



Institute of Social Studies

Graduate School of Development Studies

THE LANGUAGE OF HEGEMONY
DISCOURSE, POWER AND FREEDOM IN
EL SALVADOR'S NEOLIBERAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
THE CAFTA CASE

A Research Paper presented by:

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*Para ti, Bárbara, porque junto a ti la noche es menos larga, la tormenta menos
lágrima, el dolor menos sal y el cielo que nos queda entre tu alma y la mía
siempre lleva pájaros, sentidos y razones para vivir*

*To my family, mother, Patricia, father, Carlos, my sisters, Natalia, Ana, Marta
y Denis, Jorge El Tuto and Zepedas tia Olga, Brenda, Edgardo and grandmothers
Alma and Ondina all one million times multiplied in all the semiotic fragments
of my life.*

*I would like to thank friends that supported my path in deconstructing meanings
without deconstructing myself: Rui and Angelica, Nadia and Emmett, Phaedra,
Fany, Nancy, Eka, who in reality became my AIM complex. To my Salvadorean
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María, Rafa, Pilu y Gabriel and many more. Last but not least to the patience
and kind help of my teachers, Rachel and Des.*

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Name	Category
ANEP	National Association of the Private Enterprise	Association
ARENA	National Republican Alliance	Political Party
BPS	Bloque Popular Social	Social Movement
CAFTA	Central American Free Trade Agreements (CAFTA)	Policy
COLATINO	Colatino	National Newspaper
EDH	El Diario de Hoy	National Newspaper
FMLN	National Liberation Front Farabundo Marti	Political Party
FTA	Free Trade Agreement	Policy
FUNDE	National Foundation for Development)	National NGO
FUSADES	Salvadorean Foundation for Social and Economic Development)	National NGO
LPG	La Prensa Grafica	National Newspaper
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	International organization
US CAFTA-DR	United States, Central American, Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement	Policy
UCA	Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" (UCA) – Central American University	University
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis	Method in social scientific research
ALCA or FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas	Policy/project
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis	Methodology of Social Research
NGDO	Non Governmental Development Organization	Development organization
AIM	Academic-Institutional-Complex	Scholarly term from (Peet, 2002)

PREFACE

Unamuno used to say that what is important is *not to have reason but to have truth. A falsified exercise of reason may be disguised as scientific, but in reality it is a vehicle of domination.*" (Ellacuria, 1976: 426)

"In the name of God then, in the name of this suffering people I ask you, I beg you, I command you in the name of God: stop the repression." were the words directed to the unjust power structures by Archbishop Monsignor Romero in 1980. His voice echoed symbolically the start of the twelve years of violent civil war in El Salvador (1980-1992). According to the United Nations Truth Commission Report called *"From Madness to Hope"* he was killed by a bullet that reached his heart while celebrating mass. Death squads sent by the founder of ARENA, the political party in power since 1989, Roberto D'Abuisson executed the mission¹. His discourse of resistance represented the voice of common people crying out for justice and truth, but he was silenced. The war left 75,000 people dead and more than a million people disappeared; among them, peasants, intellectuals, priests, women and children, common people that were also friends, family, life histories. They were victims of the direct power of military repression by the State² which triggered punishment but also resistance.

¹ The same report states how in 1989 the Jesuit university where I have worked and formed myself as an economist, the Central American University (UCA) suffered again the bullets of power: *"In the early hours on 16 November 1989, six Jesuit priests, a cook and her 16-year-old daughter were shot and killed at the Pastoral Centre of José Simeón Cañas Central American University (UCA) in San Salvador. The victims were Fathers Ignacio Ellacuría, Rector of the University; Ignacio Martín-Baró, Vice-Rector; Segundo Montes, Director of the Human Rights Institute; Amando López, Joaquín López y López and Juan Ramón Moreno, all teachers at UCA; and Julia Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina Mariceth Ramos."* (United Nations, 1993)

² 75000 people killed and more than a million disappeared including the assassination of Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero. The death is attributed by the UN Commission on Truth for El Salvador, to the founder of the political party now in power, ARENA.

Today, *in the name of freedom*, several policies become legitimized and shape the post-war neo-liberal development agenda of the country by ARENA, supported by an institutional, academic and media complex. Sadly, this model of development is now producing victims that affect the same crucified people. Poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, inequality, violation of human rights, of a great majority of the population contrasts with the buoyant benefits of small elites. Today, structural violence does not come from politically motivated bullets, but from the bullets of social and economic exclusion that the neoliberal model is causing.

This research explores how language and meaning is used *by those who have power and freedom*, upon those who are *powerless and suffer unfreedoms*. It tries to show how the discursive capabilities of the hegemonic powers lock social practices that lead to a *continuum* of social injustice in El Salvador. In this sense, it is dedicated to the martyrs of my university, UCA, and to the memory of Carlos Paniagua³ (1974-2002), economist friend of mine, whose research findings illustrated the essential anatomy of power in El Salvador. His dedicated work revealed how entrepreneurial elites control the key sectors of the Salvadorean economy sharing political ties with the government and family bonds that enlarge its power. Building on his work, questions arise: how does this development model and its power-elite become legitimized through language? How are politicians, entrepreneurs and prestigious intellectuals coming from national or international think-tanks and armed with concepts of 'freedom', 'modernization', 'globalization' using language to justify the model to its final consequences?

Carlos Zepeda

*The Hague, Netherlands,
November 2006*

³ Carlos Paniagua died at the age of 28, before his findings were published.

*"About peace in supreme happiness
Always noble El Salvador dreamt
Obtaining it was its eternal problem
Conserving it was its major glory*

*And with unbreakable faith
The road of progress
It plead to follow
To fulfill its grandeur destiny
Conquering a rewarding future*

*It is protected by a strong barrier
Against the shock of vile disloyalty
Since the day its high flag
With its blood wrote: Freedom!*

*Freedom is its dogma, is its guide
That a thousand other times it succeeded defending;
And others more of tyrannical audacity
Repelling the hateful power"*

(Translated Excerpt of the Salvadorean National Anthem)

.....

"The national anthem is not a dogma. If it has a lot of beauty and of truthfulness one has to deduct that truth and that beauty from the reality of the country, so that one does not keep on singing what in reality does not exist, and to make that beauty of the hymn be translated in realities of the country."

(Monsignor Romero, Homily 24, 1978)

1 INTRODUCTION

It was at dawn of December 17th of 2004, at exactly 3.00 a.m. that the Central American Free Trade agreement with the United States (CAFTA) was legally ratified by a coalition of right-wing political parties in the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. The treaty was signed with 49 votes in favour -ARENA, the ruling political party, PCN and PDC]; and 35 against it [the leftist, FMLN and CDU]. Strikingly, it became public notice, that the deputies signed an agreement which they had not even read a line of the constitutive text. It was, so it was said, because it was too difficult a task: the document of the agreement was a 2,500 pages long paper that was plagued with complicated technical jargon and puzzling economic terms (Moreno, 2005). Although, the deputies did not read a word of it, ARENA's members expressed their satisfaction with the outcome of the session with hugs and congratulating hand-shakes. Hence, there it was: the fifth free trade agreement that the country would subscribe, as it had already done with the Dominican Republic (1998), Chile (1999), Mexico (2000) and Panama (2002). (MINEC, 2006) It symbolized how El Salvador had reached the summit of a series of neo-liberal reforms that were enforced by ARENA since its governing period started in 1989.

What has been the *leitmotif* of this liberalizing trend in the development agenda of ARENA's government? Apparently it had all to do with freedom. On the words of doctrinal documents of ARENA's ideology, "ARENA promotes that freedom can be achieved with liberalism". (ARENA, 2006a: 33) and this liberalism promotes that the state should guarantee that the economic system be oriented "towards the growth of productivity, by means of the private enterprise, whose principles should be respected and promoted by it" (ARENA, 2006b: 1) The question is: which are those *principles* of the private enterprise?

Arguably, El Salvador has been committed with the principles of the Washington Consensus, which is why it has implemented almost literally all of its policies. El Salvador has not only been the best *neo-liberal student* of the Central American region: privatizing public services, reducing tariffs to trade, liberalizing the interest rates, eliminating subsidies, dollarizing the economy, etc. (Zamora Rivas, 2006); but also the most affected by its failures and 'externalities'. The Salvadorean paradox has been that, on the one hand, according to the Heritage Foundation (2006), El Salvador has been one of the countries with the highest economic freedoms of all the Latin American region, and certainly the leader of Central America, implementing nearly zero barriers to trade (see figure 1.1); and on the other, it has also been one of the most slow in growth rates of the region. According to ECLAC, (CEPAL, 2006) El Salvador has been growing at such poor rates that it is barely covering its own population growth rate. Only in the period of (2001-2004) its rate of growth amounted to a weak 1.8% average and the GDP per capita has come to a virtual halt (See fig. 1.2a, and 1.2b)

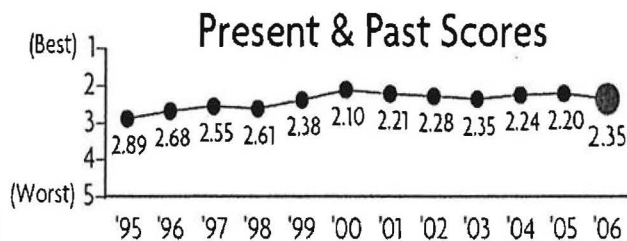
Notwithstanding these paradoxes, the policies in question have remained legitimate in the government's discourse and its neoliberal style of policy making seems to be locked. The power of the neoliberal economic reforms remains and the liberalizing trade agenda of El Salvador is testimony of it. As the World Bank asserts: policies of free trade agreement "*can help "lock-in" progress made on unilateral trade liberalization, making it immune to protectionist pressures that might arise in the future.*" (World Bank, 2003: xvii) Whose progress is CAFTA securing?

Figure 1.1

ECONOMIC FREEDOM OF EL SALVADOR

Economic Freedom in Central America, ordered by year, focusing on trade
(1= Excelent, 5= Worst)

Trade Rank	Country	Year	Overall Score	Trade	Fiscal Burden	Government Intervention	Monetary Policy	Foreign Investment	Banking/ Finance	Wages/ Prices	Property Rights	Regulation	Informal Market
1	El Salvador	2006	2.35	2.5	3.0	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3
1	Costa Rica	2006	2.69	2.5	3.4	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
1	Guatemala	2006	3.01	2.5	3.6	1	3	3	3	2	4	4	4
1	Nicaragua	2006	3.05	2.5	4.0	2	3	2	2	3	4	4	4
5	Honduras	2006	3.28	3.5	3.3	3	3	3	2	3	4	4	4



Source: Heritage Foundation (2006)

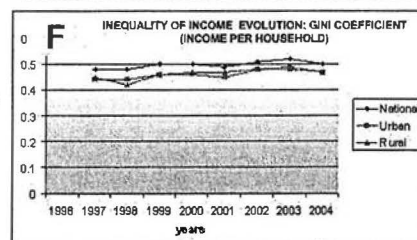
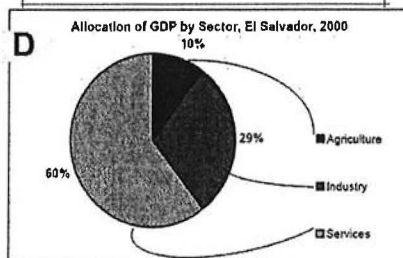
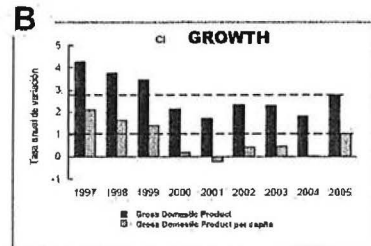
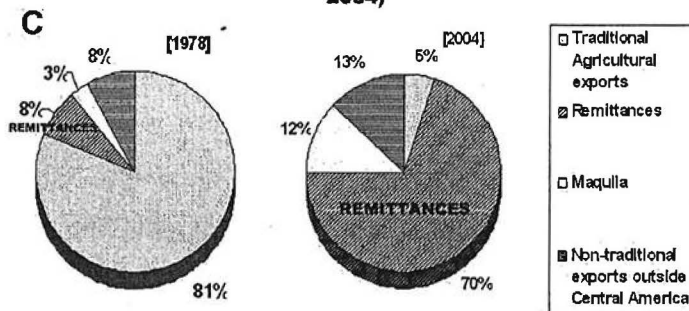
Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2

A EL SALVADOR: MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS 1995-2004

Indicadores	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Population (Millions)	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7
Annual GDP Growth	6.4	1.7	4.2	3.7	3.4	2.2	1.7	2.2	1.8	1.5
Yearly GDP Growth per capita	4.2	-0.4	2.1	1.6	1.4	0.2	-0.2	0.3	0.0	-0.2
Tributary taxes	12.0	10.6	10.3	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.5	11.1	11.6	11.5
Family remittances /GDP			10.8	11.3	11	13.3	13.8	13.5	14.1	16.1
Trade Balance /GDP	17.7	13.9	11.9	12.7	13.0	15.3	15.7	15.4	17.6	18.8
Inflation rate		7.4	1.9	4.2	-1.0	4.3	1.4	2.8	2.5	5.4

Source: BCR

SOURCES OF HARD CURRENCY IN EL SALVADOR (1978, 2004)

1.1 Aim: Deconstruction of the language of Hegemony

The objective of this research is to provide evidence on how an hegemonic academic-institutional-media (AIM) complex⁴ operating trans-nationally and nationally in El Salvador has used discursive tactics in language based on notions of 'freedom' to legitimize and lock-in the neo-liberal development model implemented in the country, despite efforts of resistance from counter-hegemonic organizations and their alternative discourses.

In order to illustrate empirically the thesis of this research, a case study of a 'paradigmatic' policy enforcing the neo-liberal development agenda of El Salvador is analyzed: the Central American free trade agreement subscribed by El Salvador with the United States (CAFTA). The focus here is to sample the development discourses used to support this policy's conception period – proposal, design, negotiation and initial implementation (2001-2006).

1.2 Relevance and contextual justification

The relevance of this research is crucial for two reasons, i) it identifies the discursive practices shaping El Salvador's contemporary development agenda in a period of *free-trade craze*⁵; ii) secondly, because the discourses on 'freedom' that legitimize these policy-making processes are not addressing basic questions of development ethics in a time where structural social change is urgently needed. As Gasper (2004) and DeMartino (2000) argue, the meanings and purpose of development are socially constructed, which is why advancing policies 'X', 'Y' or 'Z' (a task where discourses are certainly relevant) requires answering vital questions on justice and equity, i.e. "Who bears the costs and who reaps the benefits?" (Gasper, 2004: 84) and for "Whose values?" with "whose rules?" (DeMartino, 2000: 128).

As argued in chapter 3, El Salvador's fragile electoral democracy is virtually monopolized by an AIM complex supporting ARENA's neoliberal policies. However these policies have not yet produced the expected well-being and

⁴ In this research the term "Academic-Institutional-Media Complex" or hitherto "AIM complex" derives from the basic framework on the analysis of hegemony of Peet (2002). See chapter 2.

⁵ The current government of El Salvador (ARENA) is aiming to sign more free trade agreements, specifically with the European Union, Taiwan and Canada. (MINEC, 2006)

agency precisely for the people that most need it⁶, making the outcomes unjustly asymmetrical.

On the one hand, positive results or *freedoms* for an elite that has control of the government, key economic sectors and policy-making institutions, think-tanks, and the media⁷ and on the other, a negative, but less publicized side of the story: *the human struggle of unfreedoms* faced by the excluded and most marginalized people of the country.

1.3 Methodology

This research strategically relies on the methodology of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Wodak and Meyer, 2001) for several reasons: firstly, this methodology is structurally flexible because it is '*problem based*' and adapts to the dialectical relationships found between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices. Secondly, this methodology offers different tool-boxes and strategies for analyzing discourse. This research is based on a particular version of CDA, that of Fairclough's approach (1988; 1991; 2001; 2003) as it is considered in Ruth Wodak's words (Wodak and Meyer, 2001) the *best 'middle-ranged' analytical position* to bridge the analysis of power-language-ideology, matching the critical elements of this field with those contributed by Foucault (1974; 1978), Bourdieu (1998b; 1994; 1991) and Gramsci (1971). Lastly, this methodology is also good because it has a *transparent character* which forces the researcher to recognize its position and possible biases within the reality examined and to take an explicit ethical standpoint by focusing upon the problems affecting the "losers" within particular forms of life, (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 6) in this case, the poor and marginalized people of El Salvador.

Accordingly, this methodology has shaped the structure of this research in three stages broadly framed as: a) *deconstructing the context*, b) *deconstructing the language* and c) *understanding change*. (See appendix A.1)

⁶ (Pelupessy, 1997; PNUD, 2001; 2003; Popkin, 2000; Segovia, 2002)

⁷ (Dolores Albiac, 1999; Segovia, 2002; 2005);

The first stage of the paper focuses on deconstructing the context of social practices in El Salvador (chapters 2-3). Chapter 2 provides a theoretical tool-box to situate and understand discursive practices and their relation to power, freedom, ideology and social practices. Chapter 3, then empirically engages with describing the context of El Salvador's neoliberal development model and how CAFTA fits in these set of policies.

The second stage (chapter 4), aims at deconstructing the language of hegemony (*semiotic flows*) based on notions of 'freedom' produced by the main actors of the hegemonic AIM complex analyzed. Chapter 4 engages with the direct deconstruction of texts and images produced in CAFTA's policy-making process.

The semiotic analysis is done by sampling texts and images from relevant and typical flows produced by the main actors of the AIM complex. The criteria to select the sources of analysis used the recommendations of the methodological 'good practice' in CDA which are: *representativeness*, *reliability*, *validity*, and *completeness*. "The results of the study will be 'complete' if new data and the analysis of new linguistic devices reveal no new findings." (Meyer, 2001: 29)

In the third and final stage of the paper, 'understanding change' (chapter 5) the effort aims at concluding how discourses have been used to lock-in the status quo of the development model. The implications of this work for democratic deliberation practices and social change are observed.

The sources of data collection are based primarily on texts from publications, editorials, speeches, etc. but an effort is done to capture some other relevant semiotic elements such as images. The contextual verification and triangulation of the sources of information is provided by 15 semi-structured interviews on key social actors from organizations that have been relevant to the policy-making process of CAFTA or that are knowledgeable on the subject.

2 UNDERSTANDING DISCOURSE, POWER AND FREEDOM

Examining the *language of hegemony* implies *deconstructing la raison d'être* and *the* system of meanings in which its foundations lie and interconnect. In this sense, by 'deconstruction' this research means detecting the truth behind ideologies and their discursive manifestations, the power they serve and the interests that they safeguard.

The meaning itself of 'deconstruction', according to Derrida (1978; 1976) refers to the *philosophy of meaning* that processes the ways meaning is constructed by human beings through their social practices; and consequently, how we receive and *understand it* through texts, speeches and other mediums of communication. Thus, deconstruction is not a synonym of *destruction*; it denotes examining texts beyond their surface locating their "underlying, unspoken and implicit assumptions, ideas and frameworks" that shape what *we think we understand and believe*. Ethically, deconstruction aims for the emancipation of truth (whatever that may be) from the *invisible jail* of ideologies.

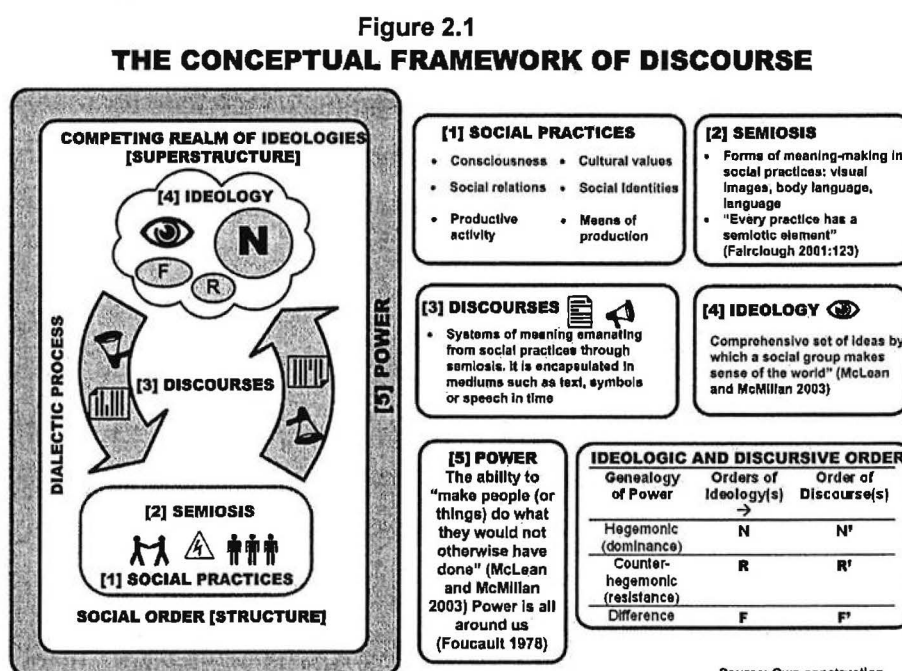
2.1 Discourse as means for power

On this basis, deconstructing flows of discourse emanating from dominant ideologies is the primary target of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Wodak and Meyer, 2001). The reason is its Foucaultian understanding that power is produced and disseminated '*all around us*' (Foucault, 1974; 1978; 1979) by the systems of meaning that flow from our social practices. If discourses are the manifestations of these flows, it is clear that they may be used as a 'weapon of choice' to influence behaviour in the ideological struggles of society (Fairclough, 2001). As Fischer (2003: 77) drawing on MacDonnell 1986:43-55) underlines, discourses are not ideologies *per se*, rather they have intentional or unintentional links to them. Hence, ideologies may "supply the words of a discourse with different meanings" for particular contexts. That is why, paraphrasing Derrida

(1993), in order to deconstruct discourses, first one has to *sense the unsensuous*, or the 'spectrality of ideology'.

Consequently, methodologically speaking, CDA scholars have normatively begun by examining real social problems within social practices and the effects they have on the poor or marginalized people. By starting with this, the approach asks for questions beyond the surface of language *per se* such as responsibility, interests and ideology and by doing so; it 'consciously' chooses: a) "the perspective of those who suffer most", and b) critically analyses those in power, those who are responsible and "those who have the means and the opportunity to solve such problems". (van Dijk, 1986:4) quoted from (Wodak and Meyer, 2001) Hence, CDA is 'naturally' deconstructionist and emancipatory.

A framework that helps to understand the relationship of discourse with power is seen in figure 2.1.



As you may see, a procedural deconstruction *à la* CDA of discourses implies at least a sequence of analysis of the format [social practice→semiosis→discourse→ideology→discourse→semiosis→social practice...]. Within this framework, social practices [1] are all those activities occurring in the social life of human beings as they act and interact with each

other. These activities, by their own intrinsic nature are always *semiotic* [2], that is, they always in some way or another produce *meaning* through symbols, visual images, body language, as well as language (Fairclough, 2001: 123). These semiotic flows, like 'vapours' in *perpetuum mobile*, arise from social practices as inexact, approximate mirrors or representations of them encapsulated in forms of image, text and speech through time (see table 2.1) constituting *systems of meaning* or what we call *discourse* [3]. (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2005; Dijk, 1997; Fairclough, 1991).

Intersecting and feeding many of these discourses, we find ideologies. An *ideology* [4] is at its core, a hub of ideas that constructs a meaningful 'totalitarian' understanding of reality by providing a persuasive explanation of *how it all works*, *how things should be*, *how it all came to be like this*, and *where we are going*. Thus, an ideology provides a guide for action and for distinguishing truth from falsehood, valid arguments from invalid, and more often than not, "some overriding belief, whether in God, Providence, or History, to which adherents may make a final appeal when challenged." (McLean and McMillan, 2003) This is why social groups always try to nourish discourses with ideologies, because their normative features may help them further their interests.

Figure 2.2

Table 2.1: Where and how are discourses generated in social practices?

How?	Example of Semiosis in social practices
a) As a part of the social activity within a practice (genres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyday conversation, ▪ meetings at work, ▪ chains of e-mails, ▪ book reviews, etc
b) In representations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The lives of the poor & Disadvantaged people: ▪ Represented through different discourses of politicians, doctors, scholars... ▪ Through different discourses within each of these practices corresponding to different positions of social actors.
c) In ways of being, identities (styles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Styles of business managers ▪ Political leaders.

Source: Own construction based on (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002: 193-4; Fairclough, 2001: 123)

Power [5], or the ability to “make people (or things) do what they would not otherwise have done” (McLean and McMillan, 2003) is omnipresent in this framework, insofar as discourses influence behaviour by building and disseminating an external structure that frames the thoughts and actions of individual or collective actors (Foucault, 1974; 1978). These frames or ‘discursive formations’ are manifestations of power preceding and enabling the agency of individuals as they stamp “actions and objects with meaning” and bestow them “with morally charged identities”. (Rossi, 2004, quoting Foucault 1991:94).

2.2 The genealogies of discourse: hegemony, counter-hegemony and difference

On these grounds, consider for example, the following question: “How do different discourses *position or subjugate* participants in a communicative exchange?” (Fischer, 2003: 80) Certainly, if there is inequality in the *discursive capabilities* of people (determined by knowledge or other attributes), there will also be differential access to certain kinds of discourses. This pattern is reinforced by ideologies that indicate which knowledge is the most legitimate for a certain context, *i.e.* which are the discourses predominantly accepted when debating whether to implement or not policies of free trade? Are they, for example, coming mainly from experts or citizens, politicians or businessmen? As Fischer (2003: 80) quoting (Beck 1986; Schiller and Symthe 1992) insists, these questions would oblige us “to examine a distribution of discursive capabilities across a society” since evidence indicates (Hajer, 1995; Kothari, 2005) that the way they are enacted or diminished in a democratic society, is crucial for the understanding on how discourses are *means* for power. In other words, discursive practices that feed from dominant ideologies are more effective and ideas “that do not draw on or interact with the available discourses will be dismissed as strange or irrelevant” (Fischer, 2003: 83)

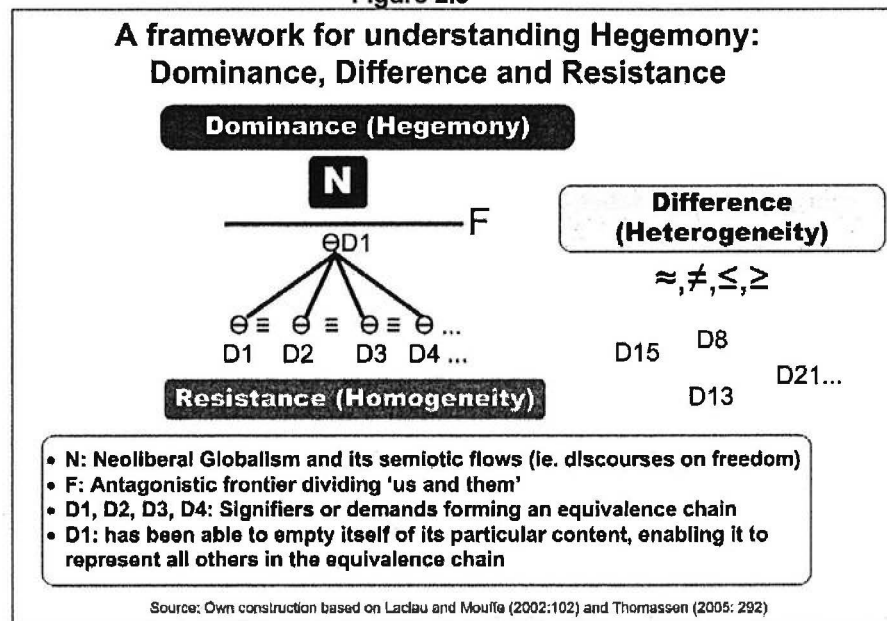
Take for instance an ideology [N] like *neoliberalism* as in [fig.2.1] If it becomes hegemonic in the competing realm of ideologies, it is also because it has achieved to make its discourses [N'] the most persuasive and most efficiently disseminated throughout the social practices of a particular society. However, this hegemonic stadium is not a stable equilibrium, discourses of resistance [R'] or oppositional to neoliberal discourses, and feeding from counter-hegemonic ideologies, together with other marginal, or heterogeneous alternative ideologies [F] and discourses [F'] may struggle in the discursive and ideological fields to change this situation, thus creating certain *orders of discourse* and of ideology.

Interestingly, these orders of discourse keep interacting and changing through *genres* (editorials, e-mails, etc.) and *styles* (rhetorical, religious, etc) that are aimed at influencing behaviour by spreading *social imaginaries* and normative knowledge to a society. However, in order to be compelling, persuasive and effective, discourses need to condense large bits of factual information from collective wisdoms. How so? According to Fischer (2003: 86), the answer lies in the use of *storylines* or narratives to capture complex ideas in simple stories. Storylines transfer in a digestible and easy-to-understand unity "social constructions of particular events". In so doing, they either reframe or retell particular aspects of the event in question, or marginalize and hide certain actors, tensions, problems or paradoxes inherent to the story. (Fischer, 2003: 86-7) This way, discourses spread more easily and have greater probabilities of becoming hegemonic when mainstreamed as *legitimizing common sense*, sustaining relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

Accordingly, when a discourse clustered with certain ideology(s) successfully dominates the discursive fields of a society by translating itself in the *prevailing common sense* formed in culture, diffused by civic institutions, actively shaping values, customs, and spiritual ideas and inducing "spontaneous" consent to the status quo", then we are effectively talking about hegemony (Peet, 2002: 56) Stemming from the work of Gramsci (1971) this concept in terms of power, crucially connotes that "one social class exerts power over others beyond that accounted by coercion or law" (McLean and McMillan, 2003) If this happens,

hegemony could be seen as a special kind of '*violence symbolique*' (Bourdieu, 1998a) that elites of a dominant class direct towards others, as it refers to a colonization of ideas in invisible 'battlefields' of consciousness. (Cox, 1983; Peet, 2002; 2003)

Figure 2.3



Using Laclau's (2002) framework inspired by a Derridean deconstruction on the study of ideology⁸ (see fig. 2.2), hegemony may also be represented as a binary tension between a *dominant ideological discourse* (i.e. Global neoliberalism as an *antagonistic force N*) *vis-à-vis* a *counter-hegemonic discourse* (resistance). This creates an *antagonistic frontier (F)* that separates the field in a binary opposition of '*us*' and '*them*'.⁹ In this sense, D1, D2, D3, D4....: are *demands* that bond together the arguments of the resistance discourse (represented as a homogenous chain of equivalence and encapsulated by a supposedly common demand D1).

⁸ The so called 'Essex School' lead by Laclau (2002), later criticized and expanded by Thomassen (2005)]

⁹ For example, during El Salvador's civil war (1980-1992) all those opposed to the government were framed as ['them': "the communists" or "terrorists"], and ['us': the "liberals", the "democrats"].

Laclau's framework has been criticized for being too simplistic, leaving aside the possibility of heterogeneity in discourses, which is why, taking into account (Fairclough, 2001) the 'module' that takes into account the heterogeneous alternative discourses would not be the focus of this paper (D15, D18, D13, D21...). These discourses of difference are not necessarily clustered in the binary battlefield of discourses of hegemony and counter-hegemony, but are actually 'third-ways' that exist and may influence this realm.

Another angle of hegemony is its use of *rhetoric* or "the art of effective expression and the persuasive use of language" (Nordquist, 2006). This element is fundamental in order to make discourses spread and reach hegemony. Like so, one of the most commonly used structures of argumentation in rhetorical language is arguably the *enthymeme*. (Heracleous, 2006) Essentially, an enthymeme is a deductive argument structured in three parts (a characteristic known as a *sylllogism*) which has an *unstated assumption* that must be true for the premises to lead to the conclusion. In an enthymeme, *part of the argument is missing* because it is assumed. As Heracleous¹⁰ understands, researchers "can uncover taken-for-granted values and beliefs within particular contexts" by identifying and analyzing the "unstated and assumed premises" found in enthymemes. Precisely because of this, enthymeme structures insulate values and beliefs that could be used as "structures of legitimation that underlie agent's interpretations and (communicative) actions". A basic framework for analyzing the rhetoric through the structure of an enthymeme of a dominant discourse is presented in figure 2.3.

¹⁰ Heracleous draws on this idea from Gill and Whedbee (1997) and (Giddens, 1984, 1993)

Figure 2.4 Heracleous' enthymeme framework

UNDERSTANDING THE PERSUASIVE USE OF LANGUAGE (RETHORIC) THROUGH THE STRUCTURE OF AN ENTHYME				
Enthymeme structure	Discursive manifestation		Nature of statement	
	P1	Our key goal is X	P1	Value stating desirable state of affairs
P1 + P2	P2	Y leads to X	P2	General belief of contingent relationship in normative domain
C1 → P1' + P2'	C1 → P1'	Therefore, we need to take appropriate action to achieve Y	C1 → P1'	General conclusion on required type or class of action
C2	P2'	Action Z leads to Y	P2'	Belief of contingent relationship in the action-oriented domain
	C2	Therefore we need to do Z	C2	Conclusion of required specific action to be taken
Source: (Heracleous 2006: 1067)				

2.3 AIM complexes as means for the construction of hegemony

A *hegemonic Academic-Institutional Media (AIM) complex* is basically a network of 'centres of persuasion' (prestigious institutions, public personalities, the media, etc) that united by a dominant overarching ideology coherently enact and disseminate discourses to lock-in their own privileged interests in a certain status quo. (Peet, 2002) These centres of persuasion or '*factories of discourse*' represent the voices of the elite in its many forms (academic, economic, institutional, cultural) as an orchestrated 'chorus' or *composite structure*¹¹ (See table 2.4).

A classic example of an AIM complex is precisely the network of academic institutions, public personalities and media resources that helped to make *neo-liberalism* today's global hegemonic ideology. A vast array of scholars have

¹¹ Originating from Gramsci (1971), the notion of 'complex' acknowledges the heterogeneity of discourses and social actors fighting for the same ideology with different angles and approaches.

evidenced how this ideological hegemony was achieved by centres of persuasion generating and disseminating discourses loaded with narrative storylines, rhetorical uses of language, and semiotic inseminations of 'scientific' and prescriptive knowledge¹². These included the back-up of: a) *prestigious academic communities* like Friederich Hayek's Austrian School of Economics in Vienna; Milton Friedman's Chicago "Boys" of Chicago University or the London School of Economics; b) *powerful institutions* like the American Heritage Foundation, Hoover Institute, American Enterprise Institute; c) *public personalities*: the US president, Ronald Reagan, the UK prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, and d) *dominant media networks* like the main newspapers, TV and radio stations.

Figure 2.5

AIM COMPLEX AS A COMPOSITE SET OF FACTORIES OF DISCOURSE		
[A]: Academic activity ▪ <u>Scientific Knowledge discourse</u>	▪ scholars from elite institutions, (Knowledge elite)	▪ Academic papers, books, reports, articles
	▪ ie. leading universities with great capital resources	▪ speeches, conferences, expert Interviews, policy prescriptions, academic blogs and websites
[I]: Institutional, Economic practices ▪ <u>Business discourse</u>	▪ economic agents and institutions of business and financial elites (Economic elite)	▪ Dominant media networks
	▪ i.e. business federations, chambers of commerce, etc.	▪ entrepreneurial language, narratives of business sections in newspapers, interviews, commentary shows, etc.
[M]: Communications practices ▪ <u>Cultural discourse</u>	(Media elite)	▪ written, visual or multimedia language
	▪ ie. dominant networks of newspapers, radio, television, internet,	▪ editorials, interviews, articles, music, pictures, etc.
Source: Own construction on the basis of Peet (2002: 58)		

AIM complexes determine with their discourses the deliberative struggles that arise when advocating, designing, or implementing a certain policy. (Fischer, 1995; 2003) In this way, with their discursive power at work, they filter, foster and mould particular sets of policies or marginalize and stop others in the development agenda. For example, the contentious argument of this paper

¹² For example see Harvey (2003; 2006), Peet (2002; 2003), Chomsky (1997; 2004; 2002)

asserts that CAFTA as a policy of free trade is one such an example of an AIM complex at work, shaping the policy-making process, at everyone of its different *discursive phases* of technical-analytical, contextual, systemic, and ideological nature. (See figure 2.6)

Figure 2.6

DISCURSIVE PHASES THAT ARISE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A POLICY			
Levels	Discursive Phases	Content	Organizing Question
First Order Evaluation	1. Technical-analytical discourse	Program Verification [Outcomes]	Does the program objective empirically fulfil its stated objective (s)?
	2. Contextual Discourse	Situational validation [Objectives]	Is the program objective (s) relevant to the problem in question?
Second Order Evaluation	3. Systems discourse	Societal vindication [Goals]	Does the policy goal have instrumental or contributive value for the society as a whole?
	4. Ideological discourse	Social choice [Values]	Do the fundamental ideals or ideology(s) that organize the accepted social order provide a basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments?

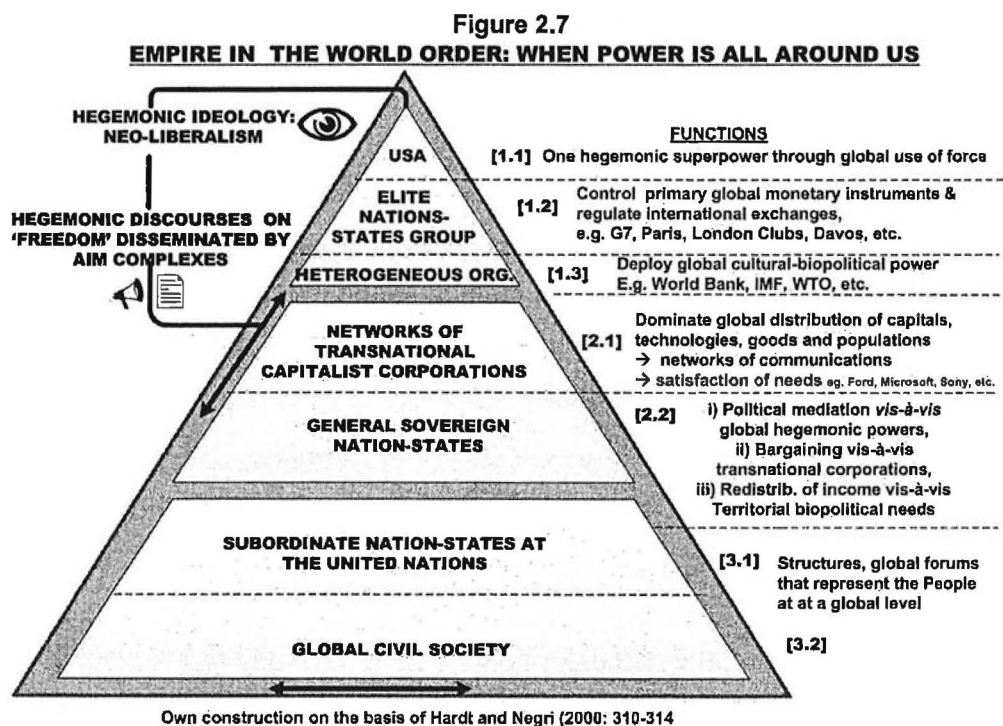
Source: Own construction on the basis of (Fischer 1995: 18)

2.4 The hegemony of global neoliberalism and its 'freedom' discourses

2.4.1 World Order and the Constitution of Empire

At a macro-level, the question is: how has the interaction of AIM complexes constituted *in practice* the world order of power of our post-modern era? Drawing from Hardt and Negri (2000: 309-12) AIM complexes are structured within a world order, a hierarchical *pyramidal structure* of various networks of entities and organizations that in a decentralized manner posit a regime, an "Empire". This would refer not to a unique centre of power expanding geographically by force (notion of *imperialism*) but a power that is all around us, decentralized, with non-spatial a boundary that has the objective of ruling social

life in its entirety with a certain hegemonic ideology and discourse (neo-liberalism), constituting itself as a form of *biopower*¹³. (See fig.2.4) El Salvador would be located at a subordinate level within this structure: at the level of *sovereign nation-states* [level 2.2]. This means recognizing that the country is subsumed to orders of global command coming from *superior* powers: the United States as the only superpower [level 1.1], ii) an elite group of nation-states that control global monetary exchanges [level 1.2], *i.e.* OECD countries, Davos clubs, etc. and iii) heterogeneous associations of organizations [level 1.3] *i.e.* the IMF, World Bank, etc. Thus, El Salvador's *functions* would be reduced to: a) mediating politically with respect to global hegemonic powers; b) bargaining with respect to the transnational corporations and c) redistributing the income "according to biopolitical needs within their own limited territories."



¹³ Biopower is for Foucault, a form of power which frames the individual, her identity and "imposes a law of truth" on her which she must recognize and which others have to recognize on her. Thus "it is a form of power which makes individuals subjects" (cf. Foucault, 1983: 212)

2.4.2 Neoliberalism as the “cement” ideology of the world-order

Following the above, the “cement” that unites all the building blocks of the Empire, is how these AIM complexes within the current world-order, produce and reproduce discourses charged with the ideology of neo-liberalism. But what is *neo-liberalism* as an ideology, as a policy-making practice and why does it transfer discourses of ‘freedom’? Concisely, neo-liberalism is an ideology that transforms the liberal views of the past (Smith, Lock, Hobbes, etc.) into a contemporary interpretation on what should liberalism be in today’s world. As this ideology is encompassing normative views on *how things should be* its ‘*interpretive schema*’ is powerful: it has become a structural ‘blueprint’, a normative theory of political and economic practices which purports that “human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of *entrepreneurial freedoms* within an institutional framework characterized by *private property rights, individual liberty, free markets and free trade*.” (Harvey, 2006: 145) For this reason, within this ideology the role of the state is merely supplementary: creating and preserving “an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.”¹⁴ Notice that the notion of ‘freedom’ is a central keystone of the concept, which explains why discourses expand it throughout their storylines, rhetoric, etc.

2.4.3 The notion of freedom

Neoliberalism as an ideology has disseminated within the social practices of this world order, through AIM complexes, the notion of ‘freedom’ (or liberty)¹⁵. Its advocates repetitively insist that neo-liberalism is the best doctrine available since it champions the *value* of freedom. (Friedman and Friedman, 1980;

¹⁴ Italics emphasized for this paper.

¹⁵ According to the (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2006) the notion of *freedom* should be understood as a synonym of ‘liberty’

Fukuyama, 1992; Hayek, 1944) Who can resist to this? Who is to say that 'freedom' is not something we all find *valuable per se*?

'Freedom' is, as Gasper and van Staveren (2003) argue, "a particular family of values" so wide that it has been understood in "two hundred different senses" (Berlin, 1958: 6). This has made the concept contested and problematic since the start.¹⁶ From these senses, Berlin chose to define two: the notions of *positive* and *negative* freedom. Berlin defined *negative freedom* as a 'freedom from interference', a state of absence of obstacles, barriers or constraints so that one is "not being prevented from choosing" (Berlin, 1958: 7); *positive freedom*, on the other hand, would be, so he argued, the kind of freedom that arises when one is capable *to be* and *to do*¹⁷ what one chooses in its own life, having *control* over its own decisions or actions and therefore realizing one's fundamental purposes.

Interestingly, these two senses have *served to colonize the field of politics*: Firstly, negative freedom has usually been attributed to *individual agents*, while positive freedom has generally been attributed to *groups* or to individuals members of groups (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2006) giving birth to notions like 'collective or individual agency'. (Sen, 1999: 18-9)

Secondly, this splitting 'freedom' into two rival "ways" has also had its impacts: a) On the one hand *political liberalism* uses a negative definition of freedom making liberals generally claim "that if one favours individual liberty one should place strong limitations on the activities of the state." (*Op cit.*) and b) On the other hand, others have argued that in order for the individual or collectivity to have the freedom of self-realization or self-determination, a *broad* political-economic-cultural action should be taken. This would require *more* state intervention to bring justice and equality of capabilities in such way that it would surpass common neo-liberal views. (DeMartino, 2000; Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 1992) How is this relevant for El Salvador's development practice?

Consider for example the obstacles created by impersonal economic or social forces like it so happens in the country. How do economic constraints like

¹⁶ See Robeyns (2006) critique from a capability approach perspective on how the different notions of freedom have been constrained or expanded, starting with Berlin's work.

¹⁷ (cf. Sen, 1999)

recession, high crime, poverty, unemployment, unequal access or competition in market trade, social exclusion, neutralize the capabilities of people to do and to be what they actually value? Are they *unfree*?

If we acknowledge that these socio-economic constraints are brought about intentionally, for the *negativists* of freedom, a *laissez faire, laissez passer* view would dominate: for them, the impersonal constraints brought about unintentionally *would not* restrict people's freedom, even though they make them less capable to do their valuable beings and doings. This makes the state *irresponsible* for enhancing or diminishing freedoms of impersonal nature something advocated by neoliberal academics, and institutions typically known as "market-oriented libertarians". (I.e. Hayek¹⁸, Friedman, Becker)

In contrast to the latter, the positive side of freedom would be inhabited by discourses critical to the irresponsibility of 'libertarianism'. Their idea is that the constraints on freedom should include both *intended and unintended* constraints, thus compromising and making the state accountable to actively intervene in removing them for achieving real human flourishing (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2006). On these broader grounds of the notion of freedom is where socialists, egalitarians and scholars such as (Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 1999) and others, have put forward the idea that the poor or socially excluded people in capitalist society are generally unfree, or at least less free than the rich, in contrast to libertarians, who have tended to claim that the poor in a capitalist society are no less free than the rich.

Thus from the pool of different notions that exist of freedom, evidently choosing one notion over another has concrete consequences in the type of views about what development is and for the discourses enacted. Taking into account development ethics advocating for more egalitarian or morally responsible types of freedoms (Gasper, 2004; Gasper and van Staveren, 2003), and CDA's positioning on the 'feet of the poor and disadvantaged' (Fairclough, 2001), this research understands for 'real freedoms' those concrete basic

¹⁸ For Hayek (1960, 1982), freedom has effectively the absence of coercion, where to be coerced is to be subject to the arbitrary will of another.

capabilities to do and to be that people effectively experience and find important for their lives through democratic deliberation processes. (Sen, 1999) The concern hitherto is thus, with the *wider positive freedoms* that the negativists of freedom (i.e. neoliberal-utilitarian types) leave out. Understanding the context of the people living in El Salvador in terms of real freedoms is to examine a general picture not just of their negative freedoms (absence of obstacles, like less income taxes) which are *means* for achieving well-being but of those that enhance their capabilities to lead the life people democratically cherish in values that go beyond the notion of freedom (i.e. solidarity, justice) that were expanded or contracted by their development processes (positive sense of freedom) and the different dimensions within them (Alkire, 2002; 2005). (See appendix A.4) At the level of discursive practice, this general framework aims at least to critically analyze the neoliberal discourses that argue that *Salvadoreans are generally freer than ever before*. Is this true? Let us consider this in chapter 3.

3 THE CONTEXT: LIVING UNDER THE AEGIS OF NEO-LIBERALISM.

"This is the account of how all was in suspense..."¹⁹(Popol Vuh)

In El Salvador: Who enjoys power? Who enjoys freedom? These two basic questions provide the structure of this section. In this sense it aims at answering: how are social practices in El Salvador structured in terms of *power relations*? And, what is the impact this model of development has on the real freedoms of its people?

3.1.1 Power, the global context: A system of hubs and spokes

In a first level of analysis, power in the global context may be seen as unequally distributed and conformed as a system of hubs and spokes, especially when talking about trade. "*Favouritism in trade cannot be stopped*" was the opening statement of a recent analysis of The Economist (2006). This gloomy remark

¹⁹ Opening words of Popol Vuh, the Mayan legend (Mayan Legend, 1954)

came after the world's largest multilateral negotiating space on free trade, *the Doha rounds of trade* were suspended indefinitely since July 24th 2006. The outcome was hardly surprising. The historic quarrels starred by the WTO's bigger members and their unwillingness to concede real free trade in multilateral agreements with their counterparts neatly evidenced how free trade is still a surrealist doctrine rather than a real practice. As Stiglitz (2002) notes the world's richer nations preach to developing countries things that they themselves do not practice. Today the tendency for unilateral or bilateral trade agreements is the norm favoured by the powerful nations towards the small. As the Economist describes:

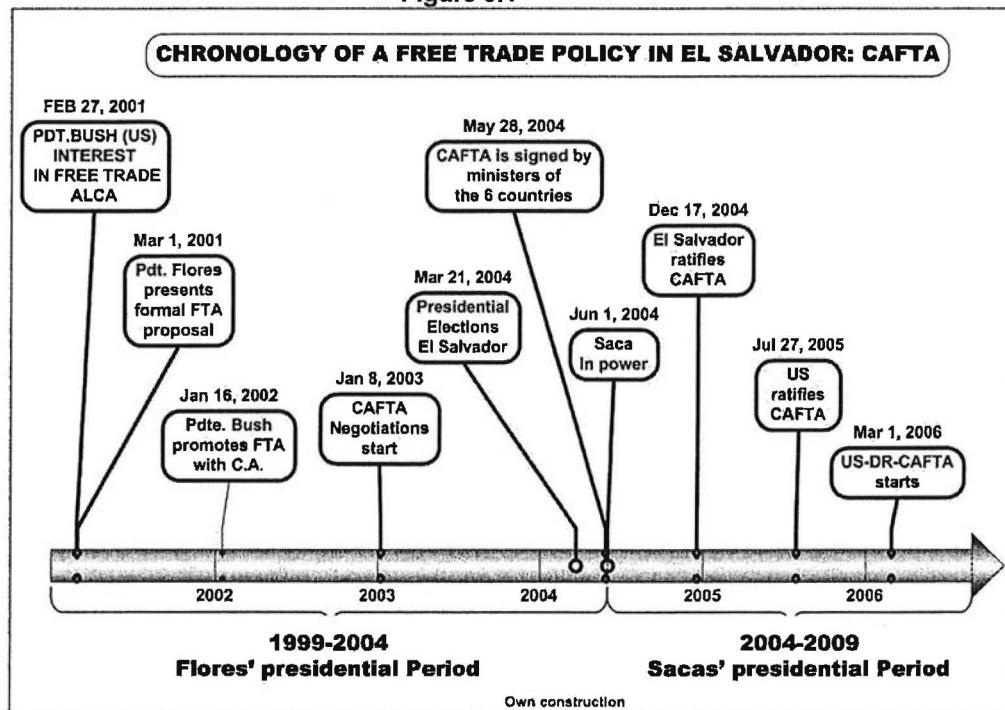
"In a global trade round, the big players lock horns with each other... Outside the multilateral system, however, the biggest powers are free to pick off smaller economies one by one. Many fear this will result in a system of 'hubs and spokes', in which small economies (the spokes) are drawn into agreements with big ones (the hubs), but not with each other. This is wonderful for the rich-country hubs – they can import goods from wherever they like, even as their exporters enjoy outlying markets all to themselves. It is not so great for the spokes." (The Economist, 2006)

As The Economist indicates, the main hubs of today's global trade would be the United States, the European Union and Japan. El Salvador would automatically be one of the spokes under the influence of US power. According to Feinberg (2003: 1019-20) this convenient 'bilateralism' has been precisely the strategy that the Bush administration has followed since announcing that his administration would try to further the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). This move of "economic imperialism" (Harvey, 2003), has made the US-furthered free trade arrangements much more than trade agreements *per se* but rather as "an instrument for influencing the balance of power within states and affecting processes of political and economic change."

3.1.2 CAFTA's architects, neoliberalism and the hegemonic AIM complex

On a second level of analysis, the question is if El Salvador is dominated by an AIM complex that believes in furthering neoliberal policies such as CAFTA. Evidently here, what matters is to understand that the construction of such policy was not merely planned and executed by the government of ARENA. The policy was far too important and mixed with complex interests. The chronology of the policy is seen in (fig.3.1):

Figure 3.1



Notably, in the process of insemination of the idea of CAFTA, the first player that came into the scene was the US. In February 27th, 2001, President Bush made the official announcement that his administration was willing to make ALCA (FTAA) a reality as wide scope project to create one whole region of free market for the whole of the Americas. Thus, the hegemonic imperial power passed the first *semiotic* message: all those nations in the Latin American region in favour of this plan (that is all those 'freedom' loving democracies) should make steps towards fulfilling this commitment.

Almost immediately, (four days after the announcement, march 1st, 2001) and as a reaction of this positioning the government of El Salvador, through the leadership of the former President Francisco Flores makes a formal proposal 'flirting' with the US to create an FTA between both countries. El Salvador was the first country of the region to get in the queue of free-trade. Yet the socio-political setting was not favourable: high opposition throughout the Latin American region from globaliphobics to leftist governments sent the wide FTAA idea to a long-standby. The US counter-strategy to this was to make a progressive liberalization, stage-by-stage not encountering the region as a multilateral block, but rather negotiating unilateral or bilateral agreements. CAFTA was proposed in this context in January 16th 2002 by the Bush administration.

Politicians, entrepreneurs, academic, think-tanks, NGOs, civil society in general of the Central American region, all were stirred and drawn into the discussion on the possible implications of such an agreement. The Salvadorean press covered every stage of the process and important economists or 'gurus' of free-trade were called upon to give their opinion on the subject. Through their production of discourses a map of a hegemonic AIM complex was soon configured (see table 3.2)

Figure 3.2

THE HEGEMONIC AIM COMPLEX OPERATING IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CAFTA			
	ACADEMIC: Scientific knowledge discourse	INSTITUTIONAL Business, Political discourse	MEDIA Cultural discourse
TRANSNATIONAL [US and Heterogeneous organizations]	Economists from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ American Universities: Chicago, Harvard, etc. ▪ Chilean economists, government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>USAID / US Government</u> ▪ <u>IMF</u> ▪ World Bank ▪ WTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written Press: The New York Times, The Economist, Foreign Policy, The Weekly Standard ▪ TV: CNN, Fox News ▪ Radios, radio programs, etc.
NATIONAL [El Salvador]	Economists from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>FUSADES</u> ▪ Lawyers Educated Business people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>ARENA</u> ▪ <u>ANEP</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written press: <u>La Prensa Gráfica</u> ▪ El Diario de Hoy ▪ Televisión: TCS ▪ Radio: Grupo Samix

Source: Own construction

On a third level of analysis, we can now dig-in each of the wings of this AIM complex that advocated for CAFTA. For example, starting with the academic wing certain elements can be described:

3.1.3 The academic network

Who wins and who loses with CAFTA? "I think that in the end we are all going to be winners (...)"²⁰, FUSADES

To whom did the press consult when illustrating the general public about the possible outcomes of CAFTA? According to interviews to journalists from the two main newspapers of El Salvador, La Prensa Gráfica (Contreras, 2006) and El Diario de Hoy (Barrera, 2006) the tendency was clear: the sources repetitively quoted within the national newspapers, television, radio networks were basically the same: the economists affiliated to pro-government or pro-free trade

²⁰ Interview: (Trigueros, 2006):

institutions; i.e. FUSADES, ANEP, Ministry of Economics, at the national level, and throughout the process. The exception was FUNDE. It was regarded as left thinking but sufficiently proactive and 'scientific' to be able to quote it as an alternative vision. (Ibid.) However, all those voices who continuously opposed to CAFTA were neglected as sources to take into account, at least in the case of LPG and EDH.

From the pool of different voices of academics, a high production of papers, conferences, interviews, etc. on the subject were generated by this academic network. By far the most illustrative example is FUSADES. There was a triangular connection that merits attention: FUSADES was born in 1983 as an institution aimed as a think-tank representing the private enterprise (ANEP) of the country. To create it, the private sector received the financial assistance of USAID as an effort of the US Reagan administration of the time, "to promote the new [neoliberal] model and to create the social basis to support it" (Segovia, 2002: 27). This was the first academic block created by the AIM complex: the formula *USAID-FUSADES-ANEP*.

This triplet relationship was strengthened in two ways:

- a) Economic funds were continuously provided, e.g. only in the period of 1984-1992 FUSADES received amounts above US\$100 million dollars, plus a programmed base of more than US\$150 millions. (Ibid. 27: quoting Rosa 1993:81, and Barry 1993:2);
- b) The ties with intellectual scholarship from US-based universities and think-tanks were strengthened (e.g. the Universities such as Chicago University and Harvard University have provided intellectual support to some of the key policy recommending documents that FUSADES transferred to ARENA's government such as (FUSADES, 2003)

Nowadays, FUSADES not only boasts an active relationship with these prestigious institutions but its staff is also coming with education degrees from prestigious Anglo-Saxon universities (American universities like Vanderbilt, Ohio, Oklahoma, New York or British origin, like the Warwick University or the London

School of Economics)²¹. Moreover these economists have had a profound impact in the policy-making arena. It is widely recognized how they have helped to shape and translate the neo-liberal policies that came with Structural Adjustment Programmes –SAPs into tropicalized policies for El Salvador throughout the 1990s. (CIDAI, 1996; Segovia, 2002). FUSADES, defines itself as a “a research think-tank that promotes the economic and social *progress* of the Salvadoreans through sustainable development under a system of democratic and individual freedoms”²² (FUSADES, 2006a) On a similar note, economists and professionals in ANEP, have been part of this institution and vice-versa, making it a dynamic exchange.

b) Institutional Networking: national and transnational levels

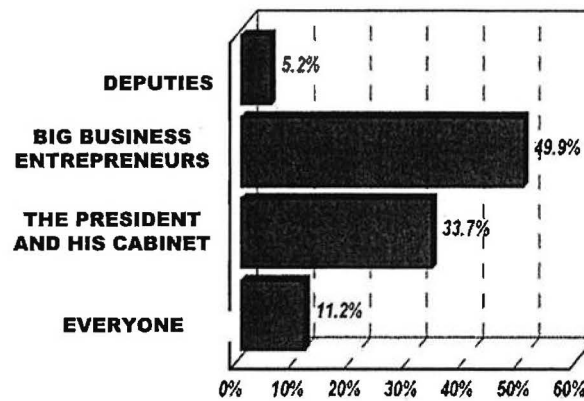
In this wing of power of the AIM complex, the connections are more evident. ARENA's institutional arrangement is also horizontally and vertically connected. The formula here is ANEP→FUSADES→ARENA, whereby the entire institutional network shares ties with ARENA.

A poll done in 2004 to the entrepreneur business sector revealed that policy-making in El Salvador was perceived of not being in control of the state, but rather by the big enterprises of the country (see fig.3.3) When the entrepreneur sector of El Salvador has been asked directly who really decides the economic policy process of the country, almost half of all interviewed agreed: the big private enterprise (49.9%) (IUDOP, 2004)

²¹ For example, read their curriculums at (FUSADES, 2006b)

²² The italics are emphasized by the author of this article.

Figure 3.3 National Poll to Entrepreneurs in 2004. El Salvador
WHO DECIDES THE ECONOMIC POLICY
IN EL SALVADOR?



Source: IUDOP (2004: 8)

If the latter is at the level of perceptions, empirical evidence confirms it strikingly more: the link between the private-enterprise with ARENA is *umbilical*.

For example, take the case of today's current President of El Salvador, Antonio Saca. His cast as entrepreneur, media man, and member of ARENA is symbolic and semiotic in *its own right*. Being formerly a radio and TV football sports commentator, business entrepreneur of one of the major radio networks in El Salvador –Grupo Samix–, former president of ASDER (the national association of radio network) and former president of ANEP²³, Antonio Saca integrates almost all the spheres of the AIM complex at once. He is in this sense, not only a President, but a communicator, and representative of a network of entrepreneurs and politicians.

ARENA has been known since the very start as the political party of the entrepreneur sector. It was precisely because of its direct links, between the families that compose the elites of the country and ARENA that this government was called “the Salvadorean hegemonic entrepreneur block” (Paniagua, 2002) Hence, the Salvadorean political elite is not only composed of the business elite,

²³ Twice

but it also incorporates all the elites of the AIM complex faithfully: academic staff from FUSADES, the media communications network, the private enterprise and the right-wing politicians all participate in ARENA.. *The corporate elite* that fills its ranks comes from a range of rich families of the corporate sector that essentially control the majority of the means of production of the country, and have powerful businesses throughout the whole Central American region, creating a kind of “real regional integration” but at the private economic level. (Segovia, 2005)

Obviously, the effects of such concentration of power in key sectors of the economy (services, financial and commercial), had its impacts in making the processes of democracy and development sterile: they would control not only economic-political power, but also the social, and cultural power by controlling the information flows in the media (also owned by them)(Paniagua, 2002), and creating their own ‘organic intellectuals’ in the Gramscian sense by starting up think-tanks to yield knowledge and ideology to support their actions.

Figure 3.4

THE ECONOMIC ELITE: ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORKS & FAMILY TIES

Family [ECONOMIC GROUP]	Areas in which it operates
▪ Palomo Meza [ADOC]	INDUSTRY: Footwear industry
▪ Meza Ayau [AGRISAL]	INDUSTRY, SERVICES: Beverages, soft drinks, beer, ice and bottled water, hotels, and business centres, agroindustry, sale of vehicles, state, industrial assembly of industrial machinery
▪ Baldocchi-Dueñas, Kriete [BANCO AGRÍCOLA]	INDUSTRY, SERVICES: Bank, insurance, pensions, casas de bolsa, real state, exchange houses, agroindustry, non-traditional products
▪ Bahala, Cristiani Family [CUSCATLÁN]	SERVICES Bank, insurances, pensions, etc.
▪ De Sola [DE SOLA]	AGROINDUSTRY, SERVICES Agroindustry, real state, insurances, banking, hotels, distribution of home products, cinemas, tourism
▪ Not a family group. [SIGMA]	INDUSTRY: Graphic and paper industry. [Stockholders are Salvadoreans and Guatemalans]
▪ Poma [POMA]	INDUSTRY, SERVICES:
▪ Quiroz [QUIROZ]	SERVICES: Distribution and financing of vehicles and accessories.
▪ Simán [SIMÁN]	INDUSTRY, SERVICES
▪ Kriete [TACA]	SERVICES, AGROINDUSTRY

Source: Own construction on the basis of Segovia (2005)

c) Media networking: national and transnational levels

On the level of the media, CAFTA was highly exploited as a positive policy represented through various forms of communication. The biggest networks of written press, TV and radio are part of the same hegemonic AIM complex. Take for instance the two most widely read newspapers, La Prensa Gráfica and El Diario de Hoy. They are at the same time owned by two important groups of families, the Dutriz family and the Altamirano family respectively which have direct nexus with ANEP and ARENA. (Rubio-Fabián et al., 2004: 75) Together, according to statistics available by the UNDP for 2001 (PNUD, 2003), they represent 73% of the total daily flow of written press. If you add the newspaper, *Más!* which is part of the same editorial company of *El Diario de Hoy*, it becomes clear that only two families own 87% of all effectively circulating press. Moreover, if we take into account that only Colatino is regarded as a newspaper politically oriented to the left, and the rest are regarded as "rightist" and are privately owned then we notice the overwhelming power of the media wing of this AIM complex (95%). This incredible power has proved to be fundamental in ARENA's victory in the last presidential elections. (ECA, 2004; Rivas, 2004)

Figure 3.5
Table 1: Written Press in El Salvador (2001)

Newspaper	Daily flow (units)	Percentage
La Prensa Gráfica	110,000	39%
El Diario de Hoy	95,000	34%
Mas!	40,000	14%
El Mundo	20,000	7%
Co-Latino	15,000	5%

Source: (PNUD, 2003: 280)

Not only has the local media nurtured views and perspectives of the elites of the country, but because of the context of profound linkages with the Salvadorean population in the US (more than two million Salvadoreans have emigrated to the US)(PNUD, 2005), it has also reinforced a strong cultural environment of US alienation, high consumerism of US cultural products, on TV, radio, family networks, the press (La Prensa Gráfica also circulates in the US for

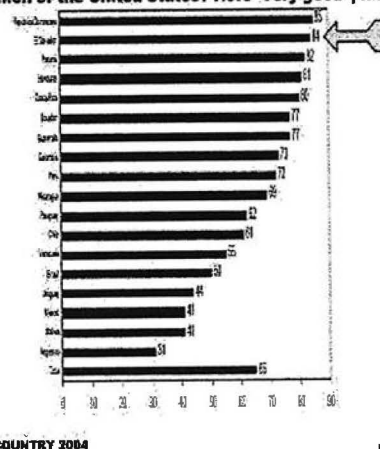
example and has a special section called '*Department 15*', which is dedicated wholly to the issues of the US-Salvadorean population). This *cultural hegemony* of the US in Salvadorean issues is felt in the perceptions of the polls. According to Latinobarómetro, a Latin American poll, Salvadoreans are among the most "US-loving-nations" of the region: they perceive the US as their best good friend in the world (60% of the interviews) (Latinobarómetro, 2004a) and they believe the US is the world power that helps more to promote democracy (56%), development (61%), and free trade (68%) in the country. (Latinobarómetro, 2004b)

38

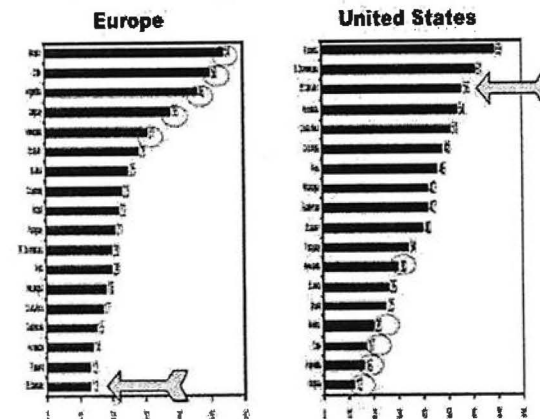
Figure 3.6

País	Porcentaje
El Salvador	60
República Dominicana	60
Francia	49
Corea del Sur	45
Honduras	42
Colombia	41
Guatemala	38
Nicaragua	34
Ecuador	26
Perú	25
México	20
Chile	15
Brasil	13
Paraguay	13
Bolivia	13
Honduras	12
Uruguay	10
Argentina	3
Total	28

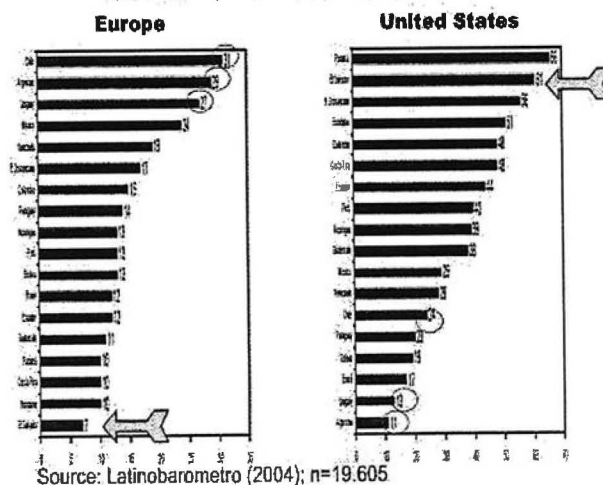
Q. I would like to know your opinion about the United States. Do you have a very good, good, bad or very bad opinion of the United States? Here 'Very good' plus 'Good'



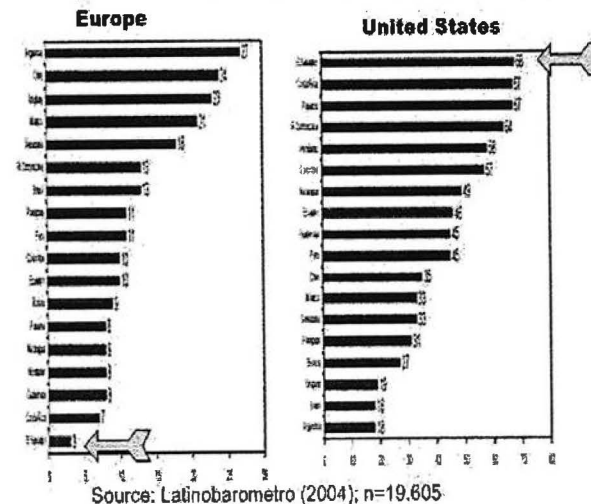
Q. Which of the world powers do you believe helps more to promote democracy? *Here 'Europe' and 'US'



Which of the following world powers do you believe helps more to development? *Here



Q. Which of the following world powers do you believe helps to promote free trade? *Here 'Europe' and 'United States'



3.2 Storylines of freedom: Neoliberalism in El Salvador, Good for whom?

If on the level of power, the story of injustices is clear, it is also clear in the level of freedoms. Taking into account Alkire's dimensions of human development (Appendix A.4) it is possible to argue that in El Salvador the poor and marginalized people (a great majority of its population) is not enjoying real freedoms. Inequality in multiple basic capabilities, in income, violent crime and poverty: this is the basic triangle of unfreedoms that has been the background of the neoliberal model in El Salvador. (See fig. 3.7) In a nutshell, this is where the real freedoms of Salvadoreans get sterilized. Their real positive freedoms to determine their own life have been severely hit not just by economic constraints provoked as negative externalities of the market, but by their own overall social, political and cultural exclusion from basic valuable ends like: the ability to walk safely in the street, to learn and integrate in equal terms to society, to have strong and durable friendships, religious expression, etc. in other words, capabilities that are not included in the utilitarian arithmetic of market-based approaches.

In El Salvador, it would be too easy to assert that you have the real freedoms to live a fulfilling and rewarding life in terms of Alkire's dimensions²⁴, when poverty, social exclusion, inequality, etc. make it impossible to, for example have the real freedom to read a book in the beauty and safety of a natural park with your family or friends, without frustration (because the parks are so few, and to be inside a mall is safer), sadness (because you lack the capability to read) or fear (because of the danger of getting robbed or killed), and so on. In the words of Beat Rohr²⁵, UNDP, representative in El Salvador

"I am angry and worried that here there are no public spaces whatsoever. For example, my little son is still young, eleven years old, and cannot ride a bicycle here. There is no space where I could tell him to go unworried and come back safely at night. (...) this is really horrible because it is creating individualist societies, with too little trust between human beings. The same happens when I go to the beach.

²⁴ life, knowledge, work and play, friendship, self-integration, self-expression, religious spirituality

²⁵ Swiss nationality

The side of the beach should be a public space but in reality here it is owned by the privates..." (El Faro, 2006)

What worries about this all, is that neoliberalism's negative freedoms have created a vicious cycle in El Salvador. Today, in order for the economy to keep going, El Salvador requires high amounts of continuous emigration and of great proportions, which is difficult to be sustainable in the long term. Nevertheless, El Salvador has kept receiving remittances, between 1990 and 2005, that amount an average of 14.2% of the GDP and were never lower than 2.2%. (CEPAL, 2006) and poverty, and inequality are lowered, but at the expense of disintegrated families, patterns of consumerism, and rise of crime.

Figure 3.7

A

EL SALVADOR: POVERTY LEVELS (2003) IN PERCENTAGES

By geographical area	Total Poverty	Extreme Poverty	Extrema Poverty
Urban	34.0	12.2	21.8
Rural	55.8	29.1	26.6
In the whole country	42.9	19.2	23.8

Source: Zamora Rivas (2006) ed. "El Salvador por dentro"

B

EL SALVADOR: INEQUALITY OF INCOME PER CAPITA (GINI COEFFICIENT (1992-2002))

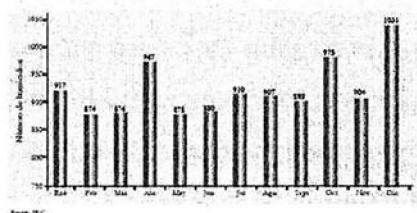
Año	National	By geographical area	
		Urban	Rural
1992	0.55	0.48	0.52
2000	0.55	0.51	0.47
2001	0.53	0.49	0.49
2002	0.54	0.50	0.49

Source: Zamora Rivas (2006) ed. "El Salvador por dentro"

C

EL SALVADOR: VIOLENCE

Simple series of homicides in El Salvador (1999-2003)



Source: PNC

Wrapping it up: When unequal power furthers unequal freedoms

In this section we have examined how the unequal concentration of power and the use of it by a hegemonic AIM complex in terms of a neo-liberal agenda has produced an unjust pattern of inequality of freedoms among the population of El Salvador. On the one hand, the Salvadorean elites, all those connected to the bodies of the big private enterprise (ANEP), ARENA's pro-neoliberal institutions,

and academic elites, have discovered in this development model the real capabilities to do and to be what they value. On the other hand, the majority of the population today, is being affected by high indexes of poverty, social exclusion and crime, which are all manifestations of inequality in the country. Although measuring freedoms is beyond the scope of this paper, it is certainly a good start to say that the evidence given confirms that in El Salvador the majority of people suffer unfreedoms.

4. DECONSTRUCTING THE HEGEMONIC DISCOURSE

Consider how the hegemonic AIM complex described previously, produces discursive practices to secure its dominance: texts, language, symbols, meanings loaded with its dominant ideology. Here, we explore these discursive practices by sampling texts, speeches, images, that were used in the advocacy of a policy of free trade in El Salvador: CAFTA's conception period (2001-2006). A relevant sample of organizations that constitute key factories of discourse within the hegemonic AIM complex described are analyzed: 1) *Academic discourse*: FUSADES, 2) *Institutional discourse*: IMF, ARENA, ANEP, US Government; and 3) *Media discourse*: LPG and EDH. The choice of these organizations derives from the previous chapter conclusions.

The first step of the analysis is to ask: what are the orders of discourse relevant for this analysis? (Fairclough, 2001) Drawing on (Steger, 2005: 14) today's ideological 'hub' is *neo-liberal globalism*. He argues that from this dominant ideology, at least six core claims usually emanate: (i) that globalization is about the liberalization and global integration of markets; (ii) that it is inevitable and irreversible; (iii) that it benefits everyone in the long run; (iv) that nobody is in charge of globalization; (v) that it furthers the spread of democracy in the world, and (vi) that it requires certain 'immediate' actions to further it. This ideology and its list of claims provide guiding lines to know *what to look for* in the patterns of discursive practices of the organizations selected. Do they defend these claims through their use of language?

4.1 THE ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

4.1.1 FUSADES: The victorious market

The semiotic material analyzed is a written article from Antonio Cabrales, President of FUSADES entitled "*Message from the President*" published as the welcoming section of the *Annual Report 2003* of FUSADES. (Cabrales, 2003) The text (appearing both in English and Spanish) provides a brief historical account of what has been the positioning, goals and vision of FUSADES as a development think-tank in key development issues of the nation since its creation in 1983. It is relevant because:

- a) It promotes its latest development strategy (FUSADES, 2003) created jointly with Harvard University professors in a publication called "*Fourth economic and social strategy 2004-2009. Opportunities, security and legitimacy: Foundations for development*" aimed at influencing policy-making for the 2004 Presidential elections of El Salvador; and
- b) It advocates for CAFTA in a critical period when already the negotiations have started.

The *take-home message* of the text is that the institution throughout its 21 years of existence has actively provided "guidance" by producing "serious" and "deep" studies to develop national development strategies from which public policies have been derived (Cabrales, 2003: 7-paragraph-2). This discursive practice provides rather than a technical discourse typical of a policy paper, a compressed institutional representation of how things have happened in the history of FUSADES and El Salvador.

The symbolic organization of the text follows the pattern of [past = chaos, present = positivism]. It basically reinterprets the problems of El Salvador from its particular vision: as Cabrales portrays it, FUSADES was born in a critical period, a time of "lack of defence for democracy and individual freedom". Faced with this situation "*visionary entrepreneurs*" founded FUSADES an institution that "came to fill that void" left by an "out of date model". (Ibid. paragraph-3)

Cabrales acknowledges how FUSADES' first recommendation for the first year of ARENA's government in 1989 was

"[o]pening up the economy, which implied an entirely new commercial policy to end protectionism and *force the country to make a better allocation of resources and become competitive.*"

Notice here an assumption: the free market has the default goodness of making "better allocation of resources" (8: paragraph-4). To be consistent with the above statement an obliged question pops-up: If the market is the best resource allocating option, (at least better than any state policy-strategy) then why after systematically opening up the economy (1989-2006), the indicators of inequality of income, poverty and social exclusion have, if not increased, remained alarmingly high for the last 15 years as one of the most unequal societies in Latin America? Moreover, how does this make the economy 'competitive'? The statement provides the reader with a vision about the inherent 'efficiency' of the market, but the issue here is, drawing on Gasper (2004: 56) "*efficiency in terms of which values*"?

Cabrales follows the line of argument of this idea throughout the article and links it with CAFTA:

"[I]n terms of international relations, management of the commercial policy by signing free trade agreements with several countries is *remarkable and the leadership of El Salvador* in the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Central America is a *highlight*. It is important to mention *how effective it has been for the country to have a 15-year continuity process for the achievement of all these reforms.*" (9: last paragraph)

Again, the question that arises from the text is, what does "*effectiveness for the country*" actually *mean*? In other words, if CAFTA is a 'highlight' of the 15 years of neo-liberal reforms, it is a *highlight* for whom? Thus, the issue is "Effectiveness towards *what* and *whom*?" (Gasper, 2004: 51). The assumption is that everyone agrees with the effectiveness of the policy.

Yet, the narrative of the text would not be complete if there was not present within it some explanation about the evident failures of the free-market economy in El Salvador, and these are given in (10: paragraph 2) " (Appendix B, text [1]) This passage is remarkable for three reasons:

a) It tries to separate FUSADES's position from the classic developmentalist view of the neo-liberal project of Washington Consensus institutions (IMF, World Bank...) whereby development is seen as a linear process formula: *free-market → growth → efficient-distribution → sustainable development*. By stating that the "institutional problem" was not addressed by the international institutions that pushed the reforms, it assumes a Post-Washington Consensus position by reinterpreting that the market is not guilty for what it has caused, it just needs a better institutional framework: a rule of law i.e. competition laws that would refine laissez faire reforms 'trickling-down' benefits to everyone in a sustainable way;

b) Moreover, it implicitly sets the responsibility issue of the failure of neoliberal reforms on the stubborn direction of the *powers above*, i.e. *IMF, World Bank, etc.* in missing this legal framework and not in the failure of the open-markets approach.

c) Lastly, notice the contradictions in: [i] the use of the term "*dissatisfaction*" and "*consumer*", and [ii] in the insisting approach of the "legitimacy of the market". Paradoxically, the language used to justify the failures of the market-reforms is still definitely grounded on a market-utilitarian-approach: people are consumers that need to be *satisfied*, thus rule of law in some of the negative externalities of the market is needed in order to satisfy the clients, i.e. with better prices of products. In a nutshell: the market is always victorious and its legitimacy, unquestionable.

4.2 THE INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSE

4.2.1 IMF: "*Trade Liberalization Makes Sense for Its Own Sake*"

This text represents the development discourse of the IMF. It is a speech given by Anne Krueger the First Deputy Managing Director²⁶ of the IMF in April 19th 2005, for a conference given at Notre Dame University denominated "*Latin America and the Global Economy*". Krueger's speech was entitled: "*Trade Policy and the Strategy for Global Insertion*" (Krueger, 2005)

²⁶ On this post since September 1, 2001

Contextually, the speech is relevant as it is a typical discursive genre practiced by global institutions: hold conferences in which 'experts' manufacture consensus about certain policy actions. (Haas, 1992; Kothari, 2005) This is a highly meaningful semiotic practice in two ways: a) It is a nodal factory of hegemonic discourse as the invited speakers all represent the global financial power, e.g. representatives from The World Bank, Goldman Sachs, Federal Reserve Bank of New York, American Development Bank, etc.; b) It addresses Latin America's trade policy in a time where El Salvador's CAFTA process was still fragile (the US ratifies CAFTA four months after this speech, July 27th, 2005).

Analyzing the overall structure of the text, it is clear that the speech aims to persuade the audience that higher accelerated growth rates are vital, thus immediate action must be taken: liberalize without admission of alternatives. In a nutshell, the *take-home message* is, quoting her own words, that "*Trade liberalization makes sense for its own sake*". [paragraph-49] The format of argumentation is as follows: 1) Trade liberalization leads to accelerated growth. 2) Accelerated growth leads to development. 3) The latter is true, if *ceteris paribus* you add complementary social policies 'and stir'. This message is emphasized both in the beginning and end of the text.

Furthermore, the message is not intended to be discussed, rather it is *prescriptive* and by the nature of the conference –invitation only– it is possible to infer that consensus would be the logical outcome of such elite-oriented forum [*tenor*]. Accordingly, the symbolic organization of the text sequence is framed in a closed structure: "*introduction*" → "*trade and growth*" → "*pushing ahead with trade liberalization*", → "*complementary policies*", → "*conclusion*". It does not leave a space for including counter-critiques, or questioning the position stated.

It is contradictory to see how sure Krueger seems to be about the sources of growth, when key 'growth' economists like Hausmann, Rodrik, Harberger, of Harvard University accept that no one really knows the sources of growth.²⁷ The text is populated with simplistic affirmations which are not supported by facts,

²⁷ Like Harberger states in, "When you get right down to business, there aren't too many policies that we can say with certainty deeply and positively affect growth." (Harberger, 2003: 215) quoted in (Rodrik, 2004: 1)

figures or counter-critiques to moderate them. Rather they are given in the style of proven facts or assumptions *already known* by the hearers appealing to their common sense in a third person style: "*there has been increasing acceptance worldwide*" (....) *Experience shows* (...); "*Evidence shows* (...)", without really given any systematic justification of its remarks. The strategy seems to be always of the format: "*Evidence shows...*" that "x" is necessary to get to "y". Take the statement that "*rapid growth*" over a prolonged-period is "*vital*" for poverty reduction. The obliged questions are: why and how "rapid"? in terms of *which criteria*? is all "rapid" growth the desirable goal and a condition for sustainable human development?

The surface or vocabulary of the text is easy to understand 3,681 words [tokens], 74 paragraphs. The information density of the text is not measured directly, but certain aspects of this issue can be described: the noun "trade" appears 81 times (1.24% of the text) which represents the highest frequency of token/type ratios. The word "growth" appears 47 times (0.72% of the text) (and all the adjectives added to it confer it a meaning of strength: "*accelerating growth*", "*rapid growth*", "*boosting growth*", "*trade growth*", "*global growth*", "*crisis-free growth*" "*sustained growth*", "*buoyant growth*". The word "liberalization" is the next in frequency of appearance (40 times, 0.61% of the total text) and lastly, the word "economic" appears 34 times (0.52% of the total text). The *neo-liberal cast* of the speech, is in other words, evident.

The position of the speaker [interpersonal aspects] is evidenced in the use of 'interactive items' such as 3rd person and objective reporting style in the passive voice indicating a position of *detachment*. Furthermore, the text does not rely too much on modal auxiliaries²⁸, but it does so at key stages of the speech, to get the message through, especially in the conclusions. (e.g. "[T]rade liberalization makes sense for its own sake, and *should be* pursued as rapidly as possible". Like so, it uses modals of volition and prediction (will: 9 times, shall) and hypothetical modals (would, should: 9 times) to lock-in the image of a rewarding future if free trade is pursued; e.g. "...that *will* deliver lasting

²⁸ [ideational aspects used to make propositions, e.g. must, should, can, may, would, should]

improvements...", "...will enjoy enormous benefits", "...will increase real incomes..." CAFTA is included as a policy that is part of that happy scenario ("Pushing ahead with liberalization: paragraph-4)

In sum, the use of language here is strategic and reassuring to maximize the impact of the message: Growth is the saviour of the greatest problems of humanity and free trade is the *only* way to achieve poverty reduction (paragraph 5) Thus, we can see that there is a constructed meaning of a "given truth" which is that the objective of any economy is "rapid growth". It is not a dialogue or open message, it is prescriptive and overrides the negative side of growth by saying "*Nor is there any systematic evidence that growth skews income distribution against the poor*". In sum, the flux of meaning is quite clear: *free trade* → *high growth* → *high-poverty-reduction rates* → *low-corruption*. The examples given are Korea and Chile as countries which "*experienced dramatically accelerated growth*" as a result of their trade openness.

4.2.2 US Government: Democracy, Prosperity, Freedom

In the case of the US Government, I take into account two speeches made by the President of the United States, George W. Bush in the pinnacle of the negotiations of CAFTA. Both are done in 2005, and are meaningful because this was a key year in which the objective was to *convince* the US Congress to sign in a 'fast-track' the permission to sign the agreement. Both speeches are done in the White House. One speech is given in May 12th "*President Discusses CAFTA-DR*" (Bush, 2005a) accompanied by the presidents of Central America. The other is given on the 2nd of August and is called "*President Signs CAFTA-DR*" (Bush, 2005b) accompanied by the Ministers of Central America.

The *take-home message* of both speeches can briefly be summed up in the first one (Bush, 2005a) [first paragraph] where Bush asserts that "The best way to achieve peace and prosperity for our hemisphere is by strengthening democracy and continuing the economic transformation of Central America and the Dominican Republic." The nature of the social interaction taking place [field] on both speeches analyzed is prepared for the mass audience. Thus, the flux of

language is “official” and is meant to give positive assurance about the process in which they are engaged in: free trade. Both speeches are very short. In the speech “President Discusses CAFTA-DR” President Bush appears in the Rose Garden of the White House with the Central American presidents subscribing the agreement in a ‘united’ manner. Bush is in the middle. His speech is a snapshot of the US leadership on the whole CAFTA process of negotiation: it portrays the uneven power relations of the actors involved by providing the image or narrative that the US is providing *opportunities* for poor fragile democracies of the South to trade with the world’s richest nation.

The symbolic organization of the speech uses a persuasive rhetorical message about the historic and successful path being undertaken with the signature of CAFTA by all the countries involved. His colloquial [mode] of speech is loaded with solemnity. He refers to the Central American mandataries as “people who have stood strong for democracy” that now come to this “historic opportunity” because “CAFTA brings benefits to all sides” [third paragraph]. Bush primarily uses a spoken corpus that includes the first and second person form with the terms “I”, “You” which gives a sense of familiar involvement .

Interestingly President Bush’s language never uses in both speeches the word ‘development’ but he seems to prefer ‘progress’, ‘prosperity’, ‘economic growth’. Moreover, when referring to the people of Central America or the United States instead of using the terms of “people” or “citizens” the choice of word is utilitarian: he refers to them as the “Central American *consumers*”, “the American *consumers*”, “we would open our market to 44 million *consumers*” or as “44 million *customers*”.

In the speech’s descriptive account of Central American countries he also represents them as “newly emerging democracies” in “our own backyard” that “share our values” [(Bush, 2005a) paragraphs 3-4]. Which values are those? The semantic chain that always follows is ‘democracy + freedom’ [(Bush, 2005b) paragraph-4, (Bush, 2005a) paragraph-5] whereby the latter depicts the overriding value: “CAFTA would bring the stability and security that can only come from freedom” he repeats this as he states that “the United States was built

on freedom" and that "the more of it we have in *our backyard*, the *freer and safer* all of the Americas will be." This legitimizes how the discourse flows: America is the headquarters of freedom and because everyone knows that freedom is a good value, the mission is to spread freedom which automatically means spreading democracy and free markets in a frame that situates a narrative of the 'past' as negative, and the present-future as positive like this: "Today a part of the world that was once characterized by oppression and military dictatorship now sees its future in free elections and free trade." Thus democracy is made the equivalent of the binary formula of free elections + free trade. More examples can be encapsulated in the statement: "By *transforming our* hemisphere into a *powerful free trade area*, we will promote democratic governance, human rights, and economic liberty for everyone."

Notice that parallel to the discourse on freedom, there is a possessive use of the region of Latin America, "*our own backyard*", whose backyard? The backyard of the Americans... this metaphoric description evidences the tacit vertical power relations that the US projects towards Central American countries, whereby the US would be 'the owner of the house' (idea of dominance) and Central America is part of its owner's property as it is the house's backyard. This description is used in both speeches. Moreover, the notion of freedom as free trade is linked to the notion of safety of "all of the Americas" [(Bush, 2005a) paragraph-6] which is a strategic persuasion move considering the way this issue has populated the collective consciousness about insecurity and terrorism in the Post 9-11 era.(Colás and Saull, 2006; Davis, 2005)

The notion of freedom related to free trade as intrinsically "just" can also be seen in [(Bush, 2005b) paragraph-4] whereby he states that Central American countries do not face tariffs in the US, which is *not fair* because US exports to Central America "still face *hefty* tariffs there. CAFTA will end these *unfair* tariffs against American products and help ensure that free trade is fair trade." Hence here he seals and enriches the equation: *free trade=fair trade*. Not only is free trade inspired by the value of freedom and brings democracy to the 'consumers' but also it is 'free' for it liberates producers from 'hefty tariffs' [used twice] and

thus its fairness. The obliged question pops up: what is fair in this US administration? What about the asymmetries of developing countries vis-à-vis the most powerful nation in the world?

Lastly, there is a manufacturing of consensus in the language used: the remarks when Bush dictates his speech in the day of signing the agreement, are stylized in the format "All of us in this room understand..." "x" is good for achieving "y", "x" being open markets and "y" growth and employment: "All of us in this room understand that to keep our economy growing and creating jobs, we need to open markets for American products overseas."

Essentially the idea of both speeches is to legitimize CAFTA with simple equations: free markets operationalize the value of freedom and have inherently good effects as imperatives seen in the uses of modals of volition and prediction such as "will": "(...) economic growth will raise working standards and will deliver hope and opportunity to people who have made the choice for freedom.

4.2.3 ARENA: "Being free is a life style." (Acosta Oertel, 2006)

The context: ARENA, CAFTA and the discourse on freedom

Since the day ARENA's government initiated the CAFTA negotiations with the US (January 8th, 2003) until the day of the Presidential elections (March 21st, 2004) El Salvador lived intensive struggles of discursive nature. Salvadorean citizens were bombarded with semiotic 'grenades' of propaganda of political and economic nature coming from all the contending political parties. In fear of losing the presidential seat from the leftist political party (FMLN), ARENA, the by-then three-time winner of the previous presidential elections, dispersed into the media a vast array of development discourses seeking to persuade the public opinion that it was the best and only alternative. In the process the party exhibited a real *tour de force* of its AIM complex when debating key policy issues such as CAFTA.

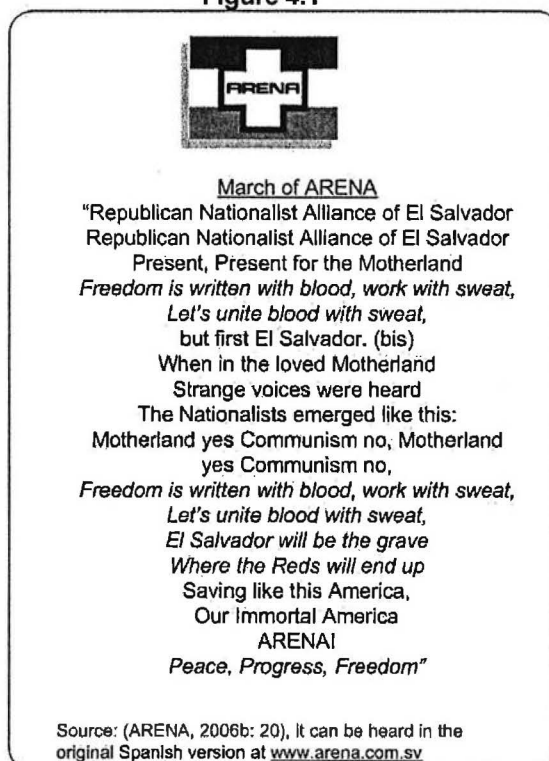
As the former Director of Ideology and ex-strong man from the Internal Affairs Ministry of ARENA's government, Mario Acosta Oertel, confirms:

"There has been much doctrinal influence, in the case of the economic field, of the Chilean School and the Chicago Boys. The first government of ARENA was fed by proposals that were coming from FUSADES which were in turn, highly influenced by the Chilean School and the Chicago Boys. *It wasn't an automatic transplant but it was a 'tropicalized' transplant of El Salvador.*" [Interview: (Acosta Oertel, 2006)]

In this way, ARENA's neoliberal ideology permeated all sorts of discourses generated in texts, speeches, etc. through the active work of its AIM complex. As a consequence of the above, ARENA, until today processes, re-structures and disseminates "tropicalized" discourses into the public opinion. Thus, in the 2001-2006 CAFTA's period, ARENA, tried to use the idea of freedom as a Trojan horse in the political debate like this: to choose FMLN, was to choose communism which is the enemy of freedom, democracy, the free-market, and of the US. (ECA, 2004) Logically then, to vote for ARENA was already an act loaded with meaning: it meant *voting for freedom* and thus it implied to *vote for CAFTA*, for good relations with the US (vital for all citizens dependent on remittances), etc.

Anecdotically speaking, ARENA's political march song, a heavily used semiotic material during political campaigns or ARENA's events (whereby all of its members are seen singing it with devotion) through TV spots and radio stations may give us a *surface* introduction about ARENA's notion of freedom. I draw on this song as I believe it depicts and briefly summarizes ARENA's self-representation of its identity, history and sub-culture within the public realm:

Figure 4.1



Taken as a unit, several aspects come to attention: a) the march, which in real music has the pace and chorus of a real military march and is used in almost every public act of ARENA, uses lines of El Salvador's National Anthem "freedom is written with blood" to unite it to the notion of "work with sweat" which implicitly interprets an ideal: the idea that freedom is given to those *who work-hard*. b) The notion of 'motherland' is framed as the exact opposite of 'communism' and ARENA's objective is to make El Salvador "the grave of the Reds (...)" Saving like this America (...)" This murderous feeling towards communism stems from a deeply rooted notion spread out through the liberal ranks of ARENA: freedom is opposite to communism, and communism is bad. Thus, it follows that 'to save' America; those who are liberals deserve life, and those who don't will be annihilated. ARENA's members describe it verbally like this:

"Conceptually, the word 'freedom' is not only associated with the genesis of ARENA, but is also clustered with the genesis itself of the Motherland, and of our concepts of Nation which is "God, Union and Freedom" from there is

where it starts, as a *concept style of living* which is incorporated in the liberal democratic concepts of ARENA. *Freedom is in all the sense of the word, like an antithesis of nationalization, [it is opposed to the] limitation of individual freedom, and to what could be an individual or centralized control of the state.* [Interview : (Acosta Oertel, 2006)]

The question is: how has the notion of freedom been *metamorphosed* to mean “the opposite of nationalization” or to the “centralized control of the state”? Is this true?

ARENA's ideology

To understand this it is useful to leave this cortex of meaning-making in ARENA's popular culture, and dig-in the political-economic notions that lay in the core of ARENA's ideological superstructure. Consider for instance, ARENA's constitutional texts of principles and objectives. These are taught to every new member in ARENA's political school, the Institute of Political Education Mayor Roberto D'Aubuisson (ARENA, 2006a) in form of texts, that later are described and enacted verbally with the aid of PowerPoint presentations with cartoons and easy-to-understand lexical language. (See Appendix) In these, the following notions of freedom and its relationship with neoliberalism appear as follows:

ARENA's discourse on freedom

[Text-1]

“Liberalism: It is the *ideology of freedom*. It is the theory of the limits of power. (...) Liberalism is *the supreme generosity: it is the right that the majority has given to the minority* and is for that reason, the most *noble cry* that has been heard in the planet.” (ARENA, 2006b, p.1)

.....

“The liberal doctrine is based in following fundamental principles:

- *All men are free*
- *All men are equal* in the face of law
- *At all levels the principle of free competition rules (...)*”(ARENA, 2006a, p.35)

From [text-1] notice that the attempt to encapsulate the meaning of liberalism *inevitably* falls in embarrassingly ambiguous terrains. Liberalism is said to be an 'ideology of freedom'. However, as we have already discussed in ch.2, the concept of freedom is too wide to orient policy actions in a clear-cut way: it is a Babel family of values deriving more than two-hundred senses and interpretations (Berlin, 1958; Gasper and van Staveren, 2003). How elastically confusing can this definition be?

Moreover, there is an intrinsic three-fold contradiction: Firstly, Liberalism is said to be the "*supreme generosity*" of the majority towards the minority because the majority has conceded them "the right"... the right to do, to be or to have what? If a right used as a noun is "a moral or legal entitlement to have or do something" (Weihmeier, 2005), which value is supporting it? Which right is that? For example, if we assume that one is entitled to the right to life, then it follows that others do not have the liberty to murder him/her. Yet here a small minority enjoys a right that the majority was entitled to enjoy but that has "generously" not to enjoy it by giving it instead to the minority. The question is who poses these moral constraints and obligations in whose benefit. Who is this minority? What begs for an answer is why it is a 'generous' act? Is it not true that if it is valued as a 'generous' gesture of the majority to 'give' this right to a minority, this right *must be good and valuable*? But if there is a "goodness" in this right, why should a minority (an elite) enjoy *the luxury of it* at the expense of the majority? Furthermore, if this inequality of power and freedoms [some have more entitlements than others in terms of capabilities to do and to be] is institutionalized by the law then, such a discursive statement, is in fact legitimizing an unjust societal order.

This brings us to the second point: In ARENA's view the law is nevertheless, observing that "all men are equal" under the law. But if henceforth the rules are made by and for the elite's best interests, then, as Anatole France once put it, what we have here is the justice of the powerful: "*The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread.*" (France, 1894)

The third point of analysis is yet another contradiction: ARENA states that "all men are free" and "equal under the law" However, it then *ipso-facto* adds to its list of principles that the principle of free competition rules "*at all levels*". What does this mean? Does it mean for example, that as we are all equal and free, we have the right to compete for life? or to privatize public goods like water or air in order to compete? In competition, the results tend to be in terms of some winning and others losing, but what if the elite make the rules? Take CAFTA for instance, as of today, the rule of law enforces free trade and edicts a competition among unequal technological, political, social, economical and cultural settings. In this Darwinian status quo, does the survival of the fittest, bring well-being for all?

[Text -2]

"Freedom, is in its optimum form, the *guarantee* that each person *will* realize its full potential, *depending* on its motivation and application. Freedom does not guarantee equality, because that is impossible. Men have never been equal and can never be." (ARENA, 2006a, p.31)

.....

"In the political field, Liberalism favours a government that *guarantees the most freedoms* to the individual." (ARENA, 2006b, p.1)

.....

"In the economic field, *freedom is the absence of governmental coercion* for the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services, more than what is indispensable to maintain freedom itself." (ARENA, 2006b, p.1)

"Capitalism *placed freedom at the reach of the poor*" (ARENA, 2006a, p.40)

Accordingly, [text-2] extends the latter discussion in another contradictory way. The subtlety here consists in stating that freedom gives some kind of '*guarantee*' that each person will realize its 'full potential' "or "*the most freedoms* to the individual". Hitherto, this means that ARENA endorses a certain kind-of freedom that certifies or predicts that the person "*will*" [modal of volition and prediction] enhance the full capabilities of Salvadoreans to do and to be what they really value for their lives. Yet, the sentence also adds in contrast to the latter meaning, that this will happen "depending" on other factors: motivation and application. If it also acknowledges that "*freedom does not guarantee equality*",

then the question is obliged: what does ARENA understand for equality? Is the classic "Equality of what?" question (Sen, 1992) answered here in any way? Is it equality of rights, of income, of opportunities, of capabilities or what?

As previously discussed in ch.3, one could deduct from this passage that ARENA endorses a 'negative' notion of freedom (Berlin, 1958) as it refers implicitly to an idea of "*absence of governmental coercion*" that would mean "equality of opportunities" or so to speak, an "equal availability of some *particular means*" or the equal absence of "some specific barriers or constraints." (Sen, 1992: 7) Therefore, ARENA conceives here a government that does not take responsibility in other else than limiting obstacles to the market or expanding freedoms *in some undefined way*. As Sen indicates, the problem with this restrictive notion of freedom is that it misses the fact that as human beings are diverse, an equal absence of barriers, or "equal benefits to people with unequal needs will not produce equal well-being". (Gasper, 2004: 107) As Sen concludes about this negative freedom it "does not amount to anything like equality of *overall freedoms*". Does ARENA's discursive notion of freedom *guarantee* anything at all?

ARENA's view of development history

[Text -3]

"The liberalism that our party presents is the same liberalism that enabled the *civilized existence of the developed world*. This liberalism *has been waiting for us patiently, like holy water, to clean the sweaty faces* of the Central Americans." (ARENA, 2006b, p.1)

"History of humanity has been the *history of the crushing power of the government over the individual*, beginning with the Syrian monarchies and the Egiptians faraons, to the absolute monarchies that dominated the world *until the arrival of the French revolution*." (ARENA, 2006b, p.1)

Finally, we have here two passages in [text-3] that depict the semiotic representation of ARENA's view of the world and the liberal ideology. Two aspects deserve attention: a) Notice that ARENA's development discourse

assures the reader or listener that their liberalism is the same as the one that enabled the construction of the "civilized existence of the developed world". In other words, as the classical stages of economic growth portrayed in (Rostow, 1960) ARENA portrays the idea that by following the same steps of the developed world in terms of policies, the inevitable outcome is that we will develop like them. b) In this sense, it provides a quasi-biblical metaphoric use of language and a persuading narrative that liberalism "has been waiting for us patiently", as if liberalism was a benign deity that had "*patience*" with [supposedly implicit], stubborn Central American resistance to see its light. Now that those converted to liberalism have seen the light, their "*sweaty faces*" (a phrase that conveys a meaning of dirt, poverty, hard-work under the sun), shall be 'cleaned', or in other words, shall be saved from the sweaty poverty typical condition of most Salvadoreans living in the rural areas. Lastly, attempts to connote in the same package, that their liberalism is directly linked with the French revolution's principles as opposed to those of totalitarian regimes in the past. But is ARENA practicing a formula of *liberté, égalité et fraternité*?

The semiotic production of the Presidents

In March 30th, 2002, a relevant semiotic passage occurred. President Bush (US) arrived for a couple of hours to El Salvador to make a strategic visit: to visit President Flores's administration, to advocate for CAFTA. Consider that this was the year in which the AIM complex started generating technical and ideological discourses pro-free trade. The shadow of ALCA was evidently pushing the agenda of the Central American region. Consequently, President Bush's visit to El Salvador became the expectation of the media, academic, entrepreneurs, and policy-makers of the government. They wanted to see if the US would send positive signals about how-to-go over the difficult process of making CAFTA a reality. The dominant local media of the AIM complex, most significantly the written press, applauded Bush's visit using CAFTA as their main

theme in the following terms: "Bush brings prosperity" announced El Diario de Hoy, and "Bush bets on free trade" were the main titles spread. (CIDAI, 2002)

Yet what was remarkable of the visit was its semiotic aspect. That day in a conference done jointly by both presidents in the Presidential House of San Salvador, all Salvadorean journalists bombarded Bush with questions about CAFTA. Their interest was in knowing how and when the process would really start for Central American countries. In sharp contrast, the American media did not show any interest on CAFTA which is why they asked no questions related to it, and merely issues of US-related domestic affairs (Martinez, 2002). Out of all the journalists in the pressroom none bothered to ask any questions to Flores.

This plainly demonstrated that the power to drive CAFTA forward seemed to be perceived *in reality* in the hands of the US. El Salvador was perceived as nothing else than a docile 'puppet'. This idea became more evident when, in a media spectacle, a public exchange of 'friendly remarks' occurred between both presidents. Their brief statements were fully loaded of semiotic elements. (Appendix B-text 4] On the one hand, Bush portrayed El Salvador as "*one of the bright lights*" in Latin America because of its "*great economic and political transformation*"; and on the other, this statement reinforced the storyline about the success of the neoliberal structural reforms that the Washington Consensus dictated to the obedient ARENA. Bush omitted however, to mention any concrete outcome of this "great transformation" for Salvadoreans. Instead, he preferred to assert that the future of El Salvador was "hopeful".

Hence, this event symbolized: i) the US dominance in the political culture of Salvadoreans and its power to set the agenda and discourse namely on the agenda of free trade agreement in Central America and ii) only those who adapt to this agenda, the good liberals will be in the honourable list of Bush's friends.

President Saca's discourse: ARENA's government Plan 2004-2009

In a last account, a crucial discursive document is examined: President Saca's government plan "*Secure country: Government Plan 2004-2009*". This text is relevant in the discursive networks of CAFTA as it was consolidated and

widely disseminated through the media prior to the presidential elections, and based on the strategic contributions of FUSADES-Harvard University academic cluster (FUSADES, 2003), and the entrepreneur sector represented in ANEP with its position papers of the National Meetings of the Private Enterprise (ENADE) . In this sense, it is the by-product of the hegemonic AIM complex *par excellence* and illustrates ARENA's latest positioning in the period of the CAFTA debate and its development discourse. The document is a 70 page text that was aimed to communicate to the Salvadorean population, what the future government of ARENA would do in terms of development policies. Notably, for a text analysis, the best sampling and most representative part of the text as a whole are its summarized introductory sections were it accounts: "The historical project of ARENA" [text-5]; the "Introduction" to the government plan [text-6] and the "Framework of the plan]" [text-7]

On first instance, the document reflects ARENA's positioning and general tone of the text from the assurance that it has *already accomplished* its three main constitutional objectives: 'Peace', 'Freedom' and 'Progress'. What do this words mean in a nation where for instance, poverty and unemployment is persistent, growth per capita is low, and the crime rate, inequality, and emigration to the US has been growing steadily and is regarded as one the highest in the world? Obviously, the political rhetoric does not touch this, but implicitly accepts that something has not worked out so fine: it states in a rather Post-Washingtonian Consensus discourse that now ARENA has a "renovated ideal" which additions the words "Social Peace", "Progress with *Equality*" and "Freedom with *responsibility*". In other words, ARENA is stating that *something was missing before* in its development planning.

[Text-6]

(...)"[W]e are here in the face of a historical election; more than in any moment of our history we have to choose between the future or the past; between conflict and hate or the harmony of social cohesion; *between isolation or integration with the world.*"

"The past is a reference; the present is the need of accelerated progress and the future, the great challenge to build a much better El Salvador. The next government will work towards progress with equity, constructing a more just, cooperative, participatory and productive society, with the means to progress in peace, within a system of freedoms. We will bet for the future!" (ARENA, 2004: 2)

What was missing? Why should the population believe in this development plan? The text immediately closes the discursive structure [text-6] and reframes its narrative to a typical hegemonic discourse where only two positions can be taken: the negative past : words used to portray the past: 'isolation', 'conflict', 'hate' (associated by ARENA to the communist left) and the 'bright', 'harmony', 'social cohesion' future (represented in this discourse by ARENA itself). This brings to mind typical discursive practices of the neoliberal ascendancy of the eighties whereby leaders like Margaret Thatcher exploited the notion of TINA (There is no alternative) position to maintain the status quo. Moreover, observe that the transfusion of language of force *IMF-Krueger* style of "accelerated progress" comes back to the tool-box of meanings to associate it to more well-being. With ARENA, thus, it is deducted that what can be expected is a positive future in terms of justice, participation, cooperation, production, system of freedoms, and progress with peace and equity.

[Text-7]

"In the threshold of the XXI century history tends to repeat; the countries have the opportunity to access the technology and transform its productive base, or not do anything and fall in a much greater comparative disadvantage, at the expense of its population." (ARENA, 2004, p.3) "The solution to the problem is not to oppose progress but to unite to it. The richness is in augmenting productivity by raising the technological levels in which our society works in all its areas and in all its spaces." (ARENA, 2004: 3)

Understandably so, then if the future is *that bright* [ARENA] and the past is *that dark* [FMLN] then the "*solution to the problem*" takes you to only one alternative: one should select the best development plan available: ARENA.

Furthermore, here the discourse is not just that ARENA is the only option available, or paraphrasing Fukuyama(1989), "the end of history for El Salvador" it is also the only one *feasible*. It argues that not engaging with "the opportunity to access the technology and transform its productive base"(typical globalization discourse of inevitability and irreversibility) will bring the disastrous "comparative disadvantage". Hence, the rationale of development is summarized in this format: ↑open-markets [opportunity]→ ↑access to technology→↑ growth[productivity]→ ↑progress which here is understood as synonymous of development.

4.2.3 ANEP

The National Association of the Private Enterprise disseminated in the media several discursive practices related with free trade and its support for CAFTA, on almost identical ideological grounds as ARENA. (ANEP, 2003)

Notwithstanding this position, it is certainly important to see how the private enterprise clustered its business discourse into the overall discursive flows. The text here refers to a position given by ANEP to the Salvadorean media, entitled "*The Free Trade Agreement between Central America and the United States: An opportunity of growth and development*"

Unlike ARENA, the overall tone of the language used herewith is less solemn. It is oriented to provide information to the general public about the position of the private enterprise on the CAFTA process of negotiation without drawing so heavily on political rhetoric of 'us': the good, versus 'them': the bad. Instead, it provides a short and simple *take-home message*: ANEP's position is to provide "full support" for the start of the CAFTA negotiations. How so and in terms of which criteria? The answer is immediately provided in 8 bullet-points. This allows the listener/reader to have a sense of an 'orderly', more technical objectivity. The discourse is thus closer to that of FUSADES, in fact in later stages of the text it backs-up its arguments making reference to the academic documents that the private enterprise has produced on the subject such as the annual ENADE position papers.

The first three bullet points are provided here as a sample. Notice how the argument is framed: CAFTA and “every” similar initiative of lowering trade barriers and thus “promoting freedoms” “*will be supported*” [modals of volition and prediction]” . This is a crucial statement: it does not leave space for doubts: invariably of its nature, every initiative of free trade is inherently good regardless of the context , its nature and at no matter what cost because it has already been proven that this is the best policy available for growth and development. The argumentative structure of the policy is like this: it provides *philosophical reasons* [value of ‘freedom’] → *empirical-technical* “reality” [openness→growth]. The argument is in this way normative: *supporting freedom* means supporting “openness”, which in turn means following policies of “free-trade”. The discursive sequence [freedom→openness→free-trade→growth→development] is persuasive precisely because it is a ‘neat common sense’ developmentalist equation. Again, we find the same repetitive structure of the Krueger-growth argument of the AIM complex here.

The weakness of the argument stems from the fact that as it draws strength from a negative sense of freedom (“lowering barriers” or constraints as *means* for development) it also leaves out the contextual diversity of human beings and their larger-than-market freedoms. Not all Salvadoreans benefit in equal way from the absence of constraints, and moreover, their capabilities to flourish as full human lives in structures of unjust power relations (where a majority abdicates their valuable rights for the sake of a minority) may be limited because of their own lack of education, cultural barriers, or lack of governmental support. In addition to the negative freedom’s critique, the connective jump of *free trade→growth→development* as previously discussed, is too naïve: Latin America’s and El Salvador’s structural reforms sought just that, with more than sad and sterile results. (Biglaiser and DeRouen Jr., 2004; Green, 2003)

In Appendix B [text-2] CAFTA is again, portrayed as an inevitable fact of globalization. The argument portrays a sense of ‘helplessness’ to the overwhelming power of globalization that “without anybody’s authorization” has “effects on everyone”. The question is *what kind of effects are those?* Is this

“accelerated process” of globalization affecting everyone in a negative or positive manner? If the answer is both ways, are the negative-positive effects of this process affecting everyone in equal manner?

4.3 THE MEDIA DISCOURSE: EDH and LPG²⁹

The last wing of the hegemonic AIM complex is the media. It is here where all the diverse voices of the dominant elite echo their development discourse and effectively form a surrounding ‘stereo-phonetic’ chorus in a single harmonious song. Just like an orchestra, the director selects sometimes a ‘solo performance’, certain players or certain instruments to play at key moments of the song and spread a certain feeling or meaning, and the right atmosphere to express the mood of the song. In the media, even silence counts as a discourse, provided it is placed at the right place in the right time.

In this way, the following Editorial from (El Diario de Hoy, 2004) was selected to represent the view of one of the most (if not the most) fierce defendant of CAFTA within the written press. Attention is put at what it says, and what it does not say. The Editorial entitled “*They ask absurdities to justify themselves*” was published on December 18th, 2004. The timing is relevant as it is the day-after CAFTA was historically ratified by ARENA and the rightist block of Congress (after 16 hours of bitter discussions with FMLN). The agreement was signed by a slight differential in votes favouring the pro-CAFTA position in the middle of the night with a *divide et impera* strategy. That week was a convulsive chapter in CAFTA’s chronology, as people and civil society organizations opposed to the agreement took the only forum left available for them to express their anger for signing the agreement: with multiple riots in the streets.

The take-home message of EDH’s Editorial starts with the title and subtitle sections of the article: “They ask absurdities to justify themselves”, meaning that those who oppose to CAFTA [i.e. FMLN] ask questions that are not relevant to this issue of free-trade and thus do not have feasible arguments to veto it. It then follows that “protectionism what the communists defend...” is out of the question,

²⁹ Written press

because this policy is not feasible, desirable or relevant as “it punishes the consumers” and “producers” . As in other wings of the AIM complex, a market-utilitarian approach view of society flourishes in the language used: society can be partitioned in a consumer-producer binary. Notice that the general tone of the text is aggressive towards those who oppose CAFTA. The article constructs a storyline that depicts reality as a black-and-white world: it does not leave room for heterogeneity of positions towards CAFTA. In this sense, you are either against CAFTA, (FMLN-communist), or you support it (entrepreneur, liberal government). However, in this narrative you'd better be situated in the side of the entrepreneurs since the term “communist” serves as a pejorative tag-word that works in basically the same way as George W. Bush's use of the term “terrorist”. (Colás and Saull, 2006; Nakaya, 2005) It separates as in Laclau's notion of hegemony (Laclau, 2002) a frontier between ‘us’ and ‘them’. In this way, it frames FMLN as the bad or the ugly guys, and homogenizes the field, by adding all other positionings in the same basket. (see fig.4.2)

Figure 4.2

WRITTEN PRESS FRAMING LANGUAGE: EL DIARIO DE HOY'S STORYLINE ON CAFTA		
CAFTA	Negative Face	Positive Face
Tags	"Communist"= FMLN [the bad, the ugly]	"Entrepreneur", "the "government" = ARENA [the good]
Hegemonic frontier	"Them"	Us
Policy supported	"Protectionism", "relative isolation"	Openness, free-market, "progress", "business opportunities"
Objectives	<i>"The disorder, the spread of discord, the blind opposition, the lack of arguments."</i> "social justice" = "social sabotage", "social riots", "social traffic jams", "social burning of buses", "social kidnapping", "social delinquency"	<i>"the one that is supported by the majority of the enterprises and the Executive: to open-up the economy to world trade but especially with the United States in this first stage"</i>

Source: own construction based on (El Diario de Hoy, 2004)

4.3.1 La Prensa Gráfica: The use of image and text

The day CAFTA was officially inaugurated as an active treaty (March 1st, 2006) the media became, as many times before, a significant factory of discourse of the event. A flux of semiotic elements 'covering' the occasion populated the main headlines and a whole 'priesthood' of experts and 'economic gurus', again were called-in to give their points of view about the historic agreement and its consequences. La Prensa Gráfica, the morning newspaper with the highest readership in the country, prepared for the event with a high profile forum of analysis called "CAFTA: Optimism and Challenges". The idea was to invite a representative set of actors to a public space to discuss and give their points of view about CAFTA and its future. Hence, the forum was meant to create opinion, and stir up a climate for debate. In this section, the analysis focuses on a sample of the "visual-text narratives" presented at such forum in the layout-form of the newspaper that day (Ramos et al., 2006). (See fig. 4.3) and appendix B for the original version in Spanish)

Figure 4.3

CAFTA: FLOWS OF TEXT & IMAGE IN ONE OF THE MAIN NEWSPAPERS OF EL SALVADOR, LA PRENSA GRAFICA

[FORUM TITLE] "CAFTA: OPTIMISM & CHALLENGES"

"THE BEST EXCUSE"	"GIVES CONFIDENCE"	"TOTAL EFFORT"	"OPPORTUNITIES"	"NEW REALITY"	"TIME WILL TELL"	"MORE PRODUCTION"	"THE PROTECTION"
Roberto Rubio, FUNDE	Vilma de Calderón, COEXPORT, [ARENA GOVERNMENT]	Napoleon Guerrero ASI [ANEP]	Marío Salaverria, Ministry of Agriculture [ARENA]	Yolanda de Gavidia, Minister of Economy, [ARENA]	Federico Colorado, ANEP	Carlos Orellana Merlos, FUSADES	Ricardo Esamahan, CAMAGRO, [ANEP]
"It is the best excuse, in many years, to modernize the country even despite the costs it could have. It will be a magnet of investment attraction."	"CAFTA must be an element of trust for the industries and enterprises, but this has to be accompanied by good quality in products."	"CAFTA is not going to take us economically forward as a country, but rather it will be all our efforts to take advantage from it"	"For the agricultural sector, CAFTA has opportunities and has challenges, and the opportunities are in the short term since today."	"It opens us a totally different space and benefits us in investment and other areas. Obviously there are important challenges"	"The news are good, we believe that the results will be given as the years pass by and the entrepreneurs mark the results."	"The main challenge towards CAFTA is the increase of productivity. It is not if they lower the tariffs because it is not a problem of tariffs."	"What the sector achieved was time, a prudent time to make the job we have to do: renovation and to make it more competitive"

Source: All text translation done by the author & picture taken from the 'Economic section', La Prensa Grafica, 1st of March, 2006, p.3

In the sample, the picture and the text transfer a certain meaning of *assurance* to the reader. The public personalities in the picture come from well known institutions which could all (except for FUNDE), be framed as part of the institutional hegemonic AIM complex. This is true insofar as it has already been acknowledged, that ARENA's government has close ties with all entrepreneur sectors of the country.(ch.3) Strikingly, this CAFTA 'forum' pleads a necessary question: what type(s) of *knowledge(s)* and *voices* are privileged in this space? Which are excluded? If a 'forum' is "a place where people can exchange opinions and ideas on a particular issue" (Weihmeier, 2005) which ideas are *in the frame* and which are not? For the context at hand, it is evident that in this forum, the legitimate speakers on the subject of CAFTA are those closest or in connection with the government or with the academic realm. The common citizen, the peasant, the grass-roots associations, the informal sector, medium, small and

micro-entrepreneurs are perhaps supposed to be 'represented' in the voices above, but are they legitimately representing their ideas, worries, fears or positions? By means of a market-analogy: Why are there barriers or constraints in the "free market" exchange of ideas to deliberate on a policy that is supposed to affect the lives of everyone in the country? Which are the requirements one has to meet to be included? Perhaps the discursive capabilities of the *vox populi* are not relevant, but if El Salvador is claimed to be a full deliberative democracy, then how is the notion of 'freedom' effectively practiced here? Who has the freedom to deliberate? The discourse of silence of the *incapable* and those opposed to CAFTA must be read from under the images and lines of this text.

On the other hand, supposedly here FUNDE is the 'alternative voice' in this forum, but it strikes as a too unbalanced setting of political thinking. FUNDE in the CAFTA debate did not represent the 'no position' to CAFTA, but rather the "yes, but, only if," position. (Iniciativa CID, 2002; 2003; 2006)

On the actual structure of the layout, the same homogenizing feeling of consensus is observed: the chosen titles and subtitles of the text, the picture presented of the forum's participants and the selected quotes-text all have a common positive tone supposedly summarising what each of the public personalities thought about CAFTA. The general atmosphere that is portrayed is noticeable in the headline title which gives the *tenor* of the meeting: "*Optimism and Challenges*". Notice that the choice of words is meaningful. The newspaper could have chosen other binary sets such as "benefits and costs", "opportunities and constraints", "advantages and disadvantages", "assurances and risks" etc.... Instead it delicately chose words that give implicitly the idea that the forum *concludes* that CAFTA is good, and that whatever bad that comes with it, is not something bad, but a *challenge*. Moreover, it is verifiable that within the headlines of the quotes, none of them, except for "time will tell" quote give a negative or doubtful impression about the possible impacts that CAFTA could have in the development future of El Salvador. If you zoom-in and read the quotes, this sense changes to a more doubtful note.

4.4 WRAPPING UP THE LANGUAGE OF HEGEMONY

As we have seen from the deconstruction of key discursive practices of the hegemonic AIM complex operating in the scenario of CAFTA, it is evident how the overall discursive narratives or storylines overlap and reinforce each other at various levels, with different accents, genres, and modalities but all in their own special way furthering a specific message of the dominant ideology. Taking into account the rhetorical aspects of many of these, it is now easy to see that as the basic structure of storylines, the general argument fits perfectly with the structure of enthymemes (see fig.4.4)

Figure 4.4

UNDERSTANDING THE PERSUASIVE USE OF LANGUAGE (RETHORIC) THROUGH THE STRUCTURE OF AN ENTHYME				
Enthymeme structure	Discursive manifestation		Nature of statement	
	P1	[1] Our key goal is... X: to achieve PROSPERITY	P1	Value stating desirable state of affairs
P1 + P2	P2	[2] Y: ACCELERATED GROWTH leads to X	P2	General belief of contingent relationship in normative domain
C1 → (P1' + P2')	C1 → P1'	[3] Therefore, we need to take appropriate action to achieve Y	C1 → P1'	General conclusion on required type or class of action
C2	P2'	[4] Action Z: FREEDOM as FREE TRADE leads to Y	P2'	Belief of contingent relationship in the action-oriented domain
	C2	[5] Therefore we need to do Z	C2	Conclusion of required specific action to be taken

CONCLUSIONS

By arguing that discourses can be threads of power, this study has tried to *provide evidence on how discursive tactics in language based on notions of 'freedom' serve as means of an hegemonic academic-institutional-media complex to advance and lock-in the neoliberal development model of El Salvador.*

In this sense, the research has contributed in the understanding of how language may be used as means for framing patterns of behaviour and policy-making agendas throughout the reality of El Salvador. The research has in this way engaged in contributing with at least three dimensions of current academic literature:

First, it has furthered the understanding on how development discourses supposedly based on the value of 'freedom' shape young democracies of developing countries in Latin America, in contexts of elite power structures. As (Stevens et al., 2006: 607) state in their study of Latin American elites, "Elites' values and behaviour reflect the health of a nation's democracy". In this sense, the implications of this research on the way these processes of hegemonic discursive practices become enacted are specially important for the critical advancement of more real spaces for deliberative democratic processes in conditions of egalitarian capabilities. The research also shows and informs literature on the subject,³⁰ that elite values and ideologies can be effectively tropicalized, re-structured, and disseminated through a whole range of discursive tactics and forms of meaning-making in order to profoundly affect the behaviour and values of the mass population. It in this way has demonstrated that the elastic boundaries of the notion of freedom as a value provide sufficient space for a whole range of rhetoric strategies in language and to enforce the neoliberal globalism dominant ideology of today.

Moreover, following Sen (1999) and Deneulin (2006) this research critically asks if the real freedoms of Latin Americans 'to do and to be what they

³⁰ (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Hill and Hurley 1999; Zaller 1992).

have reason to value are sterile or inexistent because they suffer inequality of capabilities and opportunities to influence deliberative processes. This inequality is specifically evident in the policy agendas of free trade fostered by AIM complexes in the Latin American region and US interventionism (i.e. CAFTA, NAFTA, the project of ALCA) which are examples of social practices where development discourses on 'freedom' are put into practice. (Green, 2003)

Secondly, this study has furthered inputs to the relatively young literature on critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2005; Dijk, 1997; Wodak and Meyer, 2001) by combining its methodological approach with a 'development studies' perspective. This research may provide new lenses to understand the contemporary discursive practices that nurture not just the local reality of El Salvador, but that also affect a wider scope of Latin American democracies 'in construction'.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature on how hegemonic structures of society 'freeze' and lock-in certain views of the world by nurturing discourses with ideologies that defend their interests (Cox, 1983; Gramsci, 1971). As Apthorpe and Krahl (1986)³¹ argue, this 'colonizing effect' of development discourses is especially relevant because they are typically portrayed by scholars and policy-makers as "the technical neutral pursuit of the self-evidently desirable". This is particularly happening in El Salvador's policy-making field where policy-makers tend to see their technical output as value-free. This research nevertheless, breaks this positivist trend, and support a more post-empiricist approach in the line of Fischer (1995: 13), where it is argued that reality is exactly the opposite case: value judgements always precede the policy-making process even when they are 'facts-based'.

The scope of this research has however left out some aspects that should become keystones for further research: the alternative discourses of difference and counter-hegemonic resistance. What has happened in the nucleus of resistance? What is the structure of their claims, discursive practices and ideology as opposed to those of the hegemony? Why and how do they become

³¹ As quoted in (Preston, 1994: 36)

subjugated? As Fairclough and others argue, in the line of Foucault, there is always *some kind* of counter-hegemonic response that has to be acknowledged and detected in every power relation. It remains then an open streamline of academic research to apply multidisciplinary frameworks such as the ones applied here, to a reality thirsty of explanations on how to further emancipatory social change from unjust power structures.

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APPENDIX

A.1

Deconstructing the Context	1. FOCUS UPON A SOCIAL PROBLEM WHICH HAS A SEMIOTIC ASPECT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problem-based: what calls for change ▪ A problem for whom? ▪ Emancipatory objective with the poor, the socially excluded
	2. IDENTIFY OBSTACLES TO IT BEING TACKLED, through analysis of:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diagnosis of the problem ▪ What makes this a problem which is resistant to easy solution?
Deconstructing the Role of Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. NETWORK OF PRACTICES it is located within ▪ The networks of power and interactions that lock the problem
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. RELATIONSHIP OF SEMIOSIS to other elements within particular practice(s) concerned ▪ How does Semiosis (<i>any form of activity, conduct, or process that involves signs, including the production of meaning</i>) have incidence in the legitimation of the social order?
	c. DISCOURSE (the semiosis itself)
	I have discovered the network of power before, now I argue that this network is a network of interrelated discourses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ STRUCTURAL analysis: the order of discourse ▪ Social structuring of semiotic differences in orders of discourses¹ ▪ Which Genres which regulate action and interaction in organizations are the dominant ones? ▪ How are these genres, discourses, and styles disseminated internationally (re-scaled), and across areas of social life (restructured)?² ▪ Range of difference, diversity, in genres, discourses and styles- and the social structuring of that difference: who does or not have access to dominant forms –how other genres, discourses and styles are affected by the imposition of new dominant ones. ▪ It is an error to assume that dominant forms are the only ones that exist (Resistance & Difference)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INTERACTIONAL analysis ▪ Dominant influential ways of interacting, ways of using language in interaction³
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INTERDISCURSIVE analysis ▪ How do particular types of interaction articulate together different genres, discourses and styles? ▪ Unpicking the particular mix characteristic of particular type of interaction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LINGUISTIC & SEMIOTIC analysis ▪ Systemic functional linguistics (Halliday) ▪ It sees and analyses language as shaped (even its grammar) by the social functions it has come to serve. ▪ Agents / Time / Tense / Modality / Syntax
	3. CONSIDER WHETHER THE SOCIAL ORDER (NETWORK OF PRACTICES) IN A SENSE 'NEEDS' THE PROBLEM:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Linking 'is' to 'ought' ▪ Does it legitimize the status quo? ▪ Discourse is ideological in so far as it contributes to sustaining particular relations of power and domination"
Understanding	4. IDENTIFY POSSIBLE WAYS PAST THE OBSTACLES:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Showing contradictions or gaps or failures within the domination in the social order ▪ Identify not fully realized possibilities
	5. REFLECT CRITICALLY ON THE ANALYSIS (1-4):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How effective is it as a critique? ▪ Does it contribute to social emancipation? ▪ Is it compromised in its own positioning in academic practices?

¹ (ie. way in which managerial discourse has colonized public service domains such as education)

² For example as Fairclough states, how the discourse and genre of 'negotiation' 'flows' between economic, political, military and family life.

³ I.e. texts

A.2

HALLIDAY LINGUISTIC & SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSES	
SYSTEMIC STRUCTURE	ANALYTICAL COMPONENTS OF SPOKEN OR WRITTEN LANGUAGE
1. SOURCE	Individual/ Position/ Entity; Title or identifier of written/ spoken word
2. FIELD	The register of the text, what is happening, the nature of the social interaction taking place: what is it that the participants are engaged in, in which language figures as an essential component?
3. TAKE-HOME MESSAGE	Take-home message: Written language is lexically dense, while oral language is syntactically more complex.
4. TENOR	Tenor: who is taking part; the social roles and relationships of participant, the status and roles of the participants
5. MODE	The symbolic organization of the text, rhetorical modes (persuasive, expository, didactic, etc); the channel of communication, such as spoken/written, monologic/dialogic, +/- visual contact, computer-mediated communication/telephone/F2F, etc.
6. TEXTUAL	Type/token ratios, vocabulary use, register Tokens: the number of individual items/words Types: the different kinds of words used, e.g., lexical (content) items and grammatical (function) items Lexical Density: The ratio of lexical and grammatical items in an utterance or text; a "measure of information density within a text" (Yates, 1996:37).
7. INTER-PERSONAL	Speech-function, exchange structure, involvement and detachment, personal reference, use of pronouns, "interactive items" showing the position of the speaker (just, whatever, basically, slightly), discourse markers (words that moderate/monitor the interaction, e.g., well, might, good, so, anyway) { A spoken corpus is primarily an "I", "You" text; the world as seen by you and me. Illustrates INVOLVEMENT { A written corpus often takes 3rd person and objective reporting styles (it, he, she, and passive voice). Illustrates DETACHMENT
8. IDEATIONAL	Ideational: propositional content; modality through (in English) modal auxiliaries, e.g., (in Yates, 1996:42) { modals of obligation (must, need, should) { modals of ability and possibility (can, could) { modals of epistemic possibility (may, might) { modals of volition and prediction (will, shall) { hypothetical modals: (would, should)

Source: Own construction on the basis of the summary on Hallidayan linguistics in (Thorne, 2006)

A.3

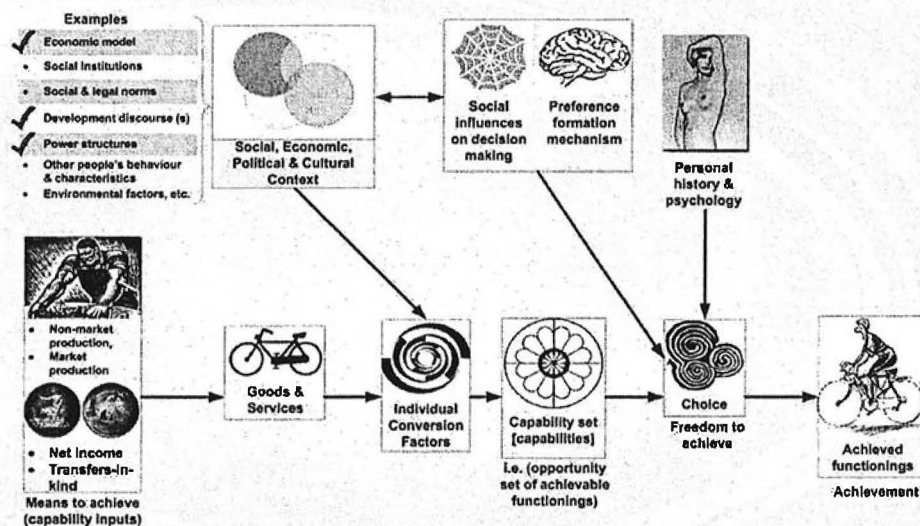
Criteria	Description
(a) Representativeness:	It has to be a typical sample of the semiotic materials produced by the social practice (texts, visual images, and body language) produced by the key actors in question.
(b) Reliability:	The flow of discourse analyzed must be coming from a trusted, identifiable source and verifiable by anyone.
(c) Validity:	The source selected shall be centred on the topic in question and relevant, and The research is based in Wodak's and Scollon's triangulation procedures to ensure validity
(d) Completeness:	"The results of the study will be 'complete' if new data and the analysis of new linguistic devices reveal no new findings."

Source: Own construction based in (Meyer, 2001: 29)

UNFREEDOMS IN EL SALVADOR: POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND VIOLENCE

A.4

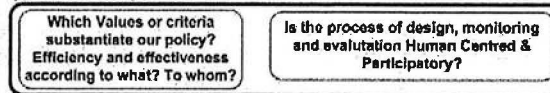
Situating the influence of power & discourse in the framework of freedom: A stylized non-dynamic representation of a person's capability set and her social and personal context
(Adapted from Robeyns)



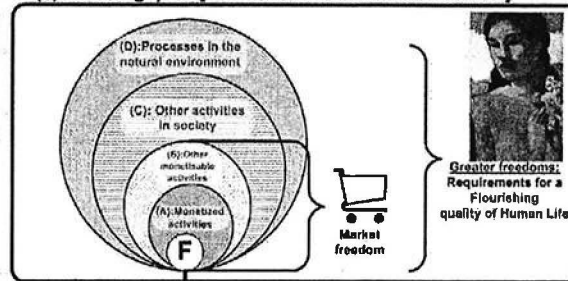
Source: Adapted from Robeyns (2005)

WHY DO WE SAY POLICY "F" IS 'GOOD'?
METHODOLOGICAL RANKING OF ETHICAL PRIORITIES
("F": FREE TRADE)

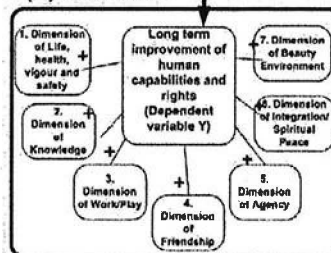
(i) Essential questions



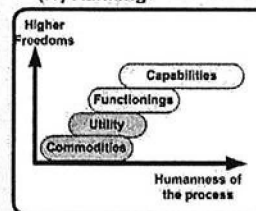
(ii) Situating policy "F" in the context of an Economy



(iii) Dimensions



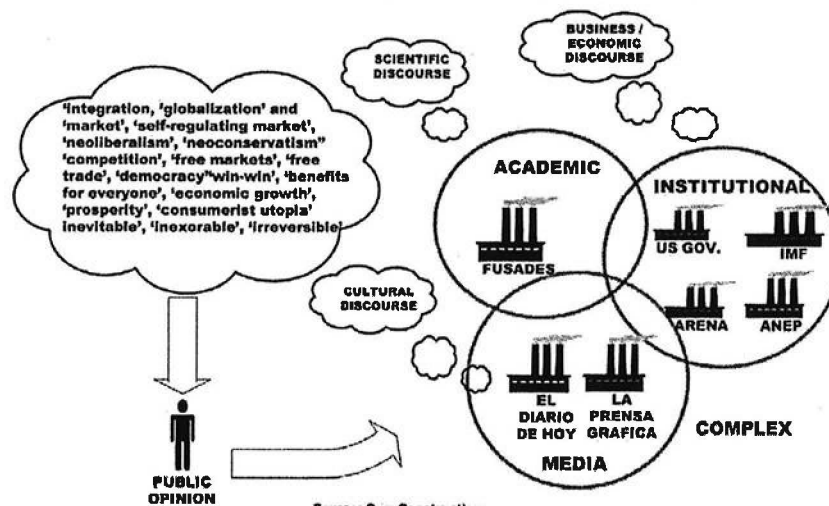
(iv) Ranking



Source: Author's construction on the basis of Gasper and van Staveren 2003; Aikre 2002

SECTION B

SELECTED NEOLIBERAL FACTORIES OF DISCOURSE
WITHIN THE HEGEMONIC AIM COMPLEX. EL SALVADOR-CAFTA CASE



Source: Own Construction

FUSADES [Text-1]

"[h]ere at FUSADES we thought that it had finally been possible to produce a "sustainable development". International institutions observed us and perhaps approved our initiatives *but they told us that the real priority was to proceed with second and third generation reforms and continue opening up the economy.* They also added that success was guaranteed because it would come by itself. Nobody mentioned the country's institutional problem. (...) "(...) despite all the reforms that the country carried out, there is great *dissatisfaction* among its citizens. There is *dissatisfaction* for the lack of a legal instrument that regulates free competition and protects the *consumer.* *The new strategy of FUSADES* [The Harvard-FUSADES 2004 strategy] *insists on strengthening the legitimacy of the market.*" (Cabrales, 2003, p.10)

ARENA

Consider for instance, (Acosta Oertel, 2006) remarks on the issue of free trade:

The logic of making free trade agreements informs the concept of freedom by "giving the opportunity to all persons of being able to find better destinies and even provoke personal individual creativity (...) through which means? By finding agreements free of obstacles to be able to sell." (Acosta Oertel, 2006)

[Text-4]:⁴.

[George W. Bush, US-President]: "El Salvador has one of the *great histories of economic and political transformation of our time.* It is one of the *bright lights* in Latin America.(...) Due to the leadership of this man [President Flores], the *future of El Salvador is hopeful.* It's a *great honour to call him my friend*"

["At that moment a smile appeared in the face of Flores"]

⁴ See the newspaper La Prensa Gráfica. (Martinez, 2002)

Francisco Flores, President of El Salvador]: "I have not had a *higher honour in my life* as the one of President Bush calling me *his friend*."

[Text-5]

"ARENA has accomplished the three fundamental objectives of its Historical Project. We have *Peace*, we have established a *system of Freedoms like never before has existed*; and *Progress is unquestionable*. (...) Today, the Historical Project of ARENA presents a *renovated ideal* that defines the search, achievement and continuous perfectioning towards: *Social Peace*, *Progress with Equality*, *Freedom with Responsibility*" (ARENA, 2004: 1)

ANEP [Text-1]

"Why does the Salvadorean private sector support the negotiation process that will finalize with the signing of the free trade agreement between Central America and the United States? There are various reasons: 1. For philosophical principles the Salvadorean entrepreneurs *believe in promoting freedoms and every initiative* that has as an objective diminishing the commercial barriers of goods and services *will be supported*. 2. Because of a demonstrative effect: the *empirical evidence* over the last 40 years shows that the *countries that have opted for a major openness to the rest of the world* have achieved the *greatest growth rates* and have achieved *improving their levels of development* respect to those that opted for the opposed position. 3. For trade reality: the main trade partners of El Salvador are the US and the rest of the Central American region, in that order, markets that concentrate the 90% of national foreign trade. Similar percentages in their trade have the other countries of the region. (...)"

[Text-2]

"The free trade agreement with the US is part of the accelerated process of the globalization that we experiment without anybody's authorization but that has effects on everyone. The responsibility of the Salvadorean entrepreneurs is *to understand these processes* and to *take advantage out of them*. (...) The option that the private sector has chosen is to seek *influencing this process* in order to obtain a better agreement and that's what we're working on. Thank you."

LA PRENSA GRAFICA (LPG)

LA MEJOR EXCUSA

“La mejor excusa, en muchos casos, para poder tener, es un tema de protección de inversión.”

DA CONFIANZA

“CAFTA debe ser un elemento de confianza para las industrias y empresas, pero eso debe ser acompañado de una buena calidad en productos.”

ESFUERZO TOTAL

“El CAFTA no nos va a llevar como país a salir adelante económicamente, sino que será la verificación que todos hagamos para aprovecharlo.”

OPORTUNIDADES

“Para el sector agropecuario, el CAFTA tiene oportunidades y retos, y las oportunidades son de mucho más alcance.”

NUÉVA REALIDAD

“Nuestro es el reto de tener una política totalmente abierta, y eso beneficia a las empresas y a los países.”

EL TIEMPO DIRÁ

“La realidad es buena, siempre que los resultados los daremos a los años y las empresas van a ir mejorando su competitividad.”

MÁS PRODUCCIÓN

“El principal desafío frente al CAFTA es el incremento de la productividad. No es el bajar los aranceles, porque no es una política de ajuste.”

LA PROTECCIÓN

“El sector lo que teme es que, por el tiempo, van a tener problemas para hacer la tarea que tenemos que hacer: reconstruir y volver competitivos.”



C·A·F·T·A

OPTIMISMO Y DESAFÍOS

LA PRENSA GRAFICA realizó ayer un foro para examinar, con representantes del Gobierno, empresarios y analistas, las oportunidades y desafíos que nacen hoy con el CAFTA. Todas coincidieron en que el acuerdo es un arma para la atracción de inversiones y el incremento de las exportaciones. Otros dijeron que es “la mejor excusa” para modernizar al país. Los retos, reconocieron, son incrementar la productividad, facilitar el financiamiento y fortalecer el estado de derecho y la integración.

LOS CIUDADANOS RATOQUE

Los ciudadanos ratificaron el CAFTA como una política de apertura y de integración con el mundo. Sin embargo, algunos ciudadanos expresaron preocupación por el impacto que tendrá el acuerdo en el sector agropecuario y en el comercio exterior.

EL PRIMER EXPORTADOR

El primer exportador de la zona, el sector agropecuario, expresó su preocupación por el impacto que tendrá el acuerdo en el sector agropecuario y en el comercio exterior.

WRITTEN PRESS: EL DIARIO DE HOY

[Text-1]

[Subtitle] *Protectionism, what the communists defend with their 'marches and social disorders' punishes the same way the consumers as well as the producers.*

[Body of text]

"Yesterday there was a march against the approval of the FTA [CAFTA], that paralyzed the traffic in the Juan Pablo II avenue. While ex communist China, or "Popular China" is promoting an area of free trade in all East Asia, the local communists [FMLN, left-wing sympathisers] want the contrary; that we maintain the relative isolation in which we Salvadoreans are. This is all part of what the efemelenists [FMLN partisans] call 'social justice'. This 'social justice' includes: 'The social traffic jams' that *obstacles the free circulation of vehicles and people* in the cities and roads; 'the social riots' that make chaos

in the streets, *victimizing small businesses and women working in mobile sales*; 'the social sabotage' like the ones that paralyzed the construction of various parts of the periphery. Before, like many remember in this land, it was the 'social kidnapping', 'the social burning of buses' and the 'social delinquency' that destroyed the productive sectors of El Salvador. (...) *It is obvious that in the theme of FTA there are two faces. One of them is the disorder, the spread of discord, the blind opposition, the lack of arguments. The other face is the one that is supported by the majority of the enterprises and the Executive: to open-up the economy to world trade but especially with the United States in this first stage, as this will multiply the business opportunities to local producers regardless of their size. The immediate space of opportunity is the 'nostalgic market', that is, the demands that millions of Salvadoreans living abroad have. (...) What they don't want is progress. The success stories of opening up the markets are too many to enumerate. (...) Without a doubt the worst thing for communism is that the peoples of the world enjoy progress."*

SECTION C

DIFFERENCE AND RESISTANCE: THE EXISTENCE OF COUNTER-HEGEMONY

As in Foucault's (1974; 1981) and Fairclough's (1988) view, power in El Salvador's society has not been *totalitarianly* monopolized by the hegemonic AIM complex described before, regardless of its sheer institutional muscle, astute discursive strategies or economic size. Power *to differ and resist* both in the realm of social practices and within the discursive and ideological field has existed in El Salvador in direct and parallel ways to the dominant structure and superstructure. This section acknowledges this and discusses its genealogies. Due to the scope of this paper, the analysis will not engage with a deconstruction of the discourses of heterogeneity (resistance or difference to the dominant discourse), but rather will focus on how these forms of power have co-existed and confronted the challenging struggle of surviving the neoliberal tide. If this hegemonic AIM complex has evidently been shaping the agenda and orders of

discourse in El Salvador, how have the subordinate discursive practices of the dominated responded to it?

In this sense, doing an overall scan about what have been the discourses of resistance or difference to the dominant discourse, it is useful to draw again on the analytical tool-box of the AIM complex. Do the structures of resistance or difference have similar scope and fill the requirements to be an AIM complex? Furthermore, do they *need* to be an AIM complex? On the first level, the most evident opponent to CAFTA, and overall, to the streamline of neoliberal reforms has been the former guerrilla, the political party, FMLN. Thus at least on the *institutional level* in the post-war era of El Salvador, one could say that there has been space for resistance, although arguably on the still precarious quality of a fragile electoral democracy. (Beetham, 2002; Ladutke, 2004) In this scenario, FMLN would be the central institutional building block of a possible AIM complex of resistance.

Institutional resistance

Following Biekart (2001: 198) the nature of the problem of the revolutionary left in El Salvador as a form of resistance to the neoliberal storm may be best understood by examining its "double defeat" throughout the nineties. Biekart argues that the FMLN "by accepting the rules of the electoral game" in the conditions given by the Peace Agreements of 1992 "eventually *legitimized the new neoliberal order*". This research argues that the reason was in its failure to recognize the tension between power and freedom. The reason for this was the context: the FMLN did not take into account that to participate in electoral freedom under conditions of inequality imposed by the then fully fledged hegemonic AIM complex, did not necessarily mean equality of capabilities to exercise democratic freedoms. Constraints in economic, social and other political barriers and the responsibility of the State in being accountable for them were not taken into account in the 1992 Peace agreements thus making the FMLN sign its own resignation letter to abdicate "its revolutionary goals."

Taking this into account the latter provides further understandings to the institutional position of FMLN today. There is evidence that parallel to the

institutional resistance offered by FMLN in the political arena, grass-roots movements and organizations in the civil society realm have also been connected to the FMLN (Interviews with Nidia Diaz and Dagoberto Gutiérrez), present throughout the periods of neoliberal reform and have engaged in varied efforts in the struggle for changing the dominant structures. (Biekart, 1999; 2001) Their strategies have been heterogeneous, conforming networks of cooperative communities with diverse forms and sizes, and even have been identified as new forms of 'solidarity economy' that go beyond survival strategies (Montoya, 1995; 2003; 2005; Sinclair, 1995). Accordingly, within the recent context of CAFTA, at least two popular movements have come up as visible 'revolutionary' movements to the public eye: Movimiento Popular de Resistencia (MPR-12), and Bloque Popular Social (BPS). Under this setting, a structure of *[grass-roots-movements]–[civil-society-building-NGOs]–[political-party-of-counter-hegemony]* does exist in El Salvador and constitute a *potential composite corpus* of difference and resistance to the dominant power structure. But still this does not amount for an *AIM complex of resistance*, since it does not necessarily mean that their academic-institutional-media networks are really interconnected and share common goals, forces, vision and ideology to exert in an *orchestrated* form a discursive battle of resistance.

Academic Resistance

On the level of the *academic counter-hegemonic resistance* to the neoliberal project in El Salvador, there has been productive centres of discourse, such as the intellectual efforts of scholars and professionals within the reduced circuit of some universities (e.g. National University, Central American University⁵) or NGOs (FUNDE, FESPAD LAS DIGNAS, etc.⁶) Yet it would be too easy to assert that they speak and think the same language and ideology. Their ideas have differed in focus, approaches and operational ways to translate their

⁵ See for example, (Artiga-González, 2003; CIDAI, 2006; Departamento de Economía de la UCA, 2005)

⁶ See also, (Asociacion de Mujeres por la Dignidad y la Vida et al., 2006; FESPAD, 2005),

views and proposals into practice. They share critical views against the neoliberal hegemony but they do not constitute a united front.

Take for instance the case of FUNDE, a well-known critical think-tank NGO in El Salvador: throughout the nineties it was long regarded as an NGO of "leftist thinking" when compared to FUSADES. Thus its natural institutional ally was seen to be the FMLN. However, although this organization has been constantly producing several publications which criticize from a political-economy perspective the consequences of the neoliberal model implemented in El Salvador. ie. (FUNDE and ORMUSA, 2006; Rubio Fabián et al., 1997) their means to bring about change have differed in many ways in terms of policy-making standpoints vis-à-vis the FMLN⁷. When CAFTA came with force into the agenda, FUNDE chose to position itself in a revisionist critical position to the agreement, but *not to oppose to it*. Together with a number of other organizations FUNDE constituted a network that contributed to the creation of a transnational Central American network known as "*Iniciativa CID*" or the "*Mesoamerican Initiative for Trade, Integration and Sustainable Development*" and produced a number of studies and proposals that would aim to bring critical knowledge to the debate and stir up efforts for structural changes in the agreement.⁸

FUNDE's *non-compliance* to join the more radical position of a frontal "No" to free trade with the US was a critical passage in the configuration of the discursive practices of difference and resistance in El Salvador. In FUNDE's analysis of the context, the unequal correlations of forces pushing the FTA agenda favouring the hegemonic block, left too much of a probabilistic chance of it becoming a concrete reality. Hence, they engaged in trying to change the restrictive nature of the agreement to a more just, socially responsible one by participating actively in the negotiations, and trying to bring change *from within*. Rather than a negative issue, they saw CAFTA as an opportunity to construct civic engagement for fair trade and thus produced a vast array of critical and propositive academic materials, texts, studies, position papers, etc. Their

⁷ Unlike ARENA's harmonious link with FUSADES for example.

⁸ Among the most crucial of these see for example, (Iniciativa CID, 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006)

intermediate position separated them from the realm of “pure” counter-hegemonic resistance and had consequences on how it was perceived by the FMLN and other forces of the left. FUNDE had become in their terms *a colonized neoliberal*.

In contrast with FUNDE’s position, for example NGOs like UNES, CDC, FESPAD, LAS DIGNAS, and other NGO-GRO’s, joined forces at difference phases (ie. the MPR-12- BPS resistance blocks) of organizations and constituted what they called the *Red Sinti Techan* (Network of Citizen Action Towards Trade and Investment). Their position was a clear “No” to CAFTA and possibilities for negotiation were consistently rejected with public riots, declarations, marches, etc. (Moreno, 2004) Interestingly so, they regarded other intermediate positions like the “Yes, but, if” position of FUNDE as completely negative, since they regarded this as a colonization of their goals towards the benefit of the interests of the hegemonic powers of the region. Thus, these organizations have become the clear “counter-hegemonic” resistance to the position of the neoliberal AIM complex.

5.3 Media Resistance

On the level of the media, these differences in positioning towards the neoliberal trend of policy-making also became apparent. Needless to say, because of the control exerted by the entrepreneur block on the popular media networks (TV, radio, written press) privately owning the majority of its operational apparatus, the realm of effective public spaces to direct messages of counter-resistance was practically blocked. Yet hegemony is never a tight-structure of perfect equilibrium (Thomassen, 2005), every space that was available for difference or resistance was consistently used. Take for instance Colatino, the only newspaper not privately owned in El Salvador and regarded as “leftist” in the political spectrum. It served as a communication field for resistance, providing space for the FMLN and other neglected voices in the main newspapers to express their views on CAFTA for example. Yet because it has a many times lower size in readership throughout the nation, its impact in the public discourse

has been limited. Popular community radios, cartoons, internet blogs and websites, grass-roots verbal and visual communication strategies of resistance, interviews on TV in the few spaces available, etc. have in contrast served as stronger means for discursive strategies of resistance.

Within these, a truly creative range of counter-hegemonic discursive resistance found its voice in the Internet, especially in the case of CAFTA. As the economic apparatus of the AIM complex did not have private ownership of this space, it has been the natural "breeding" point for a whole genealogy of "*transnational digital guerrilla networks*" of resistance⁹, and serving as semiotic mirrors of discourse of international alliances against CAFTA.(Martín Álvarez, 2006)

5.4 The discursive creativity of the oppressed: discursive practices of difference and resistance

As a concluding remark, an example of the latter "creative" and popular resistance in the context of CAFTA has been the work of "Equipo Maíz". (Equipo Maíz, 2003b; 2003a; 2005; 2006) This organization, aimed to communicate in a popular, accessible manner what the stakes were with CAFTA. Funded by development NGOs like Oxfam Novib, Diakonia, DanChurchAid, and others, it elaborated publications about CAFTA in a "pedagogical" and contextualized way.

In the line of Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed (1967; 1970) it converted the difficult, technical jargon used by the economists and the professional experts into a more clear, popular language. Thus, it aimed to disperse an alternative and meaningful narrative of images and text what was really happening and what was at stake with CAFTA. Economists, sociologists and cartoonists of the "resistance" published the information in the newspaper Colatino. See fig

⁹ See for example www.stopcafta.org,

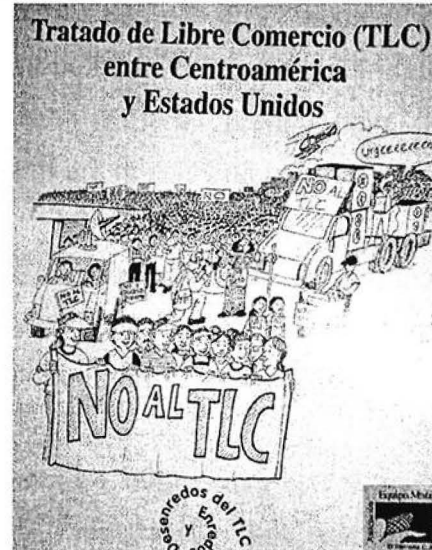
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EQUIPO MAIZ: SEMIOTIC REPRESENTATIONS OF RESISTANCE TO CAFTA THROUGH CARTOONS



"What we want is to sell our beef, our corn and beans to all the people all over the world."

Source: (Equipo Maiz, 2006)



"Central American Free Trade Agreement with the US"

Source: (Equipo Maiz, 2003)

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