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BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE PEACE: LESSONS FROM EL SALVADOR

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MAY 2017

A Master's Paper

Submitted to the faculty of Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the department of International Development, Environment, and Community

And accepted on the recommendation of

Denise Humphreys-Bebbington, Chief Instructor

Building an Inclusive Peace
Lessons from El Salvador

Patrick Seed

Abstract: This paper argues that the peace created after a conflict becomes more
sustainable when peace processes are inclusive. The Salvadoran peace process shows how
including certain actors reduced political violence while excluding other actors allowed for
social and economic marginalization to continue. Based on secondary literature, this paper
addresses who was involved in the peace process and how their involvement shaped the
evolution of violence within El Salvador. While the peace process erased political
violence, not including the unique needs of women and men led to continued social and
economic exclusion and marginalization of vulnerable populations. The lessons from El
Salvador on inclusive peacebuilding still resonate 25 years later, with exclusionary
attempts at negotiating peace with *maras* falling apart.

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Baccalaureate Degree: Politics

Source: The Catholic University of America   **Date: May 2015**

__DEDICATION__

For Mom and Dad, thank you for all of your guidance and encouragement. I could not have come this far without you.
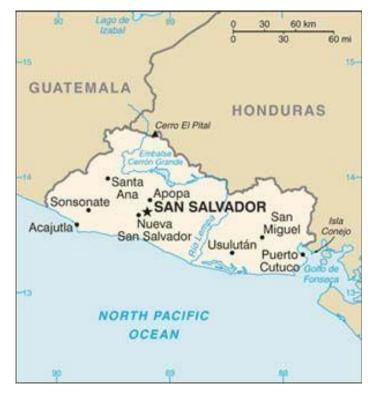
<u>ACKNOWLDEGEMENTS</u>

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Glossary

Asociación de Desmovilizados de las Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador, Association of Demoblized Armed Forces Members (ADEFAES)
Alianza Rebulicana Nacionalista, Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA)
Comisión Nacional para la Consolidación de la Paz, National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (COPAZ)
Demobilization, Demilitarization, and Reintegration (DDR)
Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)
Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador, Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES)
Plan de Reconstrucción Nacional, National Reconstruction Plan (PRN)
Policía Nacional Civil, National Civilian Police (PNC)
Programa de Transferencia de Tierras, Land Transfer Program (PTT)
People with Disabilities (PWD)
Secretaría de Reconstrucción National, Secretariat for National Reconstruction (SRN)
United Nations (UN)
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNOCD)

(US State Department 2016)

<u>Introduction</u>

The Salvadoran peace process (1992-1995) has served as the foundation for subsequent

international peacebuilding operations to this day, with all other UN peacebuilding

emulating or reworking some aspect of the Salvadoran peace process. The resulting

Chapultepec Accords (1992)[1] set a standard for changing relationships between people and

state institutions. The Accords sought to prevent the reemergence of violence in El

Salvador through specific interventions that addressed concerns about political freedom,

the role of the military, and absorbing veterans and ex-combatants into Salvadoran society.

Among the Accord's most notable accomplishments were reducing the role and size of the

Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES), creating a civilian police force, recognizing the

Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, or the Farabundo Martí National

Liberation Front (FMLN) as a legitimate political party, and implementing efficient

disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. Twenty-five years later,

political violence is almost non-existent and neither party has ever broken the ceasefire.

Paradoxically, El Salvador today is considered one of the most violent countries in the

world outside of an active warzone (Watts 2015) despite the peace process' success in

eliminating political violence. The violence in El Salvador today is largely characterized

by rampant gang violence, though it is only the most visible form of violence within El

Salvador as child abuse, spousal rape, and femicide are also prominent but not as heavily

covered (Seelke 2016). El Salvador's homicide rates are higher now than any point during

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[1] The Chapultepec Accords were signed in Mexico City and represented the culmination of twenty months of negotiations between the FMLN and the Salvadoran government, with the United Nations, the Catholic Church, and the Mexican government serving as mediators (Negroponte 2011)

the country's decade long civil war at one murder per hour (Farber 2016). An attempted

truce negotiated between the government, the *maras*[2], and members of the Catholic Church

to reduce the country's violence collapsed this past year (Arce 2016). Most importantly,

many of the issues which sparked the civil war remain unaddressed. Economic and social

mobility remain stagnant, reforms have not delivered the prosperity first promised, and

people do not trust government institutions to help them (Garni and Weyher 2013).

Almost of quarter of the country's 6.3 million people have permanently left the country,

and the youth population struggles to find their place in an economy that cannot or will not

include them in shaping the future (Hume 2007; Garni and Weyher 2013).

In honor of the 25th anniversary of the Chapultepec Accords, it is an appropriate moment to

reexamine the Salvadoran peace process and reflect upon the inclusive, or not, nature of

the Accords. The field of peacebuilding has expanded since the signing of the Chapultepec

Accords, and examining the Salvadoran peace process through a fresh lens can give us

additional insight into how the Accords agenda was crafted, who was included at the

negotiation table, who was left out and what issues were off the table. Though the

inclusion of different peoples is considered central to peacebuilding efforts today, the

intentional and deliberate nature of inclusion was not considered of major importance for

El Salvador's peace process. Using an inclusive lens, I will ask: What are some of the

lessons that can be learned from peacebuilding in El Salvador towards constructing more

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[2] *Maras* are transnational gangs originating from Los Angeles, and becoming a dominant force in El Salvador after the US Immigration Reform and Illegal Immigrant Responsibility Act (1996) allowed for the deportation of anyone with a yearlong prison center and caught without their paperwork, leading to the forced deportation of over 150,000 Salvadorans in three years (Farber 2016)

inclusive processes? Drawing upon peace researcher Thania Paffenholz's (2014) nine

modalities of inclusion in peacebuilding as a departure point, I hypothesize that the

participation of different groups and the representation of broader interests on the agenda

contributes to building sustained peace, while exclusion or presence without participation

or recognition perpetuates violence and allows violence to reemerge in new forms. For

this paper, I will use Paffenholz's modalities to compare how different forms of inclusion

and exclusion shaped El Salvador's peace and to argue that that exclusionary practices

ultimately have contributed to the rise in violence today.

This paper begins with an examination of the literature on peacebuilding and inclusion,

how they intersect, and how different disciplines shape our understandings of what

peacebuilding and inclusion look like. I will present definitions of peacebuilding drawn

from peace studies and feminist international relations scholarship. Definitions on

inclusion and exclusion will draw off of ideas from development theory, feminist theory,

and disability studies, and I will then present the intersections between inclusion and

peacebuilding. After establishing this theoretical foundation, I will provide a brief history

on broad Central American social, political, and economic structures as they apply to

Salvadoran history. Following this, I discuss the history of the Salvadoran conflict and the

peace process. From there, I use Paffenholz's modalities to analyze how the inclusion and

exclusion of FMLN commanders, female ex-combatants, and male ex-combatants in the

peace process shaped El Salvador's peace and explore its relationship to levels of violence

seen there today. I conclude with a review of the lessons learned on inclusion in

peacebuilding from the Salvadoran peace process and how those lessons can be used to address El Salvador's pervasive violence today.

Section 1: Literature Review

In this paper, I examine how the inclusion and exclusion of actors shape peacebuilding processes using the case of El Salvador. To do this, I will use the literatures on peace and peacebuilding, feminist theory, disability studies, inclusion, exclusion, and Latin American history. From these literatures, I will create a framework for peacebuilding and inclusion and place it within the context of El Salvador's culture and history. In this way, I seek to make audible the voices of marginalized peoples through these fields of study. Feminist theory and disability studies in particular have an explicit focus on why people become invisible and are committed to ensuring those voices are present. Ensuring different voices are present and heard is the first step to creating an inclusive peacebuilding process.

Peacebuilding is a relatively recent concept in Peace Studies, especially compared to the more familiar concepts of peacemaking and peacekeeping. While peacemaking focuses on creating peace and peacekeeping on maintaining peace, peacebuilding is directed towards preventing outbreaks of violence or introducing peaceful means of conflict resolution (Lederach 2003). The focus on peacebuilding began with the United Nation's (UN) *Agenda for Peace*, which describes peacebuilding as, "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Definitions and terminology for peacebuilding vary outside of the UN, but the idea of promoting particular structures to maintain and

strengthen a country's peace remains fairly consistent (Anderson, Olsen, and Doughty 2003; Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, and Sitea 2007).

Most thinking on peace and peacebuilding builds off of Johan Galtung's ideas of "positive and negative peace" (1967). Galtung, a foundational thinker in peace and conflict studies, defines negative peace as stopping physical and direct violence between two or more parties, while positive peace addresses the underlying causes of violence (Galtung 1967). Peacebuilding adds another layer to international peace initiatives. Peacemaking and peacekeeping activities focus on stopping violence, while peacebuilding activities address systemic causes of violence. Successful peacebuilding is generally associated with restoring order, enhancing civil society, and establishing participatory institutions, usually through DDR programs, fostering democratic systems of governance, including elections, and promoting economic growth (Crocker and Hampson 1996; Licklider 2001). Despite the aim of addressing the underlying causes of violence, peacebuilding does not inherently address systemic issues within countries. International relations theory on conflict was designed for addressing conflict between states, and conflict based on identity rather than political ideology were deemed as "domestic issues" (Mount 2010). Within some international relations circles, examining how a person's identity intersects with their status as an ex-combatant is not seen as important to addressing bigger issues of war and peace (Enloe 2004). Yet addressing the underlying causes of violence requires addressing people's intersecting and conflicting needs and interests. Building a sustained and enduring peace requires intentionally incorporating the voices of groups that become invisible through systems that simplifies who acts and who is acted upon. Feminist

theorists, working to ensure that marginalized voices and experiences are recognized and respected, provide tools and frameworks for peacebuilding to address underlying causes of violence at the interpersonal level as well as a broader, more universalized level.

Feminist theory adds to the larger picture on conflict and peace by looking at how violence gets replicated from individual interactions to legal and cultural systems. Feminist scholar and peace educator Betty Reardon expanded on Galtung's ideas on peace, arguing not only that negative peace can build positive peace, but that it can also build an authentic peace pursuing global civic community based on trust and equality (Reardon 1993). Stopping violence is the first step to create an authentic peace. For feminist theorists, violence is a means of maintaining an inherently unequal and patriarchal system and the first step to achieving peace is recognizing how all forms of violence are interconnected (Reardon 1993). Feminist political theorist Iris Young expands on Reardon's ideas of violence, arguing that exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism are other forms of oppression[3] which build towards the acceptance or tolerance of violence against different groups of people (Young 2005). The voices of people at the margins of society are silenced when pernicious social structures and practices go unexamined. Bringing feminist theoretical frameworks to examine the context of violence gives peace workers an additional perspective to understand who's needs the peace serves and who's needs are ignored.

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[3] Iris Young defines the five faces of oppression as exploitation, the transfer of results of labor from one group to another; marginalization, excluding people from participating in social life; powerlessness, depriving people of authority, status, and sense of self; cultural imperialism, universalizing the dominant culture as the norm and other as the deviation; and systemic violence, the knowledge that some groups must fear random, unprovoked acts of physical violence to humiliate or destroy them (Young 2005)

Feminist conflict and peace theory asks questions about power and privilege during times

of war and peace, mainly who's security needs are emphasized and how (McKay 2004). A

gendered lens applied to peacebuilding asks why women are so often ignored and who

benefits from the exclusion of women's voices; recognizing that women and men are both

affected by conflict and that their needs must be intentionally recognized and addressed

(Reardon 1993; Enloe 2004). Using a gendered lens brings forward issues usually not

covered in issues of peace and security like domestic violence, gender inequality, gendered

control over food, water, and natural resources, gender dynamics in power and decision

making, the rights of women, and viewing people as actors and not victims (McKay 2004).

Peace negotiations and peacebuilding activities like DDR programs typically exclude

women, and even when women are brought to the negotiating table their input is not as

valued in creating a path to peace (McKay 2004). Acknowledging the deficiencies of

brokered peace processes, the UN adopted Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000),

which not only affirms the role women play in conflict prevention and resolution, but also

promotes equal participation and full involvement of women in peacebuilding initiatives

(UN Security Council 2000). Resolution 1325 is very important to feminist peace workers

and made talking about inclusion more central within peacebuilding literature.

In recent years, development discourse has focused on how to build more inclusive

societies. In this paper, I use the concept of inclusion to be the intentional creation of a

community which diminishes differences between groups by deliberately and continuously

addressing issues, usually by incorporating people from broad socio-economic

backgrounds (Quick and Feldman 2011). The intentional, continuous nature of inclusion

and its explicit focus on changing relationships makes it distinct from similar terms of representation, diversity, and participation. Representation means having a third party or representative speak for a group (Hudson 2015); diversity involves quotas or the presence of different groups within a particular setting; and participation focuses on the ability to provide input (Quick and Feldman 2011). Inclusion intertwines all of these concepts to address broader issues, working together to create a new kind of community by changing how they relate with each other. Representatives might not advocate effectively for a group; the mere presence of marginalized groups does not necessarily change whether or not their voice gets heard; and the contributing time, labor, and ideas is meaningless without a transformation in how people see each other. When applied together deliberately, representation, participation, and diversity creates a dynamic group of people able to address larger issues (Quick and Feldman 2011). Development studies, feminist studies are just some of the fields that address issues of inclusion. For this paper, I will show how the disability studies field further clarifies what inclusion looks like and the criteria necessary for inclusion.

The field of disability studies seeks to naturalize disability and frame people with disabilities (PWD) as people rather than as problems that need to be fixed (Linton 2005). Disability scholars define disability as an impairment or barrier that hinders participation in society rather than an individual medical problem (Garland-Thomson 2005; Blaser, Kanavou, and Schleier 2013). Disability studies works to remove the physical and social barriers which enforce isolation of PWD and their inability to live and operate independently in society. For disability rights activists and disability studies scholars,

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including PWD is the best means to break down barriers. Disability studies regularly

breaks down the concept of inclusion into three levels: physical integration, functional

inclusion, and social inclusion[4] (Wilson 2006). Addressing physical, functional, and social

barriers to inclusion is central to disability studies and important to incorporate into other

fields working towards greater inclusion. The criteria for reaching these levels of inclusion

are increasing accessibility, accommodating for difference, integrating PWD into programs

and processes, encouraging active participation, and fostering respect for PWD, building to

the idea of "nothing about us without us." While neither originating with nor exclusive to

the disability rights movement, "nothing about us without us" is reflected in the core of

disability studies literature: PWD need to be actively involved in the decisions that shape

how they live and the amount of control they have in their lives (Charlton 1998).

Disability studies and peacebuilding are relatively new fields of study, both only emerging

at the end of the 20th century, but the two overlap in important ways on debates around

inclusion. Both fields stress including marginalized groups from the beginning of peace

processes, particularly in the form of self-representation (Aaron, Curtis, Ghensis, Lane, and

Barth 2014). As with feminist theory, a disability lens supports the desire to address

systemic issues that cause violence by pointing out structural violence against PWD. The

first step to addressing pernicious practices is to ensure people are physically integrated,

functionally included, and socially included. Disability studies argues that PWD need a

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[4] Physical integration addresses a person or groups right and ability to physically access a site, functional inclusion means a person is able to function independently and successfully within a given environment, and social inclusion addresses the acceptance of people and groups and their participation in positive social relationships

seat at the table to start changing how the non-disabled community sees PWD, and peace processes must intentionally address the needs of PWD. Peace processes must intentionally incorporate the voices of different groups to -begin the relationship transformation work of peacebuilding. The mere presence of people from marginalized groups will not change how others see them, nor are they responsible for representing issues solely about a particular marginalized group. To be inclusive, the needs of marginalized groups, like PWD, must be intentionally incorporated into the peacebuilding agenda.

The intentional nature of inclusion makes it an appropriate concept to keep at the center of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding focuses on changing relationships to prevent conflict, beginning the relationship transformation with how peace agreements are crafted. Key concerns for creating an inclusive peace process are who has a seat at the table and who's needs get addressed within peace accords. The inclusion of all major parties involved in a conflict into peace agreements is considered essential to ensure the agreement does not fall apart, but the question of who is allowed at the negotiation table is a central question for all peace processes. For peace researcher Thania Paffenholz, all parties relevant to the context of the conflict should be included in some capacity within this framework. She defines parties involved as armed groups, political parties, civil society groups, special groups, professional associations, minority or women's organizations, relief groups, development or peace NGOs, researchers, indigenous groups, representatives of social and political movements, youth networks, and business actors (Paffenholz 2014). Who gets included at the table is important to determining who the peace is for. Inclusion gives people a stake

in maintaining the agreement, particularly among the elites of conflicting parties (Licklider 2001; Suazo 2013). Combatants and governments create peace accords for who wins the war and work between those fighting with possibly adding a mediator. Yet building peace requires more than winners asserting their dominance over a defeated party. The needs of elite and marginalized groups must be represented to give people a greater stake in how the peace develops and work towards changing relationships and diminishing differences (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). Sustainable peace depends on the meaningful participation and presence of groups throughout the peace process (Ofreneo and de Vela 2006), so providing as many different opportunities to include different groups is essential to crafting an inclusive peace process. Peace researcher Thania Paffenholz developed nine modalities of inclusion to provide as many opportunities as possible for the intentional inclusion of different parties to create a more durable and sustainable peace.

Paffenholz developed nine modalities of inclusion based off her in-depth review of nine peace agreements[5]. Different levels of participating in peace negotiations include direct representation, observer status at the negotiation table, official consultative forums alongside negotiations, informal consultations, inclusive post-agreement mechanisms like Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, high-level problem solving workshops, public participation, public decision making, and mass action (Paffenholz 2014). Peace agreements become more sustainable as more modalities are added and the input from these groups is valued and brought into the agreement and implementation stages of

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[5] The peace processes used to develop these models were those of Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Benin, Liberia, Burundi, Guatemala, Afghanistan, Kenya, Mindanao, Northern Ireland, Colombia, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, and Nepal

peacebuilding (Paffenholz 2014). The intentional application of these modalities to a peace agreement creates a more inclusive peace process. Assuming that an equal number of people from conflicting sides of a conflict does not change how people relate with each other, and the different levels of power people have does not get addressed through quotas or participation alone (Anderson, Olsen, and Doughty 2003). Not addressing power dynamics directly and intentionally addressing the different needs of different parties ends up excluding people, pushing marginalized voices to the side or reinforcing and legitimizing structural violence.

Like inclusion, exclusion also has multiple definitions. In his article "Social Exclusion: Concept, Application, and Scrutiny," economist and philosopher Amartya Sen breaks exclusion into active and passive acts, with active exclusion as decisions made targeting individuals or groups of people to deprive them in some manner while passive exclusion is the social process which has no explicit intent on excluding, but de facto excludes (Sen 2000). Whether active or passive, exclusion is used to diminish claims and to dehumanize those excluded, in turn to justify the continuation of unjust structures and systems. Exclusion marginalizes people, deeming them unworthy of respect and keeping them outside of social life (Young 2005). Carlos Guillermo Ramos, a Salvadoran sociologist whose areas of research include rising youth violence in El Salvador, expands on the idea that exclusion is a form of violence, focusing specifically on the interconnectedness of poverty and discrimination. He defines social exclusion as the separation from goods and elements necessary for daily life and human development, and that different groups of people experience different forms of violence as a means of perpetuating their ability to

develop (Ramos 2000). Exclusion, like Reardon's conceptions of violence, is a tool that keeps people invisible and robs them of their power and self-worth. The self-perpetuating nature of exclusion makes addressing deep social and economic problems difficult. Moral exclusion, deeming certain groups of people as worthy of deprivation and exploitation or as justified in the harm they receive, works as a justification for excluding others (Ofreneo and de Vela 2006). Meanwhile, the excluded are forced to depend on systems and processes which limits the harm from material deprivation or isolation (Young 2005). Exclusion creates a self-sustaining cycle that only intentionally identifying how actions and processes hurt people can break it. Excluding people from marginalized groups will not address structural violence, only their inclusion can. Nothing can, or will, happen without their inclusion. Unfortunately, keeping people outside of the peace process follows similar logic to wider forms of exclusion: dehumanize and delegitimize others and keeping them trapped within a self-perpetuating cycle of deprivation and isolation for the sake of maintaining power.

Excluding people from peace negotiations or peacebuilding processes is a means of keeping them out of shaping a country after a war or conflict, and a peace shaped by exclusion does not create a sustainable, durable peace. Excluding actors from a peace settlement does have its purposes, like keeping out spoilers who seek to prevent a negotiated peace (Licklider 2001; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008) or diminishing the legitimacy of violent actors (Whitfield 2013), but Paffenholz says even those opposed to negotiated peace should have a seat at the table. Not surprisingly exclusion usually caters to the interests of elites, incrementally bringing conflicting parties together, and avoiding

the underlying causes or interests of the negotiating parties (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). Elites seek to maintain existing power structures as much as possible within peace agreements, and keeping as many voices as possible out limits the amount of power elites have to relinquish. Keeping people powerless and outside of the political settlement maintains their dependency on support from the elites (Young 2004). Keeping groups of people outside of peace processes becomes problematic given the effects of exclusion. A peace created through secrecy and exclusion is inherently unstable, since powerful excluded actors can actively undermine the peace they had no role in shaping (Wanis-St. John 2012). The normalization of violence, or seeing violence as an effective and legitimate tactic, is one of the more threatening responses to exclusion in peacebuilding initiatives (Ofreneo and de Vela 2006). In this paper, I argue that the consequences of exclusion in El Salvador, a country built on and maintained by exclusionary institutions and practices, include new forms of violence and conflict in which marginalized young men play important roles by feeding into *machismo* attitudes, or the idea that anything feminine is considered weak and men are expected to act aggressively to assert their dominance (Wantoch-Rekowska 2008). Within El Salvador, social, economic, and political exclusion alongside historic repression at the hands of the state and *machismo* attitudes legitimizes violence as a tool to regain dominance, control, and recognition.

The concentration of power and high levels of inequality characterize Central American society. Spanish colonies created a highly socially stratified society based on race to maintain power, and much of Latin America maintained those practices after independence. These practices became more entrenched within Central America during

the late 1800s with the expansion of banana and coffee plantations and the coupling of

landed aristocracies with military dictatorships enacting systematic and brutal repression to

keep the system together (LeoGrande 2003). Politically based violence was the most

prominent form of violence from independence through the 1980s, but coexisted alongside,

and at some points obscured, other forms of violence (Ramos 2000). The *machismo*

culture of El Salvador reinforced the country's structures of violence and was used to

delegitimize different groups. The *machismo* culture in much of Central America expects

men and women to follow rigidly defined gender roles where anything feminine is

considered weak and men are expected to act aggressively and assert their dominance

(Wantoch-Rekowska 2008). Violence is a tool to maintain inequality, and *machismo*

attitudes are heavily connected to gender based violence. Hegemonic models of

masculinity like *machismo* deny the legitimacy of men's lived experiences of masculinity

and create incentives for men to exercise violence in a way that undermines the sense of

self within other men (Dolan 2002). Within El Salvador, men are expected to assert their

dominance and showcase their masculinity privately and publicly, with violence seen as

the most effective tool to get quick results (Hume 2008). Because masculinity is marked

and defined by men's relationships with women (Dolan 2002), deviations from established

cultural markers of what it means to be a man diminishes a man's sense of self. Within

machismo culture, women are expected to submit to the demands of men in their lives

(Wantoch-Rekowska 2008). The very idea of women not fitting the submissive role

produces hostility and hatred among populations in Central American countries like

Nicaragua (Molyneux 1985). Similar to other forms of hegemonic masculinities,

machismo is a means of exerting power over others. The rise of democracy in El Salvador and other parts of Central America did not diminish attitudes on domination, and the persistence of the idea of complete dominance in all aspects of life intersects with trends of concentrating wealth and power. Wealth continues to be highly concentrated in the hands of elites and the region faces declining opportunities for employment. Most of Latin America's wealth and power is concentrated in the hands of the landed aristocracy and the dominant classes in capital, while the fastest growing employment growth levels are in the informal sector (Hoffman and Centero 2003; Kruijt 2004), with El Salvador's elites very much the same. The economic and social problems of El Salvador are foundational, with elites structuring society to maintain wealth and influence while committing acts of violence against their people. Mirroring the gender dynamics of excluding women from public life and expecting men to assert their dominance through force, the Salvadoran elites perpetuated a rigid social and economic structure where economic and social mobility were non-existent, the poor were expected to serve the needs of the wealthy, and the oligarchy asserted their dominance through military force.

El Salvador's social and economic structure was one of the most rigid and hierarchical in all of Latin America. Fourteen families formed an oligarchy to control the political, financial, and economic levers of power while most of the population struggled to support themselves. In the years leading up to the war, the fourteen families owned 60 percent of the land in El Salvador and received 50 percent of the nation's income (LeoGrande and Robbins 1980). Reformists never controlled the government for long and struggled to implement even moderate reforms, while external calls for reform were met with death

threats and assassinations (LeoGrande 2003). Events like the massacre of the peasants leading a rebellion in 1932 effectively made the country's indigenous population invisible and left a permanent mark on how Salvadorans thought about rebellion (Murray 1997). The Salvadoran government continued creating a society of fear through the merging of the military, the police, and intelligence against shifting definitions of internal enemies (Kruijt 2004). The tradition of marginalizing the poor and silencing dissent alongside throwing support behind a military or political strongman to protect the country against war and violent crime makes El Salvador's transition to a positive peace through inclusion of others more challenging (LeoGrande 2003; Hume 2008). Embracing a violent approach to asserting security, whether it is the military in the pre-war era or the police in the post-war era, prevents other ways to build a society from emerging (Dolan 2002). The institutional memory of favoring elite strongmen who dominate over others cannot address the underlying causes of violence in El Salvador: deep social, economic, and political inequality.

Some of the same issues of inequality which built El Salvador still plague the country today. El Salvador's financial sector began to take on the landed oligarchy's position as the dominant economic force during the war, while entry into the formal labor market is impossible for most Salvadorans, with the informal market the only viable option for employment (Kruijt 2004). Remittances are now a central feature to the Salvadoran economy, funding trade gaps (Pearce 1998), sustaining a quarter of all households in El Salvador (Grani and Weyher 2013), and disintegrating families (Kruijt 2004). The politics may have changed, but the inequalities which fostered violence and oppression remain in

place (Hume 2003). States created the social and economic conditions that breed inequality, and the Salvadoran state created an environment where violence is the best, most available tool to gain a sense of security. The tradition of exclusion, invisibilization, and repression are intensifying the violence which already existed in a country praised for a successfully negotiated and maintained political peace.

Peacebuilding is a relatively recent development to prevent the reemergence of violence by addressing the underlying causes to violence. Inclusion is the intentional creation of a community to address differences by continuously and deliberately addressing issues from peoples of different backgrounds. Feminist scholars and disability rights researchers demonstrate help flesh out the concepts of inclusion and peacebuilding and stressing the intentionality required of inclusive peacebuilding. Exclusion is a means for elites to maintain their power over others. Whether active or passive, exclusion is a form of violence, and El Salvador was built on practices of exclusion and repression. El Salvador's history of economic and social exclusion are still persistent problems today. The government's exclusion of most Salvadorans from social and economic prosperity alongside repressing the people led to the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992), and creating peace depended on addressing social, political, and economic exclusion.

<u>**Section 2: Exclusion and Repression Brings War**</u>

The Salvadoran Civil War is framed as a Cold War conflict, but its roots lie in a long history of economic, social, and political violence and exclusion. After the war, the Salvadoran President Alfredo Crisitani said "this painful and tragic crisis has political, economic, social, and cultural roots that are both old and deep. In the past, one of the most

pernicious characteristics of our national way of life was the absence of the mechanism necessary to permit the free play of ideas" (Murray 1997). Understanding the causes of the war is important for understanding the construction of the Salvadoran peace process, especially since it became one of the defining peace processes after the Cold War. This section will show the dynamics of exclusion that led to the war, identify the main parties in the war, the tactics they used, and how both parties reached a negotiated solution to end the Salvadoran Civil War.

The Salvadoran Civil War was a response to centuries of exclusionary practices and repressive state actions against the population. For most of the 20th century, the country was dominated by an alliance between the military and the oligarchy of fourteen families. The oligarchy dominated economic policy and the military ruled the country to maintain social order (Wolf 2009). Protests emerged throughout the 1970s to fight for expanded rights, which were met with some reforms alongside a campaign by death squads to silence urban dissent (Wolf 2009). El Salvador's death squads, made up of soldiers, ex-soldiers, and civilians, were a tool to ensure right wing dominance: businessmen funded them, and military leaders commanded them, and anybody who opposed them was considered a threat to national security (Bonner 2016). The death squads acted with complete impunity, assassinating common citizens and high profile individuals including San Salvador's Archbishop[6], and exerting control through disappearances, rape, and leaving decapitated

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[6] Archbishop Romero was the most prominent voice of the Catholic Church's embrace of the preferential option of the poor. He and other priests and nuns reached out to rural areas to work with laborers and the most impoverished rather than serving the oligarchy as the Church traditionally did in El Salvador (Murray 1997)

corpses on the side of the road (Bonner 2016). Increasingly violent state responses to non-violent pleas for expanded social, political, and economic rights united previously disparate leftist guerrilla groups under the FMLN banner. Initially fighting for a socialist revolution, the FMLN fought the Salvadoran government and the *Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador,* or the Armed Forces of El Salvador (FAES), for the people of El Salvador.

The FMLN primarily operated in rural areas and both sides primarily fought the war in rural areas, with the FAES employing scorched earth tactics targeting primarily civilian supporters of the FMLN (Murray 1997). Meanwhile, the FMLN sought to gain support by providing areas they controlled with health care and education (Call 2002). Young men were kidnapped by the FAES, who physically and psychologically abused them to continue targeting potential supporters of the FMLN (Marray 1997; Verhey 2001). The war devastated the countryside, leading to mass displacement, and ultimately shifted the Salvadoran economy away from a weak agricultural sector towards finance and industry (Garni and Weyher 2013). Though the conflicting parties fought over structural problems within El Salvador, the FMLN and the FAES sustained themselves through copious external funding as El Salvador became a proxy war. The United States in particular helped fuel the conflict by directly providing military strategy to FAES officials and annually sending millions of dollars in aid, peaking at US$197 million dollars in 1984 (Call 2002). Both the FMLN and the FAES would only accept the complete surrender of the other, leading to twelve years of the most intense civil war in Central America.

After over a decade of intense fighting, the FAES and the FMLN felt pressured to reach a negotiated conclusion to the civil war. El Salvador's population also grew war weary as

the humanitarian costs increased, with 80,000 dead, 70,000 severely incapacitated, and over 1 million people displaced (Murray 1997). Recruiting and forced conscription of child soldiers was rampant on both sides, and 26.7 percent of child soldiers acquired a physical disability during the war (Verhey 2001). Neither side could claim a decisive victory in the war. The FMLN, the FAES, and their external supporters initially opposed a negotiated solution, hoping for a decisive military defeat. After the FMLN's 1989 assault on San Salvador, continuing a stalemated war became harder to defend internally and externally. For the Salvadoran government and the FAES, the United States threatened to cut funding due to the government forces involvement in the assassination of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter in San Salvador (Call 2003). At the same time, the FMLN lost much of its financial support from the Soviet Union—channeled through left-leaning regimes in Latin America—and the leadership was encouraged to reach a political solution with the government (Negroponte 2011). Meanwhile, the Mexican government maintained a friendly relationship with the FMLN while signaling that it would no longer support the group if it engaged in armed conflict (Negroponte 2011). The stand-off led to one of the first negotiated peace agreements in the post-Cold War era.

Reaching a negotiated peace between two parties who initially refused any form of negotiated resolution required a long, intensive process of mediation through parties seen as neutral. The Catholic Church and the Archbishop of El Salvador, the country's Jesuit community, moderate businessmen, and community organizations mediated internal conflicts while the Mexican and US governments encouraged their respective allies to

reach a negotiated solution to alleviate the number of refugees flowing out of El Salvador (Negroponte 2011). As leaders realized complete military domination was not possible, both the ARENA government and the FMLN reached out to the UN to mediate the peace negotiations. The Mexican government, a longtime supporter of the FMLN and having worked closely with the Salvadoran government due to the quantity of refugees fleeing into and through Mexico, served as the cite for most of the negotiations (Códova Marcías, Ramos, and Loya 2007). Seen as a neutral party, the UN ensured the Chapultepec Accords met the standards of both parties and assisted with implementing the Accords, pressuring both sides to maintain their agreement and setting up offices to monitor progress. When UN officials left in 1994, they noted that most objectives of the Accords had been met, despite some delays (Vilas 1995). Meeting those objectives largely depended on who was included within the official process, starting with the FMLN.

Section 3: FMLN and the Strength of Inclusion

This section will show how the inclusion of FMLN commanders throughout the peace process created the most durable aspects of the Salvadoran peace process: the elimination of political violence. The FAES heavily resisted their presence, but the FMLN played a central role in the negotiation and execution of the Chapultepec Accords, as well as the *la Comisión Nacional para la Consalidación de la Paz,* or the National Commission on the Consolidation of Peace (COPAZ) responsible for overseeing implementation (Call 2003). The reorientation away from guerrillas fighting for economic and social change towards the creation of a political organization seeking open and competitive elections while addressing and moving past the government's human rights abuses guaranteed the

FMLN's inclusion, and the Accords reflect this pivot (Pearce 1998). As a result, the Chapultepec Accords had two primary objectives: politically integrate the FMLN and demilitarizing the state (Segovia 2009). The FMLN consistently provided input and worked alongside the government implementing the Accord's DDR programs. Meanwhile, the FMLN positioned itself as the primary opposition party for the country's first legitimate democratic election, securing itself as a continuing force in Salvadoran political life. Other aspects of the Accords did not have the same emphasis on inclusion, as the FMLN did not have a strong role in crafting and implementing judicial, social and economic reforms. Unlike political reform and DDR, where the FMLN had an active role in design and implementation, the FMLN could only consult the government on substantive reforms to the judiciary and socioeconomic matters after the signing of the Accords.

The FMLN worked on judicial reform primarily through an Ad Hoc Commission on human rights violations committed by the FAES. FMLN commanders heavily supported the Ad Hoc Commission as their report to the Truth Commission would help ensure the safety of FMLN members as well as the society as a whole (O'Shaughnessy and Dodson 1999). The Commission published its report, *From Madness to Hope*, naming all those it found committing acts of grave violence, mainly massacres in the countryside, assassinations carried out by death squads, acts of violence committed by the FMLN, and the assassination of judges (Segovia 2009). The Truth Commission recommended that those named in the report to be removed from office and permanently banned from public office. However, the *Alianza Republicana Nacionalista,* or the Nationalist Republican

Alliance (ARENA),[7] dominated Legislative Assembly and responded by passing a sweeping amnesty for all those named in the report. The FMLN was not included in the decision to propose the amnesty law, but it was not opposed to amnesty for those named by the Truth Commission (O'Shaughnessy and Dodson 1999). While publicly opposing broad amnesty and generally praising the work of the Truth Commission, FMLN leaders recognized that broad amnesty laws protected their own members listed as human rights violators (Collins 2006). Social and economic issues also pushed FMLN commanders to the margins and forced them to choose between ideals and a political peace.

Economic and social concerns only accounted for about 10 percent of the Accords (Call 2003). The government and the FMLN agreed to renegotiate economic and social matters after the formation of a new government. A *Plan de Reconstrución Nacional,* or a National Reconstruction Plan (PRN), would serve as the primary peacebuilding initiative outside of the Accords to address El Salvador's social and economic problems, but the FMLN were not included in its design. The conservative government and the ARENA party designed and approved the PRN, with the FMLN only providing recommendations (Segovia 2009). Due to the dire economic conditions of post-war El Salvador, the Salvadoran government used the PRN to pursue structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilization to secure foreign funding for the peace process (Boyce 1995). With the country's dire financial reality, the FMLN commanders focused on the *Programa de Transferencia de Tierras,* or the Land Transfer Program (PTT), as the primary vehicle for

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[7] The ARENA party was created at the beginning of the war to give the country's economic elites political representation in the government (Wolf 2009)

social and economic reform within the Accords. Though the FMLN largely shifted away

from addressing social and economic reforms so the Salvadoran government and the FAES

would address the size and the role of the FAES and allow the FMLN to become a political

party, the PTT was an essential victory for FMLN supporters.

The PTT was the only substantial piece of the Accords addressing social and economic

questions. Despite this distinction, the PTT was a symbolic victory for the FMLN and it

did attempt to address the historic problem of land ownership. This program allowed both

ex-combatants and people living within conflict zones to be eligible to purchase land. The

inclusion of *tenendores*[8], displaced persons, and those providing support to fighting within

the PTT's beneficiaries and other reintegration programs would not have happened without

the FMLN's inclusion in writing the Accords as well as putting them into practice

(Conaway and Martínez 2004). While government delays in land distribution caused

problems, the *tenedores* FMLN leaders had fought to include within the peace process

ended up as the primary beneficiaries of the PTT (Conaway and Martínez 2004). Despite

opening access to the PTT to *tenedores*, the FMLN still limited who could access resources

for a successful reintegration.

When implementing the Accords, FMLN commanders acted as gatekeepers. Commanders

determined which combatants and supporters were eligible for benefits and which benefits

they were to receive. The FMLN acting in this capacity was problematic at multiple

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[8] *Tenedores* were men and women who tended to the land controlled by the FMLN in exchange for providing food to combatants. This was an essential constituency for the FMLN during the war (Conaway and Martínez 2004)

levels, but in particular with how it handled gender, and specifically the needs of rural women.

The Women of El Salvador's Peace: Inclusion vs Participation

The Salvadoran peace process was gender-blind, which excluded the needs of women who supported combatants and women who fought in the war themselves. Contrary to popular conceptions of war and conflict, women participated heavily in the civil war, primarily as combatants with the FMLN (Blumberg 2001). They served as community support in refugee camps, *tenedores,* and commanders. By the end of the war women made up 30 percent of the FMLN, with similar proportions of commanders, combatants, and political officers (Segovia 2009). Women's physical presence on the frontlines extended into the peace process. Women participated at all stages of El Salvador's peace process, serving as important representatives of the FMLN, ARENA, or the FAES. María Marta Valladares, one of the FMLN representatives at the negotiating table, said that she and the other women present was respected, "not as a woman, but as the representative of a powerful armed group" (Conaway and Martínez 2004). Women were elected from both major parties in the 1994 elections and reforms regarding child support and domestic violence were implemented with joint support from women on the left and the right (Blumberg 2001). The problem came from the interests of women not being represented until after the Accords were agreed upon and written up.

The issues and concerns of women were not designed into the Accords or any of the programs which came out of them. Women representing both the FMLN and the FAES' interests participated in negotiations, but they represented their parties rather than their

gender (Conaway and Martínez 2004). The women negotiating peace mistakenly assumed these programs included women as beneficiaries, however it was not until the list of beneficiaries for the FMLN came out did they realize that was not the case (Conaway and Martínez 2004), and the *Secratería de Reconsturción Nacional,* or the Secretariat for National Reconstruction[9] (SRN), did not include any classification for gender that would allow women to access any benefits (Romero 1995). After FMLN commanders renegotiated women's inclusion as beneficiaries, many struggled through reintegration, with camps designed without facilities for women or benefits administered in the name of women's husbands (Conaway and Martínez 2004). Though the influence of women like Valladares allowed for women's retroactive incorporation into the DDR programs, it reflected a broader challenge in addressing gender relations throughout the country.

While the women representing the main parties did not and were unable to advocate for women's rights issues and the inclusion of women, NGOs and community based groups specifically addressing women's rights and gender based issues were excluded from the Accords. Gendered acts of violence were systematically excluded from the Truth Commission report, despite evidence of its usage during the civil war (Hume 2008). The National Assembly would change laws regarding interfamilial violence and child care support because of NGO and community based advocacy (Walsh and Menjívar 2016), but implementing and enforcing those laws lacked the persistent input and presence of women thanks to the normalization of masculine dominance.

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[9] The SRN was created to develop medium-term reconstruction plan as well as develop the reinsertion programs for the FMLN, the FAES, and the National Police, working closely alongside USAID and relying heavily on international donor contributions (Clark 1996)

Salvadoran women were paradoxically considered worthy of fighting during the war but were expected to return to pre-war expectations of supporting the men in their lives and staying outside of public life. Prior to the civil war, women could only participate in the economy through the informal sector, and women taking up work outside of the home was considered shameful even when employment was necessary for survival (Blumberg 2001). The war forced women out of the domestic sphere, but the respect for individual women did not increase opportunities for women after the war. The *machismo* culture of El Salvador reemerged after women were forced to take on expanded roles after the civil war's conclusion. To reassert expectations of male dominance, women were expected to return to domestic roles for the sake of supporting the broader interest of securing stability. Women's groups struggled to increase the public participation of women, as many felt pressure to balance post-war expectations with prescribed gender roles, particularly as caretakers for children, the traumatized, the disabled, and the elderly (Conaway and Martínez 2004). Alongside these personal pressures, not addressing the impunity for crimes against women during the civil war perpetuated the rising violence against women. Women participating in public life were publicly harassed (Conaway and Martínez 2004). Reporting cases of domestic violence to the police resulted in increased harassment and death threats (Hume 2008; Walsh and Menjívar 2016). Like in neighboring Nicaragua, the specific interests of women were pushed down to serve the broader interest of negotiated peace (Molyneux 1985). Suppressing the distinct needs and interests of women for the sake of peace allowed for the continuation of structures that harm women. The stability of patriarchal systems of dominance were maintained through the passive exclusion of what

women needed for creating a peaceful El Salvador, and maintaining *machismo* cultural norms prevented the relationship transformation work of peacebuilding.

The presence of and respect for women at the negotiating table and implementation stages like Valladares allowed women and other typically excluded groups to access benefits typically not made available to them, but not addressing the unique needs for women did not change perceptions of women as a group. Along with the reestablishment traditional gender norms and continued impunity for violence against women, the sacrifices of women during the war did little to advance their position in society. The forceful return to traditional gender roles did not only limit opportunities and safety for women: it also placed demobilized young men into situations which defined them as weak. Not taking gender into consideration had the most direct and discriminatory effects on rank-and-file women within the FMLN, but it also ignored the needs of demobilized men as they faced limited employment options and became portrayed as burdens to families and communities, and eventually as threats to the stability of the new peace.

<u>Male Ex-Combatants: Exclusion and Expectations of Dominance Collide</u>

The demobilization and demilitarization aspects of El Salvador's peace process were considered a major achievement, but the exclusion of rank-and-file members of shaping their reintegration into society perpetuated marginalization and a sense of alienation among demobilized young men. FMLN commanders helped design reintegration programs, but ex-combatants had little agency in their program placement. Young men conscripted to fight lacked skills and resources to become successful farmers, yet their placement as farmers through the PTT did not provide them with the necessary tools to succeed.

Meanwhile, the reintegration program for mid and high level FMLN officers was considered one of the most successful reintegration programs compared to other Salvadoran reintegration programs, as it transitioned officers directly into a political bloc which judged qualifications by combat experience (Gariby 2006). Male ex-guerrillas faced many obstacles to reintegration, but they had some tenuous support thanks to a network of NGOs in FMLN controlled territories improving the effectiveness of service distribution (Clark 1996; Call 2002). Veterans of the FAES, primarily relying on the Salvadoran government for reintegration support, did not receive the same quantity and quality of support as FMLN ex-combatants.

FAES ex-combatants, like FMLN ex-combatants, had no input in designing the DDR programs nor did they have any choice in which programs they were enrolled in. Unlike the FMLN, these ex-combatants did not have the benefit of a strong support system delivered by NGOs or the ARENA-led government. The SRN was assigned to administer the reintegration process for demobilized FAES members, but FMLN aligned NGOs showed a greater effectiveness at administering benefits than government controlled programs (Clark 1996). Organizations and associations dealing with the needs of demobilized or disabled FAES members did not emerge until after the government failed to deliver benefits promised to them and their families (Segovia 2009). The FAES' dependence on the government to administer benefits is reflected in who received government support after it signed the Accords. Demobilized FAES members received the smallest amount of benefits from the land transfer program (Gariby 2006). Due in part to its dire financial situation, the government excluded soldiers discharged prior to the

signing the peace accords as beneficiaries and only provided one third of ex-soldiers with

promised severance payments two years after signing the Accords (Call 2002). The lack of

government support hit the demobilized members of the FAES hard, as they were already

the least integrated members of the armed forces (Gariby 2006), and were mostly young,

poorly educated peasants conscripted into service (Murray 1997). With any actions

demobilized FAES members took to securing the support promised to them, the

government worked to delegitimize them. When the *Asociación de Desmovilizados de las*

Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador, or the Association of Demobilized Armed Forces

Members (ADEFAES), protested in San Salvador for greater access to benefits, the

government responded with repression and discrimination. The soldiers were dismissed

as deviants inciting violence and creating disorder (Pearce 1998; Gariby 2006). Only after

violently occupying the National Assembly and holding some Assembly Members hostage

did the ADAFAES receive any benefits promised to them within the Accords (del Castillo

1997). The Salvadoran government used the standoff with the ADAFAES to portray all

demonstrators as a source of chaos and violence, using the rhetoric once employed against

the FMLN now aimed at former FAES members (Gariby 2006). The government's

interactions with the ADAFAES defined official institutions as untrustworthy and willing

to make veterans the enemy after fighting for the government. The government's active

demonization of men who fought for them, alongside the lack of support with reintegration

and continued social and economic exclusion, pushed young veterans and ex-combatants

to the margins of society. Rather than elevating young men like mid and high ranking

FMLN officials or protecting them like important members of the FAES, the government

portrayed young men as the primary threat to the social order.

Not addressing longstanding socioeconomic dynamics within El Salvador has led to a

sense of alienation and marginalization. Reintegration programs focused on rural

populations, but programs did not give young men in rural areas the means to thrive on

agriculture. Reintegration programs also neglected to address the increased urban

population in post-war El Salvador. *Maquilas*[10] were the only source of employment

within the formal economy, but they predominantly hired women at significantly lower

wages (Pearce 1998). The norms of what it meant to be a man remained after the war, but

young men had no means of meeting those expectations. Stripping the rank-and-file FAES

and FMLN members of their choice for reintegration and abandoning them to failure left

these men feeling powerless and in need of reasserting control over their lives. With the

expectation that Salvadoran men dominate all aspects of life, even though violence when

necessary (Hume 2008), disgruntled demobilized members of the FAES and the FMLN

joined *pandillas*[11] to cope with economic and social uncertainty (Jütersonke, Muggah, and

Rodgers 2009). Though not responsible for the prominence of gang violence in the

country today, the government implicated rising violent crime with young men and

disgruntled ex-combatants, with a 1999 prison survey revealing that almost 30 percent of

the country's prison population was made up of ex-combatants from the FAES and the

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[10] *Maquilas* are assembly industries. Most of the foreign investment El Salvador received in the post-war era went towards building up these *maquilas*, but they hire few people (Pearce 1998)

[11] *Pandillas* are Central American youth gangs which primarily engage in acts of delinquency, with muggings the most violent actions. They became increasingly common and violent post-conflict across the region, although were eventually replaced by the more structured *maras* from the United States (Jütersnoke, Muggah, and Rodgers 2009)

FMLN, despite the fact that only 6 percent of the country's general population served in the war (Call 2003). Instead of addressing the feelings of alienation young men felt and delivering on the promises of respect and prosperity, the criminalization of youth and young men allowed the Salvadoran government to fulfill the role of the strongman. As young men and women joined *pandillas,* and later *maras* exported from the United States[12], the Salvadoran government portrayed all young men as social deviants and the source of the country's problems. The general public viewed rising youth gangs as the source of all violence within the country (Call 2003), and the government used the public's fear of rising crime and delinquency to engage in broadly supported repressive actions (Call 2003). Just as the FMLN were portrayed as moral degenerates and threats to public security, the language Salvadoran officials used to delegitimize the ADAFAES and other veterans and ex-combatants was expanded to describe youth in general, especially young men. The ARENA government asserted its strength and dominance over young men, thereby asserting the elite's power over an entire generation. *Machismo* cultural norms assert that the masculine as strong and dominant, while the feminine is weak and subordinate and proving oneself as masculine must be asserted though force. Maintaining old structures of power and criminalizing an entire generation traps the youth in a position of weakness and perpetual domination at the hands of the elites. Excluding ex-combatants

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[12]*Pandillas* and *maras* are fundamentally different, though writers covering Central American gangs use the terms interchangibly. *Pandillas* are home grown, common to Central America since the 1960s, had an "aging out" element to them, and primarily engaged in acts of delinquency. *Maras* are transnational, mirror the structures of their US counterparts, are engaged in more violent crimes or serve transnational criminal operations, and *mara* members are marked for life. By 2012, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated that 20,000 people were members of *maras* in El Salvador, though it did not disaggregate membership based on gender (UNOCD 2012)

from shaping the peace process and pushing young men to the margins of society set the stage for them to reassert their dominance and sense of control through the only tool they could use effectively: violence.

Conclusion

At the outset of this paper, I sought to understand how exclusion can breed marginalization and how violence must be addressed through inclusion. I also noted how the contours of the peace that exists in El Salvador today was crafted by—and for—those included in the peace process. The Accords created a political peace and one of the most stable democracies in Central America, but excluding economic and social issues from the Accords has continued El Salvador's problems of marginalization and alienation, especially among its youth population. Organizers of the Peace Accords did not take a gendered approach to the DDR programs, which led to the exclusion of women when implementing the Accords. The young men forcibly taught in the art of warfare were discarded by the government they defended, and were villanized when they demanded recognition. The causes and continuation of El Salvador's pervasive violence today are complex and multifaceted, but the Salvadoran people can use the lessons from the Peace Accords to address today's violence.

In 2012, the FMLN led government attempted a truce with the *maras*, mediated by officials of the Catholic Church and breaking from previous government's *mano dura*[13]

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[13] *Mano dura*, or iron fist, was a policy established in 2003 within El Salvador that advocated for the immediate imprisonment of gang members and took a zero-tolerance policy towards gang membership (Hume 2007)

policies. The truce collapsed in 2015, partially because the negotiations were an exclusionary, secretive process that shut out civil society organizations and was perceived by the public as focused more on lowering the country's homicide rates than addressing the real and legitimate needs of Salvadorans (Whitfield 2013). The negotiations with the *maras* did not reaffirm the most successful and durable aspects of the Salvadoran peace process, mainly the intentional and continuous inclusion of the FMLN in decision making and implementation. Instead, it continued the Salvadoran government's history of exclusion as a means to keep power.

What can be learned from the Salvadoran peace process? Inclusive peace processes will reduce violence in the areas intentionally addressed. Sidelining problems and ignoring longstanding issues will not solve them. Exclusion and discrimination lead to alienation and marginalization. The issue of violence in El Salvador today is complex and multifaceted, but employing tools of violent repression or continuing to criminalize entire groups of people has not and does not stop violence. The Salvadoran peace process shows that deliberate and continuous inclusion is the first step to stopping violence. Addressing human rights violations and political repression in a way that included the FMLN created a stable democracy and the near elimination of political violence in El Salvador. Whether it be El Salvador's dealings with *maras* or countries like Colombia as they undergo their own peace processes, El Salvador's peace process serves as a valuable example for how inclusion is a means to creating a durable peace.

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