

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

FILED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

MAR 17 2023

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

MOLLY C. DWYER, CLERK
U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

MARTA DEL CARMEN MERCADO
MORAN; et al.,

Petitioners,

v.

MERRICK B. GARLAND, Attorney
General,

Respondent.

No. 20-72369

Agency Nos. A202-120-132
A202-120-133
A202-120-134

MEMORANDUM*

On Petition for Review of an Order of the
Board of Immigration Appeals

Submitted March 14, 2023**

Before: SILVERMAN, SUNG, and SANCHEZ, Circuit Judges.

Marta Del Carmen Mercado Moran and her sons, natives and citizens of El Salvador, petition pro se for review of the Board of Immigration Appeals' ("BIA") order dismissing their appeal from an immigration judge's decision denying their applications for asylum, withholding of removal, and protection under the

* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by Ninth Circuit Rule 36-3.

** The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision without oral argument. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

Convention Against Torture (“CAT”). We have jurisdiction under 8 U.S.C. § 1252. We review for substantial evidence the agency’s factual findings. *Conde Quevedo v. Barr*, 947 F.3d 1238, 1241 (9th Cir. 2020). We deny the petition for review.

Substantial evidence supports the agency’s determination that petitioners failed to establish they were or would be persecuted on account of a protected ground. *See INS v. Elias-Zacarias*, 502 U.S. 478, 483 (1992) (an applicant “must provide *some* evidence of [motive], direct or circumstantial”); *Zetino v. Holder*, 622 F.3d 1007, 1016 (9th Cir. 2010) (an applicant’s “desire to be free from harassment by criminals motivated by theft or random violence by gang members bears no nexus to a protected ground”). In light of this disposition, we need not reach petitioners’ remaining contentions regarding the cognizability of their proposed particular social groups. *See Simeonov v. Ashcroft*, 371 F.3d 532, 538 (9th Cir. 2004) (courts and agencies are not required to decide issues unnecessary to the results they reach). We do not address petitioners’ contentions as to whether the harm they suffered rose to the level of persecution because the BIA did not deny relief on this ground. *See Santiago-Rodriguez v. Holder*, 657 F.3d 820, 829 (9th Cir. 2011) (“In reviewing the decision of the BIA, we consider only the grounds relied upon by that agency.” (citation and internal quotation marks omitted)). Thus, petitioners’ asylum and withholding of removal claims fail.

Substantial evidence also supports the denial of CAT protection because petitioners failed to show it is more likely than not they will be tortured by or with the consent or acquiescence of the government if returned to El Salvador. *See Aden v. Holder*, 589 F.3d 1040, 1047 (9th Cir. 2009).

The temporary stay of removal remains in place until the mandate issues.

PETITION FOR REVIEW DENIED.