

Poets and prophets of the resistance: intellectuals and the origins of El Salvador's civil war

Chavez, Joaquin Mauricio, author

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Abstrak

One of the most potent insurgencies in twentieth-century Latin American history emerged in El Salvador in the 1970s. This book examines the trajectories of urban and peasant intellectuals who articulated the movements ideology and politics in the context of the Cold War in Latin America. Between 1960 and 1980, these intellectuals embodied an ethos of resistance that blended multiple political, religious, and cultural traditions. They drew on cultures of resistance deeply rooted in the countrys history as well as poetry and religion to spark urban and rural mobilizations against oligarchic-military rule that preceded the civil war in El Salvador. The book provides a ground-up history of the polarization and mobilization that brought El Salvador to the eve of civil war. Combining social analysis with close attention to political consciousness, it examines the evolution of political and religious mentalities and ideas about historical change among both urban and peasant intellectuals who articulated the insurgencys ideology and politics. Poets and Prophets of the Resistance utilizes archival sources in El Salvador and the United States, especially public and private archives that document Catholic Church history, university politics, intellectuals, literary groups, social movements, insurgencies, and repression. It also relies on original interviews with men and women who took part in Salvadoran politics and cultural life in the 1950s through 1970s. The book suggests that the trajectories of intellectuals and revolutionary movements, even in geographically small countries like El Salvador, can reshape the history of the Cold War in Latin America.