

### *Democratization Through Peace: The Difficult Case of Guatemala*

The Guatemalan peace process provides an excellent opportunity to revisit a number of discussions about political democratization and social justice in Latin America. It is the premise of this article that fulfillment of the peace accords, particularly on demilitarization, is the necessary precondition for full development of political democracy in Guatemala. The article first summarizes how, beyond ending the war, the peace process has contributed to Guatemala's democratization, and then analyzes the Guatemalan experience since the early 1980s as a means to address some of the broad theoretical debates.

### *Demilitarization and Security in El Salvador and Guatemala: Convergences of Success and Crisis*

The Salvadoran and Guatemalan cases correspond to a new model of public security that is widely shared across Latin America. The more localized processes of demilitarization in the two countries, moreover, appear to share a similar dynamic. In the midst of real reforms, however, the deterioration of public security as directly experienced by much of the population is cause for worry. An examination of the reforms established in the peace accords leads to an interpretation of these experiences in a comparative regional framework.

### *Global Forces and Regime Change: Guatemala in the Central American Context*

Drawing on theories of regime change, revolution, and democratization, this paper proposes a process theory to account for the 12 major regime transformations that have occurred in Central America since 1970. Political regimes, coherent systems of rule established among a coalition of dominant political actors, change when their prevailing political rules and their ruling coalitions undergo transformation. External forces are important to this process. The focal case is Guatemala and its prospects for democratic consolidation.

*Neoliberalism, the Global Elite, and the Guatemalan Transition:  
A Critical Macrosocial Analysis*

Recent change in Guatemala is part of a complex transition that has continued in Central America since the 1960s. It involves the region's ongoing, gradual, highly conflictive, and contradictory entrance into the global economy and society. The transnational model of society in the Isthmus is inherently unstable, with contradictions internal to global capitalism. The constraints of the exclusionary socioeconomic system undermine efforts to open up the political system as contemplated in the peace accords. Authentic democratization requires a radical redistribution of wealth and power toward the poor majority; but the accords ratify existing property relations and rule out such a redistribution.

*Guatemala in the Global System*

This article presents a short summary of the world-systems perspective on globalization as relevant to considering the possibilities and probabilities of Guatemala's prospects for democracy and development. Guatemala's structural position in the larger global political economy is examined. The strategy of "globalization from below" as popular movement alliances' response to neoliberal corporate globalization is considered in the Guatemalan context.