

Schmidt

Thanks to the 2017 Tinker Field Research Grant from the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, I traveled to El Salvador and Guatemala to conduct research on historical development, state-countryside relationships, and agricultural elites from May 2017 to late-August 2017. Located in vibrant Central America, both countries have a turbulent history concerning land tenure and agricultural elites. My travels helped me acquire a more thorough understanding of the historical development of both countries' countryside, and more importantly, it helped me understand the role agricultural elites played in the evolution of the land tenure systems.

The purpose of my trip was twofold. First, I consulted various archives in both countries that house agricultural records and information on land ownership. In Guatemala City, I went to the General Archive of Central America (*Archivo General de Centro América*, AGCA), where I consulted various historical sources on agricultural production and land ownership. I spent over three weeks in the AGCA and I was able to obtain a complete list of all the initial land grants in the country since the 1840s. Moreover, I was able to obtain various censuses on agricultural productivity from the 1920s and 1930s. This information provides a snapshot to the heterogeneous nature of land ownership and the makeup of the historic agricultural elite in Guatemala—which included both domestic and foreign individuals—and will serve as the basis for my forthcoming analysis on the evolution on land tenure systems. I am currently in the process of digitizing and geo-coding the land titles and censuses to use in an eventual econometric analysis.

In El Salvador, I consulted the General Archive of the Nation (*Archivo General de la Nación*, AGN) in San Salvador. From the AGN, I was able to obtain information on the various

land redistribution events that occurred in country since the early 1900s. The history of El Salvador is tied to the patterns of land ownership, and the various land grabs and redistribution events, have shaped the composition of the agricultural elites in the country. Just like with the Guatemalan data, I am currently in the process of digitizing the data I obtained to help me in my analysis.

Second, the trip allowed me to interact with local academics and government officials to better understand land tenure and agricultural elites in both countries. In both Guatemala and El Salvador, I interacted with historians from the *Universidad Francisco Marroquín* and *Universidad Centroamericana, "José Simeón Cañas,"* respectively, that helped me better understand the historical trajectory of rural development, land ownership, and conflict in each country. Moreover, I was able to forge relationships with government officials in the hopes of obtain more detailed, modern data on future research trips.

The Tinker Field Research Grants facilitated my trip to both Guatemala and El Salvador, allowing me to conduct archival research and interact with local academics and government officials. In both countries, I was able to obtain novel data on the historical development of the countryside and information on the land ownership patterns. Going forward, I am digitizing part of the data I obtained from the archives to eventually guide my econometric analysis of land tenure systems in the region.