is traditionally cooked in a tandoor. The term mandi means “dew” and it is used to describe the dewy look of the dish when it is cooked.

Qat/khat is a very popular tradition in Yemen which can be seen being used in varying degrees such as seeing friends to it being offered in business meetings. Many use the plant as a way to escape the realities of their country and help with their stresses. The plant is used by chewing the leaves of the qat/khat plant that creates an amphetamine-like experience. The plant is legal in the country but the government has taken action to control the substance by limiting the cultivation of it due to the high water stress it causes which in turn plays a part in the famine in the country and has been banned in many countries overseas

Religion

Islam is the official religion, with a very small percentage of the country following other religions such as Judaism. As for the religious demographics, the country practices Islam with variations of Sunni and Zaidiyyah

Shia. The current state of the country for their government is at a unitary provisional Islamic republic or emergency government due to the political problems that arose in the 2000s.

Etiquette

Yemeni culture places great value on a collective culture where community bonds are highly regarded. It is common to express appreciation for hospitality and generosity; this can be seen when a guest initially declines an offer of food to express politeness before eventually accepting.

Maintaining eye contact during conversations represents being alert and attentive towards the speaker, while avoiding eye contact represents modesty. Physical closeness are significant cues and only done when people are familiar with one another and they have a strong connection.

Education

Education in Yemen has slowly started to take the spotlight in the coming years in order to create a better future. The government spends about 14-20% of their budget each year on education and 9.6% of the country's GDP on education as well. Education is free and compulsory for those between 6 and 15. However, it has been seen that the country does not enforce education for those students. This in turn leads to low enrollment rates and the poor infrastructure of the quality of education in the country. The gender norms in the country as well leads to low female enrollment due to factors such as early marriage, chastity, and the social attitude towards women in education. Outside of the gender norms, many prospering students face financial hardships, community participation, low level of teacher training and qualifications, and distance

between school and homes. With all these factors considered, this leads the country to having a low literacy rate, being about 58%, however the country is aiming to increase the literacy rate by putting education on their top priorities. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) developed in partnership with Yemen to create a more developed education system and is being sponsored by the World Bank and donor countries. With a hopeful higher education system, the country has been aiming to offer students a better opportunity to pursue multiple paths outside of the needed fields and also sending students abroad in order to meet the social demand for the country. In recent years, education has been stunted and the population since 2014 has been focusing on survival and war over education.

Migration History to San Diego

Yemen's history of migration to the United States can be traced back to 1869 and some of the citizens of Yemen at the time of WWI and WWII were granted citizenship due to their participation in these wars as long as they were loyal to the state. Post WWII did have a slower rate of migrants from Yemen as there wasn't a need for them and the quota system which limited the flow of migrants. For those Yemeni migrants, they settled in heavily Lebanese communities such as New York. It did not come easy for these migrants however because of the nature of the culture, for instance the Lebanese communities they settled in were mainly of Christian believers compared to Islam.

Following the events of 9/11, there was a higher rate of crimes against those who were of Yemeni descent as well as those who "fit the description" of a Yemeni which led to racism and discrimination of the people.

Support groups in the United States aid the Yemeni community such as the Yemeni American Merchants Association whose goal is to "educate and elevate Yemeni-American merchants and their families through education, civil rights advocacy, business and social service support." More recently with Yemen's Civil War, many migrants traveled to the United States in order to support themselves and families and escape a war they do not agree with.

Working with this Population

Counseling services offered in Yemen are very limited, in all healthcare facilities, with only about 51% of the facilities are fully operational but their staff go unpaid. For those suffering from mental disorders, the World Health Organization estimates that 22% of war affected areas in the country will develop a mental disorder and as of right now, 19.5% of the population suffer from a mental disorder, and is more prevalent in children who develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or depression. These illnesses do not get treated further than family support due to the stigma against mental health in society, which in turn can have damaging effects on the country's future.

Yemen has ratified treaties that outlines the rights and responsibilities of the people in relation to mental health, such as no discrimination to seek help, access to good and reliable care and medicines. However, there has been a neglect to those treaties and future attempts from the

country's because the ruling government believed that the issue was not political or popular and the country had been in conflict by the time that any further steps could be taken. On the surface, there are a handful of programs and resources available, however, many of these programs and facilities lack the necessary staff to care for these patients, for instance having 1 psychiatrist per 200,000 people.

The stigma in Yemen is still present, associating those with a mental illness to be connected with superstitions, witchcraft, etc. The portrayal of these individuals on social media have been associated with crime and that those who are in mental hospitals are not fit for society. In turn, Yemen's society amplifies the misunderstandings and carries the discrimination against those with mental disorders. In order to help their citizens, there needs to be an acknowledgement of their country's experience and take into consideration the people and destigmatize seeking help for mental illness.



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<https://www.yamausa.org/about/>

Majdal Center

<https://majdalcenter.org/>

Reviewer: Mutaz Sayed

Second Reviewer: Carrie Vang



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Center for Mental Health & Counseling for Nepal

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Thank you

Albanian: Faleminderit

Amharic: አመሰግናለሁ

Arabic: شكراً

Dari: تشکر

English: Thank you

Farsi: مرسى

French: Merci

Haitian Creole: Mèsi

Hmong Dawb: Ua Tsaug

Kurdish: Spas Dikim

Lao: ຂອບໃຈ

Mandarin: 謝謝

Nepali: धन्यवाद

Oromo: Galatoomi

Pashto: مننه

Somali: Mahadsanid

Spanish: Gracias

Swahili: Asante

Tagalog: Salamat

Tajik: Tašakkyr / Raxmat

Tigrinya: የቐንየለይ

Turkish: Teşekkürler

Turkmen: Sagbol

Urdu: شکریہ

Uzbek: Rahmat

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