



# THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERHOOD

## La política de la hermandad religiosa

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Abstract

When six members of the transnational brotherhood of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) were murdered in cold blood in El Salvador in November 1989, the Jesuit community in the United States responded with a powerful combination of outrage and embarrassment bordering on guilt. The Jesuits assassinated at the Universidad Centroamericana were killed because their devotion to the Jesuit mission of “the service of faith and pursuit of justice” was seen by the leadership of the Salvadoran military as a direct threat. And they were killed by a Salvadoran military that was receiving in support of its war against an insurgent guerilla force over \$1 million per day from the United States government. Using all of the substantial institutional resources at their disposal, Jesuits in the U.S. worked to pressure the Salvadoran government to hold accountable “the authors of the crime” within the military’s high command, while at the same time they worked to pressure the U.S. government to shut off the military aid that had been used to murder their fellow Jesuits. “Their” government was killing “their” brothers, and the Jesuits in the U.S. mobilized a complex, transnational political response out of both communal solidarity and national responsibility.

*Cuando seis miembros de la hermandad transnacional de la Compañía de Jesús (jesuitas) fueron asesinados a sangre fría en El Salvador en noviembre de 1989, la comunidad jesuita de EE. UU. respondió con una combinación poderosa de furia y vergüenza, bordeando la culpa. Los jesuitas asesinados en la Universidad Centroamericana murieron porque su devoción a la misión jesuita al “servicio de la fe y la búsqueda de la justicia” fue vista como una amenaza directa por parte del liderazgo del ejército salvadoreño. Y fueron asesinados por un ejército salvadoreño que estaba recibiendo, como apoyo a su guerra contra una guerrilla insurgente, más de un millón de dólares al día por parte del Gobierno de los EE. UU. Haciendo uso de los importantes recursos institucionales a su disposición, los jesuitas en EE. UU. trabajaron para presionar al Gobierno salvadoreño para que juzgara a los “autores del crimen” dentro del alto mando militar, mientras que, al mismo tiempo, presionaron al Gobierno de EE. UU. para que suspendiese la ayuda militar que había contribuido al asesinato de sus compañeros jesuitas. “Su” Gobierno había matado a “sus” hermanos y los jesuitas estadounidenses movilizaron una respuesta política compleja y transnacional nacida de la solidaridad comunitaria y la responsabilidad nacional.*



Resumen

Transnational Relations; Jesuits; El Salvador; Civil war; Ignacio Ellacuría; Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); U.S. foreign policy; military aid; martyrs.

*Relaciones transnacionales; jesuitas; El Salvador; guerra civil; Ignacio Ellacuría; Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); política exterior de EE. UU.; ayuda militar; mártires.*



Key words

Received: 23/10/2023. Accepted: 18/12/2023



Fechas

The academic field of Transnational Relations (TR) concerns itself with what Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, first, formally defined a half century ago as “the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization” (Keohane & Nye, 1973, p. XII). Conceived of as a corrective to the over-reliance on the role of territorial states in traditional International Relations—or as I would prefer, Global Politics—, TR usefully draws our attention to a host of non-state actors who participate meaningfully in world affairs. Multinational corporations, international non-governmental organizations, social movements, ethnic diasporas, and religious communities and institutions of all kinds are just a few examples of these previously under-emphasized actors on the world stage.

Some of these transnational actors and communities live their lives in liminal space. Effectively (and affectively), they live in two places at one time, manifesting a profound “simultaneity”, or occupying what Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) have called “transnational social fields” (p. 1002). As a result, they can be deeply involved in two wholly separate political systems, and at times they can use their privileged position in one political context to work at influencing conditions in another. This dynamic duality is generally associated with ethnic diasporas or migrant communities whose fundamentally transnational positioning can at times allow them to advocate in their new “host lands” on behalf of the interests of their co-nationalists left behind in the shared “homeland.” (Faist et al., 2013, p. 12).

What I want to explore here, however, is a group whose transnational ties are religious, institutional, and intentional rather than ethnic, demographic, and primordial. Members of the Society of Jesus are deeply tied to each other across international borders by transnational linkages that are explicit, purposeful, and central to the very definition of their Society’s life (Byrnes, 2011). Usually, these linkages manifest themselves in relatively quotidian forms of institutional solidarity, shared religious commitment, and varying levels of communal coherence. But sometimes these ties turn the transnational Jesuit social field (to coin a phrase) into an arena of cross-border interactions with real, concrete political import. This is true when Jesuit residents and citizens of one country are driven to act in the defense of fellow Jesuits who are residents and citizens of another. And this is especially true when Jesuits in one country are motivated by the conviction that dangers faced by their fellow Jesuits abroad are being perpetrated by the first group’s national government.

This was precisely the transnational political dynamic that was set in motion on the night of November 15-16, 1989 in San Salvador, when a group of soldiers from the Atlacatl Battalion of the Salvadoran Army roused six Jesuit priests from their beds at the Universidad Centroamericana José Siméon Cañas (UCA), gathered them on the lawn outside their residence, and pumped a bullet into the back of the head of each Jesuit (Doggett, 1993). The priests, under the leadership of the university’s Rector, Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., had become prominent proponents of a negotiated settlement of the brutal Salvadoran civil war that had then been raging for years. And the Army decided to silence them, and the cause of reconciliation, in the most brutal way possible.

Outrage over the murder of the Jesuit “martyrs” (as they immediately came to be known) was immediate and widespread (Mulligan, 1994). But nowhere was it felt more viscerally or personally than within the Catholic order of priests to which the men had belonged, the Society of Jesus. The priests of the UCA were members of a religious community of twenty thousand men, approximately four thousand of whom were U.S. citizens. While these U.S.-based Jesuits

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shared the grief and anger that Jesuits the world over felt in response to the killing of their fellow brothers, the Americans felt something else as well: a level of embarrassment bordering on guilt. To the Americans, the Jesuits in El Salvador had not only been murdered in cold blood; they had been murdered in cold blood by a Salvadoran Army that was receiving the lion share of its funding and support from the U.S. government. In a very concrete way, in other words, the American Jesuits were faced with the horrifying reality that their government was deeply implicated in the murder of their brothers.

Some American Jesuits knew Ellacuría and his colleagues personally. Many more of them knew them by reputation, as academic administrators and professors who were known internationally for embodying with particular clarity the presumed responsibility of Jesuit educators everywhere to apply the institutional resources at their disposal to the “service of faith and the pursuit of justice”.<sup>1</sup> But virtually all of them were shocked into anger, mobilization, and action by the deeply disturbing fact that six of “ours” had been martyred to the cause of opposing a Salvadoran government and a Salvadoran military that were direct agents of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> Many Jesuits in the U.S., therefore, immediately resolved to pursue two related goals: the identification and prosecution of not only the individual soldiers who had pulled the triggers, but also “the intellectual authors of the crime” in the High Command of the Salvadoran Army;<sup>3</sup> and a change in U.S. foreign policy towards El Salvador, most specifically a halt to the direct U.S. funding of the military that had committed such a despicable act.

The overwhelming sense of solidarity that U.S. based Jesuits felt towards their brothers in El Salvador—including those killed at the UCA and those living under the fear of further violent reprisals by the Army—was based in three basic dynamics. The first is the shared “formation” that all Jesuits undergo on their way to professed membership in “the Society,” and for most of them ordination to the priesthood. The Society of Jesus was founded in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by Saint Ignatius Loyola as a self-consciously transnational band of brothers who would be particularly open to the “discernment” of God’s will in their lives, individually and collectively, and who would remain “mobile” and open to residence and assignment anywhere that their superiors might deem it appropriate to send them (Ganss, 1991). What this means today in practical terms is that every Jesuit goes through a similar path of formation that includes an introductory stint in a novitiate, many years of formal study in philosophy and theology, and several years of work in a preparatory period known as “regency” before an individual Jesuit embarks upon a particular life’s work or what they would usually prefer to call an “apostolate.” Along the way, each and every Jesuit experiences “the long retreat,” a 30-day immersion in Loyola’s “Spiritual Exercises” which sets the foundation for their formation in “Ignatian Spirituality,” and sets the framework for discernment of how each Jesuit can individually pursue the Society’s mission of “bringing all things to God” (Decloux, 1991).

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1 The quote is from the legendary Chapter Four of the report of the Society of Jesus’ 32<sup>nd</sup> General Congregation. This document, promulgated in 1975, explicitly committed Jesuits all over the world, in all of their apostolates, to the pursuit of social justice.

2 “Ours” is a term of identification used among Jesuits themselves. It refers not only concretely to each individual Jesuit’s membership in the Society as one of “ours,” but also symbolically to the powerful sense of collective responsibility that Jesuits feel for the Society as a whole.

3 The quote is from Rev. Jose Maria Tojeira, SJ, who was at the time the religious leader of the Jesuit community in El Salvador.

I have asked many Jesuits what it is that most powerfully holds the Society together transnationally, and every single one of them has immediately offered the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola as the glue that binds them to one another. It has been described to me as a “shared mystical experience,” a “mystical tie,” a shared “way of proceeding,” and a “very particular way of understanding the Gospels.” The shared experience itself obviously holds deep spiritual meaning for individual Jesuits. But the consistency with which they cite its unifying power also attests to the Exercises’ symbolic weight as a source of powerful connection and shared experience across an otherwise diffuse transnational community.

The second glue holding the community together and sparking the kind of solidarity that animated the U.S. Jesuits’ response to the murders at the UCA is the commitment to “mobility.” Many Catholic orders and congregations organize themselves in exactly the opposite way through devotion to the concept of “stability.” Benedictine monks, for example, commit themselves not merely to the Benedictine Confederation as a worldwide entity or brotherhood, but also to a particular monastery, in a particular place, usually as a lifetime commitment. Jesuits, who define themselves as “contemplatives in action,” are supposed to be committed not to one individual Jesuit community or “house” but rather to “the Society” as a global body. One former Jesuit Superior sardonically noted to me that the Jesuits he oversaw in New York demonstrated an “unshakable commitment to move anywhere the provincial asks him to; anywhere, that is, on the Island of Manhattan” (interview with author). Despite whatever truth this humorous caveat might convey, the principle of mobility remains a prominent element of the Society’s ethos, and powerfully reinforces any particular Jesuit’s understanding of himself as a member of a larger, transnational whole.

Finally, and crucially, the martyrs in El Salvador were not just fellow Jesuits to their brothers in the U.S. As I alluded to briefly above, Ellacuría and his colleagues were also a living, breathing challenge to every Jesuit in the United States who was spending his life—his apostolate—as a professor or administrator at a Jesuit college or university. It is one thing, after all, to “serve faith in the pursuit of justice” if one is manning a soup kitchen in Los Angeles or leading a parish in Detroit. But what if one is a professor of Philosophy at Santa Clara University in California’s Silicon Valley, or a Professor of Management at Georgetown University in Washington DC, or indeed President of Fordham University in New York City? In those settings, the Jesuit mission is not as clear, and the potential contradictions between the pursuit of justice and service to a higher slot in U.S. News and World Report’s annual rankings of universities and colleges might be quite problematic. Education had been the central communal commitment of Jesuits in the U.S. ever since John Carroll founded Georgetown in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But as Catholics assimilated into the American mainstream, and as Catholic institutions of higher learning struggled to retain a distinctively Catholic character, Jesuits in the U.S. were being explicitly prodded in the 1980s by Ellacuría and others to use their social position and institutional clout to serve the underserved, educate the undereducated, and advance the interests of the marginalized.

Santa Clara University awarded Ignacio Ellacuría an honorary degree in 1982, and his speech on that occasion put the matter of institutional responsibility plainly and plaintively in equal measure. A Jesuit university, declared the Rector of the UCA, “must transform and enlighten the society in which it lives... It must do everything possible so that liberty is victorious over oppression, justice over injustice, love over hate.” And in a direct challenge to Jesuits in the U.S., Ellacuría added:

American universities [...] have an important part to play in order to ensure that the unavoidable presence of the United States in Central America be sensitive and just,

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especially those universities—like Santa Clara—which are inspired by the desire to make present among us all the Kingdom of God. (Santa Clara Today, October, 1982)

Is it any wonder that Jesuits in the U.S. reacted with such horror and resolve to the murders at the UCA? The Ignacio Ellacuría who had issued this direct challenge at Santa Clara was one of the Jesuits executed with a bullet to the back of the head by an army that at the time was receiving over a million dollars a day from the U.S. government. And he was killed precisely because he was applying the resources of his university in efforts to “transform and enlighten the society in which it lives.” Ellacuría and his colleagues were not just martyrs to the cause of peace in El Salvador; they were also martyrs to the cause of authentically Jesuit education everywhere. The leaders of the UCA had been killed for devoting themselves fully to the Jesuit mission that Presidents of Jesuit colleges and universities in the U.S. were struggling to define and embody. As Joseph O’Hare S.J., who was then president of Fordham, put it: there was a “special kinship between people who were struggling with the whole idea of what is the mission of a Catholic university and, in fact, a Jesuit university that had the mandate of faith and justice” (interview with author).

As perhaps the most prominent Jesuit priest in New York City, Father O’Hare was tapped by his superiors to deliver the homily at a memorial Mass held at St Ignatius Loyola Church in Manhattan immediately after the murders in San Salvador. Speaking from the heart and in evident personal pain, O’Hare laid out in that homily the central motivations that drove the actions that he and his brother Jesuits took over the ensuing months and years: “For the Jesuits working at the twenty-eight Jesuit college and universities [in the US],” he noted, “there is an added sense of solidarity with the martyrs.” But tying that solidarity immediately to political imperatives, O’Hare declared that: “after ten years of evasions and equivocation [...] the assassinations of November 16 pose, with brutal clarity, the question that continues to haunt the policy of the United States towards El Salvador: can we hand weapons to butchers and remain unstained by the blood of their innocent victims” (*America*, 12/16/89).

The first level of response to this butchery and to the powerful sense of responsibility the American Jesuits felt in response to it was to provide direct support to the surviving Jesuits in El Salvador and to the university whose leadership had been decimated. The murders at the UCA, after all, were not an isolated incident. Other Jesuits, as well as non-Jesuit priests and nuns, had been killed previously in El Salvador, and the remaining Jesuits in San Salvador—many of whom lived literally around the corner from where the assassinations had been carried out—had every reason to fear that they might be next.<sup>4</sup> As a sign of moral support, then, but also has a tangible act of physical protection, five Presidents of Jesuit universities in the U.S. travelled to El Salvador in February 1990 to stay with their fellow Jesuits in San Salvador, and to begin the process of pressuring the Salvadoran government to seriously investigate and prosecute the crimes that had been committed at the UCA two months before.

Moreover, an international group of Jesuits was formulated by the Society’s leadership in Rome to go to San Salvador, not as a short-term show of support, but rather as a long-term replacement team for the administrators and faculty who had been murdered. Arriving on the scene while “the blood was still on the walls,” this team included two U.S. citizens: Dean Brackley S.J, who

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<sup>4</sup> Rutilio Grande, SJ, had been assassinated in 1977 for organizing landless peasants in defense of their rights. And following Grande’s brazen murder, the *Unión Guerrera Blanca* death squad had ordered all Jesuits to leave the country within thirty days, and had papered the country with pamphlets that read “Be a Patriot: Kill a Priest.”

was then teaching theology at Fordham in New York, and Charles Beirne, S.J., Academic Vice President of Santa Clara in California (interviews with author). Chosen largely because of their familiarity with Central America, their fluency in Spanish, and their enthusiastic willingness to go, Beirne and Brackley were living out a kind of dual loyalty that drove their personal choices and their political commitments. They were members of the Society of Jesus, devoted to their transnational brotherhood, and particularly committed to the principle of mobility and service. But at the very same time they were also citizens of the United States of America. For them, and for many of their fellow Jesuits whose involvement was not as personal or dramatic, these two loyalties did not contradict each other in 1989 and 1990; they complemented each other. Being a Jesuit didn't compete with being an American citizen. Instead, being a Jesuit and an American citizen meant that they felt powerfully responsible to leverage their citizenship to do everything they could to bring about change in policies they considered to be murderously harmful to their fellow Jesuits. Their government was responsible for the murder of their brothers, and that was simply, and profoundly, unacceptable. Brackley, who died in 2011 while still serving at the UCA in San Salvador, described his own role and response in starkly personal terms: "There is no question," he told me, "that I came [to El Salvador] as an act of civic responsibility or even patriotism, paying my dues as an American citizen, or paying reparations you might say" (interview with author). Not all Jesuits, obviously, felt this strongly or made this powerful a commitment. But a great many of them did all that they could with the resources they had at their disposal.

In a number of cases, these resources were derived from the leadership of very prominent institutions of higher learning in U.S. cities. The two most immediate tasks at hand were: (a) to debunk the absurd claim of the Salvadoran government that the murders had been carried out by the leftist rebels fighting the Army, and (b) to pressure the Salvadoran government to identify and prosecute the members of the military's high command who had ordered the killings to take place. Leo O'Donovan, S.J., for example, was at the time the President of Georgetown, in his words the "most powerful university in Washington." Having cried on the morning of November 16<sup>th</sup> because of the powerful connection he felt to Ellacuría and the other martyrs, President O'Donovan's first act was to publish an op-ed in the *Washington Post* three days later. Referring to the UCA as one of Georgetown's "sister schools" and to the murdered Jesuits as his "brothers," O'Donovan echoed Ellacuría's plea for an immediate cease fire in the Salvadoran civil war, and called for the Salvadoran government—and its patrons in Washington—to investigate the crime aggressively so that they could bring the perpetrators to justice (*Washington Post*, 11/19/89).

Moreover, in a stunning coincidence that spoke loudly of the reach of Jesuit educational institutions, O'Donovan was also scheduled to meet that week with Salvadoran President Alfredo Christiani, who himself happened to be a graduate of Georgetown. "I am not a firebrand", O'Donovan recalled in an interview, "and not much for demonstrativeness. But I was horrified and I told [Christiani] that I didn't know the facts, but you have to find them, and the extent to which you don't you are going to lose support in the US" (interview with author). Charles Beirne, who died in 2010 after serving as President of LeMoyne College in New York State, actually was a bit of a firebrand. He phrased the matter a bit more colorfully in a meeting with U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador William Walker shortly after Beirne arrived from California to take up his leadership position at the UCA. If Walker didn't know the murders had been ordered by the High Command of the Salvadoran Army, Father Beirne charged, then Walker

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was incompetent. But if Walker did know and did nothing about it, then the U.S. Ambassador was something much worse—an accomplice (interview with author).

Similar questions and charges were articulated by the group of five Jesuit Presidents who traveled to El Salvador together in early 1990. O'Hare of Fordham recalled that “it was an ominous atmosphere. The U.S. Embassy was like an armed camp. In retrospect, we felt like they gave us a bunch of baloney and hogwash” (interview with author). Donald Monan, S.J., President of Boston College at the time and a member of the delegation, stressed that the Jesuits from the U.S. wanted to “use our presence as Presidents of Jesuit universities to put some pressure on the [Salvadoran] government to really get at the truth” (interview with author). As Monan and his colleagues would learn to their frustration, the Salvadorans were willing to go to great lengths to resist that pressure. “Christiani was polite [to us],” Father Monan recalled of a meeting with the Salvadoran President. “They were all seemingly cooperative. But we hit the same stone wall that the Jesuits in El Salvador had hit” (interview with author).<sup>5</sup>

The Jesuits in the U.S. were not only committed to bringing the “intellectual authors of the crime” to justice, however. They were also intent on changing the U.S. foreign policy that funneled money to the murderous Salvadoran Army without, apparently, imposing any controls on its behavior and without, apparently, expecting any accountability when things went horribly, disastrously wrong. In terms of this element of the case, the American citizens who led Jesuit universities were not just trying to influence judicial proceedings in a foreign setting where their brothers had lived and died. They were also trying to influence executive decisions and (especially) legislative appropriations in their own home country. In that context, they were able to effectively marshal their institutional resources, apply them to the full gamut of “lobbying” activities, and achieve considerable success at advancing their objectives.

One of the most telling aspects of the Jesuit responses to the murders at the UCA were how deeply they could be defined as being actualized *universitariamente* (Beirne, 1996, p. 228), or grounded in the educational institutional resources controlled by the Society of Jesus in the United States of America.<sup>6</sup> Universities like Georgetown, Fordham, Boston College, Santa Clara, and twenty-four others were leading members of the American higher education system, and their Presidents were often local figures of considerable renown and prestige. We have already seen how those Presidents sought to leverage their influence through public statements designed to draw attention to the murders and focus energy—in San Salvador and Washington—to prosecuting the perpetrators of them. We have also seen how five of these Presidents interjected themselves directly in the aftermath: traveling to San Salvador to act as human shields of the most impenetrable sort while also personally challenging Salvadoran officials and U.S. diplomats to react more aggressively to the execution of the Jesuit martyrs.

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5 Donald Monan, S.J. was particularly committed to the tasks of supporting the Salvadoran Jesuits and pressing the Salvadoran government to prosecute the crime. A trial was ultimately held in San Salvador, but only of the foot soldiers who actually pulled the triggers, and only for their murder of the Jesuits' housekeeper and her daughter (who the soldiers also gunned down in order to eliminate any witnesses to the killing of the Jesuits). This travesty of justice was personally witnessed by Fr Monan, the president of Boston College, who silently attended every day of the trial.

6 The term *universitariamente* can be awkwardly translated as “university-ly,” or “in a university fashion.” Beirne, in attributing the term to Ellacuría, was referring to the Salvadoran's commitment to using the academic resources at his disposal as the grounding on which to articulate his demand for social justice and his opposition to civil war. But the term can just as usefully be used to describe the response that Jesuits in the U.S. had to Ellacuría's martyrdom at the UCA.

But when it came to efforts to change U.S. foreign policy and cut off funds to the Salvadoran military, the Jesuit Presidents relied on local contacts and relationships with political officials that had been cultivated over long periods of time. The examples are numerous: Leo O'Donovan, S.J. of Georgetown had a particularly prominent platform, of course, and he took advantage of it with relish. In addition to his very public statements and his warnings to the Salvadoran President, O'Donovan also requested and was granted a session with Assistant Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger where the Jesuit priest pressed the case for a change in U.S. policy. Paul Locatelli, S.J., President of Santa Clara University had a long-standing relationship with Santa Clara alumnus Leon Panetta, who at that time happened to be Chairman of the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives. Locatelli met with Panetta in the wake of the murders and like so many of his fellow Jesuits made the case that U.S. military aid to El Salvador was not only bad for the people of that country, but was now also directly responsible for the death of six of Locatelli's brothers.

Conversations such as these were held all across the country as Jesuits engaged with their representatives and "lobbied" them from a position of institutional weight and local prominence. But several very influential members of Congress did not really need to be lobbied in any traditional sense. These members had been greatly affected by their own personal experiences in various Jesuit institutions, and they played the insider's role often played when members of an ethnic population or interest group actually gain seats in the legislature. Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, for example, was a graduate of Georgetown Law School who had been trying for years to get his colleagues to join him in cutting off aid to the Salvadoran military. "If now is not the time," he said in anger after the assassinations at the UCA, "what in Heaven's name has to happen in that country before it is time?" (135 *Cong. Rec.* 30,430 1989). Chris Dodd, a long-term Senator from Connecticut and a graduate of Georgetown Prep in DC, publicly endorsed Leahy's position after the murders, and became an outspoken opponent of any further aid to El Salvador.

Finally, members of Congress were also subject after the murders to a more "grassroots" form of lobbying as well (Berry & Wilcox, 2018). Congresswoman (and future Speaker) Nancy Pelosi, for example, represented a district in California that included the Jesuit University of San Francisco, and she defined the role and influence of the Jesuits in a particularly broad way. "Many of us in this body," she stated on the floor of the House of Representatives, "belong to the Jesuit family; either we have brothers, sisters, or children who have been educated by the Jesuits, and we know the close ties that bind... We have been hearing from those of the Jesuit family to call for a cease fire, for a negotiated settlement, for an investigation into the slayings and a second look again at our policy in El Salvador which has not diminished the violence and which we have an opportunity to do" (135 *Cong. Rec.* 30,097, 1989).

Given the complexity of policy-making and the many influences that are brought to bear on policy makers, specifying and isolating influence on legislation can be as hard as identifying a black cat in a garbage can at night. But there is good reason to be confident that these various forms of "Jesuit lobbying" did, in fact, have an effect on U.S. policy toward El Salvador. Numerous members of Congress clearly and publicly stated, after all, that their position on Salvadoran funding was deeply influenced by the murders at the UCA and by the firestorm of activity that followed. Representative Don Edwards of California, for example, cited "Father Ellacuría's strong ties" to Edwards' district through the UCA Rector's "association with Santa Clara University." Edwards also entered into the *Congressional Record* an article from the *San*

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*Jose Mercury News* by Jesuits at Santa Clara mourning their brothers in San Salvador, and calling for an immediate end to funding of the murderous Salvadoran Army (135 *Cong. Rec.* 31,763 1989). New York's Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, for his part, recalled a personal meeting he had had with Ellacuría years before, placed Leo O'Donovan's op-ed into the *Congressional Record*, and dramatically reminded his colleagues that he was talking about a "murder which most likely was carried out with American weapons. May I say that again?," he intoned, "A massacre which was most likely carried out with American supplied weapons" (135 *Cong. Rec.* 30,419 1989).

Perhaps most significant was the effect that the murders and subsequent lobbying had on Representative Joseph Moakley of Massachusetts. Moakley was appointed by Speaker Tom Foley to impanel a commission and investigate in the name of the House of Representatives what had happened in El Salvador in November 1989, and just as importantly what should be done about it. Key staff members of the Moakley Commission had encountered the delegation of Jesuit college Presidents on their first exploratory visit to El Salvador in February 1990, and those staff members stayed in very close touch with Jesuits in both San Salvador and Washington as they conducted their Congressional investigation. Moakley was by his own admission a fairly traditional Congressman, more interested in delivering "pork" to his district than in launching moral crusades related to U.S. foreign policy. But that district in Massachusetts included Boston College, and Moakley knew President Monan and other local Jesuits well. The idea that an Army funded by his votes in Congress was assassinating members of the Society of Jesus in cold blood was simply unacceptable to Representative Moakley. It was the kind of stark outrage that could turn a patronage pol into a tireless advocate for a shift in U.S. foreign policy.

Moakley had no doubt, by the way, that the murders and the efforts by Jesuits to call attention to them had a significant effect on policy. Referring to the growing opposition to military aid, Moakley said in 1990 that: "the Jesuit murders were the thing that did it... Had not the killings happened... had not the Jesuits themselves and a lot of upset Americans stuck with this issue, then the aid would still be flowing like mother's milk" (*Boston Globe*, 11/16/90). The cold-blooded murder of six priests revealed for Members of Congress what sort of regime the U.S. was actually supporting in El Salvador in the 1980s. That crucial realization was encouraged by Jesuits in the U.S. by their direct interactions with legislatures, by the leadership provided by Members of Congress who were themselves products of Jesuit institutions, and by the grassroots lobbying carried out by the many Americans who considered themselves members of the "Jesuit family."

The influence of all this Jesuit lobbying was significant, if perhaps a bit indirect. It is a fact that U.S. aid to the Salvadoran Army was cut by half in the year following the killing of the Jesuit martyrs, and it is reasonable to conclude that the dynamics I have been detailing here played an important role in that result. It is also a fact, however, that the funding was restored in 1991, albeit as part of an effort by President George H. W. Bush to keep his Salvadoran allies at the negotiating table. And, of course, everything changed in 1992 with the signing of the long-awaited peace accord between the Salvadoran government and the FMLN rebel force. My own view is that the deaths at the UCA and the outrage that followed actually advanced in a sad and perverse way Ellacuría's goal of a negotiated settlement to the Salvadoran civil war. Indeed, if the Salvadoran Army's intention was to silence that voice by killing Ellacuría and his brother Jesuits in November 1989, then their actions turned out to be starkly counterproductive. In assassinating the Jesuits at the UCA, the Salvadoran Army

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had decided to kill the six people in El Salvador who had the deepest, longest standing, and most meaningful transnational ties to influential citizens of the United States of America of any people living in El Salvador at the time. The martyrs were members of the Society of Jesus, a transnational brotherhood explicitly and aggressively devoted to the notion of trans-border solidarity, and almost uniquely well-positioned to putting that solidarity to the service of policy changes that would alter the circumstances that had led to the murders. It is a tragic irony that even some leaders of the Salvadoran Army agreed with me on this point. Colonel Roberto Pineda Guerra, chagrined to find his colleagues openly celebrating Ellacuría's death the morning after the murders at the UCA, plaintively shouted: "Idiots. Don't you realize we have just lost the war" (Whitfield, 1995, p. 74).

That said, I wouldn't go so far as to argue that the Jesuits in the U.S. changed American foreign policy towards El Salvador single-handedly. What I definitely would argue, however, is that widespread outrage in response to the martyrdom at the UCA, and the political mobilization that followed of Jesuits who were simultaneously the Salvadoran martyrs' religious brothers and American citizens provided a graphic justification and an easily explained hook on which to hang growing reservations about the political wisdom and moral acceptability of funding the treacherous government and murderous army of El Salvador. Or as one close observer of the developing U.S. policy on El Salvador put it: "and then came the Jesuits" (Whitfield, 1995, p. 83).

I began this article by noting the deeply transnational nature of the Society of Jesus, and analytically placing the U.S. Jesuits' political mobilization in response to the murders in El Salvador within a Jesuit "transnational social field" defined by solidarity and simultaneity. Charles Beirne, SJ and Dean Brackley, SJ most clearly manifested this particular dynamic as they lived in a sense in two places at once: San Salvador as Jesuit officials of the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas; and the United States as U.S. citizens working to prod their government to take action in response to a travesty that had been perpetrated with tacit U.S. support and tangible U.S. resources. But the whole of U.S. Jesuit response to the murders at the UCA was conceived of and implemented out of a transnational simultaneity that challenged U.S. based members of the Society of Jesus to be Jesuits and U.S. citizens at one and the same time.

In this particular case, the connections and the imperatives for U.S. Jesuits were fairly straightforward and wholly compelling. Their government really was complicit in the killing of their brothers, and it is perhaps not surprising that so many of them discerned that they had to do something about it. However, the kinds of questions and challenges posed to U.S. Jesuits by the martyrdom at the UCA in 1989 continue to reside at the heart of Jesuit identity and mission in a deeper and broader sense as well. Transnational religious brotherhood and U.S. citizenship can never be confidently expected to reinforce each other. After all, "the service of faith and the pursuit of justice" can hardly be seen as a driving motivation of U.S. foreign policy in any era. The divergence between the Jesuit social mission and U.S. geo-political interests will (thankfully) not always be as clear or devastating as it was in November 1989. But the challenge of how best to marshal Jesuit resources and influence, *universitariamente*—both within the domestic political context of the United States, and in support of embattled fellow Jesuits abroad—remains as real today as it was thirty-five years ago, and it promises to grow only more pointed in the future.

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