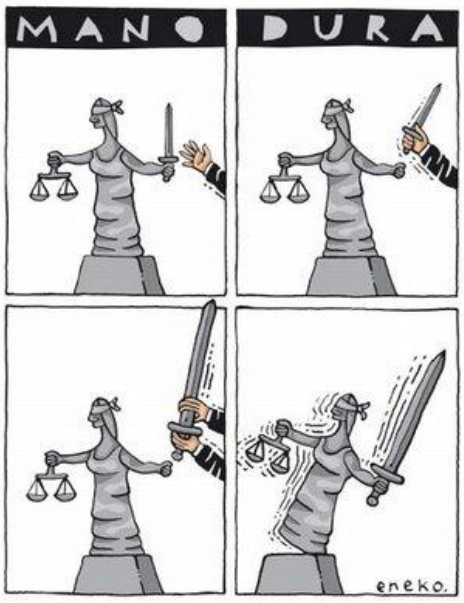
WHO IS WHO IN MANO DURA?

RETHINKING THE ACTOR/AUDIENCE NEXUS IN THE SECURITIZATION OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN CONTEMPORARY GUATEMALA



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Chapter 1: Violence in a Time of Peace

1.1 Introduction

It was April 2012. I was sitting at the dinner table in a richly decorated room, located in a middle-class private settlement within Guatemala City's notorious zone eleven. I was listening to the stories of Paolo and Maria. Both had been doing social work all around the globe but eventually ended up working on the streets of the Guatemala City slums, attending street children. They seemed to share a the same views on many aspects of Guatemalan society, such as the corruption of public services and the unequal position of men and women. However, this changed when the conversation turned to politics. When I asked what they thought about contemporary Guatemalan politics, the man answered:

Our last government was weak and let it all just happen. His wife Sandra Torres was as corrupt as can be…she took money from all places to buy her expensive clothes. I hope that the new government will clear the streets*; mano dura*.[1]

Paolo is not the only Guatemalan who upholds these ideas about the effectiveness of using armed forces to reduce the high levels of violence. They are part of an increasingly popular political discourse which is called *mano dura* in Latin America. Current president of Guatemala, former general Otto Pérez Molina, has strongly advocated a tough approach to crime during his election campaign for his Partida Patriota in September 2011. His ideas on security found strong support across the country. Some compare *mano dura* with the US zero-tolerance approach but *mano dura* is much deeper ingrained into historical and cultural practices . It can be divided into two key components: one is the support for private acts of vigilantism and the other is support for state violence against those who are considered responsible for acts of crime (Godoy, 2006: 56-59). For the sake of my argument, I shall only focus on the second component: the support for repressive state violence.

However, Molina's popularity also triggerred some strong opposition from the socialist and liberal side. On that sunny day in April, I happened to stumble upon one couple with two opposing views. Maria's reply to Paulo's statement was clear:

Lies! These governments just talk and talk but nothing happens. This country is so corrupt, everything happens here [signs under the table]. Guatemala is a country with amnesia, forgetting the past and

[1] Excerpt from an interview, conducted on the 17th of April 2012 with the founder of a local street children NGO and his fiancée.

what Molina has done during the war. He is a topclass militar. During his training they sent him out into the jungle of Panama with only one knife. Do you know what they used that knife for? To kill, to survive. These men are tough.[2]

Before and during the elections, Maria's concern about Molina was shared with many members of civil society and the international community. Although they nearly all agree with Molina that violent crime rates are a real and national problem, they were concerned that a repressive military and legislative approach would not be effective because it fails to address important root causes. During my fieldwork, I have talked to many NGO leaders who shared these concerns. In chapter three, I will discuss these specific NGOs and their view on security. It is important to note that the position of these NGOs does not reflect the views of many of the people they wish to aid or represent, though many NGOs seem to be oblivious about this discrepancy. This leads to 'how' questions on the reception side of *mano dura*. It calls for an explanation on why Guatemalans, who have been so much affected by repressive state action during the civil war, now argue in favour of militarization.

Some argue that Guatemalans are perceptible of *mano dura* because of their constant sense of imminent threat, fuelled by speech acts from politicians and the media. For those who live in urban areas, this perceived threat is maintained by almost daily encounters with actual threats. Fear is a vicious circle: violent acts trigger fear of new violence, causing distrust and creating a securitized culture, causing more violent acts. This circle of fear that seems to have a hold on a large part of Guatemalan society can be seen as collective or social fear (Gíron, 2005). However, fear of crime is not a specifically Guatemalan character trade. It has taken a hold of societies across the Americas, "where citizens retreat behind ever-higher walls, barred windows, and armed guards or enter into associations with neighbors aimed at protecting property" (Godoy, 2006: 7). In a society where inequality between higher and lower classes are as sharp as in the case of Guatemala, it sounds hardly surprising that the wealthy classes take measures to protect their family as well as their home contents.

However, I observed that also the less privileged classes of Guatemalan urban society are living in secluded and secured areas. Many of my middle-class friends and acquaintances would not even think of living outside the safety of their *condominium*. Even in the impoverished areas of Guatemala City's zone three, different communities that live and work in and around the garbage dump have organized themselves into small *condominiums*: enclosed housing areas with private protection. It

[2] Interview conducted by the author on 17th of April 2012 with the CEO of a local street children NGO and his fiancée.

comes to no surprise that private security companies -many of which are run by former military personnel- are thriving (IEPADES, 2008: 11).

Those who could not afford this security either had to protect their family and property by means of force or by relying on their respectability within their community. One young middle class ladino who lived just outside of Antigua told me that he always walked home at night but never felt threatened in his own community, because he knew everybody. However, Antigua is a relatively small place. In the large urban areas of Guatemala City, traditional community and family structures have eroded over time and are being replaced with new unstable structures. Many of my respondents mentioned the destruction of family structures as an important cause of today's violence. A coordinator of an important NGOs that focuses on the protection of women and children told me that she believed it to be caused by a lack of responsibility. "There are different reasons [for the violence]. It is also a lack of values, disintegration of families. Women get the blame because they have to work but it is true that there is also a responsibility of the fathers or companions to take care of their children"[3].

Another infamous export product of the United States that is generally acknowledged by the public to be affecting Guatemalan urban society is gang culture. Many Guatemalans who fled during the civil war ended up in the southern states of the US, especially California. There, on the streets of Los Angeles, young Guatemalans started bonding with Salvadorians and other ladinos in search of a new identity and status (Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers, 2009: 379) Two of the largest Central-American gangs were born: the Mara Salvatrucha and the Calle 18. However, as these gangs grew more violent and powerful during the nineties, strict US immigration legislations combined with a declining tolerance among many US citizens allowed the government of the United States to deport 160,000 illegal immigrants and 46,000 convicts to Central America (Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers, 2009: 380).

The exact influence of these events remains beyond the scope of my thesis, but there are strong indications that the import of US gang culture has had a major impact on the social structure of urban communities (Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers, 2009). Gangs became extremely popular in poor neighborhoods , not only because they provided a sense of belonging and family but also because of the idea that it is possible for the underdogs of society to obtain status and wealth by the use of demonstrative direct violence. Those who believe that this moral decay is one of the main causes of the violence are consequentally more inclined to favour a more direct approach, as opposed to those who believe that structural repression is at the heart of the violence and therefore advocate more holistic and inclusive approaches.

[3] Interview conducted by the author on 29th of March 2012 with the coördinator of a grassroots social security NGO.

This destruction of 'traditional' social structures came hand in hand with the declining power of the federal government. The Peace Accords intended to strengthen the government by building on its legitimacy but the transition from strong military repressive rule to a 'soft' democracy has left a vacuum in which all sorts of illicit power structures have risen (Briscoe and Pellecer, 2012). Many scholars point out that this vacuum is uphold by the high levels of impunity (Godoy, 2006: 11; Briscoe and Pellecer, 2012: 13). They claim that the popularity of *mano dura* is partly caused by the absence of an effective judicial system. Estimations on impunity levels differ, but all indicate that between ninety and ninety-nine percent of criminal acts will have no legal consequences. A study of 90,000 potential cases brought to the attention of the Guatemalan legal system in 2001 even predicted that none of these cases would reach sentencing (Hendrix, 2002 in Godoy, 2006: 46). The insecurity of these structures, along with impunity, cause people to take justice into their own hands – *justicia a propia mano*.

I spoke with a Dutch farmer in Guatemala who had decided to move back to the Netherlands with his Guatemalan wife. When I asked for his motivation to return to his homeland, he replied:

I decided to move back because I felt Guatemala was no longer a safe place for me and my wife. The civil war was horrible, but at least there was less crime, you did not have to be afraid of criminals, because you knew that the police forces and the army had everything under control . But now, it is anarchy, you cannot trust anybody.[4]

According to this farmer, a strong military approach to violent crime would be preferable to anarchy. This view is shared by many other Guatemalans . Godoy encountered similar views on the possibility of a leadership position for Rios Montt, the notorious former dictator who is now on trial for genocide and crimes against humanity (BBC, 2012b). " [They were] recalling his[Rios Montt ed] earlier success at imposing order in times of great social turbulence. A surprising number of Guatemalans appeared to accept this characterization of his leadership"(2006: 56). However,this is not very surprising when considering geography. The civil war mainly took stage in the rural parts of the country, leaving the urban areas largely untouched. In opposition, the flow of violence that followed the Peace Accords affected these urban areas even harder than the rural areas; changing the nature of the conflict from a peasant war into an urban war (Rodgers, 2009: 959-960). A rapid growth of homocide rates combined with high levels of impunity proved to be the perfect mix for a brew of fear.

[4] Excerpt from an interview with a Dutch farmer in a café in Antigua, April 2012.

Many scholars and journalist believe this fear and anxiety to be at the root of the popularity of former generals in Guatemalan politics, such as Rios Montt and Otto Pérez Molina (Godoy 2006; Benson, Fisher and Thomas, 2008: 49). Benson, Fisher and Thomas illustrate the popular support for the iron fist approach as "an understandable desire no longer to live with insecurity"(2008: 49). Along with scholars such as Jenny Pearce, they claim that the grand narrative of security is being used by state elites to 'keep the underdogs in place' and to secure the status quo (Benson, Fisher and Thomas, 2008: 49; Galtung, 1996; Pearce, 2007).

However, when I came to the land of eternal spring, my questions concerned not the 'why' but the 'how'. I was wondering how president Molina conveyed the necessity for an iron fist approach and- perhaps more importantly- how these messages were received by the Guatemalan public. When reading international scholars on Guatemala, it struck me how little agency was prescribed to the Guatemalan population. The main explanation given for the popular support of iron fist approaches was fear but I believe this too simple an answer for such a complex process. Furthermore, I wondered how it came to be that human rights activists and other members of civil society were barely heard in their rejection of this iron fist approach. When looking at these questions, it is important to first consider the country's history.

1.2 Historical Processes

There is a local saying among the Guatemalan population, which is loosely translated as: "Beware [of] the peace, they chide, because now the government is fighting everyone" (Gilbert, 2002: 7). In the civil war, which lasted from around 1960 to the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, an estimated 200,000 people lost their lives and around a million people lost their homes (Blum,2001). However, there are strong indications that the Peace Accords have failed to bring about any substantial changes (Benson, Fisher and Thomas 2008: 38). There is still widespread poverty, socio-economic inequality, strong military influence and discrimination. Above all, Guatemala belongs the the most violent non-war zones in the world (Savenije and vd Borgh ,2009: par 1).

When analysing security phenomena from a critical theory perspective, on which I shall elaborate in the following section, it is vital to keep important historical processes in mind that have shaped these phenomena. The roots of the violence that Guatemala faces today partly lie in socio-economic issues. Although it seems that the global economic crisis has not affected Guatemala as much as it affected other Northern states, the economic situation in the country is still cause for concern. A major drop

of international coffee prices, one of Guatemala's main export product, combined with food prices going up, combined with a decline in export caused by a faltering world economy have brought serious economic malaise. When adding up these economic difficulties with a lack of social services such as education; entering the illegal labor market can be seen as a preferable option.

Furthermore, the violence could also partly be caused by cultural factors. This is an explanation that fits within the *mano dura* discourse. Many of my repondants mentioned the *falta de valores,* loss of values, when I asked them about what causes the violence. This is also reflected in the responses on the questionaire, in which the overall majority of the students indicated that the responsability to combat violence lies within the individual responsability of the family.[5] According to Godoy, this loss of traditional values is considered among many Guatemalans to be the result of the import of US culture or increasing narco-traffic (2006: 47).

Nevertheless, the most important aspect to consider when trying to get to grips with the notion of security in Guatemala is the country's bloody history. Many policies and attitutes in contemporary Guatemala can be directly traced back to the civil war. As Benson, Fisher and Thomas argue, "Guatemala's new violence is [..] a manifestation of enduring legacies of state violence" (2008: 38). These legacies can be traced back as far as the 16th century. Guatemala's patriarchical colonial history begins in 1523, when Pedro de Alvarado declares the area to be Spanish domain. Before the spanish conquest, the area was inhabited by several powerful Maya clans[6]. These clans were continuously at war with one another, which provided the Spanish conquerers with the perfect ground for the classical colonial tactic of divide and rule.

It would take a substantial amount of time before Guatemala would start to resemble its current state; the country gained full independence from the Mexican Empire only after 1839. One hundred years later, the first attempts at social-democratic reforms were being made; which included a social security system and redistribution of land. However, this redistribution would include land from corporate fruit companies such as United Fruit. In a reply, these corporations, along with the US State Department, framed the left-wing government as potentially dangerous communists. President Nixon succesfully framed the Arbenz government as "a foreign government controlled by Moscow"(Mendelsohn and Pequeneza: 0:25-0:30). In 1954, The CIA launched Operation PBSUCCESS

[5] Results of questionaire, handed out to college and university students on multiple locations in Guatemala City and Antigua.

[6] Quiché was the principal nation, its descendants can still be distinctly recognised today. Aside from the Quiché clan, there were the K'akchiquel and the Tzutuhils, the Man and the Pokomchí. All these clans had a sense of hierarchy in their society: with a ruling class of nobles and priests and working class of farmers and laborers. For a compelling acount on Mayan social structures and diplomacy: see the works of Dutch antropologist Ruud van Akkeren.

to support right-wing military leader Armas in his coup d'état [7]. What followed were decades of authoritarian military rule. Repressive measures by military leaders led to a radicalization of left-wing Guatemalans. This combined with socio-economic discrimination of the indigenous population – who after more than 200 years of suppression by the colonial ruler still did not own land nor rights- led to the beginning of the organised resistance.

What followed was a brutal war of thirty-six years. First, there was resistance from the intellectuals from the *Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo*, which were no match for the well-trained military troops. This was followed by the establishment of the *Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes* and MR-13, a revolutionary movement comprising of left-wing military officers who were mainly based in the eastern regions of the country. As a response, the army launched operations in which notorious death squads would produce a long line of kidnappings and assasinations. Chances of a transparent and fair democracy were slim: even when there came a democraticly elected president in 1966, the violence from guerilla and military forces continued.

In the seventies, many of the fighting took place in the western parts of the highlands, which continues to be predominantly Mayan until this day. As the conflict continued, indigenous communities were perceived as being synonymous with the guerilla forces, which meant that they were often target of counter-insurgency. It should be noted that the term counter-insurgency is misleading, for it suggests that they responded to large scale attacks from the rebel forces. However, the Commission for Historical Clarification has certified that the state was responsible for 93 per cent of the violence (*Del Silencio a la Memoria,* 2011).

The situation for the indigenous population aggravated when Efraín Rios Montt seized power and dissolved congress, suspended political parties and annulled the constitution. He ripped apart entire communities by installing civilian defense patrols and destroyed entire areas with his infamous scorched earth campaigns. [8] Furthermore, those who survived the attack on their villages were forced to move to replacement villages controlled by the army (Moller and Derryl, 2009). Some of

[7] For a detailed and gripping account of these events, see: Coatshworth, Joan H. 1999. *Bitter Fruit: The Story of an American Coup in Guatemala*. Harvard: David Rockefeller Centre For Latin American Studies

[8] There is evidence that current President Molina was actively engaged in these tactics of terror, which also was cause for strong concern among human rights advocates all around the globe when Molina was elected (Wahlforss, 1982). He has been interviewed during military operations by two US filmmakers. Their documentary can be found online. See: Wahlforss, Michael. 1982. 'Titular de Hoy: Guatemala'.*Youtube*. Posted on: 16th Sept 2012. Online available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7znfz6huz0Y

the villagers resisted and were forced to hide deep into the jungle into their own settlements of resistance, in which they continue to live until this very day (Moller and Derryl, 2009).

It took another ten years after the rule of Montt before peace talks were initiated between the Guatemalan Revolutionary National Unity and the Guatemalan state. This eventually led to the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996. These Accords contained agreements over constitutional reforms, a definitive ceasefire, reduction of the role of the armed forces in politics, respect for indigenous rights, a historical clarification commission, rehabilitation of internally displaced communities, involvement of the international community, implementation of human rights and further negotiations.

Although the agreements looked promising on paper, reality proved to be troublesome. The civil war had revealed an ugly side of the land of eternal spring, one that could not easily be forgotten . The brutal violence, suffered by so many Guatemalans, caused immense psychological and social damage on a personal and national scale; which is considered by many to be at the base of today's violence. As I will demonstrate in the following sections, power structures from the civil war are still in place. Only the frames have been altered.

1.3 Literature Review

The case of *mano dura* in contemporary Guatemala will be used as empirical evidence to support my reconceptualization of securitization theory. Securitization is part of a large body of theory on international security studies. When talking about security on a private level, ideas on what what security is and what needs to be secured can vary immensely. In the Netherlands, for example, everything needs to be secured: from a nice old age to a brand-new laptop. On the other hand, most people in developing countries do not have the financial and institutional means to secure neither themselves nor their property. When mentioning the words personal security, it is more likely for Guatemalans to refer to protection against violent crime. Likewise, when it comes to state security, there are many different approaches depending on cultural and personal preferences on an ontological and epistomological base. Security is a highly political issue. The general focus of the securitization debate has shifted through the years from a realist threat-reality nexus to the more constructivist study of speech acts. Contemporary security scholars are not so much occupied with whether a threat is 'real' or 'true', but how an issue is framed as a threat.

At the Conflict and Peace Institute in Copenhagen, a number of scholars started developing their own approach to critical security studies. Their perceptions on security are now generally known as the Copenhagen School of critical security studies. This school finds it origins in the critical movement that reponded to realist International Relations approaches. Realist scholars of security take the state as their unit of analysis which they consider to be rational, unitary actors who base their actions upon national interest. In line with the realists, neoliberal theorists also focus on the state as the main actor. By basing themselves on game theory and rational choice theory, they believe states to be rational and predictable entities. In this line of reasoning, conflict is inevitable when two parties have mutually exclusive interests.

However, this static view of international relations was met with a response from the constructivist side. Constructivists argued that these realities should be approached not as given facts but as social constructs. They object to the realist notion of knowlege being absolute and the primordial notion that states are static and clashes with other states with different points of view are thus inevitable. Rather, they investigate how different aspects of international relations are historically and socially constructed, which reveals power relations behind these social constructs. One major advantage of this approach is that it opens up new possibilities for creative solutions to conflict, which is not possible in the static world as desribed by neorealists. As constructivist Richard Ashley argued:

"[neoliberalism is a] positivist structuralism that treats the given order as the natural order, limits rather than expands political discourse, negates or trivializes the significance of variety across time and place, subordinates all practice to an interest in control, bows to the ideal of a social power beyond responsibility, and thereby deprives political interaction of those practical capacities which make social learning and creative change possible"(1984: 228).

Constructivist notions are shared by those scholars who work on critical theory. Like the constructivists, critical international relations scholars underline the importance of deconstructing socio-historical processes and not to focus on the 'why' but on the 'how' questions. Although they reject the notion of knowledge being absolute, a critical theorist would argue that an alternative order can be represented coherently when its power relations are analysed through a discourse analysis of historical and social processes. For example, Robert Cox' famous critical work *Production, Power and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History* demonstrates how the socio-economical process of production has affected the projection of state power on civil society and the international community by retracing and deconstructing historical post-industrious processes and applying this to the contemporary world (1987).

International security studies (ISS) was developed after the Second World War as a response to the debate on how the state could be protected from internal and external threats (Buzan and Hansen, 2009: 8). It first mainly aimed at studying security in the narrow military sense but this was soon met with dissatisfaction as the field tended to narrow even more during the Cold War (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde, 1998: 2). From that point onwards, the field was engaged in a wide versus narrow debate. In the post Cold War period, those in favour of a widened field of security studies gained more legitimacy in their claims for a new type of approach. Critical scholars of security intended to move beyond traditional definitions of security as being strictly military. In the lines of constructivism, they tried to achieve this by focussing on disursive practices. Critical security scholars emphasised that security is a process. Their objective is to study that process by looking at both the actors and objects involved as well as the way they are constructed as security threats or objects.

The Copenhagen School adopted this critical approach and aimed to develop the theoretical framework. Their purpose was to move beyond a focus on the state and to incorporate issues which were not considered to be relevant by traditionalists, such as economy and society. One of the founding fathers of this school, Barry Buzan, argued that traditional security studies focusses too much on the most opposite sides of the spectrum, power and peace (1984: 109). He argues that as a consequence:

(..) both result in excessively rigid and negative interpretations, with power leading to an over-emphasis on the inflexibility of both elements, and peace leading to over-optimism about their removability. Security is seen to offer a more balanced perspective. [..] It opens up the considerable scope for positive change which exists within the two elements, and so provides the basis for a synthesis of realist-idealism (1984: 109).

As can be deducted, Buzan aimed to remove himself from purely constructivist ideas to a more realist-idealist approach. Along with his fellow scholars Waever and de Wilde, he developed a new framework for analysis in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998).Within this framework, the Copenhagen School acknowledges four sectors beyond the military in which issues can be securitized: environment, economy, society and politics (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde, 1998: 7). These non-military issues can move from not being integrated within the political sphere, or nonpoliticized, to be dealt by the state in public, politicized, to requiring emergency measures outside the normal bounds of political procedure: securitized. It is also possible for these issues to move back from the realm of securitization to politicization, this is called desecuritization. The

movement from being politicized to emergency between these stages requires an act of securitization: the securitizing actor performs a speech act to convince a relevant audience that extraordinary measures are needed to protect a referent object. In this discursive representation, a politicized issue is presented as an existential threat to a referent object. Critical scholars of securitization are occupied with identifying the role of the securitizing actor and the importance of the speech act in convincing a relevant audience to the existential nature of the threat (Emmers, 2007: 110).

The act of securitization can be divided into five important components: the referent object, the securitizing actor, the audience, the speech act and extraordinary measures. Firstly, referent objects can be described as 'things' that could be considered existentially threatened while having a legitimate claim to survival. These referent objects could be states but also less tangible concept such as sovereignty, ideology, identity or economy (Emmers, 2007: 110). Aside from the referent object there is the securitizing actor. It is here that the Copenhagen School takes concrete steps away from realist state-centered approaches, because the securitizing actor is not necessarily a state actor. In theory, all those who can convince a relevant audience that the referent object is an existential threat can be considered securitizing actors. Non-state actors are therefore seen as important players in the securitization model (Emmers, 2007 : 112). However, according to Emmers, securitization in practice is mainly dominated by the elite (2007: 112). In this thesis, I shall use securitization to explore how this domination of the discursive process is manifested in Guatemala.

Thirdly, the speech act is a discursive representation of a politicized issue as an existential threat to a referent object, urging for extraordinary measures. However, a speech act alone is not enough for an issue to be securitized. The actor must also convince a relevant audience, which could be the general public, other politicians or – in an undemocratic state- specific elites such as the military. In this speech act, the actor will call for extraordinary measures, meaning "measures that go beyond rules ordinarily abided by and are therefore located outside the usual bounds of political procedures and practices" (Emmers, 2007: 114).

However, this focus on security as a discursive process has been critiqued by security scholars who favour an externalist approach (vd Borgh and Savenije, 2012; Emmers, 2007; Stritzel,2007: 360). These scholars reject the exclusive focus on the performative power of the speech act event , as advocated by Buzan and Waever, which they claim to be too static (Stritzel,2007: 362-366). Instead, the externalists re-emphasize that securitization is a process. They claim that the Copenhagen School is narrowing down the field to a point where all non-discursive dimensions are left out, while security

is also clearly a daily reality in international politics with real policy implications. Therefore, they argue that a complete act of securitization is comprised of both speech acts and political dimensions, which means that a succesful act of securitization does not only rely on convincing a relevant audience but also on whether the actor can adopt policy implementations to address the existential threat (Emmers, 2007: 115). This can be analysed by taking both the discursive process and the symbolic and practical dimensions of policy making into account (vd Borgh and Savenije, 2012: 10). Furthermore, these scholars argue that this linguistical approach largely discards analysis of the socio-political context. The success of a speech act depends on the embeddedness of the actors in social relations of meaning and power (Stritzel, 2007: 367). As Stritzel argues, there is a need of "a more comprehensive awareness of the existence of a social sphere" (2007: 365).

Aside from the critique of not paying attention to the policy dimension, the Copenhagen School has received other types of critique regarding the limitations of their framework. First of all, they are being criticised for having an insufficient focus on empirical research (Brinkmoeller, 2011: 1; Emmers, 2007: 116). There is also a call for a further definition and clarification of the boundaries between politics and security in undemocratic societies, i.e. too look further at the middle ground as described by Buzan. Another critique is that although the school is looking for a broad theoretical approach, its notion of taking society as a referent object derives from a Euro-centric view on state dynamics (Wilkinson, 2007). In addition, it is questioned what the relevance is of a critical security study approach for parts of the world that can be analysed from a realist perspective, such as North-East Asia (Emmers, 2007: 116).

Furthermore, a point that still needs to be defined is the exact dynamic between the securitizing actor and the audience; the role of the audience in the process of securitization (Léonard and Kaunert, 2011: 57). Eventhough the skeleton of the Copenhagen approach relies on the trinity of speech act, securitizing actor and audience; the exact relationship between actor and audience has been underconceptualized. The reconceptualisation of the audience is even pressured for by Waever, leading scholar for the Copenhagen School (Léonard and Kaunert, 2011: 57). Although not explicitly, the Copenhagen School has always quietly assumed that the agency lies with the securitizing actor, be it one person or an entire group.

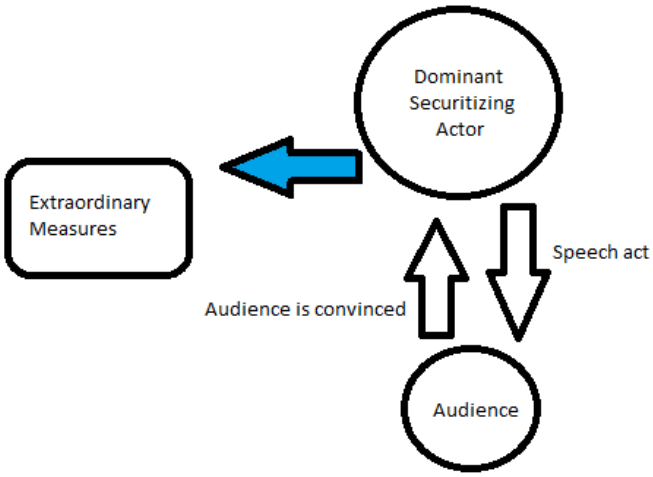
However, it is unclear what the dynamics are between actor and audience. I would argue in favour of an externalist approach. Speech acts are communicative processes and communication always works both ways. It is of vital importance for ideas conveyed in speech acts to be socially and culturally ingrained into the collective conscience of the audience. For example, it would be impossible for a Dutch politician to call for extraordinary measures against librarians, because they are not

considered an existential threat by Dutch society. Therefore, it is important to analyse a securitization process within its specific setting (Léonard and Kaunert, 2011: 62).

In developing democratic societies with a large presence of powerfull ilicit non-state actors, such as in Guatemala, politicians need to demonstrate their control to their population. In this way, certain audiences can pressure for securitization as well (vd Borg and Savenije, 2012) . So far, I have deployed the concepts of audience as the receiver and actor as the transmittor of the speech act. By demonstrating that certain audiences can pressure the dominant actor for securitization, vd Borgh and Savenije have provided a clear demonstration that audiences can play an active securitizing role. These audiences could be considered non-dominant securitizing actors. It is true that in a country where the division between military and civilian factions is not clear-cut, risks of abuse of securitizing discourses by state elites is considerably high. However, securitization can also be a tool of resistance. It might therefore be interesting to look at how a non-dominant group of potential actors receives these speech acts and how they respond.

All-in all, the theoretical starting point for my thesis will be the externalist position to the Copenhagen school. I will aim to contribute with my case study to the literature of international security studies by further conceptualizing the relationship between audience and securitizing actor. What I will propose is a different conceptualization of the relationship between the dominant securitizing actor and the audience. In the approach by the Copenhagen School, securitization means that the securitizing actor convinces a relevant audience of the necessity of extraordinary measures to protect the referent object. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1:[9]

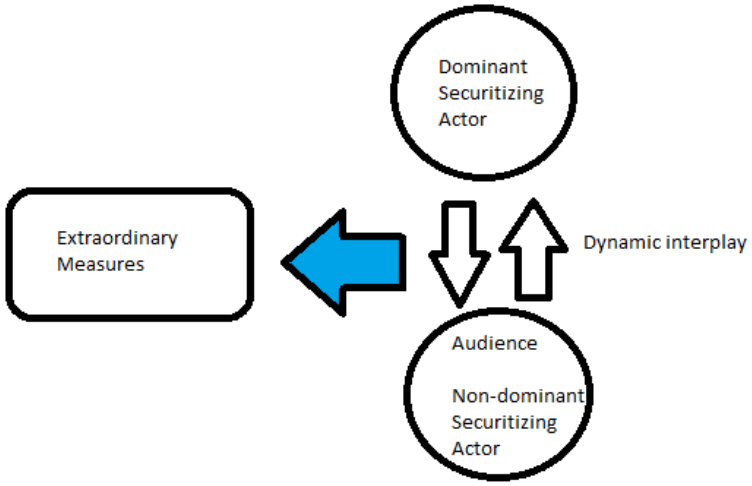


What I suggest is that the relationship between the securitizing actor and the audience is more complex. It is a dynamic process in which dominant securitizing actors can be pressured into acts of securitization by certain audiences, the non-dominant securitizing actors. I believe that securitization is a dynamic interplay between these dominant and non-dominant securitizing actors. This is illustrated in figure 1.2.

[9] Illustration created by the author

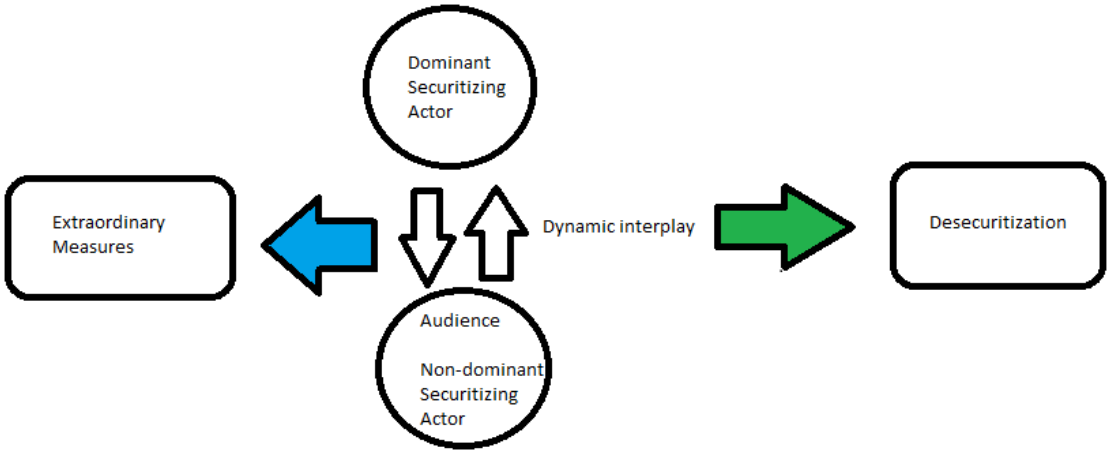
Figure 1.2:

10



Vice versa, this dynamic interplay can also result in desecuritization of a subject. For policy makers who strive to desecuritize a certain topic, this would imply that they should focus on both dominant and non-dominant securitizing actors. This is illustrated in figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3:[11]



[10] Illustration created by the author
[11] Illustration created by the author

Regarding the classical agent-structure debate, I argue that the securitizing actors act within a certain context that provides them with certain frames and conditions but at the same time actors have the ability to alter or switch frames, creating a dynamic of action and change (Stritzel, 2007: 368) I shall use the case of *mano dura* in Guatemala as empirical evidence of how the dynamic interplay between dominant and non-dominant securitizing actors works in a specific socio-political context. In chapter two, I will start by focussing on the context of *mano dura*, followed by an analysis of the dominant securitizing actors and their speech acts. This will be followed by an analysis of the non-dominant securitizing actors and their counter-discourse . In chapter four, I shall demonstrate how the interplay of these dominant and non-dominant discourses works out in practice by using case studies on the war on drugs and the state of siege in San Juan Sacatepéquez.

1.4 Research Questions and Methodology

1.4.1 Research Questions

In these chapters, my main research question will be the following:

What does the manifestation of mano dura in post-conflict Guatemala tell about the dynamic interplay between the securitizing actor and the audience in the process of securitization?

I will elaborate on this main question by aiming to answer to following sub-questions:

1. In what way could the support for a military approach to organized crime in a post-conflict society be explained by securitization theory?
2. How is the counterdiscourse to mano dura, as advocated by representatives of civil society and ladino students, constructed?
3. How is the dynamic interplay between the non-dominant group of potential securitizing actors and the dominant securitizing actors manifested by contemporary events?

1.4.2 Methodology

Data collection methods

In preparation for this thesis, I have spent four months in the urban highland regions of Sacatepequez and Guatemala City. I opted to use multiple data collection tools to provide a more comprehensive analysis. Therefore, I conducted in-depth interviews, constructed a questionnaire, gathered and analysed a daily newspaper, collected data in local libraries and archives and deployed the tool of participant observation.

Firstly, as I have indicated in the literature review section, the focus of my field work was to gather data on both the dominant and the non-dominant group of securitizing actors. In the non-dominant group, I have focussed on two groups: representatives of civil society and students. In my focus on representatives of civil society, I have opted to analyse both operational and advocacy NGO's in the urban areas of Sacatepequez and Guatemala City. During the time I spent in the area, I have visited twenty organizations. Fourteen of these organizations were operational, four were advocacy NGOs and two were state institutions. These were selected in two different ways. The first group of advocacy NGOs and state institutions had been carefully selected in advance because of their highly influential work, such as the *Movimiento Projusticia* and the *Grupo the Apoyo Mutuo*. The operational NGOs were selected through the use of snowballing. It is quite difficult to reach some of these organisations through email because of the sensitive nature of the topic and the sometimes underdeveloped skills with online practices . Therefore, only a few of these organisations were visited with prior correspondence.

However, due to the changed nature of my research in the course of time, I have used fourteen in-depth interviews as official data, one of which was a double interview. Of these interviews, half has been recorded and transcribed for thorough discursive analyses. The other half, which could not be recorded due to technical failure or privacy matters, has been recorded through note-taking. The interviews were structured around a topic list, which will be provided in the annex. Eleven of these interviews were conducted in Spanish with Guatemalan middle or working class ladinos, the other three were conducted in English with two respondents from the United States and one from Great-Britain.

In addition, I have produced a questionnaire to address my second focus group: the young urban ladinos who have recieved higher education, or are still in college or at university. The main criteria

on which these students were selected was their presence at my pre-selected locations. I choose to select three locations that are popular among students: the library in Antigua, the central park in Antigua and the San Carlos University campus in Guatemala City. The respondants were asked to fill in a questionnaire and I randomly requested them to deliberate on their comments. In addition, a former medicine student assisted me with spreading the questionnaires among his friends. In this way, I could also reach other former students. The questionnaire can be encountered in the annex.

I have combined these generated data with naturally occurring data. A third tool that I have deployed was data collection through a discourse analyses of the national newspaper *Prensa Libre*. This newspaper could be easily obtained for a few quetzals on the streets. I have collected and archived articles that concerned *mano dura* or civil society. In addition, I have added myself to their facebook page, allowing me to observe the general opinion on recent events and developments. I have also used participant observation by observing my Guatemalan friends and acquaintances; sometimes by engaging in direct debate on recent topics, other times by observing their responses in specific situations.

Probably the most important data collection method has been my frequent visits to local libraries and archives. This is specifically true for the archive and library of the *Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Meso America* in Antigua, which is a very valuable research institution and also very important when it comes to the preservation of important historical information. The people of the centre have been of a tremendous help into gaining insight into the structures of Guatemalan politics and society and the complex manifestation of *mano dura*.

The reason why I opted to focus on urban middle and working class ladinos lies within their capacity to be an influential force in the course of their country's future. As a consequence of its strongly hierarchical society, Guatemala's urban middle class is more apt to exercise its civil rights than the rural indigenous community because of several reasons that are rooted within the countries' long tradition of hegemonic discursive practices on race, class and ethnicity.

Firstly, because of their mother tongue. Among the ladinos, the Spanish language is spoken by both their parents and their teachers. It is the official language of the state and thereby of an exclusionist nature: if you are unable speak the language, you cannot be a part of the democratic system. Although the majority of young indigenous people in Guatemala is more or less able to speak the Spanish language, the way it has been taught by the static and patronizing educational system often revoked frustration and resentment among indigenous children, causing them to drop out of school at an early stage and thereby decreasing their chances of economic progress (Ajpub', 1998). Until this

day, all official matters across the country can only be arranged in Spanish. Some initiatives to change this linguistic status quo pressured by indigenous groups are being carried out, though without much effort. For example, when trying to access governmental websites, the visitor is asked what language group they belong to, indicating some form of data analysis on the topic. Nevertheless, it is very unlikely that this research will provide reliable statistics because the majority of the indigenous population does not have access to a computer.

A second cause can be found in the geographical location. My Spanish teacher told me about the development of her own village. When she grew up in a small village near the city of Antigua, there was no electricity and no running water. After the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, Antigua became increasingly popular as a tourist destination for both national and international travelers. This international presence encouraged the village elders to gather around and march to the capital to communicate their demands to the gouvernment. Their geographical location close to an place with cultural and economic interest provided them with both the means to communicate their demands as well as a leverage: although it should be noted that the institutionalization and urbanization of villages in the central highland region also brought along many negative side effects of development, such as pollution and the breakdown of social structures.

Moreover, I found that the connections between colour, class, race, ethnicity and geographical location are very diverse. Especially in urban areas, the social map is not as clear-cut as the simplistic *ladino-indígena* dichotomy. According to the minority rights group international, "increasing numbers of Mayans of varying social classes live in all of Guatemala's cities" (2008: par 4). Some of the more wealthy *indígena* are hardly separable from the urban mestizos: they speak Spanish in public, live in protected *condominios* and dress according to ladino fashion. In reverse, the impoverished *barrios* of Guatemala City are mainly inhabited by the poor underclasses of ladino society. In addition, it cannot be forgotten that the word indigenous does not signify a coherent group of people: it is an umbrella term for different groups with different customs who speak different languages.

True as it may be that the political participation of the maya rural population is vital for the development of Guatemalan democracy, I believe that this will not be accomplished if their peers who do have a voice do not use this is in a meaningful way. Solidarity is the key, not being stuck in the *caldo de cangregos.*[12] If there is no conscienciation of the urban working and middle class, it is

[12] *Caldo de cangregos* is a Guatemalan proverb. This saying is used a great deal in daily Guatemalan discursive practices. It symbolizes two pots of boiling water containing crabs, one filled with foreign crabs, the other filled with Guatemalans. The saying goes that in the end, one pot is empty while the other is still full. The foreigners

doubtful whether the fight of the rural indigenous part of the population will ever be succesful. Therefore, I believe that participation of the urban *ladinos* in the analysis is vital.

Reflection

As Guatemalan scientist Gíron argued about doing research in her country of origin: "when doing homework, our racial, class, political, gender, and national identities will shape our research"(2005: 64). I would argue that this is true for doing research in general. My identity as a Caucasian Dutch female has strongly influenced my fieldwork and thesis. In a country that is permiated with discourses of race supremacy, my white skin and blond hair have been both a curse and a blessing.

On the one hand, it became clear that as a Western foreigner in a developing country, I was automatically placed in a higher social ranking. I became aware that my position opened many doors for me. Every time I walked into an office or visited a project, eventhough this was often unexpected, I was aways welcomed with kindness. I already spent some time in the country before, so I was used to the politeness, friendliness and helpfullness of the *Guatemaltecos*. However, what I failed to see back then was that the smiles were often cultural practices of politeness, not signs of mutual understanding. It was only later, when my Spanish improved and befriended a few Guatemalans, that it occurred to me that not all social classes were treated with the same respect and dignity. Therefore, I tried to approach all of my respondents with the same respect and humility to create an atmosphere of equality.

On the other hand, my position as an outsider has not always benefited my research. As any aid worker in Guatemala will confirm, it is extremely difficult to gain the trust of local communities as an outsider. Discriminative cultural practices and legacies of a polarizing civil war has left deep scars within communities. When looking beyond the smiles, it was easy to see caution and suspicion. Furthermore, during my time in the field, I realised that my envisioned research method heavily relied on cultural assumptions. This has often caused me to radically change my method.

Firstly, I started off with different assumptions on organisational culture. Growing up in a very structural environment, I assumed that it would be necessary to establish contact with the organisations prior to my visits. However, it was often very difficult to contact the NGOs. I waisted much of my time waiting for a reply. In the end, I decided to take a chance and show up

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all helped eachother to get out of the pot, while the Guatemalans pull eachother down everytime someone is trying to get away.

unannounced. Fortunately, with my advantage of being a foreigner and thereby appearing as a 'non-threat', this tactic has worked out surprisingly well. In one case, I accidentally visited the executive director of an operational NGO in his private residence while he was still recovering from a heavy operation. Still, his fianceé decided to let me have a conversation. She later explained to me that this was not only because I came all the way from *Holanda*, but also because I approached them with 'humility and respect'.

Another important cultural difference that has strongly affected my research methods is the famous Dutch bluntness. Whenever a Dutch person rejects a statement, he or she is allowed to use the word 'no' in polite conversations. In the Netherlands, asking for directions can be replied with 'I'm sorry, I do not know'. In Guatemala, however, I perceived that these practices are considered impolite. As an employee from the Dutch embassy argued, a *Guatemalteco* will never tell you that he or she does not know directions. [13] This trait has forced me to completely change the nature of my research. I thought I had come to an agreement with a local organisation on an internship. Therefore, my initial methods were based around the activities of this NGO. However, it turned out that this organisation did not cover my intended subject; which was street children.

On a more positive note, this forced me to look at Guatemala with a more open view. This is were I started to see the influences of *mano dura* on Guatemalan society.Through the analysis of newspapers, visits to local libraries and conversations with Guatemalan friends, my interest in *mano dura* grew by the day.

To deal with the lack of structure in Guatemalan organisational and social life and to prevent my research from being more assumption-based, I decided to convert my research process into a more organic one. Instead of only gathering constructed data, I decided to take to combine this with a more observatory role and see what data comes along. This relatively unstructured approach combined with the relatively lack of time have caused factual discrepancies in my data. It is for this reason that I have decided to advocate a discursive interpretation of my data. However, I do not consider this to be a drawback. The discursive interpretation, combined with a policy dimension fits my own realist-idealist point of view. This thesis is not a factual account of the 'real' Guatemala, but my representation and interpretation of certain Guatemalan realities.

[13] Exerpt from an informal conversation with a Dutch employee at the Dutch embassy in Guatemala City's Zone ten on the 4th of May 2012.

Chapter 2: *Mano dura*

Before focussing on the reception of *mano dura* by the non-dominant group, it is important to see how the securitization of violent organized and non-organized crime in Guatemala exactly works. In this chapter, I will focus on the following question:

In what way could the support for a military approach to organized crime in a post-conflict society be explained by securitization theory?

Mano dura could be generally described as "hardline and militaristic approaches to combat crime"(Buchanan et al, 2012: 1). However, the hard line approach that characterises many policies in Latin America varies across countries and changes overtime. I will focus on how it is manifested in Guatemala. Firstly, I will elaborate on what *mano dura* as an existing discourse comprises. Secondly, I will illustrate how *mano dura* is influenced by the positional power of certain actors. This will be done through an analysis of how *mano dura* in Guatemala works as a securitizing discourse, with a focus on the main securitizing actors – the Colom administration, the Molina administration and the media.

2.1 Legacies of Terror

Mano dura is not a typically Guatemalan phenomena. All across the Americas, it has appealed to a deeply felt need to retreat behind high walls in secluded communities. This is often accompanied by a political wave of populist strongmen who propagate a hard response to crime. (Godoy, 2006: 7). Support for this hard response on crime is said to be caused by two psychological factors: fear of crime and lack of trust (Godoy, 2006; Azpuru 2010; Buchanan et al 2012; Gíron 2005). Recently, a thorough investigation on *mano dura* in the Americas has been carried out by the Latin American Public Opinion Project of the Vanderbilt University. Every year, the results of LAPOP's widespread investigations are translated into the Americas Barometer. Their research indicated that the level of support for *mano dura* is also related to educational level and the overall government performance (Buchanan et al, 2012: 5). Although the authors of the report could detect a clear connection between crime rates and support for *mano dura*, they suggest that the *perception* of crime and corruption is even more influential on the amount of support for a tough view on crime (2012: 5). This signifies that even though crime rates could go down, the support for *mano dura* could still be

high. When anti-corruption or anti-crime measures are covered extentively by the media, it is likely that they instigate a feeling of greater insecurity and thereby greater support for *mano dura* (Buchanan et al, 2012: 5). It is thus important to note that *mano dura* is a discursive process which is grounded within socio-psychological processes.

Many of these elements mentioned by the Barometer can be found back in Guatemala. On the one hand, there is a a very real threat of physical and psychological violence. Along with its neigbouring countries El Salvador and Honduras, Guatemala constitutes one of the most violent non-war regions in the world[14]. The use of violence is not limited to the state; there are also a large number of street gangs, narco-trafficers, private security companies and other types of illicit networks who engage in –often- violent criminal activities. Guatemalan political scientist Azpuru indicates that crime levels in 2010 rose to 23.3 per cent from 17.5 per cent in 2008 (2010: xxix) However, reliable statistics on the nature and frequency of crime are scant because of underreporting and hidden agendas from both national and international actors (Rodgers, 2009: 957). However, the annual amount of homocides in Guatemala is strongly believed to exceed the amount of war-related deaths during the height of the civil war (Rodgers, 2009 : 957).

These high rates of all types of crime coïncide with my personal experience and own findings. In the relatively little time I spent in Guatemala, I have been a victim of a robbery and a witness of an armed one. When I told about these events, a young middle-class painter from Antigua responded: "I am sorry for you, but this is normal, be glad that you are OK".[15] Many responses by Guatemalan acquaintances reflected the same mixture of acceptance and fatalism.

The effect of these crime rates on the national and personal psyche are also reflected in my data. Nearly all people from all classes I spoke with during my fieldwork have been a vicitim of criminal activities. Most of the middle and upperclass told me that they were lucky because they were 'only' robbed once or twice. One respondant told me that he never picked up his phone while driving, because was hold at gunpoint twice at the same road. Nevertheless, people from all classes told me that they had experienced violent assaults on other people, or heard about them. Striking about these accounts was that many feared not so much for their own life, but for their family and loved ones; a finding which is underlined by Azpuru as being one of the main causes for a decreasing support for the political system (2010: xxix). A young psychologist from Antigua said:

[14] In 2004, the global average was seven homocides per 100.000. In Central-America, this was twenty-nine per 100.000 (Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers, 2009: 375)
[15] Excerpt from informal setting with middle-class ladino in Antigua at the beginning of April, 2012.

In truth, I have been blessed because I have never been physically attacked, in all my life I have only been robbed two times. But now I am worried for my daughter. I don't know how the situation is going to be like when she grows up, I am not sure how Guatemala [City] is going to be when she want to study so it really affects you psychologically, you are living with a lot of anxiety about what is going to happen.[..] I think that today, Guatemalan society is what we call a neurotic society generated by violence. Because now we are only talking to you about violent attacks and homocides but there is also a lot of domestic violence, a lot of violence at schools - the famous bullying- that, in truth, violates you as a human being and causes you to lose the rights to decide, to decide about yourself, about your thoughts.[16]

As my respondant points out, violence has generated more violence. Her claims are supported by statistics from the Barometer in which it appears that domestic violence is more common in Guatemala than in the rest of the Americas(Azpuru, 2010). [17]

However, as she also rightfully points out, violence also has clear psychological implications – the performative function. The insecurity and anxiety that it installs in a population has a profound effect on how people think and act. This is specifically true for a country like Guatemala, in which insecurity has been a means of warfare during the last fourty years. The civil war has created a seemingly insurmountable breech between Guatemalans and the state. When the state forces turned against their own civilians, they no longer performed one of the basic tasks of a state: to protect its citizens. A reverse in state perception took place: security forces meant insecurity, the law meant protection for criminals and public servant meant private predator (Godoy, 2006: 56; *Del Silencio a la Memoria* , 2011). As a consequence, Guatemala still has one of the highest support for a coup d'etat and the lowest affiliation with political parties (Azpuru, 2010; Rodgers, 2009). It has been indicated in a 2010 report that dissatisfaction with the President – which was Alvaro Colom at the time- was one of the most important reasons for Guatemalans to support a coup (Azpuru, 2010: xxix).

Furthermore, specific war tactics deployed by the military have caused a breakdown of interpersonal trust. As a professor from the San Carlos University explained, the Guatemalan state used these

[16] Exerpt from an interview conducted with two psychologists from a grassroots NGO at 11th of April 2012.
[17] While the average of familial victimization is 19,4 per cent, in Guatemala it comprises 26,9 per cent. The strongly urban zone around Guatemala City appears to be the most vulnerable to domestic violence (Azpuru, 2010: xxix).

recursos de miedo specifically as a weapon of fear. [18] In 2010, Guatemala was located on the bottom of the list in the Americas when it comes to trust within communities, especially urban residents (Azpuru, 2010:xxx) Entire communities were ripped apart because survivors fled to all parts of the country – or abroad. In the replacement villages, some men were forced into civillian patrols; which often led to violent clashes between them and members from their own communities (Moller and Derrill, 2009).

In addition, these tactics deployed in the civil war by state forces paved the way for a new type of exemplary and extreme violence. Executions were being purposely staged to convey a message to survivors. However, power structures from during the civil war have barely changed over time. Some ex-militants even made a career in politics- such as Rios Montt and President Molina. Furthermore, it is a public secret that many former militants are either running private security companies with illicit ties to organized crime or they are directly involved in this organized crime (Godoy, 2006: 50). These former militants are now using the exemplary violence that they have been taught in the military. Accusations have been made that Molina himself has staged some of the violence during the elections to reinforce anxiety and back up his claims about insecurity (*Redes del Crimen Organizado*). The difference for *capitalinas*[19] is that violence is now aimed not only at politically active groups but at everybody. High levels of impunity and police corruption contribute to the strong feeling that state institutions are unfit to protect the nation from violence. Godoy argues that this feeling of insecurity is at the base of *mano dura*'s popularity (2006: 50).

It is here that real events trigger perceptions of corruption and crime (Azpuru, 2010: xxix). Perceptions of insecurity and corruption are strongly increasing in the urban areas (Azpuru, 2010: xxix). This combination of victimization and the threat of victimization leads, according to Azpuru, to a weaker support for the law and the political system (2010: xxix). This was also reflected in my experiences. Of the twenty-two young urban ladinos I have spoken with, four indicated that they did not vote and only three of them indicated that they trusted the government to solve the crime problem. Instead, the large majority believed that that the institution of the Guatemalan family could solve the criminal wave, indicating that crime has socio-cultural roots.

Aside from insecurity, I also encountered many stories about experience with corruption. A psychologist told me about her experiences with working in a government institution:

[18] Interview conducted by the author on the 3rd of May 2012 with a professor of Political Science at the San Carlos University in Guatemala City

[19] Spanish term for residents of the capital city.

There were so many people who only came there to annoy other people, to rob the people they work with, their colleages, my colleages, or to hand out [money] to their friends. You did not get any pleasure out of the job, you only went there to make money. [..] So I left after a year, it was a good project but there was too much corruption. [20]

All in all, it seems that many of the ingredients for *mano dura* are present in Guatemala. Not only is there a deeply rooted lack of trust and social fear, there is widespread victimization and the threat of victimization of crime and corruption. It could therefore be interesting to consider the other criteria that have been given by the Americas Barometer. As has been indicated, one of the most important barriers for *mano dura* is education: the higher the overall education level, the less perceptive for ideas about repressive state violence (Buchanan et al, 2012). In theory, education raises awareness and stimulates independent thought. It is an approach to violence in itself: nearly all student respondents from Guatemala City considered education to be the most important tool to reduce violence. This will be further elaborated in chapter three.

When regarding World Bank statistics, it is difficult to say that there is a real cause for concern about Guatemalan education. Nearly eighty-five per cent of Guatemalan children attend primary school, which, given that Guatemala is a developing country, is not as dramatic as would seem. However, these statistics are questionable because very little is known about actual school attendance in the rural areas[21]. Also, going to class is not the same as actually learning something. The educational system in Guatemala has many flaws: teachers are often under equipped, classes are overcrowded, there is barely access to educational material. In the public school of a village near Antigua, one teacher often had to handle more than one hundred children at the same time. More importantly, the hierarchical and static system only teaches repetition and obedience. It does not stimulate creativity or independent thinking. These values are cheaper and easier picked up on the streets, which is one of the many reasons why so few Guatemalans chose to continue their education. Another reason why especially the indigenous population choses to leave school is because of its patriarchical nature; there is hardly any space within the curriculum for indigenous languages and culture (Ajpub' ,1998).

Another aspect of Guatemala which makes it such a perfect environment for *mano dura* to flourish is its overall government performance. Guatemala's governing system can be described as typically Latin American, with the three organs of the state being a president, an elected congress and an independant judiciary. These institutions have a system of elected municipal and departamental

[20] Exerpt from an interview conducted with two psychologists from a grassroots NGO at 11th of April 2012.
[21] Only on very few occasions does a Government official attend schools in rural areas.

units below them (Briscoe and Pellecer, 2010: 5). Guatemala's state institutions that are concerned with security are the government, the *Ministerio de Gobernación*, the national civil police, the penitentiary system, local government departments and a special security secretary of administrative affairs (*Mapa Centroamericano*, 2006).In addition, there are several commissions that aim to increase civil participation in national security issues. An example is the *Consejo Asesar de Seguridad*, which is a controling body of the army. Naturally, the army itself is also involved in national internal security. In 2005, the *comando antisecuestros* were formed out of a mixed group of the national police and the army as a special response force against narco-traffic. In theory, these forces are being held in check by controling bodies such as the human rights commision, the ombudsman and disciplinary tribunals. There is also no lack of legislation: there are laws on internal discipline and special laws in the national constitution concerning the army (*Mapa Centroamericano*, 2006). Furthermore, Guatemala has confirmed the authority of international law by ratifiying the Rome Statute and the Convention against Organized Crime with additional protocols.

On paper, it seems that the formal power structures in Guatemala represent a legitimate democracy. The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy has called Guatemala 'a positive example of a post-conflict society where democracy is taking root'(2012: par 1). However, there are clear indications that informal power structures have a deep impact on political decision making (Briscoe and Pellecer,2012). There are also indications that many politicians have close connections to the countries' economic elite (Briscoe and Pellecer, 2012: 28; COPAE, 2012). Futhermore, political parties are fractured. Many do not have a long life span because their existence is tied up with the party leader, who often founded the party in an attempt at becoming president. When the great leader decides to leave office, the party often dissolves or is taken over. As a consequence, Guatemalan Congress has very little legitimacy among the population, which easily gives rise to illicit power structures (Briscoe and Pellecer,2012: 6; Azpuru 2010).

Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that it is not so much the performance itself but the *perception* of the performance that is critical to discourses on security . This perception will be further discussed in the following sections.

2.2 *Mano dura* as a Securitizing Discourse

In this section, I shall demonstrate how *mano dura* can be analysed as an act of securitization. As the externalists emphasise, there is more to securitization than just discourse: it also 'does' something to people. The objective of this analyses is two-fold. First, to reveal the power relations behind processes of framing. Second, to demonstrate the performative force of discursive processes. Therefore, a constructivist- realist analysis will be given of dominant securitizing actors and the extraordinary measures that they propose; which will be combined with a discursive approach to specific speech acts and referent objects.

In the lines of the general critical approach to securitization, all those who can convince a relevant audience that something is an existential threat to a referent object will be taken into account as being a possible securitizing actor. However, as I will explain later, this hardly entails civil society leaders in the case of Guatemala. The main securitizing actors are found within the elite of the country, whose voices are strongly represented by both the gouvernment and the media. Nevertheless, there is an implicit role of non-state actors and the population as a whole; which will be discussed in the following sections. For now, the focus will be on state institutions and the media. It needs to be kept in mind that this is a textual analysis, based on speech patterns and documents. Discussing the 'true' intentions of these actors, if such a thing exists, is too subjective and goes beyond the scope of this argument.

Although securitization can be applied to a large number of topics, *mano dura* is mainly an issue of public security. The main premise behind *mano dura* is that a safe and secure state is the foundation for development and growth. Therefore, those in favour of a hard approach to crime argue that combating crime in Guatemala is top priority. When looking at Guatemala's high levels of crime, it is hard to argue otherwise. Crime is widespread; ranging from organized narco-traffic to the street gangs of Guatemala city. Furthermore, Guatemala contains a large amount of fire arms, which were estimated at an amount of 235,935 in 2005 (*Mapa Centroamericano*,2006). Of the amount of annual homicides, there are clear suggestions that the majority is caused by fire arms (IEPADES, 2006).

Another dire security problem is the rapid growth of private security companies. According to an estimation of the Ministerio de Gobernación, there were about 110,000 legal and 40,000 illegal members of security companies. The police law of 1970 states that the PNC needs to coordinate the

activities of the private security companies[22]. However, concerns by human rights advocates about these companies started to grow when it became clear that a great many were involved in illicit practices (*Mapa Centroamericano*, 2006). Therefore, in 2010, Congress adopted a new law that would regulate the workings of private security companies. [23] However, it remains to be seen whether this law will properly work without actual reinforcing mechanisms.

Nevertheless, the rhetoric of *mano dura* does not evolve around preventive measures such as arms reduction and regulation of privatized violence. Instead, it rather focusses on repressive measures against those who are deemed criminals in the eyes of the state-and general public. In Guatemala, there are two specific groups that are generally accepted by the population to be criminals: urban gangs, or *pandillas*, and narco-traffickers. Nevertheless, the exact boundaries between these groups and other 'subversive' groups are not always clearcut. Pandillas do often engage in narco activities, while drug tafficers also appear to recruit among the pandillas. In addition, the labels *narco* and *pandilla* are often quite liberally used by the Guatemalan state to legitimize state action against 'subversive' groups such as human rights groups. It is here that repetitive historical processes can be detected, only the label 'communist' has been replaced by the label 'narco-trafficker'.

The first actor in the securitization process that I wish to discuss is former President Alvaro Colom, who ruled from 2007 to 2011. In line with the last few governments, his minority government with the *Unidad Nacional de Esperanza* met strong opposition in parliament, which strongly polarized debates (NIMD, 2012). During the elections, Colom advocated a social approach to crime, deviating from the hard line that was laid out by his predecessor Berger. He plead for a more holistic approach to violent crime, placing the origins of the violence not in social or cultural practices but in structural issues. It could be stated that he was aiming at desecuritization of narcotrafic and the *pandillas*.

However, his actions spoke a different language. Instead of deminishing the influence of the military, the Colom administration ordered an augmentation of military funding between five and ten million quetzal, which they had to use in the 'fight against narcotrafic'(Berganza, 2008). His inability to deploy a more inclusive approach on crime illustrates a deep polarization in Guatemalan politics and society. Colom and his wife Sandra Torres were often subject of national ridicule; especially when the

[22] Ley de Policias Particulares 1970, decreto 73-70.
[23] Ley que Regula los Servicios de Seguridad Privada 2011, decreto 52-2010

couple decided to divorce to allow Torres run for UNE in the next elections[24]. Many of my respondents who mentioned Torres referred to her as 'bad', 'greedy' or 'un-ladylike'[25].

Colom's failed desecuritization moves could then easily be used in the 2011 elections by right-wing opponent Partido Patriota to recuperate from the previous loss in the 2007 elections. Molina, another important securitizing actor, used the image of Colom as being too soft as a foil to strengthen the image of himself as the strong leader. The Partido Patriota started campaigning from very early onwards, which provided them sufficient time to implement their message of *Mano dura, Cabeza y Corazón*[26] into the minds of the Guatemalan people. Although the fist in the party's logo does not officially stand for *mano dura*, it is interesting to note that many Guatemalans were under the impression that it does symbolize an iron fist (Godoy, 2006: 63).

In his campaign, Molina aimed at addressing nationalist sentiments by referring to the public as "the Guatemalan Society" and "all Guatemalans" (*Discurso de Toma de Posesión*, 2012). Using the issue of public security is also a very deliberate strategic move because it calls for a large public; there are not many people who encourage crime and violence. By proliferating himself with his military rank, instead of trying to mask it, he aims to demonstrate certain personal qualities to the Guatemalan public. In Guatemala, a military is associated by many with authority and decisiveness (Guatevision, 2011). It is also through deep historical and cultural practices that many Guatemalans only know one institution that funcions in a time of crisis; which is the army (Godoy, 2006: 55). In an interview with CNN, Molina shapes the image of himself as a military who is willing to jump in front of his people to protect them from the dangers of the dangerous Other- the narco-trafficers and *pandillas* (*Entrevista con Otto Peréz Molina*, 2011).

This image of the war hero is again emphasised in his inauguration speech in which he claims to be "willing to make any sacrifice to protect the life of all Guatemalans" (*Discurso de Toma de Posesión*, 2012). Moreover, by emphasising his role during the peace talks, he turns his past as a military general during civil war from a negative into a positive experience. When combined, the imagery of

[24] In Guatemala, it is impossible to be re-elected after four years. Therefore, Colom and his wife had a divorce. Eventually, a judge decided that this measure was unruly and Torres was forced to withdraw from the 2011 elections.

[25] Exerpts from informal conversations with urban middle-class ladinos from March through April 2012. One of the most popular examples of ridicule is a fragment of the film Der Untergang which is 'dubbed' in Spanish, which is online available: See: Al Buen Chapin. 2011. 'Hitler se Entera Que Sandrita Puede Ser Presidente Otra Vez'. *Youtube*. Posted on: 6th Apr 2011. Online available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyF15Cj1vDU&feature=related

[26] Translated into English: Iron fist, head and heart.

the party's logo along with the proliferation of a military general calls for an image of a strong leader. This is supported by his famous one-liner 'l*e moleste a quien le moleste'* , which could be considered similar to the biblical 'an eye for an eye'. However, Molina himself seemed to agree with security scholars that security contains more than just the military aspect. He argues:

We are not just talking about public safety, but an integral security. We are talking about political security, financial security, security of the state, external and internal security. [..] This security needs to be achieved through the hand of justice, that is the only way. (CNN, 2011: 9:10- 9:50)

It appears that the referent object, as presented by Molina, is not only Guatemalan society but also the political system, the economy and the international status.Furthermore, in his inauguration speech he argues for a securitization of a completely different issue: nutrition. He has a truly valid point; chronic nutritional issues are widespread in Guatemala. According to the UN World Food Program, Guatemala has one of the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in the world, especially among children in indigenous areas (2011). This malnutrition is not as visible as one might expect from the images in advertisements or on television. This is mainly because the diet on which many underprivileged Guatemalans live comprises of *frijoles* and tortillas; which are full of carbohydrates but hardly have any other nutritional value. As a consequence, many children I have encountered were physically underdeveloped. Molina indicated that he is planning to tackle this issue, which could be considered a case of structural violence (Galtung, 1996). He states:

[..] security will remain the priority of all guatemalans but I wish to develop in my term a integral security that entails all aspects of public security, public safety, community security but all integrated with an alimentary and nutritional security that responds to the necesity of all Guatemalans. […] That we can guarantee three meals a day but also that we can see the day when all families can walk through the streets without fear of being robbed or violated or victimized by violence against women.[27] (*Discurso de Toma de Posesión*, 2012)

It would appear that Molina is trying to win support for his extraordinary measures, not only by emphasising the threat that the Other poses but also by appealing to the direct needs of the public. Naturally, not nearly all Guatemalans agreed with him. The majority of NGO leaders and employees I

[27] Original text in Spanish: [..] la seguridad sigue siendo la prioridad de todos los guatemaltecos pero deseo ampliar ese término al ámbito de seguridad integral que comprenda los aspectos de seguridad pública, seguridad ciudadana, seguridad comunitaria pero en un todo integrado con la seguridad alimentaría y nutricional que responda a las necesidades de todos los guatemaltecos [..] Que haya tres tiempos de comida garantizados en la Guatemala profunda pero también que podamos ver el día en que todas las familias puedan caminar por las calles sin temor a los robos, a los asaltos, a las extorsiones o a la violencia en contra de las mujeres.

have interviewed indicated that they were very much against the election of Molina. However, it is undeniable that his election campaign caused a stir. While the voter turnout in regular elections is usually relatively low, caused by a lack of support for the political parties, the turnout in the 2011 elections was sixty-five per cent in the first round and sixty per cent in the second (NIMD, 2012). After the inauguration of Molina in february 2012, his administration continued with pressing for the need for military action. As a completion of the securitizing act, Molina pressed for hard-line policy measures. When he was presented to the army at the military base Mariscal Zavala, he explicitly exersized his newly gained discursive power to convince the military forces to join him in his battle against crime. He argued:

Today in public, I wish to hand out an important task to the army, the important task to collaborate, to coordinate, to cooperate with other security insitutions to contribute to neutralize the illegal armed forces by means of the military power, by means of gaining back the control over the naval, aerial and terrestial spaces, by realizing operations of interinstitutional help with the aim of improving and sustaining conditions of a favourable security for the development of society (*Gobierno de Guatemala*, 2012). [28]

Nevertheless, the dominant securitizing actor needs a constant flow of speech acts to convince the audience. An important medium through which the importance for these extraordinary measures could be conveyed is the media. On the other hand, the media itself also contributed to the act of securitization. To illustrate this, I have taken excerpts from the daily newspaper *Prensa Libre*. As Stritzel argues, in certain less democratic societies, the level of success for a securitizing state actor depends on " their ability to execute power [..] more indirect through their privileged position to influence-e.g. ' behind the scenes'- a social and political structure or process that is particularly relevant to the construction of meaning" (2007: 372) Through his position as both president and former general, Molina has been able to exersize influence on all sorts of institutions; the media included.

[28] Original text: "hoy públicamente le quiero trazar al ejército, una meta importante para colaborar, para coordinar, cooperar con las otras instituciones encargadas de la seguridad y es lograr la interdicción de las amenazas externas y contribuir a neutralizar a los grupos armados ilegales mediante el empleo del poder militar, por medio de la recuperación mantenimiento del control de los espacios aéreos, marítimos y terrestres, realizando operaciones de apoyo interinstitucional con el propósito de alcanzar y mantener condiciones de seguridad favorables al pleno desarrollo del ciudadano"(Gobierno de Guatemala, 2012)

Although the *Prensa Libre* is officially an independent newspaper, its close ties to politics often prevent it from being truly critical on sensitive issues. It mainly covers already politicized or securitized issues and functions as a clear platform for government officials. Although the paper is not as sensational as the popular *Nuestro Diario*; issues on gangs, violence and narco-traffic are extentively covered.

One example in which the paper functions as a platform for government officials can be found in the edition on the third of May. In this article, the Home Secretary Rivera is described to visit the editors of Prensa Libre to "reveal his plans" (Prensa Libre, 2012: 4). He proposed a repressive approach to the violence by enforcing the police forces and to have more armed presence in the areas of the "antisocials" (Prensa Libre 2012: 4). Aside from the police forces, the military forces are also put into action on the urban streets. In the lines of the *mano dura* discourse, he points at violence being a social and cultural problem which is caused by the large migration flows from the United States to marginalized areas. Rivera continues: "Gangs are the worst enemies of public safety [..] that is why they are priority to combat with the team that is charged with national public safety" (Prensa Libre, 2012: 4). [29] His framing of gang members as 'antisocials' places them outside of society, making them an easier scapegoat. There is hardly any balance provided. The only critique that can be found in the article encompasses one quote from a public security NGO, which expresses concern about the possible damages of the hard-line approach on underaged gang members and their vulnerable peers.

In addition, the newspaper also functions as a platform for ideas implemented through securitization efforts. After six months of Molina administration, an article was published by Geovanni Corzantes based on a national research conducted among the Guatemalan population in the first week of July. This research found that the amount of Guatemalans who percieve insecurity as being the most dire problem of the country has risen from fifty-five to sixty-one per cent in one year (Corzantes,2012). This perception was strongest in the capital, with insecurity rising up to seventy-two per cent, and weaker in the rural areas, with percentages going down from sixty-six to fifty-two per cent.

As a consequence, analists have concluded that Molina has thus far failed to combat insecurity and organized crime (Corzantes, 2012). I would argue that he also has succeeded: succeeded to complete the discursive part of securitization. Whether these numbers are truly accurate and produced

[29] Original text: Las pandillas son las peores enemigas de la seguridad cuidadana, ya que cometen extorsiones, que desencadenan homicidios, sicariato, femicidios, desmembramientos y venta de droga al menudeo, por lo cual figuran como proiridad para combatir por el equipo encargado de la seguridad cuidadana del país.(Prensa Libre, 2012c: p 4-5)

without political agenda is questionable. However, the publication of these supposedly rising numbers of insecurity perception combined with the amount of press coverage demonstrate that Molina has successfully implemented his message of existential threat to society into the minds of many Guatemalans.

The research also indicates that Otto Peréz Molina has succeeded in establishing himself as a strong leader: seventy-four per cent of the interviewed regarded the president as a worker with authority, leadership, generating confidence and loved by the population. Another grand majority indicated that he was doing a good job (Prensa Libre,2012d). In addition, the research also indicated that the extraordinary measures as conducted by Home Secretary Rivera have had significant effect. It found that the amount of homocides reported by the PNC was significantly lower in the first half of 2012 than in the same period of the previous year (Corzantes, 2012). Again, the percentages in this research are high when compared to other statistics, which renders the assumptions and motives of this research questionable[30].

Another function of the Prensa Libre is providing a public platform for discussion. Although there are pages in print dedicated to opinion, this function has only recently gained popularity through the rapid rise of the internet and social media. It is true that it is still a rather exclusionary medium, when taking into account that the majority of Guatemalans does not have internet access. However, it happens that this specific group also coincides with my focus group: relatively young, middle and upper class ladinos from urban areas. Being a member of the *Prensa Libre* Facebook page enabled me to closely follow the news and its general perception. It is here that I found the following question: “Do you agree with the creation of new military brigades to combat narcotrafic and to reinforce public security?”[31]. This question was raised after a march of nine days from Cobán to Guatemala City had taken place. It was held by rural communities who asked the Molina administration to stop the presense of military brigades in their communities, or the militarization of society in general.

All ninety responses could be roughly divided into three types of discourses. The first group did not agree with the creation of these brigades. They emphasised the importance of not repeating existing discourses of violence to make progress for Guatemala. The second third group used the platform to convey a discourse about the rural indigenous communities that participated in the protest. The

[30] For example, a report by the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo indicated that there was a rise in homocides in the first quarter of this year (GAM, 2012).

[31] Original text in Spanish: ¿Estás de acuerdo con estas dos nuevas brigadas militares creadas para combate al narcotráfico y para reforzar la seguridad ciudadana? (Facebook Prensa Libre, 2012 (...))

campesinos[32] were called 'idiots'who did not like anything and instead of complaining could be working and making money. However, the third group, which comprised of a substantial amount of the respondents, was in support of these militaristic approaches. They pointed at the necessity to make a giant leap for democracy and the law to be installed, *un paso firme*. So it seems that Molina's message certainly found some legitimacy within the community, even among those who are more educated and are considered to be prone to more socialist approaches (Buchanan et al, 2012).

In response to the desecuritization efforts of his predesesor Colom, Molina has succeeded in reframing gangs and narco-traffickers as an existential threat to Guatemalan society, which is what *mano dura* in Guatemala largely entails. Nevertheless, determining the exact defenition of these criminals remains a highly political process, as will be demonstrated in chapter four. However, it would be incorrect to solely credit the gouvernment and the media for the popularity of *mano dura*. So far, I have disregarded the role of another important player in the securitization field: the audience. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: The Audience

In this chapter, the focus will be on an important concept within securitization theory that is relatively underdeveloped: the audience. In this analysis, I shall deploy my reconceptualised version of the audience; as a group of non-dominant securitizing actors . The purpose of this analysis is to reveal the –often underestimated—importance of certain audiences in the underlying power struggle between different securitizing and de-securitizing actors . In doing so, I will try to answer the following question:

How is the counterdiscourse to mano dura, as advocated by representatives of civil society and ladino students, constructed?

The analysis will consist of two parts and will be largely based on my own data from the field. In the first part, I will discuss what the relevant audience and potential actors exactly look like. This will be followed by an analysis of the counter-discourse as represented by potential securitizing actors.

[32] Spanish word for farmers, but also often used as a synonym for the indigenous rural community.

3.1 Non-Dominant Securitizing Actors

Although *mano dura* has gained ground as a dominant discourse in the field of security, there is still a substantial part of Guatemalan society who upholds a different view. When analysing the process of securitization, one of the main questions concerns the 'why' of the actor, why this actor is dominant instead of others. An analysis of *mano dura* would thus not be complete without looking at the other side of the ideological spectrum. In my investigation, I have focussed on two important non-dominant groups of securitizing actors: representatives of urban civil society and urban ladino students.

The first group of non-dominant securitizing actors that will be discussed are representatives of urban civil society. A flourishing and stable civil society is part of the Westphalian ideal. A 'strong' state is the pre-requisite of a solid civil society. As sociologist Stephen Mennell argues:

Civil society is a creation of historical circumstance. [It] is not just a matter af the free competition of groups and ideas autonomously from the state; the competition must also, crucially, be under the protection of the state. In other words, civil society presupposes peace, a relatively highly pacified territory. (1995)

It was during the civil war that civil society organisations in Guatemala started to develop. After the civil war, some of them developed into full grown organisations with a sound administration and a large group of supporters; such as the *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo* and the *Fundación Sobrevivientes*. Others powerful players during the war, such as the *Comité de Unidad Campesino,* the farmers movement, have lost a great deal of their power. [33] Nevertheless, as can be deducted from the analysis of history and politics, Guatemala is not a Westphalian ideal. Although in theory there is a free competition of ideas, there are increasing numbers of intimidations and threats aimed at active members of civil society, such as human rights defenders (Samayoa, 2006: 41-42).

Civil society is a rather broad concept which can be used in many different ways. As a response to static and traditional views on civil society that only included institutions and a rather vague definition of civil society goals , critical thinkers have developed the concept of civil society as being the public sphere; a place for argument and institutional deliberations (Edwards, 2005: par 2-7). As Michael Edwards argues, the extent to which such spaces thrive is crucial to democracy [..] when all politics are polarized, public policy problems become embedded, even frozen, in polities that cannot

[33] One of the most prominent members of the CUC (Comité de Unidad Campesino) was nobel prize winner Rigoberta Menchú, who became active in the organisation after the imprisonment of her father in 1979.

solve them" (2005: par 8). However, as Edwards also emphasizes, the most appropriate definition of a civil society can very per country (2005).

In Guatemala, government institutions are relatively weak and prone to corruption. As has been indicated, good quality education is a very important condition for the development of a country. Therefore, the governmental institution most capable of stimulating society is the educational system. During my fieldwork, I have encountered many stories about public schools with static and hierarchical teaching methods. In this type of environment, it is very difficult for creative and independent minds to thrive. Despite the absense of an education fee for primary school, many of the underclasses are still unable to attend school. Reasons may vary: some are unable to afford school supplies, others see little merit from the school system and prefer to be educated on the streets. Some are kept home by their family to contribute to the family income or, in the case of women, due to strong *machismo*[34] influence, are deemed unfit for education. As pointed out by a Guatemalan psychologist, the static education system does not only reflect but also reinforces these patterns of machismo:

The woman is used to being silent, to obey, because then the man does not need to hit her in the way that is very common here because of the machismo. In the families that I have encountered the man takes all decisisions, the woman does not have the right to decide, to be opinionated or to study. In the society of Santiago de Zamorra [one of the communities that they support ed.], it is very difficult for the girls to study because the fathers say 'it is not important for the girl, she will get married so she does not need to study'. [35]

This patriarchal attitude is also reflected in other aspects of the school system. As Balcazar argues, "the school, as part of a country's system of governance, advocates the learning and use of the prestige language. Even in a school setting that is under the control of a minority culture, the prestige language is still the norm"(2008: 29). As a consequence, nonprofit organizations in the central highland regions specificly operate to fill in the institutional gap in poor communities. Although it is

[34] *Machismo* is a word in the Spanish language that describes prominently exhibited or excessive masculinity. More generally, it is often used as a description of a strongly patriarchal society.

[35] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 11th of April 2012 in the office of an operational NGO in Antigua with two psychologists. Original text: *La mujer esta acustumbrada a cayar, obedeser, por que muchas veces no necessita hombre golpear a la manera que son este a la mujer y es muy commun aqui por el machismo, en los familias que yo he encontrado que el hombre se que manda, la mujer no tiene la derecha de decidir, no tiene derecha de opinar o a empezar estudiando. Ahora mira la verdad es muy dificil en la sociedad de santiago y zamorra motivar a las jovencitas para estudiar por que los papas dicen 'a la niña no importa, va a casarse y no necesita estudia'*

true that nonprofits cannot substitute for governmental institutions, when the latter fails to deliver services that stimulate personal, intellectual and creative development, the institutional gap is filled with the work of nonprofits. Still, in the absence of NGOs, many children in the rural regions are unable to attend school due to lack of incentives and the often poor condition of these schools (Moller and Derrill, 2009).

Regarding the patriarchal nature of the Guatemalan educational system, it is interesting to note that the majority of my NGO respondents were female. Furthermore, I observed that the majority of NGO employees in general comprises of women; including leadership positions. This provides a sharp contrast with Guatemalan state institutions. The former Colom administration only included one woman (*Observatorio Indígena Nacional,* 2012:6). Regarding gender equality, the Partido Patriota is doing slightly better than its predecessor. The current vice president Baldetti is a woman, along with two other female members of the government (*Observatorio Indígena Nacional,* 2012:7). However, there is an underrepresentation of women in all governmental bodies (*Observatorio Indígena Nacional,* 2012: 9-12). There seems to be a clear feminine-masculine dichotomy between the Guatemalan state and the NGO community. A more elaborate gendered interpretation of *mano dura* would be interesting, but lies beyond the scope of my thesis. For now, it can be said that NGOs are also an symbolic opposing faction to the Guatemalan political establishment.

A professor of political science at the San Carlos University of Guatemala City described Guatemalan civil society as being *ONG-izado*; non-governmentalized[36]. He lamented the absense of other strong types of civil organisations and the lack of unity within civil society. It is questionable whether there truly are no other civil institutions aside from the NGOs, as will be demonstrated in chapter four, but all my respondents confirmed that there is little cooperation between non-profits.

I shall deploy two definitions of NGO types provided by the World Bank: operational NGOs and advocacy NGOs (Duke University Libraries, 2001: par 2). Operational NGOs work on community development by providing services such as education and health care. Advocay NGOS aim to work towards development through public awareness campaigns, research and demonstrations on issues such as human rights, security, minority rights and impunity. The majority of Guatemalan nonprofits can be encountered in the urban areas of Sacatepequez, Guatemala and the semi-urban Sololá. Many are foreign-based, some are grassroots.

NGOs in Guatemala are not very different from nonprofits in other countries.Despite their advantages of having field-based development expertise, the ability to innovate and adapt, a

[36] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 30th of May 2012 at the San Carlos University.

process-oriented approach, long-term commitment and being cost-effective; they have low levels of self-sustainability, limited insitutional capacitiy, limited financial and management expertise and a lack of inter-organizational communication and coordination (Anderson, 1999). The continuity of many of the smaller grassroots NGOs largely depends on an individual or a small group of people, which causes concern about the sustainability of their projects.

When I asked the CEO of an operational NGO in Antigua for the cause of this fractioned civil society she referred to the case as a matter of ego. [37] Indeed, explanations most commonly heard about this lack of coordination include protectionism, ego and mutual distrust. However, I would also argue that it is caused by the absense of a strong overarching body; which could be either the government or a strong private organisation.[38] This lack of coordination and supervision has created an open field in which almost everybody can partake in, regardless of their expertise or intentions. As the Guatemalan political scientist argued: despite the good intentions of the majority of NGO staff, this has lead to similar structures of power and corruption.[39] One respondant told me of her experiences with working in a nonprofit daycare centre where the executive leader had falsified her licence, the personell locked up the children in the toilets and money often mysteriously dissappeared .[40] In a corrupt environment, many depends on the good will of these institutions.

Nevertheless, the fractioned NGO world does have something in common : a discourse. As will be demonstrated in the following section, the representatives of civil society have developed their own counter-discourse to *mano dura*. As a consequence of the growing presence of NGOs in the field of education, these organizations could have a significant influence on the Guatemalans national morality. To uncover the full scope of this counter-discourse, I have included different types of grassroots NGOs in my analysis: from operational to advocacy and from grassroots to foreign-based. [41]

It should be noted that a majority of the grassroots NGOs is operated by ladinos. These employees are mainly middle-class and educated. Therefore, I wish to include an analysis of the middle and upperclass ladino students from the urban areas of the central highlands. The main reason why an

[37] Interview with the executive director of an Operational NGO on the 14th March 2012 at the office in Antigua.
[38] Although there are a few organisations that strive to work towards better inter-institutional cooperation, such as the Guatemalan NGO Network.
[39] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 30th of May 2012 at the San Carlos University.
[40] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 11th of April 2012 in the office of an operational NGO in Antigua with two psychologists.

[41] Although large international NGOs do certainly comprise of a significant and important part of the NGO community, I have deliberately left them out of my analysis for the sake of being concise.. However, I have considered local projects that are funded internationally. Therefore, it could be argued that the counter-discourse is indirectly influenced by international organisations.

analysis of this group is relevant is because these young people have received higher education, which is said to be one of the main forces against *mano dura* (Bachanan et al, 2012). In addition, the ideological and personal development that is believed to evolve along with the level of education would make these students more apt to be involved in civil society organizations. Therefore, I have selected a group of university and college students and former students in Antigua and Guatemala City. Their exact interaction with the counter-discourse will be explained in the following section.

3.2 Counter-Discourse: Pencils, not Weapons

After the first six months of rule, Molina and his Partido Patriota appear to have succeeded in pushing through to concrete extraordinary measures. At the end of June, Molina announced that two new military brigades would be installed to "consolidate and expand the power of the nation in those zones which have been abandoned due to the multinational threats which we are facing today"(Prensa Libre, 2012b: par 3). He also conveyed the intentions of the government to install more military bases to increase the capacity of the state to fight narco-traffic and organized crime (Prensa Libre, 2012b: par 7). The first base will be installed near the border with Mexico, with a clear mission to combat drug traffic. According to official information, there is also a presence of 'kaibiles'; infamous military forces who also operated during the civil war. (Prensa Libre, 2012b: par 5).

Although there are relatively few who object to the principal goals of the fist base, the second base has caused a great stir. It is going to be placed in the urban San Juan Sacatepéquez and its regional surroundings. Ever since the intentions of the Guatemalan Cementos Progreso company, a private cement factory, to install a cement quarry mine became public, there have been a series of unresolved murders, disappearances and general social conflict within the area. In 2007, a local plebiscite was held in which over 8,000 community members rejected the project, against four who where in favour. Nevertheless, the mining project- which is owned by one of the most influential families in Guatemala- still continues until this very day. The communities fear that the mine will greatly affect them. They argue: "it leaves us without water and it affects the environment"(Prensa Libre, 2012b: par 13). Therefore, although Molina claims that the base is set up to provide peace and security, the installment of the base in this particular area is interpreted by many as support for the powerful companies. Attempts by the army to win the hearts and minds of the community by handing out candy and drawings to children have been interpreted as a clear sign of intimidation (Rodriguez, 2012: par 6).

As a direct response to the initiated military brigades, thousands of people headed out to the streets on the 30th anniversary of the Guatemalan Armed Forces day, supported by representatives of indigenous and human rights groups, to protest against the 'militarization of society' as advocated by the Molina administration that is "intimidating the population by installing this factory and only defending the interest of the companies" (Prensa Libre,2012b: par 12). Many banners that were brought along in the demonstration contained messages that reflected a clear education-militarization dichotomy. Some of them said *'queremos maestros, no militar'*, others claimed *'queremos lapiceros, no fusiles'*, followed by signs such as *'queremos escuelas, no brigadas militares'*. [42] There seemed to be a clear consensus among the protesters, which was also supported by the findings of the America Barometer: education as a solution to violence, not military suppression.

The community of San Juan could not have captured the counter-discourse more accurately: they want pencils, not weapons- education as a weapon against *mano dura*. For the sake of clarity, I shall call this the *lapicero*-discourse. [43] The *lapicero*- discourse rejects *mano dura* as a solution to crime and point at its failure to adress structural issues. As the coordinator from an operational NGO in the Guatemala City slums argued: "I think that violence in Guatemala is structural and brought from the top. There are powers who keep the inequality intact".[44] Her argument, which is close to the ideas of Galtungs' structural violence, is often resonated within the NGO community (Galtung,1996) .

Based on the conversations that I have had with coordinators and executive directors of eight operational NGOs and three advocacy NGOs that operated in the urban and semi-urban areas of the central highlands, along with information provided by a Guatemalan political scientist from the University of San Carlos, I have been able to dissect critical differences between *mano dura* and the *lapicero* discourse. It is the classical structure-agency debate. *Mano dura* argues that violence is a demonstration of moral decay of individual agents and groups that corrupt the structures. In opposition, those in favour of the *lapicero* discourse argue that perverse structures produce perverse citizens. Within these structures, NGOs dissect four interrelated perverse aspects of the Guatemalan 'system': education, moral corruption, institutional corruption and public security.

Education is one of the most important pillars for *mano dura*'s counter-discourse, as envisioned by a large number of NGOs and other representatives of civil society. The general idea is that the level of violence decreases ones the level of education rises (Buchanan et al, 2012). This idea is based on two

[42] Translated in English: We want teachers, not militants, we want pencils, not weapons, we want schools, not military brigades.
[43] *Lapicero* is a Spanish word for pen or pencil.
[44] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted on the 16th of April in Guatemala City with the coordinator of the education project of an operational NGO who work in the slums of Guatemala City.

assumptions. Firstly, education leads to opportunities and financial development without the involvement of illicit practices. Secondly, when young people are at school instead of on the streets; they are less inclined to join illicit criminal networks.

All seven operational NGOs were either running or supporting education projects. With these projects, they were trying to fill in the institutional gap in the impoverished communities and focus on the sensibilization of education. A few NGO leaders told me that they were trying to set 'the right example' for the government: to present them with an alternative system that works. Some projects focussed on primary education of children from poor areas, others focussed on health education for mothers and others were running a comprehensive program with scholarships for students from primary school to university. They also focussed on improving the quality of the teachers by special training programs. One project was bounded to a wealthier group of young students from Guatemala City, who frequently visited the project as part of an awareness program.

All respondants who were running an eduction program for children emphasised the necessity to make their programs more comprehensive by incorporating the entire family. This leads to the second structural issue that these organizations pointed out: moral corruption. Educating the next generation will not be effective when their surroundings remain the same. They pointed at the culture of violence which has permiated their communities. One NGO executive in Cuidad Vieja, a small semi-urban community close to Antigua, had conducted an internal research which estimated that around sixty-five per cent of all children in their project enounters daily violence at home which is, according to the executive, "about average"[45]. She argued that the violence is partly caused by the large inequality, not only economic inequality but also racial and sexual. All NGO respondents could tell horrible stories of different types of abuses of women and children, ranging from physical to economical to sexual. As one of my respondants argued, this abuse reaches far beyond the personal sphere: "you can hit one person but implicitly you affect all those around the person, creating a climate of instability".[46]

To combat these violent attitudes, many programs have incorporated mediation and art classes into their program: stimulating attitudes of respect, non-violence and equality. As a response to the hierarchal nature of public education, there is a focus on a non-conventional teacher-student

[45] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted on the 19th of March in Ciudad Vieja with the executive director of an education project.

[46] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 29th of March 2012 with executive director of an advocacy NGO in Guatemala City. Original tekst in Spanish: *Si pegas a una, pegas a todas, en cierto sea. El golpe puede darse solo una persona pero tiene implicito a resto que estan alrededor affecta y crea una climate de inestabilidad.*

relationship. In addition, evening behavioural classes for parents were becoming increasingly popular among NGOs as a tool to educate the entire family.

Also among the advocacy NGOs, there was an awareness of the importance for improved education. The difference between these NGOs and operational organizations is that the former is trying to incorporate these values within the general public education system, instead of only focussing on one particular community. They advocated the creation of entirely new frames, which they believed can be implemented by including human rights and education on violence into the general curriculum. One respondent informed me that he was planning to start up programs at universities to encourage youth participation in social and political issues. It is indeed true that these issues are not very popular among Guatemalan ladino youth, as I will elaborate in the following section. Other organizations advocated a focus on capacity building and sensibilization. A female human rights activist told me:

We need to include women's rights and reflection on violence into the curriculum from primary school until university. Because the Guatemalan culture has been injected with the idea that violence is something normal: if someone comes and pushes you it's normal, if someone comes and attacks you it's normal. But without a doubt we see the consequences around us. Therefore, we need to work so that the people really know what violence is. These are actions, behavioural conducts that we need to work on by showing reality. Our demands are programs of sensibilization, of capacity building from primary school to university, a comprehensive approach to the capacity building of employees in order to reinforce the structures of justice.[47]

Although this human rights defender advocated an approach of working through the structures, , she expressed a clear resentment of the current structures. Nearly all NGOs had a profound distrust in

[47] Excerpt from interview conducted on the 29th of March 2012 with executive director of an advocacy NGO in Guatemala City. Original text in Spanish: (..) *se necessita que incluisco de los pienso desde prepa hasta universidad todo de derechos de la mujeres y lo que es la violencia y como se puede projectar. Por que en la cultura Guatemalteca esta muy introjectado que la violencia esta algo normal: si alguien viene y te empugas es algo normal, si alguien viene y te agrede es algo normal. Pero sin embargo si vemos alrededededor los consequencias que se puede tener posterioramente bien llegar a una assesinato aún femicidio, tendré que preocuparen entonces que la gente sepa realmente lo que es la violencia. (..) Son acciones, son conductas apprendidas que debemos que trabajarlas para irlos de realitan. Los demandos sean programas de sensibilización, de capaticación desde prepa hasta universidad un plan completo de capaticación de los funtionarios para un cargo y los estructuras de justizo*.

government institutions. As a scholar of political science explained: “In Guatemala, justice is not institutionalized, but impunity is”[48]

All NGOs conveyed their ideas on corrupt state officials and a perverse justice system. They argue that it is impossible to have a properly functioning democracy with such high levels of institutional corruption. As a consequence of this failing justice system and the extremely high levels of impunity, many NGO leaders fail to report abuse to the authorities. Most of them consider it to only aggravate the situation, placing the victim in a very fragile position. Firstly because they fear that the perpetrators of the violence will remain unpunished and will take vengeance on the victim. In addition, when a child is violated by his or her family and this is reported to the authorities, chances are that the child will be taken away to an orphanage. However, like other state institutions, orphanages in Guatemala are often underequipped and permiated with corrupt practices. The operational NGO community fears that the chances that these children have a peaceful upbringing and receive proper education are zero to none.

Both advocacy and operational NGOs try to find a peaceful resolution to fill this gap of impunity through, for example, installing mechanisms of integrity or – on a community level- working towards a culture of respect and integrity. Through these measures, they wish to set an example to those who seek to fill this gap with less peacefull measures, such as community riots and public reprecussions.

Another critical deviation from *mano dura* can be found on the notions of public security. The NGOs that I have encountered all agreed with the Molina administration that organized crime in Guatemala poses a gigantic problem and is deteriorating every year. In speech, the NGOs reject the use of military and police forces, emphasizing a focus on more structural types of security that are necessary- such as economical security. This is underlined by the psychologist from an operational NGO when she spoke about a small village next to Antigua: “the economic situation is very bad, they do not look for alternatives in ‘healthy’ jobs, but to drug traffic”.[49] The implication here is that a faltering economy creates a vacuum in which individuals are more quickly drawn to the fast, illicit ways of money making.

Nevertheless, this vacuum can only be uphold were there is a weak presence of security institutions. Poverty is not the cause of violence, but it creates certain circumstances in which violent practices can thrive. This is underlined by a respondent from a prominent pro-justice movement: “If there is

[48] Interview conducted on the 3rd of May 2012 with a professor of Political Science at the San Carlos University in Guatemala City

[49] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted with two psychologists from a grassroots NGO in Antigua at the 11th of April 2012.

no presense of a public security in the slums, certain groups will organize and take decisions that will affect the government and the state".[50]

In addition, the NGOs pointed out that the growth of illicit organized networks is a reality that has to be addressed. They pointed at how the institutionalized violence from the civil war has been transformed into a militarization of society, involving groups ranging from private security firms to human traffickers. One aid worker from the United States told me that the ideas of Molina in the 'war on drugs' are very sound and necessary to bring the country forward.[51] However, not many believed that the government could bring about any substantial changes. Some argued that this is caused by the involvement of the government itself in illicit practices, others pointed at Molina's relatively powerless position. As the pro-justice movement argues:

"A possibility exists that this government will address crime but, sure they only have a few months so far and in some sectors we do not know what they are going to do, but this government is facing a high level of confrontation, of opposition, and many fear that in the end they can hardly do anything".[52]

By implying that the government has relatively little power to change the 'system', my respondent points at that there are other forces present in the securitization process that go beyond the dominant securitizing actor.

To some extent, a certain group of civil society organizations has to deal with the realities of a 'security crisis'. This is illustrated by the private security of these organizations. Politically active advocacy organizations, such as human rights and land right organizations, face repeated intimidation and threat from illicit groups. When I visited these groups, which were all located within the relatively safe zone one of Guatemala City, I had to first pass at least one armed security guard and two electric doors which, I suppose, could only be passed without prior notice because of me

[50] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted with the coordinator of a pro-justice Movement in Guatemala City at 8th of June 2012. Original text in Spanish: *Si no hay presensia de seguridad publica en los barrios, algunos grupos van a organizer y tomar desiciones que desafian al gobierno, a los estades, al estado*.

[51] Excerpt from interview with executive director of an NGO network on the 31st May 2012 in a private residence in Antigua. Original quote: It is difficult to say what four years of Molina will bring but so far is he is doing a good job in getting the conversation going about legalizing drug transport. In the end, drug transport might not be the cause of all problems, but legalizing it is the only way forward.

[52] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted with the coordinator of a pro-justice Movement in Guatemala City at 8th of June 2012. Original text in Spanish: *Existe la spectativa que este gobierno que esta tendencia de criminalidad, claro tiene algunas meses , en algunas sectores ya no sabemos que van a hacer, pero esta un gobierno suffriendo un alto grado de confrontacion, de opposition, existe mucho temor que en final no puede hacer mucha*

being a *gringa* [53]. The coordinator of a prominent human rights group told me about intimidation practices with large vehicles during their protest actions but also of real attacks on prominent leaders. Their founder and her five year old son had been abducted and found dead with signs of torture. The situation is said to be worse in the country-side, where local illicit powers operate freely and freedom of speech is not considered a basic right. [54]Another group that is in need of the services of private security companies is the group of more wealthy foreign-based NGOs. These groups are not so much attacked for political but for economical reasons.

However, less politically active NGOs operating in the field abstain from the use of armed security. These organizations base their security on their legitimacy within their communities; although they admit that the nature of their work provides them with the luxury to be ideological. As one respondent argued:

We also do not support [private security] because we believe that violence generates more violence. It is true that in cases of other organisations security is necessary. But we believe that when you use violence to combat violence , you only aggravate the problem. But I will not deny that it is a necessary evil for many other organisations.[55]

A group that cannot afford the luxury of private security is my second group: the students and former students of public universities in Guatemala City and Antigua. Much of the *lapicero* discourse could be encountered in the responses by this group. One could argue that NGOs could have influenced these students by means of education. However, this explanation is flawed when the lack of connection with the majority of the respondants is considered. Twelve out of twenty-two of my respondents did not have experience with NGO programs. Moreover, only five of the contestants have participated in educational programs. However, those who did participate in NGO programs were all unanimously positive.[56] Although one of the main reasons to focus on students was the possibility of an active role in civil society, the overall majority was not involved in any type of NGO,

[53] *Gringa* is a common Spanish word to denote a Caucasian foreign woman, often specifically used for women from the United States. Although it does not have an explicitly negative connotation in Guatemala, it can be used to express a negative attitude towards foreigners.

[54] Interpreted from an in-depth interview conducted with the coordinator of a pro-justice Movement in Guatemala City at 8th of June 2012. Original quote in Spanish*: La situacion es mas grave in las areas rurales. Porque hay poderes locales, poderes illicito, no tiene la misma opportunidad de expressar como aqui.*

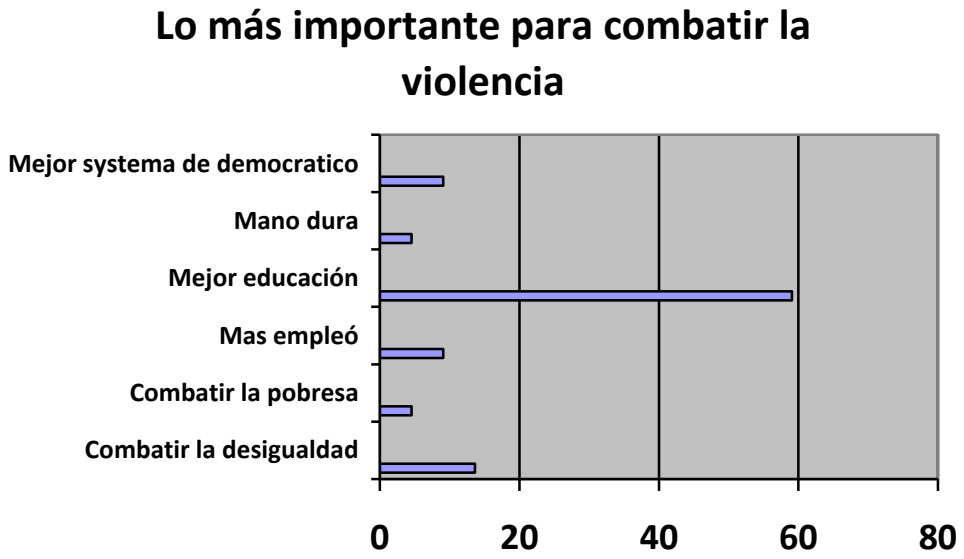
[55] Excerpt from an in-depth interview conducted on the 16th of April in Guatemala City with the coordinator of the education project of an operational NGO who work in the slums of Guatemala City.

[56] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City. See annex.

though surprisingly five respondents were.[57] The replies from the students surrounded the same central themes: education, moral corruption, institutional corruption and public security.

First, the importance of education is underlined. Replies to the question about the best ways to combat violence are expressed in percentages in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: [58]



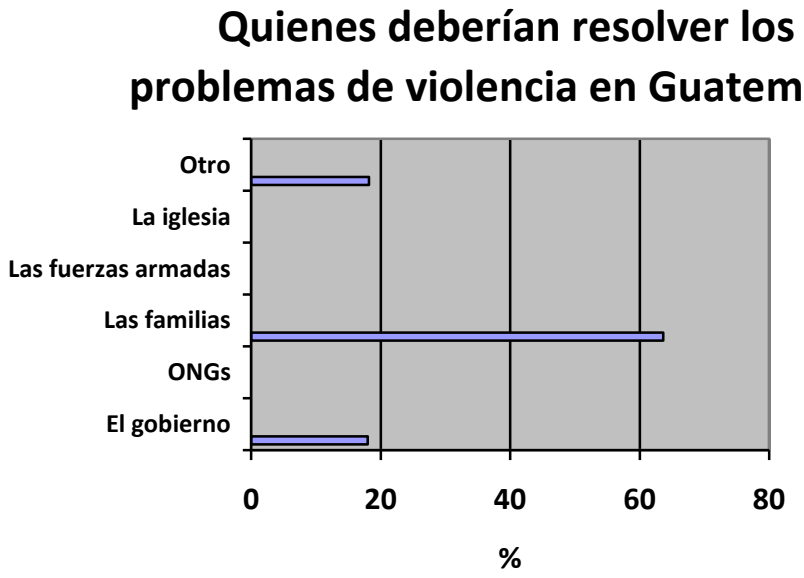
As can be seen, a large majority of the students supports tackling the violence by looking at root causes such as inequality, poverty and –most importantly- education. Only one respondant thought that a tough approach is most effective to combat violence, which is in line with the findings of the Americas Barometer about the mitigating effect of education on support for *mano dura* (Buchanan et al, 2012). Later on, this group argued that better education, and thereby less violence, is most important for the future development of their country. Only one respondant called for more security, which indicates that the securitizing efforts of dominant actors such as the Guatemalan government and media did not have a profound effect on this particular group.

The students also point at the issue of moral corruption. The majority believes that Guatemalan society is responsible for its own behaviour and is therefore most capable of breaking the violent

[57] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City. See annex.
[58] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City. Translation in English: the most important to combat the violence: better democratic system, *mano dura*, better education, more jobs, combat poverty and combat inequality. See annex.

circle. Therefore, the majority of the students replied to the question on who can resolve the crime issue with 'the families'. This is illustrated in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2:[59]



As also can be deducted from figure 3.2, the students had little faith in state institutions. Few students have confidence in their government to be an active participant in the process of breaking the cycle of violence. It is interesting to note that none of the respondants put their direct faith into the army, although previous researches have indicated a high legitimacy of military institutions among the Guatemalan population (Azpuru, 2010: 115).[60] This might very well be a demonstration of the education-*mano dura* dichotomy: these higher educated students appear less perceptible to populist discourses. As a consequence, many respondants did not put much fate in the government of Otto Molina Perez, though a substantial part indicated to be undesicive on the current administration[61].

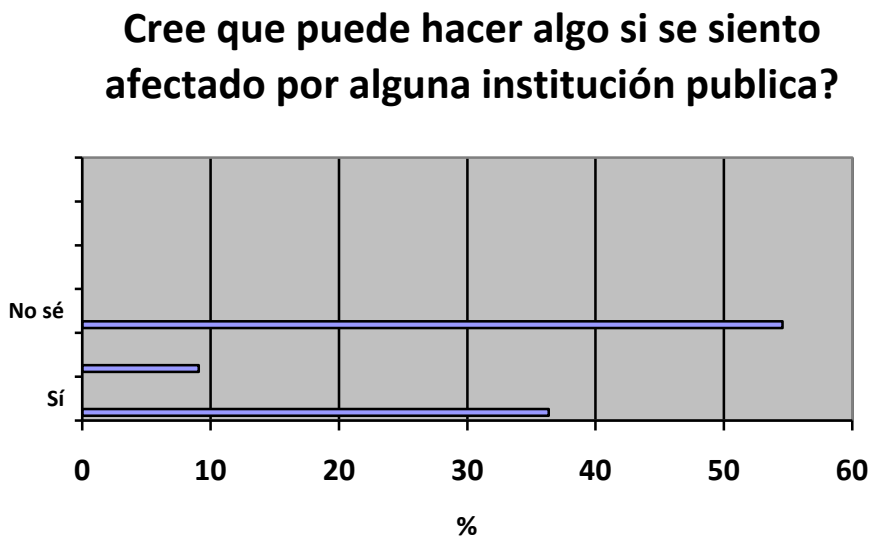
Furthermore, it is interesting to note that all of the respondents seem to reject the notion of NGOs being the backbone of civil society (Edwards, 2004). Eventhough many of them indicated to see the

[59] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City. Translation in English: Who can resolve the crime problem in Guatemala? Other, the Church, the Armed Forces, The Families, NGOs and the Government. See annex.
[60] It is also interesting to see little faith in religious factions, but this can be explained by looking at the relatively secular nature of middle-class urban ladinos.
[61] When asked to indicate the amount of trust in the current administration, the students produced an average of 2,9 out of 5.

salience of NGO programs, none of the students thought NGOs to be the most important institution to find a solution to violence.

This lack of institutional legitimacy is also reflected in the responses to the question whether the respondents felt capable of exercising their rights in case of a violation by public institutions. This is illustrated in figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3:[62]



More than half of my respondents did not have a clear view on their civil rights; which is caused, according to some respondents, by both bureaucracy and the consequential lack of faith in public institutions. However, it is interesting to note that eight respondents do believe that they can stand up for their rights; indicating that legitimacy for public institutions has not been completely eroded among some parts of the population. It is illustrative of the duality of the developing Guatemalan state: despite of a strongly embedded image of greedy government institutions, there seems to be a growing awareness among a certain part of the population that there are institutions that can help them exercise their civil rights.

However, the legitimacy of political parties appears to be relatively low –also among the higher educated part of the population (Briscoe, 2010: 6). The question on their favourite political party revealed a highly fractioned multiparty system. From the options that had been given, which were

[62] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City. Translation in English: Do you think you can do something if you feel affected by public institutions? Yes, No, I don't know. See annex.

the largest parties from the previous election, only the Partido Patriota and CREO received votes. A large part indicated to vote for another small party and four respondents even indicated not to vote at all. [63]

Regarding the issue of public security, all students acknowledged that the high levels of violence are a daily reality that needs to be addressed. However, only one of my respondents indicated that security is most necessary when it comes to the development of Guatemala. The overall majority argued, along the lines of the *lapicero* discourse, in favour of education.

All in all, both students and NGOs seem to advocate a discourse that deviates from *mano dura*. Through a discursive analysis, the *lapicero* discourse can be dissected into four main themes: education in favour of militarization, education against moral corruption, education against institutional corruption and public security through education. In sum, their key word is education. Their influence in the securitization process will be discussed in the following sections.

Chapter 4: *Mano dura* in Practice

In this chapter, I will further illustrate my claim on the influence of the non-dominant securitizing actor on the securitization process. The focus of this chapter will be on the following question:

How is the dynamic interplay between the non-dominant group of potential securitizing actors and the dominant securitizing actors manifested in contemporary events?

To answer this question, two specific cases of securitization and desecuritization have been selected based on their frequent appearance in public opinion during my fieldwork from March through June. The first case is a schoolbook example of securitization: the riots in Santa Cruz Barillas in the predominantly Mayan region of Huehuetenango which were followed by a state of siege. The second case is concerns Molina's desecuritizing approach in the fight against organized drug traffic.

4.1 Case Study: the State of Siege in Santa Cruz Barillas

The state of siege in Santa Cruz Barillas, which was declared on the third of May, is a classic example of securitization. As a human rights activist argued: "for many, Barillas was a test of how the

[63] Results from questionnaire conducted between the end of May and beginning of June 2012 at several locations in Antigua and Guatemala City.

government would respond to social conflict in rural areas. The use of force and militarization was at best a glimpse of what's to come, or, at worst, just the beginning" (Geglia, 2012: par 12) . After the assassination of community leader Andrés Fransisco Miguel in the northern region of Huehuetenango on the first of May, around two hundred men armed with machetes and fire arms took over a military base in the area. As a response, Pérez Molina declared a state of siege and sent a force of 260 armed men to 'restore order'.

Since 2010, the municipality of Santa Cruz Barillas has been the stage of a fierce conflict between local communities – which is mainly Mayan Q'anjob'al- and the Spanish energy company *Hidro Santa Cruz*. The latter intended to build a hydroelectric dam in the vicinity of the area in which these communities live. It is just one of many examples of one of the greatest challenges of rural communities: the struggle against harmful development practices being imposed by the government and multinationals. In the department of Huehuetenango alone, communities are faced with over 400 mining exploration and extraction licences which were authorized by the state, intended to result in 47 hydroelectric dams (Geglia, 2012: par 5) . At the heart of this conflict lies the regional energy crisis which is a result of ageing infrastructure and increasing demand as a consequence by the country's development. As journalist Nic Wirtz explains, part of the government's urgency to build the plant in Barillas is to provide ten per cent of Guatemala's total demand of electricity (Wirtz, 2012: par 13). Furthermore, the government itself annually receives large amounts of money from the mining companies; the gold mining alone caused the national income to rise four per cent in one year (COPAE, 2012: 1).

In opposition, the Q'anjob'al communities demand a right of self-determination and control over their own territories and resources. Like the community of San Juan, discussed in chapter three, these regional communities have used traditional voting gatherings, or *consultas*, as a political tool of organized resistance (Geglia, 2012: par 9). These local *consultas* base their legitimacy on the international UN Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the International Labor Organization's Convention but also on domestic law. Communities often use these declarations as a political leverage. Although the outcomes of the *consultas* are pushed through into policies and protective measures by the municipality of Huehuetenango, they are often in conflict with authorizations given out by the government. Therefore, the mining project by *Hidro Santa Cruz* could still be carried on, despite decisions of the municipality.

Naturally, this decision was met with opposition from the local communities; which have been in constant conflict with the authorities and the multinational ever since. When one of the most prominent members of the anti-extraction movement was allegedly murdered by security agents

from the energy company , two hundred community members stormed a military base. This was the moment when many wondered how the 'iron-man' Molina would reply. His response was a clear example of securitization: by framing the community leaders as being an existential threat to the Guatemalan State and Guatemalan society, Molina legitimized his extraordinary measures. Seventeen community leaders were detained, from which twelve were taken to a high-security prison in Guatemala City (Geglia, 2012: par 2). In addition, 260 armed forces were installed to keep the peace, which were added with approximately 600 more men during the height of the state of siege.

To justify these acts, Molina had to convince the audience of the existential threat that these community leaders pose. In this process of securitizing the issue, the Molina administration was supported by the mass media. An entire page in the Prensa Libre was dedicated to these captured men : their photo, names and description included. In that same newspaper, these community leaders were actively framed as criminals. Molina argued:

These are acts of aggression. I will not allow this, and therefore I am ordering the state of siege. I am asking for the collaboration of the pubic ministry and it is important to catch those responsible who have attacked the authority. (Prensa Libre*,* 2012a: par 2). [64]

The framing of these community leaders as aggressive anarchists is underlined by the minister of Governance: "the events in Santa Cruz Barillas lower the levels tolerance and respect for the authorities. This has been a reoccurring situation in this country that affects governability "(Prensa Libre, 2012a: par 2).[65] On a side note, in an editorial of the same newspaper, it is argued that several groups have brainwashed these communities as a part of a national escalation campaign. It is argued that the communities need to be convinced that their fears are unjustified. An analyses of several newspaper articles on several days reveals that the communities are generally constructed as disobedient, subversive, undereducated and possibly violent. [66] All in all, it seems that framing social movements in rural areas as narco-traffickers could be a useful tool for the Guatemalan government to pursue certain interests.

[64] Original text in Spanish: *Esta es una agresion la que están haciendo. Esas son situaciones que no estoy dispuesto a permitir, y por eso se está ordenando el estado de Sitio. Estoy pidiendo la colaboración del Ministerio Publico y es necesario hacer las capturas de las personas que sean responsable de haber agredidio la autoridad.*

[65] Original text in Spanish: *Los hechos en Santa Cruz Barillas rebasaron la tolerancia y respeto a la autoridad. Ha sido una situación recurrente en el pais que afecta la gobernabilidad y las garantias individuales.*
[66] Result of a discursive analyses of the *Prensa Libre* from the second to the fifth of May 2012.

However, it would be too soon for Molina to claim this a succesful act of securitization. In the case of Santa Cruz, the decision to declare a state of siege was met with strong opposition. His speech acts succeeded in convincing a certain relevant audience, which were the armed forces, but failed to convince another large group of actors. Although this would have worked in an authoritarian state, Guatemala is democracy- albeit a developing one.

As is suggested by Geglia, non-traditional types of media have played an important role in spreading a counter discourse to those of Molina and the mainstream media. Even within established institutions such as the *Prensa Libre*, the internet has provided a platform for more open debate. The analyses of sixty replies on the events in Barillas on the facebook page of *Prensa Libre* results in two main camps: thirty-six respondents support the response of the Barillas communities, twenty-four support *mano dura*. The latter advocated the need to respond with military measures as the 'true justice'. In doing so , they enforce the securitization of the topic by using image of those who participated in the riots as criminals. Many of these respondents referred to the community leaders as 'piece of shit' or 'dirty dogs' or, in the most nuanced case, as poor stupid people. The image of a dirty dog corresponds with the phenomenon of social cleansing, which could find a surprising number of support among the respondents.

Although there are those who agree with Molina, there was also a group who argued in favour of those who had taken justice into their own hands, *justicia por mano propia.* According to scholars of *mano dura*, *justicia a mano propia* can also be seen as a manifestation of *mano dura* (Godoy, 2006). Failure of the justice system is the respondents' central theme, with a surprising role for human rights. Those same human rights that many groups fought for in the civil war seemed to be rejected by a large part of the respondents. In a state in which corruption and impunity are institutionalized, human rights laws have little power. As a consequence, human rights are percieved to 'only protect the criminals'. However, when these particular respondents use the word criminals, they refer to the authorities, not to the community leaders of Santa Cruz Barillas. In their opinion, the gouvernment only acts in favour of themselves and the corporations; instead of their citizens.

It appears that Molina has gained ground under a specific audience, though his vision is strongly rejected by another audience. This opposition and reinforcement by the audience as a non-dominant group has had a large impact on the outcome of the state of siege. After two weeks, Molina lifted the state of siege while tensions were still running high. The reason for this was that the counter-discourse, in this case, has succeeded in gaining ground. Firstly, because civil society organisations were able to organise themselves. Secondly, because new types of media provided this anti-

extraction movement with a platform, which eventually influenced the mainstream media and- in the end- policy making.

As mentioned, the state of siege was met with fierce critique from civil society organizations. One prominent human rights NGO, the *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo*, demanded that the armed forces refrain from using violence against the citizens of Santa Cruz. Moreover, it demanded the right of freedom of speech for local journalists and transparancy about state operations (GAM, 2012b). Although this NGO is one of the few powerful and adequate human rights organisations in Guatemala, one denouncement from this organisation did not stop the state of siege. However, the publication was a clear attempt to reject *mano dura* and reinforce the counterdiscourse, which was presented in an official statement by local organisations to president Molina a few days earlier. This statement was the outcome of a joint collaboration between community leaders, religious institutions, social organizations and citizens of the maya and ladino villages of the eastern part of Guatemala (CPO, 2012).

In the letter presented to Molina, the collaboration lays out their demands; which were more drastic than those presented by the *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo*. They demanded that the government would revoke the state of siege, clarify the crimes against violations of community leaders, cancel the licence of Hidro Santa Cruz, put a stop to the militarization of their territory and respects the outcomes of their local decision making systems, or *consultas (*CPO, 2012). The authors of the statement argue that the current events are a demonstration of "structural racism by the state of Guatemala, because instead of defending the interests of communities, they use repression to maintain the interest of national and foreign enterprises" (CPO, 2012: par 2).[67] According to this joint collaboration of civil society and civil society representatives, the Guatemalan state and foreign companies are responsible for the systematic violation of human rights on a national level through the use of intimidation and legal persecution; whereby they refer to the military base in San Juan and a conflict with the community of San José and a mining company (CPO, 2012: par 4). They blame the state for violating the decisions made by their *consultas comunitarias*, which have national and international legitimacy.

To prevent repetition from past experiences with social conflict between local communities and state forces, these organisations have organised a mobilization movement called *Todos y Todas Somos*

[67] Original text in Spanish: *Venimos a manifestar nuestro repudio e indignación por los últimos acontecimientos sucedidos en Santa Cruz Barillas; un es muestra del racismo estructural del Estado de Guatemala; porque en lugar de defender los intereses de las comunidades, se recurre a la represión para mantener los interesesde empresas nacionales o extranjeras.*(CPO, 2012)

Barillas; we are all Barillas. It is interesting to note that they use both the male and the female version of "all", indicating gender awareness. The movement organized demonstrations and marches but also spread their message through alternative media such as blogs and social media. Through this alternative media, they were able to spread different information from what the mass media was publishing (Geglia, 2012: par 16). Eventually, these ideas were able to spread through the country, causing denouncement of militarization by many urban citizens, which slowly influenced the mainstream media and caused an increasing pressure by influential human rights organisation; such as the High Commisioner for Human Rights.

As a result of this growing national and international pressure, Molina lifted the siege after sixteen days, on the 18th of May. In his own words, it was lifted because they have "achieved the objective of restoring governability"(España, 2012: par 2).[68] Molina also announced that a round-table discussion with these communities will be hosted to analyze how to avoid these type of confrontations in the future. In addition, he ordered the arrest of those responsible for the attack on the community leaders. On the 25th of May, two security guards of Hidro Santa Cruz were arrested by the authorities. The company, however, denies any involvement and threatens to take legal action against anyone who spreads 'false information'.

However, these attempts at desecuritization are undermined by several other decisions. Despite the explicit demands by the communities for the government to adress root causes and start respecting their local governance, Molina allowed the company Hidro Santa Cruz to continue their operations in the area. Furthermore, around 150 militants remained in the area to 'keep order'. Therefore, the 'We are Barillas'-movement continues to oppose intimidation with demonstrations until this very day. The protests in the San Juan community, as illustrated in chapter three, were also part of this movement. The movement was advocating a more comprehensive approach to crime, instead of militarization. It is here that the ideas on 'structural racism' of the civil society groups meet the ideas on 'development through education' as advocated by the *lapicero* discourse of the urban NGOs.

As this case study demonstrates, it is impossible to speak of *acts* of securitization for it is a complex *process*. The case of Santa Cruz Barillas is illustrative of many other municipalities in which local communities oppose large enterprises. If the government would advocate a more structural solution to the social conflicts within these communities, it would mean that they have to go against the interest of large enterprises. In a developing neo-liberal society such as Guatemala, both the economy and the state very much depend on these enterprises when it comes to income. In

[68] Original tekst in Spanish: *Levantamos el Estado de Sitio porque se lograron los objetivos de recuperar la gobernabilidad.* (España, 2012: par 2)

addition, if Molina were to decide to shut down the mines, he would not only cut into his own budget but also into his political career. In a highly fractured and corrupt political environment such as Guatemala, Molina needs the support of the economic elite. Furthermore, he needs the support of the Guatemalan public. Giving in to those who he himself formerly framed as 'being involved with organized crime' will not go well with certain groups in the audience , such as the facebook respondents who argued in favour of social cleansing.

To put it simply: militarization is Molina's most favourable option. On the other hand, other non-dominant groups, such as the joint collaboration between civil society groups, have pressured Molina into the retreat of the military standoff and have paved the way towards desecuritization of rural social conflict. All in all, it demonstrates that certain non-dominant groups can pressure the dominant securitizing actor for acts of securitization or de-securitization. In this case, the non-dominant group was able to achieve this through close internal collaboration and the creation of alternative discursive power structures.

4.2. Case Study: The War on Drugs

In the previous case study, it has been demonstrated how civil society groups from rural areas are framed as criminals and drug traffickers. This specific type of framing has not been a coincidence; the 'War on Drugs'- discourse seems to have replaced former 'War on Communism'-discourses to legitimize state sponsored violence against citizens . For decades, Guatemala has been one of the important players in the so-called 'war on drugs' in the Americas, which was instigated by the United States. As a consequence of its strategically convenient position between drug producing countries in the south and drug consuming states in the north; Guatemala, like the rest of the Central American region, has been an important hub for narco-traffickers. The International Crisis Group even states that the majority of drugs entering the US has passed the border between Guatemala and Mexico (Schneider, 2009)

When the extremely powerful illicit network *Los Zetas* started facing strong opposition from the US-backed armed forces of Mexico in the border regions of *Chiapas* and *Yucatan*, they decided to expand their territory to the northern rural areas of Guatemala . The regions of *Petén* and *Alta Verapaz* are ideal locations for illicit narco networks. Due to the large scope of this area, its economic 'insignificance' and strong distrust of state power, there had been hardly any presence from the federal government. Furthermore, the relatively high rates of illiteracy render the area uninteresting

for politicians when it comes to gaining votes. The only official occasion in which local communities of the East vote is the election of the town mayor, but this is described by one aid worker I spoke with as being 'mere entertainment'.[69]

As a consequence, members of narco-traffic organizations such as *Los Zetas* have successfully managed to infiltrate within the entire social fabric of the Peten region through the course of time. An anonymous report, which was released in 2004, concludes that there are strong the connections between local leaders, influential business men and illicit narco practices (Anonymous, 2011). One NGO leader who worked in small villages in the Western Highlands told me that *narcos* are visibly starting to consolidate their influence over the area. They pay villagers a substantial amount of money to 'grow something' for them. She claims that these communities have no notion of the social and political implications of helping these groups. [70] Whether this is true is beyond the scope of my argument, though it is clear that these illicit groups have found a way to legitimately establish themselves within certain rural communities.

Drug trafficking is a transnational activity and is considered to be the largest international criminal threat in the world. Global annual trade is estimated at 400 billion US dollars a year, from which the International Crisis Group estimated that more than two billion dollar passes through Guatemala (Schneider, 2009: par 7-8). As vice president Schneider of the ICG notes: "even if only ten percent of the value of those cargos turns out to be available for corruption, hiring hit men, and paying other gang related bribes, it would be more than double of all US foreign assistance for Guatemala"(2009: par 8). This illustrates that drug trafficking is considered a threat on multiple levels. It is considered a military threat because of its connections to other categories of transnational crime such as arms trade, human trafficking and to the concept of terrorism. Furthermore, it is considered a threat to societal security because it tends to increase drug addictions and violent crime, to spread HIV and it is believed to be undermining family structures. Narco-traffic is also believed to negatively affect politics and the economy by creating shadow economies, distorting financial institutions, eroding the rule of law and promoting corruption. All in all, narco-traffic is viewed as a political, societal, economic and health threat.

It would appear an easy job for any actor in Guatemala who wishes to securitize drug traffic. There is hardly need for a speech act. Drugs are considered to be harmful on many levels by a majority- if not nearly all- of the population. The economic, political and societal harm that is done by narco-traffic in Guatemala also seems evident when linking these elements to the high levels of violence. A majority

[69] Excerpt from interview with executive director of a foreign-based operational NGO in Antigua in April, 2012.
[70] Drawn from interview with executive director of a foreign-based operational NGO in Antigua in April, 2012.

of the daily newspapers contain vivid pictures and descriptions of notorious crime lords and their fierce acts of retribution. This is also illustrated in the stories by many of my NGO respondents. Those who live in areas affected by this type of crime long for stability, safety and security (Azpuru, 2010). Furthermore, it is an issue which is backed up in its securitizing efforts by Guatemala's most generous donor: the United States. Therefore, the fact that Molina used the securitization of organized crime, with a specific focus on narco-traffic, as a starting point during the last two elections are hardly surprising.

However, when Molina was appointed, he did something that neither his friends nor his foes had expected. His intentions to leave the issue of drug traffic securitized still resonated in his inauguration speech:

We are going to confront [narco-traffic] as a regional threat through cooperative security with Mexico, Guatemala, Centro America, Colombia and specifically the United States. We are going to overcome this fight with a high grade of responsibility and prevention and in the fight against drug traffic, we are ready to take our responsibility. (*Discurso de Toma de Posesión*, 2012) [71]

However, the way in which Molina had envisioned this prevention came as a suprise to many. He pledged for an onorthodox measure against drug traffic: legalization. Molina argued that the War on Drugs has already cost too much money and claimed too many lives while the results are hardly visible (BBC, 2012c: par 11). He suggested that the regional coorperation could embody the establishment of transit corridors through which regulated drugs could pass. At least, he wished to move away from the unspeakable and bring the topic to the table: to politisize the issue. This speech act would earn him a place in the history books as the first Latin-American president to argue in favour of drug legalization while in office. Otto Peréz Molina discussed his view with other Central American leaders before heading to the summit of the Americas in Colombia.

Molina's ideas on legitimization were met with cautious approval from Guatemalan civil society organizations. Many of my respondent NGOs indicated to be in oppostition of the *mano dura* approach but were pleasantly surprised by his unconventional attempts to politisize the subject. They agreed that the US-led War on Drugs is ineffective and has enormous humanitarian consequences for the country. An executive director of a NGO Network argued that legalizing drug

[71] Original text in Spanish: *enfrentemos este flagelo como un desafío regional de seguridad cooperativa México, Guatemala, Centroamérica, Colombia y especialmente Estados Unidos, deben de librar esa lucha con un grado mayor de corresponsabilidad en la prevención y en el combate al narcotráfico, nosotros estamos dispuestos a afrontar nuestra responsabilidad.*

traffic will not be the solution to all problems, though she believed it to be the only way forward. [72]. Molina also found support in other regional leaders and ex-leaders, such as former Colombian president Cesar Gaviria (Colombia Reports, 2012).In addition, as could be seen in the first case, the Molina administration was supported in their desecuritizing attempts through extentive coverage by the mainstream media. [73]

For a while, it seemed that Molina had found an audience and a platform through which he could bring back the issue into the political sphere. His intended pre-summit took place in the colonial city of Antigua. Therefore, when I crossed the central park in Antigua on the 24th of March, I was hardly a few feet away from the presidents of Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia. However, some of the key figures, such as president Funes from El Salvador and delegates from the United States were not attending. With the upcoming elections and drugs being a highly sensitive issue, it is hardly surprising that ideas on legalization found little support within the United States politics. The United States government strongly opposed Molina's ideas and although they officially stated that alternative measures could be discussed, the subject was strategically avoided during the Americas summit in Colombia. Furthermore, this alternative approach to drug traffic caused confusion among the Guatemalan population; who had expected a hard-line *mano dura* approach. When the issue was discussed among Guatemalan urban citizens, they either argued that Molina had 'lost his mind' or that he used this as a tool to pressure the United States into raising their foreign security budget[74].

As a result, the legitimization of drug trade has faded away from both the discussion table as well as public debate and pushed back into the realms of securitization. Although the idea of desecuritization was initially able to find approval of a certain audience, it has been pushed back by a larger and more powerful securitizing actor: the United States. Furthermore, it has failed to convince -a large part of- the Guatemalan public. Molina, along with his support from other Latin American presidents, have not been able to convince a relevant audience, which, in this case, mainly concerned the United States.

[72] Excerpt from interview with executive director of an NGO network on the 31st May 2012 in a private residence in Antigua.
[73] Result from discursive analyses of newspaper articles from *la Prensa Libre* from the 24th of March until the 20th of April 2012.
[74] Result from notes on informal conversations with urban ladinos from Antigua and Guatemala City from the 23rd of March until the 24th of April.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion: the Power of the Audience in Securitization

The previous case studies call for a reconceptionalization of securitization and its terminology. The definition of securitizing actor provided by the Copenhagen School states that all those who can convince a relevant audience that the referent object is an existential threat can be considered securitizing actors. I would like to reconceptualize the process of securitization as involving dominant and non-dominant securitizing actors.

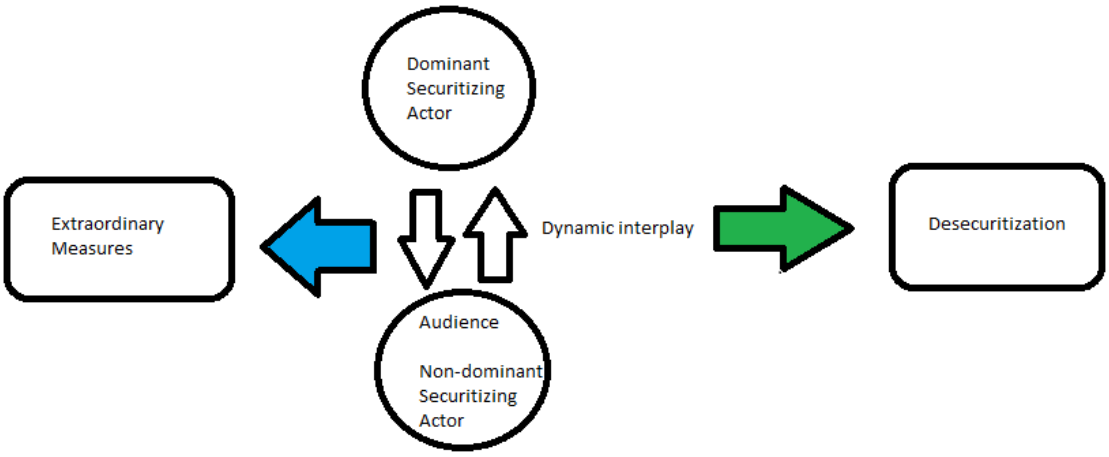
The main difference between these groups lies within the concept of power. What separates the dominant securitizing actor is the ability to exercise influence. This actor has the power and the means to both convey a message to the relevant audience as well as perform the extraordinary measures. In the case of Guatemala, it could be seen that the government was in the best position to be the dominant securitizing actor because they were in control over the mass media and the armed forces. On the other hand, a number of less powerful actors are trying to influence the dominant actor into either acts of securitization or desecuritization. These actors are inter-related but can vary enormously. In the Guatemalan context, these groups range from rural civil rights groups, operational NGOs and students to the economic elite and urban citizens. However, it is important to emphasize that these power relations are not static. When power relations shift, it is possible for a group to change from non-dominant to dominant. This could happen, for example, when a larger state power is involved. This phenomenon is clearly demonstrated in the second case study on the War on Drugs. When the United States government got involved into the securitization process, the Molina administration was 'reduced' to being a non-dominant securitizing actor. The United States government has placed Molina into a relatively less powerful position, in which he not only has to convince the other non-dominant groups but also lacks the necessary means.

In effect, the dominant securitizing actor is not the only active participant in the securitization process. Instead, the dominant actor is influenced by non-dominant securitizing actors - or subjected to the will of other dominant securitizing actors. Therefore, it can be argued that *mano dura* is not a purely political process of framing, neither is it an inevitable response from the Guatemalan population as a result of growing insecurity due to high levels of violent crime. *Mano dura* in Guatemala is a product of the dynamic interplay between dominant and non-dominant securitizing or desecuritizing actors. Seen in this light, Molina can be regarded as a securitizing actor who acts

within the specific context of a Latin-American developing society which provides him with certain frames and conditions. However, at the same time, this does not mean that Molina cannot be hold into account for his actions. As the dominant securitizing actor, he has the ability to alter or switch frames. Nevertheless, as has been demonstrated in the first case study, switching frames would imply destabilizing his own financial and political position.

All in all, I have chosen to conceptualize the audience not as a unity but as a group of inter-related non-dominant securitizing actors with mutual or conflicting interests. My previous statement from the literature review section needs to be adjusted. This initial idea is reflected in figure 5.1.

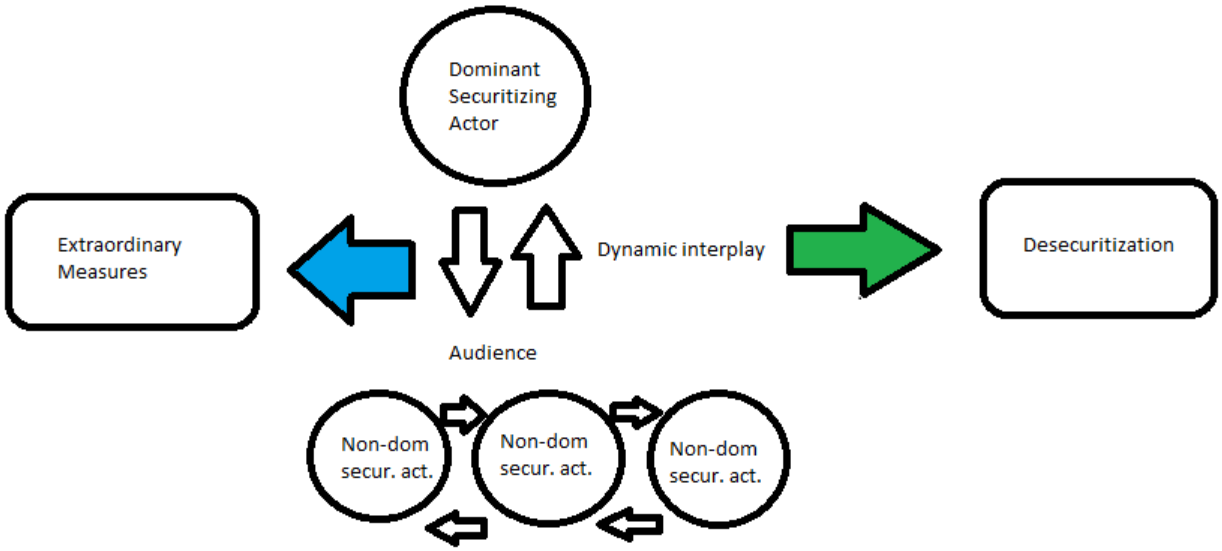
Figure 5.1:[75]



However, the previous figure reflects a view of the audience which is too simplistic. Therefore, I propose a revision as is reflected in figure 5.2.

[75] Illustration made by the author

Figure 5.2:[76]



This model is my final conceptualization of securitization theory based on my findings in Guatemala.

However, it needs to be noted that the role of one important player in the field has remained underdeveloped; which is the media. The media is an ambiguous actor. On the one hand, the mass media could help the dominant securitizing actor in securitization efforts. However, the definition of dominant securitizing actor does not fit the media. Although the mass media has the ability to exercise strong influence on national discourse, it is relatively powerless when it comes to putting words into practice. In addition, the media could be used as a tool for non-dominant securitizing actors as well. As can be seen, the media plays a dubious role; it is both a tool for other actors but also an actor in itself. I believe that identifying the media and reconceptualizing its role in the securitization process would be of great value for the development of securitization theory. I propose that more in-depth case studies are needed to help reconceptualizing the role of the media in the securitization process.

[76] Illustration made by the author

5.2 Conclusion

Altogether, by reconceptionalizing conventional securitization theory, I have been able to apply the theory as a framework for analyses in an empirical study. In this way, it could provide new insights into the puzzling daily reality of contemporary Guatemala.

I would like to discuss the sub-questions, which have been presented at the beginning of this thesis.

In what way could the support for a military approach to organized crime in a post-conflict society be explained by securitization theory?

I have illustrated how mano dura can be analysed through a securitization lens. In this way, securitization theory explains how the dominant securitizing actor, which in this case is mainly the Guatemalan government, uses a processes of framing to convince the audience of the need for extraordinary measures against those who are considered threats to the country's stability. As has been demonstrated, the old power structures from the civil war are largely intact: only the frames have changed from 'War on Communism' to 'War on Drugs'.

How is the counterdiscourse to mano dura, as advocated by representatives of civil society and ladino students, constructed?

Civil society groups and higher educated Guatemalans advocate a different approach to security, stressing the importance to address root causes. While rural groups argue that these root causes lie in structural discriminative practices by the Guatemalan state, urban NGOs and human right groups stress the importance of a restructured educational system.

How is the dynamic interplay between the non-dominant group of potential securitizing actors and the dominant securitizing actors manifested by contemporary events?

I have analysed what the dynamics between *mano dura* an this counter-discourse are in the securitization process by the use of two case studies. The case of San Juan Sacatepéquez revealed that the non-dominant groups that advocated demilitarization were able to influence the dominant actor Molina by forming an alliance and through the use of alternative media. The second case on the War on Drugs has demonstrated that the power relations within the securitization process is not static. When president Otto Peréz Molina tried to desecuritize hard-line military approaches to drug traffic, he was 'reduced' to being a non-dominant actor by a more powerful securitizing actor: the United States government.

All in all, the question comes down to the following:

What does the manifestation of mano dura in post-conflict Guatemala tell about the dynamic interplay between the securitizing actor and the audience in the process of securitization?

The manifestation of *mano dura* in contemporary Guatemala demonstrates that the actor-audience nexus, as envisioned by the Copenhagen School of security studies, is too simplistic. I have reconceptualized the traditional concepts of audience and securitizing actors –which I believe are too static- to demonstrate that the relationship between actor and audience is not one-way but an a dynamic interplay in which dominant securitizing actors are subjected to the influence of other securitizing actors- and vice versa.

However, in the case of Guatemala, it appears to be very difficult for non-dominant actors who oppose *mano dura* to influence national policies. Using good-quality education as a tool against crime instead of militarization seems like a constructive way of development. However, the idea has gained relatively little ground in both national policies and local discourses , aside from a relatively small group of students and the local and international nonprofits and civil society groups that advocate this view.

Policy makers and civil society groups who work towards desecuritization of certain topics could benefit from reconceptualization, for dynamic processes of securitization require more creative and dynamic solutions. This thesis has already touched upon some of the issues that are likely to prevent civil society groups from gaining more power as non-dominant groups in the securitization process. I would like to sum up these issues, followed by a few policy recommendations.

For national and international policy makers who wish to reduce the militarization of Guatemalan society, a more dynamic view on the securitization process implies that *all possible actors in the process should be taken into account*. Dominant securitizing actors, such as President Molina, need to be encouraged to consider alternative options. At the same time, non-dominant local actors such as civil society groups need to be supported with a platform and legislative power. It is important to note the legislative power. As could be seen in the case of Barillas, local groups can use international treaties as powerful political weapons.

The platform which could be provided to civil society groups could be the mass media but this is not always feasible in practice. In the case of Guatemala, this medium is mainly controlled by the nation's more powerful factions. Nevertheless, as the people from the Barillas-movement have demonstrated, *the alternative media provides an excellent platform*. Although a large part of the

Guatemalan population does not yet have access to the internet, trends on internet access in Latin America indicate that this is rapidly changing. Therefore, mobilization through online sources such as blogs and social media could be a fast, cheap and effective way for certain groups to spread their message and change the power balance.

What the Barillas movement also has demonstrated is *the importance of cooperation between different types of civil society groups*. During my fieldwork, I encountered a civil society that was highly fractured. One of the commonly heard reasons for this lack of cooperation was the lack of inter-institutional trust. Although some NGOs made attempts to create interconnected networks and alliances, many accused their fellow nonprofits or other types of civil society organizations of being corrupt and inefficient. Although it is not surprising that the variation within civil society combined with ego and accusations of institutional corruption prevents groups from working together, the Barillas movement has demonstrated that one common goal, background or enemy could be enough to unite completely different religious factions, farmers movements and human rights organizations. In the case of the Barillas movement, these organization had two binding factors: the goal was defending the right to local governance , the 'enemy' was the large national and international enterprises and the Guatemalan government. Their alliance meant that they could take a stronger stance which eventually resuled in the withdrawal of the majority of military troops.

A final important point for civil society organizations *to stimulate the involvement of youth*, especially the urban youth. As I could deduct from my experiences in the field, politics and human rights are not very popular subjects among young Guatemalans. Very few students are involved in civil society organizations. This is a potential loss, for the ideas of these students are surprisingly close to what many civil society organizations are advocating. Incorporating more youth within the staff will generate more creative ideas, especially when it comes to finding an online platform, in which young people are generally more experienced. [77]

The main purpose of this thesis has been to demonstrate how securitization can be used as an analytical tool and how this could benefit policy making. I wish to emphasize that this has been a specific case study of a specific Central-American country and could therefore not be applied as a set framework to any given situation. I would rather propose that this could be used as an example in generating more case-specific reconceptualizations in other socio-political contexts. In this way, securitization theory can be used as a starting point for different types of analysis.

[77] It should be noted that I also encountered some very good examples of youth participation during my fieldwork. One example of the benefits of incorporating young people is the *Los Patojos* program in Jocotenango. In this program, young Guatemalans are succesfully teaching children positive behaviour and non-violence through the use of popular cultural practices such as breakdance, graffiti and hiphop.

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Annex

A: Topic Guide Spanish

Objetivos

- Narrativas
- El pueblo de Guatemala
- Trabajar en Guatemala
- ONG's Guatemaltecos

Introdución

Introducir investigación y maestria, confidentialidad, permiso de grabar.

Empecemos con unas cuantas preguntas de información básica sobre usted.

1. ¿En donde vive? (zona de la ciudad o lugar)_____

2. ¿por favor dígame su edad? _____

3. ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene de estar involucrada en (nombre de la organización)?

_____ meses años

4. ¿A que grado llego en sus estudios?

_____

5. ¿Cuál es su ocupación? ¿A que se dedica?

Temas y Preguntas (ejemplos):

1. **Organización**

Por ejemplo:

¿Cómo se involucro con (organización)?

¿Cómo cree que la organización ha cambiado desde que usted se involucró?

¿ Que piensa de otras organizaciones? Por qué trabajan o por que no

trabajan con estas organizaciones?

2. **Violencia**

Por ejemplo:

Para usted, ¿Qué significa la violencia?

¿Cómo cree que la violencia, como usted la comprende, la ha afectado?

¿Cree usted que la violencia ha cambiado en los últimos 5 años?

¿Por qué cree usted que hay violencia en Guatemala?

¿Cuáles cree usted que son los temas más importantes para la democratización en Guatemala? ¿Por qué?

3. **Gobierno**

Por ejemplo:

¿Qué tipo de demandas le hacen ustedes al gobierno? ¿Qué le piden al gobierno de Guatemala?

¿Cómo reacciono el gobierno a sus demandas iniciales?

¿Ha cambiado la reacción del gobierno ante sus demandas con el tiempo?

4.Seguridad

¿Ha encontrado temor en su trabajo?

¿ Ha encontrado intimidaciones y violencia en su trabajo?

¿Que haces para su seguridad y la seguridad de todo de (organización)?

¿ Como recibes confianza de los niños y niñas y sus padres? ¿Que haces?

5. Agregar

¿Ahí alguna otra cosa que le gustaría agregar?

B: Results Questionnaire (Spanish)

Universiteit Utrecht

Cuestionario

1. Donde vive usted?

3	Chimaltenango 2 (9,09%)
9	Guatemala 2 (9,09%)
16	Sacatepéquez 18 (81,81%)

2. Tiene experiencia con programas de organización no gubernamentales?

1	Sí	10 (45,45%)
2	No	12 (54,55%)

3. **Cual ha sido su experiencia con estas programas?**

1	Excelente	5 (22,72%)
2	Bien	4 (18,18%)
3	Mas ó menos	1 (4,55%)
4	Malo	0
5	Muy Malo	0
6	No tengo experiencia	12 (54,55%)

4. Que tipo de apollo ha recibido de organizaciones no gubernamentales?

5.1	Seguridad	0
5.2	Salúd	1 (4,55%)
5.3	Educación	5 (22,72%)
5.4	Apollo économico	0
5.5	Apollo judicial	0
5.6	Otro	4 (18,18%)
5.7	No he recibido apollo	12 (54,55%)

6. **Está contento con el apollo que recibió?**

1	Sí	8 (36,36%)
2	No	0
3	No he recibido apollo	14 (63,64%)

7. Cree que puede hacer algo si se siente afectado por alguna institución publica?

1	Sí	8 (36,36%)
2	No	2 (9,09%)
3	No sé	12 (54,55%)

8. Que piensa que es lo más importante para combatir la violencia?

1	Combatir la desigualdad	3 (13,63%)
2	Combatir la pobresa	1(4,55%)
3	Mas empleó	2 (9,09%)

4	Mejor educación	13 (59,09%)
5	Mano dura	1 (4,55%)
6	Mejor systema democratico	2 (9,09%)

9. Quienes deberían resolver los problemas de violencia en Guatemala?

1	El gobierno	4 (18,18%)
2	Organizaciones no gubernamentales	0
3	Las familias	14 (63,64%)
4	Las fuerzas armadas	0
5	La iglesia	0
6	Otro	4(18,18%)

10. De 1 a 10, cuanto confía usted en el actual gobierno?

No confía **Mucha confianza**

1: 3 (13,63%) 2: 4(18,18%) 3: 8 (36, 36%) 4:5 (22,72%) 5: 2 (9,09%)

11. Que partido politico es su preferido?

1	Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (UNE) 0
2	Partido Patriota (PP) 4 (18,18%)
3	Libertad Democrática Renovada (LIDER) 0
4	Compromiso, Renovación y Orden (CREO) 7 (31,82 %)
5	Unión del Cambio Nacional (UCN) 0
6	Visión con Valores - Encuentro por Guatemala (VIVA-EG) 0
7	Otro 7 (31,82 %)

8	Yo no vote 4 (18,18%)

12. Usted está involucrado en una organización civil?

1	Sí, en una organización no gubernamental	4 (18,18 %)
2	Sí, en un sindicato	0
3	Sí, en una organización de derechos humanos	0
4	Sí, en un otro typo de asociación civil	2 (9,09%)
5	No	16 (72,72%)

13. Que es lo mas importante para el desarrollo de Guatemala?

1	Seguridad	1 (4,55%)
2	Salud	0
3	Educación	16 (72,72%)
4	Desarrollo económico	3 (13,63%)
5	Democracia	2 (9,09%)

Muchas gracias!