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Military Justice and Social Control:
El Salvador, 1931-1960

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Military Justice and Social Control:
El Salvador, 1931-1960

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Dedication

To Maya and Eva

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Between 1931 and 1960, Salvadoran praetorian regimes combined repression and reward to convince the public, nationally and internationally, that they were best equipped to rule the tiny nation. Shortly after taking power, in 1932 the military repressed a peasant rebellion, killed 10,000 people and blamed rural oligarchs and Liberal demagogues and communist agitators for the revolt and massacre. Both the regimes of General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez (1931-1944) and those of Colonels Oscar Osorio and José María Lemus (1948-1960) of the Revolutionary Party for Democratic Unification (PRUD) provided rewards for their political clients and repressed their enemies, who they often labeled Communists and subversives and linked with the chaos of the 1932 rebellion. In order to marginalize political opponents and centralize rule, they aggressively repressed "plots" against the regimes to reassign, exile, beat and sometimes kill their enemies. By manipulating newspaper coverage they also portrayed a social order that despite not matching the lived reality of Salvadorans contrasted with the chaos of 1932.

Because the country changed dramatically, growing in population and rapidly urbanizing, political leaders under the PRUD allied themselves with different groups than did Martínez, or in the *martinato*,. Under the *martinato*, peasants and indigenous Salvadorans provided tacit support but the Revolutionary Party was much more focused on the cities. Fearing an urban opposition, they reorganized the police, but neither regime convinced the public of their goodwill. Despite their inability to substantively reduce crime or juvenile delinquency, the military convinced people that they made genuine efforts to provide social justice to the majority of Salvadorans.

Embracing traditionalism and patriarchy, as well as social order, the military built alliances with, and glorified the image of the women of the urban markets. In contrast, prostitutes and street peddlers did not meet the standards of the praetorian social order and were demonized and repressed. Although the military was unable to provide effective social services, successfully repress dissent and criminality, or eliminate dissent, they nonetheless convinced a substantial majority that the costs of opposition were greater than the benefits of working with the regime.

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Introduction

In 1931, Salvadorans experienced the first truly contested and popular election in their 100-plus year history.[1] Mobilizing the rural and urban working classes behind his Labor Party, Engineer Arturo Araujo won the presidency by promising social reform and economic justice.[2] Unfortunately, the majority of citizens instead experienced poverty and chaos during his ten months in office, as the Great Depression caused coffee prices to bottom out, and state coffers to run low.[3] Conservative and reactionary oligarchs, industrialists, politicians and bankers blocked the national government's economic and labor reforms. When students, workers and peasants took to the streets demanding relief, Araujo's security forces used violence to repress them. Many observers believed the country was falling apart.

A group of young officers took power in a coup on 2 December 1931, and ended the democratic experiment. A week later, General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, who had been Araujo's vice president, became president. Although the coup's details remain shrouded in mystery, and we will likely never know exactly what occurred, it is

[1] Scholarly and popular texts frequently repeated this claim. For an early source see Franklin Parker, *The Central American Republics* (London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1964), 151.

[2] Very concerned with titles and distinctions, twentieth-century Salvadoran elites and professionals sought to differentiate themselves from the masses, by all means at their disposal. They included their titles, including don, Dr. and Ing. (doctor and *ingeniero* or engineer) in official, and often informal, written and oral communications. In their correspondance, military officers always included their rank (General, Colonel, etc.), and presented it alongside other titles.

[3] Araujo took office on 1 March 1931. Thomas Anderson, *Matanza: El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 71.

clear that Salvadoran history took a profound turn.[4] Rejecting Araujo's Liberal social reform programs and democratic platform, military officers installed the first of a series of praetorian states that completely controlled political life between 1931, and the election of Christian Democrat José Napoleon Duarte in 1984.[5] Even at that point, the army dominated politics because of the civil war. Not until the election of 1992, after the civil war had ended, could Salvadorans freely choose for whom they voted, or cast a ballot without fear of violence.[6] In order to maintain power for the six decades between these elections, military officers manufactured a surprising level of popular and elite support, despite their repressive and anti-democratic actions.

This dissertation explores key aspects of how the military retained power in the first half of this lengthy period. How did these officers convince people as distinct as peasants, factory workers, market women, oligarchs and U.S. Diplomats to support them between the rise of General Martínez in 1931 and the fall of Colonel Lemus in 1960? Why was the system so durable? What were the main elements in establishing regime solidity and legitimacy? Did this change over time? The answers to these questions are complex and multivariate but center on the fact that however imperfectly, the military's

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[4] Examining 1931 U.S. consular correspondence in detail, Kenneth Grieb concluded that "None of the leading politicians in the country appear to have inspired the revolt." Kenneth Grieb, "The United States and the Rise of General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (November 1971). Josquín Castro Canizales, a prominent writer and teacher at the military academy, believed that Martínez was ignorant of the plot until it was well underway. Anderson, *Matanza*, 71-88.

[5] A Revolutionary Government Junta (*Junta de Gobierno Revolucionario*, JRG) ruled El Salvador between October 15, 1979 and May 2, 1982. It contained 2 colonels, Adolfo Arnaldo Majano Ramo and Jaime Abdul Gutiérrez Avendaño, and 3 civilians, Guillermo Ungo, Mario Antonio Andino and Román Mayorga Quirós. This broke the military's complete control over national politics, but the military still controlled the repressive forces. Even when Duarte became the head of the junta on 22 December 1982, and when he was elected in 1984, the military still murdered scores of thousands of Salvadorans.

[6] For example, 1.33 million Salvadorans participated in the first round of the 1994 Presidential elections, and 1.20 million in the second. In the 1999 elections, Salvadoran voters nearly matched these numbers by casting 1.18 million votes out of 3.44 million registered voters. In the 2004 election, they exceeded these totals by casting 2.28 million votes, with a 67% turnout. International observers, present at all of the elections, determined that they were reasonably fair and contested.

hegemonic campaign succeeded. Using words and deeds to garner the support of Salvadorans of many classes, praetorian rulers provided tangible benefits to many citizens. By convincing enough people that they had more to gain within the system than through resistance, they made opposition more costly than acquiescence. Furthering their popular acceptance or at least toleration, the military also provided reasonably effective functioning of municipal and state institutions.[7] Employing terror and violence, they also defended their role as the protectors and providers of Salvadoran people. Arguing that they controlled criminals and political opponents, and demonstrating their capacity for violence, they maintained power. In relying on more than violence, they built a measure of mass support. In sum, they balanced rewards and repression to convince the populace that they deserved to rule the country between 1931 and 1960.

In these three decades, all of the military leaders shared an anti-democratic, paternalistic, patriarchal worldview that privileged social order over individual autonomy and liberty. Nonetheless, these officers differed in how they sold themselves, and how they treated subaltern subjects such as criminals. Ruling over a predominantly rural society during the Great Depression, after the military leaders under General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez (1931-44) confronted a massive peasant rebellion and slow demographic and economic expansion, they rejected the Liberal tenets of reformism and redemption. Facing a rapidly expanding nation and state within a Cold War context, the Party for Revolutionary Unification (*Partido Revolucionario de Unificación*

[7] Although non-electoral governments throughout the globe have survived while establishing a low level of hegemony, research suggests that this occurred less frequently than previously imagined. In addition, the Salvadoran dirty war of the 1980s did not completely discredit the military. Built with the cooperation of a privileged few, the system generated enough popular support within the middle and even peasant classes, for the regime to survive.

Democrática, PRUD, 1950-60) instead revived positivist doctrine in an attempt to modernize the nation.

In order to better separate myth from reality, and provide a more nuanced view of praetorian governance, this dissertation looks at the policies the military employed and language with which they justified their actions. One myth is that Salvadorans lived under a series of dictators after 1931. This is not quite true. Since the Salvadoran military leaders did not exercise absolute authority, as might a mythological or literary figure such as General Rodrigo de Aguilar in García Márquez' classic novel, or personal control like the Dominican Republic's Rafael Trujillo, I do not describe them as dictators.[8] Despite the fact that they were not dictators, and maintained power for decades, the military regime's very dark history must be addressed. We should not ignore their political manipulation, popular oppression, massacres, tortures, disappearances, death squads, corruption and many other crimes across the decades. The military's full list of abuses is too long to cover thoroughly, but I can provide a few examples.

In the last three decades of their rule, military officers killed thousands of Salvadorans, including some familiar to people in the U.S. After people protested the manipulated elections in 1972 and 1977, the leaders of the National Conciliation Party (*Partido de Conciliación Nacional*, PCN, 1961-79) killed and injured many scores of demonstrators. In 1980, soldiers and paramilitaries executed religious people who advocated peace and social justice, like Father Rutilio Grande, Maryknoll and Ursuline nuns from the U.S., and Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. In the following decade, the army massacred hundreds in the community of El Mozote in Morazán, and killed six

[8] For a true dictator see Gabriel García Márquea, *El otoño del patriarca* (Spain, 1975).

Jesuit professors at the Central American University (*Universidad Centroamericana*, UCA). In addition to these prominent examples, countless thousands of Salvadorans experienced quotidian violence and repression, as a direct result of military rule. There is no doubt that these officers and their supporters committed countless crimes against the Salvadoran public. Nevertheless, this is not the entire story.

After all, military authority collapsed only when they stopped building a "limited hegemony," completely ceased using state power to build consensus, and instead employed naked repression.[9] Once they no longer attempted to convince the public of their goodwill, but instead responded almost exclusively with violence, they created a backlash that destroyed them. Other scholars have begun to examine this phenomenon. After interviewing a number of civil war combatants, Elisabeth Wood concluded that civilian insurgents supported the guerrilla forces out of a "deepening conviction that that the government no longer merited their loyalty or acquiescence."[10] In addition, religious leaders played a key role and eroded military support. Priests and peasants, labor leaders and laborers, agitators and students only took direct political and military action, after they received the sanction and support of a significant sector of the Catholic Church in the late 1970s.[11] In 1980 and 1981, with military and paramilitary forces killing over 1,000 people per month, Salvadoran guerrillas responded by forming the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación*

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[9] My notion of hegemony is shaped by the discussion surrounding the writing of Antonio Gramsci. See Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York, NY: International Publishers, 1971) and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London, UK: Verso,1985).

[10] Elisabeth Wood, *Insurgent Collective Acton and Civil War in El Salvado*r (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 120.

[11] For instance, Rubén Zamora emphasized the repeated attempts by the Salvadoran Left and center-Right to find a non-violent solution to the political and economic problems facing the country in an interview provided for *The Americas* PBS television series released in 1994. "Fire in the Mind," *Americas* program 11 (WGBH/Boston, 1992).

Nacional, FMLN).[12] Only after a decade of sustained violence and repression did armed resistance begin.[13]

Following Erik Ching in "de-centering" the praetorian governments, this dissertation, examines "how the military stayed in power and what it did while it was there," or as Kati Griffith and Leslie Gates asked "how do military leaders try to achieve hegemony?"[14] How indeed? How did officers and their civilian functionaries repeatedly balance reform and repression to establish a measure of popular acceptance and support? Looking at authoritarian and non-electoral regimes, scholars have noted their ambivalence. Despite repressing the populace, they nonetheless are supported by co-opted or allied groups and individuals, who are often peasants or working classes.[15] Even totalitarian governments, "sultanistic" regimes, or predatory republics relied on more than oppression.[16] In fact, these governments usually weakened and collapsed when they behaved in more stereotypically despotic ways and alienated their bases of

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[12] Charles Call, "Assessing El Salvador's Transition from Civil War to Peace," in John Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elisabeth Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 546. Call mobilizes data from the Truth Report. Comisión de la Verdad de El Salvador, *De la Locura a la Esperanza: La Guerra de 12 años en El Salvador* (United Nations: San Salvador, El Salvador, 1993).

[13] The CIA World Factbook website noted that the 12-year war ended in 1992 and the US Department of State website dated the conflict between 1980 and the January 1992 peace accords. These accounts do not specify the event in 1980 that begins the war, perhaps because of an excess of options. https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/es.html and http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2033.htm.

[14] Erik Ching, "Patronage and Politics under General Maximiliano Martínez, 1931-1939: The Local Roots of Military Authoritarianism in El Salvador," in Aldo Lauria-Santiago and Leigh Binford, eds., *Landscapes of Struggle: Politics, Society and Community in El Salvador* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 50; Kati Griffith and Leslie Gates, "Colonels and Industrial Workers in El Salvador, 1944-72: Seeking Societal Support through Gendered Labor Reforms," in Lauria-Santiago and Binford, *Landscapes*, 71-84.

[15] Erik Ching, "Patronage, Power and Politics in El Salvador, 1840-1940," Ph.D. Dissertation, (University of California Santa Barbara, 1997). Richard Le Turits, *Foundations of Despotism: Peasants, the Trujillo Regime* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Valentina Peguero, *The Militarization of Culture in the Dominican Republic, from the Captains General to General Trujillo* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); Jeffrey Gould, *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979 (Chapel* Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

[16] On sultanism see the essays in H.E. Chehabi and Juan Linz, eds., *Sultanistic Regimes* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1998). On the Duvaliers in Haiti see Robert Fatton Jr., *Haiti's Predatory Republic: The Unending Transition to Democracy* (Boulder,CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002).

support.[17] The most repressive regimes in Latin American history sometimes provided favors for political clients, mobilized popular groups and built mythologies that endured long after the governments themselves collapsed. Since when facing the military's policing and judicial systems, citizens tried to use them to their "minimum disadvantage" we can better understand the multiple ways that the militaries built support, by examining their policies and institutions and how people responded.[18] The following pages will explore how Salvadorans constructed, implemented, and responded to praetorian rule.

Despite the fact that Salvadoran military regimes have fascinated scholars for decades, their historiography remains underdeveloped.[19] Writing most thoroughly about General Hernández Martínez, most works either simply condemned the regime's so-called fascism or defended his patriarchal order and consolidation of the nation-state. They also remained centered on national-level politics.[20] Ching, on the other hand, studied municipal-level documents and convincingly argued that the military maintained many political structures and patron-client relations from the previous Liberal regimes but concluded his analysis in 1939.[21] Patricia Parkman used U.S. State Department records and interviews to examine the fall of the *martinato* and the 1944 strike of fallen arms, but focused on events in the capital. Despite these important works, the political

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[17] Turits argued that Trujilo feel when his behavior "approached the fantastic degree of despotism that social scientists have attributed to the dictatorship as a whole." Turits, *Foundations*, 12.

[18] The term was apparently first used by Eric Hobsbawm. See Eric Hobsbawm, "Peasants and Politics," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 1, no. 1 (1973). The idea is borrowed by Ward Stavig. Ward Stavig, *The World of Tupac Amaru: Conflict, Community, and Identity in Colonial Peru* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999)

[19] This chapter, and those that follow, primarily compares and contrasts the *martinato* and the PRUD. Part of greater body of actors constrained by larger social, economic and political forces, however, these leaders did not transform society by themselves.

[20] Raul Padilla Vela, *El fascismo en un pais dependente, la dictadura del general Hernández Martínez* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Editorial Universitaria, 1987), Alberto Peña Kampy, *"El General Martínez:" Un patriarchal presidente dictador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Editorial Tipografíca Ramirez, 1973), Everett A. Wilson, "The Crisis of National Integration in El Salvador, 1919-1935" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1970).

[21] Erik Ching, "Patronage."

construction and development of the Martínez regime remains poorly understood. Much of the regime's scholarly attention is drawn to the fact the Martínez confronted the first Communist revolt in the hemisphere, and killed ten thousand people in response.

In addition, scholars have not adequately addressed the questions of military hegemony. Given the violence and terror of the civil war, it is not surprising that authors like Michael McClintock, outraged by the brutality, focused on the 1970s and 1980s. Stressing the role of U.S. advisors including the CIA in El Salvador, scholars wrote books with titles like *The American Connection* and *Bitter Grounds*, and criticized how the American government supported the military and paramilitary forces.[22] Despite advancing our understanding of praetorian rule, some recent studies continue to focus on state terror, and other fail to address social relations, or municipal-level politics. Although William Stanley advanced our understanding of the factional struggles within the military as he traced the persistence of the military "protection racket," he nonetheless remained driven by a desire to understand why states kill. Philip Williams and Knut Walter wrote an excellent, but macro-level analysis of the Salvadoran transition to civilian rule.[23]

Although the civil war and its origins also attracted significant attention, scholars have not delved deeply into the years preceding the conflict, especially the 1940s and 1950s. Roberto Turcios and Manlio Argueta the PRUD governments but, like Parkman,

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[22] These factors were important but scholars should focus on local agency. For a classic example see Michael McClintock, *The American Connection*, vol. 1, *State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador* (London, UK: Zed Books, 1985); Liisa North, *Bitter Grounds: Roots of Revolt in El Salvador* (Toronto, Canada: Between the Lines, 1985).

[23] Philip Williams and Knut Walter. *Militarization and Demilitarization in El Salvador's Transition to Democracy* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997); William Stanley, *The Protection Racket State: Elite Politics, Military Extortion, and Civil War in El Salvador* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996.).

largely limited themselves to US State Department records.[24] Despite enriching our understanding of economic and political developments in the PCN era (1961-79), books like Stephen Webre's Jose Napoleon Duarte nonetheless omit the 1950s.[25] Prominent Salvadoran scholars, trying to understand the origins of Salvadoran social problems, wrote heavily theoretical texts that concentrated on national level politics.[26] Authors like Williams, Bulmer-Thomas and Dada examined the economic and social development wrought by the Central American Common Market (CACM or *Mercado Común Centroamericano*, MCCA) looking for the origins of the civil war, but again did not set out to describe and explain micro-level events.[27] Nevertheless, there remained a dearth of topical as well as local and regional studies of the 1940s and 1950s. Aldo Lauria and Leigh Binford called this an "obscure period of the country's social and political history."[28]

We must examine how government policies affected the lives of individuals in order to understand why people chose to support the military regimes. Further research is needed to explore the beliefs of individuals, either interviews or by studying court documents. Athough there are xcellent starting points, most of these describe the

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[24] Patricia Parkman. *Nonviolent Insurrection in El Salvador: The Fall of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez* (Tuscon, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1988); Manlio Argueta, *Tiburcio Caria: Anatomia de una época, 1923-1948* (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Editorial Guaymuras, 1989); Roberto Turcios, *Autoritarismo y modernización: El Salvador 1950-1960* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Ediciones Tendencias, 1993).

[25] Stephen Webre, *Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadoran Politics, 1960-1972* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

[26] Mario Salazar Valiente, David Alejandro Luna, and Jorge Arias Gómez, *El Proceso Político Centroamericano: Ponencias de Mario Salazar Valiente, David Alejandro Luna y Jorge Arias Gómez* (San Salvador: Editorial Universitaria, 1964); Jorge Cáceres, Rafael Guidos Béjar and Rafael Menjívar Larín, *El Salvador: Una historia sin lecciones* (San José, Costa Rica: Ediciones FLACSO, 1988);

[27] Robert Williams. *Export Agriculture and the Crisis in Central America*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986; Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Political Economy of Central America since 1920* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Hector Dada, *La economía de El Salvador y la integracion centroamericana 1945-1960* (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1978).

[28] Lauria-Santiago and Binford, eds., *Landscapes*, 16.

experiences of opponents of the military regimes, For example, participants in struggles across the decades have provided personal stories as part of the testimony (*testimonio*) tradition of the late twentieth century, of which Rigoberta Menchu's is the most famous.[29] Victor Valle wrote a valuable and personal account of political life in the 1960s that focused on university activists and included several primary documents. Salvador Cayetano Carpio, otherwise known as Comandante Marcial recounted his tortures at the hands of Osorio's National Police.[30] Using these accounts to explore the experiences of individual Salvadorans, scholars can begin to examine how policies and institutions shaped lives.

Military governments defended themselves as capable of preventing the chaos and disorder that they argued Liberals unleashed. By discussing the tenets of Liberal governance, chapter two shows how coffee oligarchs consolidated power between 1870 and 1931, and tied the nation to the international economy. We can only properly understand the political and social changes Salvadoran military governments implemented by first tracing the development of politics, policies, and debates in the decades before 1931. Liberal rulers implemented political and economic reforms that, to some, promised democracy and independent political participation. As they attempted to modernize the state and nation, Liberals built alliances with popular groups, such as peasant organizations and urban labor unions. Fearing the power of these organizations,

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[29] The archetypal *testimonio* remains Elizabeth, Burgos-Debray, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nacio la conciencia* (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Argos Vergara, 1983). For a discussion of the problematic nature of *testimonios* see Doris Sommer, "'Not Just a Personal Story': Women's *Testimonios* and the Plural Self," in Bella Brodzki and Germaine Brée, eds., Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 107-130.

[30] Victor Valle Monterrosa, *Siembra de vientos: El Salvador, 1960-69* (San Salvador, El Salvador: CINAS, 1993); Salvador Cayetano Carpio. *Secuestro y capucha en un país del "mundo libre"* (Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica: Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana, 1979)

they intended to control these organizations, and limit their autonomy. These men were neither democrats nor true republicans, but nevertheless, by building popular alliances, and rewarding clients, they opened up a public debate over the "social question" that was limited, but also remarkably vibrant.

Reaching its peak during the economic boom of the 1920s, the debate involved the clergy, public scholars, and even the oligarchs themselves, in criticizing how the country's regressive social and economic structures and relations prevented greater development. Through newspapers, ecclesiastical documents and publications, and U.S. State Department Records, Liberals leaders lamented the republic's rural and semi-feudal structures, and promoted reforms. Salvadorans examined and questioned their political, police, penal and judicial systems during the economic boom of the 1920s, or "dance of the millions," as did countries like Cuba and Colombia.[31] This was a unique moment in Salvadoran history in the level of intellectual fervent, popular participation and belief in future progress. The economic dynamism and political promise of the 1920s spurred public debate in many parts of the world, like Turkey and Germany.[32] Including proposals for state regulations for improved working and living conditions, popular elections, and programs to deal with socially dangerous activities such as prostitution, these policies were not fully implemented, however, before the Great Depression struck the nation.

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[31] Vernon Fluharty, *Dance of the Millions: Military Rule and the Social Revolution in Colombia, 1930-1956* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1957); Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr, and Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, eds. *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[32] David Fromkin, *A Peace to end all Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York, NY: Owl Books, 2001); EJ Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler: Germany 1918-33* (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1995)

Afflicting countries throughout the world, the Great Depression allowed political opponents to use the crisis to bring down many governments including Germany, Brazil, Guatemala, and of course El Salvador.[33] Toppling Araujo, the Salvadoran military ended an era of Liberal civilian governments, and blamed them for the economic and social chaos of 1931. By encouraging the independent action of popular groups, Liberal governments had generation a backlash from numerous individuals and sectors throughout Salvadoran society. Finally, the apparent chaos and disorder of popular groups frightened many Salvadorans and fueled the backlash that soon followed.

Arguing that they restored order, the military used repression and censorship to silence the opposition, and privileged officers over civilians in government. Using government and military using records from the Ministries of the Interior, Justice and Defense, bulletins of the security forces, newspapers, and U.S. State Department records, chapter three explores the similarities and differences in the military's political reorganizations, civil-military conflicts, press censorship campaigns, and use of physical violence. Conservatives and reactionaries believed the Liberal regimes had failed when they took limited steps towards democracy, equality, and social opportunity. Allowing relatively free expression in the press, popular organization such as opposition political parties, and independent juries, these governments were criticized vehemently by praetorian rulers and their supporters. Nevertheless, although the military leaders spoke of correcting the failures of prior governments, they excoriated prior regimes primarily to secure political control. Wanting to increase their control over the government and the security forces, the leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD all reorganized their personnel

[33] For an excellent series of essays that focus on politics and economics, see Rosemary Thorp, ed. *An Economic History of Twentieth Century Latin America*, vol. 2, *Latin America in the 1930s: The Role of the Periphery in World Crisis* (Oxford, UK: Palgrave, 2000).

and command structure. These changes were couched in the language of reform, but focused on consolidating the power of a few military officers.

When the PRUD took power in 1948, they also publicly rejected the actions of prior governments, but now recognized that the public distrusted military personal rule as well as excessive Liberalism. In response to this, they portrayed themselves as a strong, but responsive party, unlike the Liberal Araujo or the "Fascist" Martínez. Never abandoning the model that the military embraced throughout these decades, however, they emphasized their critical ability to mediate between the reactionary rural oligarchs and radical agitators that plunged the nation into chaos in 1932. Neither embracing excess democracy nor complete repression, the military argued that they balanced the needs and demands of Salvadorans.

Diverging regarding the role of civilians within the government, however, Martínez militarized governance while the PRUD integrated civilian technocrats. Drastically reducing the role of civilians from that of the Liberal governments, Martínez kept civilian mayors and congressmen, but appointed more military officers to the legislature and into key positions as ministers and political governors. Briefly ruling between the *martinato*'s fall in 1944 and the Revolutionary government's rise in 1948, Aguirre and Castaneda Castro did not significantly alter these percentages. On the other hand, PRUD leaders, restored civilians to prominent positions within governance. As well as an ideological shift, this reflected the fact that the nation and the state were growing rapidly demographically and economically after World War II. Since Revolutionary governments ran a larger and more complex state, and governed a far larger population, their departments of labor, public health, housing and infrastructure

development provided many more services. Besides employing skilled bureaucrats with advanced degrees in areas like engineering, medicine, and law, the PRUD also elected women as mayors and to congress, although their total numbers remained small.

Because officers at all levels demonstrated disdain for their civilian counterparts, the groups frequently clashed, and all the military governments more often favored praetorian officials. Particularly disliking the judiciary, officers did not respect jurists, and preferred a dependent and subordinate court. In addition, jurisdictional confusion regarding jail supervision or police reforms fueled the conflicts, and exposed rivalries. Exacerbated by military desires to rule exclusively and maintain control of the repressive apparatus, praetorian regimes passed the burden of prison maintenance to civilan authorities.

The regimes also repressed opponents and would even exaggerate plots against them in order to justify the violence against their rivals. Responding aggressively against their opponents and critics in 1935 and 1952, the military leaders censored the press, and sought to shape public perceptions. They tried to control the official rhetoric and shape it for public consumption. During these crises, they manipulated elections, illegally and surreptitiously executed prisoners, and bullied the press, providing a valuable window into how the regime sold itself.

Using official Salvadoran publications such as the *Memorias* of the Justice and Interior Departments, bulletins printed by the branches of the armed forces like the National Guard and Police, communications housed by the Ministry of the Interior, newspapers, and U.S. State Department Records, chapter three outlines how the praetorian regimes courted popular support in an attempt o retain and increase their

power. El Salvador was apparently one of the most violent and crime-ridden places on earth, but in order to convince people that they were uniquely equipped to lead the nation into the future, the military emphasized the country's development and social justice programs. Presiding over limited agricultural diversification, industrial expansion, and explosive demographic growth, the military governments implemented some redistributive programs. Although the majority received limited benefits, they argued that praetorian governance protected the public from the twin evils of Communist revolution and Right-wing oligarchic reaction. In addition to limited and selective reforms, the military rulers provided rewards to political allies and clients.

Despite the repression of rural people during *la matanza*, Martínez afterwards emphasized land redistribution and his legal protection of peasants trying to build a base of rural and even Indian support. By creating Social Betterment and an Association of Rural Credit Banks, the general used these institutions to build his support among the rural masses, to counter the fact that he presided over the massacre of 10,000 peasants in 1932. A fervent nationalist in his early years, Martínez increasingly turned to U.S. support to gain access to international monies. By using foreign money for Salvadoran social justice programs and championing anti-Communism, the PRUD used their U.S. ties in order to strengthen their government politically and economically.

Controlling and manipulating language, the military reshaped words like liberty and democracy, and labeled many enemies Communists, in their efforts to convince people at home and abroad that they should rightfully rule the country.[34] This discursive

[34] There is a growing literature that examines how military dictators used language and deception to manufacture a level of passivity, if not consent, during their rule. On Argentina see Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York, NY: Oxford University

shift was in part a simple propaganda tool but the military reshaped attitudes by frequently reproducing their coded language. For instance, describing themselves as defenders of democracy and social justice, the leaders of the martinato and the PRUD encouraged their supporters to echo this language. By employing these words throughout internal communications, the regime redefined the way that Salvadoran used and understood them.

Attempting to convince Salvadorans to embrace, or at least not actively oppose the security forces, military leaders repeatedly reorganized the police and National Guard units, and publicly announced how they arrested, fired, and reassigned rank-and-file agents and soldiers who had abused their authority. Despite announcing how they addressed the egregious problems of the past, military leaders did not convince the people of their success and also failed to substantively reform the armed bodies. Communities recognized that nothing changed, as each successive reshuffling purportedly addressed the same problems of prisoner abuse, arbitrary arrests and captures, drunkenness, general pugnacity and overall incompetence. If implemented seriously, these reforms would have advanced the regimes' aims of building legitimacy and consensus. However, top officers were not serious in their efforts to improve the overall service of the security forces, but simply wanted to retain political power. When they disciplined foot soldiers to theoretically reduce insubordination and demonstrate the military's commitment to

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Press, 1998). On how regimes discursively constructed enemies and labeled individuals and groups as dangerous to explain and justify repression in El Salvador see Aldo Lauria-Santiago, "The Culture and Politics of State Terror and Repression in El Salvador," in Cecilia Menjívar and Néstor Rodríguez, When *States Kill: Latin America, the U.S., and Technologies of Terror* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005), 85-114, and on Mexico see Kristin Norget, "Caught in the Crossfire: Militarization, Paramilitarization, and State Violence in Oaxaca, Mexico," in *When States*, 115-142.

addressing popular demands, they simply sacrificed members of the citizenry to their larger aims of controlling the government and enriching themselves.

Since leaders of the martinato and the PRUD sold themselves as defenders of order, they tried to demonstrate that they effectively limited crimality but regularly favored repression over rehabilitation. Examining newspapers, internal correspondence from the Interior Ministry, publications by the various security forces, presidential speeches and writings, U.S. State Department records and Salvadoran criminal codes, chapter four shows how military leaders shared a belief in a strict social order but differed on policies and the inherent nature of criminals, and therefore humans. By arguing that they were particularly suited to maintain this order, and combat crime, military regimes used policies and language to gain legitimacy through their repeated campaigns against various types of crime. Manipulating the press, the military regimes appeared to suffer almost perpetual crime waves, and crackdowns on the many criminals within Salvadoran society.

Addressing juvenile delinquency throughout the decades, some military leaders believed that criminals such as thieves could be redeemed and advocated education and rehabilitation instead of repression in order to encourage desired behaviors. Arguing that criminals should be rehabilitated in penitentiaries and not simply punished in prisons, they believed the state should send juvenile criminals to government sponsored or religiously guided schools. PRUD leaders shifted the debate and heightened the hard-line rhetoric when they encouraged theories of criminality that identified recidivists within the population. By establishing a court of dangerous subjects (*juzgado de peligrosidad*), the military sentenced and punished people for crimes they supposedly would commit in the

future and thus created a system to imprison citizens without cause. In reviving positivist and determinist theories of criminality and humanity such as those popularized by Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso, praetorian regimes sought to convince the public about the validity of these theories and policies through the newspapers and the National Assembly. As the center of state authority, the military focused on the capital cityin their efforts to control crime, delinquency and recidivism.

Responding to the fact that in recent decades Latin Americans suffer under increased crime and violence, scholars have studied policing and the law in greater depth.[35] Fearing that Latin American citizens will choose dictatorship if democracies do not protect them against crime, authors studied people's faith in the ability of democratic regimes to maintain political and social order.[36] The problem of how "citizens' often-inflated perception of insecurity" presents a real threat to democratic governance motivated the editors of a recent volume to explore this dangerous phenomenon.[37] Also concerned upon hearing middle- and working-class Salvadorans lament the post-authoritarian decline in order and justice in their society, I wanted to study the reality behind these perceptions under the *martinato* and the PRUD. Inspired by similar laments, Kees Kooning discussed the *saudage*, or melancholic longing, Brazilians felt

[35] A special issue of *Law and Politics* focused on the problems of judicial systems during the democratic transitions and addressed the role of inter- and trans-national governments and agencies. *Journal of Latin American Studies* (36:3: August, 2004). The degree to which the democracies are consolidated is a chief concern, as demonstrated by two relatively recent public policy articles. Omar Encarnación, "The Strange Persistence of Latin American Democracy," *World Policy Journal* vol. 20 (Winter 2003/04): 30-40; Marta Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask," Journal of Democracy 8.3 (1997): 125-138.

[36] Many popular accounts cite the U.N. survey of 18 Latin American Countries that demonstrated thst a majority of people would support a return to authoritarianism, if they received economic progress in return. John Otis, "For Many, Democracy Has Been Disappointing," *Houston Chronicle* (10 March 2006).

[37] Hugo Früling Joseph Tulchin and Heather Golding, eds. *Crime and Violence in Latin America: Citizen Security, Democracy and the State* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), preface.

towards the military in the late 1990s, as the government continued to face political and economic difficulties.[38]

Besides talking about how they defended "law and order," military government also claimed to defend traditional and patriarchal society. By examining newspapers, U.S. State Department documents, criminal court records, and Salvadoran Interior Department communications chapter five discusses how the leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD focused on market women in their policies regarding workers, and prostitutes in their attempts to order public space and defend some women as they demonized others. Why were these groups so important to the military regimes? Praetorian rulers built alliances with the market women, or *mercaderas* of the major cities, particularly in San Salvador because these small merchants could mobilize large numbers of women and were a highly visible presence in the public life of the country. Organizing women to defend the social and spatial order, the leaders of the PRUD and the *martinato* recognized the political importance of retaining these urban laborers as political clients. Not all market women were equal, however, as they tried to force street peddlers into regulated centralized markets, in their attempts to monitor the streets and protect public health. In addition, these women shared basic ideological tenets with the military officers. Despite having independent economic, political and social power, and often being single mothers, *mercaderas* defended traditional and patriarchal society. Sharing ideal visions of Salvadoran society with the military governments, these women supported their position as honorable workers even as their own lives didn't meet the mythic standard, and contrasted themselves with dishonorable citizens.

[38] Kees Kooning, "Shadows of Violence and Political Transition in Brazil: from Military Rule to Democratic Governance," in Koonings and Krujit, *Societies*, 224.

Although they defended patriarchy and public order by supporting market women, the military regimes treated prostitutes quite differently. Because political leaders believed these women potentially endangered Salvadoran society, they sought to repress their movement, and sometimes even their existence. Most of the time, military governments admitted that they were unable to completely eliminate prostitution, and approved zones of tolerance which they combined with medical inspections and job training. Despite these often repressive policies, the "women of easy living" resisted state and familial control throughout the period of military governance.

We should not let the mythologies and the intentional lies propagated by the military and their supporters and opponents and their supporters prevent us from better understanding the Salvadoran military. Even though he has fascinated writers at home and abroad and is perhaps the most studied dictator in Salvadoran history, General Martínez is still poorly understood. Both demonized lionized because of his role in the brutal 1932 massacre, and holding beliefs that ranged from the quirky to the downright inexplicable, the general is hidden under layers of mythology. Critics often repeat his statement that "it is a greater crime to kill an ant than a man" because "when a man dies he becomes reincarnated, whereas an ant dies forever."[39] As further "evidence" of his insanity and ineffectiveness, they report that he strung colored lights, covered streetlights with blue paper, or painted the lights blue in an effort to contain a smallpox epidemic.[40] Gabriel García Marquez added a literary spin and provided an internal logic missing from

[39] This quote is so famous that it is used by the producers of the *Friendly Dictators Trading Cards* produced by Eclipse enterprises. See http://home.iprimis.com.au/korob/fdtcards/Central America.html. The source of the quote is not cited in the website but apparently taken from Anderson's book, *Matanza*, 174. Anderson, in turn, cites John Martz, *Central America: The Crisis and the Challenge* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 82.

[40] This is also frequently cited and presented and can be found in several internet sources. For instance, the strung lights quote is from *mongabay.com*, and the painted blue citation is from *fsmitha.com*.

the other stories in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize for literature, when he told the audience that Martínez "had streetlamps draped in red paper to defeat an epidemic of scarlet fever."[41] Although the Salvadoran dictator did apparently accept *cromoferapia*, or the ability to cure through colors, scholars should not overstate these beliefs.[42] Despite adding to Martínez's mythology, they fail to examine the very practical actions that he and his administrators took in running his government.

Although far less colorful than Martínez, PRUD leaders Colonels Oscar Osorio and José María Lemus are also misunderstood, and have been alternately demonized or eulogized from the Left and the Right. Criticized and misunderstood from many sides of the political spectrum, the regime's policies and rhetoric sometimes confused Salvadorans and international observers.[43] After all, they called themselves a Revolutionary party and embraced the rhetoric of social justice. Promoting a populist one-party government that resembled the Mexican PRI or even Brazil's Getulio Vargas and Argentina's Juan Peron, the PRUD's ambivalent rhetoric combined social justice and worker empowerment with virulent anti-Communism. Despite their conservative actions, their language concerned many observers, and the press sometimes excoriated them as overly socialistic or Communistic.

Combining words and deeds to construct a hegemonic, or at least a somewhat consensual system, the Salvadoran military regimes between 1931 and 1960 nonetheless never surrendered their right to use of massive force and violence. The governments

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[41] "…hizo cubrir con papel rojo el alumbrado público para combatir une epidemia de escarlatina." Gabriel García Marquez's quote is from his 8 December 1982 Nobel Lecture. http://nobelprize.org/literature/1982/marquez-lecture-sp.html, which is taken from Wilhelm Odelberg, ed. *Les Prix Nobel. The Nobel Prizes 1982*. (Stockholm: Nobel Foundation, 1983). The tile character of The Autumn of the Patriarch is based in part, on Martínez. Gabriel García Márquez, *El otoño del Patriarca* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Sudamericana, 1975).

[42] As cited in Ching, "Clientelism," 365.

[43] Woodward, *Central America*, 260-61.

mobilized their propaganda machines to convince indigenous peasants, street peddlers, urban professionals, market women, rural oligarchs, U.S. consular officials, and soldiers to support them, and fear them. Using the security forces, the criminal justice and penal systems, the legislature and executive power to balance reward and repression, they implemented their paternalistic, corporatist and patriarchal vision of society over the years. The populace feared the armed men who policed the streets, but knew the government would limit their abuses if they became too excessive. Often corrupt, the courts could still redress grievances and limit egregious exploitation. Despite serious challenges to their authority in 1944 and 1960, the military regimes defended their *raison d'etre*, and retained power. William Stanley refers to their justification as a protection racket, and although true, there is more to the story than convincing people that the military protected their interests.[44] They sold themselves as the only ones who could prevent another Communist revolt, as well as prevent oligarchic repression. In addition to building a state of fear, they also constructed a system that through rewards and propaganda, through lies as well as benefits, provided Salvadorans with belief that the future might bring improvements.

[44] Stanley, *Protection Racket*.

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Liberal and Oligarchic Failure

Introduction

When General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez took power in December 1931, he began a process that transformed Salvadoran society in fundamental ways, although few contemporary observers recognized the full importance or consequences of the military coup. Despite ending twenty years of civilian rule, a coup was not by itself a seminal event in early-twentieth century Salvadoran, Central American or Latin American history. Events that followed, the 1932 "Communist" revolt and the repression, *la matanza*, were much more important because they consolidated and justified both praetorian rule and popular repression.

In late January 1932, peasants revolted throughout El Salvador, and a small cadre of Communists sought to topple the government. After capturing and executing the revolt's leaders, military and paramilitary forces killed thousands of peasants in the backlash that followed. Fearing a similar uprising in their midst, the military leaders of countries like Guatemala's Jorge Ubico, Hondura's Tiburcio Carías, and Nicaragua's Anastazio Somoza took repressive action.[45] More importantly, the Salvadoran military

[45] Kenneth Grieb, *Guatemalan Caudillo: The Regime of Jorge Ubico, Guatemala, 1931 to 1944* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1979); Manlio Argueta, *Tiburcio Carias anatomia de una época, 1923-1948* (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Editorial Guaymuras, 1989); Jeffrey Gould, *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

effectively sold itself as the defender of Salvadoran society and institution best equipped to prevent future rebellions, making 1932 a "turning point" for Salvadoran society.

Ushering in a five-decade period of authoritarian rule, the leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD promoted a socially conservative, quasi-corporatist, martial and patriarchal system. Separating themselves from the prior civilian leadership, praetorian rulers argued that Liberal politicians and the rural elite had failed the nation by allowing thousands of peasants and scores of Communist agitators to threaten the country. After the political failures of the landed oligarchy, military regimes proclaimed themselves the most able leaders of the tiny nation, because they offered a solution to the "social question" of class conflict between capital and labor. What was their solution? The military said they could address the needs of peasants and workers, but still maintain the requisite social order needed for economic growth because they did not encourage popular autonomy or aggressive redistribution of land and wealth. First and foremost, they rejected the Liberal economic, social, and political model that had collapsed during the Great Depression.

Praetorian regimes argued that the Liberals, led by the Salvadoran coffee oligarchy, failed when their attempts to promote a social reformist vision of society that integrated popular groups, turned into demagoguery and incited violence. Presidents in the coffee oligarchy-dominated Melendez-Quiñonez dynasty (1913 to 1927) as well as Pío Romero Bosque and Arturo Araujo (1927 to 1931) indeed wanted to mobilize urban and rural laborers. Evn though they organized the masses into groups that included paramilitary Red Leagues who used violence to ensure Liberal victories, and Catholic mutual aid societies who tried to reform the behavior of the masses, the oligarchy wanted

to limit popular autonomy. Ultimately these groups demanded greater independence, which generated tensions with their leaders and patrons. Believing in Enlightenment, positivist and social Darwinist ideas, political and religious leaders discussed reformist, Progressive and democratic ideas but remained ambivalent about embracing their full implications.[46] They did not want democracy, but the military convinced many Salvadorans that these civilian leaders had promised too much to the masses.

This certainly seemed the case in the 1920s, when the coffee oligarchy, buoyed by high coffee prices, allowed and even encouraged public discussion of reformist and progressive visions of the Salvadoran state. Many groups criticized the landed oligarchy, and argued that government policies could modernize El Salvador. Salvadoran intellectuals, journalists, writers, policymakers and even *finqueros* themselves examined the problems of Salvadoran society. Leaders of the Catholic Church contributed to these vibrant, if short-lived, debates in the 1920s over the "social question" regarding the conflicting needs and demands of capital and labor. Romero's Bosque's Liberal oligarchic regime went as far as having a contested election in 1927, and Araujo, who followed as president, promised government-sponsored social reform and allowed Communist organizers to move through the country. Fearing the worst, many Salvadorans believed their concerns were justified in January 1932.

Rise of the Coffee Oligarchy

Despite the rhetorical contrasts between the military regimes and the Liberal governments, there shared many similarities. In fact, many of the economic, political, and social processes praetorian governments faced between 1931 and 1960 began under

[46] Bradford Burns, "Modernization," 57-75.

Liberal rule. Between 1871 and 1931, under Salvadoran Liberal regimes, the military increased their power, agro-exporters of coffee dominated the economy and initiated primitive capital accumulation and government encouraged light manufacturing and expanded formal and informal paramilitary repressive groups. At heart of the Liberal program was a commercialization and concentration of lands that increased the number of landless and land-poor people. Ostensibly running a Liberal republic and promising social reforms, political leaders instead limited popular political participation, violently suppressed dissent but provided economic justice to very few. Nevertheless, in the late 1920s, their promises of increased access and redistributive economic and social measures offered more than a glimmer of hope to many. After all, in 1927 the country had its first contested election, and in the follwing years unions were growing in strength and Communist were organizing peasants. Policymakers employed science to assist in the development of a new El Salvador and a more than a few dreamed of, and worked towards substantive change. The December 1931 military coup increased uncertainty regarding the future of democratic, participatory and social reformist hopes and dreams of Salvadorans. *La matanza* seemed to crush those aspirations.

In the last fifteen years, as scholars re-evaluated the Liberal era, they challenged many long-held myths about how Liberals were responsible for the land inequalities that generated the civil war of the 1980s. By emphasizing the agency of marginalized people and examining local conditions as archives became accessible after the end of the Salvadoran civil war and the Cold War, Salvadoran and Central American historians moved away from doctrinaire Marxism to broader social and cultural histories. Largely avoiding the pitfalls of some cultural and subaltern studies, which emphasized language

over the lives of actual individuals and ascribed too much power and voice to the so-called subaltern groups, this new literature recognized that solely economic and structural analyses have limits.[47] They showed how the decisions of popular groups affected Salvadoran society.

Traditional dependency-based studies made a valuable contribution to our understanding Salvadoran history, and Liberals certainly did tie the nation more deeply to international markets, but they did not immediately disposses the peasants of their lands. Certainly El Salvador was highly dependent on coffee and a small number of oligarchs held a disproportionate level of economic and political power into the twentieth century but production and ownership was still generally widespread between 1900 and 1930.[48] The coffee oligarchy expanded their power in the 1860s and 1870s, but the story was not simply one of peasants losing their land. Rather, as Aldo Lauria argued, it was more "complex and open-ended" than earlier studies had us believe, because despite their repression, peasant actions limited, redirected and reshaped the policies of Liberal politicians.[49] Grounded in dependency and world-systems theory, much of the traditional literature overemphasized how the privatization of communal and *ejidal* (municipal)

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[47] For examples of some classic works of subaltern studies see Ranajit Guha and Gayatri C. Spivak, *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988) and Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univeristy Press, 1997). For a discussion of the New Cultural History see Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989).
Hector Lindo, in a speech given at the inauguration of the *Carrera de Historia at the Universidad Nacional de El Salvador*, summer 2002, criticized this approach. He asked that if the weak had so much agency, why were they treated so poorly?

[48] David Browning. *El Salvador: Landscape and Society* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1971). In a contemporary account noting that Salvadoran peasants rarely go hungry and had widespread land ownership, Martin also spoke fondly of the political leadership and the condition of the prisons. He shared the views of numerous travelers between 1900 and 1930. Percy Martin, *Salvador in the Twentieth Century* (London, UK: Edward Arnold, 1911).

[49] Aldo Lauria-Santiago. *An Agrarian Republic: Commercial Agriculture and the Politics of Peasant Communities in El Salvador, 1823-1914* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 3.

lands between 1870 and 1930 led to peasant landlessness.[50] Emphasizing how European actors and local oligarchs turned Central American economies to export production, these authors believed that by 1932, primitive capital accumulation and exploitation was firmly established.[51] Rafael Menjívar and Rodolfo Baron Castro, for example, argued that despite the survival of some communal and *ejidal* lands, a reserve army and labor coercion both existed by the time the military took power.[52] Using travel accounts and selective documentation, E. Bradford Burns argued that many poor Salvadorans no longer had access to land and food as early as 1900.[53] David Browning established decades ago that significant numbers of small peasants cultivated coffee well into the 20th century and long after the Liberal land reforms had been implemented. Despite seeing that contemporary travelers like Percy Martin described Salvadorans peasants with considerable land and autonomy in the 1910s, both Burns and Browning emphasized exploitation given their Marxian inspiration.[54]

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[50] Native communal lands were often described as communal lands and were distinguished from state-owned lands, known as *ejidos* or *ejidal* lands.

[51] The classic and still valuable account of the development of Central American dependency is Torres Rivas, *Interpretación*. The world-systems theory was best advocated by Immanuel Wallerstein in his often-cited trilogy. The first volume established the theory that in a global division of labor the periphery developed (or underdeveloped) based on decisions made in the core and was influenced by, among others, André Gunder Frank. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1974); André Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment," *Monthly Review* 18 (4): 17-31.

[52] There are numerous examples. E. Bradford Burns, "The Modernization of Underdevelopment: El Salvador, 1858-1931," *Journal of Developing Areas* 18, no. 3 (April 1984): 293-316. For a classic account see Rafael Menjívar, *Accumulación originaria y desarrollo del capitalismo en El Salvador* (Tibás, Costa Rica: EDUCA, 1980). Rodolfo Baron Castro, *La población de El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: CONCULTURA, 2002; orig. pub. 1942).

[53] Burns, "The Modernization," 309.

[54] Browning, *El Salvador*. Martin, *Twentieth Century*. Martin wrote his account to convince the British government to increase investment in El Salvador and Latin America and revive the great empire.

Burns revisits the general argument regarding the crucial nature of late-nineteenth century ideas and policies the next year. E. Bradford Burns, "The Intellectual Infrastructure of Modernization in El Salvador, 1870-1900," *The Americas*, vol. 41 no. 3 (January 1985): 57-82.

Dana Munro was more critical than Martin, but nevertheless concluded that Salvadoran peasants were beeter off than those in the other countries of the isthmus, excluding Costa Rica. Dana G. Munro, *The Five Republics of Central America* (NY, New York: Oxford University Press, 1918), 113-15.

By understanding that the consolidation of the exploitative *latifundia-minifundia* complex, where the *minifundista* or owner of a subfamily farm must seek additional sources of income to support the family during the year, occurred under after World War Two, we better explain how the *martinato* succesfuly built alliances with peasants and why the PRUD faced urban discontent.[55] In 1930, oligarchs had not yet completely dispossessed peasants, although they had expanded their landholding with the help of Liberal privatization policies. Literate *ladinos*, or westernized indigenous and mixed-race Salvadorans, accumulated land at the expense of Indians and marginal *campesinos* and wealthy merchants and processors accumulated vast fortunes. Smallholders lost land in the late 1920s, but Martínez slowed the process in the 1930s with policies such as the Moratorium Law that prevented many foreclosures.[56] When the land-poor and landless population increased again in the 1950s and 1960s, their discontent led directly led to the so-called Soccer War between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969. Since a World Cup qualifying match ignited tensions that exploded into violence, some international observers joked that these "banana republics" went to war over a soccer game. Needless to say, Central American republics did not go to war over a soccer game, but Salvadoran

[55] A *minifundio* was a subfamily farm in which the owners combined scarce land and capital with excess labor. Most *minifundios* had cash and subsistence functions and were intensively cultivated. A *latifundio* was a large estate that is extensively exploited. They were subdivided into plantations (capitalized, technologically advanced specialized production units with a hierarchically organized labor force) and haciendas (low capital investment, primitive technology and small labor force). Carolyn Hall, *Costa Rica: A Geographical Interpretation in Historical Perspective* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), 144-154.

[56] Wallace Thompson, *Rainbow Countries of Central America* (New York, NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1924); Jeffrey Gould and Aldo Lauria-Santiago, ""They Call us Thieves and Steal Our Wage:" Toward a Reinterpretation of the Salvadoran Rural Mobilization, 1929-1931," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84:2 (May 2004), 197-98.

and Honduran leaders sent their militaries to war due to a political conflict resulting from explosive population growthwithout combined with insufficient land or employment.[57]

In addition to neglecting the survival of peasant landholding into the 1920s and 1930s, traditional scholarship also overstated political exclusion, economic exploitation, and coercion under the Liberal regimes. Indeed, inequalities of wealth and material deprivation were common in many areas of El Salvador, popular political participation was limited, and political repression was particularly extreme in rural areas. Arturo Taracena accurately argued that overall, Liberals "privileged the coercive functions of the state over legitimacy."[58] True enough, nevertheless scholars should stress the incomplete and contested nature of the oligarchic national project of political and economic centralization and privatization because Liberal security forces and their paramilitary brethren did not entrap peasants in a "Foucaldian social prison," as Lauria critiqued Patricia Alvarenga for arguing.[59] Regional and local political alliances, in which peasants and even organized indigenous communities played a role, continued to shape national events up to the Great Depression of the 1930s.[60] Many groups resisted the expansion of the power of the state and local elites in the 1920s, under the *martinato* and

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[57] See Robert Williams, *Export Agriculture and the Crisis* and *States and Social Evolution: Coffee and the Rise of National Governments in Central America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); William Durham, *Scarcity and Survival in Central America: Ecological Origins* of the Soccer War (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979); Thomas Anderson, *The War of the Dispossessed: Honduras and El Salvador, 1969* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1981).

[58] Arturo Taracena Arriola, "Liberalismo y poder politíco en centroamérica (1870-1929)," in Victor Hugo Acuña Ortega, ed, *Historia General de Centroamérica*, Tomo IV, *Las Repúblicas Agroexportadoras (1870-1945)* (Spain: FLACSO, 1993), 173.

[59] Alvarenga, *Cultura*. Lauria-Santiago, *Agrarian*, 227 and Mario Samper, *Generations of Settlers: Rural Households and Markets on the Costa Rican Frontier 1850-1935* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990).

[60] Aldo Lauria-Santiago, "Land, Community, and Revolt in Indian Izalco: El Salvador, 1855-1905," *HAHR* 79 (August 1999): 495-99 and Lauria-Santiago, *Agrarian*.

even during the thirteen years of PRUD control. Individual rural and urban workers were not simple pawns or victims of the powerful.

In the 1880s, Salvadoran oligarchs increased the size and scope of the national government to benefit those involved in coffee production and distribution, as did their counterparts in Costa Rica and Guatemala. [61] As they went from authoritarian liberalism to oligarchic electoral democracy, Costa Ricans created an imagined community through education and symbols. Guatemalans did not build much of a hegemonic system, but kept many aspects of the colonial system of coerced labor.[62]

Salvadoran presidents between 1872 and 1886 laid the legal foundations for Liberal economic ascendancy and political control. After General Santiago Gonzáles (1872-1876) overthrew Conservative Francisco Dueñas, his legislature aproved the 1872 Liberal Constitution that included the privatization of public and communal land, secularization of education and marriage, professionalization of the military and police, and, in theory, political term limits.[63] Dr. Rafael Zaldívar (1876-1884) and General Francisco Menéndez (1885-90) followed him. Menéndez, a coffee planter, or *finquero*, from Ahuachapán, drafted and passed the 1886 Constitution that is often hailed as the juridical culmination of the Liberal state, but offered few novelties from the 1872

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[61] There are numerous texts that review this period but for a sold and succinct treatment that covers the entire isthmus see Taracena, "Liberalismo" in Acuña, *Historia.* Another solid collection is Héctor Pérez-Brignoli and Mario Samper, eds., *Tierra, café y sociedad: Ensayos sobre la historia agrarian centroamericana* (San José, Costa Rica: FLACSO, 1994). The starting dates for the rise of coffee oligarchy are debatable and range from 1871 and the privatization of communal lands under Santiago Gonzáles Portillo to 1864 with the rise of President Francisco Dueñas and the 1864 Constitution to 1858 and the beginning of Pres. Gerardo Barrios' rule. E. Bradford Burns used the latter date because Pres. Barrios took power and announced a program of "progress" and "modernization" and argued that this model continued under the conservative Dueñas. Burns, "Modernization," 297-98.

[62] See for example, Mario Samper K, *Producción cafatelera y poder político en centroamérica* (San José: EDUCA, 1998), 168 and Steven Palmer, "A Liberal Discipline: Inventing Nations in Guatemala and Costa Rica, 1870-1900," PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1990.

[63] The 1872 Constitution, for example, limited Presidential terms to four years without reelection. General Santiago Gonzáles (1872-76), Dr. Rafael Zaldívar (1876-1884) both avoided this provision.

document. This Constitution, which remained in effect until General Martínez replaced it with the Constitution of 1939, simply consolidated the laws built over the previous decade and a half.[64] The foundations of Liberalism remained private property, international exports, and support for thee nationalization of the security forces.

After building an exploitative and coercive apparatus to control coffee workers, Liberals privatized land and removed traditional restrictions on land sales, hoping to build a reserve army of land-poor workers. Government leaders used penal codes that contained vagrancy laws to speed the lengthy process of peasant dispossession. President Zaldívar, a moderate Liberal who favored the coffee interests, implemented the famed agrarian "reforms" of 1881 and 1882 which outlawed *ejidos* and communal lands. Through the Day Workers Law (*ley del Jornalero*) which limited where peasants could work and for whom, agrarian judges who convicted labor deserters, and the Police Law which codified penalies, Zaldívar secured workers for the coffee planters.[65] Alvaranga noted that in 1889 the security forces arrested 1,107 people for labor desertion and that the majority of these were in the coffee-growing regions. Desertion was the second most frequent offence after "scandal and peaceful drunkenness."[66] Peasants responded to these restrictive labor codes, which were enforced with local magistrates and security

[64] Manuel Arrieta Gallegos argued in 1973 that the 1886 Constitution definitively abolished the *fuero* and established the principle of equality before the law. He acknowledged that the principle was built in prior Constitution and legislative acts. Manuel Arrieta Gallegos, *El Nuevo codigo penal salvadoreño: Comentarios a la parte general* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Imprenta Nacional, 1973), 43. Coordinación Educativa y Cultural Centroamericana (CECC), *Historia del istmo centroamericano*, vol. 2 (Querétaro, México: Comisión Nacional de Libros Gratuitos, 2000), 32. A team of authors, coordinated by Héctor Lindo Fuentes and Knut Walter authored the text but the section on coffee and the rise of the modern nation-state was entrusted to Lauria and Alvarenga.

[65] "Ley de policía," in Miguel Barraza, ed., *Recopilación de Leyes Administrativas* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Imprenta Nacional, 1917).

[66] Alvarenga, "Auxiliary," 126.

forces aided by civilian auxiliaries, by violently uprising in 1885 and 1886.[67]

Popular groups opposed these nation-building efforts that threatened their customs and livelihoods, and neither the Salvadoran church nor the state fully suppressed dissent. As the Liberal regimes privatized communal lands into the 1890s, the Salvadoran Catholic Church campaigned against *cofradías*, or civil-religious brotherhoods. Wanting to reform the customs of the Indian communities, Archbishop Antonio Adolfo Pérez y Aguilar (1888-1926) wrote a pastoral letter on superstitions and heresies, but never organized groups to combat the mixture of Indian and European religions.[68]

By 1898, when General Tomas Regalado took power through force and formalized the process of political succession, Liberals had consolidated their coercive apparatus and balanced it with political rewards for clients or supporters. Between 1898 and 1931, all Salvadoran presidents belonged to the coffee oligarchy, and most successfully chose their successors and were civilians. Of the eight men elected, only General Fernando Figueroa (1907-1911) was a military officer, thus effectively giving the Liberal landed elites political and economic control of the nation.[69] After 1913, when the Melendez-Quiñonez family consolidated the Salvadoran '*Pax Coffeana*,' Salvadoran elites believed they had perfected a political, economic and social system that provided them with tremendous wealth, and allowed them to slowly integrate popular forces while

[67] Taracena, "Liberalismo," 187. The rural poor also declared their displeasure in major uprisings in 1872, 1875, 1880 and 1898. Bradford Burns, "Modernization," 302.

[68] Rodolfo Cardenal, "Reorganization de la iglesia" in Dussel, *Historia General de la Iglesia*, 312-323. Archbishop Antonio Adolfo Pérez y Aguilar, "Pastoral sobre Sectas y prácticas supersticiosas y heréticas," in Ramon López Jiménez, *Mitras salvadoreñas* (San Salvador: Departamento Editorial del Ministerio de Cultura, 1960), 133.

[69] Bradford Burns, "Modernization," 302-04.

denying the masses real autonomy and independence.[70] The Great Depression shattered this system and allowed the military to assume control of the republic.

Proto-Populists and Paramilitaries

Despite the open manipulation of local and national elections, popular forces played an increasingly significant political role throughout the Salvadoran Liberal aristocracy's rule. From the 1910s, Salvadoran elites founded and supported popular organizations ranging from mutual aid societies to paramilitary groups in order to help them rule over the growing nation-state.[71] Hoping to control these groups, Liberals were constantly frustrated by how individuals constantly demanded greater autonomy, and challenged the orders of their superiors.

Liberals rulers hoped that their paramilitary organizations would remain pliant while intimidating their enemies in order to maintain political power. In 1913, President Quiñonez Molina founded the infamous "*Liga Roja*," or Red League, a paramilitary group that used coercion and intimidation to ensure the election of the desired Liberal candidates.[72] The Red League was long misunderstood by some authors who were misled by the name as much by the limited information available about them. As some pro-Martínez authors criticized the oligarchy, they poorly described the Red Leagues,

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[70] Lindo-Fuentes, *Foundations*, 158.

[71] Lauria argued that the Araujo regime of 1911-13 demonstrated 1) the consolidation of the dissolution of corporate and municipal power centers, 2) a centrally-controlled professional army, 3) top level political control, and 4) improved taxation, law, repression and communications. Lauria-Santiago, *Agrarian*, 226-27.

[72] The *Liga Roja* is discussed in most accounts of the Liberal regimes. Patricia Alvaranga has argued that civilian auxiliaries were used to buttress the Salvadoran government's system of domination in *Cultura y ética de violencia: El Salvador 1880-1932* (San José: EDUCA, 1996) and then tempered her Foucauldian inspired conclusions in "Auxiliary Forces in the Shaping of the Repressive System: El Salvador, 1880-1930," in Aviva Chomsky and Aldo Lauria-Santiago, eds. *Identity and Struggle at the Margins of the Nation State: The Laboring Peoples of Central America and the Hispanic Caribbean* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 122-150.

making them seem like a leftist popular organization.[73] Thomas Anderson clearly distinguished it from any kind of "cousin of the Bolshevik party" but only described the organization as "a means of manipulating the masses for the benefit of the old crowd already in power."[74] Mariano Castro Morán and Rafael Guidos Vejar also only discussed the *Liga* in general terms.[75] In his dissertation, Everett Wilson described them as "urban police," which overlooked their important rural function.[76] Patricia Alvaranga, who wrote the most thorough discussion of the Leagues, noted their similarity to the Red Battalions in the Mexican Revolution, in that the government organized urban workers loyal to the regime to intimidate people.[77] Using their votes as well as physical violence, *Liga* members helped elect Jorge Meléndez (1919-1923) and Alfonso Quinónez-Molina (1923-27), who ultimately disbanded the organization because he feared their autonomous actions.

Fearing the rural masses, Liberal leaders in the twentieth century primarily sought to politically integrate urban workers and artisans, who had increased numerically and economically in recent decades. [78] Although they believed peasants were more illiterate, darker or more Indian, less intellectually and morally capable, and more unpredictable than urban laborers, Meléndez and Quinónez-Molina hoped to control rural workers within these organizations. Multi-ethnic and containing agricultural workers, The Red Leagues had artisans, professionals and intellectuals among its ranks. By using

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[73] For instance see Alberto Peña Kampy, *"El General Martínez:" Un patriarchal presidente dictador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Editorial Tipografíca Ramirez, 1973).

[74] Anderson, *Matanza*, 39.

[75] Mariano Castro Morán, *Función política del ejército salvadoreñoen el presente siglo* (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1984); Rafael Guidos Véjar, *Ascenso del militarismo en El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1980).

[76] Wilson, Integration," 103-07.

[77] Alvaraenga, *Cultura*, 250-51.

[78] Guidos, *Ascenso*, ch 3.

privileged peasants to control the others, Salvadoran mayors and landowners used strategies reminiscent of black slave drivers in the under antebellum U.S. slavery, and the "trusties" in postbellum prison labor gangs.[79] Rewarded for punishing others, these "collaborators" supported the ruling order and built alliances with national governments.[80] Never able to fully control these groups, when members of the Red Leagues more frequently clashed with the official security forces in 1923, oligarchs dissolved the organization.[81] Wanting power, land or wealth, just seeking to address local slights or feuds, these paramilitaries defended their families, friends and communities through these mass organizations. Joining the League for personal and local reasons, these men were not simple and automatic pawns of the mighty, and became expendable.

Not only relying on paramilitary organizations, Salvadoran oligarchs also employed clientelism to build support. Providing spaces for formal and indirect mass participation, they always sought to limit popular autonomy, however. In El Salvador, the Constitution of 1886 provided a framework where many people participated

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[79] All of these are men are not simple collaborators, of course, but more complex than stereotypes. For a discussion of black slave drivers see the classic Eugene Geneovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1972) and William L. Van Deburg, *The Slave Drivers: Black Agricultural Labor Supervisors in the Antebellum South.* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979); For a discussion of the trusties see David M. Oshinsky. *"Worse Than Slavery": Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1996).

[80] Alvarenga elaborates this argument regarding the Red Leagues. She adds that Ladinos and indigenous Salvadorans fought for power, position, and control over land and resources within these organizations. Alvarange, *Cultura*, 252-59. She also argued that peasants repressing others in support of oligarchs weakened community bonds. Alvarenga, "Auxiliary," 135.

[81] The literature on paramilitaries throughout the world after World War II is voluminous. For Latin America see Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, eds. *Armed actors: Organized Violence and State Failure in Latin America* (NY, NY: Zed Books, 2004), and for Colombia see the related essays in Charles Bergquist, Ricardo Peñaranda and Gonzalo Sánchez G., eds. *Violence in Colombia, 1990-2000: Waging War and Negotiating Peace* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 2004). For a global perspective on related groups that are not always paramilitary, see Bruce B. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner, eds, *Death Squads in Global Perspective: Murder with Deniability* (NY:NY, St. Martin's Press, 2000).

politically even though there was little pretense of fair and open elections.[82] In such a system, local elites became clients of national elites in order to gain access to power and to the men that dispensed patronage. Oligarchs took advantage of cross-class alliances in 1885-1890, 1894, and again during the Melendez-Quiñonez ascendancy between 1913 and 1927 to retain political control. For instance, besides the *Liga Roja*, Quiñonez Molina also mobilized natives in regions like Izalco by promising them land redistribution.[83] From participating in local revolts and riots, to bulding regional and national political and military alliances, the urban and rural masses aired their political demands within the limited spaces available.[84] By granting favors to those who could influence the electorate, as well as those who could reliably deliver or falsify votes, the patron-client system linked rural and urban groups, artisans, commercial capitalists and landed oligarchs.[85]

Even as they manipulated elections, Salvadoran political leaders also responded to laborer's protests for social reforms during the 1910s. In this period, Salvadoran president Manuel Araujo (1911-1913) most aggressively tried to mobilize the increasingly powerful rural and urban popular organizations. His administration's attempts to implement interventionist social democratic reforms ultimately failed. Although he briefly expanded the national political rhetoric, the debate ended when elites

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[82] Patricia Alvarenga, *Cultura y ética*, 74. Rosas in Argentina likewise was a leader who combined repression and reward and selectively obeyed the constitution, yet nonetheless took it very seriously. Jorge Myers, *Orden y virtud: el discurso republicano en el regimen rosista* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1995).

[83] Emilio Villacorta, *patria*.

[84] Lauria-Santiago, *Agrarian*, 104.

[85] For a classic account on patronage and clientelism in Brazil see n Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989). Erik Ching noted that a very good introduction to the historiography of patronage and clientelism is Luis Roniger, "Caciquismo and Coronelismo: Contextual Dimensions of Patron Brokerage in Mexico and Brazil," *Latin American Research Review* 32, no. 2 (1987): 71-99.

assassinated Araujo. Araujo's popular constituency, including organized labor, could not prevent the downfall of his policies and organizations. Despite slowing the pace of reform, the president's successors still cautiously courted popular groups, as evidenced by the *Liga*.[86]

When the Catholic Church tried to create popular religious organizations, they also confronted tensions between mass autonomy and elite desires for strict hierarchy. Hoping to mobilize these organizations yet use the Church to control the masses, Salvadoran elites created and sponsored various Catholic mutual aid societies.[87] Because they were religious, leaders hoped that these groups might be easy to control, but they also increased in power and independence, and did not simply do the bidding of their founders. This was, in part, because the Catholic Church was also engaged in debates over how to resolve the conflicts between workers and employers in the 1920s

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[86] An authoritative, or even a thorough, account of Salvadoran politics in the 1910s does not exist. John Chasteen argued that his brief account of Manuel Araujo's presidency was the first written in either Spanish or English! John Chasteen, "Manuel Enrique Araujo and the Failure of Reform in El Salvador, 1911-13," *The Southeastern Latin Americanist* 27 (September 1984),1-17.

Ching covers the decade's politics in his dissertation as does Alvaranga in her monograph and Arturo Taracena in his essay in the *Historia General*. Ching, "Clientelism," Alvarenga, *Cultura*, and Taracena "Liberalismo." They discuss the 1910s, much as I do, as a means to discuss the 1920s and 1930s.

[87] Unfortunately the Salvadoran historiography regarding the Church and popular organizations is highly underdeveloped when compared to other countries of Latin America and even Central America. Costa Rica, for example, has several scholars that have produced substantial texts on the topic. Miguel Picado discussed in some detail the structure and ideology of many Costa Rican Catholic organizations between the 1880s and 1940s. Eugene Miller focused on the alliance between the Church and the Left between in the 1930s and 1940s and James Backer on Catholic trade unions and their relationships with political figures and secular unions emphasizing the 1940s and 1950s. Miguel Picado. *La iglesia costarricence entre dios y el césar* (San José, Costa Rica: Departamento Ecumenico de Investigaciones, 1988); James Backer, *La iglesia y el sindicalismo en Costa Rica* (San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial Costa Rica, 1975); Eugene Miller, *A Holy Alliance? The Church and the Left in Costa Rica, 1932-48* (London, UK: ME Sharpe, 1996).

These organizations are not mentioned by authors of recent works such as Thomas Anderson, Arturo Taracena, or Victor Hugo Acuña. Anderson, *Matanza*; Taracena, "Liberalismo," in *Historia General*; Victor Hugo Acuña, "Clases subalternas y movimientos sociales en centroamérica (1870-1930), in Victor Hugo Acuña Ortega, ed, *Historia General de Centroamérica*, Tomo IV, *Las Repúblicas Agroexportadoras (1870-1945)* (Spain: FLACSO, 1993). This chapter's analysis is based on a reading of Catholic and secular newspapers.

Catholics Address the "Social Question" and Blame Oligarchs

Addressing the challenge of organizing the populace, Catholic leaders debated how to resolve the "social question," or the conflicts between workers and employers, and often provided profoundly ambivalent solutions. In contrast to most socialist and Marxist proponents, religious thinkers believed that class conflict was not inevitable, and that the church was uniquely positioned to mediate between capital and labor. Educated in Italy or Spain, or from professors educated in institutions such as the Pius Latin American University (*Colegio Pío Latinoamericano*) in Rome, most Salvadoran clerics, shared with European priests and nuns, a belief in a "third way" between uncontrolled capitalism and perilous Communism.[88]

Reproducing European intellectual and social debates, Salvadoran Catholic social ideology was influenced by Marxist and socialist critiques of capitalism, Liberal reformist ideas towards the poor, and the ideas of subsidiary or corporatism and worker empowerment.[89] By dismantling some of the rigid positivist ideology that dominated theological institutes and universities in the early nineteenth century, Catholic scholars and theologians debated popular autonomy and democracy, and replaced the ideal of mandatory medieval guilds with voluntary associations.[90] Socialist critiques of capitalist production, and ideas of material justice and popular organization directly influenced Catholic radicals, despite the religious hierarchy's virulent opposition to the anti-clericalism and anti-religiosity of many revolutionary mass organizations. As the

[88] Ramón López Jiménez, *Mitras Salvadoreñas* (San Salvador, El Salvador: BANCASA, 2000; orig. pub. 1960); Luis Medina Asensio, *Historia del Colegio Pío Latinoamericano (1858-1978)* (Mexico City, Mexico: 1979).

[89] For a helpful essay collection see George Weigel and Robert Royal, eds., *Building the Free Society: Democracy, Capitalism and Catholic Social Teaching* (Washington, DC: Ethics and Policy Center, 1993).

[90] For a broad overview of these intellectual developments see Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (NY: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1991).

European Catholic Church responded to labor unrest and socialist propaganda, their rhetoric became increasingly ambivalent. In 1891, Leo XIIIs Papal encyclical on Capital and Labor, *Rerum Novarum* was published, and combined worker empowerment with paternalism and patriarchy. While defending the "primeval" rights of marriage and private property, and rejecting the ideas of equality and inherent class conflict, *Rerum Novarum* nonetheless asserted that the Church was concerned with the bodies, as well as the souls, of men.[91] In addition, the encyclical decried the fact that a few men controlled the majority of wealth and kept the masses in a state of near-slavery.[92]

When European Catholic labor leaders and members of popular organizations sometimes embraced the encyclical's more radical provisions, the hierarchy cooled the democratic fervor of the various movements. In one instance, Pope Leo XIII decried autonomous groups that might diminish the masses' "spirit of obedience."[93] After prominent Catholic leaders prevented a complete condemnation of trade unionism from the pope, some Catholic clerics and scholars responded with an increasingly liberal and even radical defense of individual dignity and human rights. Simultaneously promoting conservative and reactionary calls for elite conscience, protection of private property, and traditional hierarchies, as well as advocating legal action, and organized cooperatives,

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[91] The Pope did not craft the encyclicals by himself, of course, and was counseled and influenced by men such as Bishop Von Kettler (Mainz), Cardinal Manning (Westminster), Charles Perin (Belgium), Baron von Vogelsang (Austria). Leo XIII consciously reached out to the masses and released more encyclicals (185) than any previous Pope. Mary Hobgood, *Catholic Social Teaching and Economic Theory: Paradigms in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 103. Upon his election he began to investigate the 'social question' with an assault on international socialism in *Quod apostoli muneris* (1878). The official revival of Thomas Aquinas' thought, which he advocated as bishop of Perugia and intended to revive critical Catholic thought, was codified in *Aeterni Patris* (1879). William Murphy, "In the Beginning: *Rerum Novarum* (1891)," in George Weigel and Robert Royal, eds., *Building the Free Society: Democracy, Capitalism and Catholic Social Teaching* (Washington, DC: Ethics and Policy Center, 1993), 5-7.

[92] "Rerum novarum," in Claudia Carlen Ihm, *The Papal Encyclicals*, vol 2, *1878-1903* (Raleigh, NC: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981).

[93] *Graves de communi re*, 6-9.

and militant lay organizations, the emerging synthesis was medieval and modern, authoritarian and democratic, paternalistic and empowering, as well as radical and conservative. Families, community leaders, priests, bishops, and popes used these contradictory ideas and solutions to the "social question."[94] Groups that advocated social change and addressed the material preconditions for spiritual advancement jostled for primacy against purely evangelical and confessional groups. Salvadoran Catholics inherited this contested ideological framework.

Promoting ambivalent policies into the 1920s, the Salvadoran Catholic hierarchy countered socialist or Communist popularity with mass organizations including Catholic Action, or *Acción Católica*. Although Catholic Action, founded by Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) in 1922, was officially groups of laypersons, sponsored by local bishops, who generated a militant enthusiasm for extending the church's spiritual influence, the organization became much more than that over the years.[95] In Guatemala, for example, Church leaders used *Acción Católica* at different times to justify social justice, modernization or anti-Communism.[96] As with *Rerum Novarum*, Pius XI's ambiguous rhetoric opened Catholic social thought to liberal and radical interpretations. Because some lay people believed Catholic Action should be used for worldly and independent action, popes have at times reasserted their paternalism, as when Pius XI expressed fear

[94] Hobgood, *Teaching*.

[95] Ivan Vallier, *Catholicism, Social Control, and Modernization in Latin America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 64.

[96] Kay Warren, *The Symbolism of Subordination: Indian Identity in a Guatemalan Town* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1989).

that clergy and the laity were both seduced by leftist agitators.[97] This again demonstrated the complexities and seeming contradictions of Catholic social thought.

Before the Salvadoran political and economic expansion of the 1920s, Catholic leaders advocated a very conservative role for lay people, including when they formed Catholic Action organizations. The Salvadoran clerical organ, for example, published articles on the legitimacy of strikes and the nobility of laborers, but argued that organizing workers should always consult owners and employers.[98] When lay Catholics organized, the hierarchy believed it should be into parish circles "to instruct and moralize" Salvadoran society, or other religious and educational activities, such as establishing separate and religious schools for young boys and girls.[99] Reinforcing his paternalism and opposition to popular autonomy, Bishop Pérez y Aguilar reasserted that Catholic Action must be "under the direction of bishops."[100] The Church remained solidly anti-democratic but did argue that human beings needed physical as well as spiritual sustenance. Addressing social changes in a 1916 pastoral letter, the archbishop argued that clerics must be educated properly in the emerging social sciences to "find solutions to social and economic conflict."[101] Across the next decade, despite believing in a world of mutual debts and obligations between rural landowners and urban bosses and their workers, the Salvadoran hierarchy embraced the modern tools of research and the social sciences, and criticized both the oligarchy and social inequalities.

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[97] "*Ubi arcano dei consilio*," in Claudia Carlen Ihm, *The Papal Encyclicals*, vol 3, *1903-1939* (Raleigh, NC: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981).

[98] "Las huelgas," *La religión: organo oficial de la curia ecclesiástica de San Salvador* (21 Jun 1903); "El principe de los obreros," *La religión* (13 Mar. 1904).

[99] Mñor Adolfo Pérez y Aguilar, *Decima carta pastoral* (16 July 1911), 16. "Acción social católica: las escuelas católicas," *El Centroamericano: diario católico* (22 Dec 1914).

[100] The Pope did not formalize and define the organization until 1922 but priests but talked about the concept and the word in broader and more general terms. Pérez y Aguilar, *Decima*, 27.

[101] Pérez y Aguilar, *Carta pastoral sobre el seminario central* (30 Nov. 1916).

In the 1920s, Salvadoran religious leaders increasingly addressed the material preconditions for spiritual advancement and argued that landowners and the government had to take action to improve the lives of rural and urban workers. Some priests believed purely spiritual action was insufficient for poor and suffering workers. Faced with the dynamic growth of the Salvadoran coffee economy, the organization of urban and rural laborers, and the expansion of socialist conversions some leaders of the Salvadoran church to begin to address the "social question" with more profound and complex programs than in the 1910s. Ultimately, the majority remained anti-democratic and failed to addres the needs of the struggling laboring classes.

Knowing that Catholic Action included educational groups, mutual aid societies and social and economic cooperatives, Salvadoran priests wanted the organization to address the material conditions of the people, but disagreed over how to achieve that aim. The modern Catholic Action movement that originated in Europe during the late 1920s had also not resolved these issues. A majority within the Salvadoran Church hierarchy emphasized conservative and reactionary methods and advocated moral regeneration, but a significant number of laypersons and clerics talked about using scientific analyses to improve people's material lives. These men and women subsequently advocated radical social action such as labor strikes and political demonstrations. [102]

Before the Great Depression struck the countryside and cities, the debate over popular organizations particularly targeted the failures of the oligarchy. The Salesian fathers, who ran the Don Bosco School (*Colegio don Bosco*) for boys in the capital, for instance, criticized large landowners and industrialists for their low wages and poor

[102] Philip Wiliams, "Popular Religion and thre (Re)Construction of Community in Yungay" in Anna Peterson, Manuel Vásquez and Philip Williams, eds. *Christianity, Social Change, and Globalization in the Americas* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 83.

working conditions. Even discussing mass action and popular empowerment, these missionaries organized social conferences on the labor question.[103] In a talk entitled "The State and the Labor Question," they argued that national wealth was created "by the labor of the proletariat…as much as that of the peasant…and the worker," and that "when the poor find themselves defenseless…the State should protect them preferentially."[104] The dialogue and the early preferential option for the poor had firm roots in the reformist language employed by Salvadoran intellectuals, workers, and politicians. For instance, Catholic newspaper *El Tiempo* reported with great enthusiasm when Legislative Assembly Representative Jose Mejía proposed to construct "affordable and hygienic housing for the families of workers and normal, or teacher, and rural schools."[105]

In the late 1920s, Archbishop Belloso y Sánchez believed that the church had lost ground to socialists and Communists because these other groups substantively addressed the "social question."[106] Hard-working Communist and socialist cadres indeed "converted" many Salvadorans in this period, and the church no longer had a monopoly on education and propaganda.[107] The Party, largely through International Red Aid (*Socorro Rojo Internacional*, SRI) campaigned in the cities and countryside, especially in the largely indigenous western coffee-growing regions. In order to combat the reformers and radicals whose membership had increased even during the Depression, Belloso

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[103] El newspaper *El Tiempo* reported on the talks between 31 January y 3 March in various issues. The themes of the talks were "The Rights of Property (*el derecho de la propiedad*)," "Work (*el trabajo*)," "Social Classes (*las clases sociales*)," "The Obligations of Justice: Capitalists and Patrons (*los deberes de justicia: los capitalistas y los patronos*)," "Salaries (*el salario*)," "The Use of Wealth (*el uso de las riquezas*)," "The State and the Social Question (*el estado y la cuestión social*)," "Strikes (*las huelgas*)," "The Church and the Worker Question (*la iglesia y la cuestión obrera*)," and "Catholic Associations (las sociedades católicas)."

[104] "7a Conferencia: El Estado y la cuestión Obrera," *El Tiempo* (25 February 1931).

[105] La construcción de casas baratas para obreros," *El Tiempo* (17 mar 1931).

[106] José Alfonso Belloso y Sánchez, *Carta Episcopal* (8 December 1926), 18-26.

[107] Belloso, *Episcopal 1926*, 31.

echoed their language and programs. Stating that the "role of economics or the material relations [between] capital and labor" had to be addressed and that prosperity would improve the lives all Salvadorans, the archbishop argued that intellectuals should encourage solutions that included mutual aid societies and worker organizations.[108] Still paternalistic like Costa Rican Catholic Action leaders, Belloso agreed that "elite parishioners" would lead the populace, and as a vanguard party would educate militants, propagate the Message, spread salvation and form syndicates, study circles and other organizations.[109]

Recognizing the need to reduce class conflict, the clergy hoped that organizations like Catholic Action would directly combat socialist programs and restore the "natural" equilibrium between capital and labor.[110] Catholic Action leaders coupled study circles, comparable to socialist 'worker cells' and progenitors of later twentieth century Base Ecclesiastic Communities (*Comunidades Ecclesiasticas de Base, CEBs*), with printed and oral propaganda to spread the word of God and anti-revolution. The Salvadoran hierarchy also supported parallel organizations to the SRI's "popular" universities which were well-attended in many rural areas.[111] Bishops ans priests often justified their socialist-sounding language and rhetoric by saying it was most effective in opposing Leftist misinformation. This is true, but priests also shared basic cultural assumptions with their spiritual adversaries. Belloso, for example, argued that "the principles of the

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[108] José Alfonso Belloso y Sánchez, *Carta pastoral sobre el presente momento s*ocial (30 Oct. 1927), 5.

[109] Belloso, *Edicto*, 24-25. "Elite parroquial," *El mensajero* (March 1918), 56-64.

[110] Rodolfo Cardenal, *El poder eclesiastico en El Salvador (1871-1931*) (San Salvador: UCA editores, 1980), 216. Rodolfo Cardenal dates the 'official' founding of modern Catholic Action on 13 June 1943 in Cardenal, *Historia de la iglesia*, 384.

[111] Jose Alfonso Belloso y Sánchez, *Edicto colectivo sobre conferencias episcopales* (San Salvador: 1931), 5-6. Roque Dalton, *Miguel Mármol: Los sucesos de 1932 en El Salvador* (San José, Costa Rica: EDUCA, 1982).

true science of economics" must be used to study social conditions and figure out how to improve the lives of the majority.[112] Directly echoing the cries of many socialist reformers as well as political leaders such as presidents Don Pío Romero Bosque and Arturo Araujo, Salvadoran Marxists and Catholics both used the tools of scientific materialism and drew similar conclusions regarding the exploitation of the working classes by the rural oligarchy in the 1920s.

When government functionaries contributed to the debate over the "social question," they emphasized the oligarchy's failures. Arguing that poor living conditions destabilized Salvadoran society, San Salvador political governor Dr. J.A. Castro R. blamed the *finqueros*' unwillingness to pay fair wages and provide reasonable working and living conditions. Responding to Dr. Castro's strident critique, Dr. Vicente Sol H. of the Salvadoran Coffee Association (*Asociación Cafetalera*) argued that by neglecting terrible urban working conditions, the governor had painted a distorted picture. Claiming to be part of a larger system in which poverty persisted, leaders of the oligarchy argued that they had become scapegoats for the nation's poverty and underdevelopment. Feeling besieged, Sol added that no one had yet found a solution that balanced economic growth with an improved distribution of wealth, and as creators of economic growth, the *finqueros* should be applauded for generating the country's prosperity.[113]

Many clerics, like government leaders, publicly asserted that it was landed oligarchs that built the oppressive and unequal system in El Salvador. Recognizing that material improvement in the lives of workers and higher wages were necessary, priests criticized the landowners for exploiting rural workers. Communism complicated issues

[112] Belloso, *Carta momento social*.

[113] "El Señor Gobernador Dr. J.A. Castro R. se refiere a una entrevista publicada en Diario Latino," *El Día* (13 February 1932).

for Church leaders. In a letter to the large landowners on the eve of the 1932 peasant revolt, Archbishop Belloso cautioned them if landowners "treat[ed] their workers correctly the Communist peril would remain completely latent." The archbishop wanted the oligarchs to treat their workers with "justice and charity," which meant providing them with adequate housing and salaries, holidays, schools and medical care, limits on child labor, and maternity leave.[114] The Diocese's Catholic Social Action Council reinforced this sentiment, criticizing rural salaries and asking the landowners to "comply with the laws of justice."[115] *El Tiempo*'s editors lauded the Archbishop for demonstrating to the public that the Church defended "the persecuted and the disinherited" and for countering the secular Left.[116] The letter was important, *El Tiempo* argued, because El Salvador faced a Communist revolution if the landowners did not start treating their laborers with "generosity and Christian spirit."[117] While Belloso was no radical, he recognized that the workers' precarious condition on the coffee farms contributed to the revolutionary ferment. After the revolt, oligarchs countered the criticism by saying that Archbishop Belloso's letter to the oligarchs was "disgracefully… misinterpreted" by the peasants, and contributed to the 1932 rebellion.[118]

Although leaders of religious organizations organized ordinary people, they still distrusted them, feared their decisions and sought to limit their choices. Obsessed with "sins" like pornography, prostitution, Protestantism and alcoholism Catholic leaders

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[114] "Injusticia de los terratenientes," *El Tiempo* (18 January 1932).

[115] Belloso, "Injusticia."

[116] "Marginales del momento," *El Tiempo* (20 January 1932)

[117] "La carta de Monseñor Belloso a los Terratenientes Salvadoreños," *El Tiempo* (22 January 1932). The letter was addressed to "Capitalists, Owners (*Propietarios*) and Patrons (*Patronos*) in general" because their action was key to preventing the looming Communist revolution.

[118] "El salario obrero desde el punto de vista católico," *El Tiempo* (2 June 1932).

favored using censorship to solve these problems.[119] The most intense years of Salvadoran clerical censorship from the 1910s until the military coup were 1912, 1927 and 1931.[120] Since these years correlated with the open national political dialogues of Manuel Araujo, Don Pío Romero Bosque and Arturo Araujo, it demonstrates that the clergy believed that they had to limit dangerous ideas which could lead to peasant discontent and organized opposition. Clerical distrust of peasants also limited Catholic Action's scope and range, since Belloso ultimately hoped priests would encourage more prayer and local study circles and less autonomous action.[121]

Facing the threat of Communism, the archbishop looked to the regular clergy, or missionaries, to supplement the limited number of secular priests.[122] Agreeing that parish priests didn't have enough manpower to spread their message of social peace to the restive countryside, members of religious orders dramatically increased their spiritual activity when they faced the Great Depression and the ever-radicalizing popular groups.[123] For instance, the missionary Redemptorists performed 4,000 communions and confirmations in 1929, 24,000 in 1930 and 80,000 following *la matanza*.[124] Despite their strident criticisms of the landed oligarchy, Catholic leaders did not address the problems

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[119] Belloso, *Episcopal*, 33.

[120] Cardenal, *Poder eclesiastico*, 306-7. Cardenal's data ends in 1931 but it is safe to assume that press censorship was intense. When Thomas Anderson visited the Salvadoran National Archives in the late 1960s the only book on *la matanza* was by Joaquin Mendez. The book, *Los sucesos comunistas en El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Funes y Ungo, 1932) was intensely pro-government and anti-Communist. Anderson, *Matanza*, 144.

[121] Belloso, *presente momento*, 20-22.

[122] Bolanos claims that unlike the Catholic hierarchy that allied with the wealthy, the Redemptorists with the Jesuits and Salesians, tended to the increasingly revolutionary poor. Roberto Bolanos, *Abudante redencion en El Salvador: Los Redentoristas 1928-1988* (San José, CR: Editorial Guayacan Centroamericana, 1995), 77-92.

[123] Belloso, *Episcopal 1926*, 18-26.

[124] Luis Iglesias, *Los misioneros redentoristas y la república de El Salvador* (Mexico: Editorial Gerardo Mayela, 1956), 57-65.

and concerns articulated by the poor, and this spiritual action did not quell mass discontent.

Salvadoran religious intellectuals and theorists debated the socialist theory of class conflict between workers and employers, and between landowners and agricultural laborers, and presented a great variety of solutions to this pressing social question. Because they did not believe that class conflict was inevitable, simply omnipresent, their solutions focused on reducing and eliminating tensions between workers and employers, and not that the metaphorical sheep should make independent decisions. The Salvadoran masses, of course, had free will, as a central tenet of Catholic theology. Nevertheless, since different parts of the social body had differing abilities and functions, religious leaders believed that Salvadoran peasants did not have the capacity to vote or even migrate without surveillance and supervision. The ideal hacienda or factory strictly controlled the workers' movements and even thoughts through policing and religion.

The Salvadoran Catholic Church was solidly anti-democratic, anti-Communist and sought the preservation of the social order but employed progressive and reformist ideas in their writings. Ultimately, however, the Salvadoran hierarchy simply wanted Catholic Action to encourage prayer and not deal with popular demands or social realities. In the hierarchy's opinion, the state and particularly employers had to change their behavior, but landowners had long opposed programs to redistribute national wealth. After 1932, the Salvadoran church joined the military and rejected the radical policies of the Communists, but retained their portrayal of the oligarchy as the class that resisted social change.

Mass Revolt and the Collapse of Liberal Populism

After the postwar depression of 1919-21, coffee exports and profits increased dramatically, and as their economic power increased, popular classes demanded social reforms.[125] The value of coffee exports, for instance, rose from $7.372 million to $22.741 million from 1915 to 1928.[126] Elites remained cautious overall, but politicians and thinkers, theorists and public intellectuals brought the public dialogue regarding modernization, state social activism, political reformism and the "social question" of capital and labor conflict to its apogee. Despite the tremendous coffee-based prosperity, the poor majority complained that they did not receive a proportionate share of the expanding wealth.[127] The lower classes radicalized political rhetoric as the Left and the Right appealed to the increasingly visible and vocal working masses. Social reformers believed their mission was necessary to prevent social dislocations, and political leaders acknowledged that reform was vital to prevent revolution. During this period, the coffee oligarchy's populist politics opened opportunities for mass organizations, but nevertheless, elite responses remained largely conservative and paternalistic.

By influencing and shaping the words and policies of political leaders, Salvadoran intellectuals contributed to this vibrant and reformist dialogue over issues of poverty and working conditions. Writing on social issuers and widely debated by scholars and politicians throughout Central and Latin America, Alberto Masferrer reached beyond simple Liberal assumptions influenced the programs of Arturo Araujo's Labor Party

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[125] The *cafateleros* enjoyed superprofits of 100-150 percent during the 1920s. Even during the global economic crisis of the 1930s they did not complain of losses but lamented their reduced profits. Ernesto Cáceres, "Despues del '32," *Boletin de las ciencias economicas y sociales*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Mar-Apr 1986), 98.

[126] Wilson, "Crisis," 44, 132.

[127] The purchasing power of workers on the coffee *fincas* decreased during this period of prosperity and inflation. Aquiles Montoya, "Antes del '32," *Boletin de las ciencias economicas y socials*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (May-Jun 1984), 191-207.

Masferrer.[128] Corresponding with writers such including Chilean Gabriela Mistral, Mexican José Vasconcelos, and North American Waldo Frank, Masferrer discussed issues of education, work, child welfare and feminism.[129] Among the most original Central American thinkers, the Salvadoran author's work was influenced by spiritualism, Hinduism, socialism, Buddhism, and Theosophism. More importantly, he shaped public opinion within and without El Salvador in his widely-published works.[130] Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Costa Ricans have revisited his writings in the post-war period.[131]

Despite his reformist and conservative views, many contemporary critics believed that Masferrer was a radical author and a popular agitator. Certainly a nationalist, he sarcastically commented on the U.S. President's visit to El Salvador in 1928 by comparing Hoover to Caesar, and belittled the fawning Latin American leaders that received him. Denouncing the North American nation's racist policies against Indians and blacks, the author favorably described how Salvadorans treat them "as if they were persons."[132] Some argued that Masferrer expounded a radical feminism, but his theories were firmly grounded in Catholic paternalism. Despite founding women's political leagues (*ligas feministas*), promoting female suffrage, and teaching at women's schools, he defended a conservative and paternalistic protectionism. In his very first editorial, he expounded upon his ideology of *Vitalismo*, or the Vital Minimum in rejecting the very

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[128] Hector Perez-Brignoli, *A Brief History of Central America*, trans. Ricardo Sawrey and Susana Stettri de Sawrey (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 116-117.

[129] Italo López Vallecillos, *El periodismo en El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Editorial Universitaria, 1964), 361-68.

[130] Marta Elena Casaús Arzú, "La disputa de los espacios públicos en Centroamérica por las redes unionistas y teosóficas en la década de 1920: La Figura de Alberto Masferrer," *Revista de Humanidades* Vol 4, no 3 (2003).

[131] Marta Elena Casaús Arzú, "La influencia de Alberto Masferrer en la creación de redes teosóficas y vitalistas en América Central (1920-1930)," *Cuadernos Americanos* no. 99 (May-Jun 2003): 197-238.

[132] "El llega," 24 November 1928 in Matilde Elena López, ed., *Alberto Masferrer: Obras escogidas* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Editorial Universitaria de El Salvador, 1971), 535-37.

idea of illegitimate children. Masferrer instead argued that illegitimate actions generated and reproduced social, spiritual and physical diseases, but at minimum, children deserved protection.[133]

Frequently employing Christian theology and imagery, Masferrer outlined his paternalism in his public texts in many essays including one entitled Studies and Reflections on the Life of Christ in 1927.[134] When he described socialism as advanced Christianity, his writings prefigured later twentieth century Liberation Theology in some ways, but was much more simply a part of the rhetoric of 1920s social Catholicism. His writing appeared radical to some observers but was tied to theosophist, spiritualist, socialist, anarchist, and even Christian progressivism.[135] Rejecting social Darwinism and positivism, Masferrer strongly defended the idea that human problems are primarily environmental.[136] His proposals, in addition, did not involve assaults on private property or invoke class conflict. Advocating state intervention and social welfare in order to create a harmonious balance between capital and labor, Masferrer promoted progressive ideas, yet also evinced a profound conservatism and paternalism, and so his writing well-suited Araujo's Labor Party platform.[137] Salvadroan authors in the late 1920s most frequently debated what to do about the often-quoted "social question" of class conflict.

Defending their rights and privileges with this paternalistic and conservative, yet democratic and socialist, language, even the *cafetaleros*, or coffee oligarchy, embraced

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[133] López Vallecillos, *periodismo*, 361-68.
[134] Casaús Arzú, "figura de Masferrer," 4.
[135] Elena López, *Masferrer*.
[136] Casaús directly connected Masferrer with Henry George. Casaús Arzú, "figura de Masferrer," 16-17.
[137] Karen Racine, "Alberto Masferrer and the Vital Minimum: The Life and Thought of a Salvadoran Journalist, 1886-1932," *The Americas*, vol. 54, no. 2 (1997).

social justice and material improvements.[138] Of course, socialists, reformers and progressives criticized the landed oligarchy's role in constructing inequality and oppression, and so the landowners defended themselves. Recognizing that class conflict had increased in the 1920s, that income and wealth inequalities existed and that Salvadoran government should intervene to improve the social welfare, the landed elite rhetorically redefined their place within the system.[139] Engaging in self-critique, as socialist ideas and popular demands shaped the national dialogue between 1921 and 1931, oligarchs admitted that their choices had generated inequality, but that in the longer run Salvadorans would profit from their leadership.

Emboldened by the the relative political toleration under President Pío Romero Bosque (1927-31), urban laborers and the illegal Salvadoran Communist party (*Partido Comunista Salvadoreño*, PCS) organized and agitated for economic and political changes. Romero was an able and honest leader who is "remembered in the mythology of his country as a kind of Salvadorean Good King Wenceslaus." Attempting to balance the demands of his oligarchic base with the increasingly organized and militant working and middle classes, Romero promised social reforms and free and open elections in 1931.[140] Arguing for the "scientific organization of labor," he passed laws that limited working hours and provided accident security.[141] Recognizing the socialist challenge for the hearts and minds of Salvadorans and respecting the potential power of organized

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[138] Ovidio Gonzales, "Algunos elementos ideologicos de la clase dominante en el '32," *Boletin de las ciencias economicas y sociales* (San Salvador: UCA, Año VII, no. 6, 1984), passim.

[139] E. Bradford Burns discussed the nineteenth century ideology of modernization and Jeffrety Paige discussed the ideology of elites in the aftermath of the 1980s civil war. Burns, "Modernization," passim; Jeffery Paige, *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[140] Anderson, *Matanza*, 21.

[141] Jacinto Paredes, *Vida y obras del Dr. Pío Romero Bosque: Apuntes para la historia de El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Imprenta Nacional, 1930), 337-8.

labor, elites like don Pío employed reformist language. Nevertheless, paternalistic and patriarchal strands were deeply woven into the ideological fabric of Salvadoran elites, and they saw themselves as the natural leaders in this movement, despite believing in a more open and participatory system. Articulating and defended the interests of workers and *campesinos*, or peasants, political elites also demanded laws that would protect men from "living from women's work (*oficios femeniles*)." In their ideal vision, women received moral, intellectual and economic education, and everyone benefited from campaigns against drunkenness and prostitution, but these elites faced a growing popular challenge. [142] The PCS and labor unions such as the Regional Worker's Federation (*Federación Regional de Trabajadores*, FRTS) expanded dramatically in 1930, in part because the depression worsened living and working conditions, but many Leftist leaders had already laid the organizational groundwork in the late 1920s. In 1929, the FRTS had 38 affiliates with a total membership of 1500 and these numbers increased as the Great Depression continued.[143] Rural and urban laborers and intellectuals went to the countryside and established the "popular university" to educate peasants about their historical and structural oppression.[144]

As Catholic leaders feared the masses in Catholic Action, and the oligarchy distrusted the Liga Roja, many elites also feared popular participation in the judicial system. Salvadoran newspapers largely shared the Church and military state's evaluation of Salvadoran "lumpen" groups and the nation's democratic future. During the 1930

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[142] Copy of "Nuestro Programa "Grupo Acción Social" by Carlos Alfonso Funes in "Charge d'affairs ad interim Schott to Secretary of State," *U.S. National Archives* (*U.S.N.A.*) Record Group (RG) 84, District File (DF) 800.0054/291 (17 June 1930).

[143] Communists consolidated leadership in the FRTS by 1929 and mobilized coffee workers in 1930-31.. A. Douglas Kinkaid, "Peasants into Rebels: Community and Class in Rural El Salvador," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* vol. 29 no. 3 (July 1987), 475.

[144] Alejandro Marroquín, "Estudio sobre la crisis de los años treinta en El Salvador," in Pablo Gonzales Casanova, ed., *America Latina en los años treinta* (Mexico, DF: UNAM, 1977).

mayoral elections, *Diario de El Salvador*'s editors argued that the country could not have complete liberty because of the uneducated rural masses.[145] In the years before 1932, the editors of *El Día* repeatedly printed articles that criticized the popular judiciary or juries and argued for a more selective screening process. *El Día*'s editors and authors argued that because of their moral and intellectual weakness, jurors threatened the integrity of the judicial system and the ability to succesfuly prosecute criminals. Jurors were unable to be true Republicans, unlike the oligarchs or military officers.[146]

Besides arguing that incarcerated Salvadorans were physically and mentally inferior, many writers also rejected their civil human rights, and justified their beliefs with positivist and eugenic theories. Admiring German or Prussian social and political thought, *El Día*'s editors supported many of the policies of the rising National Socialist Party. Likening the degeneracy of prisoners to diseases like tuberculosis or syphilis, one editor argued that these sick, abnormal and delinquent people did not have right to have children. Since criminals were likely congenitally abnormal and therefore irredeemable, they argued that the state should prevent the reproduction of negative or dangerous traits and characteristics. Because those who studied hygiene examined the individual, but the eugenicist examined the social body, the author concluded that men like German scientists were resolving social problems by eliminating future faulty human beings.[147] Newspaper writers and policymakers echoed this language when they debated penal and prison reform. Despite the fact that many Salvadoran urban capitalists, rural oligarchs

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[145] Clipping in "Charge d'affairs ad interim Schott to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0054/200 (16 January 1930). The US State Department reported in January 1930 that only 57% of the San Salvador population of 96,692 was literate. "General Conditions Report 26 Dec 1929 to 2 Jan 1930" *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0047/190-G (3 January 1930).

[146] For a few examples see "Alrededor de la elección de magistrados," *El Día* (11 March 1931), ""El jurado popular es una institución en bancarrota," *El Día* (13 February 1931), and "Lo que son y deben ser los jurados," *El Día* (5 November 1931).

[147] "Comentarios: El istriagalis de la Penitenciaria," *El Día* (19 June 1931).

and military officers across the 1930s held pro-German and pro-Nazi positions, eugenicist, positivist, and Lombrosian criminological theories were overshadowed, or at least complemented, by a belief that the great majority of criminals were not lost persisted, even after Martínez became president.

Many theorists and policymakers under Liberal rule believed the state should distinguish and separate redeemable citizens from true recidivists. In 1931, *El Día* published a series of articles that reflected this Catholic and anti-deterministic vision of social pathology. Rejecting the theories of Italian criminologists like Moleschoti, Lombroso and Ferri who argued that man was a "natural machine who acts in a deterministic and defined manner," the articles stated that delinquency was not primarily a result of physical deformity. Instead, the so-called "degenerates" had not lost free will, their conscience, or sense of responsibility. Continuing the assault on Lombrosian theory, the authors argued that there was no direct correlation between physical stigma and criminal activity, because the most attractive, healthy-appearing body was still capable of committing brutal crimes.[148] This Catholic-inspired school of thought that emphasized free will, liberty of thought, and redemption, predominated in Salvadoran secular and military publications before military rule.[149]

Sharing the Archbishop's vision regarding the gullibility of the masses and the responsibility of the ruling classes, most Salvadoran authors adopted the conservative solutions offered by Roman Catholic social thought and focused on propaganda. For

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[148] "Las teorias deterministas: Estigmas y estadisticas," *El Día* (31 August 1931).

[149] Lombrosian theories were debated among public intellectuals and became part of popular scholarly discourse. *Opinion Estudiantil* 's editors attacked Martínez's supporters like Dr Lázaro Vasconselos and Dr. Roberto Paredes, and called them Lombrosians (*lombrosianos*). The author leaves unclear whether he described them as irredeemable criminals (according to Lombrosian theory) or supporters of a discredited and fascist ideology. "Justicia de Martínez in 1932," *Opinion Estudiantil* (8 July 1944).

example, weeks before the 1932 revolt, *El Día*'s editors published a series of articles by "a friend from Santa Ana" entitled "Facing the Social Question" that argued that the government should arbitrate and mediate conflict between capital and labor. When discussing he need to combat Communist propaganda and misinformation, the author argued that popular groups only organized and acted with the ideological and organizational assistance of outsiders. Because foreign or elite agitators were to blame, the state, the newspapers, and clerics could respond to the lies. Since the urban and particularly the rural workers did not act or think independently, the key strategy to combat social disorder was therefore information.[150] This perception was demonstrated graphically in the photographs printed in *El Día* after the January 1932 rebellion. The first photo showed captured dynamite, and the second showed the Minister of War Castaneda Castro and other military officers and newspapermen surrounding captured typewriters and leaflets. Arguing that the destruction of the propaganda machine was as important, perhaps more critical in some fundamental ways, than the physical weapons of war, the article reflected the belief that peasants and workers rebelled because they were misled.[151]

Because education or more accurately propaganda was instrumental, due to the public's supposed mental and moral inferiority, authors and policymakers focused on the need to convince the masses that the Salvadoran state provided and guaranteed social justice. Writing under the pen name Arístides, the author added that peasants should be

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[150] "Frente a la cuestión social" was published in four parts from 12-15 January 1932.

This belief survived throughout the decades of military dictatorships and a brutal demonstration of the military's fear of ideology and propaganda was the symbolic executions of the Jesuits by the Atlacatl Battalion during the FMLNs second final offensive during the 1980s Civil War, and Gen. Monterrossa's fatal obsession with *Radio Venceremos*.

[151] "Informacion gráfica del movimiento subversivo," *El Día* (21 January 1932).

taught to glorify the role of the state and see the perils and destructiveness of class warfare through film and schools that the state would proliferate. Since the masses must be convinced of the state's goodwill, the author added that teachers would be especially trained and ordered to contribute to the project. Favoring propaganda over effective action, Arístides did not discuss the independence and autonomy of the masses.[152]

Reinforcing the conclusions of Catholic intellectuals and socialists, Arístides concluded the articles with criticisms of the oligarchy and descriptions of their failures. Few could doubt that peasants' poor material conditions contributed to their willingness to support radical political organizers, and so many authors proposed the distribution of lands to increase the number of small property holders, which in the solid nineteenth century Jeffersonian and social Catholic traditions was believed to be the bulwark against social revolution. By asking the landowners to provide better food, housing and health care to the workers, the author directly echoed Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *rerum novarum* which Arístides cited as his inspiration.[153] Directly responding to *El Día*, Santa Ana daily *El Pueblo*'s editors agreed that peasants were agitated and that class warfare was looming.[154]

By the end of 1931, international observers in the U.S. military and Diplomatic Corps agreed with Salvadoran intellectuals and politicians that conditions were ripe for revolution, and that oligarchs were primarily responsible.[155] They lamented the miserable wages and working conditions on plantations. The global economic crisis had

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[152] Ibid.

[153] *El Día* (12-15 January 1932).

[154] "La cuestión social de la inconformidad de los campesinos," reprinted in *El Día* (20 January 1932).

[155] U.S. Major A.R. Harris compared El Salvador in 1931 to Russia, France, and Mexico on the eve of their respective revolutions. He observed that radicals proliferated because of the "the reactionary ideas of the large landowners, who don't want to let any of their land go, so that a middle class will be developed." A.R. Harris to Secretary of State, *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0194/4000b (22 December 1931).

exacerbated the Salvadoran masses' material deprivation and precipitated a social crisis. The divisions between rich and poor seemed greater than ever. Elite and middle class conspicuous consumption continued as before even as employers cut wages for the working classes. In 1932, U.S. *charge d'affairs* A.E. Carlton noted that Cuban concessionaries set up a "Coney Island"-style amusement park in San Salvador. Despite opening during the nadir of the economic crisis, this "relatively large scale" park enjoyed heavy attendance.[156] Owned by Cuban Juan Vicente Carrasco, the amusement park contained typical rides like bumper cars and the "Flying Dutchman," and also reproduced a Japanese garden. Although the owners occasionally used the park to raise money for charities, this was a small part of its operations. Life continued as usual for significant numbers of wealthy and professional Salvadorans.[157] U.S. diplomatic and military officials repeatedly noted the inherent dangers of the ruling elite's profound resistance to sharing the benefits of prosperity. The predictions and warnings offered by the newspapers, government functionaries, Church leaders, and U.S. State Diplomatic corps came to fruition in 1932.

Peasants in the western departments of El Salvador rebelled and held several towns for days before the military and their civilian allies repulsed them and retaliated by killing about 10,000 people. This event, known as *la matanza*, is among the most closely studied in Salvadoran history and will only be discussed briefly here. The Salvadoran Communist Party and International Red Aid organized and mobilized thousands of

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[156] "Charge d'affairs A.E. Carlton to Secretary of State: Salvadoran Economic Report," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0777 (19 July 1932).

[157] "La gran fiesta de domingo en Coney Island Park a beneficio de la sala cuna," *El Tiempo* (19 October 1932).

workers throughout the country between 1929 and 1931.[158] During the reformist presidencies of Romero Bosque and Araujo, these Communists organized rural and urban workers and promoted agrarian reform.[159] After the military overthrew President Araujo in December 1931, the leaders of this radical popular movement threatened a revolt hoping to pressure General Hernández Martínez into concessions. The general did not negotiate. After a series of rigged municipal election held on 4 and 5 January 1932, he instead arrested the leaders including Farabundo Martí, Alfonso Luna and Mario Zapata who had planned a barracks revolt and urban insurrection that failed miserably. The military had effectively crushed the urban revolt by 19 January 1932. Shortly before dawn on 23 January 1932 peasant rebellion engulfed the western, mostly coffee-growing regions of El Salvador and days later the killing began.[160] The exact number killed is debated in many sources but this vast massacre was El Salvador's most significant event in the twentieth century until the peace accords of 1994 and the subsequent democratic transition.[161]

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[158] The older scholarship like Anderson's *Matanza* emphasized the distinction between the Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS) and *Socorro Rojo* (SRI). Recent accounts by Ching, Tilley, Lauria and Gould talk about the entire movement as part of the Communist Party. This shift appears to be based on reliance on the records of the Archive of the Comintern in Moscow, Russia. These documents became more readily available after the fall of the Soviet Union increased access to the archives in the 1990s. Anderson, *Matanza*, Ching and Tilley, "Communists," and Gould and Lauria, "Thieves."

[159] Gould and Lauria, "Thieves," 225-234.

[160] Thomas Anderson's 10,000 is now widely accepted. Thomas Anderson, *Matanza: El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1971). Alistair White estimated fifteen to thirty thousand. White, *El Salvador*. Leftist leaders including longtime National University professor and *Opinion Estudiantil* editor Jorge Arias Gómez proposed an estimate of thirty thousand. Jorge Arias Gomez, *Farabundo Martí: Esbozo biografico* (Caracas: Fondo Editorial Carlos Aponte, 1983). This higher estimate is still occasionally disseminated in popular accounts. U.S. Embassy officials in the 1930s and 1940s also reported 10,000 and Salvadorans at that time agreed.

[161] James Dunkerley refers to it as the "single most decisive event in the history of Cenral America until the overthrow of Somoza," in "El Salvador since 1930," Leslie Bethell, ed., *The Cambridge History of Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 254. Roque Dalton considered it the "most important socio-political event of our country thus far this century, the event which has determined the character of the national political development in the republican era," Dalton, *Marmol*, 9.

As with other important events in Salvadoran history, discussions of *la matanza* have been prone to exaggerations and inaccuracies. Salvadorans sometimes describe the rebellion as an Indian revolt, but rural workers of multiple ethnic identities responded to the message of the Leftist organizers. Although the conflicts in 1930 and 1931 divided many communities along ethnic lines, it was not only Indians but also *mestizos* that attended SRI meetings.[162] Scholars often claim that military and paramilitary forces targeted indigenous peasants and virtually eliminated native identity and culture, but this too is overstated. Many peasants indeed abandoned indigenous dress, and the massacre did disrupt the traditional *cofradías* or religious brotherhoods, but their people and culture survived into the 1930s. [163] President Hernandez Martínez recognized this and created policies and institutions that sought to build indigenous support.[164]

The collective memory of the survivors as well as the *martinato*'s official discourse reinforced the victimization of the Indians. The Salvadoran military discussed how Indians had been misled by ladino elites and Communists in order to create ties between them and the state that allegedly protectorate state. Middle-class intellectuals later added a story of repression by the ladino military and paramilitary.[165] In 2002, Jeffrey Gould and Carlos Henriquez Consalvi made a film entitled "1932: Scars of Memory in which they interviewed survivors of the massacre who reinforced the idea

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[162] Gould and Lauria, "Thieves," 212-219.

[163] The classic argument is outlined in Segundo Montes, *El Compadrazgo: Una estructura de poder en El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1979), 194; Ching and Tilley, "Indians."

[164] The work of Virginia Tilley and Erik Ching led the re-evaluation of these myths for El Salvador, and authors like Jeffrey Gould continue to re-evaluating myths of mestizaje and native assimilation or disappearance. Virginia Tilley and Erik Ching, "Indians, the Military, and the Rebellion of 1932 in El Salvador," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 30 (1998): 121–156.

[165] Gould, "Nationalism" and Chapter 3 below.

that outsiders heavily influenced events.[166] The truth remains complex and perhaps elusive. Nevertheless, many indigenous Salvadorans survived the massacre and engaged politically with the military into the 1930s, if with less power than in previous decades.

After the rebellion, the military also didn't fully abandon Liberal reforms and the public did not fully stop advocating for social justice. Socialist and progressive ideas had infiltrated Salvadoran national dialogues and would resurface again. The brutal slaughter of 10,000 Salvadoran peasants in 1932 and the consolidation of the Martínez dictatorship did not fully stop the production of reformist and populist rhetoric but for a time destroyed autonomous organizations. Indeed, after *la matanza*, military leaders resisted substantive reform and along with Salvadoran elites closed ranks ideologically, emphasized racist policies, abandoned social debate and unequivocally condemned Communism.[167] This is true but not the entire story. General Hernández Martínez' government, the press, and the Catholic hierarchy and others talked about how to improve the lives of peasants after the repression of 1932. Martínez announced to the National Legislative Assembly that "social defense does not result simply from…repression, but…preventive measures should [also] be used against the causes of disturbances, and to correct existing social unease."[168] He made it clear that neither "direct and energetic repression" alone nor asking for "patience and resignation" from

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[166] See Héctor Pérez-Brignoli, "Indians, Communists and Peasants: The 1932 Rebellion in El Salvador", in *Coffee, Society and power in Latin America*. Edited by William Roseberry, Lowell Gudmundson and Mario Samper (Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 232-261 for an introductory discussion of the various interpretations of the 1932 rebellion. Jeffrey Gould and Carlos H. Consalvi, *1932: Scars of Memory* (*Cicatriz de la Memoria*) (First Run/Icarus Films 2002).

[167] Browning, *Landscape*, 271-92.

[168] "La defensa social no ha de resultar solamente de empleo de medios de represión, sino que debe de hacerse uso de preventives contra las causas que pudieran producer disturbios, y corregir en lo possibe, el malestar social existente" 23 April 1931, *Revista Judicial* (San Salvador, El Salvador: January-June 1932). For a recent discussion of the balance of reform and repression under the *martinato* see Erik Ching "Patronage and Politics."

proletarians was sufficient.[169] Lamenting the occasional need for repression, military regimes contrasted themselves with the consistently oppressive Liberal oligarchs, the populist idealogues who promised the impossible and even the conservative clergy who asked peasants to wait for the afterlife.[170] By emphasizing the oligarchy's intransigence on the eve of the rebellion, as well as the active work of the Communist leaders, they argued that those groups were responsible for the rebellion. Forced to take drastic measures once, the military argued that Salvadorans should support them to prevent the same mistakes from happening again.

[169] Nevertheless, the authors asks for "justice and charity" and not mass organization nor state intervention. Rafael Claros, "La solucion del problema social," *El Tiempo* (15 January 1932)

[170] Browning, *Landscape*, 271-92.

Two

Political Survival and Adaptation: Repression and Reorganization

Introduction

In an effort to maintain political power, preatorian leaders from General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez (1931-44) to the PRUD's Colonel José María Lemus (1955-60) manipulated the press, allied themselves with the U.S., crushed real and imagined coups and reorganized political and military personnel. Under the *martinato* and the PRUD, military officers wanted to distinguish themselves from those that preceded them. By emphasizing their failures, the regimes sought to discredit prior governments, and reconstruct governance to best increase their power.

Using repression, lies and subterfuge, General Martínez progressively personalized governance, embraced U.S. economic assistance, silenced the press and chose leading officers for their blind loyalty.[171] After establishing his capacity for using overwhelming force in the 1932 rebellion, Martínez rejected the purported failures of Araujo's Liberal regime, emphasized the benefits of his rule, and favored military officers in their conflicts with civilains. It took Martínez several years to increase his personal control of the state, and crush or marginalize his opponents. After countries throughout the world recognized his administration, Martínez abandoned nationalism and became more closely allied with the U.S., and embraced the anti-democratic sentiment of

[171] Patricia Parkman argues that there were "only sycophants remaining" after Martinez' 1938 purges and resignations that included former "president" General J.A. Menéndez. Parkman, *Nonviolent Insurrection in El Salvador: The Fall of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez* (Tuscon, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 30.

the State Department, Church and oligarchy. At first only manipulating the press, in the 1940s he silenced them almost completely.

Although the general had successfully increased personal control of the state by 1939, and exiled or imprisoned most of his political opponents, these actions ultimately united many military and civilian leaders against him. In 1944, his opponents were emboldened to publicly confront the would-be dictator. The diverse opposition included banking leaders, middle-class professionals, coffee oligarchs, urban workers, student organizers, members of the Catholic hierarchy, and younger military officers. In an effort to highlight the regime's repression, these groups organized a peaceful economic strike. When the general responded by executing opposition leaders and participants, he shocked members of the public that had previously believed in Martínez, or at least remained on the sidelines. Having lost virtually all of his support, including that of the U.S., the general left El Salvador in 1944. Buoyed by international events, the opposition hoped to create a participatory republic. After World War Two, with global opinion against fascist and authoritarian regimes, popular forces toppled dictators across Latin America, such as Guatemala's Jorge Ubico and Brazil's Getulio Vargas.

When PRUD (1948-60) leaders seized power, they too rejected the social chaos and demagoguery of the Liberal era, but in adition criticized the military "dictatorships" led by Generals Martínez and Castaneda Castro. Despite restoring civilians to important position including that of political governors, the PRUD continued to disparage institutions like the judiciary, and likewise supported military officers when they clashed with civilians. Facing a more urbanized society in which students and unions had growing strength, they brutally repressed these groups, even as they touted their

Revolutionary social justice. In 1960, as military repression publicly targeted the middle classes and upper classes, including men like Rodolfo Rivas Guardado and Edmundo Canessa, who dared run for president, the PRUD's opponents and critics grew louder. As the country faced an economic crisis, and after the Revolutionary Party manipulated the 1960 municipal and congressional elections, students, union leaders, and opposition party leaders took to the streets. When the Revolutionary Party collapsed, and was replaced by a civilian-military junta, Salvadorans again hoped for a democratic future.[172] Once again, however, the months of spring were followed by winters of military rule.

The military regimes between 1931 and 1960 shared many political strategies, but also varied greatly in their appointment of civilians, and relationship with civilian clients and government officials. The Salvadoran military's cycles of expansion and constriction are well established and share patterns with those of the remainder of the isthmus.[173] These governments often became fragile or weakest when they had eliminated their enemies and to some, appeared strongest.[174] Hoping to secure greater power, the leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD both reorganized the security forces and manipulated political appointments. Although he could not completely purge the government of civilians who had specific skills and held economic power, Martínez placed military men in key state positions and favored loyalty over competence. The regime also abandoned some of its nationalism across the decades. In 1944, politically excluded groups, including civilian elites, toppled this degenerated centralized state where loyal and brutal military officers disproportionately held positions of power.

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[172] Victor Valle, *Siembra de vientos: El Salvador, 1960-69* (San Salvador, El Salvador: CINAS, 1993), 42-49.

[173] Woodward, *Central America*, chapters 8-9.

[174] Robert Elam describes the process through which the military repeatedly faced a constriction of decision-making. Robert Elam, "Appeal to Arms," (Ph.D Dissertation: University of New Mexico, 1969).

PRUD leaders, on the other hand, promoted the bureaucratization of the state and de-militarized governance on many levels. Post- World War Two social, economic and political transformations led the military regimes to integrate civilians more deeply into the power structures. As the state budget grew and the nation diversified agriculturally and expanded industrially, professionals demanded a greater role in government. Women also were elected to positions in the legislature as well as state and municipal offices. The regime appointed military officers to the most important positions like the Secretary of War but increased the number of civilian governors, legislators, and cabinet members. The civilian leaders and bureaucrats did not reduce corruption or ultimately prevent military leaders from consolidating power and marginalizing opponents. The party was failed to balance reforms and propaganda in the midst of an economic downturn and collapsed in 1960.

Plots and Communists under the *martinato*

Between 1931 and 1939, General Hernández Martínez increasingly centralized power, militarized, and silenced the press so that his regime became truly dictatorial in the 1940s. Having to eliminate and marginalize opponents gradually, in the 1930s the general negotiated power with oligarchs, military officers and popular sectors such as peasants. By 1940 the general, along with a small cadre of loyal followers, controlled government decisions and repressed any attempts to publicly express dissent or build autonomous organizations. Ultimately opponents united against the *martinato* and toppled the regime in 1944. In 1932, however, the general had not acquired such power.

Flexible in large part because he was vulnerable, Martínez struggled to consolidate power for years after he took power in the 1931 coup.

Because there was confusion over who had authority and jurisdiction, and it was unclear what social groups the president would support, the regime was particularly fragile during the months following the coup and *la matanza*.[175] Although the general had advocated pro-labor and reformist Labor Party policies as Arturo Araujo's vice-president, and allowed the Communist Party to field candidates in the January 1932 municipal elections, he also killed 10,000 Salvadorans that threatened his regime. Seeing him as a strong, loyal and decisive military leader, both conservative and socially elite senior officers as well as the more reform-minded and middle- and lower-class junior officers supported Martínez.

President Martínez and the leaders of his administration knew that the security forces were the key to political power. Despite ruling over a mostly agrarian nation, the leaders of the *martinato* believed that control over the urban police forces was essential to preventing challenges to the government. To that effect, they reorganized the police forces to maintain order and centralize authority in urban areas. The many police and military units served specific functions in controlling different members of the public. The National Guard (*Guardia Nacional*), which was founded in 1912 and based on the Spanish rural guards, largely served the rural areas. The *Guardia* rarely apprehended criminals in El Salvador's urban areas, although they occasionally supplemented the urban police when the military needed large numbers of security forces, such as during

[175] For a discussion of the challenges facing Martínez when hew first took power see Ching, "Patronage," 50-54.

the August patronal feasts, Christmas or Easter.[176] The Treasury Police (*Policia de Hacienda*) patrolled the borders and policed the movement of goods through the country.[177] The National Police (*Policía Nacional*), on the other hand, was primarily urban and served a critical political function.

Reflecting the important role of cities within Salvadoran society, but particularly for politics, the Salvadoran National Police maintained the urban order and protected the members of the highest rungs of government. The cities, after all, housed the courts, assemblies, and executive palaces whether for the president or the departmental governors. Political life was centered in the major cities, especially in the more urbanized departments of San Salvador and Santa Ana, which were at the same time some of the wealthiest areas. When General Martínez consolidated political power he focused on the capital department. In 1943, 31,150 of the 73,785 total members of Martínez' Pro-Patria Party, which was designed to distribute patronage or favors and control elections, were in the department of San Salvador.[178] The police forces were therefore at the center of national and regional politics.

The military had traditionally maintained a strong presence in the capital and Martínez reduced this to an extent. In order to prevent his opponents from attempting a military coup, the general tried to remove all military barracks from the capital in January 1938. Recognizing the need to control downtown San Salvador yet remove praetorian political aspirants, Martínez moved the First Infantry Regiment Barracks from a location

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[176] For but one of many examples see "Hubo vigilancia estricta durante la semana santa en la República," *Boletín del Ejército*, Vol. 2 no. 12 (14 April 1950).

[177] Lt. Jose Maria Lopez A. noted that the Guardia's specialization was their service as rural police in a published article. *Revista de la Guardia* (August 1934). This task is also outlined in the *Ley orgánica de la Guardia Nacional*.

[178] "W Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0023/430 (4 June 1943).

near the presidential palace to the city's outskirts.[179] The general tolerated a measure of rural political and economic autonomy, but knew he had to secure the capital.

San Salvador was the largest city in the country, bu nonetheless a disproportionate majority of police forces were in the capital city as a result of police being key in protecting political control. After all, when the three next largest cities, Santa Ana, San Miguel and Sonsonate were combined, they had almost the same total population as San Salvador in 1930 (84,000 versus 89,000) or 1950 (122,000 versus 160,000). Receiving a comparatively negligible number of police officers and foot soldiers, the secondary and tertiary urban areas were far less politicall important. In 1938, for example, the San Salvador police department was by far the largest with 627 men, compared with only 407 police in the entire rest of the country.[180] Divided into six sections, the capital's regular police forces totaled 379 agents, with a 56-person leadership and administrative staff, a 53-member Criminal Investigations Division, 146 Transit Department officers and 35 firefighters.[181] The Special Investigations Division, which was responsible for political criminals and functioned effectively as a secret police, had 58 staff members.[182]

In the early 1930s, Martínez reorganized and centralized the security forces in San Salvador. His policies included rotating Police Chiefs to prevent them from developing

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[179] Elam, Arms," 55-56.

[180] There were 105 in Santa Ana, 40 in Sonsonate, 42 in San Miguel, 23 in Santa Tecla, 25 in Ahuachapan, 21 Cojutepeque, 22 San Vicente, 22 in La Union, 22 in Usulutan, 20 in Zacatecoluca, 16 Chalchuapa, 16 in Atiquizaya, 18 in Metapan, 15 La Libertad. "Reorganizacion del personal de la policía nacional de la república de conformidad con el presupuesto de 1938-1939," AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-11, "Ministerio de Gobernación," Folder "Direcc. Gral de Policia, Movimiento de Personal."

[181] The capital was divided into six zones with 68, 67, 66, 61, 61, and 62 officers assigned. The Director General's office had in officers and administrative personnel, 23 agents first class, 20 agents second class, and eight general workers (*mozos de servicio*). Ibid.

[182] Six officers and administrative staff, 22 agents first class, 20 agents second class and eight *mozos*, and 14 special agents. Ibid.

entrenched interests, or build potentially competing patron-client networks.[183] Arguing that he was increasing the percentage of "honorable" police officers, the general purged the capital's police forces in order to retain loyal foot-soldiers.[184] This reorganization, or purging of the body, was repeated within all the branches of the security forces at various times. When the regime reappointed officers and fired rank-and-file agents they also directed internal propaganda campaigns designed to convince the soldiers themselves of the military's goodwill. In 1934, when Martínez revised the Organic Law of the National Military in order to centralize authority, he printed numerous articles in the military's bulletins.[185]

To further concentrate authority in the hands of himself and his confidants, General Martínez streamlined the administrative structure and management of the capital's security forces. Previously ambiguous, the jurisdictions and chains of command were now clarified. Since the definitions had never been codified, the government reported that the *Policía de Línea* included all uniformed officers except for the municipal police and the firefighters. The overall police forces included the Judicial and Administrative police, as well as active non-uniformed troops. The auxiliary corps followed the orders of the Director General of Police, despite being paid by local municipal taxes. The irregular forces, although self-paid and equipped, were also under the orders of the Police Director. Previously controlled by auxiliary mayors and neighborhood constables, the Treasury Police was now controlled by the local

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[183] For example in one week he changed police chiefs in the cities of La Unión, Santa Tecla, San Miguel, Jucuapa, Chinameca and Acajutla. "Cambios d'jefes [sic] en la policía," *El Día* (13 April 1932).

[184] For example, "Para depurar la policía," *El Día* (10 November, 1932). The Brazilian military also purged its own officer corps to remove potentially dissenting personnel. *Torture in Brazil* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1986).

[185] See especially the 1934-35 articles in *Revista de la Guardia Nacional*, and the *Boletín de la Policía*.

Commandants. The leaders of the *martinato* recruited neighborhood auxiliaries from active duty soldiers, and *Línea* and Treasury reserves. They argued that this was done to raise sufficient manpower, but it also centralized the police command structure.

Arguing that he was combating crime without increasing the security budget, Martínez created intelligence units that gathered information about, and terrorized political opponents. The regime defended this secret police by arguing that they would more effectively and cost-effectively combat crime. Reporting that the 1933 established Budgetary Law "considerably reduced the manpower of the police (*Policía de Línea*)," the general announced that the Security and Investigations Division effectively prevented "anti-social demonstrations."[186] It was clear to most observers that political opponents would lead these "demonstrations," and because it was a political branch of the security forces, the Investigations Division had national jurisdiction, and was headquartered in the capital. Although headed by the Director General of the Police, and ostensibly collaborating with the Legislature, the members of the "special unit with skilled operatives" were appointed the president and minister of the interior.[187] These agents, designed as a political unit within the police, repressed enemies and threats to the regime.

In order to prevent a coup, Martínez used all means at his disposal to maintain loyal people and remove ambitious, and often capable, soldiers and politicians. [188] Often, the general simply reassigned prominent and capable officers to marginal positions and posts, as when he outmaneuvered potential rivals like Generals Osmín Aguirre and Salvador Castaneda Castro in the early 1930s and promoted loyal officers such as

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[186] The Martínez and PRUD governments referred to the national police force as the *Policía de Línea*. "Memorandum," AGN. FG, 1933 Box 3 "Solicitudes, Diligencias," Folder "Projecto creación nuevo cuerpo de policía."

[187] Ibid.

[188] Dalton, *Mármol*, 470-73.

Generals Armando Llanos and Andrés Menéndez. Taking more drastic action, Martínez either manufactured or took advantage of "plots" and "conspiracies" to aggressively remove potential rivals and opponents, and consolidate power in his hands.

Because of the military propaganda machine, it is not fully clear whether General Martínez crushed truly advanced plots or simply took advantage of political rivalries and discontent. Regardless of the complete truth, military officers indeed competed for political power, and would perpetually sought alliances to improve their power and position. In that sense the plots were real, but the general likely timed the discoveries for times when he was strongest, and his opponents most vulnerable.

In 1933, Martínez crushed a "plot" that enabled him to weaken some of the country's most powerful military men including Colonel Aguirre and General Claramount, and appoint loyal officers to high military and ministerial positions. Colonel and future president Osmín Aguirre y Salinas was highly positioned within the military hierarchy, and had acquired a reputation as a strong leader during the 1932 repression. Well-respected and with a distinguished service record, General Antonio Claramount-Lucero ran for president in 1931. Martínez removed Colonel Aguirre from his post as Director General of Police and then appointed Aguirre Political Governor of the Department of La Paz to keep him far from the capital, and the reigns of power. He named Colonel Garay, a loyal confidant, as first presidential designate, and Colonel Carlos Borromeo Flores as Secretary of War.[189] By mid-1933, with Claramount in

[189] "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0632/306 (14 October 1932); "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 January to 31 January 1933," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0111/244-G (31 January 1933).

Guatemala, Hernández Martínez had removed most of his key rivals for power.[190] In order to broaden his support base, he also appointed as ministers men that had opposed Araujo, as long as he believed in their loyalty, such as Dr. A. Gómez Zárate as Chief Justice and Dr. M. Tomas Molina as Minister of Finance.

Martínez reacted to another "plot" the following year, and accelerated the process of retaining loyal and removing ambitious men. Employing the print and radio media, the regime framed the conspiracy as a construction of rogue members of the military and oligarchy. Emphasizing the ominous nature of the attempted insurrection while reinforcing its limited scope, reporters compared it to the 1932 "Communist" revolt and peasant rebellion, but reported that Martínez had widespread popular support. Newspapers, like *El Día*, described the terrorist plot in highly dramatic terms and reported that the authorities uncovered explosives, flammable substances, poisonous gases and virulent bacteria.[191] Alleging that the conspiracy was connected to international Communist organizations, Martínez took the opportunity to defend the intelligence agencies or secret police, whose job it was largely to ferret out Communists and other political opponents.

As a result of this plot, Martínez removed General and future president Salvador Castaneda Castro, and Mr. Kriete of the *Hotel Nuevo Mundo* masterminding the plot. Although the two men were arrested and tried, the courts did not convict Castaneda and Kriete. In spite of the trials, Castaneda and Kriete had powerful friends within the oligarchy and the military, but the two men were now politically marginalized. Martínez replaced General Armando Llanos, who was a friend of Castaneda Castro, with Colonel

[190] W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report,," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0111/304-G (1 June 1933).

[191] "Complot terrorista," *El Día* (20 January 1934).

Francisco Linares, as Director General of the Police, and demoted Llanos to Chief of Personnel in the Ministry of War.[192] He also replaced Castaneda Castro with General José Tomás Calderón, who proudly and boastfully commanded the forces that repressed the 1932 peasant revolt, as Minister of Government, Public Works, Sanitation and Charities. Martínez also appointed General Andrés I. Menéndez as Minister of War, Marine and Aviation to replace the loyal but now-deceased Colonel Carlos Borromeo Flores.[193] The general also elected loyal and obedient deputies to the National Assembly.[194]

Using the incident to continue martial law, mobilize the propaganda machine, and retain the presidency, Martínez he argued that the people asked him to run for re-election, as the only person who could maintain order in such volatile times. In July 1934, he constructed the Pro-Patria Party for the express purpose of maintaining executive power. In August, he handed the presidency to his eminently loyal subordinate vice president and general Andrés Ignacio Menéndez, and ran for election. In January 1935 he egregiously manipulated the election and received 334 thousand votes.[195]

While Martínez had substantially personalized power in 1933, he still faced political challengers within the military, and sometimes defended civilian leaders in an attempt to limit the power of other officers. Occasionally protecting municipal officials from local military agents, the regime ordered the National Guard post commanders in

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[192] "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 Feb. to 28 Feb. 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/408-G (28 February 1934). Linares, appointed the rank of Colonel in 1927, was in the army since 1903 and rose through the ranks.

[193] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 April to 28 April 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/6-G (9 May 1934).

[194] "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 Jan. to 31 Jan.. 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/396 (31 January 1934).

[195] Castellanos, *Antecedentes*, 126-30.

1936 to stop interfering in civil affairs.[196] Outlining penalties for attempts against authority, Martínez threatened officer and soldiers with civil trials, thereby challenging some of the military's most cherished and long held privileges. His loyal officers publicly supported the new policies, as when longtime Guard Director Colonel Fidel Garay condemned some of his own subordinates and publicly agreed with abandoning military tribunals in extreme criminal cases.[197] When the leaders of the *martinato* feared a coup, or any level of resistance, they repressed opponents.

For the third year in a row, Martínez "discovered" and defeated another coup attempt or rebellion. In October, General Manuel Antonio Castañeda Castro (no relation to General Salvador Castaneda Castro), officers from the *el zapote* fort and barracks, and officers from San Miguel and Santa Ana plotted to overthrow the president. Recognized that some military and civilian leaders wanted to get rid of Martínez, General Antonio Claramount Lucero conspired against the would-be dictator. [198] Hernández Martínez had violated the "moral economy" of the young military officers who aspired for political power by preventing them from sharing the leadership. Many civilians disagreed with the president's desires to amend the constitution in order to remain in power for another term. Believing he had substantial military and civilian support, Claramount Lucero returned from Guatemala to supplant the would-be dictator, but the general was prepared and responded ruthlessly. In this instance, like in the two years previously, the willingness to act boldly, violently and unilaterally separated the General from his opponents. Young officers and civilians who advocated political transparency, mass

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[196] *Revista de la Guardia* (September 1936).
[197] *Revista de la Guardia* (October 1936).
[198] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0450/telegrams 49-50 (7-8 October 1935).

participation and coalition-building didn't have a chance against the brutal and decisive officer. In the final major reshuffling of 1935, General Martínez first appointed loyal Colonel Juan Merino Director of the National Police, and then named him governor of the Department of San Salvador.[199]

By the end of 1935, despite grumblings among junior officers, General Martínez had solid control of the government, and looked to further personalize decision-making. International conditions also strengthened Martínez. The economy had stabilized, coffee exports rebounded, and the general prepared substantial economic reforms. Costa Rica opened diplomatic relations with the regime in early January, and Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala followed a few weeks later. Importantly, the U.S. State Department also recognized the Salvadoran military leadership by the end of the month.[200] Franklin Delano Roosevelt's policymakers believed that the Salvadoran military could maintain law and order or stability. And in return the Salvadoran government tempered its anti-Americanism and increased economic ties with the U.S. from 1935.[201] The regime would increase its ties with the United States over the next decade.[202]

Despite the near absence of Salvadoran Communists in the 1930s, the leaders of the *martinato* publicized subversive activities in order to repress opponents and defend their use of violence and censorship. The Salvadoran military had effectively eliminated Communist activities in the wake of the 1932 rebellion, and observers like U.S. State

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[199] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0450/487 (12 November 1935).

[200] Kenneth Grieb, "The United States and the Rise of General Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Nov. 1971), 169-70.

[201] Philip Dur, "US diplomacy and the Salvadorean revolution of 1931," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 30, no. 1 (Feb. 1998)," 119.

[202] The National University's *Opinion Estudantíl* was one of the newspapers that openly critiqued the *martinato* and explicitly argued that the 1932 repression and massacre was designed to court the favor of foreign powers, particularly the United States by showing them that he was anti-Communist. See for example, "Justicia de Martínez en 1932," *Opinion Estudantil* (8 July 1944).

Department officials and local elites recognized that fact. Since prominent leaders were dead or exiled, the political organizations would not significantly revive until the 1940s. Because the fears of subversion were not based in fact, leaders of the *martinato* accused people of Communism throughout the country, and even targeted military officers and rank-and-file agents. In the months following the 1932 revolt and repression, two Sergeants and cadets were sentenced to five years in prison for possessing Communist literature. Noting that that the penalties were could have been harsher, prosecutors argued that the soldiers received "light" sentences because the infractions occurred before the *martinato* implemented a state of siege and revised the Penal Code.[203] When Martínez revised the legislation, the newspapers published a brief daily notice that read "Treason is punished by death!!! See the Penal Code" to reinforce the now-harsher sentences.[204] Designed to discourage opposition within the ranks, even at the lowest levels, and silence those who attempted to disseminate information that ran counter to official propaganda, Martínez was building a state of fear and distrust.

Using public denunciations of Communism to increase his power within the administration, General Tomás Calderón labeled his enemies Communists and then persecuted them between 1932 and 1936. In 1936, powerful coffee planters and professionals from Santa Ana and Sonsonate planned a coup when they recognized Martínez would attempt to hold on to power for another term.[205] As Calderón began to crush the opposition, he explicitly used the memory of 1932 and tied the political opposition to "Communist" subversion in a circular to the fourteen departmental

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[203] "Fueron condenados en Consejo de Guerra, ayer jueves, dos sargentos y dos cabos," *El Día* (8 April 1932).

[204] "La traición se paga con la muerte!!! Vea El Codigó Penal," *El Día* (12 April 1932). The advertisements, if they can be called such, were repeated daily throughout the month of April.

[205] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0778/734 (17 July 1936).

governors.[206] It is unclear whether any powerful people believed that the opposition was Communist but the message was clear: the two Generals would violently repress any real or apparent opposition. During this crisis Calderón frequently repeated President Martínez's motto that the nation required "a maximum of order to attain a maximum of progress."[207] Calderón continued his Communist fear-mongering until Martínez finally sent him out of the country in 1939. General Calderón had the support of high-level and conservative military officers, and preparing himself for the presidency, increasingly aligned himself with far- Right groups. As the highest-ranking officer in the Salvadoran military, he hoped for more than a cabinet position when Martínez' second administration ended in 1939. [208] General Calderón had too many powerful friends to be eliminated completely, but Martínez kept him at arms length throughout the rest of his administration.

In order to reinforce the ever-present threat of subversion and rebellion in 1936 and 1937, and emphasizing that Martínez was the best-equipped to respond to the crises, officers within the *martinato* echoed Calderón's attacks on Communist subversion. Stating that Salvadorans attached to peace and order would wish to avoid the turmoil that nations, like Spain, faced, the National Assembly commended Martínez for his "energetic and legally just" action against "communist elements." Arguing that the nation was "on the point of repeating the tragedy of 1932 which we all remember[ed] with intense panic,

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[206] For example, a pamphlet entitled "Historia del comunismo en El Salvador," by Octavio Rodriguez extensively discussed Calderón's role in the January 1932 repression. Reprinted in "R Frazer to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0557/841 (16 Feb 1940).

[207] "Fisher to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0778/846 (5 Nov. 1936).

[208] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0414/945 (6 February 1937).

the Assembly asserted their support for the military leadership.[209] In a supplement to the *Diario Oficial*, the regime reported that radical methods were necessary, because these conspirators were tied to the 1932 rebellion, and praised Calderón for saving the nation once again.[210]

The leaders of the *martinato* instructed government officials at all levels to remain vigilant against the "Communist threat." Military men and civilian functionaries quickly reported so-called subversive activity to their superiors. Martínez cultivated a culture of fear and suspicion that inhibited free or independent movement, thought and association. Salvadorans could use these policies to revenge themselves against opponent or enemies or arbitrarily harass others. Although the dictator allowed the press a measure of independence in the early 1930s, they did not have the freedom to openly criticize the government or to discuss forbidden topics, and after 1939 lost what little autonomy they previously enjoyed.

(Salvadoran) Church and (U.S.) State (Department) against Democracy

When the *martinato* took power, military leaders believed that the Salvadoran masses were incapable of desirable independent decision making, and rejected the alleged attempts of Liberal leaders like presidents Romero Bosque and Arturo Araujo to develop popular autonomous organizations. As demonstrated in chapter two, these tried to integrate popular organizations but did not believe that the masses should make their own decisions either. Although most elite Salvadorans, into the 1930s shared an anti-

[209] "W.W. Hoffman to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0505/1146 (18 November 1937).

[210] "Fisher to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0778/851 (9 November 1936).

democratic world view, military leaders linked Liberals and their ideals with popular action and the inevitable social disorder that follows.

The Salvadoran Catholic Church and the US State Department particularly embraced the military's belief that the country's masses were incapable of successful self-rule, and agreed that enlightened and paternalistic praetorian rule would most benefit the people of the tiny nation. Because in their opinion, peasants were particularly incapable of independent political participation and vulnerable to manipulation by educated and nefarious outside forces, poor Salvadorans were not to blame for the tragedy of 1932. They argued that military leaders would protect indigenous and rural people from those who wanted to manipulate them, and exploit their simplicity.

Sharing beliefs with the broader Catholic Church, Salvadoran priests and nuns propagated a hierarchical, patriarchal and paternalist vision of society that limited individual rights. After all, European Catholics promoted the idea of a social body centuries before Pope Leo XII refashioned the concept in the 1931 encyclical *Quadragemo anno*, and many opposed modernism and democracy into the twentieth century.[211] Salvadoran religious leaders favored order over liberty, and like late-nineteenth century Liberals, focused on encouraging material progress and not how to protect individual freedom.[212] The Church hierarchy disagreed with the Liberals over the role of private property, and agreed with military leaders believed that the social function of property was primary. In other words, if an individual abused their rights, the government could confiscated their lands or companies, or restrict use and access.

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[211] See chapter two for a brief discussion of *Quadragesimo anno*.

[212] Carlos Gregorio Lopez, "Tiempo de liberales y reformas, 1871-94," in Alvaro Magaña Granados, ed., *El Salvador: La República*, 2 vols. (San Salvador, El Salvador: Banco Agricola Comercial, 1999). In addition see Charles Hale, *Liberalism*, for an excellent discussion of the transformation of liberalism in Mexico and R.L. Woodward, *Carrera*, for Guatemala.

Although the Martínez regime never substantially expropriated private property, they certainly did use force and coercion against some *finqueros* and bankers.

Promoting a paternalistic and anti-democratic vision of society, church leaders argued that a select group of fathers provided benevolent, if firm, rule. In a archetypal article entitled "Religion, Justice and a Strong Hand" and published during the brutal 1932 repression, Catholic organ *El Tiempo*'s editors argued that property holders must not overwork their *colonos* so that time remained for religion, must offer adequate salaries (justice) and punish outside agitators. The workers, like children, were not blamed for their transgressions. Instead, those that "exploited the workers' gullibility" must be punished.[213]

Early twentieth-century Salvadoran and Latin American reformers shared this paternalistic and progressive vision. In a series of articles published in the aftermath of the 1932 rebellion, several authors argued that propaganda was the key to improving social relations because outside agitators had incited the poor Salvadoran peasants. In order to counter the misinformation, government leaders should cooperate with religious officials, spreading information through print media and in conferences and talks, and propagate ideas of solidarity among all social classes.[214] State leaders believed that priests could reeducate the public because they had a built-in audience in their churches and cathedrals, and they assumed that the peasants would listen to and believe the simplistic propaganda, as they had done with what they saw as the Communists' reductive presentations.

[213] "Religion, justicia y mano fuerte," *El Tiempo* (28 January 1932).
[214] "Plan de acción," *El Día* (13 February 1932).

Widely believing that peasants would not mobilize on their own, but that outside agitators caused social strife, Salvadoran authors condemned those that promoted "dangerous" ideas and secular education, and claimed that the loss of religious instruction made the weak minds of the masses susceptible to Communist misinformation. Blaming immoral professors for propagating misleading theories justified with specious scientific data, essayists attacked university education and even questioned the very scientific and modernist endeavor.[215] These beliefs were certainly not unique to Salvadoran religious leaders or even reformers because even feminist periodicals in Santiago, Chile still argued that women, like other "lumpen" groups, needed to be led and educated by revolutionary men.[216] Salvadoran reformers also viewed women, like Indians, peasants, and the working-class, as inferior "others" that needed guidance and protection. The military agreed but added the caveat that the state must also administer punishment like a strong patriarch. This was for the inferiors' and the society's own good, of course.

Throughout the the 1930s, Salvadoran Church leaders shared anti-democratic and paternalistic views with the military officers and defended their repressive actions. Archbishop Belloso, Santa Ana Bishop Monseñor Santiago Ricardo Vilanova y Meléndez, and San Miguel Bishop Juan Antonio Dueñas y Argumedo all wrote extensively on the desirability of a paternalistic and patriarchal social order. Although Archbishop Belloso still recognized that improvements in working conditions and salaries were necessary after the 1932 repression, now he focused almost exclusively on the goodwill of the landowners and capitalists. The archbishop had penned a letter that

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[215] See the series of articles in four parts entitled "Al margen de la situacion," *El Día* (16 February-1 March 1932). For a discussion of the early 20th C. Catholic Church's response to modernism see Darrell Jodock, ed., *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[216] Hutchison, *Labors*, Chapters 3-4.

strongly criticized the oligarchy on the eve of the 1932 rebellion, but now responded differently.[217] After the rebellion, Belloso argued that landowners could regulate themselves and assure mutually beneficial arrangements between themselves and their employees by creating employer associations. Hoping these organizations would restore the harmony and natural equilibrium between capital and labor, the archbishop advocated religion and "obedience to all legitimate authority." He ominously wrote that repression was justified against any class that "revolts against another, threatening death and extermination," three months after the brutal slaughter of Salvadoran *campesinos*. Belloso referenced *Quadragesimo anno* and argued for a family and just wage, but focused on elite action after the rebellion of 1932, he asserted that the *cafateleros*' power was no longer to be questioned.[218]

Arguing that everyone must abandon class conflict since "we are all brothers in Christ," Belloso said conciliatory organizations like Catholic Action could improve the lives of the working class in a pastoral letter to the country's priests and parishioners. Reminding the reader that scripture condemned violence and class struggle in a June 1932 pastoral just months after the brutal execution of thousands of peasants, he warned the public ominously that repression was justified "whenever a class rebels against another, menacing [them] with death and extermination." He restated his paternalism and asserted that the oligarchs could reform themselves and assure mutual benefits for workers and owners through worker associations. Belloso's solution to the "social

[217] The organizations of Catholic Action were primarily the Ladies of Charity, the Pius XI Catholic Center, the Women's Catholic Union (*La Associacion de las Señoras de la Caridad, El Centro Católico Pío XI y la Union Catolica Feminina*). "…todos somos hermanos en Cristo." Belloso, *Carta del arzobispado* (1 mar 1932).

[218] Belloso, *Sobre la importancia economico-social-religiosa del salario agricola el El Salvador* (June 1932).

question" became simply religion and obedience to authority, or in other words, the familiar "pay, pray, and obey" that many Catholics lament. In his 1932 pastoral, Belloso referenced Catholic social theory as outlined in the 1931 papal encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*, but strongly emphasized elite action over worker organization. [219]

Some leaders and members of the Salvadoran Catholic Church not only justified military repression bu tattacked how a few agitators including the "modern Pharisees…[the] liberal thinkers," had deceived the Salvadoran peasantry.[220] Conservative Dr. Juan Antonio Dueñas y Argumedo, Bishop of San Miguel, as a staunch conservative, stood in contrast to the more moderate and reformist Archbishop Belloso.[221] After the 1932 rebellion, Dueñas also lamented peasants' social conditions, but blamed the Communists for bringing "murder, fire, assault and plunder" to the country that "a week earlier was a flowery and fragrant flower." He did not blame unjust salaries or terrible working conditions but instead the "de-Christianization" of the public through the failures of the state, secular schools, civil marriage, nationalized liquor production, and Communist and Protestant propaganda.[222] Dueñas acknowledged that Pope Leo XXII had supported lay organizations decades earlier, but argued they should limit themselves to mutual aid, and remain under the close supervision of priests. Outlining a very narrow path for Catholic Action, the bishop believed that these

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[219] Ibid.

[220] "modernos fariseos…[los] pensadores liberalizantes." "La verdaderas causantes de nuestro desastre social," *El Tiempo* (22 febrero 1932).

[221] Bishop of Santa Ana, Mosignor Santiago Ricardo Vilanova y Meléndez, wrote a pastoral letter on "la maternidad divina de María santísima" in June 1931. He did not, however, publish an essay on the country's social problems in the months after the 1932 rebellion. Bishop Santiago Ricardo Vilanova y Meléndez, "Con motivo del XV centenario de la proclamación del dogma de la maternidad divina de María santísima," (24 June 1931). Scolars still await a comparative study of the pastorals produced by the various bishops.

[222] "nuestra patria que hasta hace una semana era un carmen florido y fragrante." Bishop Juan Antonio Dueñas y Argumedo, "*XLVI Pastoral*" (5 February 1932).

organizations should create "catechistic study circles, libraries, conferences, special courses, etc," and not discuss or address class conflict or inequality.[223] Dueñas concluded by asking the Salvadoran public to forgive "our brothers who were fooled by Satanic Communism," and to pray that God will speed to heaven the souls lost "in these days of anguish and terror."[224]

In order to counter the alleged misinformation, the Salesian Don Bosco Center held anti-Communist conferences hoping to bring "peace, harmony and love of work to the west[ern]" regions of the country. [225] Traveling around the country, priests even gave speeches to men in women in the prisons. Afetr talking to nearly a hundred prisoners in the cells of the General Direction of Police, Salesian Reverend José Miglia provided mass and communion for about seventy men and the regime considered this service a tremendous success. Jesuit Father Rafael Ramírez, noted as a great orator, closed the ceremonies in the prison with a discussion of the current regime's social action, and emphasized that the true solution was Christian love and charity.[226] Memebers of the church and military believed these speeches would somehow change people's behavior.

The leaders of the Catholic Church remained pro-government, conservative, anti-Communist and anti-democratic into the 1950s. After *la matanza*, the Catholic press frequently reported on the *martinato*'s allegedly successful social action and the oligarchy's failures. By discussing the regime's support for affordable worker housing,

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[223] *Congraso Eucaristico Diocesano de San Miguel* (14-17 November 1935).

[224] "…nuestros hermanos engañados por [el] satánico comúnismo…" "…en estos dias de angustia y terror." Dueñas, *Pastoral*.

[225] "paz, armonia y amor al trabajo en el occidente." Quoted in "Tres sacerdotes paulinos predican el paz en Tacuba, departmento de Ahuachapan," *El Tiempo* (5 febrero 1932).

[226] "Sesenta comunistas areepentidos recibieron ayer la communion," *El Día* (4 April 1932).

land redistribution, rural schools, and Catholic Action organizations, the church was a bulwark for the military and criticized the Liberalism and secularism of the 1920s. In 1944 however, religious leaders joined the chorus of opposition to Martínez, but later supported the PRUD and promoted their strategies to maintain the social order and combat Communism. In 1955, for example, the Catholic hierarchy led by Archbishop Luís Chávez y Gonzáles in a series of essays publicized how the church was organizing cooperatives to again make the soil unwelcome for leftist agitators.[227] In 1952, Students and religious leaders organized Salvadoran University Catholic Action (*Acción Católica Universitaria Salvadoreña*, ACUS) to counter the Communist-led AGEUS, who, as discussed below, legally attacked the police and defended students and workers secretly held and tortured by Special Investigations Chief, Colonel "chele" Medrano. Never having the power and influence of the prominent and long-standing student organization, from the mid-1950s the rightist students and officials looked to separate from the National University and create a separate Catholic University, which they believed would be a bastion of anti-Communism.

In supporting military control, U.S. diplomatic officials shared the Salvadoran Catholic Church's paternalism and anti-democratic beliefs, also rejecting the Salvadoran masses' ability to successfully manage an electoral Republic. When U.S. diplomats evaluated the mayoral, legislative, municipal and presidential elections in the years before the 1931 military coup, they applauded the experiment in "free suffrage" but felt that Salvadorans' high illiteracy and utter lack of public opinion and political capacity

[227] There are several representative copies of the periodical *Orientación* in "Hemba to Secretary of State," *US National Archives*, RG 84, DF 816.413/4-1659 D 514 (16 April 1959).

doomed the experiment. [228] Fearing that leaders such as Arturo Araujo and General Claramount "sounded the lowest notes in the political concert by their activities with the ignorant laboring classes" charge d'affairs Schott believed that these men manipulated the masses.[229] Believing Araujo to be particularly guilty, Schott added that Salvadoran laborers could not think for themselves, but would easily follow any demagogue with broad promises. [230] Interestingly, the U.S. representative also reported that landed proprietors were concerned that "intelligent laborers are leaving their work to join political groups." [231]

Despite the fact that Salvadoran landed oligarchs and U.S. State Department officials recognized the abilities of the oft-discussed "organic" or peasant "intellectuals," all of these elites nevertheless agreed that the great majority of peasants were incapable of independently challenging the social order. Discussing the "inferior racial quality of the [Salvadoran] population," the subsequent *charge d'affairs*, M. Quincy Stanton shared a similarly low opinion of the Salvadoran *campesino* and poor urban laborer, reporting that the "native Indians and mixed bloods…[lived] under primitive conditions."[232] In 1945, J.F. Stanton similarly argued that "the great mass of Salvadorans…are woefully

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[228] As discussed in chapter two, the 1931 elections were perhaps the freest in the nation's history. US *Charge d'affairs* Robbins referred to the 1931 presidential election as the first to "not be a sham." "Charge d'affairs Robbins to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0015/424 (16 January 1931). The Departmental Governors were appointed and not elected, even from a single list.

[229] "Charge d'affairs ad interim Schott to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0415/236 (22 Mar 1930).

[230] "Charge d'affairs ad interim Schott to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0054/348 (5 September 1930).

[231] "Charge d'affairs ad interim Schott to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0054/275 (28 May 1930).

[232] "M. Quincy Stanton to U.S. Secretary of State, General Conditions Report, 1 Dec. to 31 Dec. 1933," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0111/384-G (30 December 1933); "M. Quincy Stanton to U.S. Secretary of State, Annual Report for El Salvador for 1933," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001 (24 January 1934).

immature and undeveloped in their political thought," and believed a "modicum of personal relationships" with a dictator was acceptable.[233]

Because they believed in paternalism, U.S. consular officials genuinely believed that by supporting the military and through their own actions could positively affect the Salvadoran masses. When the state department considered tariffs with provisions to raise wages on coffee plantations and eliminate child labor, F.P. Corrigan feared that increased production price of coffee would prevent the country from competing internationally. Nevertheless, he advocated teaching the people to make good use of their increased wage. He added:

> A carefully gauged, slight and gradual wage increase, compensated for by a guarantee of our market could cause a tremendous increase in the comfort and welfare of the agricultural workers of the country, the bulk of the population. Present market conditions make it possible to insist on this point.[234]

Corrigan believed that the poor Salvadorans needed tutelage with their basic economic and social affairs, and Salvadoran oligarchs needed to be taught political and social responsibility. Leslie Albion Squires and R.E. Wilson also revealed much about their attitudes towards ordinary Salvadorans when they reported that there was little Communist activity in El Salvador, because of the absence of international Communism in El Salvador. Believing that the 1932 revolt only occurred because the leaders acted on orders from Moscow, and were organized in Russian-supported groups like the FRT and SRI, Squires and Wilson effectively said that Salvadoran leaders and masses did not

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[233] "J.F. Stanton to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0871/349 (9 July 1945).

[234] F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: General Conditions Report," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0098/179-G (13 March 1935).

make their own history.[235] In their opinion, elites made history and so the Catholic Church and U.S. State Department supported the paternalist praetorianism that they believed would limit popular autonomy and best improve the lives of Salvadorans.

Lies and (Dis)Order

In their efforts to convince Salvadorans of their ability to maintain the social order, the leaders of the martinato manipulated press coverage to distort the public's understanding of crime. Publicly acknowledging that urban and rural El Salvador faced a plague of crime and violence, military governments argued that they had a plan for addressing the problem, despite the depth and extent of the problems. Praetorian governments also manipulated reporting in order to maximize their apparent competence and strength.

After taking power, General Martínez used his support of newspapers like *El Día* to project and image of competence and to illustrate how Liberals caused the 1932 rebellion by pandering to the public and encouraging independent mass action that they were ultimately unable to control. Before Martínez took power in 1931, in an effort to underscore the widespread social chaos unleashed by the Araujo's policies, the editors of *El Día* reported voluminous crimes such as homicides, assault and robberies in the last month of Arturo Araujo's presidency.[236] Facing Araujo's censors, the editors did not explicitly criticize the government's policing, but instead reported that crime waves and

[235] "R.E. Wilson to to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00B/17-1247 (17 December 1947); "Leslie Albion Squires to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00B/1-548 (5 January 1948).

[236] For instance, the newspaper reported details on 11 homicides, 9 robberies, 5 violent assaults and 3 traffic accidents in just a few weeks. Data compiled from reports published in *El Día* 14-31 January 1931.

social disorder rocked the tiny country. Revealing their anti-democratic sentiments, *El Día*'s editors argued that Araujo's administration encouraged juries which let criminal go free, and therefore fed the seemingly ubiquitous violent crime throughout 1931.[237] The newspaper reported only thefts between 9 and 21 April 1931 and few murders were reported throughout March, after Araujo pressured *El Día* to reduce its stories of violent crime.[238] When the editors again printed a regular section entitled Police Reports later in the year, they only listed an assault, a homicide and a theft, and later described the successful efforts of the National Guard.[239] Pressured by the regime, *El Día*'s editors modified their crime coverage, but still did their best to portray an image of a regime that had allowed the mob to rule.

In order to contrast himself with Araujo and convince the public that his regime was amking a difference, Martínez controlled the distribution of crime and court data, and set up a censorship board that penalized un-compliant editors. For instance, *El Día* reported virtually no crime between the December 1931 military coup and April 1932. They slowly began reporting state action against smuggling and clandestine alcohol production, but did not report much sensational criminal activity like prison breaks,

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[237] "El jurado popular es una institución en bancaraota," *El Día* (13 February 1931), reprinted from the Catholic daily *El Tiempo*, date unspecified. The article suggests that contemporary politicians and judges responded to the popular call for clemency and fail to appropriately judge and sentence criminals. The suggestion is that the popular regimes of Romero and Araujo failed to act decisively and control social disorder. See also "La institucion del Jurado se derrumba," *El Día* (11 March 1931).

[238] Data taken from a reading of the daily newspaper (no Sunday publication) *El Día* throughout March and April 1931. The exceptions between 5 March 1931 and 28 April 1931 were a cadaver reported found on 24 March 1931 and a dramatic robbery on 12 April 1931 where the thieves killed a security guard. This contrasts sharply with the sample taken and cited in footnote 72 above.

[239] The *Informaciones Policiacas* returned with the 27 May 1931 issue. The newspaper reported, on 18 June 1931, that the National Guard had arrested 21 people for assassination and homicide, 84 for violent injuries (*lesiones*), 51 for personal and property thefts (*robo/hurto/estafa*), and 653 for other reasons (*varias faltas*), the majority of which we can assume were for vagrancy and drunkenness.

machete duels and kidnapped young girls (*raptos*) until July 1932.[240] This pattern of crime reportage enabled the general to launch his campaign against immoral behavior, without admitting that he ruled a country that faced persistent violent crime. This portrayal of praetorian law and order survived into the late-twentieth century. Because many Salvadorans in that period associated Martínez with social order and control, a group that brutally massacred civilians in the 1980s named their death squad in honor of the dictator. The stories of Martínez' law and order contribute to his mythological presence in the Salvadoran historical imagination.

Sharing *El Día*'s anti-democratic beliefs, prominent citizens under the *martinato* wrote about their disdain for juries and frustration at crime rates. In a strongly worded article to *Diario Latino*, Congressman P. Antonio Vanegas P. voiced the regime's concern for the crime waves and private property. Lamenting that respectable residents lived under fear and did not have confidence in the judicial system, he argued that the popular courts, or juries, freed alleged criminals within days after their capture.[241] By calling for a firm response and stronger penalties against suspected criminals, Vanegas' letter echoed closely the tenor of many others published in the popular press, as well as the attitudes of military officers. Although they shared an outward similarity to those published before 1932, there are notable and critical differences. Letters from 1931 explicitly blamed Araujo's Liberal and populist administration for encouraging the mass misbehavior of criminal courts but by the mid 1930s writers instead blamed civilian judges and juries because they hindered the military's effective and repressive action.

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[240] This observation is based on a daily and systematic reading of a nearly complete series of *El Día* from January 1931 to July 1934 housed in the San Salvador *Museo de Antropología Davíd Guzmán*. A notable exception is the brutal machete slaying of a man by his wife reported on 30 March 1932, and the return of monthly reports of Guardia Nacional captures on 31 March 1932.

[241] "El terrible crimen del dia," *Diario Latino* (9 September 1937).

Despite the reality of the lives of most apprehended suspected criminals, they believed that juries obstructed justice and frequently set guilty people free. Never mentioning that more than half of people incarcerated in the jails and penitentiaries were not convicted, and many had never been charged with a crime, the authors nevertheless called for a firmer hand and more arrests.

By his second administration, Martínez controlled the press enough to manipulate coverage to create crime waves that corresponded with political turmoil. Using one particular "crisis" to pass more restrictive laws, the President of the Legislative Assembly suppressed article 38 of the penal code to combat a 1936 wave of criminality.[242] In his second administration, the president forced the newspapers to reduce their crime coverage, ostensibly to avoid interference in criminal investigations. Into the late 1930s, when Martínez increased press censorship, the editors of *El Día* cooperated closely with the regime. In contrast, the editors of *El Diario de Hoy* published articles with titles like "The World of Crime" during the 1937 late-winter "crime wave" but reduced their coverage after the regime announced its aggressive policing campaign.[243] Martínez' actions against the newspapers' crime writing caused swings in the reporting before he largely silenced the press after 1939. This aggressive censorship affected information at all levels, and scholars therefore had far less data regarding the dictator's final administration. Until newspaper editors openly challenged the government in 1944, they provided only a little bit of Central American news and no substantive Salvadoran news coverage. No longer discussing topical issues, the editorials were clearly designed to please a government censor. In the last months of 1943, as the regime began to collapse,

[242] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0617 (18-24 April 1936).

[243] "Mundo del delito," *Diario de Hoy* (20 August 1937).

the opposition became emboldened and editors boycotted the government and were at the center of opposition the waning dictatorship.

After 1935, the general justified press censorship by arguing that he protected the weak minds of the Salvadoran people. The military forced the director of *Diario Latino*, Joaquin Castro Canizales, who U.S. State Department officials described as "liberal" and was also known as Quino Caso, to leave the country that year. Justifying the expulsion with now-familiar anti-democratic language, Martínez said that "subversive ideas" threatened "the simple and confiding consciences of our laboring masses."[244] The following year, the *martinato* also pressured "liberal" writer and journalist Napoleon Viera Altamiro after he started his own newspaper, *el Diario de Hoy*. When Viera and his partner, Rubén Membreño, criticized Martínez' plans to remain in power for a third term, Colonel Juan Merino, Director of the National Police, arrested the editor, but released him after a promise to cooperate. Viera Altamiro again irritated the regime in 1938 by failing to report Martínez's campaign visit to Santa Ana, which the general used to mobilize supporters for his third "campaign." This time the president banished the publisher to Honduras, and his wife remained in San Salvador as manager and editor of the newspaper.[245] In 1936, Colonel Merino also closed *La Patria*, and the newspaper's editor, Guerra Trigueros, fled the country.[246]

Although the regime no longer tolerated outward public dissent in his second administration, press censorship increased even further after Martínez' "re-election" in

[244] As reproduced in "D.G Fisher to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0086/307 (22 June 1935).

[245] "R Frazer to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0974/891/274 (17 July 1936.

[246] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0778/734 (16 Aug. 1938).

1939 and the papers no longer covered substantive news.[247] The *martinato* progressively increased their control over the newspapers, so that by the 1940s, the public press was virtually an organ of the state and ceased to report on internal matters.[248] By 1943, the police forbade newspapers to publish anything regarding banks, the coffee commerce, the coffee association, the credit cooperatives, the cattle association, the bakers' cooperative, the cotton cooperative, the sugar cooperative, metal coin scarcity, kerosene scarcity, Honduran dictator Carías Andino, salary increases, uncaptured criminal Ernesto Interiano, or anything against "public order."[249] Even previously critical newspaper, *Diario Latino*, reduced its local coverage to such an extent that by late 1943 international and regional news dominated its pages. The editors printed articles on the allied war effort in World War Two, and on Central American events to have material to fill their pages.[250]

By controlling media outlets the *martinato* was able to silence many opponents and control public discourse. Together with eliminating political opponents and garnering the support of the Church and U.S. embassy officials, a small group of men within Martínez' military regime controlled the government and decided the future of Salvadoran society. Nevertheless, repression generated resistance from within the country from professionals, oligarchs and military officers who felt marginalized by the

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[247] The level of censorship reached such obscene proportions that scholars find it extremely difficult to study Salvadoran history between 1939 and 1944. Ching's otherwise thorough studies, for example, largely ignore this period. See Ching, "Patronage."

[248] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0450/172 (5 March 1934).

[249] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0377/1044 (6 Dec. 1943).

[250] The newspaper provided occasional coverage of judicial cases, usually those that resulted in convictions, and political appointments but spent the majority of its space on non-Salvadoran political events and social announcements like the naming of the Queen of Sugar Cane (*reina de caña de azucar*) throughout November and December 1943.

concentration of political power in the hands of a few, and so the *martinato*'s leaders were soon faced with few options.

E. Neo-Colonialism and the Collapse of Martínez

Although the leaders of the *martinato* publicly opposed U.S. interests and policies after the 1932 rebellion and during the struggle over political recognition, by the mid-1930s, the *martinato*'s anti-imperialism decreased, and was even more muted after 1939. The regime abandoned its anti-*yanqui* nationalism when they needed U.S. support in the face of declining internal support. When Martínez secured his first "election" in 1935 and immediately prepared to amend the constitution to be re-elected in 1939, he began looking for allies outside the country.

In the early months of military rule, the Salvadoran press continued to attack U.S. policies as much as they had in the previous decade.[251] Nationalistic and heavily anti-*yanqui*, newspaper editors virulently criticized the U.S. during the debates regarding recognition, hoping to mobilize popular opinion in favor of the president.[252] Looking to maintain power despite non-recognition by the U.S. State Department, Martínez hoped for accommodation from the recently inaugurated Democratic regime and their newly fashioned "Good Neighbor" policy. The general had hoped to cash in on the apparent support and goodwill his government received after defeating the "first Communist revolt in the Americas" in 1932, but despite his support from individual ambassadors and state department officials, this did not immediately bring formal political relations.

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[251] For a discussion of Salvadoran anti-*yanqui* nationalism see chapter two.

[252] "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, General Conditions Report, 1 June to 1 July 1932," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0923/128-G (5 February 1932).

Although U.S. State Department officials wanted to uphold the provisions of the Progressive multi-nation 1923 Treaty of Peace and Amity that forbade recognition of people who seized power illegally, they ultimately decided to return to working with anyone who actually held the reigns of government.[253] Believing that FDR's state department was less likely to intervene militarily than prior northamerican governments, dictators like Guatemala's Jorge Ubico followed Martínez's lead, now believing that small countries could defy the U.S. and survive.[254] Central American leaders realized that non-recognition had caused leaders like General Federico Tinoco in Costa Rica and Dr. José Madriz in Nicaragua to step down from the presidency, but now times appeared different.[255] The Franklin Roosevelt administration outlined their "Good Neighbor Policy" at the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, and was influenced by the Estrada Doctrine of 1930, named after Mexican ambassador Genaro Estrada, that called for recognition of any government that had de facto control and could fulfill its international obligations.[256] Certainly it is easy to overstate FDR's Good Neighbor Policy, but the Great Depression limited the Roosevelt government's desire for

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[253] Kenneth Grieb discussed, and overstated, the attempts by the U.S. to remove Martínez from power. Grieb, "Martínez." Philip Dur acknowledged that U.S. diplomats and state department officials desired (based on what he believed were ideals regarding democracy and defense of US prestige) to remove Martínez, but emphasized that under Roosevelt and the Good Neighbor Policy, troop landings were out of the question. Furthermore the UK, France and Germany had recognized the regime by the end of 1932. Dur, "Diplomacy."

[254] The clause providing for withholding recognition of revolutionary governments was expanded from the 1907 treaty that had created the Central American Court of Justice (that was dissolved in 1918 and revived in 1962 with the MCCA or Central American Common Market), to preclude recognition of any revolutionary leader, his relatives, or anyone who had been in power six months before or after an uprising or political revolution. For a brief overview of US policy and treaties in the period see David R. Mares, *Violent Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001), 59-67.

[255] For Tinoco see George W Baker, Jr., "Woodrow Wilson's Use of the Non-Recognition Policy in Costa Rica," *The Americas*, Vol 22 No. 1 (July 1965): 3-21; For the politics of the era from a Costa Rican perspective see Orlando Salazar Mora, *El apogeo del Liberalismo en Costa Rica, 1870-1914* (San José, Costa Rica: EDUCA, 1990); For Madriz see Dana Munro, "Dollar Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1909-1913," *HAHR* Vol 38, No. 2 (May 1958): 209-234.

[256] "Warren to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.01/2-1245 (12 February 1945).

aggressive military action so despite U.S. marines landing in Panama, Nicaragua and Haiti, many Latin American governments benefited from FDR's reduced intervention.[257]

In his first administration Martínez embraced controversial and nationalist author Alberto Masferrer, and sold himself as an agent of anti-imperialism. For example, the Salvadoran papers loudly and widely eulogized the writer in 1932. Since he was dead, the military no longer feared Masferrer, who W.J. McCafferty had described as "a dangerous radical agitator and a violent enemy of the United States," but manipulated his memory and image for national unification.[258] The regime embraced the writer even as foreign ambassadors complained about the Salvadoran elite and literate populace's public criticisms of the U.S. McCafferty noted that in a 1933 article in *La Prensa* criticizing the 1923 Treaty of Peace and Amity, the author wrote that the treaty supported imperialism, not Peace and Amity, and that Wall Street provoked world hatred.[259] After Martínez' "re-election," his fiery rhetoric did not last long.

In Martínez's second administration, the military largely abandoned their critiques of the U.S. and emphasized cooperation. When the U.S. and El Salvador renegotiated trade agreements in 1935, the press amply covered the debates and allowed dissenting voices to be heard.[260] D.G. Fisher noted that Dr. Alfonso Rochac, a prominent anti-

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[257] Salvadoran policymakers frequently mentioned the change in attitude and this contrasts with the aggressive foreign policy following WWII as the Cold War heated up once again.

[258] Marta Casaús noted that the dictatorship co-opted or reconstructed his memory and cited Cañas Dinarte's list of the many Salvadoran public and private building, institutions and organizations named after Masferrer from the 1920s to the present. Casaús Arzú, "Masferrer," 3. C. Cañas Dinarte, *Diccionario de autoras y autores de El Salvador* (San Salvador, El Salvador: CONCULTURA, 2002), 317.

[259] "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, General Conditions Report, 1 September to 31 September 1932," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0923/161-G (31 August 1932); "W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, Financial Conditions," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0856 (7 June 1932); *La Prensa*, 27 January 1933 as reprinted in W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0072/243 (28 January 1933).

[260] "D.G Fisher to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0993/472 (31 August 1932). Rochac was later named head of the Office of Customs Income and U.S. charge d'affairs Cochran referred to him as a "young anti-American intellectual."

American Salvadoran attorney, argued against the proposed tariff reductions. Some Salvadoran officials still criticized U.S. policies in the late 1930s, but more and more publicly supported the North Americans. For instance, Minister of Foreign Relations Dr. Miguel Angel Araujo spoke highly of the newly appointed *charge d'affairs* Frank Corrigan in 1936, and *Diario Nuevo*, the regime's unofficial mouthpiece, printed articles favorable to Franklin Roosevelt and the "Good Neighbor" policy.

Although many of the officers in control of the *martinato* had either divided loyalties, or openly supported the Axis Powers before World War Two began, the men made a practical decision to support the Allies. Before the war many officers eagerly supported fascism. In 1938, Italy supplied the Salvadoran government with planes, tanks, tractors and parts, Martínez appointed German Colonel Eberhardt Bohnsted as a Salvadoran General and director of the Military Academy, and *The New York Times* reported that 300 Black Shirts paraded down the streets of San Salvador. The Axis could not provide the steady access to goods and services that the U.S. offered, however, and Martínez publicly denounced European totalitarianism in October 1940.[261] Despite the fact that officers no longer officially supported the Axis, the newspaper's society pages showed Axis paraphernalia, including Nazi flags, adorning the officer's clubs.[262]

As multiple sectors opposed the president's efforts to centralize power in 1944 including those who held power over chief financial and commercial institutions, U.S. support proved insufficient to prevent Martínez from losing the presidency. When the leaders of the Mortgage Bank, especially bank president Hector Herrera and part owner of the newspaper *la Tribuna*, openly opposed the president's re-election attempt in 1943,

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"Cochran to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0029/131 (12 May 1936).
[261] Elam, Appeal," 48-51.
[262] See various examples from *El Día* and *Diario Latino*.

he reassigned some and fired others. Knowing that the general was unable to remove his enemies without eliminating everyone with the skills to run the apparatus of government and the economy, members of the Chamber of Commerce joined the chorus of opposition, believing that the regime no longer maintained social order between elites and among the masses, nor increased the wealth of the nation as a whole.

In 1944, the *martinato* still had had supporters, but they centered on the most reactionary Right-wing landed elites. These men supported Martínez because they feared the masses, were concerned about political and social change and instability, and desired increased control over the nations' institutions. For instance, Dr. Carlos Menéndez Castro attempted to use his influence with the Coffee Growers and the Livestock Association to gain control over the Mortgage Bank, and dominate the government-sponsored but autonomous Federation of Credit Cooperatives. Menéndez convinced his supporters that radical and liberal elements could be defeated if the regime took back the country's economic institutions.[263] Mario Sol also controlled Social Betterment, which was founded in 1932 to redistribute land to peasants, and build cheap housing for workers, but was now becoming a tool to resist the opposition's demands for change.

These powerful and conservative members of Salvadoran society were far outnumbered by the many that desired political change, and publicly or clandestinely expressed their opposition. Despite physical harassment and oppression, the majority of prominent Salvadoran landed and white-collar families supported the "revolutionaries." The editors of the major newspapers, like *La Prensa Grafica* editor José Quetglas, criticized the government and faced a renewed cycle of repression. *Diario Latino*'s editor Miguel Pinto took asylum at embassy, and they shot his father, Jorge Pinto, while

[263] "H.G Ainsworth to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0909/23 (9 Feb. 1944).

he was allegedly "trying to escape." *Diario de Hoy*'s Saturnino Viera Altamiro and Napoleon Viera Altamiro did not resume publication until after Martínez left the country.[264] Relying on mobile printing presses, the opposition, like the National University's *Opinion Estudantil*, continued to generate propaganda against the regime. Even the Catholic Church joined the chorus of voices that opposed General Martínez. Archbishop Chavéz y González wrote an essay on "Solving the Post-War Social Problem" that ostensibly praised the administration's achievements, but effectively emphasized their failures. Chavéz argued that problems remained despite rural credit cooperatives, land redistribution and worker housing. He lamented that less than 10% of Salvadorans owned land, extreme inequalities remained, and housing shortages were acute.[265] The Church's critique, however, was relatively muted compared to many others.

In April 1944, as the military became divided and lost the last of its oligarchic support, a united and cross-class opposition toppled the regime with a peaceful demonstration, known as the strike de fallen arms (*brazos caidos*). Owners and workers closed banks and other businesses throughout the capital, as clandestine printers encouraged participation in the strike by citing the Atlantic Charter. When government repressed an insurrection on Palm Sunday and then executed fourteen leaders, they increased the number of people participating in the massive strike and peaceful demonstration. After the regime killed a young man from a prominent elite family, José

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[264] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/telegram (5 April 1944).

[265] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0538 (1943).

Wright, who was also a U.S. citizen, only the soldiers in the *el Zapote* fort and the National Police still defended the regime. This resistance did not last long.[266]

Between April and October 1944, many people believed that Salvadoran politics might change dramatically. The leaders of the movement that ended the *martinato* were magnanimous and declared freedom of thought and the press on 10 May 1944. When Andrés Menéndez was declared president, men such as newspaper editors Napoleon Altamiro, Miguel Pinto and Agustín Alfaro, leaders of the general strike, and even prominent Communist leaders such as Miguel Mármol and Dagoberto Marroquin all returned to the country. Many believed that radical change was forthcoming but their hopes were quickly dashed.

U.S. Ambassador Thurston noted in a 25 May 1944 memorandum:

> Since April 2…the army officers [believe the] prestige of the army [is] broken and disunity, mistrust, and fear [are] pervasive. This helped make the civilian-led strike so effective and general contempt for the police made them uneasy…This could be bad (they do not like democracy and many are pro-Nazi) but could help the non-military revolutionaries stay united and might check the extremist sections of the laboring class and the peasantry. Unfortunately, [the] army does not intend to lose any election and will use all means including the disguised intimidation of peasant voters. One civilian leader said the "[military class] is completely out of touch…"

The military struggled to regain full control of government institutions from civilians throughout 1944 but were finally successful in December. The far-Right distrusted the civilian and "liberal" elements that had united against Martínez regime and worked to discredit and harass his opponents. Colonel Aguirre, General Calderón and some other officers also supported the regime and repressed those that had recently opposed the *martinato*. In August, the Army Chief of Staff Col. Peña Trejo released a

[266] See Parkman, *Nonviolent*, for an excellent discussion of the civil strike.

document that linked active and suspected Communists with the labor confederation UNT (*Unión Nacional de Trabajadores*) and the Mortgage Bank and the Rural Credit Cooperatives, so that the many of these leaders could be arrested, tortured and/or exiled. The men in the list included those linked to the bank like Dagoberto Marroquin, Pedro Geoffroy Rivas and Carlos Alvarado, as well as people like Dr. Angel Gochez Castro, Abel Cuenca and Miguel Mármol who were linked to the UNT and the 1932 "Communist" uprising. Professor Edelberto Torres Rivas was listed as particularly dangerous because of his position as the Director of the Normal School for Teachers.[267] In October 1944, the army arrested these leaders and the National Police, following Aguirre's orders, beat many of them including Marroquin, Rochac and Rivas, who were exiled shortly after their assaults.[268] In October 1944, the military regained full political control after a failed revolt by a group called Salvadoran Democratic Action.

Through a party called Salvadoran Democratic Action (*Acción Democrática Salvadoreña*, ADS) a popular young physician, Arturo Romero, and Supreme Court president Molina, led the opposition to the military. After Colonel Aguirre had taken control of the government in October, they invaded the country, but failed miserably. The military censored the newspapers and exiled political contenders. Colonel Aguirre's strongman tactics and reputation, in repressing popular groups in 1932 and 1944, appealed to hard-liners on the Right. As chief of police during *la matanza*, Aguirre was reportedly so brutal, or "famous for shooting workers and peasants," that Walter Thurston

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[267] "W.Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0750/1947 (26 August 1944).

[268] "W.Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/2097 (23 October 1944).

reports that even President Martínez "called him to account for so many deaths."[269] Thurston notes that Aguirre sent members of the laboring classes in masses to the garrison known as 'El Sexto" where they were machine gunned until thousands were dead.[270] Aguirre sold himself as an anti-Communist veteran, and was supported by General Tomás Calderón who loved to tell people how *he* crushed "the bloody, Communist revolution of 1932."[271] They also had support from senior army officer and the most conservative sectors of the oligarchy. Nevertheless, many people hated Aguirre for these same reasons.

Aguirre faced resistance from many groups, including the leaders of the mortgage and rural banks, who tried to force the general out of office with the same methods they had used against Martínez. In an effort to paralyze the regime's economic abilities, these men kept the banks closed. Reformist leaders hoped to get the court to act decisively against Aguirre, but they refused in 1944 and 1945, since most of the members were Martínez appointees.[272] Aguirre also faced international resistance and many countries did initiate formal diplomatic relations with him, including the United States. The regime was only initially recognized by dictators like Spain's Franco, Honduras' Carias, and Nicaragua's Somoza. When the U.S. State Department recognized Aguirre's regime, before Castro took office, many Salvadorans were furious and sent complaints, feces covered photos of FDR, to the White House.[273] The local opposition persisted in

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[269] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/2097 (23 October 1944).

[270] "W.Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.001/0513 (28 October 1944).

[271] "O. Ellis to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.0887/348 (19 August 1948); "O. Ellis to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.0872/313 (23 July 1948).

[272] "Graves atropellos inician esta nueva etapa del régimen de Castaneda," *Opinion Estudiantil* (13 October 1945).

[273] "Mail for the Embassy," *Time Magazine* (12 March 1945).

demanding elections, that the military held, and General Salvador Castaneda Castro ultimately won.[274]

Castaneda held power for almost four years, but many Salvadorans believed that little had changed. Although Aguirre had tried to foment resistance within the police, the National Guard and the army, he failed to prevent Castaneda Castro from becoming president, and waited for the next election. Castaneda Castro at first lifted the state of siege, but newspapers *la Tribuna*, *la Prensa Gráfica* and *el Diario Latino* stopped publication for several days in protest of the rigged elections and the fact that the military had regained control of the government. The military resumed publishing an official newspaper, as *El Nacional* maintained their offices in the National Palace.[275] Castaneda Castro's Minister of the Interior Efrain Jovel closed the newspaper *Tribuna Libre*, which was founded by Pedro Geoffroy Rivas in 1944 when freedom of expression briefly seemed possible, and arrested and deported dozens of people. In late 1946, investors tied to Castaneda Castro acquired *Tribuna Libre*. When Hugo Lindo and José Quetglas became editors, the newspaper became conservative and less combative towards the military regimes, but after Alberto Rivas Bonilla and Francisco Espinosa took over, they fully transformed the paper into a mouthpiece for Castaneda Castro.[276]

On 14 October 1948, young officers led by Colonel Oscar Osorio and civilian hopefuls ended the Castaneda regime with a military coup, and once the Revolutionary Party consolidated power, they again embraced U.S. support. At first, military and civilian leaders repressed figures that they saw, or described as politically far-Right and

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[274] *Diario de Hoy* (13 February 1945).

[275] "O. Ellis to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.0639 (6 February 1947).

[276] Claudia Ponce Prudhomme, "Las vendedoras de los espacios públicos y de mercados en El Salvador a través del diario La Tribuna (1944-1948)" *AFEHC* (December 2006). http://afehc-historia-centroamericana.org/index.php?action=fi_aff&id=1283

far-Left. Osorio, or more accurately the military arrested reactionary Colonel Aguirre but also deported Communists like Abel Cuenca and Pedro Geoffrey Rivas. In order to contrast themselves with the prior government, they tried Castaneda Castro for corruption, or enriching himself without cause. These Revolutionaries modeled themselves on the Mexican PRI that balanced rural and urban interests, and modernized the nation while maintaining social order. The government also increasingly looked to the U.S. as a bulwark against Communism, and a provider of valuable resources for reforms that would appease the masses and generate wealth for the privileged few.

The U.S. embassy quickly embraced the PRUD leadership and agreed that these younger military officers would prevent the disorder threatened by the prescence of many people in the streets in 1944 or 1948. After all, they combined repression and reform in ways that pleased those that believed paternalistic and anti-democratic policies were most appropriate for El Salvador. These men talked about progress and social justice more convincingly than Castaneda Castro or Aguirre. U.S. State Deaprtment official Hoyt described economic policy under Osorio and Minister of Economy Dr. Jorge Sol Castellanos as "'New Dealish' with overtones of nationalism, colored by a small-country complex."[277] This compliment, of sorts, showed the praetorian regimes as the repressive saviors of Salvadoran society, but also the agents of economic development and ultimate political modernization. The PRUD had successfully argued that they were simply the most effective caretakers of Salvadoran society until the populace and the structures had sufficiently matured to survive without their tutelage and guidance.

In 1944, Salvadorans had an opportunity to establish a participatory government and pass substantive social reform legislation, but were doomed by reactionary groups.

[277] "Hoyt to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00/2-2653 (26 February 1953).

William Stanley argued that reformist military officers attempted to modernize Salvadoran social and economic institutions in 1944, as they would later in 1960, but that conservative senior officer allied with the reactionary faction of the landed oligarchy destroyed these opportunities. Critically, both groups feared the power and potential of popular groups, and the military successfully asserted that the social order could only be maintained with their firm guidance. The success of this "protection racket" enabled the military to effectively rule the republic and dominate society into the 1980s.[278] As discussed in chapter four, the protection racket, however, sold protection for the masses as well as for the elites. To build the culture of fear, the PRUD, like the *martinato*, perpetually confronted plots that threatened the government.

Plots and Communists under the PRUD

In order to marginalize, repress and harass their political opponents, the PRUD governments led by Colonels Osorio and Lemus also violently repressed plots against the government, but there were some notable differences between the military regimes. Like the *martinato*, PRUD leaders labeled their enemies Communists in order to demonize them and their activities, but nevertheless, they faced fewer plots led by high-ranking military officers or powerful oligarchs. The military's political opponents throughout the 1950s were more frequently middle and working class people. The military regimes chiefly targeted urban and rural workers, and middle class students and professionals who demanded political access from the Revolutionary Party. The military governments responded brutally against these groups, even as they employed propaganda to redefine the events. Although they did not take up the armed struggle as their contemporaries in

[278] Stanley, *Protection Racket*.

Cuba and Bolivia, these varied individuals began to mobilize other Salvadorans. During an economic depression, they finally took advantage of the regime's vulnerability and threatened Lemus' government in October 1960.[279] Military officers and civilians took over the government until the PCN restored military rule in 1961.

The most important plot against the PRUD was foiled in 1952, when the regime arrested, tortured and exiled dozens of men and women who later became organized labor and guerrilla leaders. Beginning as had many repressions under Martínez, the Osorio government heavily publicized the crisis, and arrested *finqueros*, military cadets, and a mid-ranking officer, Major J. Napoleon Ortiz. Arresting others in the following months, but still mostly junior officers, rank-and-file soldiers and selected oligarchs, Revolutionary partyt leaders claimed to repress those "actively connected with Communism."[280] When the government widened the targets late in the year to include several young men carrying Leftist propaganda, this particular plot became different than those under the *martinato*.[281] In August, security forces arrested J. Antonio Diaz who the newspapers called the "Peking traveler," for transporting Communist propaganda from a peace conference in China.

Fearing these political activists, PRUD leaders declared a state of siege, tied the many alleged conspirators to international Communist groups, and arrested hundreds of people. Connected to numerous political organizations, these men and women were members of General Association of University Students (AGEUS), editors of *Opinón*

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[279] The economy was vulnerable as coffee prices and exports, still critical to the health of the Salvadoran economy, dropped from a high of 274.6m *colones* in 1957 to 191.7m in 1960. Castellanos, *Antecedentes*, 189. Even the lower sum was a tremendous increase from 1945 total value: 46.7m *colones*.

[280] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/9-2552 D 39 (25 September 1952).

[281] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, 84, DF 716.00(W)/8-2252 D 96 (22 August 1952).

Estudiantil, labor leaders, connected with Communist activities in the country or simply student activists. Salvadoran police detained Roberto Carías Delgado, Manuel Atilio Hasbún and several others when they returned from the First Congress of Central American University Students, held in Guatemala.[282] Guatemala, under the rule of the socialist government of Colonel Jacobo Arbenz, had approved and begun an agrarian reform, which particularly concerned the Salvadoran military leadership and oligarchy.[283] PRUD leaders charged Hasbún, an ex-president of AGEUS, with transporting the Guatemalan Agrarian Reform Law, and in the following weeks about 1200 others including students and labor organizers such as Salvador Cayetano Carpio, Fidelina Raymundo, Tula Alvaranga, and Mario Salazar Valiente. The police did not capture Jorge Schafik Handal, who was Organizational Secretary of the illegal Salvadoran Communist Party and later became a prominent guerrilla leade and a presidential candidate.[284] Since Manuel Atilio Hasbún wa associated with Handal and both were part of the "Tina Modoti" Communist cell, rhe government arrested the former.[285]

Since the late 1940s, an organized opposition had worked within the country. Mostly middle and working class Salvadorans, with a disproportionate number of professionals such as lawyers, these men and women were politically active critics of the regime, and the military had clashed with them in previous years. The military arrested

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[282] Castellano, *Antecedentes*, 219.

[283] For an excellent discussion of peasant action during the Guatemalan "Ten Years of Spring" see Cindy Forster, *The Time of Freedom: Campesino Workers in Guatemala's October Revolution* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 2001).

[284] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/10-1052 D 208 (10 October 1952). Handal died of a heart attack on 24 January 2006.

[285] Tina Modoti was an Italian photographer and revolutionary activist in Mexico in the 1930s. She joins the Communist Party in 1927 and died of an apparent hear attack in 1942. Pino Cacucci, *Tina Modotti—A Life* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Salazar in 1949 for participating in a demonstration.[286] Hasbún, a lawyer, was a prosecutor in the District of New San Salvador, Santa Tecla in the late 1940s. Politically active and publicly visible, Hasbún tried to prosecute military officers who committed crimes in civil courts. Captain Carlos Rodriguez Trejo, for instance, allegedly raped Marta Arévalo in April 1947. Two years later, he was still protected by military authorities.[287] Military authorities sometimes transferred and hid mid- and high-level officers to prevent their prosecution in civil courts, and Trejo was trying to combat these policies as a means of challenging the regime's legitimacy.

In response to these growing organizations, Osorio and the Legislature passed the misnamed Law for the Defense of Democratic and Constitutional Order (*Ley de Defensa del Orden Democrático y Constitucional*) in November 1952. This law provided substantial penalties for the promotion of Communism and anarchism and encouraging illegal strikes and demonstrations. When they used these laws to prosecute hundreds of political opponents, the regime didn't expect a concerted legal challenge by the AGEUS and *Opinion Estudiantil*, who filed writs of *habeus corpus* with the Supreme Court, and demanded the prisoners' release. In an attempt to deter these lawyers, students, and workers, PRUD leaders combined the propaganda campaign with counter-suits, and even attacked the high court. Hoping to intimidate the opposition into silence with their public and secretive campaigns, the PRUD accused Supreme Court Justice Angel Gochez Castro, of having "leftist leanings."[288]

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[286] Castellano, *Antecedentes*, 200.
[287] "Sin comentarios," *Tribuna Libre* (23 March 1949).
[288] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/7-1852 D 184 (3 October 1952).

Despite government evasiuons, the lawyers and students maintained pressure on the regime. The activists' families and lawyers from *Opinion Estudiantil* tried to release the prisoners, but the police repeatedly moved the prisoners from jail to jail, while simultaneously denying that any were held. Security forces briefly held Díaz in the central police station in the capital, before they moved him to an unknown location.[289] This was only the beginning of the government's actions and evasions. The government shipped many prisoners to Nicaragua and Costa Rica in October, and repeatedly moved the rest within the country. Because of the frequent secret transfers, several prisoners were able to escape, and took refuge in the Guatemalan, Argentine and Mexican embassies.[290] As the government's lies became more evident, representatives of the Supreme Court performed surprise visits and released other minor prisoners, but the great majority remained held.[291] *La Prensa Gráfica* reported on May 4 that the government had released 23 people, but the prisoners' whereabouts remained unknown to their families and defenders. Student groups, including *Opinion Estudiantil* and AGEUS, finally secured a judicial order to release Hasbún, Díaz, Tula Alvarenga and Prof. Celestino Castro.[292] The remaining political prisoners were released a few days later but immediately sent to the Honduran *Isla de Tigre* in the Gulf of Fonseca.[293]

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[289] Ibid. The Salvadoran newspapers (and the U.S. Embassy) had made much of the travels of Jorge Shafick Handal, "prize winning orator and associated with the Communists in the student body." He participated in the Fifth International Oratorical Contest held in Mexico City, 18-23 July. *Tribuna Libre* (17 July 1952); "Silberstein to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/7-1852 D 35 (18 July 1952).

[290] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/10-1752 D 230 (17 October 1952); "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/1-153 D 392 (1 January 1953).

[291] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/11-1452 D 284 (11 November 1952).

[292] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/8-753 D 61 (7 August 1953).

[293] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/8-1453 D 67 (14 August 1953).

PRUD leaders tried to defuse the situation by releasing prisoners into exile but he opposition successfully attacked those responsible for the tortures and abuses. Despite the release of the prisoners, *Opinion Estudiantil* continued the lawsuit against the PRUD for well over a year, and forced the regime to make administrative changes within the police. In an attempt to silence them, Osorio's government mobilized the newspapers and unsuccessfully sued the student newspaper. Joaquin Castro Canizáles, editor of *Tribuna Libre* and future PRUD Secretary of information, published articles that defended the government's action. The newspaper glorified the Osorio administration's accomplishments and emphasized the dangers of Communism.[294] Arguing that *Opinion* committed libel by publishing articles that attacked the dignity and integrity of the Supreme Court, the PRUD filed suit against the university newspaper.[295] Despite these attacks AGEUS President René Fortin Magaña successfully filed suit against the Director General of the National Police Colonel Antonio Valdés and Chief of the Special Investigations Section Maj. José Alberto Medrano. They denounced the men for illegal detention, usurpation of authority and abuse of private persons.[296] Medrano was the head of the police Criminal Investigations Division and had a long military career. Medrano murdered and tortured numerous people in his role in the police, the National Guard, and the brutal paramilitary terrorist organization *Organización Democrática Nacionalista* (ORDEN).[297] AGEUS argued that the prisoners had been held without

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[294] López Vallecillos, *periodismo*, 306-11

[295] "A.R Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/4-1753 D 659 (17 April 1953).

[296] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/5-753 D 707 (7 May 1953). Carpio, *Secuestro*, 30.

[297] Salvador Cayetano Carpio. *Secuestro y capucha en un país del "mundo libre"* (Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica: Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana, 1979).

legal basis, and that the Supreme Court had repeatedly decreed their immediate liberty.[298] To intimidate them, the government removed university law students like Jose Enrique Silva from appointments as local attorneys.[299] In the face of a popular legal challenge, PRUD leaders compromised, and removed the two military officers responsible for the arrests and tortures of the prisoners.[300]

In 1954, the regime reassigned Major José Medrano and Colonel Valdés and dropped the suit against *Opinion*. Appointing a new Director of Police Colonel, Fidel Quintanilla, the government also replaced the eighty agents of the Special Investigations Division, including the director Pedro Miguel Angel Osorio.[301] In order to prepare for the 1955 presidential elections, PRUD leaders cut their losses, but also used the reorganization to remove officers and officials that had opposed the military's repression. They removed Lt. Colonel Oscar Bolaños from the Ministry of Defense and Dr. Jorge Sol Castellanos from the Ministry of Economics in 1953, and Roberto Canessa from the Ministry of Justice in 1954, as the Revolutionary Party removed its internal critics.

As one of the most prominent prisoners from the 1952 arrests, Cayetano Carpio ordeal was prolonged, but he won his case because his supporters mobilized national and international legal action and propaganda. Already a noted political leader in 1952, Cayetano later helped found and lead the guerrilla People's Liberation Forces (*Fuerzas Populares de Liberación*, FPL), and used his ordeal as he challenged praetorian rule.[302]

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[298] *Opinion Estudiantil* (18 July 1953).

[299] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/8-2853 D 87 (28 August 1953).

[300] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/21-753 D 78 (21 August 1953).

[301] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/1-1954 D 294 (19 January 1954).

[302] The conflict was over whether to emphasize negotiation or continued armed revolt. Comandante Marcial, as his name suggests, favored the violent solution. The FPL recognized the validity

The investigating judge, Margarito Gonzales Guerrero, determined that his detention under the 1952 Law for Defense of Democracy and Constitutional Order was illegal. The defense successfully argued that the prisoner simply had a number of publications including the Guatemalan Labor Code and a history of the Communist Party in Argentina. In argument similar to that of those who possess illegal narcotics in the USA, Cayetano's lawyers asserted that these were simply for his personal consumption, and therefore the prosecution dismissed his case in June 1954.[303]

Carpio eventually published his experiences in a text entitled *Kidnapped and Hooded* (*Secuestro y capucha*) which recounted police strategies and prisoner treatment. Describing Colonel Medrano and the San Salvador police force's methods, he graphically reinforced the many accusations made by newspapers like *Opinion Estudiantil* throughout the 1950s regarding police brutality and prison conditions. Although the police employed torture against anyone, key and elite political prisoners like Cayetano Carpio, as well as ordinary prisoners, he and his female *compañera*, Tula Alvaranga, still received preferential treatment. The torturers were more concerned with avoiding and visible damage with political leaders, and those from the middle and upper class, in contrast to working-class labor leaders and the rank-and-file. Common criminals were particularly dehumanized and subject to indiscriminate tortures and executions. Of course, this is not to imply that the beatings, deprivations, and humiliations suffered by students or Leftist leaders were minor. The police simply treated prisoners differently according to their class. In the final analysis, however, whippings, beatings, deprivations,

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of negotiation in a public radio declaration in December 1983. See the discussion in Salvador Cayetano Carpio, *Nuestras montañas son las masas* (Vienna, Austria: Corriente Leninista Internacional, 1999).

[303] "A.R. Donovan to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/6-1754 D 465 (17 June 1954).

humiliations and other ignominies were shared by common criminal, labor organizer and political aspirant alike.[304]

In an attempt to mobilize public opinion and sentiment, *Opinion Estudiantil* aggressively accused the government of police repression, and focused on the sufferings of female prisoners. The editors recognized that these stories resonated with the public and described Tula Alvarenga's, Lucila Rodriguez' and Fidelina Raymundo's tortures in great detail. The paper described Colonel Medrano's physical and psychological tortures. In addition to her beatings, the police forced Raymundo to lie naked on a wet table for prolonged periods of time. They used water to imply or threaten the use of electricity for torture. She was also verbally assaulted in a crude and sexual manner, and the guards painted grotesque expressions on her face with lipstick. Designed to humiliate the prisoner, these assaults reflected the combination of machismo that prevented more brutal physical punishments, but also the specific abuses that women endured. Rodriguez was held with her five year-old child while police beat the men.[305]

Opinion virulently condemned the condition of jails and penitentiaries to further generate opposition to the government, and link the regime to human rights violations. In a series of articles published in late 1955, its writers recounted that prisoners routinely died in custody and that the jails were hotbeds of disease. The editors accused the Supreme Court of complicity for repeatedly failed to take action to defend those incarcerated. Arguing that the judges should be ashamed of their complicity, *Opinion*

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[304] Cayetano Carpio. *Secuestro*. There are many personal accounts of the tortures meted out by the Salvadoran security forces including that of Ana Guadalupe Martínez which includes the testimonies of other political prisoners and that of Guillermo Roeder published near the end of the war. Ana Guadalupe Martínez, *Las carceles clandestinas de El Salvador* (Culiacán, México: Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, 1980); Guillermo A. Roeder, *El Chivo expiatorio…vive* (San José, Costa Rica: Julio Cárdenas y Asociados, 1988).

[305] *Opinion Estudiantil* (15 August 1953).

accused the Court of a lack of independence and of cleaning the criminal, abusive, fascist and praetorian regime's dirty laundry.[306] They criticized how the Supreme Court's didn't take sufficient action in 1952 and allowed the government to treat common criminals brutally, including informal executing them.[307]

In the late 1950s, leaders of the political opposition finally threatened the PRUD government of Colonel Lemus and pushed for electoral reform through public demonstrations.[308] In an attempt to appease the demonstrators, Lemus repealed the infamous *Ley de Defensa de Orden y Democracia*, which was the basis for the 1952 arrests. He hoped that repealing the law, which generated organized resistance against the Osorio government, would appease the public. It did not, and Lemus faced increased student and labor mobilizations which were emboldened in the aftermath of the 1959 Cuban Revolution. In December of that year, the Salvadoran police arrested more activists and future political and guerrilla leaders including men like Roque Dalton García and Carlos Alberto Hidalgo who were law students, Communist leaders and members of the CGTS.[309]

Because members of the U.S. embassy believed Lemus had not previously repressed Communists aggressively, they were openly relieved by the arrests. Ambassadors and state department officials had been similarly concerned by Osorio's "casualness and, apparently, complacency" regarding Communists. A large number of exiles from the Arbenz regime and anti-Somoza movement had found employment in El

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[306] *Opinion Estudiantil* (10 July 1956).

[307] *Opinion Estudiantil* (18 July 1953).

[308] "R.P. Gwynn to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.062/1-2858 D 406 (28 January 1958).

[309] "Downs to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00/12-1759 Telegram 146 (17 December 1959).

Salvador, they complained.[310] Eventually, given the country's economic difficulties, there was nothing the PRUD could do to stop the opposition. Emboldened by the Cuban Revolution, they were firmly entrenched in the university and labor unions. Using the economic crisis to topple Colonel Lemus in 1960, the middle and working class activists were unable to prevent the military from reestablishing itself as the protector of law, order, progress and prosperity. A new military government, now calling itself the Party of National Conciliation (*Partido de Conciliación Nacional*, PCN) took power the following year by selling itself as the institution most capable of preventing the reactionary oligarchs and the Communist students and union leaders from plunging the country into chaos.

Militarization and De-Militarization of Governance

Leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD both stressed their predecessors' failures, when they chosewho would occupy positions of power within the regime. Martínez rejected how Liberals governed in the 1920s, and increasingly replaced skilled civilians and bureaucrats with loyal officers. As the regime became more dictatorial after 1935, Martínez accelerated both the militarization of governance and its incompetence when he privileged loyalty. By 1943, the regime was dominated by a small cadre of military officers. The PRUD instead looked back when they criticized the Martínez dictatorship that failed to distribute political power. Reversing the *martinato*'s militarization, the PRUD appointed and elected numerous civilian to prominent political positions. Unable

[310] "A.E. Donovan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/2-1855 D 226 (18 February 1955).

to successfully balance the demands of its many allies, constituents, or clients, opponents besieged and toppled the Party leaders in 1960.

After he seized power in December 1931, General Hernández Martínez responded to Liberals' alleged political, economic, social, and moral failures by replacing civilians with military officers. The militarization of government rule was most profound at the national and departmental level. Martínez appointed loyal officers to the important positions of political governors and ministers. This was a marked shift from the 1920s. Mayors and legislators were still largely civilians, but the military expected these men to obey the officers and remain subordinate.

Before 1932, local oligarchs successfully petitioned the government to appoint civilian allies. As part of the pre-praetorian patronage network, Liberal presidents elected numerous professionals as governors. The residents of Santa Ana asked President Arturo Araujo appoint Dr. Pedro Jiménez, a lawyer, in 1931 because as a lawyer from a prominent family, he was uniquely qualified.[311] Likewise Araujo appointed don Atilio García Prieto governor of San Miguel in the same year.[312] Local oligarchs often controlled these appointments and manned the municipal government apparatus. The *martinato* sharply changed this process.

In contrast, Martínez appointed high-ranking military officers to the most important political positions, including appointing colonels or generals as governors in thirteen out of the country's fourteen departments after *la matanza*. The only exception was prominent lawyer, Dr. Jose Antonio Castro R., who the general appointed Castro as governor less than two weeks after the coup, because hedid not strongly hold the reigns

[311] 'Los santanecos quieren como gobernador al Dr. Pedro Jiménez," *El Día* (18 February 1931).
[312] "Nuevo gobernador de San Miguel," *El Día* (14 July 1931).

of power and was still unsure which potential allies he would cultivate. Rebels had not yet revolted against the military government providing the regime further ammunition against Liberal and civilians.[313] Although the ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs were civilians, the most important positions, such as the ministers of Government and War, were military officers.[314] Hernández Martínez believed that appointing loyal military officers increased his power despite the fact that this policy increased the resentments of politically marginalized civilians.

Even if the military leadership wanted to completely militarize governance, there would not have been enough officers to man the lower levels of government throughout the *martinato*. Civilians, therefore, retained virtually all the mayoralties and municipal offices. For instance, only one of the 25 mayors in Morazán department in 1941, Lt. Urrutia from Guatajiagua, had a military title.[315] This did not mean that civilians controlled the "elections" or municipal appointments, but instead reflected the impossibility of governing the country without civilian bureaucrats. Despite the appointment of civilians to most low-level government positions, Martínez no longer appointed lawyers and businessmen as the bulk of political governors. After oligarchs and professionals united with students and laborers, and together with junior officers, toppled the Martínez dictatorship in 1944, the movement soon fell apart because of tensions between civilian and military leaders.[316] Nevertheless, professional and middle

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[313] "El presidente de la commission especial quiere ser alcalde," *El Día* (10 December 1931).

[314] W.J. McCafferty to U.S. Secretary of State, "Political and Financial Conditions in El Salvador," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0299/17 (26 September 1932).

[315] For that year see the lists of alcaldes: "Nombrados para alcaldes" (17 December 1941) *Notas y Acuerdos: Gobernaciónes Políticas de Morazán, La Unión y Usulután 1941*, AGN, FG. The list also includes those of the other two departments included in the book.

[316] W. Thurston U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.111/0564 No 15 (15 May 1944).

class Salvadorans would exercise greater power rom the mid-1940s as they increased in numbers and economic power.

Although presidents Aguirre and Castaneda Castro (1944-1948) did not reverse the militarization of governance, keeping twelve of the fourteen governorships in the hands of military officers, PRUD leaders over time assigned civilians to important posts at far greater levels. Between 1931 and 1948, presidents relied on army officials to fill important posts such as ministers and governors, but Osorio instead appointed numerous technocrats and academics, including engineers and lawyers, to key positions such as Sub-Secretary of the Interior Dr. J. Alberto Díaz, Morazán Governor Dr. Tomás Molina, and San Miguel Governor Dr. Ramón Quintanilla.[317] Because of the increased prestige of an academic title or professional education, even some military officers identified themselves as technicians. For instance, La Libertad's political governor referred to himself as General *and* engineer Salvador Peña Trejo.[318]

Continuing and accelerating the process, Col. Lemus appointed Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios as Interior Minister, and Drs. Rafael Carballo and Julio Fausto Fernández as Minister and Sub-Secretary of Justice, respectively, in 1957.[319] Military judges like Dr. José Antonio Sanabria held doctorates of jurisprudence, but a civilian in the important Ministry of the Interior signaled a dramatic shift among Lemus and his associates. In 1957, the governors of Cuscatlán, Morazán, and Chalatenango's were civilians and held

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[317] "Morazán Gobernador Dptl. Capt. Antonio Calderón González al subsecretario del Interior Col. Luis Felipe Escobar," (21 December 1955) *Notas y Acuerdos 1955,* vol 5, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG. "San Miguel Gobernador Deptl. Dr. Ramón Quintanilla a Lt. Col. José María Lemus," (17 August 1954) *Notas y Acuerdos Dirigidas al Ministerio del Interior 1954,* vol. 5, *Notas a Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

[318] "La Libertad Political Governor General and engineer Salvador Peña Trejo to Interior Minister Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (10 October 1958) *Notas y Acuerdos 1958,* vol 4, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

[319] "Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios a Drs. Rafael Carballo y Julio Fausto Fernández," (15 January 1957) *Notas y Acuerdos 1957,* vol. 5, *Notas a Ministerio de Justicia 1957,* AGN, FG.

doctorates.[320] In 1957 and 1958, the PRUD nominated nine civilian governors, and ten in 1959, with six of thse ten civilians being doctors and professors. Including the alternates, who would serve if the primary candidate were unable, only five of 28 candidates for governor were military officers that year, and twelve were doctors and professors.[321]

Revolutionary Party leaders even included women in positions of governance, particularly in the assembly. The 1956 PRUD slate for the 54 assembly seats included 17 doctors and professors, five women and no military officers.[322] The PRUD also appointed multiple women to municipal positions such as mayoralties [323] Despite their propaganda value in a world where women had earned the right to vote and hold office, in 1950 women still remained a considerable minority within the PRUD leadership. Although political participation was real, Salvadoran scholars await an in-depth analysis of the full menaing of the shifts in the sex balance of political officeholders.

The PRUD recognized that balancing the power of military and civilian members of the party promised improvements in efficiency and strengthened the patronage system, and acknowledged the growing influence of popular groups. Increasing the visibility of civilians did not, however, resolve conflict between them and military officers. Prevalent during the *martinato*, these conflicts, which were exacerbated by praetorian disdain for civilian authority, continued under the Revolutionary Party.

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[320] "Chalatengo Gobernador Departamental professor José García Velásquez al ministerio del Interior Minister Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (10 October 1958) *Notas y Acuerdos 1958*, vol 4, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.; "Cuscatlán Gobernador Departamental Dr. R.R. Rivas al Ministerio del Interior Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (8 April 1958) *Notas y Acuerdos 1958*, vol 4, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG; "Morazán Gobernador Departamental Dr. Juan Molina Reyes al Ministerio del Interior Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (25 November 1958), Ibid.

[321] "A.W. Hemba to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.111/2-857 D 401 (8 Feb. 1957); "W.B. Sowash to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.111/8-3159 D 101 (31 August 1959); "A.W. Hemba to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.111/2-857 D 401 (2 August 1957).

[322] "D.C. Braggiotti to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.2/3-2656 D 444 (26 March 1956).

[323] See the monthly bulletins published by the Ministry of the Interior under Osorio and Lemus.

Civil-Military Conflicts

Despite varying in how they balanced the influence of military and civilian appointees, military regimes always pursued cooperation between and among their subordinates. For the military officers that manned the *martinato* and PRUD bureaucracy, however, cooperation meant obedience. Although civilians under Martínez faced a regime that encouraged and promoted the erosion of civilian power, the role of civilians was more complex and ambivalent under the PRUD. Nevertheless, many military officers throughout praetorian rule still disparaged civilians and often believed their orders should be obeyed without question.

Since civilianscontinued to protect their long-held privileges, conflicts between local oligarchs and military authorities were particularly heated in the early years of Martínez's rule. In 1932, the Mancía family, prominent merchants and landowners (*finqueros*) in the recently established township of El Congo, Santa Ana struggled against the local military Commandant. Commandant Major Antonio Villeda had detained and questioned family patriarch and ex-mayor Francisco Mancía's 14 year-old son after an unknown gunman fired shots toward the local military headquarters. When the Mancía family appealed to the Minister of the Interior, Villeda fought back and involved the more powerful Santa Ana Departmental military Commandant. This conflict was not about a young boy shooting at a military building, but was rooted in power struggles over property.

The Mancía family had repeatedly used their political connections to advance to the family's economic enterprises, and the Commandant wanted to check their influence. In 1933, the Minister of the Interior gave local merchant don Jorge Morales an exclusive

concession to sell merchandise on the road to Lake Coatepeque. When Morales, with the local Commandant's assistance, forced the roadside merchants to remove their stalls, the three younger Mancía brothers resisted relocation. Family patriarch and then-mayor Francisco Mancía refused to enforce what Morales believed to be his exclusive rights.[324] This was not the first time that the local family had used their connections to coerce other residents. After local resident Felipe Ayala refused to sell some bulls to Francisco, local police arrested Ayala or being drunk and disorderly in Mancía's cantina. The Commandant of El Congo believed that he had the power and authority to prevent the family from taking more actions like those above.

By requesting assistance from the government in order to protect their husbands and sons, the women of the family also played an important role. When the Mancía women requested support from the Departmental Governor, they listed their husbands' apolitical history, honorable and hard work, "religious" payment of taxes, and personal, patriotic and voluntary service to the government in times of emergency. Reflecting a longstanding tradition in El Salvador of using the most humble members to submit denunciations, this appeal was designed to elicit sympathy and evoke genuine need.[325] Defending their honor, the Mancía women emphasized their husbands' hard work, while the soldiers disdainfully described Rafael as a young son of the rich to discredit him in

[324] Claiming that the roadside merchants were in danger of being hurt by the considerable number of vehicles or perhaps themselves causing an automobile wreck, Morales framed his request for exclusive rights to sell wares (by requesting local agents to physically remove the competition) on the road to Lake Coatepeque in terms of public safety. "Comandante Departamental de Santa Ana al Ministro de Guerra," *Aviación y Marina* (10 October 1933) AGN, FG, 1933, Box 6, Folder "Queja contra el Comandante Local de "el Congo."

The surge in automobile purchases led to many accidents and the press and government officials widely discussed and debated the menace to public order and safety.

[325] Ching, "Clientelism," 111.

the eyes of military compatriots.[326] In addition to belittling Rafael as a spoiled brat, National Guard soldiers also publicly associated the family with clandestine profits and immoral activities. Repeatedly noting that the elder Mrs. Mancía produced moonshine, and that the senior Francisco sold home-brewed corn-beer (*chicha*) when he was mayor, the Guard hoped to counter the family's claims to honor.[327] Despite the officers' attitudes, local oligarchs like the Mancías retained some local economic power and authority, even as Martínez reduced their political influence.

As General Martínez established firm authority and greater personal control of the state in the mid-1930s, local oligarchs still retained economic and political power and influence. For example in 1938, the government ordered a police inspector to determine the National Guard's jurisdiction within a large property. The local Guard commander argued that, to ensure that local fishermen obeyed the laws, he had jurisdiction to enter doña Leonora Melendez de Quiñonez Molina's hacienda, *San Juan del Gozo*. The inspector determined that the Guard did not have that authority. Anticipating an appeal, he added that the hacienda's resident laborers and temporary workers were well-treated. Painting a near idyllic picture of the hacienda's working conditions, the inspector defended oligarchic self-rule and self-policing on the remote and well-managed plantation.[328]

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[326] There is no direct evidence that any of the Mancía males or females were literate (although they could certainly sign their names without difficulty) and the three younger Mancía wives, Isabel, Jesús and Lucía de Mancía, used a notary to type the petition to the Departmental Political Governor. "Isabel Vásquez de Mancía, Jesús C. de Mancía y Lucía González de Mancía al Señor Gobernador Político Departamental," 18 Sep 1933, AGN, FG, 1933, Box 6, Folder "Queja contra el Comandante Local de "el Congo"".

[327] Rafael was disdainfully described as an "hijo de rico [y] jovencito," to discredit him in the eyes of military compatriots.

[328] "Investigación sobre haber comprobado que en la hacienda *San Juan del Gozo* de doña Leonora Melendez de Quiñonez…" AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-11.

When civilian and military appointees frequently clashed, they particularly struggled over the supervision and maintenance of the local jails, the administration repeatedly favored regional military commanders over civilian municipal officials. In 1932, Minister of Justice General Andrés Menéndez approved Ahuachapán Departmental Commandant Joaquín Valdéz's request that the state transport the prisoners of the city jail to the Penitentiary of Santa Ana during repairs.[329] Menéndez also ordered that San Francisco Gotera's mayor (*alcalde*) pay the rent on the combination governmental and jail complex during repairs as Morazán Departmental Commandant Juan Vidal requested.[330] As these conflicts developed, the military officers shifted the burden of prison upkeep and maintenance to civilian officials even though they did not want to surrender ultimate authority.

In 1933, when Cuscatlán Departmental Commandant, General Carlos Barraza Menéndez mediated a conflict between the local Commandant and mayor of Suchitoto city, he privileged the military officers. Barraza reported that Commandant José María Montalvo was arguing with the municipal mayor over who paid for and led the supervision of inmates at the local jail. Arguing that the civilian prison warden should reside in the jail as the regulations dictated, the local Commandant said the mayor should supply the prison guards, and not use military subordinates from the barracks.[331] Responding that military troops should supply the manpower, and be ultimately responsible for the prisoners, the mayor acknowledged that someone was supposed to

[329] "Ahuachapan Departmental Commandant Joaquín Valdéz to Minister of Justice," 6 October 1932, AGN, FG, 1932, Unclassified box 1.

[330] "Morazán Departmental Comandant Juan Vidal to Mnister of Justice," 29 November 1932, AGN, FG, Unclassified box 1.

[331] *Ley Reglamentaria de Carceles* in Rafael Barraza R, *Nueva Recopilación de Leyes Administrativas* vol IV (San Salvador, ES: Centro Editorial Helios, 1929).

supervise the jails, simply not him.[332] When Liberals wrote the 1912 Law for Jail Supervision, they intended to defend civilian political control from military usurpation, but military authorities reinterpreted the legislation. Praetorian authorities wanted municipal officials to pay for the jails and their management, and yet maintain their authority over all the security forces.

The conflict was more contentious than might be expected because some officers illegally used inmate labor. Mayor Manuel Antonio Orellana argued that Departmental Commandant Barraza Menéndez did not provide soldiers when the inmates were assigned to public works, but gladly transported and supervised their work on the military lands and the officers' homes.[333] Mayor-elect and District Boss don Eduardo Molina also petitioned to the Minister of the Interior to continue the practice of inmate vigilance by the soldiers of the regiment.[334] The officers clearly believed that they held a privileged position and acted with impunity.

Resenting resistance from civilian politicians and bureaucrats at various levels, whether they were mayors, judges or wardens, military officers believed that these men prevented more effective governance. This can be seen in a drawn-out conflict over the Suchitoto jails two years later. When local civilian authorities blamed Lt. Colonel José María Montalvo, Suchitoto local military commandant, for responding poorly to a prison break in 1935, he called upon his political allies including the Departmental Governor, the Judge of First Instance, the Regiment Commander and even Supreme Court President Dr. Gómez Zarate. Blaming the prison warden, Montalvo argued that Peña slept in his

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[332] "Gen Miguel Mora Castro to Minister of Government," 14 October 1933, AGN, FG, Box 1.

[333] "Alcalde Manuel Antonio Orellana to Gobernador Departamental Henríquez," 29 September 1933, AGN, FG, 1933, Box 6.

[334] "Alcalde y Jefe del Distrito don Eduardo Molina a Ministro de Gobernación," 6 September 1933, AGN, FG, 1933, Box 6.

shoemakers' shop against the legal requirements, and embezzled state funds earmarked for the prisoner food.[335] Holding a prominent position in the Martínez government and having powerful friends, Montalvo successfully defended himself, and concluded that civilian authorities were ultimately to blame for his troubles. Arguing that the local courts inevitably blamed the military for any disorders that occurred, General Barraza agreed with his military compatriot, and added that in his "vast experience" there was no way to maintain order, and fully defend the military from the "constant threat of judges and pen-pushers."[336]

The clashes between prison warden Peña and Mayor Orellana on one side and Lt. Colonel Montalvo and Barraza on the other clearly revealed the fissures between praetorian and civilian officials. In both instances, military officers revealed their assumptions and prejudices towards non-military authorities. Believing that civilians interfered with defending the social order, officers agreed that their training, knowledge and decisions were superior. In their vision of governance, civilians worked for and obeyed military officers.

The leaders of the *martinato* never successfully controlled the conflicts between and among different members of the regime, and so battles over government resources remained frequent and required repeated central government intervention. The press reported in December 1935 that the Santa Ana Departmental Governor ordered the Departmental Commandant and local commissioners to cooperate with municipal

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[335] "No hay que confundir a un comandante local con un comandante de guardia," *Diario Latino* (3 May 1935); "El Colonel Montalvo sigue explicando la fuga de unos reos,de la carcel de Suchitoto," *Diario Latino* (29 May 1935).

[336] "Amenazo constante de los Jueces y los tinterillos." In "Comandante Departamental de Cuscatlán to Ministro de Guerra Salvador Castaneda Castro," 19 June 1933, AGN, FG, 1933, Box 2 "Municipales," Folder "San Salvador, Ministerio de Justicia"

authorities in all "works of progress" or public works.[337] This suggests that the departmental and municipal authorities clashed over state funds. These types of struggles were common and the central government acted as mediator and arbiter between the competing clientelistic blocks.

Although he still publicly defended social reforms, Martínez rarely supported reformism after 1935, therefore judges and other officials appealed to the regime emphasizing threats to order. Atiquizaya, Santa Ana first district court judge M. de J. Mena argued that the jails were loci of disease, but ultimately cited the administrative problems resulting from the mixing of convicts with those who were arrested but awaiting trial.[338] Similarly, the first district judge of Suchitoto, Santa Ana focused on the threats to order given the insecurity of the jails and repeated jailbreaks.[339] Hoping that they might have better success appealing to new political representatives about jail improvements, judges particularly pressed for improvements after municipal and legislative elections. After 1935, this strategy was less successful as most appointees knew that Martínez was not serious about jail or penitentiary reform and maintenance.

After the fall of Martínez, military officials faced renewed conflicts over guarding prisoners and jail upkeep as local authorities initially responded to the national government's rhetoric regarding prison reform. For example, in 1946, Cuscatlán Political Governor Jose M. Cruz N. defended himself against a complaint by Mayor Raúl Antonio Echeverría. Arguing that the health of the many prisoners was endangered by the

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[337] "J.F.S to U.S. Secretary of State," "Lo que dicen los periodicos," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/2109 (28 October 1944).

[338] "Juez de 1a instancia de Atiquizaya, Santa Ana, M de J. Mena al Ministerio de Justicia," 13 February 1935, AGN, FG, 1935, Box 2.

[339] "Juez de 1a instancia de Suchitoto, Santa Ana, Cruz Callejas a Ministerio de Justicia," 13 February 1935, AGN, FG, 1935, Box 2.

rainwater that seeped into the jails, Echeverría asked the Ministry of Justice for funds to repair the local jails. Because of a lack of assistance from superiors, notably Cruz, the mayor said he was unable to properly maintain the local jails, and added that the Salvadoran prison system was far inferior what national leaders proposed. The departmental governor defended his role by arguing that funds were redirected to other departments even as the mayor hoped to reap benefits from the military's claims to improve the prison system. [340]

When the PRUD took power, they also faced similar jurisdictional issues, but began what seemed to be substantive improvements and appointed a Director of Prisons and created a formal body of prison guards in 1951. When the prison system was significantly expanded and somewhat overhauled, they believed they received U.S. funds and guidance. Even after these reforms many jurisdictional problems remained. For instance, until 1952, the three central penitentiaries and the twenty-eight Departmental public jails were supervised by the Ministry of Justice and watched over by the warden during daytime hours, 6:00am until 6:00pm, but then turned over to the Ministry of Defense and the commandant of the local barracks from 6:00pm until 6:00am. Ostensibly a division of labor designed to take advantage of limited manpower in both the ministries of defense and justice, the lacks of a central authority decreased the quality of jail supervision. The prison guards were also sometimes called in by local officials to perform policing duties, despite legal proscriptions against this practice.[341] The prison

[340] "Cuscatlán Gobernador Político Jose M. Cruz N. al Ministro del Interior, J. Benjamin Escobar," (10 May 1946) *Ministerio del Interior: Notas y Acuerdos 1946*, vol. 5, *Notas Dirigidas a la Ministerio de la Relaciones Exteriores y la Justicia*, AGN, FG.

[341] Frank Loveland, "Informe sobre el system carcelario de la República de El Salvador," in Roberto E Canessa, *Memoria de los Actos del Poder Ejecutivo en el Ramo de Justicia 1952-1953*.

system remained poorly managed and supervised through the 1950s, and contemporary Salvadorans faced terrible prison conditions.[342]

Even as Colonels Osorio and Lemus appointed many more civilians to high positions of power, many officers still believed their authority was supreme, and expected obedience from civilians in much the same way they did from their subordinates in the barracks. This was especially true of those in the lower ranks of local government. For example, La Libertad Dept. Governor Lt. Col. Juan Ramón Munés was angered when El Zunzón local commissioner Rogelio Castillo did not assist the local National Guard soldiers with prisoner transport. The Guard captured a prisoner and the Governor ordered Castillo to take him to a prison in the town of Tamanique, but the commissioner refused, arguing that was performing a task for the mayor. Munés asserted that orders to assist the National Guard supersede all others, including those of the mayor.[343] Having a very personal and clear understanding of the command structure and priorities, Munés believed military officers must be obeyed over civilian officials.

The members of the various security forces at times jostled for power, but more often cooperated with each other to the chagrin of civilian officials. The officers shared a martial culture, social networks, and political ambitions as well as a disdain for non-military political leaders. Mayor of Jucuarán, Usulután José Efrain Martínez accused the town's police chief and National Guard commandant of conspiring against his authority

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[342] The vast numbers of prisoners awaiting trial prevents the proper functioning of the criminal justice system. For an analysis of the contemporary situation, see Mauricio Duce and Rogelio Pérez P, "Citizen Security and Reform of the Criminal Justice System in Latin America," in Hugo Früling, Joseph Tulchin, and Heather Golding, eds. *Crime and Violence in Latin America: Citizen Security, Democracy and the State* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). For an analysis of challenges to building the rule of law in post-war El Salvador see Margaret Popkin, *Peace without Justice: Obstacles to Building the Rule of Law in El Salvador* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University, 2000).

[343] "La Libertad gobernador departamental Lt. Col. Juan Ramón Munés al Ministerio del Interior José Alberto Díaz," (5 June 1956) *Notas y Acuerdos 1956*, vol. 5, *Notas Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

in 1956. When appealing to the civilian Departmental Governor José de al Paz Gavidia, Mayor Martínez argued that the military had endangered his daughter by failing to help him maintain the local PRUD headquarters. According to the mayor, she played in the increasingly dilapidated building during Party meetings, along with other children. In addition, the police chief's wife usurped his authority and effectively ruled over the community with the help of the local commandant, and the military men had neglected the telegraph station. Martínez thus used his political loyalty, his role as a father, the improper role of a now-powerful woman, and collusion, corruption and neglect within the ranks to buttress his case.[344] Although the Departmental Governor forwarded the appeal to Interior Minister Díaz, nothing was done to curb the power of the military, and officers abused their power and authority under the PRUD.

Because officers frequently acted with impunity, local officials asked the national government to protect them, and to discipline the guilty parties. San Luis Reina mayor Santiago Ramos and the town's *síndico* Napoleón Velásquez, for instance, asked Interior Minister Rivas Palacios to protect them against the commandant, José Francisco Jimenez, who had threatened the mayor and his subordinates. These men did not engage in the usual character assassination that was common in these attacks, but simply defended themselves as "honorable workers," and the town's primary political figures. Arguing that they wanted to appeal on record, so that if anything happened to them the authorities

[344] "Jucuarán, Usulután alcalde José Efrain Martínez al Gobernador Departamental José de al Paz Gavidia," (6 June 1956), *Notas y Acuerdos 1956*, vol. 5, *Notas Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG

would investigate Jimenez, Ramos and Velásquez, the officials emphasized feeling physically endangered.[345]

In another frequent act of impunity, soldiers used their connections to escape convictions when they committed crimes. When Chirilagua mayor Celestino Vásquez denounced local commandant Isabel Campos Otelo for physically abusing a local woman named Dora Guzmán in 1956, he asserted that this was not Campos' first crime. Vásquez added this detail because despite the justice of the peace's sentence, the commandant remained at liberty, and so he hoped that the Minister of the Interior might force Otelo to surrender.[346] Despite the appeals, Otelo's military superiors protected him from civilian justice. A week later, the mayor tried again, and added that the Commandant was a habitual drunk and thief and molested honorable citizens.[347] None of these complaints could force the army to surrender Otelo. The military high command often disciplined soldiers, especially the rank-and-file, but the officers protected their own, and themselves.[348] This prevented meaningful reform of the security forces and enabled officers to act without fear of prosecution.

I. Conclusions

The *martinato* initially suffered from political and economic conflicts resulting from the uncertainty regarding the direction and vision of the new regime. Martínez had

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[345] "San Luis Reina, San Miguel alcalde Santiago Ramos y síndico Napoleón Velásquez a Ministro del Interior Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (21 January 1958) *Notas y Acuerdos 1958*, vol. 4, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

[346] "Chirilagua, San Miguel alcalde Celestino Vásquez al Ministro del Interior Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (2 October 1956) *Notas y Acuerdos 1956*, vol. 5, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

[347] "Chirilagua, San Miguel alcalde Celestino Vásquez al Ministro del Interior Dr. Luis Rivas Palacios," (11 October 1956) *Notas y Acuerdos 1956*, vol. 5, *Notas al Ministerio de Defensa*, AGN, FG.

[348] The newspapers frequently reported when the military disciplined rank-and-file soldiers. See examples in *El Día*, and *Diario Latino*.

publicly advocated a reformist plan of action in the 1920s and was also a member of Araujo's Labor Party. The many groups who sought to gain from the change in administration jostled for power but it soon became clear that the longstanding patron-client system would survive, that military officers would be favored over civilian administrators, that the urban reformist vision of the previous regime would be largely reversed and that the rural agrarian reform and educational measures would be limited and half-hearted. The military's policies of repression and militarization ultimately increased the level and tenor of opposition. The *martinato*'s militarization and centralization helped galvanize the multi-class movement against the dictator and they toppled his regime in 1944.

Claiming to reject the weaknesses of the Liberals, but also Martínez' personal dictatorship, PRUD leaders championed a Revolutionary path that limited participation but prevented social chaos. As they repressed students, intellectuals and other critics, Osorio and Lemus argued that they prevented a Communist revolt like that of 1932 as well as oligarchic rule. In addition, they asserted that instead of building a dictatorship like that of Martínez, they blazed an independent path, supported by the U.S., and delivering progress. Since they manipulated the press, the PRUD promoted their image of power and security.

Praetorian repression and censorship helped build and mobilize the movement that toppled the regime. Although the PRUD dispensed favors and successfully projected their ideology into the public sphere, they nonetheless became vulnerable when coffee prices dropped and disorder reigned. Opponents overthrew the Revolutionary Party when

they were no longer able to distinguish themselves from Araujo and Martínez, but the military retained political power into the 1960s.

Three

Selling the Regime: Social Justice and Police Reforms

A. Introduction

All of the Salvadoran military regimes relied heavily on force and violence, manipulation and lies, but nonetheless employed reforms to limit popular unrest, and rewarded political and economic clients. By rewarding supporters and providing public benefits, they maintained control of the national government between 1931 and 1960. The leaders of the *martinato* and the Revolutionary governments differed, but they were all committed to agricultural development, maintaining the urban social order, encouraging trade with the U.S., and engaging the Cold War anti-Communist struggle. All of the military governments promoted land redistribution in order to make the ground less fertile for Leftist subversion.

The military regimes differed in their specific language and emphasis, but aggressively if largely rhetorically, supported rural social justice to combat Communism. General Martínez, of course, repressed the 1932 peasant rebellion and killed about 10,000 Salvadorans. Recognizing that rural discontent was at the heart of the revolt, and that radical agitators found a receptive audience, the general responded by promoting agrarian reform. Throughout the 1930s, his regime widely-touted a limited land redistribution that successfully convinced many peasants that the military worked to improve rural life. A system of rural banks designed to provide low-interest loans to smallholders in the 1940s less effectively built peasant support because the opposition took control of the institutions. Hoping that ties to the U.S. could bring political, but also economic

advantages, Hernandez Martínez increased trade with FDR's government. Martínez wanted to get economic assistance as had Nicaragua's Somoza family, the Dominican Republic's Rafael Trujillo, Haiti's Duvalier family or Cuba's Fulgencio Batista. By promoting the "Good Neighbor Policy," Roosevelt's state department used development funds hoping to build goodwill in Latin America, and these programs indeed brought some tangible benefits to rural populations.

Believing that land reform in combination with public health programs, would appease the rural public, Revolutionary Party leaders sought international assistance for these projects. Although newspapers frequently reported the PRUDs land sales and small-scale land redistribution, unlike the *martinato*, Colonels Osorio and Lemus more often emphasized large development projects. They laid the foundation for the major agricultural projects of the 1960s. Despite the sometimes very real improvement in rural conditions, ultimately, none of these regimes substantively reformed land tenure patterns.

The *martinato* and the PRUD also justified their U.S. ties by promoting their anti-Communist campaigns. Fearing that Guatemalan Presidents Arévalo and Arbenz (1944-54) would allow or encourage Communists to infiltrate El Salvador, presidents Osorio and Lemus collaborated with U.S. and international organizations to provide social services. Recognizing that these institutions provided a greater amount of development and public health dollars than available before World War II, the PRUD used foreign resources and took credit for the benefits. Osorio and Lemus provided medicine, training, and public health programs to the rural and urban poor, and some Salvadorans improved their health care and disease prevention strategies.

Believing in the capabilities and good intentions of the military governments, U.S. officials were glad to politically and economically support presidents Martínez, Osorio and Lemus. Unlike more openly self-serving dictators like Nicaragua's Somoza the Salvadoran military rulers convinced U.S. ambassadors, as they did with some of the local public, that they were attempting to rule in the best interests of the majority. White acknowledging that the small country faced deep problem, they primarily blamed local oligarchs who prevented greater development and improvements. U.S. ambassadors agreed with the military's self-assessment.

Recognizing that they needed the urban police forces to control the cities and wanted public cooperation, the military publicly reorganized the security forces and touted their police reforms. They sought to improve the effectiveness of the rank and file police officers, but primarily focused on convincing the public to cooperate with the security forces. Emphasizing the military's good will and responsiveness, the *martinato* and PRUD publicized their improvements. Intending to use the barracks as schools for citizenship, and transform the peasant-soldiers into indoctrinated Salvadorans, the Revolutionary Party taught the men to read. In order to convince Salvadorans that they no longer tolerated impunity, the newspapers printed extended articles describing how the regimes prosecuted agents that violated the law or abused local residents. Widely touted and published, the writings regarding the reforms and "purges" nevertheless had little effect on the public consciousness.

The military leadership employed propaganda, favors or rewards, and limited reforms to build support. This political strategy was remarkably successful. General Martínez' success and longevity was built, in part, on integrating popular groups that

included indigenous peasants. Facing demographic growth, urbanization and organized popular discontent, the PRUD promised to maintain social order and balance of the needs of Salvadorans. Despite their ability to convince a portion of the public to support the military government, the regimes could never make Salvadorans trust the security forces. Nevertheless, the military combined alliances, favors and reforms to build non-participatory and repressive regimes that had somelevel of popular support.

B Peasants for Martínez

Salvadoran political leaders from General Martínez to Colonel Lemus used policies and propaganda to co-opt peasants and convince them of the military's goodwill. The military argued that they sought to improve the lives of the majority, but faced the reactionary oligarchy's failures and intransigence. Salvadoran reality contradicted these claims as the military never took aggressive action t oredistribute the lands of the oligrchy, but the propaganda and reforms convinced some peasants to support, or ate least not oppose the regimes.

The military government had controlled the government for less than two months when military leaders faced a popular rebellion. Amidst uncertainty over whether the military government effectively controlled the nation, General Martínez used the 1932 revolt to present himself as the country's savior. On 20 January, after an urban coup attempt was discovered and dismembered, the leaders of the *martinato* installed a state of siege. Several days later, the newspapers reported that "Communist hordes" had risen up in various regions and that the government had extended martial law to the entire country. The regime wanted to report a severe threat, but also reassure the public that

there was no ultimate danger. *El Día*, for example, reported that the government was in control of even the smallest and most remote areas.[349] Days after the revolt, the newspaper reported that the Communists were fleeing into the mountains.[350] Editors balanced the sensationalism of the horrors of the revolt with assurances to the public that the worst had passed.

To convince the public that he could maintain the social and political order after the rebellion, General Martínez defended the military's mass executions and their ability to properly dispose of the bodies. Within days, the military had prevented the government's collapse, but continued to murder Salvadorans for several weeks. The exact number killed is unclear, as discussed in chapter one, but beyond doubt is that the thousands of dead bodies presented the *martinato* with a serious public health crisis.[351] The Director of Public Health ordered the bodies of Communist rebels burned "to prevent epidemics."[352] The government provided threats and reassurances in public releases despite the disturbing images of scores of burning bodies. The regime simultaneously reminded the public of the power and authority of the national government, their methods of dealing with dissent, and of their attempts to maintain the health and safety of loyal citizens.

Emphasizing the regime's popular support, the newspapers reported elite Salvadorans' financial contributions to the repressive effort.[353] The majority of wealthy and middle-class Salvadorans contributed remarkably small sums, frequently only 5

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[349] "Hordas comunistas se han levantado en armas, atacando algunos pueblos de 3 departamentos de la republica," *El Día* (15 January 1932).

[350] "Tranquilidad vuelve a reinar en todo la republica," *El Día* (26 January 1932).

[351] There are popular and fictionalized accounts of the impact of the thousands of dead bodies on the daily lives of Salvadorans. For a particularly poignant fictional testimony see D.J. Flakoll and Claribel Alegría, *Cenizas de Izalco* (San José, Costa Rica: EDUCA, 1982).

[352] "Se ha ordenado la incineracion de cadavers," *El Día* (27 January 1932).

[353] For example, "Los comunistas huyen en todos los frentes," *El Tiempo* (1 February1932).

colones. The regime intended the published list to shame the well-heeled into donating more money, or to give them an opportunity to show off their largesse, and supposedly their patriotism.[354] The government used these public reports to keep track of prominent citizens who remained loyal, and to encourage others to do the same. Failing to substantively contribute to the government or even the social welfare and charitable efforts organized by religious groups, elites instead waited to see what action the military would take in the midst of a depression, and in the wake of a massive revolt.[355]

Projecting an image of social order and political control in local newspapers, Salvadoran military leaders also distanced themselves from the policies of Liberal ex-president Arturo Araujo. Coffee oligarchs, bankers, merchants, professionals and military officers had largely abandoned Araujo and his Labor Party in late-1931, and gave the military leadership an opportunity to contrast himself with the "failed" Liberal president. The contending groups, after all, desired power within the administration, or in an entirely new one. The editors of *El Día* had opposed the old regime and printed highly critical articles about the administration. Now supporting Martínez, they printed detailed accounts of Araujo's fall, critiqued his policies, and eulogized the new government.[356] Catholic daily *El Tiempo* also criticized the ex-president and supported the new government, although with less enthusiasm and total volume.[357] *El Tiempo*'s editors

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[354]See, for example, "Más contribuciones para la campaña contra el comunismo," *El Tiempo* (29 January 1932) and "Lista de los contribuyentes para el sostenimiento de los volunatrios que prestan ayuda al gobierno," *El Día* (8 February 1932).

[355] "Cocinas de A.C. carecen de fondos," *El Tiempo* (1 febrero 1932).

[356] Within the space of a few days, the paper discussed Araujo's international political isolation in "El señor Araujo es recibido con frialdad en Guatemala," *El Día* (7 December 1931), reported that military mobilizations ended due to the country's tranquility in "La situacion entrando poco a poco a la normalidad," (8 December 1931), and critiqued Araujo's policies in "contra el ex-presidente Araujo," *El Día* (10 December 1931).

[357] See for example the articles listed below. In addition the *El Tiempo* printed articles regarding breaking news (*Ultimos sucesos*) throughout the week beginning Monday 25 January and published various

were wary of Martínez' theosophist beliefs, but the capital's other newspapers made a point of printing positive messages in the wake of the peasant revolt and repression.

Although they rejected Araujo in the newspapers, the *martinato*'s leaders continued many Liberal policies and strategies, like using civilian collaborators for political support. For instance, Martínez' national and municipal level officials wanted to build a paramilitary force like the *Liga Roja*, and publicly lauded citizens who supported the organization.[358] In December 1931, the regime began to organize citizens into a Civic Guard (*Guardia Civica*), or the "Regular Army of the Public Order," as one effusive author described the body.[359] The composition of the units varied, and the volunteers ranged from elite men, to shopkeepers, to prominent artisans. Despite their quasi-paramilitary nature, the Civic Guards did not participate in the 1932 repression.[360] In fact, the authorities chastised these irregulars for firing their weapons unnecessarily and frightening the public.[361] Citizens occasionally complained against these civilian units, but there is no evidence of systematic violence, or for that matter, concerted popular resistance.[362]

Lacking enough volunteers, the military government never organized the Civic Guards into a successful paramilitary organization. Hoping to use the guards for propaganda after 1932, the governors of San Salvador and Sonsonate asked local leaders to combine civilian patrols with rural education projects. These leaders hoped that the

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editorials on the evils of Communism and the many volunteers that signed up in places like Sensuntepeque (30 Jan 1932) and Santa Tecla (3 February 1932) and even noted that the postal service was not disrupted in Sonsonate (4 February 1932).

[358] "Un batallón de voluntaries en Sensuntepeque," *El Tiempo* (30 January 1932).

[359] "La guardia civil de El Salvador," *El Día* (28 January 1932).

[360] Anderson, *Matanza*, 161.

[361] "Ultimos datos al margen de las actividades comunistas," *El Día* (29 January 1932).

[362] The newspapers occasionally reported on these alleged abuses. The newspaper Patria was among the more vocal periodicals. See *Patria* (8 November 1934) as noted in "Lo que dicen los diarios," AGN, FG, 1934, Box 1.

Guards would mobilize the citizenry and balance repression with social action.[363] Local political and military officials could not comply, however. For instance, arguing that municipal governments did not have the manpower to obey the orders of the Military Commandant, the Governor of Morazán appealed to the Interior Minister. He complained that he had to recruit men over 40 years old, because of pressure to organize civilian squadrons.[364] Local authorities requested money from the national government to equip the paramilitaries, but intending to acquire inexpensive surveillance, the regime rarely honored these requests.[365]

By the mid-1930s, the *Guardia Civica* had become social clubs for middle- and upper-class men. They were more akin to religious confraternities or *hermandades* than the civilian auxiliaries, or *rondas campesinas* of Guatemala or Peru.[366] Allowing members to freely travel around the country, Guards carried *carnets* or internal passports that differentiated them from poor Salvadorans who faced travel restrictions. Membership, however, provided few other benefits and so the groups remained small and parades were their main outlet.[367] In a final attempt to revive the moribund organization, the newspapers reported in July 1935 that the government had reorganized the *Guardia*

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[363] "Gobernador Politico de Sonsonate to Ministro de Gobernación," 27 April 1932 and "J.A Castro Gobernador de San Salvador to Ministro de Gobernación," AGN, FG, 1932, Box 1 "Departamental," Folder "Informes-las gobernaciones."

[364] "Brigadier Gobernador Departamental Antonio Martínez al Ministro de Gobernación," 20 Jan 1933, AGN, FG, 1933 Box 4.

[365] In Chalatenango, municipal authorities asked for 2,000 *colones* for the Committees of Public Order (*Comités de Orden Público*) to "combat communism" but also undermined their argument and argued or bragged that the "pueblo Chalateco" had not been affected by subversive doctrines. "Chalatenango," (26 April 1932), AGN, FG, 1932, Box 1, "Gobernación Político Departamental," Folder "Informe: Las Gobernaciones."

[366] For a comparison of the legacy of paramilitary civilian self-defense in Peru and Guatemala see Mario Fumerton and Simone Remijnse, "Civil Defense Forces: Peru's Comités de Autodefense Civil and Guatemala's Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil in Comparative Perspective," in Kees Koonings and Krujit, *Armed*, 52-72.

[367] "Secretario del Consejo Departamental de la Asociacion Cívica Salvadoreña al Ministro de Gobernación Castaneda Castro," AGN, FG, 1933, Box 6, "Untitled Box," Folder "Casa Presidencial 1933."

Civica with a military structure and greater training. They also reported that the members would travel around the country, but the communiqués reflected desires and intent much more than reality.[368]

Like Liberal social progressives and social Catholics, the leaders of the *martinato*, believed that social science could improve the nation and address the needs of the peasantry and indigenous Salvadorans. One example of these twin goals is the Institute for Social Reform. Originally presented in the newspaper *El Día*, the author Arístides, argued that the state should mediate conflict between capital and labor. In the solid nineteenth-century Jeffersonian and social Catholic traditions that idealized the small, independent farmer, Arístides proposed land redistribution to increase the number of small property holders and prevent social revolution. He asked the landowners to provide better food, housing and health care to the workers.[369] Arístides later argued that the Institute would examine industrial and rural labor relations, labor legislation, and the moral and intellectual health of workers in order to neutralize social conflict.[370] Manuel Castro Ramirez published a newspaper entitled *El Sol* that outlined the project.[371]

The *martinato* also used social science to justify collecting information about local affairs. Wanting specifics regarding the nation's departments, counties, hamlets, and plantations, the leaders of the *martinato* requested information regarding rural social conditions in order to implement the Institute.[372] Arguing that the government would

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[368] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0276 (July 1935).

[369] "Frente a la cuestión social" was published in four parts from 12-15 January 1932.

[370] "El Instituto de Reformas Sociales," *El Día* (15 February 1932).

[371] "El Instituto de Reformas Sociales," *El Día* (12 March 1932).

[372] "Interesante circular que ha girado el ministerio de gobernación," *El Día* (12 March 1932). The newspapers' correspondent Ursus lauded the administration's efforts in the first four months and particularly emphasized General Salvador Castañeda Castro's request for information regarding social

improve workers living conditions and redistribute underutilized or fallow lands, the Minister of Government requested data from Sonsonate Department in March 1935. Although it is unclear how many counties throughout the country responded, and what the ministry did to coerce recalcitrant officials, various mayoralties in Sonsonate provided information. Although the replies varied in style and degree of detail, they still provided the central government with updated political and economic information.[373] The military actually used some of this information to redistribute land.

Responding to the popular unrest and economic distress of agricultural workers, Martínez distributed land from several haciendas over the next decade. Beginning with the state-owned *Hacienda Santa Rosa,* the government distributed parcels of land. Sold below market value with credit from the national government, the small, two *manzana,* lots, went primarily to state employees and agricultural workers already working the land.[374] The regime continued this political favoritism or clientelism throughout the *martinato*.[375] Responding with rhetoric and action, the regime added to a public dialogue regarding how to deal with the "social question" of class conflict between capital and labor and redistributed land and protected workers.

To maximize the impact of the land reform on the hearts and minds of the public, the leaders of the *martinato* thoroughly publicized the redistributions.[376] The regime preceded land sales by printing peasant petitions, in order to appear responsive to popular needs. *Diario Latino,* for instance, published the appeals of Chiltiupan peasant appeals

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conditions and Dr. Peréz Menéndez's Association for the Study of Social Problems. "En corto tiempo, una gran labor," *El Día* (11 April 1932).

[373] The responses from the alcaldía de Acajutla, Nahuizalco, Izalco, San Julían, Cuinahuat and Sonsonate are in AGN, FG, 1935, Box 4.

[374] A manzana is approximately 0.7 hectares or 1.7 acres.

[375] "Lotificación de Hacienda Santa Rosa," *El Día* (12 January 1932).

[376] There are too many examples to cite but the regime publicized these actions exhaustively in *El Día*, the *Diario Latino, El Tiempo* and in the various *Memorias* of the ministries.

shortly before providing land in 1935, and Martínez personally answered these letters.[377] Despite the fact that the state provided lands mostly to public employees and clients of the regime, Martínez advertised the impact on the majority. This propaganda sufficiently obscured reality in the minds of enough peasants to establish support for the general, and goodwill towards the government.

Focusing on the people most intensely torn by the 1932 rebellion and repression, Martínez authorized a school for indigenous students in Sonsonate. Military authorities named it the Rafael Campo Rural School for the Indigenous, and situated it in the Experimental Agricultural Station. The school's namesake was Rafael Campo Pomar, who was a post-independence departmental governor, political boss, national hero and president (1856-58) from Sonsonate.[378] Military officers controlled the school's mission, but were supported by prominent academics. Lt. Colonel and Sonsonate Departmental Commander Marcelino Galdámez opened the school in July 1932, and Lt. Colonel Alfonso Muñoz, and Drs. Jose Brito and Rafael Vásquez ran the academy.[379] Arguing that the school was preparing poor peasants for "honest work," the military taught reading, natural sciences, moral and civic education, agriculture, animal husbandry, artisanry and manufactures, as well as sports and military exercises.[380]

Dailies like *El Día* and *El Tiempo* discussed the *Rafael Campo* School, in addition to the land distribution programs, to demonstrate how the government protected indigenous people and promoted their social, economic and cultural advancement. In order to publicize how the military was educating the indigenous peasants of the "war-

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[377] "Quieren tierras fertiles campesinos de Chiltiupan," *Diario Latino* (10 June 1935).
[378] See Ching, "From Clientelism," 160-61.
[379] "Se inauguro en Sonsonate la Escuela N. de Indígenas," *El Día* (10 August 1932); "Hoy comenzó a funcionar la Escuela de Indígenas," *El Día* (14 July 1932).
[380] "Escuela para niños de indígenas fundaran en Sonsonate," *El Día* (7 July 1932).

torn" region, the school also printed a small newsletter entitled "To the Top."[381] Showcasing the students' accomplishments, the paper nonetheless had a short life. The government replaced it in October 1933 with a periodical entitled "Impressions" that also represented the Assumption school for female orphans in Izalco.[382] Ironically, the officers and academics named a classroom in the school after Alberto Masferrer. Appropriating the famous journalist, author and social theorist as a national hero after his death, the military hoped to garner the legitimacy that his name engendered. The military supported the school hoping that the teachers would successfully re-program the children of the killed "Communists," and others from across the ravaged region. They used heavy-handed tactics to educate the children. Even against a surviving parent's wishes, the state forced children to attend the school. In one particular case, the officers argued that the youths would succumb to gambling and drinking if they weren't forcefully removed from their home village.[383] The press frequently reported on the school's success and the active propaganda campaign was designed to mask the coercion.

The president hoped that the combination of limited reform and voluminous propaganda would generate peasant support without creating an oligarchic backlash, and also protect his clients from local officials and elites. In order to retain native support, Martínez asserted that the 1932 repression was a unique and extraordinary event that had now ended, and that his regime would now protect the Indians into the future. The newspapers reported how the state prosecuted lawyers and bureaucrats who took

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[381] "La misión de la Escuela Nacl. de Indígenas," *El Día* (16 August 1932). The editors of the paper, *Hacia el Cumbre*, received free postage and tax breaks, as well as the publishers of a pamphlet entitled "Hermano campesino, no seas comunista," "Gobernador Politico de Sonsonate to Ministro de Gobernación," AGN, FG, 1932, Box 3, "Solicitaciones," Untitled Folder.

[382] Copy of *Surcos*, Año 1, No 1 (15 October 1933) in AGN, FG, 1934, Box 5. The new Director of the school was Jorge Ramirez Chulo.

[383] "Noticias de Juayúa," *El Día* (28 July 1932).

advantage of indigenous communities or exploited fears of Communism. Apparently, many "unscrupulous" government officials and other professionals used the panic following the massive repression to charge individual Indians in Sonsonate high prices to defend them against accusations of Communist activity.[384] Indians denounced these local officials for these and other crimes and abuses. For instance, Serantín Quiteño successfully prosecuted Izalco public officials who continued to collect funeral taxes from the indigenous families of murdered "Communists" against the wishes and legal proscriptions of the regime.[385] The government even responded when Indians complained that the local Commandant of Zaragoza physically abused local residents whom he accused of Communism.[386] Unlike the prosecutions of local officials, there is no evidence that the state did anything but reassign the military commandant.

Martínez also used the Moratorium Law, designed to prevent foreclosures during the temporary crisis of the Great Depression, to demonstrate his goodwill towards peasants. Protecting small farmers from forced sales, the law also regulated usury. The state encouraged municipal authorities to report on landowners that violated this law and charged excessive interest rates.[387] Martínez sold the Law as an effective measure to protect small and medium landowners and retain their political support.

In and effort to to improve relations between rural people and the security forces, in 1934 Martínez ordered the *Guardia Nacional* to stop indiscriminately arresting peasants carrying unsheathed machetes. The *martinato*'s rural Guard had detained and

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[384] "Un abogado y otro conocido señor en la carcel porque robaron a los indios de Sonsonate," *El Día* (27 August 1932); "Los indios de los pueblos estaban siendo explotados," *El Día* (1932).

[385] "Ya se encuentra en la carcel uno de los individuos denunciados por Serntín Quiteño," *El Día* (26 October 1932).

[386] "Denuncia contra un comandante," *El Día* (23 September 1932).

[387] "Informe cumpliendo la ley de Régimen Político," (26 April 1932), AGN, FG, 1932, Box 1, "Gobernación Politica: Departamental," Folder "Chalatenango."

disarmed poor peasants at will since January 1932, but now security forces could only do so now if the peasants actually committed a crime. Although security forces still abused peasants in more isolated cases, the *Guardia* arrested fewer peasants overall.[388] Encouraged by the policy shift, peasants defended themselves. The mayor (*alcalde*) of Izalco, for example continued to target native peasants and confiscate their arms. After the Indians petitioned the national government, the Sub-Secretary of the Interior told the municipal authorities to return the arms to peasants that used them for work.[389] The government had formally and publicly reversed their policy regarding machetes, and encouraged Indians to defend themselves within the laws. [390] Salvadoran peasants recognized that General Martínez' government, at least sometimes, defended them against abusive local officials.

Martínez continued to talk about social justice and boast of his administrations' achievements into the mid-1930s. Courting peasant support, Martínez emphasized his efforts to improve rural life in his 1934 presidential "campaign."[391] The National Party campaign platform emphasized institutions like Social Betterment, under which the regime distributed land and built cheap housing. [392] Arguing that his continued control

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[388] *Revista de la Guardia Nacional*. San Salvador, El Salvador (año 1, no 12: May 1935).

[389] "Sub-Secretario de Gobernación J. Lázaro Arévalo al Alcalde Municipal de Izalco don Manuel Vega Ruiz," (5 February 1934), AGN, FG, 1934, Box 7, "Gobernación 1934," Folder "Diligencias sobre averiguar acerca del decomiso de armas a varios nativos de Izalco."

[390] "Sonsonate Gobernador Político Departamental al Alcalde Municipal de Izalco don Manuel Vega Ruiz," (15 February 1934), AGN, FG, 1934, Box 7, "Gobernación 1934," Folder "Diligencias sobre averiguar acerca del decomiso de armas a varios nativos de Izalco."

[391] Jorge Cáceres used this language to describe the Revolution of 1948 but the ideology is pre-dated in a less extensive form under the martinato. Jorge Cáceres, "La revolución Salvadoreña de 1948: Un estudio sobre transformismo," in Jorge Cáceres, Rafael Guidos Bejar and Rafael Menjívar Larín, eds. *El Salvador: Una historia sin lecciones* (San José, Costa Rica: Ediciones FLACSO, 1988).

[392] Corrigan commented extensively on the campaign and lack thereof. He said that Martínez limited himself to meeting with prominent citizens in the major cities and conducting weekly radio talks, a sort of "fireside chat." "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 Aug. to 31 Aug. 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/66-G (4 Sep. 1934) , "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 Sep. to 30 Sep. 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/79-G (3 Oct 1934)

of the presidency would bring continued peace and prosperity or progress, General Martínez also promised penal and judicial reforms, and increased spending on public works.[393] After the campaign, he discussed improving the standard of living of the masses, building houses for workers, and providing land to farmers. The newspapers reported widely whenever a hacienda was purchased and the land redistributed.[394]

General Martínez continued to promote agrarian reforms and programs, even when he centralized power and consolidated one-man rule after 1939. For instance, he increased the state public works budget between 1942 and 1944 attempting to keep unemployment low.[395] In order to create a class of small independent farmers who would serve as political clients, Martínez funded a central cooperative bank and affiliated rural credit banks and credit cooperatives. Alfonso Rochac led the program, which provided storage, collateral, livestock, loans, and other advantages to rural farmers. By March 1943, the regime had established sixteen rural credit cooperatives, and thirty-nine by November.[396] In addition, Martínez supported programs to improve infant welfare and care, such as a national Pro-infant Center and Association, which held the First National Conference on Children in San Salvador. In support of the *martinato*'s policies, *Diario*

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and "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State, "General Conditions Report 1 Nov. to 30 Nov. 1934," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0386/115-G (11 December 1934).

[393] The Nationalist Party (*Partido Pro-Patria*) announced that they would maintain public order, reform labor, bank, sanitation, and judicial institutions, increase public works, make government, efficient, and reform the constitution. "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0707 (6 June 1934).

[394] For example the newspapers widely and positively discussed the purchase of the San Carlos Hacienda by Social Defense for a workers' colony. "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0276 (June 1935).

[395] "H.G. Ainsworth to U.S. Secretary of State: Financial Conditions Report," *National Archives*, RG 84, DF 800.0026/2 (3 January 1944).

[396] For a contemporary discussion of the credit cooperative movement by a U.S. official see "H.G. Ainswoth to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0679/70 (15 Mar. 1943). See also "ley de credito rural" in *Diario Oficial* (15 March 1943).

Latino and *Diario Nuevo* both reported on the government's efforts to train rural midwives and educate the public.[397]

Although Martínez never generated the level of peasant adulation garnered by dictators such as Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, he still had some rural support which puzzled the broad coalition of elite, middle class and working-class people that opposed the dictator in 1944.[398] Since they knew that regional landlords and military officers physically and psychologically abused peasants, the editors of the university newspaper *Opinion Estudiantíl* had a difficult time understanding their apparent admiration for Martínez. They admitted that they did not understand why peasants regaled the president with hails (*vives*) when he had been "their greatest enemy."[399] General Hernández Martínez successfully sold himself as a protector of the rural masses against the oligarchy and as a patron for indigenous and peasant communities.[400] The *martinato*'s highly publicized land distributions, rural schools and training programs for Indian youth convinced many of the regime's good intentions. Ultimately, this support could not save the regime when the urban opposition became stronger in 1944.

In his last months, attempting to appease increasingly vocal and aggressive urban groups, Martínez touted the country's industrial development. The newspapers in 1944 discussed plans for Social Betterment's textile factory in San Miguel, a modern penitentiary in San Vicente, and an electrification plant generated by damming the

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[397] This observation is based on examining the newspapers *Diario Latino* from September 1943 to March 1944 and *Diario Nuevo* from July 1943 to December 1943. For but a few examples see "Salas cunas en los sitios de trabajo," *Diario Nuevo* (28 August 1943); "Sala cuna Goldtree," *Diario Nuevo* (26 November 1943); "Nuevo grupo de parteras," *Diario Latino* (9 March 1944).

[398] See Turits, *Despotism*.

[399] "Justicia de Martínez in 1932," *Opinion Estudiantil* (8 July 1944).

[400] Erik Ching and Patricia Tilley have also explored how Martínez mobilized peasant and indigenous support. Ching and Tilley, Indians." Ching explores this issue further in his dissertation, "Clientilism."

Lempa River.[401] The editors also reported on planned day care centers for urban workers.[402] Emphasizing factories and improved working conditions, the dictator hoped to convince the public that he could successfully industrialize the nation and lead it to the future. A concerted urban-centered opposition did not believe that Martínez could fulfill his promises. They used propaganda to shatter the dictator's paternalistic image.

Employing images and words, the opposition convinced the urban public of the regime's failures. The editors of *Opinion* countered Martínez' popular mythology and argued that he had waged war against the peasantry throughout his reign. They discussed the 1932 massacre in great detail. Primarily read by an urban audience, their message was not disseminated to the peasantry but nevertheless, in 1944, President Martínez was forced out of the country.[403]

Selling Military Justice and Reactionary Oligarchs to the U.S.

Along with the peasantry, U.S. consular officers believed that Martínez improved the nation, and also blamed the landed oligarchs for the country's ills. Lamenting economic conditions and elites' half-hearted efforts at social improvement, *charge d'affairs* William Cochran nevertheless believed that Martínez had "an undoubted interest in the welfare of his people." He lauded the General's efforts to reform the financial system and improve social conditions through worker housing and land redistribution. He added that the government's actions were only "slow in action and

[401] Based on an examination of *La Nación* from January to April 1944. For but a couple of examples see "Industria de San Miguel," *La Nación* (13 January 1944) and "Electrificacion de Río Lempa," La Nación (9 March 1944).

[402] Based on the newspapers *Diario Latino* from September 1943 to March 1944 and *Diario Nuevo* from July 1943 to December 1943. For but a few examples see "Salas cunas en los sitios de trabajo," *Diario Nuevo* (28 August 1943); "Sala cuna Goldtree," *Diario Nuevo* (26 November 1943); "Nuevo grupo de parteras," *Diario Latino* (9 March 1944).

[403] Parkman, *Insurrection*, Ch. 6.

limited in scope," because funds were "necessarily limited." Maintaining a feudal system, the true culprits were the landowners.[404] Echoing Major Harris' assessment from six years prior, in 1937 Cochran compared the country to France before the Revolution. Arguing that Salvadoran elites shared a "great fear of an indescribable beast…called *el pueblo*," he nonetheless believed that the middle class-influenced military could move the country towards democracy.[405] Comparing El Salvador to a feudal state with "benighted, almost uncivilized peons" and an upper class that feared a re-enactment of the French Revolution, *charge d'affairs* Robert Frazer was even more convinced of the military government's desire to provide land, houses, and schools for poor Salvadorans.[406] Frazer believed that "the communist troubles of only eight years ago…[were] fresh in the Government's mind" and that Martínez believed subdivision of land was "one of the strongest…anti-communist influences."[407]

Although they believed that the military as an institution sought to improve Salvadoran society, U.S. diplomatic agents did not agree that all military officers supported social justice. For instance, the consular officials recognized that Colonel Osmín Aguirre de Salinas had a reputation for brutality. During his brief period of rule between October 1944 and September 1945, U.S. Ambassador Walter Thurston focused on Aguirre's Nazi and anti-democratic tendencies. Chief of police during *la matanza*, Aguirre was reportedly so brutal, so "famous for shooting workers and peasants," that President Martínez "called him to account for so many deaths." Thurston noted that Aguirre sent thousands of workers to a garrison known as 'El Sexto," where Salvadoran

[404] "F.P. Cochran to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0444/281 (16 Feb. 1937).
[405] "F.P. Cochran to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0444/975 (13 Mar. 1937).
[406] "R. Frazer to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0207/48 (25 Jan. 1938).
[407] "R. Frazer to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0262/989 (25 Feb. 1940).

soldiers machine-gunned them.[408] The report may exaggerate the number of people directly killed by Aguirre, but reflected popular opinion, and the general's role in the massacre. Recognizing the negative opinions of U.S. officials, Aguirre unsuccessfully defended himself by claiming to have followed the orders of Minister of War Colonel Joaquín Valdés, during the 1932 repression.[409] Despite the fact that Martínez was the president during the massacre, men like Thurston clearly believed that subordinates' decisions, and not orders from above, led to the excesses of *la matanza*.

Believing in Martínez' fundamental good intentions, U.S. ambassadors argued that the regime collapsed because economic and social reforms had generated a reactionary backlash. Simons argued that Martínez' economic reforms had begun a "complete change in the conception of credit, banking, and social service" and could collapse of "the whole privileged status of the old guard of money lenders and people who used to make a living out of the sweat of the workers…"[410] They asserted that coffee baron Dr. Carlos Menéndez Castro and other conservative members of the landed oligarchy supported Aguirre and wanted to reverse the reforms.[411] Once again, Martínez had effectively sold his regime. As had the Salvadoran peasantry, U.S. officials held an overly sanguine view of Martínez.

Colonels Osorio and Lemus also convinced U.S. officials that the intransigence of the landed oligarchy, as well as the limitations of the masses themselves, prevented the country's modernization and economic development. The consular members and

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[408] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.001/0513 (28 October 1944).

[409] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/2097 (23 October 1944).

[410] "Simons to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0173/2305 (30 December 1944).

[411] "H. Gardner Ainsworth to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0642/102 (14 April 1943).

ambassadors believed that Osorio and Lemus' projects were not always optimally designed and implemented, but that the officers truly believed in the welfare of their citizens. For instance, Ambassador Kalijarvi argued in 1958 that there was

> little doubt of the sincerity of Lemus' desire to improve [the] living standards of and enact progressive social legislation for the betterment of both the agricultural and industrial workers. However, the great political power of the small and intensely conservative wealthy class has sufficed to keep Lemus' tendencies toward social reform well in check.[412]

The PRUD employed a more aggressive anti-Communist rhetoric, and U.S. ambassadors between 1945 and 1961, or under Truman and Eisenhower, were more receptive than the Roosevelt appointees.[413] Kalijarvi, for instance, lamented the growing Communist presence in El Salvador and offered suggestions for U.S. assistance. At first, the ambassador decried the wide chasm between the haves and the have-nots in language reminiscent of Major Harris' oft-quoted dispatch from just before the 1932 revolt. He is pessimistic however because so much of the anti-Communist struggle

> depends on the readiness of a lethargic, reluctant wealthy group of conservatists and rightists to assist the president in his campaign by raising the standard of living of the majority of the people and by investing their money in the country instead of exporting it abroad.[414]

U.S. ambassadors firmly believed that the military could provide the political stability and social responsibility to generate economic development for the Salvadoran people. Believing the military's pronouncements, they consistently asserted that the

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[412] "Kalijarvi to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.11/12-258 D 289 (2 December 1958).

[413] Leslie Gill, *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). Although overstating the power and influence of the U.S. in shaping the decisions of the military regimes in Latin America, Gill effectively argued that U.S. policymakers believed these the militaries would curb the excesses of the oligarchy and employ repression and reward to defeat Communism.

[414] "Kalijarvi to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.5-MSP/10-859 D 165 (8 October 1959).

Liberal oligarchs had failed the country and allowed if not encouraged the 1932 revolt. Yes, they argued, Communists were ultimately responsible for the rebellion. If the ground was not already made fertile by the neglect and abuses of the neo-feudal lords, however, they could never have endangered the republic. The military leaders, beginning with the *martinato*, and through the PRUD, convinced more than simply the U.S. legation and embassy officials of their good intentions towards the Salvadoran masses.

Selling the PRUD

Like the *martinato*, the Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification repressed opponents but relied heavily on rewards and propaganda to maintain support. Unlike Martínez, however, Osorio and Lemus relied on middle class professionals and sought in to build a stronger base of urban support. Instead of an aggressive pro-peasant and pro-indigenous campaign, the PRUD promoted a labor code and industrial growth. Nevertheless, they still ruled over a predominantly agrarian country and argued that the military could educate the populace and turn peasants into citizens. They asserted their nationalism and their defense of democracy, even as their actions belied the rhetoric.

The PRUD fashioned rhetoric and programs that would appease their urban supporters, elicit U.S. aid, and not overly scare the conservative oligarchy. In the months following the 1948 coup, the PRUD declared their cause to be truly revolutionary in official and semi-official newspapers, but focused on reform, nationalism, and education.[415] In an effort to mobilize mass support and assuage the landed elite's fears, Revolutionary Party leaders argued that they were unlike the far-Right or far-Left regimes of Latin America and shared traits with the most successful populist

[415] "No cuartelazo pero movimineto revolucionario," *Tribuna Libre* (11 January 1949).

governments. In 1950, for instance, the PRUD lauded the triumphs of Brazilian democracy under Vargas and reported that Perón's government lay between Communism and Capitalism.[416] When Perón moved against the Argentine press, however, the Salvadoran newspapers attacked him, and declared him a little Hitler.[417] The regime also argued that Arévalo and Arbenz in Guatemala were too radical. During a low-level conflict between the two countries in 1949, the PRUD reported disapprovingly that Arévalo was allied with the USSR.[418] The Revolutionary press assailed the dictators from the region, many of them recently toppled, like Ubico in Guatemala, Calderón Guardia and Picado in Costa Rica, Carías Andino in Honduras, and El Salvador's Martínez.[419] They clearly intended to distance themselves from those unsavory characters.

Celebrating their fervent nationalism, PRUD leaders particularly condemned Nicaraguan dictator Anastazio "Tacho" Somoza García, who killed anti-imperialist icon and guerrilla leader Augusto César Sandino. The Osorio government condemned the murder. Printing effusive homages of Sandino, the newspapers described the assassination as "treason," and displayed an ominous photograph of the two men in an "embrace of death."[420] In romantic biographies of the colorful guerrilla, the media clearly argued that the current Somoza was a brutal dictator who had killed one of Central America's greatest heroes.[421] They portrayed the PRUD leaders as nationalists

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[416] "Triumfo democratico de Brasil," *Tribuna Libre* (8 October 1950); "Peron entre Comunismo y Capitalismo," *Tribuna Libre* (19 October 1950).

[417] "Peron como un nuevo Hitlerito," *Tribuna Libre* (20 March 1951).

[418] *Tribuna Libre* (9 January 1949).

[419] "La ultima verguenza de Centroámerica: los dictadores," *Tribuna Libre* (24 March 1949).

[420] "Homenaje para el heroe Sandino," *Tribuna Libre* (20 February 1949).

[421] "Sandino y Doña Blanca: Amor en la jungla," *Tribuna Libre* (27 February 1949). The newspaper contrasted these humanizing stories with those that condemned Somoza. For example: "Ley fuga por guardis de Tacho," *Tribuna Libre* (22 March 1949); "ONU dice Nicaragua violaciones de

and sharply contrasted them to Somoza. In another expression of nationalism, the government defended its religious autonomy and encouraged a native priesthood. Since many of El Salvador's priests were foreign born, this legislation tapped into concerns among religious Salvadorans.[422] Emphasizing the brutality of the Nicaraguan dictator, *Tribuna Libre* reported that Edelberto Torres, who had been exiled, jailed and beaten by Salvadoran Generals Martínez and Aguirre in the 1940s, escaped from the "cruel tortures" of Somoza in 1949.[423] The regime still publicly promoted civil liberties and freedom of the press, but had no problems taking similar action, as when Osorio in turn arrested and tortured Torres.[424]

Using the images and reputations of popular figures Alberto Masferrer and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, PRUD leaders declared themselves to be anti-oligarchic nationalists. Representing ideals of education, nationalism, and social justice, Masferrer was a highly controversial while he lived, but military regimes from the *martinato* through the PRUD used him as a nationalist symbol.[425] In a brief leaflet entitled *The Salvadoran Revolution*, the PRUD described their political plan as a mixture of Franklin Roosevelt's Christian democracy and Masferrer's Vital Minimum philosophy. The pamphlet reproduced FDR's declaration that he was neither a Communist nor a Capitalist but was instead a Christian and a Democrat. They added "NOTHING MORE! [emphasis in original]" Using Masferrer's best-known work, the Vital Minimum, the regime wrote that the poor will rise through strength, dignity, and a firm will, and that the wealthy will

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derechos hmanos," *Tribuna Libre* (28 April 1949); "Otra victima de Guardia de Somoza," *Tribuna Libre* (8 July 1949).

[422] "Que no vengan clérigos extranjeros," *Tribuna Libre* (11 February 1949).

[423] "Edelberto Torres escapo de Somoza," *Tribuna Libre* (1 March 1949).

[424] "Consejo dice mantendra libertad de expression," *Tribuna Libre* (8 March 1949).

[425] Casaus, "Masferrer."

inflict misery, ill health and spill the blood of their brothers. They nevertheless warned those who advocated class hatred.[426] The PRUD criticized the oligarchy and sold themselves as necessary reformers, who also had the wherewithal to maintain social peace.

Arguing that their social reforms prevented destruction and rebellion like the country experienced in 1932, the PRUD criticized the oligarchy and blamed them for *la matanza*. In a lengthy article in the Army Bulletin, they argued that there were some good landowners but that the great majority paid miserable salaries and "looked down upon these unfortunates." Ending the article with a warning to the landed elites, the author wrote that peasants will particularly seek them out for destruction, subject them to the machete's edge and to flames, rape their wives and daughters, and destroy their property.[427] Balancing anti-oligarchic rhetoric and reformist promises, the military asserted that only their balance of social reforms and policing prevented greater bloodshed.

The PRUD regimes claimed to embrace democratic principles, and defend liberty and freedom, despite holding fixed elections. Frequently touting their achievements, the Revolutionary Party claimed democracy as the first of fourteen principles that purportedly guided the Revolution. Salvadoran democracy was "on the march," they argued in 1950, when the Legislature approved the new Constitution and appointed new Supreme Court judges.[428] Despite elections in which popular choice ranged from limited to non-existent, the PRUD asserted that they represented "the people…democracy, and

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[426] Secretaría de Información de la Presidencia de la República, *La Revolución Salvadoreña Folleto No. 1* (Tip. La Unión: San Salvador, El Salvador, 1948).

[427] "El peligro comunista," *Boletín del ejercito* (20 April 1951).

[428] "El Salvador y democracia en marcha," *Tribuna Libre* (7 October 1950).

liberty."[429] The army reportedly defended "reason, liberty, the law, and justice."[430] Emphasizing the importance of elections, social order and economic development, they made it clear that a strong army and Central American unity were needed to further growth and development.

It is tempting to completely discount the Revolutionary Party's language, but the rhetoric was not simply for foreign consumption, nor completely hollow. PRUD leaders certainly recognized that their words would be heard and perhaps evaluated in the halls of Congress in Washington D.C., at the Politburo in Moscow, and the Presidential palaces of Latin America. They recognized that US consular officials translated their pronouncements and *memorias* and sent copies to the U.S. State Department. Nevertheless this was not the only place this language was consumed. Although the leaders of the Salvadoran military state certainly recognized the importance of their words in the international arena, the military employed the language of democracy internally to defend and critique policies, and make demands upon the national state. This demonstrated that despite its apparent meaninglessness, the coded language became part of political discourse and the new or altered meanings clearly understood by all parties.

Officials from mayors and commandants, to Governors and legislators, employed this coded language and redefined their meaning. When La Libertad Departmental Governor Lt. Col Juan Ramón Munés requested additional weapons and ammunition for

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[429] These fourteen points were 1) democracy 2) liberty within order 3) a new juridical order founded on a Constitution 4) social, political, economic and cultural adhesion 5) an electoral code 6) honesty in public finances 7) rise in living standards for improvement in social justice 8) the development of the national army 9) separation of powers 10) municipal autonomy 11) respect towards state officials 12) the joining of civil society with the national army as an indestructible bloc 13) Central American amity and unity and 14) respect towards the treaties of the United Nations.
Boletin del ejercito (12 January 1951).

[430] *Boletín del Ejército* (14 January 1949).

the Santa Tecla municipal police, he argued that the family, society, and democratic institutions were threatened by un-named forces. The Governor implied that Communists and other political opponents endangered the state, and Salvadoran democracy.[431] Reporting their faith in democracy during the 1952 confrontation with AGEUS and *Opinión Estudiantíl*, the authors of the Army Bulletin too echoed this language.[432] Lauding their "democratic and republican principles," PRUD leaders emphasized liberty and the rights of the public. A person not acquainted with military doublespeak might believe these words meant fair elections and representative government. They did not. The military dictatorship redefined democracy in the pens, typewriters, and mouths of Salvadoran political leaders.

In their varied propaganda campaigns, the PRUD discussed social justice as their seventh of fourteen principles that guided the Revolution. Never aggressively courting the peasantry, Revolutionary Party leaders nonetheless claimed to be concerned about small farmers, and talked about how their development campaigns improved rural life. The newspapers reported on the plight of poor Salvadoran farmers and how the regime maintained Social Betterment to redistribute lands.[433] In 1950, for example, the newspapers discussed the efforts of the Rafael Campos reformatory, the closing of brothels throughout the county, and the campaigns by the police and Guardia to reduce criminal activity. They also emphasized the jobs created by the San Miguel Textile

[431] "La Libertad Gobernador Deptl. Lt. Col. Juan Ramón Munés al Ministro del Interior José Alberto Díaz," *Notas y Acuerdos Ministerio del Interior 1956* (6 February 1956) AGN, FG.

[432] "Fe democrática del ejercito," *Boletín del Ejército* (14 December 1952).

[433] For a few examples early in 1949 see "Pobre Campesino," *Tribuna Libre* (25 February 1949); "Hambre y desnutrición dice Dr. Paredes," *Tribuna Libre* (26 February 1949); "Lotificación de tierras," (2 March 1949); "Reparto de miles de tierras," *Tribuna Libre* (19 March 1949).

Factory and the worker housing constructed, both under the aegis of Social Betterment.[434]

Despite proclaiming democratic inspiration, the Revolutionary government advocated limited popular participation in the Army Bulletin. Primarily designed as an internal document to be distributed among military officers and literate cadets, the bulletin reflected what indoctrination the PRUD believed all soldiers should attain. The regime printed that "a society without hierarchy is a house without stairs."[435] They clearly communicated that Salvadoran democracy was inconsistent with the independent thought of the masses, including those who made up the armed forces. What did they believe that the masses should think? Soldiers should work hard, support their families, and protect the nation from Communists. The Bulletin outlined how Salvadoran peasants should learn to read, farm effectively and ferret out subversives.

Openly embracing the peasant origins of the majority of the security forces, the PRUD provided farming advice and reading courses to soldiers, but also anti-Communist propaganda.[436] Since the National Guard, Hacienda Police, and beat Police were poor and humble people, the PRUD argued that education would protect them from unscrupulous politicians and partisans. Hoping to indoctrinate the country's soldiers, the Revolutionaries declared that "every barracks was a school" and sent professors and teachers to the country's fourteen departmental regiments. The Revolutionary Party improved literacy within the security forces. *Tribuna Libre* reported that 922 soldiers

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[434] For a few examples between September 1949 and October 1950 see "Granja-Reformatorio Rafael Campo," *Tribuna Libre* (19 October 1949); "Burdel cerrado, "el mayegual" casa 31 de 24 ave. norte," *Tribuna Libre* (23 September 1949); "Guardia Nacional puso termino al escandalo," *Tribuna Libre* (1 October 1949); "Mejoramiento social y 60 casas," *Tribuna Libre* (9 September 1950).

[435] *Boletín del Ejército*, Tomo 1, no 2 (21 January 1949).

[436] *Boletín del Ejército*, Tomo 1, no 1 (14 January 1949).

learned to read in 1952.[437] They also distributed agricultural information. In a series of articles entitled "The Farmer Soldier," The Army Bulletin discussed soil, seeds, and crops and also lectured peasants on the virtues of temperance and hard work.[438] The PRUD, nevertheless, had a political objective, and even employed theater and music ad did the Franciscans in the colonial period when they ministered to the indigenous Mexicans.[439] The military wanted to increase the peasant-soldier's economic productivity, but also give them the leadership skills to defend their communities. Against whom did these peasants need to defend themselves? Without mentioning specific men like Farabundo Martí, Arturo Araujo and Arturo Romero, the answer was radicals and reformists who promised social changes.[440]

In order to define themselves as revolutionary, yet responsible political leaders, the PRUD created new institutions and documents. Wanting to distance themselves from prior military governments as well as the failed Liberals of the twentieth century, the Revolutionary Party criticized Aguirre and Castañeda Castro's massive corruption, Martínez'*continuismo*, and the coffee oligarchs policies. Rejecting the extant 1939 Constitution which was created under Martínez, the PRUD returned to the 1886 Constitution until they completed a new foundational document.[441] They published essays where prominent Salvadoran politicians, intellectuals and theorists debated the

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[437] As reprinted and discussed in the Army Bulletin. "Lucha contra la ignorancia," *Boletín del Ejército* (6 February 1953).

[438] *Boletín del Ejército* ran "El Soldado Agricultor" regularly from the sixth issue in February 1949 to July 1949. The editors printed articles on agriculture and rural life in later years but only occasionally with the same title, as on 19 February 1954 and 27 January 1956.

[439] See the discussion in Robert Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: An Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain, 1523-1572* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966) and Nathan Wachtel, *The Vision of the Vanquished: The Spanish Conquest of Peru through Indian Eyes, 1530-1570* (Sussex, UK: Harvester Press, 1977).

[440] *Boletín del Ejército*, Tomo 1, no 4 (4 February 1949).

[441] *Boletín del Ejército*, Tomo 1, no 2 (21 January 1949).

provisions of the 1950 Constitution, including the right of women to vote and hold office, secular education, and labor and penal code revisions.[442] Hoping to convince the public of the progressive nature of the documents, the newspapers dedicated a lot of print space to these projects, but nevertheless the reforms did not radically alter the Salvadoran legal and political system.[443]

With the 1950 Constitution, the PRUD largely completed their image of a populist, revolutionary party that balanced rural and urban interests, held regular elections, encouraged limited social reforms, and prevented the chaos and terror of a Communist revolt. The PRUD was remarkably successful in selling themselves to the Salvadoran public, but the people would never stop fearing and contesting the daily activities of the police and security forces.

Failure to Sell the Security Forces and Improve Agent Morale

Perpetually confronting the public's hostility and fear towards the security forces, the military between 1931 and 1960 took measures to change perceptions, but were never able to convince Salvadorans to trust them. The leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD reported widely on their reorganizations and depurations that supposedly improved the effectiveness of the armed forces. The military also frequently demoted, relocated and even prosecuted rank-and-file soldiers and publicized these actions to convince the public of their responsiveness and seriousness. Communities certainly appreciated the removal

[442] See for example reproductions of the 1950 Constitutional debates (*anteproyecto de la constitución*) and essays by people such as Labor Minister Dr. José Trabanino and Justice Minister Canessa in newspapers such as *Tribuna Libre* and *Diario Latino.* Women received the right to vote in Martínez' 1939 Constitution but only received the ability to hold office in 1950.

[443] For a thorough if sometimes hard to access discussion of Salvadoran constitutions, especially 1950 see Ricardo Gallardo, *Las constituciones de El Salvador*, 2 vols. (Madrid, Spain: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1961).

of abusive soldiers, but the military clearly half-hearted attempts to improve the quality of the policing agents ultimately failed to convince the Salvadoran majority.

Attempting to improve the military's image following his 1931 coup and 1932 massacre, President Martínez began with a campaign to improve the morale of the security forces. In the Police Bulletin, police chief General Armando Llanos critiqued the previous practice of usury, in which superiors loaned their subalterns money at high rates of interest. Arguing that the unfair interest caused rank-and-file to be in constant debt and dependence on their superiors, the police administration would now provide official advances.[444] These minor reforms did little to improve the quality or morale of the police forces which were poorly supported by the institution they served.

Recognizing that the police's main function was not to protect their bodies and goods but to maintain the social order and protect elite property, the Salvadoran public resisted the security forces. In large part, the quality and quantity of men who joined the forces was poor because they combated criminals while poorly armed and trained, and faced the hatred and opprobrium of the masses. Salvadorans particularly resented and resisted the civilian auxiliaries, who had no official uniforms and were poorly trained or sometimes received no instruction whatsoever. Poorly armed, the auxiliaries often had little more than a stick or a machete that they used to work in the fields. The Salvadoran people often responded violently to these agents who they did not respect and or often fear.[445] The newspapers noted that the public resisted the work of security forces,

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[444] Armando Llanos C, "Disposiciones de la Dirección General respecto al cuerpo, 26 April 1932," *Boletín Oficial de la Policía: Organo mensual de la Dirección General del cuerpo* (June 1932).

[445] For example, an agent was killed and two peasants injured in a fight following a party in Pasaquilla in San Miguel. "Hecho sangriento que debe esclaracerse: muerto un agente de policia," *Diario Latino* (30 Dec 1938).

especially the civilian auxiliaries, and that popular culture eulogized those who successfully fought authority.[446]

Unprotected from recriminations as angry citizens demanded justice from the General and other upper-level officials, common recruits including the rank-and-file agents were often sacrificed for the greater good of the regime. The officers who gave the orders were rarely penalized, but the administration needed to demonstrate that they would punish abusive soldiers and police.[447] The newspapers also frequently reported when officers abused prisoners or beat unarmed civilians, and particularly noted when agents beat middle class youths. In one example, a pair of police assaulted a young man exiting from the movie theater in 1949. The details are uncertain, but it seems that the youth insulted the agents after they approached him for stealing a soda. Perhaps because of class tensions, the police overreacted, and became violent.[448] The public responded to events like these and usually assisted the "criminals," and hindered police pursuit. The police's physical and judicial vulnerability combined with poor pay, limited training and long hours, depressed morale and discouraged "honorable men" from signing.

Before Martínez established his dictatorship, Salvadoran addressed public resentment of the security forces by assuring them that the regimes would make substantive changes. In response to public complaints, President Pío Romero Bosque argued before the National Assembly in 1931 that his administration would punish "the mistakes on the part of some [National Guard] members." In an attempt to further reassure the public, Romero added that *Guardias* were carefully chosen, and received

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[446] "La Criminalidad," *El Día* (1 May 1934).

[447] There are many examples in the newspapers, whether *Diario Latino*, *Tribuna Libre*, or *El Día*. Authorities made the punishments as light as reassignment and release or as strict as imprisonment.

[448] "Agente de policía golpean a un ciudadano," *Tribuna Libre* (27 March 1949).

instruction in arithmetic, geography and history before placement into their posts. In order to prove that The Guard responded to local demands and petitions, Romero Bosque eliminated and created various National Guard posts in the weeks following his speech.[449] Responding to public criticism after men under his command fired upon University students in July 1931, General Armando Llanos argued that he would limit the abuses of the Guard and restore public confidence in the security forces.[450] As Police Chief under Martínez, Llanos would later attempt to convince the public to believe he had reformed the security forces.

In an effort to distance the National Police from the reputation it previously held, General Armando Llanos announced that officers could maintain order without using unnecessary or inopportune force in 1932. Hoping to reduce violence and brutality, Llanos decried beating the inebriated or any subalterns on the street or within the ranks. He argued that, contrary to popular belief, policemen sought and desired to improve their education, implicitly.[451] In order to counter multiple, often routine, police abuses, Llanos prohibited the illegal levying of fines and summary justice. He created the position of barracks commandant, directly under the orders of the Director General, to act as a supervisor over the police at the multiple stations.[452] Empowered to punish those who violated the internal rules of the body, including minor infractions such as dress code violations, the commandant was supposed to bring local police units under national

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[449] Dr. Don Pío Romero Bosque, *Memoria de Guerra, Marina, y Aviacion* (Imprenta Nacional: San Salvador, El Salvador, 1931), 17-19.

[450] "Lo que declara el General Llanos, alrededor de los sucesos de viernes ultimo," *El Día* (15 July 1931).

[451] Llanos' orders were reprinted in 1947 to remind the officers and the rank-and-file that the rules governing the police remained intact despite the changes in leadership at the national and at the branch level. *Boletín de la Policia* (February 1947).

[452] *Boletín de la Policia* (March 1947).

government control. In order to prevent officers from abusing or releasing prisoners for payment, this officer also supervised the jails.[453]

In order to combat the reality and perception of continued police violence against prisoners, Llanos issued additional orders. In 1933, the Director stated that prisoners were not to be beaten, but brought to the police station according to the law. Declaring that beating drunks was a "low and cowardly act" (*acto de BAJEZA y COBARDIA* [emphasis in original]), Llanos forbade police from verbally or physically abusing inebriates.[454] His strong words apparently again had little effect, as Llanos was forced to repeated the order in 1934. Police used violence against more than drunks, and were particularly sensitive to insults as revealed in one instance when an officer grabbed, handcuffed, and dragged a young student to the police station for saying that the policeman resembled Nero. This was but one illustration of the disdain that the public had for the police, as well as the armed body's culture of violence and impunity. Llanos had hoped to reduce police indiscretions and abuses, including minor infractions like attending theaters without payment and using of police equipment, such as typewriters, without authorization.[455] The fact that all of these orders were reprinted, in full, over the course of several months in 1947 suggests that in the long run, Llanos failed to permanently or even significantly change the culture of the police forces. Despite his proscriptions, these abuses continued throughout the *martinato*.

Instead of addressing police abuses with structural changes, the leaders of the *martinato* responded to public complaints with propaganda and personnel changes. Reporting police violence against civilians in 1934, the editors of *El Día* noted how

[453] *Boletín de la Policia* (April 1947).
[454] *Boletín de la Policia* (May 1947).
[455] *Boletín de la Policia* (June 1947).

police agents beat unarmed and defenseless prisoners against General Llanos' proscriptions.[456] Declaring victory over Salvadoran hearts and minds in 1938, Llanos claimed that the public had "slowly, but surely, abandoned their hostile attitude" towards the police. What was his evidence? The public support and outcry after criminals killed police officer Higinío Caminos in 1937.[457] He was profoundly mistaken about this outpouring of sympathy and success controlling violence, as revealed when Martínez appointed Colonel Francisco Linares the new Police Director. With the change in leadership, the government released crime statistics to show how bad conditions were in the capital, and in the following weeks and month, publicized the new director's reforms. The police's publications repeatedly argued that the institution was reforming, but the evidence suggests little changed but the name of the person behind the propaganda. Since the propaganda was un-backed by any measurable or notable changes, the populace throughout the urban and rural areas never believed that the institutions were reformed.

Dramatic events, such as the repression of political opponents in 1944, also convinced the public of the police's repeated brutality. The *martinato*'s opponents responded to the violence, and waged an all-out propaganda campaign against the military.[458] By the time the general declared martial law on 2 April 1944, security forces had massacred scores of peoples.[459] They even attacked prominent citizens in public areas. Security forces removed *Diario Latino* Director Jorge Pinto sr. from jail and gunned him down in broad daylight in the middle of the street.[460] A week later, a

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[456] "Actos de violencia cometidos por agentes de policía," *El Día* (21 May 1934).
[457] *Boletín Oficial de la Policía* (July 1938).
[458] Elam, "Appeal," introduction.
[459] "Massey to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.1274/report 245 (18 April 1944).
[460] López Vallecillos, *periodismo*, 380-83.

cantonal auxiliary patrol attacked Dr. Arturo Romero with machetes.[461] When Martínez targeted the middle and upper classes by sentencing and executing them, his support tumbled. During the civic strike, the police and military summarily executed other citizens, and repressed workers and demonstrators.[462] As the *martinato* collapsed, the military provided the public with ample evidence of military violence and excess.

The repeated abuses by the secret and uniformed police after the *martinato*'s fall further confirmed the public's distrust.[463] According to US *charge d'affairs* William Thurston, the Salvadoran army, police and National Guard assaulted the supporters of Dr. Romero, who helped lead the April 1944 insurrection. Until General Osmín Aguirre y Salinas' coup ended the democratic experiment in October, the popular young doctor was the leader of the Democratic Union Party (*Partido Unión Democrática*, PUD). Chief of Police Aguirre led his troops in "small riots, searches, insults, arrests, and occasional shootings…"[464] He also supervised the beatings of prisoners at the police station, including prominent intellectuals and labor leaders like Drs. Dagoberto Marroquin, Rochac and Geoffroy Rivas.[465] The abuse continued under Aguirre's selected officers. They broke into Rivas' home, tied him up "like a common criminal," deported him, and occupied the offices of his newspaper, *la Tribuna*.[466]

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[461] Castellanos, *El Salvador*, 153.

[462] Parkman, *Insurrection*, 54-79.

[463] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/ memorandum (25 May 1944).

[464] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/ memorandum (9 Aug. 1944).

[465] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/ memorandum (21 Oct. 1944).

[466] "G. Gage to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/2140 (2 Nov. 1944). The opposition newspapers under Martinez and into Aguirre's administration were *la Tribuna*, *la Prensa Gráfica* and *el Diario Latino* and the pro-government papers were *el Diario de Hoy*, *el Gran Diario*, and *el Noticiero*.

Police terror throughout 1944 further alienated the population. Conservative military officers assaulted prominent intellectuals who had attempted to reform Salvadoran institutions after the military junta appointed General Andrés Menéndez interim president.[467] These men drafted a labor code and intended a radical restructuring of the labor department and laws regarding employer to labor relations.[468] They raised hopes among intellectuals and "liberals" in the nation. Hoping the judicial system would defend the liberties acquired after the April and May popular mobilizations, the editors of *Opinión Estudiantil* drafted an open letter to Supreme Court President Dr. Miguel Tomás Molina, who helped lead anti-Aguirre forces in December 1944. [469] Unfortunately, the Court was unable or unwilling to take serious action to reform the security forces or prosecute the offenders.

When General Castaneda Castro took power in 1945, he unsuccessfully sought to improve the function and reputation of the widely-hated and distrusted police. Colonel Aguirre still controlled the body and resisted change, however. In an attempt to reduce Aguirre's power and police brutality, Castaneda appointed Colonel Darío Flores as Director of Police. This did not work very effectively. A year later, the police shot into a crowd and killed Lt. Gilberto Torres, brother of *Opinión Estudiantil* director Abelardo Torres. The police also assaulted members of other prominent elite families as Carlos Azúcar Chávez and Raul Amaya. U.S. ambassador Overton Ellis reported that many

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[467] Aguirre used the subterfuge to claim that he was not involved in any illegal power grab, but was "legally" appointed by the legislature after Menéndez immediately resigned the presidency.

[468] Dr Pedro Geoffroy Rivas left for Mexico in 1931 after Martínez took power and served as assistant to Toledano. He was related to wealthy S Ana families and was part owner of the newspaper *La Tribuna*, which was the official government mouthpiece *Diario Nuevo* under the *martinato*. Dr José Leandro Echeverria was a lawyer and 1940 graduate of the National University law school. Dr Jorge Castro Peña graduated the same year 1940 was the son of Dr Manuel Castro Ramirez, Salvadoran minister to Guatemala. These men were the members of the commission to prepare the Labor Code. "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0986/1560 (12 May 1944).

[469] "Carta abierta al Dr. Miguel Tomás Molina," *Opinion Estudiantil* (9 Sep 1944).

prominent Salvadorans believed that Aguirre encouraged the violence to discredit Castaneda Castro.[470] The public, including the professional classes, distrusted the police more than any time in recent years.

Attempting to convince the public that he was substantively reforming the police, General José Guevara Martínez, National Police Director under the faltering Castaneda Castro government, publicized his policies. The reputation of the capitol's police had never been positive, but had declined under the brutal and overtly politically repressive hand of Aguirre. The Director outlined a plan to improve the force which began by republishing General Llanos' reforms. Addressing the newspapers' virulent criticisms of the security forces since the fall of Martínez, Guevara promised to reduce police brutality, particularly against the drunks that the police arrested most frequently. The general hoped to convince the public that the institution was not, by definition, brutal. In order to limit their abuses and arbitrary decisions, he purged the police, and emphasized education. Reinforcing the idea that ignorance, and not the hierarchy's failures, led to abuses, the police chief authorized extension courses.[471] Assuming that ignorance accounted for police brutality, Guevara published rules for conduct, including prohibitions against whipping prisoners, and the Code of Criminal Procedure.[472] In order to reduce violence against common criminals, he divided the police or security forces charged with defending social order from those that persecuted delinquents.[473]

Initially the PRUD government of Colonel Oscar Osorio took a different stance and instead of publicly reforming the police, they defended it, effectively blaming the

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[470] "O. Ellis to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.0519/1051 (18 September 1946).

[471] *Boletín de Policía* (September 1947).

[472] "*Codigo de Instrucción Criminal," in Boletín de Policía* (September 1948).

[473] *Boletín de Policía* (January 1947).

Salvadoran public for police abuses. Defending the repressive actions of the National Police as part of a wider strategy of public moralization, the leaders of the Osorio government instead focused on the successes since the 1948 Revolution. Arguing that the PRUD brought the public electoral democracy and was attempting to foment economic and cultural progress, they frequently repeated that social order was a pre-requisite. The government only minimally discussed the abuses of agents against their charges. Instead, the rhetoric excused police abuses and blamed the criminals and the populace for failing to respect the officers and appreciate the work they accomplished.

In order to convince the public to cooperate with the police, the regime published essays by noted Salvadoran writers on police successes, the benefits of social order, and the public's responsibility throughout 1950. In that year, prominent author Rafael Lara asked that the public at least show them a bit of appreciation. Arguing that only a small minority distrusted the police, Manuel Lara Gavidia asked the public to cooperate, since the agents safeguarded their lives and interests.[474] Implying that the nation's social problems resulted from public and not institutional failures, they authors eulogized the police. More aggressive than the noted essayists, the Police Bulletin's editors argued that agents could never allow their authority to be underestimated or unrecognized. They downplayed public distrust and referred to the organization as "universally admired," although they admitted that the police should not take actions to "generate antipathy" or "provoke difficulties."[475] Even when they admitted that the public distrusted the police, they blamed the people themselves. Arguing that young people ran from the police due to ignorance, the editors of the police bulletin asked parents to stop telling their children

[474] See the articles published in *Boletín de la Policia* between January and August 1950 on social order and the public's responsibility to cooperate with the repressive forces.

[475] *Boletín de la Policia* (September 1950); *Boletín de la Policia* (October 1950).

that the National Guard or the Police would come and get them if they misbehaved.[476] PRUD leaders did not acknowledge that police repression and arbitrary punishment generated terror among the young, as it did in the adult population. Instead of a self-critique, they blamed the press for denouncing police abuses, which in their eyes was tantamount to criminal complicity.[477] Eventually, the police could not maintain the illusion, and proponents of public reform took over.

Finally acknowledging that the Salvadoran people feared the police, newly appointed police director Lt. Colonel Valdés very publicly purged the corps, although he did not fully admit their failures. Valdés did state that the public had nearly universal disdain or aversion for their agents, but argued that the distrust stemmed from the actions of prior governments. Corrupt regimes had used the police to repress opponents and popular participation and so the new Revolutionary government endured the stigma of past abuses.[478] Echoing the Police Bulletin from the previous year, they argued that the people must obey the police. Only cooperation would dissipate abuses and distrust. Admitting that the public perception was based, in part, on reality, Valdés announced a significant purging of the National Police in May 1951. Inviting the press to report on the changes, the regime announced that although most police officers were praiseworthy, they had to rid themselves of a few "of the nation's bad sons."[479] The Director's purging clearly failed, as the police still tortured of political prisoners and physical abused common criminals.

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[476] *Boletin de la Policia* (July/August 1952).
[477] *Boletín de la Policia* (October 1950).
[478] *Boletín de la Policia* (March 1951).
[479] The purging was widely touted in articles from May until August 1951 in the *Boletín de la Policia*. It was reported in May 1951 in the Boletín del Ejercito and in the public press. See "Depura del cuerpo de policía," *Boletín del ejercito* (18 May 1951).

In 1952, organized student groups fought back after Police Director Colonel Antonio Valdés, arrested, tortured and disappeared scores of students, workers and professionals. Major José Medrano, who was in charge of the Criminal Investigations Division, personally supervised many of the detentions and tortures. Acting with impunity, these men did not hide their repression with reform and conciliation. The spokesmen of the national government and the members of the judiciary sometimes spoke regretfully about the "necessary" abuses committed by the agents of order, but the commanding officers themselves were neither repentant nor responsive to popular appeals and critiques.[480] U.S. consular officials noted that these abuses, and the officers' impunity, further discredited the police.[481] Unable to maintain their repression when faced with public opposition to police brutality and political repression, the regime decided to reform itself.

After *Opinión Estudiantil* and AGEUS publicly and legally challenged the regime, the PRUD's new Director General of police, Colonel Fidel Quintanilla, was forced to reassign officers. Extensively reorganizing the National Police force, Quintanilla dismissed 80 agents, including the entire special investigations division. Naming Pedro Miguel Angel Osorio new head of the Criminal Investigations section, Osorio transferred Medrano and Valdés to positions in the military school. The PRUD attempted to minimize the damage, and claimed that by reforming the police, they could now address the admittedly difficult problem of crime and social order. Responding to the university newspaper and other critics, the Ministry of Justice organized a

[480] See chapter three for a discussion of the 1952 plot and military repression.

[481] "A.R. Donovan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/0001 294 WEEKA no 3 (19 January 1954).

Criminology Congress to present policy solutions.[482] Shortly after judges had inspected the Central Penitentiary and the Women's Prison in October 1955, the PRUD released a report that catalogued a wide variety of illnesses that ran rampant within the prison population, including tuberculosis, syphilis, and epilepsy.[483] Shifting the debate to the Revolutionary Party's social action, they claimed to respond authoritatively to the problems within the police, and in the jails.[484] Once again, the military did not substantively improve the Salvadoran policing system. Poor treatment of common prisoners remained common in the prisons of the capital city.[485] If *Opinión Estudiantil*'s descriptions of San Salvador's jails in 1955 are even somewhat accurate, torture and brutality continued into the mid-1950s.

When Colonel Lemus became president, the regime had done little to reform the police. Colonel Jorge Tenorio served as police director until he died in December 1957, and Lemus replaced him with Colonel José Alberto Escamilla. The US embassy believed Escamilla was competent and pro-U.S. During this particular cycle of appointments and re-assignments, the regime discussed reducing abuses in the newspapers. The regime didn't address *Opinion Estudiantil*'s accusations of torture and illegal detentions, however.[486] Lemus promised social and political reforms, but backed his talk with little substantive action. Having made tortures and disappearances a part of daily life

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[482] "H.A. Hamlette to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00/355 (11 December 1952).

[483] *Opinión Estudiantil* (22 October 1955).

[484] Minister of Defense Col. Marco Antonio Molina, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Defensa* (10 November 1955), 312.

[485] See the account by political prisoner Salvador Cayetano Carpio, who describes the abuses endured by common criminals in the jails based on his experiences between Sep 1952 and August 1953. Salvador Cayetano Carpio, *Secuestro y capucha*.

[486] "R.P.Gwynn to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00/1-2458 D 400 (24 January 1958).

throughout the 1950s, the PRUD claimed to defend democracy and promote social reform, but continued to violate the civil and human rights of Salvadoran citizens.

Although to a lesser extent than with the urban police, the military also tried to convince the public that they improved the rural security forces, like the National Guard. In June 1934, when the *martinato* first published the Journal of the National Guard, they discussed the Guard's prestige and public reputation.[487] Emphasizing their role in defending the nation's morality, Martínez claimed he had improved and defend the integrity of the leadership and rank-and-file of the *Guardia*. Arguing that the public had renewed sympathy and support for all the security forces, and especially the rural Guard, the regime declared victory in late 1935.[488] Providing letters from landowners whose livestock were protected as evidence, the government argued that the *Guardia* had "quietly destroyed criminality in the country and…contained the tremendous crime wave…"[489] Once again, the effectiveness of the propaganda was dubious, but the military leaders repeatedly announced the successes of the various branches in official publications.

In an effort to improve the quality and reputation of the security forces in the 1930s, Martínez reported on how effectively he had reformed the security forces. *El Día* published articles stating that the police were successfully purged and no longer allowed to beat prisoners.[490] Hoping to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, in 1933 General Martínez reorganized the Treasury Police Reserves, and reported the efforts to suppress

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[487] *Revista de la Guardia Nacional,* (June 1934).

[488] *Revista de la Guardia Nacional,* (September 1935).

[489] *Revista de la Guardia Nacional,* (October 1935); *Revista de la Guardia Nacional,* (August 1935). Curiously, they also admitted that the rank-and-file Guardia were ignorant of police procedure and needed to study the Code of Criminal Procedure (*Código de Instrucción Criminal*).

[490] "La policía no debe ser la espantable y terrible institución de otro tiempo, debido al trabajo del General Armando Llanos," *El Día* (15 November 1932).

their abuses.[491] These efforts, as with many others to internally reform the security forces, were largely unsuccessful. Just a few months later, *El Día* reported that the administration had failed to successfully reorganize the Treasury Police and restored the old system.[492] As with the rest of other reforms of the repressive forces, these failed to substantively improve the *Policía de Hacienda* or convince the public to trust them. Nevertheless, the press dutifully reported the reform efforts.

Despite public pronouncements, reorganizations and reforms, neither the Martínez government nor subsequent military regimes ever successfully reversed public opposition to the policing agents. None effectively convinced the public to embrace the police and soldiers that monitored their streets, lives, and property.

D. Conclusions

The military regimes from that of General Martínez to Colonel Lemus sought to convince the domestic and international public of their good intentions. Martínez most successfully convinced groups such as indigenous Salvadorans specifically, and peasants more broadly, that their oppressors were the oligarchy and local officials and not the military and the general himself. The *martinato* widely celebrated the limited efforts of Social Betterment and their land redistribution policies. The PRUD less aggressively courted peasants but loudly touted their own lands reforms, housing construction, symbols of economic development, and public health and education campaigns. Osorio, and to lesser extent Lemus, declared that every barracks was a school and taught reading

[491] "El resguardo de hacienda, en algunos casos, son mas bien una amenaza para los habitantes de los pueblos y de los campos," *El Día* (20 December 1932); "Continuan abusos de resguardos de hacienda," El Día (2 February 1933).

[492] "Suprimirán la Policía de Hacienda desde el primero de octubre," *El Día* (21 September 1933).

to the recruits. The military's propaganda and limited actions convinced many within the nation, and some international observers, that praetorian rule prevented brutal oligarchs or ruthless Communists from taking power.

The Martínez administration was able to convince enough groups of their reformist intentions and ability to maintain social order throughout most of the 1930s. They cultivated peasant and Indian clients by integrating them locally into the political system. The government redistributed land among peasants and despite heavily favoring friends and public employees used the land reform and *Mejoramiento Social* in an attempt to foster goodwill among the people. U.S. diplomatic officials believed that Martínez sought social justice, and blamed local oligarchs for the failures of the military's redistributive policies. Despite these notable successes, the regime was never able to make substantial numbers of trust the security forces or reform the institutions in any measurable way. The lack of substantive reform, even compared with the limited agrarian and labor reforms, was central to the regime's failures.

Publicly lauded democracy and asserting with a straight face asserted that their administrations defended popular choice and the principles of republicanism, the PRUD also claimed to reform the security forces and promote social justice. The revolutionary Party celebrated their ability to maintain the social order and their concerted efforts to tackle crime. Only supporting the regime as long as they presided over economic growth, Salvadoran toppled the PRUD in 1960 but did not break the idea that the military could best lead the country away from the dangerous paths pointed by Right-wing oligarchs and Left-wing agitators.

Four

Constructing Recidivist and Redeemable Criminals

A. Introduction

Under praetorian rule, political, military and civilian officials agreed with rural oligarchs and urban elites that maintaining the social order was a prerequisite for economic development. In an attempt to maintain this order, they passed restrictive laws and constructed barracks, police stations, jails, and penitentiaries and filled them with thousands of men and women. These officers, bureaucrats and functionaries had competing and sometime contradictory strategies for dealing with criminals. Emphasizing control of public space and protection of property rather than individual rehabilitation, most preferred to use sweeps and imprisonment to control and repress the populace. Some disagreed, however. Believing in progressive and redemptive state policies, they argued that the government should educate, empower and redeem individuals. This minority made their voices heard in the public sphere, and by the administrations, and helped shape the military governments' ambivalent policies.

Despite sharing a basic faith in repression and social order, the leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD argument held contrasting views regarding human nature. Many theorists under the reportedly-Fascist Martínez government, argued that criminals could be redeemed, whereas the "revolutionary" PRUD more thoroughly embraced determinist ideologies and favored punishment and isolation over redemption and reform. Central to the debates between the policymakers and criminologists was whether humans were redeemable, and whether individuals should be educated or simply controlled.

Although General Martínez' government was not Fascist, his regime nevertheless contained an influential core of Fascist sympathizers, led by Minister of Government General Tomás Calderón, chief executor of the *matanza* of 1932. Calderón, for instance, supported Spain's Francisco Franco and eagerly studied the dictator's 1933 Decree for the Defense of Order and Public Safety.[493] This did not lead to unequivocal military support for social cleansing. It was the Revolutionary Party of the 1950s that developed policies and institutions that identified and categorized people as irreparably damaged, and formalized the preventive policing that identified recidivist criminals. In order to screen potential criminals, and allow only "redeemed" citizens from re-entering the mainstream society, they created a Court of Dangerous Subjects. In some ways, this was like when Martínez identified "known criminals" and swept vagrants, prostitutes and juvenile delinquents from the streets. Hoping to bring order to the cities, the Revolutionary Party implemented stricter controls over "dangerous" groups, removed from the streets, and registered their identities. Believing that the judiciary encouraged crime by acquitting prisoners and limiting police brutality, the military did not charge and prosecute these people, and avoided or ignored the judiciary whenever possible.

Sharing a desire for political order, all of the military governments tried to eliminate organized opposition. Military leaders in both periods passed anti-Communist laws, however, that outlawed mass organizations and independent publications. Oscar Osorio, for example, passed the Law of Defense of Order and Democracy in 1952, and Martínez authored anti-Communist legislation. Treating political opponents as a separate kind of threat, they were not subject to the same restrictions as common criminals.

[493] Franco used to decree repress political opposition, but was primarily an anti-Communist law. A copy of Franco's decree is in AGN, FG, 1935, Box 5.

As the Marxist paradigm collapsed alongside the Soviet Union, cultural history arose, and the writings and ideas of Michel Foucault have been disseminated widely, scholars, politicians and laypersons have studied Latin American crime, legal system reform and law enforcement in greater depth.[494] Difficulties with establishing a rule of law and the effects of neo-Liberal reforms have increased crime in the new democracies of Latin America, and driven research. This now-impressive body of scholarly work was not built overnight. Nevertheless, Latin American criminal justice history has matured in the last two decades. Ricardo Salvatore noted just a decade ago that scholars of the twentieth-century had insufficiently studied the interactions between subaltern subjects, state officials and professionals in the courts, as well as the issues of violence and policing.[495] Although much work remains, scholars have begun by studying topic like Liberal policing and criminality.[496] There are still many underdeveloped areas of research, but more and more authors, including those working on Central America, are discussing marginal citizens like street children.[497]

Despite the beginning of industrial development and the *martinato*'s attempted export diversification, the country's economic structure changed only slightly, and the

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[494] Horowitz, "Corruption," 269-70.

[495] See a summary article now a decade old, Ricardo Salvatore, "Criminal Justice History in Latin America: Promising Notes," *Crime, History and Societies* (2:2: 1998): 5-14.

[496] For a valuable study of banditry and the Porfirian police forces see Paul Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police and Mexican Development* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1992). A select list of some later works on crime include Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1931* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), and recent compilations. Ricardo Salvatore and Carlos Aguirre, eds. *The Birth of the Penitentiary in Latin America: Essays on Criminology, Prison Reform and Social Control, 1830-1940* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1996), Carlos Aguirre and Robert Buffington, eds., *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America* (Wimington, DE: SR Books, 2000), and Ricardo Salvatore, Carlos Aguirre and Gil Joseph, eds.,*Crime and Punishment in Latin America: Law and Society since Colonial Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).

[497] See Tobias Hecht, ed, *Minor Omissions: Children in Latin American History and Society* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002; Eugenia Rodriguez Sáenz, ed, *Entre silencio y voce: Genero e Historia en América Central, 1750-1990* (San Jose, Costa Rica: Centro Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Mujer y la Familia, 1997) and *Mujeres, género e historia en América Central durante los siglos XVIII, XIX y XX* (South Woodstock, VT : Plumsock Mesoamerican Studies, 2002).

population grew at a stable rate between 1931 and 1944. Martínez increased cotton, sugar and cattle exports but only modestly when compared too the 1950s. The demographic growth rate was especially modest when compared those that preceded and came afterwards. Under the Liberals (1870-1930), the population doubled in sixty years, and grew from 2.5m to 4m in less than twenty years under the PCN (1961-1979).[498] The population only expanded from 1.52m to 1.79m between 1932 and 1940, or from 1.4m in 1930 to 1.9m by 1950.[499] The growth rate, 1.3% annually between 1930 and 1950, was far lower than the 2.8% between 1950 and 1961 or the remarkable 3.5% between 1961 and 1971. Under Martínez, the rural population increased at a greater pace than the urban between 1930 and 1950 (1.4% versus 1.1% annually), but this all changed dramatically when urbanization and population growth exploded under the PRUD, due to mortality decreases, fertility increases and rural-urban migration.[500]

The PRUD faced vastly different social and economic conditions than Martínez, and in fact, effectively ruled over a different country by the end of their twelve-year rule. By the late 1950s, they ruled over an urbanizing country of 2.5m people, as population growth rates reached 3.5% per annum.[501] The sugar, cattle and cotton industries expanded, as did industrial and manufacturing production. For instance, cotton production increased from 3,600 bales worth 634,000 *colones* between 1940/42, to nearly 150,000 bales worth 50 million *colones* in 1957/58.[502] For example, cotton production

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[498] Browning, *Landscape*, ch 4.

[499] Baron Castro, *población*, 469-93.

[500] Herman Rosa and Deborah Barry, "Población, territorio y medio ambiente en El Salvador," *PRISMA: Programa Salvadoreño de Investigación Sobre Desarollo y Medio Ambiente*, no 11 (May-June 1995).

[501] "Kalijarvi to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00/2-1259 D 405 (12 February 1959).

[502] "Kalijarvi to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.000/4-1459 D 507 (14 April 1959)

exploded from 3.6k bales worth 634k *colones* in 1940 to 146.4k bales worth 49.6m *colones* in 1958.[503] Coffee exports grew from 1.25m *quintales* (46kg. ea.) worth 46.7m *colones* in 1945, to 1.9m *quintales* worth 191.7m *colones* in 1960.[504] The GNP also grew prodigiously, increasing from $17m in 1932, to $92m in 1940 to $600m in 1960. [505] Many observers within and without the country in 1960, including several authors of U.S. dissertations, believed that El Salvador's economic future was bright, and that the military had the wherewithal to successfully lead the nation into the late 20th century.[506] The party did not last however, and life became more difficult for Salvadorans in the following decade. Realizing the limits of many things, including industrialization and government social reforms, popular groups expressed their discontent, sometimes violently in the 1960s. That was still in the future, however.

Although the sinews of Salvadoran society had changed in the post-war period, the PRUD still balanced repression and reward within a system of political access and favors. Some thing changed, however. The Revolutionary governments expanded urban policing at the expense of rural state control. The National Guard steadily increased their arrests in the 1930s, but the amount stabilized in the late 1950s.[507] The Guardia arrested 13,274 individuals in 1930 for crimes (*delitos y faltas*), 82 on the orders of civilian and military officials, and 153 for contraband.[508] Despite capturing significantly more people through warrants and investigations (1,412 versus 235) in 1941 versus 1930, the total

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[503] "Kalivarji to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.* RG 84, DF 816.00/4-1459 D 507 (14 April 1959).

[504] Castellanos. *El Salvador*, 189.

[505] "Annual Economic and Financial Survey for 1956," " D. DeGolia to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00/2-2857 D 442 (28 February 1957).

[506] For two authors, in the 1960s, who believed that the military provided the best opportunity for the country to continue to modernize and develop see Elam, "Appeal," and Wilson, "Integration."

[507] Of course, as the US embassy officials repeatedly noted in the 1940s and 1950s, Salvadoran statistics are profoundly unreliable. They cannot be used to determine specific or precise shifts but, nevertheless, allow for broad comparisons over time.

[508] Romero Bosque, *1930 Memoria*, 21.

number arrested increased only by about a third, to 18,019.[509] Guardia arrests jumped had increased by about half during the political chaos right after WWII, but remained steady throughout the 1950s. For instance, rural Guards captured 25,611 Salvadorans in 1955-56 but only 26,037 in 1962-63, which was a negligible difference.[510] Considering the tremendous growth in the Salvadoran population, the repressive forces were not expanding into the countryside in the 1950s, but instead worked in the rapidly growing urban areas.

Salvadoran always lived under constant violent and property crimes under the military. Statistics are notoriously poor, but contemporaries acknowledged that El Salvador was one of the most violent countries in the world, despite the mythological praetorian law and order. The U.S. Embassy's Second Secretary noted in 1959 that El Salvador had 693 murders among 32,677 deaths. He remarked that if the U.S. had a similar murder rate there would be about 50,000 victims a year.[511] Despite reacting violently to the growing urban crime and increasingly mobile populations of the 1950s, the military failed to impose order and discipline upon an actively resistant and growing population.

The military faced deep problems, but did not often address the causes of crime and violence, nor attempted to rehabilitate those affected or responsible. The leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD manipulated crime reporting to convince the public that

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[509] Minister of Defense A.I. Menendez, *1941 Memoria de la gestion desarrollada en los ramos de Guerra, Marina y Aviacion 1939-44* (15 April 1942), 25.

[510] Colonel Adan Parada, *Memoria de los labores realizadas por el Miniterio de Defensa* (9 November 1956). Colonel Marco Aurelio Zacapa, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Defensa* (29 August 1963). The post-war Memorias covered the one-year time period before the presentation to the assembly, as for example October 1955 until October 1956.

[511] David R Raynolds to U.S. Secretary of State, "Death Comes to the Fastest Machete in the East," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.52/11-459 D 201 (4 November 1959).

Salvadoran society was endangered, but that the military protected them more effectively than the alternatives.

B. Segregating Prisons

The leaders of the *martinato* and the PRUD believed that the nation's prisons and penitentiaries fundamentally failed. Disagreeing on both the meaning and goals of the prisons, as well as the nature of the incarcerated people themselves, military policies were inconsistent and often contradictory. The military officers across the decades did, however, share a fundamental belief in female inferiority, and that women had special needs that the state prisons had to address.

Even before military rule, Salvadoran government officials fought over resources and debated the dangers to public order that poorly maintained jails posed. In 1931, the daily newspaper *El Día* reported that the Western Penitentiary, in Santa Ana, was taxed by the additional prisoners sent there from San Salvador. The piece, reprinted from the *Diario de Santa Ana*, reproduced the complaints of Penitentiary's Director Colonel Majano. Arguing that he was forced to house extra prisoners due to the poor state of the central prison, Majano pressed for changes. The regime did not reduce the pressure on the overburdened Western and Central facilities, until they constructed a new prison in Usulután in 1940, to supplement the San Vicente penitentiary.[512] Since the population grew increasingly quickly from the late-1940s prison conditions quickly deteriorated once again.

When General Martínez took power, Salvadorans were uncertain what would do about the prisons, because as Vice President of Araujo's Labor Party, he had talked about

[512] "Son necesarias las reparaciones en la penitenciaria central," *El Día* (9 Mar 1931).

improving the lives of ordinary Salvadorans. In the early years of the *martinato*, some legislators believed that the general might transform the prisons into reformatories, instead of simply punitive institutions, and transform criminals into new men and valuable citizens. In addition, Salvadoran policymakers and criminologists argued that because they simply punished the guilty and removed dangerous elements from public spaces, jails and penitentiaries were no longer "correctional" institutions. Decrying the poor condition of the jails, Congressman Dr. J. Sebastian Manzano argued that the government should construct a rural penal colony in order to produce reformed "new men." He added that careful and scientific study, planning and design should precede the project, and that the prisoners themselves could provide the labor.[513] Bringing the proposal before the assembly, Congressman Dr. Miguel Coto Bonilla argued that the government could employ plans already used in places like the United States, Germany and even Costa Rica.[514] Although the assembly rejected the proposal because they did not have the resources to transformation the penal system, the debate revealed political opinion regarding criminal reform.

When confronted with violence within the prisons, Salvadoran legislators and criminologists often demanded greater vigilance and tougher penalties. In performing his regular visit to the Western Penitentiary, the Judge of First Instance witnessed two separate violent assaults between inmates, and in one of the incidents the weapon, a machete, was not recovered.[515] Groups of prisoners frequently escaped, as when five men broke out of the Sonsonate public jails in 1933. Responding with appeals for greater

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[513] "Moción escrita presentada por el Rep. Dr. J. Sebastian Manzano," *El Día* (23 February 1932).
[514] "Un systema penal nuevo y moderno," *El Día* (28 May 1932).
[515] "En el departamento de sumariados de la penitenciaria occidental se registraron dos hechos de sangre," *El Día* (8 March 1934).

vigilance, local officials demanded state funds to properly supervise the prisoners, and adequately repair and secure the facilities.[516] When escaped criminals acted with impunity, in one case killing a Judicial Police officer and injuring another, newspapers called for the government to treat criminals with a firm hand. In the same year, *El Día* demanded that the government sentence more criminals to forced labor on the streets and highways.[517] This was seen as a particularly harsh punishment but, like the Colonial era *auto de fe*s, was designed to generate penance, and in addition provided the state with cheap labor. Like in Congressman Mazano's plan to have prisoners build a penal colony, forced labor harnessed the regenerative power of physical work, which increased the probability of redemption.

Recognizing that jails and penitentiaries actually trained criminals instead of rehabilitating them, legislators and criminologists argued that government policies should address their contaminating influences. Agreeing with Mexican theorists that jails, and especially the more isolated penitentiaries, were frequently training grounds for hardened or recidivist criminals, Salvadoran authorities felt that prisoners had to be divided.[518] Women and youths, they believed, should be particularly protected from the influences of older and irredeemable criminals.

Believing that government should address the particular or peculiar problems facing women, officials and the public wanted to protect women from the contaminating influences of other prisoners. Usulután Police Chief J. César Amaya argued that because women needed privacy for their "personal needs" and female prisoners shared the

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[516] "Evasion de reos en la ciudad de Sonsonate," *El Día* (9 November 1933).
[517] "La criminalidad," *El Día* (13 November 1933).
[518] Piccato stated that Mexico City's Belem jail was "an enclosed space for the re-creation of criminality rather than a place for punishment or regeneration." Piccato, *Suspects*, 61-62.

holding cells with male drunks, the police needed an entirely new building.[519] When they argued that women needed to be segregated for their protection, and be in separate prisons supervised by female guards, Salvadoran officials often turned to extant laws.

Many Salvadoran laws required segregating prisoners, including The Law for Prison Administration, which separated men and women. If prison spaces were contiguous, the law added, officials had to prevent communication between the sections because verbal contact could also contaminate the weaker party.[520] The laws required additional segregation besides simply by sex. Requiring that jailers separate prisoners by their stage in the criminal justice process, the law divided those who had completed the juridical process or been absolved, from those in process, and those groups, in turn, from simple debtors. Finally, the three main cities of the Republic were supposed to have special jails for government functionaries.[521] The military governments never substantively adhered to the law's provisions, but embracing and defending patriarchy and paternalism, took the provisions separating men and women most seriously.

Agreeing that female inmates should also be treated differently than the men, the *martinato*'s officials generally provided better care and comfort to the women. For example, when San Salvador Women's Prison Superior, Sister Mother (*Sor Madre*) Benigna Bedel requested appropriate uniforms for the inmates she appealed to the regime's clearly stated patriarchal and paternalistic goals of morally protecting and physically sheltering the women. Faced with a request that prevented nakedness and kept

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[519] "Director de Policía de Usulután J. César Amaya al General, Tercera Brigada," (12 May 1933), AGN, FG, 1933 Box 3, "Solicitudes, Diligencias."

[520] Title I (Disposiciones Generales), articles 1 and 2 of the *Ley Reglamentaria de Carceles*. Rafael Barraza R, *Nueva Recopilación de Leyes Administrativas* vol IV (San Salvador, ES: Centro Editorial Helios, 1929).

[521] Ibid, Title I, articles 1-3. Article 5 stated that until the government completed the public officials' jails, functionaries would be held in the Municipal halls (*salas municipales*), but if they abused the privilege they would be held in "common prison."

the prisoners warm, Minister of Justice Miguel A. Araujo approved it.[522] The *martinato*'s judges, mayors and state bureaucrats almost universally described the women's jails and prisons as comparatively orderly, clean and safe. In 1932, the Second Judge of the First Criminal Court of San Salvador reported that the San Salvador Women's Prison was hygienic and secure, that officials maintained order and discipline, and that the prisoners presented no complaints.[523] Inspecting the prisons the following year, the Sub-secretary of Justice noted that although 31 out of the 60 prisoners were not processed and sentenced, the women's clothes were clean, their health was sound, and the space was hygienic. According to his report, their only problem was the deteriorating roof and a damaged sewing shop.[524] Reporting that the city's women's prison only lacked suitable beds and a sufficiently high wall to prevent escapes, the mayor of Santa Ana assured the public that he would begin repairs immediately.[525] These reports reflect how the *martinato* presented an image of competence, instead of the physical reality of the jail, or the satisfaction of the captives.

Although female religious orders still played and important role in women's prisons as during in the Colonial Era, military rulers decreased the importance of these women within state institutions. The religious orders played a secondary role in the state prisoners, but the Sisters of the Good Shepherd still ran a reformatory for "fallen" women, and many residents saw this as a desirable alternative to the government prison. For example, when Santa Ana police arrested fourteen year-old Cristina Mena in 1938, her family requested that the state send her to the Good Shepherd Reformatory, instead of

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[522] "Ministro de Justicia M.A. Araujo to Ministro de Gobernación," 10 November 1932, AGN, FG, 1933, Box 4.

[523] "Visita a la carcel de mujeres," *El Día* (20 February 1932).

[524] "Visita a la carcel de mujeres," *El Día* (12 January 1933).

[525] ""Mejoras en las cerceles de mujeres de Santa Ana," *El Día* (21 September 1933).

putting her on the state Prostitute Registry.[526] After Mena was not immediately transferred, Departmental Governor José Lorezana ordered that the minor be relocated to an honorable "home" or reformatory so that she would not be "contaminated by criminals."[527] In this case, government officials again demonstrated their desire to separate young women from hardened criminals, even when these were also female. Because of state policies that reduced the autonomy of religious institutions, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd remained one of the few groups that cared for and reformed the bodies and souls of "fallen women" by the late 1930s.

Believing that homosexuality threatened the nation and the prison population, the military approved conjugal visits to combat this problem in the 1930s. In May 1935, the 203 prisoners housed in the Central Penitentiary requested conjugal visits on the grounds that if male convicts lost contact with their wives and female partners, their re-introduction to society would be endangered. The *martinato*'s officials took the argument further. Arguing that the visits would improve the jail's morality by decreasing prostitution and homosexuality, and the diseases that spread as a result of these practices, the government approved. Emphasizing redemption, social responsibility, public morality and public health, they supported conjugal visits continued throughout the *martinato*.[528]

Salvadorans were not alone, as politicians and criminologists throughout Latin America and the Western world also promoted conjugal visits to combat immorality. For

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[526] "Director de Policía Tte. Cnel Eladio Campos O al Ministro de Gobernación Tomás Calderón," 13 May 1938, AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-12.

[527] "Gobernador. Departamental de Santa Ana José Antonio Lorezana to, Ministro de Gobernación Tomás Calderón" 21 June 1938, AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-12.

[528] "Los reos de al penitenciaria central han hecho una solicitud al presidente Martínez," *Diario Latino* (3 May 1935).

instance, Mexican criminologists like Raúl Gonzales Enriquez "pioneered" the idea of conjugal visits to combat homosexuality in the 1930s.[529] Latin American social theorists feared the consequences of institutions, like army barracks where males were isolated from wives and other females. For example, concerned that homosexual acts and even masturbation were dangerous to health and psychological stability, Brazilian doctors and other social reformers prescribed prostitutes as an antidote to the dangerous and moral contagion.[530] Despite the conjugal visits, Salvadoran theorists did not publicly debate male or female homosexuality very thoroughly, because they didn't envision that as a particularly Salvadoran problem.

Limited by their gendered vision, the military had fewer fears about the women's prisons and female visitors to the jails, which contributed to frequent escapes. In addition, because the national government was less concerned by conditions in the women's prisons, they took little action to prevent disorder. For example, when two female prisoners escaped from the San Salvador women's prison with the apparent assistance of their lovers in 1931, the government only responded by posting guards outside the walls.[531] State officials responded with temporary solutions that never addressed the deeper issues within the female penitentiary. Women helped their incarcerated male friends and partners escape because they were less closely monitored. Although varied in their administration, most prisons allowed inmates a surprising level of internal autonomy, and access to the outside world. Since prison guards did not search

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[529] Rob Buffington, "Los Jotos: Contested Visions of Homosexuality in Modern Mexico," in Daniel Balderston and Donna Guy, *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America* (New York, NY: NYU University Press, 1997).

[530] Peter Beattie, "Conflicting Penile Codes: Modern Masculinity and Sodomy in the Brazilian Military, 1860-1916," in Balderston and Guy, *Sexuality*.

[531] "Se fugan dos reos de la carcel de mujeres," *El Día* (13 August 1931).

female visitors as thoroughly as men, they smuggled in weapons and alcohol. There are too many inmate brawls and jailbreaks to list here, but in one example from the late *martinato*, drunken prisoners assaulted two security agents. Expressing shock over the ability of these men to have and consume alcohol, the administration announced energetic efforts to investigate, discover the truth, repress the inappropriate behavior, and bring order to the facilities.[532] Little changed however, and women were poorly supervised in prisons throughout the *martinato*.

In the late 1930s, Martínez silenced criticisms surrounding the prison, as he silenced virtually all dialogue. Judges who visited the Central Penitentiary and the Women's Prison in 1937 now reported that all of the facilities were in good condition and that the inmates had no complaints regarding "bad treatment." Because these this implausible report differed so radically from popular perceptions of the prison system, the regime had to explain how this could have possibly occurred. The authors of the report argued that the men's prisons had undergone significant improvements under Martínez.[533] In preparation for Martínez' 1939 re-election bid, the campaign reported on the nation's widespread crime in 1937, in order to later limit reportage demonstrate improvements in policing. They simultaneously touted improvements in the jails but also reported the fights between inmates, because the regime believed these conflicts did not show their administrative failures, but simply reflected poorly on the inmates.[534]

State officials throughout the *martinato* agreed that the country needed at least one new state penitentiary. The three older buildings, in San Salvador, Santa Ana and

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[532] "El juez primero de lo criminal ordena seguir un informativo," *Diario Latino* (30 May 1938).
[533] "Visita de carceles se realizó ayer en la capital," *Diario Latino* (1 October 1937).
[534] There are too many to mention but for an example during the 1937 "crime wave" and response: "lamentable suceso se registro en la penitenciaria ayer," *Diario Latino* (23 October 1937).

San Miguel were outdated and deteriorating. The penal system was neglected overall, and conditions were even worse in the eastern cities and departments that had smaller budgets. As early as 1938, Martínez' officials reported in the newspapers that they had allocated money to improve facilities in San Miguel and other eastern cities, but little changed.[535] The penal system remained in abysmal shape overall, after the fall of Martínez.

Facing a crumbling penitentiary system, the PRUD built new structures to house the growing prison population and explored different ways to resolve these demographic and infrastructural realities. Reviving ideas from a 1932 congressional debate, President Osorio asked for U.S. assistance to design and build a penal colony in 1951. The assistant director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons, Frank Loveland, prepared a report on the Salvadoran penitentiary system. Confirming that the problems reported under the *martinato* continued, and that population increases may have worsened prison conditions, Loveland requested significant changes including administrative improvements. The poorer regions of the country, like the northern and eastern Departments of Chalatenango, Usulután, and Morazán faced overcrowding and limited budgets. Because the prisons of Chalatenango and Usulután remained under the control of the military commandant, corruption was rampant, and Loveland recommended that a civilian-military division of labor would improve their management.[536]

Poor leadership or coordination between the various security forces led to frequent jailbreaks in the 1950s. In 1951, the PRUD implemented a series of reforms that

[535] "Considerase el mejoramiento de carceles," *Diario Latino* (16 May 1938).

[536] Roberto E Canessa, *Memoria de los Actos del Poder Ejecutivo en el Ramo de Justicia 1952-1953* (Imprenta Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador: 1954).

directly addressed prison security, and reduced escapes from 69 in 1952 to 19 in 1953.[537] Directly addressing the report's criticisms, the regime stopped using local soldiers from the barracks to patrol the prisons and created a new unit of prison guards. Although the PRUD's later reports overstated the improvements, fewer prisoners escaped after the military introduced of a new and more expansive repressive body.

Despite the PRUD's proclamations, prison conditions remained deplorable in 1955, and student newspaper *Opinión Estudiantil*, revealed a consistent pattern of structural violence. As a larger pattern of abuse and neglect that weakened the bodies of those held within the jails through disease, malnutrition and beatings, a prisoner died in a police cell from hunger in 1955. The unstated policy allowed undesirables such as thieves and gang members, to suffer and die without ever appearing before a judge. Conditions were so brutal that prisoners committed crimes in the jails in order to force an appearance before a tribunal, or would injure themselves to be taken to the relative safety and comfort of the hospital.[538] Because of the near-absolute disdain that the police officers held for the alleged criminals, these strategies could backfire, and prisoners die without receiving medical attention. Disease was also rampant, as five men died from tuberculosis in the jails of San Salvador during holy week (Easter) 1955.[539] Because the military government and many in the public did not see these people as a valuable part of the Salvadoran body, they treated them as a disease to be removed with harsh methods.

Visiting the jails and recording valuable prisoner testimonies in 1955, the San Salvador Fourth Justice of the Peace prepared a series of reports that reinforced *Opinión*'s condemnations. Unfortunately, the original documents did not survive, and

[537] Ibid.
[538] *Opinión Estudiantil* (29 March 1955).
[539] *Opinión Estudiantil* (19 April 1955).

prisoners likely described their conditions with the intent to secure their release and garner maximum sympathy. Nevertheless, the surviving evidence catalogued a wide variety of abuses. As unidentified prisoners died, their captors unceremoniously disposed of their bodies, sometimes after several days. Extremely ill prisoners were not removed from initially uninfected populations, and none received adequate medical attention. Minors and adults alike, died from hunger.[540] In an essay that asked "how would they [prisoners] emerge corrected?" *Opinion*'s editors argued that police abuses worsened the prisoner's behavior.[541] Instead of transferring children suspected of gang behavior to a juvenile detention center as the law required, the police simply arrested these youths in the many street sweeps alongside hardened criminals.[542] Arguing that these policies only led to increased delinquency, longer imprisonments, and declined faith in the nation's police, prisons, and judiciary, the paper demanded substantive changes.

Despite promising to reform the police, and creating institution to reform criminals, president Lemus nonetheless continued Osorio's repressive policies that simply removed mobile populations like juvenile criminals, prostitutes and peddlers from the streets. Initially waiting to see whether the Lemus administration would actually address crime and police brutality as they promised, *Opinion* increased their aggressiveness as the PRUD failed to deliver substantive reforms in 1956. The government mobilized an aggressive propaganda campaign to convince the public that they had, and would continue to combat the ills of Salvadoran society. The editors of Opinion disagreed. In March they reported that the Court of Dangerous Subjects was not

[540] There are several articles that repeat similar information. For one example see *Opinion Estudiantil* (18 July 1953).
[541] *Opinion Estudiantil* (19 April 1955).
[542] *Opinion Estudiantil* (5 April 1955).

rehabilitating Salvadorans, due to insufficient funds to create and expand mental health, juvenile, and criminal reform institutions. Continuing their open attacks on the police, the paper accused them of not investigating crimes but instead repressing citizens, like the women who hawked their wares in public.[543] The editors argued that these women, like the prostitutes also targeted by the Court of Dangerous Subjects, were not the real social danger.

The police also used the information gathered by the *Juez de Peligrosidad* to arrest and even kill criminals. City residents found the bodies of recidivist thieves and gang members, who were registered and tracked by the police, dead in the streets.[544] Using increasingly violent and arbitrary policies, the PRUD regimes hoped to maintain the social order. Facing a burgeoning urban population and growing crime rates, they responded with repression. Across 1956, student activists called for a substantive reorganization of the police, and no more beatings, electric torture devices like the electric iron, the hood, and other tortures.[545] Despite the public campaign, the PRUD did not take significant action to substantively address these criticisms. Only when faced with a growing organized opposition amidst an economic crisis, would the regime again try to convince of the good intentions. In 1960, the public rejected the PRUD and their propaganda.

[543] *Opinión Estudiantil* (22 May 1956).
[544] *Opinión Estudiantil* (13 April 1957).
[545] *Opinión Estudiantil* (17 November 1956).

D. The Death Penalty

Since the country was founded, Salvadoran policymakers have adopted and supported the death penalty, but governments have used it in different ways. Following a long-standing political tradition, the military constitutions drafted and ratified by Martínez and the PRUD allowed the state to execute those who engaged in military crimes as well as common criminals. Nineteenth-century Conservatives and Liberals shared a belief that government had a right to execute citizens for crimes that endangered the state or were morally repugnant. Despite wanting to reduce political executions, Salvadoran Liberals prescribed the death penalty for crimes such as murder, parricide and, of course, treason in their archetypal *magna carta*, the 1886 Constitution. Although the military regimes never seriously considered abolishing the death penalty, they noted how infrequency to actually executed opponents and criminals. When Martínez wrote a new constitution in 1939, in his attempt to retain the executive in perpetuity, he maintained the death penalty. Claiming to return to the principles of 1886, but updating them to the twentieth century, The Revolutionary Party's also reserved the right to execute citizens in 1950. Nonetheless, in order to justify their legislation, the military governments debated the merits and use of state executions between 1931 and 1960.

When the military wanted to mobilize "popular opinion" in their favor, they could use a death penalty debate to assert their strength and their mercy, and to demonize the judiciary. At times when the military government felt politically threatened, government leaders frequently emphasized their ability to maintain public order, and how the public demanded even more executions. During the 1937 "crime wave," for instance, as the national legislature discussed whether to increase criminal penalties, Assemblyman

Carlos Portillo stated that legislative reform was unnecessary. Arguing that the laws were perfectly well-constructed, Portillo stated that the judicial system failed to properly punish criminals, and encouraged recidivism. Believing that the threat of incarceration did not deter some criminals, Portillo argued that irredeemable criminals needed to be removed from the nation, and therefore the number of people eligible for the death penalty should be increased.[546] Despite these arguments, the officials of the *martinato* did not legally expand the death penalty. They did, however, publicly announce their tough stance towards criminals.

In addition, Salvadoran policymakers and theorists discussed the death penalty when they revised legislation, as in the months before the legislature approved the 1939 Constitution. Military governments retained the right to execute people for much the same reasons as their Liberal predecessors in 1886. The 1939 Constitution allowed the death penalty for military crimes and crimes against the state like espionage and sedition and expanded the definition of parricide. The outcome had never been in question, so although the debate allowed some opponents to publicly express their views, it was mostly an opportunity for the government to defend and clarify their position.[547] Making it clear that the government most disapproved of crimes against the state, and crimes against the father, the new constitution reinforced the military's hierarchical and patriarchal vision of society.

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[546] Carlos Portillo, "Debe ponerse coto a la criminalidad, y ello solo es posible estableciendo la pena capital," *Diario Latino* (13 September 1937).

[547] Title V (Rights and Guarantees), Article 35 of the 1939 Constitution stated:

La pena de muerte podrá aplicarse por delitos de carácter militar o por delitos graves contra la seguridad del Estado: traición, espionaje, rebelión, sedición, conspiración o proposición para cometer éstos, y por los delitos de parricidio, asesinato, robo o incendio si se siguiere muerte en cualquiera de estos dos últimos casos. Prohíbense las penas perpetuas, las infamantes, las proscriptivas y toda especie de tormento.

"Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes," http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/02438376436132496754491/p0000001.htm#I_2_ .

When the PRUD also discussed the death penalty debate during the drafting of the 1950 Constitution, abolitionists more effectively voiced their opinions and shaped policy. Although the PRUD used some different language to justify execution, the criminal acts punishable by death remained effectively the same.[548] Believing that jails were ineffective deterrents, and that most criminals did not change their behavior when caught and prosecuted, death penalty proponents demanded far greater numbers of executions. To counter the argument, and interpreting the laws to express their maximum use, the Constitutional Commission limited the state's power to execute. They argued that departments or municipalities could pass laws restricting the death penalty, but could not expand executions beyond constitutionally outlined limits. In addition, asserting that the death penalty was ineffective in preventing murder, according to scientific or empirical evidence, they still concluded that fear of penalties indeed deterred the great majority from committing minor crimes. Despite the fact that the Commission officially stated that the death penalty was not a deterrent, they did not request or demand that the military abolish executions.[549] Voicing their opposition to indiscriminate executions enabled them to establish legal precedent and implicitly criticize government policies.

Some critics forcefully argued for increased executions. Nostalgically describing Spanish colonial practices and argued that they should be revised and updated, PRUD criminologist Felicitas Alvarado believed thieves and vagrant should be killed. Using Guatemala as a successful example, Alvarado argued that the Guatemalans eliminated a

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[548] *Constitución Politica de la República de El Salvador 1962* (Imprenta Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador: 1971); *Constitución Politica de la República de El Salvador 1950* in Asemblea Constituyente, *Documentos Historicos de la Constitución Politica Salvadoreña de 1950* (Imprenta Nacional, San Salvador, El Salvador: 1951).

[549] Julio Fausto Fernández, Manuel Castro Ramirez, and Enrique Córdova, *Exposición de Motivos del Projecto de Código Penal salvadoreño*, as quoted in Arrieta Gallegos, *codigo*, 324.

"veritable plague' of criminal gangs by executing recidivists in the central plaza. Adding that 50-60% of Salvadoran prisoners were recidivists, she was justifying the mass extermination or at least the wide repression of suspected criminals. Some Salvadorans Just as some Salvadorans wanted harsher punishments, others believed in redemption and rehabilitation.

In order to quiet the critics who desired complete abolition on the other hand, PRUD leaders articulated the theory of exceptional executions. Arguing that states, like families, should have the discretion to exercise kindness or generosity at most times but reserved the right to punish severely when the need arose, theorists Mariano Ruiz Funes defended government executions. Always tempering the justification by emphasizing limits, Funes stressed that the laws nonetheless outlawed state terror.[550] Fervently rejecting abolition, the military reminded the public that they rarely performed executions. It is true that the praetorian regimes performed official and public executions infrequently but this did not prevent government agents from torturing and killing many people illegally or clandestinely.[551] The military-era Constitutions all forbade torture. Crafted during the Civil War, the last two Constitutions had provisions protecting the human rights of Salvadorans. Clearly, as is too well known, these proscriptions were frequently violated.

Although the military governments frequently asserted their right to formally execute citizens, the state performed very few formal executions between *la matanza* and 1960. Martínez faced tremendous opposition when he executed conspirators in 1944. In

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[550] *Ibid*, 326-27.

[551] Secretaria ds Información de la Presidencia de la República, *Constitución de la República de El Salvador 1983* (Imprenta Nacional San Salvador, El Salvador: 1984).

response to the public opposition to state murder, President Osorio, claimed that he executed no one during his administration, despite considerable political opposition. Also claiming to oppose state executions, Lemus reduced the sentence of twenty-five men that the Supreme Court sentenced to death in the Osorio administration. He argued he personally pressured the legislature to only execute recidivist criminals.[552] Lemus thus claimed by 1958 to have improved the system of law and order by reorganizing the police forces, building new prisons, limiting the death penalty and abolishing the hated Law for the Protection of Democracy. The regime illegally abused Salvadorans despite these legal, organizational, or juridical changes. Osorio and Lemus thus propagated the fiction that the Revolutionary Party maintained the legal right to executive its people but almost never actually performed the killings.

While publicly claiming to reject the death penalty, the PRUD routinely killed common criminals and political prisoners in their many jails and holding cells, and dumped others on the sides of roads and ditches. The public was not as bothered by the murder of common criminals, however. Informal executions, like with the *ley fuga* or through neglect in prisons and holding cells killed many Salvadorans. These executions did not enter the death penalty debate. The widespread application of torture, violence and neglect by the capitol's police forces showed that key leaders of the national police rejected rehabilitative policies and the public outcry remained muted.

[552] "R.P.Gwynn to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00/1-2458 D 400 (24 January 1958).

Salvadoran Criminology: Redemption versus Recidivism

The military both during the *martinato* under the Revolution Party initially and repressively moved against those they saw as problematic, dangerous, unruly or immoral. There were always those within and around the government who disagreed with the military leadership's overall goals and sought to implement different strategies. Criminologists, regarless of their policy desires, largely accepted that scientific and rational study of criminal behavior was necessary and valuable and that the state should construct institutions to either punish or regenerate prisoners. Athough policymakers debated the balance of repression and redemption ultimately Salvadorans did not substantively challenge the military's dominant vision of a patriarchal and corporate society.

Throughout the period of military rule, many Salvadoran criminologists believed in the genetic or inheritable foundations of pathology, and thus argued that many criminals, including thieves, were irredeemable. Often tempering their beliefs with the recognition that at least some groups and individuals, most notably women and children, could still be saved, they nevertheless believed many adult criminals needed to be removed from public spaces. Since they believed recidivists were undeterred by prison, the military took away their civil rights. Sometimes defined broadly, recidivist could be homeless, juvenile gang members, or prostitutes. Frequently captured without having committed any recent or proven crime, they were imprisoned according to their identity, as "known thieves," for instance. If any "reputable person" accused these individuals of dangerous behavior, the police could arrest them. Suspicion was enough, because their

status as known criminals made them guilty, and placed them in a less honorable position within the social body.

Under the *martinato*, the government used their labor on public works projects or simply removed them from the streets. In late 1932, for example, the police captured fifteen people in San Salvador and sent them to work on the roads of Cojutepeque in the Department of Cuscatlán.[553] Arguing that many people had "criminal tendencies," Salvadoran police in the 1930s used "preventative" policies against thieves and prostitutes. They also rounded up "known criminals," mostly thieves, vagrants and prostitutes, in sweeps before the August and July religious and patronal feasts of San Salvador and Santa Ana.[554] In order to remove hardened criminals from population centers, the Salvadoran Minister of Public Works Roberto Parker wanted to construct a prison on Zacatillo Island in the shark-filled waters of the Gulf of Fonseca. He hoped to place around 600 irredeemable prisoners in this fort and abandon the principles of rehabilitation.[555] There were others who believed that prisoners could be redeemed.

Despite the widespread acceptance of arresting criminals who had currently committed no crime, this majority opinion was contested. Although many military theorists throughout the decades believed that certain people were beyond repair, and should be isolated or removed from society, others argued for redemption. In early 1932, in order to apply modern penal science methods to morally regenerate the prisoners, Congressional deputy Dr. Manzana proposed a penal colony on the National Estate Santa Rosa.[556] The Assembly considered and debated the motion but ultimately abandoned

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[553] 15 ladrones q'apresaron [sic] enviados a Cojutepeque," *El Día* (24 August 1932).
[554] See numerous examples from *El Día*, *Diatio Latino*, and *El Tiempo*.
[555] *Revista Judicial* (January/February 1932).
[556] Ibid.

both proposals. The debates demonstrate the divisions among policymakers under the *martinato*. Also defending rehabilitation, the *Boletín de Policia* published an article in 1938, based on the theories of Emilio Mira that outlined a plan of action to help limit hereditary tendencies.[557] Into the 1940s as Salvadoran newspapers often published articles that clearly recognized that human beings could be redeemed. Although these authors argued that state action could counter their tendencies and hereditary failures, the repressive policies continued.

PRUD criminologists even more thoroughly revived the language and policies of neo-Positivist and neo-eugenist theorists. The official and majority position regarding recidivists during the PRUD shifted from the *martinato*'s ambivalent rhetoric. The number of people placed in the lost category by government functionaries increased across the decades, alongside the growth in population and crime. Rehabilitating Lombroso, determinism, and eugenics, Salvadoran theorist J. Gonzales Llana argued that eugenics and preventative measure were effective strategies in a 1952 article.[558] Despite the fact that Nazi failures discredited much physical and genetic social engineering, Salvadoran criminologists argued that anthropological and sociological research could be effectively used to identify recidivists, who would then be isolated or eliminated. This applied to violent criminals, thieves, vagrants or prostitutes.

In order to defend or justify more formalized and institutionalized "preventative" measures in the 1950s, the PRUD emphasized these theories concerning irredeemable citizens, and established courts to identify these recidivists. The Court of Dangerous Subjects (*Juzgado de peligrosidad*) targeted people who threatened the moral order such

[557] *Boletin de la Policia* (September 1938).
[558] *Boletin de la Policia* (January/February 1952).

as drunks, vagrants, prostitutes, and thieves, and could be incarcerated on the basis of crimes they might potentially commit. Creating the legal foundation for legally arresting people who had committed no crime, some social lworkers and professionals defended the law as having the potential to provide care for troubled Salvadorans.

In 1965, a team of researchers at the San Salvador School of Social Work examined the theory and laws regarding States of Social Dangerousness in the 1950s in order to determine if the government should continue to support the project. Despite proudly noting that El Salvador was the first Central American, and one the first Latin American countries, to pass a Law of Dangerous Subjects, they nonetheless sought to improve the flawed system. Wanting to know how caseworkers could modify the behavior of imperiled or dangerous individuals, they reviewed documentary evidence, interviewed prisoners and their friends and families, administered a battery of personality and intelligence tests, as well as physical exams. Hoping to construct an "Index of Dangerousness," that state officials and social workers could use to categorize their "patients," and ultimately determine whether or not they were a menace to society, they tabulated the data. Seemingly well intentioned, the researchers wanted to better treat those considered "enemies of society."[559]

Citing major theorists, authors and policymakers, they argued that the idea of Social Dangerousness was contested, but necessary given the high incidence of crime and recidivism. Debating whether someone could be categorized as a danger to society before a crime, or only after a crime the social workers discussed the theories of criminologists like Grispigni, Munido, Ruiz-Funes and Laudet. This was important,

[559] Maritza Aguillon, Berta Calderón de Baires, Ana de Jesús Calderón, and José Antonio Leiva, *La Peligrosidad: Investigación, diagnostoco, pronostico y tratamiento* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Ministry of Education, School of Social Work, 1965 Thesis).

because someone could be labeled a recidivist, even if they hade never been convicted or even arrested.[560] In order to address the "widely held belief" that El Salvador had one of the highest levels of criminality in the world, the PRUD passed the Law and the Tribunal of Dangerous Subjects in 1952. Covering individuals ranging from the unemployed, substance abusers, vagrants, the homeless, prostitutes, pimps, gamblers, liars, con-artists, pornographers, the mentally ill, witch doctors (*curanderos*), pedophiles, those who sold alcohol to minors, as well as those inclined towards theft, the Salvadoran law was very broad.[561]

Unfortunately, the government devoted very little money to treatment and prevention, and the tribunal had only one judge, a secretary, two medical professionals, three social workers and seven other auxiliary staff. These individuals were not even exclusively devoted to the Tribunal, and had caseloads beyond those designated as socially dangerous.[562] The regime did not create new centers for reform and so those registered under the new laws were simply sent to the same places as before and largely received the same treatment. Despite the good intentions of some criminologists and social workers, the law did little besides legalize the arbitrary arrests of Salvadoran citizens.

Although the police could arbitrarily arrest people with greater legal justification under the new law, it is difficult to evaluate the law's numerical impact. The numbers of people categorized as socially dangerous varied from a high of 257 in 1957, to a low of

[560] Ibid.
[561] *Ley de Estado Peligroso*.
[562] Aguillon, Calderón, Calderón, and Leiva, *La Peligrosidad*.

80 in 1959 when the regime abandoned the tribunal.[563] The documentary evidence sheds little light on how the laws actually changed the experience of these so-called professional thieves, drunks, and prostitutes. The social work study noted that a majority of the time the police arrested the dangerous subjects for suspicion and not for actual crimes. What is less clear is how many people fell into the custody of the repressive arm of the state without committing a crime.

The authors of the 1965 report lamented that the Assembly dissolved the tribunal in 1959, and the PRUD completely abandoned the project in the 1960s. After the PRUD fell, the new military governments lamented the high levels of Salvadoran crime, agreed that preventive imprisonment was desirable, and again registered socially dangerous citizens in 1963. Applying many of the same methods and policies of their predecessors in the PRUD, they arbitrarily arrested people designated undesirable and who occupied public spaces without authorization. The sweeps of vagrants, the homeless, the unemployed, and prostitutes continued unabated and perhaps increased as the sheer numbers of people fitting these categories increased. Debating the 1973 Constitution, scholars and jurists formalized policies that broadened criminal penalties and surveillance to the mentally ill including alcoholics, and "habitual or professional" delinquents.[564] Judges gained tremendous power to determine who was a recidivist. They could also assign various penalties or programs for re-education and re-adaptation. The law allowed penalties that ranged from increased jail sentences to urban and rural forced labor to medical or psychological internment. Judges also granted provisional freedom as well as

[563] August to December 1955 (191), Jan to Dec 1956 (197), Jan to Dec 1957 (257), Jan to Dec 1958 (237), Jan to Jul 1959 (80). The Five Criminal Tribunals received 687 files for those categorized as dangerous in 1959. In 1960 officials registered 24, 17 in 1961, 5 in 1962, but 97 in 1963 as the PCN sought to consolidate its power and legitimacy after its "electoral" victory. Ibid.

[564] Art 110, secs. 4-7 of the 1960 *Codigo Procesal Penal*.

limits on liberties that ranged from requirement to present themselves at work or court, as well prohibitions against driving or carrying arms. Unlike the previous law, judges now only applied most of these provisions after someone had actually committed a crime.[565]

The positivist or eugenic revival was not embraced by all Salvadoran theorists. A few criminologist and reformers rejected hereditary or determinist arguments even during the Revolutionary governments. Asserting that pathology was not biologically inherited, Julio Medina argued strongly in the *Boletín de la Policía* that juvenile delinquents could indeed be treated. Citing abandonment as the prime cause of juvenile delinquency, and arguing that this held throughout the world, Medina proposed a juvenile correctional system instead of a protectorate, or segregationist policy. Stating emphatically that criminals were made and not born, he believed that education would redeem the youths.[566] The proponents of redemption became a minority in the 1950s.

Salvadoran policymakers and theorists such as Dr. Manuel Castro Ramírez across the 1960s and 1970s, José Enrique Silva in the latter debates and Dr. Julio Fausto Fernández and Dr. Enrique Córdova were instrumental in recording the alternate voices in 1960.[567] Although their impact was limited, they hoped to provide a basis for the social, political and legal change of future decades. Part of global, hemispheric and Latin American projects to modernize criminology, these jurists were among the few who substantially revised national penal codes in the 1950s and 1960s. Ruiz-Funes, who helped draft the 1953 Salvadoran Law of Social Danger, also worked on the 1941

[565] Arts 105, 106, 111, and 112 of the 1960 *Codigo Procesal Penal*.
[566] *Boletin de la Policia* (March/April 1952).
[567] Manuel Arrieta Gallegos, *El Nuevo código penal salvadoreño: Comentarios a la parte general* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Imprenta Nacional, 1973), 4-5.

Uruguayan Vagrancy Law, and the 1942 Chilean Law against Antisocial Behavior.[568] Their completed works and published debates influenced later efforts in other countries. Believing that science could solve society's ills, they promoted preventive policies for recidivists, with a deep Positivist legacy.[569]

Salvadoran theorists never concluded the debate over social dangerousness in the 1960s. When Salvadorans revised their legal codes in the 1970s, they no longer prescribed exact penalties based on scientifically determined scenarios, and still debated actual versus possible crime.[570] Continuing the discussion over whether Salvadoran police could legally (not extra-legally) arrest potential criminals into the future, events in the 1980s reaffirmed that like previous decades, military regimes sacrifice the niceties of the laws in order to arrest, kill, and torture Salvadoran citizens.

Juvenile Delinquents

Along with murder and prostitution, juvenile delinquency was the crime that most occupied the attention of the public imagination and the military regimes from the 1930s to the 1950s. Often organized into gangs, these young men committed numerous crimes ranging primarily from petty theft, to breaking and entering, to aggravated assault. Despite the fact that young women also stole goods, and broke into homes, the regimes did not often see them as a serious problem target policies that addressed their behavior. Much like the officials that dealt with prisons, most Salvadoran criminologists believed that women's inherent natures put them at risk for different behaviors. Girls, therefore,

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[568] Ruiz-Funes wrote widely and in 1927 received the prestigious Lombroso prize. http://www.criminologiahispana.org/funes.htm

[569] Arrieta G, " código," 6-7.

[570] *Ibid*, 128.

commanded different kind of attention, policies, and institutions. Policymakers put male truants, homeless and displaced children in the same categories, however, and did not sufficiently try to protect them from adult criminals and problems. Because most Salvadoran criminal theorists believed that young people could be treated or redeemed, juvenile delinquency inspired the greatest variety of debate regarding treatment and punishment. Convinced that most of young people's criminal actions were not their fault, instead but inspired by others, theorists often supported reformatories and not incarceration. Ultimately however, the actions of the military regimes insufficiently addressed the unique problems faced by Salvadoran youth.

Agreeing that juvenile criminality was preventable, civilian social reformers, so-called "liberal" newspaper editors and authors believed in the corrective and instructive role of the state even before the military took power. When *El Día*'s editors described a particularly grisly machete duel between two male minors in 1931, the writer blamed government youth homes. Currently providing only their basic physical needs, the author argued that "correctional" facilities and that reformatories, needed to also remodel souls. Asserting that one successful example, the National Police-run *Escuela Correccional* in San Salvador, was insufficient, *El Dia* asked philanthropic organizations to invest more money into educating youth.[571] Believing that the state could teach young people morality and practical skills, the editors demanded greater efforts to create hard working Christian citizens.

Since Salvadoran policymakers under Martínez believed that reform and penal institutions should target people according to their group identity, they argued that women should be segregated from men, and that men and women's correctional facilities

[571] See "La delincuencia infantil," *El Día* (30 Jan 1931).

should be segregated by age. Differing radically from the "egalitarian pretension" of Mexican Revolutionary penal reformers and their Liberal predecessors, Salvadoran military leaders embraced segregation.[572] Like Mexican criminologists of previous decades, Martínez' state and municipal officials recognized that jails designed for and inhabited by adult criminals were inappropriate places for youthful offenders, because they trained children for a life of crime.[573] A writer for *Diario Latino* argued in 1936 that children could be morally improved through education, but that adult men should be given remunerative work. And when they were finished, the state should give them even more work.[574]

In the 1940s and 1950s, military policymakers agreed with their predecessors that juvenile delinquents should be separated from older prisoners, but did little to accomplish this goal. In a 1947 public works planning meeting to address the "rampant" problem of thieves and burglars, Dr. Brannon, undersecretary of Foreign Affairs and Justice under Castaneda Castro, proposed increased prison construction. In order to best deal with the specific problems of youth criminals, Brannon argued that authorities should construct a colony for minor delinquents, in addition to prisons for adults. Reflecting a belief in the salubrious effects of nature and rural physical labor had salubrious effects, Brannon suggested the *finca Agronomía* in Sonsonate, as a place to isolate them, remodel their bodies and souls, engage them with nature, and teach them agricultural work.[575] Although this project was not completed, the PRUD changed the Rafael Campo School

[572] Buffington, Robert. *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), chapter 4, "Revolutionary Reform."

[573] Piccato, *Suspects*.

[574] "Educar a nuestro pueblo es la major obra de reconstruccion o mejoramiento social," *Diario Latino* (24 January 1936).

[575] "R.E. Wilson to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.* RG 84, DF 816.15/0076 (18 July 1947).

for indigenous youth into a rural reformatory for male juveniles. Despite arguing that criminals needed to be separated from the loci of crime in the cities, as well as their potential corruptors on the prisons, the government primarily funded urban experiments, like the national police's school for juveniles.

Believing that educating the children of the rank-and-file soldiers was essential to building a loyal citizenry, the military created the National Guard's School for Boys (*Escuela de Niños "Bran*"). Officers recognized that the many Salvadoran children in the streets presented the regimes with a serious social problem. Learning few marketable skills, these children often grew up to inhabit the urban spaces, physical and economic, that the military tried to eliminate. In order to deal with these issues, military leaders created urban reformatories, like the San Salvador Police Department's Reform School (*Escuela Protector de Menores*) and the Correctional School for Boys (*Correcional de Menores*) in the 1930s. Housed in an annex to the main building of the General Direction of Police in San Salvador, the Correctional Schools was closely linked to police activities. Officials positively described the facility, but the school was not very popular with the boys who were forced to remain within its walls.

Facing a seeming plague of juvenile delinquents who traveled in groups and robbed homes, shops, markets and persons, Salvadoran policymakers blamed the influence of adults. Newspapers reported that thirty percent of thieves in San Salvador were between the ages of twelve and eighteen, and that many of these young people organized into gangs. Although *Los Pulgas*, led by fifteen-year old Juan Ramos Clavel or "*Clavelito*," was reportedly one of the most notorious bands of youthful robbers, the

government still described them as victims of older criminals.[576] After one widely-discussed incident during the 1937 "crime wave," *Diario Latino* argued that adult thieves had compelled minors to break into stores and offices, like those belonging to the Singer Corporation. When the police collected the testimonies of the captured young men, they reinforced the long-standing beliefs of the authorities and newspaper writers. When the captured youths requested a transfer to the Preventive from the Correctional Facility, the courts denied the request.[577] After medical forensics experts physically inspected the boys, they were found fit to be punished, but the police assured the public that they would find the adults that "stimulated the juvenile delinquency."[578] These men were, of course, never discovered nor captured.

In order to demonstrate their strong action against crime as well as their redemptive policies, the government publicly tried the boys later that year, and discussed juvenile criminology in the newspapers. Prominent lawyers and public figures Jorge Castro Peña and Hugo Lindo defended the young men. Displaying his poetic and oratorical skills, Lindo's "passionate and eloquent" defense of the young men was published in *Diario Latino*. Calling Lindo's argument a "strong piece of juridical literature," the prosecutor applauded the attorney's call for a new juvenile criminology, and assigned the prisoners to the Young Men's Correctional Facility.[579] Asserting that the *martinato* had ushered in this new era of juvenile criminology, and that the Correctional School was integral to the process, Lindo helped sell the regime's policies to

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[576] "Es intensa la delincuencia de los niños," *El Día* (9 November 1932).

[577] " Menores de edad obligados a cumplir raterias," *Diario Latino* (24 January 1938)

[578] "Los menores que robaron en La Joya obraron con todo discernimiento, dicen los medicos forenses que los examinaron," *Diario Latino* (28 January 1938).

[579] "Alégase la pedagogía corrective como fundamental para forzoso a la delincuencia de los menores," and "A la correccional iran los menores condenados," *Diario Latino* (19 December 1938).

the public. In order to reinforce the government's responsiveness, the papers printed letters that asked the government to supplement its punitive policies like sweeps and arrests, with preventative and reformative policies. One author argued that progressive and scientific studies would lead to the optimal design of institutions like urban and rural schools, workshops for young delinquents and prisons that segregated criminals for maximum regeneration.[580] The leaders of the *martinato* wanted to convince the public that they were taking steps in this direction.

Despite the military's discussion of juvenile treatment during the 1937 "crime wave," the government gave the juvenile reformatories limited funds, which they were forced to supplement with fundraisers. In spite of publishing articles and released statistics throughout that and the following year to generate support for the school and tout their triumphs, the schools did not thrive and grow. [581] Although the Correctional School provided limited services into the late 1940s, and the School for the Protection of Youth survived into the PRUD era, neither was well-funded by the *martinato*, and didn't have very large enrollments .[582]

When the Castaneda Castro government debated a correctional or reform school in 1947, they employed preventative theories to build their proposals which embraced social cleansing but still retained child redemption. After discussing the problem of very young criminals, under ten years old, who were homeless and thieves, the administration argued that they needed a new school that would admit these children.[583] Talking about

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[580] "Establecimiento de un servicio de tuición con el propósito de buscar regeneración a los criminales y rateros habituales," *Diario Latino* (15 September 1937)

[581] See articles in the *Boletín de Policia* and *Diario Latino*. For example, see *Boletín de Policia* (December 1938).

[582] *Boletin de la Policia* (July 1947).

[583] *Boletín de la Policia* (March 1947).

the "social function" of the police, and "social prophylaxis," they emphasized the moralizing potential of the security forces, and the government's ability to transform society. Since children were instrumental to this transformation, Castaneda Castro's police director proposed a renewed commitment to reforming them, which included instructions on building trust among the young. Police officers were instructed not to chase and incarcerate children for minor offences, and certainly not to chase them down the streets with weapons drawn, but to instead target hardened criminals.[584]

In 1950, the Revolutionary governments discussed the role of juvenile girls, and focused on separating juveniles from adult criminals. Outlining a plan for regenerating criminal girls, theorist Lidia Valiente added that they should be educated and empowered, but also be processed within a separate legal system. Defending her position with U.S. examples, she argued that children needed specialized laws and courts, with professionals that included psychologists and medical doctors, and a system of vigilance.[585] When she added that girls should be separated from boys, and served by female judges, social workers, and lawyers, she mistakenly argued that this was never implemented, even in the U.S.[586] Legislators in southern California did develop a specialized policing and judicial system for sexually "promiscuous" young women and their minor and adult partners, but the male and female caseworkers resorted to repression more often than they encouraged reform.[587] Nevertheless, the PRUD did not turn her theories into policy.

In 1948, the government, like in 1937, publicized a crime wave in order to defend policy changes. Proposing a rural reform school, they reported in the midst of the chaos,

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[584] This reiterated a problem that Llanos had initially addressed in 1934 but had also apparently still plagued the department. *Boletín de Policía* (June 1947).

[585] *Boletin de la Policia* (February 1950 and March 1950).

[586] *Boletin de la Policia* (June 1950)

[587] Odem, *Daughters*.

the police had taken four youths from the central penitentiary and transformed them into productive citizens. Claiming that these efforts defended the public's "Order, life and property," they argued that they needed to expand these institutions to combat the current "wave of pillage and thievery."[588] Similarly to the English moral panics described by Stanley Cohen, Salvadoran newspapers and policymakers reported on a crisis, and announced culprits and victims. The Salvadoran "folk devils" were the adult criminals who reportedly seduced the youth and the governments proposed to save the victims, or in this case, the juvenile delinquents. [589] Responding to an editorial in the *Diario de Occidente*, the Santa Ana Police Director prohibited minors from frequenting "cantinas, beer shops, pool halls, etc." Believing it was in the best interests of the children, the Director asked parents to support this policy.[590] Since women were already prohibited from these establishments, the spaces became the exclusive domain of adult males. This protected women and children from abuse within the cantinas, but did not limit fights between men or post-binge domestic violence.

In order to demonstrate to the public that it was making progress against juvenile delinquency, the PRUD sometimes advocated rural reformatories. Lamenting the cities' contaminated influence, they argued that the wilderness would help to morally improve them. In October 1948, they selected fifty youths, and re-opened the Correctional Camp for Minors on the site of the old Rafael Campo School for Indigenous Youth. When they requested donations, various businesses donated, including the Palestinian-descended owners of the Safié and Hasbún textile factories. In the process of integrating themselves

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[588] *Boletín de la Policia* (April 1948).

[589] Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London, UK: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972).

[590] "Lo que dicen los diarios," (7 December 1935), AGN. FG, 1934, Box 1.

into the Salvadoran elite, these families still faced discrimination as did Jewish families.[591] They welcomed the opportunity to publicly perform their patriotic duty.[592] Social theorists like Lidia Valiente hoped that the school could be expanded and resemble the Berkshire Industrial Farm in the United States, but the regime never had the political will to create an institution on that scale. Despite the rhetoric, the PRUD placed more efforts in developing its urban juvenile center.

Since the government intended the rural school to simply supplement the work of San Salvador's Protectorate, the urban school received the bulk of the government's support. With 195 youths in the first through seventh grades in 1950, the school expanded over the next few years, until they had enrolled 310 resident and 240 non-resident students by 1955, and had 250 adults in the night school.[593] A focus on night classes in the fifth through seventh grades allowed the older students, who learned reading and writing, mathematics, natural and social sciences and geometry, to work during the day.[594] Although attrition rates were high, a majority of students, 211 of 277 in 1952, passed their exams.[595] Believed that hard work would redeem the young people, and inculcate desirable habits, school administrators provided the students with jobs, even if poorly paid, as soon as possible. Nevertheless, the regime aggressively touted the supposed benefits if the school for the specific delinquents and the social order more generally and expanded the enrollment yearly through the introduction of more students

[591] For a discussion of the social origins of Salvadoran elites see Colindres, la *burguesia* and Dada, *La economía.*

[592] *Boletín de la Policia* (August 1948).

[593] Molina, *Memoria Defensa*.

[594] *Boletín de la Policia* (November 1950)*; Boletín de la Policia* (November/December 1951).

[595] *Boletín de la Policia* (November/December 1952).

at the youngest grades. Although the full effects of the school are difficult to measure, the school served a small percentage of delinquent youth.

By creating the Law for the Jurisdictional Protection of Minors in July 1966, PRUD jurists not only defended separate institutions for minors, but also reinforced the government's rights to arrest and detain its citizens. The law created separate tribunals with professional staff that included psychiatrists, social workers, doctors and teachers. As opposed to the Court of Dangerous Subjects, these laws argued that minors, males and females sixteen and younger, committed criminal acts but were not themselves delinquents. Having not been permanently damaged or hard-wired, they could still be redeemed. According to the theory, since juvenile delinquents endangered society through their behavior, governments could take preventative measures.[596] Preventative measure included removing children from their homes and sweeping them from the streets even if they had not committed any crime.

Although young men and women had not substantively developed the violent gangs of the last decades of the twentieth century, these juveniles faced a host of challenges that the governments treated only marginally. Municipal, departmental and national officials' main concern, despite occasional protestations to the contrary, was the maintenance of social order and the safety of private and public property. Municipal officials often complained that their police forces were insufficient to "maintain order and prevent criminal acts."[597] Responded to critiques that they were not doing enough to combat the waves of crime and vice that plagued the city, military governments established urban and rural schools that were never sufficiently expansive enough to

[596] Arrieta Gallegos, "código," 170-72.

[597] "Resguardar el ordén y evitar los actos delictuosos [sic]," in *Diario de Occidente*, "Lo que dicen los diarios," (6 December 1935), AGN. FG, 1934, Box 1.

change the lives of many Salvadoran youth. In addition, their vision was limited from the beginning. They conceptualized and implemented their strategies through a patriarchal and hierarchical lens where children, like women, were to be selectively seen and heard.

F. Conclusions

Between 1931 and 1960, military governments dealt with many minor criminal by sweeping them from the streets and placing them in prisons and jails, often without ever providing a trial. Throughout this period, a minority of criminologist, policymakers and theorists believed these policies did not help maintain the social order as successfully as policies that actually educated and reformed individuals. Nevertheless, they still believed that some groups could be more easily reformed, and that others were irredeemable. Because Salvadorans agreed that different members of society had different needs and traits, they believed that children and youths had a greater capacity for redemption, and in fact, were usually corrupted by others.

Five

Women, Paternalism and Social Order

Introduction

Wanting to reinforce and re-create a patriarchal and paternalistic society that they believed had declined under civilian and Liberal rule, Salvadoran military regimes promoted ambivalent policies regarding market women and prostitutes, from the 1930s to the 1950s. Celebrating masculine and martial values throughout their reign, and rejecting the perceived weaknesses of their predecessors, they focused on ordering urban spaces. By removing female street peddlers from public arteries, and cracking down on the so-called women of "easy living" who they argued corrupted families, neighborhoods, and the nation, they tried to create an ordered, hierarchical and patriarchal nation. Nevertheless, as a result of both conscious policies and unintended reasons, market women, and prostitutes resisted state and familial control, and reshaped public policies.

By investigating the unique problems that women faced, and particularly, the ways in which they challenged oppressive structures throughout Latin America, scholars have advance our understanding national and local politics, culture and economics. Traditionally, the scholarship has focused on topics, like marriage and prostitution. In the last couple of decades, more authors have examined how women affected political life and nationhood.

Still the most developed, the scholarship regarding marriage and divorce generated a discussion over how honor constrained people's public and private lives

throughout Latin America.[598] Because there is so little information about women in traditional sources, researchers were forced to work with alternative documents. Providing a wealth of information about the lives of heterosexual couples and their daily lives, Catholic Church annulment petitions and divorce record, showed how people lived under, and responded to, colonial rule.[599] Post-independence divorce records also revealed how government policies shaped private behavior.[600] When scholars turned to notary records, judicial documents and police records, they moved beyond marriage and honor. Looking at cases ranging from the kidnapping and deflowering (*rapto* and *estupro*) cases, to murder and assault trials, this new research showed how women defended themselves in the courts, the crimes they committed, and how governments constructed criminality.[601] Although this research sometimes discussed honor, government constructions of female criminality were more important. Many works, as those analyzing female workers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, strongly focused on prostitution.[602] Why the emphasis on prostitution?

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[598] For but a few examples see Lyman L. Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, eds., *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); Susan Socolow, *The merchants of Buenos Aires, 1778-1810: Family and Commerce* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[599] Patricia Seed, *To Love Honor and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Eugenia Rodríguez Sáenz, *Hijas, novias y esposas: familia, matrimonio y violencia doméstica en el Valle Central de Costa Rica (1750-1850)* (San José, Costa Rica: EUNA, 2000).

[600] Christine Hunefeldt, *Liberalism in the Bedroom: Quarreling Spouses in Nineteenth-Century Lima* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1999)

[601] Tanja Christensen, *Disobedience, Slander, Seduction and Assault, Cajamarca: Women and Men in Cajamarca, Peru, 1862-1900* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2004).

[602] For a few prominent examples see Alvaro Góngora Escobedo, *La prostitución en Santiago, 1813-1931: La vision de las elites* (Santiago, Chile: DIBAM, 1994); Margareth Rago. *Os prazeres da noite: Prostituição e codigos da sexualidade feminina em São Paulo, 1890-1930* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Paz and Terra, 1991). Studies that dealt broadly with women workers but also provided substantial analyses of prostitution include Elizabeth Quay Hutchinson, *Labors Appropriate to their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).

Elites and nation-builders believed that prostitutes, through their vice and independence, their diseases and their wages, threatened Latin American manhood and social hierarchies.[603] Throughout Latin America, Catholic Church leaders feared that female factory work endangered the women and their families, and frequently wrote about how women might "fall" into prostitution. Largely built on the idea of a "family wage," the Catholic Church's modern social doctrine asserted that the most desirable industrial social arrangement had men working for wages, and women staying at home. Capitalists should pay enough, they argued, so that women could stay home, and the family would have enough resources to survive.[604] The streets were dangerous, they asserted, and not appropriate places for "good" women.

During the apex of Liberalism, roughly from 1850 to 1930, Latin American state leaders sought to build modern nations. Due to their fears and anxieties about female sexual commerce, policymakers took legal and administrative action to control and regulate these working women. They passed laws, designated special zones of tolerance, and created special police forces to better supervise and prevent the spread of moral and physical contagion. Believing that the bodies of these "dangerous women" threatened the nation-state morally, physically and economically, elites empowered doctors and police in their effort to improve and morally uplift their societies. Sharing a belief in science to improve and order society, Latin American politicians, writers and bureaucrats, debated, implemented and adapted European and Anglo-American ideas on criminology. As in

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[603] For Argentina see Donna Guy, *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family and Nation in Argentina* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1991). For Chile see Quay Hutchinson, *Labors* and for Brazil see Sueann Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor: Sexual Morality, Modernity and Nation in Early Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

[604] Ann Farnsworth-Alvear. *Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000),

Mexico and Argentina, twentieth-century Latin American progressives usually adapted the theories for local consumption.[605]

By tracing how Spanish imperial governments used the courts to address the demands of the local populace, and limit the power of local administrative and economic elites, researchers have illuminated lives of Colonial-era Latin Americans. William Taylor and Michael Scardaville, for instance, used court records to produce enlightening texts on the drinking, fighting and rebelliousness of late-Colonial Mexicans.[606] By maintaining far better records than their Hapsburg predecessors, Bourbon rulers left rich sources that historians have used to explore the transformation, and continuities of late-Colonial and early-national period legal practices and structures.[607] Because nineteenth-century wars ravaged much of Latin America, people researching crime and policing in the post-independence period during the post-independence period are hampered by limited data.[608] The triumph as well as resurgence and refashioning of Liberalism, in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, apparently restored the local use of the courts as a "safety valve" against national revolts.[609] Liberal states did not use this

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[605] Buffington, *Criminal* and Ruggiero, *Modernity*.

[606] For classic accounts of popular responses to the Hapsburg legal order see William Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages.* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979) and Michael Scardaville "Crime and the Urban Poor: Mexico City in the Late Colonial Period" (University of Florida: P.h.D Dissertation, 1977).

[607] For Peru, see Stavig, *Tupac Amaru*, and for Mexico Gabriel Haslip-Viera, *Crime and Punishment in Late Colonial Mexico City, 1692-1810* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), Colin MachLachlan. *Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century Mexico: A Study of the Tribunal of the Acordada* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), and Juan Viquiera Albán, *Relajados o reprimidos? Diversiones publicas y vida social en la ciudad de México durante el Siglo de las Luces* (México, DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987).

[608] See Slalta and Robinson, "Continuities in Crime and Punishment, 1820-50," in Lyman Johnson, ed. *The Problem of Order in Changing Societies: Essays on Crime and Policing in Argentina and Uruguay, 1750-1940*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1990.

[609] Liberals in the nineteenth century shifted from a focus on liberty to a greater emphasis on order and progress. See Charles A. Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989) and R.L. Woodward Jr., "The Liberal Era c. 1870-1930,"

strategy as systematically or successfully as during the Colonial rulers but stronger conclusions await additional research.[610]

Although academics have not yet sufficiently studied the Liberal legal judicial systems, people continued to defend their honor through the courts, demonstrating that many colonial structures remained intact.[611] Because Liberals maintained more records than their Conservative predecessors, and waged less destructive wars, scholars have produced a lot work on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Latin America. Using the courts to limit the abuses of government functionaries as well as private citizens, prostitutes and market women used the courts to defend themselves, as had non-elites in the colonial period. The courts will be studied in greater detail in a future project, but this chapter, along with chapter three, addresses policing.

By controlling, repressing and regulating women, Salvadoran theorists and policymakers wanted to "protect" them, and the nations that they served, between 1931 and 1960. Although officers in both the *martinato* and the PRUD wanted to fully mobilize the security forces and the courts against the scourge of prostitution, policymakers under Martínez retained more ideas and strategies developed under the civilian and Liberal regimes of the 1920s. They expanded zones of tolerance, maintained public health clinics, and frequently talked of redeeming women who had "fallen" because of their environments, and the manipulation of others. As they passed

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in Leslie Bethell, ed., *Central America since Independence* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[610] The current fashion, which I subscribe to, is to look at the courts from the perspectives of subaltern agency and gender analysis. Nevertheless, I believe broader parallels with the Colonial system will be found as legal historians examine the authoritarian regimes and limited democracies of the twentieth century.

[611] See M.C. Mirow, M.C. *Latin American Law: A History of Private Law and Institutions in Spanish America*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2004, for a discussion of civil law. There are surprisingly few texts dealing with law and criminality in the late 19ht century but the field is expanding. See the essays in Salvatore, Aguirre and Joseph, *Crime*.

ambivalent regulation that gave the state control over reproduction, traditional caretakers of women's bodies like midwives, religious depositories, and women's hospital wards lost power to doctors and other male experts.[612] Sharing Liberal ideas of fallen womanhood, Catholic leaders and institutions like the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, played a key role in the care and rehabilitation of prostitutes.

In contrast, the PRUD outlawed the long-standing zones of tolerance and used the above-mentioned Court of Dangerous Subjects to track and prosecute prostitutes, as well as other recidivist criminals. Rejecting Liberal and Catholic conceptions of humanity, and following more closely theories and policies derived from Lombrosian and eugenic thought, Revolutionary Party leaders repressed prostitutes and labeled them as irredeemable. By acquiring economic power and building alliances with police, military and local politicians, a few prostitutes defended themselves. They were few in number, however, and their influence waned. By eliminated zones of tolerance, and expanding the number of people defined as recidivists, the PRUD increased the number of people subject to arbitrary arrests.

Because of their physical and social position within the cities, military regimes agreed that Salvadoran market women could defend the regime against their enemies, or disrupt public life, and therefore made them political clients. Using their position as political clients and defenders of law, order, and morality, women in the regulated urban markets fought for their own power and self interest, but also helped their weaker and mobile sisters. Particularly targeted as a group that not only endangered the nation

[612] For a study of this process in Argentina, see Kristin Ruggiero, *Modernity in the Flesh: Medicine, Law, and Society in Turn-of-the-Century Argentina* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).

morally but also interfered with the movement of goods through the streets in the urban centers, ambulatory merchants were repressed by the military regimes. Neither the *martinato* nor the PRUD, however, eliminated them from the streets of the nation's cities.

In seeking to build patronage ties and support among women, and portraying themselves as defenders of the traditional order, the *martinato* and the PRUD share traits with other Right-wing military regimes, like General Pinochet's Chile. Although clearly sympathetic to the women who supported President Salvador Allende's socialist experiment and protested Pinochet's human rights abuses, Peter Winn recognized that most "did not commit themselves to Allende's program of radical reform."[613] In a 1988 plebiscite, a greater percentage of women than men voted to continue the Pinochet dictatorship.[614] Building on path-breaking studies like Kathleen Blee and Karen Cox on women in the US Confederacy and the Jim Crow south, and Claudia Koonz on German Nazi women, Margaret Power closely examined the ideologies, actions and motivations of right-wing women in Chile.[615] As in El Salvador, the regime sold itself as a provider and defender of women and their traditional needs.

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[613] The reasons why Chilean "conservative" women supported Pinochet are complex and sometimes avoided by scholars. For example, Lois Oppenheim only discussed the popular actions of women and youth in the protests against Pinochet, and in the Leftist opposition from 1983-89. Lois Hecht Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile: Socialism, Authoritarianism, and Market Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007), 158-162.

Scholars have more thoroughly analyzed women who supported Juan Domingo Perón, because of Eva Perón, but much research remains. For but one example see Susana Bianchi and Norma Sanchís, *El partido peronista femenino* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988).

[614] Peter Winn, *The Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 335-361. In addition, see "Capital Sins," *Americas* program 2 (WGBH/Boston, 1992). This film shares Winn's sympathies yet addresses the upper-class Chilean women who supported Pinochet.

[615] Margaret Power, *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende 1964-1973* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002); Kathleen Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991); Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL: Univerrsity of Florida Press, 2003); Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family and Nazi Politics* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1987). Lisa Baldez

Ambivalent Progressivism: Cantinas, Bordellos and Prostitutes

Salvadoran military governments all confronted prostitution and employed varying methods, but none was able to fully repress the female sex trade. At first, the Martínez regime sought to control, and even reverse, the Liberal policies of the previous regimes regarding prostitution and zones of tolerance. By removing the explicit and implicit protection afforded to prostitutes by zones of tolerance, and increasing coercion of "clandestine" prostitutes, they talked about eliminating Salvadoran prostituttion. Nevertheless, because the government devoted few resources, most anti-prostitution campaigns were more apparent than real. Quickly recognizing the limits of Salvadoran state activism, Martínez restored the zones of tolerance and looked for other ways to decrease the negative effects of prostitution. Mobilizing the far-greater resources of the 1950s Salvadoran state, the PRUD aggressively targeted prostitutes, eliminated the long-standing zones of tolerance and swept streetwalkers from public areas. Despite their aggressive actions and rhetoric, the Revolutionary government allowed some brothels to survive, with government knowledge, and apparently even complicity.

Before 1932, Liberal governments had designed laws and implemented policies to regulate and supervise prostitution, because they believed that simple repression had not worked. In 1927, Salvadoran legislators passed the Law of Venereal Disease Prevention which employed agents from the Department of Health. The office registered prostitutes following a citizen's denunciation, a ten-day police investigation and an order from the Chief Medic of the Office of Venereal Prophylaxis. Although in theory, the law provided

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recently compared activist women on the Left and Right in Chile and found that they joined opposing groups for many of the same reasons and organize them in similar ways. Lisa Baldez, *Why Women Protest: Women's Movements in Chile* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

accused prostitutes with multiple safeguards, including a written warning and a second investigation by a different officer before the state registered or quarantined or hospitalized them, in reality women were still detained and arrested with little warning.[616] Hoping that prostitutes would willingly register with the state, legislators offered incentives. They hoped that free clinics, and night school might motivate women, but the gap between the policy's intent and real-life implementation was too great.

Salvadoran Liberal governments never provided sufficient incentives for the majority of clandestine or unregistered prostitutes to register with authorities. Because the health care was sporadic and repression frequent, prostitutes didn't register in substantial numbers. In addition, authorities couldn't identify women, because many only traded sex for money seasonally, or in order to supplement other paid and unpaid labors. Since so many of them were difficult to track and to regulate, the government tried to reduce their mobility. The women never willingly remained in the same place and submitted to local and national authorities. Since even forward-thinking government leaders and rank-and-file agents thought these women were dangerous, the police never became a regulating, protective and supervisory force. Instead, much more than ensuring that the women were licensed and that their medical exams were current, the Venereal Prevention Police settled disputes by arresting the prostitutes.[617] Because police mostly repressed the women, on the eve of the military coup, the majority of them remained unsupervised.

Although the policies were unsuccessful overall, some departments and municipalities were more effective than others in this period. The departments of Santa

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[616] "*Reglamento de Profilaxis Venerea,*" Capitulo II, in Barraza R, *Recopilación*, 465-472.

[617] See for example "Reñida disputa hubo anoche en una calle de esta capital por una mujer," *El Día* (31 October 1931).

Ana and San Salvador, and their capital cities, provided the most complete and effective services in the Republic. Compared to those in smaller cities and rural areas, the urban venereal clinics of San Salvador and Santa Ana were particularly well staffed and organized. Liberal regimes intended for these venereal clinics and hospitals to provide free public health services for poor male and female citizens. Because relatively few women took advantage of the clinic's purported walk-in service, these clinics did not meet their stated purpose. Some of Santa Ana's prostitutes, like those of the capital, were registered, and operated within legally sanctioned red-light districts or zones of tolerance.[618] At times, the capital's Venereal Disease Prevention Police performed inspections and arrested registered prostitutes who failed to arrive for their required and regularly scheduled medical exams.[619] Unfortunately the government never provided enough money to expand and sustain these policies.

As they attempted to establish zones of tolerance, public health officials faced resistance from a skeptical and morally outraged populace. When Arturo Araujo's director of Public Health, Dr. Rafael Vega Gómez H., published and distributed a series of leaflets regarding male sexual hygiene and prophylaxis, numerous citizens publicly complained in the Catholic daily *El Tiempo*. In addition to lamenting the moral damage of the information, citizens argued that the Director General had trampled over the rights of municipal officials by mailing information directly to homes, and primary and secondary school. They implied that other officials would have prevented the mailings. Responding in the secular daily *El Día*, the director rejected the complaints and added that ignorance led to an increase of venereal diseases "among adolescents…of all social

[618] "casas de tolerancia…en las zonas…que la autoridad determinen," "*Reglamento de Profilaxis Venerea,"* Capitulo V , in Barraza R, *Recopilación*, 465-71

[619] "Maximo escandalos dan varios borrachos en una barriada," *El Día* (17 November 1931).

classes." Blaming the public's Catholicism for retarding the advancement of public health, Gómez challenged the church's authority over morality.[620]

Many elite women did not challenge the Church, but instead supported religious institutions designed to save "fallen" women. For instance, "scions of Salvadoran society" María Zaldívar and doña Eva de Sol were President and Vice President of the Ladies of Charity which supervised a home for the poor. Associated with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd who ran the women's prison, the Ladies housed girls as young as fourteen and women as old as fifty. Providing the girls and women with food, shelter and clothing, the Ladies bragged that they had facilitated 128 marriages.[621] Believing that marriage should be the women's goals, they asserted that Salvadoran social conditions could improve through such paternalism.

Martínez initially reinforced such paternalism, and reversed reformism and toleration, because along with most of his officers, he believed in the inferiority of the women and their inability to make good independent decisions. After his appointment in February 1932, General Martínez's Director of Public Health Dr. David Escalante took swift action to control prostitution. Dr. Escalante expelled foreign prostitutes, who he argued had been allowed unnecessarily easy entry to the country during the previous administration. In addition, he invited father Celestino Fernandez, superior of the Franciscan Order, to talk to the women cloistered within the Venereal Profilaxis Hospital.[622] Despite the fact that Martínez was a theosophist who reputedly held séances in the Presidential Palace, government agents promoted morality and patriarchy over

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[620] "Lo que dice el Director Grl. de la Sanidad," *El Día* (14 January 1931)

[621] "Noble y hermosa finalidad la que sustenta la Sociedad de Señoras de la Caridad, que en esta cuidad existe," *El Día* (22 April 1931) and "La obra de la "Sociedad de Señoras de la Caridad," *El Día* (23 April 1931).

[622] "Expulsarán del país a todas las extranjeras de vida licensiosa," *El Día* (12 February 1932).

education. Agreeing on the inferiority of the masses, and their need for religion, led the *martinato*'s leaders to support Church agencies, instead of taking effective action to create jobs for prostitutes, or contain the spread of disease

As the regime attacked the system that registered and regulated prostitutes, people on the margins of the business were also affected. When San Salvador Police Chief Armando Llanos C. led an aggressive campaign against female sex workers, he defended the morality of his mission. Moving against "legal" prostitution, Llanos denied petitions for *prostibulos* or whorehouses. In one example, the Chief argued that the brothel would "retard the progress" of the neighborhood and the nation.[623] The prostitution didn't have to be explicit to elicit his action. He sent police to control the scandalous behavior at the "Happy Land" restaurant after neighbors complained argued that it was a "virtual brothel."[624] The police chief's proscriptions affected other local businesswomen who operated on the margins of legality. For example, police told Romana Marroquín, owner and manager of the cantina *el Papaturros*, that by standing outside her cantina, she was breaking the law that prohibited women from working in establishments that sold open containers of alcohol. When Marroquín argued that economic considerations forced her, and other women, to remain in front of her place of business, Llanos explained that the officers were controlling vagrancy, public drunkenness, and prostitution.[625] Llanos hoped to control the urban space and had the president's support to aggressively repress brothels and bars.

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[623] AGN, FG, 1932, Box 4 "Diligencias/Solicitaciones,"

[624] "Petition to Director General of Police and Brigadier General Armando Llanos C," (19 September 1933) AGN, FG, 1933, Box 8.

[625] "Director General of Police and Brigadier General Armando Llanos C. to Minister of Government Salvador Castaneda Castro," (29 September 1933) AGN, FG, 1933, Box 8.

Despite military officials' claims, many municipal officials and local residents recognized that prostitution was impossible to eliminate, and asked government officials to continue zones of tolerance and prostitute registries. A group of Sonsonate residents appealed to Minister of the Interior Castaneda Castro, requesting a zone of tolerance (*zona de amor libre*) like that employed by Santa Ana. When the government limited sex trade to a single area, they argued, the citizenry received "social defense."[626] In 1933, *El Día* advocated increasing the number of zones of tolerance, and referenced the successes of Santa Ana officials in regards to this policy.[627] They recognized that unregulated and supervised sex work endangered the public and the workers themselves.

Asking the military to change their repressive policies, some citizens believed that the government should register full-time sex workers, and discourage "clandestine" prostitution. Because repressive policies encouraged part-time workers that evaded authorities more easily, they argued that zones of tolerance were more desirable and effective. Since many women's primary profession was prostitution, the state should deal with this reality. Although the authors were comparatively tolerant of the trade, they still did not grant these women the same status as other laborers, and instead marginalized them because of the immorality ascribed to their work.[628] Even the relatively tolerant theorists, that hoped to design policies to improve the lives of actual citizens, were still limited by their ideas of morality and propriety.

Because private citizens and newspaper editors shared the paternalistic and anti-democratic beliefs of the military officers, they often agreed that the women were not to blame for their condition. Instead, they often blamed male foreign agents or pimps, or

[626] "Zona de tolerancia en Santa Ana," *El Día* (31 May 1932).
[627] "Escandalos en un mesón de la Calle de Concepción," *El Día* (22 February 1933)
[628] "Las profesionales del amor," *El Día* (7 April 1933).

female madams and senior prostitutes. Rarely blaming younger women for their situation, the press, the citizenry and public officials created and propagated a mythology where dangerous outsiders and elders preyed on young innocent women.[629] There is no doubt that this sometimes occurred, and generated a dialogue over the protection and education of young women. Unrealistic or oversimplified portrayals of young virgins seduced by their worldly-wise elders with false promises of a luxurious life, limited public the government's inventiveness. The mythology lay too far from the lived reality of the poor and working-class women, who were forced to choose to occasionally or frequently sell their bodies.

Although the regime initially favored repression, by the mid-1930s, they restored the zones of tolerance. After the 1935 presidential elections, Martínez discussed assaults on clandestine houses, bars and dance halls, but also talked of restoring zones of tolerance.[630] Despite trying to repress the trade for several years, the regime now also revived the prostitute registry.[631] In 1936, when agents began to arrest women who were alone on the streets after 10pm, the newspapers argued that the regime should establish well-regulated zones of tolerance to protect innocent women.[632] This was part of the *martinato*'s attempts to convince the public that they responded to the public will. In 1935 the press discussed how the police was raiding clandestine houses, including those masquerading as bars and dance halls, but that the regime would retain zones of

[629] For example see "Iniciaremos fuerte campaña contra las proxenetas," *El Día* (19 March 1931). Reprinted from *La Pluma* de Chalchuapa, date unspecified.

[630] "Conviene o no una zona de tolerancia en San Salvador?" *Diario Latino* (17 January 1936).

[631] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *U.S.N.A.,*, RG 84, DF 800.0276 (December 1935).

[632] Conviene o no una zona de tolerancia en San Salvador?" *Diario Latino* (17 January 1936).

tolerance.[633] Despite proclaiming his tough stance on the social problem of prostitution, Martínez instead restored long-established policies.

Since they were unable to eliminate prostitution, the *martinato*'s leaders modified their policies, and admitted that zoning was superior to repressive methods that simply caused victims to relocate.[634] By the mid 1930s, the military's public rhetoric and stated strategies looked and sounded a lot more like that of their Liberal predecessors. Military officials recognized their limits, and talked about the importance of institutions like the San Salvador Venereal Prophylaxis Hospital.[635] Nevertheless, military governments never provided the clinics with many resources. After Director of Public Health Escalante visited the Santa Ana venereal clinic, in order to evaluate how they might use the clinics, officials decreased funding.[636] In 1932, local officials in Chalatenango sought money from the Venereal Prophylaxis fund, suggesting a scarcity of resources.[637] Despite their limited funding, the venereal hospitals, or clinics, survived into the mid-1930s.[638] Now controlled by the Office of the Sanitary Union of the West, the Santa Ana Venereal Hospital still functioned in 1940, under Local Boss and Head of the Sanitary Union Dr. Antonio Peñate Hernández.[639] In the 1940s, Martínez reorganized the public health system to streamline its administration and save money, but never completely abandoned public sexual health and control.

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[633] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *National Archives*, RG 84, DF 800.0276 (July 1935).

[634] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *National Archives*, RG 84, DF 800.0617 (11-17 January 1936).

[635] "Boletin Municipal de San Salvador," AGN, FG, 1932, Box 3.

[636] "Detalles de la gira del Drctr. G. de Sanidad," *El Día* (9 February 1932).

[637] AGN, FG, 1932, Box 5 "Diligencias/Solicitaciones,"

[638] Seen in "lo que dicen los diarios," 13 November 1934, AGN. FG, 1934, Box 1.

[639] "Contra Juan Antonio Moreno por falsificación de la firma de al meretriz Edelmira Martínez," AGN, FJ, Santa Ana Criminal Cases (*criminales*), 1940, Inventario no. 220

Even during the hysteria surrounding the "crime wave" of 1937, Martínez did not substantively change policies towards prostitution. In the Assembly, congressmen debated how to respond to the crisis, and discussed eliminating regulation. Emphasizing that prostitutes were criminals, articles in the Police Bulletin justified renewed repression. The women were engaged in a cycle of violence unheard of in over a decade, argued men like the new sub-Secretary of Social Assistance and Health Dr. Hermógenes Alvarado Jr., as he blamed the women for the "crime wave" of 1937.[640] Admitting that the victims were the women' lovers or *chulo*s, and that the reported violence centered on the *Calle de Modelo*, one author blamed the violence on a "special class of prostitutes" who suffered from moral insanity. Despite acknowledging that Lombrosian theory was largely discredited, the author nonetheless asserted that, used with care, the ideas could be used to identify the women by five characteristics: 1) their absence of maternal instincts, or veritable terror towards reproduction 2) their jealousy and alcoholism 3) their absence of shame, which was particularly emphasized 4) their lack of intelligence which often ranged from "idiocy to infantilism" (*idiotismo hasta el infantilismo*) 5) and a final catch-all category that contrasted their use of tattoos and love of gambling with a strong religiosity.[641] Demonizing the women, the article encouraged a moral panic to justify cleaning up the *Calle de Modelo* for the benefit of the upper classes and foreign visitors.

In late 1937, when Alvarado renewed the assault on prostitutes, vagrants and thieves by sweeping of the streets, he filled the jails with unprocessed prisoners. The regime's propaganda emphasized the alleged good condition of the jails and the supposedly decreased crime in the capital, where the campaign was centered. The

[640] "Batida contra el rufianismo y la trata de blancas," *Diario Latino* (13 October 1937)
[641] "Prostitución y locura moral," *Boletín de la Policia* (November 1937).

Department of Public Health also restated the argument that they were protecting public health and moral health with their campaign. Despite advocated a criminalization of the carriers of venereal disease, and medical exams for marriage licenses, Alvarado never implemented any significant policy changes.[642] Chiefly designed to quiet public fears during the "crime wave," the police action cleared sex workers from some public streets, reinforcing the idea that the workers were tolerated in some zones, but aggressively repressed in others. The Director of Public Health's policies were familiar, despite the aggressive rhetoric. Despite the many officials within the government that pressed for full abolition, the regime simply relocated the prostitutes, away from areas where foreign visitors could see them. Warning alleged male traffickers in the powerful Teamster's Union, and older prostitutes who recruited young girls, that their actions were no longer tolerated, the regime reproduced the image of young women as innocent victims.[643] Myth and reality are particularly difficult to separate regarding "white slavery," or those that sold young women through subterfuge and coercion. There was clearly a problem, but the full extent is not at all clear.

Even before the military took power, public fears surrounding "white slavery" caused people to link it to xenophobia, anti-Semitism and racism.[644] Demonstrating a current of anti-Semitism that travels throughout Salvadoran society, Catholic newspaper *El Tiempo* connected the practice to Jewish merchants.[645] Deeply anti-Semitic, the San Salvador-based Catholic Church's newspaper *El Tiempo* reported on Judaic threats to

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[642] "Reglamentacion de la asistencia sanitaria contra la prostitucion," *Diario Latino* (17 September 1937)

[643] "Batida contra el rufianismo y la trata de blancas," *Diario Latino* (13 October 1937)

[644] Elithabeth Hutchison noted a similar preoccupation with the Chilean Press in the 1910s regarding "white slavery" but the victims there were reportedly peasant girls who were lured to the cities under false pretense. Hutchison, *Labors*, 83-84.

[645] "Actividad social catolica feminina," *El Tiempo* (21 February 1931).

global or Western society and religion. In that same year, the newspaper reported that the majority of white slavers in Poland were of the Judaic element and connected Jews to revolutionaries and revolution.[646] Despite offering few specifics regarding Salvadoran Jews, they printed the articles so that readers could connect their local fears to European events.

When the Sonsonate Herald discussed "white slavery," their concerns reflected the regions' ethnic makeup, and fears of trafficking in Indian girls. Interestingly, Mayor R. Brito argued that his regime eliminated the trade in Indian women and that the women of Sonsonate were now dedicated to "honorable work." He said that the *Diario de Hoy* had previously reported on the problem as it existed under the previous administration but that the *Heraldo*'s report was inaccurate.[647] Government officials again raised the theme when Caribbean laborers traveled to Central America. Once again, the rhetoric focused on the laborers' foreign origins and emphasized the victimization and innocence of subaltern Salvadoran women. For example, the Minister of Government addressed a rumor regarding a white slavery ring to Guatemala and stated that the Director of Police was working with the special investigations unit to uncover the "agents of corruption."[648] Although Salvadoran women certainly worked as prostitutes in Guatemala City, and San Pedro Sula, the evidence suggests that this migration was informal and small-scale. Nevertheless, the public hungered for the xenophobic and nationalist stories about how rapacious foreigners abused and manipulated innocent and hardworking Salvadorans.

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[646] See, for example, "Los judíos: fuerza oculta de la revolución," *El Tiempo* (19 August 1932). In addition, they approvingly mentioned Henry Ford's *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* when they argued that the Church was in the best position to resolve class conflict. *El Tiempo* (20 January 1932). See William Nicholls, *Christian Antisemitism: A History of Hate* (Northvale, NJ: J Aronson, 1993) for an historical discussion of Christian anti-Semitism.

[647] ""Sobre trata de inditas en Nahuizalco," AGN, 1938, Box L-12, Folder "Informe sobre prostitución."

[648] "La trata de blancas en esta capital," *El Día* (30 January 1931).

Although fueled by xenophobia, the white slavery debate was also connected to broader and deeper ideas regarding the inability of the masses to make their own decisions. Salvadoran political, economic and social elites repeatedly acted on a vision of "child-like" subalterns who, because of social conditions, needed protection or guidance and were vulnerable to the deceptions of outside agitators. This was true whether they were indigenous peasants, street children, peasant-soldiers, or prostitutes. As discussed in other chapters, military authorities, alongside rural oligarchs and U.S. diplomats, embraced ideas regarding the immaturity and inferiority of the majority of Salvadorans. Despite their innocence, elites believed their very juvenile innocence of the masses contributed to their volatility and potentially explosive or revolutionary (yet outside-generated) actions.

Occasionally, the newspapers printed appeals by those who wanted the government to implement more repressive policies. In 1938, the regime allowed those who advocated repression to voice their concerns, and attacked the military's *de facto* tolerance, in a series of articles. Lamenting the scandal of prominent brothels scattered throughout the city, Dr. José Agustín Martínez criticized zones of tolerance in Cuba and France.[649] Arguing that the system had failed in Europe, and the Anglo-Saxon nations had already abandoned it, the article asked Salvadorans to revise their laws and pass a Code of Social Defense to combat scandalous public behavior.[650] When a group of anonymous citizens complained that a local property holder was facilitating sexual commerce, they argued that police should patrol the area because the women endangered

[649] "La zona de tolerancia en El Salvador," *Diario Latino* (18 January 1938).
[650] "Proxenetismo y trata de blancas," *Diario Latino* (22 January 1938).

school-children.[651] Most citizens didn't ask for full suppression of the trade, but simply wanted the government to keep brothels, like liquor stores and bars, away from school and children.

Since state officials considered prostitutes suspected of carrying disease a threat to public health and morality, their individual rights were often trampled. For example, in 1939 police held sixteen year-old Edelmira Martínez for eighteen days without bringing charges against her despite repeatedly demanding an examination to prove her health and secure her freedom. A local merchant and law student promised to help her prepare her appeal but they took her money instead. Despite admitting their guilt, the men were not charged with any crime.[652] Often arrested, transferred, and held in the Venereal Hospital for weeks, the police and public health agents trampled prostitutes' individual liberties. Sometimes members of the public opposed these abuses against civil liberties. *El Día*'s editors argued that by generating fear of the agents, repressive policies prevented many prostitutes from registering, thereby hindering their efforts. The editors added that innocent women were sometimes caught in sweeps of parties, and then held unnecessarily.[653] Despite the fact that many civilians recognized the limitations of an under-staffed, under-funded, repressive, arbitrary and judgmental apparatus, the military regime refused to back their aggressive rhetoric with equally flexible action.

Under President Castaneda Castro, military officials still "tolerated" prostitutes, but cracked down of clandestine houses and streetwalkers. Reinforcing zones of poverty,

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[651] "Unos vecinos a Ministro de Gobernación J. Tomás Calderon," (17 July 1938) AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-12. The vecinos said they would have appealed to the press or the courts but that the accused Daniel Olivares, had "friends."

[652] "Contra Juan Antonio Moreno por falsificación de la firma de al meretriz Edelmira Martínez," AGN, FJ, Santa Ana Criminal Cases (criminales), 1940, Inventario no. 220

[653] "Lucha contra la prostitución," *El Día* (5 Janauary 1934).

the policies acknowledged the state's inability to do anything but contain criminality. Long associated with crime and poverty, Mejicanos had drunks in the street "like no other population."[654] Zones of criminality like the "legendary" *plazuela* Ayala and the *barrio Candelaria* in San Salvador reflected the inability and unwillingness of local police officials to eliminate crime and the strategy of containing prostitution. *El Día* published an article that lamented the police's inaction and "abandonment" of the barrio, and described it as a place with an "abundance of cantinas, lodging houses, tobacco shops, and small bordellos, authorized and clandestine." Comparing the neighborhood to the *Cour de Miracles* in Victor Hugo's *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, the author described women with hair on their chest. It is unclear whether the author meant to present a carnivalesque atmosphere or whether it was a rare allusion to homosexual or trans-gendered prostitution in the period.[655] *El Día* described the same neighborhood later in the year, as a "headquarters for rogues."[656] Many of these zones of disorder remained consistent through the 1930s and the 1940s.

Taking more aggressive action against prostitutes than the *martinato* or Castro, the PRUD fully outlawed brothels and eliminated zones of tolerance, as part of a global post-World War Two campaign to repress prostitution.[657] In May 1950, Dr. Ricardo J. Peralta called upon officials to update anti-venereal legislation at the Third Central American Congress on Venereology. Despite sharing a belief in the power of science to address social problems, as with the positivists of the 1920s, theorists now came to

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[654] "Ministro del la Interior J. Benjamin Escobar to the Gobernador Politico de San Salvador," (18 July 1946) *Ministerio del Interior: Notas y Acuerdos 1946*, vol. 7, *Notas y Acuerdos a las Gobernaciones a los Departamentos de San Salvador; La Libertad.* AGN, FG.

[655] "La plazuela del delito," *El Día* (17 August 1932).

[656] "El barrio de Candelaria es el cuartel general de pícaros," *El Día* (1 October 1932).

[657] See Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

different conclusions. They decided that research did not support redemptive policies, but instead empirically proved the failures of these ideas and institutions. Individuals could be categorized and removed, not rehabilitated, in order to cleanse society.[658] This paper and the overall tone of the Congress presaged the triumphs of doctors, and the legal and physical repression of these working women, who were increasingly labeled recidivists.

Financially successful women formed working relationships and connections with the police, due to the PRUD's corruption and patronage system. Not unique to the urban centers of El Salvador, prostitutes throughout the world have defended their interests, with all means at their disposal. In pre-independence NYC, female bordello owners and managers used the courts to could bring suits against male customers, and even police forces. In addition, they had working relationships with the local police and political officials. By acting as informants and were witnesses in criminal trials, they received protection from violent and thieving clients and from random mob violence.[659] Salvadoran bordello owners did not have such elaborate or formal relationships with police, but police officials sometimes frequented the establishments and provided tacit support and protection. City residents complained that a local cantina and guest house not only violated the law by serving *aguardiente* by the glass, and housed prostitutes, but also often hosted an inspector of the Transit Police.[660]

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[658] Program for the Tercer Congreso Centroamericano de Venereología, in "G.P.Shaw to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.* RG 84, DF 816.55/5-250 Telegram 146 (2 May 1950).

[659] Hill, Marilynn Wood. *Their Sisters' Keepers: Prostitution in New York City, 1830-1870* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

[660] "Minister of the Economy Liévano to Minister of the Interior Gen. Avandaño," AGN, FG, Box "1948: Cantinas y Burdeles," Folder 321, "Prostitución, burdeles, centros de corrupción 1948."

Under the PRUD, instead of brothel owners using traditional methods of protecting themselves, the corrupt political system instead encouraged female businesswomen and property owners to profit from the now-illegal sex trade. In 1955, *Opinion Estudiantil* connected the regime to prostitution. Criticizing another wave of anti-prostitution rhetoric, they argued that the PRUD selectively repressed some brothels, and ignored others. Asking the government to match their words with deeds, *Opinion* published photos and addresses of several *casas de tolerancia* that officers allegedly frequented, and that were owned by prominent supporters and members of the government. Listing officers' wives, family and friends, the combative paper asked officials, and particularly the Judge of Social Danger, to close these establishments if they were indeed serious about reducing the trade.[661] Attacking Judge Dr. Benjamín Mancía directly, they questioned why the official was not performing his duties, and asked him to take to government's battle against the "immoral" trade further.[662] The episode not only exposed the links between the regime and brothel owners, but also demonstrated that some women profited by negotiating with the national government, even during apparent crackdowns on the trade.

Although some female bar and brothel owners wielded economic power despite government prohibitions and restrictions, this must no be overstated. Subject to the whim of members of the security forces, most of these women still lived in fear of arrest or abuse. Nonetheless, they were not without options, and were sometimes supported by the police, often to the chagrin of neighborhood residents. Estebana Blanco was one such example. Blanco owned several cantinas and bordellos in San Salvador, and expanded

[661] *Opinión Estudiantíl* (1 March 1955).
[662] *Opinión Estudiantíl* (15 March 1955).

her holding during the post-1949 Revolutionary governments. Because she was legally forbidden from entering the premises during business hours, her partner Transito Arriola owned the cantinas. When she previously worked for Angela Cárdenas in Santa Ana, Blanco was cited by the police for violating this statute, and her appeal denied by the government.[663] In his appeal to Departmental Governor Alberto J. Pinto, Santa Ana Mayor J.M. Dueñas Zaldaña asked that Cárdenas' cantinas should remain open despite Blanco's failure to comply.[664] Despite this setback, Blanco opened her own business within a few years. In 1949, her economic success and relationship with local police officials aroused the ire of neighborhood residents, who resisted her attempts to open an additional cantina by arguing that used police to defend her promotion of "vice and corruption."[665]

Officials under the *martinato* and the PRUD aggressive repressed prostitution in the newspapers, but their actions on the street were much more complex. Martínez attempted to reverse Liberal policies regarding zones of tolerance and rehabilitation, but financial limitations and public desires, forced him to rely on zoning. The PRUD relied on science and medical knowledge to defend his repressive policies against prostitutes. Despite the crackdowns, prostitution survived, and financially benefited the Revolutionary Party's political allies.

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[663] "Minister L.M. Samayoa to Estabana Blanco," 22 February 1945, AGN, FG, Box "1945: Cantinas y Burdeles," Folder "Cantinas y Otros."

[664] "Santa Ana Mayor J.M. Dueñas Zaldaña to Departmental Governor Alberto J. Pinto," 7 March 1945, AGN, FG, *Caja 1945: Cantinas y Burdeles*, Folder "Cantinas y Otros."

[665]"Vecinos to Minister of the Interior J.M. Lemus," 13 October 1949, *Caja 1949: Cantinas y Burdeles*, Folder "Cantinas."

Market Women and the State

Women have played an important, yet under-examined role in the political, economic, and social life of Latin American cities, because of demographics, and their key roles in production and reproduction. After all, Susan Socolow tells us that "by the eighteenth century and possibly before, women were in the majority in virtually all the cities of Colonial Latin America," and this trend has continued and perhaps accelerated.[666] A decade ago, Sarah Hilbert and Victoria Lawson noted that women accounted for 57 percent of the population of Latin American urban areas.[667] Latin American urban areas were indeed cities of women, to paraphrase Christine Stansell's book on nineteenth-century New York.[668]

Salvadoran cities were predominantly female throughout the twentieth century. The cities of the departments of San Salvador were 52 percent female in 1930, and 54 percent by the 1950s.[669] Santa Ana's urban areas were already 54 percent female by 1930 and held these percentages across the 1940s and 1950s.[670] The overall sexual balance, which was 49 percent female in 1950, 50 percent in 1961 and 50 percent in

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[666] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: UK, Cambridge University Press, 2000), 112.

[667] They base their info from a 1996 NSF project on "Global Change and Urbanization in Latin America." http://www.aag.org/hdgc/www/urban/units/unit1/html/unit1frame.html

[668] Stansell, *Women*.

[669] There were 46,678 women (52%) and only 42,707 men (48%) in the urban areas of the Department of San Salvador and 3426 men (50%) and 3401 (50%) women in the rural areas in 1930. The imbalance would increase to 115,204 women (54%) to 97,729 men (46%) in urban San Salvador and 156,455/296,452 (53%) overall in 1950. The ratio held at 53% women and 47% men through 1961 (244,475/463,228) and 1971 (387,068/733,445). Ministerio de Obras Publicas, *San Salvador: Monografias del departamento y sus municipios* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Instituto Geografico Nacional "Ingeniero Pablo Arnold Guzman," 1990), 14.

[670] In the department of Santa Ana there were 54% women (29707/55348) in the urban areas of Santa Ana in 1930 and 50% total (76618/154493). The proportion of women in urban Santa Ana also held steady across the period of military rule. There were 54% women in 1950, 54% in 1961 and 52% in 1971. Ministerio de Obras Publicas, *Santa Ana: Monografias del departamento y sus municipios* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Instituto Geografico Nacional "Ingeniero Pablo Arnold Guzman," 1992), 15.

1971, also held steady.[671] Urban Sonsonate was no exception. Sonsonate was 53 percent female in 1930 and 53 percent in 1961.[672] Men predominated in the more rural, isolated and less-developed areas of Chalatenango, Morazán and Usulután. Nevertheless women workers' numerical and economic strength was visible throughout the urban areas of El Salvador.

Market women, as important links in the urban chain of goods and information, as well as critical intermediaries between government officials and citizens, played an important economic, social and political role in all of the departments. Because their political support and allegiance could strengthen the ability of a political appointee to conduct business, and could potentially doom the candidacy of a political aspirant, these women were important clients in the military regimes' patronage networks. Politicians wanted to harness their ability to mobilize other women for elections, tax their commerce to increase the role and power of the state, and use their social networks to disseminate propaganda and collect information regarding local social conditions. Considering them full workers, the regime explicitly paralleled them with male laborers.[673] At all levels, government officials and political aspirants courted the market women, and sought them as political clients. For example, in 1931, *El Día* reported that the market women

[671] Ibid.

[672] Sonsonate was 53% women, 23873/45259 in 1930; 53% women 24624/46392 in 1950; 53% women 31,881/60,196 in 1961; 52% women 44,627/86,554 in 1971) and in the Department as a whole (50% in 1930, 1950, 1961 and 1971). Ministerio de Obras Publicas, *Monografias del departamento y sus municipios: Sonsonate* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Instituto Geografico Nacional "Ingeniero Pablo Arnold Guzman," undated), 14.

[673] "El gobierno continua su franca politica de effectiva protección para los trabajadores," *El Día* (1 December 1932).

received and feted President Arturo Araujo when he visited Ahuachapan, in an attempt to bolster his faltering support.[674]

When government officials wanted to nationalize the capital's central markets, they allied with market women, and rhetorically defended the Salvadoran nation and womanhood. In 1932, Minister of the Interior Castaneda Castro intervened in favor of the market women in a dispute with the foreign-owned Central Market Company, over the prices of stalls.[675] Weeks later, the problem remained unresolved, and the women again appealed to Minister Castaneda. After the women threatened to go on strike in protest of the prices charged, the Market Company responded with intimidation and threats by their private police forces.[676] When the merchants were locked out, they again appealed to the government, fined the company 12,000 *colones*. Arguing that the Martínez government was unconstitutional, Ferrer, the owner, refused to pay the fine.[677] Over the next several months, the Company's owners and lawyers continued the legal wrangling and political posturing against the governor, mayor and legislature and various Ministries. As the Company continued to resist, the *martinato* increased the fine to 33,000 *colones*, and ultimately seized the Company's goods in the market, to the public delight of the *vendedoras*.[678]

In the offensive against the companies, the newspapers appealed to nationalism, and appealed to the women. Attacking the foreign owners of the Central Market, the papers attacked the inadequacy of the original contract, the sanitary conditions and the

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[674] "Visitas del presidente y agasajos que le han hecho, en Ahuachapan, *El Día* (5 September 1931).

[675] "Se resolvio ayer a favor de las vendedoras el problema de los mercados," *El Día* (23 August 1932).

[676] "Vendedoras boicoteran los mercados," *El Día* (8 September 1932); "El Viejo asunto del Mercado present ahoy un Nuevo aspecto," *El Día* (17 September 1932).

[677] Doce mil colones de multa a la companies del Mercado," *El Día* (21 December 1932)

[678] "Las mujeres del mercado nos dan gracias por nuestro actitud," *El Día* (11 February 1933).

security of the space. *El Día*'s editors asked students from the National University Law School and representatives from AGEUS to present their analyses regarding the problems with the exploitative contract.[679] The government reported on the thefts that occurred as a result of improper vigilance and security, and released documents on the market's unsanitary and unsafe conditions. Appealing to public sentiment, the Minister of Public health argued that the general public and the "poor market women" were endangered, and that the 50-year old structure should be demolished and replaced.[680] The courts decided that the contract, passed in 1904, had expired and that the city now controlled the market. In 1934 Supreme Court President Dr. Miguel Tomás Molina reaffirmed the decision, and that compensation was not required.[681] Both after the Company's goods were seized in 1933, and their appeal defeated a year later, the market women publicly thanked the press for publicizing their conflict, and organized a mass, and a *te deum*.[682] The government's lawyer, Hermogenes Alvarado, was also feted by the papers.[683]

Although the Central Market dispute was primarily about the government's ability to politically control and economically profit from the property, it demonstrated how the regime courted the market women, and used nationalist and gendered rhetoric, to attack the company. Even after the Market was nationalized, and sold to local businessmen, the women's struggle was not over. In May 1935, appealing to the Minister of the Interior and the municipal mayor, the merchants complained about exorbitant rents. Reasserting their role as mothers and workers, they declared that their rates reached "the limits of

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[679] See *El Día* 15 and 18 October 1932.

[680] "Los pudrideros centrals," *El Día* (29 October 1932).

[681] "El Dr. Tomas Molina es de parecer que las contratas de los Mercados citadinos son nulas," *El Día* (3 January 1934).

[682] "La Cámara de comerciantes celebrará el triunfo del gobierno en el asunto de los mercados," *El Día* (1 June 1934).

[683] "El mercado central sera entregado esta semana," *El Día* (4 June 1934).

onerous," and that uniformed private police menaced them when they complained. The women wanted to pay, they said, but at the rates decreed by the government.[684] The regime continued to support "honorable" working Salvadoran women, and hoped the nationalistic and gendered appeal would generate goodwill among the reading public, even as they battled against well-capitalized interests.

This extended example shows how the regime appealed to women, in order to gain political power. The military did this across the decades, giving women the vote in 1939 as it faced increased opposition from multiple sectors, and granting women full political rights, including the ability to hold office in 1950. In May 1944, San Salvador politicians recognized the political power of the market women, and specifically targeted them in their campaigns for and against various parties, as when they made up a great percentage of the mass demonstrations that supported Dr. Arturo Romero's candidacy in 1944.[685] When the *martinato* was struggling to survive, its leaders used the market women's reputation by publishing a letter written by the women that criticized the university newspaper, *Opinion Estudiantil*. Responding to the letter, the newspaper produced a letter of support from several *vendedoras* who appreciated the actions of the University in support of urban laborers.[686] Both sides in the political conflict claimed to have the support of the influential subalterns.

Even before the military took power, Salvadoran governments drafted and passed laws in order to appeal to the market women, particular in their struggles against other mercantile groups. Under President Arturo Araujo, explicitly arguing that they were

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[684] "Sufren malos tratos las vendedoras del mercado," *Diario Latino* (19-20 June 1935).

[685] "W. Thurston to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0001/memorandum (20 July 1944). Thurston reported that the majority of the 50,000 people who greeted Romero were women.

[686] "La mentira de una hoja suelta," *Opinion Estudiantil* (8 July 1944).

protecting "the small commerce of Salvadoran women," the National Assembly forced Chinese immigrants to pay a monthly 100 *colon* tax.[687] Lauding the legislation, the editors of *El Día* lamented that the Chinese had slowly but surely displaced female Salvadoran merchants by entering the markets directly and consciously competing in women's work. The author argued that the women needed to organize to combat the united Chinese, and not simply rely on the state's assistance. Obliquely racist, the article compared the warring Chinese with the economically dominant British, French and U.S., but acknowledged that despite their trouble in their home country, the Chinese were becoming an economic force in El Salvador which could translate to political power. [688] The direct link between the markets and political power was obvious to the legislators, newspaper editors, readers, and the women themselves.

Local political officials and the security forces also joined the attempted suppression of Chinese merchants, and tied their efforts to support for the market women. In an attempt to intimidate the merchants, and discredit them in the public eye, the mayor of San Salvador sent the Municipal Police Director R. Saravia to inspect all Chinese establishments for evidence of tampering of weights and measures. [689] Also taking action against Chinese merchants, the Inspector of Produce informed authorities that Martín Chang was selling goods in Candelaria without a license. Salvadoran authorities ordered Chang to pay the 100 colon fine, and investigated the validity of his marriage to Salvadoran María Peña.[690] Defending themselves on multiple fronts, the Chinese colony

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[687] "Las tiendas manejadas por chinos pagarán fuertes impuestos fiscales que sucesivamente aumentarán," *El Día* (19 July 1931).

[688] Comentarios" El decreto sobre pulperías," *El Día* (23 June 1931).

[689] "Informe de la policía municipal sobre los chinos wue no expenden conforme a la ley," *El Día* (27 June 1931).

[690] "Encontrose [sic] a un chino vendiendo en una tienda," *El Día* (19 September 1931).

hired several Salvadorans to marshal signatures in their defense, and appealed to the U.S. embassy.[691] Resenting the Chinese, the agents of the Salvadoran government tried discredit the foreigners, but also claimed to defend Salvadoran womanhood through their actions. They released a press statement noting that because of the tax on the Chinese, "native" women had opened 400 stores in four months which directly benefited their families, and created multiplier effects for other Salvadorans.[692] These nationalist and patriarchal appeals were particularly effective in this time of economic distress.

Some officials, like Minister of Government Dr. Joaquín Novoa particularly hated the Chinese, and led the movement to isolate and harass the colony but still appealed to market women and nationalism. Leading the passage of the tax law, Novoa argued that it "opened the horizons for the employment of Salvadoran women… improved [their] morality and protected infancy…" Since it was intended as a weapon against male-owned Chinese and Palestinian small businesseses, female-owned Salvadoran stores and taverns were exempt from the tax.[693] Not content to simply harass the Chinese economically, Novoa rejected the very bodies of the Chinese. In a letter to bacteriologist Dr. Alfredo Reyna Guerra, he asserted that these Chinese people, like many poor peasants in southern China, carried a highly contagious microbe or larvae in their viscera.[694] Reyna argued that the Chinese citizens in El Salvador carried the disease, and because the disease had origins in steer, and many of the nationalist fears were tied to economics, explicitly added that the cattle industry was threatened by the foreign

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[691] "Actividad desplegada por los chinos," *El Día* (26 September 1931).

[692] "Cuatrocientas tiendas son las abiertas por Salvadoreñas," *El Día* (31 October 1931).

[693] See documents related to Representation of the Interests of Another Country by American or Other Diplomatic or Consular Officers: Chinese Interests. *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0990 from July to Oct 1931.

[694] "Sobre una enfermedad que padecen los chinos y que tienen asiento en las visceras," *El Día* (17 August 1931).

parasite.[695] The Chinese were portrayed as a commercial and bacteriological invader that threatened Salvadoran society on multiple levels.

Wanting to humiliate the foreigners into submission, Novoa argued through the Dept. of Sanitation that these "very special Chinese" carried a strange disease and needed to submit to rectal exams and provide feces samples.[696] When Chinese colony appealed to the U.S. and other foreign embassies for assistance, and when these men pressure the Salvadorans despite their own racism and xenophobia, Novoa accepted a compromise. The Salvadoran government deported a few Chinese nations, in exchange for allowing the majority to remain.[697] U.S. chargé d'affairs believed that "only the intervention of the legation…saved 250 Chinamen from an intimate examination of their excreta."[698] When this ploy failed, Novoa accused Chinese citizens of trafficking in Salvadoran women. Arguing that the Chinese owners of the "pension Washington" had lists of prostitutes registered with the Department of Health and used these women to recruit younger women to work clandestinely, the government expelled them. Combining the moral taint of prostitution with tax evasion, endangering public health, and corruption of Salvadoran female youth, the assault proved effective.[699] The accused, Alberto Chi, did admit that he rented his pension on an hourly basis, and that people of different classes and sexes rented the rooms.[700]

Linking the Chinese residents' offenses with sexuality and the government's defense of Salvadoran womanhood, Salvadoran officials tried to prevent the merchants

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[695] "La enfermedad sufrida por los orientales," *El Día* (19 August 1931).

[696] "Charge d'affairs ad interim Finley to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0990/576 (19 Aug 1931).

[697] "Finley to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0990/587 (2 Sep 1931).

[698] "Charge d'affairs C.B. Curtis to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0215/11 (19 November 1931).

[699] "Se expulse a los chinos de la pension Washington," *El Día* (11 November 1931).

[700] "Circunstancias contrarias a la solicitud del chino Shi," *El Día* (24 November 1931).

from traveling with their wives. Since the majority of the Chinese residents were male and married to Salvadoran women, in 1933 the Legislature forced Chinese and *turc,* or Middle Eastern husbands to deposit 200 *colones* before they could leave the country with their wives.[701] Despite arguing that this was to ensure funds for repatriation in the case of abandonment, the government's deeper reasons involved nationalism, racism, and paternalism, and resulted in a sexually-charged and gendered, multi-pronged assault on the dignity, comfort, and material well-being of foreigners in the early years of the *martinato*.

The Salvadoran press also contributed and participated in the xenophobic and racist attacks. Local merchant Aldo Pada, with the lack of irony held by xenophobic older immigrants, argued that despite the repression, the Chinese should be grateful. After all, given the suffering unleashed by war on the banks of the Yang-Tsé River, proscriptions in El Salvador paled in comparison to the bloodbaths in their home countries. The author, unable to suppress his animosity towards the foreigners, said he tried to enlighten the Chinese merchants but they simply responded in their "infernal language."[702] The editors of *El Día* apparently also sought to convince the colony that things could be worse by printing articles on the miserable conditions in China, and the abuses faced by them in other countries.[703] When Alberto Masferrer defended the Chinese and argued that all men have a right to free commerce, the newspaper angrily

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[701] "Que los chinos y los turcos que salgan del país con sus esposas salvadoreñas depositen 200 dólares," *El Día* (1 September 1933).

[702] "Llueve sobre los chinos," *El Día* (28 August 1931).

[703] See for example, on a natural disaster " …las catastrophes en la china," *El Día* (2 September 1931), on assaults by the Society of Sonoran Nationalists "Arrestado por abuser contra los chinos" *El Día* (11 September 1931) and on the debate regarding the expulsion of the Chinese from Mexico "Se pide exclusion de chinos en Mejico," *El Día* (1 September 1931). Of course, it is possible that the increased reportage on Chinese affairs in coincidental and simply correlative but newspaper editors controlled the news printed and usually responded to current political, social and economic events and the resultant debates, even when they could not address them directly.

attacked the foreigners' ill-gotten gains, and asserted that Chinamen throughout the world violated his principles of the Vital Minimum, by engaging in usury and other unfair business practices.[704] Reflecting the dangerous combination of Salvadoran nationalism, xenophobia, jealousy and racism that permeated civilian, and particularly military, circles, this episode also revealed the multiple ways that power-holders appealed to the market women to help advance their political, social and economic agendas.[705]

Shortly following Martínez's assumption of power, the government briefly stopped harassing Chinese merchants, but soon restored anti-imperialistic and nativist policies.[706] In this brief period following the 1931 coup, the Chinese colony requested that the Assembly strike down the anti-Chinese laws in effect, including and particularly those regarding immigration restrictions and the prohibition tax on merchants.[707] Outraged, Salvadoran businessmen, in return, asked the Assembly to reject the petition on the grounds that laws protecting womanhood and the nation allowed all Salvadorans to prosper.[708] Despite resuming official anti-immigrant policies, the laws and restrictions passed and enforced in the later 1930s did not signal a widespread anti-immigrant campaign.[709] Balancing a respect for the xenophobia and nationalism of many of his ministers and fellow officers, with a pragmatic need to cultivate the support of foreign merchants, Martínez talked nationalism but did not back his words with substantive action.

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[704] "El vitalismo y la defense de los chinos," *El Día* (17 November 1931).

[705] "Charge d'affairs W.J. McCafferty to Secretary of State: General Conditions Report 1 December to 31 December 1931," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0923/46 (16 January 1932).

[706] "Charge d'affairs W.J. McCafferty to Secretary of State: General Conditions Report 1 December to 31 December 1931," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, Decimal File 800.0923/46 (16 January 1932).

[707] "Gestiones en favor de los chinos," *El Día* (7 May 1932).

[708] "Más de 400 personal piden q'no [sic] se oigan las peticiones de los ciudadanos chinos," *El Día* (16 May 1932).

[709] "Los chinos abrieron sus tiendas, creyendo que ya no pagarian los impuestos," *El Día* (11 December 1931).

Market women were also tied to conflicts with other international merchants. When they tried to close down the small and medium-sized businesses of Palestinians and Turks (*palestinos* and *turcos*), as they called Middle Eastern-descended people, Salvadoran officials tied together nativism and appeals to working women. In 1934, various residents of Suchitoto, Cuscatlán asked the Minister of Government to declare Salvador Saca a dangerous alien because of his unfair business practices, but female employees and market women who conducted regular business with the family refuted the "false accusations." They defended Saca by presenting him as an honest businessman who charged fair prices, a creditor who loaned at reasonable rates, a valuable employer who hired Salvadoran men and women and paid fair wages, and also a family patriarch who provided his Salvadoran-born children with food, shelter and an education.[710] The Sacas worked from the beginning top cement their ties with the government, as did other families of Palestinian descent in the Americas.[711] In 1932, they gave the Martínez government 1500 *colones* towards the anticommunist campaign, as did the Chinese colony.[712]

Defending themselves in the courts, in the newspapers and through public behavior, Palestinian-descended Salvadorans eventually limited the effects of the laws, but faced deep resentments. The total number of immigrants was very small, at just over

[710] Interestingly, the defense of Saca as a family man was simply that he had a large family and took care of them (food, clothing, education). This would seem a minor point and far less than one would outline when defending a member of an elite family. They were not defending an elite or even a middle-class Salvadoran however, and the authors were contesting deeply embedded stereotypes regarding Saca. Whether cast as a subaltern or working class resident or as Middle Eastern foreigner, it would not be assumed that he would take care for his family. The anti-palestino prejudices do not appear to be as pernicious as those against the even smaller (200 or so in San Salvador in 1931) Chinese population, but were virulent nonetheless.

[711] Peter Winn noted this trait among Palestinian immigrants in Chile Peter Winn, *Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), part 1.

[712] "Sucesos registrados en Juayua, Nahuizalco y Salcoatitan," *El Día* (28 January 1932.); "Contribuye con c 1500 la colonia china," *El Día* (30 January 1932).

three thousand, and thus only 0.2% in a population of 1.67m people.[713] With about 20% of all the immigrants in El Salvador, Palestinians were the largest single alien group in El Salvador throughout the 1930s, and faced popular resentments, and occasional attacks in the courts and in the press.[714] When *El Día* attacked Palestinians again in 1934, they appealed to Salvadoran women once again. Arguing that they forced women to work illegal hours, the paper emphasized the predatory nature of the *Turcos*.[715] Accusing them of displacing native merchants, and retarding the nation's progress, *Opinion Estudiantil* also attacked those "called turcos," and asked that the Constitution limit the entry of this "detestable race" into El Salvador.[716] As threats to national progress and liberty, the editors included them with foreign capitalists, fascist clerics, and Jews and added that they paid low salaries to Salvadoran women in the textile factories.[717] Anti-Semitic and anti-*turco* statements were widespread and heavily publicized.

When women also brought suits against these foreigners, they often used race-based xenophobia and the state's desire to protect Salvadoran women and womanhood from these foreign predators, in their defense. Prosecutors arguing against "Palestino" Juan Abellardo, who refused to recognize the second child born by his longtime mistress, demanded that the father provide "subsistence and education" or face the penalties of the

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[713] Baron Castro, *población*, 435.

[714] "M.Q. Stanton to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0109/32 (11 Mar. 1935). "Maleady to U.S. Secretary of State" *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0248 (1 Jan 1937). Baron Castro cited the Anuario Estadístico and cited 647 Spaniards and Palestinians with 366 Italians. Rodolfo Barón Castro, *La población de El Salvador* (Madrid, Spain: Instituto Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, 1942).

[715] "Obligan a las mujeres a trabajar fuera de las horas reglamentarias," *El Día* (2 July 1934).

[716] "Problema de los turcos," *Opinion Estudiantil* (22 August 1944).

[717] Drawing in *Opinión Estudiantil* (17 February 1949); "El problema del palestino," *Opinión Estudiantil* (12 June 1950). The Palestinian entrepreneurs had apparently learned the same lessons employed by the Yarur brothers in Chile regarding the "importance of the Latin American state" to their fortunes. Peter Winn, *Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism* (NY, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), chapter 1.

Immigration Law.[718] Abellardo had failed to honor the expectations of Salvadoran patriarchy like the Sacas and lost the support of "their" women. In addition, based on their prejudices regarding how Middle Eastern men oppressed women, courts sometimes argued that these men failed to honor their obligation as proper Christian patriarchs. In 1931, newspapers had accused the "palestinos" of not only "stealing the bread for our women, but also insulting them," by failing to provide proper respect.[719] Salvadoran men believed that by working in the markets, Middle Eastern behaved inappropriately towards Salvadoran women. When several businessmen from the Central Market attempted to have sub-administrator Julio C. Menéndez disciplined, they smuggled nativist language and rhetoric within broader critiques. Although nepotism was the main charge against Menéndez, the businessmen also accused him of providing special preferences to female merchants, and accepting cash under the table from Chinese and "Turkish" merchants.[720]

Racialized hatred against foreigner persisted into the 1940s and 1950s, and well beyond. In 1944, prominent *finquero* Francisco "chico" Aguilar confessed to U.S. chargé d'affairs Walter Thurston that there were too many "*turcos*" in the country who had amassed great wealth, and now sought to turn it into landholdings.[721] In 1946, the capital's native merchants, led by the Union Farmacéutica, resisted the Saca and Handal families.[722] Although these prejudices are well-documented, by the 1980s, because

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[718] "Contra palestino Juan Abellardo," AGN, FG, 1938, Box L-12.

[719] "Comunicacion de unos palestinos radicados en la ciudad de sonsonate," *El Día* (5 October 1931).

[720] "Queja de varias locatarias de Mercado Central Nacional contra el Sub Administrador del mismo, señor Julio C Menéndez, por irregularidades en el desempeno de su cargo," AGN, FG, 1938. Box 1.

[721] "W. Thurston to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/1323 (24 Feb. 1944).

[722] "O.E.Ellis to to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.4016/6-1346 D 906 (13 June 1946).

turcos advanced into economic and political positions, the public language was much more muted when two Palestinian-descended candidates, Shafik Handal and Tony Saca, opposed each other in the 2004 presidential elections.[723]

In the 1950s, when U.S. Embassy Secretary A.R. Donovan noted that municipal and mayoral pre-electoral activities involved the "wooing of the market women," he showed that the women were still important to municipal and local elections. Donovan speculated that politicians did this because the women's opposition would be "vociferous and probably very harmful." [724] The market women as a whole remained politically active into the late 1950s, and engaged with political figures such as mayors and legislators. For instance, in 1957, a group of market women presented a petition to the legislature for tax reductions in bill that proposed overall increases in municipal taxes. The women also threatened Deputy Rosa Amelia Guzman de Araujo, when she supported an unrelated bill that would force newspapers to publish a rebuttal alongside critical or potentially slanderous articles. This bill was proposed after several newspapers including Jorge Pinto's *El Independiente* and the University's *Opinion Estudiantil* reported that the police had raided a party involving both homosexual activities and the sons of prominent families.[725] It is unclear whether the women opposed a bill that was seen as limiting freedom of speech and expression, whether they mistakenly associated Deputy Guzman with the tax proposal, or whether they were expressing resentment over old conflicts.[726]

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[723] See, for example Paige, *Coffee*, passim.

[724] "A.E. Donovan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 800.0564/ WEEKA no. 25 (19 June 1952).

[725] "A.W. Hemba to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A*, RG 84, DF 816.54/8-1357 D 85 (13 August 1957). The Director of the National Police denied that the police were involved in the raid, perhaps to cover up the incident.

[726] "A.W. Hemba to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/5-357 (3 May 1957).

Ultimately defeated, the bill was unpopular with multiple sectors, and the market women played a role, albeit a small one, in this particular political drama and many others.

Recognizing the political and economic importance of the market women, the Revolutionary governments provided them with small-scale loans. The Federation of Rural Credit Banks and the urban centered People's Banks played an important if limited function as they provided 12% annual interest, instead of the 12% per day, or 12 to 20% per month charged by private lenders. U.S. embassy officials reported that the Federation of Credit Banks, or People's Banks, had as "its chief function, that of lending money to market women," and had loaned a total of 1.181.175 *colones* to 7.386 clients up until the end of October 1957. [727] The loan totals certainly could not transform the nature of Salvadoran micro-businesses but was an important political tool and certainly benefited the women who received the loans.

Female workers and *comerciantes* played many roles in the political and social functioning of Salvadoran society. They could physically mobilize large groups of women, disseminated information, and through their economic activities bridged the spaces between men and women of various social groups and classes. They sometimes provided loans for small-scale merchants and contributed to municipal political campaigns. They were even involved in religious affairs. For instance, they became caretakers of the statue of San Vicente from the city's cathedral during a dispute between the Bishop and town officials in January 1954. Salvadoran soldiers and the archbishop

[727] C.L. Clark to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00/1-958 D 370 (9 January 1958).

were called in to mediate in this oddly conflictive moment.[728] In all these ways, market women played an important and largely unrecognized role in Salvadoran life.

The "*ambulantes*"

Despite the political and economic importance of market women, merchants that had were not linked to a physical location faced repression. Street peddlers faced the wrath of the dictatorship like did ambulatory prostitutes, or streetwalkers, under the regime.[729] Similarly, both groups of ambulatory "merchants" shifted their location when repressed. Ultimately, despite the fact that attacking these mobile sectors was counterproductive, military regimes never stopped trying to bring order to the streets by removing the *ambulantes*.

Outside of any ties to xenophobia, market women remained a key client for the Martínez government and municipal officials, and they often supported the women in battles against both native and foreign businessmen. State officials targeted market owners and coerced them into providing benefits and services to female merchants. For example, in 1932, the mayor of San Salvador J. Roque Bonilla and the Director of Health Dr. David Escalante met with three prominent market owners and female representatives of several local markets and negotiated significant concessions. Don Salvador Mugdan donated land for a public kitchen, Don Mauricio Smith donated land for a flower market and Don Jesús Sandoval agreed to provide space within the *Mercado Emporium* for street peddlers (*ambulantes*).[730] Although the following year government officials negotiated a

[728] "A.R Donovan to U.S. Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 716.00(W)/1-1654 (16 January 1954).
[729] "Las vendedoras han invadido otras calles," *El Día* (30 November, 1932).
[730] "Se resolvio el problema de los mercados," *El Día* (17 May 1932).

deal to provide rent-free spaces for the *ambulantes*, the women remained in the streets.[731] Whether the women resisted to maintain their physical and commercial autonomy, or simply made a financial cost-benefit analysis, the government continued to attempt to transform the *ambulantes* into stationary, taxable, and supervised workers.

Despite repeatedly failing to permanently house the *ambulantes* in stationary markets, officials of the *martinato* nevertheless persisted in their efforts. After the compromise discussed above failed, Director of Sanitation and Public Health David Escalante lamented the return of the female mobile merchants to the many streets of San Salvador in November 1933. They had once again resisted the state's attempts to regulate their commerce and behavior. Criticizing the women, the editors of *El Día* argued that they retarded the nation's progress and endangered public health by not relocating to the Mercado Emporium. Recognizing that the women wanted freedom, the author argued that actions must be taken for the greater good. He added that although the women believed they would make less money in the markets than on the street, they had miscalculated.[732] Several months later the authors again addressed the seemingly intractable problem and blamed the authorities who had repeatedly failed to resolve the public health and traffic congestion problem.[733]

Into the late-1930s, government and state officials continued to try to confine the women to stationary venues, and the street vendors continued to resist. In 1938, San Salvador mobile vendors asked to legally sell their goods in the streets, and therefore

[731] "Las vendedoras ambulantes seran instaladas gratuitamente en el Mercado Emporium el 31 a mas tardar," *El Día* (30 August 1933).

[732] "Las vendedoras en las calles," *El Día* (3 November 1933).

[733] "El problema de las vendedoras continua como antes, esperanda una solución," *El Día* (12 February 1934).

avoid police harassment, between five and ten in the evening.[734] The regime responded as it had done many times before, in many other places, and tried to convince the women to abandon their mobile ways. The regime even prohibited the *pupuseras*, the sellers of the Salvadoran national dish, from setting up their mobile ovens in the streets during the August patronal feasts.[735] After appealing to the governor, fruit and candy sellers operated during the feasts, but the government excluded food vendors.[736] Not limited to the capital, the conflict over the *vendedoras* affected municipal officials in places like San Rafael Cedros where municipal officials could not convince the local street peddlers to remain in designated zones.[737] Although departmental and municipal authorities agreed to clear the streets of itinerant vendors and candy and fruit stands, and to limit them to the respective markets, predictably, the strategy had limited success.[738]

Although state and municipal officials under the *martinato* regime frequently threatened the women, they never solely repressed the *ambulantes*, but instead sought to cultivate them as clients in order to increase government control and supervision. Never simple pawns in the government's attempts to regulate, sanitize and beautify public space, the merchants defended themselves through petitions to officials, letters to the newspapers and through their physical presence and mobility. Differentiating themselves from less moral women of the streets, the women established a rhetorical position as mothers and workers, and received support from newspapers.[739] When municipal

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[734] "Piden que les dejen vender en las calles," *Diario Latino* (21 May 1938).

[735] "No se permitiran cocinas en las calles centrales durante la feria agostina," *Diario Latino* (5 July 1938).

[736] "Concesiones a las mujeres pobres," *Diario Latino* (26 July 1938).

[737] " Se oponen las vendedoras que se les traslade a un lugar mas adecuado," *Diario Latino* (25 May 1938).

[738] "F.P. Corrigan to U.S. Secretary of State: El Salvador News Summary," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 800.0617 (2 November 1936).

[739] "Hay que darle medios honestos para que viva," *Diario Latino* (30 January 1936).

attempted to convince the women that they would benefit from a fixed location, the women argued that the locations chosen by municipal officials would hurt them financially.[740] Although state officials provided spaces and promised low rents to the *ambulantes*, the already-stationary market women received the great majority of the national, departmental and municipal government's largesse.

When they also sought to order public space, and retain the loyalty of these important urban clients, the Revolutionary governments replayed many of these same conflicts. The Osorio government faced complaints from local businesses including citizens who sought to maneuver their way through the streets of San Salvador. Initially taking a rhetorical hard line against the ambulatory merchants, they also backed down from local pressure. In March 1951, San Salvador mayor Dr. Guillermo Trabanino announced that he would no longer use the municipal police to repress the merchants, but would instead allow them to occupy the streets until local and national officials provided a solution. Arguing that a new and modern market was needed to house the women, he stopped repressing the women, without acknowledging that this so-called solution was attempted in the past to no avail.[741] The street vendors simply did not have sufficient economic and social incentives to submit to the regulation of the municipal government in the 1950s any more than their predecessors did in the 1930s.

Conclusions

Although women slowly shifted their role in Salvadoran society, and struggled to change their place within it, they had to acquire and wield economic, social and political

[740] "Debe designer un lugar adecuada a las vendedoras," *Diario Latino* (16 July 1935); "Numeroso grupo d'vendedoras se dirigen al gobernador," Diario Latino (19 July 1935).

[741] *Boletín de la Policia* (March 1951).

power before their demands could be heard. Even before this occurred, their resistance was considerable and included a complex and contradictory, but ultimately self-limiting hegemony. For instance, there was little opportunity to wield power within the chauffer's union or change public perceptions about a women's place outside the home when women received only 5 out of 149 licenses issued in 1939 and two of them were French nationals![742] Even in 1950, after women had finally received the vote in El Salvador, military officials still saw women and girls as inferior. For example, when the police decided to provide driver's education classes, they began with young women who were seen as disproportionately causing vehicular accidents.[743] Over time, and accelerating with the dramatic post-war demographic, spatial and economic changes women began to play different roles and decades later joined other subaltern groups in the mass organizations and actions that ultimately toppled the military dictatorships and ushered in the fragile democracies that still survive.

Despite their limitations, the market women's economic power and numerical strength limited the government's ability to repress and sometimes even regulate their behavior. The state instead sought to control the market women and transform them into political clients and respectable citizens. Throughout military rule, regimes struggled to transform the mobile street vendors into tax-paying market women. It is important, however, to not exaggerate the power and autonomy of the market women. The great majority of these workers, however, simply struggled to survive and they lived difficult and precarious lives. They were subject to the whims and vagaries of their customers, agents of the state, and thieves as well as broader economic and political forces. The

[742] "Licecias de Choferes," AGN, FG, 1939, Box L-9, Transito.
[743] *Boletín de la Policia* (February 1951).

scarcity and unpredictability of economic development led to many conflicts and many of the women had longstanding feuds and were recognized in the public voice as “known enemies.” The market was thus a central locus of female to female physical and verbal violence and contests over limited resources and physical space. Many public relationships, ranging from the purely economic to the sexual, were manifested within and around the markets and this also contributed to the apparent violence and conflict in this very public arena.

Conclusions

The Salvadoran military regimes, for good and ill, transformed the country's political, economic, and social structures between the fall of Arturo Araujo and the coup that toppled Colonel José María Lemus. They ruled over a relatively stable country that grew from 1.5m to 2.5m people. The nation's GDP increased from $17m to $600m and Salvadorans appeared poised to enter the developed world. The military's most impressive accomplishment, however, may have been its ongevity and durability. Built partly on economic growth and development that allowed some Salvadorans to prosper, the regime was also built on convincing the public that the military was the institution best capable of leading the country. Why? Because they successfully repressed Communist subversives, provided social benefits to help the poor majority, limited the power of the oppressive oligarchy and controlled criminality and ordered public spaces. At least that is what they argued.

Between 1931 and 1960, the Salvadoran praetorian regimes frequently used repression, coercion, propaganda and lies in order to retain power. Combining these repressive and manipulative measures with favors or rewards, and limited reforms and social justice programs, military governments built alliances with or co-opted some popular and middle-class sectors and organizations. Remarkably successful and central to the military's success and longevity, this political strategy integrated groups as diverse as indigenous peasants, oligarchs, industrialists and urban market women into the political system. By repeatedly informing the public that they promoted the popular will,

the *martinato* and the PRUD manipulated language so that they shamelessly hailed the participatory and democratic nature of fixed elections. Frequently asserting their love for electoral freedom, they argued that the Salvadoran people were not ready for true suffrage and would claim, as did President Salvador Castaneda Castro in his 1946 'state of the union' address to the National Assembly, that "liberty of expression should be 'guided' and that a state of siege…when used properly…is the best instrument of liberation."[744] Sharing traits with Soviet propaganda under repressive contemporaries like Stalin and his successors, in addition to Latin American populists like Argentine Juan Perón and Brazilian Getulio Vargas, Salvadoran leaders controlled language and along with censorship and violence built a state of fear or misinformation.[745] Unfortunately for the majority of the Salvadoran people, the transition to democracy, popular participation and freedom was never completed. The regimes instead promoted social and spatial order over individual rights and popular participation.[746]

Never able to completely control the populace, their enemies or their allies, the Salvadoran military had to rely on more than naked repression to maintain power. Building a system that lay somewhere between one desired by any of the groups or individuals participating in the system, Salvadoran governance was built like the post-Civil War rural south described by Edward Royce in *The Origins of Southern*

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[744] "Memoria Presidencial 1946: Salvador Castañeda Castro," as reprinted in *Diario Oficial*, San Salvador: Tomo 142, no 37 (15 February 1947).

[745] See Korkin's magisterial revisionist work for a discussion of "speaking Bolshevik." Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as Civilization* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), Ch. 5. For Perón see James Brennan, *The Labor Wars in Córdoba, 1955-1976: Ideology, Work, and Labor Politics in an Argentine Industrial Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). Brennan discussed the transformation of peasants into workers in Cordoba and also explored the interplay of official Perónist and labor ideologies. See Williams for a discussion of the government-sponsored cultural production under Vargas with an emphasis on the ministries of Education and Health. Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001).

[746] This point is discussed in greater detail below, and in chapters five and six.

Sharecropping. Explaining that sharecropping was a system that neither ex-slaves nor ex-masters fought towards or desired, nevertheless through conflict and negotiation, they produced a constriction of possibilities that eliminated alternative historical possibilities or desirable results, until only sharecropping remained.[747]

Although military officers dominated politics in these decades, many groups within Salvadoran society, from coffee oligarchs to organized laborers, competed for power and influence, but were unable to impose their will on others or fully achieve their aims. The military leaders desired greater control over the government, the populace, and the nation's economic structures. The oligarchs would have preferred fully pliant laborers and a client state. Peasants and laborers wanted access to land, higher wages and improved working and living conditions. Despite the fact that certainly, the more powerful groups gained advantage of the situation over time, no group achieved their aims but through conflict and negotiation received elements of their wishes. By the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, groups previously marginalized, such as small farmers, landless peasants and urban workers demanded changes and had increased in numbers and began to organize. Accustomed to exercising greater control over the masses, rural oligarchs resisted popular mobilization in the 1960s and 1970s and political violence became endemic after 1977.[748]

By 24 March 1980, when the Archbishop of San Salvador, Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez, was assassinated while celebrating mass in the Chapel of

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[747] Edward Royce, *The Origins of Southern Sharecropping* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1993); Anthony Giddens. The Nation-State and Violence (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1985); Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 2 vols., trans. by Thomas McCarthy (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1984).

[748] The military retained power after 1977 but the political violence faced by and meted out by the Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero regime (1977-79) augured the looming, though not yet inevitable, Civil War. See the introduction and epilogue for a broader discussion of the moment when the Salvador conflicts become a civil war.

the Hospital de la Divina Providencia Salvadorans were fighting a Civil War. Even in 1980, on the 48th anniversary of the 1932 Matanza, when military forces killed 67 and wounded 250, violence had raged for years. The National Conciliation Party (PCN), which had ruled since 1961, no longer balanced repression and rewards, lost popular support and faced an organized resistance. Although the system proved durable, it could diffuse this popular challenge. Never truly building a hegemonic system, the military by 1980 lost the acceptance of their right to rule from a majority of the Salvadoran people.

Occupying an ambivalent place relative to the nation-building efforts of the other Latin and Central American countries, the Salvadoran elite's attempts to construct a hegemonic system was not the most developed but neither was it the most repressive. Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico, for instance, had more highly sophisticated corporate and clientelistic systems. Dealing with prostitution, urban spatial order, prison reform, or the modernization of the security forces, they integrated larger numbers into the political system, given the scale of cities like Mexico, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paolo and these countries' far greater resources.

A more apt comparison, the other countries of the isthmus employed very different strategies regarding policies as diverse as policing, prisons, public space and labor coercion. To emphasize but one perceived social issue, all Central American governments created and applied prohibitions and regulations regarding prostitution and venereal disease which acutely reveal these differences, but at the polar extremes, Costa Rica's system sought to instruct but Guatemala's coerced and punished.[749] The

[749] Lara Putnam. *The Company they Kept: Migrants and the Politics of Gender in Costa Rica, 1870-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of NC Press, 2002), David McCreery, "'This Life of Misery and Shame': Female Prostitution in Guatemala City, 1880-1920," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 18 (1993): xx-xx, Juan José Marín Hernández, "Prostitución y pecado en la bella y próspera ciudad de San José (1850-

Salvadoran model fell between these two poles, although the regimes from the *martinato* to the PRUD admittedly too frequently favored repression over reform, and believed that the public should not make independent decisions.[750] Central government and capital-based agents at times passed laws to improve the lives of the public and build consensus but were ultimately thwarted by a lack of desire by a majority of elites to privilege hegemony over coercive dominance. Supported ideologically by the Salvadoran Church and U.S. State Department officials who agreed that the masses were incapable of making positive autonomous decisions, the regime emphasized paternalism over democracy. Despite policies that discouraged popular independence, individuals and groups from many classes supported the state or more pessimistically, were co-opted by the government. Providing enough benefits to garnered enough popular support, the regimes survived for decades. Ultimately the military leaders indeed accomplished what they promised. Maintaining Communists and other radicals at bay, they also prevented reactionary oligarchs from completely repressing the populace, and maintained public order more frequently than they failed to repress chaos. Until the 1970s, praetorian regimes could argue that they fulfilled their basic function, and the ultimate failure of this balance explains the collapse and devolution into civil and dirty war.

1930)," in *El paso del cometa: Estado, política social y cultures populares en Costa Rica (1800/1950)*, ed. Iván Molina Jiménez and Steven Palmer (San José, Costa Rica: Editorial Porvenir/Plumstock Mesoamerican Studies, 1994), and "Las causas de la prostitución josefina, 1939-49: Entre lo imaginario y el estigma," Revista de Historis (San José, Costa Rica) 27 (1993). There is currently less research on Honduras and Nicaragua examples.

[750] Steven Palmer discussed the early development of the Costa Rican "educator state" with regards to penal reform and attempts to deal with "social contagion" of criminality in "The Rise of Social Policy in Costa Rica, 1880-1935," in Ricardo Salvatore, Carlos Aguirre and Gil Joseph, eds. *Crime and Punishment in Latin America: Law and Society since Colonial Times*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001). The contrast to the state policies described by McCreery in "Life of Misery and Shame" is striking.

In the aftermath of the brutal, two-decade long civil war, that cost 100,000 lives, Salvadorans confront impudent criminals, corrupt courts and police forces, and dire poverty within neo-liberal economic growth. Although not unique to El Salvador within Latin America, these problems are among the central concern for those living in the non-Anglo Americas, as reflected in a multiplicity of articles in magazines, newspapers and scholarly journals to visual media to surveys.[751] Since interpretations of the past affect contemporary decision-making, it is troubling that rich and poor begin to long for a past when the military controlled crime, limited corruption, and built massive public projects. It is troubling because this dissertation shoes that despite having a basis in fact, this memory is largely illusory. Broader sectors of Salvadoran society have been empowered, but a realistic sense of the nation's historical legacy is needed, and the process must continue for peace and democracy to survive and grow.

Using the apparent failures of the policies and politics of Liberal oligarchs after the Great Depression as the justification for a militarization of Salvadoran society and governance, Martínez took power in 1932 and radically altered the nation's trajectory. Liberal leaders had sought to carefully and slowly increase political participation and even advocated social reforms in response to popular demands. By framing the 1932 rebellion and massacre as exacerbated if not created by the Liberal oligarchies that preceded them, the military argued that these men had allowed the free movement of those that advocated radical change like the Salvadoran Communist Party. Salvadoran Catholic Church leaders and U.S. State Department officials agreed that poor working and living conditions created the conditions for revolt, and the rural oligarchy were

[751] For a recent scholarly treatment see Diane Davis, "The Age of Insecurity: Violence and Social Disorder in the New Latin America," *LARR* Vol. 41, No. 1 (February 2006).

primarily to blame for these problems. Nonetheless, since all of these groups also agreed that the peasantry was incapable of independent thought and action, they blamed both Communist agitators and Liberal demagogues for the revolt. Since these radicals and populists promised changes that they could not deliver, they were untimately responsible for the chaos and disorder of 1931 but also the massacre of 1932.

In an attempt to present themselves as the people best suited to rule the country, military leaders argued that they protected the rural people from the abuses of the landed elites, but maintained enough repression to disable Communist organizers. Somewhat successfully, praetorian rulers gained acquiescence from the Salvadoran peasantry and urban workers, including market women. Peasants were told that the regimes defended their interests through laws and the courts and market women were told that the regimes provided them with tangible benefits and were on their side against predatory market owners and managers. Manipulating the newspapers, the military also used Salvadorans' concerns about crime to project an image of law and order that did not often mimic reality, but nonehetless has led to a perception that military repression controlled and limited social chaos.

Despite the rhetorical shift, Martínez' military regime retained many aspects of Liberal governance such as reliance on patron-client systems, social reforms and civilian paramilitary auxiliaries. The world of peasants and oligarchs, clients and patrons, working classes and the agents of repression remained largely the same. The population grew at a stable rate, the state remained small, and the rhythms of work, including immigration and migration, continued unabated. Guatemalans and Hondurans still supplemented the annual coffee harvest, and cotton, sugar, cattle remained marginal to

the economic health of the nation. The country changed dramatically after World War Two.

The economic and demographic changes faced by the tiny republic after the 1940s more radically alter the lives of Salvadorans. Population growth exploded after World War II (1939-1945) with the control over diseases like malaria via insecticides and drainage projects, the introduction of penicillin, quinine and other medicines and the expansion of potable water. The World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), and the United Nations through various programs provided money and technical assistance for rural development programs. Food production also expanded with the increased use of synthetic fertilizers and improved agricultural techniques disseminated with the active role of institutions like the Rockefeller Foundation, the United Nations, the World Bank, and other US-based advisers. The U.S. implemented and led a Mutual Security Agency (MSA) Point IV program designed to coordinate reform activities with the Salvadoran Ministries of Public Health, Works, Interior, Agriculture, Education, and Economy. Although a key part of the assistance program was to train the Salvadoran police and security forces, this precursor to the Alliance for Progress was also designed to foment Salvadoran social and economic development in order to maintain "internal political stability and security."[752] Salvadoran capital also benefited from the expansion of cotton and sugar as well as high prices for coffee which led to tremendous population redistribution.

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[752] "Angier Biddle Duke to Secretary of State," *U.S.N.A.*, RG 84, DF 816.00TA/TOTEC 59 (9 January 1953). For instance, eleven members of the National Police received scholarships to study in the U.S., including Puerto Rico, in 1957-58 and Capt. Roland Kelley of the F.B.I. advised the police on reforms. It is tempting for those in the U.S. to link the training with anti-subversive action and police brutality but it must be reinforced that the Salvadoran police knew well how to kill, torture and repress the political opposition well before US advisers arrived.

Revolutionary governments restored civilians to prominent positions within the administration and appointed many professionals and technocrats as governors and legislators and ministers. Urban and middle-class groups gained political power under the PRUD presidencies. Although Osorio and Lemus restored of civilians to decision making positions, as under the Liberals, military officers nonetheless believed that these men and women were junior partners and that praetorian orders should be obeyed. In addition, the Party emphasized scientific determinism regarding the treatment and punishment of prisoners. Through the Law and Court of Dangerous Subjects, the PRUD attempted to label and monitor recidivist criminals in an attempt to remove them fro mthe sreets and control urban spaces.

Reproducing many of the institutions, strategies and even personnel from previous military administrations, the courts, the police and other security forces, the prisons, and the laws remained disturbingly similar across the decades. Police Directors under General Martinez, as well as Colonels Osorio and Lemus all widely publicized their attempts to reform the police and make it more responsive to the public. Nevr substantive or structural, these reforms neither changed the behavior or morale of the members of the security forces, or convinced the public to trust the police. In fact, the police's openly repressive actiosn in the 1940s and 1950s may have even caused the public to further distrust and fear the security forces.

Despite these continuities across the decades of praetorian rule, because El Salvador was urbanizing into the 1960s, the countyr could no longer be governed by the same old rules and the same old players in the same old way. Popular demands, resistance and organizations strengthened and proliferated and the military governments

felt forced to act. Still attempting to balance the demands of their various clients and oppositional groups as the decade closed, ultimately the intransigence of the far Right doomed the endeavor. Civil war was not inevitable in 1972 or perhaps even in 1977 but the increased activity of military, paramilitary and civilian armed groups reduced the chances for a political or remotely peaceful solution. The military governments could not respond to the altered *zeitgeist* and change their *modus operandi* or their purported *raison d'être* and failed to avoid civil war.

The increasing demands of newly organized sectors like the peasantry, a revitalized intellectual class like the University community, and new middle class groups continued and accelerated in the decades that followed, and created profound cracks in the system. The radical social changes also contributed to the conflicts. For example, landholdings under traditional tenancy arrangements declined by 77 percent between 1961 and 1971 and landless farm families increased from 12 to 41 percent of the total between 1961 and 1975. Peasants migrated to the cities in response to these rural conditions and demanded change through organizations like the Christian Peasant Federation (FECCAS).[753] These demands strained the reformist PCN (*Partido Nacional de la Conciliación* presidencies of Col. Julio Rivera and Gen. Fidel Sánchez Hernández (1962-72), and generated increased political violence under Col. Arturo Armando Molina and Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero Mena (1972-1979). Manifestations of popular power increasingly panicked reactionary elites who mobilized their allies against these oppositional groups. The foundations of the dramatic events of the 1970s and the armed popular struggle of the 1980s were laid in the post-war period under the political leadership of the PRUD.

[753] Kinkaid, "Rebels," 480-83.

The regimes' success at balancing the power of multiple elite and popular clients contrasted sharply with their doomed attempts to secure long-term personalist rule and centralization. With limited resources and facing internal divisions, military leaders often worked to concentrate power and limit civilian influence during their administrations. Perhaps most successfully, President Martínez held near dictatorial control in the 1940s but this ultimately weakened his position and made him vulnerable to a cross-class alliance composed of oligarchs, bankers, younger military officers, organized labor and urban professionals which toppled the regime in April 1944. More conscious of popular resistance to *continuismo*, the leaders of the Revolutionary governments maintained an illusion of participation that helped prevent an organized popular opposition until the mass organizations of the 1960s and 1970s struck fear into the far-Right. In 1961, in order to prevent greater chaos, the PCN took power in a coup in 1961 supported by these Right-wing elements but the military resisted a full-blown conservative reaction. Instead the PCN continued limited reforms, particularly for urban residents, reformed the military and kept the illusions of participation. Ultimately rural demands exposed the limits of military reformism. Although the political opposition to the military in 1972 remained urban and middle class, economic and social fears of peasant organizations strengthened the resolve of reactionaries, and they soon employed the infamous paramilitary death squads and moved the country closer and closer to civil war.

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Vita

Aldo V. García Guevara was born in San Salvador, El Salvador on 8 March 1971. After completing his work at Mount Vernon High School in Mount Vernon, NY in 1989, he attended Brandeis University, Cornell University and finally received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of North Carolina at Asheville in 1999. He entered the Graduate School of the University of Texas in the same year, and currently works as an assistant professor at Worcester State College in Worcester, MA. He has two daughters, Maya and Eva, who are 10 and 8 years old.

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