A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENT ACTIVISM IN POSTCOUP HONDURAS: KNOWLEDGES, SOCIAL PRACTICES OF RESISTANCE, AND THE DEMOCRATIZATION/DECOLONIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

by

Jairo I. Fúnez-Flores

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Curriculum & Instruction

West Lafayette, Indiana

May 2020

THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Dr. JoAnn Phillion, Chair

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Nathalia Jaramillo

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

Dr. Stephanie Masta

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Laura Zanotti

Department of Anthropology

Approved by:

Dr. Janet Alsup

Head of the Graduate Program

This dissertation is dedicated
to student movements and
youth activists around the world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to my family, namely my mom, dad, sister, and brother, whose enduring strength and perseverance in the face of adversity taught me to go about the world in the same manner. They have always been an inspiration and will continue to be the pillars supporting the work I do. I would also like to thank my kind, loving, and hardworking partner, who was willing to move to Honduras with our three-month-old daughter and 10-year-old son so I could begin my fieldwork. Words cannot explain how grateful I am for all that she does for our family.

I am also thankful for having been awarded the Dean's Doctoral Research Scholar Fellowship by Purdue University's College of Education from 2016 to 2019, which allowed me to dedicate more time reading, researching, learning, and developing a strong theoretical and methodological repertoire. The American Educational Research Association Minority Dissertation Fellowship awarded to me for the 2019-2020 academic year, in addition, significantly helped me in the writing process.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. JoAnn Phillion, my dissertation chair, who supported my research interests from day one. Her encouragement and prompt feedback throughout the research process made writing that much more rewarding. The research opportunities Dr. Phillion offered me as a graduate student also gave me a chance to learn how to navigate the murky waters of academia. I would also like to thank Dr. Nathalia Jaramillo, Dr. Stephanie Masta, and Dr. Laura Zanotti for forming part of my dissertation committee and for offering insightful suggestions throughout the dissertation research process, which helped me clarify the theoretical and methodological commitments of this research.

Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to Mario, who continues to teach me about the student movement. I can only aspire to one day equal his ethical commitment to a sociopolitical struggle. Thanks to him, I met and worked with other student activists, who taught me, in practical terms, what engaged educational research looks like. *Me enseñaron, más que todo, que la universidad es del pueblo, es de todas y todos, es nuestro territorio, es nuestra casa, y no le pertenece a los que tienen poder.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this critical ethnographic dissertation research was to explore the multiple and diverse ways in which university student activists in Honduras constructed oppositional political cultures within the institutional constraints and possibilities of the university and the broader neoliberal and authoritarian postcoup context. In this research, I considered studying up and down and anything in between a necessary task to understand the complexity of student activism in relation to the university's complicity with the coloniality of power and knowledge (Nader, 1972; Quijano, 2000, 2007). Critical ethnography, decolonial, space and place, and collective action theory provided the philosophical, methodological, conceptual, practical, political, and ethical commitments to understand how the University Student Movement's political culture resisted neoliberal higher education reform. This research, in addition, offers an ethnographic analysis and interpretation of the student movement's political culture and the role it played in democratizing the university. First, I used a historical perspective to contextualize reemerging student movements in Honduras. After tracing Latin American student movement's origin to the Cordoba Student Movement of Argentina, I examined the ways in which the student movement of Honduras adopted, reclaimed, and extended the democratic principles implemented in the former. University autonomy, ideological pluralism, democratic governance, academic freedom, and curriculum reform were salient points of analyses. Second, I examined the student movement's horizontal organization, identified the democratic social practices and political culture that emerged after the coup of 2009, and interpreted student activists' knowledges born in struggle through a decolonial lens concomitant with a sensitivity to space and place and collective action. Particularly, the direct participation of students in all decision-making processes within the student movement was interpreted as an act of resistance to reclaim democratic spaces within a sociopolitical context

increasingly becoming dictatorial. Third, I analyzed the student movement's impact in democratizing the university's governance structure and resisting neoliberal higher education reform. Fourth, I shared the knowledge produced collectively by student activists. The way students conceived of the university and its curriculum and governing practices unsettled the authorial individualism still present in educational research. The knowledges born in struggle, I argued, have sociopolitical, cultural, and decolonial implications. In addition to the analytical and interpretive work which included the research, knowledges, and practices student activists shared with me during the 12 months of fieldwork and participant observation in Honduras, I highlighted how the emergence of a heterogeneously articulated student movement slowed down, at the very least, the neocolonial and neoliberal reconfiguration of the university. This dissertation thus addressed the political relationship between the global and the local. The re-localization of politics here must not to be confused with reactionary politics. It means instead to recognize how the particular is enmeshed in a more complex web of power, domination, resistance, and reexistence. To resist locally means that collective actors engage global powers, even if indirectly and unintentionally. Student activists, who were able to put a stop to the series of neoliberal reforms implemented since the coup of 2009, reminded those in power (local, national, and global) that neoliberal higher education reform within a re-politicized autonomous university with an organized student movement will be faced with resistance. This ethnographic account will hopefully reveal the ways in which student activist built a politically culture characterized by alternative forms of organizing to resist what is too often conceived fatalistically as the inevitable neoliberalization of education. These fatalistic perspectives will hopefully be unsettled throughout the dissertation. The significance of this study is that it is oriented toward an ethnographic understanding of higher education reform and student resistance in Latin America, a region with a

student population which continues to be engaged in collective action. The educational significance of this work revolves around the need to rethink and rebuild universities in radically democratic terms. This rethinking involves the need to not only democratize access to higher education but rather to democratize governance, curriculum, knowledge, research, and ways of knowing and being. Transforming the university into a democratic place in which students are directly and meaningfully involved in governance and curriculum reform opens a path toward decolonial futurities where knowledge is no longer dictated from above but rather deconstructed and reconstructed from below. This dissertation research, lastly, as it works at the intersections of curriculum studies, decolonial theories, methodologies, pedagogies, and emerging university student resistance in Latin America, offers, I hope, a valuable way to do curriculum inquiry in higher education institutions within international contexts.

PERSONAL VIGNETTE

Justifying the reasons why I am interested in university student activism in Latin America while never having attended one of its universities is not an easy task. I immigrated to the United States from Honduras when I was only five years old. I learned English without much difficulty because of my young age, and I became the first person in my extended family to graduate from high school and college.

This story gets more complex if I mention the village and *campesino* life I left behind in Honduras, the undocumented status I held in the United States for eighteen years, my lived experiences in the streets of southern California, and my ultimate return to Honduras. "What does this have to do with university student movements in Honduras?" you might ask. In what follows, I attempt to answer this very question.

When I was in high school, the way I saw and experienced the world and the people around me drastically changed. Perhaps I became more observant to the way my mom talked about Central America's history, the reasons we left Honduras in 1992, and the role the United States played before, during, and after the 1980s. Perhaps, there was something to my "illegal" immigrant identity that did not let me forget that I am from the South [*que soy del sur*]. Perhaps, it was the denigrating ways I was reminded by my fellow "American" teachers, classmates, and even strangers that I belonged to a filthy, mestizo, Amerindian, Spanish-speaking third world country. The constellation of these lived experiences and hostile encounters made it difficult to forget the place from which I immigrated. *Soy del sur.*

As a philosophy professor once told me, being Central American did not in fact make me an American. José Martí (1985) could not have disagreed more when he referred to Latin America as *Nuestra América*. I now know, however, that *Nuestra America,* our America*,* also

formed part of a Eurocentric White/mestizo urban imaginary in Latin America which romanticized the past, thereby rendering Indigenous peoples and campesino mestizos as nonexistent or insignificant to the national or regional modern identity. My educational experiences, broadly understood, and the way my identity was constructed in the United States were, nonetheless, always intimately linked to the way I imagined myself in Latin America's past, present, and uncertain future. My supposed illegal, criminal, alien being, furthermore, positioned me in a peculiar place from which to experience and read the world—a place some scholars have conceptualized as colonial difference (Mignolo, 2000), borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987), double consciousness (Du Bois, 1903), and third space (Bhabha, 1994). When I went to college, the difference between the university's space and the places I identified with outside of its White walls became more prominent. At the university, I met Black, Brown, and Indigenous students who, like me, were historically excluded from higher education. Although I was not alone, the guilt I felt because I had left my *barrio* in southern California remained. I did not belong in the exclusive labyrinths designed for the White middle and upper class.

Now that I have reached this point in my abridged biographical account, how am I to justify my interest in higher education research in Honduras? Why university student activism? It appears I would be better off inquiring about Latino/a and immigrant students' educational experiences in the United States.

My abrupt return to Honduras, however, brought me closer to the social, political, and economic issues of the (neo)colony in which I was born. In many ways, my older brother's deportation in 2007 motivated me to take this somewhat-impulsive decision to return to Honduras. In 2009, when the democratically elected president Juan Manuel Zelaya Rosales was overthrown many fled (and are continuing to flee) the country's repressive regime within a

postcoup authoritarian and dictatorial context, risking their lives not so much to chase the *American Dream* but to escape the endless Central American nightmare. While others were heading North, however, I was looking South (Dorfman, 1998). In 2010, I applied for a teaching position in Honduras, and to my surprise I was hired. I finally had the opportunity to leave the United States, and I took it without hesitating. I may very well be considered a voluntary deportee. As an act of self-determination or perhaps resentment or perhaps both, I bought a one-way ticket to the place I only knew vaguely through stories and distorted memories.

I had constructed in my mind a Honduras I could help transform. Because of my sociology degree and my extracurricular Marxist readings, I was convinced that I could be the next Ernesto "Che" Guevara! My naive thoughts faced a cruel reality once I stepped into the piss, shit, smog, and wretchedness of the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa. As I walked toward the main street outside of the airport, I stopped a taxi and asked the middle-aged man to take me to the bus station that had routes to the southern part of Honduras. While in the backseat, I got a glimpse of this wretched, colonial city. Doubt finally found its way to my mind, eating away at all the hope and revolutionary fervor I had built up before my plane departed from the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

When the taxi dropped me off at the bus station located in Villa Della, a barrio considered to be prone to robbery because of its chaotic and crowded space filled with poverty, a pack of teenage boys rushed toward me asking me simultaneously where I was heading. Each one assured me that their bus was the best option. The cheapest! The fastest! One kid persuaded me who said his bus would leave in ten minutes. I did not have time to waste. On the way to my village, I tried to convince myself that my decision to return to Honduras was the correct one. I told myself that my decision to give up the possibility of becoming a permanent resident and a

United States citizen was not a mistake. My mom warned me before checking in my bags at the Los Angeles International Airport that she did not leave our village, *Los Llanitos*, so that I could return to it. She did not look for a better life [*una mejor vida*] in the United Stated so that I could return to the life she left behind. I refused to listen.

It took eight, long hours to get to the southernmost mountains bordering Nicaragua, a region filled with stories and nightmares of the conflicts between Sandinistas and Contras. It was about eight o'clock at night when the bus finally dropped me off on the nearest path leading to my village. It was pitch black as I stepped out of the bus. From what I could tell, the electricity had gone out due to the pouring rain. A woman holding an umbrella and a flashlight walked up and introduced herself and gave me an awkward side hug, which is quite common in rural areas in which people's timid expressions and gestures reveal the distance and unacquaintedness with the manners and formalities adopted by middle-class city dwellers. This woman, who was at least 30 years old, was my mother's youngest sister, an aunt I barely remembered. Another family member grabbed my 50-pound luggage and carried it on top of his shoulders.

Through the rain, my aunt guided me with her poorly lit flashlight. After about an hour of walking through the wet, mountainous terrain my feet had forgotten to walk on, we finally made it to *Los Llanitos*, the village I left in 1992, the year that marked five hundred years of colonialism and resistance in our godforsaken lands. Family members who I had not seen for eighteen years welcomed me with food, bread, and coffee. However cliché it may sound, I did feel at home, as though I had never left. This feeling reassured me that my decision to come back was not a mistake. Place does matter, and the people who leave never truly leave, nor are they forgotten by those who stay. It is the connection I now have to my village and my family who lives there that motivates me to do research on the institution that excludes them/us—the mestizo

campesinos and Indigenous peoples whose knowledges and practices are conceived as relics of a premodern past. There is no room for them in the modern university. What I have seen and experienced Honduras ultimately led me to research on the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) and the student activists who are trying to radically change the university by articulating their struggle with historically excluded peoples and communities.

My village, like many other excluded communities, only has an elementary school with two classrooms. Those who want to go to middle school and high school must travel to the nearest town, which can take at least one hour to walk to. Those who graduate from high school and aspire to study at the university must, if they have the means, move to the nearest city, Choluteca. Geographically speaking, higher education has been designed for the White or whitened upper socioeconomic strata living in urban spaces (Echeverria, 2010). However, things have begun to change for those with family members living in the United States or Spain who are able to send money back home. My younger cousins, for instance, who are enrolled at the university in Choluteca, do so because their parents living in the United States and Spain can pay for their expenses, such as housing and transportation. Those who are unable to continue their education leave to find work at the *maquilas* in San Pedro Sula or in coffee plantations during the harvest season. Others begin a long journey north in massive migrant caravans (Lakhani, 2018). Others go about it alone. Although immigrants living in the United States and Spain have made it possible for historically excluded people to gain access to higher education, this does not mean the sociocultural, epistemic, political, and economic structures in place will dissolve as the university becomes more socioeconomically, culturally, and racially diverse. Whether more schooling is good or bad is definitely up for debate (Illich, 1971). What is important to consider, nonetheless, is that the transnational flow of people and capital has changed the patterns of

consumption and has shifted the demographics of tertiary education (Fajnzylber et al., 2008; Ghosh, 2006). According to some recent statistics published by the College Board, university students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g. students with a family income less than 400 dollars per month) make up the largest proportion of the university student population at UNAH (Mendoza, 2014). Since 2012, however, acceptance rates for this group has declined. In 2012, 19,149 freshman students falling under this socioeconomic category were accepted at UNAH and its regional campuses. In 2013, the numbers dropped to 15,346 (Mendoza, 2014). On the other hand, the enrollment of freshman students whose families are categorized as middle class and earn more than 800 dollars per month increased from 677 in 2006 to 3,626 in 2013. What should be noted is that these changes have taken place during a post-coup context in which the university has been restructured through education reform following a neoliberal logic. Admission policy, such as entrance exams, has made it more difficult for students to get accepted to UNAH. It is within this context that family members from *Los Llanitos* found out that they had been denied the opportunity to study at a public university. It is also within this context that university students initiated a political process to democratize the university in their attempts to oppose neoliberal higher education reform.

When university students at UNAH began to organize, however, I had many doubts. Initially, I was not as informed about the university's demographics as I am now. At first, I was unsure of how student activists articulated themselves to other struggles in a space which had historically excluded women and colonized peoples and communities. Was the student movement an elitist organization? Were the student movement's leaders from the middle and upper class? How about the rank and file? As I mentioned above, the geographical arrangements previously used to limit access to universities are no longer as fixed due to transnational

migration. In a country with over 67 percent of population living under poverty (*Cepal: Honduras*, 2018), however, many continue to be excluded. The questions above convinced me that I should do research on, with, and alongside the University Student Movement to highlight the sociopolitical, economic, epistemological, cultural, and pedagogical dimensions of student activism.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In this chapter, I contextualize higher education reform and the emergence of the University Student Movement at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH). I briefly describe the university's academic and governance structure as well as the student movement's organization. In addition, I situate the emergence of student activism within a broader historical, regional, and geopolitical economic context in which right-wing, authoritarian, fascist, and dictatorial governments are increasingly becoming the norm (Pitts et al., 2016; Shipley, 2016). Furthermore, I analyze the neoliberal higher education reforms within a post-coup context in relation to the politically active student contingent self-identified as *las hijas y los hijos del golpe*. They are the daughters and sons of the coup of 2009 who decided to organize themselves in a "complex associational complex" in their politico-academic efforts to unsettle the neoliberal reform movement shaping the university into an exclusive, gentrified, and authoritarian space (Baierle, 1998, p. 118). I describe, lastly, how university student activists transcended the common issues pertinent to the defense of public universities, such as the privatization of education, by intersecting their struggle with other social movements.

In this chapter and throughout this dissertation, specifically in chapter two and three, I address the theoretical and methodological dilemmas of doing activist research. I argue against the dominant theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches used to study higher education reform and university student activism. I explicate how a decolonial theoretical perspective and critical ethnography complement each other to do research on, with, and alongside university student activists. By offering an ethnographic account of the university

student movement and its diverse actors, I hope that future educational researchers working within the broad field of international education and curriculum studies will take into consideration the modest offerings of this work.

Rationale

The purpose of this qualitative, ethnographic study is thus to explore how university student activists construct knowledges and practices aimed at democratizing, radicalizing, and decolonizing institutional spaces such as the university (Alvarez et al., 1998; Escobar, 1992, 2008; Escobar & Alvarez, 1992; Melucci, 1989, 1996a, 1996b). The literature demonstrates that ethnographies of higher education are scarce while K-12 ethnographic research is extensive (Jones et al., 2014; Pabian, 2013; Wisniewski, 2000). The use of critical ethnography in higher education, despite earlier pleas for its use (Masemann, 1982), is more uncommon. Apart from what has been written by the scholarship falling under science and technology studies, few ethnographies have been written on the university and the everyday practices of its actors. It is not surprising because universities are unlikely to consent for researchers to study up. Nader (1972) asks, "What if, in reinventing anthropology, anthropologists were to study the colonizers rather than the colonized, the culture of power rather than the culture of the powerless, the culture of affluence rather than the culture of poverty?" (p. 289). In this dissertation, I consider studying up and down and anything in between a necessary task to understand the complexity of student activism and the university's complicity with power. Indeed, there exists an academic hierarchy that prevents researchers from studying up because this type of work may potentially unveil the doings of the university and the neoliberal sciences, discourses, and governing practices it sustains.

I thus used critical ethnography to analyze and interpret how the University Student Movement at the National Autonomous University of Honduras resisted neoliberal higher education reform, curriculum, and hierarchical governance practices. The significance of this study was twofold; firstly, it aimed to build upon international higher education research, particularly that which draws from critical globalization studies (Dolby & Rahman, 2008), by providing an ethnographic, sociocultural account of university student activism; secondly, it offered an international perspective to curriculum studies—one which problematizes the internationalization of curriculum as well as the theoretical frames (mis)guiding the field in settler colonial and neocolonial contexts.

The personal vignette I offered above described the importance of place and thinking from a situated social and epistemic position. Stating that I am from the Global South does not simply mean that I am from a specific country or geographical location. Rather, being and thinking from the South means one has reached a critical, decolonial understanding of what it means to think, feel, sense, live, and become otherwise with others from a subaltern position. As I explicate in subsequent chapters, thinking from a specific standpoint or borderland perspective is not something that is guaranteed or essential to a subaltern subject. Feminist theorists have elucidated this point through varying positionalities (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Haraway, 1988; Harding, 2016). Instead, thinking from an(other) epistemic position is exactly what is denied to those who have been colonized and historically subjugated. I clarify this point so that the Global South is not reified and understood in binary terms as that which is in direct opposition to the Global North. As Walsh (2012) points out, there are Souths in the North and Norths in the South, which breaks with the dichotomous conceptualizations and the strictly demarcated cartographies of the Global North and the Global South.

I used decolonial, space and place, and collective action theory to inform the epistemological, institutional, and praxeological dimensions of university student activism respectively, explicated in the following chapter. I felt it urgent to intersect these theories to understand the complexity of university student activism in Latin America and their collective efforts to unsettle the coloniality of neoliberal higher education reform and the knowledges, values, and meanings sustained by neoliberal university governance and curriculum.

In addition to providing an ethnographic account of student activism, this dissertation situated activism within the post-coup Honduran context, in which the social, economic, political, and educational institutions were rapidly restructured to meet the external and internal exigencies of neoliberal globalization. Above all, this dissertation provided an ethnographic account of a group of university student activists trying to maintain the collective alive in times when possessive individualism presents itself as the only option.

University Student Movements

> Students do merit political analysis. This becomes clear once we drop the image of students frequently playing decisive roles in determining national policies, and instead focus more on matters such as strong influence over higher education policy itself, political recruitment, the generation of ideas, and legitimacy and disorder. Student political activity in Latin America has not faded nearly as much as scholarship about it. (Levy, 1981, p. 354)

In the past, university student movements were considered the vanguard of social, economic, and political change (Altbach, 1975; Levine, 1980). The year of 1968, known by some scholars as the "Great Rehearsal" toward a world revolution (Arrighi et al., 1989), was a point in time when the ostensive intangibility of changing the world did not seem as intangible after all. Activism was not the volunteerism we see today or what Alvarez et al. (1998) consider the cooptation and NGOization of social movements, including feminist, LGBTQ,

environmentalist, Indigenous, and campesino movements. Instead, it was anti-systemic, directed at "the established power structures in an effort to bring into existence a more democratic, more egalitarian historical system than the existing one" (Wallerstein, 2014, p. 160). Student movements, furthermore, refused to conform to the expectations the modern capitalist world-system had in store for them (Echeverria, 2010), meaning that university students' struggle transcended the institutional constraints and political limitations of the university, curriculum, and the nation-state. Indeed, some student movements, Echeverria (2010) argues, transformed themselves into social struggles, as was the case with the Mexican student movement of 1968. Not long after this great rehearsal, however, with the neoliberal configuration of global capitalism and the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of history and agency was proclaimed by the West (Fukuyama, 1992; Hinkelammert, 1995, 1996). This fatalistically inescapable tale void of all alternatives allowed for only one narrative to stand until the end of time, that of postmodernity and the ceaseless development and progress neoliberal globalization promises.

Neoliberalism

During the first two decades of the 21st century, we find the implementation of neo-developmental policies concomitant with neoliberal discourses aimed at restructuring the global economy into one that is primarily knowledge-based (Torres, 2009; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002). A knowledge-based economy positions the university not only as a producer of knowledge but also as an invaluable agent of neoliberal globalization. Under this shifting geopolitical economic landscape, it is imperative to examine the relationship between neoliberalism, higher education reform (including curriculum reform), and the emergence of the

student resistance in varying contexts to not lose sight of the ongoing struggles that make it possible to think of alternative educational models.

Given neoliberalism's ubiquitous use, one must inquire first how this ideological discourse formed, and how it articulated itself socially, culturally, politically, economically, globally, and institutionally. Harvey (2005a) defines neoliberalism as the "theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can be best advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade" (p. 2). Harvey's definition underlines neoliberalism's unfaltering and irrational view of individual freedoms, which transfers the responsibility to individuals' private interests to achieve social stability without considering historically embedded social structures (Giroux, 2011). Historically embedded social structures which maintain asymmetrical relations of power intact are thus ignored. Without the consideration of sociocultural, economic, and political structures, what we are left with is a meritocratic system in which a laissez faire liberal ideology reigns supreme, where the individual entrepreneurial freedoms promised by this neoliberal ideology are only attainable by those who have historically held the resources, power, and sociocultural capital to do so. Those who fall behind within this system apparently do so because of their own doing.

Economist Milton Friedman promoted this neoliberal ideology in the United States. His neoliberal economic theories, including Friedrich Hayek's (1944, 1948, 1960), were first experimented in Chile under Pinochet's dictatorship (Harvey, 2005). They were later put in effect in the United States and in England under the Reagan and Thatcher administration respectively (Frazer, 1982). The practical implementation of these neoliberal economic theories replaced the Keynesian economic model of the welfare state (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Friedman's

(1982) work underscored the need to deregulate the public sector, including public higher education. According to him, this was the only way to guarantee individuals academic and economic success. Although Friedman's theories spoke more to K-12 schooling, his ideas initially found their highest expression outside the United States, where the privatization of higher education marched an unfettered path under authoritarian regimes in Latin America. It is not surprising that Friedman's Chicago Boys would later conduct their economic experiments after the Chilean Coup of 1973 (see e.g., the neoliberal manifesto written by the Chicago Boys titled *El Ladrillo* (Spíkula & Mendez, 1992)).

Deregulation and privatization, as the Chilean case demonstrates, always involves the participation of the State. As Gamble (1988) reveals, there is a contradiction between neoliberalism's ideological discourse and its practical implementation, for the state continues to be a critical player within a neoliberal order. To make the conditions ripe for privatization requires the deliberate implementation of economic policies. Rollback neoliberal economic policies, for instance, gradually defund public universities, leading to their "discreditation" (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 384), thus validating the neoliberal discourse around deregulation and privatization. In relation to education, this strategic maneuver is aimed at convincing the population that public education is inferior to that which is offered by private institutions. Subsequently, rollout neoliberal economic policies deregulate the public sector, making it permissible to privatize public services (Peck & Tickell, 2002). The systematic application of rollback and rollout neoliberal policies enable people to conceive of the public sector as incompetent. In addition, it presents the private sector as the only rational path toward innovation, efficiency, competition, success, and salvation. With the strategic and systematic implementation of public policy, possessive individualism, fatalism, and indifference have

become the new common sense (Gramsci, 1971). It is what Santos (2002a) coined as social fascism, which, for him, "is pluralistic, coexists easily with the democratic state, and it privileges time-space, rather than being national, is both local and global" (p. 186), within which, only the private individual with the sufficient means to seclude themselves in gated communities can survive. All *others* remain on the other side of the abyssal line (Ramon Grosfoguel et al., 2015; Ramon Grosfoguel, 2016; Santos, 2007a).

Within this neoliberal conjuncture, contemporary higher education reform, in addition to being ideological and cultural, is yet another colonizing process seeking to meet the demands of the so-called global knowledge economy. Despite its global scale, the knowledge economy is dominated by the Group of Seven, which continues to ignore the sociocultural, historical, and political dynamics of Latin America for example (Lander, 1999), like earlier forms of colonialism. When knowledge is conceived as global, it creates the illusion that it benefits everyone equally, when, in fact, this is not case. It gives the illusion, in other words, that the knowledge economy is the end to which all people must aspire. Knowledge cannot be stripped away so easily from its complicity in maintaining asymmetrical relations of power, evidenced by the global division of labor, including the academic labor quantified and ranked in top journals and World Class universities. The implications of a global knowledge economy are that it universalizes and naturalizes itself at the expense of all knowledges and ways of knowing that fall outside of its narrow capitalist parameters. It is thus an urgent task to amplify and make more visible the knowledge practices which resist being commodified, ranked, and consumed.

Understanding neoliberalism's ideological and indeed cultural manifestation is important, yet it is not enough to understand the complexity of today's globalizing context. The ubiquitous use of globalization, the global village, and the global era, furthermore, does little to clarify what

it truly entails and where it emanates from and why. Globalization is often employed to conceptualize a technologically interconnected world where the fluidity of capital and people begin to blur political borders and national identities. This blurring of borders apparently allows for a harmonious world culture to come into being (Robertson & Dale, 2015). Held and McGrew's (2003) definition is often cited in the literature:

> a growing magnitude or intensity of global flows such that states and societies become increasingly enmeshed in worldwide systems and networks of interaction. As a consequence, distant occurrences and developments can come to have serious domestic impacts while local happenings can engender significant global repercussions. . .. This does not mean that the global necessarily displaces or takes precedence over local, national or regional orders of social life. Rather, the point is that the local becomes embedded within more expansive sets of interregional relations and networks of power. (p. 3)

Whether the local was ever statically localized is debatable. However, the networks of interaction, perhaps more amplified today than ever before, helps conceive of global flows in such a way that it positions universities as potential containers in which commodifiable knowledge can be deposited, consumed, and reproduced to transform the university into yet another node within a global network of interaction. It is imperative, therefore, to understand how neoliberalism, globalization, and knowledge production are interwoven in a complex colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2000). The definition of globalization provided by Gregory et al. (2009) is worth citing at length, for it intertwines globalization and neoliberalism.

> A big buzzword in political speech and a ubiquitous analytical category in academic debate, globalization operates today rather like modernization did in the mid-twentieth century as the key term of a master discourse about the general state of the world. The most common political version of the discourse depicts globalization as an unstoppable process of global integration, a supposedly inevitable process that while being driven by free market capitalism also necessitates all the free market reforms of neoliberalism. (p. 308)

In relation to each other both neoliberalism and globalization can also be conceptualized in at least three ways: 1) as two universal politico-economic and cultural processes; 2) as late

capitalism's globally restructured form whereby unprecedented neoliberal economic forces drive contemporary globalizing processes more rapidly through technological advancements; and 3) as inextricably linked processes through which colonial domination finds its continuity in a reconfigured geopolitical form, where the United States' political, economic, cultural, and technological influence rapidly ascended to a superpower after World War II, which became uncontested after the end of the Cold War (Jameson & Miyoshi, 1998).

The Coloniality of Globalization

It is the third perspective mentioned above that critical and decolonial thinkers use to conceptualize and contextualize the current neoliberal conjuncture to understand how global designs stemming from local histories are articulated globally (Mignolo, 2000). Escobar (2004) labels this process imperial globality and global coloniality while Dirlik (2016) terms it global modernity, where it is no longer the West who is on its destructive path to reach capitalist modernity (e.g., Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS)). Although not a decolonial scholar, the prominent comparative education scholar Phillip Altbach asserts that education reform is a means to attain the 'servitude of the mind' of those dwelling in the formerly colonized and so-called underdeveloped third world (Arnove, 1980, p. 57). Without doubt, one of the most effective institutions capable of meeting neoliberal globalization's political, economic, cultural, social, epistemic, and technological desires is the university. It is not only the space in which the production and reproduction of knowledge and power is most effectively disseminated and legitimated; it is also the space in which political, economic, and cultural deposits are made in the fashion of Freire's (1970) banking model. These cultural deposits made by the university allow for a new form of cultural and intellectual colonialism, as it was initially conceived by Latin American scholars in the 1950s, later reconceptualized by

decolonial scholars as coloniality in the 1990s (Quijano, 1992; Restrepo, 2001). The university thus continues to be an instrumental space in which dominant discourses, narratives, knowledges are perpetuated and ways of being reproduced.

The university and those teaching and learning within its confines are increasingly being transformed into consumable products (Santos, 2012). That is the primary aim of neoliberal education reform. Commodifiable knowledge has become the only knowledge worth knowing. How, then, is neoliberal globalization different from earlier colonial eras led by Spain, France, and England? The power-wielding hands might have changed yet colonialism seems to have only changed according to the "evolution of capitalism, modernity, and Eurocentrism" (Gregory et al., 2009, p. 94). If we examine varying university models closely, one will notice the varying degrees to which the cultural, political, and the economic are emphasized across them. While the ecclesiastic Spanish model underscored cultural/religious domination and the French the ideological and political (used for consolidating the nation-state which also implies cultural homogenization as well), the Anglo model had, and still has, the tendency to emphasize the economic domain and instrumental rationality (Ribeiro, 1967). Under neoliberal globalization, however, the dominant Anglo-American model delicately articulates all three, where the aim is to create an individualistic and possessive culture, an ideological/apolitical subject who finds no need for public services, and the entrepreneurial/economic subject who carries knowledge instrumental for their success alone. I do not mean to sound anachronistic by citing classical liberal thinkers, but Spencer's (1860) thoughts on this matter offer some clarity and perhaps some honesty when contemplating what knowledge is of most worth according to Occidentalist rationality, morality, and subjectivity. His inquiry on this subject could be referred to today to

think about the interlinkages between culture, politics, economy, education, colonialism, neoliberalism, and globalism.

> We are none of us content with quietly unfolding our own individualities to the full in all directions; but have a restless craving to impress our individualities upon others, and in some way subordinate them. And this it is which determines the character of our education. Not what is of most real worth, is the consideration; but what will bring most applause, honour, respect—what will most conduce to social position and influence—what will be most imposing. (Spencer, 1960, p. 6- 7)

Thus, it is not knowledge in and of itself that makes it worth knowing. What Spencer clarifies is that knowledge must impose on others; it must provide an individual the means toward "social position and influence," that is, toward a position of power, which, in turn, allows an individual to have an "effect on others." Individual desires are thus promoted at the expense of the common good. Neoliberal education reform in Latin America and indeed around the world is both theoretically and practically aligned with the social Darwinist ideology developed by Spencer's classical liberalism. Today, this ideology underlies the social fascist tendencies of neoliberal globalization.

Notwithstanding the hegemonic neoliberal discourse, there is little agreement as to how modernity and development—now bundled under the all-encompassing term of globalization—should be conceptualized in relation to each other (Jameson & Miyoshi, 1998). Some point to cosmopolitan and post-neoliberal transitions (Beck, 1992; Escobar, 2010), while others find modernity and development to be two sides of the same colonial coin (Mignolo, 2000). Global coloniality (Escobar, 2010), internal colonialism (Casanova, 1965), and settler colonialism (Wolfe, 2006) are just a few other ways to conceptualize neoliberal globalization. How we choose to conceptualize neoliberalism greatly depends on the historical vantage point one attains through our own social, cultural, geographic positions. Where one speaks from, in other words, impacts the way globalizing forces are experienced, theorized, and resisted.

To challenge neoliberal globalization's symbolic and material power, one can begin by disrupting the commonsense use of terms such as the global era or the global village (Mignolo, 2007). There is no global village nor is there a global era not maintained through physical, epistemic, and cultural violence. If we examine what is happening on the ground, an unsteady terrain is found, one in which the harmonious global flows are nothing more than a reconfigured modern/colonial world-system (Mignolo, 2011). On this terrain, you will find violence, suffering, torture, death, dispossession, and displacement, which the scholarship drawing on Foucault's (2010) concept of governmentality and biopolitics describes quite well (Ortner, 2016). While analyzing the negation of life is critical to understanding neoliberalism's destructive path, it often leaves little room for thinking of alternatives. In other words, critical theory's negative discourse, philosophically understood, is not enough. Critical thought which does not affirm an alternative project beyond the Eurocentric notions of critique and emancipation all too often results, albeit unintentionally, into a fatalism fostering indifference and social fascism.

Decolonial scholars, on the other hand, make resistance more visible to crack open the monopolized conceptual space to make room for alternatives. Indeed, as social movements and student movements emerge and as collective identities are constructed to transform the sociocultural space, institutional foundations begin to fracture, making them less efficient at subjecting alternative ways of knowing and becoming and perpetuating social hierarchies based on difference.

Postcoup Context

It is not surprising that postcoup Chile, under Pinochet's brutal regime, underwent a neoliberal revolution (Hall, 2011). The democratic gains made during the Allende administration

were immediately removed from the constitution, education policies, and university's vision and mission (Bellei et al., 2014; Cabalin, 2012; Stromquist & Sanyal, 2013). Klein (2007) argues that these abrupt takeovers, termed by her as the shock doctrine, dominate the political economy and are inextricably linked to crisis (e.g., natural disasters or financial, political, institutional crises). Similarly, the Honduras' post-coup regime implemented neo-developmental and neocolonial education reforms with force. Paradoxically, within authoritarian neoliberal states there has been a resurgence of social movements, while in progressive and even socialist governments social movements have diminished or have been coopted (Zibechi, 2012). It is this contradiction that makes the University Student Movement of Honduras analytically, conceptually, theoretically, and practically salient to explore. How were university student activists able to articulate a student movement? What actions did they take to democratize the university? What experiences, meanings, and knowledges did they produce in their struggle? These questions are explored in subsequent chapters.

Historical Background

Since 1982, the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) has been under siege. That same year, ambassador John Negroponte and the Supreme Court of Honduras helped depose the university rector Juan Almendares (Borgen, 2005), with Oswaldo Ramos Soto, who was later accused by human rights organization for assisting the armed forces in the disappearance of university student activists in the 1980s (Dunkerley & Sieder, 1996). In the past two decades, UNAH experienced a series of neoliberal education reforms which began in 2004 but in actuality were enforced under different sociopolitical conditions in 2009. According to the global tendencies, these reforms sought to restructure the curriculum and governance structure according to neoliberalism's new managerialist logic (González-Ledesma, 2014).

Like many public universities in Latin America, graduate programs at UNAH are limited to a few academic programs such as law and medicine. Given these limitations, it is only possible for a selected few to attain a masters or doctoral degree in Europe or the United States (Torres, 2009). The largest undergraduate programs are in economics, engineering, law, and medicine. By examining UNAH's admission's records, one immediately notices the low number of students in the humanities and social sciences, which constitutes 21 percent, while technical programs in economics and engineering make up 41 percent of enrolled students (Matricula, 2018). The remaining programs are in the other "sciences," which means that 79 percent of students attending the central campus are in academic programs with little to no critical curricula. These numbers demonstrate how the university curriculum is structured to meet the economic demands of the increasingly globalized economy and the technical knowledges required for the new international division of labor (Alvarez et al., 1998). If we do not consider some of the programs offered in the humanities/arts and social sciences, such as architecture, foreign languages, local development and social work (which, one can argue, are also interconnected with neoliberal globalization and the NGOization (e.g., local development) of civil society (Alvarez et al., 1998), students in the humanities, arts, and social science only make up 12 percent of registered students. If we only take into consideration first year student admissions, these numbers drop significantly. These tendencies indicate how the university will be configured in the upcoming years.

The co-governing university structure constitutive of university autonomy attained by the broad-based university student movement in the 1950s was also stripped away in 2004 (Murillo, 2017). Before these neoliberal higher education reforms, university students had parity of representation, meaning that they had 50 percent of the votes in the university council, UNAH's

highest governing body. Although co-governance had been coopted before the reforms of 2004, the reclaiming of democratic practices such as co-governance at the university was only initiated in 2009, within a postcoup context, in which university student activists expressed a more radical, meaning to democracy. In the next section, I discuss in more detail the authoritarian political culture student activists oppose and briefly describe the radically democratic political culture they are building.

The University Student Movement

In 2016, student activists at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) founded the University Student Movement [*Movimiento Estudiantil Universitario*], popularly referred to as MEU (pronounced as meh · ŭ in Spanish). The emergence of MEU as a new student activist political platform must be understood within the neoliberal and authoritarian political context in which UNAH became the ideological arm to what student activists and the general population refer to as *golpismo*. This concept can be translated at the institutional level as a coup political culture. University authorities, students, and professors who continue to support the conservative national party and liberal party responsible for orchestrating the coup in 2009 fall under this pejorative concept.

According to student activists and the research they have produced collectively and disseminated through alternative media such as a widely read WordPress, UNAH has been ruled autocratically by *golpistas* who conceive of the university as their fiefdom. Those who pay tribute to the *golpista* regime are rewarded and those who disobey are punished accordingly. The *golpista* political culture established within and beyond the university has also helped sustain the neo-developmentalist and neo-extractivist economic projects initiated since the economic crisis of 2008. It is therefore imperative to analyze how the reconfiguration of capital and the

accumulation by dispossession facilitated by authoritarian and fascist governments reshape autonomous universities. The United States, according to Harvey (2005b), is transitioning toward "open imperialism backed by military force" which may be interpreted as a "sign of the weakening of that hegemony before the serious threat of recession and widespread devaluation at home" (p. 64). His prescient thoughts point to the geopolitical and economic maneuvers affecting Latin American since the economic crisis of 2008. The authoritarian tendencies in the region are illustrative of neoliberalism's material and symbolic crisis. In other words, neoliberalism globalization can be qualified more as a hegemonic world-system in which coercion surpasses persuasion as opposed to the "condition of dominance in which the moment of persuasion outweighs that of coercion" (Guha, 1998, p. 103). We can speak of a hegemonic crisis within which the university plays a greater role in providing solutions to capitalism's inherent material contradictions and modernity's exhausted narrative. The university thus assists in extending the lifeline of a fairytale economic model and sociopolitical imaginary, as Chomsky (1996) refers to capitalism's irrationality, that benefits the few at the expense of the many.

In this neoliberal moment, university autonomy and co-governance, two paramount pillars upon which the Latin American autonomous university model was built, began to lose their democratic substance (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002). University autonomy was emptied of its democratic content primarily through higher education reform which followed a mercantilist and neoliberal logic seeking to transform public universities into reproducers of what Lander (2008) calls a neoliberal science. Some scholars rightfully conceptualize the proliferation of neoliberal governance and research practices as academic capitalism and new managerialism (Torres, 2014). The former greatly influences the curriculum and research while the latter eliminates shared governance.

A neoliberal curriculum, additionally, allows knowledge produced through public resources to be transferred to the private sector at the expense of the common good. The privatization of the university, consequently, takes on another dynamic insofar as the institution ostensibly remains public while the curriculum is strictly designed to increase the private sector's profit margins through scientific and technological innovation funded by the public, usually disguised as public-private partnerships and research and development networks (Miyoshi, 2000). University autonomy, therefore, ought to go beyond what is guaranteed constitutionally and must instead pluralize the social and epistemological commitments of the curriculum. What I mean by this is that universities may appear public in form but may very well contain and enact practices opposed to the public good. The university curriculum, instead of helping answer the pressing questions asked by student activists aspiring to democratize the institution, offers technical solutions to problems intricately intertwined to the sociopolitical and economic fabric.

Political Platform

The self-proclaimed University Student Movement is not a homogenous organization. Instead, it agglutinates distinct university student collectives, associations, and independent student activists. Organized around an ideologically plural platform, university student activists initiated an unprecedented democratic project within an authoritarian institution complicit in maintaining the dictatorial regime ruling the country in power. The democratization of the university primarily aimed to disrupt the Academic Norms [*Normas Académicas*] passed in 2015, which sought to limit access to university students with low academic performance without first considering how the university and the public education system was pedagogically, methodologically, and epistemologically at fault. Student activists made this point clear in

collectively written articles, presentations given in forums, and discussions in public assemblies, which I analyze, interpret, and discuss in chapter five and six.

At the time the academic norms were implemented, almost two of every three students had grades lower than 60 percent (Quiñonez et al., 2014). For students to enroll in the class the following year, the minimum requirement was set at 60 percent, which meant that these measures would affect 40,000 students. These norms served as a catalyst since they created the material conditions necessary for students from distinct backgrounds to come together to disrupt the possessive subjectivities and ethical indifference these neoliberal reforms aimed to reproduce. Student activists organized themselves in student collectives and associations, which later transformed into the University Student Movement. Student activists believed that a political platform would be able to, on the one hand, agglutinate multiple and diverse students and associations to prevent university authorities from implementing the new academic norms, and, on the other, make it possible to reclaim democratic co-governance practices stripped away in the series of neoliberal higher education reforms following the hierarchical logic of new managerialism (Torres, 2014). As a collective, the University Student Movement began to rethink the university's social, cultural, political, and economic role in society and the role distinct communities ought to play to radically democratize higher education.

When the student movement barricaded and occupied for the university for the entire trimester in 2016, the academic norms were placed on "estandby," as one student activist described the academic norms' status. Their future implementation, Mario assured me, is likely if the university student movement is disarticulated or fragmented (M. Castro, personal communication, March 12, 2019). In chapter five, I pay close attention to the ways in which university student activists engaged in knowledge practices of resistance and created a radically

democratic political culture to unsettle the university's dominant, authoritarian political culture. I also underscore how these social practices, knowledges, identities, and subjectivities constructed through collective action helped disrupt neoliberalism's colonial epistemological, ontological, and axiological project where the valuation of knowledge simultaneously assigns a specific value to an individual according to the type of knowledge consumed and reproduced.

Geopolitical and Economic Context

> Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable. (Friedman, 1982, p. ix)

In 2009, Honduras became the first country in the western hemisphere to successfully organize a military/parliamentary coup in the 21st century (Pitts et al., 2016). Klein's (2007) work captures with perfect clarity how any crisis, be they political, economic, or ecological, can be turned into profit. The functionaries who orchestrated the coup, the *golpistas* I mentioned in the previous section, have gone to the extreme of selling the country to the highest bidders (Geglia, 2016). The National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) has also been restructured to meet the demands of the so-called global knowledge economy insofar as the academic programs and curriculum are geared toward producing technocrats rather than critical, transdisciplinary scholars. This becomes more obvious with the recent reforms aimed at academic standardization aligned with "global" demands (Council, 2015). The Academic Aptitude Test designed by the College Board and adopted by UNAH, additionally, increased the minimum admission score. Consequently, this has lowered the acceptance rate for students from historically and contemporarily marginalized, oppressed, and excluded social sectors, particularly student attending public schools. Other filters, as students understand these

measures, were implemented to limit access to those unwanted students who dare to dream to enter the academic programs designed for the elite. Salient cases to consider are the medical programs. Currently, the UNAH only admits 300 students in their medical school annually, while the Higher Education Council headed by UNAH has granted private universities the right to open medical programs without having the required infrastructure or strict admission requirements (Matricula, 2019). This highlights how the privatization of higher education may be more difficult to discern in Latin American contexts. It demonstrates that the commodification of education is more elusive in comparison to the overnight privatization of other sectors (e.g., telecommunication, energy, water, and other natural resources). In Honduras, at least, there seems to be a clear difference between the privatization of goods and the privatization of "services" which could be conceptualized in Spanish as the *privatización silenciosa de la educación* which translates into English as the silent privatization of education (Tamayo, 2011).

Let me return to the academic norms discussed above. In many ways, these norms aimed to gentrify UNAH the university insofar as it sought to transform the university into a place of consumption for the minority middle and upper class. It is not surprising that new urban projects in the neighborhoods surrounding UNAH are catering to the dominant aforementioned socioeconomic classes. Nor is it surprising that a mall-like complex is currently under construction inside the university. Building 1847, for instance, has a minimalist architectural design and much of its exterior is covered with tinted windows, giving the UNAH the entrepreneurial appearance it desperately desires. It is a five-story building which cost the university about 37 million dollars, enough to cover the family income of at least 15,000 university students from working class families for six months (Sanchez, 2018). This building is equipped with solar technology and it is open for business. Meanwhile, most students are unsure

whether a required course will open because of the limited space in other buildings. Some academic programs such as journalism, sociology, anthropology, history, pedagogy, and psychology, as student activists expressed repeatedly during their public assemblies, are assigned few classrooms despite having thousands of students enrolled. Building 1847, however, will offer the convenience of food courts with the "best" American fast-food restaurants in town. McDonalds, Burger King, Little Caesars, Pizza Hut, and KFC will be more than glad to offer their services to the hungry and anxious middle-class students.

Gentrification, however, pales in comparison to what students conceive as *la privatización en ráfaga* of the little that remains public. *Ráfaga* can be translated directly as the violent wind that blows in short duration or as the blow of live and instantaneous light used to describe the rapid fire of an assault rifle. These blitzkrieg methods to privatize is the stuff of which the shock doctrine is made (Klein, 2007), the rapid assault on public institutions that was experimented in Chile after the coup of 1973 with the assistance of Milton Friedman and his Chicago Boys. In post-coup Honduras, however, the neo-developmental and colonizing efforts underlying education reform or the counter-reform movement, as student activists prefer to call it, led to organized student resistance. The resurgence of these movements is paradoxical, given that one would expect social movements to decline under authoritarian regimes (Zibechi, 2012). It is this paradox that makes student movements in Honduras analytically and programmatically imperative to explore.

The imposition of neoliberal desires through education reform makes curriculum, conceived broadly (Pinar, 2004), ideologically (Apple, 1979), politically and pedagogically (Freire, 1970), and epistemologically relevant to this dissertation research inasmuch as it also explores how student activists unsettle the university's neocolonial global designs (Mignolo,

2000; Walsh, 2012). Fasquelle (2011), in his critical and regionally oriented take on the coup, lucidly explains the coup's unpredictable effects.

> In Latin America it [the coup] brought about the idea of organizing a Community of Nations that includes Cuba but excludes the United States and Canada. In Honduras the citizenry has mobilized beyond the point of no return, although many do not want to understand that. Today, campesinos of different backgrounds and traditions; urban workers; organized labor; teachers at all levels and many students; artisans and artists of the lower-middle class; the majority of intellectuals and the enlightened clergy actively resist the coup's successor regime. (p. 20)

As university students continue to organize within and beyond the university, understanding how they construct knowledges and social practices of resistance is of critical importance.

Conclusion

In this introduction, I contextualized the university student movement at the institutional, national, regional, and global levels. In doing so, I addressed the complicated ways in which UNAH's curriculum and form of governance are linked to geopolitical, economical, and cultural forces. My aim was to elucidate how neoliberal globalization is entangled with higher education reform and, consequently, with university student activism in Honduras. These institutional changes, as I clarified, do not take place in a void without contradictions, and conflicts, and resistance. The University Student Movement did not only initiate a process that precluded the neoliberalization of the university. Of critical importance is rather the ongoing work student activists continue to engage in to rethink the university in radically democratic terms. This dissertation thus seeks to elucidate student activists' the organizational or associational political culture within the university as well as the social and epistemological implications.

Organization of Chapters

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter one contextualized the emergence of the university student activism in relation to neoliberal higher education reform in Honduras.

Chapter two elaborates the theoretical perspectives informing this ethnographic study and critically reviews the literature using decolonial, space and place, and collective action theory. Chapter three examines ethnography both theoretically and practically, justifies the use of critical ethnography, and details the methods used in this study. The ethical and political are also discussed in relation to doing activist ethnographic research. Chapter four situates the National Autonomous University of Honduras historically, contextually, regionally, and politically. It sets the institutional stage for chapter five by analyzing various education reforms and student movements which have shaped the university's autonomous, democratic, and political character. Chapter five offers an ethnographic analysis and interpretation of the University Student Movement. It examines the everyday practices used to organize, and interprets the political culture constructed through assemblies as the decolonization of university space, knowledge production, curriculum, and pedagogy. Chapter six is a co-constructed discussion in which the theoretical knowledge and social practices student activists produced collectively are presented in their own terms. It concludes the dissertation with a summary of the findings and the implications, limitations, and future routes of student activist research within and beyond higher education institutions.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

> From our point of view, studying the history and the logic of the various philosophers' philosophies is not enough. At least as a methodological guide-line, attention should be drawn to the other parts of the history of philosophy; to the conceptions of the world held by the great masses, to those of the most restricted ruling (or intellectual) groups, and finally to the links between these various cultural complexes and the philosophy of the philosophers. The philosophy of an age is not the philosophy of this or that philosopher, of this or that group of intellectuals, of this or that broad section of the popular masses. It is a process of combination of all these elements, which culminates in an overall trend, in which the culmination becomes a norm of collective action and becomes concrete and complete (integral) 'history.' (Gramsci, 2005, p. 688)

In this chapter, I expound upon the theoretical perspectives guiding my research. As I interconnect the conceptual work of various theoretical perspectives, I also offer a critique of the dominant theoretical perspective informing the research on university student activism and international higher education (e.g., world polity theory). The review is not exhaustive. Rather, it points to the theoretical and methodological limitations of the scholarship which tends to overemphasize either the political, cultural, or economic while ignoring the ways in which these domains are imbricated. The goal of this chapter is to avoid the conceptual/analytical distinctions made between political economy and cultural studies which continue to divide academics in separate and often antagonistic camps, where some follow a materialist conception of the world while others conceive of it in idealist/symbolic terms. Maintaining these dual conceptions, however, is not viable if one is to understand the complex, paradoxical, and complementary realities of this world (Morin, 2008).

Part one of this chapter examines the dominant theoretical perspectives informing international higher education research. It elaborates the concepts offered by critical and

decolonial perspectives and addresses the methodological implications of these perspectives. More specifically, it argues for politically committed theoretical perspectives and approaches to doing research with activists. Overall, part one examines how critical and decolonial perspectives entangle the political, social, cultural, and economic with ontological, epistemological, and ethical commitments. Part two uses the concepts densely articulated by space and place and collective action theory to understand the institutional and organizational changes of the National Autonomous University of Honduras initiated by student activists. While part one offers the concepts utilized in this study to analyze and interpret student activists' knowledge production as a decolonial praxis, part two provides the analytics to examine how university student collective action reconfigures the university politically, socially, culturally, and organizationally. The former and the latter theoretical perspectives guide the analyses and interpretations of chapter five and the discussions and reflections of chapter six.

Part 1: Decolonial Perspectives

It is well documented that anti-globalization social movements in varying contexts have emerged within a historical conjuncture conceptualized as the crisis of neoliberal globalization and indeed of modernity (Escobar, 2010; Zibechi, 2012). The growth, progress, and economic development (post)modernity continues to promise, however, are difficult to defend rationally. Harvey (2005a, 2010, 2018) understands neoliberalism's ideological discourse around unfettered economic growth as the irrational rationalization of capitalism's inherent irrationality—that is, capitalism's ontological and ecological contradictions based on finite resources. Under these irrational conditions, universities are faced with neoliberal globalization's ontological crisis and the epistemological justifications sustaining national, regional, and global development projects (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007). Regarding this crisis, Santos (2012) concisely states, "we

face modern problems for which there are no modern solutions" (p. 8). Concerning the academy, these problems must, out of urgent necessity, be worked out in transdisciplinary, un-disciplinary, and transcultural ways (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007). This type of work necessitates the participation of social movements and their collective actors. It is not the university's role to solve the problems of society, as it is still conceived. Rather, the university has the potential to be the place in which multiple knowledges, ways of knowing, and cosmologies may converge, intersect, and entangle with one another. It is the space in which commensurability and incommensurability between social movements may potentially be found. The epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2014), for instance, refer to the multiple and diverse modes of thinking and doing, which involves the construction of other forms of socialibility, co-living, interconnectedness, communality, and collectivity [*sociabilidad*, *convivencia*, *vincularidad, comunalidad, y colectividad*], as elaborated by scholars whose social and epistemic positions belong to the Souths of the Global South. Subaltern interubjectivities, in other words, make it possible to think of alternatives to the individualist ways of being promoted by capitalist modernity's most recent neoliberal expression.

The epistemologies of the South are thus "a set of inquiries into the construction and validation of knowledge born in struggle, of ways of knowing developed by social groups as part of their resistance against the systematic injustices and oppressions caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy" (Santos, 2014, p. 2). University student movements in Latin America are one of many sites where knowledge production is born in struggle. Understanding the theoretical as well as programmatic implications of university student activism in direct relation to neoliberal higher education reform is one of my primary concerns in the sections that

follow. In chapter five, I analyze the sociocultural, epistemological, spatial/organizational, and political contours of university student activism.

Geopolitics of Knowledge

The ongoing work organized by the World Social Forum and the Latin American Council of Social Sciences Congress (CLACSO) illustrates the critical importance of working alongside social movements (Santos, 2014). Research in Latin America is, moreover, increasingly moving away from the political economy paradigm and toward decolonial perspectives aimed at shifting the geographies of reason through perspectives that enable what Gordon (2011) calls the teleological suspension of disciplinarity. This means that going beyond the ways of knowing of each discipline does not only refer to transdisciplinarity. A teleological suspension of disciplinarity is, additionally, epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2009) or, as Gordon (2011) refers to it, an "epistemic decolonial act" (p. 87). A decolonial perspective must thus be understood as a geopolitical project seeking to move away from Eurocentric knowledge practices (Castro-Gomez, 2005; Cusicanqui, 2012; Mignolo, 2011; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Quijano, 1992, 2000; Walsh, 2007). This distancing, nonetheless, does not mean that the dominant scholarship, theoretical perspectives, methodological contributions, and philosophical commitments produced in the Global North are ignored. In fact, those thinking with and from the Global South find strength in working at the ontological and epistemological borders—i.e., the conceptual and material space in which the dominant, residual, and emergent knowledge practices coexist, converge, and conflict with each other to produce a critical, reflexive, and transformative praxis.

These necessary tensions are what Dussel (1977) conceives as the geopolitics of knowledge. Although knowledge articulates itself globally, this should not be conceived as an

inevitable process. As I discuss below, world polity theory naturalizes the articulation of knowledge and claims that the uniformity of education and the globally adopted university curriculum is evidence of the inherent superiority of Western education models. What other reasons could there be for the uniformity of universities around the world? Without seriously considering the colonial and neocolonial efforts to design universities according to neoliberal desires, precludes us from answering this question according to the inseparability of epistemological imperialism and curricular reform (Sardar, 1989). I try to answer the question above in chapter four where I analyze the National Autonomous University of Honduras historically to link it to contemporary epistemological, political, social, cultural, economic, and global entanglements as well as with the challenges student activists face as they unsettle the university's neocolonial project.

These commitments have increasingly made knowledge a means to an end within a globalized neoliberal order. It becomes a thing one must obtain to reach a desired economic position. As a specific form of cultural consumption, additionally, knowledge also validates one's social position at the expense of those who cannot afford to shop at the knowledge market of the university. It is imperative to emphasize that universal notions of knowledge permeate academic, cultural, and political discourses not because what is enunciated is essentially more valid than other knowledges. Rather, the underlying epistemological commitments taken up ubiquitously "cross the line between scientific 'theories' and scientific 'ideologies'" (Certeau, 1986), which reveals why certain knowledges are institutionalized while others are invalidated. When institutionalized, knowledge becomes functional in maintaining the social, cultural, racial, political, and economic hierarchies already in place. It is worth citing Dussel (1980) at length to clarify the relationship between pedagogy, ideology, and philosophy.

> Modern European philosophers ponder the reality that confronts them; they interpret the periphery from the center. But the colonial philosophers of the periphery gaze at a vision foreign to them, one that is not their own. From the center they see themselves as nonbeing, nothingness; and they teach their pupils, who are something…that really they are nothing, that they are like nothings walking through history. When they have finished their studies they, like their colonial teachers, disappear from the map geopolitically and philosophically, do not exist. This pathetic ideology given the name of philosophy is the one still taught in the majority of philosophy schools of the periphery by the majority of its professors. (p. 12)

What Dussel (1980) addresses is that knowledge sustained by modern philosophical conceptions of reality travels through the university curriculum and is perpetuated by professors convinced that Europe and the United States are the only places where reason exists. The professor's role is to reproduce blind disciples who will later render the next generation epistemically blind as well. The reproduction rather than the production of knowledge in relation to one's geographic and social position is his main argument. He thus unveils the relationship between abstract space, the negation of alterity, and the Eurocentricity from which absolute knowledge is ostensibly produced. Dussel, more importantly, helps situate the university as a node within a colonial matrix which sustains itself pedagogically. Here, the dominant curriculum is stripped away from its universality and is situated or provincialized accordingly (Chakrabarty, 2000).

The locus of enunciation is another critical concept in provincializing the apparent universality of knowledge. It situates the places from which all words and worlds are felt, spoken, and created which, if taken seriously, has the potential to disrupt the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being (Lave, 1991; Mignolo, 2000). Conceiving of knowledge as situated (Haraway, 1988), furthermore, is useful to understand how student activists produce knowledge, form communities of practice (Lave, 1991), and reclaim collective and convivial relationships (Zibechi, 2012). Exploring the knowledges produced by student activists goes beyond the practices of resistance developed to disrupt neoliberal higher education reform. It has more to do

with making collective efforts and possible alternatives to neoliberal models of higher education more visible.

A Critical (Re)View of the Literature

The contemporary literature examining the ways university students resist neoliberal globalization and higher education reform in Latin America is centered around recent Chilean student movement of 2011-2013 (Bellei et al., 2014; Cabalin, 2012; Stromquist & Sanyal, 2013). Although these studies discuss student resistance, they do so usually through the macro theoretical perspectives examined below (Robertson & Dale, 2015), which tend to leave the locus of enunciation or the cultural and political dimensions of knowledge production on the ground untouched. Rarely do they explore the ways students form and sustain collective action, engage in research, produce knowledge, and enact social practices of resistance.

In their review of the broad field of international education, Dolby and Rahman (2008) acknowledge that theories and scholarly work around comparative and international higher education research are dominated by the anglophone world, namely, by the United States and England. They point to the emerging field of globalization and education which problematizes the very theoretical and methodological foundations on which comparative and international education have been built. In this study, I built my work around globalization and education as well as neoliberalism, particularly that which in aligned to critical globalization studies (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Torres, 2009). While critical perspectives dominate the latter, little has been written through a decolonial theoretical perspective (Silova et al., 2017). In the sections that follow, I redress this silence by thinking with Latin America and its intellectuals, activists, social movements, pedagogues, and philosophers. After reviewing the literature, I elaborate more on decolonial theory and its relevance for international higher education, critical globalization

studies, curriculum studies, and activist research. Subsequently, I contrast decolonial theory with the theoretical perspectives dominating the broader field of international education.

Contemporary Activist Educational Research

After forgetting the importance of student movements (Levy, 1981, 1991), researchers within the wide-ranging field of comparative and international education recently reignited their interest on this subject, especially the role university student activists continue to play in resisting neoliberal education reform (Bellei et al., 2014; Cabalin, 2012; Stromquist & Sanyal, 2013). Outside of comparative and international education research, activist educational research can also be found under the burgeoning field of public pedagogy. This field can be categorized as follows: "(a) citizenship within and beyond schools, (b) popular culture and everyday life, (c) informal institutions and public spaces, (d) dominant cultural discourses, and (e) public intellectualism and social activism" (Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 338).

Although public pedagogy sustains a critical outlook toward activism's cultural dimension, this scholarship falls short theoretically insofar as it refuses to study social movements and their political, social, and epistemological dimensions. Public pedagogy's methodological nationalism also prevents it from thinking of social totality beyond the nation-state (Patel, 2017). Its primary concepts—public and pedagogy—are indicative of its spatial and pedagogical limitations, thereby preventing serious analyses of social movements and their politico-pedagogical implications in varying contexts. If we maintain the nation-state as our unit of analysis, what meanings can be found to publicness within Indigenous, Black, and Latino communities? What does the public signify when it is saturated with a racist, White supremacist ideology manifested in laws and policies, which are mere continuities of colonial practices? The State, and its panopticon structure, as the overseer that it is, rationally maintains schools, streets,

and homes surveilled, and it organizes them to facilitate the colonizing and paternalistic oversight of racialized and gendered bodies while keeping a close eye at the counter-public networks of poor Black, Indigenous, and Latino communities (Vaught, 2017). What does the public mean when public forces are the ones violating the privacy of your home? Can you trust the public? Does Whiteness permeate what we come to understand as public space?

More relevant to this study, what does public pedagogy look and feel like in a narco-state such as Honduras which is responsible for assassinating hundreds of activists, journalists, and environmentalists each year (Geglia, 2016)? What are the implications of doing the type of activist work public pedagogy scholars write about in places where thousands die each year because public funds allocated for social security are embezzled with impunity? How about the countless deaths, disappeared, and displaced in the Bajo Aguan Valley, Mosquitia, and Intibucá? What about war refugees and migrants? What are the sociopolitical consequences when a person organizes a Permanent Breakfast or dresses like Snow White to expose the publicness of public space in a context in which the politics of death or thanatopolitics outweigh the biopolitics Foucault spoke of (Biesta, 2012; Mendieta, 2017; Sandlin et al., 2011; Sandlin et al., 2017). Is public pedagogy dominated by methodological individualism? In focusing its attention on individuals' subjective understandings, does public pedagogy disregard collective struggles? These questions may be perceived as dismissive of those who engage in or do research on public pedagogy. That is not my intention. Instead, what I am pointing to are the epistemological and political limitations context places on activist educational researchers. In the next section, I hope I can also address the epistemological limitations of world polity and world systems theory as well as political economy perspectives.

Dominant, Residual, and Emergent Theoretical Perspectives

Williams (1977) argued in favor of an "epochal analysis" (p. 121), which would provide social, cultural, and political analysts the conceptual visibility to discern the dominant from residual and emergent everyday knowledge practices. This analytical frame allows one to discern between distinct knowledge practices. Similarly, Santos' (2002b) sociology of absence and emergence highlights the ways academic and philosophical discourses may become acts of erasure or of rupture. In other words, a sociology of absence unveils the systematic erasure of histories, knowledges, peoples, communities, and struggles. The sociology of emergence aims to visibilize the emerging—that is, the "not-yet-being" (Bloch, 1995)—alternatives in the process of being built by social movements. I thus use Williams and Santos's conceptual work to separate dominant theoretical perspectives from emergent ones. Before addressing the emergent Latin American decolonial scholarship, I first probe into the dominant theoretical perspectives and frameworks informing the scholarship working at the interface of neoliberal globalization and international higher education.

According to Robertson and Dale (2015), the three dominant theoretical approaches informing international/globalization education research are "world polity theory, world systems theory, and globalization as providing a 'structured agenda for education'" (p. 157). World polity theory adopts a cultural and cosmopolitan outlook toward globalizing forces, and it conceptualizes Western modernity as an inevitable path toward development. Meyer et al. (1992) assert 'that through this century [20th] one may speak of a relatively clear 'world primary curriculum' (as cited in Spring, 2008, p. 335). They go on to argue that curriculum policy is determined by the local elite who typically choose the most effective education models that benefit their political and economic interests.

World polity theory views neoliberal and globalizing forces as natural processes through which a harmonious world culture and world polity will inevitably be brought into being (Robertson & Dale, 2015). Those who resist change are perceived as mere detractors who are stuck in their own backwardness, fruitlessly going against the grain of modernity and the inexorable march of history. What is left out from world polity theory, however, are everyday practices of resistance, the political economy and geopolitics of higher education, and the curricular reforms within and beyond the university imposed by bilateral/multilateral organizations and international financial institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Bank (WB), World Trade Organization (WTO), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). World polity theory, therefore, naturalizes neoliberal globalization and invisibilizes the conflicts that emerge once education systems are restructured to meet the demands of the so-called global knowledge economy.

Similar in scale, world systems theory uses a political economy perspective to examine the ways in which decontextualized "narrow ranges of roles and scripts" are expressed in education reform (Robertson & Dale, 2015, p. 158). These scripts or curricula perpetuate dependency, on the one hand, and sustain the symbolic and material assemblage of modernity on the other. World system theorists argue that global curriculum teaches "capitalist modes of thought and analysis" which assist in maintaining asymmetrical relations of power (Springs, 2008, p. 335). World systems theory thus makes a significant contribution to interconnecting, to a certain extent, the epistemological with global capitalism.

If world polity theory overemphasizes a universal culture as a future cosmopolitan imaginary, then world systems theory underscores the global economy and the dynamics it unleashes at the centers, semi-peripheries, and peripheries. If we were to continue comparing

these two theoretical frames, we would find that, genealogically, world polity theory is a continuation of modernization theory, developed after World War II, while world systems theory is a more complex conceptualization of dependency theory initially articulated by Latin American scholars responding to modernization theory at the time of its real-world implementation (see, e.g., the work of Arturo Escobar (1995) who provides a more detailed discussion on the development of these theories). Because both theoretical perspectives underscore the macro over the micro, the everyday practices that makes universities work the way they do is absent from both perspectives. The sociopolitical particularities of distinct national and regional contexts are also disregarded. As Robertson and Dale (2015) state, the "experiential and the actual, where power and actors reside" are silenced in the scholarship informed by world polity and world systems theory (p. 158). As Latin American autonomous universities emerged through collective struggles, it is imperative to explore the sociopolitical and epistemological dimensions of these institutions and the practices that characterize them within the context of neoliberal globalization.

The third dominant perspective is the structured agenda approach. This approach underscores the political and looks at the ways in which international mechanisms, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), promote education reforms oriented toward competitive standards, accountability, privatization, and the knowledge economy. A structured agenda approach adopts a political economy paradigm informed by critical perspectives. It stresses the role the nation-state plays in the "global project of neo-liberalisation" (Robertson & Dale, 2015, p. 158). This perspective, albeit important for investigating how international, transnational, and extranational mechanisms impact higher education, tends to ignore the cultural, epistemic, and colonial

implications of education reform, focusing more on the political (strictly understood within a nation-state framework) and economic dimensions of higher education reform.

Dominant perspectives used to analyze international education hence ignore how various social sectors in Latin America are already doing and thinking otherwise to transform and decolonize higher education institutions. For instance, can dominant perspectives understand how indigenous movements, *campesino* activists, student movements, and public intellectuals organize and articulate their struggles with each other to create alternative spaces of knowledge production? Can world systems theory conceptualize how other knowledge-practices and subjectivities are constructed to unsettle education reforms seeking to perpetuate cultural and intellectual dependency? How can these perspectives understand the pluri-versities [pluriversidades] (as opposed to uni-versities) in the Andes based on *buen vivir*/good life (Walsh, 2012), *la universidad de la tierra/*university of the earth in southern Mexico (Esteva, 1992), the meeting of knowledges in Brazil and Columbia (Carvalho & Flórez-Flórez, 2014), and the pedagogical initiatives taken by the Landless Workers Movement of Brazil (Salete Caldart, 2000, 2001; Tarlau, 2015)? The panoptic theoretical positions discussed above perform a pedagogy of silence and absence that serve to homogenize the conceptual space and invisibilize alternative modes of thought and collective action. This homogeneity leaves us hopeless since possible alternatives are conceived as merely utopic rather than actually existing social practices. Visibilizing emergent practices and knowledges, consequently, becomes a political commitment that requires another way of reading/interpreting the world to prevent their systematic absence (Freire, 1970).

Reductionist perspectives emphasizing solely the political, economic, or cultural also typically ignore the role socialist and progressive governments in Latin America played toward

cooperation and integration (Muhr, 2010, 2013). In the first decade of the 21st century, in particular, several South American governments (e.g., Venezuela under Hugo Chavez, Brazil under Lula Da Silva, Ecuador under Rafael Correa, Bolivia under Evo Morales, and Argentina under the Nestor and Christina Kirchner) created counter educational structures that increased availability and accessibility to historically oppressed groups (Carvalho & Florez-Florez, 2014; Muhr, 2010). These measures assisted in slowing neoliberalism relentless march to deregulate and privatize higher education throughout the region. Referring to these cases demonstrate that neoliberalism is not an inevitable process independent of time and space. Additionally, these examples remind us that neoliberal globalization articulates itself varyingly according to the sociopolitical context of each country and region. Indeed, these regionally oriented, integrationist measures helped put an end to the Washington Consensus and, to the very least, helped slow down neoliberalism's destructive path (de La Cadena, 2017). This last claim might be questionable and contradicting, given that several left-leaning governments later implemented neo-extractivist projects and were replaced by right-wing governments with authoritarian tendencies.

Notwithstanding these contradictions, South-South cooperation, the implementation of university partnerships, reciprocity programs, and a stronger sense of regionalism—as opposed to nationalism—began to form part of the social imaginary. Muhr's (2016) work points to these geopolitical shifts and expresses that South-South dialogue, cooperation, and integration in Latin America requires the "emancipation, decolonisation, and collective self-reliance" of the region (p. 556). State-led regionalism is not enough, however. Rather than thinking of government initiatives alone, one can also begin with the complicated ways in which university student movements as well as other social movements work collectively toward transforming the

pedagogical, social, cultural, and geopolitical economic objectives of the university at the local and regional level. As university student activists contest neoliberal reform and its discourse through active political organization and knowledge production, their collective action and praxis make it possible to rethink of the university as an interpolated place in which social movements and their collective actors may paint the walls of the university with the forbidden colors of the people.

Critical and Decolonial Theoretical Perspectives

> Every now and then it becomes indispensable to stop at the quotidian dynamics of our activity to challenge the meaning of what we do. Far away are the times in which it was possible to ignore all ethical responsibility in the production of knowledge, from the blind faith in the scientific dogma of the Enlightenment. Awakening from the sleepwalking that characterizes university life requires stopping to reformulate some basic questions. Pre-theoretical questions, which refer to the essential meaning of what we do: for what and for whom is the knowledge that we create and reproduce? What values and what future possibilities are fed? What values and possibilities for the future are undermined? (Lander, 1999, p. 25) [my translation]

The practical dimension of decolonial theory is relationally intertwined with social movements. Its analytics, intellectual activists, theorists, and philosophers who form part of the transdisciplinary Latin American decolonial scholarship offer alternative forms of theorizing about knowledge, power, and being (Escobar, 2007; Restrepo & Escobar, 2005). While postcolonial discourses draw heavily on postmodern and post-structural thought (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012), decolonial theory aims to think from other genealogies and with the situated knowledges born in struggle.

A decolonial perspective or attitude (as opposed to framework) aims to delink from Western modernity's theoretical frames and it "brings to the foreground a silenced and different genealogy of thought" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 33), one that speaks to the historical

specificity and colonial difference of the so-called postcolonial world. Delinking must not be confused with an essentialist move arguing in favor of all the knowledge produced from the darker side of modernity or from the subaltern social position of the Global South. As Grosfoguel (2007) clarifies, it is important to differentiate epistemic location from social location. The former refers to the places where knowledge is enunciated while the latter refers to the social position of those who do the enunciating. Being "socially located in the oppressed side of power relations does not automatically mean that he/she is epistemically thinking from a subaltern epistemic location" (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 213). In other words, the modern/colonial world system's effectiveness relies on the fact that the knowledge produced in and for the Global North is taken up uncritically in what may be demarcated strictly as the Global South. Indeed, much of what is read, discussed, and written in the Global South is dominated by academic discourses produced in the Global North, primarily from the United States and Western Europe.

It becomes evident, therefore, that the curriculum takes up an axiological dimension in that it aims to produce individuals who seek to competitively insert themselves in the global market by consuming the ostensibly universal knowledges produced in the Global North. One must adopt the dominant theories and epistemologies produced in the Global North if one is to have value and validation in academia. The subjectivities the global curriculum aims to produce, therefore, are an integral facet of the so-called global knowledge economy. Bourdieu's (1988) description of the university as a contested field in which hierarchies are established was prescient insofar as we expand his analysis to the multiplicity of actors and sociopolitical and economic forces contesting to configure the university at a global scale. In *Homo Academicus*, he states that:

> the university is the locus of a struggle to determine the condition and the criteria of legitimate membership and legitimate hierarchy, that is, to determine which

> properties are pertinent, effective and liable to function as capital so as to generate the specific profits guaranteed by the field. (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 11)

Although his perceptive illustration of the university was written over three decades ago, it continues to resonate with what the university of the 21st century is becoming. The university is not only a commodity; it is also increasingly a producer of commodifiable knowledges and of consumers. Bourdieu (1988), however, was speaking more to social and cultural capital and the advantages granted to the selected few who acquire said capital. Social, cultural, and even political capital holds true today, yet technocratic capital has surpassed the former three forms of capital in value.

Decolonizing Post-Colonial Theory

Before explicating decolonial theory's conceptual armature, it is a necessary task to compare it to postcolonial theory further. Whereas postcolonial discourses usually underscore the English and French colonial experience and encounter during the enlightenment (second modernity), decolonial theory highlights the modern/colonial world system and its articulation initiated in 1492 during the renaissance (first modernity) (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). The latter points to postcolonialism's erasure, namely, the discourses and social practices that enabled the construction of a Western identity and social imaginary (Coronil, 1996; Dussel, 1996, 2002). As Coronil (1996) argues, we cannot understand orientalism without seriously taking into consideration Occidentalism and its Eurocentric discourses and social practices before the 17th century. Orientalism is co-constitutive of Occidentalism. This means that for a regional identity such as the Orient to exist discursively in another region such as the West presumes that an Occidentalist identity had already been constructed. Said (1978) recognized this when he wrote, "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (p. 2). To surpass these

ontological and epistemological delimitations which are also geographically demarcated, we must think from third spaces or borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987; Bhabha, 1994; Mignolo, 2000).

To think from the epistemological and ontological borders means that one has the peculiar sensation of a double consciousness, as Du Bois (1903) termed it, to think with different perspectives and from something radically other, which may also be conceptualized as border thinking (Mignolo, 2000). Like transdisciplinarity, border thinking enables one to engage in dialogue with other knowledges and travel across worlds (Lugones, 1987), resulting in something that is more than the sum of two or more epistemes. It is the creation of a third space in which other forms of knowing are made possible and where transcultural perspectives are constructed. It is not a Third-Worldist or European foundationalist perspective, as Grosfoguel (2007) admonishes, but it is rather the making of other experiences, meanings, subjectivities, and ways of knowing. The prefix trans in transdisciplinary refers to the knowledges that go beyond each discipline, which, for Nicolescu (2002), also means to transcend binary terms. Transdisciplinary can be interpreted, as Castro-Gomez and Grosfoguel (2007) clarify, as the transgression of the ontological disjuncture still part of our conception of nature/culture, mind/body, subject/object, reason/sensual, and modern/premodern.

Contrary to transdiciplinarity and border thinking, the dominant curriculum divides knowledge into fragments, analytics, objectives, and disciplinary canons which perpetuate a reductionist way of knowing emanating from Europe and the United States. The founding figures of each discipline tend to be White males, and it is rare and even blasphemous to question the validity of their knowledge. In education, we have Dewey, in sociology Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, in anthropology Boas, in physics Newton, in philosophy Descartes and all the Greek philosophers before him. I can continue listing other thinkers and the disciplines they founded,

but that would not make my argument any stronger. What can be concluded instead is that these well-known thinkers represent the dominant modes of thought of certain regions and languages which coincided with imperialist/colonialist projects. The university, as I describe in more detail in chapter four, formed part of these colonial projects and continue to form part of the complex entanglement conceptualized as the colonial matrix of power sustaining the global project of neoliberal higher education reform (Quijano, 2000).

The university is a place that teaches knowledge that is diametrically opposed to students' lived experiences outside of the university. The university is a space that disavows the knowledge, world-making practices, and social reality and alterity of *others*. In relation to the university, the other here is the historically excluded student who, for one reason or another, did make it to this exclusive institution. This individual may choose to become a receptacle of decontextualized knowledge, adapt what is learned according to context, or construct knowledge collectively with others in a path of uncertainty. The latter choice seeks to disrupt the arboreal academic structure and neoliberal globalization's homogenizing and colonizing curriculum. In other words, it reveals that resistance persists.

Student activists who have decided to read, discuss, reflect, and act with others, have also produced knowledges, experiences, and subjectivities opposed to neoliberal/neocolonial curriculum and the global designs to produce commodities, consumers, and possessive individual. Their disruptive performance is not deemed appropriate in the neoliberal theater on which individuals are expected to perform alone in their ceaseless path to compete for an elevated social position at the expense of reclaiming a radical sense of the collective and conviviality [*convivencia*]. Producing possessive individuals is the dominant curriculum's primary goal, making collective expressions more difficult to be articulated within an

increasingly precarious and meritocratic world that disposes of unproductive bodies and absorbs all who produce and consume commodities. As the university has sought to eradicate the production of subaltern ways of knowing at all costs, however, student activists at UNAH have begun to organize themselves into associations in which knowledges and practices are being produced intersubjectively and enacted collectively. What can be more destabilizing to the neoliberal colonial order dependent on passive, possessive, and indifferent individuals than a collective praxis?

The fear of alternative ways of knowing and being unveils how modernity/coloniality, in its neoliberal globalizing form, depends on the university to place at the margins "the threat posed to it by the existence of worlds that do not operate on the same assumption" (Aparicio & Blaser, 2008, p. 64). Under these violent conditions of erasure, thinkers and doers drawing from decolonial perspectives have enacted a sociology of absence and emergence, which examine the mechanisms aimed at making other worlds invisible while simultaneously highlighting the emergence of other worlds and knowledges otherwise (Restrepo & Escobar, 2005). Critical thought must, therefore, transcend negation and affirm the construction of possible alternatives. One way to do this is to listen to the demands made by student activists. This is what Dussel (1980) had in mind when he argued in favor of an analectical approach as opposed to a dialectical mode of understanding. The former positions the thinking and doing, that is, the praxis of those excluded from the latter's totality which conveniently positions Europe and the United States as the world's central epistemological axis. An analectical approach seeks to work with the denied alterity of those who could not even be considered other within the West/East dichotomy, particularly, the epistemic and ontological differences of the Global South.

Affirming the exteriority of the other, and the knowledges and practices constructed therefrom, is the primary concern of this dissertation. Although I expand my discussion around Dussel's (1980) analectical approach in relation to ethnography in chapter three, I find it important to mention that an analectical praxis is a necessary task to unsettle the analytical gaze denying subjects the right to know and act. Student activists' knowledges and practices, for instance, as they aim to change the university as well as their communities, must not be analyzed and interpreted from the vantage point of the researcher alone. Instead, what must be highlighted is the analytical and interpretive work student activists consistently engage in, as well as their efforts to publish and share knowledge through alternative media. Juxtaposing the researcher's work with the student activists' research allows for a deeper, richer, co-constructed analysis and interpretation. The epistemological implications of doing and thinking together, as Smith (1999) proposes, is a step forward toward decolonizing methodologies.

Disrupting the homogenizing conceptual space through praxeological ways of knowing aims to point to the alternatives that have always been present, but which have been systematically repressed from the social imaginary (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). It is the affirmation of other worlds, knowledges, and practices born in struggle that distinguishes decolonial theory from postcolonial theory. The programmatic emphasis to move past deconstructive critique and postmodern skepticism demands that theorists learn how to share, co-live, build, and feel [*compartir, convivir, construir, y sentir*] with Indigenous, Black, campesino, feminist, LGBTQ, urban, youth, and student movements. Smith (1999) describes, with poignant prose, the practical implications of decolonization in relation to deconstruction and Western scholarship in general:

> In a decolonizing framework, deconstruction is part of a much larger intent. Taking apart the story, revealing underlying texts, and giving voice to things that are often known intuitively does not help people to improve their current conditions. It provides words, perhaps, an insight that explains certain experiences but it does not prevent someone from dying. (p. 26)

Thus, the decolonial turn in theory is a sociopolitical and cultural project interlinking social movements with situated knowledge practices. This *vincularidad* and relationality, as it is expounded by Andean Indigenous thinkers such as Nina Pacari (2009) and Felix Patzi (2004), aims to fracture the ontological and epistemological foundations on which the modern/colonial world stands. As Pacari (2009) explicates:

> This cosmological vision gives rise to the community as a collective subject aware of its belonging to creation or life, which is more than the multiple relationships established by 'entities'. Human beings are therefore conceived as a part of the fabric of life and the cosmos. From this vision, the construction of ordinating principles of complementarity, *vincularidad*, and reciprocity are built, which constitute the cognitive scaffolding of Indigenous peoples. [Esta visión cosmológica da origen a lo comunitario como sujeto colectivo y consciente de su pertenencia con la creación o la vida, que no es más que las múltiples relaciones que establecen los 'entes'. El ser humano, por tanto, se concibe como una parte del tejido de la vida y del cosmos. Desde esta visión se construyen los principios ordenadores de complementariedad, vincularidad y reciprocidad, que constituyen el andamiaje cognoscitivo de estos pueblos.] (p. 216)

Vincularidad primarily "unsettles the singular authoritativeness and universal character typically assumed and portrayed in academic thought (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 8). As the University Student Movement in Honduras established a political culture aimed at unsettling neoliberalism's global designs, it became imperative to inquire the extent to which their project also created the conditions of possibility or the politics of hope to unsettle the coloniality of the university and its individualistic form of reproducing and consuming knowledge. To ignore the politics of hope would otherwise strengthen neoliberalism's hegemonic position by naturalizing its inevitable global articulation. Although not intended, fatalistic forms of theorizing the neoliberal moment does more to convince us that all alternatives have been exhausted. What

Indigenous scholars, activists, and other subaltern thinkers teach us, however, is that despite colonialism's enduring project to erase other ways of being, knowing, and becoming, resistance and re-existence has persisted since 1492.

In order to prevent the fatalistic views mentioned above, decolonial theory provides a multifaceted understanding that transcends the political economy paradigm and the three dominant perspectives used to conceptualize, analyze, and interpret higher education reform, curricula, governance, and university student movements in Latin America within a globalizing context. It is not to say that politics and economics are no longer important. Rather, it is the centrality of Eurocentric analyses that are questioned. A political economy paradigm, for instance, overemphasizes economic class at the expense of gender, race, and sexuality. Consequently, emerging epistemological struggles have been categorized as particularistic because economic class continues to be perceived as a universal category (Zibechi, 2012). The social classification based on race and gender which provided the foundations for the modern/colonial capitalist world system is what Quijano (2000) conceptualizes as the coloniality of power and what Lugones (2007, 2010) terms the coloniality of gender. On the modern side of things, the social classification of gender predated capitalism's economic class while in the darker abyss of colonialism race became the hegemonic category used to classify the purity, sub-humanity, or nonbeing of the people living in what would later be known as the Americas.

The coloniality of power, furthermore, brings to the forefront global capitalism's colonial constitution. For instance, the patterns of social control articulated in the Americas consisted of racial/patriarchal/cultural/heteronormative configurations based on the nature/culture ontological duality. This dualist ontology, conceptualized by some anthropologists as the "Great Divide", continues to saturate Western thought, practices, and institutions (Aparicio & Blaser, 2008, p.

63). This great divide sustains modernity's ontology and its instrumental rationality promoted through curricular structures that crown European "Man" as the only thinking and historical *Being* divinely (Christianity) and then secularly (modern science) responsible for knowing and dominating the savagery of nature (Wynter, 2003).

Decolonial perspectives teach us that modern lenses distort alterity and establish numerous hierarchies (Dussel, 1996). To bring clarity to these distortions, decolonial theory conceptualizes modernity and coloniality as "two sides of the same coin" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 66), meaning that modernity performs itself only by hiding its darker, underside—i.e., the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being. As Mignolo (2011) puts it, "there is no modernity without coloniality", for the latter is constitutive of the former (p.85). Therefore, by working within the epistemological and ontological fissures and borders, the decolonial turn's project seeks to interrupt modernity's ceaseless developmental path—a path characterized by multifarious modalities of domination and forms of destruction. It is the ontological, epistemological, axiological, social, and cultural structures universities continue to establish and legitimate which need unsettling. This requires an intersectional project that also dislocates the spiritual, epistemic, gender, sexual, racial, ethnic, and labor hierarchies institutionalized in the university and within the social and relational totality of which we all form a part (Grosfoguel, 2007).

A political project seeking to decolonize the university requires a pedagogical-theoretical-practical commitment with knowledges and experiences that go beyond critique and toward a future of radical difference and multiplicity. University students learning to work collectively to create an alternative university—one that allows for co-governance, autonomy, conviviality, transdisciplinarity, transculturality, and noncommodifiable modes of knowing that are linked to the greater problems faced by the sociopolitical context—demands our

collaboration and contribution rather than our guidance. On a cultural level, in this study I analyze and interpret the ways in which university student activists challenge the possessive individualism promoted by neoliberalism. On a political level, I examine the university student movement's organizational structure and political culture that is transforming the university's governance structure. On an epistemological level, I underscore how the knowledges students produce collectively intersect the political and cultural.

Methodological Implications

I mentioned on several occasions that modern perspectives leave the colonial processes constitutive to Western capitalist modernity, including the ways in which knowledge and power are articulated and crystallized within universities, unproblematized. For this precise reason, a decolonial perspective provides education researchers, scholars, and intellectuals with the conceptual, ethical, and political tools needed to explore how student activists unsettle the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being.

Recently, decolonial perspectives have been developed in political philosophy (Dussel, 2008; Mills, 2015), anthropology (Blaser, 2013; de La Cadena, 2017; Restrepo & Escobar, 2005), feminist scholarship (Lugones, 2010; Segato, 2015), and curriculum studies (Paraskeva, 2011, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Decolonial scholarship thus makes it possible, more importantly, to seriously consider the epistemic and physical violence caused by Western modernity's epistemic and methodological approaches (Smith, 1999). Silova et al. (2017), for instance, argue that Western theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches usually study higher education in non-Western societies through an ostensibly universal yardstick. Consequently, nonwestern epistemic and ontological differences are portrayed as inferior, undeveloped, valueless, and in desperate need of reform. Silova et al. (2017) believe a decolonial

perspective can "disrupt the linearity and singularity" of Western epistemologies and methodologies by privileging forms of theorization from a grounded context that problematizes the nation-state as the central unit of analysis (p. 76). They use Mignolo's (2000) border thinking to conceptualize how and where hegemonic Western knowledges encounter subaltern knowledges. Border thinking works from this conceptual tension to understand how the insurrection of subjugated knowledges contests that which is imposed through neoliberal/neocolonial education reform. Methodologically, Silova et al. argue that it is imperative to unsettle 'the tranquility with which we usually 'consume' research and its objects and subjects' (p. 77). To accomplish this, a polyvocal approach is preferred to include the voices, knowledges, and actions of others. I quote Silova et al. at length to clarify their theoretical perspective.

> In addition to pluralizing…pasts, presents, and futures, as well as revealing the relations of different 'worlds,' we need to analyze the ways in which *hierarchies of knowledge production position academics and create symbolic closures imposed collectively on people* [*emphasis added*]. To make research politically different would mean to empower researchers to study their own conditions through methodologies that encourage anti-essentialist and diverse research approaches, as well as multiple articulations and representations. Escobar (2007), for example, argues for ethnographies that would avoid the epistemological traps of the studies of modernity. These studies would engage with 'colonial difference and border thinking from the ground up, so to speak, for instance by engaging with gender, ecological, or economic difference'….Similarly, Mignolo (2013) contends that this could be done by engaging in border thinking, that is, thinking within the borders we are inhabiting—not borders of nation-states, but borders of the modern/colonial world, epistemic and ontological borders (136–37). This means writing our own cultures, knowledges, and ways of being without constantly translating or comparing them to Western norms. (p. S93)

Research thus ought to do more to upset the reproduction of coloniality and the arboreal academic global structure located in the "lettered city" of Western modern civilization (Aparicio & Blaser, 2008). Because dominant theoretical perspectives and methodologies tend to neglect other ways of knowing, it is crucial to adopt alternative perspectives and approaches that

recognize how student activists enact "border thinking from the ground up" and become knowledge producers that make an alternative university possible. This last claim is not far removed from the reality of Latin America if we take into consideration the theoretical and practical contributions university student activists made after the Cordoba Manifesto of 1918 (Mazo, 1941; Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). I discuss these contributions further in chapter four.

Theorizing with student activist intellectuals is perhaps a practical route to take if we are to become genuine allies in the arduous process of decolonizing the university. More importantly, this means that decolonial theory must refuse to be academicized for it to stay in touch with the spaces and places from which it emerged. In other words, decolonial scholarship must not detach itself from subaltern epistemic, social, and political positions. Through collaborative and relational ways of thinking and doing, we may begin to disrupt the coloniality of the Eurocentric canon/curriculum and the destructive world it continues to materialize. It should be clear by now that what a decolonial theoretical perspective attempts to achieve is to disrupt the universality of Western modernity's way of knowing and being. One of its primary goals, additionally, is to work with others who are unsettling the exclusive, decontextualized, and colonizing practices of the university. The pedagogical and decolonial imperative of making other knowledges and worlds visible is what needs to take center stage in our research praxis if we are to truly enact a sociology of emergence and perform a decolonial project from the social position granted to us as academics inclined more toward intellectual and activist scholarship. It is in this vein that, in the following chapters, I examine the sociopolitical, cultural, institutional, and epistemological implications of the University Student Movement.

Part 2: Space and Place Theory and Collective Action Theory

> If there is only one narrative, one future towards which we are all marching (in the way in which we imagine the world) then we have suppressed the genuine and potential multiplicities of the spatial. The single linear history organises space into temporal sequence. A refusal to temporalise space, therefore, both opens up our stories to multiplicity and recognises that the *future is not already written*; that it is, to some small extent at least, within of course the constraints of circumstances not of our own choosing, ours to make. (Massey, 1999, p. 11)

Within the historical conjuncture conceptualized as neoliberal globalization (Massey, 2005), imperial global capitalism (Harvey, 2005b), and global coloniality/imperiality (Escobar, 2010), there exists a proliferation of place-based social movements working towards reterritorializing space from below. It is not surprising that place-based political activity navigating, using (Certeau, 1984), and creating global, translocal networks and meshworks of resistance have reignited long extinguished fires in many social theorists and researchers (Castells, 2015; Escobar, 2008). Bringing collective action back into the conversation within a seemingly inexorable globalizing process, as Dussel (2013a) poses, requires an ethical as well as a political commitment to those dwelling in exteriority, that is, those who are materially and discursively excluded.

Some contend that the resurgence of social movements is dialectically related to late capitalism's unresolvable contradictions, namely, that development and underdevelopment are coconstitutive (Escobar, 2010, 2015). Development seems to have reached a critical point of no return, which has unveiled to those dwelling in the colonial side of underdevelopment that the current political economic order is, to say the least, unsustainable. As mentioned in part one, the crisis at hand has compelled scholars to express that modern problems cannot be resolved by modern epistemological commitments. Instead, what is proposed is a political-conceptual project that may work toward constructing an ecology of knowledges and a pluriversal, place-based

decolonial world where many worlds may fit. It is, in philosophical terms, a political ontological project aimed at breaking away from isomorphic notions of space, place, and culture (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). The politics of place in relation to the geopolitics of knowledge is thus the problematic space in which I would like to work to explicate its decolonial potential.

Admittedly, one can easily get lost in the vast literature found in geography, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies focusing on space, place, and social movement theory. I do not intend to be exhaustive in my discussion in the following sections. Instead, I examine the scholarly work I believe underscores the political, broadly conceived as intersubjective, relational, volitional, and performative in relation to space, place, social movements, and collective action (Conquergood, 1991; Dussel, 2008). By working at the intersections of space/place, social movement, and decolonial theory, I hope I can underscore the epistemological implications of doing research with university student activists. I also hope that, in articulating these theoretical lenses in tandem, I can complexify the decolonial project enunciated from and with Latin America.

Space/Place and Social Movement Theory

Low (2009) asserts that space and place have conceptual and empirical implications for ethnographers. Ethnographers, as she points out, find it "difficult to discuss 'place' or 'space' in a way that does not confine the inhabitants" (p. 21). How geographers conceptualize space and place is imperative if one is to better grasp how place-based collective action, identities, and knowledges are constructed. Regarding the frequent use of spatial vocabularies, Dirlik (2001) argues that the ambiguous use of terms such as global and local need clarification and must also be problematized if one is to understand the sociocultural, political, and economic nuances and implications of place-based social practices. The local, he posits, is usually conceptualized in

asymmetrical terms vis-à-vis the ostensible universality of the global. As a result, the only possible alternatives to neoliberal globalization and modernity are hybrid derivatives. For Dirlik (2001), however, hybridity or glocality is not political enough (Latour, 1993), for it leaves radical difference situated and enacted in place conceptually hidden, silenced, and subjugated. His concern, it seems, is to interpret cultural difference from exteriority in relation to the emergence of radical alternatives.

Hybridity, on the contrary, tends to underscore modernity's apparent inexorability, an inevitable history rendering other cultural expressions as always already determined by modern/global forces. It also presupposes that culture is statically determined rather than dynamically interconnected and transcultural (Ortiz, 1947). As Gupta and Ferguson (1992) cogently state, "For if one begins with the premise that spaces have always been hierarchically interconnected, instead of naturally disconnected, then cultural and social change becomes not a matter of cultural contact and articulation but one of rethinking difference through connection" (p. 8). This claim transforms the global and local into hybrid expressions which, as a result, complicates the unicity and commonsense understandings of what the global and local represent. The claim to an always already connected world thus complicates the meaning of hybridity. A question one must ask is what exactly composes the glocal (a hybrid concept) when the global and the local are always already hybrid expressions? This question prompts us to think of the political implications of difference within the context of globalization.

According to Escobar (2007), erasing local particularities can be appropriately termed as 'the Giddens' effect,' whereby all future possibilities may only be understood in relation to modernity's inexorable expansion. Arguing against this deterministic view, he explains:

> Not only is radical alterity expelled forever from the realm of possibilities, all world cultures and societies are reduced to being a manifestation of European history and culture. The 'Giddens effect' seems to be at play, directly or indirectly, in most works on modernity and globalization at present. No matter how variously qualified, a 'global modernity' is here to stay. Recent anthropological investigations of 'modernity at large' (Appadurai, 1996) have shown modernity to be seen as deterritorialized, hybridized, contested, uneven, heterogenous, even multiple, or in terms of conversing with, engaging, playing with, or processing modernity; nevertheless, in the last instance these modernities end up being a reflection of a eurocentered social order, under the assumption that modernity is now everywhere, an ubiquitous and ineluctable social fact. (p. 183)

This ostensible social fact that modernity has subsumed or is in the process of subsuming all difference presupposes a teleologically ordered world (that is, a Eurocentric and modern teleology), rendering all social, cultural, and political differences as always already affected by modernity's incurable contagion (this diffusionist perspective is indeed a recycled discourse articulated in the 19th century (Joseph et al., 1998). Anything other to modernity is aprioristically negated and placed under an all-encompassing term of hybridity or under the vacuous concept of glocality. Emergence, in other words, is reduced to *residual* social practices fused with *dominant,* modern ones (Williams, 1977). All other *emergent* alternatives are simply unrealistic and utopic in this modern world.

The university, here, may only contain within it dominant and residual characteristics. Anything claiming radical difference is mere theoretical naivety (Alcoff, 2011). Within a global neoliberal order, all universities, following the logic of world polity theory, must be uniform and must resemble in one form or another the Western university model. As I discussed briefly in part one, there are emerging institutions, knowledges, and practices that are doing more than unsettling Western university models. Indeed, popular, Indigenous, and even social movement universities are now part of higher education institutions in Latin America (Santos, 2006). Although these universities or pluriversities are kept at the margins and are threatened by

national governments, their emergence is not any less significant. Emergence, understood as the appearance, visibilization, and politicization of alterity, is exactly what the University Student Movement is struggling to maintain. How to make the university a place in which autonomy, interconnectedness, communality, and relationality [*autonomía*, *vincularidad, comunalidad, y relacionidad*] is what student activists are trying to fight for. I know that analysis should be saved for subsequent chapters, but I find it necessary to provide the intellectual contribution of student activists as they deconstruct the globalizing neoliberal university while also pointing to the importance of building a popular, democratic, and decolonial university which is inextricably linked with social movements, peoples, and multiple knowledges [*vinculada con los movimientos sociales, los pueblos*, *y los multiples saberes*]. I cite student activists/intellectuals as one would cite other scholars, but, in this case, I cite the collective way of producing knowledge—knowledge which students have constantly reminded me during our conversations and my awkward attempts to interview them. The production of knowledge is not theirs to keep as property; it was born in struggle and for that reasons it belongs to the University Student Movement. Knowledge is meant to be shared and critiqued with others so that praxis takes on a collective dimension. The translation that I provide below hopefully does justice to the complexity of their thoughts and actions. In chapter five and six, student activists contribute to the discussions around the democratization and decolonization of university governance and curriculum.

Interjection: The University Student Movement's Manifesto

Human history has been loaded with many revolutions of various kinds and scales—in families, communities, and even global scales. Various civilizations characterized by territorial struggles sought to meet their social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual needs have

resulted in great creations—in the deep poiesis/sociohistorical sense. It is to say that they have been able to institute new imaginary meanings and representations that have marked the historical phases of humanity. Meanings and representations such as the ideas of science, technique, agriculture, democracy, institutions, which in turn have been characteristics of each civilization, of each community. Lenca and Mayan cosmogony is different from others such as Quechua and Aymara. All are different from the others despite being in the same historical era. And each of them has also unleashed their own social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual revolutions.

Today, after the globalization of social relations initiated in 1492, countless configurations come into play that burst into thought, and therefore the world's social and cultural imaginary, which is widely known as modernity. The whole series of meanings and representations based on Western Man's rational dominance over things, namely through machismo, sexism, capitalism, racism, colonialism, and imperialism, configured itself and imposed its coercive mode of thought which took form in the great knowledge producing institutions of modernity: universities, research institutes, NGOs, associations, foundations, think tanks, and organizations.

Among the problems that appear in modernity is the corruption of the nation-state, just as the world-system itself has been corrupted through tax havens, terrorism, drug cartels, world wars, invasions, blockages among others. Then there is the problem of fetishization, that is, the devaluation of the political in the social sciences which help sustain the social relations of power. How about the creation of walls and borders or the laws that make humans illegal according origin, race, religion, gender and sexuality? Also, the fetishization of the economy continues to believe in universal laws of indiscriminate growth at the expense of human dignity.

The fetishization of culture believes that Indigenous peoples are merely here for tourism, available for consumption. Social fetishization believes that social networks are a substitution of love, affection, empathy and human activities such as work that dignify life for the enjoyment and satisfaction of human needs, longings and hopes. This has caused great problems of indifference.

Another problem is the extractivism of both natural and human resources (cheap labor) and epistemic extractivism. The latter refers to the appropriation of our knowledges so that they could later be repackaged as something modern, European, American, or Western. Finally, there is the problem of human precariousness in economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual terms which has created great wave of violence and hopeless pessimism.

Faced with this reality, which overwhelms us and greatly surpasses what we could address in this essay, we can nonetheless bring our revolution towards the needs of the 21st century. That is why we propose the following contributions to start talking about revolution, organizing, and revolutionary social practices today. First of all, the protests we organize are for the common good. These allow us to create bonds and relationships that allow us to fight for basic needs. These are made based on a sense of belonging and identity, that is, with a shared focus and sense of territoriality. This involves the following: dialogical communication and experiences; social-psychic being, that is to say, each human body with their respective social imaginaries and constitutive boundaries; a necessary collectivized social space, i.e., we share territorial areas for the exercise of life on earth; spiritual imaginary and cosmogony consisting of social, political, economic and cultural histories and stories in the social space regarding activities and our respective beliefs about them.

We need to be transformed into social processes of resistance emerging within communities which refuse the imposition of colonial institutions. In this case, it is the social

institution of neoliberalism and neo-extractivism. Resistance in this case, consists of one of the most important human activities for the preservation of life (human and non-human). For us, that is why social protest must be transformed into movements of resistance, which is to say, to be constituted as organizational entities such that it is possible to establish social relations that permeate in the community for the defense of human and non-human rights.

In these processes we must also continue to make transformational leaps in the creation of new configurations of struggle, and that is why it is necessary to talk about autonomy as a revolutionary project of reinventing the meanings, representations, and social imaginary of modernity that exacerbate the civilizational and ecological crisis. It is necessary to establish new ideas, concepts, and categories that allows for the creation of popular democracies with elements of circularidad, esfericidad, y caracolaridad (circularity and spherity) in order to build an obedient power in addition to a plurisubjectivity. In the current process of globalization, we must be able to establish transcommunitarian dialogue and action [this surpasses Habermas's (1984) theory of communicative action] *that allow us to interpret ourselves and deepen our ties and realities for the exercise of good living at the planetary level.*

Autonomy must be understood as a political project in the sense of creating counter social fields capable of facing and changing the institutionality of the country and of the university. In the case of Honduras, we are talking about a Democratic State, a State of Good Living, and a Socialized/Socializing State. In the economic sense, the autonomous project is about the community and the necessary, collective social work required. In the social sense, autonomy must begin with a revolution of consciousness aimed at changing our way of thinking in order to establish an understanding of the common good [el bien común]. That is why we place our wager on the collective processes of resistance and autonomy. That is why we say that

to talk about revolution today is to talk about autonomy. The revolution must pass through the socio-historical, political, and economic projects of autonomy first and not the other way around [my translation from Spanish].

The student activists who wrote the manifesto clearly are familiar with various theoretical perspectives. They use these perspectives to analyze their social and epistemic position situated in place yet not confined by it. They interconnect their experiences with the experiences of others at a "planetary level." It is important to note that their theoretical knowledge is not a result of the university's curriculum. In fact, from the conversations I have had with student activists, I learned that their university courses only required them to read the work of theorists from the United States and Europe. They would only learn about other theorists as they became activists and as they interacted and learned intersubjectively. It is important to note that the student activists who wrote this are also engineering, law, physics, and astronomy majors who also interact with student activists in the social sciences and humanities who are more likely to encounter the theoretical work elaborated above. It is also of importance to consider that the student movement is only composed of undergraduate students. How is it possible for student activists, who are as young as eighteen years old, to become so fluent in theory and research? It is this question that is ignored by the research on university student movements in Latin America. It is this erasure that I hope to redress in chapter five and six, where I seriously analyze, interpret, discuss, and reflect with and alongside student activists' theoretical, analytical, and practical knowledge. In the next section, I elaborate further on space and place. In subsequent sections of this chapter, I address some of the conceptual tools elaborated by collective action theory. It is not for nothing that I use these theoretical frameworks to assist me in the analytical and interpretive work of chapter five.

Reconceptualizing Space and Place

Conceiving of space and place in different terms is not only an epistemological concern. It is also a political act seeking to make other social spaces and practices conceptually visible and materially possible to sustain. It is therefore an ontological concern. In our efforts to counter the one-world world ontology expressed by (post)modernity's global and neocolonial designs with the ontologically multiple concept of pluriversality (Law, 2015; Walsh, 2007, 2012), our theoretical and empirical work must seek to disrupt the reification of place and identity. Amplifying relational processes that aim to fissure modernity's destructive performance must also be addressed. Out of urgent necessity, our work must commit to what some scholars conceive as a political ontological project (Blaser, 2009, 2010, 2013), where conflicting stories and worlds are given conceptual visibility. Ultimately, conceptual visibility must work toward constructing the conditions in which social practices are not only materially possible but also sustainable. Here, I am referring to social structures, namely, of institutions such as the university. Paying specific attention to social practices contesting neoliberal globalization's ontological project, including the reconfiguration of knowledge, institutional spaces, and power, positions the university as a critical space of contestation.

In Low and Lawrence-Zuniga's (2003) edited volume *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, space and place are conceptualized as embodied, gendered, inscribed, contested, transnational, and tactical. Their conceptual separation of the collected essays, they admonish, has the potential to fragment and discipline knowledge. To avoid the dominant discursive academic practice of compartmentalizing knowledge, they underscore the "considerable overlap in the ways that sociospatial problems are defined and theorized" (p.1). Collective actors, for instance, may enact practices of resistance that unfold in multiple spaces,

places, borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987), and contact zones (Pratt, 1991), thereby revealing the porosity of statically held categories. Places and identities are not fixed, natural, or geographically determined. Universities, for example, are historically specific and have their institutional as well as sociopolitical particularities, not to mention economic. They are constructed through interaction, intersubjectively, and assembled in complex relationships that are entangled in an intricate, power-laden "web of social connections" (Low, 2009, p. 27). This is not to say that homogenizing forces are absent. Indeed, the tensions created between various actors are what make contestation possible. In Latin American autonomous universities, these tensions are becoming more acute and the contradictions between autonomy and the neoliberal higher education reforms are being expressed in direct conflict, at times through massive manifestations and university occupations and in other cases through latent democratic processes and ongoing organization.

It is imperative to reconceptualize space and place in relational terms to pay close attention to the "delicate networks" created between space and place that "remain more invisible than spiderwebs" (Latour, 1993, p. 4). To understand how student activists engage in practices that contest ontological designs (Escobar, 2018), deterritorialize hegemonic spatiality, and reterritorialize knowledge and power from below requires, in addition to the aforementioned practices, careful attention to collective action which involves the construction of alternative political cultures and fluid, horizontal forms of organizing and producing knowledge.

Massey's (1994, 1999, 2005) work is illustrative as to why the reconceptualization of space is politically implicated. According to her, "the way we imagine space has effects" and warns that the ways we conceptualize "space as in the voyages of discovery, as something to be crossed and maybe conquered, has particular ramifications" (Massey, 2005, p. 4). In other words,

space, conceived as a mere empty container in which content is poured in forcefully and often violently, needs to be unsettled and reconceptualized if we are to disrupt the coloniality of space, which continues to be employed as a technology of control and management (Mignolo, 2011). It is this colonial/imperial practice that converts place, land, and institutions into *terra nullius*—that is, into vacant land which can only belong to those who wield sufficient power to colonize and develop it (Wolfe, 2006)—in need of development. The reconceptualization as well as the reappropriation of space is therefore a political project insofar as its aim is to contest spatial technologies of control and management with the emergence of place-based knowledge practices. Universities, once again, are directly implicated in these forms of social control and management. Hierarchical university governance and curriculum reform, for instance, are two ways institutional space is filled with practices and content which are in contradiction with the autonomous character of the university. As the decolonial feminist theorist Chandra Mohanty (2003) reminds us, while citing the work of Abdel-Malek (1981), that Western modernity's hegemony is not only a result of force, coercion, and domination:

> Contemporary imperialism is, in a real sense, a hegemonic imperialism, exercising to a maximum degree a rationalized violence taken to a higher level than ever before—through fire and sword, but also through the attempt to control hearts and minds. For its content is defined by the combined action of the military-industrial complex and the hegemonic cultural centers of the West, all of them founded on the advanced levels of development attained by monopoly and finance capital. (p. 20)

The cultural centers, in this case, are the universities developing theoretical frames which invisibilize contestation. Controlling the hearts and minds implies the seduction of power. As Quijano (2007) points out, "beyond repression, the main instrument of all power is its seduction. Cultural Europeanisation was transformed into an aspiration. It was a way of participating and later to reach the same material benefits and the same power as the Europeans" (p. 69). The

university became and continues to be the place in which the desires and aspirations of modernity may be fulfilled, although today what we find is a neoliberal/neocolonial university model transforming itself into a market which provides its academic, intellectual, scientific, and technological services for a reasonable price.

Let me return to the implications of reconceptualization of space as opposed to textual deconstruction. While some scholars such as Jacques Derrida, as Massey (2005) claims, "tame the spatial into the textual" (p. 54), others tame the spatial by conceptualizing it as temporal sequence where nonwestern regions fall within varying levels of development in need of progress, thereby hiding the close relationship between colonialism, development, and underdevelopment. Sometimes, even the mental capacity of the distant other is explained in ostensibly equal terms, where science, technology, development, and civilization could reach the level of progress of the West and be expressed in the same form only if the right conditions were established (Fabian, 1983). The relationship between development and underdevelopment, however, is rarely questioned. Certainly, questioning progress may seem unfathomable and indeed unfashionable in many circles, including academic ones (Escobar, 1995; Tsing, 2015). New vocabularies and grammars are being enunciated, nonetheless, which are making it possible to ask radically different questions regarding the intimate relationship between the discursive and material dimensions of development.

Massey's (2005) conceptualization of space diverges from structural, functionalist, and spatial frames. This makes it possible to think of space in radically different terms. To conceive of space in a static form, she argues, would only continue to tame the existence of multiplicity, relationality, and radical alterity. By unsettling the reproduction of abstract space and its instrumentality, ontological openings and alternative sociospatial practices and institutions are

rendered more visible (de La Cadena, 2017). Space does not need to be imagined any longer as a surface in which ideas, concepts, and behaviors—that is, curricula—are injected to cure the "natural" ills of the underdeveloped, barbaric, and savage third world. Instead, when the multiplicity of space is untamed, another form of sociality, conviviality, *vincularidad*, and *comunalidad* is made possible (Jaramillo, 2012), one that fissures the bounded and static notion of place, culture, and identity used to justify the accumulation of capital by dispossession, destruction, and appropriation (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992; Harvey, 2005b; Rosaldo, 1988).

When space remains bounded, however, what is achieved is uniformity, an epistemically violent practice Lefebvre (1991) conceives as the domination of abstract space over representational social space. As social products, representational places may be symbolic, sociohistorical, aesthetic, ontological, epistemological, political, as well as pedagogical. For Lefebvre, sociocultural and political relations are spatially contingent historical processes. This does not mean his diachronic position favors high modernism's transcendentalism. On the contrary, his intent is to dislocate the "Hegelian notions of a single totalised history" positioning Western modernity as nature's highest and purest cultural expression (p. 41). To open space means, additionally, that contingency must be understood as a precondition of the political and the making of the sociohistorical, conceived more in ontological than epistemological terms (Castoriadis, 1991). As Lefebvre (1991) insists, "If space is produced, if there is a productive process, then we are dealing with history" (p. 46). This productive process entails social relations enacting spatial practices that, through collective efforts, work toward deterritorializing power, knowledge, and being while simultaneously reterritorializing space with a sense of place. It is thus that student activists at UNAH are not only reappropriating university space but are also

reclaiming and linking autonomy and democracy with university governance and curriculum reform.

Social Movements and Rearguard Theory

Conceptually, terms such as contingency and relationality are critical inasmuch as they provide social movement theories with the language of becoming necessitated to understand how collective actors reassert other forms of sociability in the process of reclaiming and reinscribing places with new meaning. These new vocabularies may be used to disrupt the instrumental discourses used by dominant social movement theories overemphasizing the *why* of social movements instead of understanding *how* collective actors emerge and, most importantly, how collective action is sustained despite the extant differences between the actors involved. Rosaldo (1988) suggests we focus on "knowing how" as opposed to "knowing that" or knowing about (p. 17). When the latter is prioritized, it usually results in a positivistic preoccupation with analyzing and explaining political economic factors and strategic action at the expense of the symbolic, cultural, or epistemological. I note in subsequent sections that the division between political economy and culture is no longer a viable option to understand the complexity of social movements.

Similarly, Santos (2014) argues against vanguard theories used to validate, invalidate, and predict the effectiveness of strategies and tactics employed by social movements. These conservative, progressive, and also leftist academic discourses remain in the god-like realm of predicting whether social movements will succeed or not. Causality and determinacy no longer offer—and perhaps never did—the theoretical and conceptual tools needed to understand the unpredictable cultural dimension of social movements and the actors engaged in collective action. What Santos proposes instead is rearguard theorizing that takes intellectual activists'

practical, theoretical, and politico projects seriously. In the next section I address the conceptual and methodological limitations of social movement theory and juxtapose it to collection action theory.

Collective Action Theory

Prior to the cultural and spatial turn in social theory, the analyses of social movements were dominated by resource mobilization theory, particularly in the North American academy (Escobar, 1992; Zibechi, 2012). These hegemonic theoretical frames offered a rational choice model for social analysis, but its heuristic limitation consisted in its disavowal of affectivity, intersubjectivity, and knowledge production. How individuals form collective identities through emotional ties and learn from each other's experiences, for instance, was disregarded. Researchers following rational choice models tended to emphasize the ways in which collective actors "make use of available resources, recognize them, and organize them for the purposes of achieving mobilization" (Melucci, 1996, p. 66). The analytical blind spots of these frameworks, however, prevented researchers from perceiving the social relations and knowledges constructed through collective action.

Counter to these theoretical frames, Melucci (1989, 1996a, 1996b) stresses the complex ways in which collective actors navigate social space to change the cultural codes of their societies and institutions. He explores how collective action diverges from conventional forms of political organizations solely aimed at attaining political representation or taking power. For Melucci (1996a), social movements cannot be understood in abstract terms or as units of analysis, for collective action is always more complex, conflict-ridden, and heterogeneous. How the social is articulated or "reassembled" and how the social is moved politically, as some scholars working under Action Network Theory suggest (Latour, 2007), must also form part of

our analyses. Melucci's (1996a) conceptualization of social movements, therefore, shifts our attention toward collective action and identity formation which intersects the social, cultural, and political economic.

Collective action should not be understood as a means toward reforming institutionalized political power and less so at overthrowing the State, as was the case with centralized social movements in the past. Instead, Melucci (1996a) conceptualizes and empirically supports his claims with "new" social movements in the postindustrial Global North which have brought to the fore how "noninstitutional forms of collective action" and the construction of collective identities transform social space (p. 3). Examples he provides are environmentalist, feminist, and anti-nuclear social movements, which vary from seemingly conventional forms of political mobilizations to aesthetic sociocultural expressions. Collective action conceived as gradual, sociocultural change provides a valuable way out of dominant theoretical frameworks, which only offer rational choice models of understanding student movements.

Melucci's (1989) theoretical and methodological work posits that social movements and the collective action they mediate are ends in themselves and not instrumental action strategically employed against the modern nation-state. Conceiving of student movements, as ends in themselves transforms them into symbolic, pedagogical gestures capable of challenging dominant practices expressed through hierarchical governance within the university. These cultural shifts must first be explored within specific sociospatial fields in which "social groups take action within it" (p. 4). As Melucci (1996) elucidates:

> Contemporary collective action weaves together its different roots in multiple meanings, legacies from the past, the effects of modernization, resistances to change…. Keeping open the space for difference is a condition for inventing the present—for allowing society to openly address its fundamental dilemmas and for installing in its present constitution a manageable coexistence of its own tensions. (p. 10)

"Keeping open the space for difference is a condition for inventing the present" requires a politics of hope and a sociology of emergence discussed in part one.

Reconstructive Possibilities

While space is usually tamed through modern discourses and institutional practices aimed at meeting global capitalism's insatiable desires, a negative critique of these processes and mechanisms is not enough if our aim is to point to radical alternatives. One can even argue that a negative philosophy hides alternative projects, leaving room only for deconstruction rather than radical reconstruction. Agreeing with Latour (1993), Alcoff (2011) challenges the "excessiveness of our critical epistemologies and the paucity of our reconstructive ones" (p. 69). Additionally, she problematizes "the refusal to engage in reconstructive work in epistemology, to go beyond critical skepticism and to reconstruct how to make truth claims both responsible to political realities" (p. 70). Paradoxically, by focusing solely on the darker side of neoliberal globalization, critical social theorists perpetuate the ideological project critical theory purports to dismantle (Allen, 2016). Recognizing this paradox might be an initial step toward thinking and doing otherwise.

Dirlik (2001) makes an important contribution in this regard. Theoretical limitations, as he explains, cannot be resolved by simply refining critical theory. Without first planting our feet on the shaky terrain on which we and others walk would render the social practices and knowledges of resistance invisible. To enact a sociology of absence and emergence (Santos, 2014), as described earlier, one must work with collective actors currently resisting and working toward making an ontologically multiple world possible. This demands more than a passing gesture of solidarity. Some scholars call for an ethical commitment that involves reciprocity,

commitment, and collaboration (Lincoln & Cannella, 2009), while others point to the ethics of shifting the geography reason which is implicated geopolitically (Gordon, 2011).

According to Featherstone (2008), place-based politics are insightful for they bring forth the relational process involved in constructing alternative knowledge. For him, relationality is "always already intervening in the ongoing construction of flows and routes of political activity, opens up important possibilities for understanding political identity and agency" (p. 16). Featherstone also examines the tensions between the ways space, politics, and transnational networks are conceptualized by social movement theorists. He problematizes the newness of "new" social movement theories, such as the ones studied by Castells (2015). Featherstone argues that past social movements did in fact articulate themselves in networks but were invisibilized because of theoretical, methodological, as well as ideological limitations. Questions that come to mind are the following: What makes past social movements static? Does this fall in line with the modern conception of a static past and the present's ostensible newness as dynamically related to an unknown, perhaps more modern, future? When does the past end and the present begin (Braudel, 1970)? In trying to answer these questions, Featherstone (2008) states the following:

> Placing ontological distinctions between the spatial politics of past and present struggles does work, then, in both theoretical and political terms. Theoretically, it sets restrictive limits on resources for what Amin has described as the project of developing a networked vocabulary of the political (Amin, 2004: 38). It closes down a focus on the different legacies of past political cultures on the spatial politics of the present, such as the important traditions, subjectivities and repertoires of solidarity associated with internationalisms. It makes it harder to recover and account for dynamic subaltern spaces of politics. In political terms this marginalization of subaltern agency in the past risks feeding a sense of dispossession of subaltern agency in the present. This is one of the effects of constructions of globalization as solely the product of networked neo-liberal actors able to outwit subaltern resistances trapped in the confines of particular places (see Castells, 1997: 354; Harvey, 1989: 236; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Asserting that there

> have been spatially stretched forms of resistance to globalizing processes in the past can counter this dispossession of subaltern agency. (p. 20)

The systematic erasures of the past therefore must be uncovered, analyzed, reinterpreted, adapted to the present. Regarding the "newness" of social movements, Melucci (1996a) also asserts that newness is not meant to be reified. Instead, new social movements must be understood as a "relative concept" which seriously considers the "comparative differences between the historical forms of class conflict and today's emergent forms of collective action" (p. 5). Class conflict, when examined in isolation, hides other sociocultural and political identities and forms of organizing aimed at reclaiming autonomy in historically and contemporarily exploited and colonized territories in which material and symbolic resources are extracted.

Featherstone (2008) reminds us that social movements "demonstrate that political struggles in particular localities bring together different routes of political activity. They do not exist merely as discrete struggles waiting to be brought together by intellectuals or broader political movements" (p. 31). On the contrary, political struggles are enacted relationally by social movements and are situated enduring struggles that are always already interlinked with globalizing forces (Holland & Lave, 2001). These partial connections, as Strathern (2004) conceptualized, take into serious consideration the quantitative differences in scale (i.e., local and global) as well as the qualitative variations "which renders the world a plural place" (Holbraad & Pedersen, 2009, p. 379). Ontological multiplicity which continues to exist, coexist, and resist the hegemonic discourses and practices offers a counternarrative difficult to ignore. It is this counternarrative politically committed researchers must amplify and contribute to rather than legitimate or invalidate in academic spaces.

Sociocultural and political struggles also involve the construction of collective identities and knowledges. Collective identity, however, is not without contestation, and it is indeed

difficult to speak of identity in nonessentialist ways especially when thinking of situated political activity (Low, 2003). Rosaldo (1988) asserts that place has been employed ideologically to reify people into precultural, cultural, and post-cultural categories. Those who fall under precultural and cultural groups are conceived to be closer to nature and those who are post-cultural as closer to science and modernity. Hall's (1995, 1997) work helps reconstruct identity as a fluid, diasporic concept. He acknowledges that identity, despite its complicated history and subsequent deconstruction by postmodern theorists, persist both conceptually and materially, and posits that identity can be reconceptualized without confining it in a static place. Although there have been numerous accounts of deconstructing identity as a concept, the discursive use of identity and the reconstruction of collective identities from below persists. Do we ignore, deconstruct, or reconceptualize emerging phenomena such as the emergence of university student activist collective identities? If we ignore these emergences, how are we also performing an act of erasure?

Hall (1996) asks, "What, then, is the need for a further debate about 'identity'? Who needs it?" (p. 1). In relation to university student activism, the reconstruction of collective identities, particularly of a student activist political culture, does not mean that one is arguing for a 'return to an unmediated and transparent notion of the subject or identity as the centred author of social practice, or to restore an approach which 'places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity –which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness' (Foucault, 1970, as cited by Hall, 1996, p. 2). As some feminist theorists have already pointed out (Haraway, 1988), to return to a transcendental consciousness would only perpetuate a humanist vantage point blind to the multimodality of domination (e.g., patriarchy, colonialism, and global capitalism). It is this hierarchical, panoptic standpoint that positions modern "Man" at the center of the historical stage

of progress and development that we want to avoid (Wynter, 2003). As an alternative, Hall (1996) reconceptualizes identity and the historical subject by underscoring the process of *being* subjected by dominant discursive practices, on the one hand, and the process of identification and becoming on the other. This political-conceptual maneuver takes into serious consideration the deconstruction of dominant discourses and the reconstructive possibilities of emerging subaltern forms of identification (e.g., diasporic identities). Conceived as a process of becoming, identification—that is, collective identity formation—becomes fluid, incomplete, political, and contradictory. To elucidate this last point, Hall (1996) provides a lengthy description of cultural identities.

> Though they [cultural identities] seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actual identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation. They relate to the invention of tradition as much as to tradition itself, which they oblige us to read not as an endless reiteration but as 'the changing same' (Gilroy, 1994): not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our 'routes'. They arise from the narrativization of the self, but the necessarily fictional nature of this process in no way undermines its discursive, material or political effectivity, even if the belongingness, the 'suturing into the story' through which identities arise is, partly, in the imaginary (as well as the symbolic) and therefore, always, partly constructed in fantasy, or at least within a fantasmatic field.

The narrative 'routes' the self takes with others brings us back to student activists and the varying paths collective actors take to disrupt the dominant narrative by forming collective identities, understood as always in process, heterogeneous, historically contingent, and inextricably linked to asymmetrical relations of power.

How power relations are contested is a salient question in need of further exploration. Conceiving of collective identities in relation to power aims to dislocate the enclosed, unified, changeless, and essentialist categories of place, identity, and institutions. Identification,

conceived as a relational process of learning and unlearning, also allows for the reconceptualization of social movements as collective, pedagogical, and intersubjective assemblages rather than as solidified units in need of comparative analysis.

New social movement theorists have conceived of space topologically to describe the formations of collective identities and the intricate networks or articulations "new social movements" form in postmodern and postcolonial societies. Melucci (1989), for instance, defines collective identity as an "interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientation of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action takes place" (p. 34). The field of opportunity he describes is spatial and horizontal, but it does not do enough to conceptualize the reciprocal relationships actors themselves create to transform space into a place of possibility. Although Melucci's work problematizes dominant social movement theories by describing social movements as dialogic, intersubjective, performative, conflictual, horizontal, and heterogeneous, it is limited insofar as his theorization is solely aimed at understanding how collective action and identities are formed and sustained in the so-called "first world." His narrow account of the ways in which collective identities are constructed and sustained in "complex societies" erases from view how collective action in the Global South contests the geopolitics of knowledge and power by fusing "traditional" political strategies with "new" forms of collective action which intersect the political with the sociocultural and epistemological (Escobar & Alvarez, 1992). The work of Dagnino (1998), for instance, convincingly depicts the inextricable relationship between the political and the cultural. She examines how the cultural is not derivative of political action or ideologically determined. Rather, the cultural (i.e., the discourses, meanings, values, and behaviors) are is constitutive of politics, understood broadly and as socially entangled.

Examining the political implications of culture the cultural and vice versa forms part of the analytical and interpretive work of chapter five where I examine the dialectics of the politically material and culturally symbolic dimensions of university student activism.

While the brighter side of modernity is considered analytically important in Melucci's (1996) work, the darker underside of modernity and the people enacting alternative political, economic, and sociocultural imaginaries in colonial and neocolonial contexts remain silenced in his scholarship. Flórez-Flórez (2007) addresses this erasure:

> for the periphery, the complex processes related to identity construction are completely canceled out (Melucci himself introduced the analysis of collective action!). For the 'exceptional' case of backward societies, a static perspective of identity remains valid, reducing alterity to an irremediable space for conversion; to a space in which, sooner or later, the Other will become the Same (p. 249)

Once again, a linear temporal lens prevents the knower from thinking of space in relational terms and thinking of place as dynamically related. This perspective, additionally, confines collective actors dwelling outside of the postindustrial world as those who enact traditional politics. A Eurocentric teleology, once again, leaves little room for other, perhaps more situated, social movements to exist.

Let us return to Massey's (2005) work, as she conceives of space in relational terms. For her, space is a social product insofar as it is constructed through interrelations and interactions. As she explains, "Space does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations. More generally I would argue that identities/entities, the relations 'between' them, and the spatiality which are part of them, are all coconstitutive" (p. 10). For a sense of place to be produced through social practice points to the dialectical relationship between place and the construction of collective identities. Hence, one does not construct a sense of place individually but rather intersubjectively—always in the presence of and togetherness with others.

Conceiving of spatial identities in relational terms is not limited to the construction of human identities. As I argue in chapter four, where I analyze the university at a deeper level, universities are ontological and shaped by historical, contextual, cultural, and sociopolitical specificities. Indeed, the university continues to be instrumental for disseminating modern discourses, practices, and desires. This does not mean, however, that university students are passive absorbers of knowledge or that neoliberal higher education reform goes uncontested, as I mentioned above. Students in Brazil (Salete Caldart, 2000, 2001), Mexico (González-Ledesma, 2014), Chile (Stromquist & Sanyal, 2013), Nicaragua (Muhr, 2013), and Honduras (Murillo, 2017; Portillo Villeda, 2016), for instance, have demonstrated that collective action is not a thing of the past. Whether student movements will continue to disrupt the university's ontological designs (Escobar, 2018), however, depends on the networks they articulate inside and beyond the university. Student collective action, as I examine in subsequent chapters, must be entangled socially and not merely institutionally. How student activists (trans)form the university is thus an integral part of the analytical, methodological, and theoretical contribution of this dissertation.

There is still much to say about identity and its close relationship to experiencing and sensing place. The conceptualization of experience is usually dominated by temporality. To not consider place-based experiences when speaking of subjectivity prevents one from seeing how embodiment, situatedness, or standpoint are interwoven with experience (Haraway, 1988). The way temporality is narrativized, in other words, dominates how collective subjectivities are interpreted, and it limits our understanding of how people inscribe meaning to particular places in syncretic ways. Syncretism, as opposes to hybridity, is multidirectional and at times strategic and tactical. Additionally, the "inseparability of individuality and sociability" in relation to spatiality must be stressed (Massey, 2005, p. 58). Rather than continuing with the endless task of

finding where the next revolution will take place, the Longue Durée of the curricular/cultural order of things must be considered in our aims to understand the role student movements play in re-centering agency and identity from below (Braudel, 1953)—that is, from social practices enunciating to the world that neoliberal globalization and neocolonialism do not go uncontested. Conceiving of social movements and collective actors in this way also disrupts the notion that history is a total, conflict-free, and inexorable narrative leading to all things global, European, Anglo American, and (post)modern. Like the epigraph above describes, these politico-conceptualizations of space "both opens up our stories to multiplicity and recognises that the future is not already written; that it is, to some small extent at least, within of course the constraints of circumstances not of our own choosing, ours to make (Massey, 1999, p. 11).

New social movements, as elaborated by Castells (1997, 2015) and Touraine (1977), must thus be problematized, for they maintain an ontological disjunction between past and present social movements. Earlier, I asked whether static conceptions of past social movements ultimately fall in line with the modern discourse rendering the newness of things as dynamically related to progress. I also indicated that we must rethink of space in relational terms rather than as an empty space in need of modernization. Taking this last point seriously aims to avoid transforming space into a Cartesian coordinate system where those who dwell outside of European and Anglo-American spaces become objects to be seen, interpreted, surveilled, colonized, developed, educated, and democratized. As Foucault (2010) elucidated, the biopolitical apparatus converts space and architecture into yet another technology used to canalize knowledge and power, on the one hand, while crystallizing acceptable behavior and social relations within any given social space, on the other. The university, in this sense,

becomes a node through which these forms of social control are articulated within a global neoliberal order.

Seen in this dark light (Ortner, 2016), however, one is not able to see the complex and conflictual relationships materializing from subaltern places. It privileges a vertical notion of hegemonic power, leaving subaltern spaces subjugated once again. Hegemony is not only achieved through the abstract notion of ideology. Lefebvre (1991) reminds us that hegemony "is exercised over society as a whole, culture and knowledge included, and generally via human mediation: policies, political leaders, parties, as also a good many intellectuals and experts" (10). As Harvey (2005b) also explains, hegemony is performed and sustained through "colonial policy, an international loan system—a policy of spheres of interest—and war" (p. 137). It is exercised, therefore, through institutional practices that have concrete effects, thereby silencing the politically real subaltern knowledge practices. Keeping at bay that which threatens modernity, whether it be student activists struggling to radically democratize and decolonize the university or whether it be *campesino* and Indigenous communities protecting their territories, is one salient way modernity performs and sustains its hegemonic position. Eliminating all contesting narratives, knowledges, practices, spiritualities, experiences, and struggles is modernity's raison d'être.

Knowledge and power are articulated spatially (i.e., geopolitically) but they do so with the assistance of policy, including architecture, urbanism, social planning, and curriculum reform. There is no naturally governed society. Violence, physical or symbolic (Bourdieu, 1990, 1998), is still a primary strategy used to eradicate multiplicity and difference. One must hence proceed in a different direction to eschew the 'fragmentation of the concrete' into mental space (Lefevbre, 1991, p. 15), which perpetuates the colonial abstractions and geographical

demarcations continuing to entrap the sociocultural sphere within absolute categories. There is an important question Lefevbre (1991) asks regarding the seemingly transparent "nature" of social space; "If space embodies social relationships, how and why does it do so? And what relationships are they?", and "If it is true that (social) space is a (social) product, how is this face concealed?" (p. 27). It is this hidden dimension anthropologists and ethnographers of space and place have begun to take interest in. There is, therefore, a noticeable division between abstract and practical social space. Although both concepts are irreducible to each other, they are also dialectically related. The politics of place thus involves the symbolic and material possibilities of building alternative social spaces and institutions. This requires, as Gupta (1992) unequivocally maintains, a serious consideration of the sociopolitical context in which collective actors find themselves.

Place and the Decolonization of Power, Knowledge, and Being

Decolonial scholars writing from and with Latin America speak of the politics of place in relation to the decolonial projects social movements in the region are constructing. Escobar's work (Escobar, 1992, 2001a, 2001b, 2004; Escobar & Alvarez, 1992) examines the political, epistemic, and ontological implications of social movements. Social movements in Latin America, as he understands them, involve the "reassertion of place" in regions demarcated by abstract spatial models (Escobar, 2001a, p. 141). To understand how place is reclaimed aims to unveil the paradoxical character of neoliberal globalization, which, as mentioned above, its hegemonic crisis has also been brought to light by social movements and activist intellectuals. The re-localization politics, according to Escobar (2018), involves the emergence of relational ways of becoming and knowing that unsettle the coloniality of being and the institutionally mediated ontological global designs of universities.

By exploring the ways in which student movements in Latin America construct place-based knowledges, the decolonial project enunciated from academic spaces may complicate its own individualist conceptions of exilic and border experiences, which are too often dominated by an intellectual class that remains detached from the social reality of the places their theorizing is directed. Cusicanqui (2012) is perhaps the most critical in this regard, asserting that the "North American academy does not follow the pace of our discussions; it does not interact with the Andean social sciences in any meaningful way (except by providing scholarships and invitations to seminars and symposia)" (p. 102). Discussions around place-based practices and other knowledges, therefore, necessitates a serious recognition of what Cusicanqui calls the political economy of knowledge production. There is an asymmetrical relationship between Latin American decolonial theory enunciated in the North and decolonial theory enunciated from and with the South. To disrupt the asymmetrical relationship is not an easy task, however. Our research imagination must therefore be contaminated by other modes of thinking the decolonial project (Appadurai, 2000). This requires cracking open the exclusive categories of the intellectual and philosopher, as Gramsci (1971) did long ago, where knowing avoids being a practice academics employ but rather that which is integral part of living and existing (Zubiri, 1999). Student activists' knowledge practices are underscored in chapter five and six to disrupt the knower and known dichotomy.

Contestation of University Spacey: A Place of Resistance

As mentioned above, spatial identities are not limited to human identities. Universities are ontological insofar as their identity is inscribed with historical, contextual, political, cultural, and social meaning (Nørgård, 2016). They are instrumental institutional spaces in which modern discourses are articulated with ease. The university, however, is also a place where knowledge is

contested (Lander, 1999). The internal conflicts and negotiations of space and place is thus crucial to understand how student movements produce knowledge that interpolate the university's dominant curriculum and establish governance practices aimed at democratizing the university.

For emerging political actors to create conditions in which counter structures may be sustained, they must also "project themselves into the spaces that are presently the domains of capital and modernity" (Prazniak & Dirlik, 2001, p. 39). Certainly, universities are spatial arrangements through which capital flows and modern/colonial discourses, practices, subjectivities, and values are diffused and legitimated. Universities, additionally, continue to be instrumental for the systematic erasure of other ways of being and knowing. Their ontological designs aim to produce neoliberal subjects who will continue to perform the modern, neoliberal narrative despite its insurmountable social, political, economic, and ecological contradictions. When students work collectively to disrupt (or slow-down) the university's epistemological, ontological, and spatial/organizational arrangements, what actions do they employ to democratize and decolonize the university? To answer this last question, I examine the ways in which student activists intersect their struggle with other social movements and the extent to which they open the university to other social movements' epistemic, territorial, political, and cultural struggles.

If space, knowledge, and ways of being are being contested, is it accurate to say that universities are contact zones, as Pratt (1991) conceptualized? Contact zones "refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (p. 34). In the National Autonomous University of Honduras conflicting stories are being told and enacted by student activists from distinct backgrounds, who

aim to create an autonomous and democratic university within a post-coup context. They want to transform the university's authoritarian governance structure through a radically democratic project built from below that gives students direct participation and decision-making power in student associations and assemblies as well as in the highest governing bodies of the university.

The university curriculum, however, continues to narrate a discredited story about globalization, sustainable development, and progress. How students tell and enact other stories to reclaim autonomy points to the ways in which university space may be transformed into a "placeful" university (Nørgård, 2016). As Nørgård and Bengtsen (2016) state, "education at the university is meaningful to the extent that we can be there, dwell in it, have a sense of (co)ownership of it and feel agency in relation to it" (p. 8). As newly organized departmental student associations have articulated themselves into a broad-based political platform and are currently working toward co-governing the university, the university's sedimented knowledge practices and governance structure are beginning to crack. These fissures are creating the conditions of possibility of decolonizing the university. In chapter five and six, I dig a little deeper with student activist intellectuals as they discuss the profound sociocultural and epistemological transformations their democratic project aims to achieve.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I intersected decolonial theory with space/place and collective action theory. In working at the interface of these theories, I underscored the epistemic and ontological implications and sociocultural and political consequences of reconceptualizing collective action through relational and spatial terms which are globally and locally imbricated processes involving institutions such as universities. The reconceptualization of space and place theory has indeed strengthened social movement theory. In return, social movement theories have begun to

engage in conversations around place-based politics. With the resurgence of political collective identities, additionally, I discussed the importance around the decolonization of knowledge which goes beyond the intellectual work taking place in the halls of academia. As university students are increasingly being transformed into consumers of knowledge rather than producers of situated knowledge, engaging in activists research becomes an ethical concern. In chapter three, I clarify the ethico-political dimensions involved in doing ethnographic research and argue in favor of an approach centered around knowledge and practice rather than a superficial notion of cultural behavior. Overall, there is still much to learn from university student activists resisting the modern/colonial spaces universities represent. In the following chapters, I hope I can provide a glimpse of this complexity.

CHAPTER 3: CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY, THEORY, AND PRACTICE

Introduction

In chapter two, I discussed the methodological implications of a decolonial perspective. I briefly discussed why an analectical approach to ethnography was an ethico-political position activist researchers must take to go beyond dialectical modes of thinking. Before discussing analectics any further, however, in this chapter I examine the development of ethnography and its key features and practices, explore how critical forms of ethnography contribute to the understanding of student movements, and discuss the ethical implications of doing ethnographic work on, with, and alongside university student activists.

This chapter is divided in five parts. Part one examines the historical context in which anthropological, sociological, and educational ethnographies developed. Part two explores how ethnography is conceived and applied according to varying ontological and epistemological commitments. Part three argues in favor of a critical ethnographic praxis that can contribute to the understanding of student movements' political culture, organization, subjectivities, knowledges, and practices. Part four discusses the ethical dimension of doing activist research. Part five explains the procedures I used to gain access to student activists, provides a short description of participants, and details the methods used in this study. The former two parts are more historical and theoretical while the latter three are focused on the practical and ethical dimensions of ethnographic research.

Although decolonial theory has problematized ethnography's complicity in sustaining colonial discourses (Asad, 1973; Harrison, 1991; Hymes, 1972; Smith, 1999), ethnography, paradoxically, offers a valuable methodological praxis that may assist researchers to "pursue a

novel hybridization between theory and practice, between knowledge and action, by innovating with forms of knowing and writing applied to our understanding of the new social practices of collective social actors" (Escobar, 1992, pp. 419-420). This research praxis entails the visibilization of social practices that involve new forms of identification and organization and thus of collectivization, as discussed in chapter two. In addition to highlighting the importance of visibilizing or enacting a sociology of emergence, I examine ethnography's methodological and theoretical development, expound upon the paradigms used to guide this ethnographic study, and discuss how ethnography allowed me to navigate through the complex terrain on which university student activists collectively worked toward building an alternative university to neoliberalism's colonial designs.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Ethnography

In broad terms, this qualitative study sought to understand how university student activists in Honduras engage in collective action. Collective action, as Melucci (1996) describes, is a process that is "negotiated through the ongoing relationships linking individuals or groups" which "crystallizes into forms of organization, systems of rules, and leadership relationships" (p. 67). I used a critical approach to ethnography (Denzin et al., 2008; Dolby, 2001; Escobar, 1992; Foley, 1990, 1994, 2002; Ortner, 2016; Valenzuela, 1999; Villenas & Foley, 2011; Willis, 1977) to inquire on the ways university student activists construct knowledges and social practices aimed at resisting and transforming the asymmetrical power relations embedded within and beyond the university.

Conquergood (1991) clarifies that "critical theory is not a unitary concept" and it is "committed to unveiling the political stakes that anchor cultural practices—research and scholarly practices no less than the everyday" (p. 179). Critical, as conceived by decolonial

theory, refers to the analytic and programmatic potential of situated knowledges and social practices (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). The paradigmatic position I adopted in this study worked along the theoretical and methodological lines of Freire's (1970, 1985) and Fals Borda's (1970) work, both of whom used critical and constructivist perspectives to understand situated knowledge practices dialogically and praxiologically. On a theoretical level, this study interconnects deconstructive/critical thinking with the constructive, refusing to value one over the other. Merging these paradigms, additionally, is useful in conceiving the construction of collective identities (social, political, economic, and cultural) as intimately related to knowledge and power. Ultimately, the way we read or interpret the world has social, political, and historical implications. Dominant ways of knowing are not inherently more valid but attain legitimacy through persuasive, coercive, and violent mechanisms and institutions that subjugate alternative ways of knowing, being, and becoming. A critical constructivist approach to ethnography, furthermore, is committed to unsettling these very institutions and is aimed at sociocultural and political transformation (Escobar, 2008). On an ethical level, a critical constructivist approach to ethnography engages in analectical ways of knowing. In this study, I hope that by amplifying the "subjugated knowledges that point to experiences of suffering, conflict, and collective struggle" (Giroux, 1988, p. 220), I can also point to a research praxis characterized by a sociology of emergence. In the next section, I examine ethnography's historical and theoretical development before discussing the practical, political, and ethical dimensions of engaging in activist research.

Part 1: Ethnography's History

Ethnographic accounts of others were not always written by professional anthropologists or sociologists. Considering its long history, one could begin with the colonial encounter in 1492 and the numerous travelers' accounts and utopic novels exoticizing the other "discovered" in the

so-called New World. It can be argued that these para-ethnographic tales provided the foundational texts for the illustrious thinkers of the renaissance and the enlightenment. The colonially embedded theories and concepts such as the state of nature first proposed by Thomas Hobbes and the self-imposed immaturity of Immanuel Kant are clear examples of how existing ethnographic discourses on the other influenced the development of humanist theoretical discourses (Castro-Gomez, 2005). The discursive creation of the savage other, as noted by Trouillot (1991), was not a result of academic anthropological discourse, for these discourses would only emerge in the 19th century under the epistemic order of things which had already been articulated in the social imaginary prior to said emergence (Foucault, 1970). The implications of this claim are that the fertile conditions under which academic anthropological discourses emerged was part and parcel of a greater discourse—that is, that of modernity and its darker side of coloniality.

Ethnography's history thus cannot be understood without also taking into serious consideration its colonial context. As it is well-known, institutionalized forms of ethnographic practice has its beginning in England and the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century (Wolcott, 1999), a time when the West's colonial/imperial power was on its way to reaching its apogee. As important as it may be to extend the discussion around ethnography's early colonial context further, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation. It will suffice to say that education researchers using ethnography must be reflexive and critical as they go about working with others.

In what follows, I address the professionalization of ethnography. I also maintain ethnography's colonial background in my discussion around its development to not lose sight of the potential dangers of this methodological approach. The brief historical account I provide is,

as all forms of knowing, a partial truth (Haraway, 1988). Naming foundational figures is, for instance, problematic as it is canonical rather than transgressive. In other words, it fortifies rather than fissures epistemological and disciplinary foundations. Because I focus primarily on ethnography's development in the United States, this section is certainly limited in scope, since it erases from view the contributions made from other onto-epistemological locations. In subsequent section, I redress these erasures.

Let us begin with a brief introduction to Franz Boas' contribution to ethnography. His theoretical and ethnographic work assisted in disrupting, albeit not entirely, the evolutionist, diffusionist, and deeply embedded colonial theories dominating Victorian anthropological discourse since the publication of the work of Darwin, Spencer, Tylor, and Morgan (Boas, 1920). Boas' work would later be categorized as historical particularism and cultural relativism, two interrelated schools of thought which conceived of culture as historically contingent and overdetermined rather than mechanistically determined by linear conceptions of evolution or gradual diffusion. Mead's (1928) *The Coming of Age in Samoa* and Benedict's (1959) *Patterns of Culture* developed Boas' theoretical and methodological approach to ethnography. Rather than explaining these cultures developmentally and deterministically, they sought to understand how other sociocultural systems were historically particular, relative to a specific milieu and/or region. More importantly, other ways of being and knowing were conceived as different, rather than inferior, to Western ontological and epistemological commitments. Hurston's (2006, 2008a, 2008b) and Deloria's (1988) work, though significant as they situated theory and methodology in their own communities, were not recognized by academic norms, given that they also wrote their ethnographic accounts in novel form. Additionally, being considered native ethnographers studying their own people, was counter to the dominant paradigm at the time, where the

ethnographic gaze required distance and objectivity. The role women also played in Black and Indigenous societies were central to their analyses which also went against the grain of the dominant ethnographic discourse.

Some of these ethnographies, however, came with their own problems. As Fabian (1983) reminds us, Mead and Benedict entrapped the Samoan and Pueblo peoples in "culture gardens or, in sociological jargon, in boundary-maintaining systems based on shared values" (p. 47). Relativism in any of its forms (Spiro, 1986), he posits, maintains an allochronic discourse that freezes the other in the past, even if the language used denotes contemporaneity. Hence, it is not the denotative use of language but rather the connotative that assigns the other to the past. In other words, temporal forms of representation, the coevalness or contemporaneity of the other is denied. Concepts such as primitive and kinship, which are not temporal words, parallel the Kantian immature other. Notwithstanding these important critiques, long-term fieldwork, and the ethnographies that resulted from them, did in fact dislocate the colonially embedded theoretical hubris practiced by anthropologists representing other places, peoples, and sociocultural worlds from a distance.

While anthropologists worked diligently to develop ethnography both in theory and practice, the Chicago School of sociology was also actively engaged in developing ways to study communities in urban settings. The emerging school of urban ethnography aimed at understanding how demographic shifts caused by rapid urbanization and immigration changed the social and cultural landscape in the early 20th century (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008). George Herbert Mead, for instance, dedicated much of his work to understand the "self to everyday life, in particular, the social interaction, and situations through which self-understanding develops" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008, p. 243). His work, including the work of other pragmatists, would

eventually influence a long line of sociologists dedicated to studying the sociocultural through ethnography. Overall, these ethnographies were undergirded by a pragmatist philosophy, which later served as the empirical foundation for the sociological theory of symbolic interactionism. Genealogically, it seems that the relativist Boasian school of thought and the pragmatist Chicago School greatly influenced the interpretive/symbolic anthropology and symbolic interactionist sociology respectively.

After World War II, however, both disciplines were faced with a shifting geopolitical context in which the theoretical and methodological work of the first half of the twentieth century no longer weighed as heavily in academia. In fact, in this critical historical conjuncture the geopolitical, economic, and cultural landscape was reconfigured, whereby the geographies of reason and power at a global scale shifted as well (Escobar, 1995). Moreover, the economic, epistemic, and technological power of the United States ascended to unprecedented levels (Jameson & Miyoshi, 1998). Some scholars consider this conjuncture as inextricably linked to modernity and coloniality, whereby colonial domination found its continuity in a reconfigured form (Mignolo, 2000, 2011; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). Consequently, a new exterior space was recreated in which destitute "third world" others awaiting development could be found, studied, and colonized. In this newly reconfigured space of alterity, eager anthropologists packed their bags to study the soon-to-be modernized third world cultures. Stated more emphatically, this renewed interest toward nonwestern others followed in line with Europe's civilizing mission to save those who were already condemned to the past by history's inexorable march toward progress, capitalist development, and salvation.

The three-world development model articulated by modernization theory coupled its ideological discourse around the expansion of communism with the potential dangers posed by

the so-called underdeveloped world (Escobar, 1995; Pletsch, 1981). The discursive creation of "naturally" and unevenly developed worlds, more importantly, cemented a rigid division of disciplinary knowledge production and invoked the evolutionist and diffusionist specters of the past. While anthropology kept its stronghold in the newly coined third world, sociology held tight to the first world. That these cartographic demarcations of knowledge emerged from a specific geopolitical context underscores the dialectical movement of knowledge production and the reconfiguration of the modern/colonial world system. We hence cannot understand one without the other. Doing so would disregard the material conditions of possibility under which certain discourses are conceived.

Referring to epistemological and methodological distinctions, Pletsch (1981) makes a convincing argument regarding the ideographic and nomothetic tendencies found in anthropological and sociological discourses. While the former's use of ethnography described, interpreted, and represented the so-called third world and the peoples and cultures therein, sociology was more inclined to develop generalizable categories and laws maintaining societies functioning in the developed world. Anthropology studied the particular, while sociology's emerging discourse led by a Parsonian structural functionalist perspective sought to discover the "laws" governing societies, institutions, and human behavior.

Although Pletsch's arguments are insightful, he converts each discipline into a monolithic entity. He avoids discussing, for instance, the ways in which nomothetic knowledge practices formed part of anthropology or how the ideographic was employed by sociologists whose intellectual lineage could be traced back to the Chicago School of urban sociology (Atkinson et al., 2001). This discussion can be complicated and complexified even further if we also account for the differences found between social anthropology in England, which could be characterized

as more nomothetic (etic) in comparison to cultural anthropology's ideographic (phon*emic*) accounts in the United States (Ingold, 2008). Additional differences and complexities could be examined if we compare how functionalism (Lévi-Strauss, 1955), structuralism (Lévi-Strauss, 1955), structural-functionalism (Radcliffe-Brown, 1935), structural Marxism (O'Laughlin, 1975), cultural materialism (Harris, 1979), cultural ecology (Steward, 1977), and political economy (Wolf, 1982) were articulated on both sides of the Atlantic, or how they were syncretized by scholars in the Global South aiming to understand the neocolonial contexts in which they lived (Fals-Borda, 1970; Restrepo, 2001; Ribeiro, 1968; Stavenhagen, 1971). Pletsch's major argument, however, was to emphasize the tendencies the geopolitics of knowledge revealed after the second world war.

Although extending the discussion around colonial and neocolonial contexts is beyond the limits of this chapter, I do want to emphasize how the emergence of anticolonial and antiimperialist movements helped disrupt the aforementioned philosophical, theoretical, and methodological foundations on which ethnography was built. Latin American thinkers and doers such as Ribeiro (1968) and Kusch (1953, 1962, 1966, 2010) initiated another way of thinking and doing ethnography by accentuating imperial/colonial and transcultural relations between peoples and civilizations. Stavenhagen's (1971) *Decolonialization of Applied Social Science*s, Fals Borda's (1970) *Ciencia Propia y el Colonialismo Intelectual* (Our Science and Intellectual Colonialism*)*, and Casanova's (1965) *Internal Colonialism and National Development* also began to shift the terms of the conversation against intellectual colonialism, which was later conceptualized as the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being (Quijano, 2000). It is not surprising that the modernity/coloniality research group traces its intellectual genealogy to philosophers such as Enrique Dussel (Escobar, 2007), who, along with his contemporaries,

aimed to develop *conocimientos otros con y desde los horizontes del sur* [other knowledges with and from the South's horizon].

The politico-theoretical moves in Latin America anticipated the development of similar discussions led by Hymes (1972), Asad (1973), and Harrison (1991). With these epistemic shifts, other knowledge practices emerged from the very people and places anthropology and sociology had merely seen as objects of study. Herzfeld (2001) reminds us that the people in the Global South do in fact read what is written about them and are increasingly writing accounts of their own sociocultural and political worlds. Why these accounts continue to be left unmentioned in academic discourses simply comes to show the persisting silences maintaining other epistemic positions subjugated.

Educational Ethnography

Now that I have provided a brief historical account of the conditions under which both anthropological and sociological ethnography emerged, it is apropos to mention how educational ethnography developed. The subfield of educational ethnography finds its theoretical beginnings in the early 20th century, but it is only with the founding of the Council on Anthropology and Education in 1968 and the Anthropology & Education Quarterly in 1970 that its institutionalization begins (Comitas & Dolgin, 1978; Emihovich, 2005). Yon's (2003) review of the field points out that educational ethnography begins primarily with "anthropology's conventional preoccupation with native 'others,' within the dominant paradigm of cultural relativism" (p. 413). This time, however, ethnographers no longer had to travel to distant places but could study others at home just like sociologists had done previously in urban communities. Mead's (2001) interest in the psychological development of "primitive" youth eventually led her to publish *The School in American Culture*, bringing to the fore the importance of understanding

the lives of children immersed in a post-World War II context in which the geopolitical, economic, demographic, and sociocultural landscape began to shift rapidly. If we are to look for other foundational figures, the literature would point directly to George Spindler and Louise Spindler's work (Comitas & Dolgin, 1978; G. D. Spindler, 1963; G. Spindler & Spindler, 2000; Suarez-Orozco, 1991).

The theoretical and methodological debates in educational ethnography corresponded with the debates in anthropology arguing for a critical reflexive practice. The West, including its modern institutions, was no longer exempt from research (Hymes, 1972). A great example is Jackson's (1968) *Life in Classrooms.* By uncovering the "daily grind" of the hidden curriculum, he uncovered the critical nexus between schooling and the social, cultural, political, and economic life outside of schools. Jackson's work argued for a thick description resonant with Geertz' (1973) interpretation of the everyday cultural 'nods' and 'winks' in that his interests rested in the 'things that come and go' and the 'twinkling-things like a student's yawn or a teacher's frown' (Yon, 2003, p. 416). Because Jackson emphasized the culturally normative effects of schools and their cohesive role in society, however, his work could also be aligned with structural functionalist approaches of his time seeking to understand how schools, as social institutions, maintain the order of society in place.

The seventies experienced a heightened interest in Marxist theories of social and cultural reproduction in relation to schooling (overall, the shift had much to do with the reignited interest sparked by the resurgence of social movements in the 1960s which culminated in the "Great Rehearsal of 1968" (Arrighi, Hopkins, & Wallerstein, 1989). Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Gramsci's (1971) *Prison Notebooks*, and Althusser's (1971) essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* also influenced much of the work in the United States and in

England (Yon, 2003). The resurgence of the latter's structural Marxist critique, one may argue, casted a large shadow over dependency theory and prevented the emerging philosophy of liberation (which offered a frontal critique on what they considered Althusserianism) from reaching a wider audience in a Eurocentric Latin America (Dussel, 1988).

Although outside of the aims of this chapter, it is important to acknowledge how cultural Marxism propounded by the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies began to challenge the monopoly anthropology held in ethnography. Willis' (1977) *Learning to Labor* portrayed how students resist schooling in ways that were not only reactionary or merely oppositional (Ortner, 1995). We can say his work underscored the ways in which students constructed a sub-culture of their own that was both oppositional and creative—i.e., a youth culture that was both negatively resistant and positively constructive, albeit one that perpetuated the socioeconomic relations of power. Willis' work would later influence future ethnographies in the field of education (Anyon, 1981; Dolby, 2001; McLaren, 1989; Valenzuela, 1999; Weis, 1988). In these studies, schools were no longer conceived as static, mechanistic institutions but rather as contested political, economic, and cultural spaces. It is worthy to address, however, that educational ethnographers study K-12 settings and therefore perpetuate the averted gaze of the field (Wisniewski, 2000). It is thus that I inverted the ethnographic gaze or made the familiar strange in my attempt to explore university student activism and its relationship to neoliberal higher education reform.

Part 2: Defining Ethnography

Hammersley (2018) conceptualizes the meaning of ethnography in "education and beyond" (p. 1). Understanding ethnography both theoretically and methodologically, he suggests, requires a transdisciplinary perspective. In other words, to decompartmentalize our understandings of ethnography, ontological and epistemological commitments emanating from

other disciplines ought to be taken seriously. Although Hammersley does not point to citation practices explicitly, acknowledging the politics of citation and the ways in which it sustains Western discourses at the expense of erasing many others, especially the writing of women and historically and contemporarily colonized peoples (Lutz, 1990). Citation practices are crucial in our efforts to think beyond the confinements of our disciplines as well. Ultimately, conceptual visibility, as I addressed in the previous chapter, is the political question at hand.

Citing the same authors certainly has the potential to make ethnographic inquiry stagnant and dominated by a few theoretical perspectives and conceptual frameworks. There are severe implications when a handful of ethnographers are taken up uncritically as the sacred canon of educational ethnography. Behar's (1993) powerful argument against anthropology's sacred foundational texts is an important contribution to this discussion. If read closely, her critique untangles the intricate relationship between curriculum, knowledge production, ideology, and power. As I, too, cited the founding "fathers" of anthropological, sociological, and educational ethnography because of an unspoken colonial/patriarchal academic convention, a correction ought to be made. Genealogically, ethnographers must reclaim the work of those left forgotten in the noncanonical abyss to challenge what Harrison (1991) considered the core "curriculum menu" sustaining the disciplinary foundations in place (p. 315). Through the university curriculum, therefore, a narrative has been constructed beginning with a mythical, founding moment from which all thought subsequent to its enunciative birth must inevitably follow. There is much to learn from ethnographers thinking and doing in transdisciplinary and un-disciplinary ways (Restrepo & Escobar, 2005). Rather than merely disseminating knowledge about qualitative research methodologies and methods, my citation practice in later sections proposes an ethnographic praxis from a transdisciplinary perspective.

An Elusive Definition

To define ethnography is indeed problematic, yet it is important nonetheless to understand the ways it is conceptualized. Hymes (1977) believed the "definition of ethnography is an elusive and complicated question" (as cited in Hammersley, 2018, p. 3). According to Hammersley (2018), varying definitions complicate rather than elucidate what ethnographic practice entails. Examining the rapid proliferation of adjectival ethnographies also makes things more ambiguous. Consider the following examples:

> autoethnography, casual ethnography, citizen ethnography, cognitive ethnography, collaborative ethnography, constitutive ethnography, critical ethnography, digital ethnography, duoethnography, educational ethnography, ethnomethodological ethnography, feminist ethnography, focused ethnography, functionalist ethnography, global ethnography, hypermedia ethnography, insider ethnography, institutional ethnography, interactionist ethnography, interpretive ethnography, linguistic ethnography, literary ethnography, longitudinal ethnography, Marxist ethnography, micro-ethnography, militant ethnography, multi-scale ethnography, multi sited ethnography, narrative ethnography, performance ethnography, postmodern ethnography, practical ethnography, public ethnography, race ethnography, rapid ethnography, rural ethnography, slow ethnography, team ethnography, urban ethnography, virtual ethnography, visual ethnography. (Hammersley, 2018, p. 5)

How to describe different forms of doing ethnography is even more problematic if one ignores the various philosophies undergirding them. It seems that the neoliberal preoccupation to equate everything which is new with progress has more to do with the incessant proliferation of methodologies than with the paradigm proliferation Lather (2006) speaks of. It is the methodological obsession Fals Borda (1970) warned political engaged researchers against five decades ago, which, according to him, would only lead to intellectual colonialism.

The methodological discrepancies found in ethnography are therefore not so much about how ethnographic methods are applied in the field. Rather, these discrepancies are inextricably related to the ontological, epistemological, ethical, and political positions adopted by researchers.

Without recognizing the perennial philosophical and theoretical debates, ethnography becomes just another technique to implement in our investigations. This is exemplified in commodifiable qualitative "how-to" methods found in synoptic texts (Hammersley, 2008). The instrumentalization of ethnography is most pervasive, to return to the adjectival ethnographies just mentioned, in corporate ethnography, where methodology is transformed into a means to a profitable end (Anderson, 2009). Some claim that to use "ethnographic" methods does not make it an ethnography. As Merriam (2002) points out, researchers typically use ethnographic methods such as participant observation while disregarding the product—that is, the written text about a social or "cultural" group. I place cultural under quotations for this concept no longer can be applied uncritically or blindly to understand what has been demarcated as ethnic, native, and traditional. In chapter two, for instance, I explicated how space and place has been used to confine cultures.

While the production of cultural texts involves interpretation, the theoretical commitments throughout the research process is also indicative of what the product will look like. Geertz' (1973) and Turner's (1967) symbolic and interpretive work, for example, guide us toward a hermeneutic and performative ethnographic practice. For Geertz (1973), "ethnography is thick description" that can nuance the sociocultural "winks from twitches and real winks from mimicked ones" (p. 16). Thick descriptions, he claims, are fictions, like all discursive practices, given that *fictio* refers to the poesis, that is, the craft from which all things are made. The role of the ethnographer is, furthermore, that of an artisan who paints the landscape of other sociocultural worlds (Ingold, 2008). Interpretive texts representing others are "imaginative acts" that disentangle the socially, culturally, politically, and historically underlying significance of

symbolic actions and discourses (Geertz, 1973, p. 15). Interpretation is, in other words, the translation and re-articulation of other worlds.

While Geertz' (1973) work conceptualizes culture as 'the ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong' (as cited in Conquergood, 1991, p. 188), Turner's (1980) understands culture as performed, enacted, and conflict-ridden, meaning that it cannot be understood solely as a text but rather as a political enactment. Turner's "performative paradigm is an alternative to the atemporal, decontextualized, flattening approach of text-positivism" (Conquergood, 1991, p. 189). This means that the 'world as text' must be reconceptualized as 'world as performance' (p. 190). This reframing, as Conquerhood (1991) argues, has serious implications for ethnographic practice as well as for activist research. Conquergood enumerates five potential "planes of analysis":

1. *Performance and Cultural Process.* What are the conceptual consequences of thinking about culture as a *verb* instead of a *noun,* process instead of product? Culture as unfolding performative invention instead of reified system, structure, or variable? What happens to our thinking about performance when we move it outside of Aesthetics and situate it at the center of lived experience?
2. *Performance and Ethnographic Praxis.* What are the methodological implications of thinking about fieldwork as the collaborative performance of an enabling fiction between observer and observed, knower and known? How does thinking about fieldwork as performance differ from thinking about fieldwork as the collection of data? Reading of texts? How does the performance model shape the conduct of fieldwork? Relationship with the people? Choices made in the field? Positionality of the researcher?
3. *Performance and Hermeneutics.* What kinds of knowledge are privileged or displaced when performed experience becomes a way of knowing, a method of critical inquiry, a mode of understanding? What are the epistemological and ethical entailments of performing ethnographic texts and fieldnotes? What are the range and varieties of performance modes and styles that can enable interpretation and understanding?
4. *Performance and Scholarly Representation.* What are the rhetorical problematics of performance as a complementary or alternative form of "publishing" research? What are the differences between reading an analysis of fieldwork data, and hearing the voices from the field interpretively filtered through the voice of the researcher?

For the listening audience of peers? For the performing ethnographer? For the people whose lived experience is the subject matter of the ethnography? What about enabling the people themselves to perform their own experience? What are the epistemological underpinnings and institutional practices that would legitimate performance as a complementary form of research publication?

5. *The Politics of Performance.* What is the relationship between performance and power? How does performance reproduce, enable, sustain, challenge, subvert, critique, and naturalize ideology? How do performances simultaneously reproduce and resist hegemony? How does performance accommodate and contest domination? (p. 190)

Although symbolic and interpretive anthropologists acknowledged the fictional, performative, symbolic, and imaginative character of ethnographic practice, it remained within anthropology's residual practice of enclosing the other and ignoring the material realities of imperialism and colonialism. Some anthropologists and critical scholars have pointed to these very issues (Asad, 1973; Fabian, 1983; Smith, 1999), clarifying that descriptions and representations of others "is never ideologically or cognitively neutral" (Ahmad, 1992, p. 99). Nevertheless, performativity, social practice, and the politics of performance offer the analytical tools needed to understand how student activists engage in collective action and produce knowledge in the process of resisting neoliberalism's colonizing effects.

Ethnographic Practice

Although defining ethnography may be complicated and perhaps undesired, there are some key features that predominate its practice. According to Ingold (2014), ethnography literally means the "writing about the people" while the oxford dictionary describes it as 'a scientific description of races and peoples with their customs, habits and mutual differences' (p. 385). Ingold provides these definitions not because he aims to confine ethnography to the study of races and peoples. Instead, he does so to contest these delineations and initiate a discussion around what ethnographic practice entails.

Fieldwork is ethnography's constant, yet in and of itself, fieldwork does not amount to ethnography. It is true that to better understand other sociocultural and political worlds, one must be immersed in the field. Ethnography, as stated earlier, cannot be equated to method, that is, to the techniques and procedures implemented in the field to collect data. Instead of thinking of methods used during fieldwork, one must think of the primary labor that is required to do ethnography. The work required, as Ingold (2014) claims, is participant observation. Conceiving of participation observation in such a way may help avoid conflating "ethnographic" methods with the lived, embodied, relational, and intellectual work in which ethnographers engage. Likewise, Wolcott (1999) distinguishes between "doing ethnography" and "borrowing ethnographic techniques" (pp. 41-42). To do ethnography means one takes distance from techniques aimed solely at gathering data in a systematic manner. Ethnography perhaps is more than what Wolcott considers as "a way of seeing" in the field. It is instead a way to *sentipensar* or feelthink involving "skills of perception and capacities of judgment that develop in the course of direct, practical, and sensuous [and political] engagements with our surroundings" (Fals-Borda, 2009; Ingold, 2014, p. 388). Ethnography is, according to Ingold (2014), equivalent to participant observation. It is, therefore, its primary and most valuable way to participate in and learn from other sociocultural worlds.

Participant observation presents us with an ongoing ontological and epistemological debate. Jackson (1989) states that 'one can observe and participate successively…but not simultaneously' (as cited in Ingold, 2014, p. 387). In other words, observation and participation "yield different kinds of data, respectively objective and subjective" (Ingold, 2014, p. 387). Observation is epistemological insofar as it is a way of "knowing about the world" and participation is ontological inasmuch as it refers to "being [and becoming] in the world" (p. 387).

By interweaving ontological/being/participation with epistemological/knowing/observation, the gap between being in the world and knowing about the world is narrowed. One cannot know the world without participating in and being an integral part of it. Conceptualized this way, observing (knowing about the world) no longer means to objectify through participation (being in the world) is taken seriously in a committed process of thinking, being, becoming, learning, unlearning, and *sentipensando* [feel-thinking] with others. Ethnography, as I discuss later, is pedagogical inasmuch as learning, unlearning, and relearning are part of its methodological praxis.

There is still much to say about observation, however, for observation is with is ocular-centric. Some scholars argue, as did Foucault (1980) before them, that what is observed and described or represented is often objectified or thingified (Baker, 2017; Césaire, 2000). To bring Ingold's (2014) philosophical-anthropological discussion back to the ground, taking the critique made by postmodern/post-structural (Foucauldian power/knowledge strand rather than the Derridean textualist variant) and critical/decolonial scholars seriously is needed. Haraway (1988) makes a cogent argument against ocularcentrism, which is worth quoting at length:

> I would insist on the embodied nature of all vision and so reclaim the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into a *conquering gaze from nowhere* [emphasis added]. This is the gaze that mythically inscribes all the marked bodies, that makes the unmarked category claim the power to see and not be seen, to represent while escaping representation. This gaze signifies the unmarked positions of Man and White, one of the many nasty tones of the word 'objectivity'.... Vision in this technological feast becomes unregulated gluttony; all seems not just mythically about the god trick of seeing everything from nowhere, but to have put the myth into ordinary practice. And like the god trick, this eye fucks the world to make techno-monsters…. (p. 581)

Decolonial theorist Castro-Gomez (2005) echoes Haraway's "conquering gaze from nowhere". He conceptualizes this practice as the hubris of zero-point epistemology enunciating the objects

to be known while hiding the locus of enunciation—that is, the *Deus absconditus* who sees and knows all things without ever being seen.

These god-like acts of knowing and objectifying are the things of which the crisis of representation is made. After fieldwork, fieldnotes, participant observation, and interviewing, the ethnographer proceeds with the most important task of all, the "making of texts" (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, p. 2). The making of texts requires the representation of others. Prior to the publication of *Writing Culture* (1986), the discussion around writing and representation was absent, at least to the white men in the Global North (Behar, 1993), indicative to the intimate relationship between representation, ideology, and academic discourses.

Postmodern and post-structural thought did not only assist in destabilizing modern binaries such as subject-object, researcher-researched, knower-known; it also dislocated the authorial voice of ethnographers. One of the contributors of *Writing Culture*, Vincent Crapanzano, for instance, disrupts the seemingly accurate accounts of cultural texts. According to him, ethnographers often employ rhetorical devices, "theatrical narrativity," and "interpretive virtuosity" aimed at convincing readers about the other's essence or way of being. These writing practices enable the reader to also capture the life of the other as told by the ethnographer rather than by the people with whom the ethnographer interacts. As Crapanzano (1986) states,

> The ethnographer is a little like Hermes: a messenger who, given methodologies for uncovering the masked, the latent, the unconscious, may even obtain his message through stealth. He presents languages, cultures, and societies in all their opacity, their foreignness, their meaninglessness; then like the magician, the hermeneut, Hermes himself, he clarifies the opaque, renders the foreign familiar, and gives meaning to the meaningless. He decodes the message. He interprets. (p. 51)

Albeit sardonic in tone, his argument against the ethnographer's authorial voice contributed substantially to our understanding of a dialogic ethnographic practice from which a relational

and intersubjective ethnographic praxis may emerge. For this reason, the knowledge produced by student activists took on a central role in this study. As I worked with student activists, I learned that it would be impossible to know and experience the university as they did. I also learned, moreover, that I could not capture a reality as if it were statically there for me to apprehend. What I could do, however, was participate in the readings, discussions, writings, forums, meetings, and protests to which I was invited. Sharing ideas that were pertinent to certain situations were often critiqued and discussed, which was a valuable way to develop an ethico-political ethnographic praxis where what is written by researchers seeks to contribute to a social struggle and at the same is made more transparent.

Notwithstanding *Writing Culture's* contribution to theory and practice, some thinkers writing from other philosophical commitments and standpoints critiqued its textualist position (Behar, 1993; De Landa, 2009; Herzfeld, 2001). De Landa's work, for example, challenges the "linguisticality of experience" sustaining the "hermeneutic/deconstructive belief that there is nothing outside the text" (1985). As De Landa (2009) expresses, "by coupling the idea that perception is intrinsically linguistic with the ontological assumption that only the contents of experience really exist…leads directly to a form of social essentialism" (p. 43). Social essentialism, according to De Landa, transforms social reality into a mere text, thereby ignoring social practice and its epistemological implications (Bourdieu, 1990). This does not mean, however, that the deconstruction of texts has lost all value. Indeed, deconstruction is useful insofar as it leaves room for reconstructive possibilities (Dussel, 1996). It is the realm of the virtual, that is, of emergent alternatives and futurities that leads us to a critical, reflexive, decolonial, analectic, and relational approach to ethnography.

Part 3: Critical Ethnography

> This is not a question of innovative techniques alone. It entails, as part of the very process of research, rendering ever more explicit the social relations and the options that provide the procedure with its basis and which make it possible. In other words, what is called for is, as it were, a situational epistemology, which social research increasingly needs if it is to break out of the illusion that it stands outside or above the circular observer-actor game. (Melucci, 1996, p. 396).

While some anthropologists in the 1980s were busy deconstructing cultural texts, those writing from other theoretical perspectives asked themselves whether the deconstruction of texts was a politically detached scholarship, resonant to what some consider another form of positivism (Conquergood, 1991). Critical, feminist, postcolonial, and decolonial scholars already working toward making the political—understood as the everyday practices of resistance accompanied with epistemological and cultural decolonization—more explicit in their scholarship did not find deconstruction viable to work with collective actors.

Herzfeld (2001) is one of many critics whose work problematizes the use of Western categories to do research on nonwestern societies. Like many decolonial scholars, he speaks of shifting the geographies of reason and geopolitics of knowledge (Gordon, 2011), and aims to provincialize occidental ways of thinking and being (Chakrabarty, 2000). Investigating how accepted categories and taken-for-granted concepts are practiced, resisted, or syncretized reduces the explanatory power determining, aprioristically, all that is yet to be understood on the ground. Minh-ha (1989) expresses a similar concern when she states, "Despite our desperate, eternal attempt to separate, contain, and mend, categories always leak' (as cited in Conquergood, 1991, p. 184). To avoid absolute categories, Ortner (1984) also argues in favor of an ethnographic approach that focuses on the everyday practices as understood, conceived, and theorized by the actors themselves. Instead of perceiving culture as a given or as something that needs to be captured or represented as an artifact, the multifarious ways in which sociopolitical relations

articulate themselves in distinct contexts and places must take priority. This requires new ways of conceptualizing, usually originating from the actors with whom we choose to work. Therefore, the very practices, enactments, and conceptualizations of collective actors become the theoretical, empirical, and pragmatic grounding of our research. Once again, it is for this reason the knowledge student activists produced collectively forms part of chapter five and six.

The re-emergence of critical ethnographies of resistance is not only aimed at understanding emerging political subjectivities and identities for understanding's sake. Rather, it is also intended to work from the borders, that is, from the small epistemological and ontological openings modernity's neoliberal, global, and colonial project has, paradoxically, made more apparent (de La Cadena, 2017). When an ethnography of resistance and emergence brings these small openings to light while also working toward fissuring the seemingly indestructible wall of neoliberal capitalism, it carries the potential to become a "discourse of critical resistance to the conceptual and cosmology hegemony of this global common sense" (Herzfeld, 2001, p. 14). Resistance to conceptual homogenization, moreover, requires participation and keen "observation that underscores the importance of maintaining a strong sense of the conceptual and social diversity that still exists in the world" (p. 14). In a similar fashion, Santos (2014) expresses that "the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world" (p. 237). Committing to diverse sociocultural practices such as those enacted by university student activists is, on the one hand, a political enactment against prescriptive theorizing, and, on the other, a form of doing and thinking of scholarship that is materially, symbolically, and historically embedded.

Writing about student movements and their resistant practices is not enough, however. Only by engaging in dialogue with emerging collective actors can we begin to establish our

intellectual labor in ethico-political terms. The university student activists in Honduras, for instance, which are collectively working toward changing the university's neoliberal governance structure and its exclusive practices are also constructing knowledge and other forms of sociality in the process.

To challenge the lack of engagement with and alongside emerging social movements and collective actors, Ortner (1995) recommends we write thick descriptions of the complex ways subjects engage the cultural and political in their own terms:

> it must be emphasized that the question of adequate representation of subjects in the attempt to understand resistance is not purely a matter of providing better portraits of subjects in and of themselves. The importance of subjects (whether individual actors or social entities) lies not so much in who they are and how they are put together as in the projects that they construct and enact. For it is in the formulation and enactment of those projects that they both become and transform who they are, and that they sustain or transform their social and cultural universe. (p. 187)

This ethnographic study thus explores the sociocultural and political contours of university student activism as well as the knowledges and practices which emerged from the political project of which I increasingly became a part. Understanding how collective expressions contested neoliberalism was also an indispensable component of this study. How university students formed a collective political identity or culture and produced knowledge intersubjectively, furthermore, despite the obvious heterogeneity of its members, was another dimension to which I paid close attention.

In addition to focusing on collective identities, I related the University Student Movement's political culture as always-already interconnected to the power-knowledge assemblage articulated in and beyond the university. In other words, a dialectical practice was accompanied with a commitment to the inquiry of sociocultural possibilities and the "powerful realities that constrain and shape access to knowledge" (Herzfeld, 2014, p. 1). As an education

ethnographer, I was not only immersed in the field to know all there is to be known about a specific sociocultural and political economic context. Rather, I, too, was shaped by the contextual realities and the intersubjective dimension of this study. The pedagogical implications of doing research with others are highlighted in chapter five.

Regarding the relational dynamic involved in working with university student activists, much can be learned and applied to ethnography from new social movement theories developed in sociology. Particularly, those developed by Touraine (1977, 2002), Castells (1997), and Melucci (1989, 1996a, 1996b) point to the relationship between collective action, institutional change, and sociocultural transformation. Although these scholars developed useful conceptual frames (e.g., such as action theory, social movement networks, collective action, and collective identity) that helped challenge old social movement theories (e.g., resource mobilization theory, rational choice theory, and the various theories developed by crowd psychology), one must be careful not to generalize or mimetically apply the theories developed to conceptualize "new" social movements emerging in post-industrial countries to the Global South.

Melucci's (1996a) work, as discussed in chapter two, provides a useful theoretically perspective, making it adaptable to the understanding of social movements in Latin America (Escobar, 1992). As the epigraph above demonstrates, he calls for a situational epistemology aimed at disrupting the researcher/researched binary, a theoretical praxis that simultaneously links theory with practice and also engages knowledge practices resisting and transforming dominant cultural codes. More importantly, Melucci (1989) explores the rearrangement of power relations and the cultural implications of collective action. Conceived this way, student movements are no longer "characters" on a historical stage waiting for the right conditions to appear for a revolution to take place. Instead, Melucci conceives of collective action as a spatial

and emergent phenomenon rather than as a temporal event (i.e., not as events that appear, disappear, and reappear at the right historical moment) in that collective action takes place in theoretically unpredictable contexts which follow other logics. His perspective resonates with Deleuze and Guattarri's (1987) theorizing inasmuch as he conceptualizes social movements as rhizomatic, place-based meshworks characterized as leaderless, headless movements. Networks and webs are articulated dendritically by actors not always and not necessarily involved in direct action against the state as was the case with centralized, unionized, and class-based social movements. This does not mean, however, that social movements do not engage in collective action to resist state policies. That state, without doubt, is still an important and indeed violent player within a globalizing context.

The University Student Movement in Honduras is one of many social movements reclaiming social spaces, collective identities, and radical political subjectivities in new ways. As student activists formed and sustained collective identities and enacted spatial practices of resistance, they, too, have made a symbolic pedagogical gesture toward sociopolitical and cultural transformation within, across, and beyond the university. I cite Melucci's (1996) definition of collective identities at length to understand its intricate relationship with collective action.

> [Collective identity] is an interactive process through which several individuals or groups define the meaning of their action and the field of opportunities and constraints for such an action. This common definition must be conceived as a process, for it is constructed and negotiated through the ongoing relationships linking individuals or groups. The process by which a collective identity is constructed, maintained, and adapted always has two sides to it: on the one hand, the inner complexity of an actor, its plurality of orientations; on the other, the actor's relationship with the environment (other actors, opportunities/constraints)…. Constructing a collective identity entails continuous investment and unfolds as a process: identity crystallizes into forms of organization, systems of rules, and leadership relationships the closer the action draws towards the more institutionalized forms of social behaviour. In collective action, the

> construction of identity assumes the character of a process that must be constantly activated if action is to be possible. (p. 67)

This definition, like all definitions, is incomplete yet it does provide an alternative way of understanding student movements as dialogic, intersubjective, performative, conflicting, and heterogeneous. But how are student movements directing their actions toward power and knowledge? To begin to answer this question, critical ethnography begins from the ground up to develop a theoretical and methodological praxis that is collaborative, situated, and politically committed to social movements.

Part 4: The Ethics of Liberation as an Ethnographic Practice

> To approach the Other in conversation is to welcome his expression, in which at each instant he overflows the idea a thought would carry away from it. It is therefore to receive from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity. But this also means: to be taught. The relation with the Other, or Conversation, is a non-allergic relation, an ethical relation; but inasmuch as it is welcomed this conversation is a teaching. Teaching is not reducible to maieutics; it comes from the exterior and brings me more than I contain. In its non-violent transitivity the very epiphany of the face is produced. (Levinas, 1969, p. 51)

To begin a discussion around ethics in relation to activist research, several questions must be clarified. What are the ethical implications of doing research on, with, and alongside student movements? How is knowledge production an ethical issue? What role do collective actors and researchers play in producing theoretical and practical knowledge?

Cannella and Manuelito (2008) contend that an ethical approach to research ought to first immerse its practice in a community for it to be genuinely anticolonial, transformational, and egalitarian. Being in community does not simply mean to be immersed in a specific sociocultural context long enough so that the intentionality of a "wink" could be distinguished from an involuntary "twitch." Being in the midst of things also requires an ethico-political praxis when interacting with others. This necessitates that we establish relationships with others based on

reciprocity, active solidarity, collaboration, and political commitment. This way of doing and thinking of research departs from the dualistic frame still present in the dominant academic discourse, where the objects to be known are laying out there for the knower to apprehend, analyze, synthesize, and repackage for the world to truly know their essence. What happens, then, when students refuse to be objects of analysis and express themselves instead as thinking subjects willing act upon the world to change it? What shall the ethnographer's role be when collective actors are also researching and theorizing about their world? The university student activists I worked with presented me with the possibility of rearticulating the relationship between educational research, theory, and practice. Activists' engagement with the social, political, economic realities surrounding them often required learning, unlearning, and relearning—sometimes through readings, discussions, debates, workshops, rallies, forums, public assemblies, and artistic performances that combine fear, rage, despair, sorrow, and hope to create a dissonant space within an institution that forbids affectivity. University student activists offered a gesture, better yet, a gift, in the Levinasian sense, for me to contemplate why they put their formal education on hold for an uncertain future where the collective will, rather than individual will to power and knowledge, may work toward weaving a network of sociopolitical organization. In the next section I explicate further the analectical approach I briefly discussed in chapter two to elaborate further the ethical implications of this ethnographic study.

Analectical Ethnographic Approach

Dussel (1973, 1977, 1980, 1996, 2013b) has written extensively on the philosophy of liberation as a way to think, do, and philosophize from an ethico-political position from exteriority and alterity, extending the philosophical contribution of Levinas. He proposes an analectical approach, a methodological proposition that begins from exteriority, thereby

transcending the totalizing Hegelian/Marxist dialectic. Alcoff (2011) contrasts Dussel's analectical approach with dialectical modes of thinking in the following way:

> While Marxist dialectics stays within the realm of intelligibility, in a dialogical opposition and sublation of the dominant worldview, analectics seeks to bring that which is beyond the dialectic into visibility. Dialectics remains in an internal critique by contradicting what exists, but it takes its terms of reference from the existing foundational concepts. New formulations are indeed possible through dialectics, but they will be achieved through the conflictual process of counterpoint…. Thus, Dussel argues that, in order to conceive of living labor, we need more than dialectics: we need what he calls analectics, a neologism for an attempt to think beyond what is currently thinkable, to reach beyond dialectics toward the unintelligible and incommensurable or that which is beyond the existing totality. (pp. 67-68)

Dussel believes it is necessary to depart from alterity if one is to begin a methodological praxis that is explicitly political and in solidarity with those dwelling in Western modernity's darker side. By working from exteriority, subjugated knowledges and their political and collective enactments gain discursive visibility. Ultimately, bringing forth subjugated ways of knowing and doing reveals that hegemonic power continues to be contested.

Ethical and political research requires researchers to position their academic work as a vocation rather than a profession. The original meaning of vocation is "to be called upon", and those who call are the people and communities always already politically positioned (Dussel, 2008, p. 45). As Dussel (2008) states, "the one who is called feels 'summoned' to assume the responsibility of service" (p. 45). The ethnographer's responsibility is not to emancipate, empower, give voice to the so-called voiceless, or to provide transformative options to others. Latin American philosophers, theologians, and scholars such as Enrique Dussel, Maria Lugones, Leopoldo Boff, and Franz Hinkelammert clarify the difference between emancipation and liberation. The former concept maintains the modern individual subject who is emancipated and thus humanized when they acquire the critical consciousness to know and change their reality.

The latter is about liberating struggles which are internally mediated rather than externally led by an emancipating savior or a group of vanguard intellectuals who will lead or enlighten the unfortunate out of the Platonian cave. Instead, the researcher's social responsibility is to amplify collective actors' political enactments, narrations, knowledge practices, and ontological openings. It means, in short, to enter the politics of possibility, hope, resistance, and solidarity (Freire, 1970, 1985; hooks, 2003; Walsh, 2015). This is what some scholars ignore when they critique Freire's work as they focus on emancipation rather than liberation, thereby confounding a liberating praxis with rationality. Instead of validating or invalidating social movements with vanguard theories which remain in the god-like realm of anticipating ripe conditions for success, ethnographers must take on an ethical rearguard position that accounts for collective actors' failures, successes, obstacles, and conditions of possibility. Only by making "other" ways of being, becoming, and knowing as well as the alternative political practices and stories more visible, can we begin to say that our work is politically, ethically, epistemologically, and ontologically aligned with social movements. It is our ethical responsibility, therefore, to work *with* the communities which are challenging destructive ways of being and knowing by giving more discursive visibility to their projects of resistance. Pedagogically speaking, collective actors are the ones who teach us that it is possible to create other worlds, knowledges, institutions, and social practices.

Part 5: Gaining Access, Participants, and Methods

It was not easy to gain access to the University Student Movement. I sent invitation letters via Facebook informing various student organizations or associations which formed part of the movement about my research and the possibility of me attending one of their meetings to discuss my research project in more detail. After about a month or so, I realized that Facebook

was not the best approach to contact student activists. I would only learn about student activists' precautionary behavior and their indifferent attitude toward me and my research project as I witnessed the brutal tactics used to repress student activists during protests. Infiltrators, for example, have taken pictures of student activists when unmasked during meetings. This has led to the arrest, torture, and assassination of students at the secondary and tertiary levels. The masks student activists wear in protests, press conferences, and assemblies are meant to protect them from said brutal tactics.

Before returning to Honduras, I never thought that university student activists would be suspicious of me, but they were. After I participated in one of the political workshops organized by the University Student Movement, their suspicion of my research intentions lessened. Only through their questioning me was I able to give an honest response of what my study was about and why I wanted to pursue a topic such as university student activism. In my fieldnotes, I detailed the problematics, queries, and dilemmas involved when trying to gain access to activists in a violent post-coup Honduran context. In the following narrative, I reconstruct my fieldnotes to illustrate the learning process involved in trying to do activist research in the post-coup Honduran context.

1.7.2019: Contact

Today I wrote two student movement organizations, which form part of the student movement, through Facebook messenger. No one has responded. It is frustrating I must admit, but why should student activists respond to me in the first place? Are they not simply being *precavidos* [cautious]? They are taking precautionary measures because of the context in which they live. The post-coup context is one in which silencing oppositional groups implies incarceration, torture, and, death. However, I cannot stop thinking that time is running out and

that I will never have participants. Having participants as if they are my property! The colonizing research practices of entitlement, of ownership, of exploitation is exactly what I am trying to challenge, but it is easier said than done. This comes to show that decolonizing research is not something one says but rather something over which one constantly struggles. It is ongoing. It is never complete. It appears that the way I am contacting student activists might have something to do with their lack of interest in my research, however. What could I do differently? Will there be some comradery if I mention in my communication more about who I am and where I come from? How can I find a way to attend some of their workshops?

1.26.2019: Response

One student organization finally wrote me back a couple days before the academic year began on January 28, 2019. They informed me that they were planning to have a meeting once the semester began, and that one of the topics they would discuss would be whether their organization could collaborate with my proposed research project. All I could do in the meantime was wait for an answer. I contemplated whether things would have been different if the student activist spokesperson I met in 2017 would have stayed at the university. Surely, he would have introduced me to some of his friends. However, he received a scholarship in Europe to finish his studies there. I would only learn of his abrupt departure as I met other student activists. The student activist organization which wrote me back, however, never contacted me again. I wrote the following reflection in my researcher journal:

> Qualitative research, as some wrongfully believe, is not easy. It requires you to have patience when things do not go as planned. I still do not have participants. It is frustrating, but why? Maybe I feel this way because of the pressure to graduate and the overwhelming sensation that failure is around the corner. These feelings contradict the elaborated ethical position I wrote in my prelims. Is this hypocritical sensation a reflection of my real interests? I claim to want to do transformative activists research, research that conceives of participants as subjects rather than as objects. So, why do I feel like I am wasting my time? Doubt takes over my thoughts,

> convincing me the work I want to pursue in Honduras is futile, a meaningless pursuit to seek how activist identities are formed, the reasons behind them, and the meaning-making process involved. Why do I even care about collective identity formation, and why should I inquire over such thing? Is it a theoretical cloud void of the practical realities lived by students at the UNAH? Why should I pursue these activities anyway? Shouldn't I think about curriculum theory, curreré, educational experiences, and complicated conversations? Or are students creating their own curriculum and educational experiences through social struggle? What can I do differently to gain access in a way that is less imposing?

When the first semester began on January 28, 2019, I decided to go to UNAH to walk around and make some observations. After an hour bus ride, I was dropped off on Suyapa Boulevard, in front of UNAH. In my notes I described the clear skies, warmer than usual weather, and the chaotic noise typical of busy streets in Latin American cities. I looked at my surrounding, trying to capture all there was to capture, as if everything I saw could or should form part of my study.

While I walked toward UNAH's main entrance, dozens of buses and taxis filled the streets. New students walked hesitantly toward the institution that would potentially provide a space in which a sense of community could be built or where the possessive individuality promoted by neoliberalism would be solidified. Once I reached UNAH's main plaza named *La Plaza de Cuatro Culturas* (The Four Cultures Plaza), I decided to find a shaded area where I could sit down. A group of student activists who were all wearing black shirts, whose faces were covered with make-shift masks made of tarnished t-shirts, started to gather near the plaza. I then noticed an unmasked male student handing out some flyers in the middle of the plaza as students heading to their next class passed him by. I knew he was a student activist because his black shirt had his organization's logo imprinted in the front. The flyers, from what I could tell, were used to recruit new students, but I was not certain of this. To make sure I decided to walk up to this student and, before I could say anything, he handed me a flyer. I introduced myself and my research project. Our conversation was interrupted by the explosion of some fireworks the

masked student activists decided to light in the middle of the plaza, almost as a ritual to initiate another year of struggle. Perhaps these fireworks were used to make noise in a crowded space, so everyone could see who was causing it. The masked figures seemed to enjoy each other's company as the muffled sound of laughter penetrated the masks covering their faces.

Once I resumed my conversation with the student activist recruiter, I kept talking about my study. He said that his organization would consider it. He then asked me if I wanted to write my number down. I took my cell phone out of my front pocket and saved it with a pseudonym. He said that I should WhatsApp him later and that maybe he could provide me with the contact information of some student activists who were heavily involved in the student movement. I thanked him for his time, and then we shook hands. I then decided to return to where I was sitting. In the plaza, the masked student activists continued to light huge fireworks which were launched from a mortar. After about twenty minutes, they decided to leave the plaza all at once. At that point, I decided to walk toward the main entrance to catch a bus home.

As I crossed Suyapa Boulevard, I saw dozens of riot police and military police standing in formation behind their riot shields. They were most likely waiting for student activists to attempt to barricade the streets. Maybe they were waiting for the masked student who abruptly left the plaza. UNAH undoubtedly a militarized zone. It does not matter whether students burn tires to block the streets or not. The riot police and military police make their presence, nonetheless. Their presence communicates fear, social control, torture, death. Once I caught the bus heading to my house, I took the time to process why students had not replied via Facebook messenger. I realized that in a context such as this one, contacting activists is a delicate process. Once I finally made it to my house, I saw on the local news that the riot/military police had launched hundreds of tear gas canisters after students peacefully made their presence on the

streets. The students who I had seen at the plaza setting off fireworks and who had left so abruptly were the same ones on the news. I saw the violent nature of these confrontations. As tear gas canisters were launched, the women selling food on the side of the street in front of UNAH ran inside to escape the suffocating and blinding gas. Students ran to help others who were not as used to its overpowering effects. Student began to throw rocks at the police. Several students were injured.

The ways in which students defend UNAH's "territory" resembles the way campesinos and indigenous movements in Honduras defend their communities (Zibechi, 2012). The first day of classes at the National Autonomous University of Honduras was initiated in the streets, where, as activist journalist Levy Nacho described at the CLACSO conference of 2018, countless of "books" are written but which will never be "read" by the increasingly frightened academics who distance themselves from ongoing struggles. These books are inscribed in places and bodies. It is unlikely that they will be written as mere texts. The streets are instead the places where the political is lived, enacted, and practiced. Those who choose to write with and alongside a social struggle indeed aim to make these silenced books more visible to those who refuse to read them.

Participants

This research involved working with university student activists attending the National Autonomous University of Honduras' flagship campus in Tegucigalpa. Student activists also self-identify as active members of the University Student Movement. Some of the participants became principle interlocutors, such as Mario Gomez, who organized many of the existing student associations since 2013 and who helped articulate various associations and collectives into the student movement. Without Mario having vouched for me, I would not have been able to

meet other student activists. Thanks to him I was able to participate in certain spaces such as meetings, assemblies, forums, and workshops.

This study consisted of six participants, all of whom have taken leadership positions within the student movement or have represented their student associations as presidents, vice presidents, or secretaries. Because students may be easily identified, everyone will be identified as a secretary, a term which is increasingly being used by student activists to unsettle the vertical structure of their associations. Pseudonyms are used throughout.

Eduardo Martínez

Eduardo comes from a poor mestizo campesino background in central Honduras. His windowed mother took care of the home since he was five years old. He was the first to graduate high school and the first go to college. You can say that he and I come from similar backgrounds and have much in common. He is 28 years old and is much older than most students at UNAH. Eduardo first attended the National University of Pedagogy where he finished all his courses, but he did not complete his final practicum to receive his bachelor's degree. He has postponed his practicum since 2015, when he decided to enroll in some classes at UNAH. Because his admissions test scores were high enough, he was able to enroll in the engineering program. That same year, he also became involved in organizing student associations within the engineering department.

I met Eduardo through Ricardo, the student activist handing out flyers at the university's main plaza. Ricardo had given me Eduardo's number and after contacting him and meeting him and some of his friends, I was invited to some of the political and historical workshops organized by student activists. I later learned that Eduardo's political formation was not necessarily influenced by his direct involvement in the University Student Movement. Rather, his critical

attitude and political formation stems from his learning the importance of organizing at the high school level. Eduardo hence began to work with others to create workshops that would help new student activists recover *la memoria historica* y *la cultura organizativa* [historical memory and organizational culture] of the university student movement. Situating the student movement historically and understanding the contextual, social, political, and economic differences formed part of the workshop's curriculum. The first workshop's objective was the following: "The students participating in this workshop will learn reciprocally from one another since all knowledge is collective." [*Los estudiantes presentes que estamos participando en el taller aprenderemos recíprocamente ya que el conocimiento es colectivo.*] (Workshop 1, February 2019). Freire's (1970) clearly takes an important role within these learning spaces organized and led by student activists.

Mario Gómez

Mario grew up middle class in San Pedro Sula, the industrial capital of Honduras, where working in *maquilas* and in African palm tree plantations are the most common sources of income. I mention these industries because his dad was a lawyer who defended campesinos from the land grabs initiated by the oligarchic Facussé and Rosenthal families. Mario's father was also involved in organizing university students in the tumultuous decade of the 1950's, where the University Student Movement successfully attained the university's autonomy. His father was also a representative of the student movement in the 1950s and was the secretary of the University Student Federation of Honduras (FEUH), which I discuss further in the next chapter.

Mario's involvement in organizing students in associations and co-founding many political platforms stems from his father's ethico-political commitments. His father did not get involved in student activism out of self-interest, as it is still the case with some students, where

perfiles politicos or political figures are built for individual aspirations within a traditional political party. Mario's father did not stop with student activism. Instead, he continued to fight alongside campesinos and Indigenous communities whose territories were being taken forcefully by the most powerful families of Honduras. Independent of the dangers involved, his father continued to defend the territories that rightfully belonged to campesino and Indigenous peoples. Right before his father's death, Mario began to understand why he was also involved in university student activism. He learned that an ethical stance towards others should be inseparable from political action. When Mario was criminalized for engaging in what university authorities and the media consider "disruptive" student activism, he went in hiding as the police had a warrant out for his arrest. The articulation of the University Student Movement in 2016, which was catalyzed by the criminalization of Mario and 25 other students, transformed itself into a broad-based student activist political platform. The demands initially made were the following: 1. End the militarization of the university and absolve student activists from all criminal charges; 2. Rescind the newly implemented admission fees; 3. Rescind the Academic Norms discussed in the introduction which sought to exclude thousands of students. When these demands were not met, student activists barricaded the university and paralyzed UNAH and its regional campuses for several months. UNAH became yet another territory to defend. I met Mario during the workshops Eduardo helped organize. He led the discussion around the university student movement's origin in Latin America and the way it emerged in Honduras. There, I learned about Mario's involvement in student activism.

Since that first workshop, I have met with Mario and other student activists at least once a week to discuss ways to re-organize student associations and to democratize the university. In our meetings, I learned that Mario was working on his bachelor's thesis that focused on higher

education reform in relation to the national development projects since Hurricane Mitch. I consider him a higher education activist researcher and a critical scholar whose work is unknown by academics because it is only published in a WordPress he helped create in order to disseminate the collective knowledge produced by the student movement. The purpose of the student run online newspaper he founded is the following:

> In order to generate debate, analysis and reflective criticism about University Reform and problematics behind it, an interdisciplinary group of students from various departments have taken the opportunity to create the University Student Newspaper. The proposal arises from the need to respond to many concerns within our alma mater, and to show how the regime imposes its "idea" of a mercantilist university, undermining the main actors: student and professors. It is a newspaper at the service of the university student community, for student associations at the departmental and college levels, regional campuses, and independent student collectives. We hope to reach out to our readers with knowledge and information that is not currently provided by the university and the mainstream media. (May 2016)

Mario recently handed over the right to administer the newspaper and Facebook page to a younger activist generation. Like most of his decisions, he did it for ethical reasons, believing that the older generation of student activists must learn to let go of certain things (often related to power), such as leadership positions and in this case managing the student movement's social media and newspaper. Demonstrating trust to the new generation of activists who need to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility of what the University Student Movement has reclaimed as their own is ultimately an ethical position.

Héctor Espinoza

Héctor comes from a campesino community in the eastern province of Honduras. He is a third-year history major who expressed his love for historical materialism when I first met him. This is what I wrote on my fieldnotes the day I met him during the first political workshop organized by MEU:

> After several minutes passed, another history student walked into the classroom. He shook hands with the male students and gave a hug and kiss on the cheek to the female students in the room. Everyone started talking to each other at once. They all seemed to know each other. I was the only stranger in the room so I didn't say much. I just listened and laughed or smiled accordingly. Héctor, a history student, abruptly asked Eduardo, "y este man porque no ha dicho nada" [and why hasn't this dude said anything?]. He didn't use an aggressive tone, but I was caught off guard anyway. His calm voice, however, sounded familiar. I thought of the masked student who I talked to at one of the "tomas" (takeovers) last semester when I participated in the assemblies held in front of UNAH when students barricaded the entrances. To answer his question, I started talking about my research. I said that I was there to learn from student activists and about the student movement at UNAH. I said that I was a doctoral student studying *pedagogia* and that I was writing my thesis on the student movement.

As I got to know Héctor some more, I learned that he was openly gay in Tegucigalpa but had to pretend otherwise in his campesino community. He was raised by his conservative grandmother since he was seven. He does not know his father and his mother currently lives in the United States as an undocumented immigrant. He got involved in student activism in 2016 and forms part of a student collective which later became part of the student movement. He feels that his involvement in student activism is not only about the university but the relationship the university must build with society.

Julio Ramírez

Julio is a third-year law student. He is six feet and two inches tall, making him much taller than most Hondurans. His hazel eyes, fair complexion, tall stature, and demeanor reveals that he comes from a wealthy family. His family forms part of the traditional agricultural elite which has exported coffee for over a century. His family comes from a line of liberal politicians who have even reached the presidency. Julio's formal way of speaking also reveals the political culture in which he was raised. His careful choice of words and his use of legal jargon makes him an ideal political figure for the liberal party. However, he supports LIBRE (*Libertad y Refundación*), the leftist oppositional party which emerged after the coup of 2009. His thinking

and actions betray the ideals his family tried to instill in him as a child. In some ways, he has betrayed his class.

I met Julio at a meeting Mario organized at his house. The purpose of that meeting was to discuss various methodologies that could be used to organize student associations at the departmental level. My first impression of Julio was not a positive one. I could not help but compare his demeanor with the other activists I had met. My own bias toward those who come from money, at first, made me doubt Julio's intentions in trying to form part of the student movement. I initially thought that he was one of those students who engage in activism to gain publicity only to become a political figure for a traditional political party. When I learned that his great uncle was the Honduran president who worked closely with the CIA and ambassador John Negroponte to militarize Honduras in 1980s, my bias toward him only intensified. I came to find out much later that these biased perceptions were held by other student activists as well. I would only learn, after many discussions with Mario and Julio, that it is not an easy thing to challenge your family's political lineage because it is always aligned to economic interests. Now that he openly supports what many consider a socialist party, Julio must face the political and economic consequences that come along with betraying the ruling political class. Julio's refusal to take a leadership position also demonstrates that he is not involved in student activism for individual aspirations. His knowledge of how certain political spheres work has also benefitted the student movement as it works toward democratizing the university which, at times, has required some diplomacy during meetings with university authorities.

María Guzmán

Maria is a third-year sociology student. She is from a rural community near the Nicaraguan border. She is one of the student movement's spokespeople and is also a member of

several feminist organizations. Her participation in the latter has brought to light the importance of self-critiquing the student movement's gender dynamics. Maria considers herself working class. In our conversations, she mentioned her father's involvement in the protests that followed the coup, which were organized by the teacher's union of which he is a member. Her involvement in the student movement, like many others, began in 2016 when the academic norms were implemented. Maria initially took interest in the student movement because she thought that it would prevent the academic norms from affecting her course schedule. She later learned that UNAH had many more problems than the academic norms. She became more involved in trying to democratize UNAH and eventually became the general secretary of the Sociology Student Association, the association Mario co-founded. The general secretary is like being the president, but that terminology has been changed to make the sociology student association more horizontal, where all members have equal decision-making power. This structure is what Mario, Erica, Hector, Eduardo, and Julio also want for University Student Federation of Honduras (FEUH) where every member will be a secretary with equal voting power. Each member will represent a regional campus and college. The vertical structure led by a president who often decided on all matters and who usually was from the capital is what needs to change. This form of organizing usually alienated the regional, rural campuses such as the one Maria attended for one year. Maria rightfully believes that verticality easily lends itself to cooptation.

Maria also believes that students must first be organized within their departments for the FEUH to be structured horizontally. The FEUH has been dissolved since student elections have not been held since 2004. She has expressed on several occasions that the student movement must first democratize each department and college (self-governance) and the University Council

(co-governance). Only then can the student movement begin to restructure the University Student Federation of Honduras, which is equivalent to a syndicate agglutinating multiple university student associations with the purpose of coordinating action at a national level. Maria is currently working with the university coalition, which she co-founded. It is composed of students, faculty, and staff. She believes this coalition will allow students, professors, and workers to join forces toward common goals once they form part of the university council. Maria thus has a strong commitment toward organizing and creating a political culture that will enable social and institutional transformation. As she asked during one of our meetings, "What good will it do if students have representative in the university council if students do not find value in their own associations?" She also mentioned that "change starts at the bottom and not the other way around." What this entails is the creation of a direct and participatory democracy as opposed to a liberal democracy where representation is the end goal.

Erica Escobar

Erica is a third-year anthropology and journalism major. She grew up middle class. She has been working with Mario, Julio, Eduardo, Hector, and Maria, for over a year now in their efforts to organize more student associations and the general elections at UNAH. This year, she became more involved in the Anthropology Student Association (ASA), where she now serves as general secretary. Her role as general secretary makes her a legitimate representative within the student movement's political platform. She also participates in the activities organized by journalism students.

Erica's thinking is highly informed by Gramscian scholars. In discussions, she usually remains quiet, but when she chooses to participate, her thoughts are articulated with precision and her analyses get straight to the point. Her voice often carries a tone of insecurity, but the

audience listens carefully, nonetheless. Her role in the ASA and her participation in the journalism association has allowed her to get a lot of experience in a short amount of time. She is now well-known in the "world" of university student activism and is one of the student activist representatives who will lead the process to coordinate the National Encounter for Honduras—one of the most important projects organized by the student movement, which aims to transform the university into a place of convergence where social movements will come together to share ideas and coordinate action at a national level. As she has participated in forums organized by Mario and has also been interviewed numerous times by the university press and local news reporters, she has become an important figure within the student movement.

Methods

The data collection methods I used were classified in three categories: participant observation, interviews, and document analysis. Data obtained through these methods were composed and organized in fieldnotes, transcriptions, and research memos. Rather than thinking of these methods in rigid ways, we must think of them within the context in which they were used. As I became more involved in the student movement, the analytical work I engaged in with other student activists was only partially related to my dissertation. Most of the analytical work such as document analysis was aimed at understanding the series of neoliberal education reforms and institutional/organizational changes implemented in the recent years. Understanding these changes were at times an urgent task so that we could share our analyses with the university community.

Participant Observation

Though some disagree whether participant observation is a method in and of itself (Yin, 2011), it is unarguably the most effective way for a researcher to be immersed in the field in

which a study takes place. It is the primary work involved in conducting ethnographic research (Ingold, 2014), which makes it possible to gather different types of data (Jackson, 1983), thereby enabling the researcher to use various ethnographic techniques during participant observation.

Participant observation, for instance, allowed me to immerse myself in the everyday practices and meaning-making processes student activists engaged in. As the researcher, however, I had to be cognizant that I would also influence the social space in which participants interacted. Power dynamics were always at play. For this reason, I took a participant-as-observer and an observer-as-participant approach to accommodate for context and situation. The former and the latter approach varied depending on the stage of my research and the relationships I had developed with participants. Initially, for example, my role as a researcher was that of an observer-as-participant where my participation in activities was minimal. The reason for this position was that it was not ethically nor methodologically justifiable to assume a participant-as-observer position when participants continued to see me more as a stranger than as an integrated nonmember (Agar, 1980). In the first workshop and meeting to which I was invited, I mainly spoke when students had some questions about my research or if the workshop's dynamic allowed for my participation. Once I had developed a reciprocal relationship with student activists, that is, after having contributed to the student movement in meaningful ways (e.g., participating in forums, meetings, co-research, assemblies, workshops, and protests), I took on a participant-as-observer position.

On several occasions, the student activists with whom I worked closely asked me to co-author articles that would be disseminated through their social media and WordPress with over 200,000 followers. During the final stages of my dissertation, Mario also asked me if I wanted to be an editor of student movement's WordPress so that we could begin to ask other student

activists to write reflective pieces around decoloniality, philosophy of education, curriculum reform, social struggles, and the relationship these have with the democratization of the university. Through my participation in these activities, I learned that articles should not only be directed to academic journals for them to be submitted to peer review journals. Instead, writing must also meet the politically urgent demands of social struggles. The publication of ideas must be submitted and disseminated to the public through alternative media. I also learned that writing for and with a social struggle is not for individual gain but rather is a sacrifice (of time and labor) dedicated to the collective. Most importantly, I learned from student activists that ideas and practices born in struggle are stripped away from their sociopolitical context and prevented from materializing when they are directed only to academic circles. Social struggles do not have the luxury to wait for the findings researchers have to offer after months of being peer reviewed. That is not how social struggles unfold. In my time in Honduras, in contrast, I participated in several livestreamed forums dealing with university student activism within a neoliberal context. Other student activists participated in these forums where ideas and varying experiences were shared and critiqued and where knowledge was co-constructed. The peer review process, thus, was transformed into a social and pubic matter. This form of sharing became an important way of member checking, as I put some of my analytical and interpretive work to be reviewed and critiqued by university student activists.

Overall, much of my time was spent at the plaza, at assemblies, workshops, and meetings that were held at the university, a coffee shop, or at someone's apartment. I also participated in massive protests students organized with other social movements. By immersing myself in the everyday doings and happenings, I was able to understand the ways student activists created a political culture in which actions, interactions, practices, and knowledges were expressed.

Assemblies often lasted a couple hours and took place weekly, and meetings were at times planned but many times they took place on an ad hoc basis, depending on the political conjuncture.

As for data collection, I organized the data collected through participant observation in fieldnotes and research memos. I recorded descriptive fieldnotes and reflective fieldnotes. In the former, I recorded activities, interactions, settings, and conversations. In the latter, I reflected on what I observed and participated in and how it may have been related to a particular theme, context, concept, theory, and praxis. Research memos were used to analyze and interpret fieldnotes.

Interviews

In addition to descriptive and reflective fieldnotes, I collected data through unstructured interviews. Unstructured interviews, in this case, were more like conversations between researcher and participant, which took place while I was engaged in the field as a participant observer (Madison, 2005). Following the critical constructivist paradigm and decolonial theoretical commitments of this study, unstructured interviews allowed me to engage in dialogue with participants through casual conversations (Freire, 1970). The length of each unstructured interview varied in quantity and quality, for conversations highly depended on the rapport I had established with student activists. To illustrate this point further let me give several examples. I met Eduardo for coffee during the initial stages of my research, and the interview did not last more than 30 minutes, and the conversation was not as fluid as I had expected. However, when I met Mario, we talked for eight hours straight even though I had told him beforehand that it would only take one hour of his time. He said that he did not have any other plans, so he continued to share his experience in the student movement and his criminalization and the way

that it had prevented him from receiving his sociology degree. I also shared some of my life experiences and the reasons behind my interest in doing research related to university student activism. Since then, Mario became the principal interlocutor of this research. Mario and I collaborated on many projects that strayed both from his research as well as mine.

I also conducted semi-structured interviews further in the research process. These were used to understand participants' backgrounds, the reasons behind their involvement in activism, and the roles they have taken within the student movement. I used an interview protocol which prompted participants to answer open-ended questions related to their experiences and understandings of being a student activist (included in Appendix A). Interviews were conducted as conversations which were meant to be dialogic (Spradley, 1980). Interviews varied between 60 to 90 minutes. I audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated all interviews.

Document analysis involved collecting and analyzing documents related to the university student movement and higher education reform at UNAH. These documents provided data which could not be easily attained through interviews and participant observation. Additionally, they assisted in clarifying how the student movement was organized and the role some of its members had taken before, during, and after its formation. Data collected through document analysis, lastly, helped me triangulate, substantiate, and contradict data acquired through interviews and participant observation. Chapter four, where I examine various education reforms at UNAH, is primarily a result of document analysis.

Data Analysis

I used Wolcott's (1999) work which draws on Geertz' (1973) cultural interpretation that is "theory-laden" but not theory-dependent to analyze data (p. 70). From the very moment one collects data, theoretical commitments are always-already informing what is observed. This

means that from the moment one makes an observation, analytical and interpretive work already forms part of what is perceived and written as fieldnotes and memos. Quoting Burke (1935), Wolcott (1999) states that 'A way of seeing is always a way of not seeing' (p. 70), meaning that one cannot separate description from analysis and interpretation so easily. In other words, "you can't even pick up rocks in a field without a theory" (Wolcott, 1990, p. 60). Consequently, observation is always incomplete, participation always partial, and analysis/interpretation always an ongoing process.

Semi-structured interviews were transcribed and uploaded onto Nvivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software. Data collected though participant observation were written as fieldnotes and were divided into descriptive/analytical and reflective/interpretive sections and were uploaded onto this software. To analyze and interpret fieldnotes I wrote research memos, which provided initial interpretations based on preliminary analyses. I reread and coded data to support and contradict previous interpretations. Memos were shared with participants to analyze, interpret, and critique during forums and written articles. Relevant data attained through document analysis were organized and classified through Nvivo as well. I coded data for triangulation as well to develop concepts, themes, and categories relevant to the student movement's social practices and the context in which these practices emerged.

To lessen the theoretical weight during analysis and interpretation, I engaged in a dialogical and co-constructive research praxis. To achieve this, I used member-checking frequently and involved participants' analyses and interpretations of research memos and early drafts. More importantly, I collaborated with students to produce and share knowledge in distinct forms. As mentioned above, I participated in live-streamed forums, wrote and published articles with students, and analyzed ongoing conflicts at the university and at the national level. The aim

was to reach a multi-voiced interpretive praxis that emphasized the intersubjective way of knowing of which all knowledge and ways of becoming are a part (Lincoln & Cannella, 2009). This interpretive praxis, in turn, allowed me to re-analyze and re-interpret student activists' interpretation and critique of my work, thus changing the individualistic notions of analysis into a collective process. As I worked alongside student activists, it became clearer to me that they are also researchers and producers of knowledge. In addition, as student activists did not hesitate to question or critique my contribution to discussions and articles, I knew that I was beginning to be perceived as another contributor to their struggle and not as the "expert" in the room trying to analyze from a distance. It was through critical discussions that ideas were problematized, adapted, and reshaped before transforming them into action. Often, ideas or strategies resulting from discussions did not materialize into anything significant. Other times, however, I witnessed how ideas were debated in public assemblies at UNAH in which the social base of the student movement determined collective action which was often expressed in massive walkouts and mobilizations.

The praxiological dimension of university student activism, finally, allowed me to learn how collective action is built. Praxis, understood as thought-reflection-action (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), allowed student activists to interpret, that is, theorize their sociopolitical context and subsequently to take reflective action. The knowledges built praxiologically, collectively, and intersubjectively form part of chapter five and six, where I discuss the epistemological and sociopolitical implications of university student activism.

Translations

Throughout this dissertation, Spanish is used to underscore the commensurability or incommensurability of concepts developed in Latin America when interpreted and translated to

English speaking contexts such as the United States. Concepts such as *vincularidad*, for instance, is not easily translated but is only approximated by a combination of concepts, namely, by concepts such as linkage, interconnectedness, and relationality. In the text, both Spanish and English are included to not lose sight of the original expressions, meanings, and knowledges participants manifested. With any translation, text in addition to context must form part of an interpretive process, in a hermeneutic sense, always taking the particular to understand the whole and vice versa (Gadamer, 1984; Ricouer, 1969). Spanish text is italicized in all instances and placed in brackets.

Positionality and Ethical Implications

> Acknowledging both in ourselves as scientists and in the collective actors the limited rationality which characterizes social action, researchers can no longer apply the criteria of truth or morality defended a priori, outside of the relationship. Researchers must also participate in the uncertainty, testing the limits of their instruments and of their ethical values. (Melucci, 1996, p. 395)

As a researcher who ultimately wrote an account of university student activism, Villenas (1996) and Smith (1999) admonish that, even though one may identity with the participants' culture, taking a colonizer position is not absent throughout the research process. If a reflective and ethical practice is not taken, one may develop the tendency to exploit and extract information and appropriate knowledge from those who form part of the study. There is also a risk for an essentializing and "othering" representation of university student activism. After all, I decided what to observe, what "data" were collected and analyzed, and how it was interpreted. Rather than analyzing and interpreting others, however, I tried to amplify participants' voices and knowledges—as opposed to giving a voice to the so-called voiceless—so that the door remained open, as Viveiros de Castro (2015) illustrates, for participants to escape the analytical and interpretive ethnographic gaze. To amplify voices means that knowledge production becomes an

ethical concern (Chesters, 2012). For this reason, student activists' knowledge practices are highlighted in subsequent chapters. I refused to transform knowledge producing subjects into objects of analysis waiting to be refined into theory, repackaged, and shipped to be sold in the academic market. I thus refused to confine student activists into static cultural identities and chose rather to underscore the dynamics of their intellectual, political, and activist culture in their own terms.

Potential Risks

Here I will share something that is not easy for me to write because I risk exoticizing the violence which student activists face. I risk portraying a "third world" image so easily consumed in the "first world." That brutal, cannibalistic savagery used to capture the essence of our undeveloped cultures always forms part of the social imagination.

As I write these words, dozens of university students remain incarcerated in unknown locations and hundreds of activists are being persecuted. Some have been arrested by the balaclava-wearing police unit which resembles the infamous Battalion 316, the death squad responsible for killing and disappearing numerous political activists, including university students, in the 1980s. Several students have been reported to be taken from their homes by this modernized death squad. Several university students' dead bodies have been found with the same clothes they were wearing on the day of their arrest. The typical image of lifeless bodies with hands tied behind their backs is what you find in local news outlets. The elimination of unwanted others—be they political or cultural others—saturates the media. The discourse transforms tragedy into symbolic violence. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) habitus, Pine (2008) argues that this symbolic violence involves the subjectivation of those willing to oppose the social, political, economic, and cultural structures maintaining, as I understand it, the colonial order of things in

place. For Bourdieu, habitus is "a whole symbolically structured environment, without specialized agents or moments, which exerts an anonymous, pervasive, pedagogic action" (Pine, 2008, p. 8). The pervasive, pedagogic action Bourdieu specifies is what the post-Honduran context feels like. It is difficult to ignore the possibility that this violence can be delivered at your doorstep at any moment. It is difficult, at least, not to imagine it knocking on your door when you least expect it. Colonial subjectivation mediated through fear, in short, is what I am speaking of.

In a country with a population slightly over nine million, thousands of students have been murdered since 2009 (Aguilar, 2016). I am not claiming that these murders are all politically related. What I want to emphasize rather is that many university student activists engage in oppositional politics in this violent neocolonial, thanatopolitical context which has awarded Honduras the highest murder rate per capita for civilians and oppositional groups of all kinds, including journalists, student activists, environmental activists, and social movement and political leaders (Geglia, 2016; Global Witness, 2017).

I still remember the night before defending my preliminary exams in 2018 when my partner asked me about a journalist's body being found in the capital's central district. She told me that she did some research and had come across Berta Caceres, the Indigenous environmental leader who was murdered 11 months after receiving the Goldman Environmental Prize. As she did more research and came across countless political assassinations, arrests, and exiles, she asked, "if journalists, students, and Indigenous leaders are being killed, is your research and involvement with student activists potentially dangerous? If you are investigating and working with the people the government sees as a threat, will you also be seen as a threat? Are we also in danger?"

I know that student activists who decided to participate in this study risk being identified in my study. And I also know that their identities were most likely already known by adversaries and allies alike. I know that they have put their lives at risk in this violent context even before participating in this study. I know that my life is not at risk in the same way as it is for activists working to change their communities. I can leave Honduras at any time. But, when asked to think about the potential dangers involved in doing activist research in Honduras, I could not help but think of the CIA torture manuals so carefully studied in the Schools of the Americas and put into practice in Latin America and around the world. I could not help but think of those lifeless bodies who could not say goodbye to their loved ones. I could not help but feel nauseated from the sickening thoughts that involved the brutality of the state and the lawless transnational corporations they represent. These tormenting thoughts always implicated my family. My partner, son, and daughter. Thoughts that should not be imaginable are sadly too real in these wretched colonial geographies of nonexistence/nonbeing/nothingness. With these thoughts in mind, the ethical dimensions of activist research became the most delicate and intricately woven thread of this ethnographic study.

CHAPTER 4: HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM, STUDENT MOVEMENTS, AND UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

Introduction

> When some day we enter the university—that is to say, when we occupy and decolonize it—we will not merely open the doors and redecorate the walls. We will destroy both so that we may all fit in. (Santos, 2014, p. 14)

In order to speak from and with the reemerging university student movement of Honduras, it is imperative to understand the historical specificity of Latin America. Historical specificity is what decolonial scholars conceptualize as the colonial difference (Mignolo, 2000). Latin America's colonial difference includes its institutions (e.g., religious, political, economic, and educational institutions) and the subjectivities constructed therein. Conceptualizing the dialectical or, better yet, trialectical relationship between history (Lefevbre, 1991), biography, and social structure is what Mills (1959) termed the sociological imagination enabling one to analyze, critique, reimagine, and transform the social structures and institutions in place. In writing this chapter, I intentionally refused to ignore the region's shared colonial past, for it would have distorted the social reality of the neocolonial present.

More specific to this dissertation, the historical perspective adopted in this chapter underscores curricular and academic structures established first by Spain's colonial universities between the 16th and 19th century and later by the liberal, positivist, and progressive education reforms of late 19th and early 20th century. A historical perspective allowed me to better understand the ways in which neoliberal higher education reform transformed the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) according to neocolonial and mercantilist logics. It is through a neoliberal philosophy of education, one may argue, that coloniality is also reproduced. The possessive individual, for instance, whose social position is attained within an

ostensibly meritocratic system, sustains and perpetuates multifarious forms of domination by strictly attributing academic success and failure on the individual rather than on social, epistemological, linguistic, political, and economic factors.

In this chapter, I pay special attention to institutional changes and analyze the extent to which the university continues to perpetuate the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being. I intersect local transformations within a modern/colonial world systems framework to situate the university beyond the political economy. Here, we are dealing with the subjective as well as the intersubjective, that is, the sociocultural, political, and epistemological dimensions of the university.

Furthermore, by examining higher education's curriculum broadly within a Latin American colonial context and later within a globalizing neocolonial context, I hope I can point to the complicity of the curriculum in perpetuating the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being. In doing so, I intend to portray the institutional workings of UNAH as well as the ways in which student activists worked toward effecting change from below. Situating the curriculum geopolitically, additionally, provides a valuable way out of the analytical and theoretical dead end in which many curriculum theorists in the United States buried themselves when conceptualizing, framing, and thus confining curriculum solely as a national concern (Pinar, 2006). The curriculum, as I explicate below, was always-already intertwined globally and utilized as an instrument of control.

In addition, I conceptualize and analyze the coloniality of curriculum vis-à-vis its real effects in higher education in Latin America, particularly, the instrumentality it continues to play in maintaining asymmetrical relations of power both within and between countries. In the process of analyzing the university's curriculum, I hope I can also illustrate how the coloniality

of power and knowledge functions within a global neoliberal/neocolonial order of things. Since my research pays close attention to UNAH, I hope that I can also demonstrate how the curriculum articulates itself within and beyond national contexts and how it is resisted by university student movements.

The knowledge embedded in the university's curriculum cannot be separated from its intimate relationship with power, as Foucault (1980) cogently pointed out. For this reason, inter alia, I briefly examine Spain's colonial university and the specific role curriculum played in maintaining colonial power relations in Latin America. I solely focus on Spain because Portugal and other empires did not establish universities in the region. Higher education institutions such as those administered by Jesuits (Ribeiro, 1967), for example, never attained university status in Brazil. The University of Coimbra remained the only institution with this status during Portugal's colonial rule in South America. In fact, Brazil opened its first university in the 1920s (Ribeiro, 1967).

This chapter primarily focuses on UNAH's historical, contextual, and political economic particularities. It is aimed at setting the historical stage for the analytic-interpretive and ethnographic components included in subsequent chapters. This chapter primarily analyzes the extent to which higher education reform in Honduras transformed the curriculum according to the epistemological and ontological commitments demanded by geopolitical and economic forces. The political economic is thus linked to the sociocultural domain. I intertwine the neocolonial exigencies with the internal colonial projects of the *criollo* elites aimed at building a national Honduran identity within a heterogenous region (Euraque, 1997, 2018). National unity and progress were the central axes around which the curriculum revolved in the 19th century and 20th century. Today, other concepts such as globalization, democracy, internationalization, and

freedom have replaced the master concepts just mentioned. Reconceptualizing the university curriculum thus involves a politico-epistemological commitment aimed at decolonizing the university from below, where conflicts unfold and where students construct political cultures of resistance and re-existence.

The Coloniality of Curriculum in Latin America

The university curriculum in colonial Latin America was strictly limited to jurisprudence, letters and arts, engineering, and theology (Reina, 1999). These branches of knowledge were organized as faculties, compared to the way a university college today envelops several departments and academic programs (e.g., College of Education would be the Faculty of Education). The compartmentalization of knowledge unveils the intimate relationship curriculum has with power. The university curriculum, for instance, assisted in sustaining Spain's imperial/colonial political (letters and arts and jurisprudence), economic (engineering), and religious institutions (theology). The colonial university, furthermore, resembled medieval universities insofar as it continued to emphasize the trivium and quadrivium—a liberal arts curriculum divided in seven subjects ranging from logic and grammar to geometry and astronomy (Mignolo, 2000). The colonial university curriculum differed substantially, however, because it played a central role for the first global imperial and colonial power configured by Spain

The university articulated both the political economic and the theological, and it opened the gates to early modernity's high culture. The so-called uncultivated masses remained outside, as the cultivated few studied the outside for studying sake, blissfully out of touch with the social reality and misery of the colonies. The university, therefore, has always been part of a larger, globally entangled colonial project which was, since the early 16th century, inextricably linked to

Latin America. The colonial project could continue only if the university could produce subjects who could effectively control the colonies. Rama (1996) believes the lettered cities of Latin America were perfectly designed to form these colonial subjectivities. These lettered cities could be conceptualized as the intellectual nodes of domination, which were intricately articulated by the higher education system in the region. Rama (1998) argues that the colonial project was maintained by learned men of letters who ruled the colonies by pen and paper, that is, through the symbolic hegemony intimately linked to the materiality of colonial life. As he points out, an "essential function of the lettered city, already signaled, was the intellectual and professional formation of the Creole elite" (p. 20). In the second half of the 18th century, however, the Spanish monarchy changed its policy toward Creoles, deciding that it could continue its colonial project without their collaboration. Spanish-born elite, known as *peninsulares*, strengthened their influence in the colonies but not without the discontent of the Creole elite. This internal conflict, one could argue, anticipated the wars of independence or political decolonization in the early 19th century in Latin America.

Although the university curriculum between the 16th and 18th century was not completely secular, the humanist, political, and colonial subjectivities constructed during the renaissance assisted in maintaining Spain's colonial power. Initially, physical violence predominated, but violence or coercion alone, as has been discussed extensively by Rama (1998), does not create the conditions of domination through persuasion understood today as hegemony. Dussel (1980), for instance, argues that the conqueror ethos and colonial ontology he coined as the *conquiro ergo sum* preceded Descartes' *cogito ergo sum.* The latter, as he clarifies, "arose from a previous experience of domination over other persons, of cultural oppression over other worlds. Before the ego cogito there is an ego conquiro; 'I conquer' is the practical foundation of 'I think'" (p. 3).

Colonization hence created the conditions of domination in need of justification—e.g., the Valladolid debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda exemplifies the importance of ideological/theological justification of exterminating and/or colonizing the other. Since then, knowledge production has become the central axis around which colonial power revolves. The hegemonic knowledge filtered down to the curriculum, at all levels, is the social structure legitimating cultural, epistemic, political, and economic colonization. The coloniality embedded in the curriculum is another way Western modernity perpetuates itself as effectively as it does.

Without seriously considering the role of the university curriculum, it would be difficult to understand the effectiveness of Spain's political, economic, and religious institutions in maintaining the colonial order intact. Within the university, biographies, to use Mills (1959) understanding of subjective positions and histories, were constructed in relation to the social structures in need of creating the conditions of its own reproduction. In addition, without centering the importance of knowledge, one would naturalize colonialism, placing the colonized as inferior beings incapable of escaping their wretched conditions. It would, in other words, erase the dialectical relationship between knowledge and power and the subjectivities that are produced from this dialectical exchange. The curriculum, as a canonizing instrument, sought to reproduce the creole and peninsular subjects (in addition to Indigenous nobility) vital for the effective administration of the Spanish Empire (Mignolo, 2000, 2011), while aiming to subjugate and invalidate other ways of knowing, being, and becoming. Regarding coloniality, Brazilian anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro (1967) addresses the following:

> In the colonial period the Latin American university was a replica of Spanish higher education: aristocratic, academic, clerical. Its social function was to mould the educated Creole classes who dominated colonial life as a political aristocracy subordinate to the representatives of the mother country, an aristocracy that was more alive to the interests of metropolitan Spain than was the local body of employers who owned the industrial firms. (p. 1974)

Ribeiro's description of the Creole elite resonates with Rama's (1998) account of the lettered cities in Latin America. The lettered cities in which the political aristocracy lived, for instance, could not be conceived without the presence of the university and the learned men therein who mimetically adopted a Eurocentric curriculum and who were responsible for maintaining the colonial order.

The university curriculum was complicit in reproducing colonial power and hence responsible for sustaining the asymmetrical social relations based on racial classification. Only the dominant ethnoclass, as Wynter (2003) conceives the "Western Bourgeois", could enter the university (p. 268). As for knowledge, only that which represented European superiority could form part of the curriculum. The curriculum's aim was the systematic canonization of knowledge and thus of the erasure of knowledge. Nothing else could exist outside of the Eurocentric narrative and teleology. No "countervoice" could be allowed to speak (Wynter, 2003, p. 269). The university instead produced for the Spanish Empire "administrators, educators, professional, notaries, religious personnel, and other wielders of pen and paper" (Rama, 1998, p. 18). As I mentioned above, only through the university's bureaucratic structure could the Spanish Empire hold on to power for as long as it did. Colonialism, therefore, depended on learned men who could wield their power from the lettered cities and universities of the region. All others were positioned outside of the university's walls according to racial caste; black and brown bodies were designated to slave labor, which varied in form and intensity by region, while whites were designated to free waged labor (e.g., physical and intellectual labor) (Castro-Gomez, 2005).

Women were systematically excluded from political, intellectual, and public spheres (Lugones, 2007). Systematic exclusion and violence, however, varied depending on the racial category of women. The intersectionality of gender, race, and class should therefore not be ignored (Crenshaw, 1989). In other words, Black, Indigenous, and White women experienced colonial life differently due to their racial categorization and thus their varying social inferiorization (Crenshaw, 1989; Lugones, 2007). Only in religious circles were White women granted the right to read and write, as exemplified by the work of Sor Juan Ines de la Cruz (2017) who offered a feminist critique of colonial societies.

What makes Latin America's colonial experience unique and devastating at the same time is that it is the only colonized region shaped by the renaissance university for nearly three centuries. As Mignolo (2009) points out, "In the Americas, notably, we encounter something that is alien to Asian and African regions: the colonial European university, such as the University of Santo Domingo (1538), the University of Mexico (1551), [and] the University of San Marcos, Lima (1551)" (p. 6). This means that no other colonized region in the world has been exposed to a Western European curriculum or way of knowing and being longer than Latin America. I make this factual claim not because Latin America somehow benefitted from this exposure. Nor am I asserting that Latin America deserves a rightful place in the occidentalist imaginary (Coronil, 1996). I make this claim instead to highlight the university curriculum's epistemicidal effects (Paraskeva, 2016; Santos, 2014). From the universal knowledge the university purported to produce, which was always provincial and dialectically related to colonialism and complicit with power (Chakrabarty, 2000), one attains a clearer picture of how colonial power was/is maintained.

The university's political ontology was intimately linked to Spain's imperial/colonial project between the 16th and 18th century, and its curriculum played a central role in creating the subjectivities that would make other institutions run accordingly. As I mentioned above, without the complicity of the university and its geopolitically implicated curriculum and pedagogy, the domination of a region as vast as Latin America would be inconceivable. Knowledge, in short, was a political project which sought to silence the other and place the European ethnoclass as the only speaking, thinking, and knowing being.

Castro-Gomez (2005) and other decolonial scholars elucidate that coloniality is constitutive of modernity. Colonialism and the capitalist world system cannot be disentangled from the epistemic violence enacted in Latin America and throughout the world. Rethinking of universities as historically and colonially embedded institutions enables one to explore how coloniality is performed through higher education reform today, and how university student movements express knowledges and practices pointing to the creation of alternative universities. How collective actors contest and reshape the dominant curriculum and institutional governance structures will be discussed extensively in chapter five.

So far, I have not paid enough attention to resistance because I will discuss it in more detail in the following chapters. It will suffice to say that resistance has always formed part of (neo)colonial life. Resistance as well as the numerous attempts to construct alternative worlds are still part of the region's unresolved political ontological conflicts.

In the next section, I address the influence the political philosophy of liberalism had in curricular matters. I then analyze Honduras' liberal education reform and curriculum and argue that the liberal curriculum of the late 19th century integrated Honduras according to the reconfigurations of the modern/colonial world system. I also examine the autonomist/reformist

movement of the 1950s led by the student movement and then point to its neoliberal undoing. In chapter five, I demonstrate how the collective efforts students engage in aim to change the coloniality embedded in the university's governance and curricular structures implemented by the neoliberal higher education reforms.

Independence and Liberalism

> Does the vast regulation of the Code of Public Instruction that today begins to govern mark for us a high degree of progress? Quite the opposite. Although it may seem paradoxical, I ensure you that it marks our backwardness. The governments that govern less, in matters of public instruction, are those that correspond or should correspond to the most educated nations, in which science is a negotiated society that only requires legal guarantees in which science has its own organism; in which, like religion, like industry, like commerce, it is a social activity full of life and power (Rosa, 1882, p. 6). [my translation]

After Latin America gained its independence from Spain, the epistemic shifts of the enlightenment, namely, the secularization of knowledge, began to permeate the university's curriculum and governance structure. These changes stripped the old ecclesiastic curricular order from its divine foundation by replacing it with a scientific and positivistic religiosity. The epistemic/curricular transformations, as Wynter (2003) contends, coincided with the demands of the nascent modern nation-states, the individual bourgeois citizen, and the expanding modern/colonial capitalist world system (Quijano, 2000). Scientific knowledge was articulated in and sustained most cohesively by the modern university and its positivist curriculum.

The epistemological shifts of the enlightenment mentioned above demanded a drastic social and politico-pedagogical transformation. For power and knowledge to be articulated at the institutional level, the state had to intervene in such matters. A positivist curriculum, understood as an instrument of social control, provided the nation-state the axiological, epistemological, and ontological commitments demanded to foster a new national identity within a heterogeneous

country (Euraque, 2018). The cultural unification France achieved through its Napoleonic university and its curriculum and governance structure offered the predominantly white Creole and Peninsular ruling classes in Latin America the blueprint to homogenize the cultural diversity of each country. Because of its centralized vertical structure and normalizing principles, this Napoleonic university could be directly linked to the liberal nation-state's political economic as well as cultural interests. In Latin America, this university model could be characterized as an elitist higher education model for and by the so-called enlightened men of the colonies (Bernasconi, 2008; Brunner, 2014). In France, this was not the case as it took a more popular character (Ribeiro, 1967). Because of the university's exclusive character in Latin America, paradoxically, cultural homogenization was never achieved in spite of its original intent to unify a nation under one identity.

Despite attaining political independence from Spain, the adoption of a French university model left the region intellectually colonized (Fals-Borda, 1970, 2009; Restrepo, 2001; Thiong'o, 1986). In Honduras, the second higher education reform adopted the Napoleonic model under President Marco Aurelio Soto's administration in 1882 (initiated with the Code of Public Instruction written by Ramon Rosa in 1882). Although political colonialism in Latin America had officially ended, the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being remained intact. Political decolonization, as Casanova (1965) conceptualized Latin America's wars of independence long ago, only unveiled Latin America's internal forms of colonialism. Internal colonialism becomes more complex if one also interweaves its relationship to settler colonialism in countries such as Argentina, Chile, United States, and Canada and neocolonialism throughout the so-called post-colonial world.

As I analyze in the next section, the university curriculum implemented by the higher education reform of 1882 superficially adopted a positivist philosophy of education which did not aim to produce scientific knowledge. Instead, the curriculum simply applied and reproduced technical knowledge emanating from Europe and the United States. The pretentious discourse at the time revolved around positivism's potential in developing Honduras socially, economically, and culturally. None of this is a surprise given positivism's hegemonic intellectual position during the 19th century. What is significant, nonetheless, is the reconfigured way the first politically decolonized region perpetuated the colonial practices and power dynamics of the past. It is important to note that the former Creole subjects now in power had to construct a new national identity they believed should homogenize the varying cultural identities within the demarcations of each national territory.

In the next section, I specify how the curriculum and the various *carreras* positioned Honduras as a dependent nation within a restructured modern/colonial capitalist world system. *Carrera* can be directly translated to career or race, and it could be described etymologically as a racecourse conforming the curriculum (Pinar, 2004). Its use in Latin America refers to the academic program which is directly linked to the professional career one will exercise. Academic program, curriculum, and career are almost indistinguishable. The global division of labor was thus reproduced through liberal, positivist education reforms, which were diametrically opposed to the liberal/humanist position in the late 19th century dominating curricular matters in the United States (Kliebard, 1998). This comparison nuances the understanding of liberal education in Latin America. It could be argued, therefore, that the positivist philosophy of education in the region, which took effect during the liberal reform movement of the 19th century, was comparable to a philosophy of industrial education exemplified by vocationalism. Vocationalism

in Honduras, analogous to the vocational training used to "educate" Indigenous peoples in the United States, as demonstrated by Kliebard (1999), formed part of the national curriculum in Honduras from primary to tertiary education. While in the US, vocationalism was still marginal in comparison to the humanist curriculum during the same period, in Honduras, it took a centralized form where all students were geared toward a vocation or a technocratic and economically instrumental job or profession. Reproducing rather than producing knowledge was the curriculum's main objective.

The liberal education reforms mandated by the national constitution of 1880 and the Code of Public Instruction of 1882 complemented the liberal economic reforms initiated in 1876 (e.g., Labor Reform of 1876 and Code of Public Instruction of 1882). The latter, in addition to opening Honduras to US mining and agriculture companies, set the stage for the creation of a geopolitically and strategically important Banana Republic under the control of the United Fruit Company (Chiquita Brands International) and the Standard Fruit Company (Dole Food Company). Both reforms, additionally, set the stage for the sociopolitical and economic conflicts that would later unfold throughout the 20th century in Honduras as well as in Central America (Barahona, 2005). The most notable changes made to the curriculum during these reforms is that the positivists curriculum completely removed all knowledge from the education system that was not instrumentally aligned to the knowledge, skills, and commodities demanded by foreign companies. Examples are provided in the next section where I further examine the university curriculum. For now, it will suffice to say that the curriculum—that is, the knowledge, skills, values, and subjectivities constructed—adds to the missing, yet critical dimension scholars drawing on world polity theory omit from their analyses insofar as epistemological/cultural matters are concerned.

The positivist curriculum stimulated a monocultural and extractivist economy which, to a great extent, dictated the political culture of Honduras, varying significantly form other Central American countries whose economy was more diverse. Honduras, therefore, became the classic Banana Republic, dominated by two US corporations. In other countries such as Costa Rica, a productive coffee enterprise dominated by family-owned plantations allowed for a more democratic political and economic system (Euraque, 1996).

The economic and education reforms in Honduras in the late 19th century reveal the close relationship the university curriculum began to have with the economic demands of emerging powers such as the United States. These reforms, more importantly, coincided with the Second Industrial Revolution which allowed the United States' economic interests abroad to take a more defined form. The university curriculum in Honduras, additionally, complemented these technological advances and promoted what we might call today "national interests." These interests, as we know, were reserved for the few whose rule depended on domination and exploitation.

Prior to discussions around neoliberalism and the supposed weakening of the state by globalizing forces (Gamble, 1988), what stands out in Honduras in particular and in Latin America in general is that the United States and the corporations representing its national interests have a long history in engaging in the geopolitics of knowledge and the political economy of ideas, to borrow a phrase used by Cusicanqui (2012) to conceptualize the ways in which certain ideas and practices produced in the Global North carry more force than those enunciated from subaltern spaces. As Gamble (1980) contends, a strong state fortifies economic interests globally in its favor. Without a strong state, we are left with an immanent or essential understanding of global capitalism, conceived as an inevitable force wielded by the invisible

hand of the market without human intervention and thus without the "visible fist of the State" (Amin, 2009, p. 15). What the invisible hand of the market is incapable of achieving, the visible fist of the State complements with its destructive force.

It is critical not to forget that the corporation and the State have always complemented each other, both politically and economically, though, contemporaneously, the power and influence transnational corporations wield far outweigh that of the State. This does not mean, however, that the latter is no longer instrumental in defending its national interests through military force or through economic warfare or, for that matter, defending the interests of more dominant countries as is the case in Honduras and in other formerly colonized regions now under neocolonial conditions. The Honduran government is a clear case illustrating the instrumental role the State plays in creating the right conditions for foreign investment, understood less euphemistically as recolonization. Through concessions of fertile and mineral-rich land in the late 19th and early 20th century, for instance, foreign companies came to dominate the political economy as well as the educational policies of Honduras. The knowledge and skills embedded in the curriculum, as a result, sought to meet these geopolitical and economic demands.

So far, in this section I have described the broader colonial context in which Latin American universities emerged. I addressed the liberal education reforms in the late 19th century in relation to the economic interests of the United States. In the following sections, I examine in more detail the three higher education reforms that culminated with the creation of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH). The first education reform transformed the literary academy into a university. The second reform was initiated by the Code of Public Instruction of 1882, which was implemented within a broader liberal reform movement in Latin America (Reina, 1999; Reina-Valenzuela, 1986). I analyze the positivist curriculum included in

the Code of Public Instruction implemented in 1882. It was the second reform which followed the logics of coloniality in that it perpetuated and indeed exacerbated the conditions of exploitation. I then detail the sociopolitical context in which university student movements emerged and explain how student activists transformed the university. This transformation initiated the third higher education reform. These reforms provide historical context to the recent neoliberal higher education reform (fourth reform-*cuarta reforma*) first introduced and solidified in 2004 and 2010 respectively. This last reform, however, was faced with the University Student Movement which emerged during the post-coup political climate. Although this research is primarily situated in the last reform, it is imperative, nonetheless, to understand the history behind the university to fully grasp what university student activists in Honduras are resisting and working toward changing, namely, the governance and curricular structure. Overall, in the next section, I analyze the education reforms from 1847 to 1957 to point to the ways in which the university curriculum began a recolonization process (internal colonialism and external-neocolonialism) aligned with the ever-expanding economy of the United States and the necessity of fomenting liberalism (ideology), positivism (economy), and nationalism (cultural identity and politics).

First Reform: From Academic Society to the University of the State

Between 1830 and 1840, the first steps to secularize the University of San Carlos of Guatemala were taken, but this initiative alone could not articulate its liberal philosophy throughout the Federal Republic of Central America, let alone assist in constructing a national identity. Indeed, these efforts proved futile. Once the federation was officially dissolved in 1841, the University of San Carlos reverted to the ecclesiastic model (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). Central American countries established their own university systems responsible for pursuing the

interests of the newly configured national conservative elite (oligarchy) and the Catholic Church (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). The University of the State in Honduras followed in the same ecclesiastic path. Since the dissolution of the Federal Republic of Central America in 1841, which could be adequately described as an unsuccessful progressive liberal political project, conservatives began to dominate the political economy and academic life of Honduras (Reina, 1999; Reina-Valenzuela, 1986). Thus, the regional integration intended by the ideologues of the Federal Republic could only go so far without the consolidation of a liberal university system and a public education system.

In 1845, four years after the Federal Republic of Central America dissolved, a small semi-secularized religious circle of intellectuals in the nascent Republic of Honduras founded The Society of Entrepreneurial Genius and of Good Taste (Reina-Valenzuela, 1986). The following year, President Juan Lindo granted the small academic society the title of Literary Academy of Tegucigalpa. The Literary Academy would remain a private institution under the protection of the State. In 1847, President Lindo along with Father Jose Trinidad Reyes, founder of the Literary Academy, transformed the academy into the University of the State (Ministerio General, 1850). Academic activities continued to be held inside the convent of the San Francisco Church under the leadership of Father Reyes. The university's location is representative of the control the church continued to have over the curriculum within a renewed conservative context.

The university status given to the former literary academy allowed it to offer philosophy, law, and theology *licenciaturas* (licenciate) equivalent to bachelor's degrees. The curriculum gave priority to the three branches of knowledge or faculties of knowledge pertaining to the Church, namely, jurisprudence, philosophy, and theology (Ponce, 2003). But it also included several technical degrees that slightly secularized the university. What drastically changed was

the status granted to an individual who attained the prestigious title of *licenciado.* The ecclesiastic university model of Honduras maintained its hegemonic position until it began to lose its credibility in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Once the politico-philosophical and liberal movement inextricably linked to the ever-expanding capitalist world system displaced ecclesiastics, knowledge with "intrinsic value" (Spencer, 1860, p.7), namely, that of science and the utility it potentiates, became curriculum's raison d'être. Instrumental knowledge became the ideal, rational education model for the growing global industrial demands of the late 19th century. The theological education project of the Catholic Church had finally been replaced by liberalism, at least in public institutions. The religiously conservative sociocultural fabric, however, remained intact (Euraque, 1996). It is not surprising that in several countries Catholic universities in Latin America were established in the second half of the 19th century as a response to liberalism's political, economic, and cultural/epistemological project.

Second Reform: Liberalism and Positivism

The liberal education reform of 1882, initiated by the Code of Public Instruction, restructured the curriculum at all educational levels, and it was implemented within a broader liberal reform movement in Latin America. As early as 1849, Domingo Fausto Sarmiento, most famous for writing *Facundo*: *Civilization and Barbarism* (1845), also spoke of the need to use education to modernize/civilize barbarous social element, foster a national identity, and increase economic production. Coloniality, in other words, was embedded in the first education reforms of Latin America and the pedagogical was always imbricated with the political economic and the sociocultural objectives of the nation-state. Language, gender, class, and race differentially positioned students within the stratified societies of the region. Liberal ideologues at the time

believed that the positivist curriculum of education systems in other countries, such as Prussia's education system, could also be implemented, albeit mimetically, to meet the exigencies of global capitalism and the growing international interests of the United States as well as the local interests of the national ruling class.

The positivist curriculum privileged rationality, science, progress, and, most importantly, the utility of knowledge at all educational levels. As Sarmiento (1848) argued in favor of liberal, positivist education,

> A nation's power, wealth, and strength depends on the industrial, moral, and intellectual capacity of the individuals that compose it; and public education must have no other purpose than to increase these forces of production, action and direction, increasing more and more the number of individuals who possess them. (p. 14-15) [my translation]

If one examines the curriculum included in the Code of Public Instruction of 1882 and the congressional speech given after its ratification, the dominant discourse intersecting knowledge, power, and political economy is also made explicit. Ramón Rosa, one of the most influential liberal ideologues at the time, who was also the Secretary of State under Soto's presidency, gave the congressional speech after the ratification of the Code of Public Instruction. In his speech, Rosa demonstrated an unshakeable compromise with positivism's promise toward scientific, socioeconomic, and cultural progress. He justified his opposition toward philosophy and theology equally, as they both lacked utility. Rosa addressed instrumental knowledge in the following way:

> Who are more useful and happier, our students who, after four or five years of study, speak to us a lot about ontology, theology, and dialectics, yet cannot find a profitable occupation; or our telegraph operators who, with six months of study in one of the applications of electricity, render very important services, and always have a job that satisfies their needs and those of their families?.... If the purpose of life is to do good, let us seek the good of our youth, by providing him with a positivist education, fruitful in results for his individual happiness, and for the

> welfare and progress of the nation. (my translation, Code of Public Instruction, 1882, p.14) [my translation]

Higher education thus became an instrumental institution aimed at individual economic ends, and the curriculum became an instrument of control within a neocolonial context in which the expanding economic interests of the United States prevailed over the interests of Europe, particularly, the interest of England (Barahona, 2005). Curriculum became strictly limited to Honduras' position within this changing global economy. The reconfiguration of capitalism necessitated the reconfiguration of knowledge as well. Only knowledge and skills which could insert themselves effectively within the modern/colonial world system could form part of the university curriculum. This might resemble what is happening today, and it comes to show the ways in which the curriculum continues to be used to meet the external demands of the newly positioned centers (i.e., first Spain, then France and England, the finally the United States and its transnational corporations). By emphasizing the external demand does not mean I am seeking to sustain the dichotomous conceptualization dependency theorists failed to disrupt (Frank, 1998). What I am arguing is that changing geopolitical landscapes influences the production of instrumental knowledge at a global scale at the expense of other forms of knowing. Even during the early colonial period, one could find the multiplicity of educational discourses and philosophies being debated between Dominicans and Jesuits (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). In the 19th century, however, the narrowing of Western knowledge, as a result of the hegemonic position of positivism, could already be observed. The narrowing of knowledge is what Santos (2014) understands as epistemicide, which is the systematic destruction and subjugation of other knowledges, including the knowledges produced in Europe and the United States which do not conform to the political, economic, cultural, and epistemological demands of Western capitalist modernity

Although this research is not a comparative study, it is indispensable to consider other national contexts in order to situate the positivist curriculum at a global scale. I find Kliebard's (1999, 2004) account of the US curriculum in the late 19th century useful because it points to the dominance of a humanist, liberal arts curriculum, and its gradual reform led by developmentalist, social efficiency educators, and social meliorists. The contradiction between the United States' liberal arts curriculum and Honduras' liberal/positivist curriculum is that the former continued to dominate curricular debates in the US, even within the context of industrialization. The fact that a liberal arts curriculum dominated schools and universities disrupts the linear causality attributed to education and economic growth as though capitalism was solely limited to national—as opposed to global and colonial—tendencies. The United States' economic growth could not be attributed exclusively to its education system, for vocationalism was kept at the margins throughout the 19th century.

In 1894, for instance, there were only fifteen manual training schools (Kliebard, 1999), indicative that it was not a positivist curriculum which led to the United States' economic growth. Rather, it was an overdetermined political economic and colonial context in which the United States expanded territorially, militarily, and technologically. The positivist curriculum in Honduras, on the other hand, even with its pretentious claims of scientific, economic, and social progress, limited itself to creating the conditions under which economic growth could take place, even if that meant displacing Indigenous peoples from their lands. The liberal/positivist reformers at the time believed that economic growth would only be possible if Honduras adopted an export-led growth economy. For them, supplying raw materials to the increasing industrial demands of the United States was the only option. The economic position of Honduras, within a modern/colonial world system, thus did not change. Instead of exporting raw materials to Spain,

Honduras began to export most of its resources to the United States (Euraque, 1996). What did change, however, were the means to exploit natural resources. Modern instruments were employed and an educational apparatus corresponding to the global division of labor was created. Modern forms of exploitation therefore left the colonial structures intact. While the ruling classes found themselves content with maintaining the social practices of exploitation and exclusion in order, an emerging imperial power began to play a stronger role in shaping Honduras' political economic and educational policies.

The curriculum implemented in 1882 hence confirmed Honduras' peripheral role within a modern/colonial world system. Supplying raw materials to an emerging center became the raison d'être of Honduras' political economy. And the positivist curriculum sought to form a dependent *homo economicus* and *homo academicus* ready to work for foreign companies (e.g., technocracy: agricultural and mining engineers) or help defend and maintain their economic interests by any means (e.g., bureaucracy: lawyers and politicians) (Bourdieu, 1988).

It is evident that the positivist curriculum implemented in Honduras did not seek to produce scientific knowledge as one might suppose. Rather, the curriculum's main objective was to train the technocrat engineer and the bureaucrat lawyer and politician who could facilitate the process of material extraction, the exploitation of cheap labor, and the continuation of colonial relations of power. As mentioned above, technical knowledge was intimately intertwined with the modern/colonial world system. The coloniality of power, as Quijano (2000) lucidly demonstrated, involves a matrix of domination that transcends military force and political colonialism. It involves rather the "colonization of the imagination of the dominated; that is, it acts in the interior of that imagination" (Quijano, 2007, p. 169). The coloniality of knowledge, in other words, is the primary form of colonization, and military force is only a secondary response

when all other forms of domination fail. Quijano (2007) suggests that "repression fell, above all, over the modes of knowing, of producing knowledge, of producing perspectives, images and systems of images, symbols, modes of signification, over the resources, patterns, and instruments of formalized and objectivised expression, intellectual or visual" (p. 169). Coloniality found its continuity in the liberal education reform movement and the positivist curriculum. With these curricular reforms, power reconfigured itself according to the shifting geopolitical and economic context.

In short, the second higher education reform and its positivist curriculum repositioned Honduras at the periphery within a reconfigured capitalist world system. In the United States, however, various theoretical currents such as the humanists, developmentalists, social efficiency educators, and social meliorists, continued to debate the question Spencer (1860) posed: What knowledge is of most worth? In Honduras, this question was answered unequivocally with the ratification of the Code of Public Instruction of 1882. The positivist curriculum implemented in Honduras took place before the Committee of Ten, which, according to Kliebard (1986), eventually led the curricular debates of the late 19th and early 20th century. In Honduras, the curriculum would only be questioned with the emergence of the university student movement in the 1950s. In the next section, I discuss the ways in which the first and second wave of the university student movement lead the third education reform to democratize the positivist Central University of Honduras, which was later transformed into the National Autonomous University of Honduras.

Third Reform: Student Movements and University Autonomy

> The Cordoba Manifesto meant a new way of thinking of the Latin American university. Trying to separate it from the colonial spirit that characterized it, students in the region promoted an educational institution with a strong social and political commitment, intertwined with the principle of self-government, [and] the representation of students and graduates…. (Murillo, 2017, p. 40)

Student movements in Latin America, led by an emergent middle class, initiated a political process that broke the very foundations on which the colonial, ecclesiastic, liberal, and Napoleonic university was built (Mariátegui, 2007; Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). In Argentina, for instance, the Cordoba Manifesto of 1918, written by university student activists attending the University of Cordoba, initiated a reformist movement from below in Latin America. This movement sought to transform the universities structurally, culturally, epistemologically, politically, and ideologically (Mazo, 1941). In addition to unsettling the colonial foundations of the university, the student movement proclaimed itself "anti-imperialist, anti-clerical, anti-military and against oligarchic governments" (Murillo, 2017, p. 39). It did not take long for student movements to emerge in other Latin American countries. It is evident that the student movement of Cordoba had rippling effects throughout Latin America. This reveals the relational character of the region's sociopolitical movements (e.g., Indigenous and campesino movements, liberal independence movements, student movements, socialist movements, and even fascist movements). The sociopolitical tendencies of one national context, therefore, were/are always already interconnected regionally and globally.

It was paramount that the university student movement of Argentina democratize the university by eliminating its elitist and hierarchical governance structure. Historically excluded students in Argentina finally were able to attend the university (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1991). These collective efforts eventually led to national education reforms toward secularism,

autonomy, shared governance, and universal higher education. These reforms, in contrast to education reform movements in other contexts, were initiated by students and later guaranteed by the national constitution.

Institutional autonomy provided the university the right to self-government. This meant that autonomous universities could pass and ratify internal laws, change the curriculum according to the social, cultural, economic, and political reality of the country, and administer the funds allocated by the State without external intervention. In addition to self-government, shared governance gave students, professors, and representatives of professional colleges or guilds the right to form part of the university's governing council in which decision-making power was shared equally. In Honduras, parity of representation gave fifty percent of the voting power to students. Autonomy and shared governance were the ends of these student movements, but these ends were also the means to other ends, meaning that autonomy would provide them with the conditions of possibility of effecting institutional as well as societal change.

The First Wave of the Honduran University Student Movement

The first wave of the university student movement in Honduras, like the Cordoba student movement, also played an important role in transforming the elitist, positivist university model. Founded in 1925, the University Student Federation of Honduras (FEUH) took the initial steps to changing the stagnant quasi-positivist, liberal university established in 1882. The FEUH, however, strictly positioned itself institutionally, ignoring the sociopolitical and cultural context outside of the university's exclusive walls. It is important to note that the FEUH did not intend to change the governance structure in place or democratize access higher education; nor did it seek to articulate itself politically with other social movements (Murillo, 2017). Considering that the Code of Public Instruction of 1882 was still in effect, the university continued to educate the

local elite. Women, Indigenous peoples, Black communities, and campesinos were still excluded from the university. The student movement's radical position would only emerge within the tumultuous social context of the 1950s.

The Central University of Honduras continued to be the training ground for the ruling elite. A case in point is Juan Galvez, who received his law degree from this institution. Before becoming president in 1949, he was the vice president of dictator Juan Vicente Carías and lawyer of the United Fruit Company's. During Galvez' presidency, vast quantities of land were conceded to the United Fruit Company, in addition to tax exceptions (Murillo, 2017). This conflict of interest as well as the events unfolding in Guatemala significantly impacted the sociopolitical landscape of Honduras. The Guatemalan Revolution of 1944, for instance, which was led by university students, teachers, and workers unions was able to overthrow the fascist dictatorship of Jorge Ubico (Gleijeses, 1991). University students and other social sectors in Honduras believed that they, too, could change the oppressive and authoritarian conditions under which most of the population lived.

Meanwhile, in Guatemala a democratic government was finally being configured in a country ruled by a dictator since 1931. The democratically elected presidents Juan Jose Arevalo (1945-1951) and Jacobo Árbenz (1951-1954) immediately passed progressive labor and agrarian, and education reforms (Gleijeses, 1991). The Guatemalan Revolution of 1944, additionally, transformed the National University of Guatemala into the University of San Carlos of Guatemala. The former, like the Central University of Honduras, had implemented a positivist curriculum in the late 19th century geared toward meeting the demands of transnational mining and agricultural companies, namely, the economic interests of United Fruit Company and Standard Fruit Company. In addition to gaining its autonomy which was guaranteed by the new

constitution of 1945, the University of San Carlos of Guatemala adopted a social justice-oriented mission aimed at studying and solving the social, political, and economic problems of Guatemala (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1980). Knowledge was no longer a means to an economic end for the few. Rather, knowledge was intended for the common good. It was this precedent university student activists in Honduras at the time considered most influential to their politico-academic project (Barahona, 1994, 2005).

Why are these historical events important if the topic of interest is the emergence of the university student movement in Honduras? One reason is that while Guatemala implemented progressive reforms, thereby limiting the United Fruit Company's dominance over the political economy as well as in education policy, Honduran President Galvez offered larger concessions to his former employer (Barahona, 1994, 2005). University students became more vocal regarding these concessions and decided to act in their hopes that it would lead to transforming the political and economic structures solidified by the liberal education reforms of the late 19th century (Murillo, 2017). This second wave of university student activists was distinct to the first in that student activists' political involvement no longer was confined to the walls of the university. Like their Guatemalan counterparts, they believed agrarian, labor, and education reforms were integral components to building a democratic society. This student movement was thus conceived as a social struggle.

On May 1, 1954, almost two months before Jacobo Arbenz was overthrown, the largest recorded campesino strike in Honduras paralyzed the economy. This strike is now referred to as the General Strike of 1954 or as the *Huelga Bananera* (Barahona, 1994). With university students' involvement in social, political, and economic issues, the *Huelga* transcended the

campesino's demands. Levy (1981) argues that, within oligarchic societies such as Honduras, broad-based collective action carries the potential to change the status quo.

> Should students defy the oligarchy's obstacles to participation, however, they may have significant impact. They raise issues and demands perhaps already common elsewhere but still radical at home. They introduce or promote ideologies of fundamental change. Student activity, which might be only a nuisance to more complex, broader based regimes, might ultimately pose serious threats here. When crisis politics strikes oligarchies, student activity may reach its height of widespread participation. (Levy, 1981, p. 357)

In an attempt to prevent the widespread participation of the university student movement in the broader sociopolitical and economic context, the government conceded partial autonomy to the university. Partial autonomy allowed students the right to elect deans in each department. The university student movement, however, continued to demand full autonomy. In 1956, students organized once again around the University Student Federation of Honduras and articulated its demands with the ongoing struggles of secondary students and the campesino movement which they had previously allied themselves to in 1954. After months of protests, congress finally conceded (it is this student movement that Mario's father was involved in). Article 160 of the Honduran constitution guaranteed the UNAH complete autonomy, including the right to co-governance and to organize freely in associations at the departmental level (Murillo, 2017). Article 1 of UNAH's Organic Law of 1957 granted autonomy as well as the social responsibility it previously had ignored. Autonomy was linked to a social justice mission aimed at solving the problems of Honduras, differing significantly to the intellectual autonomy granted to those thinking within the confining walls of the ivory tower of academia. However, with the neoliberal reform movement initiated in 2004 and fully implemented after the coup of 2009, as I mentioned in chapter one, co-governance was stripped away completely while UNAH's autonomy lost its democratic and social justice mission. It is within this post-coup

context, nevertheless, which saw the emergence of an organized student movement and a radically democratic political culture.

As I mentioned previously, the emergence of the Honduran university student movement in the 1950s was relationally linked with the sociopolitical movements in Argentina and Guatemala. While the Argentinean student movement focused its actions toward democratizing the university, the Guatemalan student movement sought to transform the university's role in society, hence going beyond the Cordoba principles established in 1918 (Tünnermann Bernheim, 1980). The latter movement, most importantly, was a social movement articulated by many organizations, unions, and associations of which university students formed a part. The university student movement of Honduras intended to do the same by refusing to be confined politically to the expectations designed by the ruling class. Instead, the student movement defied the liberal/positivist university and articulated their struggle with other social movements such as the campesino and labor movements. In doing so, it reshaped the collective imaginary [*imaginario colectivo*] of what the university's social, political, and epistemological-cultural role should be in Honduras. In defying "the oligarchy's obstacles to participation" in other words, student activists "raise[d] issues and demands perhaps already common elsewhere but still radical at home" (Levy, 1981, p. 357).

Conclusion

It is critical to note that the "Latin American" autonomous university model only exists as an ideal type. In other words, the university autonomy does not have essential qualities that we can categorize. What we have is an ideal of what university autonomy should be. Ideally, an autonomous university fosters a pluralist, independent, self-determined and co-governed academic institution in which multiple and diverse epistemological commitments may emerge,

converge, and diverge. However, university autonomy should not be conceived as separate from the social reality of which it is a part, and thus must have to be conceived instead as another institution immersed in the sociocultural, political, economic dynamics unfolding within a particular context which is also linked to regional and global dynamics.

It is also important to keep in mind that the Honduran university student movement of the 1950s was formed by a proportionately small socioeconomic, political, and cultural sector of the region. As one reads the Cordoba Manifesto of 1918, for example, the transcendent plea made by modern men and the erasure of other voices are obvious. I mention this as a precautionary measure so that the absences of the past can be placed in close relation to the emergent sociopolitical practices enacted by increasingly diverse actors forming part of the university student movement in the present. As I have already set the stage to understand the political constitution of the National Autonomous University of Honduras, in the subsequent chapter I will portray a more complete picture of the university student movement and the social practices, knowledges, subjectivities, historical memory, and political culture student activists are building within and beyond the university. I hope that through an ethnographic account of university student activism, I can provide a methodological, epistemological, and ethical shift in doing research with collective actors seeking to make small, yet significant changes. In chapter five, I provide a more complete picture of the multiple and diverse ways student activists build a political culture to democratize the university. I hope that I adequately relate the cultural with the political and vice versa. I, additionally, pay close attention to the knowledges student produce in distinct spaces (e.g., meetings, assemblies, workshops, protests, *tomas*, and collectively written documents and articles). Analyzing the knowledge produced by university student activists is

intended to highlight the student activists' theoretical production, which, regrettably, is often ignored in activist research.

CHAPTER 5: STUDENT ACTIVISTS WEAVING RADICALLY DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL CULTURES

Introduction

Before writing about university student activism at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), I would like to begin at the end of my fieldwork. Although I am aware research is truly never conclusive, I find it necessary to begin this chapter at the very moment I realized I had been around student activists long enough to understand, albeit partially, their collective narratives, memories, knowledges, and organizational practices. I use the term partially because, as a researcher, I could never know entirely what it is like to be a university student activist in Honduras. To pretend that I could analyze student activism to a point at which I could apprehend and interpret its reality would not only contradict the decolonial work at hand, but it would also risk reducing student activism to analytical points on a cartesian coordinate plane, fixed and set in abstract space. It is worth quoting Lefebvre (1991) at length, for he provides an eloquent description of reductionism which I hope to obviate:

> Reductionism thus infiltrates science under the flag of science itself. Reduced models are constructed—models of society, of the city, of institutions, of the family, and so forth and things are left at that. This is how social space comes to be reduced to mental space by means of a 'scientific' procedure whose scientific status is really nothing but a veil for ideology. Reductionists are unstinting in their praise for basic scientific method, but they transform this method first into a mere posture and then, in the name of the 'science of science' (epistemology), into a supposed absolute knowledge. Eventually, critical thought (where it is not proscribed by the orthodox) wakes up to the fact that systematic reduction and reductionism are part and parcel of a political practice. The state and political power seek to become, and indeed succeed in becoming, reducers of contradictions. In this sense reduction and reductionism appear as tools in the service of the state and of power: not as ideologies but as established knowledge; and not in the service of any specific state or government, but rather in the service of the state and power in general. Indeed, how could the state and political power reduce contradictions (i.e. incipient and renewed intrasocial conflicts) other than via the mediation of knowledge, and this by means of a strategy based on an admixture of science and ideology? (p. 106)

My intention in this chapter, therefore, is not to eliminate contradictions or to enact an epistemic violence onto those whose knowledge surpasses that of the researcher. I thus avoid representing student activism as a fixed thing waiting to be apprehended. Student activism is too dynamic and complex for it to be only analyzed and interpreted by academic researchers. It is for this reason that I share the knowledge student activists produced of their own experiences and practices in the student movement to disrupt the authorial individualism that continues to pervade research practices.

Important to note is that only when I could understand the student movement as narrated and enacted by student activists was I confident enough to write something that would, at the very least, approximate the complexity of their student movement. When I heard other student activists, former student activists, and university professors discuss topics related to the student movement during public assemblies, meetings, or forums, for instance, many of the things discussed were no longer as strange to me as they were when I first arrived in Honduras to make my first observations. Making the strange familiar and the familiar strange is not an easy task, even after one year of fieldwork. In times when student movements and social movements seem stranger (in the Global North) than they used to be and when universities seem more familiar and uniform than they really are, it is necessary to nuance our understanding of student activism in relation to the university and sociopolitical context in which their practices unfold to preclude the fatalistic notion that neoliberal globalization is an inevitable process absorbing everything in its path. It is thus an urgent task to denaturalize neoliberal globalization—modernity/coloniality's most recent expression—by unveiling its colonial implications while also offering ways in which it is resisted through horizontal forms of organizing, radically democratic practices, and knowledges of resistance, known by student activists as knowledges and practices of struggle

[*conocimientos y prácticas de lucha*]. These terms are not unique to the student movement but rather are borrowed from other struggles and scholars in Latin America (Santos, 2014). In spite of being a heterogeneous region, common ground can still be found between distinct social movements.

For a researcher to reach a more nuanced understanding of university student activism and other forms of social activism requires a serious undertaking which involves *convivencia* or coexistence. Here, *convivencia* means more than participant observation. It also means more than being together in the same space. It may not be translated to conviviality either, for conflict is also part of learning to *convivir* [co-live, coexist, and be together] with others. Instead, *convivencia* is a collective intersubjective way of learning and unlearning, being with, and knowing with rather than knowing about (Santos, 2018). For instance, when activists and I read, analyzed, interpreted, planned, strategized, debated, and discussed for hours on end, hoping that it would all mean something in the long run, *convivencia* was being enacted. *Convivencia*, at times, meant sharing a meal together or staying up late to write a political statement [*comunicado* or a *pronunciamiento*] in solidarity with a specific political conjuncture or because of someone's disappearance, assassination, or arrest. Writing, as I learned much later, is an urgent, collective task when it emerges from a social struggle. Knowledge, here, does not have exchange value. Instead, it is meant to the be shared to disrupt *el cerco mediático* (*el cerco mediático* refers to the skewed reality represented by mainstream media) and the unengaged intellectuals dominating the discourse. I hope that by sharing the knowledge produced by students unsettles the authorial individualism that continues to position the researcher as the knower and participants as the objects to be known (Santos, 2018). I also hope that the many conversations, forums, workshops, meetings, and writing projects I participated in added *un granito de arena* [grain of sand] to the

student movement's democratic project. As Mario told me at my going away barbecue he and other student activists helped organize, the night before leaving to the United States, "*un granito de arena es todo lo que podemos aportarle al movimiento estudiantil*" [a grain of sand is all we have to offer the student movement]. When everyone adds a grain of sand, we become, to use Erica's words, "young builders of dreams." In the end, we all can potentially contribute to a social struggle if the will to do so is present.

In this chapter, in addition to detailing the University Student Movement's radically democratic practices, I situate the movement as a pedagogical site in which knowledge is produced collectively. Collective ways of producing knowledge disrupts the irrational neoliberal ideology manifesting itself as possessive and narcissistic individualism. In other words, it unsettles the notion that individuals learn in isolation and reproduce knowledge solely to attain social, cultural, academic, and political capital. Rather than dedicating more time to studying for exams or writing mid-term papers, for instance, Mario, Erica, Eduardo, Julio, Hector, and Maria dedicated their time to things that did not have concrete rewards waiting for them at the end. As student activists enacted democratic practices within their own associations and organizations, they began to unsettle the recolonizing neoliberal logic of the university and the social atomism it purports to establish.

A collective autodidactic praxis, as student activists often expressed, was the only way to extend or break the limits placed by the university's curriculum and governance structure. Here, an autodidactic praxis implies unlearning hegemonic ways of reading the world with others. In contradistinction to intersubjective ways of knowing, when I first began to participate in student activists' laborious meetings, readings, and discussions, I could not help but think that I should spend more of my time writing my dissertation. I wondered whether my time would be better

spent transcribing interviews or analyzing data. The positivist residues difficult to get rid of constantly reminded me of choosing my time more wisely, that is, more rationally. I gradually learned to think and act otherwise as I became more involved in the student movement. It was only by collaborating with and contributing to the student movement's ongoing struggle to democratize the university that I began to learn the importance of working collectively toward a common cause. As I learned to unlearn dominant knowledge practices, I realized that other students might have experienced the same thing as they immersed themselves in the pedagogical spaces (e.g., assemblies, meetings, live-streamed forums and conferences, student movement's WordPress, newspaper, workshops, gatherings, *tomas* or occupations, and protests) opened by the student movement. Learning to learn with others while dedicating less time learning the dominant curriculum unsettled the colonizing effects of neoliberalism in ways I had not considered previously. In the following sections, I take a serpentine path to detail the complicated ways this unsettling took place.

The End is Just the Beginning

After 12 months of fieldwork and hundreds of pages of fieldnotes, memos, and interview transcriptions written, I was obviously faced with an overabundance of data. Where, I asked myself, should I begin? To start at the beginning of my fieldwork, would have confined me to a timeline I would have to follow, that is, a linear timeline that would risk reducing the complexity of student activism to a series of events. I thus decided to begin at the end of my fieldwork, hoping that, as I made my way to the beginning, things would cohere as intended.

Decolonizing Practices

At the end of the academic calendar year in November of 2019, a week before permanently returning to Houston, university student activists from the sociology department

organized a forum at the Juan Lindo Auditorium to share their research and experiences with the university community and the public. Mario and I were invited to discuss the university's autonomy, reform, and governance structure in relation to the student movement's democratic project. To present something meaningful, we decided to reread UNAH's Organic Law, the series of education reforms implemented since the coup of 2009, and Cortina's (1993) work on radical democracy. We also analyzed various student organizations and platforms that emerged in this same time period as a response to the university's restructured governance structure and curriculum. We thought it necessary to use a historical perspective to underscore the different ways university autonomy had been conceived in different historical contexts and the role student movements played in shaping university autonomy.

Our presentation's main objective was to discuss the ways in which the student movement's horizontal form of organizing through student associations disrupted the university's authoritarian political culture student activists rightfully called a "parisitocracy." According to Mario, this institutional parisitocracy's lifeblood was drawn from the liberal and conservative political parties. Our main argument was that the university's autonomy had been violated since the university embroiled itself in party politics, which only served to create a clientelist authoritarian political culture which impeded the radical democratization and direct participation of students and professors in co-governing the institution as guaranteed by the national constitution.

The violation of university autonomy is not only about governance, however. It has more to do with the limitations placed on critical thought when authoritarian, hierarchical governance structures are established to silence oppositional voices. To democratize the university's governance structure means to democratize knowledge which also works toward decolonizing

the university. Decolonization here is not a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Rather, it refers to the concrete transformation of how a public university is run, who makes decisions and for whom, and what knowledges and other ways of knowing should form part of the curriculum. Why and for whom is knowledge produced or reproduced? What values and what possibilities are fomented? What values and future possibilities are undermined (Lander, 2000)? What role should the university play in converging knowledges and practices born in struggle? Do entrance exams serve as filters which exclude unwanted Black and Brown bodies, as student activists have indicated numerous times during assemblies? How are professors and administrators held accountable for acts of corruption, violence, and complicity with power? Is the decolonization of the university possible?

What I have learned from my fieldwork, which consisted primarily of participant observation, is that we cannot decolonize the university if an undemocratic governance structure remains intact. This is something often omitted from discussions around decolonizing higher education and public education in general. Decolonization will also not take place through academicist discussions around decoloniality or individual hermeneutic practices (Zibechi, 2012). I agree with the scholars and activists thinking and acting to make another world possible who believe that the decolonization of the university and of society must be born out of a collective struggle. Expecting that publishing scholarly journals or writing books about decolonizing knowledge without taking into serious consideration the concrete practices creating the conditions of possibility of decolonizing the university's ontological, epistemological, and political commitments, will only result in establishing lucrative careers as decolonial theorists who integrated themselves in the political economy of ideas emanating from privileged epistemic, social, and geographic positions (Cusicanqui, 2012). Rethinking instead of how

concrete collective practices, including democratic practices such as shared or co-governance, enables the decolonization of knowledge must thus be taken seriously if one is to radically transform an institution such as the university. Beginning with collective practices seeks to avoid the metaphorization of decolonization (more on this topic in chapter six where I reflect on the decolonizing implications of a democratic university). Colonial governance practices historically embedded in universities must therefore be unsettled. The democratic social practices and knowledges born in collective struggles, such as the ones enacted by the University Student Movement, thus point to the unsettling of what Quijano (2000) calls the coloniality of power (governance) and the coloniality of knowledge (curriculum).

Like other institutions, the university regulates more than knowledge. In addition to reducing the social imaginary to a Eurocentric and modern teleology, it also regulates and perpetuates exclusive practices, values, and behaviors. The university, in other words, reproduces modern/colonial subjectivities, ways of knowing, becoming, doing, feeling, sensing, and living. The university, additionally, reproduces a reductionist view of space. It transforms it as that which needs to be fragmented into fields, studied and understood, and conquered. Decolonization, therefore, takes into serious consideration the re-appropriation of space and place in relation to the new meanings, values, and practices resulting from said re-appropriation. The transformation of space into a place of resistance and reexistence must hence also emerge from a collective struggle.

Scholars writing about epistemic decolonization by citing other scholars who write about decolonizing knowledge is an important task insofar as it visibilizes other knowledges, but this alone is not enough. As Zibechi (2015) argues,

> My argument is that decolonization is a process of class/race/gender/generational struggles and conflicts, in which the process is made up of subjects that embody decolonization. In short, there is no decolonization (neither political, cultural, nor epistemic) outside the framework of multiple/heterogeneous conflicts. But conflicts involve two central questions: collective subjects to lead them and the ability to create a new world so that the oppressed do not repeat history that leads them to take the place of the oppressor. This statement may seem obvious, but an important part of the work on coloniality/decoloniality highlights peoples as victims of colonialism but does not emphasize their status as collective actors. An emancipatory critical thought, in my view, cannot be limited to seeing oppressions, but must also focus on the paths and forms of action to overcome them, based on the lived experience of the collective subjects born in the world of the oppressed.... There can be no decolonization in general; it must be short, face to face, direct, territorial... it is a horizon of collective and individual transformation, material and symbolic. (p. 109)

Zibechi's (2015) reflection on decolonization indicates the importance of reclaiming territorial struggles and the relation these struggles have with concrete meaning-making practices. Reappropriating space, as Maria informed me, was an integral part of the student movement. Giving new meaning to a seemingly neutral space or non-place such as the university, in this regard, becomes subversive and transgressive (Auge, 1995). At UNAH, the reappropriation of space consisted of painting murals throughout the university, politicizing the university's main plaza with music, speeches, theatrical performances, concerts, forums, and public assemblies. It entailed, in other words, territoriality aimed at building a place in which new experiences and meanings could emerge. Territoriality surpasses, furthermore, our understanding of liberal public spaces where individual actors engage in contractual relationships. I discuss later in this chapter how university student activists conceived of space and place in relation to the university's autonomy and how they gave new meaning to a space of indifference. The forum in which I participated at the end of my fieldwork illustrates how student activists opened pedagogical spaces to give the university new meaning. In the next section, I

direct the reader's attention to the ways in which student activists opened pedagogical spaces in which knowledges and collective lived experiences were shared intergenerationally.

Student Movement Forum

The forum organized by student activists, which I was invited to, took place at the Juan Lindo Auditorium at the National Autonomous University of Honduras. When I arrived at the auditorium, right before going inside, I saw dozens of students waiting in line. Other students sat on the benches nearby while others sat on the grass under some shade. I did not expect so many students to show up. Once I made my way inside, I sat in the front row next to Mario and his family. I noticed that Mario was a little frustrated because a projector had not been set up yet. At first, he thought we would have to present without our PowerPoint presentation. This meant that our presentation would not make much sense without the images we decided to include on the slides. Luckily, the forum began 30 minutes after its scheduled time, giving Mario some time to borrow a projector from Eduardo who was in the engineering building at the time.

In this forum, I had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Juan Almendares, who is now 80 years old, share his experience as the rector of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) in the early 1980s, a time period when Honduras confirmed its status as a neocolony. When I first met Mario at a coffee shop ten months ago, he described Almendares' experience as a perfect example to understand UNAH in the present. As I sat next to Mario in the front row, waiting for students to write name plates and place water bottles in the front table where we would sit, I remembered that in our first meeting Mario had mentioned Almendares' unwavering support of social movements. Since he was deposed as UNAH's rector, he has lived a life as a public intellectual and activist, linking his thoughts and acts of solidarity with social struggles in Honduras and Latin America. From what Mario shared with me, I learned that Almendares'

solidarity with environmental, Indigenous, campesino, feminist, and student movements triggered a curiosity in many student activists to unearth the reasons why he was pushed out of the university. Why would a person who had dedicated his life collaborating with and working alongside social movements not be valued by a university which claims, at least in its organic law (Organic Law, 2004), that it aims to transform society through solidarity and knowledge production linked to the social, political, and economic problems of Honduras? Why depose a person whose work demonstrates these objectives and much more? To find answers to these questions, Mario and other student activists took a careful look at the geopolitical context in which Almendares found himself. They decided to uncover a past that had greatly shaped the university they wanted to transform. They learned that their struggle was an enduring one and that is was intimately related to an authoritarian and violent context in which dissidence is forbidden, no different to the 1980s.

It is thus that Mario decided to use Almendares' story to talk to me about the reasons why students needed to organize in associations to reclaim a university that was besieged, occupied, and recolonized under new logics in 1982, when the confluence of military, economic, and ideological forces violated the university's autonomy by undemocratically placing Oswaldo Ramos Soto as UNAH's rector (Borgen, 2005). According to an article published by the Chronicle of Higher Education (Anonymous, 1988), Soto was suspected of having ties to General Alvarez Martinez, a School of the Americas graduate who headed the military forces and dictated the actions of the infamous Battalion 316. The university, consequently, prohibited the production of critical oppositional knowledge, criminalized student activism and organization, and eliminated potential threats to the geopolitical maneuvers in the region. In addition to the installation of one of the largest US military bases in Honduras, the university

legitimated the United States' colonial military presence in Central America. The former provided the material force necessary to repress oppositional voices, organizations, and social movements while the latter offered the ideological and symbolic power to justify the brutal actions taken against student activists and anyone daring to question the neocolonial reconfigurations in the region.

Since 1982, university authorities have worked diligently to create an authoritarian political culture that could effectively control and manage student activism and organization by delimiting representation to traditional student political fronts. In the Chronicle of Higher Education article mentioned above, Almendares is cited describing one of the conservative political student fronts as 'an armed group with links to the military high command' (Anonymous, 1988, p. A41). Almendares expressed that 'Since 1980...the organization [conservative student front] has participated in the kidnapping, torture, and murder of leftist students, creating a 'climate of terror' at the university' (p. A41). In fact, the university's new rector also belonged to this conservative organization as a university student (Perdomo, 2016). According to Mario and Almendares, Soto used his power and connection to the military to repress student activists and prevent, at all costs, the radical democratization of the university and the direct participation of students and professors in the university's governing council. Very little has changed regarding these undemocratic, authoritarian practices sustained by the "parasitocracy" of which university authorities and student political fronts continue to form part. Important to consider is that student political fronts formed part of the hidden curriculum of the university, where students learned how to do politics the "right" way, that is, within the limits established by the State. This rendered everything outside of party politics illegitimate and potentially dangerous. Indeed, students thinking outside of the logics of party politics and the

State threatened the status quo. It is for this reason that student activists in Latin America have been disappeared, so that their voices would never be heard.

It is not surprising that many Honduran presidents once had leadership positions in student political fronts at the university. Juan Orlando Hernandez Alvarado, the president of Honduras, for example, was also the president of the abovementioned conservative student political front at UNAH (Perdomo, 2016). Ordorika (2003) considers these organizations as "student gangs" which are instrumental to university authorities as well as politicians who see oppositional groups as a threat to the academic and political elite (p. 376). After the coup of 2009, students began to organize within each academic program, college, and campus to challenge the student political fronts and the authoritarian political culture they helped sustain. Reclaiming [*reivindicando*] the democratic principles the student movement gained in 1957 (e.g., autonomy, academic freedom, co-governance, free tuition, social responsibility) and adapting them to the contemporary sociopolitical context became integral to the student movement's collective efforts.

Since the coup, student activists began to weave a political culture grounded in a horizontal political organization aimed at ridding the university from its authoritarian tendencies and practices. By doing so, they pushed student political fronts to the side, paving a way toward the radical democratization of the university where, as student activists expressed many times, *los de abajo mandan y los de arriba obedecen* [those from below command and the ones above obey]. This decolonial attitude toward reclaiming power from below is drawn from the Zapatistas who coined the dictum and put it into practice: *mandar obedeciendo* [lead by obeying]. In subsequent sections, I describe in more detail the democratization of university governance. I argue that the democratic project initiated by the university student movement

entails decolonial openings and futurities insofar as it is inextricably related to the decolonization of power, knowledge, and being.

Many of the details I have provided so far may seem strictly related to UNAH and its institutional crisis and possible democratization. Much of what unfolds within the university, however, is interconnected with the global, regional, and national contexts. The coup of 2009, for instance, and the fraudulent elections of 2013 and 2017 which gave birth to a dictatorial right-wing regime linked to drug trafficking (Palmer & Malkin, 2019), neoextractivism, and displacement are interconnected to global capitalism's neocolonial reconfiguration (Pitts et al., 2016). Since the coup, additionally, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets not only to demand the return of an ousted president. Instead, they demanded for the right to have rights (Arendt, 1973), something that has always been denied to those dwelling on the other side of the abyssal line of nonbeing (Santos, 2018). As Xiomara Zelaya-Castro recently mentioned in an interview, "The US has turned Honduras into a laboratory for new forms of colonization in Latin America" (Romero, 2019). Within this reconfigured, neoextractivist colonialism initiated after the coup of 2009, Honduras lost the little autonomy and sovereignty that was gained through social struggle. Zelaya-Castro states,

> 27 days before the 'De facto government' of Roberto Micheletti [immediate successor of Manuel Zelaya after the coup d'etat of 2009] handed over executive power, 150 mining concessions were granted, and hundreds of environmental licenses have been given in an unbridled manner, initiating conflicts in communities primarily composed of indigenous and Afro-descendants. Today, there are 854 extractive concessions for the exploitation of mines, forests and rivers, which are really affecting the conditions in which these communities live. [my translation]

The university is implicated in these neocolonial reconfigurations. Its silence says everything. As Almendares mentioned in the forum, "There is something that is not often admitted by academics and liberals", and with his soothing and heartwarming voice expressed, "we never

admit that Honduras is occupied militarily by the United States" [*nunca admitimos que Honduras está ocupada militarmente por los estados unidos*]. He is right. We never admit that we live in a neocolony and that we are also internally colonized by the White-mestizo elite. In relation to the university's autonomy, Almendares expressed that the university ceased to be autonomous when it remained silent and indifferent in the presence of injustice. The university thus does not only foment apathy, pathetic nihilism, and passivity; rather, to use the words of Castoriadis (2011), it is one of the most important institutions "propagating the desert" of indifference and irrationality (p. 27), while proclaiming itself as a site in which absolute knowledge and "rational mastery" are produced (Castoriadis, 1991, p. 6). The university, therefore, with its complicity with power, helped legitimate a coup which has resulted in the colonization of autonomous territories in Honduras, including Indigenous and campesino communities as well as the National Autonomous University of Honduras.

In times when structure, agency, and relations of power have been decentered and deconstructed, colonialism and collective struggles seem more like a strange thing from a distant past. That which formed part of modernity's grand narratives no longer holds any currency in what has been conceived as a postmodern and postcolonial world. If we were to only deconstruct the dominant discourse, even if it is only a knowledge practice enacted in privileged spaces with little resonance in most parts of the world, then things will somehow be less oppressive and more just. However, the millions who continue to struggle against displacement, incarceration, militarization, extractivism, patriarchy, and neoliberal recolonization know that deconstruction (even if this concept is not employed) is a small piece to a much larger and complex puzzle (Smith, 1999). As the Maori anthropologist Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) addresses in her work, deconstruction does not create the material conditions to stop people from dying. A more

politically engaged approach to research is demanded where being and knowing with activists seeks to strengthen their social struggle.

Collective action and varying forms of organizing politically are the few ways student activists have begun to rethink the university in radically democratic terms, which involves conceiving of it as a territorial struggle. Since its emergence, the student movement made this sentiment clear: UNAH belongs to the people; the university belongs to everyone; UNAH is our territory; UNAH is your home; it does not belong to those in power [*La universidad es del pueblo; la universidad es de todas y todos; La UNAH es nuestro territorio; la UNAH es tu casa; no le pertenece a los que tienen poder*]. The university, student activists claim, must be transformed into a place in which knowledges and practices born in struggle converge. In a post-coup context in which territories are being sold off indiscriminately to mining, agriculture, logging, and textile companies, autonomous territories, such as the National Autonomous University of Honduras, must be defended at all costs. The little that remains autonomous to the State must be defended from being absorbed by capitalism's relentless commodification and colonization. It might sound like I am exaggerating the urgency of these matters. I wish that were the case.

Geopolitics and the Recolonization of the University

In this section I describe in more detail Juan Almendares' story to contextualize the authoritarian political culture briefly discussed above. Between 1979-1982, the US Ambassador to Honduras, Jack Binns, who was appointed by Jimmy Carter, began to report human rights violations and continued to do so during the Reagan administration. These reports included the kidnapping, torture, rape, and assassination of a group of nuns in El Salvador in 1980, the same year and a couple months after Monsignor Oscar Romero was assassinated (Borgen, 2005). It

was during this time period that Juan Almendares headed the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) alongside the University Council in which university administrators (rector, directors, and deans), professors, and students participated. Shared governance still formed part of the democratic life at UNAH. Shared governance, let me clarify, differs from the hierarchical and delegated governance model described by an article published by the Chronicle of Higher Education:

> The truth is that all legal authority in any university originates from one place and one place only: its governing board. Whether it is a private college created by a charter, or a public institution established by law or constitution, the legal right and obligation to exercise authority over an institution is vested in and flows from its board. Typically, the board then formally delegates authority over the day-to-day operation of the institution (often in an official 'memorandum of delegation') to the president, who, in turn, may delegate authority over certain parts of university management to other university officials—for example, granting authority over academic personnel and programs to the provost as the chief academic officer, and so on (Olson, 2009, p. A33).

Shared governance at UNAH, in contradistinction to this hierarchical definition, includes students and professors not as delegates that will form part of some ad hoc committee, but rather as elected members who will have equal decision-making power at all executive and administrative levels, including the university's highest governing council. Co-governance, as mentioned above, was coopted in the early 1980s.

In 1981, Jack Binns was asked to resign, mainly because his reports did not align well with the United States' geopolitical intentions in the region (Borgen, 2005). The information he had to offer to the international community, in other words, would have revealed the US's financial, logistical, and tactical support to regimes with human rights violations. John Dimitri Negroponte, whose name still brings memories of terror to families who lost their loved ones at the time, was assigned as ambassador to Honduras by Ronald Reagan (Borgen, 2005). Why do I refer to these events that took place so long ago? How is this related to UNAH today and the

student activists I worked with for over one year? Primarily, I refer to these events to contextualize the ways in which the university's autonomy was violated and the ways in which the university became an instrument of power and a place where critical thought was repressed, paralleling what transpired after the coup of 2009. Secondly, I discuss these events because student activists such as Mario refuse to forget the 1980s and the university's instrumental role in legitimizing the geopolitics of knowledge and power. Thirdly, I mention these historical facts because they reveal a moment in time when the university was unmistakably recolonized. The atrocities of the 1980s, lastly, are not a list of events one retrieves from a history textbook. Instead, past events form part of the collective memories of social movements, including the one expressed by student activists.

Collective memories manifest themselves occasionally in forums such as the ones organized by student activists. In this forum, a storyteller who lived and survived a tumultuous time period was invited to share with a much younger generation the university's role in society. Collective memories are the oral histories that will never be written but will always be remembered, invigorated, and rewritten by ongoing social struggles led by youth movements. These stories compose the infinite number of unwritten books that are narrated by those who choose to remember a past many prefer to forget. In the dictatorial context in which social movements have emerged, the storyteller creates, to use Benjamin's (1969) words, the "means to seize hold of a memory as it flashed up at a moment of danger" in order to "wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it....where even the dead will not be safe from the enemy if he wins" (p. 255). Although Benjamin spoke of the historian's role in retrieving these memories, here, a storyteller shares not only their individual lived experience but rather brings to light the knowledges which emerged from said experiences and the way these stories are

embodied by ongoing social struggles. These actions of remembrance are enacted in the present and directed toward an uncertain future. Remembering and storytelling form part of a social movement's pedagogy of hope and affectivity. As Andreotti (2019) expresses, this pedagogy of hope is more of "an invitation to re-imagine and experience education as collective onto-genesis: an expansion of horizons and constellations of knowledges, affect, lived experiences, sensibilities, temporalities, spatialities, rhythms, neuro-metabolic processes, and possibilities of (co)existence" (p. 62). Collective memories are therefore pedagogical, intergenerational, and transgressive.

As Almendares continued to speak in the forum, he made sure to remind others to remain critical of the Unites States' military occupation of Honduras, the university's complicity with power, and the implications of co-governing the university. When Almendares narrated his encounter with the US ambassador in 1982, he first said that he received a call from the US Embassy to schedule a meeting with John Negroponte. He recalled the moment he walked into Negroponte's office. The ambassador's wooden desk sat elevated, on top of some sort of platform, while Almendares' chair was positioned directly across, on a lower level. Negroponte sat on a throne and was king of Central America. He did not move or stand up when Almendares walked in. He did not shake his hand either. Negroponte simply sat there and stared at him. To use Almendares' words, "he sat there like a gestapo ready to interrogate and torture his prisoner."

According to Almendares, the ambassador finally asked him whether he was planning to get reelected as UNAH's rector. Instead of answering his question, Almendares responded with a question in return, asking Negroponte if he knew when the United States' military forces were planning to leave Honduras and Central America (as Almendares narrated this encounter, the

audience with over 300 students and professors gave him a round of applause while others whistled and cheered). Almendares said that Negroponte replied by telling him that he would make sure to answer his question once he was reelected as rector. For Almendares, this was a sarcastic answer because Negroponte somehow knew he would not be allowed to be reelected. The brief exchange passive and not-so-passive aggressive words concluded their meeting. Almendares walked away from US ambassador's throne, somewhat agitated, in violation of the decorum expected of a subaltern Honduran.

That same year, Almendares received the majority of votes during the university's elections (Borgen, 2005). The Honduran Supreme Court, however, immediately intervened and annulled the election's results, thereby violating the university's autonomy (Borgen, 2005). Soon after his victory, the chief justice of the Honduran Supreme Court contacted Juan Almendares. He told Almendares the following: "If you tell this story, I probably will be killed. I don't want that to happen. I want to tell you that we were called by Negroponte, General Alvarez, and the President of Honduras. They called all the judges of the Supreme Court to a meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to prevent your reelection at all costs. Because you and the political forces behind you are a threat to national security" (Borgen, 2005, 27:17). New elections were held in which Almendares was not allowed to participate. Oswaldo Ramos Soto, the right-wing faculty member with ties to the military, as mentioned above, won the rigged elections. Since then, UNAH has been run by members of the conservative national party. It is to no surprise that, in 1982, student activist Eduardo Becerra Lanza and Félix Martínez Medina, the president of the university's workers union, were kidnapped and assassinated, while hundreds of other student and social activists were disappeared (Fox, 2011). The following depiction of murdered activists is what university student activists refuse to forget:

> One afternoon, in the summer of 1982, I received a call from Alexander Hernández, Chief of the Batallion 3-16, which at that time was called the Directorate of Special Investigations (DIES). He told me in an understandable code between us: 'there are two packages that you must pick up.' I went to the site indicated to me, and there, a police officer handed me Felix Martinez and Eduardo Lanza, with the following orders: 'El Flaco (Eduardo) must be disappeared so that no one ever finds his body; As for the Big One (Felix) leave him in the open field with wounds such that no communist who sees him wants to be in his skin.' At night we drove to the South and in a remote place, we got out of the car to open a pit. When it was finished, I ordered Lanza to lie inside it. He then told me that he was a leader of the Federation of University Students and if we could give him a paper and pencil to write a note to his mother. I responded by giving the order to shoot him. But my friend did it so badly that the boy shouted and there were houses nearby. I decided to shoot him in the head with a silencer gun. When he was finally still, we covered him with lime to avoid the bad smell. Then we continued further south. We arrived at Concepción de María, and at a place called Las Pintadas, we stopped. It was Felix Martinez's turn. We shot him three times in the chest. Then we stabbed him 69 times all over the body, except his face. The order was that it would be possible to identify him. (Drucker, 1986, p. 24)

This account has also been told in the third person in a preliminary report published in English by Human Rights Watch (1994). That year thus marked the beginning of the era of terror which made its horrific reappearance with the coup of 2009. It seems that the brutal residues of the past always live in the present, tending to manifest themselves in times of sociopolitical and economic crises as they aim to reconfigure power through violent force.

A Political Culture in Crisis

It was in 1982 when the university began to establish an authoritarian political culture seeking to silence, repress, and disappear oppositional voices and bodies. Student political fronts coopted democratic co-governance and supplanted the democratic principles previously established by student movement of 1957 with a clientelist and authoritarian political culture in which loyal political party members could reap the benefits (Perdomo, 2016). After the coup of 2009, however, a politicized student contingent helped organize other university students in alternative forms such as in student associations according to academic programs [*asociaciones*

de carrera], independent student movements [*movimientos y colectivos independientes*], and broad-based political platforms such as the University Student Movement (*Movimiento Estudiantil Universitario*).

With the liberal and conservative consensus broken after the coup, the political culture inside the university dominated by party politics was also shattered. These were the unexpected and indeed paradoxical consequences of the coup. As I mentioned in previous chapters, organized resistance did not diminish within a repressive sociopolitical context. The coup, albeit successful in reconfiguring the political economy according to neoextractivist and colonial logics, failed tremendously since traditional party politics no longer holds a hegemonic position both at the national and institutional levels. They have lost all legitimacy and can only sustain themselves strictly by force and violence. The dominant political culture may only hold on to power through coercion instead of persuasion. In an online video conference streamed by the University Student Movement's Facebook page with over 200,000 followers, I was invited to participate in discussing the difference between domination and hegemony and clarified, using a Gramscian perspective, that the latter requires persuasion to outweigh coercion.

> La crisis de la hegemonía material del capitalismo se pudo observar en el 2008. La crisis de la hegemonía simbólica del neoliberalismo es notable con el resurgimiento de gobiernos derechistas, autoritarios y fascistas. La dominación ahora prevalece. Cuando la dominación supera la persuasión retorica del discurso neoliberal, podemos decir que la hegemonía se encuentra en crisis. El movimiento estudiantil nos ha enseñado que el estudiante se opone tanto a las prácticas autoritarias de la universidad como la del sistema político tradicional. Esto ha agudizado la crisis hegemónica del neoliberalismo y a puesto un obstáculo formidable en contra de la contrareforma universitaria. Quiero concluir esta ponencia con lo que dijo Berta sobre la democracia: 'no creemos que la democracia sólo la "ejerce" el pueblo cuando va a votar a las urnas; la democracia, el poder y la refundación es otra cosa; tiene que ver con justicia, equidad, desapegarnos del patriarcado, del racismo, del capitalismo y fortalecer nuestras propuestas de vida…que son contrarios a ese proyecto de muerte y dominación.' La universidad, sin duda, ha sido un instrumento de muerte y ha sido uno de los pilares coloniales más duraderos. Ahora, más que nunca, necesitamos refundar la universidad. [The crisis of capitalism's material

> hegemony was best observed in 2008. The crisis of symbolic hegemony of neoliberalism can also be observed with the resurgence of right-wing, authoritarian and fascist governments. Domination through coercion now prevails. When domination overcomes the rhetorical persuasion of neoliberal discourse, we can say that hegemony is in crisis. The student movement has taught us that students opposes both the authoritarian practices of the university and that of the traditional political system. This has exacerbated the hegemonic crisis of neoliberalism and put a formidable obstacle against the university counter-reform. I want to conclude this presentation with what Berta Cáceres said about democracy: "We don't believe that democracy only is 'exercised' by the people when they go to vote at the polls; democracy, power and refoundation is another thing; it has to do with justice, equity, and delinking from patriarchy, racism, and capitalism and strengthening our purpose in life... that are contrary to that project of death and domination." The university, without doubt, has been an instrument of death and has been one of the most enduring colonial pillars. Now, more than ever, we need to rebuild the university.]

When in crisis, however, domination makes its brutal appearance, evidenced by the emerging fascist tendencies in Latin America, North America, and Europe. In other words, when persuasion loses its effectiveness, domination, that is, coercion, manipulation, torture, and death form part of the solution to maintain power. With the coup and with the protests that ensued, the multidimensional face of domination peeked its head out to reveal itself. Unveiling power's true face through protest has also been recently evidenced in other struggles, such as in Ecuador, Chile, Columbia, and Haiti. When violence is used rather than persuasion, we may very well determine that neoliberalism's hegemony has begun to lose its rhetorical charm. It is in that moment that university students confirmed their distrust in party politics and decided to engage in the political in different terms.

Changing the terms of the conversation means more than epistemic or discursive delinking (Mignolo, 2009). It is instead a political disobedience implicated ethically and entangled epistemically. It is about the knowledges born in social struggles that are constantly moving, adapting, and refusing to be fixed. This means that border thinking, pluriversal hermeneutics, and a decolonial attitude are not enough if they are abstracted from their concrete

sociopolitical contexts. What is demanded instead is a sociology of emergence which seriously considers collective resistance in relation to varying and multiple epistemological positions (Santos, 2018).

The emergence of alternative forms of organizing corresponds to the opening of alternative sites of knowledge production and learning. Student activists organized their own research teams to analyze the series of reforms implemented after the coup, studied the constitution to learn the rights they were being denied according to the university's organic law, and published dozens of articles in their widely read WordPress Newspaper and Facebook page. In the process, they uncovered how co-governance had been coopted and came up with ways to reclaim what was rightfully theirs. They learned that students belonging to traditional political fronts were handpicked [*puestos de dedo*] by the university's authority to illegitimately participate in the University Council. This was, according to Mario, Julio, Erica, Hector, Eduardo, and Maria, yet another violation of university autonomy and the co-governance structure established by UNAH's Organic Law of 1957, when the university student movement at the time gained the university's autonomy through massive protests.

The reason why students have been handpicked to participate in co-governance relates to the way university authorities are selected. University council members, for instance, are responsible for appointing members of the Board of Trustees. The latter, in turn, is responsible for hiring the university's administrative and executive structure, which includes the rector, deans, and directors of regional campuses. At UNAH, the Board of Trustees has maintained the corrupt authoritarian, clientelist, and nepotist political culture intact, evidenced by the fact that they did not oppose the former rector's intent to be reelected (an illegal act according to the organic law) for a third term. When students serving in the university council are handpicked by

UNAH's rector, selecting members of the Board of Trustees becomes a unilateral decision, for the role of handpicked students is precisely to vote according to the rector's vote. Coopting student representation, in addition, allowed the rector to select loyal Board of Trustees members who would, in turn, help the rector stay in power. With student associations articulated as the University Student Movement and with the occupation of the university's main and regional campuses, however, the rector was prevented from serving a third term when she was forced to resign. The resignation of an illegitimately imposed rector, nonetheless, was only the first step in democratizing the university. Indeed, the democratization of the university is not an end but rather a means to transforming the university. As Mario added during the forum at the Juan Lindo Auditorium:

> Our struggle to democratize university governance is a means and not an end. Democratizing the university is an issue that requires a reformist political project. We need to break away from the neoliberal university to transform it into a popular pluriversity. This must form part of the reformist spirit we have been talking about for so long. The university student movement is a few steps away from democratizing university governance. Now, our main challenge is to build a radical democracy which at the same time aims for a profound decolonial transformation.

It is important to emphasize that Mario's knowledge has influenced my own thinking and that my thinking has influenced his own understanding of the university and its social implications. An intersubjective and collective epistemic *minga*, as Santos (2018) takes up the campesino and Indigenous term referring to collective and cooperative ways of producing for the community, is what was created through our constant collaboration in urgent research projects or in writing political statements with other student activists. Before, Mario did not use the term decolonial or pluriversity, and I hardly used the term reform in the same way he understood it. In working together, different concepts came up, such as radical democracy, which now forms part of this dissertation and the University Student Movement's most recent political project. In one of our

meetings which no longer felt like meetings, Mario said "you have changed the way I think of certain things" [*vos has venido a cambiar mi forma de pensar las cosas*]. I expressed the same thing to him. On another occasion, I sent him a WhatsApp message on some ideas I had been thinking regarding the radical democratization of the university and society.

> Since Juan Antonio Hernández Alvarado [the Honduran president's brother] was indicted in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, there have been massive protests across the country, organized primarily by students and youth in general. For the first time, students from private universities joined the social struggle as did the Chilean student movement several years ago. The student movement in Honduras is not, as I have repeated many times, a movement aimed at transforming the university through a representative democracy. It has to do more with changing the social relations of power and knowledge. It's about the radical link it should have with society and its diverse actors and communities. It's about decolonizing the social, epistemic, and ontological institutions and structures that subjugate entire peoples and communities. Let's consider the actions and practices that take place in the streets. On the one hand, massive mobilizations offer a glimpse of hope and happiness. On the other hand, when the military police make their spectacular appearance, a darkness envelops everything in its path. The military police repress by firing live rounds at protesters who simply want to defend the dignity of their people and communities. The streets, nonetheless, become educational spaces where people from diverse backgrounds come together to create the conditions of possibility of building a radically democratic country. Much of the research (usually informed by postmodern and postcolonial theory) conducted by social scientists argues against state-centered forms of protest, but I think state-centrism is only problematic when taking power is the goal rather than creating alternative sociabilities. Protesting here in Honduras is not about taking power but getting rid of a dictator who is clearly in the way of our democratic project of organizing a National Constituent Assembly. A constituent national assembly will require the participation of all social movements. It is not a question of taking power, but rather of reconfiguring power horizontally and socially. Continuing to conceive of power vertically is the problem with Eurocentric theories of the State. When the collective is built among various actors in struggle, power is built from below and through reciprocal social relationship. If political parties dominate the terms and conditions of the constituent national assembly, then power will once again be reconfigured vertically and leave out social movements and prevent the construction of a radical and participatory democracy. Even if it's a leftist political party in opposition to the conservative party, let's not allow any party to strip away the people of their legitimate right to self-determination. If we are going to build a new society, we will have to distance ourselves or perhaps break away from the nation-state. We will not only have to distinguish these terms (nation and state) conceptually but we must also separate them in practice. If they are understood isomorphically, we will result with a

> homogenizing nation-state, where one group will represent the ideal "personhood" of a heterogenous territory. The alterity of others, consequently, will be annihilated as has always been the case. If we are going to build something beyond the nation-state, let us think what a state rooted in and self-determined by autonomous campesino, Indigenous, Black, and urban communities will look like. Maybe we have to get rid of these concepts altogether. This does not mean we must configure a new political map, but rather of changing the meaning of *being* part of a territory where radical democracy underpins the practices and knowledges of all the communities that are within the geographical demarcations that we consider Honduras. There is no recipe to make this happen. However, to achieve this we, at least, need what Dussel (2009) calls "a plural and united general will" where a project will be built intersubjectively and collectively (p. 138), where power will be reconfigured horizontally through the articulations of the diverse social sectors of Honduras, particularly conformed and informed by social movements that struggle every day to rethink and reconfigure the country in more radical terms. Finally, to break away from neoliberalism's colonizing logic expressed through individualistic values, the collective must be strengthened to avoid the fragmentation caused by possessive individualism. This does not mean that there will be no differences and conflicts between individuals or diverse groups once we start building a new society. Rather, through these tensions we hope to strengthen our democracy. Let us avoid, at all costs, when it is our time to build a new society, that those who wield communicative power and communicative action continue to silence the people and communities that have resisted colonialism, neocolonialism, and internal colonialism for 527 years. It is not for nothing that the word radical, if we take its original meaning, refers to that which has roots. We do not want a liberal democracy where the sum of individuals determines the direction of the diverse communities found in this territory we now know as Honduras. What we want is something more radical, something that is rooted in our communities and in our sense and way of being. Let us root our radical democracy in our territories and build something truly historical, where future generations will be able to see and feel the past in the present as the path to the future.

When he read my long message, he asked me if he could publish it in the University Student Movement's WordPress. I said that it would be nice to have students read my thoughts and to critique it. Although I previously did not know that this form of member checking existed, it became the most valuable way to share what I had learned with student activists. The epistemic *minga* thus consisted of sharing as well as collaborating in research that many times strayed away from my research proposal, that is, it moved toward strengthening, however little possible, the University Student Movement's political project. Never was I a lead investigator or

discussant in our laborious meetings and research projects, which points to decolonial research practices disrupting epistemic extractivism and colonizing methodologies (Grosfoguel, 2016; Smith, 1999). As a collaborator, instead, I simply contributed to the discussions and at times shared texts that were difficult to find. In our first meetings, on the other hand, Mario told me that my thoughts were important to the meetings and discussion but that at times they were too academic and abstract, and he was right. It took some time to learn to contribute with more concrete examples. I had to sacrifice the academic in me to learn how to think with, know with, and be with those in struggle.

Student Movement's Politico-Academic Project

Although cooptation and coercion have been (and continue to be) undeniable factors impeding the democratization of the university, student activists have continued to restructure and rearticulate the student movement horizontally. To create a horizontal student organization, student activists have organized student associations in each discipline. Coopting students has become more difficult within a horizontal structure with multiple and diverse leaders, spokespeople, delegates, secretaries, and representatives who are held accountable in public assemblies. Horizontality, concomitant with a radical political culture, has begun to rid the university from its impregnated authoritarianism which began its gestation in 1982. As a result, the authoritarian political culture no longer has the hegemonic position it once enjoyed. University reform implemented without student participation, for instance, would be faced with massive protests and long-term occupations.

The university is now a place of contestation where students are continuing to weave a radically democratic political culture of their own, organized as a network of student associations or, better yet, as a complex ensemble of social relations through which the political and cultural

are intermeshed (Gramsci, 1971). Maintaining this network articulated within an institution receiving a flow of new students every year, however, is not an easy task. In one of our conversations, Mario described newly admitted students as less political. A higher percentage of admitted students come from the middle and upper class since the College Board admissions test was implemented (Mendoza, 2014). This may be a contributing factor to the depoliticization of university students. While more students attending public schools are filtered out of public universities by entrance exams and thus are prevented from attending public universities, an increasing number of students exposed to the "international" curriculum taught in private bilingual schools teaching the knowledge the College Board evaluates are being accepted by UNAH. When I interviewed Julio, he emphasized the need to change these exclusive entrance exams.

> Another issue that we have is the admissions exam designed by the College Board. If you fail to pass the exam three times, you are prevented permanently from attending a public university. If these students still want to get a higher education, they must go to private universities. This mercantilist logic which commodifies education has been adopted by our autonomous national university when it enforced an admissions exam and when it imposed other exams specific to each academic program. What we see is a decline in student enrollment and fewer academic programs offered at the university. In contrast, we see a steady rise in student enrollment in the private sector. Certainly, student enrollment is increasing in private universities, but this does not mean that it is because there is a real capacity of the Honduran population to pay for a private education. But there is no other alternative, which leads many to take out loans for simply wanting to receive a higher education when the state can provide a higher education to many more students.

As student activists democratize university governance, they have realized that the curriculum and the academic programs offered must also form an integral part of what they call their academic-political project. In the next section, I discuss in more detail the "international" curriculum disguising the neocolonial efforts to restructure the university's governing bodies and

curriculum. How student activists conceptualize the curriculum in relation to their academic-political project is discussed in subsequent sections.

Neocolonial Curriculum and Governance

Imagine a world where a curriculum is implemented to dictate what knowledge universities should teach, how it should be taught, what type of research and approaches are likely to yield promising results, that is, lucrative results (a contradiction of what an autonomous and socially responsible scientific/academic/intellectual practice should look like), and what instruments should be used to evaluate said knowledge production. Imagine the impact this curriculum has on the overall education system in each country as PK-12 schools aspire to meet, what I call, the curricular adjustment plans dictated from above. I also want you to imagine a world where a neocolonial curriculum is used to instruct, evaluate, and enforce the implementation of said curriculum. What mechanisms are used to implement this neocolonial curriculum? Which international organizations are involved? Who benefits from these curricular adjustment plans? Who is excluded? What impact does this neocolonial curriculum have on public universities and on public education in general? These questions point to international economic and financial organizations such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Torres, 2009, 2014; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002). Knowing the organizations responsible for designing said neocolonial curriculum is not enough, however, because it does not address its concrete implementation. It also hides the ways in which curriculum is resisted on the ground.

In order to meet the conditionalities and standards imposed by international economic and financial organizations responsible for designing the neocolonial curriculum, universities in

the peripheries must increase their competitiveness. They must move along a ranking system and meet a set of criteria elaborated in the Global North and implemented by the domestic elite (Ordorika & Lloyd, 2015). Foucault (1975) was right when he discussed ranking as both a form of discipline and punishment: "Discipline rewards simply by the play of awards, thus making it possible to attain higher ranks and places; it punishes by reversing this process. Rank in itself serves as a reward or punishment" (p. 181). Within this ranking system, scholars must publish in prestigious journals which usually entails publishing in English, thinking with dominant theoretical perspectives, and capturing reality by effectively employing rigorous methodologies. Scientific production is, additionally, limited to increasing patents usually sold off to the highest corporate bidders or handed over to corporate donors who have become the rightful owners of said patents (Lander, 2008). Higher education reform, in this regard, aims to increase efficiency and productivity. The coloniality of the curriculum consequently positions universities in the Global South as traditional institutions in need of development and progress. Discursively positioned as backward institutions, universities, as a result, must promote how to think like the developed modern world and must do whatever it takes to outperform other universities to compete for potential transnational companies interested in the products universities in the Global South have to offer, namely, the cheap skilled labor produced by universities.

The coloniality of education reform becomes more evident when considering the discourse on traditional and inefficient institutions which can only be fixed, developed, and modernized by external agents. This resonates with the evolutionary and developmentalist discourses of the 19th century and modernist perspectives in the second half of the 20th century. The white man's burden is to civilize others in the political, social, and economic image of its own Whiteness. Pedagogy, additionally, has been reduced to efficient teaching practices. It no

longer refers to the complex ensemble of learning processes that intersect the social, political, economic, and cultural. Its vital connection with social life and philosophy have been disarticulated and invalidated within a modern/colonial capitalist world system (Puiggrós, 1980). It is not surprising that the politico-cultural and pedagogical experiences within the student movement and the creation of democratic spaces, meanings, and practices are perceived as threats and must therefore be silenced at all costs.

If the French and Anglo educational models in the 19th century sought to form technocrats and professionals and intellectuals to sustain the modern capitalist world system and nation state, as I analyzed in chapter four, then the Latin American educational model sought and continues to seek to get rid of the barbarity left in the continent, that is, the Indigenous and resistant ways of thinking, sensing, being, belonging, and becoming. Colonization, in other words, is the dominant curriculum's main objective. To understand the coloniality of the curriculum requires a sociohistorical and geopolitical outlook toward pedagogy. In other words, pedagogy entails multiple, diverse, and conflicting forms of learning within the sociohistorical particularity of a region, country, or place. The hegemonic form involves the subjugation of an individual or collective to conform to the dominant subjectivity. Nevertheless, we continue to find spaces of resistance to this subjugation, such as university student activists who, however fragmented their ideas, content, and form of organizing, demonstrate that an education system, understood as a social and socializing system of learning, is always contested. We must, out of ethical responsibility, visibilize these sites of resistance. When capitalist conceptions of the world and modernity/coloniality's ontology are contested, we must highlight these struggles to not lose sight of the possible alternatives that are being built in the very process of resistance and reexistence.

We must, therefore, be careful not to conceive of the neocolonial curriculum in deterministic terms. To conceive of it deterministically would only naturalize it, leaving the very actors involved hidden from this multidimensional picture. How, then, does a curriculum produced by international organizations in the Global North articulate itself in the Global South? How do hegemonic knowledge practices following a neoliberal logic become to appear natural and thus inevitable? Like colonial and neocolonial governance structures working at the national level which facilitate the extraction of resources and the implementation and enforcement of the global political economy, universities, too, must establish hierarchical governance structures to enforce and sustain the coloniality of higher education policy and curriculum.

In neocolonial contexts, this mechanism requires an authority willing to discipline its faculty, staff, and students seeking to disrupt—that is, to democratize—the established order or status quo. Maintaining order is, at the end, the main objective. To maintain order, punishment is an invaluable instrument. Mario, for instance, who is one of the criminalized university student activists, may potentially receive three years in prison for "illegally" occupying university facilities. In the first week of November 2019, several student activists were found dead. One student was arrested by the police and later found dead in a ditch, with a burnt tire on top of his face, symbolizing, in a brutal form, the consequences of student activism which is often expressed by blocking streets with burning tires. His death sent a message of terror. Student activists fearing that something similar would happen to them, have fled the country and are currently living in exile in neighboring Central American countries.

Modernizing "Traditional" University Governance

"Traditional" co-governance structures, as some scholars argue (Bernasconi, 2008), impede the effective implementation of policy aimed at modernizing Latin American universities. As comparative education scholar Bernasconi (2013) asserts,

> Sadly, in some countries, that function of autonomy continues to be necessary today. However, in most of the region, stable democracies with reasonable leadership are consolidating a space of civilized dialogue in which universities can afford, at low risk to their prerogatives, to allow more policymaking in higher education on the part of elected officials, rather than slamming the door of autonomy in their faces. (pp. 4-5)

There is thus a clear difference between modern universities with those which "sadly" continue to hold on to traditional notions of university autonomy. The colonial discourse used to describe universities in the region as traditional, archaic, uncivilized, or chaotic intends to justify their modernization through neoliberal education reform. When considering the "modern" character of Latin American autonomous universities, as addressed in the previous chapter, and the political ontology of these institutions we begin to see their dynamic character more clearly. If some institutions became stagnant and corrupt perhaps has more to do with the political cultures within and beyond the university preventing democratic political cultures from emerging (as one can easily observe in the Honduran student movement in the 1980s, the Mexican student movement of 1999, and the Chilean student movement (Bellei et al., 2014; González-Ledesma, 2014; Meneses-Reyes, 2019; Murillo, 2017; Ordorika et al., 2019)

The modernization and effective governance of the university entails the creation of a neoliberal institution capable of producing possessive individuals such as highly competitive researchers and students who may be easily absorbed by the colonial system disguised as meritocratic. Indeed, merit hides the historically embedded social structures continuing to exclude according racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual markers. Academic capitalism is only one

unit or maybe one lesson to be learned from this neocolonial curriculum and governance structure (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). As academics compete for spoiled crumbs, they also detach themselves from their social reality and from the collective struggles emerging within and beyond the university.

This neocolonial curriculum has not only been implemented toward education as it may first appear. If we examine how it was implemented toward healthcare, we find that a neoliberal pedagogy sought to create a commonsense delimiting what types of institutions are imaginable. The colonization of the imagination or the imaginary is what is at stake where only the private sector may provide the solutions to the public's demands (Castoriadis, 1987). This neoliberal pedagogy is what feminist decolonial scholar Rita Segato (2018) calls, although for different reasons, the pedagogy of cruelty, which, for her, is

> a practice of *expropriating jouissance* made to serve *appropriative greed.* The repetition of violence and cruelty produces an effect of normalization and thus leads to the low levels of empathy that are indispensable for predatory enterprises. Habitual cruelty is directly proportional to the isolation of citizens that results from their desensitization to the suffering of others and to narcissistic and consumerist forms of enjoyment. A historical project guided by the aim of forging bonds that might sustain mutual happiness turns into a historical project guided by the aim of acquiring things, by acquisition as a dominant form of satisfaction. While bonds produce community, things produce individuals, who are in turn transformed into things. (p. 202)

This neoliberal pedagogy of cruelty is a hegemonic form of sociability sustained by a pedagogy of power. Curriculum, understood in its hegemonic form, therefore, is a complex ensemble of social, pedagogic, and intersubjective relations of power. As Gramsci (2005) argued long ago:

> Every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship and occurs not only within a nation, between the various forces of which the nation is composed, but in the international and world-wide field, between complexes of national and continental civilisations. (p. 666)

There is a multidimensional articulation when it comes to the neocolonial curriculum since it works at the global, societal, institutional, collective, and individual levels. The neocolonial curriculum teaches aspiring students to consume knowledge at a hefty price. It teaches parents that they have the freedom to choose whether their children will succeed or not. Indeed, it delimits what success entails. After all, in a neoliberal society it is the individual's decisions which ultimately lead to success or failure. Institutionally, the neocolonial curriculum instructs university administrators in charge of attaining accreditation and higher ranking how their university may improve through evaluation instruments, new managerialism, and curriculum reform. In addition, it teaches/disciplines faculty members that they must compete for resources in order to outperform colleagues and friends. Here, performance is determined by quantity rather than quality, individual as opposed to collective ways of producing knowledge. Faculty members, who spend their time publishing papers and consuming conferences as commodities and thus follow the logics of neoliberalism (Nicolson, 2017), also teach these values to their students. This is the hidden curriculum of this globally articulated neocolonial curriculum impacting higher education institutions and education systems in general. The coloniality of power and knowledge is, in other words, embedded in academic structures. Consequently, the latter sustains and legitimizes the former. It is for this very reason student activists believe that organizing politically and reclaiming democratic spaces are critical for the construction of an inclusive, pluriversal curriculum and university. This is what Santos (2007b) conceives as the ecology of knowledges where varying and multiples ways of knowing converge in an intercultural or interepistemic space of translation and intersectionality.

Diametrically opposed to this radically democratic and pluriversal project is the neocolonial curriculum seducing administrators, professors, and students with rewards. Maybe a

promotion, a raise, a research incentive, or a scholarship to the first world is awarded when performance levels are maintained high. But for whom does the university perform? Surely, the criteria used to quantify performance are valid and reliable markers, at least from a corporate point of view, but what about other factors such as the public university's role in society (Rhoten & Calhoun, 2011)? Has the university's public relevance been limited to their capacity to produce knowledge that may be transformed into commodities and services? Has it become an institution that thingifies all that passes through it (Césaire, 2000)? If that is the case, what we have are publicly funded universities which transform students and academics into commodities, thereby positioning students and academics according to their social, epistemic, geopolitical, technical, and economic value. For a more elaborate account of how public universities remain public on paper but private in practice, Lander (2008) discusses the laws that were rescinded or passed which ultimately allowed public universities to transfer publicly funded knowledge production to the private sector. The severity of where universities are heading or, better yet, where they have arrived, points not only to the privatization of universities but rather to the ways in which public universities may remain public in appearance insofar as they continue to receive public funds, and, at the same time, use their resources to produce knowledge, patents, skilled and semi-skills labor, and other technological innovations for the private sector. Inasmuch as the university produces what Lander (2008) conceives as a neoliberal science geared toward incessant commodification, exploitation, displacement, and (epistemic) extractivism, then one may be correct to say that universities have indeed been recolonized by the global knowledge economy which has rendered biotechnology, ecology, and life itself as a source of profit. In what follows, I share how student activists conceptualize the university curriculum in their own words. I then describe in more detail the university student movement's struggle to democratize a

university within a neocolonial, postcoup, and dictatorial context. The fatalistic perspectives conceiving of neoliberal globalization and the curricular adjustment plans reforming higher education as inevitable are thus unsettled.

Maria: A Sociological Perspective

The student movements' primary goal is for the public university to remain public. There's an article in the constitution, article 160 I believe, which states that the purpose of the university is to give answers and alternatives to the social problems faced by the Honduran people. So, our political project was based on that, that the university should respond to the country's social problems and that it should include every social sector in this transformative process. To achieve this, we must first be critical of the university's educational model and the way we are taught at the university because we're not being taught to think, to criticize, and to construct. The university simply instructs you to obey in order to prepare you for the precarious labor force. But the university doesn't teach students constructive, critical, and humanist paradigms, which may contribute something to society.

Many of us have read much of what is being written in Latin America, but, most importantly, we have also shared our knowledges of resistance [*conocimientos de lucha*] with each other. Many of our classmates not involved in the student movement, however, do not even consider the problems Latin America is facing, which means they remained [intellectually] colonized. Many of them continue to adhere to the paradigm of neoliberal globalization. We, on the other hand, try to defend our university from being absorbed by this privatizing neoliberal model.

We must build an alternative where we can continue to preserve what is public, and that, in this case, the public opens itself up to the diverse population of Honduras in order to build

something radically different. Because, as Boaventura de Sousa Santos argues, the university is a reflection of the type of society we live in, and, in turn, the type of society we have is the reflection of the university. So that was our purpose. If we get to change the university and the ways in which knowledge is transmitted and how students are formed, then we will also help change our society. And here, we are talking about a sociological principle. Sociology should not only interpret; it should not only analyze; it should not follow classical perspectives. Rather, its purpose is to assist in transforming society. So that's what the university student movement proposes to do.

For me, personally, my experience in the student movement completely changed my life. Completely, because I initially thought that I would go to the university to get a degree. But as I got involved with the student movement, I learned why we had to transform the university. I learned to have conviction. If it was necessary, we would give our life for this struggle. That's one of the most important things the student movement continues to teach me, which is the conviction of change.

Julio: A Juridical Perspective

As student activists, we have maintained neoliberalism as our priority as it relates to the education that's being offered at the university. We see the University Student Movement as a platform which organizes various student collectives and associations as the only viable way to fight against neoliberalism. We are already seeing the expressions of these neoliberal trends precisely in the curriculum and the types of academic programs offered.

We have strong convictions when it comes to these changes. Related to this are the abundance of technical programs offered at the university. Currently, the university produces technical knowledge with the objective of offering the market cheap labor instead of producing

knowledge that may provide us with the tools to criticize our society and think and create possible alternatives. The fact that the university intends to eliminate critical thought is what we oppose. The university doesn't want students who criticize the system. It doesn't want students to become aware of what's going on around them. It especially doesn't want students who are willing to raise their voices when they disagree with the injustices they see and experience.

Therefore, there is a shift in what's being offered academically. From the social sciences or from reflexive critical theory what we learn is that there is a movement toward the technification and the mass production of cheap labor for transnational interests. The university's authorities are restructuring the curriculum to adapt it to what is demanded of students according to the international market, which totally neglects the needs of the Honduran people. The university and its academic programs must be reconnected with the diverse needs and aspirations of the Honduran population.

Erica: An Anthropological Perspective

Social space is where a reality of multiple dimensions converge, which involves different protagonists who generate a social meaning of an autonomous university. This is being disrupted by the recolonizing logic of a mercantilist education which has crystallized itself as the only way of knowing. This is the neoliberal ideology we are resisting.

When we talk about regaining our territory, we are referring to the identification we have with this space. The meaning we give to this space revolves around a spiritual framework and feelings and emotions that require the recovery of public spaces that have been historically dominated by the few. We are the ones who for so long were invisibilized by and excluded from these spaces. Because we form part of history, we also have the possibility of being young

builders of dreams, art, and knowledge, while maintaining the pedagogical principle of learning by doing. We are the joy of today.

The student movement, in this regard, has created social spaces for the full realization of democracy and the interrelationship of fields of knowledge that contribute to the reconfiguration of a new university system associated with the trends of interdisciplinary knowledge. This reconfiguration revolves around a complexity of changes demanded of our time.

Mario: A Radically Democratic and Pluriversal Perspective

In our university, we need research linked with social action aimed at a paradigmatic transformation. It is necessary to deepen our understanding of the sociocultural content already present. With this we understand the need to know, do, coexist, and be in democracy as a cross-cutting axis in education. In other words, the quality of higher education must be understood as a process of curricular reform, which entails the decentralization of the university curriculum so that it is open, flexible, diversified, adaptable, scientific, and holistic. This involves the reconstruction of critical thinking, which requires us to rethink the epistemological, gnoseological, ontological and teleological bases for the understanding and transformation of society.

It is an ineluctable responsibility that faculty and students participate in democratizing the university. Only direct student participation in the construction of the new university through student associations will we ensure a quality education. It is the inclusion of student associations in the construction of a new curriculum and university which we have been struggling for since the coup.

A quality university education is one that allows pedagogical, didactic, and androgynous approaches and the inclusion of different sociocultural content. This requires the transformation

of a university lacking popular and cultural content into one that is linked to distinct communities, localities, and regions. This will lead to the creation of a new university curriculum, that is, the creation of an open, flexible, participatory and adaptable university curriculum that allows us to understand and comprehend all the visions and worldviews of the diverse cultures of Honduras. Above all, we want a liberating and transformative university, that is, a university that allows us to become independent.

In contrast to what we demand, the transitional commission at the university implementing higher education reforms sought to build a modern university. The question is, what modernity are we talking about? The one with endless wars, violence, and xenophobia? The polarization of society? The accumulation of capital in a few hands? Hyper-specialization? Neoextractivism? The homogenization of curricula for the internationalization and exchange of human capital worldwide? The elimination of disciplines and technification of knowledge? The decay of thought?

An education model that does not help solve the country's problems lacks a curriculum that contextualizes the needs of the country. But how can society be transformed from these contents? What content, values, and valuations must be built to transform our reality? Due to the lack of epistemological sustenance and ontological and teleological conceptions, such a large vacuum is created that it almost seems impossible to create methodologies and pedagogies that allow for the transformation of reality. This lack of vision is a result of the university we now have, characterized by a hyperspecialized sense of being and knowing. That is, the university is the largest expression of scientific reductionism that incapacitates us in solving the problems we face.

The epistemological, gnoseological, ontological and teleological sustenance of understanding, systematizing, deepening, and transforming the ways of being, thinking, living together [*conviviendo*], acting and generating knowledge must come from the communities. These communities provide us with a general understanding and even a methodological guideline of resistance (praxis) to transform our realities from everyday life and practice to more organized forms of resisting social institutions. This is opposed to the obscurantism of an academic, institutionalist, objectivist, and technocratic paradigm where the imaginary institution of the university tries to convince us by telling us that, 'We have the truth; what we say is the right thing to do; what we say has to be done; what we do and have been doing is the right thing to do; you are wrong and we are right; do not protest; do not speak and do not criticize; study and work.'

But this doesn't convince us. What we want is to build a liberating, pluriversal, popular and transformative education. We want an education that begins with a paradigmatic shift from the destructive sciences to ecological, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-extractivist, and ancestral knowledges, and, above all, a university that prioritizes the learning capacity of communities to develop their own autonomy, that is, the ability of each society or community to challenge their reality and to constitute their own freedoms towards a more just world where people may live with dignity. This requires us to change the statically predetermined curriculum into a dynamically undetermined curriculum. That is why we need to set up curriculum reform committees made up of faculty members, students, and social activists. What impedes all of this crystalizing is that the university still conceives of students and our *pueblos* as mere recipients of content and not as active subjects capable of building critical ideas related to education. The active link between university and society that allows the democratic participation of

communities, parents, and students in reforming the university is thus indispensable. For these reasons we fight for the democratization of the university's government, which will allow us to lead university reform from below. It is our hope that this will also lead to a profound sociocultural and decolonial transformation.

A Subaltern Curriculum

I shared the knowledge produced by students to disrupt the authorial individualism that continues to form part of the way we do research. I hope that what I shared demonstrates how student activists think of curriculum in relation to the changes they demand. I hope that their knowledge of the university and the critical importance of changing the curriculum demonstrates more than knowing about such matters but rather underscores a deep understanding of how the dominant curriculum impacts their lives and the communities from which they come. I would also like to emphasize, once again, that what student activists hope to change goes beyond deconstruction. Their politico-curricular project is a praxis that reimagines the university as a radically democratic, situated, and engaged institution, one that is always-already an integral part of the distinct communities or *pueblos* to which they belong and the *conocimientos y prácticas de lucha* they have constructed collectively.

Through the social relations student activists have built collectively and through intersubjective ways of learning, an emergent, albeit hidden curriculum has been constructed. In contrast to Giroux's (1977) understanding of the hidden curriculum, here, the curriculum refers to the subversive, subaltern, infrapolitical, molecular, and constructive rather than the unintended capitalist values, behaviors, and knowledges taught in schools. What undergirds student activists' understanding of the curriculum is the knowledge that is excluded from the university. It is about the stories that will never be heard and about the struggles that will never be visibilized in an

institution designed to erase alterity and collectivity. The struggle to democratize governance and curriculum is a decolonial struggle even if the concepts such as decoloniality, coloniality of power/knowledge/being, or the geopolitics of knowledge do not form part of the discourse. What counts are the decolonial practices student activists are enacting and the conditions of making another university possible. Cusicanqui's (2012) argument clarifies this last point: "There can be no discourse of decolonization, no theory of decolonization, without a decolonizing practice" (p. 100).

Emerging Political Cultures and the Democratizing of the University

> Those who only have individual aspirations, will never understand a collective struggle. (University Student Movement, 2019)

> In the adversity of ideas, it is possible to construct a diversity of solutions. (M. Gomez, personal communication, August 19, 2019)

Williams (1977) conceptualized dominant, residual, and emergent sociocultural practices as politically dynamic. These concepts can be utilized to understand the ways in which student movements and social movements construct political cultures that resist dominant and residual political cultures. The political cultures at hand do not have ontological solidity or essence. In other words, there is no true political culture. What exists instead are tensions, dissensus, and conflicts that unfold in power-laden fields and contexts. The political and the cultural are, additionally, not ontologically separated domains without any sort of overlap. Indeed, the political has cultural implications and the cultural has political as well as social consequences. Both are relationally interconnected and enacted by social actors. As student activists create resistant collective political identities and subjectivities, they also make it more difficult for the dominant political culture to articulate itself hegemonically.

When the dominant political culture finds a way to exacerbate internal conflicts, the emerging political culture may lose the vitality it gained through the webs of significance and identification built across distinct groups (Geertz, 1973). This is precisely what happened in 2018 when I began writing my preliminary exams and dissertation proposal. The student movement's internal conflicts seemed to have reached a point of no return. What follows is an account of student activists who decided, despite their fragmentation, to rebuild the student movement into a radically democratic movement aimed at transforming the university into a popular university where distinct social movements, collective actors, and multiple experiences and knowledges born in struggle could converge. Creating the conditions of possibility is what student activists demanded. To re-build the student movement, student activists created workshops, organized student associations, held assemblies, and re-appropriated university space to give it new meaning and purpose.

La Escuelita del Movimiento Estudiantil

The first workshop of *La Escuelita del Movimiento Estudiantil* [The Student Movement's Little School] I was invited to took place in the engineering building. Eduardo, who is studying electrical engineering, sent me a text message on WhatsApp to inform me that the first workshop would be in room 405 at 11 a.m. on Saturday, February 9, 2019. That Saturday morning, I felt like my research was finally going somewhere. I finally had gained access to the pedagogical spaces of which I had only discussed theoretically in my dissertation proposal. In many ways, this workshop ended the disappointment I initially felt as I failed to gain access to various student activist organizations which, for very good reasons, ignored my requests to meet with them.

Reconstructed Fieldnotes

The first thing I did as I got off the bus and made my way to UNAH's main entrance was to Google search the university's campus map. Once I found a map with the names of each building, I walked around the campus with my phone in hand as though it were a compass. Every building had its assigned letter and number (e.g. A1, A2, B1, B2). After making several wrong turns in my attempt to find building B2, I finally saw the large yellow letters in front of a four-story building with chipped and faded paint covering its facade. I expected a much more modern building for the College of Engineering, like the ones you may find in universities in the United States. The architecture, however, was no different from other buildings. It was 10:45 a.m. when I found room 405 on the fourth floor. I peeked through the door's narrow vertical window and saw that no one was inside. I did not want to be the first person in a space I was just invited to, so I decided to sit and wait in the hallway.

As I sat there, trying to cool down from the long walk, I thought of the sacrifices student activists make as they spend their Saturday mornings and a good part of their afternoons in workshops that have little relevance to their academic programs and the official curriculum they are expected to learn and succeed in. Perhaps sacrifice is the wrong word. Maybe the words I am looking for are commitment and active solidarity. Students could very well be hanging out with friends, studying for an upcoming exam, or recovering from the previous night's outing. Instead, they choose to spend their time learning what will never be taught in their classes and what will unlikely make them more academically successful. It is a sacrificial offering of their time that disrupts the neoliberal values and subjectivities ingrained in our sense of being and way of knowing. Time no longer measures money but rather the quality of experiences shared in a common space.

In a neoliberal university, in contrast, students must learn as individuals and work diligently to outperform their classmates in hopes of climbing an already broken, precarious social ladder. Students are dehumanized and thingified as they are transformed into commodities. Knowing what type of human commodities are produced by the university may be a good indicator as to where the university is positioned or ranked. The university thus becomes what Santos (2018) considers a "gulag of falsely autonomous individuality" (p. 99). It is the self-fetishization and the dehumanization which must form part of any discussion around decolonization. In this *escuelita*, on the other hand, students come together in the same space to learn collectively. They refuse to be turned into things. In these workshops, there are no specialists. There is no division between teacher and learner. The *escuelita* reveals a collective will to learn together as opposed to the individual aspirations of those seeking the material rewards promised by neoliberalism's meritocratic ideology.

After about 30 minutes of waiting, thinking, and reflecting in the hallway, I decided to text Eduardo. He did not reply. It did not take long to convince myself that I had misunderstood Eduardo or that somehow I was in the wrong building. I decided to reread his old WhatsApp messages just to confirm. I was in the right place after all. "Maybe something came up, and the workshop was cancelled," I thought. Shortly after, I walked down the hallway toward the stairwell. I thought of leaving, but for some reason or another I convinced myself to wait a few more minutes. I stood in the hallway for five more minutes looking down the stairwell, hoping that I would hear the echo of someone's voice. I felt like I was the only person in the building. It was Saturday after all.

Not too long after, luckily, I saw Eduardo walking up the stairs with some of his friends. Eduardo was dressed casually. He wore blue jeans and a gray short sleeve button up shirt. His

university student ID attached to a lanyard hung in front of his chest. As I walked up to him, he introduced me to his three *compas* [companions/friends] as "the guy I was talking to you about who is writing his dissertation on the university student movement." After we all shook hands, Eduardo gestured for me to follow him to room 405. I have to admit that I felt a little nervous because I did not know what other student activists would think of my participation in a learning space specifically designed for them. From my previous encounters with student activists, I learned that they are usually cautious when it comes to strangers entering their social space since hundreds of student activists and social activists have been profiled, criminalized, and accused for sedition (e.g., Eduardo and Mario) (Vommaro & Briceño-Cerrato, 2018).

Immediately after entering the classroom, the five of us sat down in the individual wooden school desks. Eduardo then had us rearrange our desks in a circle. It did not take long for everyone to start talking about their *carreras* which can be translated to English as both a career and an academic program. The academic program chosen is directly related to a specific career or profession. The emphasis placed on professional education is the Napoleonic residue continuing to corrode the university into an apolitical, functionalist university within a neoliberal context.

The female student to my right, Carmen, who had several tattoos exposed on her wrist and neck, began to share what social work students "really" do after they graduate. She was the first one to share because Eduardo asked sarcastically, "what do social workers in Honduras do anyway?" Carmen informed us that the few students who can find jobs usually enter the public sector and are employed in distinct government institutions or non-governmental organizations. Sometimes, she continued, "studies are done and then applied to the needs of certain communities." Eduardo then pointed at me (because he knew I had a sociology degree) and said,

“isn’t that what sociologists do?” Carmen said, “I guess sociologists conduct the studies and we try to implement the supposed ‘solutions’ their investigations points to,” she clarified. Her tone revealed her incredulousness of what social scientists have to offer through their analytical gaze. Social scientists are detached from the social reality of Honduras and usually use quantitative data to justify the use of specific social programs, without necessarily knowing what communities demand or considering what historically excluded peoples know about the social, political, economic, and ecological problems they are facing. From what I could pick up from the conversation, students distrust the government and the social projects they apparently implement. With the embezzlement of public funds destined for healthcare and education programs (“IHSS,” 2018), students know that social work in Honduras is nothing more than a smokescreen concealing the government’s corruption and complicity with extractivist projects and special economic zones in these very communities, which continue to defend their territories with their lives.

Another student named Eric joined the conversation and said that he was initially unsure to which academic program he was going to apply. His form of expressing himself revealed his socioeconomic and cultural background. Even within a space which privileges formal, academic Spanish, he refused to portray himself as someone he was not. This form of resistance was a way to maintain his sociocultural identity. Eric’s dark brown skin combined with his form of speech proudly portrayed to others his social position. After taking several placement tests, Eric felt more confused as to what he would study. After changing programs several times, he finally decided he wanted to study law. At UNAH, you can enroll in any academic program as long as your admissions exam scores are above the minimum score requirement of the academic program of interest. There are, however, new limitations being placed in other programs,

especially in the medical field. He said that nothing else seemed more "productive" than becoming a lawyer. It was not clear whether he meant that in Honduras other careers do not have a high demand or whether being a lawyer was more lucrative. Eduardo quickly said, in a humorous tone, that all Eric wanted to do was "defend cartel bosses and politicians." We all laughed at Eduardo's joke because we all knew he was referring to Honduras' narco-state status. Eric also started laughing.

When the first student responsible for facilitating the workshop entered the classroom, the jovial mood of the class remained the same. Eduardo introduced me to Angélica and told me that she, along with two other history students, were responsible for facilitating the class. She then asked me if I was the person that was coming to observe. Jokingly, I said, "*observando suena un poco feo*" [observing sounds a little ugly]. She laughed and said that it did sound more like I was there to supervise.

Once Angélica began to get things ready in front of the classroom, Héctor, also a history student, abruptly asked Eduardo, "*y este man por qué no ha dicho nada*" [and why hasn't this dude said anything?]. He did not use an aggressive tone, but I was caught off guard anyway. His calm voice and the way he enunciated his words sounded familiar. Hector was the same masked student activist who served as the spokesperson in one of the *tomas* [university occupations] I observed in November of 2018. To answer his question, I told him that I was attending the workshop to learn from student activists' experiences in the student movement and to learn about its history. I added that I was a doctoral student studying *pedagogía* (curriculum studies does not exist in Honduras and in many parts of Latin America, so it would have interrupted the flow of the conversation if I had explained the subfield of education scholarship) and that my dissertation focused on university student activism at UNAH, particularly student activism after the coup and

the current student movement. He said that my dissertation topic was a great choice and said that we could talk some more about the student movement after the workshop.

When the other two history students who were supposed to facilitate the class walked in, they apologized for arriving late and said that they thought the class began at noon. The male history student, José, had dreadlocks, a green long-sleeve flannel shirt rolled up to his elbows, and black shorts and boots. He had several tattoos exposed in his arm. The female history student, Claudia, wore grey baggy pants and an oversized black t-shirt. A white middle finger was imprinted on her T-shirt, and the finger was surrounded by the following phrases in bold letters: ***NO PARES DE LUCHAR, NO TE VENDAS*** **[DON'T STOP FIGHTING, DON'T SELL OUT].** Claudia's t-shirt expressed her relentless commitment to the student movement as well as her activist identity. It also expressed the possibility of coercion and cooptation, which have gravely affected the student movement. Now that the three history student facilitators had arrived, the workshop began.

Collective Learning Begins

When the three history students introduced themselves, Claudia shared the following objective she had written on the whiteboard: "The students participating in this workshop will learn reciprocally from one another since all knowledge is collective." Their goal was to create a pedagogical space in which knowing would form part of an intersubjective and collective process. At first, I thought that the student facilitators would only share their knowledge with us, but this was not the case. We were all asked to share what we knew about the student movement or what our experiences were in the student movement. Some students talked about political conjunctures, historical contexts, ruptures, articulations, horizontality, and verticality in relation to social organization as well as coercion, cooptation, and betrayal. They used these concepts to

talk about their social reality and their collective lived experiences in the student movement rather than a show of intelligence, as may be the case in some graduate courses where students try to outdo each other theoretically, competing, at times, without realizing it. I say this because I, too, have engaged in said competitions. Student activists, however, used concepts as heuristic devices to read or interpret the world they were trying to help change. Dialogue was praxis oriented. Abstract language that is far removed from reality was avoided. Their words were well-thought out and fluid. They spoke from experience rather than from a book or an article. There was no scholarly regurgitation. Concepts were used to read or interpret the world. Rather than reifying concepts, they used them prudently, always aware that, in the end, concepts are meant to understand, analyze, interpret, critique, reimagine, and transform a social context. They gave concrete examples of the abovementioned concepts and the way they experienced them. Specifically, they discussed the student movement's organizational structure and the political implications of creating a horizontal organization to avoid hierarchies and cooptation. The knowledge student activists shared that day could not be understood outside of social struggle and praxis, that is, of thought, collective action, and reflection. How else would an engineering student such as Eduardo, for example, learn to use concepts outside of his technical field? Consider, for instance, Eduardo's opinion related to the engineering curriculum:

> We are taught that human beings must be replaced by machines because they are not as efficient. That's what they teach us here. It must be the other way around, where the machine is used for the benefit of humanity. That's what we're trying to do in our associations and assemblies, and that's why the College of Engineering is becoming more human in a sense. We need to get out of our technical world and start getting to know the social issues more closely. All disciplines must ask social questions, not only sociology, not only history, not only anthropology, but we all ought to have that social component. If not, our disciplines will end up destroying society, by the way they are teaching us. The curriculum has not been transformed and that's why I wanted to be involved in this process because I'm also a pedagogue. That part is humanistic. I studied math education at the Pedagogical University. What I want is for engineering to be more human, more humanistic,

> more social. I want the College of Engineering to teach the future engineer to work with people. To do so, we must transform the curriculum. We don't have classes on ethics or interpersonal relationships. We only learn pure technique. Only now have engineering students started to think in interdisciplinary ways. Before, they only cared about whether their machines functioned well. We need clarity where we want the university to go.

Transdisciplinarity, here, is not a theoretical posture or fad to resolve disciplinary decadence. Instead, it is a knowledge practice emerging within the student movement, where student activists from distinct sociocultural and academic backgrounds, to borrow from the workshop's objective, "learn reciprocally from one another since all knowledge is collective." The student movement has thus created politico-pedagogical spaces in which knowledge attained from their own disciplines, extracurricular readings, and lived experiences have simultaneously opened an intersubjective space of learning.

As the discussions continued, another student walked in, about two hours late. When this student first spoke, he used expressive hand gestures. His mode of expressing himself reminded me of Slavoj Zizek, albeit with less spit. He was the most *chele* or light skinned student in the room. He wore a sleeveless black shirt like the ones worn by skaters in southern California. He also wore his hat backwards. His skinny jeans made his expensive looking Nike tennis shoes look bigger than they actually were.

When Federico spoke, the dynamics of the class began to change. Perhaps it was his demeanor or facial expressions. His gaze was analytical rather than attentive. At times, Federico's facial expression simply revealed doubt of what another student had said. He did not hide his disagreement. When he spoke, he articulated himself with finesse. He was not necessarily rude when he spoke but was rather straightforward and assertive in his discourse. As he dominated the discourse, the newer members, spoke less with the Zizekian personality in the room.

After a while, however, José calmly yet assertively told Federico that there were new members in the workshop and that the way we talk to each other must be pedagogical and dialogical, and that all of us in the room were part of the *escuelita popular* [popular little school]. Jose said, "This is not the way knowledge is constructed," while assuring Federico that he appreciated his participation, enthusiasm, and arguments. What I found most valuable about this interaction was the way Federico reacted. He apologized and said that sometimes being passionate and angry at the same time makes a person talk in ways that might not be shared by everyone. He spoke less after this interaction. When he did speak, however, he contextualized his arguments and elaborated them in ways that were accessible to everyone in the room, especially to those who were just entering the world of university student activism.

From what I could deduce from Federico's engagement with the topics at hand is that he felt nostalgic about the times the student movement took over the university and the days when tens of thousands of students took to the streets at a national level. He mentioned several times, "those were the days." Those days are over for now, however. The University Student Movement has entered a new phase, one that involves organizing student associations and reestablishing co-governance and curriculum reform, which was coopted in 1982 and eliminated after the coup of 2009. What needs to be underscored from my first participation in this workshop is that students are producing knowledge that is being used for the student movement. It is not only practical knowledge activists embody. Instead, theoretical knowledge and research forms part of these workshops, where students share their "findings." They theorize about their experiences and investigate to maintain the student movement moving dynamically and horizontally. To ignore, as José suggested, the processes changing the student movement usually results in emphasizing the facts of the student movement as though it were a fixed entity when it

is constantly adapting itself to the shifting sociopolitical and economic landscape as well as the university's institutional constraints and possibilities. In one of our initial conversations, Julio mentioned something similar when he said that we needed to rethink how we understand success and failure, specifically as it relates to what the student movement has accomplished or failed to accomplish. When student activists refer to the student movement's failure, what often results is disenchantment. In this regard, unlearning deficit, instrumental vocabularies is needed to learn how to speak in vocabularies of process, relationality, and possibility.

Angélica questioned Federico's reminiscing of past events: "what is it that matters most, the facts or the process [*los hechos o los procesos*] of the student movement?" If we only focus on historical facts, then we are left disillusioned with what we have failed to accomplish. If we consider the process of a social struggle, then we know that more work is always necessary, and that we must look at this political project as unfinished and in the making, always already entangled to that which came before and that which is in the process of becoming. On the other hand, once we accomplish something in an instrumental way and regard it as factual evidence of "success," it may very well work against the social movement because its members feel like the entire essence or being of the movement has been fulfilled, while not realizing that its sociohistorical raison d'être is paradoxically being stripped away. But if process is underscored, we are seriously considering the becoming of a movement and its collective actors. In what follows, the process of building a political culture through associations and assemblies disrupts the disenchantment that results from thinking of social movements in instrumental terms.

Self-Governance and the Construction of Obedient Power

> In just weeks, students and organized groups that began to express themselves in a non-formal way became a collective without defined organizational and management procedures; they quickly went into the framework of a common agenda, making decisions at the level of student assemblies in each academic

> program. It is from this process of interaction and that students began to challenge the university's authoritarianism. At the same time, there was a need to give identity and direction to this collective expression now known as the University Student Movement (MEU). This process of interaction and unity brings together all student actors including academic associations, college associations, and independent movements. In this sense the student movement needs to be understood as a social movement. (University Student Movement, 2019)

University student activists have created at least three different types of associations with their respective assemblies that form part of the self-governance structure within the university. The first association is quantitatively smaller and qualitatively more intimate and limited in sociopolitical and academic scope. The College of Social Sciences, for instance, has a student association in each discipline and each association holds their own student assemblies outside, usually in the smaller plazas in front of the college, to discuss internal issues related to infrastructure, student elections, curriculum, and unethical pedagogical practices of professors or corrupt behavior of administrators. At times, discussions revolve around broader issues impacting other student associations. Other times, issues relate to the social context or political conjuncture, as students refer to it, when each association must decide, during the assembly, what actions must be taken to meet the urgency of said conjuncture. Should the student association write a political statement to show solidarity? Who will write it? What should be included in the statement? Does the association want to support the protests and mobilizations organized by feminist, environmentalist, Indigenous, and campesino movements? Should the student association occupy the installations when dialogue is denied or when demands are not met? These are common questions discussed and debated during assemblies. Many times, the answers are obvious, but the discussions are unpredictable and indeed contribute more to student activists' political formation.

Assemblies are spaces in which dissensus and consensus are expressed. The elected representatives of the student association may not make decisions without the consensus of those participating in the assembly. It is becoming the new common sense of organizing where the political base commands [*aquí, las bases mandan*]. This political culture disrupts the verticality of politics of social movement in the 20th century (Melucci, 1996). Horizontality displaces hierarchical structures of governance where the president of an organization, syndicate, or social movement decides unilaterally what is best for the masses. The student association's representatives or spokespeople, in contrast, are forced to lead by obeying the voices of the political base. Here, autonomy, as described by Almendares during the forum mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, stands out more than ever: "autonomy is about self-determination and the courage to recognize our territory and the dignity of peoples to defend their sovereignty." In relation to the autonomy of each assembly, Mario interconnected the political with the affective:

> Since society is based on dialectical and therefore also conflicting relationships, the political becomes dynamic through dialectical relationships. As an assembly we also politicize pain, as long as we are able to learn from it to transform our reality. That is why this constant, fluctuating and growing politicization of society is being visualized because of the profound contradictions that produce grievances and injustices against the Honduran population. With this we can raise the need for politics as a mediator of social conflicts for the transformation of our own reality according to our needs, longings, hopes and potentialities. With this we can elucidate the panorama in which as a society we can debate, reflect, and change the ideas about our institutions and laws that govern us. Here, we are talking about autonomy (auto=self and nomos=laws or customs), that is, to be able to think of our realities critically and reflexively to institute new laws (or "eidos" = institutions) capable of meeting our demands and needs as a society.

Assemblies are spaces in which the political unfolds and where autonomy is born. The self-determination of student activists demonstrates their discontent not only with the university but also with the nation state and its exclusive laws and liberal forms of governance. This is what Cortina (1993) considers a procedural democracy where representation is the end goal rather

than the direct participation in matters affecting the collective. The political, understood broadly and socially dynamic, is a way to build institutions that are more just. The political culture created in assemblies aims to do just that, mainly, to unsettle the neoliberal university and rebuild one that is radically democratic and self-determined by the demands from below. Radical, ultimately, means to be rooted or situated as opposed to having a fundamentalist ideological position.

The second type of association and assembly is organized at the college level. Student associations of each academic program or discipline assist these assemblies. Here, student activists discuss the same questions stated above. Topics discussed in these larger assemblies may relate to the administration's suspension of a professor's contract. For instance, professors deemed too critical for the university have lost their jobs for not following the standard curriculum (Mario, for example, introduced me to several professors who lost their jobs in the recent years, including anthropologist Danira Miralda Bulnes, who I conversed with for several hours during my going away party in Honduras). When university authorities refuse to listen to the assembly's demands, what results are massive occupations of installations and walk outs. Frequently, the boulevard in front of UNAH is blocked and occupied by student activists. Other times press conferences are organized so that other colleges and the broader community may be informed about the issues affecting university students.

Coordinating collection action has been facilitated by the University Student Movement since it created logistics, security, communications, and political commissions. The communications commission, for instance, is usually composed by journalism students who are responsible for contacting news outlets to provide the assembly a larger audience. Similarly, student associations in each academic program and college have created their own

communications commissions responsible for managing social media and the student association's Facebook page. Assemblies are scheduled and shared through Facebook. Strategic information discussed in meetings outside of the university, however, is usually shared through alternative applications such as Telegram rather than WhatsApp, for the latter is, according to students, unsafe. Maria made this clear when I asked her if she could send me an audio message through WhatsApp to inform me about a meeting I could not make it to. She sent me the following message: "If you want me to inform you about the meeting, it is better that we talk in person. Audio or text messages should never be sent through WhatsApp. You just never know" (M. Guzmán, personal communication, May 23, 2019).

The University Student Movement makes up the largest university student association, which is more accurately understood as a political platform articulating multiple student associations. General assemblies are usually held at the university's main plaza, which has been "baptized" by the student movement as the Eduardo Becerra Lanza Plaza. This plaza now belongs to student activists. At the plaza, student activists remember those who lost their lives in the 1980s as well as the countless lives lost since the coup. It is evident that the renaming of the plaza forms part of the student movement's collective memory which refuses to forget the time when the university lost its autonomy and when Eduardo Becerra Lanza along hundreds of others lost their lives for simply raising their voices against what the Honduran journalist and poet Felix Cesario called, in one of his Facebook posts, the "long nights of dread" (2019, August 2). In despair, however, one can also find glimmers of hope. The sentiment of hope emanates from the walls covered in graffiti surrounding the plaza: "They have taken so much from us, that they also took away our fear" [*Nos quitaron tanto que nos quitaron el miedo*]. As Cesario Felix also wrote on his Facebook page, "The disappeared must appear at the exact moment of history, with all of

terror's tenderness" (2019, August 2). Student activists thus refuse to allow the dead to vanish from our memories. They make them appear at the "exact moment of history" to guide us in a treacherous path of uncertainty (2019, August 2). As student activists name and give meaning to spaces that for so long forbade and brutally silenced oppositional voices and bodies, the university, too, begins to (trans)form itself into a place of possibility and hope.

In these assemblies, the plaza transforms itself into a political space in which most student associations participate. Figure 1, 2, and 3 show the participation of student associations during these assemblies. Usually there is a microphone connected to a speaker at the center of the plaza while a couple of volunteer facilitators responsible for limiting the time of each participation make sure no one dominates the discussion. The issues discussed usually are larger in scope (e.g., education reform, a recently passed bill seeking to privatize education, healthcare, or water, the criminalization of students, the democratization of the university, and a wide range of issues related to mining concessions, displacement, and territorial struggles). After having listened to the discussions, the general assembly determines the actions the student movement will take. Massive walkouts, mobilizations, protests, and occupations are organized in these general assemblies. Figures 4-17 represent direct confrontation with the police and the military, when all other options have been exhausted.

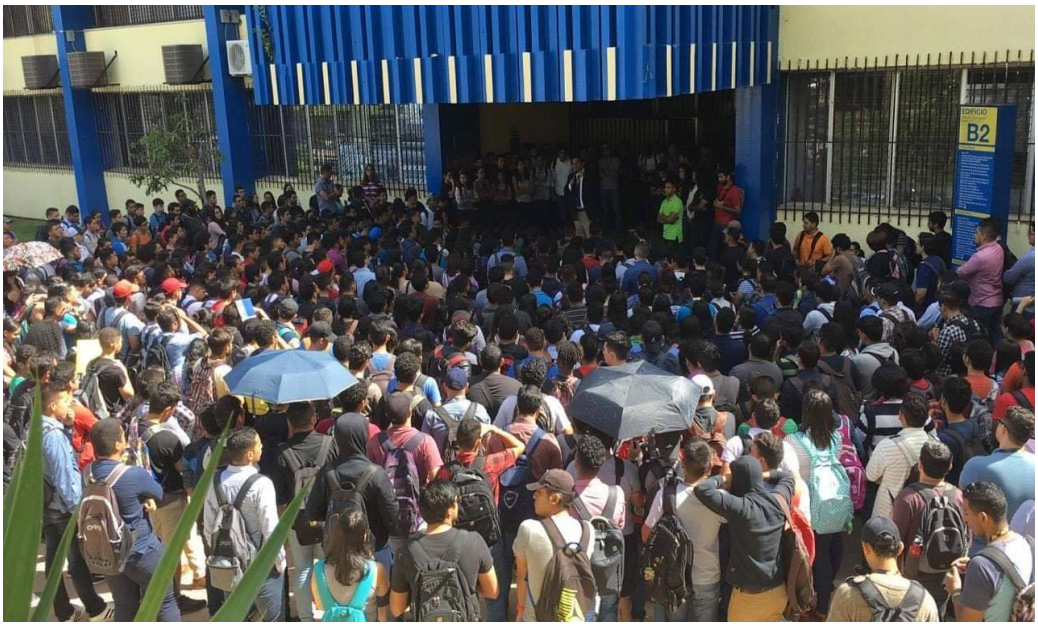

Figure 1: College of Engineering Student Assembly

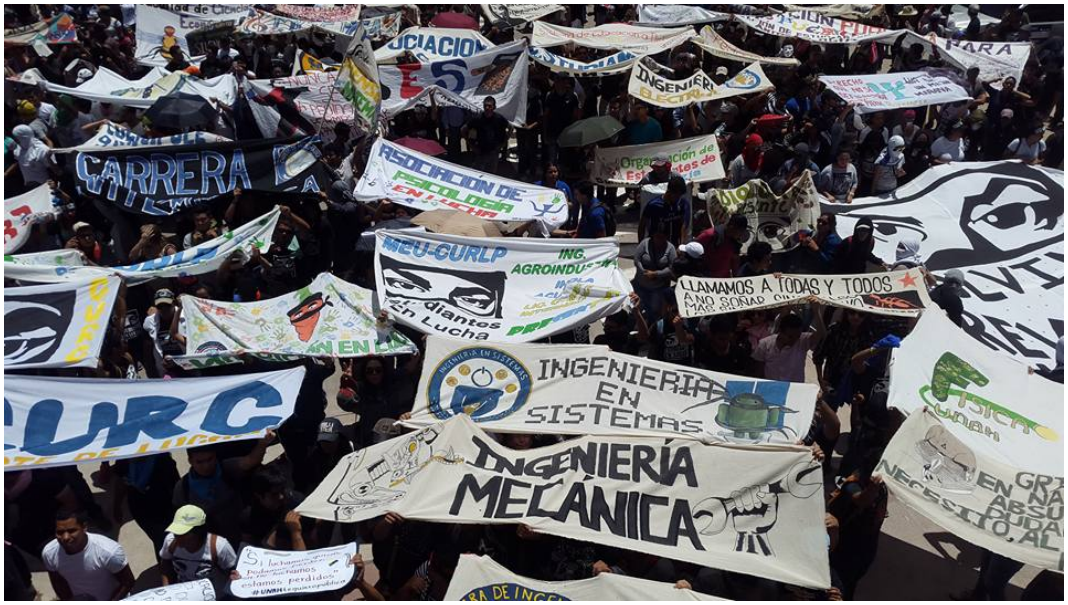

Figure 2: Student associations and their banners

Figure 3: General Assembly at the Eduardo Becerra Lanza Plaza

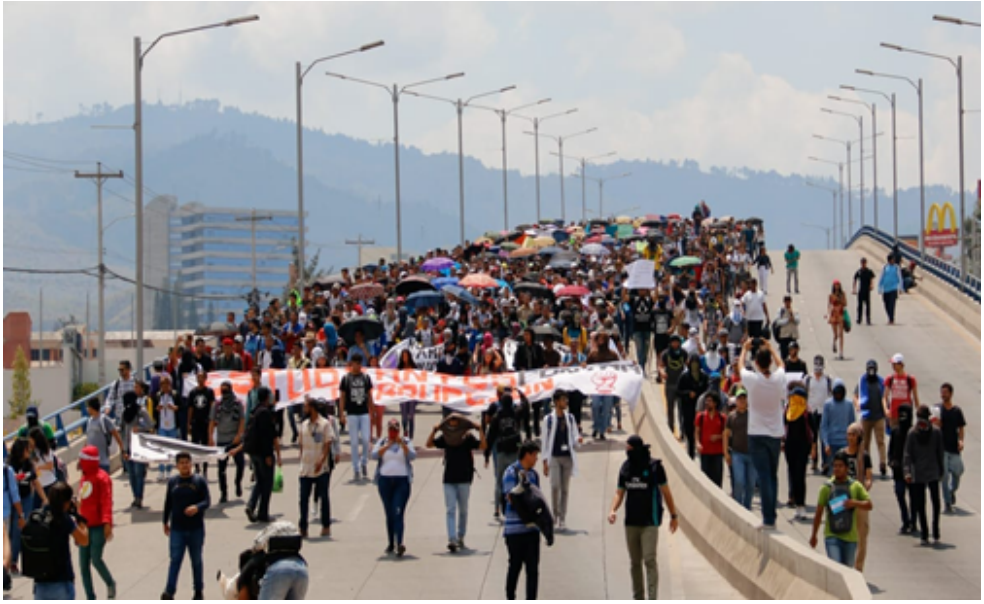

Figure 4: Student activist walkout and mobilization

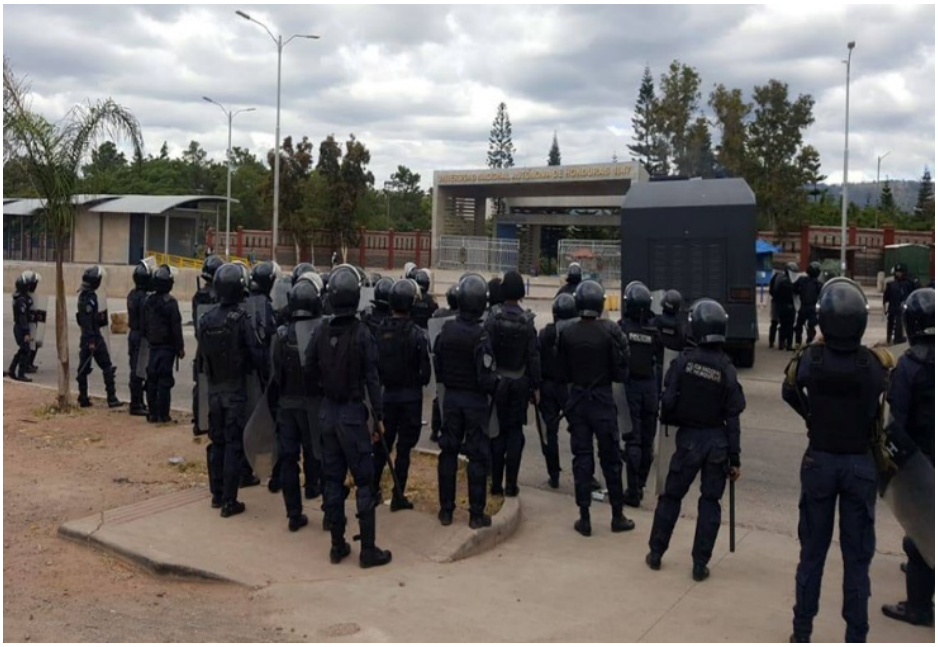

Figure 5: Riot police waiting for student protesters

Figure 6: Direct confrontation with military

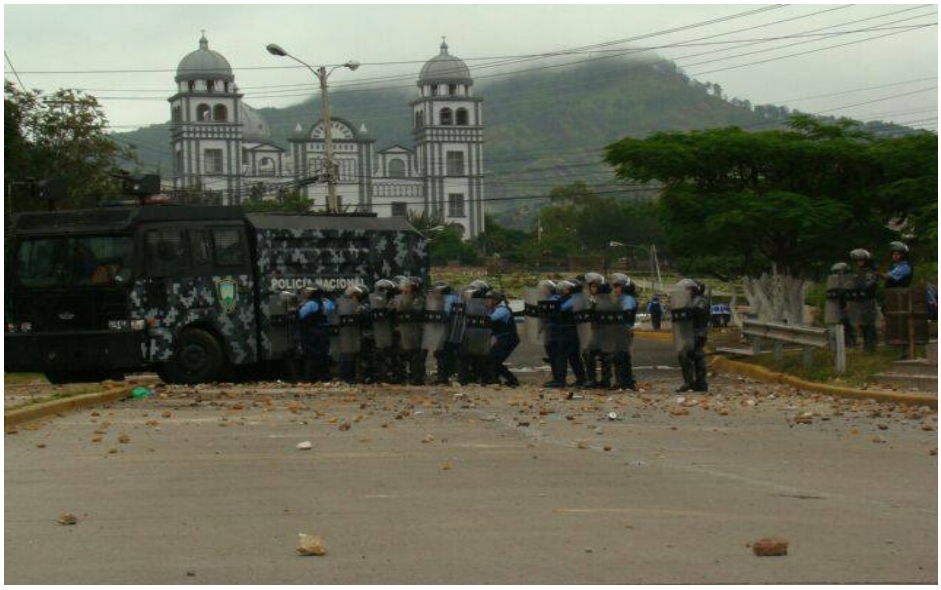

Figure 7: Direct confrontation with national police

Figure 8: National Police retreating from the cloud of tear gas

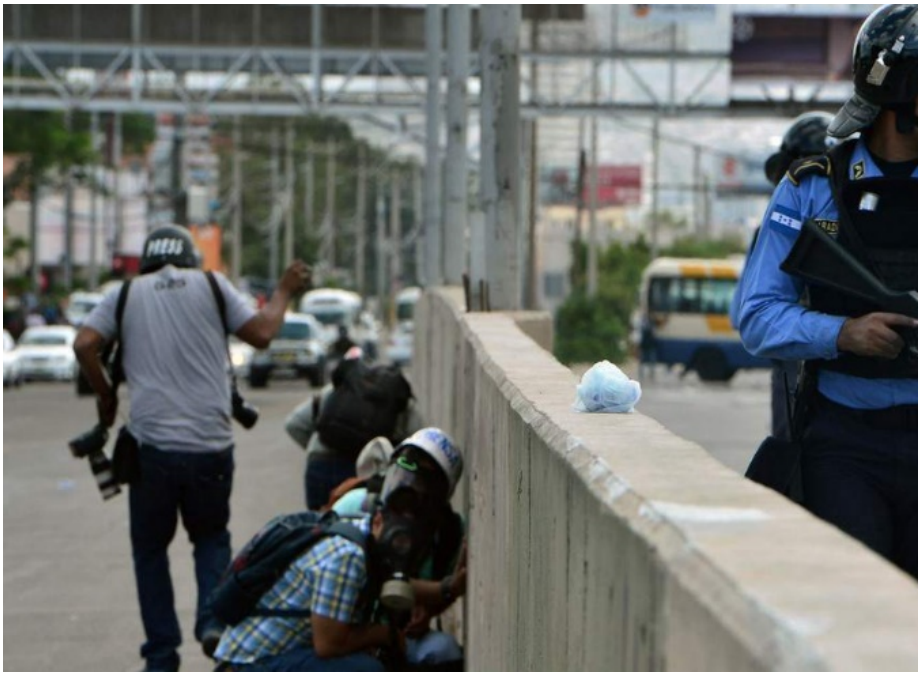

Figure 9: Journalists taking cover

Figure 10: National Police launching a teargas canister

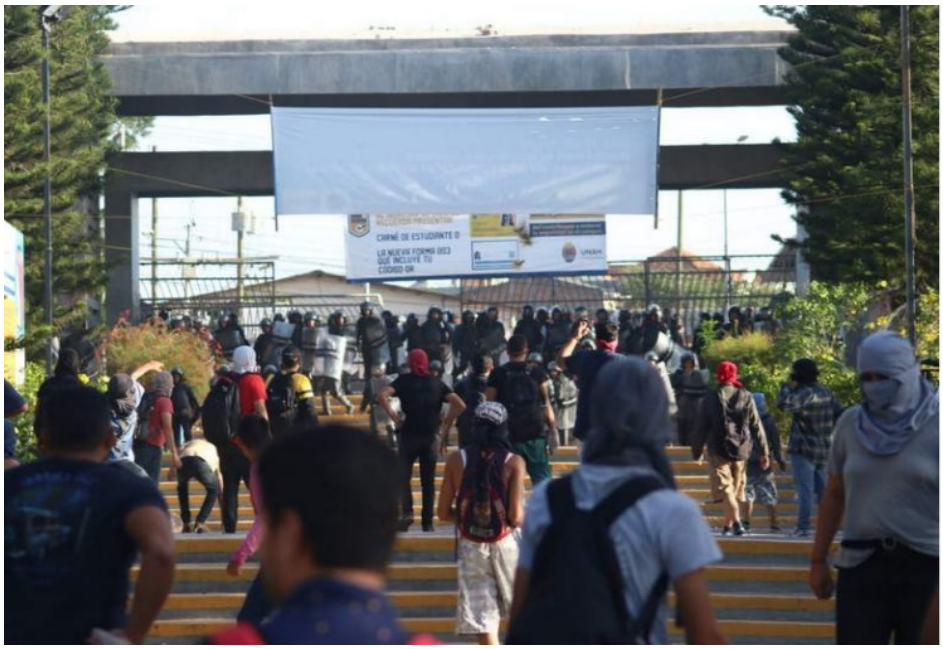

Figure 11: Military Police violating UNAH's autonomy before opening fire with live bullets

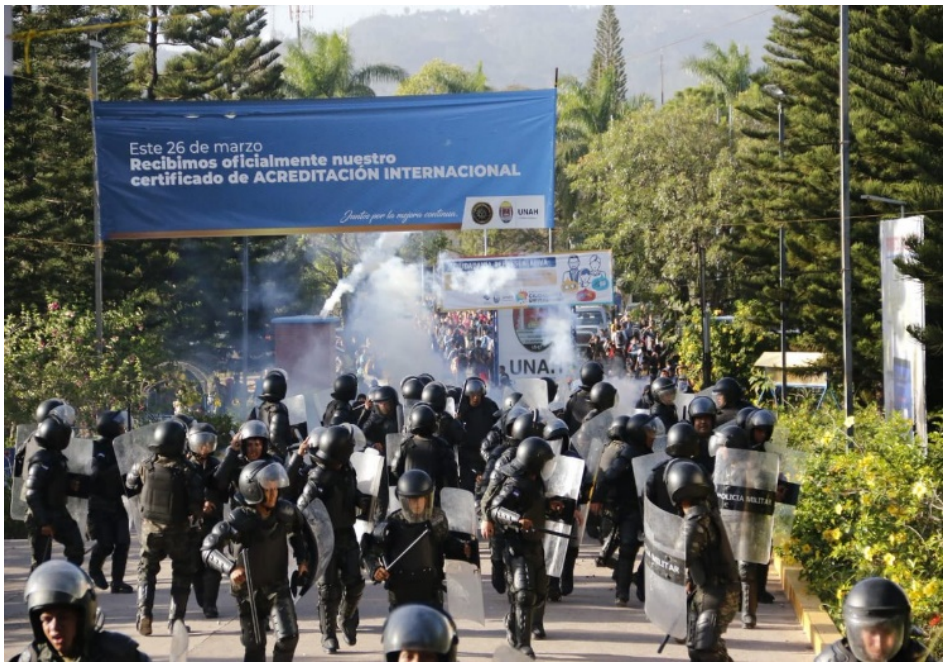

Figure 12: A photograph of military police retreating after opening fire at university students

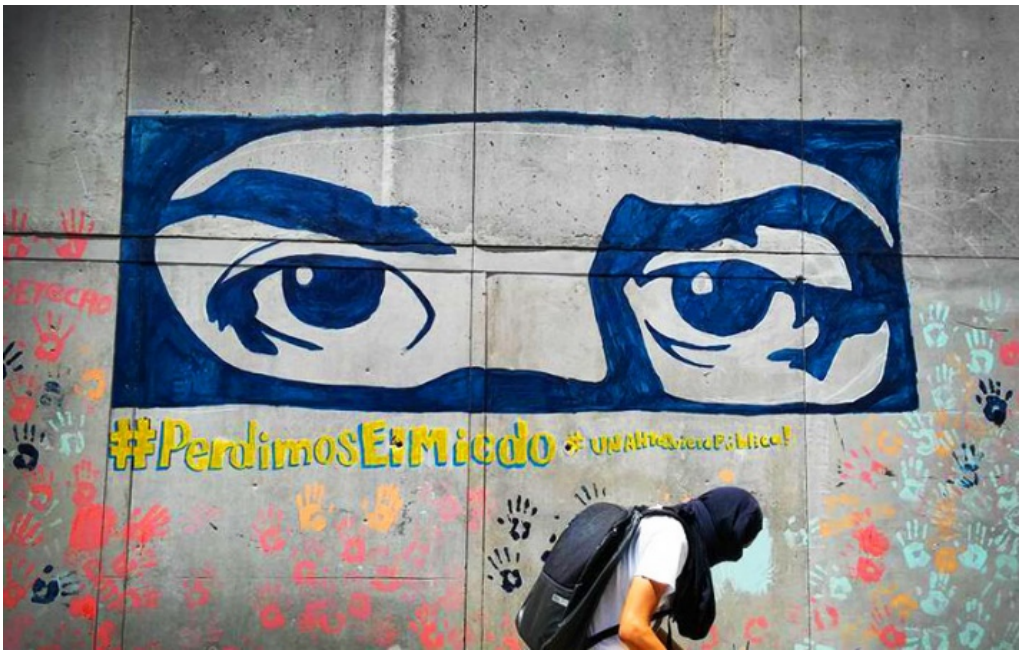

Figure 13: #We lost our fear


Figure 14: Massive mobilization

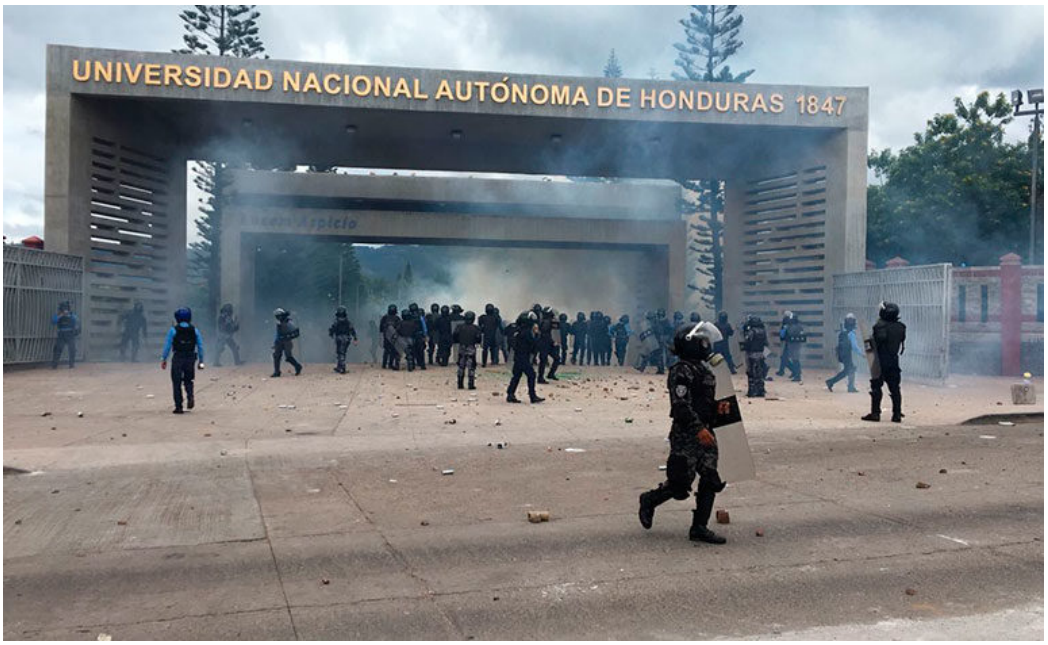

Figure 15: Military Police violating UNAH's autonomy

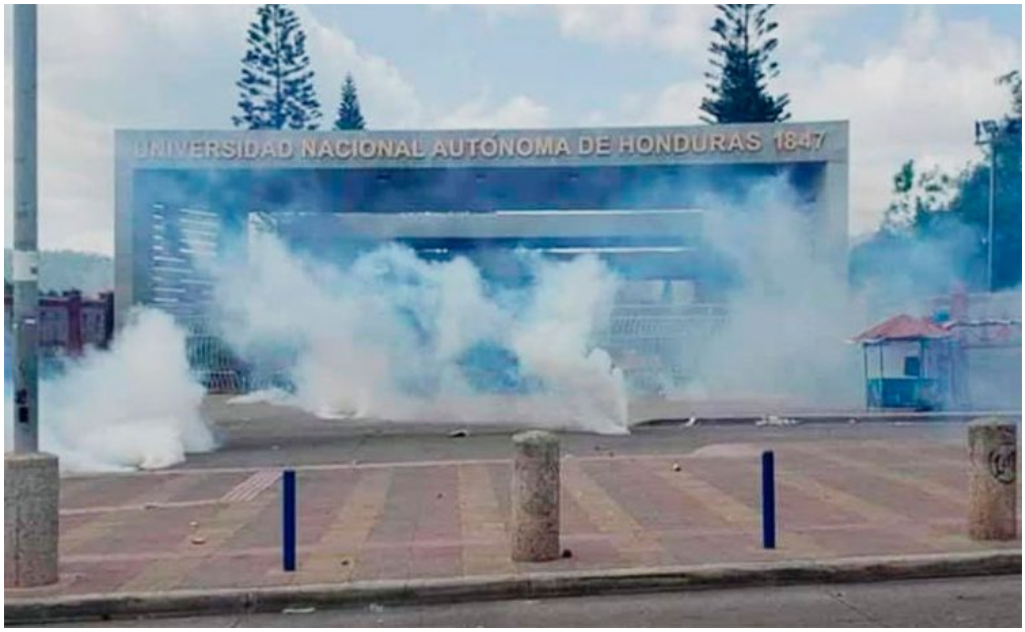

Figure 16: UNAH's main entrance

When asked about the general assembly, Maria talked about it in relation to the sociopolitical context as well as the assembly's relational autonomy, form of governance, and potential for creating a constituent assembly. Reclaiming democratic spaces within a dictatorial context, as clarified by Maria, is a central concern for student activists.

> What we really want is a university constituent assembly. That's still the student movement's ultimate goal. We want every social sector to come together to reform everything! Everything! We want to reform the university's sense of being public. We need to reorganize the university because, after the coup, everything was lost. When the coup happened, university students were the first to protest. That's when we saw the first occupations at UNAH. Then, in 2013, the university's rector decided to get re-elected, which was forbidden, but the authorities here went to congress to amend the organic law. That's when they also eliminated student representation or co-governance. That's also when students started to organize themselves to reclaim what previous generations had fought for.

In relation to the autonomous character of each student association, Mario believes that the general assembly responds to the demands of each academic program, and that it creates a larger democratic space or collective.

> If you're the representative of your association, you're not able to interfere in another association. That's why there's a big difference in the way each association is organized and governed because in each association you only work with your *compañeros* and *compañeras*. In contrast, a broad-based organization such as the University Student Movement is made up of multiple associations, and it makes decisions as a larger collective. As an association, to make decisions, you must always do so in an assembly. What is determined in an assembly is what you [as a representative or spokesperson] must take to the University Student Movement's general assembly. The student movement acquires its maximum representation from the student associations' representatives and attains its maximum participation in each assembly. When a political proposal is written [in the name of the University Student Movement], representatives must go down to their association to convene an assembly. They must share the proposal, often through social media, and, in the assembly, students will discuss which points may be modified, critiqued, opposed, or added. Representatives of each association meet once again to discuss the revisions that their association demands. Then, representatives vote on what will form part of the final proposal. After voting, each representative goes back to his or her association to share what was modified, considered, or omitted. As an assembly, each association votes whether they accept the final proposal. Representatives then meet again to give the general assembly's vote [as opposed to the representative's vote]. The political actions or projects

> initiated by the student movement were ultimately determined by student associations and their respective assemblies. Once representatives have given their final vote, you [as a representative] must go back to your association and say something like, "this is the final political proposal; we have to assume it." That is how a real democracy works, where every student participates directly in decision-making.

What Mario elucidates is the participatory democratic process introduced by the University Student Movement. He points to the student movement's horizontal character, and the way assemblies are used to determine what elected representatives will decide as a larger university student collective. When representatives make decisions against the assembly's collective will, a referendum may be held to elect new student representatives. This shifts our understanding of vertical power conceptualized negatively toward positively affirmed collective power built from below (Dussel, 2009). It is the decolonization of power that is at stake insofar as we are seriously considering the role the university plays in reproducing the subjectivities, epistemologies, and hierarchical social relations sustaining the modern/colonial world system. Leading by obeying is what student activists are enacting. In addition to being a horizontal organization, the student movement's political culture is radically democratic inasmuch as students directly participate in the assemblies where decisions are made and governance is shared. The student movement's democratic project is best explained by Erica, who belongs to the younger student activist generation who, like many other women historically and contemporarily excluded from engaging in the political, significantly influenced the student movement by adding to it a strong presence of feminist thought and experiences.

> A democracy is no longer the imposition of a minority on the majority. The imposing minority is constituted because they have all the legal-political superstructure in their favor. The democracy for which we are advocating today is no longer one imposed to pursue an order, but that which is built directly by students. Assemblies are the foundations that give the student movement organic life in a participatory, democratic, plural, inclusive, equitable and responsible way. UNAH must ensure a participatory democracy and the full exercise of students for

> both men and women, with equal opportunities and conditions. The University Student Movement has created the conditions that allow women to be incorporated into all aspects and areas of the democratic process. To accomplish its objectives, the student movement will be based on the principles of democratic participation, egalitarian representativeness, ideological pluralism, accountability, transparency, equity, equal opportunities, accountability, solidarity, and companionship.

Decision-making power at the university may seem unimportant for dominant groups in liberal democracies. However, in Honduras (and in other Latin American, African, and Asian countries), reclaiming democratic spaces and practices looks and feels more radical when considering the colonial and authoritarian political culture continuing to deny the vast majority the right to think, feel, speak, live, and become otherwise. Reclaiming democratic spaces and practices in the university is, furthermore, an ongoing struggle to decolonize an institution historically complicit in maintaining the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being. Democratizing and decolonizing are thus two sides of the same coin. May we decolonize knowledge, power, and being without building radically democratic social practices? Is a society democratic when colonial structures are maintained? It is the dominant use of democracy, I believe, that empties it of all decolonizing potential. Rethinking the relationship between concrete democratic practices born in social struggles and the their decolonial potential hence becomes an indispensable task. University student activists are one of the many social actors in Honduras posing these very questions.

University Constituent Assembly: A National Encounter

With student associations articulated horizontally as the University Student Movement, student activists were able to organize massive mobilizations and long-term occupations which forced the university's authorities to sit down to negotiate with the student movement. In April 2019, the Student Electoral Regulation Mario (Sociology Student Association), Hector (History Student Association), Eduardo (Electrical Engineering Student Association), Julio (Law Student

Association), Erica (Anthropology Student Association), and Maria (Sociology Student Association) helped write with other student associations was finally ratified by the reluctant interim government running the university since the student movement forced the previous rector to step down in 2017. In April 2020, elections will be held at the university's main and regional campuses. During these elections, each student association will elect new representatives. Each college and regional campus will designate one member to participate in the University Council. Representatives for the University Student Federation of Honduras (FEUH) will also be elected (the student federation, as I described in chapter four, was established in 1925). It is likely that the University Student Movement's candidates will become the new FEUH representatives, since it is the only broad-based political platform.

The goal is to restructure the FEUH horizontally. It is for this precise reason that, within 30 days after the elections, a University Constituent Assembly will be held in which student representatives from student associations of each campus, in addition to faculty members and university authorities, will meet for three days to amend the university's organic law (i.e., the national constitution will be amended), which includes restructuring the FEUH horizontally. Once the federation is restructured, one delegate will be selected during the assemblies held by each college student association. A horizontal structure will transform the University Student Movement into a national platform organized under the student federation, which will enable students to coordinate protests, activities, and events nationally. Presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, or treasurers will no longer form part of this horizontal structure. The student federation, instead, will become a counter-structure difficult to coopt because every member will have equal decision-making power, who, in the last instance, is accountable at the assembly level.

UNAH's organic law forms part of the national constitution, meaning that students will have the opportunity to change the very foundations on which the university stands. As mentioned above, one of their goals is to restructure the student federation into a real federation of secretaries where every member is a mere delegate of a college student association. One of the most important changes student activists want to make to the organic law is the right to a referendum, where representatives of each association, university council, or student federation may be held accountable during assemblies. Of critical importance, moreover, is to eliminate the Board of Trustees or to restructure it. The latter option will allow students and professors to participate in this governing body. Student activists believe that the Board of Trustees holds too much power and has, since the coup of 2009, been one of the principle governing bodies responsible for coopting student organization and representation and violating the university's autonomy. I will describe the university's co-governing bodies in more detail in the following section while also clarifying how they are interconnected to self-governance and university autonomy.

Co-Governance

In addition to electing representatives for the three self-governing bodies (academic program student association, college student association, and the University Student Federation of Honduras), student associations within each college and regional campus will elect one representative for the University Council, UNAH's highest co-governing body. The two other co-governing bodies (College Council and Academic Program Curriculum Committee), will be established after the elections as well. In the University Council, students, professors, and the university's administrators share governance (Organic Law, 2004). It will be composed of 54 members, divided equally between students, professors, and administration. UNAH's rector will

also be an active member of the University Council but will only have voting power to untie a vote. The University Council is thus a tripartite governing body where each part holds equal voting power. Because UNAH's rector, deans, and regional campus directors currently hold interim positions since the student movement's actions forced university authorities to resign and at the same time reclaimed the general elections after congress reluctantly ratified its first citizen bill (established a precedent for other social movements trying to get a law passed that will strengthen their struggle—e.g., mining concessions), the interim Board of Trustees must initiate a hiring process to fill all administrative positions prior to the elections.

A problem begins to emerge, nonetheless. The seven Board of Trustees members also currently hold interim positions because none of them have been nominated by a University Council quorum with legitimate student representation. However, the interim Board of Trustees will have the power to rehire the interim rector, deans, and directors because limitations to a third term only applies to those who have held official administrative titles. Interim positions do not impede reelection, for instance. Once all administrative positions have been filled, the university will convene to nominate new Board of Trustees members who meet the criteria listed in the organic law (e.g., academic degree and experience). Mario believes that the interim Board of Trustees has too much power because it has the power to give administrative roles to loyal faculty members who will also form part of the University Council. As a result, said administrators will also become members of the University Council and will likely return the favor by voting in the same Board of Trustees members who hired them. In the past, this created a vicious clientelist cycle where only the academic and political elite could participate. However, there are several limitations to this cycle of corruption. Board of Trustees members may only serve two four-year terms. Students and professors will also have 66 percent of the votes in the

University Council (Organic Law, 2004), which, to a certain extent, limits the administrative faction of the University Council which used to nominate Board of Trustees members unilaterally for personal gains. In order to form part of the Board of Trustees, an individual must receive 66 percent of the votes as well (University Council Regulations, 2015). Lastly, students and faculty members must return to their respective associations and assemblies to make public the curriculum vitae of each potential Board of Trustees members. The assembly will ultimately decide how students and professors vote in the University Council.

Academic Cogoverning Bodies

Other co-governing bodies, such as the College Council and Academic Program Curriculum Committees, will be formed after the elections. In the former, the college dean, three faculty members, and two students will participate. The latter will be composed of the academic coordinator, two faculty members, two students, and two professionals working in the field. The College Council and the Academic Program Curriculum Committee in the College of Social Sciences, for example, will lead curriculum reform autonomously. Education reform without the participation of these co-governing bodies will be viewed as a violation of the university's autonomy. It is for this reason that the student movement's self-governance and co-governance bodies serve as counter-structures which will help resist neoliberal higher education reform. With the horizontal restructuring of the University Student Federation of Honduras, in addition, where all student associations have direct participation, collection action at a national level will be taken if the university is suspected of being reformed without student participation. This does not mean, however, that university authorities and interested political parties are no longer capable of reforming the university according to neoliberal logics. Rather, what I am arguing is that neoliberal higher education reform will be met with organized student resistance.

Nevertheless, there is no guaranteeing that university student activism will not experience any obstacles in the future. If student activists participating in the co-governing bodies do not eliminate the entrance exams gradually gentrifying and thus whitening and depoliticizing university students, then opposing the neoliberalization and privatization in the future seems unlikely. If the National Autonomous University of Honduras becomes a public university where only students whose Whiteness [*blanquitud*] is performed through consumption (Echeverria, 2010), then the university will lose the potential it now has in becoming a pluriversal and popular university. Democratizing and decolonizing the university, I fear, will only become a metaphor used by academics if students from historically excluded communities lose access (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Social Implications

Student activists believe that the democratic practices constructed at the university will radiate into the communities to which student activists belong. They believe that, once they graduate, they will also help democratize the professional associations or guilds of which many will become members. For Mario, this is not wishful thinking. Several professional associations, such as the teachers' unions and the national lawyers' guilds, according to him, are currently facing resistance from recently graduated student activists entering these spaces which have also been dominated by the same authoritarian, clientelist political culture. The democratic political culture which continues to form part of the student movement is hence becoming an important reference for other social movements and organizations. Democratizing an institution such as the university is, as Maria indicated in one of our conversations, a political practice with sociocultural implications. For her, the university serves as a laboratory for the sociopolitical context. Referring to Boaventura de Sousa Santos' work, Maria stated the following: "the

university is the reflection of the type of society we live in, and, in turn, the type of society we have is the reflection of the university". To radically (trans)form the university, namely, to go beyond the democratic limits imposed by the university, legitimate student representation in co-governing bodies is not enough. What is needed is a University Constituent Assembly. Mario described the emergence of the student movement's political culture and its organization as a gradual process initiated after the coup. His account, additionally, unsettles the state-centric revolutionary perspectives which dominated social movements in the 20th century.

> The generation of students during the coup of 2009 was the generation that came up with the university constituent assembly. There were two attempts without much success. Our generation did organize a student congress where student activists from every campus met. We named it the Eduardo Becerra Lanza Congress. So, while their generation was the first to build internal student movements or collectives within the university as organizational alternatives, we organized students by academic programs before any sort of university constituent assembly. This new generation has organized student associations [and their respective assemblies] which are the heart and soul of the university student movement. We have accomplished a lot of things because the movement is diverse and we must learn to work with so much diversity. The only way to do so was through consensus. *In the adversity of ideas, it is possible to construct a diversity of solutions*. In reality, these are democratic spaces. In the university student movement, decisions are made democratically. And horizontality was key. We did not have permanent leaders. Everyone was a spokesperson [*vocero*/*vocera*] at one point.

Mario's complex understanding of the student movement's political culture based on assemblies emerged because he formed part of the arduous process of organizing students of what he refers to as *el trabajo de hormiga* [the work of an ant]. This is what he considered the steady and slow-going work required to organize students. Organizing is, therefore, at the heart of the student movement, without which the articulation of various student associations would be impossible. In the next section, I examine, in more detail, the collective action that result when all other options have been exhausted. Much of what follows is a reflective account to my participation in student-led protests.

Collective Action

Unknown faces hid behind makeshift masks made from ragged T-shirts. In a way, student activists resembled the Zapatistas of southern Mexico. In many ways, they resembled no one. The faceless students, *los encapuchados* [those who are masked], portrayed by the mainstream media as a violent, anarchist organization, marched the streets of the Honduran capital city of Tegucigalpa. Those who walked in front of the massive mobilization carried an enormous banner for the media to capture images and words of rebellion. On the banner, the image of Karl Marx was accompanied by a cigar-smoking Che Guevara and a peace-sign-wielding Berta Caceres, the recently murdered environmentalist Indigenous leader. Superficially, these images illustrate some well-known thinkers, revolutionaries, and activists. At a deeper level, these images represented what the University Student Movement believes the route to political change is—a stance which includes both militant collective action and a strong desire to live in peace and with dignity. The words surrounding the images expressed the following: *Sociología es Mujer, Cultura, Ecología, y Lucha Colectiva* [Sociology is Woman, Culture, Ecology, and Collective Struggle]. The text challenged the androcentric and dualist (nature/culture) epistemology and ontology held by modern perspectives. Instead of sociology signifying the abstract concept of society, the ontological word "*is*" revealed how being, knowledge, power, and resistance are inextricably linked. A body of knowledge such as sociology, in this case, is formed by women and it is intersected by political, ecological, and cultural struggles. As I read this, I thought of the social practices that unsettle the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being. As a mere spectator in this massive protest, I could not ask student activists what "sociology is woman" meant to them. At that moment, I did not know the impact women had in the University Student Movement's horizontal structure. I would only learn this after talking to Maria and Erica and

participating in meetings, protests, and workshops organized by the student movement. At that moment, however, I knew very little about the complex network of social movements to which student activists were articulating themselves.

Other banners were more poetic and artistic than the one mentioned above. Poetic words from Marti's (1974) *Nuestra América* [Our America] whispered to those willing to listen. The music of Silvio Rodriguez and local folklore singers played from a black column speaker being carried by a pickup truck moving at the pace of student activists. The faceless listened and sang along. The faceless students continued their march under the beating sun. Some cars heading in the opposite direction honked in solidarity. Some angry drivers yelled out of their windows because the blocked street prevented them from getting to work on time. The streets now belonged to student activists.

The faceless mass of students continued to walk in unison toward the legislative building where congress meets. As we walked, students chanted Latin American unity and solidarity slogans. "*El pueblo unido, jamás será vencido*" [the people united, will never be defeated]. This translation does not express the semantic difference between *pueblo* and people. *Pueblo* means much more when enunciated in the wretched lands now known as Latin America. It conceptualizes the intricacies between the communal, cultural, and political instead of the individual collection of contractual relationships forming part of the modern nation state. A united *pueblo* is always already connected to power and the ways it can be taken back through collective action directed at institutionally mediated power. Los pueblos always refer to the historically and contemporarily exploited and oppressed campesino, Indigenous, Black, and urban communities. In the streets, *los encapuchados* enacted and narrated the collective. Indeed, they performed a very dangerous counternarrative within a dictatorial context. As I would later

learn from Maria, as she cited the many slogans used to foment a collective identity within the student movement, "those who only have individual aspirations, will never understand a collective struggle," and that the reasons they covered their faces, in addition to concealing their identity, was to "reveal their hearts to the world." The mask symbolized the student movement's collective identity. It hid the identity of the individual and thus prevented the creation of a dominant leader who could potentially be coopted. "We are the student movement" was a common expression. Putting on the mask expressed the collective and hid the individual. As I asked in chapter one and similarly in chapter two, "If the individualist neoliberal ideology of progress and development is a colonizing global force, can the collectivization of students be a decolonizing practice?" It is this question that continued to come up as I participated in protests, meetings, workshops, discussions, and assemblies which also pointed to the unsettling of neoliberal and colonial subjectivities.

Why were university students protesting? The student movement demanded the resignation of the university's rector, who was only a neoliberal agent of the State and a minor player in a brutal transnational game. Another demand they had was for the State to respect the university's political and academic autonomy (Ordorika, 2003). Autonomy refers to the right to self-determination, namely, the right to decide what is taught, how it is taught, and who it is taught by. Autonomy, more than anything, means to reclaim co-governance, foment social responsibility, and democratize and decolonize the curriculum—i.e., the right to have collective power over matters that have historically been held by the powerful grip of the few. Almendares made this point clear during the forum I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter:

> Autonomy is about self-determination and the courage to recognize our territory and the dignity of peoples to defend their sovereignty. There can be no university autonomy when university authorities and faculty refuse to speak of the great problems we are experiencing in this country. This silence betrays the social

> conscience of this country. This leads me to ask, 'what is an intellectual?' It's not just about knowledge. UNAH is said to be climbing international ranks. What we should be proud of is that UNAH is involved in defending the human rights and dignity of its students, professors, and social activists rather than protecting the interests of the market. This leads us to a discussion around the subject. What is the subject? Some who study pedagogy think that the teacher is the only one who has knowledge. This is an authoritarian pedagogical model. They think young people do not think. That is false. We need the critical thought of youth, and we need a rebellious youth, not a domesticated and servile youth. And so, even if many people don't like him, there's something very beautiful about Che Guevara when he said, 'when you witness a humiliation or an injustice, never keep quiet.' We have kept quiet for too long, and young people know this and much more.

A Distant Observer

If one were to decontextualize the student movement, the social structures would clearly remain hidden and the student actors involved in creating counter-structures would be left omitted from the story. Students are not organizing, protesting, blocking major highways, and democratizing university governance and curriculum within a militarized postcoup context only because higher education is increasingly being privatized. Rather, the sociopolitical, economic, and colonial structures of Honduras, which are interlinked with transnational processes, are the motivating factors driving many to unsettle them, even if slightly. It is the *ya basta* or the "we've had enough" that finally explodes from youth, student, feminist, Indigenous, campesino, LGBTQ, and Black movements. As modern institutions lose legitimacy, including the university which for so long has remained silent, as Almendares reminded us in the forum, the energetic student movement has begun to rebuild the collective to face the colonial/neoliberal storm to come. In the next section, I describe in more detail how student activists made their voices heard by transforming university space into a place of resistance and organization.

On Space and Place

Imagine yourself attending a university with no running water in the restrooms for most of the day. Imagine yourself juxtaposing the dilapidated buildings you know so well with the 13-story administrative building enveloped by tinted windows. You stare at this imposing modern structure standing proudly on the university's main campus. You imagine how it feels to have a privileged vantage point to stare down at students hastily going to class. For now, you still do not know that social mobility in Honduras is nearly impossible even after attaining a college degree. You, however, feel like the fortunate one from your *barrio*, *colonia*, or village who was able to make it to the National Autonomous University of Honduras, the so-called maximum house of study. You feel confident that, once you graduate, you will find your dream job. Progress is all you know. Being successful is what you dream of. What you do not know is that only a small percent of students who graduate from UNAH acquire jobs in their field. The rest will be unemployed or perhaps will work at transnational call centers. Only those who speak English, however, will land a job in said call centers. The merit you alone have acquired, you constantly remind yourself, must amount to something. The people running this place decide what you learn and determine access to graduate programs and scholarships abroad. According to you, the only way to succeed is to go to class like the diligent student that you have always been. In many ways, you are seduced by the power the modern administrative building represents, for it excludes so many and accepts so few. You, too, aspire to one day be one of those looking down at the insignificant bodies moving about.

Fatalism leads you to not participate in student activism and say, "what difference will I make, anyway?" You would rather choose the route where rewards await. There is no need to worry about being punished if you act accordingly. To avoid being punished, all you must do is

make sure to stay away from those lazy students constantly disrupting classes. Stay away from those masked students—*los encapuchados*—who like to barricade the university's main entrances as well as the entrances to all other installations as a form of protest. Stay away from those who claim to be activists trying to organize you into what they call student associations. If you think about it, they are violating your human right to an education when they decide to occupy the university. Do your best to circumvent the university's main plaza to not have to listen to the ongoing discursive and theatrical performances around what they consider the privatization of the university and the loss of university autonomy, co-governance, democracy, and the criminalization of students. They speak of democracy, but they prevent others from attending class. You ask yourself, "Why should students have any say in university matters? Why can't we just go to our classes, graduate, and find a job like everyone else in the first world?"

The hypothetical university and diligent student above symbolizes the panopticon Bentham (1995) conceptualized, which Foucault (1975) took up to theorize various mechanisms of social control and self-regulation. Similarly, Bourdieu (1977) analyzed the "structuring [social] structures" or habitus at the institutional level (p. 72), which makes the university a field in which domination is effectively maintained through the reproduction of modern subjectivities which designate cultural capital in the form of possessive tendencies, efficiency, competition, and indifference. This institution punishes those who oppose its authoritarian governance structure and grants privileges to those who perform a neoliberal habitus and are willing to maintain the status quo. Controlling the hearts and minds therefore implies the seduction of power. As Quijano (2007) points out,

> beyond repression, the main instrument of all power is its seduction. Cultural Europeanisation was transformed into an aspiration. It was a way of participating and later to reach the same material benefits and the same power as the Europeans: vis, to conquer nature—in short for 'development' (p. 169).

The university is the primary institution which continues to offer individuals the knowledge and the space to develop a habitus that allows them to reach the power promised by modernity, capitalism, and progress. Instrumental reason hence becomes a universal paradigm everyone must follow. Let me quote Quijano (2007) at length to elucidate the importance of decolonizing knowledge, power, and being.

> It is necessary to extricate oneself from the linkages between rationality/modernity and coloniality, first of all, and definitely from all power which is not constituted by free decisions made by free people. It is the instrumentalisation of the reasons for power, of colonial power in the first place, which produced distorted paradigms of knowledge and spoiled the liberating promises of modernity. The alternative, then, is clear: the destruction of the coloniality of world power. First of all, epistemological decolonization, as decoloniality, is needed to clear the way for new intercultural communication, for an interchange of experiences and meanings….Nothing is less rational, finally, than the pretension that the specific cosmic vision of a particular ethnie should be taken as universal rationality, even if such an ethnie is called Western Europe because this actually pretends to impose a provincialism as universalism. The liberation of intercultural relations from the prison of coloniality also implies the freedom of all peoples to choose, individually or collectively, such relations: a freedom to choose between various cultural orientations, and, above all, the freedom to produce, criticize, change, and exchange culture and society. This liberation is, part of the process of social liberation from all power organized as inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and as domination. (p. 177-178)

Observing the University's Social Space

The first day I visited the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) was in June 2018. I reached what seemed like the university's main plaza. Like most plazas in Latin America, these spaces are usually the gathering places for city dwellers who simply want to sit down on a bench to read a book, people watch, talk, or drink a cup of coffee. Plazas in Latin America, as Echeverria (2010) described, express a baroque ethos where use value rather than

exchange value envelopes the actions, thoughts, and behaviors of those who socialize in these spaces. In contradistinction to classical, modern, and postmodern space, have not been commodified and absorbed by neoliberalism's insatiability. In other words, a baroque ethos carries the potential of resisting a capitalist and neoliberal ethos.

In the middle of the university's plaza, there was an empty water fountain. In the middle of the fountain, there was an obelisk which was about 20 feet tall. There were four malfunctioning clocks on top of the obelisk, each one indicating a different time. Each clock faced a different direction. I later found out that the plaza's name was the Four Cultures Plaza. According to the university's newspaper, the clock represents the Mayan, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations. The fountain symbolizes knowledge. The university seems to be a replica of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) for it also has a plaza with a similar name. The Three Cultures Plaza at UNAM, however, represents pre-Columbian, Spanish colonial, and modern Mexican culture ("Plaza de las Tres Culturas," n.d.).

As I observed my surroundings, I noticed the political graffiti covering the walls of each surrounding building. Everywhere I looked, I found graffiti denouncing the political and economic elite of the country as well as the transnational interests they represent. I knew I was in the right place. The popular FUERA JOH (out with JOH) slogan used to denounce the dictatorial president Juan Orlando Hernandez was the most common expression spray-painted on each wall. The graffiti expressing solidarity with Berta Caceres and the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) was the most striking, for it denounced the transnational and national powers student activists believe were involved in her assassination and the assassination of many other campesino and Indigenous activists. Other slogans depicted the need to democratize the university. As Maria recalled in one of our conversations, the slogans often

displayed on the walls by student activists were always related to the reappropriation of space. "UNAH is our territory! It is your home! It does not belong to those in power!"

It is not only in the main plaza where students gather in large numbers. Near the library and coffee shop, for example, students also play music, dance, and play cards. The way students dress and the way their bodies occupy space reveal their upper middle-class status as well as the gradual gentrification of the university. Political graffiti is absent in these spaces. There are no masked students or political assemblies. At the plaza, however, graffiti and murals are the most common expressions of student dissensus. The plaza narrates the lived experiences of those who dwell outside of the university's walls. Feminist student activists, for instance, spray-painted the plaza with the following statement: *No somos histéricas; somos históricas* [We are not hysterical; we are historical]. This statement, as I learned much later, is used by feminist movements around the world. It refers to the way women are portrayed when they denounce the patriarchal society in which they live and the multidimensional violence they experience. The word play "we are not hysterical, we are historical" becomes pedagogical insofar as it is intended to change oppressive discursive and social practices. The meanings inscribed in this space contradict the social, cultural, and political expectations of women. They contradict the pedagogy of cruelty and power mentioned above.

During one of my observations at the plaza, I attended the Feminist Fair organized by student activists known as the *Feministas Universitarias* [University Feminists]. The slogan used for the fair was, "We Make the Economy Move." Their aim was not only to play music, disseminate information, or sell homemade goods. Instead, they wanted to demonstrate that women are collectively creating alternative economies. Women in Honduras resist the social roles expected of them when they insert themselves in the formal and informal economy or when

they refuse to be positioned socially, politically, and economically as housewives or stay-at-home moms. Cusicanqui (1986) and Zibechi (2007) understand these actions as the subterranean and molecular forms of resisting patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist modes of production and sociability, similar to the infrapolitics addressed by Scott (1990). During the fair, I bought several feminist magazines and a couple "FUERA JOH" stickers. Student activists mentioned that these collective efforts aimed to promote the idea that the economy is not synonymous to capitalism. One would easily assume from the discourse used by feminist student activists that they had already read Gibson-Graham's (2006) *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*. It is more likely, however, that they learned these discourses through their engagement in feminist struggles outside of the university, such as the feminist discourse and praxis embodied by Berta Caceres and other Indigenous, Garifuna, and *campesina* activists defending their territories (Alvarado, 1987).

Although money formed part of the medium of exchange, when the student activist who sold me the magazine said, "*muchisimas gracias compañero*" her words transformed our transaction into a gift. A simple thank you *compañero* included me in her collective efforts. I no longer felt like a customer consuming a commodity for consumption's sake. Instead, I became part of a gift economy which, as argued by Mary Douglas in the foreword to Mauss (1990) work, aims to enhance solidarity of the parties involved in the exchange while also making it possible to disrupt neoliberalism's instrumental rationality, unfettered individualism, utilitarianism, and sociability. I know that I am not part of a feminist collective but the words the student activist enunciated with no exaggerated excitement but rather as a matter of fact as if she knew me already, did make a significant difference in our interaction. Will I ever truly know their

struggle? No, of course not. Can I be a *compañero* or a companion willing to walk alongside them in their struggle? I hope so.

The Making of a Rebellious Place

At the Eduardo Becerra Lanza Plaza, university students hang out, smoke, gamble, listen to music, occasionally dance, laugh, and, most importantly, have conversations that would otherwise not take place. Many of the students who hang out at this plaza are part-time activists. Some of them are just sympathizers. They are the rebels who refuse to act according to the university's neoliberal expectations of producing globally competitive individuals which, in the end, translates to cheap semi-skilled labor. The neoliberal university does not make room for collective identities, nor does it have to tolerate alternative forms of sociability and organization, especially more democratic forms of governance. Despite the administration's attempt to depoliticize the plaza, student activists have continued to occupy this space. They have inscribed new meaning and a radical sense of belonging to a space which apparently is neutral and transparent, void of any political, cultural, and social content. As student activists re-appropriate university space, they also unsettle the university's neoliberal/colonial design.

This unsettling entails artistic expressions displaying what student activists oppose and what actions may assist in transforming the university into a popular university [Universidad Popular]. Every building is covered with graffiti, paintings, and murals. The plaza belongs to student activists; it is their territory. The markings in this space make it theirs. The multitude of students who walk by the plaza usually stare at the murals and at times engage in conversations with student activists demonstrating their discontent artistically through theatrical performances and discursively through public assemblies and speeches. These intersubjective, pedagogical exchanges point to the cultural infrapolitics, on the one hand, and the repolitization of space on

the other. The plaza has become a space in which knowing with and being with a movement in struggle as opposed to knowing about is made possible.

On one occasion, student activists began to set up a medium-sized column speaker. Once they connected the microphone, one student started reading something he had written, perhaps the night before, to commemorate Berta Caceres's death. As he began to speak, somewhat nervously, he informed everyone at the plaza that many students were planning on going to the Lenca communities belonging to the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), the organization Berta Caceres co-founded in 1993. Their goal, as the student clarified, was to learn from these communities and organizations and, most importantly, to commemorate Berta, the woman who planted seeds of hope in Latin America and the world [*la mujer que sembró semillas de esperanza en América Latina y en el mundo*]. I sat on one of the benches surrounding the plaza and listened. The student activist then stopped talking and placed the microphone on top of the speaker. Music then began to play. At first it was rap, then punk, and finally the folklore music of Violeta Parra, Silvio Rodriguez, and Victor Jara's *El Derecho de Vivir en Paz* [The Right to Live in Peace] filled the plaza with hope, solidarity, and a strong sense of community.

With the various banners on display and with the music playing while others painted a mural of Berta, I got a sense of how these activities help build community in a space designed to erase the collective. I, too, participated in the painting of this mural after Hector, the student who questioned my silence during the first workshop I attended, asked me if I knew how to paint as he handed me a paint brush, not giving me a chance to answer. On another wall, some students spray-painted the poetic words of Elvia Zelaya, the mother of Roger Samuel Gonzales who was killed by the Battalion 316 in the 1980s: "I have my tongue stuck to my palate from repeating

your name to the wind so many times. My hands grow old, touching insensitive gates that offer silence as a response" [*Tengo la lengua pegada al paladar de tanto repetir tu nombre al viento*]. Mis manos envejecen tocando portones insensibles que me ofrecen silencios por respuesta]. Once we were finished painting the mural, I took a picture of the mural (illustrated by Figure 18 and 19). The next day, however, the words placing blame on one of the richest families of Honduras which owns the energy company involved in the Berta Caceres' murder, were erased (Lakhani, 2018). Whoever painted over the mural, for one reason or another, did not have the courage to paint over Berta's portrait. Student activists took advantage of the situation. Effigies were laid on the ground. Caution tape was placed around the mural, simulating a homicide scene. The yellow tape surrounded the "dead bodies" were covered in "blood." Student activists made sure that Berta's memory would not be forgotten and that those responsible for her murder and the murder of other social activists would one day face the consequences. As the new words painted on the vandalized mural expressed, "NO CALLARAN LA VOZ DEL PUEBLO!" [The people's voice will not be silenced!] (illustrated by Figure 18 and 19).

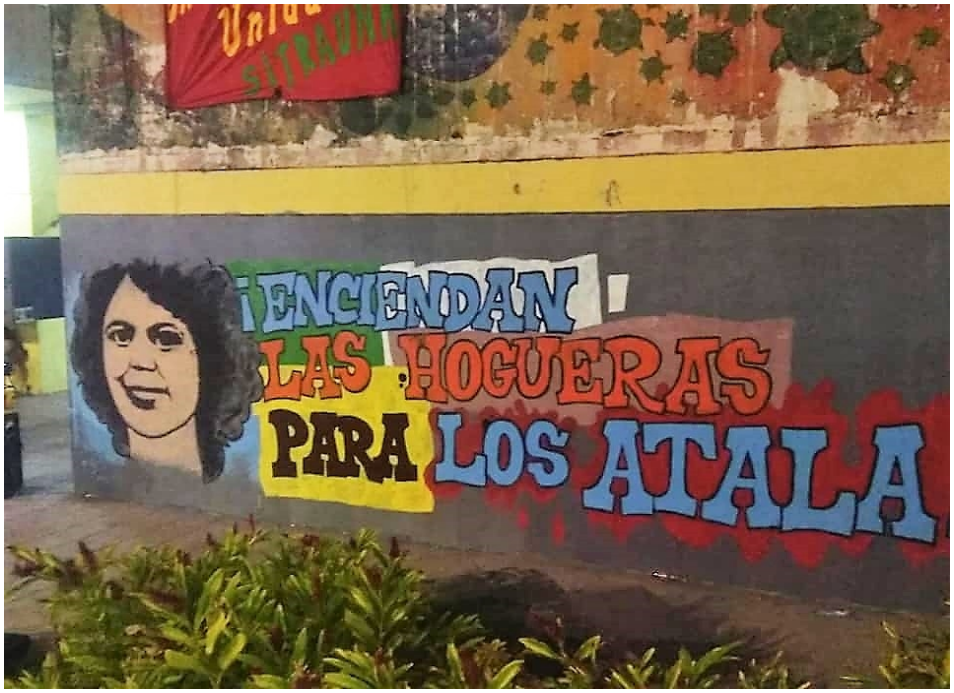

Figure 17: Mural of Berta Caceres

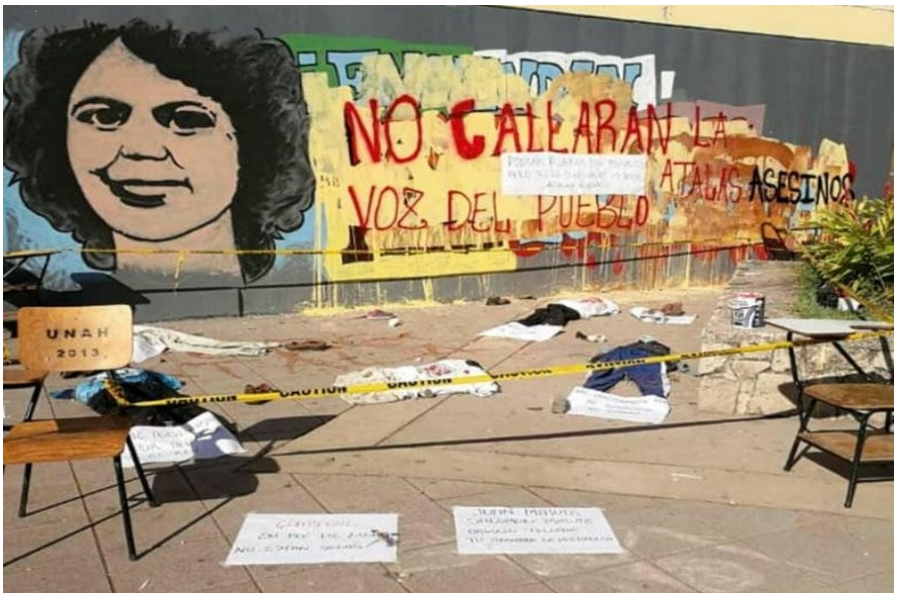

Figure 18: “Bodies” surrounding the vandalized mural

Direct Action

A barricade blocks a street but also opens a new path. (Anonymous Graffiti, 2019)

On April 29, 2019, student activists decided to take direct action to make it clear that they opposed the narco-state and the transnational and colonial interests it represents. Each student association held an assembly to discuss the new bills introduced in congress which aimed to privatize water, healthcare, and education. Each assembly decided to walk out to protest. Hundreds of masked students, women and men, came from all directions to barricade the boulevard in front of the university. It is important to note that this irruptive confrontational behavior is not about violence. Rather, it is about a collective enacting resistance within a brutally violent context. What student activists spray paint on the streets, this makes it clear that they are no longer afraid as a collective. "They have taken so much from us, that they also took away our fear." "They fear us because we are no longer afraid." "Those who only have individual aspirations, will never understand a collective struggle." These phrases can be found spray painted throughout the city, on university buildings, and on major streets. It is through these collective expressions, as Holloway (2010) suggests, where flashes of light of hope help us visualize alternative ways of being together in an uncertain world.

> Like a flash of lightning, they illuminate a different world, a world created perhaps for a few short hours, but the impression which remains on our brain and in our senses is that of an image of the world we can (and did) create. The world that does not yet exist displays itself as a world that exists not-yet. (Holloway, 2010, p. 30)

Student activists are creating a world in which fear no longer justifies the unethical indifference toward those who fight to defend their dignity. As the Hñähñu social activist Estela Hernandez cogently expressed in her speech, *Hasta que la dignidad, se haga costumbre* [Until dignity becomes a custom] (*Hasta que la dignidad*, 2017). Dignity is what many student activists fight for.

When students take to the streets, the military police usually respond with brutal force to disarticulate their collective struggles' hopes and dreams of building another world. While I was talking to Hector as he helped barricade the boulevard with large rocks and tires, the shots of "non-lethal weapons" were fired. As I looked up, I saw a shower of teargas canisters heading toward us. Without hesitating, student activists wearing construction gloves ran toward the canisters and threw them back at the police. One canister impacted me on my right shoulder and landed next to my feet. I kicked it off to the side as hard as I could, away from student activists. I then retreated along with other students toward the university. The women and children who sell street food near the university's main entrance also ran inside. They, too, knew that the autonomy of the university would provide safety because it prevented the police from going in. Tear gas canisters, however, entered freely inside the campus, causing a middle-aged woman to faint as she ran away from the suffocating gas. Many gasped for air with tears in their eyes. Everything happened so fast, at least for me anyway. Students activists reacted in a different way. They ran toward those who needed help, assisting them with water and vinegar, which they believe helps relieve the pain inflicted by tear gas. Several students asked me if I was okay or if I needed water.

Once I could see and breathe somewhat normally again, I turned around to stare at the main entrance where students scrambled to pick up more teargas canisters. The masked students [*los encapuchados*] started to throw rocks at the police. It was in that instance that I felt an anger I had not felt in a long time. At that moment, I thought of the many encounters I had with the police in southern California, of the time I was dragged out of my car while several police officers pointed a gun at me for simply refusing to answer their questions. I thought of my incarceration as a teenager. I thought of my friends who are still in prison. I thought of the

violence designed for colonial subjects, that is, for those who live on the other side of the abyssal line of nonbeing, where human rights are mere illusions used to justify more violence. In front of my swollen eyes, I saw the power differential so clearly. Armed military police with helmets, gas masks, lethal and non-lethal guns, and shields. Students whose relentless energy was slowly being choked out from the suffocating gas. I felt the desperation all through my body. I, too, wanted to build the courage to confront the police. The body knows and remembers the violence it once experienced under its own flesh. There is no need for discourse analysis in moments like these. There is no need to discuss metanarratives, deconstruction, or even decolonial theory when it does not stop people from dying.

At that very moment, while my thoughts travelled to my younger, gang affiliated self, Héctor walked up to me and said that I could handle the gas better than some of his friends. With tears in both of our eyes, we both laughed. We both knew this was not the case. A group of other student activists trying to get some fresh air sat next to me. We looked at each other and laughed our tears away. Almost simultaneously, they said, "*hijos de puta*" [sons of bitches]. Héctor then invited me to go to the frontline once again. I hesitated primarily because of the "ethical" issues related to my research. He said that to know what direct action is, we need to *vivirlo en carne propia*. The best translation of this phrase is to experience something in one's own flesh. This is not a romantic depiction of direct collective action. Héctor knows that these actions are a result of desperation. He knows that throwing a canister or a rock at a fully equipped military police is hardly effective. Direct action is an end in itself insofar as a collective identity is built through these experiences. I wrote the following in my fieldnotes:

> When I walked toward the frontline, I did not throw rocks at the riot police, although *las ganas no me faltaban.* The urge to throw rocks was there. In that moment, two canisters landed in front of me. I immediately grabbed the hot cannister and threw it as far as I could, away from student activists. My hands were

> badly burnt. As I type these words, my hands still smell like gun powder, tear gas, and burnt flesh.

On that day, I stayed at the university for six hours since every entrance was blocked by the police as they continued to launch tear gas. Within that timeframe the riot police launched hundreds of teargas canisters to repress student activists and everyone willing to join them (illustrated by Figure 20). According to what has been reported by some news outlets, each teargas canister is worth at least 150 dollars. That day, the military police launched over 500 canisters. One could only imagine how much the State has spent on the hundreds if not thousands of protests organized in different parts of the country every year since 2009. For obvious reasons, Honduras increased its defense and national security budget from 182 million dollars in 2009 to 631 million dollars in 2018 (*Presupuesto general*, 2018). In comparison, in 2018, only 262 million dollars were allocated to the National Autonomous University of Honduras.

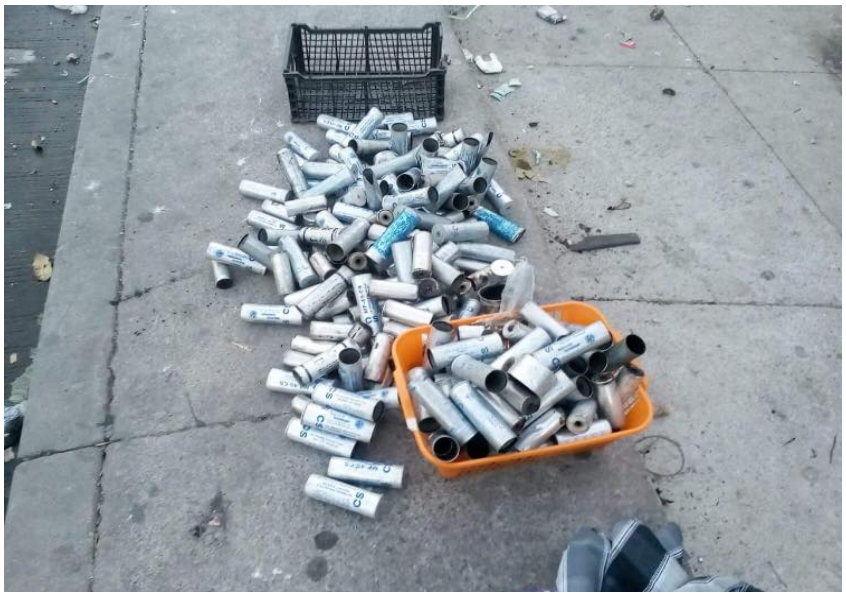

Figure 20: Collected canisters

What I experienced on that day was more than police brutality. What I experienced *en carne propia* involved the anguished faces and bodies surrounding me. Some students cried because of the tear gas while others cried because of anger caused by powerlessness. This anger and sense of powerlessness, however, has been channeled positively to unite various student activist associations once again. Even one student organization which had previously criticized direct action joined this struggle. UNAH is becoming a territorial struggle. It is what students have learned from the campesino and Indigenous struggles with which they have established active solidarity. The strategies and tactics employed by student activists are similar, although the space and place are radically different.

When the student movement became involved in other social struggles, it did not do so with the pretentious vanguardism practiced in the past. When the political conjuncture demanded their commitment, they decided to join or *acuerpar la lucha social* [join the social struggle] at the expense of the institutional politico-academic transformation they were already working on. Their ethico-political position was primarily concerned with other struggles which transcended

the university. When students joined other struggles, they also did so within a specific sociopolitical context. Within a postcoup context, particularly, student activists learned that their struggle could not be isolated from other social movements. Joining other struggles has thus broadened the student movement's radically democratic project. It is for this reason that the national encounter organized by student activists plans to bring together distinct social movements.

The actions taken by student activists thus interweave the ongoing struggles of many others outside of UNAH. These actions transcend the conventional understanding of student movements as collective action directed at defending the publicness of the university. What these confrontations reveal are territorial confrontations which connect themselves to the global, extractivist context under which Latin America and many colonized regions find themselves. These struggles teach social movement researchers the complexity of global coloniality, the institutions which help sustain it, and the multiple and diverse actors resisting its reconfiguration. Student activists are, to cite the Iranian scholar Hamid Dabashi (2015), "thinking and acting in terms at once domestic to their immediate geography and yet global in their consequence" (p. 86). Where collective action will lead is uncertain. What these actions construct in the process, however, are collective ways of knowing and becoming which are no less important than their objectives.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the self-governance and co-governance structures of the university. In the former, I distinguished three types of self-governing bodies. On the first level, there are student associations for each academic program. On the second level, there are college student associations. And on the third level, there is the University Student Movement which will

be organized under the University Student Federation of Honduras (FEUH). Although the student federation was coopted for many years by traditional student fronts, as I addressed throughout this chapter, the University Student Movement will, nonetheless, try to restructure it during the University Constituent Assembly. After the elections in April 2020, the three co-governing bodies (University Council, College Council, and Academic Program Curriculum Committee) will be constituted by the delegates selected by student associations and their respective assemblies. How co-governance will look after the University Constituent Assembly depends greatly on the University Student Movement and the student associations articulated around its political platform. If the student movement is disarticulated when the University Constituent Assembly takes place in May 2020, the politico-academic agenda during the constituent assembly will likely be dominated by traditional student fronts which continue to receive financial and institutional support from the dominant traditional political parties (e.g., National Party and Liberal Party).

In this chapter, I also examined the University Student Movement's political culture and its democratic and decolonial implications. Horizontal forms of organizing, as practiced by student activists, points to the decolonization of power through the creation of a radically democratic university consisting of co-governance, self-determination, and autonomy. I, additionally, analyzed the re-appropriation of university space in which new meanings and alternative forms of sociability emerge. Collective action was briefly discussed to interconnect the student movement's solidarity with other social struggles. In the next chapter, student activists discuss their democratic project in their own terms. The discussion is a co-construction as well as a reconstruction gesturing towards decolonial subjectivities, knowledges, practices, futures, and ways of knowing and becoming (Stein, 2019). Rather than maintaining the authorial

individualism still prevalent in research, I highlight student activists' collective understandings, practices, and knowledge of their politico-academic project. Their thoughts will hopefully present to the reader and potential activist researcher that student activists are knowledge producers, researchers, and collective actors who refuse to be conceived as extractible data. To enact decolonial research, we must thus go beyond academicist perspectives. The discussion which concludes this dissertation gestures toward decolonizing research by decentering authorial individualism.

CHAPTER 6: A CO-CONSTRUCTED DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Student Activists Think, Speak, and Act

There are many who think, speak, and act to make this world more just who will never work in nor be known by academia. The few that do, are likely to work at the margins because their expected productivity levels are often not met, for much of their time is likely spent in less academically productive areas such as in sociopolitical organization. Productivity, as mentioned in chapter five, relates to efficiency, competition, and rank. Those who think from inferiorized geographies and languages, additionally, will hardly ever be cited by academics in dominant positions. It is more common for analyzable data/information to be collected for it to be transformed into theoretical knowledge. The epistemic, social, and geographic location of those who write in subaltern languages will likely be forgotten or silenced to a point of invalidation. If Latin American decolonial theory, for instance, is focused on the locus of enunciation, then, the contradiction lies in the fact that many well-known and widely cited decolonial theorists write in English and from privileged social locations in the geographic Global North (Grosfoguel, 2013; Lillis, 2010; Ordorika & Lloyd, 2015; Phillipson, 1992, 2008). Even within Latin America, those who are widely cited usually come from more "developed" countries with access to universities, journals, and publishing companies with far greater reach (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico). In Honduras and in Central America, we are apparently theoretically mute. We do not speak, so it seems. Others speak for us. I do not believe, however, that widely known decolonial theorists such as Walter Mignolo, Enrique Dussel, María Lugones, Santiago Castro Gomez, and Anibal Quijano intentionally silence those who think from distinct places. I merely want to point out that there exists a political economy of ideas (Cusicanqui, 2012), where those who theorize

with and from Latin America are no longer speaking only from this region. Indeed, some of them have detached themselves from the sociocultural, political, and economic context from which their ideas and experiences originally emerged. If knowledge is situated and embodied (e.g., Mignolo's (1999) "I am where I think"), then surely our way of thinking will shift once our bodies travel across real and imaginary borders and interact in distinct spaces, places, and institutions. If we are to take decoloniality and its concepts seriously (loci of enunciation, geopolitics of knowledge, and coloniality of power), we must not only analyze how "epistemology is embedded in languages and in particular genealogies" but also in particular geographies and institutions (Mignolo, 1999, p. 236). Mignolo (1999) addresses that the loci of enunciation works at the intersection of politics of location, colonial differences, and epistemology, but in refusing to acknowledge the role his epistemic institutional location plays in the political economy of ideas, his work and the work of others tend to impinge upon and distort academic and non-academic discussions around decolonization in other spaces. As he admits, he is "not interested in either playing the role of the 'Hispanic' victim or of the successful marginal who publishes in English in American university presses and works at Duke. I am interested in making the (epistemic) colonial difference visible" (p. 240). This argument, though important when considering his theoretical contribution to understanding modernity/coloniality genealogically, falls short insofar as decoloniality is conceived as that which is enunciated from academic circles and by an individual seeking to make coloniality "visible" for others to see and interpret the world properly. The universities from which decolonial scholars speak, additionally, do influence and in some ways limit the thinking that is situated in the social practices emerging from distinct geographies of Latin America. This is of great concern if we are to prevent decoloniality from being adopted uncritically in distinct places with varying historical and

contemporary particularities. Can decolonial theory keep up with the social practices enacting decolonial futures? Can decolonial theory exist without decolonial social practices? Does decolonial theory become hegemonic when it emanates predominantly from the Global North? When decolonial theory travels back to the Global South does it erase decolonial thought and action situated in place? Does decolonial theory have the potential to silence and subsume emerging decolonial praxis, and does it abstract it from its concrete sociopolitical context? There are no absolute answers to these questions. These questions are useful insofar as they direct us toward a more critical stance toward our own theoretical commitments, so that we may enact a knowledge practice that avoids the dogmatic and enchanting traps of theory, especially the vanguard (as opposed to rearguard) theory produced by academics working in "world-class" universities, which have established for themselves an aura one mistakenly hopes to emulate. In subsequent sections, I reflect on these questions in relation to the metaphorization of decolonization.

In contradistinction to academicist discussions around decolonial theory, the student activists with whom I had a chance to work interconnected their thinking with action, always situating their thoughts to the sociopolitical context and the university they hoped to transform. The knowledges born in struggle point to the ways in which activist researchers can engage in work that simultaneously enacts a sociology of emergence and a decolonial praxis where lived experiences are no longer conceived as data or information but rather as collective knowledges and social practices of resistance creating the conditions of possibility of building a world otherwise. The knowledges and practices produced by student activists, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, disrupts the authorial individualism continuing to pervade knowledge practices in "post" discourses as well as in decolonial theory (Blaser, 2010; B. de S. Santos, 2018). In

underscoring the student movement's praxis, my intention was to bring forth knowledges emerging from autodidactic processes situated alongside and outside the university, while also revealing the unmaking and remaking of the curriculum, broadly understood epistemologically, ontologically, and axiologically. How else would future electrical engineers, such as Eduardo, for instance, come to understand and critique the university's neoliberal logic if it was not for his lived experience, struggle, and transdisciplinary (and undisciplinary) form of knowing with others in the student movement? How would an anthropology, sociology, history, and law student come to understand the social, political, cultural, colonial, and economic implications of university reform and the conceptual limitations of dominant theories if not through their own investigations, theoretical praxis, and interepistemic *mingas*? What follows is a co-constructed discussion which draws on the work of Mario, Erica, Eduardo, Maria, and Julio. The writing was produced by them (at times with my participation and contribution) on different occasions when political statements and communications were going to be disseminated on the student movement's newspaper and Facebook page or when they simply wanted to share with the university community and the public in general their thoughts on issues that were impacting them internally in the university as well as externally in their communities. Some of their thoughts were drawn from interviews, conversations, forums, and meetings. I hope that my selection of their elaborate ideas makes it evident that students, as young as 19, do in fact think and act otherwise and are interpreting their world instead of being interpreted by others (i.e., by academics). I also hope that what follows stresses the complex ways in which student activists are rethinking the university in radically democratic terms and are at the same time doing something to make that happen. I would also like to remind the reader that everything was translated by me, so, if there are any phrases or terms that sound odd, the blame would entirely

have to fall on me. The topics students preferred to discuss situate the student movement's emergence according to the social, political, cultural, and economic context. Their actions, knowledges, and reflections were part of an intersubjective process born in struggle, which explored the university's complex entanglement with global processes, its historical role in subjugating people, and its possible transformation through democratic governance. The complicity of the curriculum in subjugating knowledges and preventing alternative modes of thought is also emphasized below.

Like a *coyote* smuggling people across the border, I intend to smuggle in knowledge into an academic space that continues to ignore the collective voices emerging in the epistemic and geographic Global South, especially the youthful and resistant voices often silenced because of their ostensible immaturity. This smuggling might be interpreted as the appropriation of knowledge. This is not the case, however. Situating student activists as knowledge producers instead of data producers aims to disrupt the coloniality of research practices which extract "data" and repackage "information" into commodifiable theory (similar to the way raw materials are extracted and manufactured into commodities and later shipped back for consumption). I cite their work at length to enact rather than to speak of decoloniality. The ideas included in the following sections, often discussed as a summary of "findings," were co-produced with student activists who thought it necessary to share their experiences and knowledges in hopes that their understanding of institutional and societal change may offer other activist intellectuals, researchers, and pedagogues another vantage point from which to understand the relationship between university and social transformation. Ultimately, their ideas are meant to be read by anyone interested in making this world more just.

The Coup

The 2009 coup resulted in the re-politicization of society and therefore in the creation, empowerment, and mobilization of popular resistance throughout the country, which included teachers' unions, student movements, bus drivers, taxi drivers, street vendors, campesinos, Indigenous and Black peoples, feminists, LGBTQ, and various sociopolitical organizations. Since 2009, an authoritarian political regime imposed itself in the university, paralleling the state's authoritarian political regime. The university's rector, at the time, centralized university governance and marginalized students and professors. These actions reduced the University Council to a homogeneous body with a hierarchical structure excluding faculty members and students from participating in the institution's governance and curriculum reform. What happened since then was not higher education reform. Rather, they were counter-reform measures which eliminated the participation of the university's main actors. It took away the decision-making power of students and professors.

In Honduras, there is now a new oligarchic-capitalist financial model that emerged from the reconfiguration of political, economic, and military forces in 2009. This new hegemonic model has deepened the sociocultural and political crisis in which we were already living. This crisis is clearly visible in the statistics that the government itself provides. Unsurprisingly, this has only benefitted national and transnational interests by granting mining concessions, privatizing public services, and using state institutions to maintain the status quo. This new regime has created a decontextualized and completely isolated educational system servile to oligarchic and transnational interests. Restrictive fiscal and monetary policies have also reduced social spending, which has been followed by deregulation and privatization.

It is necessary to understand that student repression at UNAH is a result of the implementation of state policy supported by university authorities as a means to silence the voices that have historically struggled to transform the university and society. The student movement's historical memory, for example, helps us understand that the violent repression of student activists is not new. We have always been perceived as a threat. Student activists, now organized as the University Student Movement, have resisted since the university counter-reform movement was initiated in 2009.

Henceforth, we have been fighting to build a public, plural, inclusive, participatory, holistic, popular, and democratic university in hopes that it will transform society. We are against a market education. We advocate instead for a truly liberating, transformative, and popular educational model. This means that, unlike the technocratic education proposed by a corporate, elitist, and militarized university, we advocate for an education that is a collective social right. For an education to become a collective social right, we must oppose all measures aimed at privatizing education.

Authoritarianism

The absence of legitimacy makes the university authoritarian. The neo-fascist governance structure, additionally, works the same in all regional campuses. There are sentinels who receive and broadcast information from these spaces, but the intentions to discipline bodies and minds has only generated tension and creativity expressed in the rebelliousness of the student movement.

The limited vision of those who arbitrarily run the university does not allow them to critically and reflexively value the creative abilities, changes, and transformations demanded by the student movement. Nor can they appreciate the student movement's organization which is

composed of subjects moving in an open system as opposed to the confined system used by the grotesque forces of modernity seeking to indoctrinate and transform us into consumers and passive individuals.

All of this is accompanied by faculty members who distribute scholarships to lackeys and vassals that support the university's regime. Some students, unfortunately, have already turned their backs on our struggle to defend public education. This has generated a clientelist and nepotist culture, no different to what the dominant political parties have done with other institutions, unions, and syndicates. A parasitocracy is what we call this culture. That is why, under a clientelist logic, faithful employees and the relatives of deans, directors, and vice-chancellors are awarded scholarships to other countries in order to become the next generation of professors who will later maintain the status quo.

The coup of 2009 unveiled the antidemocratic practices of the state and its institutions. It confirmed that the two-party system was in fact composed by the same ruling class. Within the university, the same parasitocratic, clientelist, authoritarian, and antidemocratic forms of governing were also deeply embedded. Traditional student fronts which had been coopted, rather than representing the interests of students, did the bidding of politicians. UNAH had become a place for political campaigning and a place where representatives of these student fronts could ascend the socioeconomic and political latter through their alliances with university authorities. UNAH's authorities thus used these fronts to perpetuate their rule like a lord over his fiefdom. Deans, rectors, and directors could make decisions without student opposition. After the coup, however, we became more informed as to how the country and the university was run. In 2010 and 2011, several student activist organizations and platforms emerged in the Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula Campus. Our inflamed discourse immediately attacked the antidemocratic

practices student fronts and university authorities used to maintain power. The plaza became a place where the parasitocracy and bipartisan *golpista* culture of the university could be attacked in front of students, professors, and university authorities alike. At the plaza, we blamed the student political fronts for helping university authorities coopt co-governance. We blamed the student fronts for handing over the parity of representation previous student activists had fought for and defended. The University Student Federation of Honduras was also dissolved. We were left with nothing. Organizing was the only way forward.

Repression: A Student Activist's Reflection

As I walked inside my house at 7:50 pm, the first thing I did was cry. I cried because of the damn helplessness that engulfs me. I never imagined seeing anyone fall at my feet injured, seeing gunshot wounds around me, or hearing dreadful pleas from wounded friends saying "bro, don't leave me here alone" [*maje no me dejes solo*]. Bullets, tear gas, the violation of university's autonomy. I didn't expect to see groups of students under the cars crying because of the terror of bullets released by the military police.

I cry because of the gunshot wounds my friends received, who are thinking minds fighting for a better Honduras. It is not just, damn it, that the military police can kill the future of Honduras. It's not fair that this country is going to shit because of the fucking corruption of that drug-trafficking party. When will we have justice in this country? How much longer will our dignity be denied? People reading this might think I am too dramatic or perhaps that I am exaggerating but having a battalion of killers shooting directly at you and seeing university students and friends shot at while others took cover behind cars as they cried out of fear does not leave room for embellishment. Only if you witnessed this will you feel the same outrage. While those to blame for this terror are roaming free, our friends are in the hospital dying.

Not too long after the shooting at the university, the president linked to drug trafficking said that we were "a group of radicals that have had the National Autonomous University of Honduras on its knees for more than 10 years. These things are not often said, but if we do not attack the root of the problem, this problem will not be solved. We must say things by their name" ("JOH sobre disturbios," 2019). The root of the problem is us, who refuse the conformist and indifferent attitude the university and the state demand of us. According to our so-called president, the root must be attacked to solve the problem we represent. Fortunately, our roots are sporadic, relentless, and unyielding.

Neoliberal Globalization and the University

Global capitalism reconfigures itself during a crisis so that it could continue to dominate the world. During an economic crisis, there is, at times, an inability to think politically. There is a hegemonic discourse that prevents us from thinking as such. This discourse aims to convince us that we must not politicize healthcare, education, and social justice during precarious times. The social institutions capitalism is increasingly commodifying should not be politicized or intervened by the state. We must let the market run its course. Higher education reform, however, aligned perfectly with the state's developmentalist vision and mission published in 2010, which resulted in neoconservative and authoritarian governance structure, limited to the fundamentalist ideology of neoliberal globalization. This did not only result in the expansion of privatized higher education, but it also reduced the state's responsibility in guaranteeing a higher education to historically oppressed peoples. Additionally, in its aim to increase revenues, the university increased fees (e.g., registration and lab fees), limited access to certain academic programs (e.g., cap of 300 students medical programs and the few academic programs offered

were designated to those who could afford the tuition fees), and significantly reduced the number of students graduating from the social sciences.

Decolonizing Politics and the University

The student movement is not to be understood as strictly political but is rather configured by suffering, knowledge, and the collective power to transform our realities. We have felt the pain of daily injustices and the precarious state of living. That suffering, in turn, has been converted into knowledge of our social, political, cultural, and economic realities in order to transform the conditions that make this suffering possible in the first place. The knowledges we have created collectively are directed toward a good life [*buen vivir*], social welfare, and the collective social right to demand them through sociopolitical and cultural organization.

All this is related to public space, the spatial scenario where multiple and diverse dimensions of reality converge in which different protagonists generate a social meaning of the university, based on social conditions historically produced of what "The Public, National, and Autonomous University" signify. These social as well as political meanings we give to the university disrupt the recolonizing logic of a market education which crystalizes itself into the hegemonic ideological knowledge system of neoliberalism [*el pensamiento único*].

Decoloniality

History cannot be conceived as mere facts. History demands a critical apprehension and reinterpretation, in a historiographic sense, for its reconstruction. Colonialism, for instance, is not a historical period or even found in the past but is rather a latent phenomenon and underlying structure of our society, with different faces, protagonists, and institutions, largely supported by a symbolic and intellectual field, expressed in the desires in some and an authoritarian self-realization in others.

At the university, the superficial inclusion of certain customs and practices from Lenca, Miskitu, Garifuna, and campesino communities (such as music and dance) does not resonate, at least profoundly, with students who come from these very communities. Real change to the curriculum demands critically reflective and spiritual spaces that position social practices situated in community as our present rather than some historical artifact found in a museum meant to be displayed occasionally during some sort of "cultural" event.

The knowledge of the other only falls into the exoticization of certain practices. We are specifically referring to when Indigenous and Black peoples and campesinos are invited to open events with their dance and music. It is not necessarily a bad thing to experience such things if it were also complemented with a curriculum on Indigenous philosophies, Indigenous, Black, and campesino organizations, resistance, etc. There is, therefore, the need to reflect on Indigenous thought within public higher education, because topics such as interculturality are not exclusively related to Indigenous peoples but of education in general, understood as a relational practice of learning, freedom, love, ethics, and social justice.

Higher Education Reform

In Latin America, it does not take much effort to examine the negative impact universities have on society, especially in the neoliberal and neocolonial model allowing transnational companies to exploit natural resources indiscriminately and to accumulate capital for neoliberal globalization and financial capitalism. A university that does not confront the neoliberal, neoextractivist, and neocolonial model only promotes and legitimizes structural violence and displacement.

In contrast to what we demand, the transitional commission at the university implemented higher education reforms seeking to build a modern university. The question is,

what modernity are we talking about? The one with endless wars, violence, and xenophobia? The polarization of society? The accumulation of capital in a few hands? Hyper-specialization? Neoextractivism? The homogenization of curricula for the internationalization and exchange of human capital worldwide? The elimination of disciplines and technification of knowledge? The decay of thought?

If we read and analyze these higher education reforms, we can see how the university's supposed essence is gradually articulated and shaped from the vision of its own institutionality, which is starkly against our communities' realities. The concepts of identity, participation, inclusion, equity, globalization, for instance, expose the university's modern vision. In themselves, these concepts dictate what the university and society need to finally catch up to modernity. These concepts contain within them an integrated identity. What we have seen is the elimination of interculturality and democratic participation. Does inclusion refer to the private sector's management of all that is public? When university authorities speak of equity and globalization, are they referring to the global exchange of human capital and the so-called internationalization of higher education? When they speak of a national identity, what identity are they aspiring to create? Are they referring to the touristy consumption and romantic Mayanization of our diverse Indigenous, Black, campesino, and urban identities? As student activists, we have asked the following questions:

> What is the purpose of having university reform with a fragmented curriculum if we cannot transform our reality and build the society to which we all aspire? Is UNAH really aspiring to change or is there another hidden logic? Is there a logic which conceives of us merely as human capital to be exchanged and consumed like commodities within and between the national and international private sectors? Does university reform seek to maintain cultural and political hegemony?

Academic norms intended to formally and legislatively instrumentalize and legitimize the structural crisis of the university, particularly its ontological crisis and its epistemological and methodological inability to know and understand our social reality from our worldviews. At the same time, in the academic standards we find acute contradictions between the university and the social context. Because these standards express explicitly the need to use the university as a social public good, we need to understand how public good is interpreted. Providing academic and "cultural' services in reality only lead students to the private sector. Academic standards, furthermore, homogenize individuals for the exchange of human capital at the international level. They prepare individuals for neoextractivist processes. Standardization, in short, is the decline of critical thought. University counter-reform has resulted in the following:

1. Curriculum counter-reform entails the evaluation and accrediting processes to homogenize our curricula, intended to train more effective "professionals" (that is, to effectively produce human capital).
2. The strengthening of a public university that serves as a concatenated thread between private enterprise and public higher education, as a means to effectively implement educational policies that are servile to the needs of the transnational labor market.
3. The creation of technical, technological, televised, virtual, and vocational education centers which offer countless technical careers exclusively designed for neoextractivist projects and the service industry.
4. The creation of a university with a hyperspecialized epistemology. This is the clearest expression of scientific reductionism creating a greater inability to solve our country's social problems.

With these egregious consequences, there is an urgent need to build a radical democracy that will become the transversal axis in education. The epistemological, gnoseological, ontological and teleological sustenance of understanding, systematizing, deepening, and transforming the ways of being, thinking, living together [*convivencia*], acting and generating knowledge must come from our communities. Our communities provide us with a general understanding and even a methodological guideline of resistance (or praxis) to transform our

realities from everyday life and practice to more organized forms of resisting social institutions. This is opposed to the obscurantism of an academic, institutionalist, objectivist, and technocratic paradigm where the university tries to convince us by telling us that, "We have the truth; what we say is the right thing to do; what we say has to be done; what we do and have been doing is the right thing; you are wrong and we are right; do not protest; do not speak and do not criticize; study and work."

But this does not convince us. What we want is to build a liberating, pluriversal, popular, and transformative education. We want an education that begins with a paradigmatic shift from the destructive sciences to ecological, anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, anti-extractivist, and ancestral knowledges. Above all, we fight for a university that prioritizes the learning capacity of communities to develop their own autonomy, that is, the ability of each society or community to challenge their reality and to constitute their own freedoms towards a more just world where people may live with dignity. This requires us to change the statically predetermined curriculum into a dynamically undetermined curriculum. That is why we need to set up curriculum reform committees made up of faculty members, students, and social activists. What impedes all of this is that the university still conceives of students and our *pueblos* as mere recipients of content and not as active subjects capable of building critical ideas related to education.

Organization

Everything mentioned so far implies that we must transform bureaucratic organizations (e.g., university, colleges, and schools) into learning communities. Initially, we recognized that the construction of a new university through a reform process—that is, through academic standards, educational models, and curriculum management, etc.—contained a void. What we

now see in these counter reforms is that they have lacked the direct participation of the main actor in any pedagogical act: the student. Such a contradiction was made visible by the student movement and in its smaller student associations, yet many of our practices at the beginning of our struggle were distorted by the institutional apparatus (for example, many of us still believed we were mere recipients of content rather than active subjects and builders of critical ideas and knowledge). Conceiving of ourselves as builders of critical ideas and knowledge made it possible to understand the student movement's methodological framework of political action [praxis] in relation to its sociocultural and educational implications. We no longer thought of ourselves as a student movement that only resists university reform but rather as a social movement with a strong commitment to build a radically democratic university linked to and interpellated by a diversity of collective actors.

Curriculum, Space, Identity, and Popular Research

Our fight is not only against higher education reform. Instead, it is a struggle that entails a process of identification or recognition among students of what we collectively understand as the political. Therefore, our struggle can be defined as a political struggle in terms related to the exigencies of regaining our voice and reclaiming power in institutional decision-making spaces. This is a social struggle as well in the sense of democratizing the curriculum to respond to the political, ideological, and cultural reality of students, who, before becoming students, are historical subjects situated in community. As an intercultural struggle, in addition, through the opening of educational spaces outside the university, we are building critical and ethical relations between subjects. The recovery of our territories and the creation of rebellious schools, popular radio stations, and newspapers, for instance, are all part of the pedagogical axis around which our struggle revolves.

Our struggle is thus conceived from a rebellious pedagogical standpoint, where the issues of conscientization, organization, and action are intersected. These become basic tools for understanding political and power relations, synthesized in an intercultural and dynamic space. This requires creativity, criticism, knowledge, and praxis. It has been challenging, however, to move from an academic method to a popular method. To clarify, the latter does not mean the lack of objectivity. On the contrary, a popular method is more rigorous as it reaffirms and integrates collective actions with various artistic, symbolic, and conceptual expressions of our critical consciousness.

The symbolic elements (the banners, murals, concerts, slogans, use of the mask, etc.) together determine the joy and conviction to continue in the construction of a movement that advocates for the defense and promotion of our social right to a public education. These are cultural manifestations that generate discussions and debates revolving around the actioning of the collective [historical] subjects within a diverse space. We also encourage debate around the recovery of public spaces. We have visibilized the violence experienced in its different modalities (direct/indirect, visible/invisible, structural, and cultural violence) by women, LGBTQ members, Indigenous and Black peoples, and *campesinos*—violence that is not only embedded in the academy but rather in society. Our *compañeras* and *compañeros* from the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras (OFRANEH) and the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) have been critical references, allies, and teachers regarding the multidimensionality of violence.

A Cultural Space

When we talk about regaining our territory, we are referring to the identification we have with this space. The meaning we give to this space revolves around a spiritual framework and

feelings and emotions that require the recovery of public spaces that have been historically dominated by the few. We are the ones who for so long were invisibilized by and excluded from these spaces. Because we form part of history, we also have the possibility of being young builders of dreams, art, and knowledge, while maintaining the pedagogical principle of learning by doing. We are the joy and hope of today.

These cultural manifestations have been expressed by many student activists in the dispute between an organized university community and a regime's strategy to stigmatize our movement in its attempt to demobilize us by utilizing the mainstream media against us. This has made it difficult to open a critical, participatory, academic, and democratic dialogue.

Important elements such as the use of the mask and the slogan, "we cover our faces to show our hearts", has been a collective responsibility to avoid persecution, disappearance, and death of those who are directly or indirectly involved in our struggle. Other strategies involved generating various actions to deconstruct the stigma the media had constructed regarding the "masked criminals" and "lawless anarchist." We emphasized this issue to humanize the mask, using it in every space of our struggle and in every recreational and cultural activity. We danced, sang, and played games with our masks on. We simultaneously visibilized the impunity of the national justice system and the fight against cultural and institutional alienation. The humanization of the mask meant going against fear, especially against the terror administered in deadly dosages to the Honduran population. We learned these strategies from the knowledges and experiences shared by the Zapatistas of southern Mexico.

Disrupting the discourse against the student movement has brought more voices together, and it has linked a diversity of social demands with the democratization of the university. At the same time, we have articulated our struggles with other social movements and have expressed

our discontent through our power to mobilize with others, where participation is not dominated by university student activists but is rather integrated by a diversity of social organizations, parents, teachers, people with physical disabilities, Indigenous and Black peoples, campesinos, and human rights organizations as other companions. This complex articulation demands that we pay careful attention to the student movement's sociopolitical and academic project, since it is not a homogeneous but a heterogeneous and intercultural movement [intercultural here refers to the deeper interepistemic spaces created between peoples and communities rather than the superficial meanings given to "culture"]. There is no single ideology determining the political and organizational identity of the movement [i.e., the student movement's political culture]. This makes student movement research a necessary praxis for student activists, professors, and scholars interested in effecting change in their educational institutions. Working collaboratively will not only provide a better understanding of the movement but will also help it become reflexively critical of its practice and sociopolitical context. The solidarity of diverse groups found at the university is not some sort of activist fad but a recognition of the legitimate claims the student movement has established to defend and expand the meanings of public education in more radical terms. At the political level, this involves a methodological process in terms of organization and as a movement capable of continuing to break boundaries in the understanding of social justice and democracy. This necessitates an ethical and political responsibility. Making the contradictions of institutionalized education at all levels a public discussion has been one of our most salient, albeit modest, contribution.

Curriculum Reform

According to article 101 and 102 of the academic norms, the curriculum is a human-educational and cultural project in which experiences of research and the interconnections with

society may be constructed through meaningful, formative, and planned learning linked to the innovations and advances in science, art, culture, and technology. These interconnections are in coherence with the educational model defined by the institution. The curriculum must allow for scientific, technological, cultural, artistic, and ethical contents to be organized, classified, and scaffolded to make them accessible to students during the instructional process, thus enabling them to develop the skills defined by their profession.

The curriculum, however, except for its superficial inclusion of cultural, artistic, and ethical content, is enveloped by technical knowledge and is intimately linked to local (tourism), national (extraction), and international development (neoliberal globalization). The words used in higher education reform often hide their referents. As euphemisms, these words hide their deeper meanings. The discourse hides how the higher education model being configured eliminates critical thought. It does not mention how neoliberal education reform turns curriculum and pedagogy into a violent act of decontextualization. The discourse hides the way art and culture are instrumentalized for economic ends. Art and culture are not artefacts over which the university has ownership.

By not being built in a democratic way, that is, by not responding to the needs of the Honduran people through the participation of the educational communities of teachers, students, and society, we consider these institutional changes as administrative, organizational, and curricular counter-reforms that have made it more difficult to build a university that is a guarantor, promoter, and transformative body of the social reality of Honduras.

The relevance of education reform should instead be focused on the reappropriation of the sociocultural, political, and economic content [curriculum] of society. The active link between the university and society that allows for the democratic participation of communities,

parents, and students in reforming the university is indispensable. It is for these reasons that we fight to democratize university governance, which will allow us to lead university reform from below. It is our hope that this will also lead to a profound sociocultural and decolonial transformation. The questions posed by Santos (2015) are critical in this regard:

> So how are we going to create a counterhegemony under these new conditions and a democracy that can't be like the one we have? Does it have to be another democracy that really has the potential to be radicalized? Because for me…, 'socialism is civil democracy', in the family, in the community, in the factory, in the office, in the university, in the school, in the street; we have contented ourselves in Western modernity's democratic island, which is nothing more than an isolated political process containing an archipelago of despotism. (p. 33)

The university should thus be a space of convergence to enable the articulation of diverse social struggles and the formulation of a counter-hegemonic decolonial project.

Democracy

Liberal democracies have created atomized individuals unable to help create a democratic culture—a culture of solidarity and communal justice. In that sense, the ontology of liberalism was the creation of a dead society (Marcuse, 1964). Democracy should be a democratic deliberation and not an electoral procedure competing for political power to represent others. A radical democracy, in contrast, aims to give direct participation to social movements so that a democracy may be shaped and established from the people's collective power. As argued by the ethics of professor Enrique Dussel's (1980) philosophy of liberation, democracy's purpose is to achieve the greatest dignity of the community of those who are systematically oppressed through distinct though intersected modalities (colonialism/racism/displacement/subjugation of ways of being and knowing, patriarchy/sexism/heteronormativity, and capitalism/classism/exploitation constitute the social hierarchy which positions the White heteronormative middle-upper class man as superior). Historically, this has been achieved through ethical social practices of

liberation. Ethics, here, is also based on the political and philosophical problems of truth. The community must resolve and sustain its existence through knowledge and action. We are not speaking of absolute knowledge but rather are referring to the real pain, resistance, suffering, joy, and aspirations of historically oppressed and colonized peoples, communities, regions, and entire continents.

The Ethico-Political

For Dussel (2013), the ethical-political construction of an institution's publicness must have, as its first and final reference, the power of the community. In other words, it must be founded through direct participation and consensus among its actors, and not through the exercise of hierarchical power. If we understand the university as a contested field, then each subject interacts and intervenes in relationships and conflicts that this field delimits. The university is an academic-political field where teachers, students, workers, and authorities interact in permanent exercises of power, counterpower, and representation, which are internally and externally related to curricular, economic, cultural, and administrative spheres. The intersubjectively political processes developed within the university, therefore, provide the framework of action and interpretation that university reform must seriously take into consideration.

The university cannot be a fixed institution, but one characterized by social struggle where leaders lead by obeying what is determined by students and professors in their public assemblies. Putting into practice the semantic resignification Dussel (2009) gives to *potestas* and *potencia*, originally addressed by Spinoza, allows for a distinct conception of power. Dussel argues that dominant political philosophy prevents us from reconceptualizing power outside of its negativity. What this means, to use a famous dictum, is that power tends to corrupt, and

absolute power corrupts absolutely (De Janosi, 1940). Outside of this notion of power, nothing else exists unless we work outside of the tendency enunciated by this very statement. This Eurocentric conception of power points to the coloniality of political philosophy (Mills, 2015). Even if we conceive of the political by using terms such as strategic action (Machiavelli, 2015; Tzu, 2007), rational action (Weber, 1978), a friend/enemy dynamic (Schmitt, 2008), hegemony and counterhegemony (Gramsci, 1971), communicative action and power (Arendt, 1954; Habermas, 1984), or biopolitics (Foucault, 2010), we are still left with little conceptual room to think of alternative forms of political activity. This negative critique, so it seems, does more to prevent us from thinking of the ways power may be resisted and built collectively and from below in different terms. As Scheper-Hughes (1995) cogently addresses in her critique of postmodernism's conception of power, "Once the circuits of power are seen as capillary, diffuse, global, and difficult to trace to their sources, the idea of resistance becomes meaningless. It can be either nothing or anything at all. (Have we lost our senses altogether?)" (p. 417). This leads to an endless deconstruction of all forms of power, even the collective power built from subaltern spaces. The contradiction is that these conceptions have been developed by anti-essentialist/foundationalist postmodern and postcolonial theories, which ultimately circle back around to essentialism since power is naturalized and thus essentialized through a negative discourse, thus eschewing everything that affirms to reconstruct power from below.

Student Activist Research and the Prefiguration of Political Cultures

In the previous sections, student activists discussed their knowledges and practices in their own terms. The university they aspire to build points to the politics of place and prefigurative politics, as addressed in chapter two. The emergence of the University Student Movement's horizontal form of organizing and social practices of resistance entails the

performative and prefigurative component of their struggle to democratize and decolonize the university and society (I use society for its economy of expression although this term is problematic). Student activists' efforts to democratize the university through a radical linkage and interconnectedness [*vinculación y vincularidad*]. with social movements goes beyond institutional transformation. Democratization here prefigures not only the decolonization of the university but also of the social relations, practices, and knowledges that sustain coloniality. A complex articulation has thus been formed to democratize and build a new university and, in turn, help rebuild a society ethically and politically. Because this dissertation used a politically engaged ethnographic approach to understand the student movement's cocreation of knowledge, organizational practice, and political culture, it contributed to body of literature focused on university student activism.

The University Student Movement thus needs to be understood as site of resistance in which a radically democratic culture is being expressed through student associations, public assemblies, the reappropriation of university space, and, most importantly, the creation of knowledge. The democratic practices used by student activists have established a radically democratic political culture within an institution which has historically been dominated by an authoritarian political culture complicit with the three modalities of domination previously mentioned, colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism. The student movement must additionally be understood as the prefiguration of a political culture extending itself beyond the limits of the university. Prefiguration, however, must not be conceived deterministically but rather as that which reflects the student movement's aspirations, politics of hope, and dreams of living with dignity and in peace. The sociology of emergence I discussed at length in other previous chapters is the stuff of which prefiguration is made. Prefiguration here is understood as a sociocultural

and political process requiring the direct participation of diverse communities in building a more just and radically democratic society. Mario and Maria both agreed with my understanding of the university as a place in which prefigurative politics were being enacted by student activists. The student movement's project to democratize the university, they clarified, was sort of like a "laboratory" or a "little school" [*laboratorio y esceulita*] for student activists and other social movements. To a certain extent, the student movement's political culture and the knowledges and social practices constructed therein were subsequently implemented in communities, professional guilds, unions, protests, and social movements (Funez, 2019; Licona, 2019; *Persisten tomas*, 2017.).

The name of the student movement might eventually change, as it will likely revolve around another political platform. The emerging *Regeneración Estudiantíl Democrática* (RED) [Democratic Student Regeneration] created by the fourth student activist generation (2019-present) since the coup is likely to become the new political platform. The collective identity and organizational, associational, and political culture constructed since 2009, however, is likely to remain.

Through massive mobilizations, student activists were able to force the university's rector and other university authorities to step down. This initiated a new phase of activism where students worked toward reestablishing the electoral process at the university. This will culminate in a university constituent assembly in which all statutes, including UNAH's organic law, will be modified. If the university constituent assembly is dominated by student political fronts or reactionary student collectives, however, the newly established statutes will likely aim to counter the student movement's democratic project. To prevent this, the student movement must maintain itself united in one political platform so that delegates from each student association, as

discussed in the previous chapter, will have the collective power and decision-making power to shape the terms of the conversation during the constituent assembly.

The importance of the university constituent assembly is that it prefigures a national constituent assembly where social movements, political parties, and civil society in general will participate. The latter assembly, according to student activists, is not about taking power as previous social movements used to believe but rather about reconfiguring it socially. To continue to conceive of power vertically and negatively, as mentioned above, is problematic when examining the ways in which emerging political cultures reconstruct power from below. When the collective is built between diverse and multiple actors, power is built through reciprocal social relations. If political parties dominate the conversation during the national constituent assembly, then power will reconfigure itself vertically and once again exclude social movements.

The radical democratization of the university has serious implications for the decolonizing of the university. These implications, however, are not limited to decolonizing the symbolic dimensions of coloniality. It also involves decolonizing practices emanating from the university, practices which have historically sustained and legitimized exploitive relationships within and beyond its walls. The democratization of the university is ultimately about reclaiming autonomy in more radical terms in hopes that it will enable us to rethink and reposition the university as socially, culturally, politically, epistemically, and ontologically situated in Indigenous, campesino, Black, and mestizo communities. In the following sections, I reflect on this dissertation's theoretical and methodological contribution to decolonial thought, student activist research, and curriculum inquiry in higher education.

Reflections and Contributions to Decolonial Scholarship

In 2017, prior to having my preliminary examination questions formulated and approved, my advisor suggested that I keep a research journal to reflect on personal, academic, methodological, and theoretical concerns related to my potential dissertation research topic. In the following sections, my reflections point to the dilemmas, contradictions, conflicts, and the ethics involved in doing activist ethnographic research. In these reflections, I intersect the pedagogical with the theoretical, methodological, and political dilemmas of doing this type of work. Learning, researching, thinking, knowing, theorizing, and doing were all linked to the pedagogies of resistance I was invited to participate in by student activists who, at first, were rightfully suspicious of my intentions during the initial stages of my dissertation research, which later became a collective endeavor.

A Reflection on the Sociopolitical Context and Research Focus

Given the sociopolitical context, what did it mean for me to do politically engaged research in Honduras? Anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1995), though in distinct circumstances, also questioned her objective position in Brazil when her *companheiras* demanded her to take on a more serious political position because they saw very little value in her objective fieldnote-taking stance. Similarly, how will my work take on an ethical and political approach? What will be gained from said approach? What will be learned? How can researchers contribute to a social movement? Before engaging in fieldwork, I asked myself these questions without knowing how to answer them. Throughout the research process, which probably began in 2017, even before knowing exactly what my dissertation topic would be, my thoughts were already traveling back to the country I left in 1992 and returned to in 2010. It was

the sociopolitical context in which I had immersed myself ever since that continued to haunt my thoughts.

In 2017, I was in Honduras during the massive protests organized after the fraudulent elections in November. I remember that I could not stop thinking of the reasons why I wanted to do research related to this sociopolitical conjuncture. At times, doubt clouded my mind, preventing me from coming up with a "real" justification to work with the university student movement. A research question escaped me. Finally, a question made its way to capture exactly what I wanted to study. Contrary to the messiness involved in doing activist research, this research question neatly placed the parameters of my study and confined a phenomenon and its objects into a specific field. Was I not, however, the one who would learn from university student activists? Was it possible for my research questions to focus more on how students formed collective political identities and constructed knowledge in the process? How were these questions related to curriculum studies? Doubt remained. Just because I had a sociology degree did not mean I was a sociologist. Only because I enjoyed reading anthropological texts did not make me an anthropologist. The one reason for doing activist research in Honduras, which continued to make its way to my thoughts after returning to the United States, was that I wanted to work alongside student activists in their efforts to democratize the university which, though a public institution, excluded the vast majority. Schools and universities, I told myself, might be the last remaining public spaces where so many rebellious students meet, talk, and learn from each other. Where else do so many restless teenagers and young adults gather and share their discontent, hopes, and dreams? Being an autonomous space equivalent to an embassy transformed the university into a potential place of contestation, hope, resistance, and organization within a violent postcoup context. It could be argued that the university is the last

autonomous institution in Honduras. This dissertation was partially a result of some of these reflections but most importantly it was a result of the constellation of experiences that I did not anticipate before my participation in the student movement. Understanding and reflecting upon the unexpected is the stuff inquiry is made of I suppose. In the following sections, I reflect on the theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical and the ways in which they are interconnected.

A Reflective Discussion: Decoloniality and Curriculum Inquiry in Higher Education

If the neoliberal university purports to foment extractivist knowledge practices as revealed by the neoliberal science Lander (2007) and Miyoshi (2000) examine, can we consider neoliberal higher education reform as yet another instrument to sustain coloniality? If the university intends to create possessive individuals willing to displace others, is this a colonial practice? If the neoliberal university narrows its curriculum by placing Western science and instrumental rationality as the only future to which we must aspire, then what may we consider actions that simultaneously challenge neoliberal higher education reform and the subjectivities it seeks to produce? Are these actions decolonial? As Tuck and Yang (2012) admonish, am I not merely using decolonization as a metaphor? In other words, am I emptying decolonization of its concrete political meanings and its inseparability to settler colonialism? Let us think about these questions for a moment. It is evident that some decolonial scholars, intellectuals, and individual activists claim to decolonize certain institutions and discourses (political, cultural, epistemic) without a collective subject and without seriously taking into consideration the importance of Indigenous territories and places. As I mentioned in chapter five, we can endlessly cite others who write about decolonization in the academy or draw from the work of those who speak in the same decolonial vocabularies, but doing so, we must admit, is also implicated in erasing other forms of knowing and doing that enact or prefigure decolonial alternatives and futures. Insofar as

scholars are detached from the practices and knowledges emerging on the ground, they will, unintentionally ignore and invisibilize the prefiguration of decolonized territories and institutions. They will, consequently, erase the politics of place and decolonial practices. Decolonization thus becomes a metaphor employed to re-center theory and perpetuate "settler moves to innocence" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 10).

Although Tuck and Yang (2012) make a compelling argument when we situate decolonization within settler colonial contexts in North America, Australia, and New Zealand, the multifaceted character of colonization and thus of decolonization cannot be understood in the same terms or have the same assumptions in distinct geographies with varying histories and sociopolitical contexts. Even though I find it difficult to write the following arguments, for I risk perpetuating the divisive and antagonist diatribes used by academics, I must acknowledge that Tuck and Yang (2012) use a monolithic conceptualization of colonialism which ignores other histories and experiences. The categories used to illustrate settler colonialism's triad (settler-native-slave) ignores how some of these categories are blurred in distinct contexts. To use the words of Minh-ha (1989) once again, "Despite our desperate, eternal attempt to separate, contain, and mend, categories always leak' (as cited in Conquergood, 1991, p. 184). The airtight categorization of settler-native-slave, for instance, is used by Tuck and Yang to position migrants as potential settlers. Consider the Miskitu in Honduras who are a pluriethnic Indigenous group one could easily categorize as a former fugitive slave community, but they are more than that. The Miskitu, for instance, speak a Mesoamerican Indigenous language and maintain connections to their territory and cosmologies. What category should we place the Miskitu who are simultaneously Indigenous to Africa and Mesoamerica? Do we place them in the slave category? When Miskitus are forced out of their lands and decide to migrate North, do they become third

world migrants? Do they become potential settlers? Is migration colonial or something that is more complex? Are they complicit with settler colonialism? Were Indigenous groups in Africa, Latin America, and Asia complicit with the colonization of other Indigenous territories before and after political and territorial decolonization? If land is repatriated within the North American context, it obligates one to ask who has the power to repatriate land? When land was reclaimed, as opposed to repatriated, during the decolonizing movements in Africa, Asia, and in Latin America did some Indigenous people benefit at the expense of others? Were there newly established hierarchies? These questions, although difficult to ask, point to the importance of not only reclaiming colonized land but also to our complicity or "moves to innocence" that leaves all that is Indigenous uncritiqued. Thinking of the neoextractivist policies of Evo Morales in Bolivia suffice to unsettle these moves to innocence when the coloniality embedded within our Indigenous, Black, and mestizo campesino communities are intimately linked to the conceptions (metaphors) imposed onto us through the pedagogy of cruelty implemented by churches, schools, *encomiendas*, and plantations. These conceptions have, without doubt, legitimated ongoing colonial relationships. The materiality of metaphors and the metaphorization of materiality are dialectics one must not ignore as both make it possible to narrate and enact the stories that perpetuate and indeed reconfigure the modalities of colonization and domination. How metaphors are implicated in the material and vice versa is what makes sociocultural and political research so important inasmuch as political economy (material) and culture (symbolic) are not separated in their categories. The student movement's political and indeed sociocultural project work at this very intersection.

The monopolistic and monolithic view of decolonization maintained by Tuck and Yang's (2012) arguments thus prevents us from thinking of colonialism's multifariousness in distinct

places. Their understanding of colonialism and decolonization does not consider other forms of colonization, such as the ongoing displacement of peoples who do not necessarily identify as Indigenous but who are inhabitants of their territories (e.g., Afro-Ameri-Indigenous and mestizo campesino communities in Colombia, Honduras, and Brazil (Escobar, 2008); Southeast Europeans and peoples within the Russian federation resisting contemporary hierarchies, displacement, and colonial tendencies in the region (M. Tlostanova, 2015); China's internal and external colonialism (Dirlik, 2001); and the settler, internal, external, and neocolonial contexts in which Latin American Black, Indigenous, and campesinos live). We could also take into consideration the violent, destructive, epistemicidal practices that displaced and devastated the lifeworld of those who were pejoratively termed *moros* and *marranos* (Arabs, Berbers, and Jews) before 1492. All the colonial practices that were later implemented in the so-called new world, such as the burning and appropriation of books and knowledge in Al-Andalus, have their origin before 1492. We must not forget these genealogies. Colonialism also becomes more complex when we consider the effects of orientalism and its imperial/colonial implications, links between colonialism and slavery (displacement of people and not the direct appropriation of land but of bodies), and financial neocolonialism within a global neoliberal context which displaces peoples and consumes everything in its path. Let me cite Bhambra, Nişancıoğlu, and Gebrial (2018) at length to extend my arguments further:

> colonialism (and hence decolonising) cannot be reduced to a historically specific and geographically particular articulation of the colonial project, namely settler-colonialism in the Americas. Nor can struggles against colonialism exclusively target a particular articulation of that project: the dispossession of land. To do so, would be to set aside colonial relations that did not rest on settler projects (such as, for example, commercial imperialism conducted across the Indian Ocean littoral, the mandate system in West Asia, the European trade in human beings, or financialized neo-colonialism today) or to turn away from discursive projects associated with these practices (such as liberalism and Orientalism). It would not only remove from our view these differentiated moments of a global project of

> colonialism, but also interactions and connections of these global but differentiated moments with settler-colonialism itself. Put differently, whereas dispossession might be the 'truth' of colonialism, it is not its entirety.
> Taking colonialism as a global project as the starting point, it becomes difficult to turn away from the Western university as a key site through which colonialism—and colonial knowledge in particular—is produced, consecrated, institutionalised and naturalised. It was in the university that colonial intellectuals developed theories of racism, popularised discourses that bolstered support for colonial endeavours and provided ethical and intellectual grounds for the dispossession, oppression and domination of colonised subjects. In the colonial metropolis, universities provided would-be colonial administrators with knowledge of the peoples they would rule over, as well as lessons in techniques of domination and exploitation. The foundation of European higher education institutions in colonised territories itself became an infrastructure of empire, an institution and actor through which the totalising logic of domination could be extended; European forms of knowledge were spread, local indigenous knowledge suppressed, and native informants trained. In both colony and metropole, universities were founded and financed through the spoils of colonial plunder, enslavement and dispossession. (p. 5)

As universities are instrumentalized to increase capitalism's efficiency, so, too, does the colonial project of displacement and deterritorialization become more perverse. Under these circumstances, it also becomes more difficult to listen to counter narratives. It is for this reason that knowledges born in social struggles, such as the ones that emerged in the student movement, carry within them the elements to tell a counter narrative of resistance and reexistence. To decolonize the university in Honduras within similar colonial contexts refers not only to the Eurocentric knowledge embedded in the curriculum but also to the knowledges practices and subjectivities that sustain capitalism's colonial project. To decolonize the university is not a metaphor but a concrete practice seeking to end ways of knowing, being, and valuing that sustain colonial social relations. This research thus sought to intersect the institutional struggles with broader issues related to decolonization, understood as a situated political praxis instead of a textual deconstruction.

Above, I mentioned that it was difficult to express certain arguments against Tuck and Yang (2012) because I, too, feel the colonial wounds inflicted onto my ancestors. I identify with contemporary campesino and Indigenous communities resisting extractivist transnational megaprojects which cannot be understood outside of the colonial past and present. My village, for instance, has organized and declared itself against all mining activities, namely, the recent attempts of a mining company to exploit the surrounding mountains we depend on to subsist. On a more familial level, my *Paíto* and *Maíta* [little father and little mother refers to grandparents], have taught me to connect with the land, to plant corn and beans during the rainy seasons, to fish in the nearby creek, to pay attention to the lunar cycle when planting, and to identify the plants, trees, and animals that form part of the territories that we co-inhabit. The connection we have with our territory represents, in one instance, resistance, and in another, the wisdom, knowledge, and experience that are produced with the territory we inhabit. I belong to the detribalized rural mestizo campesino communities who continue to live in the mountains and subsist off the land with technologies developed thousands of years ago, taught to each generation since then. Growing up in California, I learned about my Indigenous roots but my imagination of Indigeneity was distorted by the Mayanization and Aztecization of Mesoamerica. The memories and stories of my village, however, reminded me that I was not the mestizo who formed part of Honduras' White-mestizo urban imaginary, but formed part of the Indigenous and Brown campesino mestizo who was systematically taught to hate all that is "Indio" through religion and schooling yet resisted in latent forms by maintaining a strong connection to place and a strong sense of the communal. Five centuries have passed since these lands were colonized and we continue to resist. We continue to exist.

Electricity arrived in 2005 along with all the wonders of capitalist modernity. Pesticides, herbicides, mining, dams, television, Nike, and coca cola. It was all that we ever dreamed of. During these difficult times, it becomes harder to listen to the words and knowledges situated in the territories to which we belong. Ancestral social practices, knowledges, and technologies persist, nonetheless. Though these comments are tangential to the purpose of this dissertation, let me give another example. People in my village, for instance, continue to *nixtamalizar* their corn with limestone powder, a technology almost as old as the domestication of corn which helps to eliminate mycotoxins through a chemical process (Guzmán-de-Peña, 2009). This complex process required to prepare dried corn to dough is later used to make tortillas, tamales, and other Indigenous dishes is an integral part of my village. The complex process of planting, harvesting, degraining, drying, and *nixtamalizando* comes to show that, after five hundred years under colonial and neocolonial conditions, ancestral knowledge and technology has not been lost and indeed are one of the most important ways this community continues to resist modern/colonial tendencies of displacement. This process might seem unimportant, but it is the primary technique and knowledge used to sustain the community, without which, mass migration becomes inevitable. Despite the systematic detribalization of those who later became campesinos, indigeneity continues to thrive even if it is in contradiction with other practices.

Where am I going with this anecdotal account of my village's ancestral knowledge when I should be concluding this dissertation related to university student activism? The reason I reflected on indigeneity is to emphasize the varying characteristics it takes in distinct contexts and the ways in which we can think and act toward a decolonial future. For the university to be decolonized, student activists, many of whom are originally from villages like mine, recognize that they must situate the knowledges already embedded in their communities, including the

urban barrios to which they now belong. As a junior scholar from Egypt suggested during a symposium at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting in 2019 in which Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez participated, perhaps we need to think of indigeneity in different ways. This does not mean to appropriate indigeneity as Tuck and Yang (2012) rightfully admonish. This Egyptian scholar led me to ask the following questions: What does it mean, for instance, to be Indigenous in Egypt and in other Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries, Africa, Eastern Europe, Siberia, India, and China? Honduras? How is colonialism reconfiguring itself within the context of neoliberal globalization? How do people experience colonization in different contexts? If colonization is not an event that happened long ago but is rather an ongoing process as Tuck and Yang (2012) elucidate, then we must also think of colonialism's institutional and global entanglement which impacts racialized others living on the other side of nonbeing.

In addressing the relationship between university student activism, knowledge practices of resistance, and the democratization university within Honduras' postcoup context, this dissertation sought to demonstrate the implications of institutional transformation and the potential decolonization of the university's curriculum and governance. Decolonizing the university through its radical democratization where distinct social movements, communities, and student activists participate is, at the last instance, about profound social transformation. Ultimately, decolonization involves holding the university accountable, answerable, and responsible for the knowledges and practices it continues to produce to subjugate and displace others. Decolonization is, in short, about reclaiming the autonomy (governance, curriculum, and territoriality) of a university that still has the political conditions of possibility of being

transformed thanks to the many struggles, past and present, led by university student activists and their allies.

Of great importance, perhaps for future research, is determining what and how changes will be made at the National Autonomous University of Honduras once student activists are integrated to the self-governance and co-governance structures. The first National Encounter proposed by the student movement, which is scheduled to take place in the first week of April 2020, for instance, seeks to create a space of convergence where multiple social sectors will participate in developing a national alliance that will go include and go beyond transforming the university. How will this National Encounter include Indigenous, Black, and campesino activists and what role will they take after the encounter ends? How will curriculum reform be addressed during the National Encounter? Who will participate and who will not? Which voices will be heard, and which ones will be silenced?

A Tangential Epistemological Reflection

José Saramago wrote two books about blindness and absence. The first book has epistemological and ontological implications while the second book portrays the political and resistance in other terms. The former portrays a world in which everyone abruptly becomes blind from an unknown illness, and modern science is unable to find a cure. This sudden affliction prevents everyone from "seeing" and interpreting the world as they used to. Old perspectives vanish. Worldviews disappear. The other disappears along with all (mis)conceptions and (mis)representations. Paradoxically, it is the characters' vision which previously prevented them from seeing and interpreting the world in (an)other way, perhaps in more ethical terms. Their new blindness, however, enables the reader to imagine a world where one may "see", sense, and interpret the world in new ways, ways that are not predispositions or impositions but rather are

social compositions made possible through reciprocal relationships. The second book imagines a world where mundane practices such as voting are suddenly challenged, where everyone abruptly decides to leave their ballots blank. Detaching oneself from the mundane makes it difficult to predict behaviors and dispositions. The political world illustrated in this book thus finds itself in crisis. How do we, as researchers, detach ourselves from our mundane academic practices?

I read these books while doing activist research, and I thought of similar thought experiments that would unsettle dominant research practices. What would happen if all academics and scientists stopped producing knowledge for universities? What if every academic (including adjunct professors and graduate students) abruptly refused to show up to work at the beginning of the academic year? What if these academics, in their time away from the university, went to the communities their articles and books were directed? Agriculture engineers, scientists, electrical engineers, sociologists, anthropologists, education researchers, and many more lived and learned from these communities and contributed, in what they could, with their specialized knowledge in return. Grants are not needed in this thought experiment because these communities managed to take care of the expenses of these engaged researchers for an entire year. Like Saramago's book of absence, where the government finds itself in an unexpected predicament, not knowing how to reestablish the government legitimately, universities, too, find it impossible to hire qualified professors to teach anxious students. Some well-to-do parents find themselves angry after listening to what the mainstream media had to say about these irresponsible professors who supposedly care about social justice when, in fact, they cannot even provide an education to their own students. They are apparently stripping students away from a human right. Corporations which have donated millions of dollars to universities no longer have

access to the knowledge produced in the so-called public universities. The patents they often buy at a cheap price or have rights to because of established Research and Development partnerships no longer are produced (Miyoshi, 2000). Highly ranked journals and publishing companies can no longer commodify knowledge. Instead, the knowledge produced collectively now belongs to the communities in which they emerged. There is no room for extractivist knowledge practices in this imaginary lifeworld.

Although patents are not produced and discourses are not being deconstructed and shared in academic circles, hegemonic knowledge practices are nonetheless being decolonized in the process. Academics, who used to find "issues" and "problems" to do research on historically and contemporarily excluded and colonized communities, no longer extract knowledge from what they used to consider data gold mines. Conversely, these new researchers, scholars, technicians, and scientists, now integrated in distinct communities, will use another approach, one that is more aligned to transdisciplinary participatory action research and politically engaged ethnography.

I shared this thought experiment as an extreme case to conceptualize what knowledge practices would look like if they were genuinely linked to the community or social movements. Of course, the reader may question the illogical elements of this thought experiment. The point, however, is to suspend rationality for a moment to think of collective ways of producing knowledge and creating the conditions of possibility that can make this world more socially, cognitively, culturally, ecologically, and politically more just. What I hoped to achieve with this exaggerated account was to highlight the subtle and not so subtle forms of hypocrisy of academia. I also wanted to highlight other ways of doing activist work in more radical terms. If, for one reason or another, the knowledge produced by this "sabbatical movement" had to be

published in peer reviewed journals, would the "findings" cool down during the peer review process? What if co-researchers instead shared knowledge in alternative media as they worked alongside social activists, community leaders, and social movements? Like in Saramago's "Blindness" where people stopped seeing and started sensing the world in distinct forms with others or like his "Seeing" where voters intentionally left their ballots blank, thus preventing political parties from attaining constitutional legitimacy, rethinking of possible alternatives to dominant research practices also enables us to imagine what socially and politically committed research may look like outside, alongside, and in spite of academia. Throughout this dissertation, for example, I made several attempts to highlight the ways in which activist research requires the co-creation of knowledge, always-already entangled with the collective, intersubjective, and pedagogical dimensions of knowing and being with others in struggle. Researchers who choose to take this arduous path of studying with and not on social movements will, without doubt, learn that activists also engage in research to try to understand their sociopolitical context in which their struggles are immersed. Recognizing and learning from other co-researchers is where pedagogy, research, and praxis intersect in ways that make them difficult to distinguish. Indeed, it is the separation of these concepts that prevent us from "seeing" their inextricability.

Methodological Reflections

One of the student activists' most recent and perhaps most democratic proposal was written in September 2019. The proposal sought to create an Encuentro Nacional (National Encounter) in which social movements of all sorts will come together to share their struggles with others and to find points of commensurability and incommensurability. When the proposal was completed, thousands of students walked to the administrative building to make an event of it all. Representatives of each association gathered in front of the building in a circular

formation. Student activists made sure to invite local journalists so that they could help disseminate the proposal to the wider community. The proposal was written entirely by students. The ideas included therein, however, formed part of a larger conversation around the democratization of society with other social movements. Most of the ideas were previously shared in meetings, assemblies, forums, and articles. As I also participated and contributed with some ideas, I could not help but think of the praxeological dimensions of politically engaged research (*investigación comprometida* as Fals Borda (1970) preferred to call it). Praxis is not a concept one employs because it resonates well in academic circles. It is not an abstraction but rather a concrete experience which, at times, is about life and death. When ideas materialize or are exteriorized, as Mario expressed frequently in our conversations, it is not certain how they will unfold in practice. We must continue to work even harder so that the ideas born in struggle are not coopted by those in positions of power. The National Encounter, for instance, might very well be instrumentalized by university authorities and political parties, as they are likely to claim this project as their own. Praxis is therefore a constant struggle in which ideas are reflected upon, modified, or discarded completely.

The co-creation of knowledge in which researchers participate is another dimension that is often omitted from the literature on university student activism. One day, for instance, Mario invited me to his apartment so that we could work on his thesis. While we ate lunch, Mario told me all about his deadlines and his plans to finish his thesis in the upcoming months. He expressed that he wanted to write his introduction and theoretical framework chapters in one month. During conversations such as these, I was participating in the co-creation of knowledge without realizing it at first. Informal as it may seem, Mario and I analyzed each other's work and shared it with others. Through dialogue and conversation, analytical work becomes more organic

as one learns to think of concepts not so much as to what they have to offer academically and theoretically but as to what they have to offer to a concrete sociopolitical context. Everything else becomes solipsistic posturing. Radical democracy, for instance, is emptied of all meaning if it is merely an abstraction rather than a practice one can begin to implement in different spaces. One learns to find the limitations of theory in understanding the particularities of each context. The student movement's associational and organizational political culture, for instance, has put into practice the radical democracy they hope to build outside and in relation to the university. As I engaged in co-research, I learned to look elsewhere to not be blinded by theory's illumination. Dialogue, research, theory, praxis, pedagogy, and collective action are thus entangled in such a way that one begins to lose track of each thread in the complexity of the social fabric of which each one is a part. Knowing and learning with others is indeed a never-ending process that leads one to ask or, perhaps, wonder where teaching, learning, researching, theorizing, and doing begin and end. As I mentioned above, it is such delimitation that limits our ability to conceptualize the complexity of our world in different terms. Perhaps Maturana and Varela (1992) were right when they wrote that "every act of knowing brings forth a world" and that "All doing is knowing, and all knowing is doing" (p. 26).

On one occasion, after a long discussion on political economy and the relevance of critical theory and decolonial theory, Mario shared with me that he was overwhelmed with his deadlines and was disappointed with himself because he was unable to answer a question his chair asked him during one of their meetings. The question was related to the distinctions between paradigms, theoretical perspectives, and theoretical frameworks. He told me that he did not know how to answer it and knew that it would affect his ability to write his thesis. We talked some more about some paradigms (positivist, critical, postmodern, poststructural, constructivist,

etc..). I shared with him what I understood as a paradigm and how I was using critical, constructivist, and decolonial perspectives in my dissertation. From similar conversations, I learned that Mario's knowledge of university reform in the Honduras context is extensive. What I know about university reform in Honduras pales in comparison to the knowledge he has constructed with others in the process of being involved in student activism seeking to resist said reforms. What I learned while writing my preliminary examinations and through fieldwork, in other words, will never compare to the knowledge produced by student activists. As I only worked alongside several student activists for 12 months, I have to admit that my understanding of the student movement will never surpass the knowledges produced by the student movement since the coup of 2009.

One area left out of student activist research is related to the researcher's contribution to a social struggle. On one occasion, Mario asked me if I could gain access to the archives on higher education reform at UNAH, which for one reason or another had not been released to the public. To gain access to the university reform's archive stored in the university, I decided to write the academic dean, asking her whether the archives could be used for research purposes. Mario asked me for this favor because he knew that access would be denied to him because of his role in the student movement. However, as I used the US researcher card, the dean found it more difficult to deny us access to the archives. Soon after, we were given access, and Mario and I spent long hours going through the dusty books no one (except for student activists) cared to look at. We found meeting minutes, the names of participants, and the national and international organizations involved in leading higher education reform. We analyzed the higher education reform drafts and discerned that the dominant political parties were involved in revising the drafts. We noticed how the first drafts were more democratic than the last, given that student

participation was stripped of all meaning as revisions were made before UNAH's Organic Law was approved by congress. From this collaborative research experience, I learned that this type of research goes back to its original meaning, that is, to "seek out, search closely" or "to seek for" or to "go about, wander, traverse" (Etymonline, n.d.). On another occasion, Mario asked me to interview some former rectors, deans, and directors with him. Researching up is difficult but also necessary to understand the restructuring of the university within the context of neoliberal globalization. The more I collaborated in Mario's research project which he also shared on an ongoing basis with other student activists, I learned that doing research on the university is crucial to understand the tendencies in K-12 education reform. Universities set the stage, in other words, for K-12 education reform and the curriculum the latter will seek to implement. More importantly, I learned how researchers may contribute, even if it is through discussions or by getting involved in co-research that, like I mentioned in other instances, may stray away from the "objectives" of one's research topic.

After interviewing former university rectors with Mario, I thought of the importance of collaborating seriously with student activists and the research in which they are engaged. Mario and I had lunch after the interview where we talked about democratizing university governance and curriculum, without which one would find it difficult to speak of university autonomy (financial, academic, curricular, intellectual, institutional, and territorial), more so of decolonizing the university. In our conversations, we often imagined how a university could be organized without a hierarchical structure. If that were the case, how would university authorities be elected or hired? Who would participate in curriculum reform? What role would social movements and activists play in transforming the university? To decolonize the university without democratizing governance, knowledge, and practices, we often concluded, is

inconceivable. Once again, scholars writing about decolonizing the university through its curriculum is important insofar as hierarchical university governance is also unsettled. Underscoring the coloniality of curriculum while leaving the governance unproblematized points to the culture of fear in which many academics are immersed, thereby making a frontal attack (through academic and political action) on the university's hierarchical structure a *salto mortale*. University student activists, as they are liminal beings, cannot be categorized as academics or workers and thus are not as fearful of expressing their thoughts and actions against the university's hierarchical governance structure. By also unsettling the rhetoric of social justice, diversity, and democracy which universities integrate in their missions and visions, student activists have made more visible the contradictions of forming part of an institution that superficially supports social justice, diversity, and democracy while maintaining an authoritarian political culture intact which excludes students and professors from participating in the democratic life of the institution. If democracy is to mean something, then it surely cannot only mean to vote once a year. Instead, it must form part of an institution's political ontology or politically entangled sense of being and becoming. Within the university, in other words, democratic life should be experienced rather than taught and democratic governance should be enacted politically with the inclusion of diverse actors.

Future Research

It is uncommon in the literature on university student movements to analyze prefigurative politics, less so on the impact university student activists have in other institutions. Little research has been done in Honduras and in Latin America to link student movements' emerging practices and knowledges socially. The ways in which former student activists, for instance, engage in their professional guilds, unions, and communities, once they graduate, could also

form part of a follow up study seeking to make the social implications of student activism more visible. Another dimension that could be examined in more depth are the gender dynamics of student activism. Male student activists, as Maria shared with me, at first had difficulties learning to use inclusive language. In one meeting, she recalled, one of the male activists said "*nosotros*" (the masculine use of "we") and immediately after, the women in the room yelled out in unison "*nosotras*!" Slowly, the student movement's discourse and practice began to change to include other groups such as women and LGBTQ students. According to Maria and Erica, no longer will other voices and bodies be silenced and invizibilized in the student movement. Much work, however, is to be done to understand the complexity of gender and sexual dynamics in student movements and their sociocultural, political, and institutional implications.

Disruptive behavior and collective action taken by students, furthermore, shows more than resistance toward those who hold power within the university. Defiant, militant, and irruptive behavior also reveals that political action within the university is "una escuelita" for all those who are already taking action outside of the university. Maria referred to the student movement as an *escuelita* [a little school] because, in it, student activists co-produced knowledge and engaged in social practices of resistance which were later used in their own communities. She shared this with me because she helped coordinate various "networks" linked to the *tomas barriales* [neighborhood occupations] during the massive protests organized since the fraudulent elections of 2017. According to her, other student activists also helped organize their communities to engage in similar actions. Weaving social networks of resistance was what she believed to be the most important facet of organizing, without which social struggle becomes merely a text to be deconstructed, a social imaginary to be endlessly critiqued from privileged academic spaces. A collective struggle instead is an ongoing concrete organizational and cultural

process. It is both a means and an end where social practices and knowledges emerge. More research, however, can be done to understand and contribute to the building of social movement networks in Honduras and in Central America, which are at the same time creating alternative pedagogies, media, and research. Consider, for instance, *Radio Dignidad* [Dignity Radio], *Radio America* [America Radio], *and Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación* [Reflection, Investigation, and Communication Team], *Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad* la Justicia [Broad Social Movement for Dignity and Justice]. These examples point to the ways in which Indigenous, Black, campesino, feminist, and student movements are working together to create alternative research journals and communication channels to articulate their stories, experiences, and struggles with each other. The student movement is merely one node of many other social movements in Honduras and in Latin America trying to articulate itself to an increasingly complex network of sociopolitical and cultural organization and resistance. It is thus imperative for researchers to engage in this type of work not only to understand but to strengthen the articulation of these networks of resistance.

Concluding Thoughts

Collectively, university student activists created knowledges of resistance, reassembled themselves politically as a horizontal organization, and reclaimed and enhanced the democratic principles of the National Autonomous University of Honduras. Because the student movement became a counter-structure within the university, neoliberalism's possessive, fatalistic, and narcissistic indifference found it more difficult to recolonize university space. Student activists disrupted the verticality of politics precisely when communities and institutions were systematically targeted within an authoritarian postcoup context. Owing to their political and intellectual contribution to discussions around university reform in direct relation to social,

cultural, economic, political, and cognitive justice, I consider students activists to be the first organic intellectual bloc to form since the coup and perhaps since the 1980s. Paradoxically, never have so many students questioned traditional political parties while also taking the political domain so seriously. Indeed, they have contested the geopolitics of knowledge and power, including the transnational economic interests represented by curricular adjustments and the implementation of hierarchical governance structures. The knowledges students will continue to create and the actions they will continue to take to distance themselves and their autonomous university from future neoliberal education reform is yet uncertain. What can be concluded is that modernity's irrational developmental path, at the very least, was slowed down through knowledge-practices of resistance and organization that constituted a radically democratic political culture. The student movement's knowledges of resistance and organized political culture, in addition, prevented neoliberal education reform and the knowledges embedded therein from crystalizing within autonomous university spaces. They have, in other words, interrupted neoliberalism's ideological normativity and axiological commitments from settling in institutionally. I have argued throughout this dissertation that neoliberal education reform is not a mechanistic process, but one characterized by contestation and organized resistance, expressed in manifest forms and at times as less politically threatening (e.g., workshops, assemblies, meetings, forums, speeches, theatrical performances). When the series of education reforms were implemented within a postcoup context, students from every department and regional campus created their own student associations to counter these measures. Organization was not a spontaneous overnight process but one that has been unfolding since the coup, which required what student activists called the slow and steady work of an ant [*trabajo de hormiga*]. When recently organized associations articulated themselves into a political platform and when

university authorities were forces to step down, neoliberal education reform was placed on *estandby*, to borrow from Mario's expression regarding the university reform's current status. Given that higher education is on standby means that student activists must continue to work to officially put an end to previous reforms and initiate a new education reform process from below which will include diverse actors participating in the National Encounter and university constituent assembly.

The democratic Cordoba principles first included in the national constitution of 1957 have finally been reclaimed and are in the process of reconstruction. The student movement's organization began an unforeseen political project, a project which at first seemed impossible but is now more real than ever given that, in April 2020, co-governance will finally be established.

In summary, after the implementation of the new academic standards and curriculum, the University Student Movement was formed. It became a political platform for all existing departmental student associations which were organized after the coup of 2009. By converting itself into a broad-based student organization, the student movement also became, as mentioned above, a counter-structure capable of resisting the state's intention to transform the university into yet another neoliberal instrument. Student activists, additionally, have shown that, when all other strategies fail, they can disrupt all university activities by occupying and paralyzing public universities at the national level. The dominant discourse was contested through student assemblies, social mobilization, publications, and public speeches. Social media was used as a virtual democratic platform for collective decision-making and as an alternative to mainstream media. Unlike other dissipating social movements, the student movement may be characterized by constant horizontal movement, which articulates itself within, across, and beyond the university. It thus cannot be understood only as university student activism nor as a transient

protest never to be seen again. The student movement has now become a political collective within the autonomous university, recognized at the constitutional level—one that, from the strength it has gained, will not disappear any time soon, although emerging internal conflicts are pointing to cooptation and yet another fragmentation prior to the elections in April. The student movement's name might change in the future, but the radically democratic political culture weaved since the coup, is unlikely to disappear. From the knowledge students have created and shared regarding higher education reform and the unconstitutional nature of preventing students from participating in university governance, university authorities and politicians, independent of ideology, lost, to a certain extent, the dominant position they enjoyed since the early 1980s. Ultimately, thinking and doing otherwise was effectively employed through political action that shifted some power back to students. The student movement has thus become an organized collective in which social, cultural, and political institutions are deconstructed, reimagined, and reconstructed.

Student activists have also made the distinction between traditional politics and collectively enacted sociopolitical action. How student activists interpreted the university in relation to the state and the national and transnational interests it represents also conceptualized the greater forces they are up against. What is important to note is that the student movement went beyond conventional forms of politics inasmuch as it challenged various forms of knowing, being, and organizing in a world that increasingly portrays individualism as a key to success. The student movement instead refused to center the individual at the expense of the collective. Instead of being a centripetal movement revolving around the charisma of one or several leaders, the student movement has created a centrifugal organizational and associational political culture and collective force which expands horizontally and toward the streets, communities, and

institutions, thereby linking them to national and transnational political, economic, and military power structures. How events will unfold in the upcoming years will only depend on the actors themselves, namely, the student activists, community leaders, and organic intellectuals who are already political organized and in constant movement.

In April 2020, students will elect their representatives at the departmental level. Once elected, they will form a student government (self-governance). How this self-governance structure will function in practice is unclear. What will its political project be after it is constituted? Will it have one? Will it assist in coordinating direct action at a national level? Will it disarticulate the student movement with the illusion of making it more cohesive and radical? The issues here are related to the institutionalization of the student movement. When social movements are institutionalized into political parties, for example, what has been documented in Latin America is the cooptation and abandonment of the very practices and knowledges that made the social movement "move," that enabled them to take collective action and to produce knowledges and practices otherwise, independent of the state and institutionalized power such as the university (Zibechi, 2012). It is the disjunction between leadership and the political base that distances the former from the latter. The complex movement of the social and the articulation of the collective are often forgotten. How will students work out these contradictions? Will assemblies still form part of the student movement's political culture once co-governance is established? How will this self-governing and co-governing structure maintain its presence in the streets, barrios, and communities? Overall, how will student activists prevent cooptation and hold student representatives accountable once in positions of power?

Throughout this dissertation, I focused on the student movements' political and organizational culture and the knowledges that were born out of a collective struggle. As I

mentioned above, other studies may focus instead on what I only briefly analyzed, such as the political and epistemological contribution of women. Engaging gender dynamics and the ways in which women not only transformed themselves in the process of a social struggle but also changed the dynamics of a student movement are salient points to consider. Erica's reflection (which I read as I was writing this conclusion) points to the need to understand these internal tensions:

> What no one likes to speak of is that in the student movement, as a political space, patriarchal behaviors and patterns are often repeated. I have experienced this, and it hurts and enrages me, but the beauty is to turn that rage into more coherent, determined, and situated positions. I've been yelled at to my face by men, as they boast their machismo (even by those who promote political projects drawing on Freire's praxis). There are many things that are denied to you, such as being ignored when you ask to speak. When you are given the chance to speak, your contribution to the discussions are ignored while a male student is taken more seriously even if he practically repeats what you had already said. And if your partner is a man and he also shares the same spaces of militancy, there is always the "argument" that you are manipulated or conditioned by him as if we do not have the capacity to think for ourselves. One day, I will dig deeper into this issue. But for now, *compañeras*, do not be discouraged by these progressive machos (*machiprogres*) who try to tell us how we should act and think.

Student Activists' Last Words

We are not criminals. We are not lazy. We are young. We are *el pueblo* [the people]. We have dreams. We have family and friends. We cover our faces for our safety and the safety of our families, because we live in a country where the government orders to kill whoever gets in the way. We wear masks to fight for our families, for you, and for the Honduran people in general. Our demands are to guarantee a real public education. But, most importantly, we demand that our dignity be respected. We fight for the justice that has been denied to us for so long. They took so much from us, that they also took away our fear. Always remember that young people are not the future but the present.

An Activist's Words of Solidarity

Once, a friend explained to me that we are also the ones who impose obstacles on ourselves, that we are the ones who choose to live a lonely existence that prevents something particular, concrete, and beautiful from happening to us. Tomorrow we will go back to the streets, those streets that we have traveled back and forth, on one lane and on another. We will return to the streets our resilient feet have learned to walk on. Our feet know in advance every pothole in this city and which corner to turn, where unknown voices rumble like echoes of war, lost in the wind, sweat, tears, and rain. Does the same action have any meaning when repeated over and over again? Like cartoon characters, we count one, two, and three and repeat, only changing the banners and slogans. I cannot answer this question without simplifying or reducing that which is rather more complex. I could perhaps answer it rationally to find some political sense of repeating the same action, but qualitatively, each is not the same. It is necessary to go out and shout to the world that our struggle is not over, that we're still here and others are waiting for us in the streets to join them. And, above all, we make our presence felt with our hands raised up high in the air, begging the heavens for a better future. As an individual who is also part of a collective or community, I need to be in the streets because I'm still pissed off and everyone around me is still suffering. Tomorrow, I want to tell the world that not only is our fight not over but that it's just the beginning. Of course, the multitude of people and the millions of footsteps we have taken together in our protests is not our best political proposal. We recognize this. However, every social movement is based on concrete social relationships. Tomorrow, those nodes, those bonds of solidarity that we have built with so many companions [compañeras and compañeros], will be present as we walk, scream, laugh, vandalize, and break away from the mundane through our disruptive action. And it is at that moment, in that

crossroad, that our personal contradictions become flesh and blood, when one must make a choice, when it is no longer an obstacle in one's head but rather a concrete barrier one must overcome to join a struggle.

What do I do with this abstract love for others? When such an ideal is projected and grounded in solidarity with others, when those others take on a name, and when their pain is mine and my pain is theirs, do we not create human bonds where what hurts the other also hurts the self? When the abstraction of a people's pain condenses and when I am embraced by my generation, I will not laugh with my own smile but with the smile of others. So many other times I wasn't there. So many times, I simply watched from a distance. Once again, there is no one-way to answer how the love and pain I feel at the presence of suffering faces and anonymous others becomes so real. That is why I will walk tomorrow, and not because of the sum of all the reasons given so far is greater than the people who can inspire me to make this choice. Instead, I have chosen to be there. I made that decision. Because, indeed, the obstacle and the loneliness which accompanies us everywhere we go is, partially, of our own doing. In this ugly world, it is our choice to join others in their struggle or to die from the embrace of indifference which cures everything and changes nothing. Yet I still do not understand the social indifference. Let's not find joy in our solitude. Tomorrow let us all walk, act, live, suffer, laugh, and be together.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introducción

Primero le quiero agradecer por su tiempo. Tengo varias preguntas aquí alistadas y espero que estas preguntas puedan tocar varios temas sobre el movimiento estudiantil universitario y su participación en este mismo.

La investigación que estoy empezando utiliza la etnografía como su metodología y pretende comprender en toda su complejidad la colectividad y organicidad del movimiento estudiantil y también se enfocará en el por qué los estudiantes deciden entran en tales luchas. Mas que todo, pienso subrayar los conocimientos y prácticas que se producen colectivamente en las luchas estudiantiles. Pienso que las ciencias sociales han analizado el mundo a través de una perspectiva distante y hegemónico (entre sujeto y objeto), y quisiera cambiar esta perspectiva para focalizar los conocimientos que se producen en las calles, en la proximidad e intimidad de los cuerpos, y en procesos colectivos, dinámicos, y conflictivos.

Las preguntas se dividen en dos partes. La primera parte se enfocará brevemente en lo biográfico. La segunda parte se enfocará en sus experiencias y participación en el movimiento estudiantiles en la UNAH.

Esta primera pregunta es muy abierta y se puede contestar en cualquier forma.

I. Biográfico

    a. Quisiera saber más sobre su vida antes de entrar a la UNAH. ¿Me puede contar un poco de su vida? ¿De Su Familia? ¿El lugar donde usted creció? ¿La secundaria a dónde fue? ¿Antes de entrar a la universidad?

II. Experiencia, Identidad, y Conocimiento

    a. ¿Por qué decidió o que o quien la motivó participar en el movimiento estudiantil?
    b. ¿Me puede contar sobre las experiencias más memorables que tuvo durante su participación en el movimiento estudiantil? ¿Cuáles son los saberes o conocimientos más importantes que aprendió a través de estas experiencias?
    c. ¿Cómo ha cambiado su identidad o su forma de ser y pensar a través de estas experiencias?

III. Democratización (espacio institucional)

    a. ¿Porque hay asociaciones y asambleas?
        i. ¿Cuál es la estructura y función?
    b. He platicado con varios estudiantes y parece que la democratización de la UNAH es sumamente importante. ¿De lo que usted entiende sobre este tema y de lo que

usted a participado, porque es necesario tener representación legitima estudiantil en el consejo universitario?

i. ¿Y si se alcanza la democratización de la universidad, que es lo que sigue después? ¿Cuál sería el proyecto/papel del movimiento estudiantil/estudiante?

IV. Dinámica y Conflicto—Liderazgos

a. Se habla mucho en los estudios de los movimientos sociales y parece que existen dinámicas y conflictos internos adentro de los movimientos sociales, incluyendo los estudiantiles. ¿Cuáles fueron unos de los conflictos más notables del movimiento estudiantil?

i. ¿Hubo alguna experiencia donde su género, o por otra razón, afectó su participación o experiencia en el movimiento estudiantil? Elaborar por favor.

ii. A cuál clase socioeconómica pertenecen los liderazgos en las asociaciones de carrera. ¿Piensa usted que el liderazgo movimiento estudiantil representa proporcionalmente la demográfica del país?

iii. ¿Cómo se ha resuelto los conflictos internos?

V. ¿Últimas palabras? ¿Tal vez unas cosas que no pregunté o que usted quiere agregar sobre su experiencia en movimiento estudiantil?

Interview Protocol (English)

Introduction

First, I want to thank you for your time. I have several questions listed here and I hope that we can cover various topics related to the University Student Movement.

The research that I am doing uses ethnography as its methodology and aims to understand in all its complexity the collectiveness and organization of the student movement and will also focus on why students participate in activism. More than anything, I intend to underline the knowledge and practices that are produced collectively within the student movement. I think that the social sciences have analyzed the world through a distant and hegemonic perspective (between subject and object), and I would like to invert this perspective to focus on knowledges and practice that emerge from the streets and through resistance and as a collective, dynamic, and conflicting process.

The questions are divided into two parts. The first part will focus briefly on the biographical. The second part will focus on your experience and participation in the student movement.

This first question is very open and can be answered in any form.

I. Biographical
   a. Tell me about your life before entering the university?
      i. How were the schools where you grew up?

II. Experience, Identity, and Knowledge
   a. Why did you decide or what motivated you to participate in the student movement?
   b. Can you tell me about the most memorable experiences you had during your participation in the student movement? What are the most important things you learned from these experiences?
   c. How did these experiences impact you as a person?

III. Democratization (institutional space)
   a. Why are there student associations and assemblies?
      i. What is the structure and function?
   b. How is democracy related to the student movement?
      i. What have you participated that shows how democratic practice form part of the student movement?
   c. If the democratization of the university is achieved, what will be the student movement's political project?

IV. Dynamics and Conflict—Leadership
   a. What are the internal dynamics and conflicts that have emerged within the student movement?

        i. Was there any experience where your gender, race, or socioeconomic status affected your participation or experience in the student movement? Elaborate.

    b. Do you think the student movement's spokespeople proportionally represent the demographic of the country?

        i. How have some of the conflicts been resolved?

V. Last words? Maybe some things I didn't ask or that you want to add related to your experience in student movement?

REFERENCES

Abdel-Malek, A. (1981). *Civilizations and social theory* (M. Gonzalez, Trans.). SUNY Press.

Agar, M. (1980). *The professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography*. Academic Press.

Aguilar, V. (2016, August 21). *Muertes en Honduras: Más de de 20 mil jóvenes han perecido*. Tiempo.hn | Noticias de última hora y sucesos de Honduras. Deportes, Ciencia y Entretenimiento en general. https://tiempo.hn/dos-anos-mas-20-mil-jovenes-muerto-violentamente/

Ahmad, A. (1992). *In theory: Nations, classes, literatures*. Verso.

Alcoff, L. (2011). An epistemology for the next revolution. *Transmodernity*, *1*(2), 67–78.

Allen, A. (2016). *The end of progress: Decolonizing the normative foundations of critical theory*. Columbia University Press.

Altbach, P. (1975). *Literary colonialism: Books in the third world* (Vol. 45). https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.45.2.f2p87v8h618322m2

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and philosophy and other essays*. Monthly Review Press.

Alvarado, E. (1987). *Don't be afraid, gringo: A Honduran woman speaks from the heart: The story of Elvia Alvarado* (M. Benjamin, Trans.). Harper Perennial.

Alvarez, S. E., Dagnino, E., & Escobar, A. (1998). *Cultures of politics, politics of cultures: Re-visioning Latin American social movements*. Westview Press.

Amin, S. (2009). *Eurocentrism* (2nd ed.). Monthly Review Press.

Anderson, K. (2009). Ethnographic research: A key to strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, *87*(3), 24–24.

Andreotti, V. de O. (2019). The enduring challenges of collective onto-(and neuro)-genesis. *LÁPIZ*.

Anyon, J. (1981). Social class and school knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *11*(1), 3–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.1981.11075236

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza* (1st ed.). Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

Aparicio, J., & Blaser, M. (2008). The "lettered city" and the insurrection of subjugated knowledges in Latin America. *Anthropological Quarterly*, *81*(1), 59–95.

Appadurai, A. (2000). Grassroots globalization and the research imagination. *Public Culture*, *12*(1(30)), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-12-1-1

Apple, M. (1979). *Ideology and curriculum*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Arendt, H. (1954). *The Human Condition* (2nd ed.). The University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, H. (1973). *The origins of totalitarianism*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Arnove, R. (1980). Comparative education and world-systems analysis. *Comparative Education Review*, *24*(1), 48–62. https://doi.org/10.1086/446090

Arrighi, G., Hopkins, T. K., & Wallerstein, I. M. (1989). *Antisystemic movements*. Verso Books.

Asad, T. (1973). *Anthropology & the colonial encounter*. Ithaca Press.

Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (2001). *Handbook of ethnography*. SAGE.

Auge, M. (1995). *Non-Places: An introduction to supermodernity* (J. Howe, Trans.; 2nd ed.). Verso.

Baierle, S. G. (1998). *The explosion of experience: The emergence of a new ethical-political principle in popular movements in Porto Alegre, Brazil*. Westview Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429501135

Baker, B. (2017). To show is to know? The conceptualization of evidence and discourses of vision in social science and education research. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *47*(2), 151–175. https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2017.1283593

Barahona, M. (1994). *El silencio quedó atrás: Testimonios de la huelga bananera de 1954*. Editorial Guaymuras.

Barahona, M. (2005). *Honduras en el siglo XX: Una síntesis histórica*. Editorial Guaymuras.

Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: Towards a new modernity* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Behar, R. (1993). Introduction: Women writing culture: Another telling of the story of American anthropology. *Critique of Anthropology*, *13*(4), 307–325. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X9301300401

Bellei, C., Cabalin, C., & Orellana, V. (2014). The 2011 Chilean student movement against neoliberal educational policies. *Studies in Higher Education*, *39*(3), 426–440. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.896179

Benjamin, W. (1969). *Illuminations: Essays and reflections* (H. Arendt, Ed.; H. Zohn, Trans.). Schocken Books.

Bentham, J. (1995). *The panopticon writings*. Verso.

Bernasconi, A. (2008). Is there a Latin American model of the university? *Comparative Education Review*, *52*(1), 27–52. https://doi.org/10.1086/524305

Bernasconi, A. (2013). Are global rankings unfair to Latin American universities? *International Higher Education*, *72*, 12–13. https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2013.72.6105

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. Routledge.

Biesta, G. (2012). Becoming public: Public pedagogy, citizenship and the public sphere. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *13*(7), 683–697. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2012.723736

Blaser, M. (2009). Political ontology: Cultural Studies without 'cultures'? *Cultural Studies*, *23*(5–6), 873–896. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380903208023

Blaser, M. (2010). *Storytelling globalization from the Chaco and beyond*. Duke University Press.

Blaser, M. (2013). Ontological conflicts and the stories of peoples in spite of Europe. *Current Anthropology*, *54*(5), 547–568. https://doi.org/10.1086/672270

Bloch, E. (1995). *The principle of hope, Vol. 1* (N. Plaice, S. Plaice, & P. Knight, Trans.; Reprint edition). MIT Press.

Borgen, E. (2005). *The Ambassador* [Documentary]. Insight TV.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1988). *Homo academicus*. Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: On the theory of action* (1st ed.). Stanford University Press.

Braudel, F. (1953). *El mediterraneo y el mundo mediterraneo en la época de Felipe II* (1st ed.). México : Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Braudel, F. (1970). *La historia y las ciencias sociales* (J. Gómez Mendoza, Trans.; Segunda edición.). Alianza Editorial.

Brunner, J. J. (2014). La idea de la universidad pública en América Latina: Narraciones en escenarios divergentes. *Educación XX1*, *17*(2). https://doi.org/10.5944/educxx1.17.2.11477

Burbules, N. C., & Torres, C. A. (2000). *Globalization and education: Critical perspectives* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Burke, K. (1935). *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of purpose*. New Republic.

Cabalin, C. (2012). Neoliberal education and student movements in Chile: Inequalities and malaise. *Policy Futures in Education*, *10*(2), 219–228. https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2012.10.2.219

Cannella, G. S., & Manuelito, K. D. (2008). Feminisms from unthought locations: Indigenous worldviews, marginalized feminisms, and revisioning an anticolonial social science. In N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, & L. Smith, *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies* (pp. 45–60). SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483385686.n3

Carvalho, J. J. D., & Flórez-Flórez, J. (2014). The Meeting of Knowledges: A project for the decolonization of universities in Latin America. *Postcolonial Studies*, *17*(2), 122–139. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2014.966411

Casanova, P. (1965). Internal colonialism and national development. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *1*(4), 27–37. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02800542

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity* (1st ed., Vol. 2). Blackwell.

Castells, M. (2015). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age* (2nd ed.). Polity.

Castoriadis, C. (1987). *The imaginary institution of society* (1st ed.). MIT Press.

Castoriadis, C. (1991). *Philosophy, politics, autonomy*. Oxford University Press.

Castoriadis, C. (2011). *Postscript on insignificance: Dialogues with Cornelius Castoriadis*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Castro-Gomez, S. (2005). *La hybris del punto cero: Ciencia, raza, e ilustracion en la Nueva Granada (1750-1816)*. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

Castro-Gómez, S., & Grosfoguel, R. (2007). *El giro decolonial: Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*. Siglo del Hombre Editores : Universidad Central, Instituto de Estudios Sociales Contemporáneos Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Instituto de Estudios Sociales y Culturales, Pensar.

Cepal: Honduras registra mayor pobreza de América Latina—Diario El Heraldo. (2018). https://www.elheraldo.hn/pais/334012-214/cepal-honduras-registra-mayor-pobreza-de-am%C3%A9rica-latina

Certeau, M. de. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. University of California Press.

Certeau, M. de. (1986). *Heterologies: Discourse on the other*. University of Minnesota Press.

Césaire, A. (2000). *Discourse on colonialism*. Monthly Review Press.

Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference*. Princeton University Press.

Chesters, G. (2012). Social movements and the ethics of knowledge production. *Social Movement Studies*, *11*(2), 145–160. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2012.664894

Chomsky, N. (1996). Power in the global arena. *New Left Review*, *230*, 3–26.

Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. University of California Press.

Collins, P. H. (2000). Gender, Black Feminism, and Black Political Economy. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *568*(1), 41–53. https://doi.org/10.1177/000271620056800105

Comitas, L., & Dolgin, J. (1978). On anthropology and education: Retrospect and Prospect 1. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *9*(3), 165–180. https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1978.9.3.04x0502h

Conquergood, D. (1991). Rethinking ethnography: Towards a critical cultural politics. *Communication Monographs*, *58*(2), 179–194. https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759109376222

Coronil, F. (1996). Beyond occidentalism: Toward nonimperial geohistorical categories. *Cultural Anthropology*, *11*(1), 51–87. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1996.11.1.02a00030

Cortina, A. (1993). *Etica aplicada y democracia radical*. Editorial Tecnos.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, *1989*(1).

Cruz, S. J. I. de la. (2017). *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz- Obras selectas* (I. Zubowicz, Ed.). Editora Delearte.

Cusicanqui, S. R. (1986). *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: Luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa de Bolivia, 1900-1980*. Instituto de Investigaciones de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo Social.

Cusicanqui, S. R. (2012). Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: A reflection on the practices and discourses of decolonization. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *111*(1), 95. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-1472612

Dagnino, E. (1998). Culture, citizenship, and democracy: Changing discourses and practices of the Latin American left. In S. E. Alvarez, A. Escobar, & E. Dagnino (Eds.), *Cultures of politics: politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American social movements*. Westview Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429501135-3

de Castro, E. V., Nacional, M., & de Janeiro, R. (2015). *Who is afraid of the ontological wolf? Some comments on an ongoing anthropological debate.(Report)*. *33*(1), 2. https://doi.org/10.3167/ca.2015.330102

De Janosi, F. E. (1940). The correspondence between Lord Acton and Bishop Creighton. *Cambridge Historical Journal*, *6*(3), 307–321. JSTOR.

de La Cadena, M. (2017). Matters of method; Or, why method matters toward a not only colonial anthropology. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, *7*(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau7.2.002

De Landa, M. (2009). *A new philosophy of society: Assemblage theory and social complexity*. Continuum.

Deleuze, G. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press.

Deloria, E. C. (1988). *Waterlily* (New edition). University of Nebraska Press.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Smith, L. T. (2008). *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. SAGE.

Dirlik, A. (2016). Global modernity?: Modernity in an Age of global capitalism. *European Journal of Social Theory*. https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310030063001

Dolby, N. (2001). *Constructing race: Youth, identity, and popular culture in South Africa*.

Dolby, N., & Rahman, A. (2008). Research in international education. *Review of Educational Research*, *78*(3), 676–726. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308320291

Dorfman, A. (1998). *Heading south, looking north: A bilingual journey* (1st ed.). Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Drucker, L. (1986). A contra's story. *The Progressive*, *50*, 25.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). *The souls of black folk essays and sketches*. A.C. McClurg & Co.

Dunkerley, J., & Sieder, R. (1996). The military: The challenge of transition. In R. Sieder (Ed.), *Central America: Fragile Transition* (pp. 55–101). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-24522-2_3

Dussel, E. (1973). *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana* (1a ed.). Siglo Veintiuno Argentina Editores.

Dussel, E. (1977). *Introducción a una filosofía de la liberación latinoamericana* (1a ed.). Extemporáneos.

Dussel, E. (1980). *Filosofía de la liberación*. Universidad Santo Tomás, Centro de Enseñanza Desescolarizada.

Dussel, E. (1988). *Hacia un Marx desconocido. Un comentario de los Manuscritos del 61-63*. Siglo XXI Editores Mexico.

Dussel, E. (1996). *The underside of modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor, and the philosophy of liberation*. Humanities Press.

Dussel, E. (2002). World-System and "Trans"-Modernity. *Nepantla*, *3*(2), 221–244.

Dussel, E. (2008). *Twenty theses on politics*. Duke University Press.

Dussel, E. (2009). *Politica de la liberacion. Volumen II: Arquitectonica*. Editorial Trotta.

Dussel, E. (2013a). *Ethics of liberation in the age of globalization and exclusion*. Duke University Press.

Dussel, E. (2013b). *Ethics of Liberation: In the age of globalization and exclusion* (A. A. Vallega, Ed.; N. Maldonado-Torres, E. Mendieta, Y. Angulo, & C. P. Bustillo, Trans.). Duke University Press Books.

Echeverria, B. (2010). *Modernity and Whiteness*. Wiley.

Emihovich, C. (2005). CAE 2004 Presidential Address: Fire and Ice: Activist ethnography in the culture of power. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *36*(4), 305–314.

Escobar, A. (1992). Culture, practice and politics: Anthropology and the study of social movements. *Critique of Anthropology*, *12*(4), 395–432. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X9201200402

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton University Press.

Escobar, A. (2001a). Culture sits in places: Reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization. *Political Geography*, *20*(2), 139–174. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298(00)00064-0

Escobar, A. (2001b). Place, economy, and culture in a post-development era. In A. Dirlik & R. Prazniak (Eds.), *Places and Politics in an Age of Globalization* (pp. 193–218). Rowman & Littlefield.

Escobar, A. (2004). Beyond the third world: Imperial globality, global coloniality and anti-globalisation social movements. *Third World Quarterly*, *25*(1), 207–230. https://doi.org/10.1080/0143659042000185417

Escobar, A. (2007). Worlds and knowledges otherwise: The Latin American modernity/coloniality research program. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2/3), 179–211.

Escobar, A. (2008). *Territories of difference: Place, movements, life, redes*. Duke University Press.

Escobar, A. (2010). Latin America at a crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development? *Cultural Studies*, *24*(1), 1–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380903424208

Escobar, A. (2015). Degrowth, postdevelopment, and transitions: A preliminary conversation. *Sustainability Science*, *10*(3), 451–462. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-015-0297-5

Escobar, A. (2018). *Designs for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. Duke University Press.

Escobar, A., & Alvarez, S. E. (1992). *The Making of social movements in Latin America: Identity, strategy, and democracy*. Westview Press.

Escobar, G., & Barahona, L. (2017). Profundización en la erosión y violación de los derechos de estudiantes y docentes en el nivel de educación superior en Honduras. *Revista Intercambio*, *10*(8), 20–23.

Esteva, G. (1992). Papel básico de la universidad de la tierra de Oaxaca. *Etnoecologica, 1*(1).

Euraque, D. A. (1997). *Reinterpreting the banana republic: Region and State in Honduras, 1870-1972*. The University of North Carolina Press.

Euraque, D. A. (2018). Political economy, race, and national identity in Central America, 1500–2000. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.521

Fabian, J. (1983). *Time and the other: How anthropology makes its object*. Columbia University Press.

Fajnzylber, P., Lopez, J. H., & World Bank (Eds.). (2008). *Remittances and development: Lessons from Latin America*. World Bank.

Fals-Borda, O. (1970). *Ciencia propia y colonialismo intelectual* (1a ed.). Editorial Nuestro Tiempo.

Fals-Borda, O. (2009). *Una sociología sentipensante para América Latina* (V. M. Moncayo, Ed.; 1a ed). Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

Fasquelle, R. (2011). The 2009 coup and the struggle for democracy in Honduras. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, *44*(1), 16-21,40. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2011.11725524

Featherstone, D. (2008). *Resistance, space and political identities: The making of counter-global networks*. Blackwell Publishing.

Flórez-Flórez, J. (2007). Lectura no eurocéntrica de los movimientos sociales latinoamericanos. Claves analíticas del programa modernidad/colonialidad. In Ramon Grosfoguel & S. Castro-Gomez (Eds.), *El giro decolonial. Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*. Siglo del Hombre Editores, Universidad Central y Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

Foley, D. (1990). *Learning capitalist culture: Deep in the heart of Tejas*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Foley, D. (1994). NEW ETHNOGRAPHIES. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *22*(4), 527–529. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124194022004008

Foley, D. (2002). Critical ethnography: The reflexive turn. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *15*(4), 469–490. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390210145534

Foucault, M. (1970). *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (1st ed.). Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (2010). *The birth of biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (1st ed.). Picador.

Fox, M. (2011). Manipulating human rights in Honduras: An interview with Bertha Oliva. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 33–35.

Frank, A. G. (1998). *ReOrient: Global economy in the Asian Age*. University of California Press.

Frazer, W. (1982). Milton Friedman and Thatcher's monetarist experience. *Journal of Economic Issues*, *16*(2), 525–533. JSTOR.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.

Freire, P. (1985). *The politics of education: Culture, power, and liberation*. Bergin & Garvey.

Friedman, M. (1982). *Capitalism and freedom*. University of Chicago Press.

Fukuyama, F. (1992). *The end of history and the last man*. Free Press.

Funez, E. (2019, May 13). ¿Inconformidad en el CAH? A "matacaballos" habrían aumentado cotización para agremiados, según abogado. *Tiempo.hn | Noticias de última hora y sucesos de Honduras. Deportes, Ciencia y Entretenimiento en general.* https://tiempo.hn/aumento-cotizacion-agremiados-cah/

Gamble, A. (1988). *The free economy and the strong state: The politics of Thatcherism*. Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19438-4

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. Basic Books.

Geglia, B. (2016). Honduras: Reinventing the enclave: Authoritarian neoliberalism is alive and well as the "model cities" initiative that took hold after Honduras' 2009 coup moves forward. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, *48*(4), 353–360. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2016.1258278

Ghosh, B. (2006). *Migrants' remittances and development: Myths, rhetoric and realities*. International Organization for Migration.

Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2006). *The end of capitalism (as we knew it): A feminist critique of political economy* (1st ed.). University of Minnesota Press.

Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and double-consciousness* (Reissue edition). Harvard University Press.

Giroux, H. A. (1977). The politics of the hidden curriculum. *Independent School*, *37*(1), 42.

Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Giroux, H. A. (2011). *On critical pedagogy*. Continuum.

Gleijeses, P. (1991). *Shattered hope: The Guatemalan revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*. Princeton University Press.

Global Witness. (2017). *Honduras: The deadliest country in the world for environmental activism*. Global Witness. https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/honduras-deadliest-country-world-environmental-activism/

González-Ledesma, M. A. (2014). New modes of governance of Latin American higher education: Chile, Argentina and México. *Bordón. Revista de pedagogía*, *66*(1), 137–150.

Gordon, L. R. (2011). Shifting the geography of reason in an age of disciplinary decadence. *Transmodernity*.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (1st ed.) International Publishers.

Gramsci, A. (2005). *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (Q. Hoare & G. Nowell-Smith, Eds.). Lawrence & Wishart. https://muse.jhu.edu/book/34838

Gregory, D., Johnston, R., Pratt, G., Watts, M. J., & Whatmore, S. (2009). *The dictionary of human geography* (5th ed.). Blackwell.

Grosfoguel, Ramon. (2007). The epistemic decolonial turn: Beyond political-economy paradigms. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 211–223. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162514

Grosfoguel, Ramon. (2013). The structure of knowledge in westernized universities: Epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, *11*(1), 73.

Grosfoguel, Ramon. (2016). What is Racism? *Journal of World-Systems Research*, *22*(1), 9–15. https://doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2016.609

Grosfoguel, Ramón. (2016). Del "extractivismo economico" al "extractivismo epistemic" y al "extractivismo ontologico": Una forma destructiva de conocer, ser y estar en el mundo. *Tabula Rasa*, *24*, 123–143.

Grosfoguel, Ramon, Oso, L., & Christou, A. (2015). 'Racism', intersectionality and migration studies: Framing some theoretical reflections. *Identities*, *22*(6), 635–652. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2014.950974

Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2008). Narrative ethnography. *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, 241–265.

Guha, R. (1998). *Dominance without hegemony: History and power in colonial India*. Harvard University Press.

Gupta, A., & Ferguson, J. (1992). Beyond "culture": Space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, *7*(1), 6–23. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020

Guzmán-de-Peña, D. (2009). The destruction of aflatoxins in corn by "nixtamalización." In M. Rai & A. Varma (Eds.), *Mycotoxins in Food, Feed and Bioweapons* (pp. 39–49). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-00725-5_3

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action*. Beacon Press.

Hall, S. (1995). Negotiating Caribbean identities. *New Left Review*, *209*, 3–14.

Hall, S. (1997). *The local and the global: Globalization and ethnicity*. University of Minnesota Press.

Hall, S. (2011). The neoliberal revolution. *Soundings*, *48*(48), 9–27. https://doi.org/10.3898/136266211797146828

Hammersley, M. (2008). *Questioning qualitative inquiry: Critical essays*. SAGE.

Hammersley, M. (2018). What Is Ethnography? Can It Survive? Should It? *Ethnography and Education*, *13*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2017.1298458

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, *14*, 575–600.

Harding, S. (2016). Latin American decolonial social studies of scientific knowledge: Alliances and tensions. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, *41*(6), 1063–1087. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243916656465

Harris, M. (1979). *Cultural materialism: The struggle for a science of culture* (1st ed.). Random House.

Harrison, F. V. (1991). *Decolonizing anthropology: Moving further toward an anthropology for liberation*. Association of Black Anthropologists: American Anthropological Association.

Harvey, D. (2005a). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2005b). *The new imperialism*. Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2010). *The enigma of capital: And the crises of capitalism*. Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2018). *Marx, capital and the madness of economic reason*. Oxford University Press.

"Hasta que la dignidad se haga costumbre": Estela Hernández. (2017). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWl8al-fKJM

Hayek, F. A. (1944). *The Road to Serfdom*. University of Chicago Press.

Hayek, F. A. (1948). *Individualism and Economic Order*. University of Chicago Press.

Hayek, Friedrich A. (1960). *The constitution of liberty*. The University of Chicago Press.

Held, D. (2003). *The global transformations reader*. Wiley.

Herzfeld, M. (2001). *Anthropology: Theoretical practice in culture and society*. Blackwell Publishers.

Hinkelammert, F. J. (1995). *Cultura de la esperanza y sociedad sin exclusión*. Department Ecuménico de Investigaciones.

Hinkelammert, F. J. (1996). *El mapa del emperador: Determinismo, caos, sujeto*. Department Ecuménico de Investigaciones.

Holbraad, M., & Pedersen, M. A. (2009). Planet M: The intense abstraction of Marilyn Strathern. *Anthropological Theory*, *9*(4), 371–394. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499609360117

Holloway, J. (2010). *Crack capitalism*. Pluto Press.

hooks, bell. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. Routledge.

Human Rights Watch/Americas, Center for Justice and International Law, Human Rights Watch/Americas, & Center for Justice and International Law (Eds.). (1994). *Honduras: The facts speak for themselves ; the preliminary report of the National Commissioner for the Protection of Human Rights in Honduras*. Human Rights Watch.

Hurston, Z. N. (2006). *Their eyes were watching God* (Reissue edition). Amistad.

Hurston, Z. N. (2008a). *Mules and Men* (Reprint edition). Amistad.

Hurston, Z. N. (2008b). *Tell my horse: Voodoo and life in Haiti and Jamaica*. Amistad.

Hymes, D. H. (1972). *Reinventing anthropology* (1st ed.). Pantheon Books.

IHSS: El mayor desfalco en la historia de Honduras. (2018, September 13). *Diario La Prensa*. https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/1215841-410/ihss-desfalco-honduras-corrupcion-latinoamerica-escandalos-sobornos-

Illich, I. (1971). *Deschooling society* (1st ed.) Harper & Row.

Ingold, T. (2008). Anthropology is not ethnography. In *Proceedings of the British Academy, Volume 154, 2007 Lectures* (pp. 69–92).

Ingold, T. (2014). That's enough about ethnography! *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, *4*(1), 383–395. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau4.1.021

Jackson, M. (1983). Knowledge of the body. *Man*, *18*(2), 327–345. https://doi.org/10.2307/2801438

Jackson, M. (1989). *Paths toward a clearing: Radical empiricism and ethnographic inquiry*. Indiana University Press.

Jackson, P. W. (1968). *Life in classrooms*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Jameson, F., & Miyoshi, M. (1998). *The cultures of globalization*. Duke University Press.

Jaramillo, N. E. (2012). Occupy, recuperate and decolonize. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, *10*(1), 67–75.

JOH sobre disturbios en la UNAH: 'Yo miré cómo las bombas molotov estallaban sobre las cabezas de los policías'—Diario El Heraldo. (2019). *El Heraldo*. https://www.elheraldo.hn/inicio/1296349-465/joh-sobre-disturbios-en-la-unah-yo-mir%C3%A9-c%C3%B3mo-las-bombas-molotov

Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. L. (2014). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues* (2nd ed.). Routledge & Sons.

Joseph, G. M., LeGrand, C., & Salvatore, R. D. (1998). *Close encounters of empire: Writing the cultural history of U.S.-Latin American relations*. Duke University Press.

Klein, N. (2007). *The shock doctrine: The rise of disaster capitalism* (1st ed.). Alfred A. Knopf.

Kliebard, H. M. (1999). *Schooled to work: Vocationalism and the American curriculum, 1876-1946*. Teachers College Press.

Kliebard, H. M. (2004). *The struggle for the American curriculum, 1893-1958* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Kusch, R. (1953). *La seducción de la barbarie; análisis herético de un continente mestizo*. Distribuído por Editorial Raigal.

Kusch, R. (1962). *América profunda*. Librería Hachette.

Kusch, R. (1966). *Indios, porteños y dioses*. Stilcograf.

Kusch, R., Mignolo, W., Lugones, M., & Price, J. M. (2010). *Indigenous and popular thinking in América*. Duke University Press.

Lakhani, N. (2018, November 30). Berta Cáceres: Seven men convicted of murdering Honduran environmentalist. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/29/berta-caceres-seven-men-convicted-conspiracy-murder-honduras

Lakhani, N. (2018, October 15). "Yes, we can": Caravan of 1,600 Honduran migrants crosses Guatemala border. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/15/guatemala-caravan-honduras-migrants-border-reject

Lander, E. (1999). ¿Conocimiento para que? ¿Conocimiento para quien? Reflectiones sobre la universidad y la geopolitica de los saberes hegemonicos. *Estudios Latinoamericanos*, *7*(12), 25–46.

Lander, E. (2008). Neoliberal science. *Tabula Rasa: Revista de Humanidades*, *9*, 247–283.

Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)*, *19*(1), 35–58.

Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern*. Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (2007). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford University Press.

Lave, J. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

Law, J. (2015). What's wrong with a one-world world? *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory*, *16*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/1600910X.2015.1020066

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space*. Blackwell.

Levinas, E. (1969). *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority* (A. Lingis, Trans.). Duquesne University Press.

Levine, A. (1980). *When dreams and heroes died: A portrait of today's college student: [Prepared for the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education]* (1st ed.). Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1955). *Tristes Tropiques*. Plon.

Levy, D. (1981). Student politics in contemporary Latin America. *Can J Pol Sci*, *14*(2), 353–376. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423900036106

Levy, D. (1991). The decline of Latin American student activism. *The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning*, *22*(2), 145–155. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00137473

Licona, C. (2019). *HONDURAS.- ¡El FRC debe ser un proyecto de la base COPEMH!* https://elsoca.org/index.php/america-central/hondu/5290-honduras-el-frc-debe-ser-un-proyecto-de-la-base-copemh

Lillis, T. M. (2010). *Academic writing in a global context: The politics and practices of publishing in English*. Routledge.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Cannella, G. S. (2009). Ethics and the broader rethinking/reconceptualization of research as construct. *Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies*, *9*(2), 273–285. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708608322793

Low, S. (2009). Towards an anthropological theory of space and place. *Semiotica - Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies*, *2009*(175), 21. https://doi.org/10.1515/semi.2009.041

Low, S. M., & Lawrence-Zúñiga, D. (2003). *The anthropology of space and place: Locating culture*. Blackwell Pub.

Lugones, M. (1987). Playfulness, "world"-travelling, and loving perception. *Hypatia*, *2*(2), 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1987.tb01062.x

Lugones, M. (2007). Heterosexualism and the colonial/modern gender system. *Hypatia*, *22*(1), 186–219.

Lugones, M. (2010). Toward a decolonial feminism. *Hypatia*, *25*(4), 742–759. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01137.x

Lutz, C. (1990). The erasure of women's writing in sociocultural anthropology. *American Ethnologist*, *17*, 611–628.

Machiavelli, N. (2015). *The Prince*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Madison, D. S. (2005). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. SAGE.

Marcuse, H. (1964). *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (2nd ed.). Beacon Press.

Mariategui, J. C. (2007). *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*. Fundación Biblioteca Ayacucho.

Martí, J. (1985). *Nuestra América* (2a. ed.). Biblioteca Ayacucho.

Masemann, V. L. (1982). Critical ethnography in the study of comparative education. *Comparative Education Review*, *26*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1086/446259

Massey, D. (1999). Philosophy and politics of spatiality: Some considerations. The Hettner-Lecture in Human Geography. *Geographische Zeitschrift*, *87*(1), 1–12.

Massey, D. B. (1994). *Space, place, and gender*. University of Minnesota Press.

Massey, D. B. (2005). *For space*. SAGE.

Maturana, H. R., & Varela, F. J. (1992). *The tree of knowledge: The biological roots of human understanding*. Shambhala.

Mauss, M. (1990). *The Gift*. Routledge.

Mazo, G. (1941). *La reforma universitaria*. Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos.

McLaren, P. (1989). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. Longman.

Mead, M. (2001). The school in American culture. *Society*, *39*(1), 54–62. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02712620

Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. Temple University Press.

Melucci, A. (1996a). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge University Press.

Melucci, A. (1996b). *The playing self: Person and meaning in the planetary society*. Cambridge University Press.

Mendieta, E. (2017). The U.S. border and the political ontology of "Assassination Nation": Thanatological dispositifs. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, *31*(1), 82–100.

Mendoza, N. M. (2014, March 21). *Aumentan en la UNAH los estudiantes con mayor nivel socioeconomico*. https://presencia.unah.edu.hn/noticias/aumentan-en-la-unah-los-estudiantes-con-mayor-nivel-socioeconomico/

Meneses-Reyes, M. (2019). *Cuotas No: El movimeinto estudiantil de 1999-2000 en la UNAM*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Meyer, J., Kames, D., & Benavot, A. (1992). *School knowledge for the masses: World models and national primary curricular categories in the twentieth century* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Mignolo, W. (2000). *Local histories/global designs: Coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton University Press.

Mignolo, W. (2007). DELINKING: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality 1. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 449–514.

Mignolo, W. (2011). *The darker side of Western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options*. Duke University Press.

Mignolo, W. D. (1999). I am where I think: Epistemology and the colonial difference. *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, *8*(2), 235–245. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569329909361962

Mignolo, W. D. (2009). Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *26*(7–8), 159–181. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409349275

Mignolo, W., & Walsh, C. (2018). *On decoloniality: Concepts, analytics, and praxis*. Duke University Press.

Mills, C. Wright. (1959). *The sociological imagination*. Oxford University Press.

Mills, Charles W. (2015). Decolonizing western political philosophy. *New Political Science*, *37*(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/07393148.2014.995491

Minh-Ha, T. T. (1989). *Woman, native, other: Writing postcoloniality and feminism*. Indiana University Press.

Ministerio General. (1850). *Estatutos de la academia literaria o universidad del estado de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa Imprenta de la Academia.

Miyoshi, M. (2000). Ivory tower in escrow. *Boundary 2*, *27*(1), 7–50. https://doi.org/10.1215/01903659-27-1-7

Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Duke University Press.

Morin, E. (2008). *On complexity* (A. Montuori, Trans.). Hampton Press.

Muhr, T. (2010). Counter-hegemonic regionalism and higher education for all: Venezuela and the ALBA. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *8*(1), 39–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767720903574041

Muhr, T. (2013). Optimism reborn. Nicaragua's participative education revolution, the citizen power development model and the construction of "21st Century Socialism." *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *11*(2), 276–295. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2013.782199

Muhr, T. (2016). Equity of access to higher education in the context of South–South cooperation in Latin America: A pluri-scalar analysis. *Higher Education*, *72*(4), 557–571. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-0017-9

Murillo, O. (2017). El movimiento estudiantil de Córdoba y su influencia en Honduras. *Revista Historia de La Educación Latinoamericana*, *19*(28), 37–52. https://doi.org/10.19053/01227238.6162

Nader, L. (1972). *Up the anthropologist: Perspectives gained from studying up. In D. Hymes (Eds), Reinventing Anthropology (1st ed., pp. 284-311)*. Pantheon Books.

Nicolescu, B. (2002). *Manifesto of transdisciplinarity*. SUNY Press.

Nicolson, D. J. (2017). *Academic conferences as neoliberal commodities* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Nørgård, R. T. (2016). Academic citizenship beyond the campus: A call for the placeful university. *Higher Education Research and Development*, *35*(1), 4–17.

O'Laughlin, B. (1975). Marxist Approaches in Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *4*, 341–370.

Ordorika, I. (2003). *The limits of university autonomy: Power and politics at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. 29.

Ordorika, I., & Lloyd, M. (2015). International rankings and the contest for university hegemony. *Journal of Education Policy*, *30*(3), 385–405. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2014.979247

Ordorika, I., Rodriguez-Gomez, R., & Gil Anton, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Ortiz, F. (1947). *Cuban counterpoint: Tobacco and sugar*. Alfred A. Knopf.

Ortner, S. B. (1984). Theory in anthropology since the Sixties. *Comp Stud Soc Hist*, *26*(1), 126–126. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500010811

Ortner, S. B. (1995). Resistance and the problem of ethnographic refusal. *Comp Stud Soc Hist*, *37*(1), 173–193. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500019587

Ortner, S. B. (2016). Dark anthropology and its others. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, *6*(1), 47–73. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau6.1.004

Pabian, P. (2013). Ethnographies of higher education: Introduction to the special issue. *European Journal of Higher Education*, *4*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2013.864569

Palmer, E., & Malkin, E. (2019, October 18). Honduran President's Brother Is Found Guilty of Drug Trafficking. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/18/world/americas/honduras-president-brother-drug-trafficking.html

Paraskeva, J. M. (2011). *Conflicts in curriculum theory: Challenging hegemonic epistemologies*. Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230119628

Paraskeva, J. M. (2016). *Curriculum epistemicide: Towards an itinerant curriculum theory* (1st ed.) Routledge.

Patel, S. (2017). Colonial modernity and methodological nationalism: The structuring of sociological traditions of India. *Sociological Bulletin*, *66*(2), 125–144. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022917708383

Peck, J., & Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing space. *Antipode*, *34*(3), 380–404. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00247

Perdomo, N. (2016, June 29). *El papel de los frentes universitarios en la crisis*. El Pulso. http://elpulso.hn/el-papel-de-los-frentes-universitarios-en-la-crisis/

Persisten tomas de carreteras en varias zonas de Honduras—Diario La Prensa. (2017). https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/elecciones2017/1131760-410/honduras-protesta-tomas-carreteras-elecciones-

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford University Press.

Phillipson, R. (2008). The linguisitc imperialism of neoliberal empire. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *5*(1), 1–43.

Pinar, W. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* L. Erlbaum Associates.

Pinar, W. (2006). Internationalism in curriculum studies. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *1*(1), 35–42. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15544818ped0101_6

Pine, A. (2008). *Working hard, drinking hard: On violence and survival in Honduras* (1st ed.). University of California Press.

Pitts, B., Joyce, R., Sheptak, R., Hetherington, K., Castillo, M., & Ioris, R. (2016). 21st Century Golpismo: A NACLA Roundtable: Six Latin Americanist scholars reflect on the ousters of presidents Manuel Zelaya, Fernando Lugo, and Dilma Rousseff—And the emergence of the "parliamentary" or "soft" coup as a new technique to thwart the consolidation of

social and economic rights in the region. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, *48*(4), 334–345. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2016.1258276

Plaza de las Tres Culturas. (n.d.). *Alcaldía Cuauhtémoc*. Retrieved January 16, 2020, from https://alcaldiacuauhtemoc.mx/descubre/plaza-de-las-tres-culturas/

Pletsch, C. E. (1981). The three worlds, or the division of social science labor, circa 1950-1975. *Comparative Studies in Society & History*, *23*(4), 565–591.

Portillo Villeda, S. G. (2016). Organizing resistance in Honduras. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, *48*(3), 213–217.

Pratt, M. L. (1991). Arts of the contact zone. *Profession*, 33–40.

Prazniak, R., & Dirlik, A. (2001). *Places and politics in an age of globalization*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Presupuesto general de ingresos y egresos de la república y las normas de ejecución presupuestarias. (2018).

Puiggrós, A. (1980). *Imperialismo y educación en América Latina* (1a Ed.). Editorial Nueva Imagen.

Quijano, A. (1992). Americanity as a concept, or the Americas in the modern world-system. *International Social Science Journal*, *44*, 549–558.

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power and eurocentrism in Latin America. *International Sociology*, *15*(2), 215–232. https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580900015002005

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and modernity/rationality. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2–3), 168–178. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353

Quiñonez, J. H., Padilla, R. C., & Malta, J. (2014). *Lo esencia de la reforma universitaria: Ética, Fortalecimiento de la Identidad Nacional y Gestión Cultural para la Construcción de Ciudadanía*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, Editorial Universitaria.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. (1935). On the concept of function in social science. *American Anthropologist*, *37*(3), 394–402. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1935.37.3.02a00030

Rama, A. (1996). *The lettered city*. Duke University Press.

Reina, J. A. (1999). *Historia de la UNAH en su época autónoma*. Editorial Universitaria.

Reina Valenzuela, José. (1986). *Sinopsis histórica de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, Editorial Universitaria.

Research | Origin and meaning of research by Online Etymology Dictionary. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2020, from https://www.etymonline.com/word/research

Restrepo, C. T. (2001). El problema de la estructuración de una auténtica sociología de América Latina. *Revista Colombiana de Sociología*, *6*(2), 133–139.

Restrepo, E., & Escobar, A. (2005). 'Other anthropologies and anthropology otherwise.' *Critique of Anthropology*, *25*(2), 99–129. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X05053009

Rhoten, D., & Calhoun, C. (2011). *Knowledge matters: The public mission of the research university*. https://doi.org/10.7312/rhot15114

Ribeiro, D. (1967). *La universidad necesaria*. Editorial Galerna.

Ribeiro, D. (1968). *The civilizational process*. Smithsonian Institution Press.

Robertson, S., & Dale, R. (2015). Towards a 'critical cultural political economy' account of the globalising of education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, *13*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2014.967502

Rosa, R. (1882). *Código de instrucción pública*. Biblioteca Nacional de Honduras.

Rosaldo, R. (1988). Ideology, place, and people without culture. *Cultural Anthropology*, *3*(1), 77–87. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1988.3.1.02a00070

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism* (1st ed.). Pantheon Books.

Salete Caldart, R. (2000). *Pedagogi do movimento sem terra*. Editora Vozes.

Salete Caldart, R. (2001). O MST e a formação dos sem terra: O movimento social como princípio educativo. *Estudos Avançados*, *15*(43), 207–224. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-40142001000300016

Sanchez, R. (2018). *En febrero abre moderno edificio 1847 de la UNAH*. Diario El Heraldo. https://www.elheraldo.hn/pais/1234873-466/en-febrero-abre-moderno-edificio-1847-de-la-unah

Sandlin, J. A., Burdick, J., & Rich, E. (2017). Problematizing public engagement within public pedagogy research and practice. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *38*(6), 823–835. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2016.1196343

Sandlin, J., O'Malley, M. P., & Burdick, J. (2011). Mapping the complexity of public pedagogy scholarship: 1894-2010. *Review of Educational Research*, *81*(3), 338–375. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311413395

Santos, B. D. S. (2014). *Democracia al borde del caos: Ensayo contra la autoflagelación*. Siglo del Hombre Editores.

Santos, B. de S. (2002a). Nuestra America: Reinventing a subaltern paradigm of recognition and redistribution. In *Recognition and Difference* (pp. 185–218). SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446216897.n11

Santos, B. de S. (2002b). Para uma sociologia das ausências e uma sociologia das emergências. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, *63*, 237–280. https://doi.org/10.4000/rccs.1285

Santos, B. de S. (2006). *La universdad en el siglo XXI: para una reforma democrática y emancipadora de la universidad*. Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas.

Santos, B. de S. (2007a). Beyond abyssal thinking: From global lines to ecologies of knowledges. *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, *30*(1), 45–89. JSTOR.

Santos, B. de S. (2007b). Para além do pensamento abissal: Das linhas globais a uma ecologia de saberes. *Novos estudos CEBRAP*, *79*, 71–94. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-33002007000300004

Santos, B. de S. (2012). The European university at a crossroads. *IdeAs. Idées d'Amériques*, *2*. https://doi.org/10.4000/ideas.276

Santos, B. de S. (2014). *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against epistemicide*. Paradigm Publishers.

Santos, B. de S. (2018). *The end of the cognitive empire: The Coming of age of epistemologies of the South*. Duke University Press.

Sardar, Z. (1989). *Explorations in Islamic science*. Mansell Pub.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1845). *Facundo o civilización y barbarie en las pampas argentinas*. El Progreso.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1995). The primacy of the ethical: Propositions for a militant anthropology. *Current Anthropology*, *36*(3), 409–420.

Schmitt, C. (2008). *The concept of the political*. University of Chicago Press.

Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale University Press.

Segato, R. (2015). *La critica de la colonialidad en ocho ensayos TICA DE LA COLONIALIDAD EN OCHO ENSAYOS* (1st ed.). Prometeo Libros.

Segato, R. L. (2018). A manifesto in four themes (R. McGlazer, Trans.). *Critical Times*, *1*(1), 198–211. https://doi.org/10.1215/26410478-1.1.198

Shipley, T. (2016). Genealogy of a social movement: The Resistencia in Honduras. *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes*, *41*(3), 348–365. https://doi.org/10.1080/08263663.2016.1225686

Silova, I., Millei, Z., & Piattoeva, N. (2017). Interrupting the coloniality of knowledge Production in comparative education: Postsocialist and postcolonial dialogues after the

Cold War. *Comparative Education Review*, *61*(S1), S74–S102. https://doi.org/10.1086/690458

Slaughter, S., & Leslie, L. (1997). *Academic capitalism: Politics, policies, and the entrepreneurial university*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Slaughter, S., & Rhoades, G. (2004). *Academic capitalism and the new economy: Markets, state, and higher education*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books.

Sousa-Santos, B. (2012). The European university at a crossroads. *IdeAs: Idées d'Amériques*, *2*.

Spencer, H. (1860). *Education intellectual, moral, and physical*. D. Appleton.

Spíkula, S. de C., & Mendez, J. C. (1992). *"El Ladrillo": Bases de la política económica fel gobierno militar Chileno*. Centro de Estudios Públicos.

Spindler, G. D. (1963). *Education and culture: Anthropological approaches*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (2000). *Fifty years of anthropology and education, 1950-2000: A Spindler anthology* (1st ed.). Erlbaum Associates.

Spiro, M. E. (1986). Cultural eelativism and the future of anthropology. *Cultural Anthropology*, *1*(3), 259–286. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1986.1.3.02a00010

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Holt.

Spring, J. (2008). Research on globalization and education. *Review of Educational Research*, *78*(2), 330–363. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308317846

Stavenhagen, R. (1971). Decolonializing applied social sciences. *Human Organization*, *30*(4), 333–344.

Stein, S. (2019). Beyond higher education as we know it: Gesturing towards decolonial horizons of possibility. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *38*(2), 143–161. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-018-9622-7

Steward, J. H. (1977). *Evolution and ecology: Essays on social transformation*. University of Illinois Press.

Strathern, M. (2004). *Partial Connections*. Rowman Altamira.

Stromquist, N. P., & Sanyal, A. (2013). Student resistance to neoliberalism in Chile. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *23*(2), 152–178. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2013.790662

Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (1991). Dialogue and the transmission of culture: The Spindlers and the making of American Anthropology. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, *22*(3), 281.

Tamayo, S. (2011). Privatización y universidad pública. *Sociológica (México)*, *26*(73), 267–273.

Tarlau, R. (2015). How do new critical pedagogies develop? Educational innovation, social change, and landless workers in Brazil. *Teachers College Record*, *117*(11),

Thiong'o, N. W. (1986). *Decolonising the mind* (Studies in African Literature edition). Heinemann.

Tlostanova, M. (2015). Postcolonial theory, the decolonial option and postsocialist writing. In *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on Post-Communist Literatures and Cultures* (pp. 25–45). Brill.

Tlostanova, M. V., & Mignolo, W. (2012). *Learning to unlearn: Decolonial reflections from Eurasia and the Americas*. Ohio State University Press.

Torres. (2009). *Education and neoliberal globalization*. Routledge.

Torres, C. A. (2014). El neoliberalismo como nuevo bloque histórico. *Perfiles Educativos*, *36*(144), 190–206.

Torres, & Schugurensky. (2002). The political economy of higher education in the era of neoliberal globalization: Latin America in comparative perspective. *Higher Education*, *43*(4), 429–455. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1015292413037

Touraine, A. (1977). *The self-production of society*. University of Chicago Press.

Touraine, A. (2002). The importance of social movements. *Social Movement Studies*, *1*(1), 89–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742830120118918

Trouillot, M.-R. (1991). Anthropology as metaphor: The savage's legacy and the postmodern world. *Review*, *14*(1), 29.

Tsing, A. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton University Press.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, *1*(1).

Tünnermann Bernheim, C. (1980). *Pensamiento universitario centroamericano*. Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana.

Tünnermann Bernheim, C. T. (1991). *Historia de la universidad en América Latina: De la época colonial a la Reforma de Córdoba*. Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana.

Turner, V. (1980). Social dramas and stories about them. *Critical Inquiry*, *7*(1), 141–168. https://doi.org/10.1086/448092

Turner, V. W. (1967). *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual*. Cornell University Press.

Tzu, S. (2007). *The art of war* (1st ed.). Filiquarian.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling U.S.: Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. SUNY Press.

Vaught, S. E. (2017). *Compuslory: Education and the dispossesion of youth in a prison school*. University of Minnesota Press.

Villenas, S. (1996). The colonizer/colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the field. *Harvard Educational Review*, *66*(4), 711–731. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.66.4.3483672630865482

Villenas, S., & Foley, D. (2011). Critical ethnographies of education in the Latino/a diaspora. *Chicano School Failure and Success: Past, Present, and Future* (3rd ed.). 175–196.

Vommaro, P. A., & Briceño-Cerrato, G. (2018). Movilizaciones de las juventudes en Honduras: La experiencia de los estudiantes universitarios de la UNAH (2009-2017). *LiminaR*, *16*(2), 29–44.

Wallerstein, I. (2014). Antisystemic movements, yesterday and today. *Journal of World - Systems Research*, *20*(2), 158–172. https://doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2014.593

Walsh, C. (2007). Shifting the geopolitics of critical knowledge: Decolonial thought and cultural studies 'others' in the Andes. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2), 224–240. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162530

Walsh, C. (2012). "Other" knowledges, "other" critiques: Reflections on the politics and practices of philosophy and decoloniality in the "other" America. *Transmodernity*, *1*(3), 11–27.

Walsh, C. E. (2015). Decolonial pedagogies walking and asking: Notes to Paulo Freire from AbyaYala. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *34*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2014.991522

Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*. University of California Press.

Weis, L. (1988). *Class, race, and gender in American education*. SUNY Press.

Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and literature*. Oxford University Press.

Willis, P. E. (1977). *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs*. Saxon House.

Wisniewski, R. (2000). The averted gaze. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *31*(1), 5–23. https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.2000.31.1.5

Wolcott, H. F. (1999). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. AltaMira Press.

Wolf, E. R. (1982). *Europe and the people without history*. University of California Press.

Wolfe, P. (2006). Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research*, *8*(4), 387–409. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520601056240

Wynter, S. (2003). Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation—An argument. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, *3*(3), 257–337.

Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Press.

Yon, D. A. (2003). Highlights and overview of the history of educational ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *32*(1), 411–429. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.32.061002.093449

Zibechi, Raúl. (2007). *Dispersar el poder: Los movimientos sociales como poderes antiestatales*. Ediciones desde abajo.

Zibechi, Raul. (2012). *Territories in resistance: A cartography of Latin American social movements*. AK Press.

Zibechi, Raul. (2015). Movimientos antisistémicos y descolonialidad. In J. Alonso (Ed.), *Pensar desde la resistencia anticapitalista y la autonomia*. CIESAS.

Zubiri, X. (1999). *Sentient intelligence*. Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America.