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RETHINKING POLITICAL CULTURE: COUNTERINSURGENCY, DEMOCRACY, AND POLITICAL IDENTITY IN GUATEMALA

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOSEPH MARC BELANGER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 1993

Department of Political Science

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RETHINKING POLITICAL CULTURE: COUNTERINSURGENCY, DEMOCRACY, AND POLITICAL IDENTITY IN GUATEMALA

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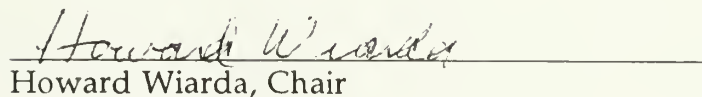
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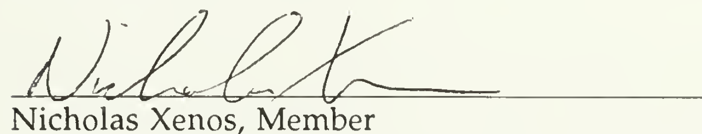
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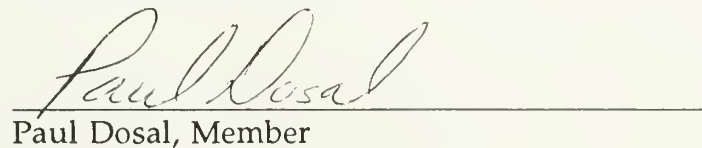
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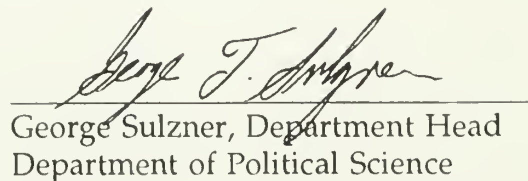
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Max Weber once told an audience of students that in order to pursue any form of study one must first clarify his or her ultimate values and "obey the demon who holds the fiber of his very life." This work reflects the truth of Weber's insight on several levels. I first learned about Guatemala while working with Oxfam America and Amnesty International in the early 1980s. In that context I was continually confronted by many horrendous and wondrous human acts, unimaginable cruelty and courage, savagery and compassion. But no country more consistently astonished me than Guatemala, both in terms of the human capacity for cruelty as well as courage and heroism. I struggled to resist the tendency to view those who resisted oppression with such strength as somehow special and different. What was indeed most moving and inspiring was the realization that the courage to bear torture and pervasive terror was something of which many were capable. And yet the opposite realization was frightening: that the perpetrators of such barbarism in Guatemala, and elsewhere, were also not special.

A work such as this could not pretend to offer conclusive answers to the mysteries of the human soul which its subject matter presents. Social scientists often imagine that human behavior can be effectively measured, but they are wrong. Instead, we can ask, How do individuals and communities construct their sense of meaning and identity? The effort to think about that

question in Guatemala and more generally led me to reconsider the issue of political culture. The answers I have offered are meant to be provocative and provisional, a stimulus to further study, some suggestions about how to proceed, a case study to provide examples.

But Weber's insights into the connection between identity and forms of inquiry are illustrated by this work in a still more personal fashion. Completing this work and drawing back from it a little, it is clear to me now, in a way it was not at all when I began, that the ways I understand culture, meaning, and identity are not detached observations. If I am interested in cultures as both historically grounded and yet endlessly reshaped by contingency, it's partly because that is how I understand my own life. My parents taught me to think for myself, and then spent years having their conservative convictions taken to task. Learning to understand the tensions and the bonds within that community has gradually in turn persuaded me how much I have been shaped by my parents and their values. While I am neither Catholic or conservative, their influence remains central to who I am and how I think. This experience has thus strengthened an assumption that underlies much of this work: that identity is always the product of conflict and change, and yet that we seldom wholly reinvent ourselves. Today many in the United States fear our "multiculturalism," as if the issue forced us to choose "once and for all" who "we" are in some definitive sense. My own experience, fortified by the powerful example of others such as the Maya in Guatemala,

has convinced me that confronting the present means truly remembering where we came from. This work is thus meant to express a faith in the inventiveness of human cultures to both redeem the past and transform the present. My deepest debts go then to my mother and my father; though they would not agree with much of what I have written, I am thankful for the faith, skepticism, and persistence that they taught me.

As I sought to ask these kinds of questions in graduate school, the field of comparative politics often seemed ill at ease with such question. Beliefs and attitudes which couldn't be quantified, words that had more than one meaning, world views in flux, beset by contingency and contradiction. I have been fortunate to study in a program which encouraged innovation and theoretical openness. The opportunity to give extensive consideration to thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Michel Foucault and Walter Benjamin in the context of graduate political theory seminars has greatly enriched my perspective.

The idea that I would ever finish this project long seemed impossible to imagine. That I kept with it is due in no small way to the support and encouragement of my dissertation committee. Howard Wiarda was critical when he needed to be, but helped curb my tendency to get bogged down trying to answer too many questions. I am especially appreciative of the openness and encouragement he offered to my efforts to question mainstream comparative politics. Nick Xenos' seminars provided some of the context in

which my ideas on culture first emerged; his respect for, openness to, and encouragement of my attempts to bring more theoretical reflection to comparative politics was also crucial in developing more confidence about where I was going. Paul Dosal served his capacity as the "outside reader" in a way which thoroughly affirmed my choice to ask him to sit on my committee. He provided invaluable constructive criticism in helping untangle what seemed a hopelessly muddled first draft of what turned out to be Chapters 3 and 4. Amrita Basu helped pinpoint some fundamental problems in my prospectus; her comments were important in helping clarify in my own mind what I thought I was doing. Jeneen Hobby offered her generous and illuminating criticism of an early draft of Chapter 2. Renee Heberle provided the same for Chapter 7.

I also wish to express deep appreciation to several individuals and organizations who were helpful in the gathering of research materials for this dissertation. They are: Johanna Mendelson of the School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC; Chris Lutz and other staff of the Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica/Plumsock Mesoamerican Center, in Woodstock, Vermont and Antigua, Guatemala; Ieda Wiarda and Edmundo Flores of the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress; the library staff of the Inter-American Defense College, Washington, DC; Ravi Khanna of the Peace Development Fund, Amherst, MA; the staff of Inforpress in Guatemala City.

It remains a sad but all too real fact that many who have helped me understand Guatemala the best cannot be thanked publicly. But without the thoughts and ideas of countless Guatemalans this work would never have been written. I pray that someday that this kind of anonymous thanks will no longer be a pervasive necessity for those undertaking research in this extraordinary country.

Katy Arnold and Betsy Cohn were wonderful friends and hosts during several visits to Washington to do research. Joanne Belanger, Midge Eisele, Renee Heberle, Nancy Herndon, Elisabeth Hinshaw, Zan Jacobus, and Marsha Marotta in one way or another helped me remain aware that I was more than just a graduate student. They kept acting as if of course I would finish one day. I didn't believe them, but knowing they did believe mattered more than they know. And without Elizabeth Rankin's presence in my life, the difficulties of the past several years would have been unimaginably greater.

ABSTRACT

RETHINKING POLITICAL CULTURE: COUNTERINSURGENCY, DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL IDENTITY IN GUATEMALA

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This dissertation has two principle aims: to examine the political cultural context for counterinsurgency in Guatemala, and in the process try to revitalize the concept of political culture. I argue that counterinsurgency in Guatemala must be understood as a political project with a distinct cultural agenda, and not simply a military strategy to defeat a guerrilla movements. The goal of that project is the construction of a modern nation state which can more fully integrate the country's indigenous communities, establish the legitimacy of national political institutions, and weaken the influence of independent social and political movements. In other words, this is a project to win "hearts and minds." I analyze the historical context, the political and cultural goals of the military, and the other political cultural forces which it must confront. I examine the cultural significance of ethnicity, religion, popular political movements, and political violence, and conclude that the military has thus far fallen far short of realizing its political, as opposed to strictly military, goals.

This case study provides a concrete context within which to examine in some depth the theoretical issues involved in the study of political culture. My intention is to point the discussion in new and fruitful directions. By re-examining the contribution of Max Weber and supplementing those ideas with discussions which have taken place among historians and anthropologists regarding cultural analysis, I critique the limitations of past uses of the concept of political culture and set forth the constitutive elements of an approach to cultural analysis with applications beyond Guatemala.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Nations and States

The question and the problem at the heart of this thesis began to take shape in my mind at the very beginning of my first trip to Guatemala in late Spring 1988, (what Guatemalans call invierno or winter.) After my Pan Am flight landed at Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City, I entered the terminal and went down a hallway toward the customs officials. At the time I was mostly concerned that my weak Spanish skills get me through customs so I could meet the representative of the language school in Quezaltenango where I would be studying. Still, I was immediately taken aback by the first visual images I encountered on the walls of the corridor toward customs, images which invoked Guatemala's Mayan past and seemed chosen for their power to convey a sense of national identity connected to that Mayan heritage. The images jarred because I knew something of what life had been like for the Maya over the past 450 years--and particularly over the past 15 or so. My initial assumption was cynical: these images of ethnic heritage in this international airport were simply intended to charm tourists and obscure a very brutal reality. But as I learned more, and made two subsequent return trips over the next couple of years, these images gradually became a metaphor

for the ambiguity, conflict, and confusion within Guatemala as a national community.

In his remarkable "reflections" on nationalism, Benedict Anderson describes modern nation states as "imagined communities"--gatherings of individuals who feel themselves bound by language, history, and expectations of loyalty and sacrifice to a community, most of whose members will never meet or come near each other. He argues that this form of community gradually emerged between the 16th and 19th century in Western Europe in response to economic, political, and technological changes which weakened previous bases for community and made it possible for "growing numbers of people to think about themselves and others in profoundly new ways" (1983: 40). Anderson attributes particular importance to the weakened power of universalistic religious communities and the subsequent movement toward forms of community which were conceived as more limited in their membership. Whereas all could be called to salvation through the Catholic Church, the claims of many Protestant churches were usually less universal, and nations even less so. That tendency was reinforced by state policy and developments in print technology which encouraged the solidification of national languages from among local dialects. Modern literary forms such as the novel and the newspaper, consumed by a growing audience of readers, encouraged a sense of community and connection as a "sociological organism moving calendrically through empty time" (31). The nation as a community

lived within human history which could be measured and judged, rather than in accordance with a divine plan that could at best be prophesied. In the absence of modern conceptions of history and time, Anderson argues, it would have been impossible to "think the nation."

At the same time, Anderson argues that while the nation is a modern political institution, the enduring power of nationalist ideologies is in their capacity to recast and provide new answers to old questions: questions about mortality, contingency, and suffering that still haunt us even as religious explanations have lost some, though by no means all, of their former power. The nation-state has, when most fully realized and in spite of its lowly status among intellectuals, been able to marshall capacities for commitment, loyalty, and sacrifice unmatched by other modern ideologies such as Marxism and liberalism. While there is something fabricated in these communities, elements of fiction, of myth, that is precisely the achievement of modern nationalisms, whether French, Palestinian, or Indonesian: "if nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and still more important, glide into a limitless future" (1983: 19). Anderson argues that nationalism is a cultural construction: a product of particular processes and experiences gradually pieced together and then bestowed with a powerful aura of timelessness. The concept has thus proven "capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains to

merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations" (1983: 14).

This capacity to combine the old and the new in ways which powerfully connect diverse local experiences and knowledge into a cohesive sense of national community is a powerful source of legitimacy for modern "nation-states." And it is partly this kind of power which Mayan images are meant to invoke in the Aurora airport. But what kind of "imagined community" is Guatemala? Can we even think of it in those terms? And what might it become in the future? Those are the questions which this work will take up in some detail. Anderson tells us that the nationalisms expressed by states are generally the conscious constructions of political elites and succeed or fail in the context of specific political strategies and struggles in which other sources of legitimacy compete and must be weakened or re-oriented. The rise of the nation state as the dominant political and economic actor of the past 200 years has provided an almost unavoidable narrative structure within which to read history teleologically as a journey, full of dangers and obstacles to be sure, toward modernity and nationhood. In this way the nation-state carries deep normative assumptions about progress and modernity.

Events of recent years have served, nonetheless, to reveal how much conflict the hyphen in the "nation-state" has often obscured. The work of Barrington Moore (1965), Theda Skojpol (1979), and Charles Tilly (1975), building on Marx and Weber, has demonstrated that the process of

state-building has generally involved extensive violence, disruption and brutality. Behind the symbols of unity and community there is often blood and misery. Most of the states of the modern world are "multi-national" in some sense. Indeed, the political world of today is full of enduring conflicts between various "imagined communities" and the states which claim them but lack legitimacy.

Guatemalan political life is deeply shaped by just such a conflict. The successive efforts of Guatemalan political elites to construct a legitimate political order and national "imagined community" have thus far failed. Guatemala's present population approaches 9 million, of which approximately half are Mayan Indians. While viewed by non-Indians in an undifferentiated manner, the Maya speak more than 20 different languages and their political and cultural identity has generally been oriented toward locally constructed communities. The policies of colonial and national governments have certainly transformed the economic and cultural life of the Maya, but they have not succeeded in eliminating ethnicity as an important source of political identity in indigenous communities. The legitimacy problem facing the Guatemalan state does not involve only the continued resistance of the Maya to cultural and political assimilation; many sectors of non-Maya or "ladino" society have also felt excluded and imagined their own visions of Guatemala. In this way Guatemala is a country facing fundamental questions of national identity and cultural meaning.[1]

The institution which has confronted this problem most systematically is the Guatemalan military. Over the past decade the military has implemented one of the most ambitious counterinsurgency programs ever undertaken in an effort to defeat a guerrilla insurgency and pacify the country. But at the same time, counterinsurgency in Guatemala has been more than an effort to brutally pacify rebellious Indians. The program has also reflected an elaborate political project aimed at constructing a vision of Guatemala as an "imagined community." While counterinsurgency, or "low-intensity warfare," as it is now often called, is usually examined principally as a military doctrine, its political aspects--the winning of "hearts and minds"--have long been centrally apparent. But it is in Guatemala that the political goals of a counterinsurgency program have been articulated and pursued perhaps most fully. The political goal of the Guatemalan counterinsurgency project was the creation of a political culture of national community, a Guatemala with the emotional, as opposed to strictly military, power to compel loyalty and commitment. This reflected elaborate notions of order, political community, and the requisites for sustaining them beyond the application of military force.

Central to this task was the construction of a modern state which more fully integrated the country's majority indigenous peoples, established the legitimacy of a national polity and institutions, while weakening the capacity of independent social and political movements. In this work I will analyze how the military understood this legitimacy problem, how it has proposed to

address the problem, and what significance this political project has had for the rest of Guatemala.

Counterinsurgency and Political Culture

On March 23, 1982, a military coup in Guatemala initiated one of the most brutal counterinsurgency programs ever undertaken. Three years later, having apparently pacified the country and strengthened its grip on power, the military oversaw the election of a civilian President--Christian Democrat Marco Vinicio Cerezo. In January 1991, a successor--Jorge Serrano of the Movimiento de Acción Solidario (MAS)--was elected in a process that most observers determined took place without the fraud which characterized most elections in Guatemala prior to 1985. The close relationship between counterinsurgency and changing civil-military relations has placed Guatemala in an ambiguous position within the extensive literature on democratization which has appeared over the past decade. The degree of military control, the weakness of civilian leaders, and the continued pattern of extensive human rights abuses, torture, disappearances, and political murders have led most analysts to speak only of a limited degree of democratization. While it is apparent that the political space for opposition has grown somewhat, it is, they argue, far too early to speak of a "consolidation" of democracy. [2]

This work will not challenge that general assessment. The most crucial goal of counterinsurgency in Guatemala was and remains the pacification of rebellious indigenous communities in the Western and Central Highlands. The military made it clear that civilian politicians would be allowed no hand in the management of that task. At the same time, the military officers who constructed that program understood that the war they were fighting in the early 1980s reflected a profound crisis in Guatemala's political culture to which they, imbued as an institution with a deep sense of national mission, were obliged to respond. In this sense they understood, at least in theory, the words of two North American students of counterinsurgency:

> Experience clearly shows that insurgencies and "revolutionary wars" are wars for moral legitimacy--by which we mean the popular perception of relative moral rightness of the competing forces...a nation whose government is or has been perceived as lacking in moral rectitude is a prime target for Marxist-Leninist insurgencies and their moralistic egalitarian doctrine. (Mainwaring and Prisk 1988: 2)

This work begins, therefore, from the premise that the effort to assess the likelihood of political success of the Guatemalan military's project must include an understanding of the historical and cultural context within which it was constructed. What was the problem for which a powerful sector of the Guatemalan military considered this project the solution?

Answering that question requires examining the political culture of the military itself and analyzing how the challenges confronting Guatemala have been interpreted within the military and how its thinking has been translated

into concrete programs and political action over the past decade. Military leaders have clearly articulated--in interviews, articles and actions--their analysis of the political/cultural problem facing Guatemala. The central concept around which they have framed this analysis is "national stability." As elaborated by former Minister of Defense General Héctor Gramajo, this is a consciously Guatemalan rejection of the notion of "national security." Gramajo has argued that the latter idea was a North American formulation which made Guatemala a tool of Cold War goals but did not address its own national realities. In this way, what Gramajo has called the "thesis of national stability" clearly reflects the strong nationalism of the Guatemalan military.

The goal of this military political program is the creation of a stronger sense of national identity through the construction and implementation of a coherent national project of development and, in its own terms, democracy. In pursuing that goal, its planners have acknowledged the failures of past governments, military and otherwise, on this account. They have also recognized that the guerrilla movement which threatened Guatemala in the early 1980s was not simply the product of evil communist conspiracies hatched in Moscow and Havana; it also grew from generations of poverty, exploitation and racism. It was understandable, they argued, that guerrilla promises, however illusory, would gain popular support. What does winning the "political war" mean in practice? Development poles, model villages, civil patrols, and other institutions have been designed to strengthen the military's

control over the rural population, especially indigenous communities. But the military also hoped to convince indigenous communities that now the government was committed to making them fully a part of Guatemala and could offer them a better life. By presenting these programs in a confident and attractive discourse of national development, the military hoped, in David Stoll's words, to seize the "moral initiative" away from the guerrilla.[3]

Indians and poor ladinos are not the only audience that the military has wanted to address with this political project. It also carries ambitious aspirations of transforming the political culture of Guatemala's political and economic elites through a process of concertación by which national consensus might replace fragmentation and cleavages. While it is axiomatic, and generally accurate, to assume a close relationship between the military and Guatemala's economic elite, there are significant tensions with regard to the proper direction of "modernization" and rationalization sought by some in the military which must be examined. Moreover, the transition to civilian rule was not, I will argue, something that was imposed upon a discredited military forced to make concessions. What was most notable in Guatemala in the 1980s was not the retreat of the military but its greater autonomy, as well as the distinctly nationalist political and military ideology which put many officers at odds with some of the traditional oligarchy at the same time as they sought partnership with civilian political groups.

Understood as a political project in this fashion, the Guatemalan case provides an important opportunity to analyze the cultural politics of counterinsurgency. By approaching the matter in this way, I will be attempting to suggest the value of cultural analysis in revealing aspects of the military's program, and the response it has engendered, which have been underemphasized. Much of the recent literature on Guatemala and the process of democratization has emphasized structural and/or external forces which pressured the military to accept civilian rule. Political change in Guatemala is clearly influenced by socio-economic structures, natural disaster, regional changes, U.S. foreign policy. But to explain solely by reference to these factors is incomplete.[4]

The most significant factor missing from a structural account is the political culture of legitimacy surrounding the state and its leading institutions and actors. The Guatemalan state has never been able to rest on its coercive power; cultural analysis can help illuminate why legitimacy has been elusive and what "winning the political war" means. Earlier research on the political cultures of Latin American militaries provided valuable insights into the ways new experiences and forms of knowledge influenced institutional notions of identity, while changing the ways traditional issues of legitimacy, participation, order, development, and national identity were understood.[5] The program of counterinsurgency and democratization undertaken by the Guatemalan military as the project of "national stability" can be similarly understood as the

product of new thinking brought to bear in response to a long-term problem reshaped by new events.

Cultural analysis can help interpret the goals of the military by clarifying what it thinks the problem is and exploring how it hopes to translate that understanding into a more legitimate political cultural order. How successful this is likely to be in transforming the political culture of Guatemala's indigenous communities and establishing a much stronger allegiance to the nation, can only be assessed by understanding the political culture the military hopes to establish and the various other political cultures within Guatemala which confront such a project.

It must be noted quite clearly that this is the project of the military, in conjunction with some civilian elites. Anderson's analysis of "imagined communities" provides a useful ideal type because it conveys well many of the aspirations of the Guatemalan state. But in studying the effort to construct a particular vision of political community, I'm not at all implying that a successful outcome to such a project is either possible or desirable. I shall argue in the latter sections of this work that the military's project is fraught with cultural contradictions which complicate the achievement of legitimacy. It is also a project which clearly builds on the politics of violence and terror which remains pervasive in Guatemala. This is certainly not a conflict among equals. The military project privileges particular spaces and identities, but has not been able to fully control the process or the responses of Guatemala's other

political cultures. The "democratic opening" permitted in 1985 may have been an integral part of the military's project, but like controlled political openings elsewhere in the hemisphere its impact was not subject to the strict control of the military. And while the military leaders conceive of their project of "national stability" as distinctly Guatemalan, that is not to say that external and structural factors are not relevant to the formation, success, or failure of their project.

Rethinking Political Culture

Analyzing counterinsurgency as a political culture project raises larger issues regarding the way political science studies culture. The contrast between structural and cultural analysis in the previous section illustrates a problem which has, I would argue, crippled previous discussion of the concept. The tendency to divide our field of study among different "approaches": statist, rational choice, culturalist, structuralist, dependency, corporatist, etc. is not unique to political science. A full ethnography of this phenomenon would no doubt uncover a range of institutional and intellectual forces at work. Here I wish only to focus on some of the theoretical problems for interpreting culture which have emerged from an overly polemical debate.

While the writers who advocate these approaches usually acknowledge some debt to other approaches, these discussions often seem to produce

confrontations in which differences and continuity are overstated in the pursuit of theoretical victory. What began as unanswered questions, gaps or silences in previous analysis, are hardened or codified into rigid theories seeking paradigmatic status. Political culture, dependency, and state-centered analysis all offered improvements over earlier studies. But once codified into "approaches" they began to become abstract. Many of these so-called approaches are often more helpfully considered as political facts in need of analysis. Dependency is a good example; rather than being a hard and fast theory which can explain inequality and underdevelopment, it is better considered a condition which itself must be explained using a combination of economic, cultural and historical analysis. The same can be said of the state, as well as, in Latin America, the institutional and cultural influence of political traditions inherited from Spain. It is not possible to undertake an interpretation of Guatemalan politics without considering each of these factors carefully, but any effort to ground explanation in any one factor--cultural, economic or otherwise--will leave important gaps in our analysis.

These polemics have been particularly unkind to the concept of culture. Consider the discussion of recent years regarding the relative autonomy of the state. Too much of the debate has been caught up in an extremely unhelpful dichotomy between "state-centered" and "society-centered" approaches to political analysis. Each side tends to create overly simplistic constructions of the other: "culturalist" arguments are labeled idealist, racist, reductionist, or

ethnocentric; "statists" are labeled Hegelian, idealist, reductionist, etc.[6] One of the consequences of this kind of polemic is the most important question is never asked with any thoroughness--what is political culture? In Chapter 2 I will set forth the constitutive elements of what I consider a viable approach toward political culture which I will then apply, in the rest of the study, to the case of Guatemala. I am not proposing a "cultural approach," however, if that implies offering cultural explanations for political structures. Structural and cultural analyses have formed one of the most enduring polemical dichotomies, but it is time to move beyond the question of which is dependent on the other and enquire more closely into the ongoing relationship.[7]

For the study of political culture this means asking some new questions that can help construct an approach to culture which is sufficiently rich and complex for the work at hand. In that sense, I share the sentiment expressed by Susanne Jonas when she described her recent book "not as an effort to elaborate (or defend) a particular theory but to interpret the Guatemalan experience" (1991: 3). This examination of the political culture of the military's project is conceived as a complement to rather than a rejection of other analyses. The multi-level crisis which has confronted Guatemala over at least the past 15 years has presented profound questions of national identity and cultural meaning for every sector of society. Guatemalans, both as individuals and members of larger cultural communities have been forced to try to make sense of natural disaster, horrific political violence, external events, and an

unparalleled economic depression. What cultural analysis can do is deepen our understanding of the human significance, the dilemmas of identity and meaning, which individuals and communities confront in contexts which are seldom of their own creation. Cultural processes are a crucial, but not determinant, element of the interpretive puzzle. A recent paper by Daniel Levine makes this point nicely in cautioning against explanations which put too much emphasis on structural changes:

> These conjunctures provide a necessary but not a sufficient basis for understanding...Transformations within religion (ideas, structures and practice) need to be set in the context of changes that made them resonate and ring true to ordinary people and gave average men and women a chance to shape the course and content of change on their own. (1990: 7)

The emphasis on culture as a practice means studying the ways new structural settings generated by war, global events, economic change, etc. inspire new understandings. When Levine refers to religion as an "existential" art, the same might be said of culture in general. Historical traditions provide resources for the ongoing task of constructing meaning and identity, but the precise content changes as new historical problems are presented.[8] Specific events are viewed through a cultural lens which interprets change, asks new questions, and, sometimes, invents new possibilities.

Structure of the Work

The discussion of political culture I want to pursue begins from the premise that previous approaches have been insufficiently reflective about the nature of the subject matter. While extensive debate has occurred among historians and anthropologists regarding what it means to speak of culture, much of the discussion among political scientists has not entailed the same degree of conceptual reflection. In Chapter 2 I will examine how the concept of political culture has been constructed over the past several decades and offer the constitutive elements of what I consider a more viable concept. While looking to other disciplines for inspiration, my approach will be heavily indebted to a reconsideration of Max Weber's influential but often misunderstood analysis of the "cultural sciences."

The framework offered in Chapter 2 will then be applied to analyze the political culture of counterinsurgency. As previously noted, the political project which the military has tried to carry out is a response to a political problem with deep historical roots. The work of legitimating a political cultural order has been continually re-enacted in the nearly 500 years since the Conquest. In Chapter 4, we will examine the ways in which Guatemala has been understood as a political community by those who have governed it, with a particular emphasis on the changing relationship between the Guatemalan state and the indigenous majority. I will focus particular attention on the Colonial era, the

subsequent impact of independent Liberal "reforms" during the 19th century, and the political legacy of the "revolution" of 1944-54. Within each epoch I will examine the kinds of political communities which have been "imagined," the ways specific colonial and national political orders attempted to legitimate themselves, and their success or failure.

In order to pursue these issues, it is necessary to clarify two theoretical points. Historians and anthropologists have provided us with richly detailed and analytically imaginative accounts of the ability of the Maya to retain something of their cultural identity amidst the devastating succession of conquests by the colonial and national governments in Guatemala. In trying to account for the choices made by the Maya in the face of externally imposed violence and domination, this research has convincingly established the importance of viewing Maya as "subjects of their own history," rather than passive objects of conquest.[9] The theoretical and practical significance of that idea will be taken up in Chapter 3 in order that the perspective on ethnic identity and legitimacy which informs the historical discussion in Chapter 4 be as unambiguous as possible.

The political culture of the military political project will be examined more fully in Chapter 5. After providing an account of the historical and cultural development of the military, two principle questions will be addressed, How does the military understand the political and cultural problem confronting it as Guatemala's most powerful national institution?

What political and military institutions are being put into place to address that problem?

Chapters 6 and 7 will then look at Guatemala's other political cultures and analyze what the practical significance of the military's project has been for other groups. Both chapters will employ the cultural analysis previously applied to the military in order to ask similar questions, How have other groups interpreted recent political and structural changes? What dilemmas of identity and meaning have these changes presented and what responses have they generated? No effort to understand Guatemalan political culture can avoid the importance of religion, and the recent explosion in the growth of evangelical Protestantism has generated enormous political controversy. In Chapter 6, I will examine the political culture of religion and, in particular, question the assumption that evangelical sects necessarily reinforce the intentions of the military. My analysis will emphasize the complex relationship between religious and ethnic identity in Guatemala in order to examine why so many Mayans have converted in recent years.

Chapter 7 will analyze Guatemalan political developments since the election of Vinicio Cerezo in 1985. One of the elements on the military's political agenda was the creation of a process of concertación that would engender a national consensus regarding political and economic development. Having examined how military leaders envisioned the "transition to democracy," I shall examine what has actually happened since 1985. By looking

at how other groups--political parties, as well as private sector, indigenous, and "popular" organizations--have responded to the military's project as well as other factors, including economic deterioration and regional and global political developments, this analysis will suggest that, as of early 1992, the goals of stability and concertación remain unrealized.

My analysis of Guatemala since 1985 will suggest that a variety of factors have encouraged a broad range of Guatemalans to see possibilities for compromise and peace in the process of "national dialogue" currently being undertaken. I will also suggest that some beginning steps are perhaps being taken toward a genuine confrontation with Guatemala's long tradition of horrific political violence. Both of these developments reflect that the political dialogue in Guatemala has moved well beyond the boundaries originally intended by the military. But for now, examining these new strains involves what Albert Hirschman called a "bias for hope." Reasons for pessimism continue to abound.

Having completed the analysis of Guatemala, I shall offer some concluding thoughts in Chapter 8 on two of the larger issues raised in this study: the political culture of modern nation states, and the implications of my approach for the practice of cultural analysis and social science.

Notes

1. The terms "Indian" and "ladino" are not as unambiguous as this introduction might suggest. A fuller consideration of the historical development of their meanings is included in Chapter 4. Much of that analysis is influenced by important new work on ethnicity and the state in Guatemala which is collected in a recent book edited by Carol A. Smith (1990).

2. The best analysis of the elections and democracy is found in the Congressional testimony of Guatemalan lawyer and political analyst Frank Larue (U.S. Congress; 1990). Jim Handy (1986) provides an excellent analysis of the historical context for current actions by the military. The argument in this chapter is strongly indebted to his insightful discussion. See also articles by Robert Trudeau and Susanne Jonas in John Booth and Mitchell Seligson, eds., (1989), Ken Anderson and Jean-Marie Simon (1988), J. Patrice McSherry (1990), Hector Rosada (1990) and Jonas' recent book (1991). More optimistic perspectives are offered by Georges Fauriol and Eva Loser (1988), and Alfonso Yurrita (1991).

3. Stoll's argument is more fully discussed in Chapter 6. It is elaborated in his recent groundbreaking work on Protestantism in Latin America (1990).

4. See Robert Trudeau's analysis of elections in Guatemala (Booth and Seligson, eds., 1989: 93-125). Trudeau argues that changes in political culture must be proceeded by changes in political structure and not the other way around as he argues "cultural explanations", such as that offered by Wiarda (1982), contend. While I agree with most of Trudeau's analysis of the significance of elections in Guatemala, his theoretical perspective on the process of political change is too limited.

5. This literature is discussed in more detail in the first section of Chapter 5.

6. For a recent glimpse into these debates see the Symposium in APSR, 1988, No 1. The theory and practice of state-centered analysis is well represented in Evans, Skojpol, and Rueschemeyer (1985). The introductory article by Skojpol provides an extensive bibliography. Further discussion of the strengths and limits of state centered analysis is presented in Chapter 2.

7. For an excellent account of the debates in anthropology on this issue see Sherry Ortner (1984). Historians explore these issues in Lynn Hunt, ed. (1988). Two brilliant discussions of the complex relationship between social structure and identity in two very different settings are offered by William Connolly (1981) and Marshall Sahlins (1985).

8. Levine's approach to religion and politics will be examined more fully in Chapter 6. Other work by Latin Americanists which skillfully analyze the ways new knowledge and ways of thinking are institutionally shaped in different settings includes Merilee Grindle (1986) on state development policies, Alfred Stepan (1988) on the military, Eduardo Viola and Scott Mainwaring (1984) on social movements, and David Stoll (1990) on religion. The literature on the latter subject is especially rich; an excellent sample can be found in Levine, ed. (1986). For an insightful analysis of the relevance to political culture of recent discussions of the state in Latin America, see Susan Bourque (1989).

9. This formulation is by Nancy Farriss (1983: 19). A fuller account of this perspective is set forth in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2

RETHINKING POLITICAL CULTURE

Weber and Political Culture: Some Old Issues Reconsidered

> The fate of an epoch which has eaten of the tree of knowledge is that it must know that we cannot learn the meaning of the world from the results of its analysis, be it ever so perfect; it must rather be in a position to create this meaning itself.
>
> Max Weber

The study of political culture has been conflicted terrain for some time. As formulated and developed by Gabriel Almond, Sydney Verba, Lucien Pye, and others the concept was widely influential for a time but gradually came in for criticism from a variety of quarters. That story will be told in more detail later in this chapter. But first, I want to consider some of the deeper epistemological issues involved in the study of culture. A rich starting point for that task is offered by Max Weber's analysis of what he termed the "cultural sciences."

It is not an easy thing to begin speaking of Max Weber. As one of the giants of contemporary western social theory, there is practically no school of modern thought--from Parsonian structural-functionalism, to Frankfurt School "critical theory," to Foucauldian "genealogy," which has not in some way been influenced by Weber. Even within the more narrow realm of modern political

science nearly every perspective or approach traces some of its origins to Weber's work. Hoping to avoid the polemics that competing uses of Weber have entailed, I will not try to situate myself with regard to all those perspectives. Instead I want to offer what I hope--dangerously perhaps on such well-trod terrain--will be a fresh perspective on Weber's contribution to the study of political culture. I will build upon the work of political theorists who have recently challenged earlier interpretations of Weber and brought out more clearly the ethical and methodological preoccupations which drove his inquiry. Weber's work is too vast, complex, and contradictory for me to claim that I have discovered the "true" Weber. It may be possible, however, to see some questions at stake in his work which are important to the study of culture and which have not received adequate attention in contemporary political science discussions of the issue.[1]

Weber continually explored the modern meanings of two concepts which are also at the heart of this work--culture and legitimacy. His intention was to investigate institutions in terms of their cultural significance for individuals and communities. This was not a question of determinism, but it was the case that institutions possessed "developmental tendencies" which Weber sought to understand in terms of the forms of human action and identity they tended to inspire. Weber did not believe that culture could be derived from structure. But while intending to illustrate the flaws in some Marxian formulations of culture, he did not intend to argue for the autonomy

of culture vis-a-vis structure. Cultural activity encourages the rise of particular kinds of economic and social institutions which possess, in turn, their own dynamics. Since consequence often differs from intention, gaps often appear between our will and our institutions--the rise and influence of Protestantism being a case in point. Structural change presents new challenges which must then be culturally interpreted. It was the ways those challenges were addressed as cultural dilemmas that most interested Weber. The causes behind the creation of institutions interested him in so far as they made more explicit the cultural problematic of the present. And no modern institution confronted these cultural dilemmas more sharply than the nation state. For while economic, military, and technological developments had greatly increased its power, states confronted ever more challenging problems trying to construct and maintain their cultural legitimacy and power.

These cultural preoccupations were not esoteric; they connected directly to his anxiety about the capacity of Germany to confront the political challenge of his lifetime. And that challenge, while having economic and military aspects, was fundamentally a cultural struggle. This is most apparent in "Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany," written in 1917 (1978: 1381-1469), and "Politics as a Vocation," but Weber's concerns about the political and cultural capacity of Germany's political leadership are apparent in essays from the 1890s on economic and political development. Keith Tribe has argued, in the context of close analysis of the earlier writings, that Weber's

intention was to pursue a "history of the present" in order that the fullest measure could be taken of Germany's current dilemma and its meaning (Tribe 1989). He could not, for reasons that will be elaborated more fully in the final chapter, offer a definitive solution. That was the task of the German nation. What Weber could do was inquire into the kinds of political subjects and identities most prominent in his present, their genealogy, and their cultural significance for the future.

Weber's effort to understand the construction of meaning reflects another preoccupation which drove all his work--from the detailed historical studies of medieval Europe to the intensely personal lectures on vocation: an effort to infuse the modern political realm with the authority and purpose once granted religious institutions. He explicitly equated the political quest of the social scientist with the classical platonic attempt to harmonize the elements of the soul while recognizing that earlier attempts to reconcile soul and polity were less available in the modern world as the sources of legitimacy had fragmented. Weber also understood that in modernity the traditional distinction between ends and means would be altered because science would establish means which were absolute rather than relative. In an age when scientific method was rapidly developing hegemony, he hoped to fashion a political realm, statecraft, which reconciled science with an individual sense of purpose and meaning.

Weber, Nietzsche, and Modern Social Science

In order to approach these matters, and their importance for cultural analysis a bit more deeply, we might start with an aspect of Weber's thought which has received increased attention in recent years--the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche. What is offered by greater attention to Nietzsche? Two things stand out: important methodological issues about the nature of modern social science can be fruitfully considered, and the anthropological and cultural elements of what Weber understood to be the dilemma of modernity come more clearly into view. How Weber confronted these issues was deeply informed by Nietzsche and it is there that we must begin.

> The material or theme of Weber's sociology is not to be found in 'interests,' or in 'ideas', or in 'images of the world', or above all in 'action'; its sole object is lebensfuhring (life-conduct). Upon this, where men reveal their particular human qualities (Menschentum), everything turns. (1988: 45)

Suppose we begin with this passage in which Wilhelm Hennis locates the heart of Weber's ethical and methodological preoccupations. The emphasis on conduct nicely complements Sherry Ortner's observation that earlier tendencies to interpret Weber within a "idealist vs materialist" orientation have in recent years been partially eclipsed by a growing emphasis on "practice" and the question of "where 'the system' comes from--how it is produced and reproduced, and how it may be changed in the past or be changed in the future" (1984: 146). Ortner notes that one significant effect of this new

emphasis was the development of analysis which combined Marx and Weber around the themes they shared in common rather than presenting them in opposition. Despite vast differences in style and substance, what each shared was an interest in understanding the processes by which subjective, ethically-oriented relations between individuals were transformed by capitalism into something which appeared objectively given. Marx saw how this had happened between workers and capitalists but then resolved the conflict, at least in theory, through a historical telos which posited revolution as the final resolution of social contradictions. But Weber believed Nietzsche had accurately spelled out the more radical meaning and implications of these developments.[2]

Let us start with the epistemological implications, though we shall see that they are closely related to Weber's anthropology. His work represents the continual thinking through of a dilemma which remains central to the study of political culture. Profoundly aware of the elements of freedom and contingency in human experience, Weber continually challenged the precision of his analysis while seeking to account analytically for the diversity of historical outcomes. He did this, of course, through the use of ideal types, but in a fashion in which the influence of Nietzsche is apparent.

Weber's methodological essays, particularly "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy," need to be read against the intellectual backdrop of Nietzsche's The Genealogy of Morals for Weber's vision of social science was

deeply indebted to the critique of Western reason and science put forward in that earlier work. While Nietzsche is often viewed as the prophet of irrationality and nihilism, it is important to remember that his own purpose was to reveal the fundamental nihilism of modern modes of scientific inquiry. That element of nihilism was in a sense both the good news and the bad news. Science was essential in revealing the elements of human construction and fabrication inside all efforts to establish universal truth claims. This was most obvious in his discussions of religion, but Nietzsche insisted that the same scientific resources be trained on other modern truth claims, including the nationalistic and anti-semitic ideologies of his own time.

There was a darker side to the scientific "will to truth," however. Nietzsche wrote that he was willing to grant it "...all power...so long as it is honest." But rather than being content to reveal the underside of claims to truth, in order that we might become more reflective about the worlds we construct, science wanted to create new universal truths to replace the ones which it had previously discredited. Science, according to Nietzsche, would like to claim a capacity to sustain objective truths and provide values but instead could only help us reflect upon their contingency and limitations. That was the sense in which science was fundamentally nihilistic and hence dangerous to Nietzsche. It could give depth and intellectual force to our value judgments, but could not tell us what to think. Like Nietzschean genealogy, science could force us to confront the contradictions in our values by revealing

their fallacies. But there was "no science without presuppositions" and hence Nietzsche's disdain for those

> ...coquettish bedbugs with their insatiable ambition to smell out the infinite, until at last the infinite smells of bedbugs....these weary and played out people who wrap themselves in wisdom and look objective. (1967: 159)

Weber's own acceptance of the limits of modern rationalism to provide for its own legitimacy is evident in his discussion in "Science as a Vocation". Legitimacy, he argued, is grounded in a feeling of personal and/or communal meaning, rather than a precise knowledge of how the world operates. Traditional sources of authority, such as religion, have not so much attempted to explain how the world works, but rather sought to uncover what it means. And this was a question which Weber believed was not answerable by science.

> Science presupposes that what is yielded by scientific work is important in the sense that it is worth being known. In this, obviously, are contained all our problems. For this presupposition cannot be proven by scientific means. It can only be interpreted with reference to its ultimate meaning, which we accept according to our ultimate position towards life...and still less can it be proved that the existence of the world that these sciences describe is worthwhile, that it has any meaning, or that it makes any sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for the answers to such questions. (1946: 143)

This was how Weber understood Nietzsche's admonition that science be "hard with its own heart." It entailed the recognition that it was our fate to live in an age when we were forced to confront that we are the creators of meaning, it is not given to us by God, history, nature or any other external power. Nor could

we rely on the power of modern science and reason to resolve the matter; Weber's account of the limits of weakness echoed Nietzsche's earlier view:

> Let us be on guard against the dangerous old conceptual fiction that posited a "pure, will-less, timeless, knowing subject"; let us guard against the snares of such contradictory subjects as "pure reason," "absolute spirituality," "knowledge in itself": these always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which alone seeing becomes seeing something, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is only a perspective seeing, only a perspective "knowing." (1967: 119, underlined words italicized in original.)

Once the cultural sciences are understood in this fashion, the purpose of ideal types is clearer. They reflect a construction of history and present reality according to the principles and interests of the analyst. In this sense Weber rejected the notion of scholarly objectivity as it is often understood. The facts must discipline us, but there will always be processes of selection and judgment which would preclude absolute agreement on the meaning of terms and concepts. We must consider carefully, therefore, what Weber meant in calling for clear sociological concepts. Taking a very different view from modern logical positivism regarding what constituted precision, Weber stressed the need for concepts which were as culturally precise and rooted in the meaning of words and ideas in practice as possible. The cultural sciences were among those "to which eternal youth is granted...(as) the eternally onward flowing stream of culture perpetually brings new problems" (1949). Ideal types were transient, destined to be replaced by different--Weber would

not say definitively whether better or worse--constructs reflecting changing questions and cultural interests:

> As soon as the elimination of ambiguity is sought for, the concept becomes an abstract ideal type and reveals itself therewith as a theoretical and hence one-sided viewpoint which illuminates the aspect of reality with which it can be related....This process shows that in the cultural sciences concept construction depends on the setting of the problem and the latter varies with the content of the culture itself. (1949: 104-5)

Those who have been sensitive to this aspect of Weber, most notably Leo Strauss, sometimes conclude that it introduces an element of ethical decisionism which amounts to a form of nihilism or relativism (Strauss 1954). Weber was clearly not of the opinion that one argument was as good as another. But every time and place was limited by that historical setting and the cultural questions set forth. There were no timeless, trans-historical philosophic questions. There was no ultimate standard or realm of truth that could be invoked to resolve the matter. There was only the force of arguments, the quality of facts they could marshall, and the cultural values they could express as well as the context of power relations within which they were embedded. He argued for the continual need to update our "ideal types" through rigorous interaction between historical contexts and theoretical frameworks. Weber rejected:

> ...the idea that the goal of the cultural sciences, even their remote goal, is to construct a closed system of concepts in which reality will be confined according to a definitive order...and from which it can be

> deduced. The course of unforseeable events is transformed endlessly, stretching to eternity. The cultural problems that move men are constantly posed anew and from other aspects....The principles of the cultural sciences will keep changing in a future without limits as long as the sclerosis of life and spirit do not disaccustom humanity to an inexhaustible life. A system of the cultural sciences, even if confined to an area which is systematic and objectively valid for questions and the domains which these questions are called upon to treat will be nonsense in itself. An attempt of this type could only reassemble pell-mell the multiple, specific, heterogeneous, disparate points of view under which reality is presented to us each time as culture. (1949: 84)

This is where epistemology meets anthropology and we see why Weber believed that any serious social science must come to terms with Nietzsche. For the concern with methodology was directly related to Weber's effort to preserve the capacity to construct a modern sense of character--a capacity to live in this age. His essays on the subject were animated by what he took to be a fundamental cultural predicament--how to make sense of structures and institutions which were continually asserting their power over the individual and closing off the possibilities for meaning. How could we endure the onslaught of the myriad forms of modernity and still salvage or construct a coherent personality? Not a personality without contradictions, but one capable of taking their full measure with honesty. This is explicit in "Politics as a Vocation." when he speaks of the need for a sense of "proportion," that ability to "let reality work upon one with inner concentration and firmness" (1946: 116). This echoes Nietzsche's admonition that we be "hard with our own heart" in the pursuit of knowledge, and "mistrust our first impressions, they are almost always too good." Nietzsche believed that science had a potential to

degrade us. In putting "dialectics in place of instinct," we became master and slave within an endless series of mechanical processes which are supposed to reassure us but instead leave us "slipping faster and faster away from the center into a penetrating sense of nothingness" (1967: 155).

It is this problem of "the disenchantment of the world", and not causal arguments about the origins of capitalism which animated Weber's study of the Protestant Ethic. The study is often interpreted as a hypothesis about the process of rationalization the truth or error of which can be investigated. But Weber didn't intend it as an hypothesis--it was an ideal type against which specific histories might be clarified. His goal was to better understand the cultural significance of capitalism and other forms of rationalization. What interested him was not capitalism per se, but rather the ethical impulses which motivated, in various ways, those who held particular beliefs. He was especially interested in the idea of a "calling" and the imperative it fixed on "lebensfuhrung," the "conduct of life" according to an idea of rationality. He was not trying to generalize about the ethical basis of capitalism, or uncover a generalizable and universal process of rationalization. Instead, he examined a particular historical instance of a "habitus"-- a style of regulating the various "life orders"--family, economic life, social community.

Weber did not believe that religions were unchanging in their essence or their historical impact; Protestantism and the values it engendered emerged at a particular historical time and was related to both religious and economic

factors. As noted earlier, Weber wasn't interested in establishing the primacy of culture. More important for Weber was the gap between intention and outcome. Protestants had not set out to develop an advanced capitalist order; they were looking for a sign of their chosenness before God. This is significant because while cultural and economic systems can converge to create a particular result, they can as easily diverge at future points, creating new cultural problems in their wake. The aim of social science for Weber was, in Merleau-Ponty's words, "...to recover the fundamental choices of the past" (1955: 24). It was never a question of these choices having autonomy from their context; the goal of inquiry was to uncover the full human meaning and drama of the confrontation. Weber wrote that there was no more moving spectre then when an individual, after taking the full measure of his/her situation says, with Luther, "Here I stand, I can do no other."

This brings us back to the question of menschentum which the citation from Hennis earlier set forth, and brings Weber's own ethical preoccupations into clearer view. While thoroughly cognizant of the influence of institutions and structures, Weber's real interest was to glean their cultural significance. What kind of individual and community identities emerged within particular constellations of institutions, ethic, and practice? What impact did the multiple processes at work within institutions have on political leadership and participation? What kind of individuals were privileged and what did this mean for other kinds of life, other ethical orientations?

Weber sought, thereby, to convey the cultural predicament posed by modernity at the level of its meaning for individuals. Lawrence Scaff has put it another way--"what is the fate of our times?" But what could be posed in deeply philosophical terms needed to be answered within the realm of specific life orders and practices. The questions might also be--how did we become who we are? and what possibilities exist for the future? When understood in this fashion, an ethic was not a collection of abstract values which had an "elective affinity" with particular institutions, and a political culture was not simply a series of attitudes toward the state or a set of roles which emerged. Weber's "cultural sciences" focused on conflicts over "ultimate values" in a world of force, contingency, history, and the lack of an ultimate ground for truth. It amounted to a battle among "gods" with profound cultural importance (1946: 142-150). In an age when traditional sources of legitimacy had come under challenge from modern institutions, the task of creating a legitimate political order was more complex. It was precisely because cultural values were not autonomous that they were continually reconsidered in the light of new experiences which posed new problems. By emphasizing the contexts and processes in which ethical and cultural dilemmas were constructed, Weber avoided getting bogged down in questions of the relative autonomy of one or another factor. This kind of analysis can also clarify the ultimate values and cultural problems which motivate our own inquiry, an issues I shall return to in Chapter 8.

Political Science and Political Culture: Approaches and Debates

Cultural Analysis and Political Legitimacy

While an awareness of the connection between politics and culture had long been an important question in the tradition of political theory--most notably in the writings of Aristotle, Machiavelli, Rousseau and Tocqueville--it was Gabriel Almond's seminal 1956 article "Comparative Political Systems" which located "political culture" as a fundamental element within emerging forms of analysis that were remaking the field of comparative politics. If we wish to understand why political culture became the focus of such attention, it is necessary to examine more closely the problems in political life to which it was a response. What did practitioners of this new approach hope to accomplish and why did they believe that previous approaches were inadequate? It will be my argument that the weaknesses that emerged from this approach to political culture were closely related to the mode of theorizing it entailed and the purposes it was intended to serve. This is what we would expect if the Weberian assumptions I have set forth have merit. Systems theory has been convincingly critiqued and this is not intended to be simply another nail in the coffin. Instead I want to look more carefully at the formation of this approach to culture so that we might better understand the questions and problems, fundamentally cultural and political, which analysis of political

culture seemed to answer. This is necessary in order to offer a fuller reply to the question raised in chapter 1, What is "political culture"?

The important proponents of comparative politics in the 1950s and 60s have often been accused of attempting to develop value-free forms of scientific analysis. Part of the blame for this view can be attributed to the writers themselves. Gabriel Almond, David Easton, Seymour Martin Lipset, and others often seemed to make strong claims for the objectivity of their analysis. But it does not require much digging to find fundamental moral commitments close to the surface of their work; they are expressed quite clearly and reflect each analyst's personal response to Weber's realization that social science begins with interpretive choices reflecting the "ultimate values" of each analyst who undertakes a particular study. In order to understand some of the values and preoccupations which informed the literature on political culture in the 1950s and early 1960s, it is useful to step back briefly into the 19th century. In the process we shall see that the analysts who developed that literature clearly understood the problem of legitimacy confronting modern social theory as explained by Weber, but believed a less agonistic resolution was still possible.

The impact of industrial capitalism was the central concern of 19th century European social theory. The analysis provided by theorists as diverse as Pareto, Sorel, Nietzsche, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber shared a common thread: a belief in the weakness of liberal political institutions and their underlying cultural ideals to address the problems confronting these societies.

This was particularly true of Durkheim. He believed that the philosophical moorings of liberalism--especially the emphasis on an ontology of the individual in a world of other individuals led to a breakdown of social solidarity. The positing of man prior to society had no appeal to Durkheim:

> From a physical point of view, a man is nothing more that a system of cells....he differs only in degree from animals. Yet society conceives him as invested with a character,,the powers which are thus conferred, though purely ideal, act as though they were real. (1915: 259)

Durkheim's approach to this problem, and his explicit rejection of the approach taken by Marx, are what made him appealing to Talcott Parsons in building a theory of social action. The idea that meaning was a socially created product was, Parsons argued, impossible for utilitarians to understand:

> The general effect of the individualistic elements of the European cultural tradition...has been to emphasize the discreteness of the different individuals who make up a society particularly with regard to their ends. The result has been to inhibit the elaboration of certain of the most important possibilities of the theory of action, those having to do with the integration of ends in systems, especially those having a plurality of actors. (1937: 447)

Parsons also borrowed heavily from Durkheim's ideas about religion to establish the need for a civil religion, but something was missing. Durkheim's system did not provide an objective basis for affirming one set of values over another; at heart, it was relativistic, because Durkheim was concerned mainly with solidarity. He did no make any effort to push the discussion of values beyond the realm of the subjective preferences of particular communities, and

hence could not, in Parsons' view, satisfactorily resolve the problem of legitimacy confronting modern societies and institutions. Parsons wanted to construct an non-relativistic basis upon which the legitimacy of modern capitalistic democratic political orders could be objectively constructed; simply to base it on ascriptive attachment would not be adequate. Weber's analysis of legal-rational authority, embodied by modern bureaucracy, offered a solution to Parsons' dilemma. This interpretation was heavily influenced by Parsons' reading of the analysis of the Protestant Ethic. Seeking a sign of their chosenness, the believer sought to order the world according to standards of rationality which transcend particular subjective ends and reflected a disciplined pursuit of "ultimate values." This was done by ordering the world in accordance, as closely as could be determined, with the will of God rather than one's own desires. The exact design of God's plan was not available; what was important was the capacity to pursue it as diligently and selflessly as possible. By upholding standards which transcended individual ends, a synthesis of normative and empirical goals was possible.[3]

Parsons recognized that this interpretation was not held by Weber himself, who consistently denied the capacity of the social sciences to uncover objective laws of social reality analogous to the natural sciences. Ideal types provided a method for structuring facts--but the issue of legitimacy was another matter. While we might subordinate our values to the discipline of hard facts, the meaning created was still our own. As I previously noted in

some detail, Weber's encounter with Nietzsche left him convinced that science could not provide for its own legitimacy, and instead tended to continually undermine it:

> The objective validity of all empirical knowledge rests exclusively upon the ordering of the given reality according to categories which are subjective. (Weber 1946: 138)

The relativistic tone in Weber's analysis deeply troubled Parsons as he sought a mode of social science which could provide legitimacy to modern American political institutions. The rationalizing, other-worldly orientation of the Protestant Ethic provided exactly that.

Parsons' appropriation of Weber in this fashion provided an important part of the foundation the basis for much of the structural-functionalist systems theory developed by Almond and others. The development of "pattern variables" as categories for analyzing tradition and modernity, as well as the analysis of legitimacy and authority, were direct products of Parsons' application of Weber's analysis of the Protestant Ethic, and the process of rationalization reflected in modern bureaucracy and economic organization.

The moral preoccupations which guided Parsons' reading of Weber were not unique. In the wake of World War II the concerns that had long haunted European social theory transformed the agenda of American social scientists as well. Having watched Europe be torn apart by ideological conflict, many North America scholars hoped that social science might provide

guidance in preserving social coherence and national legitimacy. Parsons' pursuit of a normatively committed practice which escaped the fact-value dichotomy was eagerly taken up by those who sought to reconstitute the practice of political science. Gabriel Almond's reference to himself as a "laborer in the vineyard of the Lord" provided a nice echo to Parsons' affinity for the Protestant ethic (1956: 391). These theorists believed their task was not simply to analyze; more importantly, it was necessary to create and sustain the legitimacy of American political institutions by providing a rational basis for allegiance to them.

In the field of comparative politics, the challenge confronting social science was understood in particularly fundamental terms; with the United States engaged in a world-wide competition for influence in the "developing world," comparativists, it was argued, must move beyond the particularism of earlier research and construct more generalized theories of order and stability. Previous research was viewed as either too narrowly institutional, or based on weak generalizations about "national character." Institutional and historical analysis tended to emphasize differences and make each context appear sui generis. Parsons' theory and research provided a rich foundation for the more systematic and generalizable approach to research. The research which these political and cultural preoccupations informed engendered in turn studies which carried clear policy recommendations. Framing the problems which confronted United States foreign policy in the "developing world" in specific

ways, they sought to offer policy-relevant analyses which also provided legitimacy for a world view that would ensure stability and order after the ideological chaos of previous decades.[4]

Looking at the literature of the period in even a cursory fashion, these cultural concerns are not difficult to see. Almond and Verba's The Civic Culture, or Seymour Martin Lipset's Political Man can be read as works of moral and cultural education. The importance of the two-party system, carefully regulated participation and limits on the capacity of the "unsocialized" to enter the political arena, and an aversion to "ideological" politics are recounted in a manner which very clearly reflects and celebrates the stability and freedom attributed to the American political system, while at the same time examining its reproducibility in other political contexts.

The central metaphor upon which much of this analysis was built was the notion of "system. This reflected another fundamental way in which Parsons departed from Weber. Whereas Weber had raised serious questions about the viability of system as a scientific category, Parsons entire theoretical project relied upon the opposite assumption. The most influential early effort to apply Parson's mode of system theory was put forward by David Easton. His approach to system was particularly influenced by the natural sciences and strove to construct a framework which could eventually yield a general theory

of politics:

> The social sciences have been compelled to face up to the problem of locating stable units of analysis which might possibly play the role in social science research that the particles of matter do in the physical sciences. (1965: 13)

The goal of this theory was to find a level of analysis which most accurately captured the essence of political life. System did this, Easton argued, because it provided a level of generalization which avoided the pitfalls of traditional categorizing. Ideology, governmental structure, constitutions, and other traditional foci of analysis needed to be transformed by a more all-encompassing reference point. Easton defined politics as "the study of how authoritative decisions are made and executed for a society." The political system was characterized by its ability to turn inputs into outputs in a manner which ensured its preservation and growth. The conception of a self-regulating system was illustrated with analogies from biology and economics; the system tended, generally, towards equilibrium, though not stasis. Demands on the system were constant and required continual processing and adjustment by those who managed it.

While Easton's work was frequently cited in the literature of this period, the level of abstraction involved meant that serious adaptions were necessary in applying it to the political cultural problems presented by the real world. This is quite evident in the notion of system developed by Almond. The Cold War animus of his analysis is explicit: "We can no longer view political crisis

in France with detached curiosity or view countries such as Indochina or Indonesia as interesting political pathologies." He proceeded by attempting to develop a classification scheme for the world's political systems. Easton's system was preferable to a "process" orientation because it implied a "totality of relevant units," and allowed for a quantitative approach to "patterned action." Almond put aside serious consideration of specific officials or institutions or their historical development, and concentrated on political "roles." This allowed him to study areas such as political culture and socialization and, he argued, move further inside the real world of political action within systems than had been possible in traditional studies of the formal institutions of government. With the help of emerging quantitative technologies, attitudes and values could be empirically measured and then analyzed systematically.

The study of political culture sought to find "linkages" which "reduce the gap between macro and micro analysis." Almond elaborated his idea more fully in 1960, in collaboration with James Coleman and other comparativists. The result was the influential study The Politics of the Developing Areas. Political culture was "the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among the members of a political system. It is the subjective realm which underlies and gives meaning to political action." This emphasis on how individuals related to the overall system placed heavy emphasis on the

matter of political socialization, trust, and competence, relying largely on survey data to establish the quantitative presence or absence of each attribute.

The ideal type which oriented this approach was what Almond termed the "civic culture." Using a variety of new survey techniques as well as approaches adapted from social psychology and anthropology, Almond and his associates pursued an ambitious agenda. Using this model of democratic stability, they carried out a series of national studies hoping to isolate the factors which were or were not conducive to the establishment of their cultural model. Almond described this civic culture as a sort of hybrid of two opposite tendencies.

> The Civic Culture argued that this rationality-activist model of democratic citizenship was one component of the civic culture, but not the sole one. Indeed, by itself this participant-rationalist model of citizenship could not logically sustain a stable democratic government. Only when combined in some sense with its opposites of passivity, trust, and deference to authority and competence was a viable, stable democracy possible. (1980: 16, italics in original)

While this cultural model was a clear product of Anglo-American political traditions, the most immediate policy goal of his approach was the development of a framework for understanding the process of modernization and the relationship between tradition and modernity in the "developing" world. It was not necessarily the case that any given nation was one or the other. By employing the pattern variables developed by Parsons, Almond could, he believed. begin to generalize the process of development and locate

different nations along a continuum which moved towards greater levels of political "secularization" and stability. Almond, and others engaged in similar research, sought to locate the political actors--"modernizing elites," middle classes, professional armies--who might most readily become the bearers of such a cultural project. When this formulation was criticized for its inability to account for change, Almond attempted to develop the model further in a 1966 collaboration with Powell which emphasized the need for a political system to expand its capacity for rationalization thorough increased differentiation and secularization.

Political Culture Critiqued

These efforts at greater dynamism did not save systems based developmentalist approaches from extensive criticism. Reinhard Bendix was the most prominent of those who criticized the overly simplistic tradition/modernity dichotomy employed in much of this analysis (1967). The work of historians such as Barrington Moore (1965) and Alexander Gerschenkron (1962) challenged the validity of the ideal types of Western European political and economic modernization, pointing instead towards great diversity in the pattern of state-society relations in Europe. Political theorists (Wolin 1969; MacIntyre 1971; Charles Taylor 1971) challenged the impact of behavioralism upon political analysis. Taylor argued that the effort to separate facts and values in social inquiry obscured the interpretive, and

inescapably normative, dimension of the social sciences. Other analysts criticized what they considered a bias towards "elitist" conceptions of democracy.[5] Various neo-Marxist critics argued that too much emphasis had been placed on cultural requisites, while the power of global economic structures, the historical development of capitalism, and the impact of colonialism were ignored or downplayed.[6]

Other political scientists, most notably Samuel Huntington, criticized the optimistic assumptions about modernization often present within this literature. Order and stability were still the concern but the prognosis was now much darker. A comparison of Karl Deutsch's 1961 article on mobilization with Huntington's 1965 piece on political decay clearly points up the change in attitude. Both stress the importance of institution building--in fact, Huntington rather overstates the extent to which this was missing from Deutsch and others. What is quite different is the tone. Deutsch's article implies a faith in the capacity of United States policy to address the issues, mirroring in many ways the optimism of the early Kennedy Administration Alliance for Progress and Peace Corps. By 1965 the Johnson Administration was in a much more pessimistic mood and so was Huntington. Nor was he alone--the tone of comparative politics in general turned both more cautious in terms of the promise of systematic theory as well as the cultural possibilities for democracy and development in the developing world.[7]

Some of these concerns were given especially concrete voice in an approach to cultural analysis which emerged among an influential group of Latin Americanists. These scholars, most notably Howard Wiarda, Glen Dealy, and Richard Morse, argued that the problem with the previous literature was its ethnocentricity. Latin America, and other non-Western societies possessed their own cultural traditions that needed to be understood on their own terms. Modernization theorists had wanted to read the development of democratic institutions into the expanding political influence of the newly "professional" military or the middle classes. Great hope was place on the institutions and sectors which seemed likely to support progressive liberal modernization. Wiarda argued that these optimistic expectations often left modernization theorists disillusioned by the persistence of authoritarian regimes and political projects reflecting the legacy of thomistic, organicist values deeply rooted in Catholic social theory. Wiarda further suggested that liberal biases led many North American scholars to subsequently despair of the region's unstable and even pathological political tendencies (1983: 3-25).[8]

Wiarda, Morse, and Dealy argued that rather than projecting our own cultural expectations into areas with very different histories, social science ought instead to take these regions on their own cultural and historical terms. Once this was done, they argued, it was possible to locate attitudes about citizenship, political leadership, the role of the individual, and the purposes of the state fundamentally different from those prominent in more "liberal"

societies. Wiarda criticized modernization theory for often deploying metaphors of pathology and dysfunction to describe regions and countries whose political life disappointed the expectations of North American social scientists.

A different version of this argument about corporatism was made by other Latin Americanists who were critical of modernization theory. Alfred Stepan (1978), Phillippe Schmitter (1973), and Guillermo O'Donnell (1978) each emphasized the importance of corporatistic political structures but criticized what they viewed as the overly cultural dimension of Wiarda's analysis. From this perspective, corporatist political projects reflected the policy needs of state actors, not a more generalized cultural predisposition towards authoritarian political structures.

While differing in their view of corporatism, a theme which underlay most of these criticisms of the political culture literature was the failure to develop more rigorous and thorough analysis of the state as a political actor. Alfred Stepan argued that this reflected a general liberal tendency to see the state as secondary, a reflection of plural social interests, and not as an actor in its own right (1978). Stepan's argument was reinforced by other analysts (Evans 1979; Skojpol 1979; Nordlinger 1979); this work gradually coalesced into an extensive literature on the "relative autonomy of the state."[9] Taking inspiration from Weber and expanding on earlier work by Gerschenkron, Moore and Huntington, these writers criticized the lack of attention to the state

in the work of both liberals and Marxists. Returning to Weber's historical sociology in order to challenge the appropriation of his methodological discussions, they emphasized the constitutive power of the state in shaping political structures, identities, and outcomes. Earlier "society-centered" approaches represented, they argued, a form of cultural determinism which was inadequate to explain the power of the state. Theda Skojpol wrote:

> "political development" (itself found to be an overly evolutionist conception) ended up having more to do with concrete international and domestic struggles over state building than with any inherent logic of socio-economic "differentiation." (1985: 5)

In this way, the analysts who emphasized the role of the state built upon and deepened arguments that previous approaches to political culture had been ahistorical, culturally biased, overly abstract, and reductionistic with regard to their assumptions and conclusions.

Assessing the Debates

As I have noted, the rather polemical tone which has often surrounded discussion of political culture has tended to suggest more theoretical dissonance than has often actually been present. The original literature did offer a more rigorous frame of reference than the national character studies to which they were a response. The emphasis on "culture" encouraged more inter-disciplinary analysis, and moved the focus beyond an over emphasis on institutional or constitutional structures. At the same time, the pervasive

influence of a "systems" approach produced a continual tendency towards analysis that was too ahistorical and abstract, while over reliance on quantitative studies often generated superficiality in making cross-cultural comparisons. The concept of culture was often too focused on norms and values as systems without adequate attention to how change occurs. It would be an overstatement to say that these issues were never raised; but, in placing so much emphasis on stability and working with an overly linear conception of economic development, this approach clearly had problems explaining events in specific settings. The centrality of the concept of "development" brought too much baggage from the language of developmental psychology. Moreover, the language of political dysfunction and pathology so often employed in the modernization literature did not provide easy access to how different political cultures were understood from the inside.

The scholars who argued for the existence of a specifically Latin American political tradition provided an important contribution. They effectively pointed up the ideological bias which has often distorted North American social science and obscured the particular features, and strengths, of Latin American political culture and institutions. The literature provided, therefore, important caveats against ethnocentrism and the uncritical application of frames of reference derived from different historical experience. Critics of this approach often dismiss it as a "culturalist" and reductionistic effort to construct a particularly Latin American heritage of authoritarianism,

corporatism, and paternalism which can then explain the persistence of those characteristics in present day Latin America. In the hands of less knowledgeable or sophisticated students of the region, research on Latin America's political tradition has at times been crudely used in such a fashion.[10] These dangers not withstanding, this research has provided a useful corrective to the tendency of some dependency analysis to assign overiding importance to the influence of external economic actors and forces. When the charge of cultural reductionism is set forth as a blanket generalization for this approach, it is surely overdrawn. Wiarda argued that the purpose of this research was not to attribute a single and overiding character to Latin American political life. The original model inherited from Medieval Spain--"corporatist, patrimonialist, and organic-statist"--is, he argues, being transformed by social and economic forces, including economic dependency which challenge the potential for social harmony (1982). The real question is, What is the legacy of these principles and what influence do they continue to have in the way new political problems are considered? If the dependency analysts were right to argue that capitalism emerged in Latin America under very different circumstances than it did in Europe, it is surely equally valid to inquire into the political traditions which shaped the emergence of state institutions in the region.

The drawback of this approach is that in putting so much emphasis on a particular tradition of authority and hierarchy, there is not always sufficient

attention paid to the ongoing significance of outside influences. The Enlightenment, the American Revolution, Protestantism, the Cold War, and the decline of the Cold War are all events which have had a significant impact on the development of Guatemalan, and Latin American, political culture in ways which we shall explore. While an authoritarian tradition no doubt exists, so do others. And they have mattered, even when they have lost the political battles, because they remain in the political imagination as the winners try to govern the losers. Moreover, the institutions and culture of "modernity"--capitalism, industrialization, ideological conflict, nationalism and the nation-state, communications technology--have all left their particular imprint upon Latin American societies and "tradition." Again, Wiarda and others have acknowledged these influences and tensions, but more thorough work remains to be done with regard to the ongoing relationship between the old and the new.

Some of these limitations are addressed in the work of those scholars who have sought to "bring the state back in". While Gabriel Almond has argued that this literature idealizes the state and adds nothing substantive to work previously done (1988), research on the state provided very important correctives to the tendency of both liberal and Marxist analysis to subordinate the state to social or economic forces. Moreover, heightened attention to the role of the state has not meant that society has been ignored. In fact, many of these writers offer insightful discussion of political culture in explaining

differing degrees of state capacity. Important examples of this include Merilee Grindle's analysis of the changing development ideologies at work within state policy in Brazil and Mexico (1986), and Alfred Stepan's work on the Peruvian and Brazilian militaries (1973).

The concept of political culture did not, therefore, disappear completely from state-centered analysis. The political culture of the state itself forms a crucial element of the research agenda put forth by the editors of the influential collection Bringing the State Back In. And some of the more theoretically self-conscious of these scholars have avoided the traps that come from abstract dichotomies like state-society. Peter Evans made this point well:

> Debates over relative autonomy and the capacity of the state to intervene in the process of accumulation are too often carried out in terms of categorical theoretical pronouncements rather than focusing on an analysis of historical variation. (1985: 70)

In studying the Guatemalan military's counterinsurgency as a political project I will assume the "relative autonomy" of the state and try to build on the literature which has examined state "capacity." State-centered analysis is useful in the Guatemalan context because it helps us conceptualize the military as an institution with its own agenda as the dominant actor within the Guatemalan state. The emphasis on studying what Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skojpol term "the formation of social knowledge" requires combining the research on political traditions with contemporary investigations which examine how the state makes use of "trans-nationally available economic

policy knowledge" (1985: 357-360). The ways in which policy elites receive and apply new economic or social science methods and doctrines, as well as more general political ideas such as democracy or human rights, is a very significant element of political culture and will be discussed from a variety of angles in Guatemala.

At the same time, state-centered research has tended to focus mostly on the state's role in the formation of political cultures. By taking rich inspiration from Weber's historical studies and by drawing out the limitations of Parsons' application of Weberian analysis, this recent research provides important correctives to the cross-historical systematizing and incautious use of ideal types often present in the early modernization literature. Almond's charge that the "statists" possess a "Hegelian" conception of the state is well off the mark, but questions remain nonetheless about how states perform some of the accomplishments attributed to them by these scholars. Despite their well-developed studies of the "capacities" of various states, state-centered analysts have often left many unanswered questions with regard to how a state constructs and maintains legitimacy as well as how other cultural forces confront it on their own terms. If Anderson's notion of nations as "imagined communities" is valid, then they must be understood as cultural constructions and research must examine the relationship between the state and the society it claims to represent. What factors are most important in the success or failure of a particular state's efforts to construct a particular vision of national

community? What is the influence of political symbolism on the capacity of the state? How are we to think about other forms of social knowledge: religious, ethnic, political (such as experiences of mobilization or repression)--and how they intersect with the action of the state?

Those "statists" who approach these questions most fully have often built upon the concept of hegemony developed by Antonio Gramsci. David Laitin has used Gramsci's concept to explain how the British were able to minimize the impact of cultural cleavages in Nigeria and "foster social control at low cost," by building on cultural resonances between colonial and Yoruba symbolic orders (in Evans, et al. 1985: 285-316). While this approach to cultural analysis is a clear improvement over previous functionalist and Marxist approaches, its weaknesses and limitations have been persuasively critiqued by James Scott in his work on the "everyday forms of resistance" which he argues often characterized class relations. Scott argues that the concept of hegemony, the Gramscian assumption that "...class rule is effected not so much by sanctions as by the conquest and passive compliance of subordinate classes" (Scott 1986: 316), usually emphasizes outward behavior--where explicit compliance with hegemonic ideologies or cultural norms may seem apparent. In order to more fully appreciate the ways in which class relations are constructed culturally, Scott argues that it is necessary to observe

> ...at the level of beliefs and interpretations...the rich in Sedaka can usually insist on conforming public behavior and get it; they can neither

insist on private ideological conformity, nor do they need it. (1986: 322)[11]

A variation on the hegemony argument might suggest that people comply with dominant ideas because of the capacity of dominant classes to "naturalize," that is, make the order of things appear inevitable. But while systems of domination can often "define what is realistic and what is not" (Scott 1986: 322), certainly an important instrumental goal of the state, achieving legitimacy is a far more difficult matter.[12] Scott's work demonstrates the need to understand the relation between state and society in more dynamic and interactive terms. While his argument can in turn be criticized somewhat for its lack of attention to the way in which state policy influences the choices made by peasants, it nonetheless provides valuable lessons in how to study the political culture of daily life and practices.

Scott's approach also helps examine the Weberian questions of meaning, identity, and political action brought out earlier. Analysts of the state who invoke Weber too often focus only on the state's role in the formation of "social knowledge", without giving adequate attention to the fundamental cultural problem of meaning which underlies all political conflicts. Without adequate attention to the politics of meaning as such, and not simply the politics of the state, these studies become divorced from the world of political actors and their aspirations. For if Weber helps us understand more profoundly the constitutive powers of the modern state, he also provides powerful ways to

analyze the relationship between structures of political order and the formation of political identities.

The tendency of some state-centered analysis to define itself too polemically points up the danger I discussed in Chapter 1 with regard to the codification of distinct "approaches". It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that two of the most insightful works on the relationship between state and society predate the development of a full blown "statist" approach. I refer to the seminal works of Alfred Stepan (1978) and Guillermo O'Donnell (1978). The issues of state power and political identity are examined brilliantly in O'Donnell's work on bureaucratic-authoritarianism. The political and economic disruption engendered in part by three decades of populist political projects created a situation which the militaries of several countries believed could no longer be controlled by civilian politicians. While some dependency approaches argued that economic considerations--inflation, structural bottlenecks in the process of industrialization, the needs of foreign capital--dictated the need for exclusion of popular groups, state centered analysts rightly called attention to the political considerations which inspired authoritarian projects. But when we attempt to understand the lack of public support which eventually undermined these policies, the problem is more complex than an emphasis institutional power might suggest.

O'Donnell has argued that the problem was legitimacy. Leaving aside the economic aspects of his argument, which have been effectively critiqued,

his work reflects a fundamental grasp of the essential cultural dilemma facing the state--and the fundamentally political nature of that dilemma. The bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes of the 1970s often extended the corporatist metaphors to the limit. In order to remove the cancer that was growing within the hearts and minds of the some of the population, radical surgery upon the body-politics was required:

> They ["subversives"] are the enemy of the nation, the "not-we" of the new nation that is to be constructed by the institutions of bureaucratic authoritarianism. (1978: 296)

Thus, the definition of who "we" is in these regimes has been contracted. At the same time, a claim of nationalism is being asserted; the interests of the nation have been linked to the maintenance of the regime. Yet in seeking a solution founded on exclusion, critical sources of legitimacy are lost. Citizenship and a sense of popular will have been replaced by an imposed definition, based on images of sickness and recovery, but the "consensual mediations" which could provide legitimacy are lost.

> Bureaucratic-authoritarianism cannot help but abandon the usual referrents of legitimation and present itself as the basis of its own power. It thus abandons the mediations which partially, yet effectively, transform the private life of civil society into the shared existence of collective identities through which social actors recognize themselves as members of the nation, as citizens, eventually as part of the "pueblo", and included in a state to which they normally grant the right to rule and coerce. (296)

O'Donnell's analysis illuminates both the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments about political culture put forward by Wiarda and others. "B-A" military regimes clearly share the corporatist ambitions as well as anxieties about order and conflict that have long preoccupied civilian and military leaders in the region. Yet at the same time, the military leaders of these exclusionary regimes were forced to deal partly in the symbols and discourse of democracy because the authoritarian tradition could not provide adequate resources to marshall and sustain continued support for such highly exclusionary projects. The complexity of authoritarianism, corporatism, democracy, and populism as symbols and as political realities is apparent. O'Donnell's work is among the best at giving important weight to the state as an actor while not losing sight of the cultural setting and the fragility it imparts to a regime's pursuit of legitimacy.[13] He provides an especially rich approach within which to ask questions about state power, legitimacy, and culture. O'Donnell also provides an effective position from which to analyze the "transitions to democracy" literature.

Stepan's 1978 work The State and Society remains one of the most theoretically and empirically substantive analysis of the subject. Stepan shared large parts of the critique of liberal and Marxist approaches set forth by Wiarda and others. But he then proceeded to a rigorous analysis of why corporatist projects emerge. While acknowledging their cultural precedence,

Stepan puts more emphasis on corporatist projects as "an elite response to crisis." He argued that political elites

> ...have found state-directed, nonconflictual corporatist modes of participation a useful political devise for their crisis response projects of guided development. All these elites have significant sectors that, for programmatic reasons rather than for traditional cultural reasons, want to use the power of the state to reconstruct civil society along new lines. (1978: 56)

These crises are usually characterized by increased political fragmentation and the emergence of new political actors and identities which are struggling for representation amidst the decline of older bases of legitimacy and/or political order. The relevance of this approach will be apparent when we consider more fully the Guatemalan military's understanding of its political project and the preoccupations which motivate it.

The most important feature which distinguishes Stepan and O'Donnell's work from some of the more recent state-centered analysis is their continual awareness of the dynamic and dialectical relationship between state and society. In the process they avoid getting trapped in the culture/structure dichotomy. Valuable approaches to political culture can also be gleaned from recent work on religion and politics as well as the emergence of new social movements.[14] This research points up that while "bringing the state back in" has been a very important development, it should not replace but instead sharpen our interest in and capacity for cultural analysis.

The same can be said of dependency analysis. As that approach became increasingly reductionistic, overgeneralized, and open to simplistic caricature by its opponents, its original insights were reclaimed by applying them to the study of specific contexts of dependency. Dependency analysis helped explain why models of economic and political development based on the experience of Western Europe often had little application to Latin America. But when framed as an account of the entire global capitalist economy, there wasn't any basis, other than the imperatives of the global system, to account for the diversity of outcomes in particular settings. More nuanced research on internal class relations, state policy, competing social forces, and cross-national factors has gradually put dependency in perspective: as a condition which needs itself to be examined rather than an overarching theory. While the earlier formulations of dependency theory have come in for extensive criticism, the fundamental reality of dependency and weakness within the global capitalist system continues to be a given in most research on Latin America. Efforts to prove dependency either right or wrong are thus somewhat akin to trying to prove or disprove Weber's analysis of the Protestant ethic as a theory of capitalist development. Both are much more fruitfully considered in the way Weber intended his work: as an ideal type to which specific cases could be compared.

Recent Political Culture Analysis: Renaissance or Retread?

There has been a resurgence of theoretical interest in the topic of political culture in recent years as reflected in work by Lucien Pye, Ronald Inglehart, Harry Eckstein, Samuel Huntington, and Aaron Wildavsky. Some of this work is largely an 1980s retread of the earlier literature and subject to similar critiques. Eckstein (1988) attempts to revive a modified version of systems theory, while Inglehart (1988; 1990) offers the kind of overly general cross-national comparisons, based largely on polling and survey data, which weakened earlier research on political culture. This is especially true in his discussion of polling data which measured the level of optimistic and pessimistic feelings present in a series of European countries. As the data shows that individual countries manifest consistently similar levels of feeling over time--the British tending towards optimism, for example, while Italians incline towards pessimism--Inglehart argues that we can empirically validate the claim implicit in political culture analysis that "cultural differences are relatively enduring." He then goes on to pursue the links between cultural orientations and economic achievement and to draw out the implications for democratic institutions. Put forth in this fashion, Inglehart's analysis effectively challenges some forms of rational-choice theory, but it still shares many of the problems in the civic culture literature of the past. In limiting himself to what can be established quantitatively, that it is valid to speak of salient attributes and attitudes which endure over time within specific cultures, his conclusions

about specific cultures are much too vague and superficial. Perhaps optimism and pessimism have particular cultural meanings which need to be located and unpacked. How are they understood culturally? What are their historical reference points? What forms of political identity do they inspire? How might they be open to change? Inglehart's analysis contributes little towards providing any but the most broad answers to such questions.

Among Latin Americanists, an emphasis on discussing political culture through principally quantitative means has generated similar problems. This is evident in Mitchell Seligson and John Booth's study of Mexican political culture (1984), and Susan Tiano's similar study of Argentina and Chile (1986). In seeking to refute overly simple characterizations of an "authoritarian" political culture these scholars uncover ample evidence of other more democratic orientations. This research effectively questions links between political culture and political structure that are assumed in the "civic culture" literature. More recent work by Seligson and Booth on Costa Rica and Nicaragua has extended this further and provides effective empirical challenge to the attempt by Inglehart and others to blame poverty and Catholicism for an undemocratic political culture. But Booth and Seligson's conclusions remain somewhat superficial because they simply replace one cultural label with another rather than leading the theoretical discussion of political culture towards more sophisticated conceptualization. The point may not be to decide whether Latin America is democratic or authoritarian so much as draw out the

various meanings within each political tradition.The essays in both volumes of Seligson and Booth's Political Participation in Latin America tend towards a similarly well-intentioned error: in trying to refute studies which emphasized the "irrational" political responses of the poor, the authors replace it with a form of rational choice theory without providing adequate cultural grounding to understand how conceptions of rationality are themselves culturally constructed. [15]

These are hard issues to address and impossible to answer definitively, but a helpful start is provided by a recent work by Aaron Wildavsky, Richard Ellis, and Michael Thompson (1990). Their approach is quite different from Inglehart; they express sharp criticisms of the civic culture literature and the structural-functionalism upon which it was founded. They also make several important theoretical points regarding the multiplicity of cultures within particular settings, and the sterility of culture/structure dichotomies. But their subsequent effort to locate and describe five distinct cultures or "ways of life: fatalism, hierarchy, egalitarianism, individualism, autonomy is much too abstract, and their analysis of the cultural construction of risk, in the context of responses to contemporary issues such as nuclear power, AIDS, and environmental problems, leans too heavily on psychological explanations without providing any way to account for the influence of historical experience.[16]

The recent work of Lucien Pye is also more nuanced and careful in its approach to cultural analysis. The opening chapter of his 1988 book on China, The Mandarin and the Cadre, reflects a sophisticated understanding of some of the methodological issues involved. In focusing solely on China, he avoids some of the extreme generalizing about a unified "Asian culture" in another recent work, Asian Power and Politics. He is quite right to argue that "the intangibles of politics cannot be ignored" and is acutely aware of the limitations of cross-national surveys. He also warns us helpfully of the danger of working with an either/or, rationalism vs irrationalism dichotomy. But Pye still defines culture too narrowly and in a manner which leans too heavily on psychological explanations. The culture he posits seems to exist prior to the state or concrete political experience: culture seems continually to structure experience without it being at all clear how experience, especially encounters with the outside world, influences culture. In this manner he repeats the tendency reflected in earlier work, dismissing the impact of colonialism and foreign domination on the political culture of various lands while attributing the prominence of those factors in the political rhetoric of Asian leaders to psychological pathologies. At these points, the adoption of a language borrowed from the realm of abnormal psychology reflects a crippling level of cultural bias.

The limits of much of this cultural analysis, as well as the theoretical stakes which are involved, are clearly highlighted in a 1988 debate in the

American Political Science Review between David Laitin and Aaron Wildavsky. Wildavsky argues that the goal of cultural theory is to predict behavior: "people's position in regard to their cultural context...can be used to make falsifiable predictions about many matters of interest" (596). He is critical of interest-based explanations which leave aside cultural factors which shape how conceptions of interest are constructed. Laitin agrees in part with Wildavsky's analysis, but is critical of the narrowness and lack of ethnographic rigor in Wildavsky's categories. He then goes on to argue that the question of interest is placed so far out of the picture that Wildavsky cannot account for diverse choices made among people of the same culture. While Wildavsky's rejoinder argues that Laitin assumes a disembodied pre-existence of interests existing apart from cultural interaction, Laitin never suggests interests are not culturally informed. He does reject Wildavsky's effort to establish generalized categories which can then be used to explain the behavior of particular groups who fit within that category in different settings.

The debate between Wildavsky and Laitin illustrates one of the central theoretical issues which has continued to divide analysts of culture. Wildavsky's categories offer cultural explanations for political outcomes and preferences and attempts to predict future behavior, while building value-based cultural categories which cut across specific geographic or historic settings. These intentions explain his deep antipathy towards what he terms Laitin's "nominalism" in discussing Yorubaland. Laitin attempts to analyze

culture as it is "constituted and reconstituted;" he argues that "good research in political culture should illustrate how debates get formed in other cultural arenas" (1988: 590-593).

I intend the approach to cultural analysis which I am elaborating in this work as a contribution towards the research agenda set forth by Laitin. I have argued that while analysis which emphasizes structural features--most notably the state and the international economy--is essential to good cultural analysis, it is also necessary to understand culture more fully as a human practice. The challenge confronting contemporary analysis is to develop approaches to the study of political culture capable of making sense of political dialogue and debate. Cultural analysis should be less concerned with either explaining culture by reference to other factors, or with using culture to explain political structures. Instead, we must go much further in asking, What are political cultures? How are they constituted? Where are their boundaries? and, How do they shift over time in response to the contingencies of the actual political world?" It is not a matter of abandoning other approaches; we must instead deepen their process of questioning.

Another Approach to Political Culture

Having surveyed the contributions of the previous literature, how ought we to proceed in rethinking the concept of political culture? The initial

formulation will be rather general and take much of its inspiration from two sources: recent discussions in anthropology about culture, ethnography, and interpretation, and interpretive political theory more generally as it has developed over the last couple of decades. But the resonances with the themes explored in Weber's work will be apparent. This formulation will offer a fuller answer to the question with which I began--what is political culture?

Culture as Practice

A culture is not simply a set of attributes, values, attitudes, rules or orientations which structure a world view embodied in ritual and institutions; knowing those things is a start, but what is more important is the ongoing processes and practice in which cultures continually reconstruct their sense of meaning as individuals and as communities. More than simply one side of a dialectic between state and society, base and superstructure, structure and culture or any of the other standard dichotomies, political culture is the site of conflicts over identity and meaning; it is the point where structure and meaning collide. It is the setting in which a whole series of questions the past has left to the present are interpreted and acted upon.

This is not a matter of ideas being autonomous or determinant in some fashion. As structures of meaning, cultures are continually moving and in flux as they adjust to the impact of events. Both the products of human action and the condition of the natural world must continually confront the limits of a

material world which, in Foucault's beautifully pungent words "is not the accomplice of our knowledge" (1971). How this gap between intention and consequence is understood is itself an important element of study within political culture. Marshall Sahlins put the matter nicely:

> In action, people put their concepts and categories into ostensive relation with the world. Such referential uses bring into play other determinations of the signs, besides their received sense, namely the actual world and the people concerned....Having its own properties, the world may then prove intractable. It can well defy the concepts that are indexed to it. Man's symbolic hubris becomes a great gamble played with the empirical realities. (1985: 149)

Daniel Levine's excellent work on religion stresses the dynamic quality of the relationship between religious reflection, experience, and institutional structure; by working within the categories of the actors rather than abstract, generalized categories, Levine analyzes the ongoing relationship between cultural meaning and political/structural change. When Levine refers to religion as an "existential" art, the same might be said of culture in general. Cultures cannot be conceived in abstraction from the world they seek to explain. They are a response to problems, ever changing, posed by structural, international, historical, or institutional factors; they represent the ground upon which political meanings and identities are constructed and renegotiated.

When discussions of political culture become cultural explanations for political structures, they become abstract and reductionistic. But analyses which stress the structural forces which constrain actors, or try to interpret a basis for behavior according to categories foreign to the cultural logic, leave

aside an important aspect of the human condition: the need to construct meaning, not simply achieve instrumental goals. Cultural analysis cannot replace approaches which examine institutional or external factors; but it can deepen our understanding of their human significance as part of the world cultures must struggle to interpret.[17]

Culture and Contestation

Cultures are not unified, internally coherent structures with regard to the meanings that practice creates; while traditions may be held in common to some extent because of historically common experience and geographic proximity, the precise cultural meaning of these traditions is the ground for political debate and discussion. The goal of study is not "what a people think," if this is construed as a monolithic set of ideas. The better questions are: How does a community think together?; Where are the agreements and where are the conflicts? or, when conflicts is less overt conflict, Where are the points of divergence? Cultural analysis can reveal historical patterns within particular traditions, as well as reveal the departures and transformations which emerge in response to structural change. Sahlins argues that

> In their practical projects and social arrangements, informed by the received meanings of persons and things, people submit these cultural categories to empirical risks. To the extent that the symbolic is thus pragmatic, the system is a synthesis in time of reproduction and variation....acting from different perspectives, and with different social powers of objectifying their respective interpretations, people come to

> different conclusions and societies work out different consensuses. (1985: ix-x)

If cultures are often not unified, then it is necessary to look at the way meanings are constructed differently within the same culture--as sources of authority or resistance, for example. This places importance on language as a vehicle of meaning and one of the sites where battles over meaning take place. How terms such as ethnicity, democracy, violence, religion, or politics are deployed is important. In any given setting the question "what is political culture?" must be continually re-asked. This points up the importance of James Scott's critique of hegemony and his insistence that the study of class relations must look at the everyday struggles which emerge over the meaning of cultural symbols and practices:

> The key symbols animating class relations in Sedaka--generosity, stinginess, arrogance, humility, help, assistance, wealth, and poverty--do not constitute a set of given rules or principles that actors simply follow. They are instead the normative raw material that is created, maintained, changed, and above all manipulated by daily human activity....the objective of a social analysis of class relations is not somehow to tease out a consensus of agreed upon rules but rather to understand how divergent constructions of those rules and their application are related to class interests. (1986: 308-309)

Scott's argument about class relations applies to the study of any social category--including ethnicity--which is the site of conflicts over power and cultural meaning.

Cultural analysis must be sensitive, therefore, to the ways categories and experience blend and shape cultural and political identities in ways which are not predetermined.[18] What is true for the community is also true for individuals, as multiple forms of identity can make claims on thought and action. While true in any society, this is especially important in Guatemala, given the complex mix of political, ethnic, and religious traditions.[19] Many approaches to political culture are too ahistorical and abstract in focusing on roles or attitudes while neglecting the setting and manner in which they are constructed.[20] Historical patterns do exist; this will be apparent in the historical discussion in chapter 4. But careful study often reveals that the specific content of those patterns is continually being reconstructed. How are political and cultural identities constituted? What combinations of material, institutional, and cultural factors are at work, and what is their relative weight? How do multiple sources of identity--based in religion, class, ethnicity, political and social consciousness, gender, education, patterns of consumption, or conceptions of political citizenship--interrelate? These are some of the question which cultural analysis must try to answer. The answers to these questions will never be definitive, but can help us continue to ask the right questions of the future.

<u>Culture, History, and Contingency</u>

A third assumption concerns history: a culture is located within a specific history which in turn asks certain questions of the present. New ways of seeing, based in part in new historical experience, never leave the past behind, but they do change, to varying degrees, the lens through which the past is viewed and thus adding to the myriad of previous filters through which we interpret reality. This means using the categories "tradition" and "modernity" with great care. They are only ideal types; where a specific culture actually resides is probably somewhere in between. Even when new forms of social and political identity are set forth they are never wholly new. We shall see this complex interplay at work time and again in Guatemala, particularly with regard to religion and ethnicity. Maya culture has been transformed by outside influences and yet never lost a location within its history--any more than has the United States. Marshall Sahlins has stated this well: "The more things stay the same the more they change".

If we are to understand the future possibilities we must understand how interpretations of history also shape cultural notions of the possible. Susan Bourque and Kay Warren's analysis of the cultural construction of democracy and terror in Peru points up brilliantly how possibilities for the future never exist in the abstract, but are carried in the minds of individuals and communities and the interpretations they develop of their situation (1988). Looking beyond simply how the media manufactures images, they examine

the psychological world, and its historical-structural context, from which collective conceptions of politics emerge in contemporary Peru. It is an exemplary study of the tense relationship between the inner and outer worlds of politics, and helps ask the Weberian questions: What challenge does the present offer? What questions does it seem to ask, and what are the structural and cultural elements which shape the framing of the problem and form the political culture within which conflicts over meaning, identity, and power are fought out? [21]

Taking a culture "on its own terms" may, therefore, need to be given a much more literal application than has often been the case. It has long been unfashionable to refer to "national character" studies, and I do not wish to rehabilitate the works themselves. But the concept might be open to new resonances in tune with the Weberian frame of reference I discussed earlier. Viewed in this way, national character might reflect not enduring traits, but the locus of an ongoing struggle which the past has shaped but not predetermined and which the present must confront.

Culture and Rationality

If cultures are oriented around issues of meaning and identity, economistic assumptions about rationality must be deployed very carefully. Weber is especially useful in keeping the focus on meaning in a world in which millions of daily decisions are made with various forms of cost-benefit

analysis. When we consider, in the following chapter for example, the survival strategies deployed by the Maya in the face of external domination, it is certainly possible to argue that a notion of prudence is at work. But these choices are still located within a cultural frame of reference and priorities we must untangle if we are to recover "fundamental choices." Otherwise all we know is what happened without knowing why. If we then ask why without taking the cultural context of the Maya seriously, we are likely to attribute specific actions to self interest without knowing what it means to say that. Why, for example, have millions of Guatemalans converted to Protestantism? Is it that they will make more money? Be safe from the army? Or, maybe Guatemalan reality has created an even stronger need to order one's life in a disciplined manner and seek some sign of chosenness. What is considered rational is always culturally constructed; it doesn't exist a priori.[22]

Culture and Otherness

Cultures are by their nature framed partly in relation to something outside themselves. Hence an understanding of the trans-cultural influences upon specific cultural identities must be taken into account. When it is argued, for example, that the Maya have managed to retain some control over the direction of cultural change and in so doing preserve a cultural basis for resistance to external domination, this does not mean the Guatemalan state has not partly succeeded in its effort to subordinate the Maya. Nor can we deny

the enormous impact upon Guatemala of the expansion of a global capitalist system. It is for this reason that we must employ the category "tradition" with such caution. Studying the changing historical forms of ethnic identity and relations is the way we examine this process. Cultural boundaries provide a rough set of parameters--with shifting borders--within and across which change occurs and external worlds are imagined, understood, and often resisted. Interpreting cultural responses necessitates understanding the shifting internal and external environments within which they are formed.

Taking a culture "on its own terms" must therefore be done with attention to what is pointed to outside that culture's apparent boundaries--sometimes cryptically, sometimes explicitly, sometimes from choice, sometimes from necessity. In Guatemala we shall see frequent examples which illustrate how practices do not simply reflect a closed value system but also mediate and provide an account of inter-ethnic social relations. There are also many ways in which American and global political culture has shaped the structure and terms of Guatemalan political culture. This does not argue for either convergence or dependency, but points instead to the complex blend of internal and external forces influencing each other within any given political culture.

Clifford Geertz has referred to this cross cultural dimension as the "moral imagination": the dialogue, sometimes explicit, sometimes not, which takes place between different cultural traditions at work in the same place. His

examination of a 19th century account of Balinese culture and ritual written by a Danish observer draws out the dialogic element of this process, the way an "other" is constructed from the projection of cultural fears and anxieties, which in turn reinforce particular cultural notions of civilization, order, and morality. Geertz suggests that culture is a process helpfully understood as a story about the world, a way of rendering experience, making sense of contrast, and reflecting, consciously or not, the presence of another. This practice has obvious instrumental goals, but should also be seen, in Weberian terms, to reveal fundamental ethical orientations which shape individual and group identity. Thinking about this process in the context of Guatemala also reminds us that conflicts over cultural meaning are usually about power and often shaped by political violence. Michael Taussig's work on political terror has clearly demonstrated how the application of violence and terror are not simply instrumental practices. Torture, disappearances, and other forms of political violence reveal Geertz' "moral imagination" at work implementing deeply embedded cultural assumptions about necessity and order while attempting to impose cultural identities on the victims of violence as a way of justifying its use.[23]

Culture and Social Science

If cultures are fragmented, porous, and continually beset by contingency, then we must be sensitive to the role of social science and writing

practices in the representation of what is described. If we wish to think about political culture in Guatemala, or anywhere else, it is important, finally, to recognize the force of our own constructions of other cultures, both in the past and present, and subject them, and the problematics they pose to greater scrutiny. Max Weber confronted this interpretive tension squarely in his discussion of ideal types. Weber argued that constructing an interpretation free of the presence of the analyst was impossible. Specific analytic "interests" would inevitably shape and guide the process by which questions were asked. In that sense, no culture we might describe exists solely on its own terms. In Weber's words:

> Order is brought into the chaos only on the condition that in every case only a part of concrete reality is interesting and significant to us because only it is related to the cultural values with which we approach reality. (1949: 78)

This interpretive dilemma is inevitable, but a reflective awareness of what is revealed and concealed by particular analytic choices and practices is also necessary. This will be especially evident in Chapter 3 when we examine the theoretical issues raised by the study of ethnicity in Guatemala. The ways in which indigenous communities have been studied and understood has changed over the past several decades. These changes have only partly to do with the quantity and/or quality of facts known; they are also the product of new ways of thinking and asking question about culture, ethnicity, and identity which have become prominent over that period. When the terms and

methods are changed, the reality shifts somewhat because it is partly mediated by language.[24] We may try as much as possible to work within the self-understandings of those being studied, but the questions we bring help shape the way we construct those self-understandings in important ways.[25]

One of the dangers in the use of ideal types was well explained by Barrington Moore in his classic work The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. While framed as a critique of behavioralism, his observation that arguments that posit cultural continuity always carry with them an assumption of social inertia can be carried over to many other forms of argument.

> Culture, or tradition--to use a less technical term--is not something that exists outside of or independently of individual human beings living together in society. Cultural values do not descend from heaven to influence the course of history. They are abstractions from an observer, based on the observation of certain similarities in the way groups of people behave either in different situations over time, or both. (1965: 486)

What still remains, though it is obscured by these analytic practices, are the myriad ways these "cultural systems" are endlessly challenged and reinvented in daily life. This points to the problem previously noted in Lucien Pye's discussion of political culture. A set of psychological dispositions can be a useful starting point, but we must still look at the complex world of practice through which the concrete meanings and boundaries of our analytic categories are continually revealed. In Moore's words once again:

> We cannot do without some conception of how people perceive the world and what they do or do not do about what they see. To detach

> this conception from the way people reach it, to take it out of its historical context and raise it to the status of an independent causal factor in its own right means that the supposedly impartial investigation succumbs to the justifications that ruling groups generally offer for their most brutal conduct. (1965: 486-7)

Conceptual precision must be conceived carefully, for in many political conflicts the meaning of words, and histories, as well as questions regarding whose words will count for what, are on the line.[26] This is quite evident, for example, in any discussion of religion; what is partly at stake is the meaning of words like religion, science, the popular, and church. The theologian can perhaps take strict views of these matters--but the social scientist, as Weber so clearly realized, must try to understand the diversity of meanings at work and the world views they set in motion in the political world. The art is in giving each its proper weight rather than forcing arbitrary closure. When we seek to find new terms and meanings to better explain social structures, we must also bring forth analysis which reflects the points of grey.

The Primacy of Interpretation

In Chapter 1, I noted that academic debates continually generate new labels, and one of the most popular current catch-all containers is "post-modern." My understanding of modernity will receive greater attention in Chapter 3 and then again in Chapter 8. But the principle reason I began with Weber was because his work illustrates so well the ways in which

contemporary debates over epistemology, positivism, and interpretation are not new. It is for that reason also that the term "post-modern" seems to me too limited; deep conflicts have long existed within the heart of modernism itself. Parson's interpretation of Weber was one attempt to resolve the matter, but we have seen why that effort proved unsatisfactory for many. Weber's analysis of the interpretive tensions and ambiguity in the social sciences has also been mirrored in the "interpretive turn" which has emerged in recent years in literary theory, anthropology, history and political philosophy.[27] A generation of debates about epistemology have inspired greater reflective awareness about the relationship between our forms of knowledge and forms of life. William Connolly, Charles Taylor and other political theorists have rightly stressed the expressive capacity of language not simply to convey reality but to set forth a fundamental human capacity to interpret. Their work has challenged the form in which truth claims are put forward by the quantitative social sciences while undermining the pursuit of modes of social analysis based on an objective account of the systems, structures, or rules underlying social orders. Behind claims of detachment and neutral observation, deeply political cultural commitments have been located.

Clifford Geertz' "ethnography of thought" moves in a similar direction and reflects an extremely ambitious attempt to reconstitute social science around a focus on the problem of meaning as a cultural artifact. The task of the ethnographer--whatever her particular discipline--is to "render obscure

matters intelligible by providing them with an informing content....that is, by describing the world in which it makes whatever sense it makes." Geertz has demonstrated how symbols don't simply designate, they play an active role in constituting the political world. This has often been hard to accept for those oriented towards finding the logic of human institutions:

> Like bees who fly despite theories of aerodynamics which deny them the right to do so, probably the overwhelming majority of mankind are continually drawing normative conclusions from factual premises, (and factual conclusions from normative premises for the relation between ethics and world view is circular) despite refined, and in their own terms impeccable, reflections by professional philosophers on the naturalistic fallacy. (1973: 141)

Geertz' observation points up why the language of pathology and dysfunction which pervaded modernization theory so often led to flawed analysis.

The work of other contemporary thinkers has promoted more historical and cultural self-consciousness. Thomas Kuhn demonstrated how scientific paradigms change and in the process transform our conceptions of rationality by altering the categories with which we constitute reality for ourselves (1962). The work of Michel Foucault has revealed even sharper tensions between our forms of social theory and social and political institutions. In his "histories of the present," Foucault has convincingly shown the influence of contingency and conflicting claims within what have appeared to many analysts as the products of a cumulative process of calibration and refinement in our institutions and knowledge. In analyzing the complex relationships that link

forms of knowledge and structures of power, he has given rich and concrete accounts of the constitution of modern forms of identity. His genealogies of the modern subject expose the gap between our self-understandings and the practices constituted by our institutions and their discourse. In that way, Foucault asks and tries to answer the questions about cultural meaning, identity, and fate which interested Weber.

It must be quickly added that even among the writers just mentioned, enormous differences of style, interest, and method remain. By reconsidering Weber, I have tried to show that questions about political identity and the construction of cultural significance are not new, that they have a long tradition within political inquiry though it has been diminished by the emphasis on quantitative methods and overly rigid conceptual precision. Studying political culture in this way allows us a view--however imprecise at times--of aspects of the political world that would be unavailable if our tools were only quantitative. But this is not an either/or proposition, and interpretation is not the opposite of empiricism. We are forced to confront continually the aspect of studying culture which Weber described so well:

> The course of unforseeable events is transformed endlessly, stretching to eternity. The cultural problems that move men are constantly posed anew and from other aspects...The principles of the cultural sciences will keep changing in a future without limits as long as the sclerosis of life and spirit do not dis-accustom humanity to an inexhaustible life. (1949: 84)

One of the most sensitive readers of Weber, Maurice Merleau-Ponty put the matter more succinctly still--"the curse of politics is precisely that it must turn values into the order of facts" (1947: xxxv). That is the problem that informed Weber's work and it is the central political dilemma which the study of political culture must try to interpret. Writing in a setting in which he has no doubt learned from harsh experience, Chilean political scientist Norbert Lechner offers a similar conclusion and points us toward the task at hand:

> The political struggle is forever also a struggle to define the predominant conception of what politics is understood to be. What does it mean to act politically (hacer política)? What is the field of politics? These questions bring us to the political culture. (1988: 113) [28]

Notes

1. The literature on Weber is vast and continually expanding. An excellent sample of current perspectives on Weber can be found in Sam Whimster and Scott Lash (1987). Wilhelm Hennis (1988) considers the significance of Weber's past canonization as a "founding father of sociology," and offers a provocative reassessment which locates him within the tradition of political philosophy and history. Weber's understanding of the cultural problem of modernity is discussed by Lawrence Scaff (1989), while Sheldon Wolin (1981) considers Weber's view of modern social science.

2. The influence of Nietzsche on Weber's understanding of his project has been explored in recent years by political theorists; see Sheldon Wolin (1981), Lawrence Scaff (1989), Mark Warren (1988), Wilhelm Hennis (1988), and Robert Eden (1983). An earlier exploration of this aspect of Weber was made by Leo Strauss (1953). The implications of this Nietzschean influence have not been considered adequately by those attempting to apply Weber to comparative political analysis.

3. A persuasive interpretation of the uses of Weber which developed under the influence of Talcott Parsons is put forward by William Buxton, (1985). His analysis is especially strong at elaborating the cultural problematic (in the Weberian sense I am describing here) which shaped and motivated Parsons' construction of social theory, as well as the application of that approach by Gabriel Almond and Seymour Martin Lipset.

4. A thorough elaboration of the foreign policy perspectives of these writers is presented by Buxton (1985).

5. Taylor's argument clearly echoes Weber, and will be taken up in more depth later in this chapter as well as in chapter 8. The critique of democratic elitism was set forth by Lukes, Bachrach, and Jack Walker.

6. The literature on this subject is vast. Baran (1957) undertook the first major effort to revive Marxist-Leninist categories on this subject. Frank (1967) provided the most influential early statement of dependency, to which Amin (1974) and Wallerstein (1974) provided expanded versions. Wallerstein's conceptualization

of a "world-system" approach has been especially controversial among other Marxists and was criticized by Robert Brenner (1976). Ernesto Laclau (1971) initiated the "modes of production" debate in challenging Frank's construction of capitalism. Frank's notion was further challenged in the concept of "dependent development" by Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto (1979). This concept informed Peter Evans' case study of Brazil (1979). All of these authors took issue in one way or another with Frank and Wallerstein's lack of regard to the dynamics of internal class relations in specific countries. Cardoso's approach is applied to analyze the political economy of industrialization in Guatemala by Paul Dosal (1988). An excellent roadmap for these debates is provided by Martin Carnoy (1984).

7. Almond's discussion in the final section of A Developmental Approach carries this tone. The situation of the developing countries, he conceded, did not look good. They didn't have the ability to do what the Europeans and Americans had. It wasn't really surprising that Marxism looked attractive. Was there a way that democracy and economic development could be theorized together into a coherent strategy? This challenge renewed Parsons' quest for a normative model which could be objectively legitimated rather than having to resort to ideology. When Almond later criticized dependency approaches, their greatest sin from his perspective was their "ideological" character.

8. The most influential of these critiques can be found in the edited collection by Howard Wiarda (1982). See especially the essays by Wiarda, Richard Morse, and Glen Dealy. It is the latter who argues that neither the Enlightenment or Lockean political ideas had any significant effect in the region, an argument that is given further consideration in chapter 4.

9. This literature is much to vast to attempt even a brief list of citations. The theory and practice of state-centered analysis, as well as an extensive bibliography are well represented in Evans, Skojpol and Rueschemeyer (1985).

10. Recent examples of the kind of sloppy analysis which can emerge include works by Lawrence Harrison (1985), Michael Novak (1982), and Jeane Kirkpatrick (1979). Each grew out of the Central American policy wars of the late 1970s and 1980s as efforts to blame poverty and oppression on Catholic political traditions while minimizing the impact of United States policy and the expansion of capitalism in the region. Harrison argued that political cultures determine political outcomes without any of the qualifications and nuance offered by Wiarda. Novak argued that capitalism had yet to really come to Latin America, while Kirkpatrick's famous distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes

22. On this point, I agree with Wildavsky's critique of rational choice theory (1988). The dangers which come in employing categories too far removed from the self understandings and categories of the actors themselves are well expressed by Levine (1981) in his critique of previous approaches to the study of religion and politics. The ways rationality is culturally constructed are elaborated very well by Clifford Geertz (1973: 22.126-141) and given extraordinary grounding in the daily life of a Malaysian village by James Scott (1986). His analysis makes clear how notions of self interest are always expressed through cultural frameworks from which they cannot be divorced and still understood. Notions of rationality uphold a worldview, they do not simply maximize one's position. For further development, see the discussion of Protestantism in Chapter 6. Scott's analysis of the ways cultural meanings are often sharply contested is pursued in Chapter 3.

23. Geertz develops this in "Found in Translation: On the Social History of the Moral Imagination," (1983: 36-54). Michael Taussig (1988) offers an highly original and insightful account, inspired partly by the work of Walter Benjamin, of the role that violence often plays in the conflict over "otherness". He also demonstrates persuasively the ways in which cultural practices--in this case, shamanism--are deployed to resist efforts to impose subjugating forms of identity. Taussig argues that these counter-cultural practices can help keep alive a sense of estrangement and alienation from dominant practices and the social relations they attempt to objectify. It is an extraordinarily creative and supple application of the Marxian concept of commodity fetishism. A more accessible, but equally stunning account of the moral imagination at work is offered by Israeli novelist David Grossman's report from the Occupied Territories. In trying to find ways that each community might learn to see the other as human and not wholly "other", Grossman brilliantly reveals the ways each community's construction of its own identity is shaped by the other.

24. Tzvetan Todorov's account (1984) of the encounter between the Spanish conquerors and the cultures of the New World provides an interesting examination of this interpretive issue. But his analysis is marred by a rather moralizing tone and a lack of attention to forms of cultural resistance that were deployed especially by the Maya. Chapter 3 will examine the work of historian Nancy Farriss and others who have persuasively demonstrated the capacity of the Maya to maintain something of their cultural identity amidst the devastating succession of conquests by colonial and national governments. William Connolly (1991) has defended Todorov's lack of attention to the indigenous perspective by arguing that such any attempt to interpret will always be interested in some fashion. But the work of Farriss and others suggests that Connolly and Todorov overstate the difficulties in approaching "the other," and leave the matter too abstract. Carole Nagengast and Michael Kearney argue similarly.

> Despite good intentions, Todorov reduces a complex historical reality inextricably bound up with the exercise of power to a set of prededetermined binary oppositional characteristics attributed to Spanish and Indian. (1990: 67)

25. Once again, those who argue for taking a culture "on its own terms," often need to be a bit more reflective about their place in the interpretive process. While Howard Wiarda inquired into the interpretive starting point and "sociology of knowledge" of other approaches such as modernization and dependency, he appears to assume that his own perspective does not entail the same questions. Why is the question framed in these terms and not another? What political orientation might be reflected? The questions that are asked of that culture reflect the imagination of the questioner, and that in turn is a partly shaped by the location and cultural problematic within which the question is formed. Raising these issues can never be adequate to disqualify another interpretation but they must be asked nonetheless.

26. The case for rigorously consistent conceptual definitions in political analysis was made most notably in a famous article by Giovani Sartori (1968). But the myriad of problems which this kind of effort inevitably encounters were well established by William Connolly in his critique of Felix Oppenheim (1983). Connolly argued that any attempt to fix the meaning of particular terms cannot avoid carrying baggage which shapes the kinds of questions to be answered. Oppenheim ran into trouble when trying to suggest that his definition could obtain agreement across political lines and prove useful to all points of view. The notions of responsibility and agency which Connolly wants to affirm cannot find space within the constricted definition proposed by Oppenheim: "The differentiation he affirms subjugate the norms of responsibility and agency to a technocratic conception of social life...he convinces himself that this concept describes fundamental realities when it in fact describes an ideal to which he is wedded" (1983: 224). Deconstructed in this fashion, Oppenheim's "neutral" definition reveals deep normative commitments. Connolly argued that this aspect of political analysis was inescapable: its terms are "essentially contestable."

27. "The Interpretive Turn" is the title of the introductory chapter by Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan in their outstanding edited volume which includes some of the most important essays by among the most influential social theorists of the post war era including Habermas, Foucault, Gadamer, and Geertz (1987).

28. This passage begins an essay in which Lechner discusses the concrete problem of constructing a democratic political culture in Chile in an international political context which he terms "post-modern."

CHAPTER 3

ETHNIC IDENTITY AND LEGITIMACY: THEORETICAL ISSUES

In the previous chapter, a general approach to the study of political culture was put forward, but it is necessary to apply that analysis to issues specific to the case at hand. I made the argument that political culture offers a shifting field of study; the questions which cultures ask themselves change in response to new structural conditions, political events, contingency and experience. In the chapter to follow these questions will be examined historically: how has the problem of political community been interpreted by diverse political actors over time and how have these conceptions converged or come into conflict? How have new structural conditions been interpreted culturally? How have political actors understood the challenges facing them and what have they proposed to do? And then, in practice, what relations of power have they set forth, and what political responses have they engendered?

Before examining the diverse responses and actions which reflection upon these questions has inspired, it is important to begin with a clear understanding of how to approach the issue of legitimacy in a study which sets out to describe the pursuit of a "legitimate political order." I began this work by invoking Benedict Anderson's "imagined community," as an ideal type which described the intentions of political elites in Guatemala, but I noted that the Maya generally have viewed the notion of nationality quite differently.

Hence, the concept of legitimacy cannot be understood without paying particular attention to the politics of ethnic relations between the Maya and ladinos. The analysis presented here is, in turn, built around premises regarding the nature of that relationship which must be made explicit and clarified theoretically before moving directly to a discussion of Guatemalan history.

Perspectives on Ethnicity and Culture in Guatemala

Weber described the social sciences as those to which "eternal youth was granted," and scholarship in the field readily attests to the ways in which our understanding of Guatemala has changed with the emergence of new modes of inquiry reflecting new questions and preoccupations. How ethnicity in Guatemala is understood and studied has changed significantly in recent years as scholars have sought more dynamic ways to understand relationships of power and domination. While there is no question that the conquest and its aftermath fundamentally transformed Mayan society and culture, the nature of that alteration is complicated to assess and has been viewed differently by various analysts.

The relationship between Guatemalan indigenous communities and the state was not given great attention in many of the classic ethnographic studies carried out between 1930 and 1960 (Wagley 1941; Gillen 1945; Tax 1941). These

works tended to define and study indigenous cultures as wholly distinct systems of behavior and practice; in the process they provided a wealth of valuable ethnographic data on community social structure and institutions which has facilitated comparative analysis across space and time. This research brought improved understanding, as reflected in the gradual emphasis on the municipio rather than language groups as the locus of Maya identities. At the same time this literature carried conceptualizations of culture which share many of the theoretical limitations of political science discussions on the subject. Most notable of these limitations was the tendency to view indigenous cultures as distinct systems of thought and practice, without adequate attention to the larger setting or the shifting relationship between cultures in Guatemala. While recognizing that Maya culture and practice were part of a "heritage of conquest" (Tax 1952), John Hawkins argues that most often they shared Robert Redfield's formulation in which culture "implies an integral...traditional way of life in which all members of a self-sufficient society participate" (1983). By focusing on specific traits and cultural separation, these studies had a propensity to isolate particular Maya communities as atavistic folk cultures wholly distinct from other "western" or "ladino" cultures, rather than seeing the larger cultural setting in which meanings were formed and transformed. These analysts also tended to understand cultural change as a process of gradual assimilation.[1]

Other perspectives emerged which sought to view cultures from a larger and more interactive perspective. Perhaps the most influential formulation of ethnic relations was Eric Wolf's concept of the "closed corporate community" (1957). While generating extensive commentary and critique, Wolf's notion was put forward as an ideal type rather than a precise formulation. He stressed the community's importance as a vehicle for preserving local control of land while maintaining "barriers against the entry of goods and ideas produced outside the community." Wolf's analysis provided a very important impetus for widening the perspective within which cultural change and ethnic relations were studied. To the extent that his framework took seriously local efforts to preserve autonomy, it moved well beyond approaches which focused largely on the internal coherence and unity of community social structures without understanding the larger social, economic, and cultural influences and pressures which shaped Mayan cultural responses.

In recent years Wolf has argued that cultures can never be viewed "as integrated totalities in which each part contributes to the maintenance of an organized, autonomous, and enduring whole" (1982: 390). It is not clear that his original model involved such as assumption, but it is apparent, as Jim Handy writes, that

> ...at various periods in Guatemalan history communities "opened" and "closed" depending on their relations with the broader political and economic system and in response to the demands placed on their community from outside. (1990: 164-165)

And to the extent that Wolf's formulation has "largely crystallized in the established wisdom as either a refuge of Mayan traditionalism or a refraction of Hispanic hegemony," John Watanabe suggests that it has needed to be pushed forward by recent ethnographies which reveal that Mayan communities

> ...can undergo apparently sweeping cultural changes yet retain an intense ethnic localism that while no longer "closed" or "corporate" still makes them unquestionably communities. (1990: 184)

Another influential approach to inter-ethnic relations stressed the ways that Mayan communities have been determined by the actions of colonial, national and transnational political and economic forces. Peláez (1971) argued that Mayan culture as it has existed since the conquest was a creation of colonialism and bore no resemblance to Mayan culture prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Stavenhagen (1970) described a system of internal colonialism in which ethnic relations closely paralleled class relations, though he argued that this had begun to grow less clearly divided as economic expansion led to greater emphasis on class relations and identity. Ethnic identity was viewed principally as an imposition of colonialism which had served ideological goals but was gradually being broken down by the process of proletarianization. As such, indigenous cultures received little study on their own terms as systems of meaning.

Ethnic Identity and Cultural Resistance

Analysis which focused on the larger structural factors shaping the articulation of ethnic identity went part of the way towards addressing the limitations of earlier studies of Mayan communities and cultures. But at the same time, they provided little insight into the ongoing process of cultural construction and transformation in which larger economic and political changes were interpreted by the Maya. Efforts to construct structural paradigms of economic, social, and cultural features can provide valuable data, but their level of analysis does not adequately consider how impositions of power are interpreted and acted upon by groups who, while not equal, are not simply objects--even when that is how they are viewed by others. This is especially important in a setting where so much violence has been visited upon the politically weak. Meso-American scholarship in recent years--led by the impressive work of Nancy Farriss--has offered a compelling way to think about this experience of cultural confrontation. While drawn from analysis of colonial society, the lessons have relevance into the present (Clendinnen 1987; Farriss 1983; Jones 1988; Lovell 1988; Smith ed. 1990). It is clear that we cannot begin to talk of Mayan culture without understanding the pervasive ways it was transformed by conquest. Contemporary Maya culture has grown from traditions which were constructed in the context of colonial and national

programs designed to assimilate, dominate, subjugate, exploit, and even destroy their communities.

Yet, Farriss and others have been equally insistent that we view the Maya as "subjects of their own history," rather than passive objects of conquest and colonial imposition. The object of colonialism was certainly the creation of a particular form of Indian subject. As we shall examine in more detail, that was not a consistent project. What the original conquerors, church orders, Habsburg administrators, Bourbon reformers, and post-independent Conservatives and Liberals wanted differed greatly over time. Law, discourse, violence, and fiscal policy were all part of the terrain upon which the administration of political subjects was carried out.

The question which recent scholarship has compelled us to ask is: how did the Maya--in the most constrained (a dangerously sanguine word in this instance) circumstances--respond to coercion, violence, evangelization, and the myriad intentions of others with power to compel a response? One of the underlying themes of this and later chapters will be the necessity to distinguish between the intentions of those who exercise power and how it actually operates. Guatemalan political history cannot be understood without an account of inter-ethnic relations which takes seriously how the actions of Indians constitute self-conscious forms of political action and strategy which are themselves culturally constructed as modes of survival amidst externally imposed pressures. They entail what James Scott has referred to as "weapons

of the weak" and "everyday forms of resistance." Scott argues that these forms of resistance can appear in an immense variety of seemingly non-political activities: foot dragging, non-compliance, silence, subtle or disguised cultural expressions of mockery towards dominant classes, and the invocation of shared traditions of reciprocity which groups in power appear to be abandoning. Scott draws upon a large body of literature, particularly from 18th and 19th century historiography, and presents a convincing and detailed analysis of how Malaysian peasants have tried to resist Green Revolution technologies which leave their position more precarious.

Scott's analysis clearly mirrors the insights of Farriss. Both stress the need to go beyond seeing violence as the only mode of resistance. Where others have asked why Indians didn't resist more, Farriss offers revealing explanations of why they chose, more often than not, indirect and non-violent forms of resistance. She argues that the Maya were in a better position to resist than the Aztecs because of geographic and cultural factors. They certainly lived in areas that were less prized by the Spanish, but she also argues they were better prepared psychologically. Tzvetan Todorov has argued that the Aztecs were in many ways incapable of understanding or making sense of the Spanish except within frames of reference which rendered the newcomers as gods (1984). This incapacity to envision an "other" and its wholly different cultural categories caused a breakdown and paralysis of their capacity to act and resist. While Todorov's analysis is provocative and interesting when he

applied it to the Aztecs, it immediately runs into serious problems when we try to use it to interpret the Maya. Having been previously conquered, they were not susceptible to the kind of "shock" that befell the Aztecs, and had the capacity to adapt in ways which have remained distinctly Mayan. Changes could be understood and responded to within their own categories of order.[2] This points up the necessity to view cultures as looser and more adaptable than structural accounts sometimes imply:

> Each culture or cultural configuration contains a core set of ideas about the way things are or ought to be--in other words a core of general explanations around which the shared cognitive map and the social order are organized. These ideas comprise the most stable part of the system both because they are general and because, being general rather than specific, they are open to varying interpretations in the ancillary concepts that flow from them and in the way they are expressed through social action. As core concepts they provide not only the principles according to which change will take place, but also the measure of its extent; they indicate whether we are dealing with variations on a theme or an altogether new theme. (Farriss 1984: 8)

What characterized Maya responses to the various waves of conquest and oppression was a capacity to culturally interpret what was happening within their own cultural conceptions, continually moving and adapting, of cosmology and history. That this occurred amidst enormous violence, misery, and cultural destruction is undeniable; it simply does not completely eliminate human agency. Inga Clendinnen's study of the initial conquest between Maya and Spaniard in the Yucatán reveals a capacity for "calculated accommodation" (1987: 58). The process of reading these events in the light of their own traditions was grounded in the ways that the Maya Books of the Chilam Balam

did not have static meanings. The texts were partly performative: subject to interpretation within a particular setting. That kind of process is bound to create what seem contradictions--but the enduring power of these traditions is in their capacity to make sense of ambiguity. It is within that capacity for cultural survival and resistance that a space of autonomy has been preserved.

Ethnic Identity and the State

If we are to consider the challenge that ethnic identity presents to efforts to create Guatemala as an "imagined community," three points must be made clear. The first concerns the relationship between ethnicity and the state. I have already noted that post-colonial forms of indigenous cultural identity have been constructed largely in response in one way or another to the actions of the state. The state has always been the reference point, in terms of political power, for indigenous communities; it has forced Indians to continually renegotiate their sense of identity in response to direct and indirect economic and political pressures that reshape the structural context. What it means to be an Indian or a ladino has changed over time also as a result of state policy.

Emphasizing the role of the state also reveals the danger in speaking of the Maya in Guatemala as if they were a monolithic group. It is only in relation to the Guatemalan state they have been so unified; Maya imagined communities have generally been much more localized. The emergence of

national indigenous organizations in the 1970s was, as we shall see, new, and a response to repressive state policies which viewed Indians as a unified mass of "subversion" (Smith 1990).

The continued political salience of ethnicity in Guatemala illustrates a point about state-society relations which has been noted by students of the subject in other areas of the world. Prior to at least the 1970s, ethnicity was often viewed as an element of "tradition" which would gradually become less significant as the process of modernization and development promoted new forms of identity based on rational and non-ascriptive foundations.[3] As Weiner noted, it is now apparent that "there has been far less nation-building than many analysts had expected, for the process of state-building has rendered many ethnic groups devoid of power or influence" (1987: 36). States were not neutral and ethnicity was not simply part of a static cultural tradition--the relationship was dynamic and on-going, and the political-cultural significance of ethnicity was subject to change in its character in response to the actions of the state. However grounded in a long history a community may be, its modern identity is partly a product of the modern world. In this way, the continuing strength of ethnic identity clearly is linked to the cultural power of self determination as a modern political claim. The important point is to recognize this without falling into linear views of historical development. Contemporary Maya culture is saturated with the impact of "modernity," yet deeply grounded in an ethnic identity whose form and content have changed

and yet remained fundamentally Mayan. This point also has a very important practical meaning in Guatemalan politics; groups across the political spectrum, and particularly on the left, have generally been disposed to discount ethnicity and assume assimilation was inevitable in the national communities they imagine (Smith 1987; 1991).

Culture as Practice

The second point that must inform analysis of ethnicity is that we must avoid too closely linking the preservation of ethnic identity with particular institutions, practices, or strategies. From such a point of reference, the decline of particular institutions is often posited as inevitably leading to loss of the identity. Changes in religious practice, landholding, or internal political structures have been continual and yet ethnic identity--as Maya--has remained important. John Watanabe's study of Santiago Chimaltenango illustrates this point with great sensitivity (1984); he argues, for example, that declines in the political significance of local cargo based systems, or increased involvement in the cash crop production of coffee, reflect adaptions partly created by the Chimaltecos in a context of contingency and external events they do not control. As he carefully unpacks some of the conventions through which community members construct themselves as ethical subjects, Watanabe is able to analyze continuity by focusing on the ethical relations and boundaries of

those conventions rather than their particular content or institutional embodiment at a point in time. The conventions create the boundaries for ongoing choices; there is no real essence to ethnic identity other than in the sense of a "we who are here." Watanabe's study illustrates the concrete ways in which culture, as previously noted, is a practice--a continual reconstruction of experience and contingency by a world view. By actively shaping local responses to broader changes in Guatemalan society, these conventions "reaffirm an enduring community while simultaneously sanctioning the very forces that transform it" (1984: 154).

These insights reinforce the point made earlier about the cultural capacity of the Maya to make sense of events within cultural traditions which made room for ambiguity. This is necessary to bear in mind when considering the long record of religious syncretism which is discussed in chapters 4 and 6. Barbara Tedlock has argued that syncretism is often misunderstood as a sort of naive melding or fusion of symbols and institutions which usually involves little historical self-consciousness (1983). The error is compounded by the tendency to give to syncretism a kind of structural unity and distinctness which mistakes the ideal type for a reality which is more unruly and in continual, and conscious, dialogue with the world around it.[4]

The third point is that ethnic identity in Guatemala is sometimes viewed as an "inverse image," of the dominant cultural discourse of conquest (Hawkins 1984). This attributes too much power and authority to dominant

notions of ethnicity without seeing the ways in which they are unstable and built upon constructions of self and other which assume what the previous paragraphs have challenged--that rival identities can be tidily separated. At the national or state level in Guatemala, this has presented a continual cultural problem which is reflected in the ambiguity with which Guatemala constructs its identity internationally as a nation with an Indian past which it celebrates, while at the same time practicing near genocidal violence upon its living Indians.[5]

Each of these points reinforce the notion that cultures are not fixed systems; they provides interpretive possibilities that are continually reworked in practice. Kay Warren argues that many analysts of ethnicity have tended to view it as an all or nothing choice of mutually exclusive identities; hence cultural change equals the permanent loss of a particular cultural identity. This assumes in turn that ethnic identities exist independently of human constructions as choices with their own inherent logic.

> This construction of polar, mutually exclusive choices--Indian or ladino--steers us away from overwhelming evidence that individuals continually manipulate identities...there is no ladino or Indian except as those identities are constructed, contested, negotiated, imposed, imported, resisted and redefined in action. The process is never ending; identity never quite coalesces. (1988: 4-5)

Warren's argument reinforces James Scott's discussion of the concept of hegemony and its limitations, particularly with regard to the assumption that people comply with dominant ideas because of the capacity of dominant

classes to make the order of things appear inevitable. There appears little reason to imagine--based on the ethnographic data--that the Maya, any more than the Malaysian peasants studied by Scott, have ever confused justice and reality.[6] So legitimacy has always remained a problem for colonial and national governments given the force of competing cultural orders. During those few periods when a legitimate political order can be said to have existed in Guatemala since the conquest, it has been a fragile and ambiguous achievement. This history provides much ground for skepticism about the success of an project of national integration. The Maya appear in no hurry to make good the predictions of modernization theorists of the left, right, and center regarding their inevitable assimilation.

The Problem of Legitimacy

This long history of cultural resistance and renegotiation in a context of external domination clearly indicates why the pursuit of political legitimacy has remained so problematic, and why it is such an important element of the current military political project. In the following chapter, I argue that there have been only a few periods in Guatemala since the Conquest when a legitimate political order could be said to exist. But before turning to an historical analysis, some more general points about the nature of legitimacy remain to be made.

Trying to offer a precise definition of what constitutes legitimacy in practice is difficult, for like many of the concepts upon which the study of politics is founded, its meaning has changed over time. Weber's famous typology of the three sources of legitimate authority--tradition, charisma, and rational-legal principle--has influenced the terms of the debate, but not offered much resolution. The acceptance of these categories has generally carried with it the assumption that rational-legal authority, in some manifestation, was inevitable, and normatively desirable, once modernization reached a certain point. As with so many of Weber's categories, however, these were intended as ideal types, even though much of his analysis indicates a strong assumption that modern forms of rationality were growing more dominant. [7]

But we have also seen that Weber's encounter with Nietzsche, in the context of epistemological reflection about social science, left him deeply skeptical about the capacity of rational/scientific modes of thought to demonstrate their legitimacy:

> Science presupposes that what is yielded by scientific work is important in the sense that it is worth being known. In this, obviously, are contained all our problems. For this presupposition cannot be proven by scientific means. It can only be interpreted with reference to its ultimate meaning, which we accept according to our ultimate position towards life...and still less can it be proved that the existence of the world that these sciences describe is worthwhile, that it has any meaning, or that it makes any sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for the answers to such questions. (1946: 143)

Weber believed that the issue of meaning still revolved around personal choices based on faith, whether religious or secular. While he did not believe

that rational authority could provide a stable basis upon which to construct a legitimate political and cultural order, he could also not imagine what other forms of authority could survive in modernity. His own struggle to invest the modern political realm with legitimacy indicate his own personal response to an age when the sources of legitimate authority has grown fragmented and diffuse. As we have also seen this was a problem well understood by many of the analysts who developed the influential conceptions of political culture in the 1950s and 60s.[8]

Weber's dilemma reflects the limits of his own categories for analyzing legitimacy. It also provides a partial explanation for Benedict Anderson's argument that the power and legitimacy of nationalism has grown from the capacity, when achieved, to recast the problems of fate, contingency, and mortality--questions to which religion also responds--and to offer a kind of secular redemption by constructing a community which links the dead, the living, and the unborn. While the ideologies of modernity--liberalism, Marxism, humanism--tend to look ever forward, it is as communities of remembrance and redemption that nations gather their power. As previously noted, the cultural achievement of modern nationalism is to take a new idea, a national community consciously constructed within a specific historical setting, and endow it with a sense of mythic origins which "loom out of an immemorial past, and still more important, glide into a limitless future" (1983: 19). For many modern states this has been no easy task as the concept of

self-determination and the idea of nation which it has fostered have continually challenged the legitimacy of those states.

This problem reflects the ways political legitimacy in "modernity" is built on a complex combination of old and new forces within diverse historical and cultural settings. We must not overstate what William Connolly has referred to as "the retreat of God from the world"; while traditional sources of authority may have grown problematic in many places, they have not disappeared, reflecting the ways changes within cultures do not leave the past behind so much as they change the perspective through which it is viewed. Traditional sources of authority and legitimacy have been forced to address the cultures of western modernism and rationalism. But there is nothing predictable about the myriad of diverse responses--whether Chinese communism, Islamic modernism and fundamentalism, liberation theology, evangelical protestantism, or Asian capitalism, to name the most prominent. Modernity is in this sense an ideal type that gathers within it many characteristics and tendencies, but exists in reality only as a multiplicity of specific historical settings in which older and more recent forms of knowledge attempt to render new experience. It can perhaps be best characterized as a world in which authority is contestable, but without making any assumptions that particular kinds of "traditional" responses are "no longer available to us."[9] We can assume that those traditions--religious, ethnic, national--are in some way modern achievements which in the process of confronting new structural

and cultural forces have been reshaped in some distinct but not predetermined fashion.

In an age when the sources of legitimacy have fragmented, even as the administrative power of the state has increased, it is not surprising that challenges to the legitimacy of states--particularly, but by no means exclusively, in the "non-Western" world--remain a central element of world politics. This in turn suggests that legitimacy ought not to be defined so much as analyzed historically. What we can ask of a particular order is: How did it attempt to legitimate itself? What were the sources of legitimacy which were invoked by political rulers and how were they received by the governed? To what extent, if any, was or is the order legitimate? Those are the questions which will be taken up in the following chapter.

Notes

1. The passage by Redfield (1940) is cited by John Hawkins in a helpful survey of the concept of culture which informed the work of Redfield and his contemporaries. Hawkins' own approach views Guatemalan Indian and Mayan cultures as "inverse images" within a overarching cultural system. This is heavily influenced by the linguistic structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure and is criticized later in this chapter (see page 13).

2. For two fascinating and well documented discussions of this process see Inga Clendinnen (1987) and Grant Jones (1989). Both point out that Maya notions of cosmology, time, and history all provided a basis for interpretation of the arrival of the Spanish, as well as their new political and religious institutions. In doing so, the Maya were able to preserve a basis for community continuity amidst enormous political pressure.

3. This was a view shared by analysts with radically different assumptions about the process of modernity itself. What we might term a liberal perspective believed that ethnic identities would gradually become depoliticized and largely private sources of identity--as reflected, for example, in the attachment of many Americans to the ethnic heritage of their parents. Citizenship within a modern state grounded in rational-legal forms of legitimacy would become the principle focus of political identity. Marxist analysis also believed that ethnicity would become less salient as economic and political transformations created the conditions for class consciousness to emerge. Both viewed ethnicity as something that would disappear under the onslaught of modernization. Each perspective has promoted political models which in some ways have exacerbated ethnic tension. This is most obvious today in Central Europe and the former Soviet republics, but it is also apparent in many of the African and Asian nation states whose political development prospects were the focus of so much policy analysis by comparativists and where attempts to develop western style state institutions have magnified the fragmentation they were an effort to limit. Examples of more sophisticated analysis include Walker Connor (1987); Paul Brass (1990); Donald Horowitz (1985); Cynthia Enloe (1973). For a discussion of the ways class analysis deployed by ladino intellectuals has obscured understanding about ethnicity in Guatemala see Carol Smith (1987).

4. If we think about Christianity and its encounter with "modernism," the point is perhaps clearer and more obvious.

5. This point has been influenced by a recent analysis of the study of ethnicity put forward by Kay Warren (1988). Permission to quote from the article was granted by the author.

6. See Warren's (1978; 1985: 251-276) analysis of the cosmology of residents of San Andres Semetabaj. She describes the ways their conceptions explain the gap between their treatment by the Spanish and their sense of justice. While these cosmologies did not usually generate a prescription for resistance and tended to reinforce "a deterministic world where Indians are cast as passive victims of an unchanging social order," they were grounded in a moral framework that permanently challenged the moral legitimacy of Spanish and Ladino domination. Moreover, Warren argues that community narratives (1985: 257-261) also created space for individual moral initiative within the local cultural institutions. Catholicism as a source of legitimacy is explored more fully in the following chapter.

7. The difference between modern political science and traditional definitions of legitimacy and what is at stake is drawn out beautifully by John Schaar (1969). Starting with the definition offered by Webster's unabridged dictionary:

> Legitimate: 1) lawfully begotten...2) real, genuine; not fake, counterfeit or spurious...3) accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements.

Schaar argued that this definition reflects an older notion of authority in which:

> ...a claim to political power is legitimate only when the claimant can invoke some source of authority beyond or above himself. History shows a variety of such sources: immemorial custom, divine law, the law of nature, a constitution.... [whereas] the new definitions all dissolve legitimacy into belief or opinion. (1969: 284)

Schaar offers Seymour Martin Lipset as an example of the approach taken by political science: "Legitimacy involves the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for that society." The weakness of defining legitimacy solely in terms of opinions is that it tends to measure acquiescence rather than the actual legitimacy possessed by political authority. It assumes that the legitimacy of a "system" is what is foremost at stake--which leaves the question of the cultural and ideological setting aside. As Lipset's own analysis focuses heavily on the conditions by which legitimacy in democratic states can be preserved, his emphasis is on stability and the maintenance of attitudes towards the "system" which do not provide excess variance. In this sense, and built on the experience

of the United States as the "first new nation," Lipset emphasizes the development of a particular form of modern state in which ideological and parochial attachments are kept carefully checked--by "cross-cutting cleavages"--or eliminated by education and the inculcation of new values. But the problem which Weber recognized with modern sources of legitimacy is more clearly spelled out by Schaar--legitimacy is now something which political regimes attempt consciously to fashion and then transmit to a populace through cultural symbols and ritual which generate support. And that means that

> ...order will now be seen as artificial, the result of will and choice alone, as vulnerable to change and challenge as will itself is. (1969: 295)

8. The tension between science and political legitimacy arose for Weber in examining the tradition of democratic rights and governance. Science cannot make sense of concepts such as equality or rights, for they conflict with the norms of rationality. The orientation of science is towards solving a problem in the most orderly manner available. Weber is quite explicit that

> Democracy as such is opposed to the rule of bureaucracy, in spite of and perhaps because of its unavoidable yet unintended promotion of bureaucracy. Under certain conditions democracy creates obvious ruptures and blockages to bureaucratic organization. (Connolly ed. 1984: 47)

Democracy promotes bureaucracy in seeking an even-handed and neutral approach. But charged with the task of managing in the interests of all, the principle of rationalization is unlikely to tolerate the chaotic impulses it will no doubt find within democracy.

9. Modernity as an historical, epistemological, and ontological condition has been the subject of extensive discussion. As regards the problem of legitimacy, an excellent collection of diverse perspectives--including Weber, Lipset, Habermas, Foucault, and Sheldon Wolin--can be found in the edited collection by William Connolly (1984). Much of this discussion focuses largely on the "legitimation crisis" in the advanced or "late" capitalist world. Within that setting, Connolly's essay is particularly persuasive in its discussion of the relationship between institutional structures and the formation of identity; at the same time his analysis is weakened by overly general assumptions about the decline of religion. My own understanding of the matter has been most influenced by John Schaar's essay in the same collection. While Connolly criticizes Schaar's attempt at "restoration," I think the latter comes closest to appreciating the continuing power of traditional

sources of authority. In the process his argument moves along lines which parallel Benedict Anderson.

CHAPTER 4

LEGITIMACY AND THE STATE IN GUATEMALA

The Conquest of the Maya

In the discussion of nationalism which began this work, it was argued that while every nation claims to represent an immemorial past, each is a historically constructed community which has usually reflected, at least in part if not entirely, the particular interests of political elites and the outcomes of concrete power struggles. The feelings of belonging which nationalisms promote have to be instilled; they don't exist apriori. Guatemala has long been a problem as a "nation." For its inhabitants, the sources of political identity have been multiple, fragmented, and shifting. As the structural context has been altered by local, regional, and global changes, new and old forms of cultural meaning and knowledge have come in contact--sometimes melding, sometimes colliding in conflict. What kinds of communities have been "imagined" in Guatemala? This chapter will examine the ways in which Guatemala has been understood as a political community. The Weberian questions set forth in the previous chapters, What are the new problems which structural changes present and how are they interpreted culturally? must now be examined historically. This analysis will focus particularly on the terms by which political and cultural legitimation was sought in the past. How did

Guatemalan political actors attempt, at different times, to legitimate their political projects, and to what extent, if any, did they succeed?

Conquest of a Fragmented Civilization

While Guatemala was "discovered" by the Spanish in 1524, its human history began more than 10,000 years before. A recognizably Maya culture began to appear in the 3rd millennium B.C.; most Mayanists locate its zenith during the Classic Period from roughly 300-1000 A.D., achieving its greatest expression as a civilization in the ceremonial centers in the lowlands of Chiapas and the Petén. While Maya civilization never expressed itself in large centralized kingdoms as in Central Mexico, it achieved a level of cultural sophistication perhaps unmatched in the Americas. After a few centuries of conflict and decline, these centers were gradually abandoned as the population dispersed to the north and south. Between roughly 1250 and 1475 the western highlands of what would become Guatemala were dominated by the Quiche Mayans after being "Mexicanized" by Toltec immigrants who quickly established themselves as a new political elite through a process of administrative and military expansion (Lovell 1985: 38-40). At the same time, Mayan culture was able to assimilate the Toltecs and retain predominance (Handy 1984: 18). Quiche control over other Mayan groups came unraveled by the later part of the 15th century as first the Cakchiquel and then the Ixil and Mam peoples revolted. There is historical speculation that the power "vacuum" in the area may well have been filled by the Aztecs if the Spanish had not

arrived. Other evidence suggests that the area may have faced imminent demographic pressures (Macleod 1973: 37).

The Spanish conquest of what is contemporary Central America occurred piecemeal. Columbus explored the Atlantic coast between the Gulf of Honduras and Panama, but attempts to colonize the area from settlements in the Caribbean were not made until 1513. Around the same time another group of Spanish forces arrived in the Yucatán, and an unsuccessful effort was launched from Cuba in 1517. But it was not until Spanish forces under the command of Cortez defeated the Aztecs in Central Mexico that a coordinated and concerted effort, led by Pedro de Alvarado, was made to conquer Maya groups and bring the area more firmly under Spanish rule. The Maya were already aware of the presence of the Spanish on their continent, some from direct experience or word of mouth, while many more had begun to be exposed to the myriad European diseases which preceded Alvarado's forces. While this setting of fragmentation and war, augmented by the advance work of disease, might suggest the area would have been even easier to conquer than Central Mexico, the opposite was true. The Spanish had to conquer and subdue each independent group--there was no center which when captured caused the rest of the area to fall. Alvarado was able to conquer the Quiche with the assistance of the Cakchiquels, but then faced a revolt by the latter.

The nature of the land and the personality of the conquerors also played a role in slowing down conquest of the area. Since the prospects for immediate

wealth were much more limited than was the case further to the North, some areas had to be reconquered after the initial invaders moved on. It was therefore only gradually, and often after several entradas, that the area came under administrative control. The lack of wealth partly explains why it eventually took the appearance and energies of the religious orders to effectively bring colonial structures into place in many areas. Murdo MacLeod argues that, with Cortez being a notable exception, these were men with little interest in administration; rather they were motivated by a restless energy and the hope of fortune and adventure:

> They thought of it (Central America) as a staging area, or an asylum, or at best as part of a whole complex of interlocking source materials which if fitted together in the proper conjunction might produce capital...there men were entrepreneurs, not administrators and certainly not statesmen. (1973: 102)

With gold and minerals lacking, wealth was associated with land, control of labor, and the right to demand tribute from Indians, all of which were granted under the system of encomienda which transferred the Crown's right of tribute to the early conquerors as reward for their accomplishments.

The Colonial Order

It was not until the 1540s that a political order was institutionalized. With the passing of much of the first generation of conquistadores and adventurers, important posts were filled by royal officials appointed from Spain who were more interested in administration than warfare and

exploration. The Audiencia of Guatemala, as a part of the larger colony of New Spain, covered all of present day Central American except Panama, and Chiapas in Mexico. The post-independence history of Guatemala is deeply rooted in its colonial status. As the capital of the Audiencia, it was the most politically and economically developed area. It was also where Crown laws which sought to protect Indians from settler exploitation and abuse were most fully implemented. This partly explains why a much larger percentage of Guatemala's indigenous population survived. From the beginning, the Colonial Administration placed high priority on the maintenance of Indian communities as sources of labor and revenue (Smith 1990a: 73-76).

This was never a simple matter, however; conflict and debate emerged over the proper treatment of Indians. The ideas which animated Spanish colonialism--including the notions of political community--were inherited from medieval social theory (Wortman 1982; Wiarda 1982). But these forms of thought were never able to account fully for what existed in the "new world." The debates which took place among the Spanish were an effort to make sense of and explain to themselves the purpose of their rule over the Indians. This was played out at the level of philosophy and legal doctrine in the great debate between Las Casas and Sepulveda over the proper status and treatment of the Indians. These discussions were not esoteric; they reflected intense political conflict over who had the right to administer the Indians as colonial subjects.

While these debates are important in terms of the cultural categories and modes of thought they reveal, most of the historical analysis of the period has argued that reforms such as those sought by Las Casas were always part of the legal discourse of Spanish colonialism. The New Laws of 1542 were the first of many efforts to protect the Indians from being endlessly at the mercy of settlers. But the effect was often moderated by the hesitancy of administrators and the capacity of Guatemalan encomenderos to work around restrictions. MacLeod argues that treatment of the Indians was often related to economic and demographic factors. When populations declined, care was taken, but "whenever boom conditions existed and whenever Spanish entrepreneurs found a profitable export product, pressure on the Indian population intensified and the old abuses returned" (1973: 118).

The inconsistent manner in which indigenous communities were treated reflected more than simply the vagaries of shifting interests. From the beginning, and for the first two centuries of its rule, Spanish colonialism was animated by economic and religious goals that were not totally consistent in practice. The role of the Church in the "spiritual conquest" of Guatemala reflected that this was not simply an economic enterprise. The spiritual and material energy unleashed by the reconquista, when the Moors were drive out of Spain, was also a powerful animating force.

It is also important not to grant this enterprise more coherence or clarity than it possessed. 16th century colonialism was less calculated and assured

than its 19th century counterpart. While the greater centralization of political authority under Isabella and Ferdinand permitted a more effective exercise of power, the state still had much less power, and the world it conquered was more new and strange; continual innovation was required in response to situations for which previous experiences provided weak preparation. This aspect of the Conquest illustrates the way cultural categories are often stretched by new realities which force a community to adapt those categories and explain anomalies.[1] And, as Adrian Van Oss has noted, this was not a world in which spirituality and realism were two mutually exclusive ways of thinking--as was perhaps the case three hundred years later. Colonial administrators confronted an immediate challenge: the Indians were dispersed and therein hard to either administer or convert. The Missionaries played a central role in the process of reducción which sought to move the Indians into towns in which tribute and prayers could be more easily gathered.

The grand theory of Spanish colonialism sought to create separate republics--Indian and Spanish--with their own leaders, but under Spanish rule. The mediating force was the local Indian cacique; through the paying of various gifts--machetes and other tools, the colonizers sought to "reinforce the power and reputation of such caciques as took the Catholic faith as their own" (van Oss 1986: 16). But the actions of settlers quickly reduced the authority of caciques. In theory these Indian leaders ruled by natural law; in practice they were frequently removed from power and even killed by settlers who the

Crown often had little effective control over despite orders from the King on behalf of the Indians. Hence, to view the caciques as a nobility in either an economic or political sense cannot be squared with reality. Between the actions of encomenderos and the religious orders, they were caught in the middle; without real power, Mayan leaders were often forced to do the bidding of the settlers, alienating their own community while offering little economic benefit. The result in structural terms was the breakdown of autonomous Indian communities, the beginning of a cash economy, and the gradual "transformation of a various and tribal people into a kind of peasantry" (MacLeod: 142).

While immediate economic interests shaped the character of Indian rule, we should not conclude that they were always dominant or that Indians everywhere faced equal levels of cultural destruction and economic subjugation. The conflicts between economic, political, and religious goals produced varied results. MacLeod argued that clear socio-economic differences existed between the Western Highlands and the Eastern regions of what is present-day Guatemala. Christopher Lutz and W. George Lovell (1990) have recently extended this analysis, arguing that the division was a reflection of the ways the Spanish viewed the economic potential of the two regions. The lack of commercial interest in the highlands put less direct pressure on the indigenous communities of the area. At the same time, colonial administrators viewed Indian communities as important sources of labor and revenue, and

exercised more control over encomendero abuses than in more distant part of the Audiencia. The bulk of the colonial population settled in what Lutz and Lovell term the "highland core" near the capital of Santiago. Other settlers moved into the Pacific Coast; while the western Highlands remained largely Indian and while some commercial ventures did appear in that region, they did not put extensive pressure on Indian lands.

Catholicism, Syncretism, and Legitimacy

As important as these economic and political considerations are in understanding colonial Guatemala, they do not answer the question, how legitimate was this order? Attention to the history of what Adriaan van Oss has called "Catholic colonialism" provides an essential vantage point from which to understand the deep tensions between theory and practice, as well as spiritual and material concerns, and analyze their significance for the issues of cultural legitimacy and political community.

The ways in which Catholic missionaries and priests helped to colonize Guatemala were very much influenced by which groups were doing the work. Early missionary accounts report that priests were lacking in quantity and quality, a problem which led Bishop Francisco Marroquin to request the assistance of missionaries from the monastic orders. As van Oss notes:

> The American dioceses, including Guatemala, served as a sort of escape valve for unemployed and perhaps unqualified members of the peninsula's spiritual proletariat. (1986: 13)

The arrival of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and others brought solutions and new problems. The new missionaries brought with them a degree of learning and spiritual conviction that gradually put them at odds with the "secular" (non-monastic) clergy. The religious orders were dominant in the Western Highlands, while the secular clergy tended to end up in the lowland centers where the populations was less indigenous.

The dominance of the religious orders had a significant impact on creating the political and cultural legacy of non-assimilation in the highlands. The process of reducción put limits on the growth of encomiendas in the region. When a clash of jurisdiction emerged between congregación and encomendero, the missionaries usually won out. While the formation of congregations brought some changes in the territorial basis of Indian communities, many were still able to survive relatively intact.

W. George Lovell reports that in the Cuchumatán region in Western Guatemala the process of gathering Indians often did not create a genuine sense of community among the disparate groups brought together. "Far from being homogeneous entities, many a congregación was a mosaic of small groups that touched, but often did not interpenetrate" (1985: 80). These efforts were carried out so that "Indians should be reduced to villages and not allowed to live divided and separated in the mountains and wilderness where they are deprived of all spiritual and temporal governments." The Spanish strove to impose a new spatial order in the assumption that a cultural

transformation would follow. Spanish-style towns--which van Oss notes were an important element in the strengthening of the medieval church and polity--sought to draw the Indians out of what seemed anarchical patterns of inhabitation in remote, inaccessible areas. Sometimes, Spanish goals could be satisfied within pre-colonial settlements; Huehuetenango was an example. This had important cultural advantages:

> It was frequently possible to establish congregaciones in which a Catholic church was built on or adjacent to a native ceremonial complex, thus giving Spanish power over the Indians a strong and overt symbolic expression. (Lovell 1985: 78)

But for the most part, the success of congregaciones as vehicles of cultural transformation was more apparent than real. Two different ways of thinking about land were in opposition--one instrumental, the other spiritual. Flight was also motivated by economic concerns and

> ...a complex interplay of cultural preference and existential circumstances constantly eroded Spanish notions of orderly, town focused living. (Lovell: 83) [2]

The methods of evangelization employed by the orders tended to readily reinforce the inclination to not assimilate. In theory education, especially in Spanish, was always a centerpiece of Crown policy. But in practice neither the Indians nor the religious orders had any real interest; van Oss suggests that the missionaries sought to create a permanent need for their presence as missionaries, and in the process maintain their position and privileges. This is also evident in the total disinclination to ordain indigenous priests (1986: 161). The gradual lose of interest in the "uplift" of the Indians

illustrates what Woodward (1985) describes as a pervasive colonial attitude--that the Indians were happy living in poverty and idolatry. Van Oss notes that the Spanish continually viewed the Indians as pagan idolaters, but he argues that among the Indians themselves Catholicism, as they had constructed it, was a powerful focus of loyalty and reverence (1986: 150). In this way, Catholicism provided a kind of cultural legitimacy, but its terms were fragile, grounded in non-assimilation, cultural ambiguity, and indirect resistance.

The nature of this peculiar and ambiguous cultural order indicates that while the institutions of Catholicism certainly transformed indigenous religious practice and community structure, the result was not hispanicization. The political, economic, and religious institutions of Spanish colonialism so quickly imposed their imprint upon the life of the Maya that it is understandable why some argue that Maya culture quickly disappeared under the institutions of conquest. Systems of land tenure which held together an array of cultural-political institutions were transformed by encomienda and reducción. At the same time, the broad contours of colonial intent and Maya response took on shape and meaning in specific, diverse sites, and the impact and results were by no means consistent. Community cultures and institutions were transformed, but in ways which did not always reflect the intentions of colonialism. What can perhaps be most safely said is that by the end of the 17th century, the structures of colonial rule--beset by inconsistency, lack of

local compliance by settlers and Maya, and economic stagnation--were increasingly unsatisfactory from the perspective of Spain. With the displacement of the Habsburgs by Bourbon rule, the effort to construct and new political and economic order was gradually enacted.

Bourbon Reform

The Spanish Enlightenment

Colonial policy underwent a fundamental reordering under the Bourbon rulers of the 18th century. While these policies eventually contributed to the development of an independence movement and the end of Spanish colonial rule, the spirit of Bourbon intentions was to live on in many of the national elites who ruled Guatemala in the 19th and 20th centuries. Economic stagnation in the colonies and debts incurred through wars in Europe compelled Spain to pursue economic expansion through the development of a more capitalist, export-oriented economy. The Bourbon political goals paralleled those of other modernizing European states: greater efficiency, political centralization, rationalization and wealth-generating capacity. In the accelerating climate of economic and military competition of 18th century Europe, modern nation-states, as well as the "system" in which they pursued their national interests, gradually began to emerge in Europe. This process bore the influence of enlightenment ideas and principles, but as Paul Kennedy

has recently argued, it was economic competition and sustained military conflict that moved political leaders towards rationalization (1987: 31-73). Gradually these developments were further transformed by nationalism, but:

> It was war, and the consequences of war, that provided a much more urgent and continuous pressure towards "nation-building" than these philosophic considerations and slowly evolving social tendencies. (Ibid: 71)

In this way, La Ilustración influenced Spanish culture and politics in the same way as in other European countries--not as a series of philosophical abstractions, but rather in the context of specific and pressing demands placed on emerging nation-states trying to confront an array of problems with the resources their political and cultural traditions offered. Hence the particular features of Spain's encounter with the enlightenment were deeply rooted in its medieval, Catholic political traditions.[3] The Bourbons were forced to confront the cultural significance of the Enlightenment because it came to them embedded in a series of economic and technological changes which, as Woodward notes, they could scarcely avoid confronting:

> Reduction of taxes on commerce, freer trade, increased incentives to production, expansion of African slavery, encouragement of new technology, improved roads and navigational aids, more liberal credit and capital accumulation laws, easier acquisition of land for agriculture, and authorization of new commercial organizations all promoted capitalist growth and a trend away from subsistence agriculture towards plantation production for exports. (1990: 53)

Reform

The Bourbons viewed strengthening the administrative and fiscal power of the state as essential to their political and economic survival. That goal required weakening the local power of the Catholic Church which had held up the Habsburg system. As Miles Wortman noted:

> If the Bourbon state were to stimulate private economic development with ties to the metropolis, the Church's control of local capital had to be broken. If taxation to develop state power was to be increased, the ecclesiastical credit institutions had to be destroyed and replaced by private individuals whose primary aim was to profit from an increase in commerce. (1982: 133)

But the struggle between state and clerical power was not resolved quickly for much was at stake. Spanish state power gradually won some victories--particularly after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1766--as the state became the center of finance, and religious influence remained strongest in the realm of education. Still, the financial power of the Church was not effectively broken until the late 19th century.

The Crown also sought to expand its capacity to tax local merchants and communities. In order for fiscal reform to succeed, administrative reforms were necessary which brought the Crown into localities which had previously seen it as a distant and not immediately relevant force in their lives. This was the purpose behind the creation of four intendentes within colonial Guatemala: Leon, Chiapas, Salvador, and Comayagua. This new administrative structure had long-term significance as new military and financial institutions provided

more power and autonomy to provincial elites who had long resented the economic and political power of Guatemala. These tensions gradually created increasingly separate notions of political interest and identity.

While the process of economic and political reforms in Spain was not as extensive as in some other European states, it brought enormous changes in economic structure. Subsistence and barter economies were gradually being altered by the increased links to a expanding global capitalist system. Inconsistency, the lack of adequate bureaucracy, and local conflicts all hindered the success of reforms. New commercial possibilities for some threatened the status of others; these changes thus sharpened the political schisms which divided colonial elites during and after the movement for independence.

Stronger State, Weaker Legitimacy

By the end of the 18th century, reforms undertaken by the Bourbons had begun to weaken the political authority and legitimacy of the Catholic Church both in Spain and in her colonial empire. Medieval political traditions had been forced, by political necessity, to grapple with the Enlightenment and its often contradictory language of reason, freedom, and rationality.[4] The emergence of new forces such as capitalism and republicanism did not destroy Spanish traditions, but they did loosen some of the fundamental cultural moorings of the colonial world. Church and State were never again to exist in so culturally close a fit in Guatemala, except in a more limited way during the

Conservative rule of Rafael Carrera from 1837 to 1865. While maintaining strong support among traditional elites, the Catholic Church was increasingly at odds with important emerging groups.

In the next section, I examine the ways these changes shaped elite conflict and the movement for independence. But the weakening of the temporal power of the Church by new ideologies of state modernization brought profound changes to indigenous communities that were resisted by many. Clearly the Indians had viewed the Church ambiguously; but it was the only Spanish cultural institution which ever came close to possessing legitimacy. To the reformers that legitimacy was useless, grounded as it was in distance and difference rather than assimilation. As the economy had grown more complex, the loose administrative spread of the clergy was inadequate. Van Oss describes their dilemma well:

> [Whereas] it was the clergy who provided the nerves and sinews guaranteeing continual colonial presence. Royal officialdom relied on the parish priests to fulfill many basic functions besides the care of souls....no official policy could be executed at the local level without recourse to the parochial office. (1986: 152-154)

While economic change and enlightenment ideology had their own momentum as historical forces, they could not readily generate a new cultural basis for legitimacy and instead provoked increased fragmentation and open resistance in many indigenous communities. Carol Smith has argued that the pattern which had previously developed in Guatemala--a degree of corporate

autonomy for indigenous communities--meant that when first the Bourbons and later post- independence Liberal governments moved to strengthen state administrative and fiscal power, they confronted resistance. Reforms altered "the rules of governance without developing a legitimate ideology for popular consumption" (1990a: 260). What existed instead was a fragmented world of enlightenment, Catholic, Iberian, and Maya cultural forms and enclaves; none was wholly separate and all were shaped by the particulars of the colonial experience. This conflict and confusion exposed just how tenuous and internally contradictory the previous cultural order had been while deepening a legitimacy problem which has never been resolved.[5]

Independence and Federation

Conservatives, Liberals, and Independence

Miles Wortman has noted that the power of the Spanish monarch "was greater in 1790 than any time since the Conquest and yet within twenty years most of the accomplishments were destroyed" (Wortman: 156). Bourbon reforms and economic expansion had brought the region more fully into the world economy than every before. Subsistence economies that had depended upon nature for prosperity became dependent on European demand for dye as well as fluctuations of nature in their regions and the indigo zone. Trade was increased, though monopoly was still the rule, as was the case throughout

Europe and the Americas in the 18th century. The Spanish were forced to confront their rivals in the Isthmus--particularly the British--providing further impetus for revenue generation and economic development. But while at times able to take advantage of particular products--indigo, most notably--the Spanish economic position was precarious within the emerging world market.

The fundamental weakness of Spain's position internationally was multiplied by the impact of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Discontent with Spanish rule grew within Guatemala among the 4% of the population of the Audiencia in 1810 which was white and dominated political life. But within that small group were nasty cleavages and resentments, particularly between <u>penisulares</u> and <u>criollos</u>. The latter group generally believed that Crown policy had systematically privileged the former at their expense; this split was to color many of the policy disagreements and party divisions which grew deeper and more violent after independence in 1823. In a new structural environment, new questions challenged and altered the political culture of Guatemala.

One group, which eventually was represented by the Liberal Party, tended towards free trade, anti-clericalism, and republican political reforms. They were intellectually under the star of the American and French revolution and the rhetoric of free government, equality, and the principles of enlightenment reason and progress. The Conservatives, on the other hand, opposed each of those positions and upheld traditional values and institutions.

Resentful of the dominance of royal and penisulare officials and threatened by many of the administrative and economic reforms being enacted, Woodward argues they began to:

> ...embrace two views of Spain, one historical, the other immediate...on the one hand the creoles idealized a glorious Spanish past--Spain at the peak of its power, the Spain of the Conquest, with its elevated cultural and spiritual values. They saw themselves as defenders of this spirit in the new world. (1985: 75)

This brought them in opposition to what they viewed as "scheming and calculating royal officials threatening their economic position with bothersome and misguided laws" (Ibid).

The positions taken by each faction vis-a-vis independence were not consistent or predictable, owing to the upheaval in Spain throughout the first decades of the 19th century. The Spanish republicans were not inclined to grant independence (Karnes 1976: 12-28). Moreover the Captain General, Jose de Bustamante y Guerra, appointed in 1812, was a conservative who opposed the republican constitution established by the government set up at Cadiz in resistance to Napoleon. Bustamante's determined efforts to weaken liberal forces in the colony provoked revolts throughout the Audiencia, until a more extensive crackdown accompanied the return of Ferdinand VII in 1814. With the restoration of the 1812 Cádiz Constitution in 1820, the movement for independence started up again but it was far from united. Conservatives rejected Spanish republicanism, but they also feared the potential strength of liberal forces within a Central American federation. Many supported the plan

put forward by Mexican leader Agustín de Iturbide which proposed to make the Audiencia part of the newly independent country of Mexico. Many liberals were fearful that Guatemalan elites would retain their traditional dominance, but a majority of local municipios voted for independence. Still, as Woodward notes,

> All accepted independence from Spain, but there were variations in their approaches to the future, so that as the national period opened Central America was politically fragmented and caught up in wave of regional and local acts of separation. (1990: 58)

Jim Handy develops the same point more broadly:

> For Central America, independence came not as a victory in a bitter battle against a commonly perceived oppressor. Rather it was the culmination of a series of incidents that prompted almost universal acceptance of the need for breaking ties with Spain, but which did little to determine the shape that politics would take in the region. (1984: 37)

Federation and Discord

Full Central American independence came in March 1823 after Iturbide was overthrown and the annexation of Guatemala was nullified. But calling Central America a nation did not make it so. The states of the Federation, built upon the powers given the intendentes by Bourbon reforms, and strengthened by the independence period, were only weakly controlled by the federal government. Woodward characterized the 1824 constitution as a mix of the 1812 Cadiz and 1789 American Constitution. "Widely recognized as pro-liberal," it gave greatest power to local legislative assemblies and "provided inadequate authority or revenue to the central government" (1990:

59). These structures reinforced regional and social rivalries and factions which had given rise to quite different interests and identities. Miles Wortman argues that "most people in Central America recognized the state government as their nation" (1983: 253). Moreover, each of the republics was internally divided, though liberal forces were generally dominant beyond Guatemala. Conservative forces took control of the federal government in 1826, but were driven out in 1829 after two years of constant armed conflict between the two parties. Honduran Liberal Francisco Morazán's efforts to organize a strong national government were a failure; he was more successful in organizing military forces which could put down threats to individual republics. In this way, the era of confederation was mainly notable for the solidification of local political structures and identities as the principle point of reference.

Liberal Rule: 1829-1837

Guatemala was always the strongest bastion of conservatism during the movement toward independence. Its privilege and influence during Spanish rule had long fueled provincial resentments, and distrust of Guatemala's traditional aristocratic elite remained pervasive in the violent conflicts over power which occurred in the first years of the federation. After the triumph of Morazán's forces in 1829, the federal capital was moved to San Salvador, and Liberal Mariano Gálvez became Guatemala's new governor (Handy 1984: 39-40). Gálvez set forth an ambitious program of economic and social reforms

designed to create a modern, "enlightened" political economy. At the heart of these reforms was the belief that Guatemala's Indian and Catholic heritages were impediments to political and economic development. Going beyond the original intent to separate church and state, Gálvez moved actively to exile or remove particularly vocal priests and weaken the Church's financial and property holdings. The Liberals attempted to establish a unified legal system to replace the juridical world of institutional fueros. They sought to end the separate system of legal protection for Indians and promote equality. Gálvez' attack on the power of the Church included an effort at education reform that would create a public school system to "westernize" the Indians (Woodward 1985: 102).

The Liberal program for economic development emphasized agricultural modernization. Prior to Independence, Guatemala was still characterized by extensive areas of land remaining under the control of indigenous communities. While efforts to take over these lands were occasionally successful, the Colonial state saw the Indian communities as important sources of revenue and hence restricted the possibilities for purchasing community lands (McCreery 1990). Gálvez' government pursued diversification and a strengthened position within the emerging world market; they hoped to transform various "inefficiencies" within the agrarian sector--"most importantly, inadequate agricultural practice on the part of Guatemalan peasants" (Handy 1984: 45).

Liberal reform measures directly challenged the fiscal autonomy of Indian communities and the traditional power of local officials. Gálvez' policies sought to exercise greater coercive power over Indian labor, levied an onerous head tax, promoted foreign investment, and challenged Indian land holdings (Woodward 1971: 49-55). His government also moved to extract greater revenue from the cajas de communidad, community funds which were traditionally under the control of village leaders. Legislation passed in 1829 allowed for the public sale of tierras baldías held by Indian communities as well as the privatization of all common land. When Indians could not document their legal title to the land, as was usually the case, they often lost it. The goal of these measures was to open the land up to development by agricultural entrepreneurs, especially foreigners who would be encouraged to invest while an indigenous labor force would be compelled to work in these new enterprises.

The Failure of Liberalism

Gálvez' programs provoked resistance and often were imposed by force. Indigenous rebellions grew more extensive and violent after a cholera epidemic broke out in 1836. Catholic officials seized on the epidemic as a sign of God's disfavor with Liberal political attacks on the Church and tradition; they sowed suspicion about government vaccine programs. When the government moved to enforce efforts at quarantine, a peasant army quickly

coalesced under the leadership of Rafael Carrera in 1837. Conservatives argued that Liberal reform programs were fomenting social chaos and disorder.

> Gálvez' program aimed at assimilating the Indians. The Conservatives claimed this meant exploitation, with the danger of rebellion and violence. Instead they offered paternalism and protection. (Woodward 1985: 115)

As Gálvez waffled in response, a group of Liberals sought a coalition with Carrera, believing the "illiterate goat herder" could be easily manipulated. They underestimated their erstwhile ally; after the removal of Gálvez in 1837, a power struggle ensued from which Carrera's forces emerged victorious in 1840 after the military defeat of Morazán.

Some commentators have attributed the failure of Gálvez and the Liberals to manipulation of superstitious and ignorant Indians by the forces of reaction. Mario Rodríguez wrote that the Indians "apparently rejected the attempt to bring them into Guatemalan society as first class citizens" (1971: 29). His analysis focused largely on the legal mechanisms of reform--the Livingston Codes--and the general goals of regeneration, social change and progress. Williford (1971: 39-40) argued that the general aversion of the masses to change presented insurmountable obstacles, particularly in the wake of the cholera epidemic of 1837. From these perspectives, the Liberals represented the forces of culture and enlightenment struggling in a backwards wilderness that was not yet ready to modernize. Liberal efforts at "applied enlightenment"

appeared too soon and could not take root in such a hostile cultural environment.

The liberals of Gálvez' era clearly failed because their programs were inappropriate to the setting. But we must carefully analyze the political culture within which these policies provoked such resistance. It is useful to recall that the Independence movement itself was dominated by penisulare and criollo elites. Indigenous communities had little reason to view independence favorably; Bourbon reforms which challenged community autonomy and tried to exact more revenue from villages had generated increased, if fragmented resistance in the late 18th and early 19th century (Handy 1984: 48-49). Liberal policies under Gálvez were presented as an effort to improve the life of all and promote "development." But from the perspective of Indian communities, a perspective reinforced by the Catholic Church but firmly grounded in their own experience, Liberal policies were seen as a intensification of Bourbon efforts to weaken their political autonomy. The change from a Spanish to Central American government did nothing to grant the policies more legitimacy or make them seem less threatening. As Smith notes:

> Because the nationalism of this period was an imposition of elite culture on the masses and because it had no respect for local cultural forms, it provoked a popular, cultural reaction. (1990a: 79)

The resistance by indigenous communities to the Liberals' efforts to construct a modern "nation" reinforces James Scott's argument that peasants often act to maintain traditional social relations which provide relative security

in the face of changes which, under the banner of progress and economic development, cause greater inequality and weaken the possibilities for subsistence (1986). The Liberals' stated intention was to improve the life of indigenous communities and end their separate legal status; but however "enlightened" Liberal programs by intention, the indigenous beneficiaries of these efforts judged, with reason, their practical impact to be otherwise.

The Carrera Regime

With the triumph of Conservative forces in 1837 under the command of Rafael Carrera, most of the Liberal constitution was set aside and a less centralized, more personalistic form of government ensued. Woodward argues that the Conservatives returned to the pattern of the Habsburg era in some ways. This represented a less ambitious governmental project, with control in many areas returned to non-governmental institutions such as the Catholic Church, in education, and merchant guilds or consulados that oversaw maintenance of internal infrastructure. Local government was in the hands of municipal corporations, and the system of special courts, embodying institutional fueros, remained predominant.

With regard to the Indians, Carrera's government sought a return to the spirit of colonial laws which, with the intention of promoting their spiritual and intellectual betterment, also expressed a commitment to protect indigenous

communities from exploitation and abuse. The goal of regulating their existence as a labor force was balanced by a commitment to the preservation of their communities and land holdings:

> The desire to bring our country's advance and improvements by enacting the legislation of enlightened nations, without being prepared to receive them, has produced nothing more than trouble and evil. Our liberalism must be limited to giving our people a general education and improving their habits.

While Carrera's government returned to the more paternalistic political model of the past, important social changes led to increased Indian participation in government, particularly in the military. Maya communities recovered some of the autonomy they had possessed in the past, and Oliver La Farge argued in a famous analysis that this period constituted the highpoint in terms of the relative autonomy of indigenous communities (1940). Recent work by David McCreery has offered further evidence to back up this assessment. The reversal of anticlerical liberal legislation could only go so far in restoring the former financial and political power of the Catholic Church. "This situation freed up the Cabildo [town governments] and the cofradías to become more genuinely indigenous political and religious vehicles" (1990: 91). This did not, McCreery adds, lead to an era of highland peace and harmony; many conflicts over land emerged and "not only could state authorities not bring the situation under control, they commonly had little or no idea what was going on" (Ibid: 104).

In the first decades after independence, cochineal, used in the production of dyes, replaced indigo as Guatemala's most important export. Carrera promoted cochineal production because it reinforced the social policy of the Conservatives. Cochineal was taken from insects who fed on the <u>nopal</u> plant and production tended to be household based. It provided a source of revenue for Indian producers and their communities and did not generate increased pressure on their land (Handy 1984: 58). But with the decline of cochineal in the face of bad harvests and the discovery of aniline substitutes in the 1850s, interest in coffee increased as Guatemalans saw the success that Costa Rica and El Salvador were having in the world market.

While coffee production is often associated with the Liberal regimes after 1971, both Carrera and his successor Vicente Cerna (1865-71) offered incentives to promote coffee production and the new crop quickly expanded to provide 50% of the country's export revenues by 1871 (McCreery 1990: 104). But there were inherent limits in the Conservative approach to coffee production from the perspective of the newly emergent planters. If the enormous economic potential of the crop was to be more fully realized, reforms in the policy and capacity of the nation state were necessary. In this environment liberal economic and political ideas gained renewed credence as the solution to Guatemala's economic weakness within the changing and expanding world economy.

Liberal Reform 1871-1944

Conservative President Cerna was overthrown in 1871 and replaced by Miguel García Granados (1871-1873). The new President's cautious moves towards reform provoked impatience among more aggressive Liberals; Granados resigned and was succeeded by Justo Rufino Barrios (1873-1885). Barrios accelerated the Reforma Liberal and ushered in an era of Liberal rule which would last until World War II and leave an imprint upon Guatemalan society and political economy which still remains. These Liberals were very much the heirs of the earlier tradition of anti-clericalism, faith in foreign capital, and a general rejection of the political traditions inherited from Spain. But their development philosophy included new elements reflecting the economic and intellectual world of their era, as well as the lessons learned from Carrera's defeat of their forebears in 1837. As Woodward notes, this new generation was less idealistic and more overtly elitist in its rhetoric and ideology. Political democracy was only a distant goal which could not be approached without a prior economic and cultural transformation. These new Liberal policies were inspired by cultural, economic and political goals which were related in theory but are best analyzed separately in practice, for they left a complex and inconsistent legacy.

Culture

E. Bradford Burns has argued that 19th century Latin American countries were often the scene of fundamental cultural conflict between three groups: a Europeanized elite seeking North Atlantic-style modernization; a conservative elite interested in slower and more selective adaption of outside influences; and the masses who generally had to fight to preserve whatever security tradition offered and whose situation was generally worsened by "progress" (1980). The era of Carrera's rule clearly represented the ascendence and dominance of the latter two perspectives in an ambiguous balance. The return to Liberal government, especially with the rise of Barrios, brought the unambiguous victory of the first group.

The Liberals viewed themselves as a progressive cultural vanguard with a mission to impress their more advanced ideas upon a backward nation. They spoke, in even sharper terms than Liberals of the 1820s and 30s, of the need to purge the population of the Indian and Catholic influences that obstructed Guatemala's potential for national development. The dominant philosophic ethics behind these efforts were positivism and Social Darwinism; Liberals embraced what they termed a "scientific philosophy" which carried the promise of progress and modernity (Burnett 1986; 1990). Their idea of progress, fueled by Social Darwinism, carried explicit assumptions about the

racial and cultural superiority of the new missionaries. In Burnett's words:

> Progress was converted into a synonym for the importation of values, beliefs and if possible the genetic heritage of Northern Europe and North America. Seen in this way Protestant missionaries were the perfect physical and ideological vehicle for the improvement of the nation--not only would they bring their capital, they would also promote by their own effort, the same attitudes and values that had brought their own people to the vanguard of developmental evolution. (1990: 16)

President Barrios and his successors hoped that German and North American immigrants would provide a vehicle for a transformation of cultural values. Protestant missionaries were invited to set up schools to which the President sent his own children as an example to others. The vision of the liberal reformers--their project of economic and social modernization--inclined them quite readily to see Protestant missionaries as partners in the task of overcoming the debilitating influence of the Catholic Church on Guatemalan culture and economy. Their goal was not simply the conversion of souls but also, in the words of a missionary--"minds, bodies, and spirits."

These sentiments did not only express the goals of liberal reformers like Barrios. They gradually came to reflect the foreign policy interests of Guatemala's powerful neighbor to the north. While United States' missionaries were initially slow to respond to Barrios' appeal, they gradually took up the idea, which became prominent in the 1880s, that Christians--in other words, Protestants--possessed a God-given duty to civilize non-European parts of the world. They shared the ideas expressed with growing fervor by politicians and

ministers such as Josiah Strong who informed his fellow Anglo Saxons that God was "preparing mankind to receive our impress." One prominent missionary in Guatemala, Edward Haymaker, referred to a "missionary corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine which in essence stated that:

> Central America is our responsibility. Others are not going to evangelize it. The spirit of the Monroe Doctrine governs more than European armies, it also discourages European missionaries and keeps them at a distance. (Cited by Burnett 1990: 23)

It was, therefore, the duty of North Americans to elevate backward peoples and free them from vice, poverty, illiteracy, moral and spiritual degradation, and superstition.[6]

In spite of continued effort and government support, the success of these missionary ventures remained minimal during the first several decades of this century. An institutional infrastructure was established, and liberal reforms which decreed Catholicism to no longer be the state religion decisively weakened the political and economic power of the Church. But the numbers of converts remained quite small--never more than 5% of the population--and the cultural power of Catholicism remained very strong. Burnett argues that in essence the missionaries spoke a cultural language that was foreign to the majority of the population. In many cases the linguistic barrier was more literal as the missionaries were very slow to learn and use indigenous languages. But even when the Bible was translated from Spanish into Quiche or Mam, the aggressive anti-Catholic rhetoric deployed in seeking conversion often

alienated more than it convinced. Burnett argues that it was only when Protestantism began to find indigenous points of reference that it was able to attract significant numbers of converts. What had been missing, and only began to really appear in the 1950s and 60s, were religious messages emanating from these churches which could speak in some way to the cultural world of indigenous Guatemalans rather than simply to a small, racist elite which looked to Europe and North America for its cultural models.[7]

Economic Development

While the Liberal's ambitious cultural goals were not realized, their economic programs fundamentally altered the socio-economic condition of indigenous communities as well as their relation to the state. Believing that economic development would flow from an expanded agro-export sector, Barrios immediately implemented policies designed to increase the availability of land for coffee production as well as the expansion of available credit. Railroads and shipping facilities were constructed. The results were impressive: production grew by five times between 1871 and 1884, and Guatemala's coffee won gold medals in Europe in 1888 (Handy 1984: 64).

Policies to promote coffee production necessarily involved securing adequate supplies of labor. But the cultural goals of the reformers not withstanding, the state was cautious and did not attempt to abolish communal land holdings. David McCreery argues that while such a process did move

very rapidly, and violently, in El Salvador and to a lesser extent in Nicaragua, the situation in Guatemala was more complex. He also maintains that this difference goes part of the way towards explaining why resistance to Liberal policy was slower to develop than it had earlier in the century. The best coffee lands were not in the highlands; this put less direct pressure on communal lands than was the case in El Salvador. The Guatemalan state wanted to ensure a ready supply of labor and did so under the system of forced labor known as mandamiento. Yet, as I noted, the experiences of the 1830s had chastened the new liberals and they were careful to avoid provoking another uprising.

While Liberal reforms did not generally threaten communal lands, they did greatly increase state control over the highlands and change the terms of Indian-state relations. As previously noted, indigenous communities survived the initial conquest more successfully in the Western Highlands in part because they had received greater protection from the state, which viewed them as an important source of revenue. Since Guatemala was the administrative center of the Audiencia, colonial officials could more effectively enforce crown decrees protecting Indian communities from exploitation; they also dominated the processes which controlled access to Indian labor. Carol Smith argues that the dominance of Church and state in the area "inhibited the rise of a powerful landed oligarchy in the province holding power

independent of the state." In other parts of the kingdom, these structures were weaker and the local economic elites more dominant.

> This kept most Guatemalan Indians more isolated from non-Indian settlers than in other parts of the New World. It also prevented the rise of a powerful landed oligarchy in the province, holding power independent of the state. Thus, it established the central contradiction in Guatemala, that between Indian communities and the state, rather than between peasants and landowners or workers and the state. (1990a: 74)

When Indians were exploited in the colonial period, therefore, the process was to large degree managed by the state. Coffee production built on this pattern while altering the specific dynamics in important ways.

At the same time, legislation, reinforced by direct coercion, forced many to labor in the new coffee fincas (Cambranes 1985; McCreery 1983). In the process, Smith argues, the terms of ethnic identity shifted and "Indian" and "ladino" took on their modern meaning in the highlands. The categories were reconstructed amidst new strategies for the control of Indian labor. Prior to this time the primary division had been between Indians and whites. Smith illustrates this point by noting that Carrera, by modern definition clearly a ladino, was widely labelled an Indian in his own time (1990a: 72-95).

The modern construction of ladino in the Western Highlands only became widespread in the wake of the increased economic and political penetration of the area after 1871. Ladino now referred to individuals who were sometimes mestizo, and sometimes pure Indians who spoke Spanish and no longer lived in indigenous communities. In the zones where the coffee

economy flourished, ladinos, who had previously faced restrictions on their right to live in the Western Highlands, began to move into the areas as "special agents of the state and coffee economy"--as government officials, soldiers, labor contractors, merchants. Whereas their economic status previously had been essentially the same as Indians relative to the white elite, coffee production engendered new class relations between Indians and ladinos. Smith writes:

> What is notable...in Guatemala is that the emergence of agrarian capitalism which eradicated distinctions between Indians and non-Indians in the coffee zones of the rest of Central America, created divisions between Indians and non-Indians in the coffee zones of Guatemala which did not exist in the pre-coffee era. (1990a: 85)

Whereas in other parts of Guatemala--particularly in the capitol and the Eastern Highlands--they gradually came to be viewed uniformly as poor ladinos, in the highlands Indians and ladinos became "separate and opposed classes" with the latter possessing political control through dominance of local state institutions (1990a: 86).

These changes strengthened the long existing tendency of Indian communities to define their interests and identity in opposition to the state, instead of an economic class. On the one hand there was the further strengthening of the state as the agent of capitalist expansion and, at the same time, the continued presence of autonomous Indian communities resisting efforts at cultural assimilation. Liberal governments did not need to launch an all-out attack on indigenous lands in order to achieve their goals. Their project

emphasized generating new export production, recruiting laborers, and expanding administrative control. The expansion of state power in the form of comandantes locales made rebellion much less possible, and local officials now represented the state more fully than ever before (McCreery 1990: 110). Still, the history of Indian resistance made the post-1871 Liberals cautious not to upset local traditions any more than was necessary to further their ends.

The agro-export emphasis of the Guatemalan economy was extended during the 22-year rule of Manual Estrada Cabrera (1898-1919). The first decades of the new century brought increased dependency as foreign entrepreneurs opened up the humid lowlands for banana cultivation. Government land concessions and tax exemptions permitted the United Fruit Company to gain control of the Guatemalan Railway Company. El Pulpo, the Octopus, became one of the most powerful political and economic forces in Guatemala.

Political Development

While there were elements of continuity, the rule of Barrios and those who followed differed fundamentally from the caudillismo of Carrera. By restoring some of the power of the Church and a more decentralized governing structure, Carrera's rule possessed a degree of legitimacy. He came to power with support from the masses, and even though he ruled in alliance with conservative elites, his policies permitted much greater autonomy for

local institutions. Barrios also ruled with paternalism and personalismo, but did so with an improved bureaucratic apparatus and an explicit commitment to a national project built around an image of racial difference (McCreery 1983: 16-17). His government openly equated the interests of a small, "enlightened", developmentalist elite with those of the nation and for that reason was both more powerful and less legitimate than Carrera.

While Estrada Cabrera ruled with an iron hand that kept him in power for over two decades, elite opposition did emerge in response to his compliance with the wishes of the United States government and foreign companies. When Cabrera finally alienated his North American allies during World War I, his foes were emboldened to remove the dictator in a 1920 coup. The regimes of the 1920s represent both continuity and a time of transition. Carlos Herrara's Unionist Party (1920-21) promoted trying to reestablish the Central American Federation and tried to negotiate better terms with foreign interests; Herrara was ousted in 1921. General Jose Maria Orellano (1921-26) returned to a more compliant position and was immediately viewed more favorably by the United States. But while Orellano and then Lazaro Chacón (1926-30) often ruled with a repressive hand worthy of their distinguished predecessors, conflict and contestation were much more evident. Elements of the country's economic elite expressed opposition to government concessions to United Fruit. New urban labor and professional groups were gradually organizing. While movements for reform never approached the dimensions of

those which emerged in El Salvador in the late 1920s, they reflected the uncertainty and ferment of the times. To call this a full-fledged legitimacy crisis would be an overstatement, however; legitimacy had been tenuous at best during the Liberal era.

The rising political star of the decade was Jorge Ubico, godson of Rufino Barrios. His work in a series of administrative positions established a record of efficiency and reform which gradually won Ubico a following among university students in the capital. After his 1926 effort to form an alternative Liberal Progressive Party failed, Ubico returned to the traditional Liberal Party as a vehicle for his political ambitions and won election in 1931.

The world wide depression after 1929 devastated the market for Guatemala's exports and brought a 40% drop in trade between 1929 and 1932 (Dunkerley 1988: 90). In this environment Dunkerley argues that Central American states

> pursued essentially defensive and preemptive strategies in order to maintain the plantation economy. The suppression of social unrest and violence directed against political opponents was primarily to ensure the preservation of existing social relations rather than in support of an aggressive expanisionism. (1988: 94)

Victor Bulmer-Thomas argues that the structure of political control dominant in Central America prior to the depression, which he calls the "liberal oligarchic state" gave way to a more authoritarian model. The depression brought increased unemployment and labor activism, intensifying demands

upon the state. While the 1920s had exposed conflict among the economic elite, particularly regarding the power of foreign interests, the 1930s encouraged greater cooperation to keep the economy afloat. The depth of the economic crisis temporarily quieted elite divisions; a strengthened state apparatus clamped down on the spaces for political debate which had opened in the 1920s while marshalling fiscal resources towards recovery of the export agriculture sector (1987: 82-86).

While Ubico extended the tradition of personalistic dictatorship, he also introduced significant new elements to Guatemalan political institutions and culture. By replacing locally elected alcaldes with hand-chosen intendentes, Ubico increased the presence and control of the central government within local communities. Ubico also changed the system of labor control in the countryside; debt peonage was abolished but vagrancy laws satisfied the needs of landowners while requiring the rural population to submit to administration through a system of identity cards. He employed forced labor to construct new roads which further expanded national-local linkages. Ubico's policies to strengthen the national government were reinforced and consolidated by expansion of the institutional capacity and coherence of the military and security apparatus (Adams 1970; McClintock 1985: 14-20). The Escuela Politécnica was expanded and military instructors from the United States and their methods came to replace the French and Spanish curricula previously

dominant. Internal security mechanisms were also enlarged, most notably through expansion of the National Police.

Ubico's actions appear to have been motivated more by the logic of personal power than by a coherent ideology of development (Handy 1984: 97-101; Dunkerley 1988: 99-101; Adams 1970: 176-86). At the same time, Ubico's success in stimulating economic growth generated some popularity among the emerging urban middle class. Periodic trips into the countryside, made possible by new road construction, helped Ubico also build some support among the rural population. But his systematic suppression of free speech and political opposition provided little real legitimacy. Guatemala was more of a nation in terms of administrative structures and state power, but a stable and broad-based national political identity was still largely lacking. While Ubico modernized the structures of repressive dictatorship in some important ways, the early 1940s brought structural and cultural forces to bear which undermined his legitimacy with elites while the struggle against European fascism discredited his style of rule among other groups: students, elements of the military, unions, and professionals. The war generated increased markets for Guatemalan goods, but this growth and economic development, brought about partly by Ubico's policies, at the same time strengthened the influence of the groups which now opposed his dictatorship. When elite and military support for Ubico further dwindling, a coalition of

young military officers and middle class groups succeeded in overthrowing the dictator in 1944.

The Revolution: 1944-1954

The era of Liberal rule between 1871 and 1944 had transformed Guatemalan political economy. Export-based coffee and banana industries linked Guatemala closely to the global economy and its vagaries. Foreign economic interests played a central and growing role. While generating economic growth, export oriented policies had not established the kind of development they originally promised, and were never able to generate new forms of legitimacy to replace the traditional sources they undermined. This was particularly true with regard to indigenous communities; Liberal reforms brought tighter state control and a weakening of local autonomy, but the pattern of non-assimilation and cultural survival endured.

The Programs of the Revolution

The 1944 revolution which toppled Ubico remains the central event of 20th century Guatemalan history. New forces and new social groups came to power, and significant changes were enacted in the institutional order. The revolution produced an immediate opening up of the political process to a disparate array of groups which had previously been either without any

voice--peasants and workers--or effectively co-opted or repressed--students, professional groups, trade unions. In December 1944, Juan Jose Arévalo was elected President; his program of "spiritual socialism" promised "sympathy for the man who works in the field, in the shops, on the military base, in small business." Arévalo invoked the political program of Franklin Roosevelt and rejected materialist socialism as "contrary to human nature" (quoted by Handy 1984: 106). The initial programs of the new government provided greater constitutional protections and established a rudimentary welfare system in health and social security. A labor code instituted in 1947 set forth the rights of workers, including the right to strike and bargain collectively. Ubico's intendente system was replaced by local elections which allowed for renewed community autonomy while opening the rural areas up to national political party organizations (Dunkerley 1988: 139).

These reforms reflected the goal of political modernization pursued by the Arévalo administration. The President spoke of integrating Guatemala's indigenous communities into a broader national political and economic community and developed government education projects which, in the words of a government agency, sought "to dispense to the further corners of the republic the cult of the patriotic symbols and historical values of the nation." (Cited by Handy 1990: 166). This goal was furthered by the development of political parties in highlands municipios. At the same time, these programs shared many of the traditional ladino biases against Indian communities and

their cultures. Like their Liberal predecessors, the revolutionaries viewed Indian culture as a largely negative influence which they now hoped could be transformed by education. As such, Arévalo's programs were often paternalistic (Adams 1990: 147-157).

Arévalo approached economic modernization cautiously, particularly in the crucial export agriculture sector. Rural workers were given rights under the labor code and Ubico's vagrancy law apparatus was overturned. Research undertaken by the government's Agrarian Studies Commission suggested the need for fundamental agrarian reform, but Arévalo feared alienating conservative forces who might label such reforms communist and instigate a counter-revolution. Though Arévalo's election had been facilitated by the cooperation of important sectors of the military, opposition remained, as reflected in the numerous coup attempts mounted against the civilian President. After divisions in the military were exacerbated by the assassination of Colonel Francisco Arana, under circumstances which appeared to implicate his chief rival, Jacobo Arbenz, Arana's supporters revolted. Arbenz defeated these forces and purged them from the military; he was subsequently elected President in 1950.

Arbenz immediately moved towards a program of economic modernization which in his own words strove to:

> ...convert Guatemala from a backward country with a predominantly feudal economy into a modern capitalist state...our policy must necessarily be based on strengthening private initiative and developing

> Guatemalan capital in whose hand rests the fundamental economic activity of the country. (quoted in Handy 1984: 115)

A key element in Arbenz' program was the promotion of a more modern, diversified agricultural sector. A 1951 study by the World Bank emphasized the need to diversify and integrate the highlands into the national economy:

> The basic poverty of Indian highland agriculture permanently hampers not only agricultural progress but the whole economic growth of Guatemala; for the Indian population constitutes the bulk of the potential internal market, without which industry cannot develop adequately. (Ibid)

While Arévalo's policies had freed Indian communities from forced labor, they did very little to improve their general economic condition or further the oft-stated goal of national integration. Rural unions and peasant leagues organized after 1948, leading to greater political participation and pressure for a more aggressive policy.

In 1952, Arbenz proposed the Agrarian Reform Law with the expressed purpose of creating the conditions in which a rural middle class of small farmers could be established. This was viewed as a step towards the development of a larger internal market that would stimulate new production and achieve the goal of diversification. The program provided land and credit to over 100,000 landless families. A study by the Bank of Guatemala indicated that the economic impact on agricultural productivity was largely positive, in spite of the dire predictions which opponents had made (Handy 1988: 687-88).

But the political impact was polarizing and ultimately fatal to the revolution. Peasant leagues and unions sought to accelerate the process while Church leaders, and finqueros mobilized opposition. As communist involvement, particularly at the local level, became evident, Arbenz opponents pressured the President to disassociate himself from the program and purge the communists from government agencies such as the Agrarian Reform and the Social Security Institutes, as well as from trade unions and peasant leagues, but Arbenz resisted. The military viewed the reform programs with increasing concern because they challenged its institutional power in rural areas. While the military as an institution was not directly involved, its refusal to defend Arbenz from the CIA-backed "liberation forces" led by Carlos Castillo Armas sealed the revolution's fate.[8]

The Political Cultural Legacy of the Revolution

The revolution clearly left an enormous legacy in terms of new institutions, political mobilization and memory. Virtually every sector of society drew its own lessons from the experience. Those most immediately involved in the counter-revolution were re-emboldened in their determination to resist change. Still, many military officials who were not allies of Arbenz were troubled by the North American intervention, and wary of letting the military become simply a tool of the wealthy. The groups involved in or mobilized by the revolution drew an assortment of conclusions. Some were

further radicalized by the evident opposition of the United States to change. The downfall of Arbenz and the counter-revolution which followed provided a powerful lesson of the limits of reform projects given the framework of United States foreign policy perspectives on the region. For the Catholic Church, opposition to the revolution inspired a search for more moderate alternatives that would lead in unexpected directions. It also created more space for Protestant churches.

At another level, the revolution often represents a missed opportunity made all the more tragic by what has occurred since. Politicians of that era who survive still try to proclaim themselves its heir--as did the vice Presidential candidate of the Christian Democrats in the November 1990 elections. A generation of mobilizations and terror stand between those days and the present, and it is not clear how tangible any political project based on the revolution as its animating myth can be in present day Guatemala. Nonetheless, the memory of failure and elite intransigence that the counter-revolution represents remains a powerful presence in Guatemalan political culture. [9]

The impact of the revolution on Indian communities has been debated among scholars. Some stress the efforts at education and economic reform and the elimination of vagrancy laws (Handy 1988; 1990). Others have seen the impact more negatively with regard to community autonomy (Wasserstrom 1975). Richard Adams described a "sociological awakening" that was deepened

by later events, but given important propulsion by the events of these years (1970). Adams argued that for the first time Indian communities pursued an active involvement in the national political system. Adams' recent analysis of ladino discourse on ethnicity during the revolution has revealed the ethnocentrism within well-intentioned programs. While emphasizing Indian poverty and exploitation, and the need for change, Indians themselves "are portrayed as capable of no self-generated action" (1990: 160).

This does not mean that Indians rejected the revolutionary programs and political activity. Handy argues that whatever attitudes ladino officials and activists might have carried towards Indian communities, the communities themselves often participated actively and saw reforms as a way to further their own agendas: "Community members were adapting national institutions at the same time as they were adopting them, just as they had done numerous times in the past" (1990: 182).[10]

The ambivalent relationship between the revolution and indigenous communities raises some fundamental issues regarding legitimacy and national community. To the extent that Arévalo and Arbenz sought legitimacy, they were partly defeated by the failure to achieve mass support at a level which might have generated a stronger defense against intervention. As long as indigenous communities have struggled to maintain their own identity and these ambitions have not been fully appreciated by ladino political reformers, the power of the ladinos to construct national political projects has been

inherently weak.[11] This is not to deny that the reformers honestly sought to improve the life of indigenous communities, even empower them in some ways. But from the perspective of the communities, these programs still carried the mark of a state towards which they were ambivalent, willing on the one hand to pressure it for services, while on the other continuing to harbor an inherent suspicion of its intentions.[12]

Counter-revolution, Conflict and Military Rule: 1954-1982

In the remaining section of this chapter, I will construct a broad picture of the cultural and structural forces which collided in the late 1970s. I will focus on three aspects of this period: the increased institutional power of the military; divisions within Guatemala's economic and political elites; and the forms of political opposition, non violent and armed, which gradually emerged to challenge the status quo, most importantly in indigenous communities. Each of these topics will be examined more fully in subsequent chapters.

Institutional Military Rule

The forces which supported the counter-revolution were united more by opposition to Arbenz than by a clear and coherent political project of their own. Assisted by pressure from the United States, Castillo Armas became President, but the coalition of forces which had opposed Arbenz began to

fragment immediately amidst new struggles for power. Getting rid of a regime was much less complicated than establishing a new and legitimate political order. Arbenz was gone, but the countryside was still full of peasant organizations, trade unions, and land reform recipients that needed to be politically neutralized. Many, though not all, of the reforms of the previous ten years were overturned, including the right to strike. These changes, reinforced by government harassment and repression, greatly reduced the numbers and power of the unions, though not without a struggle. Still, the genie of political mobilization could not easily be put back in the bottle. The structures of traditional authority in rural areas were permanently weakened and eventually required the construction of new institutions of control. The strengthening of state bureaucracy which occurred under Arévalo and Arbenz was not overturned; the apparatus of the welfare state survived while the autonomous political organizations mobilized to demand these services were repressed. Still, what Caesar Sereseres called the "traditional mass-elite control system" (1971: 40-41), was permanently weakened (Weaver 1969: 129-131).

The coup and counter-revolution of 1954 did not, as is sometimes assumed, represent the establishment of institutionalized military rule. The decision not to defend Arbenz reflected fundamental institutional concerns; but while we can trace a connection between 1954 and the events of the 1970s and 80s, important transformations occurred in the intervening years which were

by no means preordained. As James Dunkerley has noted, the new government:

> ...looked determinedly backwards and sought little more than to restore the status quo ante once the vestiges of a putative bolshevism had been eradicated. Eisenhower's Washington possessed no alternative model beyond the restoration of unbridled free enterprise. (1988: 435)

This illustrates how cultural settings place boundaries on political action. Only later, in response to events which are analyzed in the next chapter, were more expansive military political projects possible to envision. Serious tension existed between the "liberation" forces and the military, and Castillo Armas was rebuffed by the High Command when he tried to integrate his own forces into the military. While these matters were resolved in the short run, they reflected cleavages between elements of the military and the Guatemalan right which would re-emerge later.

Castillo Armas' new party, the Movimiento de Democracia Nacional (MDN), was challenged by the remnants of the old Ubiquista political machine. After Castillo Armas was assassinated in 1957, long-time Liberal Party politico Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes got the turn at being president that he had long sought. But with a weak political base, he gradually lost support within the military--especially younger officers. A general environment of corruption and incompetence was made more odious by specific actions which angered many militares. The use of Guatemalan territory by Cuban and North Americans planning the Bay of Pigs invasion was viewed by many as a

challenge to national sovereignty and revived some of the bitterness associated with the 1954 intervention. While far from supporting Castro, some officers expressed resentment about being made "puppets" of U.S. policy (Dunkerley 1988: 442). When Ydígoras Fuentes then allowed former President Arévalo to enter the 1963 Presidential elections, he was deposed.[13]

This coup in 1963 did far more than bring another general to power. The reign of General Ricardo Peralta Azurdia (1963-1966) consolidated the form of institutional military power which ruled Guatemala for the next two decades. This military coup represents, therefore, a watershed in the development of the Guatemalan military; it was the first time the military as an institution put forward its own project. Like the officers studied by Stepan in Brazil (1973), the Guatemalan military understood itself to be uniquely qualified to both guarantee order and actively administrate the national government. The effort undertaken by Peralta was motivated by the growing awareness within the military that the 1954 counter-revolution had not adequately addressed the political problems generated by the revolutionary period. While progressive and grass-roots political activity could be temporarily repressed, it kept re-emerging. The divisions within the military which the revolution brought to the surface had grown, as reflected in the coup attempt in 1960. Peralta hoped, therefore, to stifle the growing fragmentation within the military as well as the larger society.

Elite Consensus and Division

The intellectual and institutional foundations of the 1963 military coup are examined more fully in chapter 5. The significance of those developments is more as precedent for the more sophisticated project which emerged after 1982; Peralta's effort full well short of realizing its ambitions. The institutional power of the military expanded greatly relative to other political institutions and sectors. At the same time, division within Guatemala's ruling elite continued to grow. Economic growth in the 1960s complicated that process by generating divisions between agricultural and commercial elites over economic policy. The military's effort to construct an electoral system which legitimated their own power through the Partido Institucional Democrático (PID) also failed. The Presidential elections in 1966 were won by the centrist Partido Revolucionario as the PID and the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional, heir to Castillo Armas' MDN, split the conservative vote. The PR candidate, Julio César Méndez Montenegro, was only able to take power after negotiating with the military and making explicit promises not to interfere in "military affairs" such as the counterinsurgency war currently being waged in some Eastern provinces.[14]

Parties to the left of the PR--most notably the Christian Democratic Party (PDCG)--were excluded from the 1966 election, though many initially viewed the new President hopefully. The PR's subsequent capitulation to the military lost the party most of its more liberal members. With the left more

fragmented than in 1966, the 1970 election was won by Carlos Arana Osorio as part of a PID-MLN coalition which gradually soured. In 1974 an electoral coalition, the FNO (Frente Nacional de Oposición) dominated by the Christian Democrats but also containing other moderate and center-left politicians ran on a campaign of reform. The specific nature of the reforms was left vague and the coalition chose a presidential candidate, General Efraín Ríos Montt, who they believed would be acceptable to the military. The coalition's caution and tact were useless however; the FNO won the election but was denied office through fraud (Handy 1984; Black 1984; Dunkerley 1988). After Ríos Montt capitulated, the Laugerud García Administration did make some mild movements toward reform. While never producing permanent change and gradually replaced by ever higher levels of repression, these policies reflected growing divisions within the ruling elite. While the parties of the right were generally united in the face of challenges from below, reformist elements in the military increasingly viewed the MLN faction as wedded to an inefficient and anachronistic economic and political model whose days were numbered.

Political Mobilizations from Below

The overthrow of Arbenz in 1954 brought a halt to the process of reform which the revolution had started. But important legacies remained. The legal framework of the 1947 Labor Code remained in place, though substantive rights were weakened. The political mobilization of campesinos was slowed,

but gradually found new outlets. The relationship between Indians and the state intensified and grew more conflictive over the next two decades. The political mobilizations engendered and then abruptly halted were driven not only by the logic of revolution; they were part of larger socio-economic transformations which placed new pressure upon indigenous communities and prompted changes in political culture (Falla 1978; Warren 1978; Watanabe 1981; Davis 1971; Brintnall 1979). In the absence of land reform, population growth put new pressure on community subsistence, bringing about increased landlessness and migration.[15] These changes weakened the political and religious authority of traditional community institutions such as the religious brotherhoods known as cofradías. A principle catalyst of change in some communities was the appearance of Catholic Action. The situation was further complicated by the growing presence of Protestant, and particularly evangelical, churches in indigenous communities.[16]

These processes of political mobilization accelerated in the mid 1970s in response to several developments. The decline of the Central American Common Market, and the OPEC embargo in 1973 sent the Guatemalan economy into a tailspin after a decade of steady growth in the GNP. While the FNO, 1974 electoral coalition, did not offer much in the way of concrete proposals--regarding land reform for example--and offered little official protest of the fraud, the result convinced many that electoral politics was a dead end. On the eve of the 1976 earthquake, the political culture was as tightly

pressurized as the geological formations which finally moved on February 4. Repression, death squads, inter-elite competition, religious renewal from several different directions, frustrated political mobilizations, and a growing guerrilla movement were all significant factors. The death and destruction wrought by the earthquake generated intensified pressure on the state for services, organization, and money.

From the perspective of the Guatemalan state the most significant development was the growing movement of cooperatives emerging in the highlands. Several accounts of the emergence of these groups reveals a consistent pattern (Davis and Hodson 1982; Berryman 1984; Carmack 1988). The original animus often came from church-based community cooperative organizations, sometimes with U.S. AID funds, pressuring local and national officials for basic services. Some worked on behalf of political parties and some of these efforts succeeded locally, but the larger pattern was of state inaction, fraud, and repression.

The scale of state repression reached a new level of ferocity after the 1976 earthquake, and prompted a cut off of U.S. military aid by President Jimmy Carter in 1977. The situation only grew worse, however. A particularly brutal massacre in April 1978 at Panzós in the Northern Tranversal Strip occurred when peasants gathered to protest illegal seizures of their land. In January 1980, Ixil and Quiche Indians occupied the Spanish Embassy in Guatemala City to protest army repression; acting against the wishes of

Spanish officials, the Guatemalan police stormed and burnt the building, killing 39 and prompting a break in diplomatic relations with Spain. While state violence against labor and Indian political activity increased, repression of center-left politicians also grew, particularly after the election of a PID-PR coalition headed by General Romeo Lucas García in 1978. The murder in 1979 of two popular progressive politicians, Alberto Fuentes Mohr of the Social Democratic Party, and Manuel Colom Argueta of the Popular Revolutionary Front, who were expected to lead an electoral movement in 1982, reflected an intensification of repression and effectively ended any possibility for a reformist electoral project (Handy 1984: 174-181; Sereseres 1984).[17]

In the struggle to make sense of so much violence and turmoil, new interpretations and analysis developed as some avenues for change appeared completely blocked. By the end of the 1970s national Indian-based organizations emerged; most notable of these was the Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC).[18] As the repression grew worse in 1978 and 1979 the CUC and other "popular organizations" began to form links with guerrilla groups which re-emerged after being brutally defeated in the 1960s. Whereas the popular support for those earlier efforts was marginal and largely drawn from poor ladinos of the Eastern Highlands, this new movement drew wide support from the Western and Central Highlands. The extent to which Indian communities actually supported the guerrillas, as well as the reasons why, have been matters of great controversy and are discussed in more depth in

Chapters 5 and 7. It is clear that the development of organizations like CUC, and the relations, however complex and problematic, between guerrilla organizations and indigenous communities was profoundly worrying to the military and represented one of the largest and most diverse challenges to the political status quo ever mounted in Guatemala.

Counterinsurgency and a New Political Order

By the late 1970s a variety of political, economic, and social processes came together to create a cultural crisis of profound dimensions. Economic downturns wiped out much of the growth that was achieved in the 1960s; at the same time, it exacerbated inequalities and put new pressures on community structures. Arturo Arias argues that these events:

> complicated the search for a new world view that could encompass the dizzying rate of change. As class differences within the communities were eased, the crisis of values became deeper and more pronounced. The traditional structure of authority was basically undermined. Capitalism made its presence known at the economic level but was absent at the level of ideological production, resulting in a crisis of community authority, tradition, and symbolic structure. (1990: 241)

For a time revolutionary movements offered explanations and possibilities for meaning to some. So did evangelical movements. And so did the army. From early on counterinsurgency was not simply an effort to brutally pacify rebellious Indians; it was an effort to construct a new order--built from the old but firmly recognizing that the basic problem of

creating a legitimate political order had never been resolved. Fraud, corruption, and incompetence all contributed to a loss of faith in national institutions which could then be exploited by the forces of subversion and external aggression. The causes and solutions to this crisis were elaborated in the Plan Nacional de Seguridad y Desarrollo (National Plan for Security and Development), the intellectual framework for the forces which overthrew General Romeo Lucas Garcia in March 1982 and brought to power General Efraín Ríos Montt. The plan acknowledged a legitimacy crisis at three fundamental levels: economic decline, widespread administrative corruption and incompetence, and loss of faith in a political system torn by polarization, violence and human rights abuses. And in their place it proposed development, democracy and _Guatemalidad_. The structure and meaning of that project will be examined in the next chapter.

Notes

1. See the discussion in chapter 3.

2. The cultural role of towns in establishing the line between civilization and otherness is examined by Grant Jones in his study of Mayan resistance to Spanish rule in the Southern Yucatán and the Petén (1989). He argues that "frontiers" aren't simply areas where administrative control starts to weaken or dissolve; they also mark the edge of cultural boundaries. This is worth noting for it is not necessarily the way the Indians understood the frontier. Working within very different cultures of time and history, they understood these "non-civilized" areas as places of resistance and cultural freedom. And even as political and religious institutions from Spain began to influence their culture, an element of strategic withdrawal was always present.

3. This illustrates a point made more abstractly in chapter 2; traditions are continually asked to confront new problems that stretch their categories and yet seldom leave them behind. We must be careful to recall that the Enlightenment is a ideal type. When the light of actual histories is shone upon it, a quite diverse, even contradictory group of features and characteristics emerge. Spanish policy, while rooted in medieval and Renaissance formulations, was not impervious to outside influences. As noted in chapter 2, this is a point that critics of the analysis of Wiarda, Morse and others who focus on the importance of Latin America's distinct political tradition often overlook in the rush to label that approach "culturalist" or "reductionistic." To focus on economic change without studying its cultural context is equally one-sided, and too dismissive of human agency. Nonetheless, the "culturalist" argument is often contrasted to a "western" and "liberal" paradigm which is overgeneralized and, as stated, applies to only a part of the West. Moreover, by identifying the West so strongly with "capitalist society," they leave aside the valid questions raised by dependency theorists about the penetration of capitalism as a world system--as opposed to systems of relations of production or social values which only existed in a relatively few countries.

4. The ambiguous combination of authoritarian and libertarian tendencies within the enlightenment is brilliantly discussed by Michel Foucault in his essay "What

is Enlightenment?" (1984: 32-50). The philosophical significance of Foucault's discussion is considered more fully in Chapter 8.

5. Of course, this is not to idealize or even imagine the existence of a previous unity. As van Oss notes, "the synthetic holism of the colonial Church papered over deep rooted cultural and social divisions in society." This was true enough of even the Spanish, let alone when we consider the Maya.

6. The quote by Strong appears in Frederick Merk's study of the North American sense of mission and manifest destiny (1963). His book provides an excellent account of the long tradition of these attitudes. The social Darwinism of the late 19th century was a further extension of the attitudes toward Latin America and the impact of Catholicism which were voiced earlier in the century around the discussion of territorial expansion and manifest destiny. The ongoing prominence of these ideas in North American political culture and their influence on foreign policy is explored by Michael Hunt (1987).

7. The more recent and much larger wave of evangelical Protestant churches in Guatemala, and the response of the Catholic Church, will be taken up in Chapter 6.

8. Jim Handy (1986, 1988) argues persuasively that the military perception that its power in the rural areas was threatened was the decisive factor in its lack of support for Arbenz. The precise motivation for the intervention has long been the subject of controversy (Schneider 1958; Immerman 1982; Kinzer and Schlesinger 1981). Assessing the relative importance of ideological, geo-political, and economic factors behind U.S. policy is difficult. The links between United Fruit and the Eisenhower Administration have often led to a conclusion based on corporate interests. But while the claims of U.S. officials, given credence by press accounts, clearly exaggerated the extent of communist influence, it is probable that they were sincerely held convictions in the context of the Cold War. John Lewis Gaddis argues that the use of the CIA in Guatemala and Iran reflected the Eisenhower's Administrations desire for relatively low cost forms of containment that could still offer important symbolic and practical victories for U.S. policy makers in the cultural and psychological battle for influence in the "developing world" (1982: 157-159). For an excellent analysis of U.S. policy between 1954 and 1960, see Charles Brockett (1991). The author uses extensive internal documentation to show how the U.S. placed great pressure on Castillo Armas and Ydígoras regarding the political suppression of suspected communists in surviving labor

and peasant organizations; at the same time, the economic assistance provided by the Eisenhower Administration fell far short of creating the "capitalist showcase" that was promised.

9. In their analysis of the cultural construction of terror in Peru Susan Bourque and Kay Warren argue that those symbols and meanings are constructed against the backdrop of political failure surrounding a variety of political projects--most notably the 1968 military-initiated revolution (1988). For different reasons, the failure of the revolution of 1944-54 also casts a sense of limitation over the future.

10. The difficulty ethnicity has presented for the analysis of left and progressive ladino political projects is discussed further in chapters on religion and political movements. While the reforms undertaken between 1944 and 1954 were often well-intentioned efforts to improve the life of Indians, Adams reminds us of the systematic and enduring incapacity of ladinos--and this is true across the political spectrum, to confront ethnicity and racism as fundamental structural and cultural elements in Guatemalan political life (Smith 1987). We shall see other versions of this problem; to the extent that modern developmentalist and class analyses have seen ethnicity as something that would gradually be assimilated by modernity, their interpretations of the national problematique have been limited. Some analysts--particularly those who deploy class as a category--have tended to define ethnicity relative to economic categories. Seen through this lens, Indians exist largely within pre-capitalist relations of production. Arturo Arias and Carol Smith both caution that changes in the economic status of Indians within capitalist relations of production do not necessarily mean a change in their sense of class consciousness. Such a point may seem obvious, but has often been forgotten in analysis of the revolutionary potential of changes in the economic status of Indians. Arias has argued that if Indians develop a sense of class unity with working class or peasant ladinos, this change in consciousness will not emerge from economic transformations alone (1990: 231).

11. This argument is drawn from analysis by Carol Smith. She argues that Carrera's revolt in the 1830s reflects the only real mass movement prior to the late 1970s, and that the lack of strong mass support facilitated Arbenz' demise (1990a: 259-264).

12. These issues also confronted the FSLN after 1979 in its policy towards Nicaragua's indigenous communities. For a even-handed and insightful account, see MacDonald (1988).

13. While Ydígoras' actions in support of the Bay of Pigs angered some, the 1963 coup which brought the military to power was fully supported by the United States, which also disapproved of Arévalo's return (Dunkerley: 444).

14. This election and the government of Méndez Montenegro are discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

15. These processes are analyzed in several different contexts by the essays in Carmack, ed. (1988). See especially the essays by Shelton Davis and Roland Ebel.

16. These developments are discussed in much greater detail in Chapter 6.

17. For a particularly detailed account of this period, see Berryman (1984). The murders of Fuentes Mohr and Colom Argueta occurred in the context of a small political opening initiated by Lucas Garcia when he permitted the PSD and FUR to register for elections.

18. The story told by Rigoberta Menchú (1984) provides a personal, but representative account, even if her eventual choice to join the armed resistance is only one of several choices that Indians made. Her father, Vicente Menchú, worked through Catholic Action in his local community in Northern Quiche for several years struggling to claim title to their land. After years of runaround and outright deception by national land reform institute (INTA), he and others formed the Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC). The appearance of the CUC was most significant in terms of the degree and extent of indigenous political mobilization that it involved. After her father was killed in the massacre at the Spanish Embassy, and other family members, including her mother and sister, were tortured and murdered by the army, Rigoberta describes how she and others chose armed struggle. She recounts that a good part of the inspiration for this choice came from just war arguments drawn from her newly acquired ability to read and interpret the bible in Spanish.

CHAPTER 5

THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF COUNTERINSURGENCY

In the previous chapter, I traced the history and cultural contours of a legitimacy problem which has long confronted the Guatemalan state. The counterinsurgency program which was carried out following the coup of March 1982 must be understood within that historical context as a response to the unresolved effort to construct a modern nation state and national identity. But it must also be understood within the historical development of the Guatemalan military as the country's most powerful institution. While touched on previously, the institutional and cultural issues and preoccupations which informed military analysis of the problems confronting Guatemala must be more fully explored. And that in turn raises theoretical questions regarding the study of military institutions. Before turning to a fuller analysis of the political project of "national stability" set forth after the 1982 coup, it is necessary to briefly review those questions.

The Military and Political Culture in Latin America

The literature on the military in Latin America is vast and growing all the time. Few areas of study have received more attention in Latin American politics, and the continued importance of the military in Latin American

political life ensures that the subject will not soon become passe. The continuing relevance of the subject has also ensured that theoretical debates seldom lose their grounding in reality. In the 1960s, some analysts argued that military institutions were inherently conservative (Lieuwen 1961), while others viewed them as a potentially important force for modernization and development (Johnson 1964; Huntington 1964). The wave of military coups and interventions in the later 1960s and early 70s muddied the theoretical waters as analysts sought to interpret distinct military political projects which emerged in Peru, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay, as well as Central America. Alfred Stepan's "new professionalism" and Guillermo O'Donnell's "bureaucratic authoritarianism" became dominant new paradigms, though each was generally subject to extensive critique and reformulation once applied outside the original context in which they developed. Other analysts of military politics looked more carefully at the often complex and ambiguous relationships which form between military and civilian political actors (Weaver 1969; Nun 1967; Ronfelt 1974). Their conclusions often challenged the tendency to assume that divisions between the two groups over interests and policy were natural or inevitable.

The development of this scholarship over the past several decades has clearly illustrated the analytic dangers in generalizing about military regimes across Latin America (Remmer 1978; Rouquié 1987). Differences in geography, history, socio-economic structure, and political culture have forced students of

military institutions to refine and qualify generalizations. It is apparent, for example, that the military institutions of Central America differ in some fundamental ways from those of South America, and particularly Brazil and the Southern Cone. While categories and analyses which have been developed through study of the latter may be useful in general comparative terms, Weber's caveats regarding the use of ideal types must be heeded with particular care in studying the politics of the military in diverse settings.

The issues of institutionalization and professionalism illustrate this point well. Central American militaries have generally been considered less professionalized, more weakly institutionalized, and more subject to the power of the United States (Varas 1989). While each point is true comparatively, they can be deceptive as a guide to analysis of actual events. Central American militaries are certainly less institutionally developed or professional than their counterparts in South America, but at the same time their power relative to civil society (with the exception of Costa Rica) is arguably stronger, with Guatemala being perhaps the most powerful military institution within its own borders, in the hemisphere. Placing too much emphasis on the role of the United States raises similar analytic dangers. The perspectives and priorities of Washington policy makers have long shaped the structural setting in which Guatemalan civilian and military leaders act. And yet, as we shall see, the legacy of U.S. intervention has also unwittingly provoked deep resentment. Those feelings have in turn generated a heightened nationalism among military

officers which has strongly shaped their perceptions and actions over the past several decades.

These issues demonstrate the importance of the question of political culture. Perhaps the most valuable contributions provided by Stepan and O'Donnell's research were their insights into the cultural significance of the process of modernization for Latin American military officers. Previous work on the institutional and intellectual traditions of the military effectively pointed up the limitations of developmentalist assumptions about the liberalizing impact of greater professionalization. But O'Donnell and Stepan took that research a crucial step further by analyzing what happened when military officials began to acquire greater expertise in modern social science and then deployed these new skills to study their changing national situations in more depth. The conclusions that emerged from these processes were influenced by past intellectual and cultural traditions but Stepan persuasively demonstrated the ways in which new knowledge and experience reshaped institutional notions of legitimacy, participation, order, development and national identity. The acquisition of new perspectives and skills strengthened the traditional notion of the military as the quintessential national institution, while encouraging a heightened sense of political competence which in turn produced more sophisticated military political projects.[1]

These kinds of issues and developments have generally not received adequate attention in the extensive literature on the process of democratization

in recent years. As was noted in Chapter 2, much of this literature takes its theoretical direction from the approaches which emphasize the "relative autonomy" of the state; this research has generally been cautious about or even hostile to the issue of political culture. Military political behavior--particularly the handing over of power to civilian political leaders--has generally been explained by reference to structural or institutional factors: alliances, war, external pressures, economic crises. This research has generated valuable institutional analysis, but it has left aside some of the important insights and approaches to military political culture present in earlier work. While great attention is paid to the conditions which encourage or hinder the process of democratization, this literature has often failed to adequately consider the precise ways these structural contexts or coyunturas are culturally constructed and understood by the military as political cultural problems in the Weberian sense discussed in Chapter 2. The issues of meaning, identity, and legitimacy which were so fruitfully raised by O'Donnell have often been put aside in the rush to build typologies and generalizations regarding democratic transitions.[2]

The emphasis on external or structural explanations for changing civil-military relations has been particularly evident with regard to Guatemala. Many analysts have emphasized the economic or foreign policy factors motivating the military since 1984. But when military political actions are viewed solely as tactics or short-term strategies, it is difficult to understand the deeper cultural forces at work within those policies. The program of

counterinsurgency and democratization undertaken by the Guatemalan military as the project of "national stability" is the product of new thinking brought to bear in response to long-term problem which have been reshaped by new events. "Democratization" was not imposed upon a discredited military forced to make concessions; what was most notable in Guatemala in the 1980s was not the retreat of the military but its greater autonomy, and the distinctly nationalist political and military ideology which put it at odds in important ways with some of the traditional oligarchy. Cultural analysis must thus complement institutional and structural analysis if we wish to construct a fuller account of Guatemalan politics.

Before proceeding further, one point of clarification is in order. This chapter will in part try to explain how Guatemalan military officers understand democratization and the role it plays within their political project. All references to democratization should be understood in that light as the elaboration of the particular political and cultural perspective of the military. That many would contest the credentials of Guatemalan military to speak on the subject of democracy is an understatement. Chapters 6 and 7 will examine in more detail the larger political culture of democratization and the sharp conflicts over the meaning of democracy which continue to characterize contemporary Guatemalan politics.[3]

The Institutional Development of the Guatemalan Military: 1871-1963

> The Army represents the spirit of the state, and thus, its members must cultivate the highest national virtues. To be a soldier is most deeply to belong to an institution that is in the political realm something akin to the religious orders in the spiritual realm. Thus as the Brothers and Sisters are distinguished by their daily manner from other men and thus accept the obligation to give example of virtue before others; the soldier accepts a similar obligation: to serve and defend la patria at the sacrifice of his own life. (Marroquin 1963: 45)

> We never forget our obligation to defend the country, guarantee the constitution, and preserve respect for human rights, observe the law, and protect order, given that we are a permanent and national institution...we are apolitical and must present ourselves to the country as immune and disconnected from the influence of any organization or political party. The army should situate itself above disputes between social, economic, and political groups...oriented to its constitutional destiny and committed solely to the interests and vital aspirations of the nation.
>
> General Juan Leonel Bolaños Chávez
> Army Day Speech, Guatemala City, 1990

The Guatemalan military traces its traditions, particularly its sense of corporate identity and autonomy, to Spanish colonialism. But it was during the era of Liberal reform after 1871 that the institution began to assume its modern character. The power and scope of the Guatemalan state expanded as a consequence of changes made to accommodate expanded coffee production. While the reforms did not result in wholesale dispossession of indigenous lands, the military now exercised much stronger control over the procurement of Indian labor. Most of the presidents who ruled between 1871 and 1931 were

military officers, though they usually ruled through personalismo rather than the institutional power of the military (Handy 1986: 386-387). The factions which formed were generally not of civilians or officers as such, and usually involved intrigues over power rather than significant ideological debates.

Building a stronger and more professional military was central to the goal of state modernization promoted by Liberal reformers. Prior to this time Michael McClintock argues that

> The Guatemalan army--or armies--were largely ad hoc affairs, evolved in part from Spanish colonial militia system, but considerably less structured....most of the 19th century armies were city based and in no sense national; they were effectively local militias or ill armed bands. (1985: 10)

President Rufino Barrios founded the Escuela Politécnica in 1873 in order to strengthen the professional training and sense of national mission of Guatemalan military officers. Barrios staffed the Escuela with officers from Spain including the first director, Colonel Bernardo Garrido y Agustino. The Politécnica combined training in modern methods with an attempt to generate a heightened sense of group identity and mission. Military codes and procedures were modernized and the curricula at the Politécnica was expanded to include classes in engineering, mathematics, and history (Patterson 1988: 364-365). The school was closed by Estrada Cabrera in 1908 after one of many assassination attempts against the dictator drove him to purge many of the school officials and open his own version, the Académica Militar. The Politécnica reopened, however, after Cabrera's removal in 1920.

The merit based admissions procedures at the Politécnica made the military an important opportunity for upward mobility for ambitious young men from lower and middle class families. One of these students was Jorge Ubico, who as President from 1931-1944 left an important imprint on military institutions. He reorganized and expanded the National Police, originally established in 1922, and assigned it the task of policing rural areas which had previously been the responsibility of the national military. Ubico greatly expanded the influence of the United States government and military in the training of Guatemalan officers. His goal was partly tactical; putting U.S. directors in charge at the Politécnica kept domestic competition for dominance at bay. Close relations between the United States and Guatemalan military leaders were maintained after the overthrow of Ubico.

The relationship between the Guatemalan military and the revolution which overthrew Ubico is very complex. Ubico initially resigned and placed a military junta in charge under the command of General Federico Ponce Vaides. Widely perceived as "Ubiquismo without Ubico," Ponce was quickly challenged by demonstrations and strikes, and was ultimately forced out when forces led by Colonel Jacobo Arbenz and Major Francisco Arana supported the opposition (Handy 1984a: 105). Handy argues that the cultural influence of Roosevelt's "four freedoms," and the resentment of younger officers regarding the dominance of Ubico cronies in the upper ranks combined to inspire the action against Ponce (1986). But while permitting the election of Arévalo, the

military junta which overthrew Ponce first issued a decree clearly establishing the continued institutional autonomy of the military (McClintock 1985: 20-21).

Arévalo proceeded to extensively revamp the national police and civil guard, while abolishing Ubico's secret police apparatus. The civilian president was, at the same time, continually cautious to avoid antagonizing military officers. Nonetheless, he endured more that thirty coup attempts and gradually came into increased conflict with Major Arana. The most powerful military officer, Arana actively blocked the full implementation of Arévalo's labor legislation in the countryside (Handy 1986: 389). Conflict between Arana loyalists and supporters of Minister of Defense Jacobo Arbenz deepened as the 1950 presidential election drew near and the two officers emerged as the leading candidates. Amidst reports that he was planning a coup against Arevalo, Arana was killed by Arbenz loyalists, and many of Arana's leading supporters were subsequently removed. Arbenz easily won the 1950 election.

Arbenz' own reform programs, which went further than his predecessor, gradually produced new opposition and anxiety within the military. The biggest concern, according to Handy, was that political mobilization was weakening the military's capacity to control the countryside (1986: 391). While the military as an institution was not directly involved in the 1954 counter-revolution, its failure to support Arbenz was crucial to the success of the "liberation" forces. But while the removal of Arbenz solved an immediate problem for the military, other serious issues remained.

The most important of these problems was the persistence of schisms within the military. Castillo Armas temporarily closed the Politécnica in 1954 after an uprising of cadets and then reopened it in 1955 with a new plan of studies which included intensified training in the techniques of modern warfare (Handy 1986: 392; Patterson 1988: 370-371). Most of the Arbenz loyalists were purged from the ranks by 1957, but officers continued to harbor bitterness regarding the military's "defeat" by the forces of Castillo Armas as well as the new president's compliant attitude toward the United States. While not directly involved in the assassination of Castillo Armas in 1957, many officers felt little remorse; nor did they respect his successor, Ydígoras Fuentes (1957-63). The new president's blatant favoritism in promoting officers of his generation angered many, while the ambivalent legacy of the 1954 coup among many military officers was re-enforced and brought more into the open after Guatemalan territory was used in the staging of the Bay of Pigs debacle in 1961.

Anger over Ydígoras' incompetence, corruption, and compliance with the United States provoked a coup attempt on November 13, 1960. The coup was put down when many officers involved in the planning apparently backed off at the last minute for fear of failure or U.S. involvement (Sereseres 1971). Some of the leaders of the coup became commanders of the guerrilla armies which emerged over the next two years. In the aftermath of this failed coup, anti-Ydígoras officers were purged and divisions shored up, but they quickly

re-emerged. Elections in Guatemala City in November 1962 reflected the continuing presence of vigorous opposition movements with links to the revolutionary period and "left" ideas. The results led former President Arevalo to declare himself a candidate for president in the elections of 1963. Two days later on November 25, members of the Air Force launched a coup which eventually failed but strongly bolstered the prominence and prestige of that branch. Amidst these political challenges, a downturn in the price of coffee was exacerbated by inept and corrupt policies. Commercial elites were angered by new tax proposals, while Ydígoras committed the further sin of appearing to be willing to permit Arevalo to return to the country for the presidential campaign.

The 1963 Coup: Expanded Institutional Power and Mission

Nationalism and Mission

The military coup led by General Enrique Peralta Azurdia in June 1963 marked a fundamental watershed in the development of the Guatemalan military. It reflected long-term attitudes and preoccupations--nationalism, anxiety about the accelerating political fragmentation and discord--but the coup was the first time the military as an institution put forward a national political project which directly addressed its concerns. By their intervention, military leaders sought to establish clear boundaries regarding political

participation by left and center parties, which it associated with "foreign" and "communist" doctrines, while at the same time restoring the institutional unity of the military. While the revolutionary period was seen as the root of many of their concerns, Peralta and his colleagues believed that Castillo Armas and Ydígoras Fuentes had exacerbated the problems by their incompetence and corruption; the spectre of Arevalo's return was the final straw.

The coup reflected, therefore, a sharply heightened sense of the military as the institutional embodiment of the national identity. While always describing itself as "apolitical," the military intended this as a badge of legitimacy reflecting their mission, and capacity, to look beyond the limited sights of mere "politicos" and fully represent the interests of the nation. Peralta declared that the military was:

> ...acting without personal ambition...limited to the time absolutely necessary to realize its work: to liberate the country from anarchy and the importation of exotic and anti-democratic doctrines (Ejército, No. 17, Jan. 1964: 1)

These attitudes were deepened by the professional training many officers had received in the skills of civilian governance--political economy, management, policy analysis (Handy 1984: 156). An article in the monthly periodical of the army, Ejército, described the coup as a "patriotic decision taken by the High Command in order to save the country from disgrace and immanent danger." The military was described as an institution that was "permanent and apolitical--fully recognized by the democracies to which Guatemala is proud to

belong" (Ejército No. 7, March 1963: 3). In pledging to save the country from chaos and protect the "bien comun", the military invoked a long tradition while intensifying its political range and sophistication in important ways. A July 1963 article in the military journal Revista Militar described the "Mision del Ejército," as a task of national integration in which the military must develop its technical capacity to preserve order and protect the "national tradition against ideas that threaten and suppress the real feeling of the nation" (Marroquin 1963: 44).

The traditional military training programs provided by the Politécnica were revised to include a stronger civil component. The Instituto Adolfo Hall Central--established in 1955 by Castillo Armas--was expanded in an effort to develop a stronger sense of civic mission in future officers prior to their entrance to the Politécnica. This training sought to instill a deep conviction within military officers that their level of conscience and duty set them apart from civilians. While this notion was by no means new, its implications were widened now to involve a much more direct role in the process of governance. Young aspiring officers were taught that

> The duties of the military are more important and exceed those of the rest of the population. While civilian citizens carry important obligations, nothing demands the sacrifice of their rights, nor deprives them of the right to avoid danger, nor asks them to put aside, in critical circumstances, personal feelings and emotions... Military honor commands that all these are forgotten, that in the supreme moment in which he is struggling for the dignity of the country, he cannot remember his mother, girlfriends, wife, nor children because the nation (patria) is something more than all that and the love for her demands

> something more than the pure feelings for family and home can ask. Only the soldier can impose upon himself denial and sacrifice without limits. (Ejército, No. 63, Jan. 1967: 3)

The power of this message was strongly reinforced by the Politécnica's conscious effort to isolate the young cadets from the rest of society and their immediate family. Franklin Patterson notes that the rhetoric of this training possesses an

> ...extravagance and color unfamiliar to non-hispanics, and is therefore easy to discount. This is a mistake, however; in its cultural context the rhetoric reflects the intensely idealized, almost mystical attachment that graduates profess for an institution in which their brotherhood is forged. (1988: 375)

Patriotism, nationalism, and subordination of one's personal identity to a mission and duty were all fused with institutional loyalties and further deepened by strong internal bonds with classmates, mentors, and proteges.[4]

This expanded concept of the national mission of the military provided a powerful basis for military identity. With support from U.S. AID, programs of "civic action" provided the military with an important forum for strengthening its claim to national leadership:

> The concepts about how to carry out the duties and responsibilities concerning the defense of the nation no longer involve only the duty of training its citizens and employing its resources in the maintenance of a public defense force. The army must include in its work also programs of cooperation and assistance to resolve the social problems of the popular classes; now it is understood that only by improving the condition of the people can we speak of the defense of political and economic sovereignty. (Ejército, No. 1, Sept. 1962: 10-11)

Road building, health facilities, water projects, youth and public service projects, and other examples of desarrollismo were thus motivated by closely related national and institutional goals.

Programs of civic action were also intended to more fully integrate rural and indigenous communities, and in the process broaden the legitimacy of national institutions. In the 1960s, these objectives were only vaguely developed and would be, as we shall see, subject to much greater reflection in the 1970s as tensions between the state and those communities grew. Civic action projects mostly attempted to boost the public image of the military and the state in local communities, and thereby weaken any appeal that more radical parties and proposals might obtain. The effort to integrate indigenous communities and traditions into a more strongly constructed Guatemalan national identity was also reflected in the military's symbolic embrace of Indian hero Tecun Uman who died fighting the forces of Spanish Conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1524.[5]

Civil-Military Relations

While the coup in 1963 reflected expanded intellectual and institutional horizons for the military, Peralta and other officers did not intend that the military rule on its own without civilian participation. From the beginning they sought relations with what were deemed acceptable civilian partners and gradually attempted to establish a political party, the Partido Institucional

Democrático (PID), modeled on the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in Mexico. In establishing such a party, military leaders sought, in Handy's words, "to dominate politics through the governmental bureaucracy it commanded, and to smother reform movements by incorporating them into the party" (1986: 393). They intended to establish similar capacities for legitimation and the integration and/or co-optation of opposition political groups that the Mexican party had managed so successfully. The new constitution implemented registration requirements that served as an instrument for limiting left parties.

At the same time, the coup received significant political support from civilian elites--government officials, business groups, and officially sanctioned political parties--who shared the general disgust towards Ydígoras and had their own reasons to fear the return of Arévalo. Civil-military relations following the coup in 1963 were insightfully studied by Jerry Weaver in his research on the "political style" of the military (1969: 1969-70). He emphasized that in highly militarized societies such as Guatemala the relationship between civilian and military leaders is complex and murky terrain. Weaver's work remains valuable for its empirical analysis as well as his conceptualization of the subject. Moving beyond the theoretical debate between Lieuwen and Johnson, he carefully studied the decision-making processes at work in order to understand concretely how military regimes governed before drawing conclusions about their political power. He pointed out that the institutional

expansion of military political power engendered by Peralta's policies promoted a simultaneous increase in the authority of non-military officials at various levels. These officials, in turn, viewed Peralta as a moderate force to control the left and extreme right while promoting modernization. Peralta's government needed the experience of technocrats and financial officials. They served a technical and political function, providing expertise as well as building institutional strength, while weakening possible sources of opposition. While skeptical of the capacity of civilian political parties or traditional elites to effectively manage the challenge confronting the Guatemalan state, the military never sought to rule without those groups.

At the same time, the military's political power relative to civilian groups clearly grew after the June 1963 coup. Caesar Sereseres described the political process in these years as

> ...one of manipulation and negotiation among power contenders with reciprocally recognized power capabilities. In effect what this means is that the Guatemalan political system is based on a flexible coalition--both civil and military--among diverse power contenders which is subject to revision. (1971: 81)

While this remained an accurate description of Guatemalan political processes in some ways, it missed the significance of expanding military power in the wake of the coup. The accelerated process of professionalization created significant new institutional power combined with powerful new notions of

military identity. Weaver argued that:

> Translated into political action, military professionalization meant sophisticated new means of violence to serve effectively self-defined values....while the armed forces were forging a sense of purpose and solidarity, the greater Guatemalan society was fragmenting....the armed forces were experiencing new heights of discipline, coordination and sense of purpose while civilian political power was fragmenting to a level approaching anarchy. (1969-70: 78)

Weaver's point is reinforced by Richard Adams who argued that what he termed an "assumption of regnancy" among military officers increased enormously in these years and was not balanced by comparable growth in other political institutions (1970).

While the military increased its institutional power, competence, and corporate cohesion after 1963, it was still far from a united group. Weaver located three tendencies whose policy prescriptions were quite different. The first position, put forward most strongly by Major Jorge Lucas Caballeros, was characterized by Weaver as "economic reformers." They promoted a version of desarrollismo that emphasized economic and political modernization: tax reform, administrative development, and a stronger government effort to stimulate national industry. These officers found allies among progressive civilian sectors, but alienated the traditional economic elites which associated such programs with Arevalo and Arbenz. Weaver describes them as

> ...a new element within the economic elite: men concerned with profit and lose and technical innovation as opposed to traditional norms of social prestige and paternalism. (1969: 65)

This group was seldom dominant in those years, but their perspective would continue to find voice in the military and be present in the post-1982 programs.

These reformers were opposed vigorously by the "duristas" (hardliners) who generally labelled reforms "communism" and opposed any change which threatened to open political space for the mobilizations of the past. Peralta generally pursued a middle course between these two positions, initiating the rudimentary social welfare projects carried out under civic action programs but at the same time maintaining close vigilance over political expression and opposition activity. Though able to accomplish this balancing act for a time, Peralta failed to accomplish the long-term goal of creating a basis for elite consensus. The effort to brake the fragmentation of Guatemalan political life in the 1960s ran up against continuing division within the military as well as the efforts of civilian parties and politicians to coopt the military for their own ends.

Nevertheless, the concerns, ideas, and intentions which motivated the military coup in 1963, as well as the institutional expansion it promoted, are essential elements of the political cultural setting in which the more fully elaborated project pursued after 1982 must be interpreted. The sense of mission, nationalism, and expansion of the expertise and governmental breadth of the military were all present, but in a much less developed form than later.

And the same could surely be said for the legitimacy crisis confronting the Guatemalan state.

<u>**Elections and Counterinsurgency**</u>

It was previously noted that one of the major concerns which motivated the military coup in 1963 was the need to reconstruct a system of mass control which had never really recovered from the 1944-1954 period. Despite the repression by Castillo Armas, continued sporadically by Ydígoras, left and centrist parties with reformist platforms continued to garner significant support when allowed to operate freely. Peralta had based the legitimacy of military intervention in 1963 on a promise to return to electoral democracy, so the 1966 elections provided a crucial test of how successful the military had been in its effort to control political participation and establish a more legitimate basis for state power. Left and centrist parties were carefully excluded from participation--including the Christian Democratic Party. The Partido Revolucionario (PR), a party established in 1958 by former supporters of Arevalo, was permitted to participate after its leadership--headed by Mario Méndez Montenegro--appeared willing to enter into a coalition with the military's PID, which had only managed to obtain weak support (Handy 1984: 158-159).

Subsequent events got in the way of these efforts, however. Méndez Montenegro died prior to the election and his more leftist brother Julio, dean

of the law school at the University of San Carlos, became the party's leader and presidential candidate. All bets were off now, as the PR received support from more radical parties and easily won the election. Winning the election was one thing, taking power another, however. Negotiations between the President-elect and the military ensued, and Méndez was only able to take office after promising to not interfere in "military affairs."

The military's principle priority was maintaining a free hand in the growing counterinsurgency program in the Eastern Highlands. The first guerrilla armies began to appear in early 1962 and were led by former military officers involved in the Nov. 13, 1960 coup attempt who had subsequently fled the country. The groups were based largely in the Province of Zacapa in the Eastern Highlands, the site of the cuartel from which the coup had been launched. By most accounts, these groups were divided by tactical and political analysis and enjoyed only weak and localized support. While the actual number of combatants never exceeded more than 1000, an estimated 8000 people were killed between November 1966 and March 1967 (McClintock 1985: 85-86; Dunkerley 1988: 457-458).

North American training and support in counterinsurgency methods, heavily based on experience in Vietnam, figured decisively in the military operations conducted against guerrilla forces. But, as Sereseres has noted (1971), this should not be taken to indicate a compliant relationship. We already saw how Ubico had used the presence of United States advisors to

serve his own purposes, and also noted the tensions which pervaded the post 1954 period. Good relations often existed for reasons which permitted the military to further its own institutional agenda and didn't necessarily reflect U.S. control. These elements of independence and nationalism should be accented because they became more prominent, and have been present even when relations were close and cordial. The United States put most of its resources into defeating the guerrilla armies, which given their military and political weakness was not difficult. But from the perspective of the military, controlling the boundaries of acceptable participation and expanding their political control over the countryside were still the highest priorities.

The counterinsurgency expanded the institutional power and instrumental capability of the military towards that larger end; it also introduced a new, but not transient, element to Guatemalan political life--the "death squad", of which the Mano Blanco (White Hand) and Ojo por Ojo (Eye for an Eye) were the most prominent. Then, as later, Guatemalan military and political leaders described the death squads as "outside the law" and not under official control; the government portrayed itself as the center caught between violent right and left factions. These paramilitary organizations were often informally organized by local military commissioners and members of the ultra-conservative Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) who could use the cloak of anonymity to express their strong convictions on social and political hygiene: "Gangrene demands the amputation of the infected limbs;

cancer must be cut out at its roots" (Cited by Aguilera Peralta 1980: 103). The MLN was the updated version of Castillo Armas MDN and was the political base for what Weaver called the "hardliners," military and civilian elites with no use for the developmentalist philosophy of Peralta. The MLN now referred to itself as "the party of organized violence" (Dunkerley 1988: 460).

The leader of the counterinsurgency campaign, Carlos Arana Osorio, was also a liberacionista (MLN member), and had contempt for the PR. While President Méndez made some efforts at tax reforms, he was blocked by the MLN, and was subject to several coup conspiracies; early commitments to agrarian reform were also set aside. Mendez' power increased temporarily in 1968 after a group of right-wing officers and businessmen kidnapped Cardinal Mario Casariego in a botched effort to implicate the guerrilla armies in "terrorist" activity, but by 1969, the right was back in full command. The election campaign of 1970 occurred amidst enormous violence and tension, especially in Guatemala City. The Christian Democratic Party was permitted to put forward as its candidate, Jorge Luis Caballeros, a former Arbenz advisor and one of what Weaver called the military "reformers". Many PR members had been disillusioned by what they viewed as Mendez' capitulation to the military. Though originally proclaiming itself the "Third Government of the Revolution," the fate of Mendez' regime is well summed up by Georges

Fauriol and Eva Loser:

> Despite its civilian and democratic facade, Mendez Montenegro's term of office concluded with a lop-sided civilian-military imbalance. By 1968, one could already discern the beginnings of military "developmentalist" regimes. (1988: 47-49)

In this atmosphere of violence and cynicism, with center-left political parties and activists generally weak and divided, the election was won by the "Jackal of Zacapa," Arana Osorio, on a MLN-PID ticket. President Arana unleashed a renewed wave of repression directed against labor and student groups in Guatemala City and often carried out by the death squads.[6]

1970-1982: Stronger Military, Weaker State

With the election of Arana in 1970, Guatemalan politics entered a new period of conflict and drift. The programs undertaken after the military coup in 1963 had greatly expanded the institutional power of the military, but internal schisms, shaped by both personality and policy differences, remained (Handy 1986). The developmentalist agenda set forth by Peralta was now moribund and the civilian elite remained as divided as ever. The regimes which ruled between 1970 and 1982 continued to pursue civil-military alliances, but success was temporary and the situation only continued to

deteriorate. Sereseres described what he termed the "esquema politico" as

> ...tacit understandings among the military, the private sector, and the political parties to create a democratic facade marked by periodic elections. Each of the major actors wanted the political system "managed" and political surprises avoided. (1983: 24)

This "tacit understanding" not withstanding, differences over economic policy and factional disputes over political power were pervasive. Each of the regimes of the 1970s pursued a strategy aimed at coopting elements of the "popular" sector, though the specifics of these efforts differed with each regime. Arana initially presided over a period of intensive repression of dissidents, but permitted some "radical" organizations to operate--most notable the Guatemalan Worker Party (PGT). But the PID-MLN coalition which Arana represented gradually broke apart as many of the PID-allied military officers began to question the MLN's embrace of violence, ultra-orthodox capitalism and rejection of all efforts at socio-economic reform.[7]

Divisions between the two groups grew more heated after MLN leader Mario Sandoval Alarcón was passed over in favor of Arana Chief of Staff General Kjell Laugerud García as presidential candidate in the 1974 elections. While there was sufficient elite unity to fraudulently turn back the electoral victory of the FNO coalition, the tensions grew sharper when Laugerud put forward quite moderate reforms to promote economic diversification and reduced dependence on agro-exports. He distanced himself from the MLN and Arana, and began to listen to some of the political demands of labor and

peasant political organizations. For a time, Laugerud also permitted political space for the emergence in the highlands of a rural cooperative movement, largely supported by private voluntary organizations and Church groups. Conflicts over the administration of earthquake relief funds sharpened inter-party resentments, and in 1978 the PID was forced to revive its partnership with the PR in order to defeat the MLN in an election which drew a dismal turnout.

Another source of elite conflict and tension in the 1970s was the growing economic prominence of the military and its commanding officers. The expanded institutional power of the state in the 1960s and 1970s provided more than a strengthened capacity for military repression; it also offered extraordinary new possibilities for personal enrichment, particularly through the acquisition of land. Much of the expansion that took place in the Franja Transversal del Norte (Northern Transversal Strip; FTN), which included highways and other infrastructural links to Guatemala City, directly benefitted members of the High Command. Over the next decade other major enterprises controlled by military officials included the Aurora International Airport, the airline AVIATECA, the state electric company INDE, the phone system, and Channel 5 TV (Painter 1989: 48-49). The military also dominated over a dozen other parastatal agencies which served largely as forums for the personal appropriation of state revenues. In this way military officials were able to directly enter into Guatemala's economic elite, though this wealth and the

interests that came with it generated new divisions with the traditional landed oligarchy.[8]

Laugerud's support for the rural cooperative movement declined after 1976, and quickly gave way to intensified repression after the election of General Lucas Garcia in 1978. With electoral politics clearly at a dead end, national organizations of nearly unprecedented size began to emerge representing rural and indigenous communities.[9] Some of these groups formed alliances with guerrilla organizations which first emerged in the 1960s but had previously been without any real links to indigenous communities in the highlands. Military massacres, assassinations, and disappearances were matched by a growth in the insurgency; by 1982 guerrilla groups were operating widely in the Western Highlands and had developed a social base far beyond that achieved by their forebears in the 1960s. These coalitions were built more on strategy than coherent ideological unity, but for awhile between 1980 and 1982 they appeared to enjoy significant support and even have a chance to succeed.[10]

The military response of the Lucas regime to this crisis drew bitter criticism from many officers, base commanders, and rank and file; they believed that corruption and incompetence were hurting the government far more than guerrilla activities. A widespread perception developed that while the rank and file were dying in the highlands, Lucas Garcia and the military officers of the PID were getting rich (Handy 1986: 401-402; Dunkerley 1988:

489-490; Sereseres 1984). In the words of a lieutenant colonel interviewed by Caesar Sereseres,

> The government has no strategy to deal with the guerrillas. It has used the tactic of disorganizing society, labelling any vocal leadership as subversive, [and has] attempted to used brute force against a political problem. The guerrilla would not be a serious military problem if not for the corruption, inability to govern, exploitation, and violence that provides the guerrillas with recruits and legitimacy. (1984: 31)

When Lucas Garcia's Minister of Defense fraudulently won the March 1982 presidential election, the prospect of more corruption and inept command was finally intolerable. On March 23, 1982, Lucas was overthrown in a coup engineered by junior officers, many of them field commanders who were anxious to pursue a more effective counterinsurgency while restoring some of the prestige the Guatemalan government had lost internationally as well as at home (Handy 1984: 183; Dunkerley 1988: 492-493; Black 1984: 136-139). In the words of a Guatemalan colonel, the new government:

> ...was established in order to bring justice...and to end all the forms of corruption that had existed previously, corruption that like a contagious disease has slowly and imperceptibly infiltrated all forms of life in the republic and carries the risk of converting us into a people without ethical principles, without shame, living in a state of demoralization. (Giron Tánchez 1983)

A New Military Political Project

The junta which took power after the March 1982 coup was led by General Efraín Ríos Montt. The General had been fraudulently denied the Presidency in 1974 as the candidate of a centrist coalition. In the years between 1974 and 1982, Ríos Montt became a minister in the California-based Church of the Word (Iglesia del Verbo). His fervent evangelism and pious political language made Ríos Montt the focus of enormous international interest, and a lightning rod for positive and negative commentary on the situation in Guatemala. The significance of Rios' evangelism will be examined more fully in Chapter 6; it is important, however, not to exaggerate the importance of one controversial figure. The March 23, 1982 coup marks a fundamental turning point in Guatemalan politics and in the institutional development of the Guatemalan military. Rios Montt played virtually no role in bringing the coup about, and while chosen because of his personal reputation for honesty, the General was readily removed 17 months later when he came to be seen as a liability by the military high command. A full analysis of the intentions of the coup must, therefore, concentrate on the goals of the military as an institution.

The unprecedented levels of violence and terror unleashed in the wake of the March 23 coup have been well documented. In its purely military aspects, the counterinsurgency was one of the most ruthless ever carried out. A "scorched earth" campaign destroyed over 400 villages, while 30,000 people were killed or disappeared, and hundreds of thousands displaced (Black 1984;

Americas Watch 1983; Manz 1988). While not eliminated, the guerrilla armies were forced into retreat and lost most of their civilian base. This outcome did not reflect only upon the effectiveness of military tactics; it also pointed up important weaknesses in the power and strategy of the guerrilla groups--now united as the Unidad Revolucionario Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG)-- despite their impressive gains over the previous several years.[11] Dunkerley argues, drawing on discussions within the groups themselves, that the guerrilla offensive begun in September 1981 eventually overstretched their resources and forced them into a

> ...strategic counter-offensive that they could not sustain in either military or political terms....the inability of the URNG to sustain military operations outside its core areas of support and, more importantly, its failure to provide protection where it possessed a longstanding base, proved to be disastrous. (1988: 490-491)

The focus of the military did change somewhat after the coup. During the latter part of the Lucas Garcia administration, repression had been targeted most harshly at urban activists by "death squads" usually working directly with the military (Amnesty International 1981). Some of the coup backers viewed the indiscriminate and highly visible political terror deployed by Lucas Garcia as ineffective and harmful to Guatemala's international image, while serving only marginal military purposes. After the coup, these officers moved to rationalize the violence and concentrate on pacifying the rural areas. There had been rural operations during the Lucas period--including a massacres of

over 100 at Panzós--but the program now became more systematic and focused.[12]

But from early on, counterinsurgency was not simply an effort to brutally pacify rebellious Indians; it was also a political project that sought the construction of a new order, built from the old but firmly recognizing that the basic problem of creating a stable and legitimate political order had never been resolved. As previously noted, the military took seriously the post-Vietnam recognition that a lack of attention to the political dimensions of an armed conflict could undermine military success.[13] Hence military doctrine linked winning with programs of civic education and democratization, and the goal of a fully realized program was not simply defeat of a guerrilla force, but the legitimation of the state and, in the military's terms, the creation of a more just social order. In that sense, the military also recognized that, in the words of two U.S, defense department analysts: "insurgencies and 'revolutionary wars' are wars for moral legitimacy" (Mainwaring and Prysk 1988: 2).

The intellectual framework for this political project was initially set forth in the Plan Nacional de Seguridad y Desarrollo (National Plan for Security and Development). The analysis and program extended and widened the conceptions of state building and mission that were nascent at the time of the coup in 1963; the nationalism, the pursuit of development, and the construction of a sense of national community and identity which included Guatemala's indigenous communities were all articulated much more fully.

The Plan acknowledged a three-fold legitimacy crisis: economic decline, widespread administrative corruption and incompetence, and loss of faith in a political system torn by polarization, violence and human rights abuses. Among its stated objectives were:

> ...the reconciliation of the Guatemalan family in order to favor national peace and harmony...to establish a nationalistic spirit and lay the foundations for the participation and integration of the different ethnic groups which make up our nationality...[and] to stimulate among the various pressure groups which represent the activity of the nation a new way of thinking which is developmentalist, reformist and nationalist. (Plan Nacional, reprinted in Black 1984: 189-190)

These objectives were formulated by the military through an intensive process of analysis by the military in response to what they clearly perceived to be a crisis. Their analysis has been set forth in articles, many appearing in the Army's Revista Militar, and other documents. Careful attention to the thinking which these writings reveal provides an illuminating perspective on the political culture of the military. Recalling the Weberian idea of culture as the setting within which problems that the past has left to the present are analyzed and acted upon, what is the military's understanding of the political and cultural problematic confronting Guatemala? If culture is the place where structure, meaning, and identity collide, what response can we discern in the military's political project?

The analysis which informs this political project has been elaborated most fully by one its principle intellectual architects--General Héctor Alejandro

Gramajo (later to be Minister of Defense for President Vinicio Cerezo). Gramajo's thinking deserves further consideration if we are to fully interpret the political goals of counterinsurgency. In a 1987 presentation of military strategy he began by analyzing the political context within which guerrilla armies had been able to generate widespread popular support in the early 1980s. While his analysis included the standard assertions regarding the role of external actors and "international terrorism", Gramajo also clearly acknowledged the indigenous sources of guerrilla support. He argued that their easy defeat at the hands of the military in the 1960s had led guerrilla leaders to rethink their situation and reflect upon their political weakness among the Guatemalan population. Acknowledging that they had learned from experience, Gramajo argued that in the 1970s the guerrillas had made the war an "integral struggle" of political and military programs in order

> to construct a solid base in support of their operation. They moved to the West where they were able to take advantage of the lack of government attention to development. In these conditions the terrorist groups were organizing and strengthening, stimulating the resentment of the local population regarding the abandonment to which they were condemned. (1987: 65-66)

The guerrillas, he argued, were able to persuasively tell impoverished Maya as well as ladinos that the military repressed them in the service of the rich: the landowners, businessmen, and foreign economic interests.

> The socio-economic conditions facilitated this process of integration of the subversives [with the indigenous population] without the

> government foreseeing the dramatic consequences that the next years would bring. (1987: 66)

This historical legacy of neglect and poverty was further magnified by the impact of the recession and the 1976 earthquake. Gramajo also argued that the guerrilla cause was being strongly supported by what he considered an international campaign to discredit Guatemala and destabilize its government under the banner of human rights. Taken together, these factors combined to produce a profound crisis for the Guatemalan state.[14]

While Gramajo believed that Guatemala had been unfairly singled out and victimized by this international attention, there was a silver lining. The cut off of U.S. aid by President Carter in 1977, in response to human rights reports, damaged Guatemala's international image. But, Gramajo argued, it also forced the military to rethink its own doctrine. The military results of that process began, he argued, to appear in 1981 when General Benedicto Lucas García organized a more effective military strategy for confronting the expanded guerrilla presence in the highlands. By early 1982,

> ...the military threat was diminished and controlled within this offensive, but it was necessary to begin to redesign the military strategy in order to adapt it to the situation in which we were living. (1987: 69)

Just as the guerrilla armies had been forced by experience and reflection to deepen their political analysis, Gramajo argued that the military realized it had to move beyond a purely military approach and begin to develop a more

profound political analysis of its own. This required innovative reflection and action by the military, and also necessitated stronger participation by Guatemalan civilian groups--both elites and masses:

> To this point the war against the terrorism had been the total responsibility of the army while political organizations, private sector, the government, and other groups remained outside as spectators and negative critics. (1987: 70)

Gramajo argued that these attitudes had generated cynicism and apathy and permitted the further deterioration of Guatemala's political institutions amidst pervasive corruption.

In this way, the principle objective of the coup of March 1982 was not to clear the way for a more efficient prosecution of the military war; that had already begun. The central motivation of the coup was to set forth a new political project--elaborated by the Plan Nacional--which sought to make the civilian population the "backbone" of a new strategy based on nationalism and "the reconciliation of the Guatemalan family" (1987: 71). The political crisis was fundamental and could not be resolved simply by another election or change of rulers or some other immediate action. The crisis went to the heart of Guatemala's continued existence as a nation. Under these circumstances, the military was compelled by duty and mission to "take control with the duty of rescuing the dignity and faith of the people in their institutions" (Cited in AVANCSO 1989: 111). This new military analysis was thus put forward as a

response to what was viewed as the Lucas regime's total lack of attention to the socio-economic and political factors that fueled the military crisis.

A Doctrine for Guatemala: The "Thesis of National Stability"

> Guatemalans can feel proud and satisfied to be the first country in the world that has been able, with its own strategies and tactics, sustained in our national spirit, and without foreign assistance, to soundly defeat subversion and, thus maintain our integrity. (Ejército de Guatemala 1984: 88)

It is important to note that while the military saw itself as the quintessential national institution with a duty to promote unity, it conceptualized its message and program as directed at two quite distinct audiences--Guatemala's political and economic elites on the one hand, and its indigenous communities on the other. In this section, the approach to the first group will be examined, while the next section will look at the programs in the highlands.

We have already seen that the proponents of the 1982 coup laid much of the blame for Guatemala's political problems squarely at the feet of the country's political and economic elites. President Rios Montt early on told the population "we don't want any more politicians (politiqueros)" (Cited by

Sereseres 1984: 40), and characterized the Guatemala's private sector as

> strong and intelligent...which has impoverished itself and the nation by tax dodging and its illegal export of dollars which has made us all poor. (Cited by McClintock 1985: 235)

Many of the "democratic" proposals Rios Montt promoted, including the Council of State which offered representation by sector, carried a strongly corporatist cast. This was one of many actions which alienated Rios Montt from elements of the elite--in this case those with ties to the traditional political parties. Rios' proposals for tax and agrarian reform provoked similar opposition in other quarters. The moral fervor of Rios' political rhetoric--including his weekly sermons to the country--was welcomed by many rank and file military as well as middle class Guatemalans, but gradually generated opposition from the High Command. Having outlived his usefulness as a head of state, Rios Montt was overthrown and replaced by Defense Minister General Oscar Mejía Victores on August 8, 1983.

But while Rios was shown the door, the political project set forth by the Plan Nacional of 1982 continued fully on track. Military officers continued to criticize the failure of Guatemalan civilian and military leaders to offer effective and consistent long-term programs to deal with Guatemala's underlying social, political, and economic problems.

In 1986, all of the themes and preoccupations which had been expressed by many military officers over the previous two decades came together in the

articulation of what General Gramajo and other officers presented as a new Guatemalan political doctrine: the "thesis of national stability". Gramajo asserted that this doctrine represented a genuinely Guatemalan program, not one derived from foreign realities and theories. Gramajo argued that President Carter's cut off of military aid in 1977 had provoked a transformation in the consciousness of the military:

> We began to teach our own doctrine based on the principle that the army of Guatemala is not an army of occupation, but a national army that struggles within its own frontier. (1987: 76)

This led, he maintained, to a reconsideration of the relevance of United States military concepts such as "low-intensity warfare" and "national security:"

> The conflicts that other latitudes coldly refer to as "conflicts of low-intensity" are very highly intense and involve the survival of these little nations. Vietnam and Nicaragua demonstrate that military power is not enough, the predominant factor is the political decision to win. (1987: 77)

Gramajo went on to argue that the doctrine of "national security" was relevant to North America and Western Europe but not to Guatemala. Advanced industrial countries had obtained a level of development in which they could "guarantee to their people a better future through economic and social means." Under such conditions, the doctrine of national security helped "maintain a psychological state of security" within the cold war and the perceived threat of communism (1989). Gramajo argued that in Guatemala, on

the other hand, the conditions for basic political and economic development did not exist and the doctrine became a kind of free floating pretext for knocking off one's adversaries: "We came to realize that domestically, national security deteriorated into irrationality and crudeness" (Schirmer 1991: 11).In this way, the doctrine of "national security" faced a crisis in 1982 because it couldn't respond to the political and social needs of the country. For the military it represented "a decrepit and inoperable doctrine within the democratic system" (Quoted in Schirmer 1991: 11). This critique of "national security" led logically, Gramajo argued, to the articulation of a more appropriately Guatemalan political and military doctrine.

A 1986 article in Revista Militar, co-written by five military officers, described the new doctrine of "national stability" as:

> The joining of two inseparable factors: security and development. It is understood as the equilibrium of the four factors of national power: political, economic, psycho-social, and military. It is necessary to integrate in the same strategic equation, the planning of the politics of security and the politics of development. (Ejército de Guatemala 1986: 74)

This new doctrine spoke directly to the previous failure to "structure a national strategy that established the path to follow for continued periods" or enunciate a "national strategic concept or a plan that joined security with development." Past programs had:

> reacted to specific situations, but never [provided] a strategic plan for the long term that recognized and pursued permanent national objectives regardless of the type or form of government. (1986: 88)

Of the four "factors of national power" listed by these officers, military power had previously been considered the most important; but now, the military argued, it was necessary to develop a more complex analysis and practice in which each form of power was carefully integrated. From this new perspective, the military defeat of the guerrillas was proceeding and remained a vital task; but now the military war could only be fully won if it was integrated into a national political project constructed by Guatemala's diverse classes and groups within the framework established by the military. While it could not simply impose its own solution, the special role of the military was continually asserted. A leading military intellectual wrote:

> The army is responsible for creating a system of defense which is not only material, but also spiritual: that permits the state to maintain or obtain the national elements and objectives essential to the policy of security....There will be a country as long as the military exists. (Alvarez Gomez 1985) [15]

The expansion of what was termed "psycho-social power" was an especially important element in this project. This concept referred to the attitudes and tendencies of individuals and groups; the weakness of this form of power in Guatemala pointed up directly the absence of a strong sense of national identity and community, and the corresponding legitimacy problem confronting the Guatemalan state. Gramajo's elaboration of the doctrine of national stability made civilian participation and elections central to the successful realization of the project. Democratization in these terms was thus

not simply the military being pressured from power; "victory over subversion" was directly related to the capacity to generate an alternative that "overcomes all the antagonisms and pressures of every sort that are opposed or could oppose themselves to the establishment of permanent national interests" (Ejército de Guatemala 1986: 83).

By framing the issues in this manner, Gramajo and his colleagues were confronting the tensions and fissures between economic and political elites which had fragmented Guatemalan politics over the past several decades. The analysis being put forward explicitly attributed many of Guatemala's problems to the attitudes and policies of the country's traditional oligarchy.

> This generation of military officers is tired of being the peon--of being the peon of politicians and businessmen.... The success of Guatemala depends on wresting power from the economic elite. (Quoted by Schirmer 1991: 13)

In setting forth this project, Gramajo bluntly challenged Guatemalan economic elites. The time was past, he said, when the military would automatically support their economic interests. The previous doctrine of national security had, he argued, made the military into what was essentially an "occupying force" representing foreign interests and a small sector of the elite.[16] Gramajo admonished those elites to expand their vision as well as the tax revenues they provided the state (Anderson and Simon 1987: 9-11). At the same time, Gramajo made it clear to military groups unhappy with the presence of civilian politicians that coups from the right would not be

supported; the high command was behind civilian leadership. He also made it clear that the army felt under no obligation to talk with groups it considered subversive and would continue to enforce what it considered necessary limits on acceptable political participation by the left.

In order to facilitate the development of an effective national consensus regarding policies that would promote both security and development, Gramajo proposed the creation of a center of study where civilian and military, in close collaboration, "study and debate national problems and solutions" (1987: 88-89). He realized this goal in 1989 with the establishment of Centro ESTNA (Centro de Estudios Estratégicos para la Estabilidad Nacional), an organization intended as a forum for discussion and the forging of national dialogue among different sectors. In explaining the raison d'etre of the Centro, Gramajo wrote:

> Experience indicates that one of the principle obstacles to stability in any society is the superficial knowledge that different groups have of each other. (Cited in AVANCSO 1989: 116)

Centro ESTNA was intended to foster stability and concertación by engendering stronger awareness of the perspectives and concerns of diverse groups. The leaders of those groups would then develop the capacity to broaden their own analysis and find ways to make their interests coincide with the public interest. Gramajo described this as something that would happen in stages; further evaluation must first locate the proper objectives and strategy,

then develop projects and institutions through which different sectors could work together toward those objectives.

The discussions undertaken through Centro ESTNA and similar forums point up the importance Gramajo and like-minded military leaders attached to the development of improved civil-military relations.[17] As Enrique Baloyra notes:

> For some the military decision to cede power...is nothing more than a strategy imposed by circumstances. For others, matters are more complex, given that the military cannot govern directly with any coherence for very long, or convert itself to a political party. (Crónica, June 23, 1989: 15)

In this way, Centro ESTNA was intended as a vehicle through which the same concerns expressed by Peralta and other military leaders in the 1960s might be finally addressed.

This is the political and intellectual context in which the elections and the process of democratization undertaken by the military must be understood. Hence, elections were not simply a concession to a specific coyuntura; they were a response to what Gramajo and others understood as the historical failure to develop a modern national project of economic and political development. A central element in the project of "national stability" is the construction of a state which can establish the legitimacy of modern political institutions at the same time as it fully integrates the country's indigenous population and weakens the capacity of independent social and political

movements. The process of democratization envisioned by the military within the doctrine of national stability is central to that agenda; it is designed to increase the administrative and cultural power of the state. The institutional power of the military is understood as essential reinforcement of that project wherever it is threatened, but Gramajo's concept of an "integrated" strategy should be considered seriously. It is by no means ad hoc or simply tactical, but reflects the thinking through of a long-term political cultural problem confronting the military with regard to the problems of national identity and the absence of a legitimate political order.

Bringing out the political culture dimension of the military's project points up again the importance of a complex approach to the analysis of civil-military relations; otherwise, we can underestimate the political power of the military or its understanding of the dilemmas it confronts. The relationship between Christian Democratic President Marco Vinicio Cerezo, elected in 1985, and the military reflects very well a point made by Alain Rouquié about particularly militarized political systems:

> ...contrary to a view marked by liberal ethnocentrism, in a system so militarized, there do not exist two worlds entrenched like two camps prepared for battle, with civilians on one side and the military on the other. Far from provoking a sacred union of the political class or of the social forces organized to defend democratic institutions in danger, any military uprising will enlist the public support of certain civilian forces competing with their rivals. (1986: 133)

A fuller analysis of the political culture of political parties and elections will be provided in Chapter 7, and the weakness of civil society vis-a-vis the military will be examined more closely in order to assess the significance of the process of democratization which has occurred in Guatemala. For now, this examination of the doctrine of national stability put forward by Gramajo and other military officers should suggest that the project reflects an ambitious institution, fully confident of its power and competence to articulate the interests of Guatemala, and equally capable of structuring the processes of political development and democratization on their terms. Jennifer Schirmer argues that the thesis:

> may represent the future model for Latin American military strategic thinking because it strives for an accommodation between national security and democracy. (1991: 13)

This cultural and institutional context must be kept in focus. The military did not intend to "hand over power" and go "back to the barracks" in the usual sense. Hence analysis which simply argues that the military remains in command despite the efforts of civilian leaders remains superficial. The military was genuine in seeking collaboration and dialogue with other political groups and yet it clearly reserved a special supervisory position for itself and, as noted, viewed itself as the proper judge to decide which groups could participate in the process of national dialogue and concertación they envisioned. In Schirmer's words, once again, "Gramajo's interest lies in

institutionalizing the army's own political, economic and strategic interests apart from any political movement" (1991: 13). The project cannot, therefore, be easily categorized as simply military or civil. It goes beyond a defense of the traditional sense of fuero militar; while clearly wishing to maintain its corporate autonomy and privilege, the concept of "national stability" reflects a fundamental deepening of the military's sense of national mission. Anderson and Simon describe Guatemalan style democratization as a form of "permanent counterinsurgency," and quote one military official who says "now that the war has been won we have to figure out how to govern these people" (1987: 47). The authors tell us that the officer was reading The Prince, and one might surmise that he was interested in Machiavelli's advise regarding the relative virtues of being loved and feared, as well as the dangers for regimes which rely on excessive force and incur the hatred of their own people. In the next section we will examine what the military's reflection on these matters has meant Guatemala's for indigenous communities.

"The Continuation of War by Other Means": Counterinsurgency Institutionalized

As we proceed to examine what "winning the political war" has meant in the highlands, it must be made clear from the outset that from the perspective of the Guatemalan military, the political and the military conflicts are not separate spheres with their own logic and practice. When Guatemalan

officers reverse the famous Clausewitz formulation, as quoted in the title of this section, they express the tight link between their conceptions of development and pacification. Jim Handy has argued that threats to the military's control in the highlands have been a principle motivation for military interventions in politics over the past four decades (1986). If that was its priority in 1954 and 1963, the political opposition which emerged in the early 1980s was arguably the biggest threat to the Guatemalan state since the revolt which destroyed the Central American Federation in the 1830s.

In response to that threat, the military concluded that it was necessary to "integrate into the same strategic equation, the politics of development and the politics of security." That analysis contributed to setting forth--after the 1982 coup--the most ambitious effort at integrating Guatemala's Indian communities yet attempted. In Carol Smith's words, "the point of all these efforts is to end once and for all the resistance of Indian communities to Guatemalan state policy" (1990: 275). Successive military campaigns--Victory' 82, Firmness' 83, Institutional Re-encounter' 84, National Stability' 85, National Consolidation' 86, etc-- sought to eliminate the guerrillas and permanently institutionalize state political control, through the military, over indigenous communities. While building on the institutional foundations of the past, these campaigns reflected unprecedented range and depth and introduced important innovations in the application of state power.

The analysis behind the project began from the assumption that Guatemala's political violence was a product of underdevelopment and exploitation. If the military wanted to win the "political war" for the "hearts and minds" of Guatemalan indigenous communities, it would be necessary to confront the social conditions which created a climate in which "subversion" could thrive. It was argued that poverty and racism created conditions in which communist guerrilla movements could exploit the genuine suffering of the people and fool them with empty promises (Manz 1987: 18-20). In response to what the military leaders referred to as "imported ideologies," they claimed to put forward authentically Guatemalan solutions to Guatemalan problems.

From Civic Action to "Civil Affairs"

The attack on "imported ideologies" was most sharply directed at Marxist analysis, but Guatemalan military leaders also questioned the relevance of North American developmentalism from the 1960s. We previously saw how this led to the revision of the doctrine of national security and the development of the more appropriately Guatemalan concept, its proponents argued, of "national stability." This thinking generated a similar reformulation of the notion of "civic action" into the doctrine of "civil affairs." The older concept, it was noted, grew out of United States military experience as an occupying force in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam. For that reason, civic action was now seen as a "paternalistic, assistance concept," which needed to be

replaced by a policy "oriented to the attainment of the welfare of the population." "Civil affairs" was defined as

> ...the combination of activities carried out by the army in a participatory manner with the civilian authorities and the population in general, to facilitate military operations against a declared or hidden enemy, and to foresee and resolve problems stemming from underdevelopment or from actions by the terrorist groups. (Cited in IGE 1989: 59)

Previous civic action programs were now characterized as having had limited, humanitarian goals which, like most previous state policy, had lacked a long-term plan and vision. Civil affairs programs, on the other hand, were not

> ...isolated acts, nor based on luck or improvisation; they are the result of realistic studies and intensive analysis of the general situation of the country. (Ejército de Guatemala 1984: 63)

Another military document described the goal of civil affairs as the creation of:

> ...a feeling of identity and unity in order to achieve national objective and to win, preserve, and strengthen the populations support for the army. (Internal Military document on civil affairs, cited by IGE: 62)

The emergence of the concept of "civil affairs" reflected a sharpened awareness of the political and cultural aspects of the war being fought. The military argued that it had learned its lessons from past experience. The

Chairman of the Defense Chiefs of Staff noted

> Subversion had put in 12 years of political work in the region; that is why it was necessary to combat it using the same methods, and that is why we are entering the age of ideological and developmental military operations....we will conduct counterinsurgency security and development operations and ideological warfare. In other words, once security is achieved, the army penetrates the population with the development incentives in order to correct the vulnerabilities which our society faces due to the abandonment in which it has lived and which the subversion has exploited. (Ejército de Guatemala 1984: 58)

An account of the civil affairs program conducted in the Ixil Triangle of Northern Quiche relates the evolution of military doctrine to lessons learned from the military's attention to changing guerrilla tactics. The author of the account noted that the guerrillas:

> ...haven't been speaking to the Indians about Marx, Lenin, Mao, Fidel, or Che, but have pointed out that they [the Indians] are poor and the ladinos are the owners of the wealth. They have reminded them of historic processes, raising their awareness [concientizandoles] and offering them a dignity the Indians haven't found from governments which all their life have treated them as backwards and brutalized by ignorance and alcohol.

Civil Affairs, the author concludes, will succeed only:

> ...by offering the Indians realities and complying with them immediately in order to neutralize the action of the enemy. We must take into account the psychological work of the enemy against the army and all the civic values of Guatemala....it is vital that a deep and well-considered psychological campaign be able to reassure the Ixil mentality and make it feel part of the nation. (Porta España 1982: 44)

These goals were to be carried out by the civil affairs section (S-5). General Gramajo later described the task of the S-5 as directing the war in a:

> ...more integrated form in order to make local government agencies more efficient and thus able to contribute to the war effort in their respective fields. (1987: 79)

These programs were described as "bottom to top" and the emphasis was on the voluntary joining together of military and rural communities in the pursuit of security and development. In the process, the military greatly strengthened its control over rural political institutions, promising development while trying to mobilize the population into the security strategy.

> Security and development are so integrated that it is impossible to enjoy fully the one without the constant presence of the other. (Gramajo 1987: 81)

So whereas civic action had brought limited development to some rural areas, civil affairs programs now sought to establish a stronger institutional relationship between peasants and the state. The military did not simply intend to offer services, but hoped to construct a new infrastructure of power relations that directly linked indigenous communities and the state. Involving the population more directly in the security strategy was to be reinforced by new services and the consolidation of military dominated administrative structures linking rural and urban areas.

This effort to transform the political-cultural attitudes of indigenous communities towards the army was part of what David Stoll has described as an effort to seize "the moral initiative" away from the guerrillas by convincing the population that the military was more genuinely interested in their welfare. By acknowledging both the misery of the majority and the bankruptcy of traditional development approaches in Guatemala, the military's project had two inter-related dimensions; it was framed in a confident new discourse of nationalism and independent development. Even opponents of the military acknowledged the sophistication of this new approach:

> In Ixcan, they themselves [the military] state that the purpose of the S-5 is to relate to the population. There are education and health promoters. They use indigenous and many women to work with the women of the community in health hygiene. They bathe the children....It is very sophisticated. As they themselves say, they work with an ideological and psychological perspective towards the population. (Cited in IGE: 50)

This assessment from a member of the population targeted by the military points up clearly that the analysis set forth by the military was not just new words and meanings; it was embedded within new institutions and political infrastructure which powerfully expanded the connections between the state and its rural subjects. At the center of this expansion were two new institutions which the military hoped would transform its relationship with the rural population: development poles, and civil-defense patrols.

Development Poles

The goal of strengthened military and political control was initially carried out by the Victoria 82 campaign. This included Ríos Montt's "fusiles y frijoles" (beans and guns) and "techo, trabajo, y tortillas" (shelter, work, and food) civic affairs programs. The campaign clearly reflected the notion of an "integral" strategy for defeating the guerrillas while restructuring the political order. Gramajo described the objective of this campaign as the:

> ...development of a program of psychological operations in order to strengthen the nationalist feeling of the population and the fighting spirit of the troops and to weaken the morale of the terrorists. (1986: 73)

The civil defense patrols (patrullas de auto defensa civil) were introduced under this campaign, and will be examined more fully in the next section.

The "Firmness 83" campaign sought the further isolation of the guerrillas, while deepening the "physical and psychological control" and institutional reach of the military in the areas of conflict. Twenty three military zones were established with the intention of reducing the extensive territorial jurisdictions which previously had been the responsibility of a single commander (Gramajo 1987: 74).

The next phase, "Institutional Re-encounter '84," was informed by three principle goals: return to institutional rule; reconstruction; relocation of the displaced. The first priority of counterinsurgency had been to separate the guerrillas from their social base, defeating them if possible, but at least

neutralizing their capacity to operate. While highly successful, the military's tactics produced an enormous displacement of the highlands population. The widespread violence, destruction, and upheaval--including the destruction of over 400 villages had, by design, confronted those who survived with three choices: to live in hiding in the mountains, to leave the country, or to turn themselves over to the army. The military sought to consolidate dispersed populations into what were termed "development poles," and defined as:

> an organized population center that guarantees the adherence of the population and their support and participation against communist subversion. (Ejército de Guatemala 1984: 25)

Each of these polos de desarrollo contained smaller units, strategic hamlets and model villages, which were intended to become bases of services and livelihood for individuals, families, and communities displaced by the war. The development poles were most prominent in the areas where the guerrilla groups had been strongest. They were also the focal point of army-directed "programs of psychological operations to strengthen the nationalist feeling of the population...The mind of the people was the principle object" (Gramajo 1987: 73). These were populations which from the perspective of the military had been in some kind of relationship with guerrilla groups and almost certainly the target of their propaganda about the army and the state. "Re-education" programs were employed to teach the people that they had been tricked by the guerrillas.

The development poles were administered by a system of "Inter-institutional Coordinators". As explained by the Chairman of the Defense Chiefs of Staff during the regime of Mejía Victores, they were the

> framework which homogeneously promotes and harmonizes coordination of the public sector. It eliminates the possibility of duplication of efforts and financing, which, by some undesirable possibility, could reverse the benefits established by the social integration of the population. As an additional dividend, it gained mastery over the themes utilized by the subversives. (Ejército de Guatemala 1984: 88)

Translated into concrete structures and functions, the coordinators were supposed to strengthen the capacity of the state to supervise rural development. Similar efforts were made in the 1960s and after the earthquake in 1976, but had not been sustained. The network of coordinators worked at four levels--national, departmental, municipal, and local. While presented as an effort to decentralize administrative control "from the bottom to the top," and thus implement the "filosofía desarrollista", the system had the effect of subordinating all other local officials.[18]

The military originally planned to construct 49 model villages that would be home to 60,000 internally displaced Indians (Manz 1987: 42). For anyone who has travelled in the Guatemalan highlands, model villages immediately stand out in sharp contrast to most rural towns or village which typically retain the design promoted by the Spanish conquerors. Most have a center with a church and a square along with some stores (the number and

extent varying according to size), and perhaps a school. There are usually some residents clustered on side streets, with many more living on small family plots in the surrounding area. Model villages have a completely different spatial and cultural texture. The villages are organized in a much more gridded fashion, with geometrically proportioned lots of equal size, with a very small area for growing food. The residents have generally been gathered from a variety of locations and may not even be of the same language group--which serves the army's goal that they learn Spanish and develop a more national sense of identity.[19]

The streets are patrolled by a civil defense patrol in which local men are required to participate. Programs of psychological re-education were initially conducted and reinforced by signs such as the one which greeted residents and visitors to the model village of Ojo de Agua--"Welcome to the village of Ojo de Agua which has said "'no' to communist subversion." The army tightly controls the comings and goings of the residents with a lookout tower at the entrance, and limits their ability to farm beyond the immediate environs of the village. Health clinics have only been constructed in a few of the villages, and are often severely understocked and without staff unless run by foreign agencies.

Hence, in spite of the grandiose vision initially presented, there is little evidence that the model villages have brought economic development and prosperity for their residents. The efforts at greater rationalization of the state's

infrastructure for promoting economic and social development have fallen short because of bureaucratic infighting and lack of revenue. After the election of a civilian president in 1985, the system of Inter-institutional Coordinators was replaced by a network of civilian administered development councils; but the councils came to be widely viewed as a scheme by the Christian Democrats to build their own political base in the countryside, a concern which apparently limited their capacity to work with non-governmental organizations (WOLA 1988: 15). There has thus been no significant expansion of the civilian services provided by development poles and model villages since 1985. [20]

Building "Guatemalidad": Civil Defense Patrols

The most influential and enduring element, so far, of the military's effort to reshape Guatemalan political culture has been the system of civil defense patrols. While immediate security and intelligence goals were evident in the formation of these paramilitary patrols, the military has also hoped from the beginning that the patrols would help establish a stronger sense of what some officials have called "Guatemalidad" (Castañeda 1982). In this way, the patrols were conceived partly as an ideological project for fostering a sense of national identity. While the military has long seen itself as uniquely capable of promoting the national unity and identity of the Guatemalan nation, the problem of national identity became more troubling to some military analysts in the 1970s. A 1973 article in Revista Militar, "In Search of the National

Identity: The Army and National Development," argued that Guatemala must reject imported solutions and seek its own path, "in the way that each country has or tends towards their own Personalidad Básica" (Ejército de Guatemala 1973: 19). The task of the army, with the nation, was to extract the best elements of each of Guatemala's cultural components, ladino and Indian, and find common ground from which to derive a national identity. Similar concerns were expressed in an analysis of the military as a vehicle of ladinoization (Cruz Salera 1978). Many who joined or, more likely, were forcibly conscripted, became alienated from their communities and were not able to facilitate the building of cultural bridges. Another analyst argued that the appearance of many Protestant evangelicals has created further fragmentation and disunity (Mejía Carranza 1979).

The civil patrols addressed these problems by directly linking villages to the army through civilian militias which, it was argued, would foster a sense of partnership in the defense of the nation. One proponent of this notion, writing in Revista Militar, presented the civil patrols as proof of Guatemala's claim that it was now a "national community". In joining the patrols, this writer argued, local militia members were defending "the distinctness of their own style of life in the face of a foreign system that intended to displace it." These actions were further referred to as a "defense of the personality...a hispano-aboriginal transculturation which has defined contemporary Guatemala" (Castaneda 1982: 8). With this notion of "Guatemalidad", the

military claimed to celebrate the cultural achievements of Maya civilization and suggested that the active participation of indigenous communities reflected an assertion of nationalism on the part of the rural populations who "liberated themselves from bloody and oppressive hands". Guatemala thus showed itself to be like any other national community when "an external threat conspires against the national definición, when something or someone tries to erase its personalidad" (Castaneda 1982: 6).

The military stressed the voluntary nature of the patrols; indeed, the Guatemalan constitution guaranteed the right to not serve. The patrols were, the military argued, an effort by "those most infected by terrorism. Once they had overcome the armed crisis, they organized themselves according to their own wishes." General Gramajo maintained in 1987 that

> ...if the situation had been otherwise--if many Guatemalans with a nationalistic vision had not become involved in "the troubles"--the army only could have designed plans, made profound analysis, and developed strategies, but it would not have been able to move forward. (Quoted in Guatemalan Church in Exile 1988: 45)

It was, Gramajo argued, because the military was among the "mind of the people," that it was able to convince them to turn to the army for help in defending themselves against the guerrillas.

> The objective is to organize the population civically and politically...so that through the civil defense patrols the persons formerly infected by the subversive groups come to know, study, and understand how they were deceived and how to prepare not to fall again into the same or similar trap. (Ibid)

In order to strengthen this sense of connection, participation in patrols includes rituals of national allegiance and solidarity such as parades and singing the anthem of the civil patrol:

> I am a victorious soldier
> Of the civil defense
> Always side by side like a brother
> With the brave army
>
> For my country Guatemala
> My blue and white flag
> For my home, my ideals
> I shall fight with fierceness

Civil patrol training also often includes a strong "re-education" component for rooting out remnants of support for guerrilla propaganda.

The immediate task of the patrols is to protect their area against guerrilla activity and provide intelligence as well as paramilitary support for the army. Close to 900,000 men take part in the patrols, which are particularly prominent in those areas of the highlands where guerrilla activity was most intense. Only about 5% of the patrollers are actually armed, usually with Winchester or M-1 rifles that they must turn in after each round on patrol. It is said that the quality of the weapons depends on the amount of trust the military has in the patrol.

The role of the patrols in the evolving political culture of democratization in Guatemala has been very controversial. While the patrols are voluntary according to the constitution, this is generally conceded, by

former President Vinicio Cerezo and the U.S. State Department among others, not to be the case. The prominence and ambiguity of their presence is evident in the violence which has surrounded the activities of CERJ (Ethnic Communities We are All Equal), a group working particularly in the department of El Quiche to educate Indians about human rights, including the constitutional right to refuse service in the patrols. The organization's leader, Amilcar Méndez, has received repeated death threats. As of February 1991, 10 CERJ members had been killed and 9 disappeared; one was murdered the same week that Méndez was in the United States to receive an award from former President Jimmy Carter. Civil patrol members in areas where the CERJ works are repeatedly told by the Army that the organization is subversive and represents the "politics of human rights."

Participation in civil patrols also brings economic hardship. The requirement to serve 24-hour shifts, whether twice a week in some smaller villages, or perhaps every two weeks in larger communities, means missing work opportunities or paying a part of one's meager earnings to another patroller. In an area where most men must leave their communities for extended periods of time to work in other parts of the country, the requirement to serve in the patrols presents a severe burden.

Critics of the patrols also argue that they tend to foster and/or exacerbate cultural divisions, suspicion, and xenophobia. While the military argues that the patrols reflect and reinforce the national identity, they also seek

to reinforce local community and family connections while weakening larger ethnic bonds of solidarity (Barrientos 1983). The military wants patrollers to feel they are Guatemalan in some sense, but also that they are protecting their family and village against external forces, which the military implies may be located in another village or represented by all manner of desconocidos or "strangers"--ladino, foreign, or Mayan (Americas Watch 1986: 76-77).

At the same time, it is important to recognize the complex cultural world in which civil patrols and model villages exist. Reports from anthropologists who have returned to areas where violence was extreme have uncovered evidence of bitterness towards the guerrillas among many indigenous survivors (Manz 1988; Carmack ed. 1988). David Stoll has suggested that given the long distrust of ladinos the military was able to gain a degree of support from indigenous communities by appealing to their sense of having been "burned" by the "subversives" (1990: 180-217). Stoll argues in his account of the highly militarized Ixil Triangle in Northern Quiche that many Ixils turned to the army though fully aware that it was the institution most responsible for the violence; some had even recently supported the guerrillas but concluded that they could not protect them. Others resented being left unprotected from the wrath of the military after the guerrillas realized they were militarily overextended and had to pull back.

An argument such as Stoll's is obviously controversial and problematic; many question the testimony of Indians about this period and attribute

anti-guerrilla statements to the presence of the army and fear of retribution. Given the long tradition of strategic withdrawal and distrust of ladino politics among indigenous communities, we must be cautious in assessing what is going on. Moreover, joining civil patrols is only one of the choices made by Maya. In the following chapters some of the other choices, including exile, religious conversion, political activism, urban migration, will be examined in order to provide a fuller assessment of the military's success in realizing its political-cultural goals.

What is clear is that the network of civil patrols has permitted the Guatemalan military to greatly expand its control and presence in the highlands. Those who choose to oppose the civil patrols put their lives in great danger because they threaten a thus far quite successful effort to institutionalize and internalize a direct relation between rural communities and the state. In that way the patrols have been a powerful force for reshaping the political culture of Guatemalan indigenous communities in the direction sought by the military. For the political parties and movements emerging in recent years, they represent a large percentage of the adult population which is difficult to mobilize.[21] During the 1985 election campaign, the Christian Democrats promised to reorganize the patrols and ensure freedom from coercion. Once in office they instead sought to give the patrols a more developmental cast as it became apparent that the military saw them as central to the ongoing tasks of pacification and national integration. While former

President Cerezo stressed their role in rural development, human rights groups have argued that the predominant function of the patrols is military--intelligence, logistical support, helping gather refugees and displaced people--and their character largely repressive. In August 1987, civil patrols played an integral logistical role in carrying out a major military offensive in northern Quiche, and local patrollers have been repeatedly accused of human rights abuses.[22]

These debates over the role and nature of the civil patrols reflect a more fundamental issue underlying the entire military project: the role of force and violence. While this analysis has emphasized the political goals of the military project, I have also stressed that security and development are integrally related. When Gramajo and others discuss the "political war," they always assume the continued relevance of military considerations. The change represented by the "thesis of national stability" is hence one of degree. General Gramajo has recently referred to what he calls the concept of "minimum force," which he explains as a

> ...more humanitarian, less costly strategy to be more compatible with the democratic system. We instituted Civil Affairs which provides development for 70% of the population while we kill 30%. Before, the strategy was to kill 100%. (Interview by Schirmer 1991: 11-12)

When asked by Jennifer Schirmer how these numbers were arrived at and how strictly they governed policy, the General made it clear that the percentages were more of a metaphor than a guideline; they were meant to convey a spirit

of moderation, but the military would continue to do what was necessary and permit no interference from civilians in the analysis and performance of that task. The violence which has surrounded the civil patrols reflects clearly how important they are in the military's project.[23] A fuller discussion of what will be termed the "political culture of terror" will be undertaken in Chapter 7.

Provisional Conclusions

How successful has this project been in achieving its ambitious objectives? In 1987, in the aftermath of elections, with the guerrillas apparently reduced to a marginal position and the United States hailing the "consolidation" of democracy, Jean Marie Simon and Ken Anderson persuasively suggested that what they termed "permanent counterinsurgency" might rule Guatemala for several generations and even provide a model for other states. The military expressed great pride in their success, suggesting that it was they who should instruct the United States and not visa versa. But in 1992, the situation appears uncertain and the consolidation of the military's project seems far off. Economic problems have limited developmental ambitions; the system of parties and elections, which is central to the legitimacy of the project, has its own political culture and is viewed with cynicism and apathy; the guerrillas have not been defeated and are now participating in a process of dialogue with other sectors of Guatemalan

society--religious, political, business, labor, etc. And all the while, tensions persist within the military as an institution with regard to policy, tensions which will be examined more closely in chapter 7. It is much too early to dismiss the scenario suggested by Simon and Anderson; the pattern of Guatemalan history until this point has been toward ever-increasing institutional power for the military. While a definitive break with that pattern is possible, it is not inevitable. Still, political spaces exist that continue to challenge the military's project and widen the room for opposing groups and agendas. At the same time, external cultural and structural forces gather around those spaces, also providing opportunities and constraints.

It is necessary now to look beyond the political cultural goals of the military officers who have formulated the project of "national stability," and examine the larger cultural worlds they confront within Guatemala. How do those other forces foster and/or hinder the goals of that program? The most significant of these other cultural forces will be examined in the next two chapters; in chapter 6 the role of religion will be explored, while chapter 7 will examine the political culture of the democratization process in Guatemala since 1985.

Notes

1. The best discussion of the cultural dilemma confronting military regimes is provided by O'Donnell's "reflections" on his original model (1979). While his work on bureaucratic-authoritarian states is often accused of providing structural explanations, the more interesting part of his analysis involves the legitimacy crisis which confronted those regimes as they tried to work within the symbols and discourse of democratization when the authoritarian tradition could not provide adequate cultural resources to marshall and sustain continued support for exclusionary projects. Viewing history as a series of interventions and subsequent retreats is convenient, but doesn't provide insights into the impact of new knowledge and political cultural change. Structural factors are always present, but are not necessarily viewed in the same way.

2. An impressive exception to this tendency is reflected in the chapter by Alfred Stepan in the collection by Evans, Skojpol, and Rueschemeyer (1985). Stepan's analysis of state-society relations in the Southern Cone is illuminating on specifics; it is also comparative without forcing his case studies into superficial typologies. In examining the "different dilemmas that democratic opposition faces" in confronting military-dominated governments in that region, his conclusions are relevant to the case at hand:

> The power of the state as an actor and an institution cannot be analyzed in isolation from an understanding of the nature of the cleavages that rend civil society, on the one hand, or the growth of horizontal ties that bring different sectors of civil society together on the other hand. At the same time, the evolution of opposition to the state within civil society is shaped by the ways in which the state defines its project and by the contradictions and conflicts that emerge within the state apparatus itself. (1985: 340)

3. Analysts of democratization often start from classical definitions of democracy and proceeded to examine the institutional developments and transformations necessary for its realization, as well as the degree to which democratic norms and values are accepted by elite and mass groups; see Booth and Seligson (1989; 1991). The degree of civilian rule is considered an essential

barometer and it is automatically assumed that the military was a repressive, anti-democratic force yielding because of institutional weakness. My goal is not to argue that the Guatemalan military is democratic in any sense that corresponds with democratic theory; it is to ask how they understand democratization.

4. Patterson argues that some of the traditional internal networks of loyalty such as the promoción and centario appear to have faded in importance in recent years. He also notes the continuing difficulty for social science students of military political culture which Richard Adams noted in 1969--the military remains resistant to all efforts at sociological research on the Politécnica.

5. The effort to rehabilitate Tecun Uman included the publication of Estudio Critico de la Conquista de la Republica y Muerte del héroe nacional Tecun Uman by the military publishing facility, Editorial del Ejército. The book, published in 1966, proclaimed him a national hero who protected Guatemala from foreign invasion and hence defended the sovereignty of the nation. While probably wildly at odds with the ways that history was understood by indigenous communities, for whom Guatemala had a weak meaning at best, the willingness, though mostly symbolic, to view Guatemala's Indian past in positive terms was a small change in traditional attitudes expressed by the state. One officer wrote in the military monthly Ejército, that

> in recognizing the heroism of Tecun Uman the military understands that it isn't a man or a hero who is being exalted, but a collection of values and virtues of the inhabitants of the country....Tecun Uman crosses time to establish a genuine link of spiritual continuity between the ancient peoples and the contemporary Guatemalan nation. (No. 14, Oct. 1963: 3)

Ejército also carried a serialized historical account of the Conquest which spoke of the heroic effort of Indians "in defense of the sacred territory of our nation" against "the Spanish," in a way clearly designed to draw parallels with what they considered the current assault from foreign communism. The journal also focused on developing a national military history which reinforced the notion of the military as the "backbone" of the nation.

6. Other sources for this account of the Mendez election and government include Kenneth Johnson (1966), John Sloan (1968), and Milton Jamail (1972). Jamail's account provides the best review (136-161).

7. The MLN is often labelled "fascist," but the label seems misplaced for the reasons noted by Rouquie in a more general discussion of Latin American militaries. He notes the important differences between the fascism of Hitler or Mussolini and military rule in the continent, particularly regarding approaches to capitalism and political incorporation. His argument applies particularly well to the MLN given their antipathy to state intervention in the economy.

8. In his insightful discussion of the Politécnica, Franklin Patterson notes one area where the training received by cadets does not prepare them well for professional life--the difficulties of living the life of a caballero on the salary of a soldier. On the expanded economic power of the military, see Painter (1988), and Black (1984).

9. Good accounts of this period are in Carmack, ed. (1988); Davis (1983); Handy (1984); Arias in (Smith ed. 1990).

10. This degree of popular support is hard to quantify with precision. Arturo Arias (1990: 255) estimates between 250,000 and 500,000. A 1982 study by Davis and Hodson for Oxfam America found that for most highland Maya who joined the guerrillas the desire for protection from the army was a stronger motivation than ideological affinity . Despite the triumphalist tone of the guerrilla groups in this period, whether they could have won is highly debatable. If they had won, it would probably have been due to military incompetence, given the assurance with which they were turned back once the military improved its operation.

11. The URNG drew together several factions with historically diverse political bases and revolutionary analysis. These will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

12. While "death squads" clearly worked closely with military leaders in determining targets, Benjamin D. Paul and William J. Demarest provide an extraordinary account of a death squad in San Pedro la Laguna which shows that the extensive political violence did sometimes provide a cover for settling personal scores (Carmack ed. 1988: 119-154).

13. On the subject of counter-insurgency and "low-intensity warfare" see the edited collection by Klare and Kornbluh (1988). While the authors are highly critical of U.S. policy, they draw heavily on military documents to examine the intentions of programs in several areas. For an interesting internal assessment of counter-insurgency in neighboring El Salvador see Mainwaring and Prisk (1988). Their study, commissioned by the Small Wars Operational Requirements Division of the United States Southern Command interviews North American and Salvadoran principles and points towards a central problem: the lack of a coherent, long-term national plan and objectives. One Salvadoran colonel told the authors:

> At this point all democratic forces are polarized and disunified. I believe there will be no unity unless it is sought through a national perspective where all sectors of the population are integrated...and we will be able to obtain a national consensus. We will be able to clearly determine our national objective...we will be able to visualize where we want to go as a state. At this time I believe we do not know. (1988: 20)

His comments clearly indicate why the Guatemalan military felt it had something to teach it neighbors.

14. For an account of this process from a perspective more sympathetic to the guerrilla organizations and with a strong knowledge of their internal debates, see Black (1984).

15. The same author wrote in another article (1985a) that the model of development followed by Guatemala should not answer to

> ...any other patron foreign to our nature; it should be established on the basis of a democratic society whose end is to elevate human values and social values while honoring our cultural and spiritual traditions.

Once again we can see the effort to posit and invoke a sense of national identity in the hope of thus creating one.

16. This view is also expressed by Col. Eduardo Wohlers, head of the civil affairs division (S5) and an important architect of the rural institutions of

counterinsurgency described in the next section. See the interview with him in WOLA (1988).

17. For more on Centro ESTNA see Crónica (Oct. 6, 1988; June 23, 1989).

18. For a fuller version of the military's vision of development poles and desarrollismo, see their full color 1984 publication. While redundant and propagandistic, its expresses well the triumphal attitude of the military at that point in time.

19. In many ways development poles carried on the process of reducción attempted by the missionary orders who first colonized the area in the 16th century. Gathering the Indians into colonially administered towns was seen as a fundamental aspect of the cultural process of civilizing and Christianizing them. In the case of counterinsurgency in the 1980s, security concerns played a more central role, but are closely connected to cultural goals.

20. This conclusion is based on research by Beatriz Manz (1988), James Painter (1989), Carol Smith (1990b), the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) (1988) and AVANCSO (1990), and was reinforced by my own visit to the Ixil Triangle in Northern Quiche in July 1990, as well as discussions with development officials working in the area.

21. This point was made on several different occasions during conversations I had while in Guatemala during the summer of 1990. One prominent Christian Democrat told me that from the standpoint of any sort of center-left political project, the civil patrollers were unmobilizable. In the interview with Jennifer Schirmer (1991), General Gramajo makes it clear that the military is seeking to eliminate independent political movements in the rural areas through the deployment of selective political violence. This account of the patrols is based on Americas Watch (1986; 1991). For the military's perspective see Castaneda (1982) and Barrientos (1983).

22. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a non-binding international injunction requiring the Guatemalan government to protect 14 members of CERJ. The ruling came in response to the government's slow pursuit of two civil patrollers accused of murdering several CERJ members. The suspects were arrested just before the ruling was handed down, a fact

human rights activists attribute to the pressure applied by the Court hearings. (Christian Science Monitor, August 6, 1991: 5)

23. General Gramajo's frank discussion with Schirmer did not go unnoticed, and was used by groups who sought to prosecute the General when he has at Harvard University in 1990-1991. In response Gramajo told another interviewer more recently that Schirmer's grasp of Spanish was poor and that she had misrepresented his views. What he really meant to say was that he had:

> tried to make the military more of a service organization. The effort of the government was to 70% in development and 30% in the war effort. I was not referring to the people, just the effort. (Times of the America Feb. 5, 1992: 3)

CHAPTER 6

RELIGION AND POLITICAL CULTURE IN GUATEMALA

It does not take long for a visitor to Guatemala to realize that it is a very religious country. It is virtually impossible, therefore, to approach the issues of political and cultural identity without taking that religiosity into account. The relationship between religion and politics has grown all the more significant and controversial given the explosive proliferation of evangelical Protestant sects in recent years, and the political success of evangelical minister-politicians such as General Efraín Ríos Montt and current President Jorge Serrano Elias. The extraordinary number of conversions in a time of intense political change, violence and militarization has led many to generalize about the conservative political orientation of evangelical churches. Many have viewed the proliferation of these churches as a form of foreign intervention and/or an arm of the counterinsurgency. The evangélicos have been accused of dividing Guatemalans and destroying indigenous culture, while preaching subservience to the existing political order.

While this perspective is not without merit, I will argue that the relationship in Guatemala between political and religious identity, and political and religious change, is profoundly more complex than right and left categories can suggest. It is more complex because the newly emerging

evangelical churches are highly diverse and cannot be easily explained by simply examining the intentions of foreign and domestic elites. While those intentions should not be dismissed, a more complete analysis requires understanding the ways religious change, and specifically religious conversion, is constructed as a cultural choices within Guatemala.

A better grounding in Guatemalan reality helps avoid another of the ways in which religious change is sometimes oversimplified. The emergence of Protestant sects is sometimes portrayed as a new and unprecedented challenge to the power of a previously pervasive and monolithically powerful Catholic Church.[1] The discussion of ethnicity and legitimacy in Chapters 3 and 4 established the limits and ambiguity of the cultural influence of the Catholic Church. The central point underlying the analysis in this chapter is that the present must be seen in the context of that history. A Weberian formulation can be borrowed to argue that the Catholic Church has long confronted "competing Gods" in Guatemala, and its victories over indigenous religious traditions have always been incomplete. Recent events do not, of course, merely reflect the patterns of the past. Knowing more fully why large numbers of Guatemalans, including hundreds of thousands of Maya, are converting will require more years and careful research, but Guatemalan history offers important lessons about ethnicity and religion which can improve the quality of the questions which are asked. When both the nation-building political ambitions of the counterinsurgency project and the explosion of religious

conversions are viewed within their respective historical and cultural contexts, the political relationship between them becomes ambiguous.

This chapter will, therefore, ask the same questions of religious groups which the previous chapter did of political elites and the military. How have changes in state power, social structure, and political economy been interpreted culturally? What new questions have those changes provoked, and how have the questions and the answers been grounded in tradition? But before we can approach these questions, it is necessary to begin with some brief theoretical reflections on the study of religion and politics.

Interpreting Religion and Politics

Events of the past several decades have provided continual testimony to the power of religion within a wide array of political cultures. This has been especially evident in Latin America and has stimulated an impressive collection of scholarly work by political scientists seeking to make sense of the recent developments. What makes this work so impressive is its potent combination of theoretical insight and empirical observation. Complex changes require sophisticated analytical tools capable of untangling the relationship between cultures, structures, and practice, and this work directly builds on Weber's analysis of the relationship between changing structures and religious practice.[2]

Recent analysis of religion and politics in Latin America has been motivated by changes in the Catholic Church which previous models of analysis could not satisfactorily interpret. Much of the earlier analysis was rooted in structural-functional modernization theory and tended to view the activities of various religion elites as political strategies employed in a context of waning temporal influence and gradual but inevitable secularization. One of the most influential proponents of this approach, Ivan Vallier, constructed a typology of these responses along a spectrum from "conservative" to "radical" (1972). He then analyzed the attitudes and values of clergy within each category and outlined the probable political actions that could be expected at each point. His own normative hopes were with the "progressives". In contrast to the regressive "conservatives" and anti-developmentalist "radicals," the progressives could potentially make up a part of the modernizing elites who would create the values and goal orientations conducive to liberal democracy. This perspective was concerned primarily with the Church as an institution and paid little attention to religious belief itself. Sharing the assumptions which linked modernity and secularization, this analysis saw the Church engaged in an effort to survive politically and hence pursuing largely temporal considerations.

Daniel Levine argued that this approach reflected the general bias of modernization theorists regarding the need to separate the religious and the political in the process of political rationalization and modernization. In its

place he offered a "phenomenological" approach, animated by the imperative to "take religion seriously as a source of guiding concepts and principles, instead of merely subsuming phenomenon under secular rubric" (1978: 518). Functionalist approaches downplayed the importance of religious faith and reflection by focusing on temporal political roles and strategies deployed by religious leaders. Levine did not argue for making religion the principle point of reference, but maintained rather that religion and politics must be understood as mutually related phenomena. This approach recognizes that historically adjacent institutions and theoretical models influence religious expression but in a manner which is dialectical and ongoing. This requires that social science pay serious attention to the political significance of "changes in the existential act of being religious." The movements of religious faith reflect an ongoing dialectic between experience and reflection:

> Such a perspective requires research that looks at groups and structures over time in specific historical contexts, working so far as possible with their (italicized in original) concepts and categories. (1981: 187) [3]

We must also guard against the danger of seeing religion as the principle point of reference without understanding the practical dilemmas within which it is applied daily. This tendency is present in much of the public discussion of Islam and often blinds observers to the element of practical politics and rationality, culturally constructed, in actors perceived to be simply fanatics. As Clifford Geertz has noted, few people operate wholly in the realm

of mystic symbolism and it is in the everyday world that cultural systems have their most enduring if never completely consistent influence (1973: 119-20).

Levine provides two warnings in his work which are particularly relevant to the case at hand. When religious values are not taken seriously enough and subsumed into political categories, there is a tendency to fit events within a left-right framework relative to the current political scene. While not without some rough heuristic value, those efforts do not take us far enough inside the cultural world where choices are made.

The same can be said of analyses which stress the structural forces or institutional imperatives, or try to interpret a rational basis for behavior according to categories independent of the cultural logic of the actors themselves. Such analysis can tell us part of what happened, but not what it means for living women and men. Analysis of recent religious conversion in Guatemala has tended to focus on macro issues: conflicts with the Catholic hierarchy; the intentions of North American missionaries and their political allies; relationships between evangelicals and the Guatemalan military's counterinsurgency project; natural disaster. But to explain conversion solely by reference to these factors is incomplete. A 1990 paper by Levine makes this point nicely in cautioning against explanations which put too much emphasis on structural changes:

> These conjunctures provide a necessary but not a sufficient basis for understanding....Transformations within religion (ideas, structures and practice) need to be set in the context of changes that made them

> resonate and ring true to ordinary people and gave average men and women a chance to shape the course and content of change on their own. (1990: 7)

While the Guatemalan case may appear to strain the possibilities for individual agency, it is important that we continue to recognize that choices are being made in however constraining an environment, and that they involve the deployment of culturally constructed categories of thought and action. Structural forces aren't simply external events to which individuals must respond, they are viewed through cultural lenses which interpret change, ask new questions and provide for new possibilities. Levine again puts the matter well:

> This vital dialectical relation between the arts of living and studying religion and politics suggest considerable dynamism: participants are searching for new values, elaborating new categories of analysis, and creating new forms and meanings of action and reflection. (1981: 187)

While Levine's terms imply a more esoteric frame of reference, they can be applied to all cultural practice. What does it mean that hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans have changed their world view in significant ways? The answer is something we can only interpret through attention to cultural categories. And the same is of course true for the majority of Guatemalans who remain Catholic. This is what it means to say that religious faith is an "existential art" which continually influences how experience is interpreted while being reshaped in turn.

The Legacy of the Past

In Chapter 4, I argued that religious goals were central to the political identity of the Spanish Conquest. Drawing upon the research of historians and anthropologists, I contended that while the Catholic Church provided the strongest element of legitimacy the colonial political order possessed, it was a legitimacy based in syncretism, fragmentation, and ambiguity. It is not surprising that Bourbon and Liberal political leaders later viewed limiting the Church's power as essential to their efforts to construct more coherent and centralized political structures and legitimating principles. The first effort to construct a "national" political order--the Liberal-led Central American Federation--failed because of the violent reaction it provoked from indigenous communities and the Church.

The generation of Liberal leaders who ruled Guatemala after 1871 succeeded in permanently weakening the political and economic power of the Church. Richard Adams argues that

> Indeed, if a crucial case is needed to counter the die hard stereotype that blames all Latin American ills on the Church, Guatemala is the case. For, in the some eighty years of liberal suppression, the Church could hardly be accused of being the major offender in keeping Guatemala underdeveloped. (1970: 278)

The Liberals also sought to transform what they viewed as the Church's debilitating cultural heritage by encouraging the work of Protestant missionaries. Indeed, from the first appearance of Protestant missionaries in

the 1830s, their influence within Guatemala has been fraught with political meaning and connected to broader struggles. At the same time, as Virginia Gerrard Burnett has argued, success or failure at any given point has been directly linked to the capacity of new churches to speak to Guatemalans in a culturally meaningful way. In that regard, as was noted in Chapter 4, the missionaries of the 19th and early 20th centuries failed dismally.

The Catholic Church fared somewhat better under Ubico's administration. The assault on the Church moderated, although it was not able to recover its lost properties, and Ubico was initially less supportive of the efforts of Protestant missionaries. Burnett argues that while Ubico cited fiscal restraints imposed by the Depression, the president seems to have had a "personal distaste for Protestants." By the mid 1930s, Ubico's desire to improve relations with the United States prompted a more conciliatory policy however (Burnett 1986: 112-121).

If Ubico's policy towards the Catholic Church was more even handed, earlier attacks on its power had severely weakened the infrastructure of the institution, especially in rural areas. But requiring the large majority of foreign clergy to leave Guatemala produced rather different results than were intended. For while the state increased its presence in indigenous communities during under Ubico's regime, the weakening of Catholic institutions made possible a tremendous flowering of indigenous religious institutions and the emergence in many communities of what Kay Warren has called a

"civil-religious hierarchy," dominated by the system of religious brotherhoods known as cofradías. In her study of San Andrés Semabaj, Warren documents the ways Indian leaders:

> ...redirected the religious brotherhoods, initially founded by Spanish missionaries, to serve as the mainspring of a separatist Indian culture with its own ritual language and valued images of behavior. (1978: 27)

Warren goes on to argue that in a time when the larger socio-economic and political reality limited the autonomy of indigenous communities, this separatism enabled the construction of a cosmology and ethos in which moral autonomy was possible.

> Within this separate sphere of control, Trixanos [residents of San Andrés] celebrate an identity that they believe is distinct from their economic and political subordination to ladinos in the bi-ethnic social system of San Andrés. (1978: 173)

The revolutionary period provoked responses from Guatemala's religious community which were to greatly complicate the relationship between religion and politics between 1944 and 1954 and well beyond. Still weak from earlier attacks, the Catholic Church was furthered challenged by the political reforms undertaken by Arévalo after the overthrow of Ubico. While rejecting the agro-export model promoted after 1871, the reformers in both the Arévalo and Arbenz administrations shared many of the same assumptions about modernization. They were deeply suspicious of the Catholic Church and its cultural influence, and the feeling was mutual within the Church hierarchy.

Protestant churches, dominated as they were by North American missionaries, were initially concerned about the strongly nationalistic tone of the new administration. These concerns gave way quickly, however, as Protestant groups found they could work well with the reformers and shared many of their developmental goals (Burnett 1986: 125-128). The churches worked closely with government literacy programs and also supported Arévalo's labor legislation.

This cooperation exacerbated tensions with the Catholic Church which accused Protestants of "being the opening wedge of Communism in Guatemala." An article published in 1945, entitled "Protestantism: Fountainhead of Communism?," traced a conspiracy between the American missionaries, the "Dean of Canterbury, Moscow, and the head of the national labor union in Mexico" (Burnett 1986: 134). These attacks apparently had little effect, however; public attitudes toward the Protestants improved because of their social work.

With the election of Jacobo Arbenz, matters turned more complex. Arbenz sought to limit the entry of foreigners and by 1952 it was virtually impossible for missionaries to obtain visas. These actions reflected concern that a strong foreign presence would hinder further reforms, especially the appropriation of foreign, held properties under the Agrarian Reform law. Missionaries were gradually excluded from teaching in government literacy programs, and many foreign missionaries became themselves convinced that

Arbenz was moving towards communism. This was not, however, the assumption of many of their Guatemalan parishioners. Burnett argues that a split ensued within the churches between foreign missionaries alienated by Arbenz radical nationalism, and Guatemalans who supported the government because they stood to benefit from reforms. Protestant converts were more likely to be landless; moreover:

> ...the fact that the Church members had already committed a major deviation from accepted social norms by joining a Protestant Church...were more open to radical change than their Catholic brethren. (Burnett 1986: 143-144)

After the triumph of the counter-revolution, these individuals gradually became the members and leaders of denominations which were much more indigenous in their philosophy and institutions. Burnett argues that the revolutionary period unleashed nationalistic energies in a part of the population which earlier Liberal regimes had viewed as a brake on national development and which had hence rather naturally tended to view government projects with passive or active hostility. New possibilities for social and political identity emerged. When this nationalism could no longer find active political expression after the coup in 1954, and as the traditional Protestant Churches suffered from their association with the revolution, Burnett argues that this nationalism took on more religious forms. In this way, the growth of new Protestant sects in the 1950s and 60s can be seen as an expression of nationalism as well as of individual autonomy and self determination in a new and more politically constrained environment.

This nationalism was expressed in schism and sectarianism; major North American churches, including Central American Mission and the Assembly of God, fragmented in this way as new sects emerged which were increasingly identifying themselves as

> ...pura Guatemalteca...autonomous, spiritually appropriate to its people, and not tainted by association with foreign personnel or ideas. (Burnett 1986: 175) [4]

The 1960s and 70s brought on an explosion of conversions. Why, in addition to the factors discussed by Burnett, did these religious groups and practices now have the capacity to speak culturally to larger numbers of Guatemalans? As before, we must start with a grasp of the structural context and then ask why these experiences inspired new cultural practices. Among the conjunction of factors were: urbanization in response to economic development programs which increased landlessness; political violence and polarization; renewed and expanded missionary activity; and the havoc provoked by the 1976 earthquake. Burnett noted a consistent pattern among those who convert: they tend to be among the poorest and most marginalized populations. Bryan Roberts argued that Protestant churches helped create support networks among people who found themselves on their own in the city; these networks were a particularly important source of support for working women with children. The moral strictures of pentecostal communities--especially with regard to drinking, adultery, and wasteful

spending--also appealed strongly to women struggling with abusive or alcoholic husbands.[5]

Renewal and Change in the Catholic Church

The growth in evangelical sects did not only reflect their intrinsic appeals. A convert, after all, does not simply join a new church; he or she leaves another behind. This in turn suggest that the activities of the Catholic Church need to be examined to determine the extent to which they may have been responsible for alienating Catholics and encouraging them to look elsewhere for spiritual and practical guidance.

The Church recovered some of its institutional power after 1954. Castillo Armas expressed gratitude for its support in the battle against communism, and while his policies did not go as far as Archbishop Rossell y Arellano hoped, they did permit the entrance of several hundred new priests from abroad. While that process had begun quietly under Ubico's regime, the improvement in relations after 1954 allowed the Church to increase the number of priests from 132 in 1950 to 483 by 1965. The increase in women religious was equally impressive. And as before, the clergy thus remained 80-85% foreign (Berryman 1984: 173-174; Adams 1970: 278-296).

The Church's improved relations with the Guatemalan state occurred within the larger context of expanded Vatican interest in the situation of its

Latin American base. Catholic Action was one reflection of a renewed interest in reviving the Church's presence in the continent "with the largest single number of Catholics in the world and with unquestionably the most underdeveloped clergy and Church structure" (Adams 1970: 282). The purpose of Catholic Action was to "involve laymen more profoundly in the work of the Church and against the ideas stemming from humanism, Protestantism, rationalism, autorevelation, historical materialism, and laicism" (Adams 1970: 295). The Vatican and Guatemala's Catholic hierarchy viewed this movement as a moderate and Christian alternative to what it perceived as communist political movements which had been fostered during the revolution.

Another significant effort to mobilize Catholic laity politically was the development of Christian Democratic parties in several countries. This movement, which originated among Catholic intellectuals such as Jacques Maritain in France, presented itself as a kind of "third-force" political movement: a communitarian alternative to socialism and liberalism. This brought many middle class Catholics, especially students, into the political arena and the parties became an important political force in several countries including Guatemala.

Christian Democracy and Catholic Action represented a major effort by the Church to more actively engage with the forces and movements of modernity. But the Second Vatican Council took that process of encounter several steps further under the mandate of Pope John XXIII's program of

aggornamento or bringing the church up to date. If the Church was to be brought up to date it first would need to understand the world better through the prudent application of modern social science. The Church, it was argued, needed to confront secular philosophies openly, and with confidence of its own relevance.[6]

The work of applying the new ideas unleashed by Vatican II within the Latin American context was taken up by the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellin, Colombia in 1968. For many of the region's clergy this was the first extended chance to meet with their colleagues. A network of social science and theology research centers was established; this research represented the first systematic attempt by the church to look closely at the socio-economic conditions facing its parishioners.[7]

The effort to analyze Latin American reality more fully and draw upon relevant modern modes of study led to serious rethinking of the institutional Church's significance and identity. The Church could no longer rely on the security of temporal institutional edifice as a source of identity; it was more accurately seen as a "pilgrim people," a community of believers in the world engaged in an on-going interpretation of the Bible. Rather than remain aloof vis-a-vis temporal authority, the Church was instead called to bear witness in the light of its values and to show solidarity and provide support to the oppressed. It was also in a position to critically examine the institutions of the world. At Medellin, this impulse was manifest in the examination of

alternate forms of giving voice to the Church" (Berryman 1984: 189). As many Catholics looked to more radical options, governmental repression grew more fierce.

The Politics of Conversion and Counterinsurgency

While many within the Catholic Church moved to the left and joined with other emerging political movements, evangelical churches grew in members and prominence throughout the 1970s, and especially after the 1976 earthquake. But with the ascendence of General Efraín Ríos Montt in the wake of the March 1982 coup, the politics of these churches became the subject of intense domestic and international controversy. The new President immediately declared himself the hand of divine will. Ríos' continual invocation of religion, prayer, and divine love galvanized the support of North American evangelical churches intent on taking a concrete step to combat the spread of "communism" in Central America (Stoll 1990; Burnett 1986). The support of these groups for Ríos' "guns and beans" civic action program in turn led many observers to argue that evangelicals were playing a critical role in trying to foster cultural legitimacy for the institutions of counter-insurgency.

Several points of common ground between the military and evangelical churches were asserted: opposition to the social activism which parts of the Catholic Church have promoted; a strongly anti-communist ideology and

inclination to apply the label "communist" to all forms of social activism; promotion of more individualistic and less communitarian attitudes; a strongly right-wing ideology which could confront the influence of "liberation theology".

While not without some basis, this analysis of the relationship between conversion and counterinsurgency has serious limitations, and is most convincing as an explanation for the intentions of foreign missionaries. Much of the evidence used to support links between evangelicals and the military is drawn from the stated intentions of North American groups, the experience of Ríos Montt, and/or anecdotal quotes from individual military officials. But a closer analysis of the military's project suggests several reasons to question the connection. The military officials coordinating "civil affairs" in the countryside no doubt welcomed the support of evangelical churches in the "humanitarian" aspects of those programs. Their initial priority--particularly in 1982 and into 1983--was to defeat the guerrilla armies and establish civil patrols. Burnett points out that the qualities which tended to characterize evangélicos--"sectarianism, passivity, apoliticism, and a lack of articulated politics"--made them attractive to the military partly because they were unlikely to generate coherent political analysis and/or mobilization (1986: 240-243).

At the same time, these qualities also create problems. While evangelical churches do not encourage the kind of overt political mobilization which

Catholic practice did in the 1970s, they can also be seen as a threat to the military in that they encourage fragmentation and autonomy.[9] Hence the personal style and message of Ríos Montt should not be automatically conflated with the more elaborate ambitions embodied in the "thesis of national stability." The strong nationalism of that project would also suggest that alliances which emerged between the military and foreign missionaries were probably largely tactical. Moreover, the process of concertación among the country's various sectors envisioned by the military was designed to establish legitimacy among the elites, many of whom are strongly Catholic.

There is, thus, no consistent indication that evangelical groups form an important part of the military's project the way, for example, Protestant missionaries did under the Liberals in the 19th century. Ríos Montt was replaced because the High Command saw him as divisive and counter-productive to their goals; General Mejía Victores retorted that what Guatemala needed was "more murders, not more prayers". Moreover, the more recent experience of Ríos Montt as presidential candidate has shown that the moral self-righteousness of some of the evangelical groups does little to legitimate Guatemala's political leaders and parties.

The Politics of Interpreting Religious Change in Guatemala

The analysis presented so far has argued that interpreting the political culture of religious conversion requires placing more emphasis on how those choices are understood culturally by the people who must make them. Before proceeding further toward that goal, it's useful to ask why explanations based on the intentions of the military and foreign missionaries are so readily accepted by many non-Protestants in Guatemala. What cultural perspectives do these explanations express and how have they been constructed? The answers to that question provide further insight into some of the schisms within Guatemalan political culture as well as their influence upon religious practice.

The Catholic Church has been far from passive in the face of intensified religious competition, and in January 1989 the Episcopal Conference of Guatemalan Bishops issued a pastoral letter advising the faithful on this question. The letter emphasized the Church's position throughout Guatemalan history as a source of unity; for centuries it has been "the only element that could establish a certain integration among the diverse races and social and economic groups." When turning to the Protestants, the tone of the letter turns quite sharp. Noting the positive intentions to correct Church errors which motivated the Reformation in the 16th Century, the Bishops argue that constructive impulses were manipulated to support the political agenda of

various political actors of the time. The Church stood in the way of their desire to expand dominion over larger populations:

> In this way, even thought the Reformation had its origins in a religious motivation, its diffusion and consolidation was more as a political weapon than a religious preoccupation. (1989: 9)

This reasoning provides the foundation for the Bishops' effort to present the Catholic Church as a unifying force against the individualistic ideologies carried by Protestantism. They recount the cooperation of Protestants with Liberal development policies which had a devastating impact on peasants. Now once again, Protestant sects are, according to the Bishops, dividing communities and families, and promoting exclusive forms of solidarity: ""Brother" (hermano) isn't man as a being in the image of God, but solely the one who shares the same religious belief." Moreover, the Bishops assert, the evangelicals carry a foreign philosophy which in addition to dividing communities is also having a harmful effect on indigenous culture. The Bishops cite the well-known contents of a report given by Nelson Rockefeller to President Richard Nixon in 1969 which described the growth of Protestantism as a positive development for U.S. foreign policy given the increasingly liberal stands taken by the Catholic Church. At no point does the letter consider elements of Church practice which might have alienated Catholics and rendered other churches more appealing.[10]

A similar argument is put forward by many ladino intellectuals and activists.[11] Drawing on the ample evidence that foreign, and largely North

American, churches have sought to gain a missionary foothold in Guatemala, this phenomenon is attributed to a sinister plot, backed by the CIA and the Guatemalan military, to foster a right-wing, anti-communist alternative to the growing radicalism of the Catholic Church. The problem with this kind of analysis, as David Stoll has noted, is that it only focuses on half the question, What are the intentions of external actors and the military? In doing so, it is assumed that indigenous Guatemalans who convert are being manipulated or terrorized into doing what others want them to, and lack any real agency. The intentions of elites certainly matter, but they only provide a partial explanation. Recalling Daniel Levine's discussion, we must still strive to understand the meaning of social action within the concepts and categories of the actors.

Religion and Ethnicity

How, then, do those who convert understand that choice? I will examine the evidence available thus far in a moment. It is important to stress that it will take much more observation over the next decade and beyond to more fully understand the political significance of what is happening. Until then, analysis on the subject should be careful not to overestimate the element of change manifested in these events. In his recent book on Protestantism in Latin America, David Martin describes what is happening as the rending of the "sacred canopy," a concept borrowed from Peter Berger, long provided by

Catholicism. Developing societies dominated by Catholicism, he argues, have yet to experience the social differentiation which "hives off religious mobilizations from political mobilizations." The Catholic heritage continues to generate comprehensive social doctrines which make a universal claim and keep the religious and the political closely linked. As a result, most Protestants are suspicious of politics and power and prefer cultural forms which are only indirectly political. Hence the apolitical orientation of the new Protestants in Latin America.

Martin goes on to argue that the region is now entering a phase in the process of secularization comparable to that through which North America passed two centuries ago. He analyzes this religious fragmentation as part of the process of differentiation and secularization in which politics and religion become two distinct realms. In this way, Martin understands what is happening in Latin America today as analogous, although culturally distinct, to what occurred in North America in the 18th and 19th centuries as the all-encompassing organicist political tradition of Catholicism gave way to secularization.

Yet, there are serious limitations in an attempt to draw the emergence of Protestantism in Latin America into a general theory of secularization such as this. Focusing on what are seen as universal processes of social differentiation does not tell us very much about the specific cultural setting where change takes place. This is particularly problematic when transferring a model of

Catholic Church-State relations from North America and Western Europe to a rather different setting. While the Church does still see itself as a quintessential unifying force, its cultural power has always been ambiguous and its economic and political power on the decline for the past two centuries. Moreover, the existence of such a pervasive tradition of syncretistic religious practice suggests that what is happening today in Guatemala is not nearly as new--or analogous to North American experience--as Martin wants to suggest.[12] Martin's analysis also fails to adequately consider the ways transformations in the contemporary Catholic Church further challenge his general theory.

Studies of the local dynamics of the Catholic Action movement reflect that the religious practices which existed prior to the 1940s and 50s were uniquely Mayan (Warren 1978; Falla 1978; Brintnall 1979). They were gradually transformed when socio-economic changes introduced new pressures and led especially younger community members to look in new directions (Annis 1988). The appearance of Catholic Action engendered sharp divisions in many towns and villages. Brintnall notes, for example, that in Aguacatán, Catholic missionaries who arrived in the 1940s encountered nearly as much resistance as the Protestants. Much of this resistance emerged in response to Church efforts to "modernize" religious practice and weaken or eliminate elements of Maya "folk" catholicism. Catholic Action-based community organizations often appealed to younger community members because they challenged the traditional, racist political hierarchies of Ladino domination as well as

indigenous political and religious leaders (Warren 1978; Falla 1978). Yet, the proliferation of new Protestant churches in the 1960s and 1970s reflects that many made other choices.

This is the context which is missing when the Episcopal Conference of Catholic Bishops argues that Protestant sects are exclusionary and divisive in Guatemala; these new churches didn't suddenly disrupt peaceful indigenous communities that had previously lived in harmony. Changes in the Catholic Church, such as efforts to challenge the authority of traditional institutions, divided families on occasion, as did efforts at political mobilization. Thus, the image of a Catholic Guatemala losing its unity and being divided by new sects is based on a mythical understanding of the country's past.

At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, as David Stoll has noted, part of what has accelerated the number of conversions is the confused and contradictory political culture of the Catholic Church itself. On the one hand, the post-World War II Church has continually tried to promote more participation and decentralization, as reflected in the Catholic Action movement and, more recently, Christian base communities.[13] These efforts have been articulated with reference to notions of praxis, empowerment and democracy. But in recent years the Vatican has clearly acted to rein in these forces and re-establish institutional hierarchy and authority. These efforts have led many to see evangelical sects as sources of self-expression and

autonomy--places where a peasant can become a pastor or community leader in ways the Catholic Church makes more difficult.

In the process, commitments to democracy and hierarchy carried within diverse strains of modern Catholic thought spring into open competition. Daniel Levine has stressed that the practices of religious institutions don't simply set forth standards of religious conduct; they also express values regarding participation, because the influence of religion extends far beyond the realm of spiritual reflection. It also informs the world of daily practice and is a culturally constructed interpretation crafted locally in response to the pressures and challenges of experience. That is not to say that most evangelical churches are models of democracy and participation; their structures are often quite authoritarian. But at the same time, they provide possibilities for mobility and self-determination which are more difficult to come by elsewhere. If cultures are where we seek some small sense of being in control of our fate amidst structures of power which constrain, a church in which a peasant can become a pastor, or a women can get her husband free of alcohol, and which offers a world view with many resonances in Mayan tradition provides one way to get some control over a very disordered and tumultuous reality.

Giving a full account of the sectarian world of evangelical Protestantism is impossible here.[14] But the fragmentation should make us cautious about generalizing about the political thought and action which have emerged. Defining the politics of the new sects is hard because they are so diverse.

Indeed, what is most clear is that the dynamics differ from one setting to the next and a composite explanation can only offer some ideal types. Some churches clearly fit the right-wing stereotype. These have strong connections to North American churches, have an explicitly political ideology, and, it appears, appeal largely to middle class and working class ladinos (Evans 1991). Timothy Evans refers to them as "neo-pentecostal," and argues, based on field research in Quezaltenango, that they appear to make up a small percentage of Protestants in Guatemala.

Many of these groups are stridently anti-communist and were directly involved in the "civil affairs" components of the pacification program (Stoll 1990; Guatemalan Church in Exile 1988). The military's civil affairs program was partly administered initially by the Fundación de Ayuda al Pueblo Indígena (FUNDAPI), with extensive support from fundamentalist groups in the United States. They were able to operate much more freely in military zones than Catholic groups and their work was given vocal support by North American evangelical leaders such as Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson.

In his 1990 election campaign, Ríos Montt gathered much of his support from these churches, but it is important to add that he also received significant support from conservative Catholics, disgusted with corruption and growing lawlessness and including some of the officers who originally placed him in power in 1982. Public speeches in which Ríos denounced congressional

deputies as "clowns and mental defectives" may have shocked some but they struck a chord with many others. One frequently heard it said that when Ríos was in power, people worked hard, respected God, and behaved morally. So his candidacy did not just appeal to hard-core evangelicals.

The available evidence suggests, however, that a rather small percentage of Guatemalan Protestants belong to these more politicized churches. There is another, much larger group of evangélicos which are better characterized as apolitical. Most of these churches are also Pentecostal and are also generally more Mayan in their origins and membership, and are often quite small. They are often not linked at all--or only loosely--to larger churches, and some analysts believe they represent the majority of Protestants in Guatemala (Evans 1991; Stoll 1990). Many of these smaller churches are the products of sectarian fragmentation and internal feuds. The practices themselves--faith healing, speaking in tongues, singing--often resonate with the more mystic, intimate, and emotionally cathartic elements of traditional religious practices. There are also obvious differences of theology and cosmology. Protestantism is thoroughly monotheistic and less subject generally to syncretism than Catholicism. It is also more completely grounded in biblical scripture. Being Protestant, as David Scotchmer has noted, means living outside a large network of traditional culture and practice. The resonances between Protestant and Mayan religious practice may reflect what Burnett terms "functional

substitutes" for earlier practices which were more emotionally satisfying than their modern Catholic replacements (Burnett 1986).[15]

While it is important to see continuity, we must recall Levine's words: religious faith is an "existential art" in which "participants are searching for new values, elaborating new categories of analysis, and creating new forms and meanings of action and reflection" (1981: 187). In re-confronting sources of value and meaning in the light of new experience, Protestant churches do not simply recover earlier traditions. Guatemala's current social, economic, and political problems are seen partly as the product of failures of the past--which are now seen as dead ends. New cultural constructions build on what are understood to be the "lessons" of previous experience. The problem of divining meaning continually pits individuals and communities against forces they can not control and which threaten to undermine and even destroy their moral autonomy and physical security. Unless we remain sensitive to this aspect of culture we are likely to evaluate outcomes too materialistically and not see the cultural problematic they reveal for individuals.[16]

This becomes clear and tangible in considering why many Protestant churches chose to cooperate with the military. Stoll and Burnett argue that for many of these groups and individuals the motivation was largely fear and survival, rather than ideological affinity. The cultural world in which those choices were made was, of course, violent and complex. As discussed in Chapter 5, reports from anthropologists who have returned to areas where

violence was extreme have uncovered evidence of bitterness towards the guerrillas among many indigenous survivors (Manz 1988; Carmack ed. 1988; Stoll 1990: 180-217). In a world in which all the political choices were perceived as bad, Protestant churches may have offered an escape from politics.

"Apolitical" Politics

There are analytic dangers, however, in characterizing these groups as apolitical. It would appear at first to confirm David Martin's argument (1990) regarding the important role Protestant churches play in the process of secularization. But recalling Weber's warning that the political significance of religious belief differs according to history and context, it is necessary to ask, What is the cultural meaning of "apolitical" within Guatemala? One North American sociologist doing field research told me "For a lot of Indians getting involved in politics means getting caught in the middle when the Ladinos start shooting at each other." We have seen that religious practices in Guatemala have long embodied an account of inter-ethnic relations of power, and they have often expressed indirect, but implicit, rejection of status quo ideologies and systems of domination. In that sense, continuity with the past may be present in these new religious communities. We should at least anticipate the possibility that the capacity for cultural renewal will continue in new and

different ways, and that, whatever the intentions of elites, religious conversion will not destroy indigenous culture.

Evangélicos, whether ladino or indigenous, are not simply the objects of subjugating ideologies and practice; like many before them in Guatemala they are engaged in a cultural practice in a situation of "brutality, intimidation, and subordination" (Scotchmer 1989: 214). Viewing religion as part of an ideology from above which attempts to legitimate domination does not explain how every day reality is experienced and interpreted by those who form their own sense of what religion means. Protestantism may provide a "fresh and inviting option to the politically weary or uncommitted" (Burnett 1986: 232), but the long term result may be unpredictable. David Stoll reports that many local evangelicals were apprehensive about the way individuals like Ríos Montt had "politicized the faith". He also suggests that, like the Catholic Church in previous decades, the new churches were inevitably forced to confront the social needs of their members. He quotes one evangelical: "Even though the conservatives are in control, they are not going to maintain it, because the people are learning to speak, in their own terms and their own forms" (1990: 182).

In the short run, perhaps evangelicals reinforce the political goals of the military. But they do so in the same way that past cultural practice reinforced domination--in a manner that is slightly askew--off center--and autonomous enough to be unpredictable. This is not to suggest that they harbor latent

radicalism. James Scott's work has illustrated brilliantly that "everyday forms of resistance" are usually not intended to establish a new cultural order, and have little faith in achieving revolutionary change. Instead, they use what space they can to preserve as much security and cultural meaning as they can. The task of culture, as Weber understood so well, is an endless practice of understanding, with the cultural resources at hand, how we came to be who we are so we might know how to proceed. We must analyze what a culture says, what the structures that push against it are, and where the spaces are where local knowledge and experience slide into the cracks and create their own meaning. The historical experience of the Maya suggests a well-developed talent for this work in the most hellish of worlds. The challenge is to understand the complex relation between structures of domination and the cultural worlds which interpret them. In the Guatemalan world of democracy and counterinsurgency, in which dialogue shares the spotlight with widening political violence and economic crisis, we should expect what Michael Taussig calls "epistemological murk," in which things are only partly what they seem and the message which is received by "subordinate classes" is never exactly that which is intended.[17]

It remains, therefore, to be seen what impact the more individualistic tendencies of Protestantism will have on the bonds of ethnic community. There is clearly no reason to assume, given the demonstrated flexibility of ethnic identity, that the two are incompatible. Moreover, recent developments

indicate renewed vigor and independence in indigenous political and cultural activism.[18]

The Catholic Church Looks to the Future

As important as the explosive growth of evangelical churches is, the majority of Guatemalans are, and for the foreseeable future will probably continue to be, Roman Catholic. What cultural dilemmas do they confront? The analysis which follows focuses principally on the responses of the Church hierarchy. It is a leadership whose position well reflects the cultural complexity of modern Catholicism. While traditionally among the continent's most conservative clergy, the violence and political fragmentation of the past several decades have gradually provoked the Guatemalan Bishops to take more critical positions on matters of social policy. While still very cautious about embracing liberation theology, the Bishop's 1988 letter "El Clamor por la Tierra" set forth a position on Guatemala's land problem which is clearly grounded in mainstream Catholic social teaching. Pope John Paul II's highly publicized confrontation with several Catholic priests and bishops with regard to liberation theology has led some to emphasize his conservative anti-communism, but other Papal statements reflect continuity with the Church's traditional critique of the cultural and economic significance of capitalism.[19]

The 1988 letter on land strongly echoed the Church's traditional perspective on the dignity of labor and the right of all to the fruits thereof. It didn't hesitate to suggest that current Guatemalan social structures were an unjust affront to the humanity of the majority. While there is none of the fundamental questioning of capitalism that characterizes liberation theology, the letter clearly attempted to challenge well-off Guatemalans to consider their national reality with more conscience and compassion. And while the letter stopped short of calling for land reform, the attacks directed at the Bishops from private sector groups after its release reflected clearly that the letter was not viewed as a harmless sermon.

The Church's support was critical in getting off the ground the process of "national dialogue," which is analyzed in the following chapter, and it has been the continual initiative of Monseñor Rodolfo Quezada Toruño, President of the Committee of National Reconciliation, which has kept the dialogue alive. The Church leadership has expressed growing concerns about what a 1989 statement by the Bishops Council termed a condition of "social decomposition and internal rupture in the society." The Bishops starkly described a society torn apart by violence, corrupt public officials, and widespread public despair, cynicism, and apathy.[20] The Council also released several statements admonishing their followers to vote during the 1990 presidential elections and their support for the dialogue is clearly driven by an appreciation of the long term dangers of the present situation.

There is a deeper issue here which recent Church documents address as the problem of "being church." This issues is not new; Catholic Action and the political organizing done by many priests and lay catechists in the 1970s sought to make the Church a more responsive vehicle for the spiritual and material aspirations of its faithful. The concept of the Church as a "pilgrim people" was intended as way to de-emphasize institutions and structures and deepen the sense of community.[21] But in a period of horrific political violence, natural disaster and economic dislocation, new religious communities spoke more meaningfully to many Guatemalans. The Church remains a very hierarchical institution but it clearly cannot avoid the challenge to develop more participatory structures and programs, and, as Levine notes:

> new concepts and forms of political action necessarily alter the impact of politics on religion, providing new pressures, problems, and models for action. (1981: 29)

The position of the Church can be partly understood by reference once again to Weber's analysis of religion. He distinguished three categories of religious actors: laity, prophet, and priest. The role of the priest is to rationalize religious doctrine, often after periods of revolution or renewal by prophets. The priest has a complex task; he must balance the needs of the religious institution with those of his community. This is where the political importance of the priest is manifest:

> Pastoral care in all its forms is the priest's real instrument of power, particularly over the workaday world and it influences the conduct of

> life most powerfully when religion has achieved an ethical character. In fact the power of ethical religion over the masses parallels the development of pastoral care. Wherever the power of an ethical religion is intact, the pastor will be consulted in all the situations of life by both private individuals and the functionaries of groups. (Weber 1978: 465)

This is the level where Protestants have been winning converts, whether because of a shortage of priests or mistrust of the Church or simply the appeal of a new perspective in confronting new problems which shattered previous bonds of community and solidarity. At the same time, the Catholic Church knows something is happening and they have a pretty good idea what it is. In Guatemala, the problem may well be that it is too late.

Conclusion

As Guatemalans live in a world where the social and cultural fabric is being ripped apart by internal and external forces and traditional sources of meaning are losing their power, they continue to wonder if they can construct a future, or will things only get worse? I often heard Guatemalans from different sectors lament that "only God can save us now." While this is played out in contemporary political battles, sometimes violently, individuals make their own choices based on their own reflection on meaning, faith, and identity. I have tried to set forth some empirical and theoretical reasons why we ought to be careful about facile conclusions based on the intentions of religious and political elites.

Once again we see the themes, within a quite different setting, which shaped Weber's study of the Protestant Ethic. Recall Weber's interest in the cultural significance of the idea of a "calling" and the imperative it fixed on the "conduct of life," according to a conception of rationality which sought the possibility of a faint earthly echo of divine order. Weber stressed, refuting all efforts to generalize, that rationality was not a universal concept: it could mean different things depending on one's ultimate values and ends: "it is our first concern" he noted, "to explain the special peculiarity of Occidental rationality." My approach to cultural analysis has, following Weber, stressed that cultural changes--such as changes in religion and world view--occur within a historical context which shapes how the challenges of the present are constructed as cultural problems. The continuity we have seen between evangelical and Maya religious practice displays this process concretely.

Weber also understood well the gap between intentions and outcomes. Protestants had set out to uncover a sign of their chosenness by pursuing a calling; they ended up constructing "the iron cage." Gaps such as these pervade Guatemalan history. It was Protestants who offered support for the revolution of Arévalo and Arbenz, and who suffered repression afterwards. As the politics of new and more indigenous evangelical churches moved to the right or turned away from politics, the efforts of the Catholic Church to develop their own alternative to revolution gradually were radicalized by changes Archbishop Rossell could scarcely have imagined, and those efforts in

turn provoked a torrent of state terrorism from which Guatemalan have only begun to recover.

"No one knows who will live in this cage in the future," wrote Weber; and no one knows where evangelicals or Catholics--Maya or ladino--will arrive with their choices. Weber argued that religions which were better able to preserve the tension between their ethical standards and the political world, remaining at least partly "not of this world," were in a better position to withstand the process of rationalization and the resulting "disenchantment with the world," which the Protestant ethic had helped engender. He also understood that for modern religious communities, the most important "competing god" was the modern nation state. While the political project of the Guatemalan military seeks to deploy religious symbols and images within the national "imagined community" it hopes to construct, the long history of tension between national and religious identities in Guatemala should not be forgotten. This is not a country which promises to reward theories on the inevitability of secularization any time soon.

Notes

1. The pitfalls in viewing what is happening against too broad a theoretical or global background are evident in a major recent work by David Martin (1990). He attempts to deploy a general theory of secularization developed in his earlier work to interpret the significance of Protestant growth in Latin America. Interpreted in that light, recent changes are inevitably viewed as more novel and unprecedented than is the case, while the elements of continuity as well as the grounding of events in cultural traditions get obscured. While Martin's book provides a very valuable synthesis of important and often little known empirical research, his theoretical framework is too over-generalized to interpret Guatemala adequately, a point I elaborate more fully later in this chapter .

2. The most theoretically and empirically interesting work in this area has been pursued by Daniel H. Levine (1990; 1985; 1981a; 1981b; and many others). Other important contributions include Smith (1982), Mainwaring (1985), Bruneau (1982), and Berryman (1984), whose book includes an excellent chapter on Guatemala. For a further bibliography, and essays which reflect the high quality of recent work see Levine's edited collection (1986). Levine's debt to Weber is particularly strong and explicit (1985).

3. Levine's approach builds heavily on the work of Weber and Geertz, but his emphasis on religion as a continually changing practice of reflection and action is also a central element of liberation theology. However transcendent God's truth may be, what its revealed to the historical church is partial and shaped by its setting. Changing circumstances demand new questions of theology as scripture is continually re-interpreted in the light of new experience. Seen in this way, religion is not a timeless system of beliefs, but rather a set of powerful cultural practices which like any other must be continually reinvented to fit new settings. This assumes what Geertz has demonstrated persuasively: religions form cultural systems which provide "conceptions of the world, the self, and the relations between them." Far from having a purely metaphysical meaning, religions "color a sense of the reasonable, practical, humane, and moral" (1973: 122-3). If we fail to take seriously the day-to-day power of religious values upon the way people think and act in a wide variety of "secular" realms, we weaken our capacity to understand how these choices look from the ground.

4. My heavy reliance on Burnett's account reflects how invaluable it is in documenting the history of Protestantism. At the same time, her use of terms such as "Guatemalan," "indigenous," and "nationalism," at times almost interchangeably, creates some confusion in her analysis. This lack of clarification has the effect of obscuring the complexity of ethnicity and nationalism in Guatemala. These new churches may indeed be more indigenous and local, but not necessarily nationalistic in any clear sense. Still, Burnett's discussion is highly perceptive and suggestive of the complexity of national political identity in Guatemala.

5. See Roberts (1968). A growing literature on gender and conversion to Protestantism has emerged in recent years and is well examined by Stoll (1990) and Martin (1990). Shelton Annis' study of San Antonio Aguas Calientes explores this issue also (1988).

6. One of the most important changes occurred in the Church's attitude towards Marxism. While continuing to reject its atheism and materialist orientation, the humanism in its appeal was acknowledged by Paul VI:

> Some Christians are today attracted by socialist causes and their various developments. They try to recognized their a certain number of aspirations they carry within themselves in the name of their faith. They feel they are a part of that historical current and want to play a part in it. (Pope Paul VI, "Apostolic Letter to Cardinal Ratzinger," U.S. Catholic Conference, 1971)

7. It is interesting to note the parallels between Latin American Churches and militaries in this regard. Both were engaged in intensive reflection on their national realities and sought to improve their academic competence to do so. While the conclusions drawn were obviously different, this process reveals important ways that Latin American political culture was being reshaped by the selective appropriation of modern ideas.

8. The literature on liberation theology is too large to quickly summarize. The best overviews are provided by Cleary (1984) and Berryman (1984; 1987). See also Levine's perceptive review article (1981). The social and cultural analysis in liberation theology drew on two elements of the Marxist tradition. Dependency analysis offered a method for studying socio-economic conditions which offered

useful insights. A perceptive and sympathetic analyst of liberation theology, Michael Dodson, points out that the use of dependency theory was at times overly simplistic in its prescriptions, but that the theory, as it evolved in complexity, did offer persuasive counter-arguments to regional policies influenced by developmentalist theories (1979).

The concept of the Church as a "pilgrim people" was influenced by the philosophy of history Marx learned from Hegel. Gustavo Gutiérrez wrote that "history is the locale where God reveals the mystery of his person. His word will reach us to the extent that we immerse ourselves in the ongoing process of history, and that history is riddled with conflict" (1979: 16). This formulation of the Church's condition applied Hegel's idea that history reflected a series of time bound standards of truth and reason groping towards absolute truth. God's truth is not relative, but the Church's perception of it is historically bound. Scripture must therefore be continually interpreted in the light of new experiences. As Hegel had believed that the truth of an age must look its negation in the eye and "abide" with it, so did liberation theology conclude that it must look at the "otherness" in its own setting. For the Latin American Church, it was argued, the most immediate "other" was not atheism, it was poverty.

9. This is a theme which is stressed in several analyses of the problem of national integration which appear in Revista Militar. One analysis of "El Poder Nacional" explicitly lists religious divisions as a source of disintegration and weakness (Caceres Rojas 1982). See also Mejía Carranza (1979).

10. This tone was sharpened in August 1990 when the Bishops Conference released another letter ("Guatemala Tarea de Todo") in reference to the upcoming elections. In admonishing Guatemalans to vote--polls were reflecting high levels of voter apathy and dissatisfaction with the electoral choices--they warned against candidates who sought to divide Guatemalans religiously or used "moral manipulation" in their advertising--both clear attacks on the candidacy of Ríos Montt. See La Hora, August 22, 1990.

11. I heard this kind of argument continually when I visited Guatemala in 1989 and 1990 and it appears to be the common wisdom among many members of the "popular movements" as well as intellectuals. It is further elaborated by the Resource Center (1987). This is a perspective with a history, reflecting the frustration historical See Carol Smith (1987) and Arturo Arias (1990) on the theoretical and practical difficulties ethnicity has presented for the Guatemalan left. Richard Adams (1990) and Kay Warren (1990) have recently argued that non-Indians are only beginning to understand how the Maya have constructed

their own experience. Existing largely within oral traditions that are themselves strategies of survival, those histories remain to be understood by outsiders.

12. One of the dangers of such a global frame of reference is the ease with which such an analysis can be deployed by those seeking to resuscitate crude versions of a so-called "Weber thesis" which locates Protestantism as the force which will, at long last, create values conducive to the emergence of democratic capitalism in Latin America. This is exactly what Peter Berger does in his introduction to Martin's book. Martin is much more cautious on the subject of democracy, though his political preference for Protestantism is evident throughout. It is important to add that these criticisms are aimed at the relevance of his general argument to Guatemala. Martin's book is still a valuable synthesis of important and often little known empirical research.

13. This generalization about decentralization should not be taken too far. The intentions of Catholic leaders in different Latin American countries have been various and often ambiguous. Essays by Daniel Levine on Colombia and Scott Mainwaring on Brazil in Levine, ed. (1986) illustrate the quite different character and significance of base communities in the two countries. Levine argues that their political impact in Colombia has been carefully controlled by the country's conservative Catholic leadership.

14. David Stoll's account (1990) is the best place to start though he admits his distinctions and typologies are still rough and inexact, in keeping with the complexity of the subject matter itself.

15. Barbara Tedlock argues, in her study of indigenous religion syncretism in Momostenango, that these practices often emerge from the effort to confront the tensions and ambiguity present in everyday confrontations with the ladino political and religious elites (1983). The apparent theological contradictions which often develop do not reflect simple naivete, nor are these contradictions simply ignored by peasants too unsophisticated to understand. They are the subject of ongoing cultural interpretation and reflection. Another anthropologist and Presbyterian minister, David Scotchmer, observes:

> In that symbols are ambiguous and variously interpreted by their adherents, symbols make community possible because they permit a variety of meanings to coexist within any given context. (1989: 285)

If we think about Christianity and its encounter with "modernism", the point is perhaps clearer and more obvious.

16. Burnett also argues persuasively that more than political prudence was involved in many churches choice to cooperate with the military:

> ...the message of the evangelicals seems to have offered some spiritual solace to victims of violence. (1986: 207)

17. This analysis reinforces the point established in Chapter 3 and supported by Watanabe and Warren regarding the limits of associating ethnic identity with particular practices, or assuming that transformation of the practice equals elimination of ethnic identity.

18. See Chapter 7. In his discussion of the rise of evangelical sects among the Maya in Mexico, David Martin describes this as the product of a "crumbling world" (1990: 174). Perhaps so, but hasn't it been continually so since the Conquest?

19. The Rerum Novarum of Pope Leo in 1891 is the classic modern expression of the Catholic Church's antipathy for some of the excesses of industrial capitalism. This was framed in terms of the sinful aspects of greed and competition. Industrialists were called upon to allow workers a greater share in the fruits of their labor while, of course, socialism and class struggle were completely rejected. For fuller discussion see Berryman (1984; 1987). A recent statement of the Pope's views of capitalism and labor appeared in an encyclical released on May 1, 1991 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Leo's classic statement; "...it is unacceptable to say the defeat of the so-called 'real socialism' leaves capitalism as the only model of economic organization." The letter went on to question the materialism, greed, and insensitivity to suffering that unregulated market economies can promote:

> it is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being'" (Reported in the Boston Globe May 3 and May 7, 1991),

20. The bishops' document dealing with these issues was summarized in Prensa Libre, August 8, 1989.

21. The practical significance of these issues within one of Guatemala's largest dioceses can be seen in the analysis and program set forth in the Plan Pastoral Diocesano 1990-1994 (Diocesis de Quezaltenango 1990). While the document is careful in the terms employed, a strong commitment to social and economic needs, and a clear analysis of their condition, is set forth in the Plan. The general objective is stated in terms which echo Liberation Theology but are stated less confrontationally:

> To construct, in communion and participation, a Church that is evangelized and is an evangelizer, in order that, from the preferential option for the poor, the Kingdom of God will grow in our communities as they struggle and search for a more just society. (68)

The document distinguishes three modes of "being church:" rejecting a more traditional, hierarchical, clergy dominated model on the one hand which is characterized as "classist, without commitment to the people," and the closed, sectarian, apolitical approach that is a clear reference to evangelical sects on the other. The document's analysis and program clearly reflects a view of the Church as a comunidad profética which

> is characterized by its formative interest in the community; decentralized and ministerial. It promotes more egalitarian and communitarian relations, places importance on political compromise, is committed to the defense of the poor, and promotes service and solidarity. (42)

The use of this concept points up further the complexity which public debates on the Pope and liberation theology obscure. Levine's analysis of "lo popular" (1986) provides an excellent theoretical and practical discussion of these issues within the Latin American Church. A more recent paper analyzed the meaning of "being church" in the religious and political reflection of Venezuelan Catholics among whom Levine has done research (1990).

CHAPTER 7

DEMOCRACY AND TERROR: GUATEMALA 1985-1991

> Until now our country has been a society nearly without interlocutors. Words have come in the form of manifestos, ordinances, decrees. There has never existed authentic communication because the messages have been put forward in a one way manner, without attention to the response. There has been a grand fear of the word dialogue, because the fact of sitting down to dialogue implied the act of legitimizing the other.
>
> Roberto Castañeda
> Guatemalan Labor Party

This work began with the argument that the Guatemalan state confronted a fundamental political problem: the failure to construct a sense of national identity upon which a legitimate political order might be established. Using Benedict Anderson's analysis, I argued that Guatemala continues to contain not one, but many "imagined communities." In Chapter 5, we examined how the military has understood this problem over the past several decades and then analyzed an ambitious effort by leading military officers to construct a coherent national project. We saw that their political project--developed most fully in the "thesis on national stability"--sought the establishment of a process of concertación that would engender national consensus regarding political and economic development. We also saw that the military officers who fashioned this process sought to promote greater civil-military cooperation while at the same time retaining clear boundaries on

the capacity of civilian leaders to interfere in what were considered military matters.

Knowing how the military has understood the "transition to democracy," it is now necessary to examine what has actually happened. The military clearly intended to combine the establishment of legitimacy with increased institutional power over the direction and parameters of Guatemalan politics. To what degree have they been successful? I will argue in this chapter that while democratization in Guatemala remains restricted and incomplete, the military has thus far failed to attain its broader objectives. Evidence for that conclusion will be drawn from analysis of the response which the military project has provoked from other sectors. In examining the political meaning of those responses, I will be directly applying the assumptions about political culture developed more theoretically in Chapter 2. I argued that the purpose of cultural analysis was not to study "what a people think," if it is construed as a monolithic set of ideas; rather, the question is "how does a community think together?" By emphasizing the terms of public debate, particularly within the Guatemalan press, I intend to examine the multiplicity of political interpretations and cultural agendas which are present. The cultural dilemma confronting Guatemala--in the Weberian terms developed earlier--is seen quite differently and we must consider several cultural perspectives which are present.

The military project is a complex mix of cultural symbols in its own terms: indigenous, national, military, developmental, democratic. In that sense,

like most national projects, it contains contradictions which must be balanced. Placing democratization at the center of its legitimating symbols has not eliminated human rights abuses; we have seen General Gramajo acknowledge that a certain level of ongoing repression was still necessary. But by using the language of democratization the military must also permit some space for other groups who are neither part of the military project, nor likely to be coopted by it. This includes religious leaders and what are referred to in Guatemala as the "popular movement": labor, Indian, and human rights organizations. At the same time, the military has not been able to consolidate the support of Guatemala's traditional elites. So, while the institutional power of the military has grown in some areas, other forces--some new, some old--have used the political space which has opened in the past six years to directly challenge the legitimacy of the military and frustrate its broader political intentions. In this way, the project of "national stability" has deepened the problems it was intended to resolve. Whatever the intentions of the military, it has expressed its goals in a cultural language which helped shape the form and content of the program as well as the response to it in ways that have greatly complicated its realization.

One of the most important reasons why the military has thus far failed is that Guatemala's system of political parties has proven largely incapable of serving the function that the authors of the "national stability" doctrine intended. This chapter will begin, therefore, with an analysis of the political

culture of the current party system, focusing particularly on the role of the Christian Democratic Party (PDCG-Partido Democracia Cristiano Guatemalateco). We can then proceed to examine the political position and significance of other actors--dissident military factions, business elites, popular sector organizations--as well as the policies of current Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano Elias, elected in January 1991. I will pay particular attention to the process of "national dialogue", originally mandated under the Central American Peace Accords signed at Esquipulas, Guatemala in 1987, but which only became meaningful in Guatemala in 1990. While the goal of "national reconciliation" is still far from realization, the dialogue process has demonstrated some political will towards compromise among Guatemalan political groups.

As before, I do not intend cultural explanations for political events; rather, I want to analyze the cultural significance, the dilemmas of political meaning and identity which change has posed. The military's political agenda is a central structural influence upon other political actors in Guatemala, but economic crisis, regional developments, and global political change also cast a powerful shadow over that cultural context. At the same time, political violence remains a pervasive influence on how Guatemalans think and act politically. The legacy of violence and terror is at the heart of debates in recent years over the role of the military and the issue of impunity. Matters of such complexity and importance within Guatemalan political culture deserve much

deeper analysis, but I will conclude the chapter by briefly examining the significance of recent events and policy debates as they relate to the broader issues of political legitimacy and national community examined in this work.

The Military and the Christian Democrats

> We are not considering bringing anyone to trial because Guatemala is not Argentina. In Guatemala we are trying to get along with an army which considers itself successful and victorious, and not with an army that came out of a war with its tail between its legs.
>
> Marco Vinicio Cerezo, 1985.

> Whoever becomes President is going to have to be very diplomatic with the military--he is going to have to do business with a bottle of Johnny Walker Black in his hand.
>
> Archbishop Próspero Penados del Barrio, 1985.

> This election is the final step in the re-establishment of democracy in Guatemala.
>
> United States Embassy, 1985

The election of Christian Democrat Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo in 1985 was widely hailed internationally as an important step away from repressive military rule and towards the creation of legitimate political democracy. By receiving 68% of the vote, Cerezo also appeared to possess a broad mandate from the Guatemalan electorate. Yet, by the end of his term in January 1991, and in fact well before that, the Cerezo Administration's public approval rating was dismal and the President was widely viewed as corrupt or

incompetent. What brought about such a fall from grace? What did Cerezo and his party do with the mandate they received in November 1985?

In order to answer those questions we must first understand the philosophy of the Guatemalan Christian Democratic Party (PDCG). How did they understand their position and what did they hope to accomplish? These issues must be interpreted in the context of Guatemalan political culture and the historical evolution of the party's response to national issues. The PDCG is often viewed from the context of United States political culture as a long- term foe of the military, occupying a fragile political space between violent forces on the left and right. This perspective has some basis, given the murder of over 100 Christian Democratic politicians by the military and death squads in the late 70s and early 80s; the fraudulent denial of the FNO coalition (in which the party was a leading force) in 1974; and the general opinion of the Guatemalan right that the party was communist, or at least fairly pink.

Yet, from the perspective of Cerezo and other leading Christian Democratic figures, the working relationship with the military high command that made their electoral victory in 1985 possible was not simply a short-term tactical choice. Instead, it brought to fruition a decade-long effort within an influential segment of the party which sought a partnership with moderate military officers. This goal was first elaborated in 1975 by Danilo Barillas, a former secretary General of the PDCG, in a book entitled Christian Democracy

and its Position on the Guatemalan Army of Today. Barillas argued that:

> In Guatemala it is advisable to forget the possibility of governing if it is not through a political decision of the army. The army has the capability, through their armed power, to decide who governs; because of this capability it is the strongest and most important pressure group....And its men are capable of assuming many responsibilities of government. (Cited in IGE 1989: 16)

Barillas subtitled his book "A Call for an Historic Compromise" and urged reform-minded military officers to carry out a coup against the Laugerud regime (Painter 1987: 70-74). Extensive criticism of this perspective, both from within the party and without, led its proponents to lower their profile. Vinicio Cerezo, Secretary General of the party at the time, argued publicly that Barillas' perspective was personal and did not reflect official party analysis. Yet, at the same time, Cerezo was expressing a very similar analysis in internal party discussions. In "The Army: An Alternative," Cerezo argued that

> Instead of regarding the army as an enemy of the democratic parties, we ought to consider accepting it as an ally of these parties. What we are suggesting here is that progressive politicians and military officers have a common responsibility....The key factor in the creation of a new order resides in the taking of power by the national army and the PDCG....Current conditions present us with a dead-end conflict unless both sectors UNITE and make a gigantic and joint effort to reorganize and redirect the nation's course. (IGE 1989: 16-17)

This perspective reflects two important aspects of the Party's political position towards the military: first, that the sort of civil-military dialogue endorsed by General Gramajo and other military leaders represented the

development within the military, independently, of a perspective long held by Cerezo and other leading Christian Democrats. At the same time, it also reflected the divisions within the party regarding reform. The party originally attracted young Catholic political activists seeking a non-marxist path toward reform of Guatemala's unjust social, economic, and political structures. Changes within Catholic social teachings and the continued resistance of Guatemala's traditional elites to reform engendered a still present identity problem for the PDCG. While reform proposals in the party's platform were generally rather mild, they provoked suspicion and resistance nonetheless among the military and oligarchy. Those reactions encouraged some party members towards more radical positions and other political movements, while the virulent anti-communism of other members led them to support the 1963 coup. In the late 60s and early 70s, the party was closely linked to the Catholic Action Movement, which was in turn assisting the growth of a rural cooperative movement. The party was a major force behind the FNO coalition which put forward Ríos Montt in 1974. But many party activists were disillusioned by the party's weak response to the blatant fraud which put Laugerud in power. Its constituency among unions and rural organizations also grew increasingly disenchanted with elections, furthering weakening the party's popular base and making it an insignificant factor in the elections in 1978 and 1982. Nonetheless, the party did gradually build stronger links with elements of the military.

The election of Cerezo in 1985 did not, of course, simply represent the military coming around to the party's analysis. By 1985, the political spectrum represented by Guatemalan parties was more narrow than ever; this process was accelerated after 1974 and grew especially murderous after 1978. The violence of the late 70s and early 80s decimated center-left political movements; the forces which could represent a "social democratic" electoral political project have yet to recover from the murders of such prominent political leaders as Alberto Fuentes Mohr and Manuel Colom Argueta. The platform put forward by Cerezo in 1985 was circumspect with regard to reforms that challenged traditional structures. Agrarian reform and the dismantling of civil defense patrols were discussed vaguely, as were efforts to investigate human rights abuses and establish an effective judicial system. But once in office, Cerezo was very cautious.

It was in the area of agrarian reform that many hoped Cerezo would use his mandate in order to challenge a system in which 2% of the population held over 60% of the arable land. The importance of this issue was stated by the Catholic bishops in their 1988 pastoral letter El Clamor por la Tierra, which stopped short of calling for land reform but described the country's social injustices as sinful. Cerezo was directly pressured by the Pro-Tierra movement led by Father André Girón.[1] Cerezo's administration downplayed land reform and emphasized agrarian policies which promoted "non-traditional exports": flowers, and vegetables for the winter market in the United States. This

economic activity would, proponents argued, provide more income to small farmers as well as employment for the landless.[2]

These policies reflected the Christian Democrats' firm desire to not offend the military. As their commitment to that path became more apparent, their relationship with left and popular sector groups, who had initially taken a wait- and-see attitude towards the new government, began to deteriorate. Yet, at the same time, its alliance with the military did little to improve the PDCG's standing with the right, especially among business groups. The tensions and strains with the latter were evident in the 1987 conflict over tax reform in which the military strongly sided with the PDCG in an effort to strengthen the state's fiscal resources and infrastructure. While claiming they were not opposed to fiscal modernization, business groups, led by CACIF (Chamber of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial and Financial Associations) distrusted Cerezo and Gramajo's will to follow through on economic reforms and maintained the state would waste new revenue because of incompetence and corruption.

Cerezo further angered conservatives by taking some initial steps towards improvements in relations with the Soviet bloc. Apparently even an appearance by the Moscow Symphony was too much "Soviet penetration" and was canceled after right-wing pressure (Painter 1987: 144). Cerezo also took some initial steps towards the process of "national reconciliation" set forth under the Esquipulas Accords signed in August 1987 by the five Central

American presidents.[3] Cerezo played a prominent role in the signing of the accord, and the military viewed it as an important element in the effort to establish a more independent foreign policy in the region. The Military viewed the Accords' embrace of dialogue and reconciliation as a framework for resolving military conflict in El Salvador and Nicaragua, but did not consider it relevant to Guatemala where, it was argued, guerrilla groups had been decisively defeated.[4] A Committee for National Reconciliation (CNR) was established in September 1987, and talks were held between the government and the URNG in October in Madrid. The following spring, four prominent representatives of the exile-based Representación Unitaria de Oposición Guatemalteca (RUOG), including Indian activist Rigoberta Menchú, returned to Guatemala briefly to test the possibility for dialogue. Their visit provoked outrage on the right and they soon left after many death threats.

Cerezo furthered angered business groups in March 1988 when he reached agreement with the Unidad de Acción Sindical y Popular (UASP), an important new labor and popular sector coalition which formed in early 1988, on a broad package of social policy including a higher minimum wage and price controls on electrical services and a few other items. Cerezo also committed the government to the investigation of human rights violations and to a fuller discussion of a process by which the 40,000 Guatemalan refugees in Mexico, generally viewed as "rebel sympathizers" by the right and military, might safely return.

Before Cerezo had much opportunity to demonstrate his political will to back up these commitments, dissident military officers attempted a coup on May 11, 1988. Though General Gramajo and the High Command defended the President and put down the golpe, the coup marked a fundamental turning point in the Cerezo Administration. It revealed contradictions well expressed in the analysis of the coup by Inforpress, a Guatemala City-based weekly newservice:

> One of the few advantages of a failed coup is that it permits a clearer examination afterwards of the political processes...because it brings to light facts and circumstances that actors and institutions try to keep in the dark. (May 19, 1988)

While General Gramajo publicly declared the military to be firmly behind the democratic process and committed to taking immediate steps to insure that the coup attempt was not repeated, the General's comments also reflected some implicit warnings to civilian political groups:

> We are taking determined--but sensible--decisions in order that there is no next time [another coup]. The problem is that the army is not alone responsible for the "next time." The rest of Guatemalan society will also have to act wisely. (Crónica, May 19, 1988: 21)

The actions of the Cerezo Administration in the subsequent months reflected that the coup plotters achieved many of their goals. Cerezo quickly moved away from the commitments made in the agreement with UASP as well as, for the time being, talks with the URNG. The military rebels behind

the coup also criticized the handling of the war and sought the sacking of Gramajo. While the General stayed on and disagreements were temporarily set aside, the coup shed new light on the failure of the "national stability" project to eliminate internal divisions. Tensions within the military continued to fester with an estimated one-third of the military supportive of the coup plotters. Another coup was attempted in May 1989, and again pitted the officers who were behind the coups of 1982 and 1983 against younger, self-defined "officers of the mountain" (Jonas 1991: 168-169).

After the May 1988 coup attempt, Cerezo and the PDCG entered a period of nearly unrelenting criticism and declining popularity that continued through the Presidential elections held in two rounds in November 1990 and January 1991. The President and his party were seen as incompetent at best, while charges of corruption, including involvement in narcotics trafficking, became common and openly expressed assumptions of many Guatemalans. The previously outlined partnership between the party and the military generated a continual political problem that Cerezo and the PDCG were never able to overcome: while viewed with continual suspicion and eventual contempt by the left, the party was equally unable to establish strong or consistent support from groups on the right. When Cerezo stepped back from the agreement with UASP, his administration's lack of political will now seemed irrefutable from the perspective of popular sector groups. Yet, his actions did little to improve relations with CACIF and the private sector.[5]

During the 1990 election campaign, with its prospects for re-election dim, the PDCG made a weak effort to strengthen its electoral support among the constituency represented by UASP; a group of well known center-left political figures explicitly referred to the tradition embodied by the murdered leaders Fuentes Mohr and Colom Argueta in giving their support to Christian Democratic presidential candidate Alfonso Cabrera. Their stated goal was to:

> ...establish a popular and democratic convergence that seeks a real and authentic process of democratization through a strategic alliance of popular organizations and responsible, modern, democratic political groups with the reformist faction of the Christian Democrats in the government. (Prensa Libre August 5 1990: 3)

This support did little to revive the political fortunes of the PDCG however. Indeed, it revealed the complete lack of popular support. Crónica derided what it called "operation rescue" as a feeble effort to establish "la izquierda lite." This effort was not joined by the Guatemalan Social Democratic Party (PSD). The Party's presidential candidate Mario Solórzano, exiled from the country through much of the 1980s, dismissed it as a political maneuver by the Christian Democrats to use a group of politicians generally associated with the left to:

> ...try to give a bit of forced color to their formula, though it is difficult to believe that one, two, or three persons inside the DC can cause a change in the course of a new government. (Interview in Crónica, Aug. 24, 1990: 25)

Solórzano posited that the PDCG hoped to use this display of support from the center-left to attract voters frightened by the prospect of Ríos Montt, but he argued that these individuals--political personalities without any real political base--could do little to repair the Christian Democrats' image. At the same time, however, Solórzano and the PSD received minuscule support themselves. The whole episode sharply illustrated the non-existence of the left in electoral politics.

1990 Elections: None of the Above

For much of 1989 and 1990, Jorge Carpio of the Unión del Centro Nacional (UCN) appeared the clear favorite to succeed Cerezo. Using his newspaper El Gráfico as a daily forum, Carpio was able gradually to develop a political infrastructure to compete with the PDCG at the departmental and municipal level. His "filosofía centrista" was presented in an attractive pamphlet available in supermarkets, while his face appeared on telephone poles and billboards throughout the country (Carpio 1990). Yet, with each new poll in 1990 it became clear that Carpio and his centrismo were failing to generate much enthusiasm in spite of widespread hatred of the PDCG. His campaign appeared to many to be rather short on specifics beyond the rhetoric of "ni la izquierda, ni la derecha" (neither of the left or the right).[6]

The first round of the Presidential elections was scheduled for November 1990. As the campaign moved on through August and September and into the final weeks, the electorate continued to express profound dissatisfaction with political parties and politicians. A poll taken at the end of July revealed 40% still undecided and 10% responding none of the above. The leader in that poll--the preference of 19% of the respondents--was not even a legally accepted candidate, General Efraín Ríos Montt. The General's candidacy was unconstitutional under Article 186 of the 1985 constitution which prohibited individuals who had previously come to power through a military coup from running for president. Ríos possessed a vocal and committed core of support however, and ran a campaign which spoke directly to public disdain with political leaders who seemed clearly incapable of dealing with economic deterioration, public employee strikes, and intensified political violence and street crime.[7]

It is in that context that the support expressed for Ríos Montt's campaign must be understood. Foreign news accounts of the General's candidacy consistently expressed incredulity at his current popularity given the widespread reports of human rights abuses during his 1982-83 regime, and the international condemnation which ensued. It was generally assumed that his popularity represented an anti-democratic impulse towards order and stability. But support for General Ríos Montt was also, in part, a popular response to the political culture of elections. Guatemalans do not, for reasons the account I

have given makes apparent, generally hold political parties in high esteem as the standard bearers of democracy; instead, they are seen as corrupt vehicles of patronage and personal aggrandizement. As thoroughly hated as the ruling Christian Democrats were, what was more striking was the complete failure, consistently reflected in polls, of other parties to gain public support as alternatives.[8] So the process of elections and democratization experienced by Guatemalans seemed if anything to be further discrediting the country's political leaders and perhaps its political system in general. I noted in Chapter 5 that we must be very careful in assessing expressions of support for Ríos Montt in some rural areas such as the heavily militarized Ixil Triangle in northern Quiche department. But in the capital and other urban areas, many ladinos openly expressed positive remembrances of the General's rule--in those days people worked, believed in God, and the government was honest. When asked about reported human rights abuses, many expressed skepticism about whether innocent "non-subversives" were killed. [9]

The Guatemalan Supreme Court finally resolved the issue of the legality of Ríos Montt's campaign in October 1990 by affirming that Article 186 prohibited his candidacy. While the General and his followers made vague threats prior to that ruling, they were not pursued and his campaign quickly fell apart. As Ríos presence finally faded in the weeks before the first round on November 11, one of the apparent also-rans among the candidates began to gather support among some Ríos' backers and undecided voters. Jorge Serrano

Elias, of the Movimiento de Acción Solidaria, came from out of nowhere--around 2% in the polls in the final weeks--and managed to finish second in the voting (23%), thereby forcing Jorge Carpio (24%) into a runoff in January. Serrano accelerated his momentum from that point and easily defeated Carpio in January, receiving 68% of the vote. I will look more closely at Serrano's policies in a later section; what was particularly notable in this election was the high rate of non-participation--estimated at between 55 and 70% of the voters. This suggested that the new President's honeymoon would be brief, and as we shall see, it was.

The National Dialogue Revived

1990 was the year of elections, but at the same time, the process of national dialogue and reconciliation set forth in the Esquipulas Accords regained momentum and appeared to many Guatemalans to offer better prospects for bringing change. In the process, the political dialogue over Guatemala's future began to expand beyond the political cultural boundaries the military had previously sought to establish. When the Guatemalan government helped complete the Esquipulas Accords in 1987, the military dismissed the relevance to Guatemala of the process of national reconciliation mandated by the accords. It argued that the URNG (Unidad Revolucionario Nacional Guatemalteca) was a defeated force without a significant national

constituency. The Cerezo Administration did nonetheless enter briefly into informal discussions with guerrilla representatives, but dropped these contacts after the coup attempt in May 1988.

At that time most of the international attention and pressure focused on using the Esquipulas Accords as a step towards resolution of the conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador. The accord did lead to the establishment of the Commission of National Reconciliation in Guatemala, however, largely through the initiative of religious leaders. By early 1990, amidst sustained economic crisis, it was apparent that the military had been premature in declaring the war over, while human rights abuses were growing. The Commission, led by Archbishop Rodolfo Quezada Toruño, held a meeting with the URNG in Oslo in March 1990. With assistance from the United Nations, the commission organized a series of meetings between the URNG and various sectors. The first of these meetings was held in Madrid in May 1990 with representatives of Guatemala's political parties and was aimed at beginning a process for ending the war and incorporating the guerrillas into the political system. The meeting was significant because it brought together members of Guatemala's extreme right and armed left and appeared to reflect a genuine desire among both sides for an end to the war. MLN leader Mario Sandoval Alarcón, long associated with the most intransigent and violent elements of the extreme right, stunned participants and observers when he acknowledged the genuine political will of the URNG to find solutions; he

went so far as to actually acknowledge the guerrillas leaders as Guatemalan patriots.

Subsequent meetings were held between the URNG and other sectors: business, religious, popular movements. Especially significant were meetings held with CACIF, the leading private sector organization, in Ottawa in September 1990. While the meeting did not produce any concrete proposals, it did represent an important step in the growing legitimacy of the URNG as a political force in Guatemala. Editorials in the conservative daily Prensa Libre echoed the attitude expressed by Sandoval Alarcón: after 30 years it was time to end the war.

In spite of growing support for the dialogue process among Guatemalan political and economic elites, as well as regional actors, the military continued to reject joining the process directly, even though all agreed that its participation was crucial. But in April 1991, a delegation which included members of the High Command met with the URNG in Mexico City and agreed to an agenda for future talks.[10]

While the high command reluctantly accepted the need to negotiate, given the state of the economy and external pressures, dissident factions within the military quickly accused their leaders of selling out. A June communique from a group calling themselves the "officers of the Mountain"

complained:

> We are on the battlefield suffering and rationing food with the troops while the high command lives in luxury and allows officers to drink it up at the negotiations with the subversives themselves. (CERIGUA, June 16, 1991)

This is the group of officers who attempted coups against the Cerezo Administration in May 1988 and again in May 1989. While this group did not constitute an immediate threat to the High Command or President Serrano, the worsening human rights situation, described in more detail below, led some commentators to suggest that elements opposed to the dialogue were sowing disorder.[11]

Meanwhile, serious and difficult issues were on the table for negotiation. The most important of these were human rights, the role of the military, and the meaning of democratization. As Frank Larue noted:

> The two parties approach the theme of "democratization" from different perspectives. The government considers itself a democratic regime and views the discussion as one of "perfecting" democracy. The URNG sees the need for a thoroughgoing process, particularly addressing the question of guarantees of popular participation. (1991)

In spite of increased political violence, optimism about the prospects for an agreement grew after meetings held in Queretaro, Mexico, July 23-26, produced another accord setting forth a working definition of democracy to guide future discussion. The "Preliminary Accord regarding democratization

for the search for peace through political means" agreed on the following points:

1) The pre-eminence of civil society
2) The development of an institutional democracy
3) The effective functioning of citizens' rights.
4) The permanent elimination of political repression, electoral fraud, military attacks and pressures, and anti-democratic actions.
5) The strict respect of human rights, which should be clearly defined to both parties by the Mediator to prevent misunderstanding on either side.
6) The subordination of the Armed Forces to civilian control.
7) Recognition and respect for the identity and rights of the indigenous.
8) Access to and enjoyment of the financial benefits of national production and the country's natural resources, which should be based in principles of social justice.
9) The effective resettlement of the free population displaced in the armed conflict.

This accord reflected compromises on each side. As noted by Inforpress:

> The URNG has tacitly acknowledged the constitution as the legal framework in which to operate politically, while the government has clearly made concessions by linking the concept of democracy to indigenous rights. Moreover, the military has accepted the supremacy of civilian rule. (August 2, 1991)

But the fate of the dialogue in the following months vividly revealed the gap that remained between words and deeds. The human rights situation showed no improvement; in the first 10 days of August 1991, 38 deaths were reported bearing the classic death squad trademarks--signs of torture, death by a shot to the head. Most significant of these was the murder of the Head of the Homicide Division of the National Police, José Miguel Merida Escobar on Aug. 5. Merida's death was widely assumed to be related to his conscientious

investigation of the murder in September 1990 of well known Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack in a case which attracted enormous international attention. A September 1991 report released by Americas Watch documented the continuing failure of civilian authorities to challenge military impunity with regard to human rights abuses.

The worsening human rights problems reflected the centrality and difficulty of the issue on the table when the government and the URNG met in Mexico City, Sept 20-24: processes for verifying compliance with human rights accords. The URNG proposed 5 points:

1) indemnification of past victims.
2) abolition of civil patrols.
3) end of forced conscription.
4) end of all clandestine operations-including use of plain clothes police and unmarked cars.
5) abolition of the amnesty law covering 1982-86.

The meetings in September were still fairly cordial but inconclusive. The rhetoric of the Serrano Administration grew more hostile in the next month however, suggesting that it was being magnanimous in talking to the URNG but repeating ever more strongly its position that Guatemala was already a democracy ruled by a constitutionally elected government.

The meetings held in Mexico City October 22-24 began with some mutual compromises on the issues of indemnification and conscription. But the talks broke off over the URNG proposal that a commission be established under U.N. auspices to monitor compliance of human rights. The divide

between the two sides was substantial and revolved around the issue of timing: do human rights abuses and the counter-insurgency need to end immediately, as the URNG argued; or, is a cease fire and full peace pact a prior necessity. The government maintained that the proper goal of the meetings was a cease-fire, not new political and military reforms. In addition, the government viewed the participation of the UN as an unconstitutional infringement upon its status as a democracy while the URNG argued that:

> ...human rights violations are not just the project of the internal armed conflict as the government maintains; but rather arose from the existing political system, upheld by consecutive regimes, since before the war began. (In Inforpress Nov 1, 1991: 2)

The President of the CNR, Monseñor Quezada Toruño, met with the URNG on November 15 in an effort to rebuild some consensus regarding points for future discussion. But at the same time, increased military encounters between the URNG and the military suggested that the war might be heating up again with each side looking perhaps to rebuild its leverage. Nonetheless, while the Serrano Administration was taking a more hard line approach, the two leading military representatives in the negotiations received promotions. In the beginning of December, Serrano replaced his Defense Minister and Army Chief of Staff; the changes did not signal a change in attitude towards the dialogue in principle, but did reflect continued division between those who supported and opposed negotiations.

At the same time, the dialogue process is not the only issue and often gets tangled up with internal military issues regarding promotions and corruption in the High Command. When the military appeared willing to investigate the participation of several navy officers in the robbery and murder of 11 on a highway in Escuintla department in July 1991, these actions were portrayed by the military and government as an important step in addressing the issue of military impunity. As this case involved purely criminal as opposed to political motivations, human rights activists expressed skepticism about its significance in confronting that larger issue. At the same time, a communique in August from the "Officers of the Mountain" argued that the navy officers were scapegoats, and maintained that officials of the elite military intelligence unit G-2 were responsible (Inforpress August 23, 1991: 1-2). Given the central role long attributed to the G-2 within Guatemala's apparatus of repression, any effort to prosecute, or simply ask questions of its members would have presented a whole range of problems. While the dissident officers had no interest in questioning the methods used to fight "subversion," they objected to having lower level officers being made sacrificial lambs in an effort to develop a more positive international image.

The issues under discussion when the dialogue broke off raise fundamental questions regarding how to view both the past, present, and future of Guatemala. I will return to these questions in more depth in the discussion on human rights and the "culture of terror" which will conclude this

chapter. The achievements of the dialogue so far are not insignificant, but it is apparent that further agreements will only come gradually, if at all. Whether the process of national dialogue will lead to some kind of "historic compromise," or is simply a passing footnote amidst continuing political violence remains to be seen. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I will examine the other main political cultural forces which will influence that outcome.

The Changing Political Culture of the Left: The URNG

The process of national dialogue, while still far from bringing permanent changes in Guatemalan politics, has at least generated discussion between the URNG and many sectors of Guatemalan society. How ought we to understand the position of the URNG within this context? The end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union have generated much discussion and speculation on the implications for Latin American revolutionary movements. Those who previously assumed Central American revolutionary movements took their ideological and military initiative from Havana and Moscow have tended also to assume that such groups would be forced to abandon their previous positions or become irrelevant. Yet, guerrilla movements which have endured in one form or another for thirty years cannot be dismissed as simply the puppets of external forces. Those groups have

survived, as General Gramajo acknowledged in his analysis, because of their capacity to adapt their tactics and analysis in the light of experience. Guatemala's guerrilla organizations have clearly been affected by regional and global revolutionary doctrine in the past, and recent changes in the analysis of URNG leaders reflect their realization of the new political and economic environment of the 1990s and the challenges which it presents.

Structural factors conditioned these perceptions: political weakness, regional changes including the electoral defeat of the FSLN in Nicaragua, pressure from allies abroad to end the war through negotiation.At the same time, it didn't take the collapse of the Soviet Union or the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas to interest the URNG in dialogue with the Guatemalan military. While previously portrayed by the United States State Department as a sectarian and xenophobic extreme undisposed to compromise, the URNG began to move away from its previously triumphalist declarations and sought contacts with the Cerezo Administration shortly after the new President's inauguration. The experience of the early 1980s had clearly convinced many in the URNG that while they could continue to harass the army and hold off total defeat, the war was not winnable. Military operations were from this point conceived principally as a means to obtain political leverage by convincing the army and political elites that the state could not win the war either and that a political solution was necessary.

This analysis of the current coyuntura also reflected changes in URNG's own political perspective regarding the question of democracy. A socialist polity achieved through the armed capture of the state was no longer considered a realistic or desirable goal. Instead, the guerrilla organizations sought to establish an environment within which a broader range of political movements and groups could securely participate in Guatemalan political life.

The URNG has been able, through participation in the dialogue, to move slowly towards realization of that goal. What for many Guatemalans had previously been a rather shadowy force that only showed up in the press as "terrorists" and "subversives" defeated by the military was by 1990 widely recognized as an essential part of the solution to Guatemala's problems. Whereas only a few activists and intellectuals could previously read about the analysis of the URNG in exile publications from the United States or Mexico, its point of view is now regularly reported in the newspaper.

What are URNG leaders saying to their compatriots? As with the military, and perhaps to an even greater extent, the URNG is not completely united. It is an amalgam of guerrilla armies, each of which has somewhat different popular bases, histories, and political tendencies. Still, the position set forth by URNG leaders within the national dialogue process has been fairly consistent. Their analysis has noted the obvious changes in East-West relations and emphasized the opportunities provided by a less ideological United States

foreign policy. Luis Felipe Bekker, a principle negotiator for the URNG, told an reporter for the daily La Hora:

> The foreign policy of the United States now appears to favor stability in Central America because it has been proven that their investment and economic dominion cannot achieve the desired results in a climate of war. Thus, they have begun to have less confidence in military solutions and U.S. diplomacy has sought other paths. (August 16, 1990: 10)

Bekker argued that the end of the Cold War placed new pressures on both sides and went on to argue that some elite groups within Guatemala also believed that the war and political violence was damaging their own interests:

> There are inside CACIF sectors who want to modernize the system given that the traditional economic model [based on agro-exports] has shown itself to be obsolete and incapable of serving as a basis for stabilizing the situation and defending their interests. (Ibid)

At the same time, the URNG has argued that there can be no basis for "genuine democracy" without some fundamental transformations in the role of the military. The demand for demilitarization has meant the need for, in the words of Comandante Gaspar Ilom:

> ...the reorganization, suppression, and investigation of police and intelligence entities and the unrestricted subordination of security and police entities to the judicial system....we haven't fought for 30 years in order to receive an amnesty....Peace ought to resolve problems not simply end the war. For that reason we wont accept peace at any cost. (Crónica, July 27, 1990: 32)

The dialogue process offers, in the view of the URNG, the best prospects for initiating such changes, though as indicated previously the negotiations will not be easy.

The fact that the URNG is participating in the dialogue also represents its members' new perspective on democracy. The evolution in perspective parallels in some ways a trend Robert Barros has analyzed in the Southern Cone:

> The defeat of the left in Chile, Uruguay and Argentina at what was thought to be the height of each one's power, along with the ferocious repression unleashed to destroy guerrilla organizations, disorganize left parties and trade unions, and instill fear in their supporters, has badly shaken the previous ideological certainty of the left. (1986: 50)

In this context, Barros notes that the previous disdain of "bourgeois" democracy and "reformist" political programs has been replaced by the realization that

> ...the possibility of advancing even the most elementary revindicative demands of lower class groups came to hinge on the recovery of civil and political liberties. (1986: 51)

This rethinking has led to political action intended to create and consolidate political spaces and institutions which can serve as a buttress against military rule. The "reform vs revolution" polemic of the 1960s and 1970s has thus given way to a new appreciation of the need to restore, or in some cases establish, institutions and rules of law that can provide greater protection against the

unprecedented, for Latin America, levels of state terrorism practiced in the 1970s and 1980s (Lechner 1981; Munck 1989: 1-24). Given the powerlessness of the URNG to defend its popular bases against the military's counter-insurgency, these issues have inspired intensive reflection and critique of previous assumptions about democracy in a non-socialist context. [12]

Susanne Jonas began her recent study of Guatemala with the question "Is social revolution still on the agenda in Latin America?" The prevailing assumption in many current analyses is that it is not; or if a revolution is occurring, capitalism and liberal democracy, and perhaps evangelical Protestantism rather than socialism, are its terms . Given the failures of "existing socialism" and past Latin American statist development projects, the reasons for such assumptions are not hard to see. However, the URNG has by no means completely abandoned its socialist identity despite a more conciliatory perspective towards the private sector and capitalism in general. Moreover, while the guerrilla organizations are a central actor, they are not the whole left. If and when agreements are reached, their meaning and worth will be established through the daily struggles of specific political organizations. The members of guerrilla organizations will most certainly play an important role in that process. At the same time, they will need to build day-to-day working relationships, strategies, and political projects with popular sector political organizations already in place, and already engaged in their own struggles and programs. A cease-fire and end to the war will provide new

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peasants learn about the human rights guaranteed them under the Guatemalan constitution.

National Coordinator of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA) was founded in 1989 and has organized approximately 9000 women around a wide range of health, literacy, income and employment generation projects, while publicizing, speaking out, and pressuring the government with regard to continued violence and repression.

Unión Sindical de Trabajadores de Guatemala (UNSITRAGUA). A confederation of 25 of Guatemala's most militant unions which seeks to coordinate labor responses to repression against union activity as well as to the deteriorating economic situation. They have been particularly active in opposition to the philosophy of "solidarismo" which many companies and business leaders--including Serrano's Movimiento de Acción Solidaria--have sought to promote among workers. Solidarismo is based on a more corporatist and paternalistic relationship based on reciprocity; UNSITRAGUA argues it is an effort to destroy workers' rights.

National Council of Displaced in Guatemala (CONDEG). Formed in 1988 to represent some of the hundreds of thousands displaced by the war who are now trying to survive in cities, especially in the capital or the South Coast, because it is not safe to return to their villages in the highlands.

Comunidades de Población en Resistencia (CPR). The Communities of Population in Resistance went public in 1990 but represents communities

which have been surviving in hiding since 1983. They are now demanding that they be able to peacefully return to their homes. They are also calling for the elimination of the model villages and civil patrols and are demanding that the government officially recognize them as a non-combatant civilian population.

Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC). This organization was organized in 1976-78 in response to intensified repression against indigenous communities.[13] CUC's close identification with the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) forced it to operate underground for most of the 80s, but it re-emerged as the leading force behind farmworker strikes in the coastal plantations in 1989 and 1990.

Since these are groups which the military has generally viewed as subversive, they were not viewed as legitimate participants in the process of concertación envisioned by the thesis of "national stability." They also have little relationship to the leading political parties, even though they represent, taken together, at least as wide a constituency. They have used the political openings present since 1984 to challenge the popular legitimacy of the Cerezo and Serrano Administrations, as well as the military's political project. But while the situation is better than during the darkest periods in the early 80s, the efforts of the popular organizations to build and conserve political space are still plagued by political.

The importance of these organizations was implicitly acknowledged by President Serrano in his effort to negotiate a "social pact" between government,

business and the popular sector. That discussion will be examined in more detail in the following section. These groups challenge the legitimacy of the current Guatemalan state at several important levels. The work of CERJ has brought international attention to the existence of the civil patrols, and its leader, Amilcar Méndez, has been honored by U.S. human rights organizations. The Communities in Resistance challenge the legitimacy and even the continued viability of development poles, model villages, and the other rural infrastructure organized by the military. They were visited in February 1991 by a "multi-partite commission" made up largely of religious and popular organization leaders and through which they presented three demands:

> 1) recognition as a civilian population distinct from the URNG; 2) freedom of movement and organization within their territory: "we don't want civil patrols and development poles. They divide us and impede communication"; 3) unrestricted entrance for church and human rights organizations. (Siglo Veintiuno, March 14, 1991)

The CPRs have also affirmed the dialogue process and asked the Committee for National Reconciliation to verify their situation. Most of these organizations joined together in early 1988 to form the Unidad de Acción Sindical y Popular (UASP) in an effort to achieve greater coordination of their common agendas. UASP negotiated an agreement with Cerezo on wages, prices, and human rights in March 1988, but the president backed away from his commitment after the May 1988 coup.

These organizations have strongly and consistently supported the dialogue process, and they share much of the social and political agenda reflected in the negotiating positions of the URNG. At the same time, each organization has its own issues and agendas which, as Susanne Jonas has stressed, are partly born of the desire to establish autonomous political and organizational identities in the wake of the massive repression suffered by popular movements in the 1970s (1991: 186-193).[14]

A New Social Pact?

When Jorge Serrano Elias assumed the Presidency, many commentators wondered how he would govern given the weakness of his own political party. Serrano argued in response that what was perceived as weakness by many was in fact a source of strength. Without the more extensive party infrastructure of the UCN or PDCG, he would be better able to work towards a policy of unity and reconciliation between parties and sectors. He put this assumption into practice almost immediately when he named a cabinet of ministers which, while mostly representing the right, included Social Democratic leader Mario Solórzano as Minister of Labor. Reacting to the fragmented new Congress in which no party held a majority Serrano told

Crónica:

> It will be a gift to govern a country with a Congress without majoritarian blocs, and in which it will be necessary to look always for a balance. For an autocratic President this would represent a serious problem, but not for me for I have been a conciliator. (Nov. 16, 1991: 20)

For the new president to show that this claim reflected real political gifts and not simply rhetoric, he would have to quickly convince Guatemalans across the socio-economic and political spectrum that he had some genuine solutions to Guatemala's severe economic woes. The current situation is generally considered to be the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. Over the past decade, and especially since 1985, Guatemala has moved near to the bottom of the hemispheric list in virtually every quality of life indicator. U.S. AID estimated that by 1990 the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty, without the resources to meet minimum nutritional needs, had increased from 52% to 72% (Jonas 1991: 178). The Guatemalan National Statistics Institute estimated that 75.5% lived below the poverty line, and in rural areas estimated that figure at 94%.[15] Unemployment in 1989 was estimated at roughly 50% while purchasing power was 22% compared to 1972. Inflation in 1989 and 1990 was 60%, brought on by devaluations of the quetzal.[16] While the figures for inflation, GDP growth, foreign reserves, and interest rates all improved in 1991 (Central America Report, Nov. 8, 1991), unemployment and wage levels continued stagnant.

President Serrano responded to this situation by immediately proposing negotiation of what he termed a "social pact". This effort to reach agreement between government, labor, and business was Serrano's version of concertación, but it was soon confronted by highly negative reactions from the other two sectors. Nearly all of Guatemala's independent labor organizations rejected the pact; the Unidad de Acción Sindical y Popular (UASP) argued, in a paid announcement in the press, that:

> The government and the powerful sectors of the country want to impose the so-called social pact with the fundamental objective of breaking the just demands and struggles of the popular movement....They want to put a strait-jacket on these groups...and we believe that signing of the pact signifies resigning ourselves to living in misery. (Cited in Crítica, April 26, 1991: 12)

Given the continued harassment of labor, and non-enforcement of existing legislation regarding minimum wages and collective bargaining, as well as Serrano's clear commitment to the company-union oriented Solidarismo movement, many labor groups were completely disinclined to trust either the state or the private sector.

If unions viewed the social pact in this fashion, it might be assumed that President Serrano could count on strong support from the private sector, but such was not the case. The President of CACIF, Victor Suarez, asked why such a pact was necessary; "Guatemalans already have a social pact: the constitution." CACIF was skeptical about how the pact would contribute to economic growth and feared it was simply a pretext to government economic

intervention. The private sector would be forced to pay new wages and taxes while the government failed to address what Suarez considered the more important issue: "our economic model is exhausted...[and] internal production is stagnant" (Crítica, April 26, 1991: 14).

Despite this rampant skepticism, negotiation between the government and the state workers union (FENASTEG), and other segments of organized labor continued into the Summer of 1991. President Serrano announced the formation of a Commission of Salaries, Prices, and Employment of the Social Pact, and initially announced the possibility of salary increases of up to 15% in some areas. But the talks stagnated by the end of July and have yet to establish any real momentum.

The failure, thus far, of Serrano's "social pact" is not surprising given the inherent tension between the commitment to free market, neo-liberal policies on the one hand, and the regulation and governmental intervention on the other inherent in the idea of the pact. Given the inability of Serrano to convince or co-opt labor to join what, shorn of a strong statist economic agenda, amounts to a corporatist project, those tensions continue to dominate the present political landscape. With the social pact and the national dialogue both stalled, the present government completed its first year in office appearing even weaker than its predecessor.

The lack of success of Serrano's social pact reflects the political tensions described, but it also reflects the cultural confusion inherent in a period of

potentially profound national change. Guatemala's economic crisis may well prove to be the early stages of a transformation at least as profound as what occurred in the 1960s and perhaps as far-reaching as the liberal reform era of the 1870s and 1880s. In such a context, the contours of which are still far from clear and probably will remain blurred for much of the 1990s as global and regional economic processes gradually unfurl, the challenges confronting Guatemalan labor organizations are especially strong. Only 5% of the work force is presently unionized and the largest growth in employment in recent years has come in the largely non-unionized maquiladora sector. While Guatemalan efforts to attract more of these industries have been less successful than elsewhere in the isthmus, any future growth will weaken existing unions unless they are able to respond effectively. At the same time, changes in the agricultural sector--including the movement towards non-traditional export crops--will also require new analyses and strategies by farmworker movements such as the Committee of Campesino Unity (CUC).

Ethnicity and Political Identity 500 years After the Conquest

The earlier discussion of the "popular movement" included several organizations based heavily among indigenous communities; but given the enduring importance of ethnic identity a fuller treatment is necessary. As I noted in chapter 3, analysts from across the political spectrum have long

predicted that forces and processes were conspiring to gradually weaken ethnic identity and replace it with, for better or worse, more "modern" forms. I suggested that the historical evidence should inspire caution about such assumptions. The efforts of the military over the past decade to integrate indigenous communities have led some to speak of a "third conquest" and ask whether the Maya could continue to preserve their ethnic identity (Carmack ed. 1988). Or, were the combined forces of earthquake, horrific political violence, displacement, counter-insurgency, and economic depression finally going to accomplish what previous efforts at cultural, political, and economic assimilation of the Maya could not?

The provisional answer to that question at this point is clearly "no". While communities have been torn apart and only partly reconstituted, and hundreds of thousands of Maya have been forced to migrate to the cities, new and important forms of indigenous political activity have recently emerged. These groups and activities are significant because they directly challenge the political goals of the military's counter-insurgency project and reflect its failure, so far, to resolve the legitimacy problem of the Guatemalan state. These new Maya-based movements also challenge the traditional ladino left by insisting that indigenous issues be given more than lip-service, and by demonstrating the desire and capability to chart political agendas which may work with larger political movements while insisting on maintaining their own autonomy. Carol Smith has recently referred to this as a nascent "Maya

nationalism" which has sought not an independent state, but "the creation of a strong and general Mayan identity, one that maintains the values of the past, while dealing with developmental issues of the present" (Smith 1990: 279).

An important organizing symbol for these new indigenous movements has been the "500 years of resistance" campaign being carried out by indigenous groups throughout the hemisphere. The Second Encounter of the 500 years of Indigenous and Popular Resistance was held October 7-12 in Quezaltenango. The meeting brought together delegates from 26 countries. As a continent-wide process, the meeting revealed continuing tensions between indigenous and non-indigenous groups and agendas. But the conference was a significant political cultural event in Guatemala. Most notable was the prominent press attention accorded Rigoberta Menchu, long branded subversive by the state, and the open participation by the Communities in Resistance and other largely indigenous organizations.

The future direction of these development is still quite unpredictable. Whatever their outcome, however, they indicate that the events of the past two decades are changing the nature of ethnic political identity, not eliminating it. This new "nationalism" is emerging in a time when the majority of Maya no longer live in the traditional rural communities which have for so long provided a base for cultural survival. Recent research has also challenged the conventional assumptions about the impact of urbanization and ethnic identity.[17]

These new developments and activism do not constitute a unified movement, and it is not clear that such unity would be desirable for realizing their goals. The Maya have survived past efforts to assimilate them partly because their cultures and identities have long been, as Smith argues "plural and localized rather than generic and monolithic" (1991: 31). Past history demonstrates clearly that unified indigenous movements risk provoking a powerful repressive response from the state. They could also give too much power to Maya elites and weaken local efforts. The emergence of strongly indigenous evangelical churches may foster more local action, as well as be a barrier to unity. New indigenous political movements might also offer a way to finally build a Guatemalan political order which represents, and is seen as legitimate by, the majority. They may also gradually forge a more decentralized relationship which challenges the unifying assumptions of modern nation-states, an issue which I will examine more fully in returning in the final chapter to the issue of modern nationalism which began this work. These are the dilemmas, compounded by all the other forces transforming Guatemala's socio-economic structures, which will confront indigenous movements into the 21st century.

The Culture of Terror

We have seen that despite enormous problems and tensions, there is clear evidence that the present context has generated conditions within which a broad range of Guatemalans--including important elements of the left, oligarchy, military, and the superpowers--appear willing to negotiate and consider compromise in the pursuit of a new political order. That the extreme right and the armed left are willing to talk and envision a place for each other within Guatemalan politics is a significant political cultural development.

But any assessment of this process of dialogue must be tempered by recognition of how pervasive the influence of terror remains within Guatemalan political culture. One of the fundamental issues which has confronted newly democratizing countries in Latin America has been how to deal with the terror and violence of the past. In Guatemala, where the level of violence deployed by the state was the most extreme and prolonged in Latin America, the issue is central to current political debate and shows no signs of going away. Before looking at recent discussion and events more closely, there are some general issues that need to be examined.

The specific issue around which the larger questions usually gather is impunity. Should military officers, as well as their subordinates, be held responsible for human rights abuses which occurred during periods which those officials consider states of war within which their actions were justifiable

in terms of national security? Responses to the issue have ranged from military-granted amnesty laws in Chile and Brazil, an act of Congress in Uruguay which was later ratified by national referendum, and limited prosecution of officers held responsible for the "dirty war" in Argentina in the late 1970s.[18] In the latter case, initially seen as an important new precedent, Presidents Alfonsin and Menem eventually pardoned most officers accused of rights violations. In Guatemala, the military issued Decree 8-86 which granted amnesty covering all actions undertaken after the March 1982 coup.

In a paper on the subject of impunity and civil-military transitions, J. Patrice McSherry has noted four general perspectives: pragmatic, legal, social, and moral (1990). From the "pragmatic" perspective, "impunity is the necessary price for the transition to civilian rule"; the pursuit of absolute justice complicates the goal of stability for an emerging civilian regime. This argument has informed the policy of President Cerezo and Serrano; in order to move ahead with the full cooperation of the military and without rancor and recrimination, the past should, they argue, be left in the past.

The "legal" perspective views blanket amnesty laws and the message of impunity that they carry as a threat to international law because they undermine international human rights norms such as the U.N. Declaration and the Geneva Accords. What McSherry calls the "social" perspective is closely related to this, but brings the matter closer to home by arguing that laws such as Decree 8-86 weaken the long term legitimacy of democratic institutions in

the pursuit of short term objectives. Without processes for resolving the suffering caused by human rights violations by the state, "a culture of fear persists...the fear that terror might recur" (1990: 5). The individual who must daily pass her torturer in the street, or the parent who can never learn what happened to his child continue to experience a culture of lawlessness within which personal security is always in doubt. The wounds can never be healed because the state cannot bring itself to say: what happened to you as a citizen was a violation of the law and an injustice which must be punished.

The larger political effect of "putting the past behind", from this perspective, is the weakening of civilian authority, "by strengthening the military and encouraging increased perceptions of impunity, contempt for civilian rule, and self righteousness" (McSherry 1990: 5). The Guatemalan military clearly view their actions as the necessary tactics of a war against subversion; no apologies are required, and in fact would strike at the heart of the military's own well-developed sense of mission and identity. The thesis on "national stability", as elaborated by General Gramajo, assumes quite explicitly that a certain level of violence against the civilian population is essential given the infiltration of subversive elements. In that sense, the Mutual Support Group (GAM), and Widows Committee (CONAVIGUA) are not the only ones battling over the meaning of the past. When civilian presidents tell Guatemalans to look ahead and not behind, they support, intentionally or not, military version of history and political morality.

The issue of impunity remained central to Guatemalan political debate in 1991, revealing an important political cultural fissure. Signs of change and continuity were present and are clearly illustrated in the case of slain anthropologist Myrna Mack. One of Guatemala's most prominent academics, Mack's most recent research had produced highly critical studies of government policy which documented the continuing impact of counter-insurgency programs on displaced persons in the highlands. The work of Mack and her colleagues at the Association for the Advancement of the Social Sciences in Guatemala (AVANCSO) sought both to investigate current conditions and to reestablish independent social science after a decade of murder, exile, and intimidation. Given the nature of her work, Mack's murder was widely viewed as a direct effort to intimidate independent inquiry.

The first official reaction from the government suggested that the anthropologist was the victim of street crime. But the widespread domestic and international publicity given the case gradually led to a more rigorous investigation by the head of the Homicide Division of the National Police, José Miguel Merida Escobar. Merida concluded that the murder had been "politically motivated" and his investigation implicated a security officer working under the Presidential Chief of Staff. The case was widely viewed inside and outside Guatemala as an acid test of the state's willingness to investigate and punish political crimes by military officials. But Merida was

himself murdered on August 5, 1991, and in the first 10 days of August there were 38 murders bearing the classic signature features of political killings.[19]

A September 1991 report by Americas Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, Who's at Fault?: Getting Away with Murder, documented the continuing failure of efforts to challenge military impunity.[20] It was against the background of these events that efforts to discuss human rights--especially verification issues--led to a breakdown of the dialogue in October 1991.

At the same time, there is some reason for optimism if one looks at the local and national reaction to an internationally publicized massacre of 14 Indian peasants by soldiers at a military barracks at Santiago Atitlán in December 1990. In the aftermath, extensive discussion ensued inside Guatemala regarding the role of the military. While then President Cerezo was slow to react, both he and the national assembly supported the request by townspeople that the barracks be removed from their community. Subsequent efforts by the military to move were opposed by other towns in the area. The success of these efforts to make the President truly perform his function as Commander-in-Chief, rather than permit the military its traditional autonomy over its own affairs, suggests that the usual pattern of civil-military relations may be open to change. The political battle against impunity is still far from won, but recent events clearly show the military is on the defensive. [21]

We should also not discount the genuine achievements that popular movement organizations continue to make in widening political space beyond

that envisioned by the authors of the national stability project. The return of Rigoberta Menchu and the coming into the open of the Committees in Resistance are two examples. Popular sector organizations held the first "Conference of Victims of Violence and Impunity" in Guatemala City, July 18-19 1991, an event which as Inforpress noted was "remarkable more for context than content." Given that such a meeting would have been unthinkable in 1988 or 1989, the potential cultural significance should not be dismissed. [22]

Human Rights and United States Policy

The treatment of human rights was also affected by changes in U.S. policy towards Guatemala in 1990 and 1991. The Reagan and Bush Administrations had generally been very upbeat about the democratization process and strongly supportive of the efforts and sincerity of President Cerezo and General Gramajo. U.S. officials initially called Cerezo's election the "final step in the re-establishment of democracy," and though Cerezo's relative neutrality regarding U.S. concerns in Nicaragua, as well as his role in the Esquipulas Accords angered U.S. officials, Cerezo's image in Washington remained considerably better than it did at home until well into 1989.

United States policy efforts to support the agenda of Cerezo and Gramajo included several "pro-democracy" programs which generated great controversy in and out of Guatemala. These included a program to train

Guatemalan police and justice officials. Particularly controversial was an AID supported program run by the Harvard Law School. The program brought Guatemalan judges to Harvard and was criticized by human rights and exile groups as a mostly cosmetic effort by Cerezo and Gramajo to use Harvard's prestige to legitimize their government. Harvard eventually ended its participation in the program in July 1990. [23]

Harvard was also strongly criticized when it granted a fellowship to General Gramajo. During his graduation ceremony, Gramajo was given notice of a suit filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights on behalf of nine Guatemalans whose relatives, it was alleged, were the victims of human rights abuses by the military. Another lawsuit involved the case of an North American nun, Diana Ortiz, who charged that she had been raped and assaulted by Guatemalan police officials. The suit was based upon international tort law agreements which permitted foreign citizens to sue in U.S. courts if the perpetrator is on United States soil. The case provoked the Guatemalan weekly Crónica to charge a "conspiracy at Harvard" in a cover story (June 20, 1991); the weekly traced a network of exiles, journalists, U.S. Representatives, and human rights activists who, it was argued, were interfering in Guatemala's sovereignty and democratic process. Gramajo's accusers argued, on the other hand, that the General, and his U.S. allies, were using Harvard in order to clean up his image and get him ready to run for President in 1995.

The incident points up the continued significance of international human rights networks in Guatemalan politics. The reactions of both United States and Guatemalan actors indicate that these groups play an important part in the political dialogue and influence the terms of the debate regarding human rights and what I have termed the "political culture of terror." They play an influential role in discussions of aid to Guatemala in the U.S. Congress; pressure from Congressional Democrats was partly responsible for the cut off of aid announced by the Bush Administration in December 1990. The impact of human rights groups is complex however, supporting the efforts and concerns of many Guatemalans while at the same time provoking nationalist emotions and defenses in others. At the same time, opponents of President Cerezo on the right often cited the work of Amnesty International and Americas Watch when it reinforced their criticisms.

Several factors caused the United States government to distance itself from the Guatemalan government; with elections scheduled for 1990 the U.S. wanted to counter the perception that it favored the Christian Democrats, especially as their electoral hopes plummeted. The worsening human rights situation generated congressional efforts to cut off or limit military aid. New developments compounded the pressure; the case of Diana Ortiz; the murder of Michael Devine, a North American who had lived in Guatemala for many years and ran a well known camp for travellers on the way to the Petén; and extensive negative reporting in the United States media on the brutality

suffered by street children in Guatemala City. Military and/or national police officials were strongly implicated in each of these matters. In December 1990, after the massacre in Atitlán and continuing inaction on the Devine case, the Bush Administration cut off military aid.

Looking to the Future

While the previous two sections suggested possibilities for a weakening of what I have called the culture of terror, there are also good reasons to suggest that these issues will prove more difficult in Guatemala than they have been elsewhere. Unlike Chile and Uruguay, there is no well-developed tradition of the rule of law which can be invoked, however ambiguous it may be. [24] There is not a strongly established national identity which can be restored--it remains rather to be constructed. I argued in Chapter 5 that the Guatemalan state's power vis-a-vis civil society was arguably the strongest in Latin America, but we must amend this conclusion with an important distinction set forth by Carol Smith--between a state which is strong and hegemonic, borrowing Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and one which is weak and coercive (1991: 31). The Guatemalan state's coercive power has grown as a response to the lack of hegemonic power; that is the problem which Gramajo and his colleagues understood so clearly and sought, in their fashion, to change.

But it remains difficult to see how a sense of Guatemala as a national community can emerge without some definitive break from what Guatemalan Archbishop Próspero Penados del Barrio has recently called the "culture of death" and which his Central American colleagues have characterized as:

> The galloping corruption in all walks of life and the impunity with which the most detestable deeds are committed. Almost without realizing it we have entered into a culture of death. We are so accustomed to live in the midst of such horrible violence and dreadful massacres and crimes that we have been left insensible. (Cited in Central America Report, Dec. 6, 1991)

During the controversy over whether General Ríos Montt could legally be a candidate for President, political parties and editorialists often framed the issue in straight-forward constitutional terms: Article 186 says he can't, so he can't. But for many Guatemalans the constitution, if they can read it, says a lot of things which don't take place in reality. The work of CERJ (Ethnic Communities We Are All Equal) has been previously noted; they try to teach peasants about their constitutionally guaranteed human rights--including the right to not serve in the civil patrols. The group's leader, Amilcar Méndez, has received repeated death threats and is usually accompanied by at least one member of the international group Peace Brigades; many less well known members have disappeared or been assassinated. In the villages where CERJ works, the army follows up with cartoons that show chickens (peasants) being attacked by foxes who, the peasants are told, represent the "politics of human rights."

So when we talk about the possible emergence of a stronger political culture of dialogue and democracy we must be cautious about predicting its direction and must remember that the political culture of terror is still pervasive. Important political spaces have been opened and remain significant despite being under nearly constant challenge. But this is only a start. Moreover, we must see these issues against a larger set of cultural memories. If ever there was a place where, in Marx' words, "dead generations weigh like a nightmare upon the brain of the living," it is Guatemala.

I argued earlier that cultural analysis ought to focus on the ways meaning and structure interact. A weakness of many approaches to culture is an emphasis on attributes or structures without adequate attention to their historical formation. While change prompts new cultural reflection, the past is still present in some fashion. Throughout this work, I have stressed the continuing dialectic of structure and culture and sought to analyze the ways structural changes influence ongoing issues of meaning and identity. The urgency with which many groups in the popular movement, especially labor, view the dialogue reflects their own sense of the importance of the current moment and its fleeting nature. The same is true of the Catholic Church, as I noted in the previous chapter, and the implications of the changes are also increasingly clear to the private sector. As the quote by CACIF leader Suarez indicated, many of them know the old economic and political model is dead. The movement towards a hemispheric free trade zone, while still far from a

reality, will also place transformative pressures on Guatemala's socio-economic structures. CACIF supports the dialogue process because private sector leaders realize that global and regional economic transformations are occurring which will potentially leave Guatemala behind its neighbors if a greater degree of peace and stability cannot be established.[25]

A Guatemalan friend said to me, "The national dialogue is our last chance." Possibilities for the future are never conceived in the abstract, they are always informed by historical/cultural understandings of the past that shape a sense of the possible. The conquest and its legacy of violence and racism, the old dictatorships, the failed revolution of the 1940s and 50s, U.S. intervention, and the horrific political violence of the past 25 years all help shape Guatemalans' understanding of the cultural task they confront, though in radically different ways. This is especially true for Guatemala's indigenous communities, where fear and terror have a long history, as do the forms of direct and indirect resistance which James Scott has referred to as "weapons of the weak." The memory of the early 1980s--the hundreds of villages destroyed and thousands of people killed, and hundreds of thousands displaced-color every aspect of the military's project of democracy and counter-insurgency. If we simply see it as terror we lose sight of why it is applied, why it works, and why it fails. Civil Patrols may eventually be dismantled, only to be replaced by something different. Unless the fear and hatred which that legacy reflects is fully measured and kept in view it will be impossible to intelligently wonder

about the ways the diverse "imagined communities" which inhabit Guatemala might find a way to live with each other.[26]

Notes

1. In August 1990, Father Girón announced he was leaving the priesthood in order to seek a position in Congress. His active embrace of the Christian Democrats provoked anger from some of his supporters.

2. Cerezo's policy was reinforced by analysis which emerged in criticism of the Bishop's letter. Lionel Toriello Najera of the Asociación de Amigos del País challenged the assumption that land reform was the sine qua non of economic modernization. Whatever merits such a policy may have had in the past, he argued, it was no longer realistic given land and population pressures, especially if the result was to lock peasants into subsistence without genuine opportunities for income. The goal of policy should be to create jobs, not freeze Guatemala into being an agrarian society (Crónica (March 10, 1991).

3. Esquipulas is the Guatemalan town in which the five presidents signed the accord which in the United States was often referred to as the Arias Peace Plan in reference to Costa Rican President and Nobel Peace Laureate Oscar Arias.

4. While the military continued to portray the guerrillas in this fashion, they also carried out extensive military operations in the highlands in 1987, including a "final offensive" which was the largest since 1983 (Painter 1989: 139-140).

5. Immediately after the May 1988 coup, the Cerezo administration began legal actions against the owner of a television station which broadcast a program openly supportive of the coup plotters. These actions provoked extensive controversy and were denounced by much of the conservative Guatemalan press as censorship which revealed Cerezo's authoritarian agenda. These same groups were less concerned when the office of La Epoca, a weekly founded by exile and liberal journalist Julio Godoy, was bombed at the same time. These incidents occurred during my first visit to Guatemala and after reading in the U.S. press--especially the left press--about Cerezo's subservience to the old order, I was a bit surprised at first to see how the old order talked about him in their own public discourse.

6. Carpio's centrist language illustrates a point made in chapter 2 regarding the cross-cultural aspect of political culture; it cannot be understood if we only analyze its meaning for domestic audiences. Carpio knew that he was campaigning in Washington also and the symbols and discourse he employed often seemed rather distant from the violent reality of Guatemala and more attuned to Washington discourse in which Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History" provoked such controversy and debate. This is complex however; the experience of President Cerezo offers a good lesson in the dangers of being toasted internationally and hated at home. Cerezo was often seen by many Guatemalans in a way George Bush would recognize: as a President who used diplomatic missions as a way to flee domestic criticism and seemingly intractable problems. Political cultures are always a complex blend of internal and external forces influencing each other; hence, care is required in any attempt to take a culture "on its own terms."

7. The line between these forms of violence was often rather obscure. People of no obvious political involvement would turn up randomly killed in traditional death squad fashion leading to some speculation that an effort was being made in some quarters to generate concerns about the ability of the government to insure public order.

8. A North American political scientist, Frederick Turner from the University of Connecticut, generated some controversy during a visit to Guatemala in July 1990. Turner presented a series of lectures explaining polling research he had conducted on the subject of the presidential elections. The very conservative editorial board of Prensa Libre took exception to Turner's description of Guatemalans, based on their responses to his questions, as apathetic and uninformed.

> His [Turner's] conclusions are based on the fact that many of the citizens consulted responded, "I don't know"; I am not going to vote," when they were asked about political matters....Such responses are a form of self defense because for many years here nobody confided in anybody, much less to foreigners asking questions. His hosts could tell him that this is a piece of the earth in which are produced possibly more kidnappings, disappearances, and assassinations than any other....The country of Dr. Turner--particularly in the academic circles he frequents--has been the birthplace of a word dedicated to Guatemala: matamaticas, [playing on the Spanish verb matar, to kill] in order to describe the cannibalism which is destroying us. In such conditions, how can a normal person answer the questions of a stranger? (Prensa Libre, July 26 1990: 10).

9. Ríos Montt's following was often assumed to be largely evangelical protestants attracted by the General's membership as a pastor in the Iglesia Verbo. The Catholic Bishop's issued several warnings about the divisive potential of an evangelical resident, but I heard many positive opinions expressed towards the General by Catholics even though they were at the same time concerned about the evangelical influence.

10. For an excellent analysis of the politics of the dialogue process see Aguilera Peralta (1991). He rightly stresses the significance of new attitudes among external powers in reinforcing the efforts of the CNR. For a recent statement of the URNG perspective on this process see the interview with Pablo Monsanto, Comandante of the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR) in Crónica, May 10, 1991.

11. See the May 24 1991 issue of Crónica.

12. Carol Smith suggests that these attitudes may parallel a larger critique of traditional left attitudes towards the state (1990: 276-279); this issue will be discussed more fully in the final chapter. An excellent analysis of the issue of democracy and the Latin American Left is offered by Ronaldo Munck (1989).

13. The most important account of this is provided by Rigoberta Menchu; her father was one of the co-founders of the CUC. (1984)

14. These organizations also gain an important part of their influence from the links they have been able to develop with international human rights, labor, and "solidarity" organizations. These connections have generated pressure on their behalf from foreign government and organizations. While the Guatemalan government tries in turn to portray these actions as interference, Guatemalans in exile form an important part of the international network. The significance of this factor in Guatemalan political culture is further considered in the section on human rights later in this chapter. For an original and illuminating discussion of the significance of international networks in the success of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, see Alison Brysk (1991).

15. Jonas cites an extensive collection of supporting statistics including a 1987 UNICEF study which, combining infant mortality, life expectancy, and literacy

concluded that Guatemala had the lowest "physical quality of life" index in Central America.

16. Between July 1989 and August 1990, the quetzal's value declined from 2.90 to 5.00 against the dollar.

17. This research on indigenous migrants to Guatemala City was presented in a FLACSO study by Manuela Camus and Santiago Bastos (1990). The report presented extensive evidence to refute the widespread assumptions about urbanization and the loss of ethnic identity noting that

> The existence of indians that no longer have their traditional reference points in community, land, language, or clothing, are developing a new ethnic identity which we call indígenas urbanos. (Cited in Frayssinet 1990: 12)

The broader significance of these patterns of change and continuity is explained nicely by Stefano Varese in considering changing ethnic identity throughout Latin America:

> This new sociology of the native peoples of Latin America--transnationalized, urban, proleteriat, border-crossing, bilingual and trilingual, professional--poses a direct challenge to established anthropological tradition. To be an Indian meant fundamentally to belong to a residential indigenous community located in a marginal rural zone, to be preferably monolingual in a native language, to have a strong communal and ceremonial understanding of life, to show some rejection of the logic of the market economy, and to be satisfied with the repetitive and "traditional" use of antiquated technology....What do we do with an entire community of Mixtecs who own pick-up trucks, have parabolic antennae on their roofs and VCRs in the kitchen next to the comál? In which of the boxes of anthropological taxonomy do they fit? Obviously, this is a problem that worries academics and development specialists a lot more than it does Indians. (1991: 16)

18. An excellent account of the public debate in Uruguay, and the cultural, social and psychological impact of widespread repression, especially the use of torture, is provided by Lawrence Weschler (1990). His book also includes the extraordinary story of how the evidence presented in Nunca Mais, a documentation of torture and other secret police activity in Brazil, was collected, in secret and at enormous personal risk, from the Brazilian polices' own files.

19. This description of the Mack case is drawn from accounts in Central America Report, Crónica, the Christian Science Monitor, and reports from the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission.

20. The Physicians group visited the country to help train Guatemalans in forensic techniques that would improve local investigation (Siglo Veintiuno, July 2, 1991).

21. The massacre at Santiago Atitlán and the ensuing controversy were given excellent coverage in Crónica (Dec. 7, Dec 14, 1990). See also the Boston Globe (Dec. 5, 1990); Christian Science Monitor (Dec. 12. 1990).

22. The conference released a public statement published in the press and stating three demands: an end to impunity; elimination of development poles; compensation for victims.

23. The director of the program at Harvard, Phillip Heymann explained these actions in Crónica (Aug 24, 1990: 27-28). He attributed the failure of these efforts to a lack of political will on the part of President Cerezo and Minister of Defense Gramajo.

24. Some point to the 1944-1954 period, but my analysis in chapter 4 tried to suggest both the power and the limits of the revolution in establishing a national political community.

25. Another increasingly significant factor, whose potential implications require an analysis not possible in this context, is Guatemala's growing role in international drug trafficking networks.

26. Richard Adams (1990) and Kay Warren (1990) have recently argued that non-Indians are only beginning to understand how the Maya have constructed their own experience. Existing largely within oral traditions that are themselves strategies of survival, their history remains to be learned by non-Indians. Recent works by Susan Bourque and Kay Warren (1988), and Michael Taussig (1987) have begin to ask important questions about the cultural construction and representation of terror and political violence.

CHAPTER 8

LIVING IN THE "IRON CAGE": CULTURAL ANALYSIS, MODERNTIY, AND THE PROBLEM OF MEANING

Nations, States and Political Identity After the Cold War

Over the past decade, the field of comparative politics has been dominated by studies of "democratization." This began in generally limited efforts to analyze the complex series of civil-military transitions that occurred in Southern Europe in the 1970s and Latin America in the 1980s. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Breshnev Doctrine in Central Europe and the subsequent break up of the Soviet Union itself, euphoria and triumphalism were the initial response and some analysts spoke of the emergence of a global democratic political culture. Events in parts of Africa and Asia seemed to offer further evidence of such an occurrence.

But the optimism of many regarding democratization in Eastern Europe has rather quickly given way to a realization of the deeper historical forces which Soviet domination drove underground and which are now re-emerging amidst a new and difficult structural environment. And while civilian-governed electoral democracies are still in power in most of Latin America, recent events in Haiti and Peru suggest that electoral systems have yet to

establish their capacity to solve the economic and political dilemmas confronting states and civil societies on the continent.

The issues of national identity, legitimacy, and cultural meaning explored in this work with regard to the effort of the Guatemalan military over the past decade are thus by no means unique to that country. It is clear that these issues will be a particularly important field of study as the end of the cold war focuses greater attention on specific cultural and historical dilemmas in areas previously subject to greater structural constraints within the international system. Social scientists will need to ask much more specific kinds of questions about the relationship between concrete cultures and political projects and resist the temptation to believe that the "end of history," with or without a capitol "H", is here. Students of political culture can provide an empirical and normative contribution to this process by more fully developing our capacity to look at the complexity and ambiguity within all national political cultures.

This attention should, moreover, not be confined to the areas in which conflicts over national identity are most visible. The argument here is not meant to apply only to places where the process of constructing a national "imagined community" is clearly problematic. The stirrings of political and cultural discontent in Western Europe are increasingly evident in the renewed vigor of national movements seeking greater autonomy or independence from existing states. Further evidence is provided as well by the electoral success of

right wing political parties in France, Germany, and Italy. Europe may indeed be coming together; but centuries-old questions about national identity are by no means dead. Anxiety about the fate which befell Europe in the 1930's amidst economic collapse and political drift, inspired much of the original literature on political culture. While the prescriptions for stability and order produced by the authors of that literature were perhaps too strongly colored by the Cold War, and their analysis theoretically weakened by structural functionalism, their concerns about the cultural dilemmas confronting modern democracies remain as relevant as ever. Perhaps as the 1930s gradually are read less in terms of appeasement and the Munich analogy, other lessons will receive more attention.

Similar issues haunt our own politics and can be seen in a multitude of manifestations from the debates over "multi-culturalism" and liberal education, the polemics unleashed by Oliver Stone's film "JFK," and the string of media-saturated events which have defined U.S. politics in recent years. The ample evidence of cultural discontent, dissent, and ferment point up what Anderson's analysis strongly suggests--that the construction of national identity is a never-ending cultural task which, stable appearances to the contrary, is continually being re-examined in the light of new experience and new problems.

It is well to remember that Anderson stressed that the nation state emerged amidst a complex combination of economic, technological, and

cultural factors which made it possible for "growing numbers of people to think about themselves and relate to others in profoundly new ways." The idea of a nation as a "sociological organism moving calendrically" grew from the ways print technology created possibilities for connection and solidarity among larger and larger communities of readers, at the same time as older forms of community were losing their dominance.

We can expect that a cultural institution of such complexity and power as the nation-state will not quickly fade away. At the same time, modern nation-states find themselves confronting economic and technological change which blur borders and challenge traditional conceptions of sovereignty. It is still the state which is most often looked to when citizens want protection from transnational dangers such as terrorism, refugees, disease, drug trafficking and environmental problems. Yet, in some countries, and the list may be growing--Peru, Colombia, Somalia, Liberia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, and the former Soviet Republics--the state appears to confront a society which is nearly ungovernable. In the past such situations never lasted indefinitely; new states and political structures eventually imposed their order for a time. Some states have begun to consider larger economic alliances and regimes to deal with problem beyond the capacity of individual states. But whatever new systems and structures emerge, they will not survive on economic rationality or political force alone; cultural legitimacy will have to be constructed. For that reason, the nation state

will in all likelihood be with us for some time; the 'ghostly imaginings" of collective identity it carries show no sign of becoming less important.

Nonetheless, the total, unifying claims of the state to represent a particular nationalism, a particular "imagined community," continue to generate internal conflicts between competing communities. In many of these conflicts, nationhood is the goal of groups which are challenging existing states. In a international system in which nation states have the most rights, statehood remains the best way to be certain that national claims will be recognized. At the same time, the emergence of new indigenous political organizations in Guatemala and elsewhere in the hemisphere provide the possibility of an alternative model, one in which the state's claims are less total and distinct imagined communities with their own cultural identity are able to work within the same national framework. While these are at present only possibilities, these movements deserve more attention for they may provide an alternative to civil war and fragmentation, and point towards more consciously heterogeneous political communities. The prospect of such a world often drives political scientists to reach for Hobbes; but as long as self-determination and national identity continue among the most powerful forces in modernity, the construction of legitimacy and political order will be complex and never ending tasks.

Modernity, Nihilism, and Social Science

> The moral sense has been bred out of certain sections of the population, like the wings have been bred off of certain chickens to produce more white meat. This is a generation of wingless chickens, which I suppose is what Nietzsche meant when he said God was dead.
>
> -Flannery O'Connor

> It is not the object of the story to convey a happening per se, which is the purpose of information; rather, it embeds it in the life of the storyteller in order to pass it on as an experience to those listening. It thus bears the marks of the storyteller much as the earthen vessel bears the marks of the potter's hands.
>
> -Walter Benjamin

The approach to cultural analysis I have developed and applied in this work carries some moral premises which remain to be considered briefly by way of conclusion. The most simple premise is that a manner of study is itself a cultural practice and never reflects the disinterested pursuit of knowledge.[1] If we wish, therefore, to think about political culture in Guatemala or anywhere else it is not be enough to simply listen carefully to how individuals and communities construct meanings and identities. We must also recognize the force of our own constructions of other cultures, both in the past and present, and subject them, and the problematics they pose to greater scrutiny. There are thus new possibilities, but significant new dangers also in James Clifford's admonition that we "open ourselves to other histories:" relativism,

new forms of textual privileging, interpretations of meaning which distort and collapse another culture, the temptation to forge a new synthesis, the failure to follow Nietzsche's admonition that we be "hard with our own heart," the illusion that we are "letting difference be" in our interpretation. Foucault's warning still applies: "We must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we would only have to decipher; the world is not the accomplice of our knowledge," (1984, 127). If "opening" ourselves means anything, it means having an clearer understanding of what we are looking for and who we are. Western analysts must be especially cautious about interpreting current events as some sort of affirmation of our own political culture and ask instead what are forms of study reveal about ourselves.

One of the best ways to observe the relationship between inquiry and identity is to consider the diverse ways that modernity is constructed. Perhaps the most influential trope of modern social science, modernity once seemed to carry profound prospects for reason and liberation. I argued that the anxiety of Parsons and others regarding the potential for fragmentation and disorder generated by modernization motivated the effort to construct modes of social inquiry that could provide a rational basis for legitimacy. But the ferocity of recent polemics surrounding multiculturalism, 'canons', and academic standards provide further illustration of Weber's conviction that modernity was partly characterized by a legitimacy problem from which the social sciences were by no means immune.

How are we to understand this problem? and how are we to understand modernity? Baudelaire wrote "you have no right to despise the present." And yet many of us seem to feel lost in modernity, believing that our cultural moorings have come unglued. The anxieties about order and fragmentation in the academy express pervasive questions about meaning and value which seem unlikely to be resolved any time soon. Why has modernity gone so sour on us?

An especially rich and provocative discussion of these issues has been offered by anthropologist Mary Douglas. Writing about the sort of cultural criticism and analysis of secularization represented by Daniel Bell and Peter Berger, Douglas argues that the cultural differences between modernity and earlier ages are often misunderstood. Consider the assumption that people in earlier ages were more religious:

> Indeed, reflection shows that the evidence for old-time sanctity comes from suspect sources such as hagiography, panegyrics, and sermons. If we now read even that biased evidence more critically we would notice the professionals upbraiding the mass of ordinary people for lack of faith, as if the gift of which, we are told, modernity has deprived us were always rather the exception. (1982: 5)

Or consider the assumption that science has taken the wonder and mystery out of the world, leaving us to feel more alienated. This may be the case if we are talking about trees and rivers, but if nature is that which "contrasts with culture; ...that part of the cosmos that humans do not fabricate, that humans can learn about but never change," then Douglas is more skeptical. Perceptions

of nature, Douglas argues, have always been mediated by culture, and there is no reason to assume, without studying the concrete cultural processes themselves, that modernity is necessarily less religious, more prone to identity crisis and mental illness, or less capable of feeling religious or wholeness than earlier ages. "Everything is wrong because our stereotypes of premoderns is wrong" (1982, 17); they were neither as religious or as integrated as some feel we ought to be. It is certainly true, nevertheless, that the conditions in which matters like God, fate, death, duty, and moral integrity are constructed are different.

Benedict Anderson's conception of "imagined community" provided an ideal type with which to analyze the Guatemalan military's effort to construct culturally legitimate national political institutions. At the same time, the way in which he constructed his argument provided an example which I have tried to follow in this work as a whole: a careful historical tracing of the ways ideas develop in response to change and yet continue to reveal the past from which they came. While nations are clearly a modern form of community, they carry within them ancient questions about fate, death, redemption, and community, and the same is true of the diverse "imagined communities" which inhabit Guatemala. Anderson is continually aware of the importance of structural or economic change, but his central preoccupation is to watch human communities refigure and reinvent themselves.

In the 1980s the Guatemalan military put forward an ambitious effort to reinvent Guatemala as a national political community and to construct a political culture that reinforced that goal. Their project emerged from a recognition that there is not one but several political cultures in Guatemala with their own visions of past, present, and future. None of these cultures have been unphased by the forces of modernization, let alone by each other. What has endured are sources of political identity which while changing over time, have remained in conflict and which have inhibited--in very different ways in different historical periods--a variety of efforts to fashion a united collective national identity.

The project of "national stability" which grew out of the military's counter-insurgency strategy was thus an effort to resolve a legitimacy problem which, as this work has tried to establish, is deeply rooted in Guatemalan history. The country's future political shape began to develop as a backwater in a colonial effort which, while brutal in its impact upon the indigenous population, was on its own terms beset by internal contradiction and conflict over its meaning, identity, and purpose. Medieval Catholicism, Enlightenment rationalism, liberalism, and positivism have engendered confused and conflicted responses within a long context of economic dependency and weakness. These cultural conflicts broke apart the Central American Federation after independence, and they have continued to scar Guatemalan political life ever since.

While the Spanish colonialists and their Guatemalan offspring have struggled among themselves, a much deeper divide has separate ladinos from Maya communities. A recent inquiry into the political significance of ethnicity in Latin America argued that:

> Common wisdom holds that native American cultures are relics of the past destined to survive only as museum pieces. Underlying this unfortunate meeting point of many on the left and Right is the belief that Indians are bound to abandon their ethnicity as modernity spreads its tentacles into the outer reaches of the Western World. (NACLA 1991: 12)

This work has presented ample evidence of the enduring capacity of the Maya to retain a powerful sense of their own ethnic identity. Constructed in the face of successive, brutal efforts at conquest and assimilation, the content of Mayan political identity has changed enormously and yet continually illustrated the weakness of this "common wisdom."

Images of Maya heritage in the Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City opened this work. What do they tell us about Guatemala as an modern "imagined community"? In offering the world the image of Guatemala as a nation which is proud of its Indian past, the country's ladino elite can of course be seen as simply cynical. But it may also express a cultural identity crisis and desire to establish a unique national identity. The willingness of the military to embrace the heroic efforts of past Maya leaders who resisted Spanish domination, and their acknowledgment of racism and exploitation reflect a recognition, if not explicitly, of the cultural limits of both their own

traditions as well as the new cultural resources offered by "modernity" and "development".

At another level, however, these invocations of an collective Indian past carry on the "common wisdom." Ruins, markets, marimba bands, and Maya warriors may now be seen as cultural treasures which adorn airports and draw tourists, but as Carol Hendrickson has argued, these images reinforce a conception of Maya culture as traditional, mysterious, and unchanging (1991). From such a perspective "modernized" Mayas could only be expected to assimilate themselves and their political and cultural aspirations to a modern, and largely ladino, national community. Moreover, the analysis set forth by General Gramajo and his colleagues seems to assume, as have other ladino politicians and activists with perspectives otherwise quite different from Gramajo, that some services and a better educational system will resolve the problem. And yet, as we have seen, exposure to modernity has so far not destroyed, though it has surely transformed Mayan political and cultural identity. Being modern and being Indian are not a contradiction in practice.[2]

This is perhaps the most important lesson that the Maya can teach us, for they have been forced to reinvent themselves culturally amidst enormous change and violence for over 450 years. The study of political culture must start from the assumption that modernity is not a value system, attitude, or a destination; it is a condition characterized by the interplay between old and new sources of meaning challenged by change. When we become more aware

of our historical and cultural biases about what being modern means, we might then be better able to understand and evaluate the ways our own political and cultural identities try to balance science and faith, reason and mystery, freedom and contingency, and tradition and modernity.

The power which Max Weber's work continues to possess resides not simply in the general insights he presents into the relationships between culture and structures. He was not principally interested, after all, in telling the German state how it could effectively manage issues of national development and economic modernization. Instead he wanted to know what becomes of the human beings who live in the structures and institutions of modernity? His work continually explored how those predicaments were resolved, how communities and individuals made sense of a world that was continually presenting new dilemmas. As I noted in Chapter 2, these interests were not esoteric; and for all the rationality and abstraction, what is still most profound in Weber's writing is the pathos of his personal experience of modernity.

It is striking that Weber, despite his own professed lack of religiosity, chose so often to use religious language--duty, calling, devotion. Weber's encounter with Nietzsche left him strongly convinced that science could not solve the problem of what was worth knowing and thinking about:

> still less can it be proved that the existence of the world that these sciences describe is worthwhile, that it has any meaning, or that it makes any sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for the answers to such questions. (1946: 143)

At some point the pursuit of meaning and value required a leap of faith. When Weber spoke therefore of a "battle of gods" Weber referred to the framework of values which oriented one's personal search for meaning and identity. And from this perspective, one of the predominant gods of modernity was the modern state.

At the heart of all of Weber's work, from the detailed historical studies of medieval Europe to the deeply personal lectures on vocation, was a profound effort to infuse the modern political realm with the authority and purpose once granted religious institutions. He explicitly equated the political quest of the social scientist with the classical platonic attempt to harmonize the elements of the soul while recognizing the earlier attempts to reconcile soul and polity were less available. In an age when scientific method was rapidly developing hegemony, he hoped to fashion a political realm, statecraft, which reconciled science with an individual sense of purpose and meaning. The social scientist also had a political responsibility to the state. The task was to, in Wolin's words, "nourish notions of what is significant", and hence worthy of inquiry. "Significance... symbolizes the moment of freedom...it is akin to a momentary and secular salvation for it creates meaning in an otherwise meaningless world" (1981: 81). In this way, the social scientist helps the state establish legitimacy.

Weber recognized that this endeavor left him caught ambiguously between two conflicting points of reference. He could not accept the notion of

value-free social science, but he also rejected subjectivism. His solution was to push the frame of reference to where the methods of the natural sciences were unable to follow--into the realm of values. In trying to analyze the "phenomenon of life in terms of their cultural significance" (Wolin 1981: 71), Weber recognized that choices existed: the theorist or the the social scientist had to recognize the values implicit within their own project. More than simply a recognition of values for the sake of intellectual honesty, this was an affirmation of what the scientist/political man held to be most important. After listing many of the causes which might animate political action, Weber argued:

> Some kind of faith must always exist. Otherwise, it is absolutely true that the curse of the creatures' worthlessness overshadows even the strongest political successes. (1946: 117)

But Weber also feared that modern forms of rationalization carried their own tendency to subordinate individual meanings and values and establish ends and means which were absolute rather than relative. This was reflected, for example, in the tension between democratic rights an modern governance. Democracy promoted bureaucracy in seeking an even-handed and neutral policies. But charged with the task of managing in the interests of all, rational-legal forms of authority are unlikely to tolerate the chaotic impulses found within democracy. Science cannot make sense of concepts such as equality or rights, for they conflict with the norms of rationality. The

orientation of science is towards solving a problem in the most orderly manner available. Weber is quite explicit that

> Democracy as such is opposed to the rule of bureaucracy, in spite of and perhaps because of its unavoidable yet unintended promotion of bureaucracy. Under certain conditions democracy creates obvious ruptures and blockages to bureaucratic organization. (1984: 47)

In this way the passion which animated a true calling for politics could confront the same "iron cage" which previously was the fate of Protestants. The image of the cage is often understood as a metaphor for a modern world devoid of ethical meaning. But Weber's own work sought to reveal something quite different: the gap between intentions and consequences which Weber believed was an inescapable condition of politics.

Weber provides an extraordinary account of the tragic dimension of political action. While he did not conceive of rationalization as a universal process, Weber's dark prophecy of a "polar night of icy darkness and hardness" expressed despair for the fate of those who were not what Weber termed "specialists without spirit." By examining the origins and and developmental tendencies of western rationalism, Weber sought to preserve the capacity for reflective awareness regarding the conditions in which individuals and communities think about who and what they are in an age in which modes of rationalization were crowding out those capacities.[3]

At the same time, it is often said of Weber that his attention to Nietzsche made him a relativist, even a nihilist. The most sophisticated version

of this charge was put forward by Leo Strauss: "Weber assumed as a matter of course that there is no hierarchy of values: all values are of the same rank." Strauss understood that this was not literally true; Weber certainly had his preferences. But what crippled Weber's social science for Strauss was the complete rejection of the possibility of uncovering the objective truth:

> Every pursuit, every whim, becomes as defensible or as legitimate as any other. But Weber did not always go this far. He also said that the goal of science was clarity, i.e., clarity about the great issues, and this means ultimately clarity not indeed about the whole but about the situation of man as man. Science or philosophy is then the way towards freedom from delusion....It is concerned with the knowable truth, which is valid regardless of whether we like it or not. Weber went up to this point. But he refused to say that science of philosophy is concerned with the truth which is valid for all men regardless of whether they desire to know it or not. (1953: 72-73)

A defense against this criticism can be mounted by turning to the work of a contemporary thinker who was strongly influenced by Nietzsche and Weber. Michel Foucault is often criticized for offering analyses which appear to offer no possibility for subjective agency. His analysis of the role of the modern state in the increased application of various forms of disciplinary control over larger populations, and in ways which are not always apparent, does render problematic areas of social life not generally considered threats to freedom. For some this puts forward the message of "no way out:" you can run but you can't hide, because even reforms reveal new levels of non-freedom and disciplinary control.

This is a serious misreading of Foucault, however. Power may appear to be everywhere, but it is not all powerful. Power relations set boundaries which privilege particular subjects and attempt to structure an order. But they are structures which emerge from discontinuity and contingency and while they may seek their own reification as totalizing powers, the point of Foucault's genealogies is that in a world which "is not the accomplice of our knowledge," something gets away, something Foucault calls resistance.[4] Moreover, his work, and this is explicit it does not need to be dug out as some contend, assumes a subject capable of understanding discrepancies between who we are and who we say we are (1984).

This attitude towards social inquiry is most evident in Foucault's essay "What is Enlightenment?," in which he located his critical genealogies of social and political practice within the project of the Enlightenment and its task of greater ethical reflection. He warns us against succumbing to what he terms the "enlightenment blackmail" of being "for or against the enlightenment." This carried with it the need to decide for or against reason, rationalism, and all the other baggage carried within that tradition. While Foucault's work reveals the dark side of reason, the ways its promises of freedom have obscured the expansion of social discipline, power and surveillance over our daily experience, he also recognized the critical resources the Enlightenment offered as:

> ...an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the the

> limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them....that is, a patient labor giving form to our impatience for liberty. (1984: 50)

Foucault was not, though his critics often argue otherwise, working within science-anti-science, or rationalism-anti-rationalism dualities. Challenging the assumptions of some approaches is not to argue for their reversal. In this sense, I understand Foucauldian genealogy the same way in which Nietzsche understood his own writing--as a sort of "ghost language" within reason which revealed the underside, the suppressed nihilism within its claims, forcing it to be more truthful. Some have been frustrated that when Foucault tells us that "everything is dangerous," while locating power in places we are accustomed to viewing unproblematically, he gives us no basis for deciding and no place to stand intellectually. But in pushing forward the question "how did we become what we are?," Foucault forces us to continually ask hard questions of our knowledge, taking us in the direction that Weber called an "ethic of responsibility," and characterized as the "ability to let realities work upon him with inner concentration and calmness." (1946, 115)

Constructed within complex historical settings, our forms of inquiry and interpretation possess a fundamentally moral/ethical character. We ask particular kinds of questions of a world which is opaque and not self evident. This is the essential cultural problem--to make sense of a history which is continually being seen in new ways in the light of new experience. Moreover, Guatemalan political history examined in this work illustrates that the meaning

of that history is often a source of intense division and debate among different groups. Similar dynamics are evident in the controversy over what our children should be taught about Columbus 500 years after he landed in the Caribbean. These questions are not just idle curiosity--they make our forms of life possible. When we offer an interpretation we do more than explain reality--we reveal more fundamentally what we think it means. This gives to our interpretations something of the quality of storytelling. They attempt to give narrative coherence to historical events and a present whose meaning, like that contained within biblical scripture, is shadowy, even obscure. Social science has traditionally sought to buttress its stories with more facts and figures, but we have not been able to avoid the more basic fact--that meanings are created and re-enforced within particular social worlds and the interpretive resources they make available to the local storytellers. This is what the case study of Guatemala makes clear, and these are the issues which cultural analysis can help illuminate.

Some will view this as the soft, subjective and merely speculative, but it should be clear that this is not an embrace of relativism. Logic, the capacity to illuminate concrete situations, factual accuracy as far it goes, are all crucial. This is certainly not to say that some interpretations aren't better than others. But what is held to be a persuasive account--a satisfying story--is built partly from cultural meanings and not simply the demonstration of truths which exist independently of the social world within which they are constructed. Social

science is as much a set of cultural practice as are the worlds it attempts to study. This is the dilemma that Weber understood and with which he sought to come to terms in making more explicit the cultural problematic which informed his inquiry and gave it both meaning and transience. [5]

Politics is about many things, but most of all it is driven by competing visions of how we ought to live. Weber understood that these were not simply abstract ideas; they were embodied in our conduct and shaped by our encounter with a world which locates us and readies consequences that can never be forseen. He believed us to live in an age when that cultural task was becoming more complex and his concern was to inquire what it required. Weber hoped his "cultural sciences" would provide a way to take the full measure of circumstances in order that we might go on. All of our efforts to develop more accurate models, more elegant theories, more precise hypotheses, or clearer concepts risk becoming either abstract or shallow when they become disconnected from the realization that, while politics is fought within institutions and structures, between classes, sectors, status groups and political actors, questions of identity and meaning are what is at stake. Our theories and approaches are only useful in so far as they cast light upon those cultural dilemmas. At that point social science moves away from the technocratic ambitions Weber denied it, and helps us ponder the questions--what is our fate? and how are we to live?

Notes

1. See Guillermo O'Donnell's reflective comments on the element of "thoughtful wishing" involved in the study of democratization (1986: 3-18).

2. The complexity of modern Mayan identities is beautifully illustrated in Rigoberta Menchu's account (1984). While the sources of identity upon which she draws--ethnic, religious, class, gender, national--appear contradictory within the categories of social science, they become quite plausible in practice. Interestingly, her account has been seized upon by many critics of "multiculturalism" as an example of what Dinesh D'Souza has called "victim studies," and characterized as a fraudulent and manipulative effort by left-wing academics and activists to use Menchu as grist for their political mill (1990). My views of D'Souza's perspective is expressed more fully in a letter to the Editor, Christian Science Monitor, April 18, 1991, written in response to an Op-ed by D'Souza on the use of Rigoberta Menchu's book in college curricula.

3. The issues under discussion in this section have also been addressed by some Latin American social scientists as part of an effort to revitalize the concept of politics within the context of recent movements away from military rule. A particularly rich--both politically and philosophically--discussion is offered by Norbert Lechner (1988). His work continues the critique of traditional approaches to the subjects of politics and democracy among the Latin America left. For a discussion of Weber which explores the same issues see Flisfisch (1987: 103-147).

4. Critics of Foucault see power operating everywhere in his analysis and hence assume that efforts to escape can only be new forms of entrapment. But Foucault suggests there is an instability in these forms of power which hinders their, usually unstated, totalizing ambitions. In creating certain forms of truth and bestowing legitimacy on certain discourses, authors, rituals, and rules of textual formation, power creates and gradually broadens the potential for resistance from "subjugated knowledges." As the demands of these systems become more stringent, the pressure on individuals to maintain the most privileged forms of subjectivity creates powerful deconstructive counter-pressures. In the absence of genuinely transcendental standards, the norms of rationality which emerge, including those in Weber's account, are never able to completely obtain total control. Power finds itself caught in an ironic trap; since the subject is the

principle way in which power is reproduced, it is forced to encounter the resistance generated by that same subject. This study of Guatemala has revealed several instances which confirm Foucault's understanding of power. The most notable of these include the multiple uses of religions and ethnic identity and the ways even the most violent of states is seldom able to fully impose its own networks of meanings.

5. William Connolly has stated this point well in this analysis of the politics of analytic language:

> As long as modernity continues to house debates over the character of the good life, political discourse will provide sites upon which the debates are pursued. (1982: 225)

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