

Indigenous Higher Education as a Tool for Decolonization in the Hemisphere:
Comparative perspective between decolonial projects in Ecuador and USA

Marie-Eve Drouin-Gagné

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Signed by the final examining committee:

_____ Chair
Dr. Damba Lkhagvasuren

_____ External Examiner
Dr. Roe Bubar

_____ External to Program
Dr. Elizabeth Fast

_____ Examiner
Dr. Karl Hele

_____ Examiner
Dr. Jean-Philippe Warren

_____ Thesis Supervisor
Dr. Mark Watson

Approved by _____
Dr. Amy Swiffen, Graduate Program Director

March 11, 2019

Dr. Andre Roy, Dean
Faculty of Arts and Science

ABSTRACT

Indigenous Higher Education as a Tool for Decolonization in the Hemisphere: Comparative perspective between decolonial education projects in Ecuador and the US

**Marie-Eve Drouin-Gagné, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2019**

In the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to actions, many Canadian Universities are considering "Indigenizing the Academy". My dissertation examines what universities could learn from existing Indigenous higher education programs and institutions. In the last fifty years, Indigenous nations and organizations across the continent have developed their own higher education in response to colonial education systems. Transforming our academic institutions, with the purpose of decolonization, can therefore build on these decades of educational experiences. I begin the dissertation with an analysis of the history of colonization in a hemispheric perspective, pointing at the Doctrine of Discovery as a shared colonial framework in all nation states of the Americas, showing its impact and significance in terms of knowledge hierarchy and Indigenous education. I then compare Indigenous responses to this colonial framework, including decolonial projects undertaken in higher education. The analysis of Indigenous higher education as a tool of decolonization therefore reveals existing links between international processes of colonization and decolonization, and local articulations of decolonial projects in higher education. I then compare four case studies of Indigenous higher education in Ecuador and the United States to better understand their respective contributions to processes of decolonization. This comparison draws on transversal themes from the literature on Indigenous higher education, including the articulation of transformative projects, and the engagement with Indigenous knowledges and communities. The comparative description and analysis show that all of these programs and institutions contribute to decolonial projects of survivance, storying, and resurgence, in their own ways. I also identify some limits to the accomplishment of these projects, in particular the resurgence project, which would require a better integration of land-based and place-based pedagogy. Despite these limitations, Indigenous higher education offers valuable learning opportunities for mainstream universities, such as integrating Indigenous knowledges and building reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities, in order to unsettle colonial hierarchies still in place in higher education and in the general society.

RÉSUMÉ

L'éducation supérieure autochtone comme outil de décolonisation dans le continent : perspective comparative de projets d'éducation décoloniale en Équateur et aux États-Unis.

**Marie-Eve Drouin-Gagné, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2019**

Dans la foulée des travaux de la Commission vérité et réconciliation du Canada, plusieurs universités s'intéressent à l'intégration des Autochtones. Ma thèse se penche sur les apprentissages qu'elles pourraient tirer des programmes et institutions d'éducation supérieure autochtone existants. Dans les cinquante dernières années, plusieurs nations et organisations autochtones à travers le continent ont développé une éducation supérieure qui leur est propre, en réponse aux systèmes d'éducation coloniale. La transformation de nos institutions d'éducation supérieure dans une visée décoloniale peut par conséquent s'appuyer sur ces décennies d'expériences éducationnelles. J'analyse d'abord l'histoire de la colonisation dans une perspective hémisphérique, avec la Doctrine de la Découverte comme cadre colonial partagé par les États-nations des Amériques, et je présente ses impacts en termes de hiérarchie des savoirs et d'éducation autochtone. Je mets ensuite en parallèle les réponses autochtones à ce cadre colonial, par le biais de projets décoloniaux qui s'expriment aussi en éducation. L'analyse de l'éducation supérieure autochtone comme un outil de décolonisation permet ainsi d'établir les liens entre processus internationaux de colonisation et de décolonisation et l'articulation locale de projets décoloniaux en éducation supérieure. Je compare ensuite quatre études de cas d'éducation supérieure autochtone en Équateur et aux États-Unis, afin d'analyser leurs contributions respectives aux processus de décolonisation. Cette comparaison mobilise des thèmes transversaux aux projets autochtones d'éducation supérieure qui ressortent dans la littérature, notamment, la mise en place de projets transformateurs, ainsi que l'engagement avec les savoirs et les communautés autochtones. Il ressort de cet exercice que tous les programmes et institutions étudiés contribuent, chacun à sa façon, aux projets de survivance, de recadrement narratif, et de résurgence. J'identifie également certaines limites à l'accomplissement de ces projets, en particulier quant à la résurgence qui demanderait une meilleure intégration de la pédagogie par le territoire. Malgré ces limites, l'éducation supérieure autochtone présente de précieux apprentissages à mettre en place dans nos universités, lesquels sont abordés en conclusion de la thèse.

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List of Abbreviations

AFN – Assembly of first Nations
AIHEC – American Indian Higher Education Consortium
AIM – American Indian Movement
AIRA – American Indigenous Research Association
AIS – American Indian Studies
AISA – American Indian Studies Association
ANC – Aaniih Nakoda College
AUCC – Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BARA – Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (University of Arizona)
BCC – Blackfoot Community College
BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs (US)
CAOI – Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas
CAIP – Council of American Indian Programs (Montana State University)
CAUT – Canadian Association of University Teachers
CBPR – Community-Based Participatory Research
CES – Consejo de Educación Superior (Ecuador)
COFENAIE – Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana
CONAIE – Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador
CONAMAQ – Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu (Bolivia)
CONESUP – Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior (Ecuador)
CORPUKIS – Corporación de Pueblos Kichwas de Saraguro (Ecuador)
CSKCT – Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe
DINEIB – Dirección de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (Ecuador)
DoD – Doctrine of Discovery
ECUARUNARI – Ecuador Runacunapac Riccharimui
FEI – Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios
FNU – First Nations University
GTA – Graduate Teaching Assistant
IAC – Indian Advisory Committee (University of Arizona)
IBE – Intercultural and Bilingual Education

ICCI/ARY – Instituto Científico de Culturas Indígenas/Amawta Runakunapak Yachay
ICIE – Indian Control of Indian Education (Canada)
IEFA – Indian Education for All (Montana)
IFC – Indian Federated Colleges, now First Nations University
IHE – Indigenous Higher Education
IRB – Institutional Review Board
MOSEIB – Modelo del Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe
MSU – Montana State University
NAS – Native American Studies
NAIS – Native American and Indigenous Studies
NAISA – Native American and Indigenous Studies Association
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization(s)
NNI – Native Nations Institute (University of Arizona)
OIP – Office of Indian Programs
OPI – Office of Public Instruction (Montana)
PSE – Post-Secondary Education
RCAP – Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RUIICAY – Red de Universidades Indígenas, Interculturales y Comunales de Abya Yala
SAIGS – Society of American Indian Graduate Students (Montana State University)
SBS – College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (University of Arizona)
SKC – Salish-Kootenai College
STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TC – Tribal College
TCUs – Tribal Colleges and Universities
TOCC – Tohono O’odham Community College
TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UA – University of Arizona
UAIIN – Universidad Autónoma Indígena Intercultural (Colombia)
UNDRIP – United Nations’ Declaratino on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNIBOL – Universidad Indígena Boliviana
UNIK – Universidad Indígena Intercultural Kawsay

UNISUR – Universidad del Sur (México)

UNPFII – United Nations’ Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

URACCAN – Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

US – United States of America

WINHEC – World Indigenous Nations’ Higher Education Consortium

WINU – World Indigenous Nations’ University

WIPCE – World Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education

I) INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

To a large extent, the academy remains founded on epistemological practices and traditions that are selective and exclusionary and that are reflective of and reinscribed by the Enlightenment, colonialism, modernity, and, in particular, liberalism. These traditions, discourses, and practices have very little awareness of other epistemologies and ontologies, and offer them heavily restricted space at best.

(Kuokkanen, 2007, p.1)

When I read Rauna Kuokkanen's *Reshaping the University* (2007), in the summer of 2013, I was struck by how clearly she encapsulated my experience in the academy in her concept of epistemic ignorance produced, reproduced, and transmitted in higher education. Born and raised in Montreal, descendant of a Franco-Québécois family, my education included a strong leftist and nationalist perspective, paired with an international justice and alter-globalization ideology. This education, however, left out a piece of my identity and my place in the world, which I ignored for most of my life: the fact that I am a settler on unceded Kanien'keha:ka territory¹, and that I am a result and an actor of the colonial and globalizing processes of this world, right here in my "hometown". It took me several years living abroad in South America, the questions of my Bolivian friends and colleagues, and meeting faculty members of an Indigenous University in Ecuador, to begin questioning my position and history as a member of a settler society. Why did I not learn anything, throughout my education, up to the end of my undergraduate studies in anthropology, about Indigenous Peoples of the lands on which I had lived my whole life? Why, even when I chose to learn as much as I could about it in my last year as an undergraduate student, were there so few Indigenous intellectuals and theoretical frameworks presented in the curriculum?

¹ While I understand that many Iroquoian nations have historical relationships to Montreal area (see for example Gates St-Pierre, 2016), and that other nations, including Algonquian nations, have long-term relationships to this territory (Clermont, 2016), the continuity of the presence of the Kanien'keha:ka nation in these lands, the role they played in the history of the St-Lawrence river, and the role they currently assume as caretakers of the land and waters on which Montreal sits, cannot be denied (Bonaparte, 1999 and 2009). Furthermore, it is important to understand that a relationship that one nation has established with a territory does not necessarily exclude other nations' relationships to it: the idea of exclusivity and closed boundaries is much more linked to the settler State idea of possession and ownership than to the Indigenous understanding of territories (Thom, 2009). Finally, another, perhaps more gentle way of thinking about my "settler" identity is as a guest on these lands, which implies to act with respect towards the land and original people(s). Nevertheless, this concept implies a relationship with people of this land, and agreements on how they receive settlers and how settlers are to act. While this should be the ideal to meet, I think that for the moment, the systemic colonialism of which I am part allows only for me to think of myself as a settler.

And finally, why had I never heard of Indigenous programs and institutions of education throughout my education?

It is because of that ignorance, which I constructed and consolidated throughout my years of education, that I decided to center my research on Indigenous higher education. I felt that I needed to learn about the Indigenous institutions and programs of higher education, to understand what they did differently. I consequently began my research journey with the intention of creating changes for myself and for the system, in order to avoid that future generations of students would go through their education ignoring the existence and work of Indigenous higher education. In other words, this dissertation emerges from a personal story² and from the commitment to decolonizing and indigenizing education that I developed throughout my doctoral research.

² The cultural and social self-location is an increasing common practice (Snelgrove, Kaur Dhamoon, & Cornassel, 2014) that recognizes how "stories of our life experiences (...) shaped the purpose, design, researcher roles and relationships with communities, and the outcomes of our studies" (Keane, Khupe, & Muza, 2016). In Indigenous circles, it is also common to begin any intervention by situating oneself and one's relations (see McGregor et al.). The recognition of my personal position and its influence on the research is also in line with a specific post-modern approach to reflexivity (Gouldner, 1970; Scholte, 1969), but I do not pretend to situate myself in the 'writing culture' turn of anthropology (Clifford & Marcus, 1986).

INTRODUCTION

Having participated historically in the displacement of Indigenous Peoples, today's universities reflect and reproduce epistemic and intellectual traditions and practices of the West through discursive forms of colonialism.

(Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 14)

For every educator, our responsibility is making a commitment to both unlearn and learn—to unlearn racism and superiority in all its manifestations, while examining our own social constructions in our judgements and learn new ways of knowing, valuing others, accepting diversity, and making equity and inclusion foundations for all learners.

(Battiste, 2013, p. 166)

Context: from Personal Ignorance to Coloniality of Knowledge

Kuokkanen is one of many Indigenous authors who write about education and the space for Indigenous Peoples³ in the academy. She defines epistemic ignorance as both individual and institutional mechanisms that end up "excluding and effacing [I]ndigenous issues and materials in curricula, by denying [I]ndigenous contributions and influences, and by showing a lack of interest and understanding of [I]ndigenous epistemes or issues" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 67). Accordingly, the personal ignorance I experienced in my education is part of a bigger problem, the epistemic ignorance of the academy, which is a result of colonial processes and the resulting socio-cultural hierarchies (Kuokkanen, 2007). What Kuokkanen identifies as "epistemic ignorance" shares much with Battiste's idea of "cognitive imperialism" (2005, 2013)⁴ which situates curricula as state-

³ In this dissertation, I use the term "Indigenous" following common practices in International law and politics (ex: UN, WGIP, ILO). Terms like "Indian", "First Nations", "Natives", "Aboriginal" and "Tribe" or "Band" relate to national or regional contexts, to specific bodies of law (ex: "Indian Law"), or political organizations, and I use them in the dissertation when relevant. I employ "Native", "Indian", for example, when authors and interlocutors use those terms themselves, and when referring to Indigenous higher education programs or institutions that use them (ex: "Native American Studies", or "American Indian Studies", or "Tribal College", or "First Nations University"). However, these different nominations for programs and institutions all fit, in my perspective, in the more general, and international Indigenous higher education (IHE) phenomenon. Of more relevance, however, would be the original specific names of each nation, people and community (ex: Kichwa, Saraguro, Salish, Aaniih, Nakoda, Tohono O'odham, etc.) to which individuals often identify more closely. These are used when possible to specify a nation, people or community to which I refer.

⁴ "Cognitive imperialism is a form a manipulation used in Eurocentric educational systems. Built on damaging assumptions and imperialist knowledge, educational curricula and pedagogy are built on a monocultural foundation of knowledge, and privileges it through public education (Battiste, 1986). "Cognitive imperialism relies on colonial dominance as a foundation of thought, language, values and frames of reference as reflected in the language of instruction, curricula [...] texts, and methods (Apple, 1982, 1997; Bear Nicholas, 2008; Farmer, 2004). As a result of cognitive imperialism in education, cultural minorities in Canada have been led to believe that their poverty and powerlessness are the result of their cultural and racial origins rather than the power relations that create inequality and capitalistic economy" (Battiste, 2013, p. 161).

sanctioned and standardized, and shaped by Eurocentric definitions of what counts as knowledge (Battiste, 2013)⁵. This "Western privilege"⁶, by which I mean the privilege given over to Euro-Western intellectual traditions and epistemologies, was invisible to me during most of my education. According to Battiste, this personal experience is reflective of a much broader reality. She notes, regarding the experience of predominantly white education students, that

Teacher candidates were comfortable to discuss cross-cultural differences and the "other" – largely negative caricatures learned in social discourses in their families, among relatives and friends, and in the media. What they did not realize was how they themselves sustained the dominant discourse of difference and reproduced a sense of superiority embodied in whiteness that marginalized, diminished, and reproduced iniquities among students who were different. They did not have to consider how their own privileges were gained through the normalization of ideas, values, and beliefs to the detriment of others. Such is the core issue in confronting cultural and cognitive racism (Battiste, 2013, p. 126).

Thus, ignorance is reproduced by the curricula and educational system, which is reflected on a personal level, by the students. This results in the perpetuation of cognitive racism, as Battiste calls it, which both ignores the intellectual traditions of "the other" while also representing these "others" in ways that justify this ignorance.

Furthermore, epistemic ignorance and cognitive imperialism are underpinned by political undercurrents linked to past and present colonialisms. Hence, when Battiste argues that there is a main "stream" established through curriculum selection, that ignores other possible streams, she is pointing to the political role of education in terms of nation building. The "nation-building" nature of education, which is recognized by Indigenous organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), or the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), becomes problematic in the context of contested sovereignties, which are at play in the colonial context. The question of what education, for what nation(s) is at the core of the debate in terms of the place we make for Indigenous Peoples in mainstream education.

⁵ "Cognitive imperialism then generates knowledge legitimation, production and diffusion, thus positioning some knowledge connected to power, and others marginalized, dismissed, or lying in wait until they are found useful to the outcomes needed in society" (Battiste, 2013, p. 159). The development of a discourse on Western superiority and Indigenous inferiority as emerging from the Doctrine of Discovery, and further taking root in Western historical, philosophical and scientific traditions is also part of this dissertation, and will be explored in more details in chapter 2.

⁶ Here, I choose to talk about a "Western privilege" as a parallel with the idea of "white privilege", or, as Irlbacher-Fox puts it, the "settler privilege" (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014). In that sense, I am addressing the construction of a "western intellectual tradition" (see, for example, Williams, 2012a) and its participation in the racial and colonial privilege.

This question of the space for Indigenous experiences and knowledges in the academy is underlying my dissertation. In tackling this issue, my work is at least partly influenced by post-modern critiques addressing the power structures at play in the production and reproduction of knowledge (Argyrou, 2002; Fabian, [1983] 2002; Foucault, 1971; Gough, 1968; Quilan, 2000), questioning its objectivity and neutrality, and opening social sciences to multiple voices, positions, and histories (Abu-Lughod, 1991). Moreover, I recognize the importance of considering the politics of representation in relation to Indigenous Peoples and the academic production of knowledge⁷ (see for example Grande, 2004; Iseke-Barnes, 2005; A. Simpson, 2014; Smith, 2012 [1999]; TallBear, 2013a). This is nevertheless probably as far as this research goes in terms of the textual turn in social sciences.

To explain this position, I would refer to Restrepo and Escobar (2005), who situate the different orientations that the textual turn took in anthropology in the following way: "Today, this critique could be seen as effecting a set of displacements from *cultures-as-text* (interpretative turn), to *texts-about-culture* (writing culture and the politics of representation), ending up with *anthropology-as-cultural-critique* (critical cultural constructivism)" (Restrepo & Escobar, 2005, p. 107). I do believe, following Abu-Lughod, that questioning the act of *writing culture*, which focuses on the texts written in anthropology "leave[s] intact the basic configuration of global power on which anthropology, as linked to other institutions of the world, is based" (Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 143). Charles Menzies also points out how the literary turn in anthropology took the discipline away from the "dirty work" of concrete decolonization: "when Gough called on the discipline to literally get their hands dirty working to make the world a better place, anthropology instead made a turn to literature and textual representations" (Menzies, 2010, p. 52).

Hence, while I do consider some of the important critiques that post-modern anthropology and the textual turn brought to the discipline, my dissertation is about the colonial power relationship at play in mainstream education in relation to Indigenous Peoples, in the context of colonization and decolonization. I am inspired by authors working on Western representations of

⁷ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who wrote one of the foundational books in terms of the Indigenous Research Methodologies, wrote: "My own academic background is in education, and in my field there is a very rich history of research which attempts to legitimate views about Indigenous peoples which have been antagonistic and dehumanizing. Discussions around the concept of intelligence, on discipline, or on factors that contribute to achievement depend heavily on notions about the Other. The organization of school knowledge, the hidden curriculum and the representation of difference in texts and school practices all contain discourses which have serious implications for Indigenous students as well as for other minority ethnic groups" (Smith, 2012 [1999], pp. 11-12).

Indigenous Peoples (Deloria, 1969 and 1997; Eddie & Game, 1998; Iseke-Barnes & Danard, 2007; Journell, 2009; A. Simpson, 2014; Vargas-Cetina, 2013), but I approach the problem from the perspective of the colonization of the Americas, with the discourses and practices linked to the Doctrine of Discovery (R.J. Miller, Ruru, Behrendt, & Lindberg, 2012; Newcomb, 2008b; Williams, 2012a, 2012c). The situation of Indigenous higher education as a tool for decolonization in broader considerations about colonial and decolonial projects (as developed in chapter 2 and 3) contributes to the originality of this dissertation. In brief, it is the coloniality of knowledge (Beauclair, 2015; Escobar, 2010; Mignolo, 2011; Quijano, 2000, 2007) in higher education, and Indigenous decolonial projects in higher education, that I address throughout this dissertation. I do so through a comparative framework and the comparison of field sites, namely, Indigenous higher education institutions and programs, in order to understand how Indigenizing the academy implements changes and contributes to decolonization.

Problem: Decolonizing/Indigenizing the Academy

“Decolonizing” and “Indigenizing” the academy are becoming common expressions, almost trendy, in the past couple of years, but their meaning remains hard to pin down. Over the last ten years or so, a number of Canadian universities and provincial educational authorities have moved towards a deeper reflection on their relationships with Indigenous Peoples. For example, in 2005, the government of British Columbia published an Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Plan and Action in the spirit of its New Relationship approach. The plan, for instance, pushed universities to make spaces for Indigenous community building and gathering, increasing culturally relevant courses and programs, and increasing the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the government and administration of the universities (Government of British Columbia, 2005). Another example is from Saskatchewan where the provincial government in 2008 made mandatory treaty education for all students, in all areas, and for all grades. These decisions do not emerge from sudden good will, but in response to the long-term work of Indigenous scholars and institutions. It is not a coincidence that in the years before those changes happened, growing calls for “Indigenizing the academy” were emerging from the Indigenous scholars’ community (Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004). However, in the last couple of years, with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) work, a renewed interest in “Indigenizing the Academy” (MacDonald, 2016) has become almost synonymous with efforts to enact reconciliation in the academy. Despite many attempts⁸, the question remains as to what “Indigenizing the Academy” actually means and looks like (see, for example, CAUT ACPPU Bulletin, 2016). In the face of mainstream universities’ efforts to “Indigenize the Academy”, I aim at taking a serious look at the existing “Indigenous Academy” and consider what lessons we can learn from Indigenous Higher Education (IHE).

⁸ Lakehead University and the University of Winnipeg now have Mandatory Indigenous class for all their students, and Alberta is currently planning to educate all Alberta teachers about Indigenous histories. In Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina are both developing plans to “Indigenize the academy”, following the 13 principles of Universities Canada’s Indigenous Education (2015). In Quebec, a movement demanding the integration of Indigenous histories in schools’ curriculum has grown in the past 2 years, and universities are only now developing new Indigenous Studies programs (Concordia created, in 2013, the first BA in First Peoples Studies of the province), decades after these were created in universities across Canada (the first Canadian NAIS program was born at Trent University in 1969). Furthermore, in the post-TRC context, many universities have created task forces and committees to address the situation of Indigenous Peoples in their institution, and develop plans for Indigenous education. For example, Concordia now has an Indigenous Directions Leadership Group (IDLG) entering its last year of a 3-year mandate. The IDLG is an advisory group composed mainly of Indigenous students, staff, and faculty members, which came together in the Fall of 2016, at the Provost’s request, to advise him on the University’s answer to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calls to action.

For example, Newhouse mentions that the cultural representation of Indigenous Peoples in the academy is not enough, and the real indigenization of universities needs to address the labour happening in the academy, which is “about knowledge and its production and transmission from one generation to another” (Newhouse, 2016, p. A2). The goal should thus be to bring Indigenous knowledges to affect and transform research and teaching that happens across all disciplines in universities (not just Indigenous studies). Similarly, Kuokkanen suggests that the academy needs to shift its mindset towards a "logic of the gift" and of hospitality regarding Indigenous epistemes (Kuokkanen, 2007). She writes:

Unconditional welcome calls for the academy to show responsibility for - to respond to, and be answerable to - indigenous epistemes by embracing the logic of the gift. This logic requires a new relationship that in turn requires both knowledge and action - a relationship that is ongoing and unending and which "responses flow from the both sides." Unconditional welcome requires a transformation in the way the dominant academic discourses and practices perceive and relate to other epistemes and epistemologies (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 138).

In other words, Indigenizing the academy means "reclaiming and validating indigenous epistemologies, methodologies, and research questions" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 143), a task that cannot remain the burden of Indigenous Peoples, but must become a responsibility of the mainstream academy⁹. A central tenet of this dissertation is that if we are serious about “Indigenizing the academy” and creating space for Indigenous knowledge systems in our institutions, we ought to pay close attention to the wealth of experience that Indigenous Peoples have had in developing their own institutions and programs for their own communities based on their knowledge systems¹⁰.

⁹ "As an institution with a colonial legacy that shows ongoing neocolonial complicity, the academy - at the institutional *and* individual levels - has a stake in dismantling these colonial structures and practices as well as an ethical responsibility to do so. Challenging the existing frameworks of systemic discrimination is "not just a task for the colonized and the oppressed; it is the defining challenge and the path to a shared and sustainable future for all peoples" [Battiste and Youngblood, 2000: 12]" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 140).

¹⁰ There are over 30 programs of Indigenous/First Nations/First Peoples/Native Studies (Nelson, 2012); and over 60 Indigenous institutes/colleges/universities of higher education/learning, just in Canada. The Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium (Ontario, founded in 1994) currently counts 7 institutions, while the First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium (Alberta, founded in 1997) regroups 11 institutions – one in Manitoba and the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (British-Columbia, founded in 2003) includes about 40 institutions. Adding to it the First Nations University (in Saskatchewan, funded as the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in 1976), the Micmac-Malecite Institute (in New Brunswick, opened in 1981) and the Kiuna College (Quebec, since 2011). If you add to them the Nunavut Arctic College in Arviat, Nunavut, and Yukon College in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory (Barnhardt, 1991), we have a total of 63 institutions, at least, in Canada.

Nevertheless, while the integration of Indigenous knowledges in the academy is laudable, doing so without consideration for existing knowledge hierarchies – which result from the intellectual privileges, the “white supremacy of intellectual conventions” (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 65), and cognitive racism (Batiste, 2013) that are engrained in our institutions – runs the risk of re-creating colonial appropriations and violence, rather than contesting them. In order for a real conversation between knowledge systems to happen in the academy, and to create an ethical space of engagement with Indigenous Peoples (Ermine, 2007), we need to examine and reflect on the power dynamics already implied in the existing colonial relationship.

As Elina Hill (2012) argues, the focus on “Indigenizing the academy” can actually serve to avoid and circumvent the hard conversations about colonial history and the role of universities in it. Accordingly, in the post-TRC context, and the new wave of “Indigenizing the Academy” in Canada (CAUT ACPPU Bulletin, 2016; MacDonald, 2016; Pete, 2016), it is imperative to consider the continuous colonial violence of academic institutions. For this reason, I anchor my analysis in the framework of the Doctrine of Discovery (Williams, 1990 and 2012; Miller, 2008; Miller *et al.* 2011) and the supremacist discourse and practices it implies. This doctrine (hereafter DoD, or “the Doctrine”) is still at the root of the legitimacy of states and has from the beginning subordinated Indigenous interests and rights to those of the settlers. The Doctrine is intimately linked to education, which was an important element in the application of the Doctrine of Discovery’s ideas of civilization and Christianization. While Canadian universities were quick in jumping on the “reconciliation” and “Indigenizing” train, they have appeared less enthusiastic in terms of examining the colonality of the institutions and the knowledge they build and transmit (Mignolo, 2011).

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The principal aim of this research is therefore to contribute to the decolonization of the academy by considering the decolonizing projects of Indigenous higher education (IHE). Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to establish control over their own education systems has been part of ongoing struggles to ascertain social and political sovereignty (Taiaiake Alfred & Cornthassel, 2005; Battiste, 2000; Brayboy, 2005). It is for this reason that Indigenous higher education (IHE) has developed in the last 50 years or so (Barnhardt, 1991; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; S. Wilson, 2008) across the Americas as an important tool for national and international processes of decolonization (Beck, 1999; J. García, Lozano, Olivera, & Ruiz, 2004; Juneau, 2001; Stonechild, 2006; Szasz, 1999 [1974, 1977]). Accordingly, Child and Klopotek (2014) have identified common threads of Indigenous education throughout South, Central, and North America (Child & Klopotek, 2014). Among other common issues, they contend that (1) "Education has consistently been connected to issues of land, economy, and autonomy in Indigenous settings throughout the hemisphere" (or, in other words, in direct relations to the realities of colonization [Child & Klopotek, 2014, p. x]); and (2) Indigenous groups have adapted educational strategies for their own interests (or, as a decolonization tool [Child & Klopotek, 2014, p. x]). It can be understood from this that if education is a powerful tool of colonization, it can also be a powerful tool of decolonization and I argue that a comparative hemispheric perspective is particularly revealing in terms of colonization and decolonization processes in education. After all, these processes are inter-national in their nature.

Two goals are guiding the dissertation: on the one hand, I address the colonial aspects of the academy and, on the other, learn about decolonizing processes, from Indigenous programs and institutions of higher education. With that commitment in mind, the dissertation addresses the role of Indigenous higher education in articulating Indigenous nations' decolonial projects, based on their own knowledges, and in relation to Indigenous communities. More precisely, I came to the field - institutions and programs of Indigenous higher education - with the objective of understanding how their work of developing, synthesizing, and institutionalizing Indigenous knowledges in Indigenous post-secondary education in different contexts of the Americas created higher education that differs from the mainstream academy.

Consequently, the central questions of my research are the following: What are the different models of Indigenous academy that have been enacted by Indigenous post-secondary education

institutions and programs in the Americas? What needs and objectives do these projects serve? What specificities do institutions and programs of Indigenous higher education develop in terms of knowledge practices and theories, to fulfill these projects? Finally, do these specificities represent challenges for the mainstream academy, and how so? That is, what can be learned from IHE decolonial projects?

For the purpose of this doctoral thesis I answered these questions through multi-sited ethnographic research with Indigenous institutions and programs in the United States of America (US) and Ecuador. The institutions I worked with were: the Indigenous Intercultural and Communal University Amawtay Wasi in Ecuador, the Salish Kootenai College in Montana, the Native American Studies program at Montana State University, and the American Indian Studies program at University of Arizona. The first two cases (Amawtay Wasi and Salish-Kootenai College) represent Indigenous institutions of higher education¹¹, while the other two cases are Indigenous programs of higher education in mainstream universities. The respective projects of these institutions and programs are presented mainly through the voices of key actors (past and present Faculty members, and when possible, past and present students) whom I interviewed during my fieldwork. These interviews are presented in the context of my observations and activities in these institutions and programs. Finally, while paying attention to the specificities of each case, I draw comparison between each of the sites with the objective of understanding their contribution to global decolonial projects and the lessons mainstream institutions can learn from these projects. It is indeed through the comparison of these institutions' and programs' work that one can understand how they contribute to decolonial projects, which one could easily lose of sight in the nitty gritty details of everyday educational labour.

¹¹ As we will see later in this dissertation, there are no Indigenous studies programs in Andean universities.

Structure of the Dissertation

I organize the content of this dissertation into five sections. First, I present the research subject and the methodology in this introductory section. Second, I develop the theoretical framework attached to colonization and decolonization in the second section. A third section is based on a literature review of IHE. In the fourth section I present my field sites and their analysis. The last section is the conclusion. Each section presents several chapters, except for the conclusion section. In the present section, and following this introduction, Chapter 1 explains the relevance of a comparative, multi-sited methodology, and how I implemented it in four sites in two countries. I especially focus on the need for a comparative hemispheric perspective, and on the choice of the sites. I also give some information about the ethnographic context of my fieldwork in each site.

The second section establishes my theoretical framework to understand IHE as a tool for decolonization in the Americas. The objective is to develop a clearer definition of colonization and decolonization processes, as well as an overview of the role of education in these processes throughout the Americas. This section includes two chapters laying down a comparative framework of colonization (Chapter 2) and decolonization (Chapter 3) in a hemispheric perspective. The common history of the Doctrine of Discovery as the basis of all nation-states in the Americas is presented in Chapter 2, along with its impacts for the academy today. Then, in Chapter 3, I explore Indigenous shared resistance to colonization throughout the continent. This includes the articulation of decolonial projects and Indigenous futurities, as well as the reclaiming of Indigenous knowledges and relationality, in higher education projects.

Having situated IHE in this comparative framework as a decolonization tool, in the third section of the dissertation, I define networks and patterns of IHE, through a review of the literature existing on IHE in both South and North America. This allows me to identify the diversity of networks, actors, and forms that IHE takes in different contexts; as well as the common threads that exist across this diversity. In Chapter 4, I define IHE as a complex international reality and present commonalities shared by IHE institutions and programs that I have found in the comparative literature on IHE. This comparison of the IHE literature helped me identify two important dimensions that are always part of IHE: the relationship with Indigenous communities, and the relationship with Indigenous knowledges. In turn, in Chapter 5 I take a closer look at how these commonalities are enacted locally, according to different patterns. These patterns include the context (social, political, cultural, and academic) in which each institution or program developed

a vision for their educational projects. I therefore present the context of each of the institutions and programs I worked with, and situate them in terms of more general IHE patterns.

Having situated the broader context for IHE in North America and the Andes, in the fourth section of this dissertation, I present the case studies of four IHE institutions and programs, in Ecuador, Montana, and Arizona, and their contribution to decolonial projects (Chapter 6 to 9). For each case, I present their educational project, or how they envision their objectives, then I present how they engage with Indigenous knowledges and their relationships to Indigenous communities. I provide a brief conclusion at the end of each case where I highlight similarities and differences with other projects, and how their local efforts contribute to decolonization in a broader perspective. I finalize section four with an analysis of these cases, looking at how these IHE programs and institutions participated in concrete decolonial projects as identified in Chapter 3 (on decolonization) - namely, to Indigenous survivance, storying, and resurgence (Chapter 10). Finally, section five of the dissertation presents my conclusion, where I address the lessons that mainstream academy can learn from IHE institutions and programs, especially thinking about Concordia University's efforts in Indigenous Education, through the Indigenous Directions Leadership Group's work.

CHAPTER 1: ON COMPARATIVE AND MULTI-SITE METHODOLOGY

Research is all about unanswered questions, but it also reveals our unquestioned answers. It is my hope that readers of this book will begin to question some of their own beliefs about the way research needs to be conducted and presented, so that they can recognize the importance of developing alternative ways of answering questions.

(S. Wilson, in *Research is Ceremony. Indigenous research methods*, 2008, p.6)

Situating a Paradigm: Relationality and Co-construction of Knowledge

When beginning any research undertaking, and the process by which one seeks to answer a research question(s) or problem(s), it is important to identify and understand the assumptions that inform one's methodological approach. Wilson reminds us that by nature all research is situated within a given paradigm¹², which he defines as "broad principles that provide a framework for research. As paradigms¹³ deal with beliefs and assumptions about reality, they are based upon theory and are thus intrinsically value laden" (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 33). Wilson describes four dominant paradigms in academic research: positivism, post-positivism, critical, and constructivist theories. He then adds a fifth Indigenous paradigm, relationality, which entails the "[t]hinking of the world around us as a web of connections and relationships" (S. Wilson, 2008, p.77). A

¹² Methodology refers to the theory of how knowledge is gained, or in other words the science of finding things out. Our view of what reality is, and how we come to know this reality, will impact how we seek out more knowledge can be gained about this reality. If the ontology we ascribe to is that there is one ultimate reality, then it follows that there should be one way of examining this reality (methodology) that will help us to best understand it (epistemology). If the ontology is that various realities exist, then you will choose ways of examining one of these realities (methodology) that will take into account your point of view as a researcher to come up with a better understanding (epistemology). Methodology is thus asking, "How do I find out more about this reality?" (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 34).

¹³ Of course, the concept of paradigm is used by so many authors in different ways. Generally attributed originally to Kuhn (1962), his use of the concept of paradigm was rather vague and differed throughout the book. However, one way Kuhn defines paradigms is as "Recognized scientific achievements or grand theories that provide a model for problems and solutions to a community of scientists" (Kuhn, 1970 [1962], p. viii). He also adds "Men whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards for scientific practice. That commitment and the apparent consensus it produces are prerequisites form normal science, i.e., for the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition" (Kuhn, 1970 [1962], p. viii).

Paradigms have also been described and analyzed in terms of meta-theoretical assumptions that frame the theories developed in social sciences, including ontology, epistemology, human nature, methodology and the role of social sciences in terms of understanding social regulation or social changes (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Hence, Wilson's articulation of a paradigm is not a new one. However, it is a very clear articulation of the different dimensions of a paradigm, which allows him to also formulate the relational nature of what he calls an Indigenous paradigm.

Furthermore, it seems important to highlight the difference between this idea of paradigm and the idea of episteme as developed by Foucault (1966). This latter concept is a broader one, that includes the way tensions and conflicts between paradigms are organized and felt with in a given time/epoch.

relational paradigm also posits that it is through relationships that knowledge is constructed and as such knowledge must be held accountable to these relationships.

The relational approach to knowledge is not completely foreign to the critical and post-positivist approaches in the social sciences that critique the notion of objective, external, and neutral knowledge. Indeed, in the social sciences, “knowledge has become – and must be – acknowledged (implicitly, at least) as relational, both in the sense that it attaches itself to relations between people or between people and objects and in the sense that it emerges within a dialogical field” (Hastrup, 2004, p. 456). This is especially true of anthropological approaches to "fieldwork", which are often seen as experiential, participative, or even performative modes of knowing (Fabian, 1990), and which consequently refuse to conceive of knowledge as a simple, final object to acquire, but rather as an integrated part of social life (Hastrup, 2004).

In this spirit, even if my objectives and questions oriented my research from the beginning, the relational nature of fieldwork brought changes and variation throughout the 12 months I spent in the field in three different places. These changes were also the result of Indigenous research methodologies' exigencies that centre the relationships in the research endeavour (S. Wilson, 2008) and require researchers to be accountable to the communities they work with (Hart, 2010; Kovach, 2009; Lambert, 2014). If one really commits to a conversational approach (Kovach, 2010), the questions, concerns, and objectives of the communities, organizations, institutions and individuals who participate in the research will re-orient the overall research journey each step of the way. While the extent to which one can venture into these uncertainties and collaboration while undertaking a doctorate research is limited, I still took many "detours" in the research, and throughout this dissertation, to arrive to some often incomplete answers to my original research questions. I nevertheless always came back to the fundamental principle that Indigenous higher education is a decolonizing tool, taking different shapes, in different contexts.

In her efforts to decolonize methodologies, Smith mentions the importance of the relationship the researcher establishes with participants in the investigation. She points out that "reporting back" and "sharing knowledge" are ways of ensuring reciprocity and respecting feedback (Smith, 2012 [1999], p. 16). Similarly, Brayboy's Tribal critical race theory – TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005) – is built around a main objective of social change in service to Indigenous communities, being accountable for their needs and problems. Relationship established through research is also an

important focus in Shawn Wilson's book on methodology (S. Wilson, 2008). His Indigenous research paradigm focuses on relational accountability, meaning that (a) methodology needs to be based in a community context (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 99), and (b) it has to demonstrate respect, reciprocity, and responsibility (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 99).

Taking a relational approach to research and knowledge production challenges the classic power dynamic in which the anthropologist gets the final word in describing the events of fieldwork and is considered the "expert" who possesses specialized knowledge about social life acquired through the specific questions and theories of their discipline. Simply,

Shifting from the arrogance of "knowing the other" to "learning to learn from below" will require a radical revision of previously held conceptions about learning. As Freire contends, we are able to learn only when we recognize our "unfinishedness". This understanding challenges the academy's standard arrogance, will to know, and premise that the "other" can be known. In short, there is also a difference between *learning about* and *learning from* (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 121).

Learning *from* others rather than learning *about* them depends on the relationship that is established and how the power dynamics that are at play in that relationship are addressed. Hence, my approach is to assume that the people I worked with are the experts in IHE, and to consider myself in the position of student learning and receiving what we can term, the gift of Indigenous epistemologies (Kuokkanen, 2007). Kuokkanen explains the logic of this gift as being part of various Indigenous worldviews, symbolizing ideas of relationship and interdependence, of hospitality and reciprocity. She contends that the logic of "the gift" is based on values of care, cooperation, and bonding, which all promote the growth of communities and social ties (Kuokkanen, 2007, pp. 30, 36), which in turn offer an alternative to market logics that interrupt communities and social relations. An important step into learning how to actually receive the gift of Indigenous epistemologies, according to Kuokkanen, is thus to change the relationship we build with these teachings (and the people and land that carry them).

Following this logic, I approached my research about IHE as a way to learn about what is done in the Indigenous academy and to challenge the theoretical "Western superiority" embedded in the mainstream academy. Consequently, I consider my research and the writing of this dissertation as a co-construction of knowledge (Lévesque, Cloutier, & Salée, 2013; Lévesque, Cloutier, Sirois, Radu, & Labrana, 2015) between the knowledge system I carry - critical theories

in socio-cultural analysis - and the knowledge systems that I encountered in the Indigenous academy. At the same time, I hold myself accountable to the needs and aims of the IHE communities with whom I have worked over the years. The knowledge they have shared will also serve to decolonize the academy and hence my work will contribute to one of the objectives that they themselves have.

Multi-sited Approach: Moving Through Relations and Relational Accountability

In the process of writing my dissertation, I was reminded to integrate the idea of relational accountability to help me think through the presentation of my fieldwork in different sites, the relations established in and between these field sites, and the relationality of the knowledge built in that process. Given the relational nature of fieldwork, and of the knowledge acquired during fieldwork (Hastrup, 2004), reflecting on my field sites implies reflecting on how I established relationships with people, ideas and the decolonial projects of each IHE program and institutions I worked with. In a relational paradigm as described earlier, these relationships also involve being accountable to the people, communities, ideas and decolonial projects that contributed to my research journey.

Many events, situations, and people have come into my life and made possible the international weaving of local experiences, through my research. For instance, it was during an event I attended in Ecuador, in 2010, that I first encountered the Amawtay Wasi University, where I ended up doing fieldwork in the fall of 2014. This same event brought together Indigenous organizations from North and South America. Amongst them was Tonatierra, an Indigenous organization from Phoenix, Arizona. Following this contact, I visited Arizona in the fall of 2012 and met with Indigenous scholars in Phoenix and in Tucson, where I went to do fieldwork in the winter and spring of 2016. While in Phoenix, I also met with an Indigenous student, Michael Munson, who is from Montana, but was doing her doctorate at the Arizona State University (ASU). My choice to include Montana as a field site was influenced by Michael, as well as by Dr. Trosper, who was at the time the director of the American Indian Studies program, at the University of Arizona (UA), whom I met in Tucson during the same trip to Arizona. Dr. Trosper is a member of the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes in Montana, and he encouraged me to look into the Salish-Kootenai Tribal College (SKC). In the Fall of 2013, Michael had return to Montana, was doing her doctorate at Montana State University (MSU), and later she began teaching at the Salish-Kootenai Tribal College (SKC). Her presence at the College and at MSU made it possible for me to collaborate with both of these institutions in my research. Moreover, faculty members at MSU knew Dr. Trosper and the program at UA in Tucson. Dr. Gail Small, one MSU faculty members, also knew Dr. Trosper, and she also has a daughter who was then doing a PhD in sociology at UA. Of course, she put me in touch with her, and Desi became a friend and colleague in Tucson.

To summarize, my first visit to Ecuador brought me to Arizona, which in turn brought me to Montana, which was also linked to Arizona. Hence, my three field sites were already related through people, institutions, and events, and it is in that web of relationships that I inadvertently entered in Quito, in 2010. Additionally, the various sites are also linked by ideas and concepts. It is through members of the Tonatierra organization that I first learned about the Doctrine of Discovery. Tonatierra is involved in the "Dismantling of the Doctrine of Discovery" locally and internationally - including at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). In April 2013, Tonatierra and ASU partnered to organize a conference on Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery, with participants from North, Central, and South America. The conference was divided into different action areas, one of which was education, in which discussions I participated. This greatly influenced my understanding of colonial processes in educational context, from a continental perspective. The ideas around the Doctrine of Discovery and the dismantling of this doctrine were already being discussed by people from North and South America and circulating amongst the IHE networks that I worked with and continued to be so in the following years. It is not surprising that the institutions and programs I worked with were all interrelated: after all, each of them is engaged in a decolonial project, and they consequently all participate in the process of decolonization, through which they relate with one another inevitably. The sites are therefore also related through these decolonial projects.

These are some of the examples that show how relationality was at play before and during my fieldwork - and remains valid after, at the time of writing about, and analyzing, the decolonial projects I related to, "in the field". These examples illustrate the simultaneous local-international nature of any site where I conducted fieldwork: Indigenous Peoples of Ecuador, Arizona and Montana were and continue to be related, through events, struggles, ideas and solidarity. These sites are also related through the much more expansive context of Indigenous Higher Education, as a decolonial project. Following relational principles as described by Wilson (2008), I become accountable to these relations, which include maintaining the connection between these sites, in an international comparative perspective.

Being accountable to these relations can take many shapes, and in an ideal situation would take all of the following forms: building the research project with the people and communities involved in it; consulting with them as to how to proceed, and as to how to analyze the data; ensuring that the people, communities and institutions involved have ownership over the research;

making sure that the result of the research contributes directly to the communities, institutions, and persons with whom I work; and giving the research back to them, through communications, presentations, or a formatting of the results that would be useful to them¹⁴. While I am aware of these, and other decolonial and participatory approaches to research, and I aim at respecting these principles, it is a very difficult standard to achieve within a doctoral program due to the restrictions concerning timelines, financial obligations, acceptable outputs, and so on, put in place by institutional rules. Still, I would like to discuss, if only briefly, some of the principles I was able to uphold through this journey.

First, I crafted the project in collaboration with the intercultural, communal, Indigenous university Amawtay Wasi in Ecuador. I made sure from the start that the questions and objectives of this dissertation were in line with their own project, and I confirmed with each new institution involved in the research that this was an interesting project for them, too. At the Amawtay Wasi, we talked about the benefit of comparing their experiences with North American ones. The head of the university was interested in knowing more about these experiences. When I visited other IHE institutions and programs in the North, people were also interested in knowing what was happening in the South. Accordingly, one of the benefits I offered for the institutions and people I worked with is the exchange and circulation of ideas, by presenting the knowledge I built in one site to the other sites.

In terms of consultation as to how to proceed with the research, where possible, I applied to the ethics protocol of each institution and program I worked with. Amawtay Wasi does not have a formal ethics protocol as Indigenous institutions and programs in the North usually do. It was consequently through oral agreements that we worked. These agreements included reciprocity principle, for example, they asked me to write a paper in Spanish to be published in the university's journal, which I did. I also presented an overview of IHE in North America to the students and professors in Saraguro. In other words, agreements integrated the idea of giving back the research, in multiple forms. While working in Ecuador, another important partnership was with the

¹⁴ See for example, the concrete approach developed by the National Steering Committee of the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey and First Nations community leaders in Canada, the Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP®). The definitions of the principles outlined here are directly from the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) website at www.fnigc.ca/ocap, which has formally registered the combined principles as a trademark. The FNIGC encourages readers to go to their website for further information regarding the use of OCAP® principles as a standard for conducting research with First Nations.

Scientific Institute of Indigenous Cultures (ICCI/ARY). I participated in their communal political school, presenting information and experiences from the North. We agreed that, once the dissertation was finished, I would come back to present on it, as a way of giving back the information. This is something I plan to do once the dissertation is submitted.

In fact, the sharing of my results is something I agreed to with all the institutions and programs I worked with. At the Salish-Kootenai College in Montana, which was the location for the annual American Indigenous Research Association (AIRA) conference, it was agreed that, once my dissertation would be completed, I would present during this event and take the time to plan more presentations with SKC faculty and staff. The AIRA has moved on to happen outside of SKC at this point, but it is still held on the Flathead reservation, and I still plan on attending and taking the opportunity to share the research with SKC. Beside this agreement with SKC, I also apply for an ethics certificate from SKC, which implies that at the end of the process, I submit a copy of my dissertation to the college, which I will also do.

As I undertook research in Native American Studies at Montana State University and in American Indian Studies at University of Arizona, I worked closely with those departments in obtaining my ethics certificate, thus again ensuring I followed their norms in proceeding to research. In terms of giving back, I also gave multiple guest lectures while doing research at those sites, in order to share what I had learned from other IHE projects in other sites. The exchanges about my experiences with a Tribal College and an intercultural, communal and Indigenous university were welcomed in these programs, and discussions were insightful for my own understanding of IHE and the place of NAIS in it. Giving back also entailed, in both sites, agreements that I would come back once the dissertation was completed to share my conclusions with them.

Of course, a doubt remained for me throughout the process as to how I was really contributing to the institutions and programs I worked with. This is a key component of Indigenous and participatory research methodologies. The knowledge built has to be useful to the communities involved in the process, who gave their time and provided their expertise. I had many conversations along the way regarding this principle, and I finally came to term with it in the following way. The main reason why all the people and institutions I worked with accepted to be part of this project is my commitment to contribute to decolonizing the academy. As this is a broadly shared objective

amongst IHE institutions and programs, people were willing to engage in the research, so I could learn from their work. We established a common understanding that my contribution would be in a larger picture, and not necessary to their direct benefits¹⁵. As I could contribute to developing a broader picture of decolonization in IHE, building links between their work and the broader processes and international experiences I encountered, the people involved in my research trusted that in the long run, my work would be a contribution. I remain committed to the shared objective we established.

This is how I established protocols and agreements to remain accountable until the end of the process and to make sure that the people, communities and institutions involved will have access to the results and can make use of it. Throughout my research journey, I have kept in touch with key persons in each site and communicated to them some of my advancements. Emails turn out not to be the best way of keeping in touch, given that everyone is busy and people do not always have the time to read or answer them. But I remain committed to traveling back to each site in order to communicate the results of this research and to give back to each person the material they gave to me (interview transcripts, for example). This is how I am answering to the principle of relational accountability.

I am aware that many other steps could have been taken to ensure relational accountability. For example, establishing an advisory committee with people in each institution and program would have ensured follow-ups and feedback throughout the process. A first examination of the dissertation could have been done by this committee, before the final examining committee at Concordia. While I would have hoped to have put these consultation mechanisms in place, the international nature of my work, the two different languages that I navigated to realize it, as well as both the time (mine and that of the faculty and staff of the institutions and programs I worked with) and means to compensate others for the work required, were obstacles that proved insurmountable. I think this is something that ought to be done when realizing professional and academic research projects, but it is difficult to do so in the context of a PhD research.

¹⁵ I included this conversation in the consent form to participate in the research, to ensure we would reach a common understanding of benefits. I also had an institutional consent form (that I would discuss with the head of the programs and institutions where I conducted research) that included space to establish reciprocity agreements. This is where we agreed on forms of giving back, as discussed here.

Comparative Approach and Hemispheric Perspective

While I chose to address processes of decolonization through higher education from an international comparative perspective, the extent of doctorate research does not allow for world-encompassing research. Consequently, I chose to focus on a hemispheric perspective. This choice obviously followed existing relations as I just mentioned, but it also appeared relevant because comparative literature on the IHE exists for countries that were formerly part of the Commonwealth, or between Canada and the USA, but there is a gap in the literature in terms of comparing IHE from a hemispheric standpoint. The experiences in South and North America differ, but I argue that they also share a lot both in terms of colonization and decolonization, as I demonstrate in this dissertation.

While I also decided to develop this hemispheric perspective through a comparative, multi-sited approach, it seems important to consider the specificities of such a methodology. In their work on comparative anthropology, Gringrich and Fox (2002) argue that comparative analysis is the legacy of anthropology, and while it has been somehow discarded for the undertone of "grand theories" it had in anthropology's history, it is still used fundamentally in any anthropological study and tends to be everywhere, especially in cultural studies. Furthermore, they argue that by addressing the tensions between big concepts or patterns (such as capitalism or colonialism) and the distinctive outcomes of these patterns around the globe, comparative studies allow for recognizing the tension between global connections and heterogeneous local responses. They thus argue for the recuperation of a comparative methodology in anthropology, in non-universalist and qualitative forms (Gringrich & Fox, 2002). Comparison is used in anthropology to engage with global issues while working with concrete local realities (Peacock, 2002). Therefore, comparison is suited to understand an international phenomenon such as decolonization in IHE while at the same time considering the specificity of decolonial projects in local IHE institutions and programs.

Similarly, by applying comparison to human rights studies, Hastrup mentions that anthropological studies of such phenomenon requires

a sense of both global unity and local distinction, like the dual reactions we are faced with when dealing with human rights. As a subject of no small anthropological significance, the study of human rights leaves us squarely in a loaded political, moral, and theoretical problem of how simultaneously to claim universality and respect cultural diversity (Hastrup, 2002, p. 28).

As colonization and decolonization also speak to the political, moral, and theoretical problem of the universality of human rights and diversity of life projects, these processes are also suspended between, and connecting, global and local dimensions of life (Hastrup, 2002, p. 30). Moreover, Hastrup argues that comparison of localized tensions fosters a humanization of the subjects who are actively involved in global processes, in this case, of colonization and decolonization.

Peacock further argues that thinking about the global world opens doors to comparative opportunities, and that through comparison, anthropology can be usefully engaged with issues in the world (Peacock, 2002, p. 44). By engaging in such comparison, Peacock considers that anthropology can be useful in policy and leadership, as it is able to broaden the scale of discussion, de-center a debate over a locale/life-world by bringing one case study into conversation with another, and it allows mid-level theorizing (Peacock, 2002). This especially speaks to me in terms of engaging with decolonization in the academy, by learning from precise, local examples enacted by Indigenous Peoples.

Multi-sited, comparative fieldwork therefore considers how specific places interact with the world or with a broader context, in a global thinking. Consequently, the comparative method that I embrace here does not assume that IHE programs and institutions with which I engaged in my research were discrete, separated entities. As Gringrich and Fox point out, "the 'units of comparison' need not be accepted as discrete, homogeneous and stable entities at all. Indeed, understanding them as the differentiated, changing results of wider developments, within their fuzzy boundaries, is essential for the new pluralism in anthropological comparison" (Gringrich & Fox, 2002, p. 19). What I am suggesting here is to take into account how "global patterns develop, both variously and similarly" (Peacock, 2002, p. 65), through the consideration of decolonization through multiple IHE programs and institutions.

Considering multi-sited approaches in anthropology, Marcus states that a field work "site" is always local only circumstantially. Field "site" is actually built, designed, or situated, in order to understand something broadly, in a "strategically-situated ethnography" approach (Marcus, 1995). It follows that sorting out the relationships between the local and the global has always been part of classic anthropological research. Multi-sited research, however, emerges as a response to the ontological perspective that understands cultural formations not as discrete, separated units anymore, but as produced at different scales, local and global, interrelated in the world-system.

These scales and interactions are often what becomes the object of study, in multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995, p. 99), "following" actors, ideas, or objects through local-to-global interactions.

While I situate my research as multi-sited, in this case, it is the relationship between IHE as an international (or global) phenomenon and its regional/local development as a concrete tool for decolonization that I follow. IHE is a diverse, complex, and multiply situated reality. It also features commonalities in terms of international Indigenous struggles for decolonization. Thus, IHE juxtaposes local expressions of decolonization to international reality. While these local expressions in some cases might appear "worlds apart" (Marcus, 1995), they provided me with different answers that will form a more complete picture of IHE as a tool for decolonization. Consequently, I am following the international phenomenon of IHE as a tool for decolonization through its development in different contexts and networks as well as through precise local cases of concrete practices, with the objective of learning from these cases to eventually apply decolonizing approaches to my own context.

Nonetheless, I do not pretend to any exhaustiveness, or complete holistic understanding of IHE. Cadea argues that, whether it be multi- or uni-sited, the field-site is always a somewhat arbitrary cut of the reality realized by the researcher (Cadea, 2016). In my case, the multi-sited approach is only a way to acknowledge and account for the complexity and the relationship between the local and international nature of IHE as a decolonizing tool, without aiming at representing the whole complexity and diversity of IHE. Decisions were made to choose certain field sites and case studies. Nadai and Maeder lament how the explanation and problematization of the choice of sites is often absent from the research report (Nadai & Maeder, 2005). Consequently, I decided to present hereafter the process I went through to make these choices.

Choice of Sites

I decided to explore the knowledge produced, structured, and transmitted in IHE, within the context of colonization and decolonization in two broad regions of the Americas: the Andean region and North American region. It is to be noted that I exclude Mexico from the North American region for several reasons. First, Mexican IHE institutions are related to Andean ones through a network of "Latin American" Indigenous intercultural and community universities (*Red de Universidades Indigenas, Interculturales y Comunitarias de Abya Yala - RUIICAY*). The concept of *interculturalidad* shares a relatively common history and content in Latin America, both as a colonial and as a resistance concept, which differs from what is generally understood as "intercultural" in US and Canadian contexts. Moreover, by looking at IHE in Canada and the United-States, on one hand, and in Andean countries, on the other, I am explicitly looking at settler states that inherited different colonial legacies: Spanish colonial rule followed by republican states in the Andes and British colonial rule followed by federations of states or provinces in the US and Canadian context. Of course, there are some significant differences in the ways settler states of the same region adapted the colonial legacy they inherited. Still, I argue there are greater similarities between Canada and the US, and between Andean countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, especially, but also Chile and Argentina), than between these two regions¹⁶.

Part of my decision was to circumscribe cases in a way that would respect the existing IHE networks in their global organizations. For example, IHE institutions in Latin America are part of the Network of Intercultural, Indigenous and community Universities of Abya Yala (RUIICAY), which brings together institutions from Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina. While this network is very active in creating common projects, courses, and research protocols, as well as supporting each other and gathering regularly, they are not very active, for example, in the World Indigenous Nations' Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC). WINHEC has been much more inclusive of institutions from settler states that emerged after colonization by the British Empire (New Zealand, Canada, United States, and Australia). Additionally, the documentation of colonization and decolonization through Indigenous education in the Americas and of the role of social sciences in these processes, falls between two broad regions, following the organization of IHE networks: North America

¹⁶ Although, as I argue in Chapter 2, the Doctrine of Discovery is certainly a common thread throughout the Americas.

(excluding Mexico), and Latin America (including Mexico). Consequently, I decided to compare case studies that would come from these two broad regions and networks. Finally, “Latin America” appeared to be too diverse and include too many countries, as opposed to “North America” when excluding Mexico. Since my Master’s research was about the history of the Andean context (which includes parts of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina), it seemed appropriate to single out Andean countries from the “Latin American” context. Finally, given the importance of national realities and policies in the development of educational institutions and programs, I decided to focus on two countries (national contexts): the US and Ecuador.

This choice is serendipitous, for it followed the relationships and networks I was fortunate enough to build with certain institutions and programs in these two countries. Thus, participating in conferences, events and gatherings of Indigenous scholars, educators and activists was also a way to slowly establish a network of collaboration, developing a sense of whom I could work with, and what institutions would accept to be part of my research. Rather than seeing this as a limit to the research, I understand it as part of the relational process of research, as Wilson describes it (2008). The serendipitous "selection" of participants actually reflects the collaboration we established in the development and production of knowledge (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 129).

Andean site

For the Andean region, I decided to undertake fieldwork in Ecuador, with the Indigenous Intercultural University *Amawtay Wasi* (House of Wisdom, in Kichwa; hereafter, the Amawtay Wasi), with whom I had been in touch since 2010. The Amawtay Wasi was created to serve the 14 Indigenous nations and 11 Kichwa peoples¹⁷ representing about 30-40% of Ecuador's population.¹⁸

¹⁷ The national Indigenous organization of Ecuador - the CONAIE - and the Amawtay Wasi articulate a difference between nations and peoples, the former representing a group of ancestral peoples, pre-existing, but part of, the Ecuadorian State, and sharing a language, a history, a culture, and a territory (various peoples in one nation). Peoples are considered collective entities formed by communities or administrative centres sharing cultural identity, with their own systems of social, political, economic and legal organization.

¹⁸ This is the percentage used by the national Indigenous organization, the CONAIE publicly, however, the 2010 national census numbered the Indigenous Peoples' population to 7% of the Ecuadorian population. Martínez Novo wrote an article on the disparity of these numbers and the political minimization of Indigenous numbers in the census. She writes:

"CONAIE in several publications and public speeches argued that 35 percent of the population was indigenous, the Interamerican Development Bank estimated without explaining how the number was calculated that indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorians made up 25 percent of the population in 1999 and the World Bank estimated the indigenous population in 10.4 percent at the end of the 1990s in its proposal for PRODEPINE. It was widely believed that the 2001 census underestimated the indigenous population" (Martínez Novo, 2014, p. 406).

I chose the Amawtay Wasi as a case study for various reasons. First of all, it was the first Indigenous University that I encountered, and it is the one that introduced me to the subject. Secondly, it has a strong leadership in the RUIICAY network and is involved in international activism at the UN as well as across other alternative platforms (Abya Yala summits, Indigenous organizations such as the CAOI - Coordinating body of the Andean Indigenous Organizations). Finally, it constitutes a case of an Indigenous university created by and for the Indigenous movement of Ecuador which was legally recognized by the state but never funded by it, and thus is quite independent in its activities. Nevertheless, the state of Ecuador decided to suspend the Amawtay Wasi's activities in November 2013. The university's response was twofold. On the one hand, the administration filed a complaint at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and decided to maintain its activities in research and workshops/training for the communities (the university cannot admit students nor graduate them at the moment). On the other hand, a group of people originally affiliated with the university looked at the possibility of negotiating with the state, that was now running a "contingency plan" in order to graduate the registered students before suspending the university's activities altogether. Thus, Amawtay Wasi represents the case of an

Chisaguano also pointed, in 2006, to the variety of the numbers given by Indigenous organizations, with the FEINE evading the Indigenous population to a 30%, the CONAIE to a 45%, and the FENOCIN to a 70% of the Ecuadorian population, according to public declarations made based on their own data collection (Chisaguano M., 2006, p. 8).

While Chisaguano cites a 1846 census estimating the Indigenous population to a 52% of the population of the then *Real Audiencia de Quito*, Martínez Novo explains that, based on "a 1942 estimate of the National Directorate of Statistics of Ecuador that calculated that the population of Ecuador was 39 percent Indian or in earlier nineteenth-century lists of indigenous taxpayers that estimated the indigenous population of the highlands at 46 percent" (Martínez Novo, 2014, p. 404), in the mid-twentieth century, the general perception was that Indigenous Peoples in Ecuador represented the third to the half of the population (Martínez Novo, 2014, p. 404). However, the 1950 census identifying only 16.3% on Ecuadorian population speaking an Indigenous language. Martínez-Novó explains the political nature of that census: "indigenous peoples were undercounted in the 1950 census because of lack of access to some areas of the national territory such as the Amazon, indigenous resistance towards being counted, the fact that urban bilinguals were not counted as Indians, and state desire to present Ecuador as more urban and mestizo than it really was. There were indigenous uprisings against the 1950 census because indigenous peoples associated it with the colonial goals of taxation and forced labor recruitment" (Martínez Novo, 2014, p. 404).

In the following census, the questions to identify Indigenous Peoples changed, from ethnicity to language, to race and self-identification, which might have explained different results. Plus, the political context of a census is always important: "the 1990 census included again a question on the languages spoken by the population. Once more, only 3.84 percent reported speaking an indigenous language. The census was taken a few months after a nation-wide indigenous uprising paralyzed the country. The 1990 census results were challenged because indigenous organizations boycotted the enumeration process" (Martínez Novo, 2014, p. 404).

Martínez Novo interviewed authors, intellectuals, and professional involved in the census, and they generally doubt the numbers presented by the census, blaming either the process of collecting the information, the political will to inscribe Indigenous Peoples as minorities in the public imagination, and problems of discrimination and loss of identity.

In any case, this debate could not emphasize better the politics of knowledge and of data collection, which I think is important to consider. In this political situation, I refer here to the numbers used by the national Indigenous organization, the CONAIE, knowing that they are contested (but so are the official governmental numbers).

institution which succeeded in maintaining its independence for almost 10 years (2004-2013) but which is now faced with the politics of knowledge and education, and an obligation to develop an array of strategies that represent well the diversity of actors involved in IHE in Latin America (Mato, 2008b, pp. 49-52)¹⁹. As a case that was short lived, however, Amawtay Wasi's strength remains its philosophical and political project, rather than its practical experience, and this might be reflected in the dissertation, through a more idealistic tone. I still base my description on the experience I had of the university, and on the testimonies of many of its stakeholders.

North American sites

In North America, I faced a choice between Canada and the United States. Having developed good networks in the US and given the perspective of situating the case studies in the broader overviews of the regions, I decided to keep the US case studies. I knew that I could develop reflections about my own national context in a comparative perspective. Furthermore, I chose to realize fieldwork in two sites in the US (Montana and Arizona), for two reasons. First, because of the number and diversity of Indigenous nations, communities and IHE programs and institutions present in the US; and second, the differences in educational policies from one state to another also affects IHE realities.

Even though two sites were not going to be representative of the entire country, the possibility of comparing them, I felt, would add to the complexity of the reality considered. Furthermore, in North America, following the classifications of Barnhardt (1991) and Warrior (2012), I had established the differentiation between IHE programs in mainstream academy and independent IHE institutions. Accordingly, I needed to realize fieldwork in places that could allow me to consider cases of IHE programs (in mainstream academy) and institutions (independent).

Based on my connections, I chose as one site the State of Montana, where 6.5% of the population is Indigenous, with 12 Indigenous nations organized into 7 federally recognized Tribes and reservations, and 7 Tribal Colleges (one per reservation). Montana is in a very interesting

¹⁹ It is to be noted that, as I am making the final corrections to this dissertation, in May 2018, the news broke that the Amawtay Wasi will be reinstated as a public university. The National Assembly of Ecuador voted unanimously, on May 15th, for the reform of the Higher Education Law, which includes the re-installation of the Amawtay Wasi, this time as a public university, part of the Ecuadorian higher education system. This was possible because of the continuous resistance of Indigenous communities, both through Pluriversity's activities, and through the negotiations that ended up being led by an Education committee of the CONAIE. Since May 2018, the government granted a building to the Amawtay Wasi, and the university is now in a reorganization process together with the Ecuadorian Indigenous organizations and involving the different actors who were previously part of the project.

political situation: since 1999, the state has adopted a clear policy of "Indian Education for All" (IEFA), which fulfills the explicit commitment of the 1972 Montana state constitution to its "Indian citizens". Montana State University (MSU) is a leader in IEFA application at the higher education level and they have a department of Native American Studies which is member of the WINHEC. Additionally, one of their former faculty, now retired but still actively in relationship with the university, has undertaken extensive research on Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). I had contacts both at the MSU Department of Native American Studies (NAS), MSU Department of Education, and at one of the Tribal Colleges, the Salish-Kootenai College (SKC), where a friend teaches at the NAS Department. MSU and SKC both agreed to receive me and support research.

In Montana, one specificity involved looking at IEFA application at the higher education level, and at the role of Tribal Colleges in the development of knowledges at the higher education level. Montana therefore became one of the US sites for my fieldwork, with the possibility to realize at least 2 case studies, one with an IHE program in a mainstream university (MSU) and the other with an IHE institution, the Salish-Kootenai College. Along the way, I learned that SKC, with their enormous campus, their relatively positive economic situation, and their full 4-year programs, is considered by many to be "the Cadillac" of Tribal Colleges (usually 2-year programs institutions, following the model of Community Colleges in the US, but with far less funding). Since I did not want to paint a distorted picture of Tribal Colleges based on the experience with a "Cadillac model", I made the effort to visit 3 other Tribal Colleges in Montana. I was able to realize interviews with people involved in 2 of them, including the head of the NAS program at the Aaniiih Nakoda College, which gave me a broader perspective on the Tribal Colleges and Universities intellectual movement as well as the current socio-political and economic realities.

Then, in order contextualize Montana IHE in relation to other US realities, and again following the contacts I had previously established, I chose Arizona as my second site of fieldwork in the US. Arizona is home to the largest number of speakers of Indigenous languages in the US and to 21 federally recognized tribes (representing 5.3% of the state population). In this State, the general policies go against ethnic studies and linguistic diversity. Even though these policies do not concern higher education institutions as such, it is still revealing as to the general context in that state regarding cultural diversity and Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, one of the oldest "American Indian Studies" doctorate programs in the USA is at the University of Arizona (UofA, Tucson), which offers a graduate certificate in IHE. UofA also has a Native Nations Institute

conducting research on education and nation building. In the fall of 2013, Dr. Ronald Trosper, who was then the head of the American Indian Studies program at UofA, agreed to receive me as a visiting researcher, and I thought that from this institution, it would be possible for me to establish relationships and collaboration with the Tribal colleges of Arizona, the Diné' College and the Tohono O'odham Community College. This proved more complicated than I first thought, given my ignorance of the complex procedures of ethics approval that one has to go through in order to work with Tribes in Arizona.

As sovereign nations, and in response to some of the abuses of academic researchers,²⁰ Tribes in the USA have developed their own process of research approval. The Diné' (Navajo) Nation, particularly, has developed a procedure that requires months of establishing a relationship with local communities²¹ - a process I was impressed by in terms of establishing a research standard very close to Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR). However, I learned about this protocol only a month after my arrival in Arizona, and there was no time to go through all the

²⁰ For example, in 2004, the Havasupai Tribe filed a lawsuit against Arizona Board of Regents and Arizona State University researchers for misuse of their DNA samples. The research that had begun in 1989 about DNA and Type II Diabetes, was proving inconclusive, and the researchers began analyzing the DNA for other issues, without consultation nor consent from the people who had given their DNA. When they found out about that, the Havasupai issued a banishment order to keep researchers from Arizona State University from entering their reservation, and they filed a lawsuit that took 6 years to reach a settlement.

While this is just one case of the ethics of research gone wrong, the abuses have been multiple, and often related to the role that knowledge and research play in the colonial relationship established with Indigenous Peoples. Hence, Smith writes:

"it is surely difficult to discuss *research methodology* and *indigenous peoples* together, in the same breath, without having an analysis of imperialism, without understanding the complex ways in which the pursuit of knowledge is deeply embedded in the multiple layers of imperial and colonial practices" (Smith, 2012 [1999], p. 2).

This role of knowledge and research in colonialism will be analyzed in more details in Chapter 2 on colonization and decolonization concepts and practices.

²¹ Navajo Nation covers territory of 71 000 km², comparable to the size of West Virginia state, which is divided into chapters and agencies. To receive the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the nation, one has to have the support of at least one Agency Council, who would accept to write a letter of support to join to the research proposal presented to the Tribal IRB. This means that one has to ask to present their project to the council during one of their session and seek their support. Only then, with the letter of support and all ethics documents (which include, apart from classic universities requirements, to state clearly what is the community involvement, and what are the benefits of the research for the Navajo Nation), can one submit their research project for approval. The documentation needs to be sent to the Navajo IRB one month prior to the anticipated meeting of the IRB, for which the researcher needs to request placement on the agenda to present their research project. The whole process would then take at least 2 months and a minimum of 3 preliminary trips to Navajo Nation, in the best conditions, (to make the contacts, attend the Agency Council meeting, and then the IRB meeting). However, this protocol ensures that the researchers are talking to local community members, that their project is rooted in, and supported by, at least one Agency Council, and the IRB approval depends also on the contribution the research makes for the Nation. It is also required that the research present the results to the Navajo nation and leave a copy of their material for the Navajo Nation, thus ensuring a certain level of reciprocity.

steps, which also would have required several preliminary trips to the reserve, located 6 hours from where I was residing (Tucson).

In Montana, I worked directly with the Tribal Colleges, who had their own Institutional Review Boards, to whom I submitted my research protocol. The nature of the process was fairly simple and resembled what I was used to in terms of ethics, so my research was approved by two colleges in a timely manner, during my research stay. In Arizona, the Tohono O'odham Community College (TOCC) was much closer, so I first established a contact with them. I was hoping to be able to work with them in the same way I had worked with SKC. Midway through my research stay, I learned that they had established a moratorium on research done at the college and with the Tribe²². While I was unable to conduct research as such at TOCC, they received me at the end of the spring semester, so that I would present my research project. This gave me the occasion to visit the physical space of the college and to have an exchange with faculty members, staff, as well as the President of the college, about my research, IHE, and some of TOCC's projects. That was my only interaction at a Tribal College in Arizona, but while researching at UofA, I attended Dr. Fox's class on Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). This provided me the opportunity to reflect with fellow graduate students on various issues related to TCUs, as well as the opportunity to meet many people involved in TCUs movement in Arizona and nationally, who came as guest speakers to the class.

In sum, both sites were different enough to offer a glimpse into the diverse contexts of IHE in the US and how these have impacts on higher education's structure. I spent one semester at each site (fall 2015 in Montana; winter/spring 2016 in Arizona) just as I had spent one semester in Ecuador (fall of 2014). The two US sites gave me the necessary material to frame case studies around two Native American/American Indian Studies departments, and one Tribal College, plus visits, interviews and exchanges with other Tribal Colleges. I could then compare these case studies with the Andean one. Each site allowed me not only to relate to precise, unique cases of IHE, but also to interact with each of them in ways that revealed very different dimensions of IHE.

²² No one explained to me exactly why the moratorium was put in place, but I think that expresses yet again the difficult relationship between academic research and Indigenous Peoples, and the politics of knowledge it implies. It also speaks to the different tensions that exist in different States, where politics (and educational politics, together with politics of knowledges) also differ.

Ethnographic Context

Aside from presenting the choices of sites and institutions on which I developed a multi-sited, comparative perspective, in a relational approach, it is also important to present the networks and some of the key persons with whom I realized my research. After all, these relations and networks form the “sites”, and the process of knowledge building is a relational one that would not have been possible without these key persons. Accordingly, the labour that goes into establishing and maintaining relationships across places and time is an important part of the research endeavour, and it seems important to be transparent about this side of the “fieldwork”. For the three sites of my research, I present here the circumstances and relations that formed the ethnographic context of this dissertation.

Amawtay Wasi in Ecuador

In my first meetings with the head of the Amawtay Wasi, Fernando Sarango, in 2010, I visited the headquarters in Quito. I returned in 2011 and visited the *Chakra* (campus)²³ in Conocoto, with their new Amazonian house that was built by students for an architecture class. The *Chakra* was accommodating introductory classes for all programs, as well as Kichwa language classes, and specific classes for the architecture program. That year, I also visited the *Chakra* in La Esperanza, and participated in the *minka* (collective work) to build a greenhouse for the agro-ecology program. Thus, before my "actual" fieldwork in the fall of 2014, I had been in touch with the leadership of the Amawtay Wasi since 2010, and especially with Fernando Sarango, and Gerardo Simbaña (the academic coordinator). I had also established contacts with the Instituto Científico de Culturas Indígenas (ICCI) and its director, Luis Macas, during the Indigenous Peoples' Gathering the Encounter of the Condor and the Eagle, in June of 2010. The ICCI hosted the gathering and accepted my participation as a volunteer to help out with translation and note taking for the event's memory.

As an institution that acts as a technical front collecting the scientific thoughts and the political experiences of the various Indigenous Peoples' organizational processes in Ecuador, the ICCI was one of the key actors in organizing the discussions (*Minka* - collective work), from the mid 1990s

²³ The Amawtay Wasi uses the term *Chakra*, in Kichwa, and also *ajà*, in Shuar, to talk about their campuses. These terms both refer to the garden, or the place where one cultivates the land. This goes with the agricultural metaphors used by the Amawtay Wasi to talk about the collective work of knowledge building, and the collective harvesting of the knowledge, at the end of a semester (*fiesta de cosecha*).

on that led to the creation of the Amawtay Wasi. Luis Macas, one of the important and historical leaders of the Indigenous movement in Ecuador, played a key role in presenting the university project to the National Congress as then a representative of the Pachakutik political party (political arm of the Indigenous movement). I visited again briefly in 2011, after attending the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education (WIPCE), in Cuzco, Peru, just before beginning my doctoral program. Fernando Sarango once again agreed to meet and allowed me to spend some time at the university and in classes, with a cohort of students in architecture, on a campus just south of Quito. The group invited me to the inauguration of the Shuar house they had built on campus and to accompany them on a field trip to a community of Guaranda. I was also invited to participate in a collective work (*Minka*) at the agro-ecology campus just North of Quito, where the students were building a greenhouse. There, I presented to a group of students the research project I was developing for my doctorate. I also discussed that project with Fernando Sarango, who gave me his input, including the importance of a comparative perspective with North America.

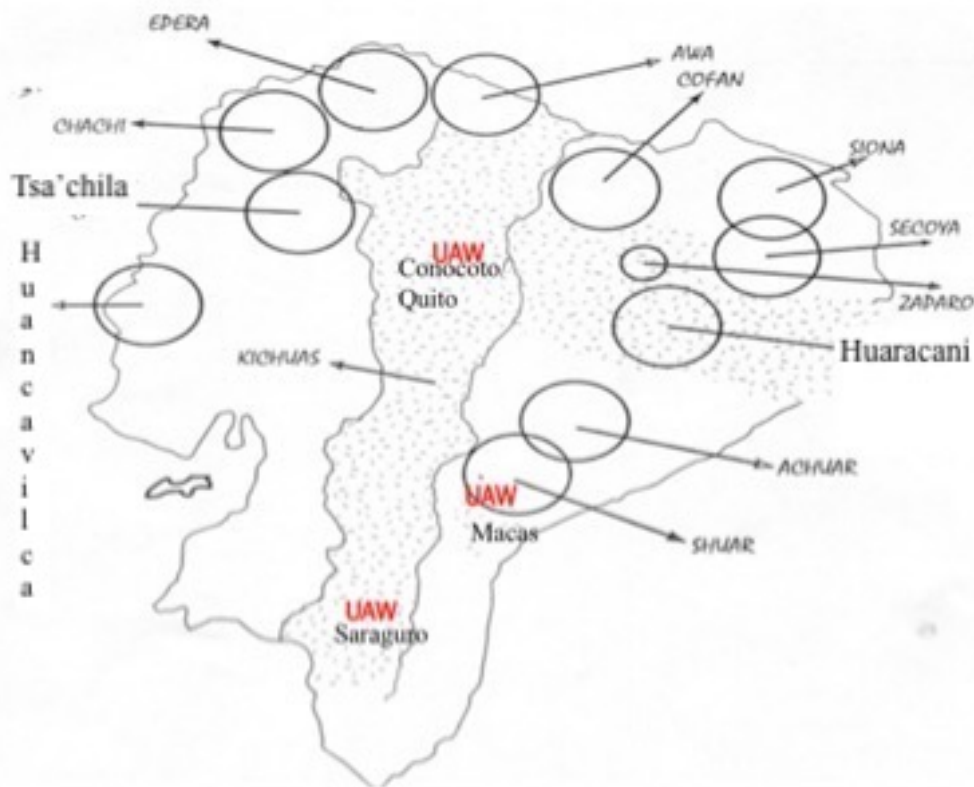
I made another brief visit in November 2013, while traveling with colleagues, activists, and friends from Arizona to Colombia for the Fifth Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples of Abya Yala. I had heard rumours of the university being in crisis and possibly being closed by the government. I did not believe that could actually happen, given the international right of Indigenous Peoples to their own educational institutions, the Ecuadorian plurinational constitution, and the prominent role that the Amawtay Wasi played in the RUIICAY international network. Nevertheless, when I visited Fernando Sarango, he confirmed that after an assessment by the Council of Higher Education (a government agency), the university was, in fact, being closed down. In November of 2013, Amawtay Wasi was consequently in the middle of that crisis to find a way to resist and continue existing, filing a case in the Interamerican Court of Human Rights. We conducted an interview that we uploaded to You Tube,²⁴ and a petition was circulated to support the university in their struggle. Despite these and other efforts, the university's activities were indefinitely suspended by the Council of Higher Education (*Consejo de Educación Superior* - CES). With the university officially suspended, while I knew they were still active and working in different ways (autonomously, and in collaboration with the RUIICAY international network), I was not sure how to organize an official exchange with them for a semester of fieldwork. It turned

²⁴ <https://youtu.be/uaTRLn8gVyI>

out I could realize that with the ICCI, as a research institute. Luis Macas, with whom I had also maintained contact throughout the years, accepted and wrote letters of support for me to undertake research with the ICCI. Hence, the ICCI was my official host institution in the fall of 2014, for my fieldwork with the Amawtay Wasi (although, again, preparation for fieldwork had begun several years prior to that). It made sense to work with the ICCI, as the founding institution for the Amawtay Wasi and I assumed that they were working together.

When I arrived in Quito in August of 2014, however, I realized the reality was much more complex. Luis Macas and Alicia Vacacela at the ICCI received me and gave me access to an office. Through our discussions, I understood that the Amawtay Wasi, as a university, had been closed by the government, but that the ICCI was supporting the students and professors who were involved in the contingency plan put together by the CES. They were also contemplating the possibility of negotiating with governmental agencies for the revival of the university. They were having meetings with people that were involved in the project since the beginning, to discuss the possible avenues. Luis Macas also attended the different thesis defences and celebrations of the graduating students from the contingency plan in Quito (the architecture students that I met in 2011 were now studying in buildings of the Central University), La Esperanza (Ibarra, just north of Quito: agroecology students), Saraguro (South part of the Ecuadorian Andes: pedagogy students), and Macas (in the Eastern lowlands of Ecuador, south-East of Quito: pedagogy students). In this way, the collaboration with the ICCI allowed me to participate in all of these thesis defence events, to make contacts and interview coordinators/professors as well as some students in these different settings and disciplines. I also attended some of the meetings held at the ICCI regarding the future of the Amawtay Wasi. We had many discussions over the following weeks and months, regarding the history, current situation, and possible futures of the Indigenous University. Both Luis and Alicia greatly helped me in processing the information and acquiring a broader perspective on the overall situation of Indigenous Peoples and organizations in Ecuador.

Figure 1: Map of the regions where the Amawtay Wasi (UAW, in red) was active, in Ecuador (from J. García et al., 2004)



For all of the networks the ICCI connected me with, to my surprise, the administration of the former Amawtay Wasi University was not one of them. As a means for survival and continuity of their work, the administration had converted the university into an NGO that was oriented towards education, called Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity (*Pluriversidad*). Fernando Sarango was still the head of the Pluriversity. He was also part of the group who had been involved in moving the Amawtay Wasi towards the project of an autonomous Pluriversity rather than pursuing the government's contingency plan. There were obviously real tensions between the group that was involved in the contingency plan and the one that had taken the autonomous path. In spite of these tensions, the people at the Pluriversity, including Fernando Sarango and Gerardo Simbaña who I already knew from past years, received me well, and opened the door for me to connect with the work they were undertaking.

To contextualize briefly, the transition from the university to the Pluriversity was a strategic one, so that it could continue functioning without the recognition of the state (and the accreditation to deliver diplomas). The Pluriversity was offering a course in intercultural communication,

running in Saraguro and in Cotopaxi. The communications degree was going to be recognized autonomously by Indigenous organizations, while the diplomas would be officially granted by the URACCAN, the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, who is a member of the RUIICAY. Thus, the Pluriversity was maintaining its international relationship with the RUIICAY.

The collaboration with the Pluriversity was fundamental in order to experience the intercultural communication classes that were going on in Saraguro and to talk with and interview some of the students as well as the professors and the coordinators of the groups both in Saraguro and of Cotopaxi. Through the Pluriversity, and in collaboration with Sergio Enrique Hernández Loeza, another doctoral student from Puebla, in Mexico, I met and interviewed the presidents of the RUIICAY universities while they were meeting in Quito. Sergio and I produced a video about their work. Representatives of the RUIICAY were meeting in Quito in November 2014, and we interviewed representatives from 6 out of the 10 universities and institutions forming the RUIICAY. The video briefly presents each university and their cultural, political, and historical context, before moving on to look at how these institutions participate in the Indigenous struggles in their countries and across the continent. We then addressed the RUIICAY's history, objectives, some of its projects and graduate programs, and finally, we discussed the closing of the Amawtay Wasi from the perspective of the RUIICAY²⁵.

The Pluriversity also included me in its *Rimanakuy* (conversation) on the commemoration event of the closure of the university, in November 2014. I was asked to write about it in the Amawtay Wasi journal. Furthermore, conversations and interviews with Fernando Sarango and Gerardo Simbaña were especially helpful in understanding the strategy of the Pluriversity as another model of autonomous IHE institution. They also gave me access to some curriculum material for the intercultural communication program and had discussions about it. It was also by "hanging out" at the Pluriversity headquarter in Quito that I met Sergio and other graduate students who were undertaking, or had just finished, their dissertations about the Amawtay Wasi, with whom I was able to exchange on our ideas about IHE²⁶.

²⁵ See the video, in its original version: <https://youtu.be/7nKFGtxcrjE>
Or with English subtitled: <https://youtu.be/Rlbdj4fCKrs>

²⁶ I am very grateful for the ideas exchanged, and for the support and the collaboration that Sergio brought into my fieldwork. I was not expecting to encounter a fellow graduate student working on a very similar subject, but comparing

Montana State University and Salish-Kootenai College, Montana, USA

The fieldwork in United States could not have been more different. There, I worked with much more formalized and established institutions and programs, that were accredited and recognized by the State and had established infrastructures, both physical and financial. This is not to diminish in any way the financial struggles, the political and academic marginalization, and the astonishing tasks they were facing on a daily basis, but these institutions and programs were not under threat of closure or suspension, nor were they directly questioned or challenged by their government(s). Furthermore, both Tribal Colleges and Native American/American Indian programs were following academic processes, forms and administration that were familiar to me. That being said, the fieldwork in both US sites opened up very different networks and relationships that held the potential to access different kinds and sources of information.

The two field sites in the United States were linked in interesting ways, and it is through my initial trips to Arizona that I considered working in Montana as well. In the Fall of 2012, as I was traveling in Arizona and New Mexico, I reached out to Dr. Brayboy at the Arizona State University (ASU, in Phoenix) to discuss my research, due to his expertise on IHE. Dr. Brayboy then introduced me to Michael Munson, one of his doctoral students from Montana. She is part of the Séliš community now residing primarily on the Flathead reservation. Michael had worked for the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) in Montana, especially around Indigenous education, and she knew all about Indian Education For All (IEFA) policy in Montana. She had worked for IEFA application and developing material at the OPI. She encouraged me to look at what was happening in Montana in terms of Indigenous education and to include it in my research. She herself returned to Montana in 2013 to pursue her doctorate in education from her home and community. Since Michael and I had become friends, and probably because we felt we shared similar concerns, albeit from very different positions, she kindly opened up her networks to me²⁷. She invited me to visit

experiences from Mexico, Argentina and Ecuador. He had much more experience than me as he was himself involved in Indigenous and intercultural education in Mexico, but I hope I was able to reciprocate the insights and reflections he provided to me. I was also very grateful to meet along the way Paola Vargas, who had worked with the *Amawtay Wasi* for her MA thesis, and who so generously shared her own insights as well as Mauro Shakai, who was involved in the experience of the *Amawtay Wasi* in Macas but was then realizing his MA in the PROIEB-Andes in Bolivia and working on the experience of the *Amawtay Wasi*. He was also a great fellow graduate student with whom to exchange. The joke was that, between us and other people we knew had worked with the *Amawtay Wasi* for their thesis and dissertation, we could probably create a seminar on the subject. I still think that would be a great idea, and hope that we might realize it one day!

²⁷ Michael knows literally everyone. She is so active and has served on so many committees and academic research projects, for which she collaborated with so many people, it never stops amazing me. I am so grateful for the friendship

her in Montana and participate in the first American Indigenous Research Association (AIRA) conference at the Salish-Kootenai College in Pablo, Montana (on the Flathead reserve), which was also my first visit to a Tribal College. To make the most of my Montana trip, Michael invited me to stay longer. Thus, we could spend time together and she could introduce me to people working at OPI and to people at the department of Education at Montana State university. She had also introduced me to Dr. Jioanna Carjuzaa, professor of Multicultural Education at Montana State University (MSU), and a leader in the efforts for the development and application of IEFA in higher education. While visiting MSU, I also contacted the Native American Studies department head, Dr. Walter Fleming, and we discussed the possibility of me coming as a Fulbright visiting research student. Walter accepted and followed through with all the letters and papers necessary for my Fulbright application.

I stayed in contact with Michael and Jioanna throughout the development of my thesis proposal. We traveled and presented together to the 2014 WIPCE conference in Hawaii (May 2014). That summer, I also re-contacted Walter Fleming at the NAS department of MSU, to prepare my Fulbright application to submit in the fall 2014 (while in Ecuador), in order to be able to go to Montana the following year.

Meanwhile, Michael had begun working with the Salish-Kootenai College (SKC) in Pablo, teaching in Native American Studies and coordinating grants projects. She was part of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), so she explained to me the process to obtain the approval in order to realize my research. When I finally arrived in Montana for my research stay, in August 2015, Michael picked me up and I stayed with her in Pablo. I arranged an appointment with the then College Vice-President, Sandra Boham, to discuss the possibilities to realize research at SKC. Michael introduced us and I described my project and objectives. Sandra Boham agreed for me to undertake research at SKC.²⁸ I proceeded to apply for the IRB approval, which was accepted at

developed with her, and for all of her insights into my research. This project would never have been without her support, that took so many forms throughout the years: exchanges of ideas, collaborations, but also, receiving me into her home and her family, and in her academic and professional networks. Michael made me feel home in Montana and helped me understand so many realities for Indigenous Peoples of Montana, for her particular community, and in terms of IHE and even more broadly, of Indigenous education in Montana and in her community. She is completely dedicated to Indigenous education in her community, in her state, and nationally, and her insights were always very valuable. I hope that in some minor way, I was able to reciprocate the amount of care, help and support she provided me.

²⁸ One condition that we agreed upon was for me to come back to the college and present my research result to the people, as a way of giving back.

the end of August 2015. The plan was to come back for the AIRA conference, which was taking place at SKC for the third year, at the end of October. I would then stay in Pablo, with Michael and her partner Steve for a total of three weeks, during which I would interview faculty members at SKC. This is exactly what I did, plus I returned in December for a week with Michael and Steve to finish some interviews. I was also able to participate in a couple of classes at SKC and had the opportunity to present and lead a discussion in one of Michael's classes.

Figure 2: Part of SKC campus (Pablo, Picture taken on the field)



Figure 3: Map of SKC campus (Pablo, from SKC Website) – the previous Figure corresponds to #67 on the map.

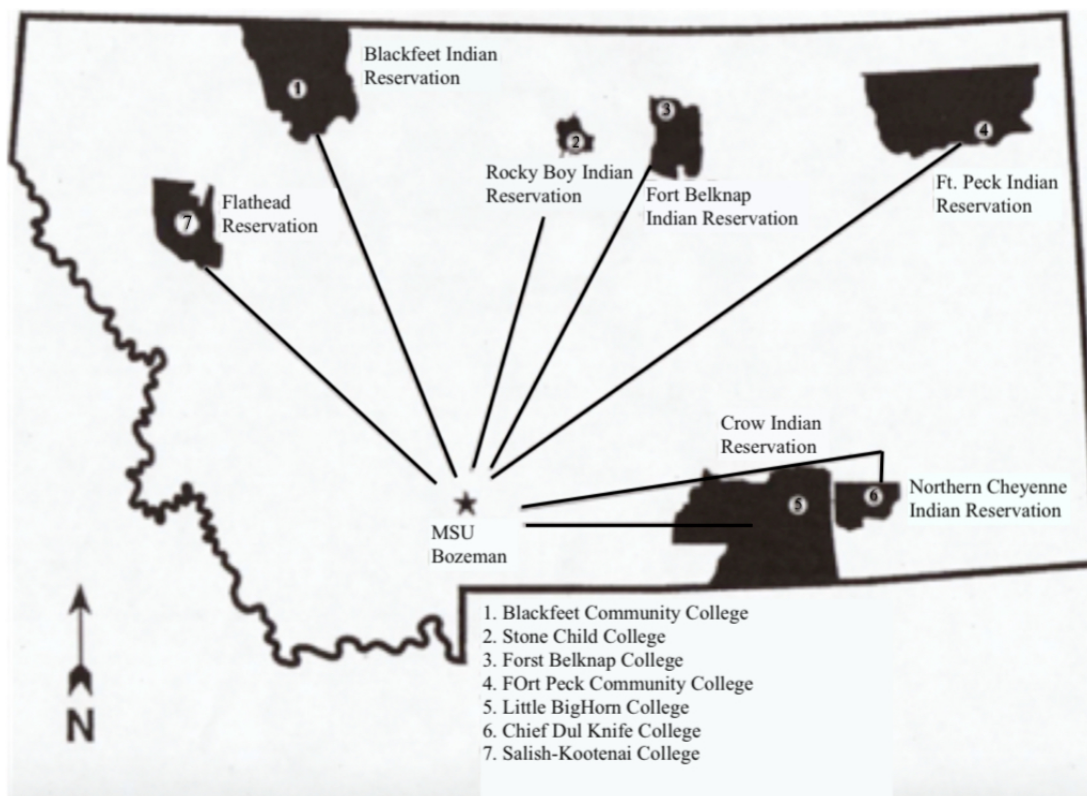


The research stay in Montana was officially hosted by the Native American Studies (NAS) department of Montana State University where I arrived at the beginning of September 2015, after my first visit at SKC. I quickly met with each faculty member, who all accepted to realize interviews with me, and invited me to sit in their classes. I was even invited to the meetings of the Graduate Students Teaching Assistants (GTAs). Four of the department's graduate students were teaching the introductory course to NAS, each of them had a group that they would meet with 3 times a week; they also held weekly meetings with the supervisor/coordinator of the GTA, Dr. Matthew Herman. These meetings were dedicated to discussing course material and pedagogical strategies, as well as sharing and resolving any concerns or issues they were having. I sat in one session of each GTA class, as well as in all courses offered at the department, at least once. I followed more closely the Native Food Systems classes of Dr. Kristin Ruppel and the Graduate Seminar, of Dr. Gail Small. Most of the Faculty members invited me to give a lecture in their class, which gave me another perspective on the IHE experience at MSU.

I participated in every event possible, including actively contributing to the activities around the Indigenous Peoples' Heritage Day, Native American Heritage Month, the efforts to abolish Columbus Day and replace it with an Indigenous Peoples' Day. I attended the Society of American Indian Graduate Students (SAIGS) meetings and some events organized by the American Indian Council. I went on field trips to the Northern Cheyenne reservation with the class on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems; to the Madison Buffalo Jump with Jioanna and a group of international educators she was training (the TEA fellows); and I accompanied Jioanna and her group of Indigenous students in Education (Wanji Oyate group) to the National Indian Education Association conference in Portland. Jioanna also invited me to attend the monthly meetings of the Council of American Indian Programs (CAIP), a gathering of all the programs for Indigenous students on campus, at which Walter Fleming was always present for the NAS department. Walter invited me to attend the meeting of the Elders' Council for the university. Put simply, I was completely part of the NAS department for the semester, and I was treated sometimes as a graduate student, and sometimes as a faculty member. I also reached out to other departments, particularly the Education department.

Aside from interactions with faculty members, teaching graduate students, as well as students and even 2 alumni who were working at a Tribal College, I also had the chance to meet and talk with Wayne Stein, former head of the department. Dr. Stein has written extensively on the movement of Tribal Colleges, and while he had retired from his position at MSU in the fall of 2015, he was teaching at the Aaniih Nakoda College (ANC).

Figure 4: Map of Indian Reservations and Tribal Colleges in Montana, from MSU Website:
<http://www.montana.edu/airo/images/reservations.jpg>



Since Dr. Stein had a strong relationship with the Aaniih Nakoda College at Fort Belknap, he helped me establish a connection with the head of the NAS program at the Aaniih Nakoda College, Sean Chandler, who was also in charge of the IRB process at the college. After submitting all my paperwork, which he reviewed, I was able to visit the college and interview Dr. Chandler. I traveled to ANC with my MSU office-mate, Marsha Small, who also became a great friend and supported me throughout my research at MSU. Marsha, who is Northern Cheyenne, had graduated with her MA from the MSU NAS department, where she was teaching part time, while also doing work for the return of the Bison to their ancestral territory, as the Tribal outreach associate for the National Wildlife Federation. We traveled together to Fort Belknap, as well as to Rocky Boy (to visit the Stone Child College), for her work and my research. Additionally, my mother came to visit during the Thanksgiving long weekend, and we traveled north to the Blackfeet Reservation. I made the most out of this travel, and visited the Blackfeet Community College, where one of Michael's and Marsha's friend, graduate student at MSU in education who I met at the AIRA conference, was working.

Figure 5: Buildings from the Aaniiih Nakoda College (Fort Belknap, from their Website)



Figure 6: Outside and inside Stone Child College main building (Rocky Boy, pictures taken on the field)



Figure 7: Blackfeet Community College (Browning, from their Website)



University of Arizona, USA

Finally, in January of 2016, I began my last research stay in Arizona. I collaborated with the department of American Indian Studies (AIS) of the University of Arizona (UofA) in Tucson. As mentioned already, I began establishing contacts with IHE scholars and programs in Arizona in September of 2012. I first had the idea of working with Arizona State University in Phoenix, but when I visited UofA, I was able to meet with the (then) head of the AIS program, Ronald Trosper, who showed interest in my research, and willingness to help me undertake a research stay there. Part of his work relates to comparing Indigenous and Western theories in natural resources management and was developing Indigenous theories on economy. Dr. Trosper is member of the Salish-Kootenai Tribe in Montana. He recommended that I take a look at the Salish-Kootenai College. In the Fall of 2013, I was back in Tucson, with a clear objective of establishing UofA as one of my research site/host institutions for a Fulbright research stay (together with MSU). I made appointments with Dr. Trosper, as well as other professors at UofA, including Tsianina Lomawaima at the AIS department and Robert Williams from the Faculty of Law. Dr. Trosper also introduced me to Mary Jo Tippeconnic Fox, who specializes on IHE and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), mentioning that it would be a good fit for me to work with her. Dr. Fox said she would be happy to have me at the department. As with Montana State University, I worked

through the 2013-2014 academic year to establish the necessary contacts and fill the necessary paperwork for my Fulbright research stay project. I submitted my proposal in the fall of 2014 and began the research stay in the US in the 2015-2016 academic year.

In between my visit in the fall of 2013 and my arrival in the fall of 2016, the AIS program underwent a lot of changes. Thus, maintaining the relationship was more complicated than I had first thought. The program became a department and the changes that Dr. Trosper was trying to introduce – which was actually the reason he had been hired as the head of the program in the first place – were being met with resistance. The resistance eventually led to a crisis in which Dr. Trosper stepped down from the leadership, and a former head of the program, Dr. Ofelia Zepeda, assumed the interim leadership while the department searched and hired a new head. I visited again with Dr. Trosper during the 2014 NAISA conference in Austin, Texas, and he explained to me the situation. He told me I would have to work with Dr. Zepeda for the paperwork of my research stay, which I did. When I arrived in Tucson, however, Dr. Zepeda was no longer the head of the department. The new head of the program, Dr. Keith James, was hired and began working in the Fall of 2015 while I was in Montana. Maintaining a contact and a sense of where I was going through these changes was not easy and would not have been possible without the continuous contact, communication and support of Dr. Trosper. He also helped me navigate the IRB process and get my paperwork ready to submit upon my arrival at UofA. Over the years, I had also been in touch with Dr. Lomawaima, who I would always see and briefly visit each year at NAISA but the year before my research stay began, she moved to ASU in Phoenix. The other contact I had at UofA was Dr. Fox, who had accepted to collaborate with me. When I learned she was going to teach a class on Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the Winter term of 2016, I asked her to sit in on it, which she accepted.

To sum up, Arizona was a very different context. My connections were less established than in Ecuador and in Montana, which affected the type of information and material I could gather. I was not able to do any in-depth research with a Tribal College in Arizona, but I was in touch, visited, and did some research regarding Tohono O'odham Community College. Therefore, I limit my case in Arizona to the American Indian Studies (AIS) at University of Arizona (UA). I realized seven interviews at the AIS Department of UofA and had several other conversations with people involved in IHE at UofA, both in the past and currently, and at different levels such as student services, administration, professors of different departments.

I regularly attended Dr. Fox's seminar on TCUs, which included guest speakers from Diné College, the developing college for the San Carlos Apache Tribe, SKC, and the American Indian College Fund. Dr. Fox's extensive experience in IHE, both with Tribal Colleges (she helped create and was on the board of her Tribe's Tribal College), and in a mainstream institution (she had occupied many positions, both administrative and in teaching/research at UofA) was a key factor in my reflections. I presented twice my research and beginning of data analysis in her class. This gave me the opportunity to exchange with her and the graduate students in her seminar, as well as make sense of the information I had gathered. I also participated in Dr. Adam Murry's seminar on Indigenous Research Methodologies, Dr. Trosper's seminar on Indigenous Economic Principles, and Dr. Benedict Colombi's class on Natural Resource Management in Native Communities. I collected syllabi, texts assigned, took notes on the content, and interviewed each of them.

I participated in all the activities and public events I could that were linked to IHE on campus, including conferences, talks, symposia, dissertation defences, and graduation events. I also attended the American Indian Studies Association's conference (AISA) at ASU in Tempe, where an important number of faculty members and graduate students from UofA were presenting. Many fellow graduate students also played important roles in terms of exchanging and thinking through my understanding of IHE at UofA, the process of conducting research, and Indigenous realities in Arizona and beyond. Amongst these colleagues were Dean Jarrett, Gumbaynggirr from Australia, where he was studying Business, and fellow Fulbright doctoral researcher at the AIS department, with whom I had many discussions on the comparative nature of our respective research projects; and Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear, who is from Northern Cheyenne, and was doing a dual doctorate in New-Zealand and USA, in demography and sociology. Desi's insights always helped me make sense of things locally, nationally, and internationally. She reminded me of the reality in Montana and was always asking questions that helped with the rigour of the research process.

Material Analyzed

To summarize the information gathered through the relations established in Ecuador, I compiled journal articles, philosophical and pedagogical documents, material on the curriculum, and legal documents, as well as dissertations/theses regarding the experience of the Amawtay Wasi, in all its creation, development, assessment, closure, autonomous/Pluriversity, and contingency plan phases. I also attended a diversity of events regarding the past, present and future of the Amawtay Wasi. Some events were also about the larger historical, political, academic, organizational, as well as local and international contexts in which the Amawtay Wasi experience is situated. I witnessed some of its outcomes in terms of the students' projects and theses defence and came to better understand the relationships created (or sometimes, lacking) with Indigenous communities and organizations. I also realized 27 interviews with people who had been involved in the Amawtay Wasi in all of its phases (even the assessment and contingency plan), some of whom had been involved in other projects of IHE in Ecuador. I came home after 4 months with much more material than I could ever process in one dissertation, but with a solid understanding and a case study of IHE in Ecuador.

In Montana, I compiled information on 4 Tribal Colleges, realizing interviews in 2, and deepening the research experience at SKC, while also getting to know the NAS program at MSU, as well as the broader context for IHE at MSU. I gathered syllabi when possible, sat in classes, attended public events and conferences, exchanged with fellow graduate students, gave lectures, and participated in workshops that helped me think through as well as receive feedback on my understanding of IHE in Montana, in both the mainstream university and Tribal colleges. I realized a total of 28 interviews with people involved in IHE in Montana at different levels (14 at MSU; 12 at SKC; 1 at AN; and 1 with two MSU alumni now working in a Tribal College). Again, I came home for Christmas, after 4 months of research in Montana, with a lot of material and 2 case studies (SKC and NAS at MSU) of IHE in Montana.

Since I was unable to undertake in-depth research with a Tribal College in Arizona, aside from being in touch and visit once the Tohono O'odham Community College (TOCC), I relied mainly on publicly available documents such as their mission, vision, reports, catalogues, even some syllabi accessible through their website, to better understand their work. I conducted 11 interviews at the AIS Department of UofA and had several other conversations with people involved in IHE at UofA, both in the past and currently, and at different levels such as student services,

administration, and professors of different departments. Again, the information gathered in Arizona gave me another solid IHE case at UofA and the understanding and analysis of it in much broader terms of IHE in Arizona and the USA.

When I returned to Montreal from the US in June 2016, I had fieldwork material from three sites in the Americas. I also understood the many ramifications, from local, to national and international levels, of these cases. I had developed deep relationships with and insights into different IHE programs and institutions in one country for each of the two regions I had identified as my research focus. I could now compare case studies of the Amawtay Wasi, Salish-Kootenai College (and in a much lesser way, some insights of other Tribal Colleges in Montana and Arizona), Native American Studies program of Montana State University, and American Indian Studies program at University of Arizona. At the same time, these institutions and programs, together with the other ones I had touched upon during the research in the three sites, were providing me with information on different models of IHE, from the Indigenous, Intercultural, Communal universities models in the Andes, to Tribal Colleges in the US, and Indigenous programs in the mainstream academy.

Just as the choice of field sites, and the beginning and end of the fieldwork, involve fuzziness that is hard to render in the writing process, fieldwork is also messy in terms of the data and information that emerge from it, and in my case, from the different sites involved in my fieldwork. With a total of 66 interviews (27 in Ecuador; 28 in Montana; and 11 in Arizona), and notes on the classes and events I attended, the amount and nature of information became quickly overwhelming. Notes, pictures, interviews, gathered documents, are in much greater quantity than I could ever present here. Of course, while in the field, I tried to make sense of all the information and attended initial analyses of the cases, tested hypotheses with the people involved in the research, and with close friends, too. Furthermore, moving from one "field site" to the other involved bringing with me the information and experience of the previous "field". In that sense, writing and describing distinct case studies for each institution and program involved in my research entails rendering linear and coherent information that was much messier to begin with. To do so, I rely heavily, in the presentation of the field sites, on the voices of key actors in each institution and program of IHE. While everything is contextualized with my observations and participations in each site, it is, I believe, both relevant and important to let the actors speak, through their interviews.

While respecting the voices of IHE actors, I analyze this material in relationship with the bigger picture of colonization and decolonization (Chapter 2 and 3), and of the history of IHE (Chapter 4 and 5). This is fundamental in order to figure out the underlying common themes that these different cases share. This is also a way to address the broader projects underpinning the nitty gritty details of the everyday work that happens in these programs and institutions. Many interviewees expressed their satisfaction in being able to talk about the “bigger picture”, to reflect on the goals and roles of their programs and institutions, which they said were easily forgotten in the midst of academic daily tasks. Accordingly, while presenting specificities developed by different institutions and programs of Indigenous higher education in terms of knowledge practices and theories, the common thread remains the question of institutions’ and programs’ contribution to decolonization. As common themes emerged from comparative literature on IHE - namely, IHE as a decolonial project that engages with Indigenous communities and is based on Indigenous knowledges - I also realized that these themes were fundamental in each program and institution that I worked with. Hence, these became the elements that I focused on, locally, to address the hemispheric perspective on IHE as a tool for decolonization.

II) A COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK: COLONIZATION AND DECOLONIZATION IN A HEMISPHERICAL PERSPECTIVE

It is February of 2016, I am at the University of Arizona in Tucson conducting research at the last of my 3 field sites. I meet with a professor for my first interview in this institution. I have already conducted about 60 interviews in Ecuador and Montana, and I am beginning to feel confident in establishing a fruitful conversation space, even in a cold-lighted meeting room that feels too big just for the two of us. We sit in front of each other and I pull out the "consent form" to go through. I am grateful for working with scholars who are used to the Western academy's ways of establishing "ethics", so people understand why I need to go through that paperwork. The professor listens and stops me after the brief description of the research project and its objectives: "First, we will have to clarify, what do you mean when you talk about colonization and decolonization?". I stop, surprised. This is obviously a good question, which underlines my interview, yet this is the first time someone actually asks me to elaborate on this when going through the consent form. Of course, as all my interviews consist of conversations around Indigenous Higher Education and its relation to decolonization, we always end up elaborating, directly or indirectly, on the meanings of both colonization and decolonization. Still, no one actually asked me to explicitly state what I mean with these concepts. I am usually the one listening to how people define the concepts. I take a moment to gather my thoughts to answer her question, but she seems to have picked up on my surprise. She goes on to ask if I situate my question in relation to the "old" fact and concept of colonization, or if I am referring to a post-colonial framework? I answer by mentioning that I understand colonization in relationship with the Doctrine of Discovery that justified, and continues justifying, the dispossession (or the appropriation, depending on which side one is) of Indigenous lands throughout the Americas. I add that I am particularly interested in the intellectual constructs of the doctrine, and how it still impacts what we teach in higher education, or how it is challenged by Indigenous higher education. She smiles: "Ok, the old version then!". I laugh. My answer seems to satisfy her. I get the feeling that she situates me somehow in an "old", maybe structuralist perspective that is at odds with "post-colonial" more discursive interpretations of colonialism/decolonization. Yet, I would argue my answer situates me in the middle, taking into account both the material/structural and discursive/subjective dimensions of colonialism. In any case, we go on with the consent form and

proceed to the interview, but I make a note to myself that I need to clarify at the beginning of my dissertation what I mean by colonization and decolonization, before I even dive into the concrete of Indigenous higher education as a tool for decolonization.

When reflecting back on my fieldwork in Ecuador, Montana, and Arizona the three experiences exposed the links between colonization/decolonization processes, knowledge systems, and education systems. These issues are deeply ingrained in the life of anyone in the Americas, as colonization in all its forms is the foundation upon which all the countries of the hemisphere are built. It is also the reality that Indigenous Peoples face and resist in diverse manners throughout the continent, including through higher education programs and institutions.

In Ecuador, Fernando Sarango, then head of the Amawtay Wasi pluriversity, stated that from his perspective, "the conquest war, or the invasion, is not over. Instead of Spaniards, you have the modern nation-states, those criollos [from Spanish descent but born in Americas] states, in which the interest is to eliminate all difference" (Sarango, 2014, interview, my own translation)²⁹. Similarly, in the US, right after Trump was elected president, Kim TallBear reminded a grieving audience during the National Women's Studies Association conference: "As a Dakota, we have struggle post-apocalyptically for a century and a half. Genocidal USA governance is the foundational condition of that country [...] America is that horror, if you thought differently, I am truly sorry for what you must feel today" (TallBear, 2016b). Hence, in the two very different contexts, these Indigenous scholars were speaking to the fact that our current nation states are colonial in their nature and both mentioned this fact in the context of addressing the [im]possibilities of decolonizing these states and their institutions.

In order to think about decolonization as a process, and about decolonial projects in education, it is essential to first define what colonization is – after all, decolonization responds to the process of colonization. That being said, when considering colonization, even in a very critical way, it is important to keep in mind decolonization is also a continuous process. Accordingly, Indigenous Peoples are not merely victims of colonization, in a passive role. Rather, the colonial experience

²⁹ Por esto decimos que la guerra de la conquista o de la invasión no ha terminado. En vez de los españoles son los modernos estados-naciones, estos estados criollos, en donde para ellos lo que interesa es eliminar todo tipo de diferencia

should be spoken about in a way that not only offers an explanation for the past and present violence that Indigenous Peoples face, but also as a way to understand resistance and possible futures (Cote-Meek, 2014, p. 25). Indigenous Peoples have resisted colonization in different ways and elaborated a diversity of decolonial projects, including in higher education. For instance, while facing the colonial claim over their lands, resources, and societies Indigenous Peoples throughout the continent have maintained and defended their right to Communal/Tribal/National self-determination and their relationships to their territories. This is possible because they also maintained the stories, memory, knowledges, and structures that constitute their peoplehood in relation to their territories (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Holm, Pearson, & Chavis, 2003). Decolonial projects, theories, and practices (Mignolo, 2011) are possible in relation with resistance to the colonization of the mind (Ngũgĩ, 1986) and cognitive assimilation (Battiste, 1986). These projects include practicing re-storying and remembrance (Chi'XapKaid, 2011 [2005]; Grande, San Pedro, & Windchief, 2015), survivance (Brayboy, 2005; Vizenor, 2008), and resurgence (Corntassel, 2012) of Indigenous communities, Peoples, and Nations.

Sarango's and TallBear's examples speak to the coloniality of the Ecuadorian and US states and remind us of the international reality that colonization and decolonization entail. Colonization was, from the beginning, and still is, an international issue. From the imperial nations' perspective, it was about acquiring land and sovereignty over foreign lands and peoples. From Indigenous perspectives, it was nation-to-nation relationships that were originally established between Europeans newcomers and Indigenous Peoples (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Brayboy, 2005; Cook-Lynn, 1997; Ermine, 2007; Ladner, 2006; A. Simpson, 2014). In the settler-states resulting from colonial relationships, however, it is the imperial perspective (and structure) that was imposed over Indigenous Peoples until this day.

In this regard, it is worth noting the specific sense that decolonization takes when applied to the settler colonial context of the Americas as opposed to other colonial contexts such as Africa or Asia. "Decolonization" often refers to the political act of transforming a colony into a sovereign entity (Spruyt, 2011), or the dismantlement of European empires (Hopkins, 2008). Battiste and Henderson (2000) remind us that while "In the 1950s and 1960s, practically every colony in Asia, Africa, and Oceania availed itself the right of self-determination and opted for political independence" (Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000, pp. 1-2), it soon became clear that

Indigenous Peoples in settler states³⁰ would not be recognized the same right to self-determination as other peoples³¹. Consequently, Smith argues that Indigenous Peoples "represent the unfinished business of decolonization" (Smith, 2012 [1999], p. 7). She contends the concept of "Indigenous" serves to collectivize the voices of the colonized peoples and internationalize their experiences. In other words, Indigenous Peoples differ greatly from one another, socially, and culturally as well as historically, but share the struggle for their rights (i.e. political, economic, and educational) and self-determination.

In the context of the Americas, the states that achieved "independence" between the eighteenth and the twentieth century (for Canada) did so under the leadership of Euro-descendant settlers (known as *Criollos* in Latin America). Settler independence did not involve decolonization for Indigenous Peoples, instead it led to the creation of settler-states (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Coulthard, 2014; Gott, 2007; Grande, 2004; Wolfe, 2006). As these states maintained sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples and lands, they inherited a colonial legacy that includes ideas, discourses, relationships and internal structures that persist beyond the political dismantlement of a colony (Bird, 1993; Laenui, 2000; A. C. Wilson, 2004). It is in the context of settler-states in relation to Indigenous Peoples that I understand the specific meaning of colonization and decolonization in the Americas. The comparative hemispheric perspective developed here highlights the similarity of the processes of colonization and decolonization in this particular context, which I argue comes from the articulation of the Doctrine of Discovery throughout the continent, first by European Crowns, and by the following colonial powers (US, Canada, Ecuador, Bolivia, or any current nation-state in the Americas, as a matter of fact).

The Doctrine of Discovery comes from a legal opinion articulated by the US court (Marshall's opinion in *Johnson V. M'Intosh*, 1823) following an old European principle of international law

³⁰ As a matter of fact, this applies to Indigenous Peoples globally, as shown by the diverse Peoples from around the globe gathering every year in New York for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and in Geneva for meetings of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In the context of this dissertation, I am limiting my claims to settler states, and especially settler states in the Americas. While the study of settler states has been usually confined to South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the US, I contend here that all countries in the Americas are settler states. This is the basis of my hemispheric comparison.

³¹ While colonialism was declared a crime against humanity by the UN in 1960, Indigenous Peoples had to wait almost 50 years, for the adoption of the UNDRIP in 2007, to have the same right recognized in the article 3 of the UNDRIP. For a long time, Indigenous Peoples were not recognized as Peoples in the UN system, and were rather referred to as "populations", in a careful avoidance of recognizing them as equal to other sovereign peoples. Even with the creation of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the forum is not a Peoples's forum, but a forum to discuss issues related to Indigenous Peoples.

that proclaimed the right of European nations to own the lands they "discovered" and conquered, at the expense of Indigenous sovereignty (R.J. Miller, 2011; 2012). Over the centuries, the Doctrine was interpreted in different ways across the "New World", but it still informs the Western conceptions of land titles across the Americas. The DoD is the foundation of the settler-state legitimacy in the Americas, informing to this day the relationships established by nation-states with Indigenous nations (R.J. Miller, 2012; d'Errico, 1999; Frichner, 2010; U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2010, 2012a). Moreover, the Doctrine of Discovery is not only a legal concept, but it establishes a specific understanding of the world, and peoples and societies within it. For example, the concepts of land titles articulated in this legal doctrine were based on two fundamental ideas of a supposed Western superiority: Europeans were superior because they were Christian and because they were "civilized" and thereby bringing civilization to Indigenous nations. Based on these conceptions, settler societies justified the colonial process as a "civilizing" one and took upon themselves to "educate" Indigenous Peoples following their ideas of religion and civilization (Lomawaima, 1999; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). In other words, territorial, economic and political colonialism were supported by what Battiste (2005; 1986) has called "cognitive imperialism" and its "cognitive assimilation" practices³².

It is therefore to these processes of colonization, their intellectual and theoretical foundations, as well as their link with knowledges production that the first chapter of this section is dedicated. The second chapter is dedicated to a working definition of decolonization, in the context of the Americas and in relation with decolonial projects in education and knowledge production. The fact that I address decolonization second, though, does not signify that this is a more recent process. Resistance to colonization has happened from the first colonial efforts (Mignolo, 2011) and is a continuous reality, just as colonization is (Cote-Meek, 2014; Regan, 2010).

³² Which, in the context of Africa, has been associated with the "colonization of the mind" (Ngũgĩ, 1986 ; J. Comaroff and J.L. Comaroff, 1991).

CHAPTER 2: COLONIZATION

To understand colonialism in the Americas, it is useful to differentiate between different types of colonialisms, such as external and internal colonialism (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The former "denotes the expropriation of fragments of Indigenous worlds, animals, plants and human beings, extracting them in order to transport them to - and build the wealth, the privilege, or feed the appetites of - the colonizers, who get marked as the first world" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 4). The latter is defined as "the biopolitical and geopolitical management of people, land, flora and fauna within the "domestic" borders of the imperial nation. This involves the use of particularized modes of control - prisons, ghettos, minoritizing, schooling, policing - to ensure the ascendancy of a nation and its white elite" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 4-5). The colonization of the Americas might have begun with the external colonial model, and moved into the internal colonial model as independent nation-states and dominions³³ were established, but the foundation of modern states across the continent could best be described with a settler colonialism model, which combines both, according to Tuck and Yang. They describe the settler state in the following terms:

Settler colonialism operates through internal/external colonial modes simultaneously because there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony. For example, in the United States, many Indigenous peoples have been forcibly removed from their homelands onto reservations, indentured, and abducted into state custody, signalling the form of colonization as simultaneously internal (via boarding schools and other biopolitical modes of control) and external (via uranium mining on Indigenous land in the US Southwest and oil extraction on Indigenous land in Alaska) with a frontier (the US military still nicknames

³³ In a paper re-considering decolonization from the British Empire, Hopkins consider the place of Canada and other dominions in the empire and its dismantlement. He writes: "the colonies achieved independence after the Second World War, and principally in the 1950s and 1960s, whereas Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa had long been self-governing. Their superior status was recognized by the term 'dominion', which was adopted to distinguish the self-governing colonies of white settlement from parts of the empire that remained subject to imperial rule. The term was first applied in 1867 to describe the new Confederation of Canada, and was attached to Australia and New Zealand in 1907 and to South Africa in 1910. Dominion status was a characteristically ambiguous imperial invention that recognized various states of self-government while managing to convey over tones of continuing subordination. Nevertheless, the dominions were formally independent in internal affairs, and after the First World War they secured a degree of representation in foreign affairs too" (Hopkins, 2008, p. 212).

Moreover, the "superior" status accorded to dominions, in comparison to other British Colonies, relied on a concept of white supremacy. As Hopkins mentions it: "dominions shared the basic principles of white superiority (...). Elevating Britishness entailed relegating indigenous societies, or 'first nations', as they are now called, because to accept the validity of non-European cultures was a step towards agreeing to equality of treatment, which would have questioned white supremacy and endangered what Milne called the 'destiny of the English race'" (Hopkins, 2008, pp. 222-223). Canada was therefore defined in these terms of euro-descendant, white, settler supremacy. It is to be noted that the word "dominion" has a biblical sense of domination, God having given the people "dominion" over other animals. The underlying racist undertone seems key to the whole concept of Dominion.

all enemy territory "Indian Country"). The horizons of the settler colonial nation-state are total and require a mode of total appropriation of Indigenous life and land, rather than the selective expropriation of profit-producing fragments (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5).

In this context, Tuck and Yang (2012) define colonial violence as the structure of our society, which disrupts Indigenous relationships to land by imposing a property/ownership relationship (p.5). They contend that the focus of settler colonialism is total, including land (comprising water, air and subterranean earth in the concept) required for the new homeland of colonizers, and Indigenous life. The mechanisms of residential schools, reservation system, and prisons are in place to disrupt Indigenous Peoples' lives and relationships to land, in order to create space for white bodies and western structures.

Tuck and Yang also argue that the connection disrupted through colonialism is not only material, with the creation of a wealth built on the dispossession and imposed poverty of Indigenous Peoples, but also includes the disruption of Indigenous "[e]pistemological, ontological, and cosmological relationship to land [which] are interred, indeed made pre-modern and backward" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.5). The physical and material violence is thus accompanied by a "profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence" that is "reasserted each day of occupation". Furthermore, through modes of control such as schooling, and the establishment of laws, amongst others, the dynamics of settler colonialism are made invisible and settler perspectives and worldviews are normalized as neutral knowledge, thus rationalizing and maintaining an unfair social structure (p.2). In these authors' logic, then, colonialism is a material and structural process first, that is justified and maintained through knowledge structures.

Similarly, Coulthard sees the dispossession of the land (and of Indigenous Peoples' relationships to it) as the principal marker of settler colonialism. Coulthard engages with a marxist analysis of colonialism, and pays particular attention to the concept of primitive accumulation (Coulthard, 2014, p. 7). Drawing a parallel between the violent state practices that served to establish capitalist mode of production and the violent practices that served to establish new states over the "colonies", Coulthard writes:

Marx's historical excavation of the birth of the capitalist mode of production identifies a host of colonial-like state practices that served to violently strip - through "conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder" - non capitalist producers, communities, and societies from their means of production and subsistence. In *Capital* these formative acts of violent *dispossession* set the stage for the emergence of capitalist accumulation and the

reproduction of capitalist relations of production by tearing Indigenous societies, peasants, and other small-scale, self-sufficient agricultural producers from the source of their livelihood - *the land* (Coulthard, 2014, pp. 7, author's emphasis).³⁴

While Coulthard (2014) defines colonialism as a form of structured dispossession of Indigenous Peoples' lands and self-determining authority, he also addresses its discursive facets in a post-colonial tradition (Fanon, 1952). Following Fanon's argument, Coulthard explains that structured dispossession entails modes of colonial thoughts, desires, and behaviours that can be adopted by Indigenous Peoples³⁵. In Coulthard's post-colonial conceptualization, then,

³⁴ However, the reality of how Indigenous Peoples participated, to a certain extent, in the building of the current world system economy, cannot be denied (Feit, 2004; Weatherford, 1992). Of course, in their "participation", while contributing to the world economy (simply, thinking of the fur trade, for example), the relationship was one of exploitation, with other nations making the most out of the "partnership" (Tsing, 2005). However, it is important to acknowledge the agency of Indigenous Peoples who are not mere victims in this system. Some Indigenous Nations entered in these partnerships consciously, based on their own existing economic systems of trade and commerce. It is to be noted, for example, that extended trading routes existed throughout North and South America, and Indigenous economic systems cannot be reduced to simple "subsistence" systems. Furthermore, Indigenous communities today deal with the capitalist system in varied ways, and the adoption of such a system, in their own terms, is often inevitable (Champagne, 2007; R.J. Miller, 2012; Newhouse, 2001).

Furthermore, to understand colonization and decolonization in the Canadian context (and, I contend, in any state of the continent) Coulthard contends that we need to address 3 features of Marx's concept of primitive accumulation. First, the temporal framing situates the described dispossession as a thing of the past, part of a primary structure of capitalist accumulation, while Coulthard points to the "persistent role that unconcealed, violent dispossession [which] continues to play in the reproduction of colonial and capitalist social relations in both the domestic and global context" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 9).

Second, the normative developmentalism that was part of Marx's initial articulation of primitive accumulation is problematic, for Indigenous societies are ranked lowest on this historical/cultural development scale, deemed to be drawn into the capitalist relationship, with the consolation that it comes with the beneficial effect of modernity/progress. While of course some Indigenous nations' leadership, or community members, often adopt this view, Coulthard rejects it and avoids it by shifting his analysis to the colonial-relation (instead of the capital-relation), in a way that position the injustice of colonial rule "on its own terms and its own right" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 11).

Finally, while Marx depicted the primitive accumulation as a brutally violent dispossession by the state power, Coulthard points to the fact that "state violence no longer constitutes the regulative norm governing the process of colonial dispossession [...] in ostensibly tolerant, multinational, liberal settler polities such as Canada" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 15). Drawing from Fanon's work *Black Skin, White Masks*, Coulthard asserts that "the maintenance of settler-state hegemony requires the production of what he [Fanon] liked to call "colonial subjects": namely, the production of the specific modes of colonial thought, desire, and behaviour that implicitly or explicitly commit the colonized to the types of practices and subject positions that are required for their continued domination" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 16). This is basically how Coulthard explains the fact that some Indigenous Peoples - individually or collectively through their nation's leadership - will adopt concepts and practices linked to capitalism, progress, and modernity, as usually thought of as "Western". This is of course a debatable point, as capitalism, progress and modernity are impossible in a "West"-only perspective, and need a "world-system" (Wallerstein, 2004) level of interaction to function. Thus, many nations and cultures have always "participated", and continue to do so, in capitalism, progress, and modernity. However, the colonial power relationships that are established between "Western" nations, and later, settler ones, and Indigenous Peoples, in the growth of capitalism and so-called modernity, cannot be ignored.

³⁵ This is what he refers to, following Fanon's conceptualization, as the colonized subjects committing to these modes of colonial thought, desire, and behaviour.

Coulthard thus argues against Indigenous Peoples "buying" into the capitalist and colonial structure of the society. In this analytical perspective, the relationship with the capitalist system, even when adopted and implemented by Indigenous communities, does not escape the colonial settings. Arthur Manuel famously pushed that issue nationally

colonialism consists of a material dispossession that is supported and reflected through subjective/cognitive dispossession, for example, through residential schools and other schooling approaches that intend to "educate" Indigenous children into the western, mainstream knowledges and cultural practices (see, for example, Brayboy, 2005; Grande, 2004; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). Consequently, colonialism is both structural and subjective/cognitive, and the dispossession of land and sovereignty is mirrored by, and justified through, the dispossession of Indigenous intellectual and cultural practices; schooling being just one example³⁶.

When considering the material/structural and the subjective/cognitive dimensions of colonialism, Quijano (2007) and Mignolo (2011) – both part of the modernity/coloniality framework and research program³⁷ (Escobar, 2010; Quijano, 2007) articulated by Latin American (but non-Indigenous) intellectuals – trace a difference between colonization and coloniality. They contend that both are linked to domination of the European/Western politics over other lands, peoples, cultures, and politics. Nevertheless, the former constitutes the political and material enactment of that domination, while the latter describes the logic that supports it (Mignolo, 2011, p. 22). This logic includes notions of "progress" and "modernity"³⁸, and the order and hierarchies

and internationally, pointing at how Canada was setting Indigenous Peoples for poverty, even if they would accept completely the Canadian, capitalist mode of life. With access to only 0.2% of the land base of the country, Indigenous Nations don't have, in Canada, the land base to be able to "develop" a strong economy in a capitalist sense (Manuel & Derrickson, 2015). Furthermore, many nations are dealing with profound colonial wounds that remain to be addressed: one only has to look at suicide rates, education levels, and housing or water situation in Indigenous communities, to understand that even when engaging with the capitalist systems, this does not solve the problem inherited from a colonial history, and current socio-economic and political structure of our countries.

Next section of Chapter 2 looks into Indigenous Peoples' resistance and projects, to understand better some of the different strategies adopted by diverse people.

³⁶ Other post-colonial authors, such as Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) and before them Ngũgĩ (1986) also mention the importance of intellectual and cultural institutions, such as schools and churches, in the colonial process.

³⁷ "[T]he rhetoric of modernity is a rhetoric of salvation (by conversion yesterday, by development today), but in order to implement what the rhetoric preaches, it is necessary to marginalize or destroy whatever gets in the way of modernity. It so happens that not everyone believes in the salvation being proposed, and those who don't either react against (resistance) or engage in a critical analysis of the situation in order to move in a different direction (re-existence)" (Mignolo, 2011, pp. xxiv-xxv).

³⁸ "Modernity" can of course mean different things. It has been defined as a Western philosophical project (Latour, 1991) or as linked to the capitalist world-system as forged in Europe (Wallerstein, 2004). It has also been defined as possibly plural and not only Western (Eisentadt, 2007; Chakrabarty, 2007). Similarly, Balandier, quoting L and S Rudolph, rejects modernity as the uniqueness of the Western achievement, rather defining it in terms of potential alternatives, possibilities, and choices that a society makes in a given context, and according to their tradition (Balandier, 1971). Lomomba Emongo also conceptualizes tradition and modernity as intertwined, dynamic, in continuous change and in continuity (Emongo, 1998). The coloniality/modernity group, however, presents modernity as the rise of a certain Western framework (capitalism, philosophical project, and worldview), which is colonial per

instilled by colonialism, which remain part of the society even after so-called "decolonization" (Quijano, 2007). Synthesizing the concept of coloniality, Mignolo writes:

Coloniality names the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to today of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive, although downplayed, dimension. The concept as used herein, and by the collective modernity/coloniality, is not intended to be a totalitarian concept, but rather one that specifies a particular project: that of the idea of modernity and its constitutive and darker side, coloniality, that emerged with the history of European invasions of Abya Yala, Tawantinsuyu, and Anahuac; the formation of the Americas and the Caribbean; and the massive trade of enslaved Africans. "Coloniality" is already a decolonial concept, and decolonial projects can be traced back to the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. And, last but not least, "coloniality" (e.g., *el patrón colonial de poder*, the colonial matrix of power) is unapologetically the specific response to globalization and global linear thinking that emerged within the histories and sensibilities of South America and the Caribbean (Mignolo, 2011, p. 3).

With this definition of coloniality, and the linear thinking it involves, the framework addresses the colonial continuity between the idea of civilization, and that of European modernity as the "point of arrival of human history and the model for the entire planet came to be taken for granted" (Mignolo, 2011, p. xiv). According to this framework, ideas of development, economic growth, and even quite often educational reforms in the name of modernization are embedded in "the logic of coloniality" and the "colonial matrix of power" (Mignolo, 2011 xiv). This logic and matrix are no longer articulated by European empires. It is rather articulated today by nation-states, world organizations, and any entity that is part of the capitalist world-system³⁹. Hence, the collective modernity/coloniality draws a direct link between the type of domination imposed by European crowns over the Americas in the fifteenth century and the current global order, through the colonial matrix of power implemented in the name of civilization and, later, of modernity and its different tenets.

Amongst these tenets, Mignolo identifies the idea of a separation between nature and culture alongside the idea of a human control over nature; the incorporation of work in the colonial matrix of power under slavery and waged work, which changed the relationship to nature and the land;

se. I think it is important here to understand modernity as an ideology and philosophy developed in the West, while also recognizing that modernity, when thinking of the state of a society, corresponds better to Lemongo's definition.

³⁹ According to Escobar and the modernity/coloniality research program, the analysis of modernity implies to understand it as beginning with the colonization of the Atlantic by European nations, and as such, colonialism, as well as the capitalist world system, are constitutive of modernity, which is to be understood in a world perspective rather than specific to Europe, although it implies a European domination and subalternization of other cultures/peoples.

and the understanding of nature as a resource to be exploited for the purpose of the Industrial revolution. This is very close to the marxist idea of primitive accumulation as Coulthard articulates it. Mignolo adds to the concept that throughout these changes in the relation to nature and land, knowledge is always the "basic and powerful tool used both to control authority and to be transferred as a commodity" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 13). In other words, the European (and later, Western) domination and subalternization of other cultures/peoples is supported by a hegemony of Eurocentrism characteristic of the form of knowledge in modernity/coloniality (Escobar, 2010, p. 184). Accordingly, the "colonial matrix of power" is conceptualized here as including a control of the economy [the land and other modes of production], of authority, of gender and sexuality, and of knowledge and subjectivity (Mignolo, 2011, p. 8).

The modernity/coloniality framework is therefore useful for thinking about the role of knowledge in current and past colonial power structures and hierarchies, as it is part of the colonial matrix of power: "as far as knowledge was conceived imperially as true knowledge, it became a commodity to be exported to those whose knowledge was deviant or non-modern according to Christian theology and, later on, secular philosophy and sciences" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 13)⁴⁰. In respect to colonialism, then, the coloniality framework adds to the consideration of cognitive/subjectivity that of knowledge, knowledge structure, and knowledge hierarchies.

The three definitions of colonization, settler-colonialism, and coloniality show that colonization in the Americas includes dispossession and re-structuration of Indigenous Peoples' lands materially (including water and all-the-relations the concept of "land" implies), of their subjective life projects, as well as of their knowledges. I contend that these three dimensions – land, subjectivity and knowledge – are articulated in the conceptual framework of the Doctrine of Discovery. Considering the literature on the DoD history and its development through time (R.J. Miller, 2008, 2011; R.J. Miller et al., 2012; Newcomb, 2008a; Williams, 2012a, 2012b), demonstrates that the DoD applied throughout the Americas. It also shows that the DoD served to justify the land appropriation and often the labour appropriation, as well as the imposition of foreign sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples, based on ideas of civilization and Christianity in the

⁴⁰ In a similar move to Coulthard's resurgence, the coloniality/modernity framework identifies Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies and cultural practices as part of decolonial projects. Emerging from a resistance or a re-existence in face of (or, to a certain point, external to) the modern/colonial project, these ontologies, epistemologies and practices are part of the "border thinking" which serves to challenge modernity/coloniality.

nineteenth century, and on current concepts of development, progress, evolution, and scientific knowledge, today.

The Doctrine of Discovery is the result of legal negotiations between European colonizing empires, and it was defined, in the modern US State, by the opinion of US Chief Justice John Marshall, in the 1823 Supreme Court case of *Johnson v. M'Intosh* (Williams, 1990). The meaning and implications of this decision might be widely disputed, but it remains, almost two centuries later, the law of land in the US (Robertson, 2005), in Canada (T. Lindberg, 2012), and, as I contend, in the Americas (R.J. Miller, 2011). As it remains the justification for modern countries' sovereignty claims over the territories occupied in the Americas, it provides a useful comparative framework to understand colonization throughout the Americas. The Doctrine justifies nation-states' sovereignty in the Americas – as opposed to Indigenous nations' sovereignty – based on a logic that articulates colonial subjectivities in terms of superiority and supremacy of certain Western life projects over Indigenous Peoples' life projects. The superiority of Western life projects is in turn articulated through knowledge hierarchies, as perpetuated through education and academic institutions. As such, the DoD offers a good comparative framework to understand the role of education in colonization, throughout the Americas (Battiste, 2013; Grande, 2004; Lomawaima, 1999).

The structure of this chapter aims at supporting this general claim about colonization, while exemplifying how it applies in the Americas. First, I demonstrate that the Doctrine of Discovery was applied throughout the continent and serves as the basis of all nation states, with examples in North America and the Andes. Second, I focus on the articulation, in the DoD, of a colonial subjectivity that fosters ideas of western supremacy/superiority, devaluing both Indigenous life projects and knowledges. I show how the knowledge hierarchy implied in the DoD moved from a religious discourse to a scientific one, with particular attention to social sciences. Third, I describe the application of the DoD and its colonial logic in education, throughout the continent. Finally, I demonstrate how current higher education perpetuates coloniality and the knowledge hierarchies it implies, both in North America and the Andes.

The Doctrine of Discovery: land appropriation, sovereignty imposition, and current settler-states legitimacy

Recognizing the role of the Doctrine of Discovery in the establishment of European colonies and Western nation-states in the Americas, R.J. Miller summarizes the Doctrine in the following way: "In essence, the Doctrine provided that newly arrived Europeans immediately and automatically acquired legally recognized property rights in native lands and also gained governmental, political, and commercial rights over the inhabitants without the knowledge or the consent of the Indigenous peoples" (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 2). First rooted in beliefs of Christian universality and mandate to conquer the world and impose truth (Williams, 1990, p. 6), the DoD, is also the current basis for the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and settlers-states (d'Errico, 1999; R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 3). Basically, as a body of international decrees, laws, and principles, the DoD was developed in an attempt to regulate European exploration, colonization, evangelization, and trade in order to mitigate conflicts between Christian nations establishing colonies abroad (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 5). Concurrently, the DoD asserted the domination of Christian nations rights over non-Christian, non-European nations (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 9)⁴¹.

The development of the DoD can be traced, according to Miller and Williams, in Christian international politics, from the fifth century idea of a worldwide papal jurisdiction and a universal Christian commonwealth (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 9). The Doctrine also finds roots in the legal grounding of the Crusades in the tenth to twelfth century theology, enforcing the Church's vision of the truth and of "natural laws" on all Peoples (R.J. Miller, 2012; Williams, 1990, p. 6). From these early principles, both authors trace the history of the doctrine in the settling of disputes between European kingdoms in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries colonial enterprises (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 11; Williams, 1990, pp. 6-7). This includes Pope Alexander VI papal bull regarding Spain and Portugal's rights to discover and acquire overseas lands (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 12). Miller and Williams also mention the diverse modifications of international law⁴² to

⁴¹ An existing objection to understanding relationships between Indigenous and European descendants in the Americas in terms of the Doctrine of Discovery is that the Doctrine was a rule to control discoveries and colonizations, to regulate them between European nations, to avoid wars, etc. but not to postulate on Indigenous rights and sovereignty (Kades, 2001). Miller mentions that, "On one esoteric level, Discovery was an international legal principle designed only to control the European nations. Clearly, however, as we will see, Indigenous peoples and nations have felt most heavily its onerous burdens [i.e. loss of their land and sovereignty rights]" (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 5).

⁴² It is to be noted that the notion of "international" and what it includes and excludes has also a tendency to follow a Western-centric definition. In the 15th century, the "international" community that mattered for Europeans was the Christian community. Today, at the UN, the "international community" is formed of nation states represented at the General Assembly, still following a Westphalian conception of what is a state and how it is sovereign. Following this

accommodate English and French claims in the "New World", by "right of discovery" (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 17). In this process of asserting land titles and dividing the world between European Crowns, Indigenous Peoples' laws and approaches to international diplomacy⁴³ were disregarded. Instead, European Crowns understood they had a "guardianship" duty over Indigenous Peoples (including evangelization), which formed the foundation of European titles over their land (R.J. Miller et al., 2012).

Based on this "guardianship" duty (which in turn relied on the affirmation of European religious, intellectual, and political superiority), the Spanish Crown established its title to the Andean region (and throughout the Americas), acknowledging that the King, as natural Lord, was the true landlord of these territories and could therefore manage Indigenous Peoples' land and work through the institutions of *latifundios/haciendas*, *reducciones*, *repartimientos*, Indian tribute⁴⁴, and

Western political concept, entire nations and Peoples are excluded from having a seat at the UN. It is the case for Indigenous Nations, who have other mechanisms at the UN to have their voices heard (Special Rapporteur, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). However, they are not interacting on the same level as the Nation-states and they do not have yet a seat at the General Assembly of the UN. Furthermore, even the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) still insists on the State as the instance realizing the charter, which in turn does not challenge territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent states.

D'Errico also demonstrates how the DoD continues to be recognized, at the international level, in today's perspective that sovereignty is attainable only through organization in a state or nation-state, not by recognizing the status of "peoples" and their rights to self-determination:

"The term peoples in international law implies rights of self determination, which the United States has challenged as not applicable to indigenous peoples. The United States argues that self determination exists only through states, and that people not organized in nation-state form are merely groups of individuals with shared cultural, linguistic, and social features without any legal status as peoples" (d'Errico, 1999, p. 25).

⁴³ Indigenous nations of the continent had their own ways of conducting the nation-to-nation relationship they established with each others, and between various confederacies (see, for example, Susan Hill's paper (2008) which discusses Indigenous constitutional orders; or Robert Williams' book (1999) on Indigenous visions of treaty making). Therefore, as I develop further in this section, it is important to nuance the conceptual ignorance of Indigenous Peoples' laws and diplomacy, and the concrete application of colonial enterprise, which demanded that Europeans, at least in the beginning, would follow Indigenous Peoples' diplomacy. TallBear (TallBear, 2016c) mentions the importance of practices of "making kins" out of newcomers, J.R. Miller (2009) mentions the covenants and Friendship treaties that were sealed between first newcomers and Indigenous Peoples at the beginning of Western colonial arrivals in North America. It is also significant that multiple wampums exist marking the agreements and treaties that Indigenous Peoples and Europeans made up to the eighteenth century, as it demonstrates, at least in part, that Europeans were following Indigenous diplomacy protocols.

⁴⁴ As subject of the King, Indigenous Peoples had to pay a tribute on their production in exchange of using the land for farming, pasturing, or any productive activities they were conducting. While that sounds horrific, Indigenous communities later on resisted the abolition of the tribute, because this actually allowed them to maintain a certain independence from the Western society. They were organized politically according to their own political institutions - for example, the *cacicazgo*, where the *caciques* were responsible for the administration of the community and for collecting the tribute and pay to the Spanish administration. This allowed for the maintenance of political organizations such as *Ayllu* (the basic community in the Tawantinsuyu: multiple *Ayllu* were part of a *Marka*, and multiple *Marka* were part of a *Suyu*, for of which formed the Tawantinsuyu, also known as the Inca Empire) or other community organization, even if their access and relation to the land were modified (the organization was at the village/community level, and not at the level of previous ethnic and political groups).

*mita*⁴⁵. Following the Laws of Burgos, the *encomienda* system was codified as a way to relocate Indigenous Peoples in villages under Spanish Christianizing and civilizing influence. These villages were either *latifundios/haciendas*⁴⁶ or *reducciones*⁴⁷, often built on the foundation of previous villages, or reorganizing the population on land granted by the King or his representatives to a Spaniard or to a religious institution. Measures were taken to destroy previous Indigenous dwellings and to educate Indigenous elites (ex: sons of *Caciques/Curacas*) into Christian institutions – and the values and beliefs they embodied.

France, England, Netherlands, and other European Christian nations also justified claiming land titles in the Americas based on the privilege of the "Western corpus of legal, political and theological ideas that constituted the Christian natural-law tradition" (Williams, 1990, p. 103).⁴⁸

⁴⁵ The *mita* was a forced labour into the mines (especially in Potosi, but also in other mines), each male Indigenous person of a certain age was obligated to perform each year.

It is to be noted that Spanish colonization of the late fifteenth Century and early sixteenth Century was also marked by the enslavement of Indigenous Peoples under the system of *encomiendas*. The Encomienda was the practice of "commending" groups of indigenous slaves to worthy Spaniards. Williams note that the encomienda system was a way to institutionalize a feudal mentality and system over the Spanish New World (Williams, 1990, p. 84).

⁴⁶ The *latifundios/haciendas* were feudal land tenure, where land was given to aristocrats and they would have peons/subjects working on the land for them, in exchange of a small lot that they could farm for themselves. Originally developed as a way to re-populate the peninsula with Castellanos, after it had been re-conquered from the Moors (and thus, Muslim peons were working on the *latifundo* for the Spanish aristocrats), it was also imported in the Americas, where it lasted well into the 20th century. Today, Haciendas usually define an extended amount of productive land hold privately.

⁴⁷ In 1518, Las Casas founded the first "free" Indigenous villages, an institution that became known as *reducciones*, which consisted in missionary communities, protected from slavery, but organized following the Christian and Spanish model. In other words, even the opponents to the violent Spanish colonization in the Americas, such as Bartholomé De Las Casas (1484–1566, sometimes described as the defender of Indigenous peoples' rights), were still defending imperialism based on the responsibility of the Church to evangelize Indigenous peoples (de las Casas, 2007, p. 8), in order to make them adhere to human dignity and civilized order, implying that they were lacking such dignity and order and that Spanish intervention was needed. See also (de las Casas, 1967, pp. 257-258).

The *reducciones* soon became a model to follow in order to evangelize and civilize Indigenous Peoples, who still had to perform forced labour for the *encomenderos* under the institution of the *repartimiento*, a form of forced wage in which Indigenous Peoples of a given community (*reducción*) would take turn to work for a given period of time (ex: 8 days a month) for the *encomendero*, before returning to the community. The *encomendero* might have had a *hacienda*, but the work could also be for a Spaniard's house, or such.

⁴⁸ Under the questions of the legitimacy of Spain titles, and the possibility of other nations challenging the papal bull, Spain searched for other ways to justify its imperial possessions. Spain's titles in the New World were given a new foundation by Francisco de Vitoria's 1532 formulation of the law of Nations, based on the European Christian conception of "natural laws", which needed to be respected in the New World, through its imposition by "just war" if necessary. Vitoria's formulation allowed Spain to exercise their natural laws in the Americas (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 14) and recognized Spain's international right to travel, engage in trade and commerce, and make profits from items thought to be held in common (R.J. Miller, 2012). Indigenous Peoples had to allow Spain to send in missionaries to preach the Gospel, which, by natural law, they were required to reasonably comprehend, and thus receive. Any impediment to these rights was reason for a "just war" and Spanish conquest of the territory.

The secularization of Spain's titles in the Americas through Vitoria's Law of Nations had an effect throughout the continent: it opened, in European legal terms, the continent for other nations' colonization, without requiring the Pope's permission anymore.

While other European nations ventured to claim "discovery" and conquest of the New World, complications and modifications to the Doctrine of Discovery became necessary to govern and regulate their endeavour⁴⁹. For example, England found another way to secure the superiority of European Peoples over Indigenous Peoples, based on land use as well as the concept of labour and propriety. Lindberg states that, under the Doctrine of Discovery, the appropriation of the land relied on the "fiction that the territory is uninhabited" (T. Lindberg, 2012, p. 131) or else it would have required a conquest (a just war) or the cession of the land by Indigenous peoples. According to Lindberg (T. Lindberg, 2012), in the European perspective, Indigenous societies were seen as "Infidels and Savages" and represented by the principle of "*Terra Nullius*" that negated the adequate occupation and use of the land by Indigenous Peoples: "European settlers applied the doctrine of *terra nullius* with a unique twist, concluding that *such lands were legally vacant* despite the presence of bands of people organized according their own societal customs" (T. Lindberg, 2012, pp. 197, emphasis is mine). Lindberg explains that either the use of the land or the claim that Indigenous Peoples had no effective legal regime⁵⁰ recognized by Europeans were included in conditions of *Terra Nullius*. Miller adds the fact that a country would not have a recognized sovereign nor symbolic traces of Christian royalty (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 21) would establish it as *Terra Nullius*⁵¹.

⁴⁹ In her book about the conquest and discovery of the Americas, Seed (1995) compare the colonization of the continent by five European nations between 1492-1640. Comparing the ceremonies and means by which different European nations performed "possession" of the new territories they were claiming, Seed contends: "Englishmen held that they acquired rights to the New World by physical objects, Frenchmen by gestures, Spaniards by speech, Portuguese by numbers, Dutch by description" (Seed, 1995, p. 179). While each colonial nation's culture certainly influenced their approach to performing and claiming new lands in the Americas, I contend that the underlying logic of these different ways of claiming sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples and their territories remains the DoD, in all cases.

Moreover, while colonialism in the Americas involved various European/Christian nations, and in North America, that included France and French colonies, I focus here on English colonialism in North America. I do so because both USA and Canada certainly have inherited of this colonialism, more than French one (even if French colonialism did have impacts in eastern Canada, Acadie, Quebec, and in many communities West of Ontario - and in USA, in the Cajun culture, and even in the West, Montana having an old history in relation with French religious missions). I cannot possibly cover all forms of colonialism by all colonial nations in North America, in this dissertation, so choices had to be made.

⁵⁰ Indigenous peoples were defined as too primitive to have legal order (T. Lindberg, 2012, p. 131), and English Common law therefore applied automatically (T. Lindberg, 2012)

⁵¹ This conception applied in the Andes too. Spaniards went through great efforts to prove, in the Andean context, that the Incas and other Indigenous leaders were not "natural lords" of the land and of the people. A good example of this type of argument to defend the Crown's titles is the chronicle commended by then Peru viceroy, Francisco Toledo, and his captain Sarmiento de Gamboa. Sarmiento took great pains to demonstrate how barbarous Indigenous peoples were in the Americas, how they did not respect natural laws, in order to justify Spanish intervention (Sarmiento De Gamboa, [1572] 1907). In his chronicle, Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa wanted to demonstrate "the truth of the worst and most inhuman tyranny of these Incas and of their curacas who are not and never were original lords of the soil" (Sarmiento De Gamboa, [1572] 1907, p. 10) in order to reaffirm Spanish titles: "your Majesty has a specially true and

While establishing titles over lands deemed "empty" (of people, of labour, and/or of property laws), European explorers and settlers had, in reality, to deal with the Indigenous Peoples of the land they were claiming and settling in. Both British and French colonists thus entered in treaty relationships with Indigenous Peoples, which took different forms and shapes. James Miller mentions at least four phases in treaty-making processes from the beginning of colonization to modern times, in Canada (J.R. Miller, 2009), with the period before the 1763 Royal Proclamation marked by commercial compacts and friendship treaties that basically served to establish relationships between newcomers and existing Indigenous systems⁵².

During that period, even if titles to the land were acquired on a theoretical level through the legal fiction of Discovery, European newcomers still needed Indigenous collaboration and support to establish themselves and to extract the resources such as furs. The competition between different European nations forced them to establish alliances with Indigenous Peoples who negotiated with their own interests in mind. At that point in time, ceremonies to create alliances were mainly following Indigenous diplomacies, which included creating kinship relationships, treating each other as relatives, and expecting them to act as such. However, given the supremacist logic of the DoD, Indigenous legal orders were subordinated to settlers' laws, and their sovereignty denied by the settlers' governments⁵³. Consequently, and following the framework of the Doctrine of

holy title to these kingdoms of Peru, because your Majesty and your most sacred ancestors stopped [...] their wicked and accursed customs" (Sarmiento De Gamboa, [1572] 1907, p. 10). Sarmiento's argument rested on the idea that the Incas were not the "natural lords" (in relation to natural laws) of the Tawantinsuyu, since they believed in the devil Viracocha from whom they claimed authority, rather than the real God from whom the Spaniards were claiming theirs. He also put efforts in demonstrating that the historical knowledge of the Incas consisted in fact of fables and falsehoods: they had recollection of a flood, but the rest of their story did not fit the Euro-Christian chronologies. Finally, he went to great expenses to prove the "tyrannical" nature of the political institutions of the Incas, and of their reign as false lords in the Andes. The whole argument was to discredit the Incas as legitimate "lords" of what had been identified as a kingdom (the Tawantisuyu), and to prove the need for the Spaniards intervention (Drouin-Gagné, 2011).

⁵² This is a fundamental difference between Spanish and English (and French) colonialism: while Spain received a certain monopole from the Church to colonize the Americas, they did not have to establish treaties and relationships, but could impose their ruling and take the land, under the authority of the Christian community. In contrast, French and English colonizers were in conflict and competition between each other (and even other nations, including the Netherlands) to claim land, resources and ruling over North American lands. Therefore, the establishment of alliances and friendships amongst Indigenous nations was fundamental to their enterprise, at least at the beginning of it.

⁵³ Lindberg explains the relationship between European settlers acquiring land, rights, and sovereignty in the Americas; and the denial on Indigenous sovereignty, the subordination of Indigenous rights and the invasion of Indigenous lands:

"The Doctrine of Discovery, therefore, came to be understood as a means by which to contrast and compare Indigenous and non-Indigenous humanity in order to arrive at a privileging approach to rights determination. Settler rights and settler governments, in order to rationalize the unjust "taking" of Indigenous lands (in other comparable situations, and perhaps in this one, this would be labelled "invasion") had to legitimize settler authority by ostensibly delegitimizing Indigenous authority. In this way, imperial philosophy created the imperial law related to settlement ('discovery') which explicitly (then) and implicitly (now) subordinated Indigenous interests, rights, and authorities to

Discovery, Europeans assumed that the titles and territorial rights were acquired, and the process of treaty-making in North America was meant to regulate the use of lands and territories.

On the eve of the American Revolution, which would be followed by Independence movements in Latin America, the DoD encompassed 10 principles linking property right to the idea of non-occupied, non-possessed, misused land (*Terra Nullius*, implying Indigenous savagery), and to the ideas of Christianity and civilization both serving the claim of Western superiority (R.J. Miller, 2008, pp. 3-4)⁵⁴. In other words, the Doctrine's legal frame was largely supported by concepts and ideas reflective of "western knowledge" of the time.

Based on this history and its contemporary impacts, Miller *et al.* (R.J. Miller et al., 2012), just as Williams (Williams, 1988, 1990, 2012a, 2012c) and many Indigenous activists at the UN (Frichner, 2010; U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2010, 2012b), present the Doctrine of Discovery as the foundation of the current laws regulating relations between settler states like the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Indigenous Peoples, as well as the international recognition of these governments' sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples and lands. For example,

settler interests, rights and, authorities. Settler standards were understood by settlers and recorded in written text as the law - the normative standard - which became prescriptive and which mandated Indigenous inferiority (in rights, in land claim, and in law). All of these reasons, entrenched and normatively established, vacant the basis of the matter of face denial of Indigenous sovereignty" (T. Lindberg, 2012, p. 100).

⁵⁴ Miller describes the 10 principles as follow: (1) the first European country to discover lands unknown to other Europeans gained property and sovereign rights over the lands and peoples; (2) this country had to actually occupy and possess the newly found lands to turn a first discovery claim into a claim of complete title; (3) discovering European countries acquired a property right of pre-emption to buy the land from the Indigenous peoples and governments; (4) hence, Indigenous nations and peoples were considered by European legal systems to have lost the full property rights and ownership of their lands, and retained only occupancy and use rights, which could potentially last forever if Indigenous peoples never consented to sell; (5) Indigenous nations and peoples were also considered to have lost some of their inherent sovereign power and their rights to free trade and diplomatic relations on an international scale, since they were only supposed to deal with the European government that first discovered them; (6) Europeans had a claim to a reasonable and significant amount of land contiguous and surrounding their actual settlements and discovered lands; (7) if lands were not occupied by any people or were being used in a fashion that Europeans legal systems disapproved of (*Terra Nullius*), then the lands were available for Discovery claims; (8) Christianity was fundamental to these principles, since they applied to non-Christian peoples, who did not have the same rights to land, sovereignty, and self-determination as Christians; (9) Europeans thought that God had directed them to bring civilized ways, education, and religion to Indigenous peoples, thus exercising paternalistic guardianship powers over them; (10) therefore, the first "discovery" gave the same rights as conquest, which was also possible through "just" and "necessary" wars (R.J. Miller, 2012, pp. 6-8).

It is to be noted that the fourth principle that implies that Indigenous Peoples had retained the occupancy and use rights on their lands (principle on which treaties rest in North America) did not apply in South America, and especially in the Andes, where Indigenous Peoples were paying a tribute on their production and use of the land until the 20th Century. The tribute, mita and repartimiento system shows how the Spanish crown considered having clearly assumed all property rights. Hence, there are no treaty process in the Andes, as opposed to the North American territories colonized by the British Crown and subsequent settler states.

in North America, the US Federal Indian law⁵⁵ as well as the Canadian Indian Act, are modern embodiments of the DoD. Furthermore, the legal decisions made in US and Canadian courts still refer to the spirit of the DoD as sustained in the opinion of Chief Justice John Marshall, in the 1823 Supreme Court case *Johnson v. M'Intosh*⁵⁶. Marshall's opinion sustained that

On the discovery of this immense continent, the great nations of Europe were eager to appropriate to themselves so much of it as they could respectively acquire. Its vast extent offered an ample field to the ambition and enterprise of all; and the character and religion of its inhabitants afforded an apology for considering them as a people over whom the superior genius of Europe might claim an ascendancy. The potentates of the old world found no difficulty in convincing themselves that they made ample compensation to the inhabitants of the new, by bestowing on them civilization and Christianity (Williams, 1990, pp. 13, quoting *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 21 U.S. (18 Wheat.) 572-573 (1823)).

Consequently, the United States and "its civilized inhabitants" (R.J. Miller, 2012, pp. 4, quoting *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 21 U.S. (28 Wheat.) (1823)) held the country and the real property rights to the lands as well as sovereignty powers over Indigenous Peoples (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 4). According to Marshall's opinion, this was justified first by the character and religion of Indigenous peoples (judged as primitive and heathens), then by the superiority of European people (judged as

⁵⁵ "Federal Indian law involves a distinct body of law that relates to the legal relationships between the federal government and Indian tribes. It is dynamic, evolving and encompasses several hundred years of federal policies and interaction with tribes. The sources of federal Indian law include principles of international law, the United States Constitution, treaties with Indian tribes, federal statutes and regulations, executive orders, and judicial opinions" (Jaeger, 2012, pp. retrieved 05-01-2013 from: <http://tm2112.community.uaf.edu/unit-2014/general-principles-of-federal-indian-law/>).

⁵⁶ The case concerned a land dispute between two non-Indigenous parties, who had both acquired titles on Piankeshaw nations territory: one had inherited a purchase made in 1773-75 (*Johnson*, who was also a Wabash Company shareholder), while the other had received a land patent from the Federal government (*M'Intosh*). In the dispute, the *M'Intosh* defence alleged that Indigenous peoples could not have sold their land in 1773-75, because they were "never considered independent communities, having a permanent property in the soil, capable of alienation to private individuals" (Williams, 1990, p. 311). At the time, only the British "civilized" government had that right, acquired by "Discovery", which granted it the power to "overlook all proprietary rights in the natives" (Williams, 1990, pp. 311, quoting *M'Intosh* counsel). The United States, as a "civilized nation", had inherited this right of titles after the Revolution, since Indigenous peoples were regarded as inferior people, who could not have acquired proprietary interests in the lands.

It is to be noted that Echo-Hawk presents the case as a fake one, orchestrated by the parties in order to obtain a ruling from the court on the acquisition of Indigenous territories, in a period of great prospection upon Indigenous lands (Echo-Hawk, 2012, pp. 62-68). Similarly, Robertson shows through the analysis of the corporate records of the Illinois and Wabash Land Companies, plaintiff in the *Johnson v. M'Intosh* case (through Thomas Johnson Jr., original Wabash Company shareholder), that the case involved political collusion (Robertson, 2005).

In any case, The Supreme Court ruled in favour of *M'Intosh*, based on Marshall's opinion reasserting the validity of the Doctrine of Discovery in the modern USA legal system, the Federal government having "the exclusive right to extinguish the Indian title of occupancy, either by purchase or by conquest" (Williams, 1990, pp. 13, quoting *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 21 U.S. (18 Wheat.) 587 (1823)), a decision that was never overruled (d'Errico, 1999, p. 16).

civilized), and further by the belief that Indigenous peoples were compensated by the civilization and Christianity bestowed upon them by the Europeans (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 4).

Today, Miller asserts that the Doctrine remains embedded "into plenary power [Congress' authority in Indian affairs and power of enacting laws], the trust responsibility [guardian, trustee and fiduciary responsibility towards tribes], and the diminished tribal sovereignty doctrines of federal Indian law" (R.J. Miller, 2008, p. 175); fomenting the loss of [1] tribal and individual Indian property rights, [2] human rights, and [3] sovereignty powers" (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 6). The diminishing of Indigenous Peoples' rights in these three areas is not a coincidence: it corresponds to the conceptualization of Western superiority and Indigenous inferiority in the long tradition of the DoD. In that sense, d'Errico states that Indigenous and American nations have continuously experienced the same conflicts, for almost 500 years now, around land and water rights, hunting and fishing, and so on (d'Errico, 1999, p. 7), based on the nonrecognition of Indigenous sovereignty, or, in the US, a limited recognition, as "dependant" of the Federal State. In other words, "tribal" peoples have a diminutive form of sovereignty, which is not self-determination, but dependence (d'Errico, 1999, p. 10).

Similarly, the DoD remains at the core of Canada's constitution⁵⁷ and court cases decisions, such as the recent *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* case (2014). In this case, while the

⁵⁷ The first Canadian constitutional document is the Royal Proclamation, which clearly shows how British and French Crowns assumed their respective land titles: "France transferred its Discovery claims in Canada and east of the Mississippi River in America to England, and granted its Discovery claims to lands west of the Mississippi River to Spain" (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 17). The Royal Proclamation also recognized "Indian Country", thus creating the notion of "Indian title" to the land. However, the titles and sovereignty then "recognized" to Indigenous Peoples were limited by the Crown's (T. Lindberg, 2012). Furthermore, their legal recognition in a Western framework assumed the possibility of extinguishing these rights through treaties that would sell or otherwise cede the land to the Crown (and later on to the Canadian State). This in turn was breaking Indigenous laws regarding the connection and relation to the land, which was not seen as being transferable, but rather inalienable (T. Lindberg, 2012; Little Bear, 1982). In other words, the founding document of the Royal Proclamation is rooted in Western political ontologies and concepts of land and sovereignty, while ignoring Indigenous Peoples' own ontologies and concepts of land and sovereignty.

The modern Constitution of Canada still refers to the Proclamation, thus reaffirming the DoD. Furthermore, Lindberg points to the constitutional contradiction between affirming the Indigenous rights and limiting them at the same time. Referring to the Section 35, subsection 1 of the 1982 Canadian constitution (which constitutionalized the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights), she writes:

"Limiting rights to existing rights ignores the impact that colonization and imperialism had and continue to have on Indigenous Peoples. That a history of the lack of acknowledgement of Aboriginal rights and the attempted or actual legislative removal of lands, enforcement by jail time for not adhering to enforced models of governance, and the English assumption of English sovereignty should not be addressed before arriving at an understanding of what Indigenous rights were actually able to exist reifies the Doctrinal axiom that infidel rights exist at a level below other citizens' rights" (T. Lindberg, 2012, p. 130).

Consequently, in its own way, Canadian constitution remains entrenched in the Doctrine of discovery that affirms the superior interests of European, or Euro-descendant, government over those of Indigenous Nations.

Supreme Court of Canada finally recognized the Aboriginal land titles of the Tsilhqot'in (or their sovereignty over their territory), the Canadian State can still justify incursion on Tsilhqot'in land "if they are justified by a compelling and substantial public purpose and are not inconsistent with the Crown's fiduciary duty to the Aboriginal group" (Introduction, in *Tsilhqot'in V. British Columbia*, 2014)⁵⁸. In other words, the Canadian State retains the possibility of imposing decisions on Tsilhqot'in land in name of the public interest. This means that Canadian interests are still considered, today, superior to Indigenous Nations' interests, following DoD logic.

Andean States are also a result of the DoD, inheriting the colonial land tenure and economic systems associated with the *encomiendas*, *repartimientos*, tributes, and *mitayos*. Independence leaders such as Bolivar, Martí, Sucre were all *Criollos*⁵⁹, and as such, Latin American independences came out of the *Criollo* imaginary⁶⁰, which was in part inspired by Indigenous Peoples in terms of their "*rebeldía*" (Zapata Silva, 2013).⁶¹ What were effectively created at the end of the independence movement were oligarchic republics throughout the Andes with deeply seated racial hierarchies under the control and governance of a Criollo/mestizo land- and resources-owning class. In spite of the promise of Indigenous tribute abolition (the tribute was conceived as a payment for protection under the colonial rule), the republics soon realize how their

⁵⁸ The recognition of Indigenous land titles by the Supreme Court is limited by the Western conceptual framework used in court as "legal test" for the Aboriginal title: "Aboriginal title flows from occupation in the sense of regular and exclusive use of land" (Introduction, in McLachlin et al., 2014). In other words, the recognition of "Aboriginal title" relies on the court determining if Indigenous Peoples' occupation of said land is sufficient, continuous and exclusive, which can be very problematic and at odd with indigenous ways of defining their own belonging or relationship to their land.

⁵⁹ A racial category designating the descendant of Spaniards, born in the Americas

⁶⁰ In other words, the independence was Settlers' independence from their Metropolis, and not the independence for Indigenous Peoples. This is the case throughout the Americas – except for Haiti, which is a very different case.

⁶¹ To differentiate themselves from the European metropolis, the independence heroes imagined a "new race" for Latin America, a mestizaje between Indigenous Peoples and Criollos, and of their glorious pasts, for a future republic (conceived in Western ways, of course). However, this inspiration was limited to an image of Indigenous Peoples and civilizations as something of the past, that could be claimed as a foundation for the Criollo Nationalism, differing from the "*mère-patrie*". This form of claiming Indigenous past for the benefits of a Criollo national narrative and identity is the root of the cultural and political indigenismo of Andean countries - See, for example, the work of the first president of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, Manuel Gamio (1992 [1916]) - which would endure until the second half of the twentieth century, and the idea of mestizo nations throughout Latin America. In this case, the sense of "mestizo" is not quite the same as the Canadian idea of a Métis nation. In Bolivia and Ecuador, for example, people rarely talk of "white" and "Indigenous" people, but rather, of "Mestizos" and Indigenous people. The Category "white" is more absent from the popular discourse of race, probably because of the ideal of the Independence "hero" such as Bolivar, who imagined a "new race" for Latin America. In practice, though, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui mentions that the only "acceptable" mestizaje was the one that embraced European/Criollo values and lifestyle, while the one that embraced Indigenous values and lifestyle was called "Cholo/Chola" and deemed inferior (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010).

economy depended on the structures put in place in colonial era, and the tribute was maintained until the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the Andes, the nineteenth century was also marked by the proliferation of private property, *latifundios*, *haciendas* that were reorganized under the new nations, which came with a new form of enslavement of Indigenous Peoples through the *huasipungo/pongo* institution.⁶² This implied major reorganization of the land. For example, in Bolivia the *Ley de Exvinculación de comunidades Indígenas* was signed in 1874 leading to the fragmentation of Indigenous communities' land into parcels. This process was paralleled in other countries such as Ecuador, with the 1868 *Ley de Terrenos Baldíos* (literally, law of empty lands), a clear affirmation of the *Terra Nullius* concept, ignoring Indigenous occupation of the land (Zapata Silva, 2013). These processes in the Andes mirror North American policies such as the Dawes Act in US (1887) and the compulsory enfranchisement under the Canadian Indian Act. This is no coincidence; it rather reflects the shared logic of the DoD as entrenched in modern settler-states structures, laws and policies. In the Andes, the *Hacienda* system of land tenure, which was the basis of the economy of the oligarchic states, was maintained, and many Indigenous peoples continued working as peons until well into the twentieth century (Becker, 1997; Becker, 2003; Clark & Becker, 2007). Parallel to land tenure, the peasantification of Indigenous Peoples was very common across Andean nation-states as a way to integrate Indigenous communities into a "one nation, one culture" perspective⁶³.

Similar to the US and Canadian states, Andean countries have moved towards greater recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights in their constitutions (see for example, Ecuador's 2008 Constitution, and Bolivia's 2009 Constitution and their positions on Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination). However, analogous to the case of Canada and US, these constitutional developments did not resolve the tension between Indigenous Peoples' and the national states' sovereignties. For example, analysts of constitutional changes in Latin America over the last three decades highlight contradictions existing between rights expressed in constitutions, and the control of these rights by the central governments (Ávila, 2013; Gargarella, 2011). For instance, the 2008 Ecuadorian constitution recognizes self-determination rights of Indigenous Peoples and Nations,

⁶² Under this system, Indigenous families were "given" a small parcel on an hacienda, which they could cultivate for their own benefit, in exchange of free labour for the land owner.

⁶³ It is possible to see the difference between the creation of a Bureau of Indian Affairs under the War department (USA), a Department of Indian Affairs (Canada), and the ruling of Indigenous issues under the Ministry of Social Welfare and Agriculture (Ecuador).

but the Ecuadorian State remains in charge of implementing this constitutional right. This is not unlike Canada's constitutional article 35.1, which recognizes "existing Aboriginal and treaty rights" without defining them, leaving it to the Canadian courts to define and apply them. In this context, it is the power of the state to apply norms of self-determination, based on the understandings it has of this right, which rarely question the actual sovereignty of the state. Subsequently, there is a continuous discrepancy between Indigenous Peoples' and national governments' understandings of their respective sovereignty and powers. Furthermore, and in continuity with the Doctrine of Discovery's principles, when Indigenous Peoples oppose the governments on certain projects, they are often cast as backward, and as a hindrance to the progress and development of the modern state⁶⁴ (Blaser, 2014; Quijano, 2012). Therefore, the laws on which current states are based, including their constitutions, continue to subordinate Indigenous interests to the interests of the settler nation (Canada, US, Bolivia, Ecuador)⁶⁵.

Over the centuries, the Doctrine was interpreted in different ways in the Americas, but it continues to be the foundation on which the legitimacy of the state relies for all countries of the continent⁶⁶. In spite of the differences and specificities of the Andean countries in relation to North

⁶⁴ For example, in Bolivia, the project of a road building across the National park of the Tipnis has opposed Indigenous movements and Evo Morales' government for the past years. Where Indigenous movements have argued for the environmental consequences of the road building in their territories, the state has presented the road as part of the modernization of the states' infrastructure system. Similarly, in Ecuador, Indigenous and environmental movements opposed to oil exploitation in the Amazon have been criminalized by the state, cast as enemies of the state's progress. This is also the case in North America, when Indigenous Peoples resist the construction of new pipelines, or hydroelectric projects, and the state sees it as hindering (economic) development.

⁶⁵ This is why, in the 2014 landmark Canadian Supreme Court decision in the case *Tsilhqot'in Nation v British Columbia*, while recognizing the Tsilhqot'in nation land title to their territory, the court maintained the possibility for the "Crown" (i.e. the Canadian state) to override the Tsilhqot'in title, if this was for a "compelling and substantial objective", in other words, if it was for the greater good of the nation. The "Crown" would still be responsible to consult the Tsilhqot'in nation (but, mind you, not to acquire their consent), and to comply with their fiduciary obligation to the Tsilhqot'in nation. The bottom line, however, continues to be that the nation-state's interests are superior to the Indigenous nations' interests, which can still be subordinated.

⁶⁶ This is sometimes an overtly explicit case: it was nationally recognized in the US Federal Indian law with the *Johnson v. M'Intosh* case in 1823 (R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 3) as the current basis for the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the US federal government. Other times, it will take much more subtle or implicit form: for example, in the case of Ecuador, where the constitution of 2008 was greatly influenced by the work of Indigenous movements, and as a result, includes the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples, the *Buen Vivir/Sumak Kawsay* (Good Life) project, and founds a plurinational state, as demanded by Indigenous nations and communities of Ecuador. However, as Gargarella (2011) and Avila (2013) note it, there is still a contradiction between the expression of these Indigenous rights and projects in the constitution, and the total control that the state has over these rights and projects, in the same constitution. Hence, even when "recognizing" Indigenous Peoples' rights, territories, or even political aspiration (sovereignty, autonomy, or self-determination), there is no question regarding the legitimacy of the state sovereignty and control over the nation and the national territory, and regarding the superior interest that the state represent in relation to the so-called domestic issues of Indigenous Peoples' rights.

American countries explored here (Canada and US), there are many similarities that can be observed as a result of the nation-states' roots in the Doctrine of Discovery. Legal hierarchies between Indigenous and settlers' interests, which justify the dispossession of Indigenous lands, and the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the citizen body, are a common theme throughout the Americas, followed by attempts to assimilate them into the citizen body, including through education. The resulting relationships between Indigenous Peoples and settler states have taken different forms in terms of land titles/access (reserves/reservations in North America, "peasant" communities in South America), and in terms of sovereignty and political organizations (tribal and band councils in North America, and the question of self-determination in the Andes). In all cases, the idea of Western (settler, *criollo* or *mestizo*) superiority forms the theoretical support to the social hierarchies established in settler states. This idea of superiority was expressed in the DoD through ideas of Christianity and Civilization, and is maintained today with concepts such as progress and modernity, and how Indigenous Peoples are seen as obstacles to this progress. As the legitimacy of our states in the Americas relies on the DoD, it implies the subordination of Indigenous Peoples' rights, life projects, relationships to the land, and political aspirations⁶⁷.

Having established that the Doctrine of Discovery is at the root of all states' legitimacy in the Americas, which lays the base for a hemispheric comparative perspective, I address in the following section the hierarchies that the Doctrine of Discovery creates. These include the supremacy logic embedded in religious and scientific knowledges, as well as the knowledge hierarchies that ensue. I show describe how these hierarchies were established both in North America and in the Andes. This will give the appropriate background to consider the role of education in supporting the DoD's implementation.

⁶⁷ If it was not for the DoD, there is no reason for legitimating the settlers' sovereignty over the land in the Americas, and the creation of nation-states that are not Indigenous. The subordination of Indigenous Peoples' rights and interests is the only logical explanation for the imposition of Western bodies of laws, constitutions, , and overall interests in the Americas.

Doctrine of Discovery's supremacy logic: intellectual justification of colonization

If the Doctrine of Discovery is the underlying political and legal structure of settler states in the Americas, the history of the Doctrine of Discovery in the continent shows that it relies on the intellectual justification of a Western superiority. In turn, Western superiority assertions supporting of the Doctrine of Discovery find their roots in the fifteenth century European claims about Indigenous Peoples as inferior beings, devoid of actual humanity. Maldonado-Torres (2014) notes how in the "first contact" between European and Indigenous peoples, Columbus opened the debate on the humanity of Indigenous Peoples, by presenting them as lacking religion⁶⁸. Maldonado-Torres writes:

Since the recognition of religiosity was a principal feature in the recognition of peoples as people, the declaration that natives did not have religion opened up the path for the expropriation of the natives' lands, denied them subjectivity, and declared them servile subjects (Maldonado-Torres, 2014, p. 640).

Maldonado-Torres explains that religion was the universal trait recognized to humanity in fifteenth Century Christian worldview. Thus, European categories of humanity differentiated Christians, people with false religions and people with no religion. The latter included Indigenous Peoples, who were denied recognition as people: "Religion is universal among humans, but the alleged lack of it among natives is not initially taken to indicate the falseness of this statement, but rather the opposite: that there exist subjects in the world who are not fully human" (Maldonado-Torres, 2014, p. 641). Hence, Columbus opened in 1492 the long-lasting debate regarding Indigenous Peoples' humanity, or lack of thereof.

Moreover, the religious argument of superiority served as the basis to deny Indigenous Peoples rationality. In a fifteenth century Christian perspective, rational souls defined humanity, but this rationality was conceived as the capacity to understand, and therefore accept, the Gospel (Williams, 1990). Consequently, according to the European Christian conception of natural laws, Indigenous Peoples, as rational human beings, had the right to freedom, but the obligation to receive the Gospel (Williams, 1990). Indigenous Peoples' reason, or lack thereof, would mandate

⁶⁸ "Y creo que ligeramente se harían cristianos, que me pareció que ninguna secta tenían" (Colón [Columbus], [1492] 1986, p. 63).

the recognition or diminution of their right to freedom⁶⁹. Based on these conceptions, in 1512 Spain, the Burgos Council, and the laws that came out of it, depicted Indigenous Peoples as idle, irrational in their beliefs and political organizations, then justifying the appropriation of their land and their labour as a way to assimilate them to the Spanish ways, beliefs, and political organization. Doing so, the Burgos Laws encoded Christian superiority in terms of civilization, as well as the civilizing mission of Christian Crowns.

Similarly, seventeenth century England continued using the idea of Christianity and civilization as the basic justification for colonization:

they order their colonists to take Christianity and civilization to American Indians for the purpose of 'propagating *Christian* Religion to those [who] as yet live in *Darkness and miserable Ignorance* of the true Knowledge and Worship of God, and [to] bring the *Infidels and Savages*, living in those parts, to human civility, and to the *settled and quiet Government...*' (King James I, quoted by R.J. Miller, 2012, p. 19).

According to this conception, Indigenous organizations were deemed "savages" and European ones were considered "civilized", which justified the sovereignty claimed by Europeans over Indigenous lands and Peoples.

If in the seventeenth century, "Christianity" and "Civilization" were the major justifications for conquest (see the 10 principles of the Doctrine as presented by Miller, 2012), colonial discourses of the "inferiority" of Indigenous Peoples evolved to biological ones with the birth of racist theories of the nineteenth and twentieth century (Berkhofer, 1979; Bieder, 1986; TallBear, 2013b), and to cultural and national ones arguing the inadequacy of Indigenous Peoples with national citizenship and full peoples' rights. For instance, nation-building processes in the Andes came with the need to establish national singularities between the different Nation states, as a new round of national conflicts for the territory marked the first half of the nineteenth century (the Pacific War between Peru, Bolivia and Chile in the late 1800s, the Chaco war in the 1930s, and the Amazon war between Peru and Ecuador in 1941). This is also when Indigenous Peoples

⁶⁹ Thus, the Council of Burgos heard extensive testimonies, and while it recognized Indigenous Peoples' freedom and right to humane treatment, it also claimed the need to (forcibly, if necessary) inculcate them in Christianity and civilization. Doing so, the council relegated Indigenous Peoples' cultures and institutions to a "deficient, diminished legal status" (Williams, 1990, p. 88). This included a series of inquiries regarding the capacity of the Indigenous Peoples to "comprehend the Gospel and to order their lives according to "civilized" Spanish norms of conduct" (Williams, 1990, p. 94). Thus, the council's Laws of Burgos, in 1512, "reflected a Eurocentrically determined vision of Indian normative divergence requiring the natives' subjugation and remediation, by peaceful means where possible but by forceful means where necessary" (Williams, 1990, p. 87).

resurfaced in national debates, as lower-classes, imperfect bodies and peoples, who needed to be improved/cultivated and integrated in the national bodies, an idea widely supported in sciences, particularly in social sciences (Zapata Silva, 2013). Therefore, where the DoD was once supported by religion, the transfer from a religious explanation of the world and of Indigenous Peoples to a scientific evolutionist one (Kehoe, 1998; B. A. Mann, 2003) created the modern "language of savagery", deeply influenced by social and cultural evolutionist theories (Williams, 2012a)⁷⁰.

Socio-cultural evolutionist theories in Western social sciences played important roles in legitimating the colonial jurisdiction over Indigenous lands, resources, peoples, and societies. For instance, Morgan's anthropological theory of unilinear evolution (Morgan, 1877; Morgan, 1965), developed in a context of tensions between Indigenous and Federal claims to the land in US⁷¹, had serious legal implications. According to this unilinear evolution model⁷², the passage of an organization based on people (and kinship) to an organization based on "township" (territory) and "fixed property" was the threshold of evolution from a barbarian society to "civilization"⁷³. Based on his theory, Morgan attributed the status of "Barbarian *societas*" to Indigenous peoples, concluding that "There was neither a political society, nor a citizen, nor a state, nor any civilization

⁷⁰ According to Robert A. Williams (2012a), the Doctrine of Discovery is rooted in a profound language of savagery inherited and transformed through Western civilization history, as at the basic dichotomy on which to affirm ourselves as "civilization" (savagery/civilization Williams, 2012a, p. 236), which was applied to Indigenous peoples over the last 500 years (Williams, 2012a, p. 8). Far from being a thing of the past, Williams argues that this language is still common in films, publicity, mass media, and popular culture, and the stereotype they convey about Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, in Williams' view, Western social sciences and universities have played a role in the elaboration in fomenting and consolidating the "language of savagery" and applying it to Indigenous Peoples. In fact, the theories on "savages" and "primitive" Indigenous peoples in the Americas were part of the work of Western Enlightenment intellectuals, often presented today as the founders of modern social sciences and taught in theoretical courses throughout the academy: Rousseau, Hobbes, Locke, Smith. Williams mentions that the travel literature to the New World re-enacted Classical ideas of "savage" through its embodiment in the "American Indian" figure (Williams, 2012a, p. 8). This heritage was reinterpreted by the Enlightenment New science of humanity, which made Indigenous peoples in the Americas the "living model" of "savage" humanity in a "primitive state of nature", assuming the evolution of a "primitive" humanity toward a "more evolved" one. This is the historical basis on which our current social sciences developed.

⁷¹ The land claim of Tonawanda Seneca nation, whose land had been purchased fraudulently by the Ogden Land Company, for example, which Morgan knew about

⁷² Lekson (2006, 2009) and Kehoe (1998) both identify Morgan's model as the source of American archaeology orthodoxy about Chaco Canyon and Cahokia Indigenous societies being chiefdoms and not state, in a model where "all American Indians were caught in *societas*, never *civitas* – that is, never more than primitives cut off from the historical world" (Kehoe, 1998, p. 184)). Indeed, there is still a general belief to the effect that "it is safe to say that all prehistoric North American societies fell in the pre-state category" (Fagan, 2000, p. 50). But the legal impacts of such a perspective can become very important, given the fact that anthropologists play a legal role as experts in courts of law on "Indian nations' claims for land, compensation, or federal benefits" (Kehoe, 1998, p. 184).

⁷³ "A state [*civitas*] must rest upon territory and not upon persons, upon the township as the unit of a political system, and not upon the gens which is the unit of a social system [*societas*]" (Kehoe, 1998, p. 173).

in America when it was discovered" (Morgan, 1965, p. 4). Consequently, Morgan was negating their land ownership⁷⁴ (their township, territory in terms of "fixed property"),⁷⁵ which would have supported their recognition as a "political society", or "state", potentially at the same level as for Americans (nation-state).

If this unilinear model now seems obsolete, evolutionism in anthropology was revived by multi lineal evolutionist theories, with Julian Steward's work (Steward, 1955, 1977).⁷⁶ Steward represented Indigenous peoples as "minimally socially evolved" (Pinkoski, 2008, p. 178), which in turn supported the government's logic of denying title to Indian plaintiffs because they were "not organized societies" and therefore did not own the land (Pinkoski & Asch, 2004, p. 188).⁷⁷ In that sense, Pinkoski and Asch note a "close correspondence between Steward's 'family level of sociocultural integration' and the requirements of a colonial legal ideology consistent with the

⁷⁴ As a lawyer (admitted to the Bar in 1842), Morgan could not ignore this concrete consequence on territorial disputes: if no Indigenous group was ever organized as a political society, it was because they were not organized based on the fixed property of the territory, so they could not claim ownership of the land. According to this logic, if no Indigenous group was ever organized as a political society, it was because they were not organized based on the fixed property of the territory, so they could not claim ownership of the land, an argument that justified the American colonization and legitimized the US government over Indigenous sovereignty.

⁷⁵ As an ethnographer having extensively studied Iroquois societies, Morgan could not ignore that Indigenous peoples had their own concepts of territories and government (in fact, the secret society in Aurora in which he participated until 1846 - year in which the society decided to support the Seneca in their land claim - tried to emulate Iroquois principles of governability). Yet, he declared the society of the informants with whom he had worked for so long to be a "barbarian" society, with no state or "fixed property". Thus, his political position was clear: as a Republican who served in the New York State Assembly in 1861 and in the State Senate in 1867-1868; and as an attorney for railroad and mining ventures in Michigan ([1877] 1964: XVIII), Morgan's interest was on the side of US state and private capital, not on the side of Indigenous peoples' cultural and social survival in their territories. Unfortunately, these elements, which certainly supported the development of his theory, are often ignored when his role in anthropology is presented, in anthropology courses (even if his role is often presented as that of a historical figure, whose theory is not taken seriously anymore).

⁷⁶ Steward was formed in the cultural history approach of anthropology with Kroeber, and he was in agreement with the weakness attributed to the evolutionists' theoretical foundations on the teleology of progress and to their empirical observations (Steward, 1977, p. 59), including those of Morgan, who had "lumped together" Pueblos farmers and Mesoamerican empires in barbarism (Steward, 1977, p. 60). Nevertheless, Steward also adhered to the growing critique toward cultural history's lack of explanation of cultural change in a scientific perspective. Steward wanted to find valid cross-cultural social laws to explain cultural change (Murphey, Introduction to Steward, 1977, p. 3). Steward believed it was possible, through cross-cultural research, to find regularities (and scientific laws) regarding the factors that shape cultural adaptation, development and change in each type of environmental situation, to produce certain types of societies (gatherers, hunters, trappers, farmers, empires, etc.). He understood ecological adaptations as the driving force for cultural change (Steward, 1955, p. 11) through development of technology and social structure in response to a certain environment, eventually leading to social organization and superstructure based on different "levels of sociocultural integration": family, band, tribe or nation, progressing from simple to complex.

⁷⁷ Steward's model was the result of his applied work as consultant for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Applied Anthropology Unit, and his hiring as an expert defence witness for the Department of Justice before the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) between 1949 and 1955 (Pinkoski & Asch, 2004; Ronaasen, O.Clemmer, & Rudden, 1999), for cases concerning the Northern Paiute, Great Basin Shoshone Tribe. In these cases, Steward concluded that the Shoshone had never developed organization beyond the family level of integration, and for that reason, they had no territorial claim (Pinkoski & Asch, 2004, p. 188).

doctrine of *terra nullius*" (Pinkoski & Asch, 2004, p. 193), therefore limiting the aboriginal interest in the land based on social evolutionism (Pinkoski & Asch, 2004, p. 193). This evolutionist tradition in social sciences has had extensive consequences in terms of limiting Indigenous Peoples' rights (Pinkoski, 2008; Pinkoski & Asch, 2004), and continues today in the way Indigenous Peoples are often presented in court, by so-called "expert" - mainly anthropologists - whose theories and representations can affect the decision regarding a land claim, or Indigenous fishing or hunting rights (Ray, 2011)⁷⁸.

Therefore, western knowledges, and in particular social sciences, participate in these discourses of Indigenous Peoples' backwardness⁷⁹, beyond the nineteenth and twentieth century

⁷⁸ For example, in late twentieth century court cases, such as the 1996 Van Der Peet case, the concept of "culture" and "traditions", well rooted in anthropological theories of Indigeneity (A. Simpson, 2014), are used to argue against Indigenous Peoples' rights beyond what is perceived as their "custom" before colonization. In Van Der Peet decision, when Dorothy Van Der Peet, from the Sto:lo nation, defended her Aboriginal right to sell fish that she had caught under an Indian food fish license, the court applied the "frozen rights" doctrine, following the guiding factor of "central significance of the practice, custom or tradition to the aboriginal society in question" (Allain, 1996, p. 6). Hence, in this case, the court found that the defendant "had failed to demonstrate that the exchange of fish for money or other goods was an integral part of the distinctive Sto:lo society that had existed prior to European contact" (Allain, 1996). In other words, in the nation-state perspective, Indigenous Peoples are assumed to come from a "subsistence based diet" with uncomplicated economies that did not involve trade. It also assumes that Indigenous cultures are frozen in time in terms of their political, economic, and social organizations and rights, while Western culture can evolve and become modern, with all the rights that this "modernity" implies.

The assumption of Indigenous Peoples' economy excluding trade is contradicted by archaeological facts that show extensive pre-colonial trading routes in North America (Lekson, 2006; C. C. Mann, 2005; Sutton, 2011; Wesler, 2006) and South America (D'Altroy, 2002; Klauer, 2000), where the Inka Road was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2014.

Answering to these types of assumptions and their consequences for Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty, Audra Simpson, in *Mohawk Interruptus*, questions how anthropology, through the conceptualization of culture and traditions, has created accounts of Indigeneity that are ahistorical and depoliticized. She criticizes the type of "recognition" forged in anthropology, which contains and constrains Iroquois politics, for example, to certain geographic spaces and certain versions of tradition. In her refusal of this type of anthropology, she argues for new accountings of the politics and cultures of Indigenous Peoples (A. Simpson, 2014).

⁷⁹ For example anthropology as a discipline is deeply rooted in colonial enterprise and the need to know and define the "other" (Berkhofer, 1979; A. Simpson, 2014). This is why Simpson (2014) argues that "Indigeneity", or the representation/conceptualization of Indigenous Peoples, is deeply intertwined with anthropology and colonialism. While historically constructing and defining Indigeneity and the politics for Indigenous Peoples, anthropology actually answered to colonial/imperial needs of containing the difference: explaining the difference through culture, in order to make sense of it, order it, rank it, and eventually govern and possess it (A. Simpson, 2014). In other words, and as seen earlier in this chapter, the knowledges built in anthropology served governmental and disciplinary possession of bodies and territories, creating space of containment (with categories of knowledge such as labour, property), and the difference is always measured on categories of knowledge coming from the unquestioned "self" (A. Simpson, 2014). Of course, not all social sciences research or endeavours contribute to colonization, and Audra Simpson herself chose anthropology as the site of her academic formation. However, she did so from her Mohawk positionality, which aims at "interrupting" the type of anthropological narratives and colonial discourses and policies described above. In parallel to Simpson's this work of uncovering the power dynamics and domination relations in the knowledge produced anthropology but working from a different perspective (mainly South American, non-Indigenous), is the World Anthropology (WA) project. Beginning with a critical awareness of the larger epistemological and political context in which anthropology emerged as a discipline (Restrepo & Escobar, 2005, p. 100), WA authors argued that as long as

theories. In fact, more than 500 years after Columbus questioned Indigenous humanity and rationality, the ideas of Western superior knowledge and Indigenous "savagery" are still at the core of national legal principles ruling the relationship with Indigenous peoples. In other words, the knowledge and theories developed in Western social sciences are related to colonialism: they represent historically the cognitive tools and intellectual support of colonial processes, and they still sustain hierarchies between Western and Indigenous Peoples, thus maintaining the superiority belief that is part of the doctrine of discovery.

Accordingly, it is critical to understand how the epistemic status of scientific knowledge is engrained in a colonial legacy that has impacts on the relationship established with Indigenous knowledge systems. As a concrete example of the problematic relationship established in Western (colonial/modern)⁸⁰ sciences with Indigenous knowledges, Kim TallBear mentions that Western science is, just as Western religion, "laden with longstanding narratives of indigenous isolation, unenlightened thought, and deficiency" (TallBear, 2013b).⁸¹ These narratives are in line with the

we maintain invisible that context and naturalize the discipline of anthropology (or social sciences in general), dominant (mainstream) anthropology remains unquestioned (Restrepo & Escobar, 2005, p. 102). Therefore, one of their objectives is to dismantle "dominant anthropology", by making its normalization and naturalization visible, uncovering the dynamics of dominance and geopolitics of knowledge, and situating he allowed contestation in the discipline. Moreover, to define mainstream/Western knowledge, the authors use three theoretical perspectives: World-systems analysis (Wallerstein and Kuwayama), geopolitics of knowledge in a modernity/coloniality perspective (Mignolo, Quijano, Dussel), and Provincializing Europe (Chakrabarty). These allow a critical perspective on Western knowledge structure, which exposes the Eurocentricity of mainstream academy, even in its critical stance (the allowed contestation). In a sense, their critique helps identifying the "mainstream" context, and the colonial relationship it entertains with Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge systems, resulting in their exclusion and marginalization from mainstream social sciences.

⁸⁰ To be clear, Mignolo directly associates the colonial/modern matrix of power to Western civilization. He writes: "Coloniality names the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to today of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive, although downplayed, dimension" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 2).

And later, he talks about "the historical foundation of the colonial matrix (and hence of Western civilization)" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 8). In this perspective, then, modernity, coloniality and the idea of Western civilization all go together. I understand that there are other definitions of "modernity", much less euro-centric, that could and probably should be considered here.

⁸¹ Elsewhere, Dakota biologist, Kim TallBear confronts this hierarchical relationship established between Indigenous and Western sciences, regarding the accounts of the origins of Indigenous Peoples (TallBear, 2013a). She stresses the impact that these narratives have for Indigenous identities:

"Indigenous ways of understanding their origins embody reckonings of people-hood based in particular histories, cultures, and landscapes. [...] [Scientific narratives of human history] do not make sense if peoples already think that they have satisfactory answers to such questions. For example, Genographic is not going to tell me how I am related to my various Dakota tribal kin, the ultimate set of relations in tribal life. Nor can Genographic tell me how we got here today, although it could tell me that I have the founding "Native American" lineage dubbed "haplogroup A". The question of how we as Dakota got to where we are has already been answered, and the answer is not one of genetics. I could reference Dakota creation stories that give us values for living, narrate our common history, cohere us as a people with a common moral framework, and tie us to a sacred land base. But another important narrative exists that, for many of us, is even more crucial today. We Dakota people got to where we are in 2007 in important ways because

core beliefs of the Doctrine of Discovery, which revolve around Western superiority and Indigenous inferiority, whether it be biologically, religiously, politically, legally, or in terms of knowledge systems. These narratives are present in Western definitions of sciences, and the hierarchies they establish with Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems.

In the supremacy logic, science is portrayed as an evolved form of knowledge and the relationships with the cultural context deem Indigenous knowledge as a local, traditional, mythic, and pseudo-scientific (Drouin-Gagné, 2014). Yet, this conception is much more based on Western history of science (D.Lindberg, 2007 [1992]) and our conception of culture and knowledge evolution, than on the real knowledge developed by Indigenous Peoples: as social evolutionism considers Indigenous Peoples as less "developed" than Western Peoples, then it is assumed that Indigenous sciences could not have developed similar sophisticated and evolved knowledge as "Western science".

To summarize, where the subordination of Indigenous communities, their knowledge and relation to land, was once articulated in religious terminologies, and then in biological and racist

of the Dakota Conflict of 1862, that defining moment that so circumscribed present-day Dakota geography, family relations, governance and identity. That was the moment when our ancestors' dispossession from our ancestral lands – from the life-giving rivers in what is today southern Minnesota – was crystallized. Pushing back violently against white settlement, and the forced marches, prison camps, and mass execution that ensued, marked a bloody re-mapping of Dakota life. "Who we really are" is not a question that most, if any Dakota, will think answered by discovering that they have mtDNA markers that "originated" in Mongolia" (TallBear, 2007, p. 416).

TallBear's point regarding Indigenous Peoples' identities and collective memory applies to any nation and people: we make sense of who we are based on particular histories, cultures and landscapes, and we do not define who we are as Québécois or as Canadians, for example, based on the paleoanthropology of Europe. Similarly, when discussing the history of England, for example, we do not get back to the original peopling of that land. Furthermore, the history of populations in Europe and the Americas are not elements that we use to dismiss history written by Europeans, or Euro-Canadians. However, in the case of Indigenous Peoples, and following the knowledge structures exposed above, their presence in Western sciences mainly comes from anthropology and its different branches, where the study of non-Western people has been used to explain "humanity" development, in a universal cultural timeline, with the implicit premise that non-Western cultures explain Western past, and are situated in previous stages of the development of humanity.

For an example of Quebec's narrative of collective memory and history, see Jocelyn Létourneau (1992). Part of Létourneau's argument is that all human groups build and define their identity through a complex process of memory, which includes and excludes facts, and their interpretation, and which might change throughout history, while at the same time maintaining that common identity.

Vine Deloria, who was a fierce critique of Anthropology and the work of anthropologists in Indigenous communities, wrote:

"Race has been the primary criteria in gathering and determining data about Indians. Debates over whether Indians fit into one of Aristotle's minor categories of subhuman ensued shortly after the discovery of the New World and was not really settled until cultural evolution placed us at the bottom of the scales and described us as comparable to Europeans but with a Stone Age understanding of the world. We were able to remain in the human category because we were subjects of scholarly inquiry and represented man's climb toward a mechanized culture. This belief continues to be held by many people in the universities today" (Deloria, 2004, p. 19).

terminologies, it is now articulated based on scientific terms (Battiste, 2013). From religious to epistemological hierarchies, nonetheless, the supremacist logic of the DoD is maintained and continues to articulate the relationship established between settler-states and Indigenous Peoples. Accordingly, settler states and societies are always situated in a position of power where they “know better” and can educate Indigenous Peoples, whether it be through Christianization, civilization, or assimilation into the citizenship. The result is what Battiste has called "cognitive imperialism". Battiste argues that "Cognitive imperialism then generates knowledge legitimation, production and diffusion, thus positioning some knowledge connected to power, and others marginalized, dismissed, or lying in wait until they are found useful to the outcomes needed in society" (Battiste, 2013, p. 159). This cognitive imperialism further becomes a powerful tool of assimilation and colonization of the minds (Ngũgĩ, 1986; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1991), especially when applied in education systems.

As I demonstrate in what follows, education is an important area of application of the Doctrine of Discovery. However, it is important to understand the knowledge hierarchies created by the DoD’s supremacy logic, which are at the basis of colonial education for Indigenous Peoples. These hierarchies were preserved through the different educational policies implemented in the continent, as described in the next section of this chapter. Consequently, these knowledge hierarchies need to be addressed seriously for any decolonial project to be implemented in education.

Application of the Doctrine of Discovery: "civilizing" and "Christianizing" through education

In a compilation of IHE cases across the Americas, Child and Klopotek (2014), identify education as a key institution in the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and power structures. They write:

Education has consistently been connected to issue of land, economy, and autonomy in indigenous settings throughout the hemisphere. Dispossession, dependency, and attacks on Indigenous sovereignty have all been facilitated by educational policies and practices [...] Given the extensive interconnections of education to virtually every other issue facing indigenous communities and their relationships with the various powers that be, education must be understood as critical indigenous political issue throughout the Americas (Child & Klopotek, 2014, p. x).

This description implies that education plays a powerful role in the process of colonization (and decolonization), throughout the hemisphere. Education serves to transmit certain knowledge and culture that will forge the way individuals relate to the world and to each other, to land, economy, and autonomy (or authority). Doing so, education becomes a tool to instruct people in the cultural and behavioural outcomes necessary for colonial control to happen. This role of education in terms of the “domination of the mental universe of the colonised” (Ngũgĩ, 1986, p.16) was also articulated by Ngũgĩ (1986) in the context of English colonization in Kenya. His argument about the need of cultural colonisation through school can be applied in the Americas. He says:

Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people’s culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others.

For colonialism this involved two aspects of the same process: the destruction or the deliberate undervaluing of a people’s culture, their arts, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature, and the conscious elevation of the language of the coloniser. The domination of a people’s language by the languages of the colonising nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised (Ngũgĩ, 1986, p.16).

As Ngũgĩ argues, this domination of the mental universe, the devaluing of a People’s culture in favour of the colonizer’s, is best achieved through educational institutions. Through mandatory

education, it is possible to impose a certain language, a body of literature, a given religion, and a version of history to a People. While assimilationist policies in education are well documented, it is important to understand the underlying logic of colonial schooling, to recognize its impact on today's education and higher education.

Educational policies in the Americas have facilitated colonization by articulating core beliefs of Western superiority related to the DoD (ex: Civilization and Christian conversion). These beliefs are at the centre of what Lomawaima calls "colonial education" (Lomawaima, 1999), which she defines as the "reculturing and reeducation of American Indian by the secular and religious institutions of colonizing nations" (Lomawaima, 1999, p. 1), in which she includes Spain, Great Britain, France [and I would add Portugal for the Americas], and the United States [and I would add all American nation-states]. According to Lomawaima, DoD's core beliefs of Western superiority are embedded in four main tenets of colonial education, as follow:

"(1) that Native Americans were savages and had to be civilized; (2) that civilization required Christian conversion; (3) that civilization required subordination of Native communities, frequently achieved through resettlement efforts; and (4) that Native people had mental, moral, physical or cultural deficiencies that made certain pedagogical methods necessary for their education" (Lomawaima, 1999, p. 1).

As the tenets elaborated by Lomawaima relate directly to the supremacy logic of the DoD, it is possible to trace the use of education as a tool of colonization from the beginning of the application of the Doctrine in the Americas.

In the case of the Andes, Spanish education of Indigenous Peoples began as early as the sixteenth century and was focused on "civilizing" and Christianising them, particularly the elites, with the objective of ruling the population through them⁸². The civilization and Christianisation of

⁸² Once a member of native nobility was recognized as a Cacique, they were exempt from forced labour and from tribute, and had civil and criminal jurisdiction over their subjects under Spanish authorities' supervision. They were basically ruling for the Spaniards, and as such, the crown made sure they would receive a Christian education. Rowe wrote:

"After 1619 the vice regal government provided special schools for the sons of caciques. These schools were under Jesuit administration and apparently offered an excellent education by the standards of the time and place. There were 2,078 caciques in the viceroyalty of Peru in 1754" (Rowe, 1957, p. 157).

However, the determination of who was a Cacique was a source of contention amongst the Incas and other native nobles, and certainly a "divide and conquer" strategy on behalf of the Spaniards. Playing in the competition and conflicts between different elites, both the Inca ones, and elites of people who were subjugated under the Tawantinsuyu, the Spaniards extended some "privileges" to loyal nobles (that is, loyal to Spain crown). Determining nobility through genealogical lines, the Spaniards recognized higher statuses to the Indigenous nobles who were following Spanish ways, acknowledging the Crown sovereignty, and converting to Christianity (Bauer & Decoster,

the rest of the population, destined to work for the elites and the King and his representatives in the Americas, was limited to their re-organization in villages built around a church (*reducciones*)⁸³.

Similarly, in the case of English colonization of the Americas, education of Indigenous Peoples was part of the project early on. Boyer (Boyer, 1997) indicates that English colonizers were involved in the education of Indigenous Peoples from the beginning, using this "ritual of Western civilization" (Boyer, 1997, p. 7) to assimilate and Christianise Indigenous Peoples. The first schools and colleges quite often included in their mission the "education of Indian youth". This was the case for the East India School established in 1619 in Jamestown, Virginia, as well as some of the oldest US colleges, such as Harvard, in 1636 (and later, Dartmouth, in the eighteenth century). According to Boyer (1997) and to Wright and Tierney (1991), however, these early attempts to actually educate Indigenous youth failed, partly because the leaders of their nations were not interested in the education offered, which was of little use for their own ways of life. This failure was also partly due to settlers lacking real interest for this education. The colleges were often more interested in the fundraising opportunities that came with the mission of educating and Christianising Indigenous youth, than in the actual labour of educating Indigenous youth (McClellan, Fox, & Lowe, 2005, p. 9).

Still, as Lomawaima and McCarthy (2006) and Grande (Grande, 2004) describe it, education, and especially Christianisation and education into menial labour, was an effective way of establishing control over land, populations, and labour. Grande (2004) argues that exploitation is the principal characteristic of the relationship established with Indigenous Peoples by the nation-state society and its educational policies (Grande, 2004, p. 26). For instance, historically, US government's educational policies have mirrored the land politics in establishing exploitative relationship to Indigenous Peoples' labour:

2007). Furthermore, after realizing a census that also resulted in Sarmiento de Gamboa's chronicle (finished in 1572), according to Bauer, Viceroy Toledo proceeded to an ethnic cleansing of the Inca elites identified in the chronicle who were still resisting the colonization in relation with the Ollantay-tampu headquarters (Bauer & Decoster, 2007, pp. 14-15). The elites that remained and who were subsequently recognized and educated were thus either allies of the Crown, or at least, nobles who did not resist, or stopped resisting the Spanish Conquest at that point. This history highlights, here, the importance of education as a tool for colonization: either assimilate the Inca elites to Spanish/Christian "civilization", through education, or destroy the ones who would resist it, was the *modus operandi*. Western education, from its inception in the Andes, was thus associated with the colonization of these lands by Spaniards and the Catholic Church.

⁸³ This is not to diminish the violence that took place in these *reducciones*: the Church went on to a fervent and violent "extirpation of idolatries", which implied destruction of sacred places and sacred material, including the burning of many *kipus* (Andean writing system) and multitudes of symbols that supported the history of the Incas, and the state in general.

For example, while the Indian Removal, Dawes, and Termination Acts can all be viewed as legislated attempts to destroy Indigenous *culture*, in the end they all provided greater access to Indian lands and resources, and, as such proffered the federal government a windfall in capital gains. Similarly, while manual labor and boarding schools attempted to extinguish Indian-ness by imposing culturally imperialistic curriculums, they also profited from child labor as well as helped to establish a permanent Indian proletariat (Grande, 2004, p. 27).

In fact, Juneau mentions that education following the Doctrine of Discovery principles played a role in each of the different eras of US-Indigenous Nations relationships : (1) European intrusion; (2) Indian Treaties; (3) Allotment (Dawes act, 1887); (4) Tribal Reorganization (Indian Reorganization Act, 1934); (5) Termination (Termination Act, 1953); and (6) Self-determination (Nixon's "Indian Message" to the Congress, 1970) (Juneau, 2001). With the last treaties and the beginning of allotment, religious and federal Indian boarding schools were instituted in the nineteenth century (Lomawaima, 1999; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006), with the aim of "killing the Indian in the child"⁸⁴. This educational policy remained active into the twentieth century and these boarding schools were especially prominent during the allotment period that is also associated with great assimilationist efforts⁸⁵. After the Meriam report of 1928, which strongly criticized the US Indian Administration and the failures of education in boarding schools, a new era of policies was installed, starting with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The 1934 Act marked a decrease in Federal control and financial aid for education (Juneau, 2001). In 1953, with the adoption of the House Concurrent Resolution 108, the Federal government decided to completely withdraw its obligations towards Indigenous Peoples with whom US government had signed treaties. Resolution 108 also marked a renewal of Termination policies, including termination of 109 specific tribes, and relocation programs paired with the integration of Indigenous children in public schools where it was thought they would learn to become Americans (Juneau, 2001). Finally, following Indigenous activism in the 1960s, the Congress passed the

⁸⁴ In Canada, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report (Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2015b) revealed, Indigenous children were abused, physically and sexually, and many of them died in the residential schools. Thus, the impacts of Indian residential schools went far beyond assimilation of the Indigenous children and disconnecting them from their identities. The physical and sexual abuse many children experienced at these schools, often by multiple perpetrators and many for the entire duration of their childhood, marked the Indigenous future.

⁸⁵ Some Indian Boarding Schools still exist today, I heard about some of them in Montana, and read an article about the students' experience in one of them in Wyoming (Shrank, 2016: <http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/todays-remaining-native-american-boarding-schools-are-far-cry-their-history#stream/0>). However, the educational policy of "killing the Indian in the child" seems to have lasted until the 1970s, and the experience would today be different in boarding schools. Shrank still reports how they are seen as a mean to marginalize children from their Tribes and families.

Indian Civil Rights Act (1968) and President Nixon addressed political changes towards self-determination in 1970, which eventually led to a new era in educational policies, with the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975.

The history of education as a tool for colonization and for the US nation building (and creation of its citizenry) is somewhat mirrored in the Canadian use of Indian day and residential schools. In Canada, First Nations who negotiated the numbered treaties all included clauses regarding responsibility for the implementation and control of education. According to Carr-Stewart, this was done in the perspective of access to formal education in a way that would combine it with Indigenous practices, for future generations to prosper (Carr-Stewart, 2001, pp. 126-128). These treaties all stipulated that schools and teachers should be provided on reserve *when "Indians" of the band would desire it*. Hence, Indigenous education, controlled by each Indigenous communities at all levels⁸⁶, is often interpreted as a "treaty right", "obtained in return for the sharing of land" (Stonechild, 2006, p. 1). However, the implementation of Indigenous education by the Canadian government was ultimately defined by the Indian Act. Specifically, the 1884 amendment of the Indian Act, gave the powers to the "Superintendent" to decide to which religious denomination(s) the teachers in the schools on the reserves should belong. Later, the 1894 amendment of the Act provided for compulsory school attendance for Indigenous children. Those politics were in part informed by the 1879 *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* directed Nicholas Flood Davin to the Ministry of Interior and which reported on the US experience with industrial and boarding schools and provided recommendations on how to adapt the model in Canada. Finally, if the treaty promises were interpreted by Indigenous nations as having the potential to include higher education, the assimilationist policies of the Indian Act even included the "enfranchisement" from Indian status of any individual who would obtain a university degree⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ Stonechild reminds us that, from an Indigenous perspective, education right never excluded the concept of higher education, which he describes as traditionally being "lifelong pursuit of specialized knowledge in order to become hunters, warriors, political leaders, or herbalists" (Stonechild, 2006, p. 21).

⁸⁷ These assimilationist and "enfranchisement" policies were part of the Canadian attempt of domestication of Indigenous Peoples, through the application of the Indian Act and the tools it implements, such as the reserve (land) and band (sovereignty) system, the residential schools (Christianization and assimilation through education), and the administration of Indian status (identity erasure and assimilation).

The domestication of Indigenous issues in education, and other political spheres in general, is still true today. In spite of all the changes that were made in the policies towards Indigenous Peoples, following decades of Indigenous activism and struggle for Indigenous rights, Canada still subordinates Indigenous sovereignty, rights, and land titles to the national interest.

In Andean countries, the assimilationist policies in education and through land tenure/use were also closely related. For example, in Ecuador, assimilationist policies, such as the 1929-1930 "integrative educational policy", created by the Ministries of Social Welfare and Agriculture, prioritized teaching Spanish language as an instrument for "integration" (J. García et al., 2004, p. 273). Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, Ecuador had no other politics of Indigenous education than the missionaries "providing education" as they wished. President Eloy Alfaro (1895-1901 and 1906-1911), a liberal political figure who fought to repatriate powers from the Church to the State, transferred to *hacenderos* the responsibility to provide education for the children of their "employee". Therefore, until the 1929-30 policies, Indigenous Ecuadorian children were offered education by those who would exploit their labour⁸⁸. With the Nation building process of the 1930s, and the emerging national discourses, came along intercultural politics in education (Zapata Silva, 2013) which were directed towards Indigenous Peoples as a means to their integration in the citizenry. The imagination of a "Raza nacional" (national race) as a coherent and homogeneous population was proposed to answer the "Indian problem", thinking that Indigenous Peoples could be absorbed in a certain *mestizaje*. This idea came with the formation of different ideas of "mestizos": the Cholo, pejorative term designing "Mestizo Indios"; and the "raza nacional" thought of as constituted of Westernized Mestizos (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010).

Just as the North American educational policies reflected core tenets of the Doctrine of Discovery and its supremacy logic, Andean states' perspective on Indigenous Peoples, supported by social sciences and Western knowledge, situated them as inferior people to be salvaged. In this perspective, the destiny of Indigenous Peoples was to join/be brought into the Raza/Criollo (*mestizaje*), similar to the idea of "killing the Indian, saving the child" that had oriented boarding/residential schools in twentieth century North America. Other emerging national proposals included, for example, "*Indianizar la nación*", with the creation of a folklore based on Indigenous Peoples, with the goal of bringing them into the national body. These discourses were supported by anthropology, archaeology, and history, disciplines that become integration tools (Zapata Silva, 2013), developing a certain knowledge for the political goals of the "Raza

⁸⁸ Similar to the North American politics of teaching Indigenous children menial work (Grande, 2004; Lomawaima and McCarty, 2006).

nacional”⁸⁹. Intercultural and bilingual education, as proposed by the nation-states from the 1950s on, was directed at the integration of Indigenous Peoples into Westernized systems, identities, and society, in order to secure a national "race" and citizenry. In this context, pedagogy and education were used as tools for integration into the national society, just as it was the case in North America.

All countries reviewed in this section moved from an assertion of Indigenous inferiority that justified the colonization of American territories and exploitation of Indigenous labour, to the need to fully "integrate" (as in, complete assimilation) Indigenous Peoples. The underlying logic is that Indigenous Peoples are seen as obstacles to the national affirmation of identities, legitimate sovereignties, and economic development and progress. From Canada to Bolivia, a common theme of the modern states is the consideration of Indigenous Peoples as a "problem" that needs to be addressed either by annihilation, dispossession, or diverse forms of assimilation. While assimilationist measures might have included forced displacement/settlement of populations, or forced integration of Indigenous populations in exploitative forms of labour, other tactics were aiming at the integration of Indigenous Peoples in the citizenry body of the state through cultural and cognitive assimilation (Battiste, 2013; Grande, 2004; Lomawaima, 1999).

The education systems imposed on Indigenous Peoples during centuries of colonial education and national governments' policies of indigenous K-12 education (i.e. integrative educational policy, residential/boarding schools, national mandatory school system, J. García et al., 2004; Lomawaima, 1999; Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010)⁹⁰ are among the most disruptive "cognitive assimilation" practices (Battiste, 1986, 2013). National education systems such as residential/boarding schools and assimilationist programs of intercultural and bilingual education

⁸⁹ See, for example, the work of the first president of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, Manuel Gamio (1992 [1916]).

⁹⁰ Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Dunbar (2010) even argued that Indigenous children's education as it is done up until today, in a forced homogenisation and assimilation perspective, represents a linguistic genocide and crime against humanity. Without acknowledging the ethnocide implied in its Indigenous policies (including education), Canada also recognized in 2008 the assimilationist and colonialist nature of its educational policies towards Indigenous Peoples:

“For more than a century, Indian Residential Schools separated over 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families and communities. In the 1870's, the federal government, partly in order to meet its obligation to educate Aboriginal children, began to play a role in the development and administration of these schools. Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child". Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country” Statement of Apology - to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools, Canada, June 2008: <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649>.

were mainly installed throughout the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. They served the nation-building objectives of nation-states, by dismantling Indigenous modes of knowing, learning, and reproducing socially. Furthermore, the development of national policies of Indigenous education, accompanying the era of nation-state building in the Americas, began at a time when scientific discourses supported beliefs about the superiority of Western/White peoples (Stonechild, 2006), which follows the Doctrine of Discovery's logic.

Part of colonial education beliefs related to the Doctrine of Discovery's Western superiority, such as Civilization and Christian conversion, seems obsolete or politically incorrect today. This does not mean, however, that we overcame these core beliefs in contemporary Indigenous education policies (Lomawaima, 1999, pp. 19-20). To the contrary, Lomawaima (1999) argues that these tenets are repeated today in the schooling systems with the belief that "American Indian children require special pedagogical methods to learn because those children possess peculiar traits or insufficiency" (Lomawaima, 1999, p. 20). The "deficit model" often adopted to address Indigenous students' success in education (Pidgeon, 2008) is a good example of this continuity. Another example, in the content of education, is the image often presented in sociology classes focusing on statistics representing poverty, alcoholism, diabetes, incarceration rates, or low education levels attainment, amongst other problems plaguing Indigenous communities (Tuck, 2009). While these problems are not to be ignored, when presented without the ongoing colonial violence of which they result in great part (Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2014), the danger is to naturalize a racist view of Indigenous communities as problematic and maladaptive or unfit for modernity. Without consideration for the ongoing colonial violence, research and theories emerging from mainstream academy reinforce the DoD's ideas of a somehow mentally, physically or culturally deficient "other" (here, Indigenous Peoples) that requires certain pedagogical methods for their education (Lomawaima, 1999, p. 1)

By failing to address the racial/cultural hierarchies, Indigenous educational policies largely remain rooted in the "deficit" model. For example, since the 1980s Latin American countries pursued a series of educational policies towards *interculturalidad* (interculturality). From the state perspective, interculturality referred to the need for Indigenous children and population to be integrated in the national citizenry body. Thus, intercultural policies served, and continue serving, an integration mechanism targeting Indigenous Peoples. In other words, "special" programs of Intercultural and Bilingual education are created for Indigenous Peoples based on the assumption

that Indigenous students should become bilingual and intercultural, whereas non-Indigenous students could maintain their monolingual/monocultural education (Walsh, 2012, p. 157)⁹¹.

Similarly in North America, when dealing with differences and specifically cultural differences in education, multicultural policies have the tendency to constrain cultural difference by establishing "safe differences" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 53) or a "safety zone of tolerable cultural difference" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 56). In the context of mainstream education, Western cultural norms usually become the standard against which to measure this cultural difference, in "an ongoing struggle over cultural difference and its perceived threat, or benefit, to a sense of shared American [or Canadian] Identity" (p.6). Through that process, Indigenous Peoples are "othered", becoming asterisks in the mainstream system, where that difference is somehow identified as a risk (deficit models, see Solorzano & Yosso, 2001).

Child and Klopotek note that "colonial educational institutions" also strategically "incorporated indigenous cultural practices", while often removing or replacing the political and cultural content of these practices with colonial content and forms (Child & Klopotek, 2014, pp. x-xi). In spite of changes in educational policies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the authors highlight the social relations reproduced in educational systems through racialization and segregation. They write:

Clearly, whites created distinct racial projects for land-based indigenous groups (e.g., Native Americans) and groups racialized solely to exploit their labor (e.g., African Americans), as Patrick Wolfe has discussed elsewhere. Racializations of indigenous groups tend to protect white interests by pushing toward assimilation of indigenous peoples (or, more accurately, of their land) into the dominant society, while racializations of landless groups exploited for their labor protect white interests by keeping this distinction, there is significant overlap in these categories, and Native Americans have been exploited for their labor and historically enslaved, and historically racialized immigrant groups have been coercively assimilated into colonial societies, as well (Child & Klopotek, 2014, p. xi).

⁹¹ Walsh calls this kind of interculturality a functional one, which is different, according to her, to the type of interculturality that Indigenous movements have been demanding and building, especially in Ecuador and Bolivia (Walsh, 2012). She calls that interculturality "critical", and notes that it is linked to a decolonial praxis, questioning the problem of power and racialization implied in the construction of the cultural difference (Walsh, 2012, p. 171). According to her, critical interculturality takes into account the "exclusion, negation and subalternization ontological, and epistemologico-cognitive of the racialized groups and subjects; and the practices - of dehumanization and subordination of knowledges - which gives privilege to one over the other, "naturalizing" the difference and occulting the iniquities that are structured and maintained" (Walsh, 2012, pp. 173, my own translation).

In other words, the educational projects across the Americas are bound to the colonial processes and the resulting social, cultural, and intellectual hierarchies. The authors point to the invisibility of whiteness, and the core role of white supremacy in the racial and colonial processes, as the common social relation sustaining these different colonial educational projects (Child & Klopotek, 2014). The DoD supremacy logic and the hierarchy of knowledge it implies need to be addressed when we consider “reconciliation through education” and “decolonizing the academy”. A first step is to consider how colonial violence has a legacy in our current knowledge institutions, and for the purpose of this dissertation, in the academy.

Continuity of cognitive imperialism in higher education: the colonial legacy of knowledge hierarchies

In spite of all the changes in educational policies in the past century alone, colonial education continues across the Americas (Battiste, 2013; Kuokkanen, 2007; Lomawaima, 1999) and beyond. As education plays a role in the building national narratives and cultures, Battiste (2013) points to the disservice of this same process for Indigenous students: "For Indigenous students, this education has been partial, fragmented, alienating, and disrupting to the inner wholeness that their education trajectory has been. Aboriginal peoples have not participated in [I would say, have been excluded from] Canada's political creation, its socio-cultural transformations, and its goal setting" (Battiste, 2013, p. 163). Consequently, Indigenous Peoples are not considered as part of "mainstream" Canadian education⁹² which results in the exclusion and sometimes even disrespect for Indigenous students and their Peoples in the academy (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

One facet of the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the academy is expressed when looking at the under-representation of Indigenous students, faculty members, and staff (Battiste, 2013).⁹³ The low participation rates of Indigenous Peoples in the academy is a generalized trend throughout the Americas (Mato, 2012; Zapata Silva, 2013)⁹⁴. The lack of will and means to understand the

⁹² Based on this concept of "cognitive imperialism", Battiste argues that curricula are state-sanctioned and standardized, with Eurocentric definitions of what counts as knowledge and ways of knowing (Marie Battiste, 2013). For Battiste, there is a "stream" established through curriculum selection, a mainstream that ignores other possible streams.

To illustrate this point, there was a power point slide, from an unknown author, that was circulating on Facebook, which presents pretty well, and in a synthesized manner, this power relationship. It read: "White privilege is your history being taught as a core class and mine being taught as an elective". I would even add that this is in the best scenario, where Indigenous history is taught, at all, at least as an elective.

⁹³ Considering the actual participation of Indigenous Peoples in mainstream educational system, only 8.6% of Indigenous youth between 25 and 34 years of age had a university diploma in 2006 in Canada, compared to 29.8% of the non-Indigenous youth of the same age (Richards, 2011, p. 8). Universities Canada report that, when taking into account Indigenous Peoples of 25-64 years of age in Canada in 2011, 9.8% would have a university diploma. They base this number on the 2011 Statistics Canada National Household Survey (Universities Canada, 2016). Also, see Dufour (2013) for an example of this exclusion in Quebec, specifically.

In the USA, Brayboy, Fann, Castagno and Solyom report that in 2006, American Indian/Alaska Native youth between 18-24 years of age had the second lowest rate of enrolment in College or University: 26%, while Latina/Latino had 24% enrolment (Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012, p. 54).

⁹⁴ Ecuador estimated in 2004 that 3% of youth between 18-24 years of age who identify as Indigenous attended higher education institutions, compared to the average 14% for the rest of the country's youth - which splits into 14% for the mestizo youth and 19% for the white youth - (Garcia, 2004, cited in Mato, 2012, p. 32). Zapata Silva (2013) adds to this information that Weise (2008) estimated the percentage of Indigenous students in Bolivian universities around 30% of the overall student population (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 186). This might seem a very high number, but when reminded that more than 60% of Bolivian population identifies as Indigenous, the under-representation trend for Indigenous peoples in the academy remains too. Finally, Chile's 2005 census presented 2% of Indigenous Peoples having completed higher education, compared to 6.9% for the non-Indigenous population (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 186).

number of Indigenous students attending and of Indigenous Faculty teaching at mainstream universities (Mato, 2012; Zapata Silva, 2013) is often paired with misconceptions regarding their participation. Moreover, Cote-Meek points at racialization of Indigenous students as an important invisibilizing and excluding dynamics. She explains that when Indigenous students are physically identified as such, they are often associated with stereotypes, biases, and folklorizations that exist in the dominant population (Cote-Meek, 2014). At the same time, when students do not "look" Indigenous, based on the racialized perception of the dominant society, they are often not recognized as such, and absence of Indigenous students is assumed in a certain context ("there are no Indigenous students in my class"). In both cases, Grande argues that "[s]chools have failed to nurture the intellectual development and academic performance of Native children" (Sandy Grande, 2004, p. 20).

In higher education specifically, many factors explain this failure, including systemic barriers for the participation of Indigenous Peoples such as financial, geographical, social, historical and cultural barriers (Assembly of First Nations, 2011)⁹⁵. Cultural barriers include the exclusion of Indigenous languages, cultures, and knowledges from higher education institutions (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, 2012; Longboat, 2013; Mato, 2012).⁹⁶

While numbers are only one facet of the problem, these show a tangible reality: Indigenous Peoples are under-represented in the academy, which certainly constitutes exclusion. The low

⁹⁵ A brief review of general reports on Indigenous post-secondary education in Canada indicates that important barriers still exist today for Indigenous students in the actual post-secondary education system. For example, reports by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), 2010), the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation (2004) and by Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2008) mention the following systemic barriers:

- historical barriers, including assimilation-focused education policies;
- socio-cultural and personal barriers such as the lack of reflection of Aboriginal worldviews, communities, learning styles, the lack of role models, social discrimination, unemployment, family responsibilities;
- educational and bureaucratic barriers including the lack of academic preparation and the prerequisites for some programs;
- financial barriers
- geographic barriers.

(Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), 2010, pp. 7-8; Orr, 2008, pp. 28-36; R.A. Malatest & Associates, 2004, pp. 11-16).

⁹⁶ Accordingly, a review of general reports on Indigenous Higher Education (IHE) in Canada indicates that important "barriers" still exist today for Indigenous students in the actual higher education system: historical barriers (assimilation-focused education policies), socio-cultural and personal barriers (no reflection of Aboriginal worldviews, communities, learning styles, lack of role models, social discrimination, unemployment, family responsibilities), educational and bureaucratic barriers (lack of academic preparation and prerequisites), financial barriers, geographic barriers, for example (Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), 2010, pp. 7-8; Orr, 2008, pp. 28-36; Malatest & Associates, 2004, pp. 11-16).

participation of Indigenous Peoples in the academy is aggravated by their invisibilization in cases such as universities that do not keep track of their Indigenous students and faculty members and staff (as is the case in Latin America Mato, 2012; Zapata Silva, 2013)⁹⁷. In a deeper sense, invisibilizing Indigenous Peoples in the academy happens through their exclusion from the history, the theories, and the content in general that is taught in institutions of higher education (Battiste, 2013; Kuokkanen, 2007; Zapata Silva, 2013).

In the Latin American context, the academy is generally identified as a historical space of negation of Indigenous identities and knowledges (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 200).⁹⁸ Walsh argues that educational institutions are spaces of construction and reproduction of values, attitudes, and identities linked to the historically hegemonic power of the State (Walsh, 2012, p. 156). In her book on Indigenous intellectuals in Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador, Zapata cites Estelina Quinatoa on the challenge of maintaining an Indigenous identity and culture while going through academic training (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 199). Zapata points to the cultural violence that Indigenous Peoples have experienced in these Andean countries, and how the violence is reproduced in an institution that transmits the "legitimate" knowledge and cultural history of that society (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 198). Similarly, Mato mentions the lack of programs and curriculum content that would actually address Indigenous communities' needs and interests, and incorporate their knowledges and languages (Mato, 2012, p. 20). Hence, while financial, historical and geographic barriers complicate Indigenous participation in the academy, cultural hierarchy and exclusion – linked to the DoD supremacy logic – are also key factors.

⁹⁷ The tracking of Indigenous students' recruitment, retention and graduation numbers are also very limited in some cases in Canada. Concordia, to give one example, currently only gives one option for self-identification on application papers: register as "Canadian First Nation". That excludes the possibility of self-identifying as Inuit and Métis, or even as Indigenous person from abroad Canada.

⁹⁸ Even in the famous Liberation Pedagogy movement, led by Paolo Freire (Freire, 2005 [1970]), as Tuck and Yang point out:

"Freire situates the work of liberation in the minds of the oppressed, an abstract category of dehumanized worker vis-a-vis a similarly abstract category of oppressor. [...] Under Freire's paradigm, it is unclear who the oppressed are, even more ambiguous who the oppressors are, and it is inferred throughout that an innocent third category of enlightened human exists: "those who suffer with [the oppressed] and fight at their side" (Freire, 2000, p. 42). These words, taken from the opening dedication of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, invoke the same settler fantasy of mutuality based on sympathy and suffering" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 19-20).

My understanding is that the marxist/dialectical analysis of Freire, while enlightening and valuable on many levels, still fails to address the specific colonial relationship prevailing societies throughout the Americas, and the educational systems they developed. Questions around Indigenous and Western knowledges systems are not addressed in his work.

Similarly, in the North American context, to explain the low numbers of Indigenous students in higher education, Brayboy *et al.* point to the cultural differences, discontinuities, and "competing worldviews and conceptions of legitimate knowledge" (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 61) present in colleges and universities, or "predominantly white institutions" (Windchief, 2015, p. 352). Such factors, they argue, have a detrimental impact on Indigenous students' experiences of college and university. They cite various authors whose research reveals how "mainstream universities are not hospitable places for Indigenous students" (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 63), and how these institutions' ideas of what supports or hinders Indigenous students' success does not align with what Indigenous students themselves identify as persistence factors (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 64; Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014). Curriculum and institutional structures are rarely questioned for revision, even if "for many Indigenous students there is neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivation to learn the overwhelmingly white, middle-class content or to engage in the types of learning activities found in mainstream postsecondary programs" (Ball, 2004, pp. 457-458). In that sense, the authors conclude:

There are significant challenges facing Indigenous students who want to enrol in and complete college. There are few Indigenous role models, which is a pattern likely to continue unless the initial college-going and completion rates are not addressed immediately. The cultural differences between institutions are intense and, in some cases, counterproductive. Without some clearer sense of how education serves a public good, that individuals can succeed in college without assimilating, and that universities can shift their focuses and policies to see the needs of a broad range of students, there will be continued challenges (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 71).

The circular problematic described here highlights a situation that cannot improve in the long-term without systemic change. The provision of programs by institutions to support individuals in achieving academic success might in fact contribute very little if the core values of the system itself are left unchallenged⁹⁹. If an Indigenous student decides to follow through their education to the graduate level, Brayboy *et al.* argue that "[t]he literature describing the experiences of Native

⁹⁹ For example, Mato notes that Latin American countries have developed, since the 1980s, programs of financial support and of enrolment to support Indigenous individuals in the academy. However, he mentions that these initiatives have not addressed the inequities that individuals then face inside the academy, and how the success can be difficult given the lack of relevance and cultural diversity in the programs offered (Mato, 2012, pp. 19-20). Similarly, Marie Battiste, Lynn Bell and Len Findley wrote an article (2002) mention that even though there have been efforts to render post-secondary education accessible to aboriginal peoples (with financial support) and efforts in retention of these students, there is no real change in the presuppositions and content of university curricula (Marie Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002, p. 83). They identify as a problem the absence, ignorance or marginalization of indigenous histories, knowledges, etc. in universities, and

doctoral students consistently describes obstacles to completing doctoral work that include feeling of isolation and academic and cultural alienation, racism and discrimination, lack of Indigenous role models, lack of academic guidance, and financial stressors" (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 78). Among the experiences linked to racism and discrimination, they mention facing stereotypes, microaggressions and silencing:

Several authors described how Native students experienced being silenced in their programs, resulting in withdrawal from classroom discussions and other interactions with faculty and peers (Ballew, 1996; Buckley, 1997; Henning, 1999; Lacourt, 2003; Rodriguez-Rabin, 2003; Shotton, 2008). The act of silencing students is blatantly racist and at times aggressive. Some Indigenous students explain that it was a combination of treatment in the classroom as well as cultural socialization that made it incredibly difficult, and at times painful, for them to speak out in class, articulate opposing points of view, and question cherished theories and academic assumptions. Lacourt (2003, pp.288-289) described an experience where she had a different interpretation of theory used in class and spoke up for the first time in that course; the response was absolute silence from the students and professor (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 83).

Hence, the experiences and knowledges that Indigenous students bring to the university, and which inform their interpretations of the theories and content taught in class, are often not recognized as valid. Addressing this lack of recognition of Indigenous student's specific and distinct cultural and historical trajectories, Zapata also contends that equality and meritocracy have been used as excuses to ignore cultural and historical differences when it comes to Indigenous students (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 197). That is to say, equality and meritocracy are used in a hegemonic context of western knowledge and of settler society experiences normalization. This in turn creates systemic barriers and imposed cultural discontinuities, that can explain at least partly the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the academy.

The exclusions and invisibility described here constitute a continuity of the colonial hierarchies that installed a "Western privilege" or "white privilege" or a "settler privilege" (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014) in nation-states of the Americas. These hierarchies and privilege, in turn, are supported by the intellectual tradition that accompanied the Doctrine of Discovery (Williams, 2012a). Batiste (2013) argues that while it might no longer be acceptable to discriminate Indigenous Peoples based their skin colour or "race", their intellectual traditions continue to be rejected, based on colonial cultural hierarchies. Battiste articulates the means by which this

rejection becomes institutionalized in the academy, mainly through curricular selection and exclusion:

Selecting curricular knowledge requires that decisions made include the overriding issues of power, status, and legitimation, as well as racism, hierarchy, and normativity. These decisions entail questions about whose knowledge is included, whose languages are considered legitimate vehicles for carrying the knowledge, who are the people who make these decisions, how will their choice be made, and what governs those choices? (Battiste, 2013, p. 105).

Accordingly, the systemic barriers and cultural discontinuities that Brayboy *et al.* and Zapata Silva described for the North American and Andean contexts result from continuous colonial hierarchies institutionalized in the academy. Colonial legacies in the academy thus entail the institutionalization of hierarchies of knowledge, and what Battiste has called "cognitive imperialism" (Battiste, 2005)¹⁰⁰.

In other words, universities as knowledge institutions inherited the colonial hierarchies between Western and Indigenous Peoples, and their knowledges. This is not surprising, considering that Western universities exist in the Americas, because of the colonial enterprise. According to Mihesuah and Wilson,

Since every academic institution sits on Indigenous land, that oppression was first corporeal; ultimately, the institutions exist because Indigenous peoples were first dispossessed. That oppression continued in a less tangible but no less destructive way with the establishment of academic disciplines that exploited Indigenous peoples as their subjects of research in ways that reinforced the superior position of EuroAmerican peoples while subjugating their subjects of study (Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004, pp. 5-6).

Following this description, the dispossession process is in great part sustained by academic practices and research (Grande, 2004; A. Simpson, 2014; Smith, 2012 [1999]). Accordingly, the absence, ignorance or marginalization of Indigenous knowledges in social sciences, and more broadly, in the Academy, is ingrained in the colonial structure of knowledge. In terms of concrete

¹⁰⁰ Cognitive imperialism is a form of manipulation used in Eurocentric educational systems. Built on damaging assumptions and imperialist knowledge, educational curricula and pedagogy are built on a monocultural foundation of knowledge, and privileges it through public education (Battiste, 1986). Cognitive imperialism relies on colonial dominance as a foundation of thought, language, values and frames of reference as reflected in the language of instruction, curricula, [...] texts, and methods (Apple, 1982, 1997; Bear Nicholas, 2008; Farmer, 2004). As a result of cognitive imperialism in education, cultural minorities in Canada have been led to believe that their poverty and powerlessness are the result of their cultural and racial origins rather than the power relations that create inequality and capitalistic economy (Battiste, 2013, p. 161).

programs and courses in the academy, it implies the conception of European heritage as being objective, real knowledge towards which everyone should be oriented (Battiste et al., 2002, p. 83). In turn, this leads to cognitive imperialism over other knowledges and peoples into the Western traditions of knowledges. Battiste et al. argue that

The broad and entrenched assumption of most postsecondary curricula is that Eurocentric knowledge represents the neutral and necessary story for "all" of us. This discourse of neutrality combines with the universities' serial obstruction or evasion of Aboriginal knowledge and its producers so as to shelter and sanitize a destructively colonial and Eurocentric legacy. Both Eurocentric discourse and anti-Aboriginal resistance attempt to impose cognitive assimilation on Aboriginal students while denying the reform required to achieve a respectful and productive liberation for Aboriginal peoples from the educational apparatuses of colonialism (Battiste et al., 2002, p. 83).

Universities play a fundamental role, as training institutions for the professionals of our societies, in maintaining the conception of Western modernity as superior to realities, experiences, and sciences of other cultures and societies (Smith, 2012 [1999])¹⁰¹.

Therefore, following the history of colonization and the socio-cultural hierarchies it has created, and since this colonization is supported by theoretical justifications (language of savagery, and evolutionist theories in social sciences), the knowledge structure in our institutions includes colonial hierarchies. In spite of all the work done in "post-colonial" perspective, universities are still colonial¹⁰². Despite the efforts to include Indigenous issues into different programs the

¹⁰¹ Recounting her own experience in the academy, Smith describes the antagonistic and dehumanizing representations of Indigenous Peoples in education, in the following manner:

"My own academic background is in education, and in my field there is a very rich history of research which attempts to legitimate views about Indigenous peoples which have been antagonistic and dehumanizing. Discussions around the concept of intelligence, on discipline, or on factors that contribute to achievement depend heavily on notions about the Other. The organization of school knowledge, the hidden curriculum and the representation of difference in texts and school practices all contain discourses which have serious implications for Indigenous students as well as for other minority ethnic groups" (Smith, 2012 [1999], pp. 11-12).

¹⁰² I am aware that the idea that "mainstream" Western knowledge developed in the academy has political implications is not a new one: post-modern literature questioned "modern science" and its rational objectivity and the dichotomies that it creates, as being part of metanarratives (Lyotard, 1979), of a modernist worldview (Bowman, 1997; Latour, 1991), and post-structural literature questioned scientific knowledge and disciplines in terms of the political objectives of the dominant society, group, class or institutions that produced and imposed them (Foucault, 1966, 1969). This questioning of science's objectivity and political agenda also challenged, in anthropology, the objectivity of the modernist vision of "the other" as fixed in primitive times, and of the "self" as subject knower of the universal human nature. Instead of objective facts, these conceptions were reframed in the post-modern movement as emerging from "specific cultural codes of a historically specific society" (Bowman, 1997, p. 41), thus articulating a more general critique of social sciences' pretensions to objectivity. The questioning of objectivity is also paralleled with the questioning of social institutions producing the knowledge, and their political role in the power dynamics of the society (Boltanski, 2011). In this context, it is possible to consider the social role of the knowledge produced, structured and

academic assumptions are still Eurocentric, reaffirming "colonial encounters in the name of excellence, integration, and modernity. Here too Aboriginal peoples' achievements, knowledge, histories, and perspectives have been ignored, rejected, suppressed, marginalized, or underutilized" (Battiste et al., 2002, p. 85).

Considering the colonial hierarchies built between knowledge systems such as "Western sciences" and "Indigenous knowledges" and the role of positivist but also post-modern theories to support these hierarchies, Snively and Corsiglia (2001) mention how Western academy has been caught in the dichotomy between (1) modernist perception of Indigenous Peoples as being "unscientific because they are based on magical beliefs and/or because they lack the benefit of the Western scientific method of empirical observation and experiment" (Snively & Corsiglia, 2001, p. 23); and (2) the relativist perspective that still rejects Indigenous science because there is no such thing as scientific knowledge: there are different world views (Snively & Corsiglia, 2001). The authors conclude:

"The first group believes that Science (with a capital "S") is an invention of recent European culture. The second group professes that there can be no science (with a capital "S") because there is no Reality (with a capital "R"), only unique cultural definitions of reality. Neither perspective leaves room for TEK and modern science to join forces to the end of achieving an understanding of reality superior to both" (Snively & Corsiglia, 2001, p. 23).

Nevertheless, according to Snively and Corsiglia (2001), the amount of knowledge developed by Indigenous Peoples and integrated into "modern" sciences and technologies should suffice to validate the existence of Indigenous real sciences. They mention, amongst other things, the development of food plants that feed some three-fifths of humanity, including thousands of varieties of potatoes, oilseed, squashes, peppers, corn, pumpkins, sunflowers, and beans. Rubber use, vulcanizing, and also platinum metallurgy, as well as mathematics and astronomy with calendars more accurate than those used by Europeans at the time of contact, are also part of the knowledge they highlight. They also mention medicinal knowledge and conclude that "most people do not realize that we are benefiting from the labors of Aboriginal scientists and doctors

transmitted in mainstream institutions of higher education, and to critically consider the role of social scientists in the imposition of a colonial social order through academic institutions.

almost every time we dress, dine, travel, or visit our physicians." (Snively & Corsiglia, 2001, pp. 13-14)

The hierarchy between Western sciences and Indigenous knowledges quite often results in the exclusion of Indigenous knowledges from social sciences. When effectively considered, Indigenous knowledges tend to be included as content within a Western scientific framework (Bala & Gheverghese Joseph, 2007), mostly as objects of study. Rarely are Indigenous Peoples, and in a broader sense non-Western people, seen as the audience addressed by social scientists (Kuwayama, 2003). In an even broader sense of the difference between Western social sciences and "natives" in the sense of people belonging to groups studied in social sciences, Kuwayama describes different means by which "native" knowledges and knowers are still represented as inferior:

First, native texts (i.e. literature written in the local language) are often taken too lightly. Generally, outsiders are not in a position to take on board the nuances and complexities of native scholarship; indeed, they often disregard it when they do not consider it directly relevant to their immediate research. Second, native intellectuals tend to be regarded as "knowledgeable informants" rather than as equal research partners. Outside researchers effectively monopolize the right to interpret the information provided by their "informants". Third, native discourse tends to be seen as "propaganda" promoting a particular political position effectively keeping native communities outside the respectable academic community. Fourth, the researchers' moral responsibility towards their research subjects is frequently evaded in the name of scholarship. Native claims that outsider representations harm their interests and reputation are often not considered carefully enough. If outside researchers fail to respond to native objections, this can be experienced as hidden, yet deep-seated, contempt for native intelligence (Kuwayama, 2003, p. 13).

While Kuwayama is talking about "native" in the sense of non-Western knowledges and non-Western social scientists, I argue that this applies to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous scholars. There is a deep-seated tendency of thinking we can articulate, in social sciences, abstract theories based on the study of other knowledge systems without really considering seriously others' interpretations, knowledges and theories on their own culture. The extraction of information and intellectual labours thus happens with settler researchers who systematically study Indigenous Peoples and analyse them with their own worldviews and understandings (Smith, 2012 [1999]). Bala and Gheverghese Joseph (Bala & Gheverghese Joseph, 2007, p. 54) warn against this type of "one-sided attempt to exploit traditional knowledge to advance science, by using traditional techniques and data to further articulate modern scientific theoretical and methodological programmes". They mention that Indigenous knowledges are not only a set of practices and body

of information, but also imply theoretical frameworks and methods that ought to be considered if Western sciences are to establish real, equitable, dialogues with other sciences¹⁰³.

To summarize, there is an exclusion of Indigenous knowledges in the academy and I contend that it is linked to the Doctrine of Discovery, the language of savagery, and the colonial structure of knowledge and sciences. These elements, combined, have supported a hierarchical relationship between Western and Indigenous knowledges and institutionalized what Battiste calls cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2005) into academic institutions. Thus, the Doctrine of Discovery, as the body of laws and principles that allowed the colonization of Indigenous lands and labour throughout the continent, and the imposition of settler states' sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples, was applied through education, and continues to support the knowledge structure in academic settings. Therefore, the academy is always marked by a geopolitical situation (Escobar & Ribeiro, 2008) which establishes the link between knowledge, academy, and the world-systems (Wallerstein, 2004). Consequently, any consideration for decolonization in the Americas requires taking into account the geopolitics of knowledge (Mignolo, 2002) and the role of higher education in colonization and decolonization processes.

A clear understanding of colonial processes, as elaborated here, was necessary to begin thinking about decolonization as the counterbalance to these processes. I presented colonial education as an implementation tool for the DoD, and higher education as an institution that maintains the knowledge hierarchies implied in the DoD. If education is a site of colonization, it logically follows that education, and specifically higher education, is an appropriate site for decolonial projects. In the next chapter, I define processes of decolonization in order to situate Indigenous higher education as a tool for decolonization.

¹⁰³ Bala and Gheverghese Joseph (Bala & Gheverghese Joseph, 2007, p. 47) mention the literature on the "hidden dialogue between western science and other traditions of knowledge." showing a great deal of knowledge transmission from areas east of Europe (such as China and India) back to the west (Europe). But these contributions are not limited to Eurasian exchanges, and they most certainly included Indigenous Peoples of the Americas' scientific contribution.

CHAPTER 3: DECOLONIZATION

Having established the Doctrine of Discovery as the colonial framework in the Americas, I now turn my attention to Indigenous resistance and decolonial projects in the face of the DoD. The objective is to situate Indigenous higher education (IHE) as a tool for decolonization, which requires the establishment of a decolonial framework. In the context of higher education, Andreotti et al. state that since "colonization affects nearly every dimension of being, [...] decolonization has multiple meanings, and the desires and investments that animate it are diverse, contested, and at times, at odds with one another" (de Oliveira Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew, & Hunt, 2015, p. 22).¹⁰⁴ In the Americas, where the Doctrine of Discovery legitimizes settler-states, colonization has indeed many facets, from claims to land ownership and sovereignty, to enforced educational systems and knowledge hierarchies. Any definition of decolonization in this setting should address these diverse facets, which I contend are included in decolonial projects implemented in Indigenous higher education. This chapter therefore presents dimensions of decolonization, such as: (1) political/legal resistance to the settler nation-state structures; (2) Indigenous life projects and futurities expressed in decolonial projects reclaiming Indigenous intellectual traditions; and (3) the unsettling of knowledge hierarchies with Indigenous relational knowledges. The implication is that IHE is a tool for decolonization because it is a site of articulation of these three dimensions.

The conceptualization of decolonization based on these three dimensions is not a coincidence; it follows definitions articulated by authors I used in previous chapter to define colonization – Tuck&Yang, Coulthard and Mignolo – who also offer useful definitions of decolonization. It is

¹⁰⁴ The authors proceed to a mapping of the meanings and practices attributed to decolonization in higher education, and come with categories of 'soft- reform' space, 'radical-reform' space, and 'beyond-reform' space (de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 25). They argue that the 'soft-reform space' focuses on the concept of inclusion, while the 'radical-reform' space recognizes epistemological dominance by realizing "analyses that highlight the historical, discursive, and affective dynamics that ground hegemonic and ethnocentric practices" (de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 26). The beyond-reform spaces, in turn, recognize ontological dominance, "exercised primarily through the conditioning of particular ways of being that, in turn, prescribe particular ways of knowing" (de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 27). Thus, according to them, "Analyses in this space connect different dimensions of oppression and reject the idea that the mere addition of other ways of knowing (through a critique of epistemological dominance) will ultimately change the system" (Ibid). The authors add: "If we approach decolonization through Cartesian, self-, logo-, and anthropo-centric forms of agency, we may unintentionally enact precisely the dominance we seek to address" (de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 35).

based on their work that I came to understand “decolonial projects” in higher education and the relationship between decolonization processes, decoloniality, and Indigenous futurity.

According to Tuck and Yang, decolonization implies answering complex colonial processes that the authors describe as interruption and violence to Indigenous relationship with land that are socioeconomic, “[e]pistemological, ontological, and cosmological” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). As a result, decolonization is not limited to legal and political solutions to the socioeconomic violence. Rather, it entails philosophical dimensions that can sustain alternative socio-cultural and political projects for Indigenous Peoples, that are not confined to the colonial context. Tuck and Yang suggest an ethic of incommensurability in which decolonial projects do not answer the settler anxiety of reconciliation but rather go “elsewhere”. In other words, decolonization entails futurities that can be incommensurable to settler futurity. In that perspective, decolonization is that which “brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1).¹⁰⁵ Decolonization can therefore be conceptualized as the project of forming alternatives to actual colonial structures, based on Indigenous life projects and futurities, such as those articulated in Indigenous higher education.

Similarly, Coulthard argues that decolonization goes beyond dismantling exploitative economic relationships and includes discursive power structures supporting these relationships. Coulthard explains:

“decolonization must directly confront more than mere economic relations; it has to account for the multifarious ways in which capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and the totalizing character of state power interact with one another to form the constellation

¹⁰⁵ Tuck and Yang warn against the use of the concept for anything that “we want to do to improve our societies and schools” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1). The authors warn against social justice projects that would drive on the “redistribution of Native land/life as common-wealth” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 27). These projects are incommensurable with what decolonizing the Americas would eventually mean: that “all land is repatriated and all settlers become landless” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 27).

In Tuck and Yang terms, decolonization is incommensurable with other social justice and anti-imperial struggles: “Breaking the settler colonial triad, in direct terms, means repatriating land to sovereign Native tribes and nations, abolition of slavery in its contemporary forms, and the dismantling of the imperial metropole. Decolonization “here” is intimately connected to anti-imperialism elsewhere. However, decolonial struggles here/there are not parallel, not shared equally, nor do they bring neat closure to the concerns of all involved - particularly not for settlers. Decolonization is not equivocal to other anti-colonial struggles. It is incommensurable” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 31). I understand this incommensurability of decolonization described by Tuck and Yang, in relation to what Mignolo describes as de-linking from Western modern/colonial matrix of power. If other social justice or anti-imperial projects might drive on ideas of progress, development, human rights, civil rights, or any other projects that uses Indigenous land for a common, universal goal (equality, fraternity, for example), then they are not decolonial.

of power relations that sustain colonial patterns of behavior, structures, and relationships" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 14).

In order to confront the power structures (capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy) that support the colonial state power in its relation to Indigenous Peoples, Coulthard suggests a resurgent politics of recognition that acknowledges "the transformative role that critically revived Indigenous cultural practices might play in the construction of alternatives to the colonial project of genocide and land dispossession" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 23). For Coulthard, resurgence represents "an alternative politics of recognition, one that is less oriented around attaining legal and political recognition by the state, and more about Indigenous Peoples empowering themselves through cultural practices of individual and collective self-fashioning that seek to prefigure radical alternatives to the structural and subjective dimensions of colonial power" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 18). That is to say, Indigenous cultures bring about concepts and ideals that have a revolutionary potential in the sense that they represent real alternatives to the current socio-political and cultural system. Such concepts and ideas are articulated in educational projects, for example.

Thus, as conceptualized by Tuck and Yang, and by Coulthard, decolonization includes not only legal and political sovereignty, but also ways of thinking about the world, economy, politics, and cultural collaboration, that differ from Western ones. Similarly, Mignolo understands decolonization as an enactment of broader decoloniality¹⁰⁶ which consists in political and epistemological projects disengaging and de-linking from Western epistemology (Mignolo, 2011). While decolonization and decoloniality are complementary according to Mignolo, he also explains that the modernity/coloniality collective prefers the term decoloniality to decolonization for two main reasons: first, it distinguishes between the decolonization processes associated with revolutions and independences of the colonies, which were far from decolonizing the relationship between settler states and Indigenous Peoples; and secondly, "decoloniality" refers to the four spheres of the colonial matrix of power (control of the economy, of authority, of gender and sexuality, and of knowledge and subjectivity), and the delinking of these spheres from the colonial Western modern project.

¹⁰⁶ "when Anibal Quijano introduced the concept of coloniality, and suggested disengaging and delinking from Western epistemology, he conceived that project as decolonization: decoloniality became an epistemic and political project (Mignolo, 2011, p. xxv).

Understanding decoloniality in relation to alternative proposals to the project of modernity/coloniality, Mignolo contends that

the rhetoric of modernity is a rhetoric of salvation (by conversion yesterday, by development today), but in order to implement what the rhetoric preaches, it is necessary to marginalize or destroy whatever gets in the way of modernity. It so happens that not everyone believes in the salvation being proposed, and those who don't either react against (resistance) or engage in a critical analysis of the situation in order to move in a different direction (re-existence) (Mignolo, 2011, p. xxv).

This conceptualization of decoloniality opens the door to *decolonial projects*, or socio-political and cultural projects which rely on alternative rhetoric and ideals. Similar to modernity rhetoric and ideals, however, decolonial projects might be idealistic, and yet bear practical consequences.

In the perspective of modernity/coloniality framework that Mignolo embraces, decolonial projects often emerge from non-Western epistemologies that, in spite of their marginalization (or colonization) by the colonial/modern world-system (Wallerstein, 2004), continuously resist and re-exist in different forms¹⁰⁷. While modernity/coloniality as a Western project creates a "colonial difference" (Mignolo, 2002) – or the marginalization/destruction of everything that does not fit the "modern" order¹⁰⁸ – resistance and re-existence are continuous, even if displaced to the margins and existing beyond the ever-pushing border of the modernity/coloniality. It is in this "border thinking" positionality (Mignolo, 2011; Quijano, 2007) that decolonial projects exist. Furthermore, Mignolo argues that the resistance movements go back to the beginning of the colonial era, and continue today with current Indigenous movements¹⁰⁹ - most of the decolonial examples Mignolo uses come from Andean Indigenous societies (Mignolo, 2011).

¹⁰⁷ The concept allows for acknowledging Indigenous resistance from the beginning of the colonial enterprise. Mignolo writes: "Decolonial thinking materialized, however, at the very moment in which the colonial matrix of power was being put in place, in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. And decolonial thinking is always synonymous with decoloniality, to distinguish the new meaning from the legacies of the concept of decolonization" (Mignolo, 2011, p. xxiv). Thus, decoloniality allows, to a certain point, a broader perspective, both in time and in terms of the dimensions considered in decolonial projects.

¹⁰⁸ For example, historically, the colonial formation and endurance of the settler-state is dependant of the erasure of Indigenous Peoples' continuity and endurance as Peoples, which in turn depend on expansive and fluid principles of kinship. In this context, and following colonial process of settler-state nation building, even Indigenous families' kinship structures were forced into "modern" (Western) nuclear, heterosexual and patriarchal structures with institutions such as the monogamous marriage, and the patriarchal land tenure that comes with it (TallBear, 2016b). The nuclear-family structure was therefore forced on Indigenous Peoples as part of a series of colonial policies restraining them conceptually and physically to "save the man and kill the Indian" (TallBear, 2016a).

¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, it is important to consider the ongoing resistance and possibilities for decolonization that answer to the ongoing colonial violence. Ignoring or concealing this continuous resistance would frame Indigenous Peoples in

Mignolo's framework, which includes the projects that people have used to resist to coloniality from its beginning, speaks to the "elsewhere" that Tuck and Yang conceive as decolonial (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 36). These two definitions of decolonization/decolonial projects include resistance to the dispossession of Indigenous land, to the encroachment on Indigenous sovereignty, and to the attempted genocides of Indigenous societies and cultures. This also relates to the resurgence that Coulthard advocates for: beyond resistance, (re)existence and (re)enactment of Indigenous Peoples' relations to their communities, their culture, and their lands, can be conceived as decolonial projects that have been ongoing throughout the centuries of colonial violence. The three definitions of decolonization/decoloniality point to Indigenous alternatives to the modern, settler, colonial structures (both material and subjective) of our society.

Following these definitions, decolonization not only entails the unveiling of, and resistance to, colonial violence, as I articulated it in the previous chapter. It also involves the imagination of what could be, beyond colonization, through decolonial projects. As Battiste argues, decolonization in education includes a cycle involving four steps which she defines as:

- (1) Mapping colonialism: "mapping the contours of the ideas that have shaped the last era of domination underpinning modern society and the varied faces of colonization as it is maintained in the present era" (Battiste, 2000, p. xxiii);
- (2) Diagnosing colonialism: "unravelling of their experience, whether they are the colonizers or the colonized. [...] It goes beyond the practice of colonial oppression to explore the unquestioned and conflicting assumptions that underpin oppressive relationships" (Battiste, 2000, p. xxiii);
- (3) Healing colonialism: "intellectual and practical challenges to current ways of pursuing humane relationships. It is a process of healing ourselves, our collective identities, our communities, and the spirit that sustains us" (Battiste, 2000, p. xxiii);
- (4) Imagining post-colonial societies: "hope and anticipation as we turn to our traditions to preserve our communities, our education, our governance, and our future through focusing on the integrity of Aboriginal knowledge, systems, and their applications. It offers the

the role of passive victims in the colonial process, rather than seeing the potential for decolonization by Indigenous Peoples, communities and movements.

foundation for reclaiming ourselves and our voice, as we envision the Indigenous renaissance based on Indigenous knowledge and heritage" (Battiste, 2000, p. xxiv).

In this framework, decolonial projects are supported by the imagination of different societies based on Indigenous experiences and knowledges, rather than assuming that settler-colonial structures and projects will continue in the future. This radical hope for something different is an essential challenge to the supremacy logic's assumption of a settler continuity. I contend that there is no better place to articulate this radical hope for a decolonized future than in education, which contributes to decolonial projects, from the resistance to the legitimacy of settler-states sovereignty over Indigenous lands, to the challenge of evolutionist and "progressive" assumptions regarding the assimilation of Indigenous Peoples. To understand the different dimensions implied in decolonial projects articulated in IHE, I detail here the political and legal challenge of Indigenous Peoples to the Doctrine of Discovery, the denial of the DoD supremacy logics through Indigenous life projects, and the dismantling of knowledge hierarchies implied in the DoD through Indigenous relational knowledges. These can all be implied in IHE which then becomes a powerful decolonizing tool.

Indigenous legal and political resistance to the colonial nation-state structures

A first obvious dimension of decolonization is the challenge it represents for settler nation-states. These states are legitimated by the Doctrine of Discovery, and it is to be expected that they have been challenged by decolonization processes. In fact, Indigenous defence of sovereignty and self-determination began with the colonial encounter¹¹⁰ and continues in today's decolonization movements. Correspondingly, the first element to recognize in decolonization is that in spite of all attempts in the past 500 years to assimilate, destroy, and erase Indigenous Peoples' experiences and histories, they remain and they do so as *Peoples*. Politically, this existence relies on the long-term national and international struggles for Indigenous rights as a mean to resist the legal framework of the DoD. Thus, one of the important forms that decolonization has taken, for Indigenous Peoples, is the legal and political challenge of nation-states' sovereignty over their communities and their lands. This level of decolonization implies Indigenous nation building and is interdependent with educational success in higher education, since it requires historical awareness and cultural consciousness (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 30).

In a decolonial sense, however, Indigenous sovereignty cannot be founded on the same legal and political foundations as settler-states. Instead, Indigenous legal and political resistance to the DoD lies in the articulation of alternative narratives. Citing the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Plain Cree systems and the Haiida and Nisga'a Nations using inter-dependent and complex structures of clan and national governance, Ladner argues that each Indigenous nation has its own constitutional orders that "provided the teachings, 'supreme law', political philosophies and jurisdictions that were operationalized within the political system" (Ladner, 2006, p. 4). In this context, survivance of Indigenous nations as sovereign ones, following their constitutional and legal orders, is a decolonial project that many Indigenous Peoples share (Vizenor, 1999; 2008). Furthermore, Hill (2008) also mentions how the constitutional and legal orders were the basis on which Indigenous Peoples negotiated the treaties with the settlers, in ways that also modified their constitutional orders. She gives the examples of the Guswentha - two row wampum - and the silver covenant chain as agreements between Haudenosaunee nations and the newcomers, that were meant to

¹¹⁰ The examples of Túpac Amaru (executed in 1572), Túpac Amaru II (executed in 1781) and Tupak Katari (executed in 1781) and Bartolina Sisa (executed in 1782), in the Andes, and of Tecumseh (killed in the Battle of the Thames, 1813) in North America, amongst other renown inter-national Indigenous leaders of resistance movements, should remind us of the continuous Indigenous refusal of, and adaptation to, colonial processes.

follow Indigenous constitutional orders, while also modifying them to accommodate the new relationships¹¹¹.

The political and legal decolonial project of (re)existing as Peoples, in the face of settler states, is supported by Indigenous principles and knowledges, which have been articulated by Indigenous scholars in the past decades. For example, Daniel Heath Justice explains how the principle of kinship is the condition on which continuity and continuance rely for Indigenous Peoples as Peoples (Justice, 2008, p. 150). He positions this principle in contrast to the colonial formation and endurance of the settler-state, which has depended on the erasure of Indigenous Peoples' continuity and endurance as Peoples. In this context, the active resistance of Indigenous Peoples to maintain kinship and strong communities as the basis of their nationhood, or what Weaver (1997) has called "communitism" (combining "community" and "activism"), is a challenge to our idea of nation as Canadian or American.

Accordingly, in North America, Indigenous scholars' theorization of Indigenous Peoples' continuous existence challenges settler-state concepts of sovereignty and nationhood. For example, Audra Simpson, in her book *Mohawk Interruptus* (2014), presents a "cartography of refusal" "that takes shape in the invocation of the prior experience of sovereignty and nationhood, and their labor in the present" (A. Simpson, 2014, p. 33). The refusals she presents articulate political alternatives to the settler-state, questioning its authority and legitimacy, while presenting new accountings of the politics and cultures of Indigenous Peoples (A. Simpson, 2014). Thus, Indigenous nationhood forces us to think outside of the "nation-state" political framework, which has a potential for decolonizing our societies, especially in terms of re-thinking the nation-to-

¹¹¹ Illustrating the different approaches to nationhood and peoplehood, and referring to the account of the US-Dakota war and how her fourth great-grandfather, Chief Little Crow or Taoyateduta, tried to deal with the US settler-state, TallBear argues that "making kin" is an Indigenous strategy to "forge relations between Peoples in ways that produce mutual obligation instead of settler-colonial violence upon which the US continues to build itself" (TallBear, 2016c)¹¹¹. If kin-making was an important diplomatic strategy at the beginning of colonial area, TallBear argues that the settler states such as United States and Canada were not interested in kin-making with Indigenous Peoples. Rather, policies created since the nineteenth century reflect forced adaptation and violent imposition of Western ideas, economy, and social structures. In that sense, TallBear highlights how Canada and the United States have violated the kin relations established by Indigenous Peoples between nations (as sovereign nations, and through friendship treaties with European nations), and with the land and non-human persons and nations (Tuck & Yang, 2012). For a Cree perspective on how the principle of kinship and adopting people – rather than constitutions and symbols – informed Cree understanding of treaties and the treaty rights extended to the newcomers, see Harold Johnson's *Two Families* (2007).

nation relationship (A. Simpson, 2014) - or maybe the kinship responsibilities (Garrouette, 2003; Justice, 2008; TallBear, 2016c) - established with Indigenous Peoples.

Similar challenges of nation-states by Indigenous claims of sovereignty and self-determination as distinct peoples also occur in the Andes. A good example is the intercultural and pluri-national proposals that emerged from Indigenous movements in the Andes since the 1970s (Massal, 1999). Catherine Walsh (2012) explains that Indigenous movements elaborated an intercultural project which is opposed to the "recognition" and banal diversity celebrations of multiculturalism, and rather articulates a complex critique of colonial power dynamics at play in the nation state. According to Walsh (2012), these dynamics have played on the "colonial difference" to discriminate and exclude Indigenous Peoples from the state, first culturally (ethnic difference and hierarchies), then structurally (social and political exclusion from "citizenry"), and epistemologically (e.g.: exclusion of Indigenous knowledges and definitions of nation, economy, society, and laws).

Facing the colonial power of the state, Indigenous movements in the Andes put forward the challenges of plurinationality and of the creation of intercultural societies (Macas & Lozano, 2000).¹¹² Indigenous organizations in Bolivia (2009) and Ecuador (2008) succeeded in changing their state structure from republic/nation-state to plurinational states organized on intercultural principles – at least according to their new constitutions. The plurinationality and interculturality of the state relies on Indigenous communities reclaiming their own communal laws (Sarango, 2004), thus resisting the colonial legal order. The writing of the Indigenous right to communal law and justice in the Ecuadorian constitution is an example of Indigenous self-determination affirmation through legal and constitutional orders. It supports the survivance (Vizenor, 1999; 2008) of Indigenous nations as nations, and of their communities, beyond the mere survival in the face of displacement, dispossession, and colonization in general.

In the Andes, the "critical interculturality" (Walsh, 2011) proposed by Indigenous organizations as a socio-cultural principle for the new plurinational states implies inter-

¹¹² In Ecuador, these were part of the national Indigenous organization, the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) claims. These include sociocultural demands (the challenge of social and cultural hierarchy, by re-valuing Indigenous knowledges and practices) and economic demands (re-centering on Indigenous communities' life projects) as well as political demands of reforming the state from the nation-state model to a plurinational and intercultural state.

epistemology conversations with the potential transformation of both society and state by Indigenous knowledges, concepts, and practices¹¹³. The definition of such a "critical interculturality" is a testimony to the fact that Indigenous movements' and settler states governments' political projects are informed by differing epistemologies and political ontologies (Blaser & De La Cadena, 2008; De La Cadena, 2010).¹¹⁴ Indigenous ideas of well-being and communal economies – such as the concept of *Sumak Kawsay*¹¹⁵ – confront ideas of social and economic "development" embedded in the concept of "modernity" (Radcliffe, 2012). They also challenge the socio-political and economic relationships established with nature and the environment (Zimmerer, 2012) – for example, when considering *Pachamama's* (broadly understood as Mother Earth) rights. Indigenous epistemologies and political ontologies challenge linear and evolutionist Western epistemology and concepts of development and progress on which the concept of "modern" nation-state is based (Blaser, 2014; Quijano, 2012). De La Cadena thus argues that "the current emergence of Andean indigeneity could force the ontological pluralization of politics and the reconfiguration of the political" (De La Cadena, 2010, p. 360).¹¹⁶

¹¹³ In an article about the challenge that Indigenous politics represents, De La Cadena (2010) highlights how the inclusion of Pachamama/Nature in the new Constitution of Ecuador annoyed then President Rafael Correa, who "blamed an 'infantile' coalition of environmentalists, leftists, and indigenists for the intrusion of Pachamama–Nature in the Constitution. Wrapping up his accusation, he added that the coalition was the worst danger for the Ecuadoran political process (Ospina 2008)" (De La Cadena, 2010, p. 336). Citing then CONAIE president, Humberto Cholango, De La Cadena explains that the inclusions (or intrusions) of new political actors (here, the nature/Pachamama) follow the continuous existence of Indigenous beliefs and symbols, and ultimately, Indigenous ontologies in spite of 500 years of colonialism. She adds that Indigenous ontologies by "conjuring" entities that were previously excluded from the political sphere disrupt nation-state institutions' comfort zones.

¹¹⁴ "lo hegemónicamente impensable en el siglo veintiuno no es que los indios (los negros, las mujeres, o cualquier grupo subalterno) no puedan actuar políticamente – hace algún tiempo que se desautorizó la idea de estos grupos como pre-políticos. Lo impensable ahora son los términos en que estos grupos actúan políticamente – y esto coincide con el análisis de Trouillot, para quien lo impensable es aquello que desborda los términos en los que se hacen las preguntas mismas" (Blaser & De La Cadena, 2008, p. 3).

"the hegemonic unthinkable of the 21st century is not that Indians (or Blacks, women, or any other subaltern group) could act politically - the idea of these groups as pre-politic has been unauthorized for a while now. The unthinkable now are the terms on which these groups act politically - and this coincides with Trouillot's analysis, who defines the unthinkable as that which overflows the terms with which the problem was framed" (my own translation, and the terms "Indians" and "Blacks" were used by the authors).

¹¹⁵ *Sumak Kawsay* is a Kichwa concept that translates roughly to "Good Life". It has been largely used in the past two decades by Indigenous organizations in Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia (also, *Sumaq Qamaña* in Aymara) to talk about alternative life projects to capitalism and ideas of development and economic growth.

¹¹⁶ To clarify the extend of the reconfiguration of the political to which she refers, De La Cadena adds three important points:

"There are several things, however, that this phrase does not mean. First, it does not refer to ideological, gender, ethnic, racial, or even religious plurality; nor does it refer to the incorporation or inclusion of marked differences into a multiculturally "better" sociality. Second, it is not a strategy to win hegemony or to be a dominant majority—let alone an indigenous majority. My proposal to think through the pluralization of politics is not intended to mend flaws within already existing politics—or "politics as usual." Rather, it aims at transforming the concept from one that conceives

Both in North America and in the Andes, Indigenous Peoples' continuance as well as their survivance and resurgence, have challenged not only Western concepts of nationhood and settler-states sovereignty, but also the ideas of development, progress and modernity on which our societies are based. The legal and political resistance of Indigenous Peoples shows the inconsistencies of nation-states and allows for the emergence of decolonial projects. Acknowledging the political historical process of Indigenous resistance, agency, imposition, and pushback complicates the history of nation-states and contradicts the assumptions of civilization and progress that were supposed to justify the establishment of settler societies' sovereignty over the land and peoples. In turn, Indigenous decolonial projects challenge our political conceptions of sovereignty, rights, nationhood, and the legal and historical ideas on which these are based. Doing so, decolonial projects also question the colonial hierarchies that informed how settlers established relationships with Indigenous People, their land, territories, kinship relations, and communities (broadly understood as "all-my-relations" principle).

Indigenous decolonial projects can also influence changes in our conceptions of democracy and socio-political structures moving towards respectful nation-to-nation relationships (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Cook-Lynn, 1997; S. M. Hill, 2008; A. Simpson, 2014) or at least restructuring of our constitutional orders, as was the case in Bolivia and Ecuador. This is possible because of Indigenous knowledges and ontologies that inform their legal and political struggles. Consequently, the potential for socio-political and economic decolonization of settler societies can only be realized if it is accompanied by a decolonization of our knowledges, epistemologies, and sciences in general, which happens in academic settings. Hence, Indigenous higher education has the potential to include theorizations and articulations of Indigenous peoplehood, nationhood, communities, and sovereignty concepts. As a result, IHE also has the potential to participate in a decolonial project transforming our societies.

politics as power disputes within a singular world, to another one that includes the possibility of adversarial relations among worlds: a pluriversal politics" (De La Cadena, 2010, p. 360).

Denying the supremacy logic: Decolonial projects and Indigenous futurities

If the continuous existence of Indigenous Peoples, and their claim to sovereignty, relationships, and rights as *peoples* challenge the legitimacy of settler-states as founded on the Doctrine of Discovery, it also questions the supremacy logic on which the Doctrine is based. The assumption of settler societies' superiority and the ideas of evolution and progress that nourish assimilationist projects in the settler states are challenged by Indigenous decolonial projects or "futures" (Tuck & Yang, 2012). These projects go beyond colonial impacts, and are rather rooted in Indigenous communities' histories, experiences, and knowledges. They encompass what Blaser (2004) calls Indigenous life projects, which he defines as follows:

"Life projects are embedded in local histories; they encompass visions of the world and the future that are distinct from those embodied by projects promoted by state and markets. Life projects diverge from development in their attention to the uniqueness of peoples' experiences of place and self and their rejection of visions that claim to be universal. Thus, life projects are premised on densely and uniquely woven "threads" of landscapes, memories, expectations and desires" (Blaser, 2004, p. 26).

The definition of life projects therefore involves intellectual traditions of places and histories as well as visions for the future. Indigenous life projects are rooted in Indigenous world views and intellectual traditions articulated in contemporary colonial situations, in ways that challenge these situations and foster Indigenous futures. Thus, elaborating decolonial projects that foresee Indigenous futures, or even "Indigenous Futurisms" (Dillon, 2012), involves recognizing "space-time as simultaneously past, present, and future, and therefore futurisms is as much about the future as it is about right now. [...] it means telling alternate histories [...] imagining a future where unceded territories are taken back" (LaPensée, in Roanhorse, LaPensée, Jae, & Little Badger, 2017). It involves thinking through, and acting upon, the re-establishment of relationships that were and continue to be altered and even severed, by colonial structures.

Indigenous life projects and futures directly question the supremacy logic of the DoD according to which Indigenous Peoples should be assimilated in Western "civilization" or in the nation-state citizenry. Instead, Indigenous life projects rely on intellectual traditions articulated in decolonial projects such as storying (S. Grande et al., 2015; Sium & Ritskes, 2013; Whiteduck, 2013), survivance (Vizenor, 1999, 2008), and resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2011).

Storying, stories and storytelling, according to Grande, San Pedro, and Windchief (2015) entail 3 of Tuhiwai Smith's 25 "Indigenizing projects": "remembrance, looking back into one's community history; reclamation, taking back spaces, places, and perspectives; and regeneration, moving forward as contemporary peoples while sustaining traditional values" (S. Grande et al., 2015, p. 117). Colonial processes are filled with stories and narratives such as narratives about the superiority of Euro-settlers and inferiority of Indigenous Peoples (Iseke-Barnes, 2005), narratives of Indigenous Peoples' "savagery" (Williams, 2012a), as well as myths of Terra Nullius and supposed "discovery" (R.J. Miller, 2008; R.J. Miller, LeSage, & Lopez Escarcena, 2010). These narratives are part of the knowledge built, transmitted, and circulated in mainstream academy. Hence, it is not a surprise that decolonial processes and projects would address these narratives with alternative stories (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, & T'lakwadzi, 2009). That includes space for Indigenous stories and storytelling, which tend to have special connotation for Indigenous pedagogy that recognizes the power of stories in terms of defining the world and the people in it (Archibald, 2008; King, 2003). Sandy Grande, Tim San Pedro, and Sweeney Windchief write that "one of the main methods for recentring Indigenous values is the telling and teaching of story" (Grande et al., 2015, p. 117). The power of stories is in the projection into a different world, one that is beyond colonialism.

Concretely, and according to Brayboy (2005), Indigenous stories serve as "the basis for how [Indigenous] communities work" and thus "are roadmaps for [Indigenous] communities and reminders of our individual responsibilities to the survival of our communities" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427). In that sense, stories contribute to another process that goes beyond "survival": the process of survivance (Vizenor, 1999). The "active sense of presence" that is Native survivance according to Vizenor (2008, p. 1) requires "continuance of stories" (*Ibid*), remembrance, traditions, and customs (*Ibid*) in order to support Indigenous Peoples' change of lifestyle and life projects in the face of colonialism while maintaining their knowledges, sovereignties and identities as Peoples. Thus, survivance of Indigenous Peoples implies synthesis of tradition and renewal, as support of Indigenous nations' sovereignty (Vizenor, 1999). Hence, Native presence over absence, that goes beyond mere survival as colonized peoples, implies the deepening of Indigenous sovereignty (Tuck, 2009; Vizenor, 1999).

The reconnection of Indigenous Peoples with their own territories and constitutional orders, and life projects require a move towards resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005;

Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014). Resurgence takes Indigenous Peoples out of the colonial state-centric frameworks, and reconnects with their own ways of thinking, doing and being, including in the four spheres of the "colonial matrix" (knowledge, economy, politics, and gender/sexuality, Mignolo, 2011). Resurgence builds on everyday acts of sovereignty, that regenerate Indigenous nationhood, and restore sustainable relationships with the communities, the culture, and the homelands (Taiaiake Alfred, 2008 [1999]). These everyday acts include focussing on Indigenous responsibilities to their relations, including the land (Corntassel, 2012), commitment to the relationships of the community, and engagement in continuous cycles of renewal that are transmitted to future generations (Corntassel, 2012). These can involve affirming the presence on the land, returning to traditional diet, transmitting culture, spiritual teachings and knowledge of land, strengthening familial activities and re-emergence of Indigenous cultural and social institutions, and maintaining sustainable land-based economies, amongst other things (Taiaiake Alfred, 2008 [1999]).

To sum up, while storytelling addresses the attempts of erasure of Indigenous Peoples' history, experiences, and cultures, survivance ensures the existence of Indigenous communities in a (cultural, politics, economic) self-determining way that goes beyond resistance and response to colonialism. In turn, resurgence allows for Indigenous Peoples and communities to strengthen by re-centering on themselves, rather than engaging with the structures and institutions of the settler-states at the origin of their dispossession and assimilation. These three decolonial projects support the continuity of Indigenous life projects and challenge the supremacy logic of the DoD.

All three approaches, in their diverse ways, reclaim Indigenous knowledges as the basis to possible (re)storying, survivance, and resurgence. A common thread in these diverse decolonial projects is certainly how they all re-center Indigenous knowledges as a fundamental aspect of communities' collective memories, self-determination, relationship to the land, and futurity in general. Envisioning decolonization in terms of Indigenous life projects and futurity relies on acknowledging the continuous existence and re-existence of Indigenous knowledges, in all their forms, in Indigenous communities. These knowledges can also be articulated in the academy, in IHE programs and institutions. The specificity of Indigenous knowledges, when articulated in higher education, contributes to the dismantling of ongoing colonial knowledge hierarchies.

Decolonial re-connection: Indigenous knowledges and relationality

Just as colonization is supported by knowledge and theories that justify colonial projects and "settler futurity" (Tuck & Yang, 2012), knowledge is the support to decolonial projects which are justified by Indigenous theories. This echoes the conceptualization of colonization by Coulthard, Tuck and Yang, and Mignolo, which implies multiple dimensions, including ontological and epistemological dimensions (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Hence, decolonial projects relate to Indigenous knowledges, which, according to Indigenous scholars, are relational (Coulthard, 2010; Deloria, 2001; Kovach, 2009; Meyer, 2001; S. Wilson, 2001b, 2008). I further contend that the relational nature of Indigenous knowledges unsettles the knowledge hierarchy of the DoD framework.

The relationality of Indigenous knowledges can be interpreted in many ways, but it generally involves the recognition of relations existing between knowledges and the land, cultures, and individuals who created or transmitted these knowledges. For example, Native Hawaiian scholar, Manulani Meyer (2001), identifies seven epistemological dimensions of knowledge that vary from one culture to another, depending on the answers they bring to the following questions: (1) What is the origin/genesis of knowledge? Which implies that all knowledge has origin, history and future orientation that differ in each culture. (2) What is the process/activity linked to knowledge? Which refers to experienced knowledge and the fact that knowing always takes place somewhere specific. (3) How is knowledge acquired? Which refers to how empirical knowledge is influenced by culture and place. (4) How is knowledge validated? To which she answers that knowledge is an exchange implying relationship. (5) What is knowledge for? Which refers to the utility and application of knowledge. (6) What is the meaning of knowledge? Which refers in ways that knowledge is expressed and understood (hermeneutic questions). (7) What part of human being is implied in knowledge? Which refers to the personal engagement of mind, body and spirit (or soul, or heart) in knowledge.

The point is that any group and nation will have slightly (or very) different answers to all these questions, but the questions apply for any knowledge produced and transmitted anywhere, and the relationship of knowledge to all these different dimensions should be recognized. The consequence is that there is no hierarchy between knowledges that would be rooted in a certain cultural context, and knowledges that would somehow escape their cultural context. All knowledge has a context. Meyer focuses on the influence of both culture and geography on the sensory relationship that peoples establish with the world, and consequently, on the empirical knowledges they develop

(Meyer, 2001). Accordingly, empirical knowledge is also influenced by context. Taking the relation of knowledge with its context into account, Meyer questions the epistemological hierarchies built in the Western ideas of sciences as the most evolved knowledge emancipated from its context of origins (Berthelot, 2008; Delanty, 1997).

Similarly, Cree scholar Shawn Wilson recognizes diverse paradigms in research, based on four philosophical dimensions that all imply fundamental beliefs and assumptions (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 33): (1) ontology, or the belief regarding the nature of reality, the ways of being, and what is real in the world.; (2) epistemology, or the beliefs regarding adequate ways of thinking about said reality; (3) methodology or how we use our ways of thinking to gain more knowledge about the reality ; and (4) axiology, or the sets of ethics and morals that motivate our knowledge or to which we apply our knowledge. While these dimensions forming paradigms can be developed in many different ways, depending on the content, Wilson puts a relational definition of cultural knowledge at the core of his project, stating that

Within an Indigenous research epistemology and ontology is the recognition that research and thinking need to be (and are) culturally based. Of course all philosophy is based upon a culture, a time, a place. It is impossible for knowledge to be acultural (Meyer, 2001). We need to recognize that this is an important part of how all people think and know (not just Indigenous people). Once we recognize the importance of the relational quality of knowledge and knowing, then we recognize that all knowledge is cultural knowledge (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 91).

According to this definition, paradigms are diverse, yet they will imply relations with philosophy, and consequently, with culture, place, and context. While each precise Indigenous epistemology and methodology will differ according to the nation's culture, history, and protocols, Wilson's work with Indigenous Peoples from Canada, the US, and Australia explicitly defines relationality as an (pan)Indigenous paradigm (S. Wilson, 2001a, 2008). In this (pan)Indigenous context, Wilson situates relationality as being the core component of each of the knowledge dimensions he identifies (ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology)¹¹⁷. Of course, the relational quality of knowledge/knowing is not limited to Indigenous perspectives, but this

¹¹⁷ For example, while stating that an Indigenous research paradigm is relational and maintains relational accountability (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 71), Wilson also argues that relationality and relational accountability are put into practice through the choice of research topic by the communities (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 110); the collaborative methods of data collection including Elders, people, plants, environment, amongst others (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 116 and 131); the non-linear, intuitive and relational analysis (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 116 and 131); and the ceremonial presentation of information (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 123).

recognition and acknowledgement of the relational nature of knowledge is at the core of Indigenous epistemologies. In this perspective, knowledge is not a linear process that is distilled away (or evolved) from a phenomenological experience to an abstract, universally valid knowledge.

Wilson further describes the difference between Western dominant paradigms from Indigenous paradigm in the following words:

Basic to the dominant system research paradigms is the concept of the individual as the source and owner of knowledge. These paradigms are built upon a Eurocentric view of the world, in which the individual or object is the essential feature. This premise stands in stark contrast to an Indigenous worldview, where relationships are the essential feature of the paradigm (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 127).

Whereas Western paradigms fragment reality to focus on individual objects, from an Indigenous relational perception, the relations between the parts and between parts and the whole, are the explanatory basis. For the *person* is a central component of social structure, but it is considered to be made of relations (Deloria, 2001, p. 23) – to people, place, cosmos, and ideas/knowledge – to which it is accountable.

Wilson's work on a relational paradigm echoes the work of other Indigenous scholars who have centered Indigenous ontologies on relations and relationships. Deloria explains that the personal nature of the universe implies specific, particular knowledges, related to specific, particular places and contexts. This, according to Deloria, differs from the Western scientific quest for universal laws that would be invariable. Instead of thinking in terms of laws, Deloria suggests that Indigenous Peoples think in terms of relationship, correlation, and appropriateness of these relationships (Deloria, 2001). Consequently, the fundamental ethics and orientations of knowledge are quite different from an Indigenous and from a Western point of view.

Building on Deloria's concept of place as a web of relations, Coulthard (2010) writes about the profoundly different orientation of place-based Indigenous worldviews and time-oriented (evolution) Western worldview. While the latter ought to be understood as the historical, developmental, evolutionary perspective on the world, the former ought to be understood as a field of relationships that influence "a way of knowing, experiencing, and relating with the world; and these ways of knowing often guide forms of resistance to power relations that threaten to erase or destroy our senses of place" (Coulthard, 2010, p. 79). Coulthard alludes to the relational ontology

in a place-based epistemology that conceptualizes human beings as "an inseparable part of an expansive system of interdependent relations covering the land and animals, past and future generations, as well as other people and communities" (Coulthard, 2010, p. 82). He situates ethics and political norms as resulting from this relational conception. The ethical outcome is a position that highlights "the importance of sharing, egalitarianism, respecting the freedom and autonomy of both individuals and groups, and recognizing the obligations that one has not only to other people, but to the natural world as a whole" (Coulthard, 2010, p. 82). Again, this orientation differs, as Coulthard argues, from the imperial/colonial/capitalist idea of the infinite growth of a society, that will expand and conquer new areas to fulfill its destiny (Coulthard, 2010, p. 82), as is the case with the Western doctrine of discovery and ideas of manifest destiny linked to border expansion (R.J. Miller, 2008).

Thus, the knowledge orientation from an Indigenous perspective is quite different from knowledge orientation drawn on a Western perspective. For example, the relation (to the community, to the land, amongst other) remains an ethical imperative in research for Indigenous Peoples. While Wilson points to relational accountability in terms of fulfilling our role in the research relationship, answering to all the relations established in the research, Deloria points to the fact that relationships must not be left incomplete (Deloria, 2001). This speaks not only to the "giving back to the community" aspect of research that Kovach mentions (2009) but it also speaks to the way the whole research is designed and conducted in relation to a community's interests, aims, protocols (Kovach, 2009). As research serves to build knowledge, Meyer (2001) also reminds us that in a Hawaiian epistemology, knowledge is an exchange that implies relationship and interdependence, based on reciprocity, harmony, balance, and generosity. At the end of the research process, knowledge also has to be applied in a useful way that serves the family/community/relations (Meyer, 2001).

As Indigenous knowledges serve the re-building or maintaining of relationships with traditions, communities, people, land, territories, it goes against the destructive impacts of colonial enterprises. Relational axiology, as described by Wilson, Meyer, Kovach, Deloria, and Coulthard, involves principles of reciprocity and accountability to the communities - thought of broadly, including the territories and all the relations they imply (i.e. land, water, plants, animals) - which shifts the orientation of knowledge. In this perspective, knowledge is not about extracting information from communities, persons, and places to build universal knowledge, which in turn is

used to control and exploit nature, places, persons, and communities¹¹⁸. Rather, knowledge is built through reciprocal relations, and with the goal of serving (being useful to) nature, places, persons, and communities.

Additionally, the shift from an evolutive to a relational perspective on knowledge offers a way out of the hierarchies built between Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. Quijano describes Indigenous communities as liminal spaces where border epistemologies can emerge "from the exteriority (not the out-side, but the outside invented in the process of creating the identity of the inside, that is Christian Europe) of the modern/colonial world" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 20). This spatial thinking of the colonial relationships between Indigenous and Western knowledge systems actually opens the possibility of thinking about them in terms other than evolutionist hierarchies between evolved "modern" sciences, associated with "progress", and archaic Indigenous knowledges, associated with "backwardness".

Indigenous knowledge systems differ from currently dominant Western ones, and offer alternative ontologies (Maryboy, Begay, & Nichol, 2006; Stewart-Harawira, 2005), epistemologies (Cook-Lynn, 1997; Ermine, 1995; Meyer, 2005) and methodologies (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012 [1999]; S. Wilson, 2001a, 2008) that are not only valid and legitimate (Cajete, 2000; Deer, 2006), but can also constitute a valuable contribution to humanity and science (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 1999). Some researchers assert the compatibility and the complementariness of Indigenous and Western knowledge (Hammersmith, 2007; Odora-Hoppers, 2002) in frameworks such as complexity theories (Betts & Bailey, 2005), relationality (S. Wilson, 2008), place-based theory (Cajete, 1994; Deloria, 2001), as well as racial and tribal critical theory (Brayboy, 2005). In spite of compatibility and potential for complementariness, because of the colonial hierarchies perpetuated in higher education, work remains to be done in order to make space for Indigenous knowledges to be part of the tools in the academy (Kovach, 2009). Hence, despite of decades of work on educational equity and Indigenous knowledge restoration and production in the Americas

¹¹⁸ Tsing also alludes to the way in which Indigenous contributions are sometimes occulted. She mentions, for example, the "the terrifying history of past encounters through which Indigenous knowledge has entered the metropolitan corpus of science and industry" (Tsing, 2005, p. 159), and the reconstitution of white privilege (Tsing, 2005, p. 159/160) through the appropriation of those contributions, while maintaining a romanticized views of Indigenous Peoples as opposed to modernity (Tsing, 2005, p. 160).

(Barnhardt, 1991; Karlberg, 2007; Mato, 2009), Indigenous knowledge remains mainly ignored or marginalized by the Western mainstream academy (Battiste, et al. 2002; Berger 2009).

If the colonial knowledge hierarchy of the Doctrine of Discovery is perpetuated in mainstream academy, as I argued previously, then academy is also an important site for unsettling the knowledge hierarchy, based on Indigenous knowledges. Indigenous higher education entertains a different relationship with Indigenous knowledge systems and therefore contributes to decolonization of mainstream academy and its politics of knowledge (Battiste, 2000; Smith, 2012 [1999]). Education – as the process by which a culture expresses its reality and values, processes its culture, and transmits it to each generation (Battiste, 2013) – and educational institutions – where curricula express state sanctions and standardizations of what counts as knowledge and ways of knowing – are of prime importance in terms of Indigenous contributions to decolonizing our societies, politics, economies, and knowledge systems. As educational institutions are places where these knowledges are taught, and in the case of higher education, the places where they are often built in research programs, it seems fundamental to consider Indigenous contribution to the decolonization of higher education. Indigenous higher education (IHE) is an important site of articulation of Indigenous knowledges and decolonial projects.

Indigenous Higher Education as a tool for decolonization: articulating decolonial projects in education

Education, and higher education in particular, is an institution that combines social projects, be them colonial or decolonial, with the building/transmission of knowledges. Education therefore has the potential to bridge the three dimensions of decolonization previously looked at: challenging settler nations, building Indigenous life projects and futurities, and decolonizing knowledge hierarchies. Clearly, Indigenous higher education has a role to play in the decolonization of our societies. Alfred, who participated in the creation of an Indigenous Governance program at University of Victoria (British Columbia, Canada), sees education as a starting point to change our society, not just for Indigenous peoples, but influencing the population in general. He claims that

What is needed in countries like Canada and the United States is the kind of education that would force the general population to engage with realities other than their own, creating their capacity to empathize with others – to see other points of view and to understand other people's motivations and desires. Admittedly, it is not likely that the entire North American primary and secondary education system will become so open-minded anytime soon. However, indigenous people have succeeded in altering non-indigenous people's perceptions through dialogue in institutions of higher learning. As a result, we are beginning to see an empathy for the Indigenous experience, and a political space for change, that Native leaders must capitalize on.

To do so, leaders must promote Native education both in the conventional Western sense and in terms of re-rooting young people within their traditional cultures. In time, such education will produce a new generation of healthy and highly skilled leaders who will be able to interact with the changing mainstream society from a position of strength rooted in cultural confidence (Taiaiake Alfred, 2008 [1999], pp. 132-133).

Education, as a central institution to the creation of citizenry and the inculturation of individuals into a society's values, beliefs, structures and knowledges (Apple, 1993, 2013; Marie Battiste, 2013), is also a central institution in terms of nation-building. In that sense, it has the power of creating both settler-states' and Indigenous Nations' projects. If a common tendency is to associate education with Western institutions, it would be false to assume that Indigenous Peoples did not use schooling systems in the Americas, thus overseeing Indigenous education before colonial times (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006; Valcarcel, 1961, 1975)¹¹⁹. For example, in

¹¹⁹ Lomawaima and McCarty present in their book the "Carefully Designed Educational Systems" of American Indigenous Peoples (p.27-39), and the possibility to return to local control of education (p.40). Valcarcel wrote about the education system of the Inca society in 1961, which he includes in the history of education in Peru (1975).

the Andes, the Inca Empire had institutions to train Amautas or historians, Quipucamayocs or administrative accountants, and Harahuacs or musicians. Markham (1911) writes: "There were Yacha Huasi, or schools, at Cuzco, said to have been founded by Inca Rocca, where youths were trained and instructed as Amautas and Quipucamayocs" (Markham, 1911, p. 142). In North America, we can also think of structures for keeping and transmitting specialized knowledge, such as the Blackfoot societies¹²⁰ or the Pueblos Kivas. Hence, Lomawaima and McCarty argue that "[t]he ultimate test of each human educational system is a people's survival" (p.30). In that perspective, given the assimilative pressures that Indigenous Peoples of the Americas experienced (and continue to experience) in the past 500 years, their survival as Peoples and Nations of distinguished cultures should be sufficient proof of their educational systems' efficiency. Accordingly, Indigenous educational and intellectual traditions have contributed to the legal and political challenge that the continuous existence of Indigenous Peoples represents for the settler states.

Furthermore, the history of Indigenous higher education is more complicated than the imposition of a Western institution over Indigenous nations. For example, there were always Indigenous intellectuals involved in the academy during colonial and federal assimilation times¹²¹. US examples include Samson Occom (Mohegan, 1723-1792), Susan LaFlesche Picotte (Omaha, 1865-1915), Luther Standing Bear (Dakota, 1868-1939), Charles Eastman (Dakota, 1858-1939), Zitkala-Sa (Dakota, 1876-1938). Andean examples would even include sixteenth and seventeenth century chroniclers, such as Titu Cusi Yupanqui, Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua, and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, who worked with the Church and had received an Iberian-Christian education. These intellectuals were not only involved in Western institutions of higher learning, but they were also reclaiming their own intellectual traditions, inside of these

¹²⁰ Furthermore, Blackfoot communities contributed to higher education in different ways, too. In a conference they gave at the University of Montana on 27 October 2007, Blood and Heavyhead presented their work relating to a SSHRC grant (2004-2007) to investigate aboriginal knowledges as paradigms for research, and more specifically, how Blackfoot elders had influenced social sciences. Blood and Heavyhead explain that Ruth Benedict, as other anthropologists in the 1930's, thought that you needed to involve in comparative cultures in order to formulate any kind of universals, and she was also convinced that other cultures and paradigms could be used to fix some of Western society's problems. Thus, she was regularly sending PhD candidates in Blackfoot communities, which makes the authors say that Blackfoot communities, and especially their elders, contributed in training scholars

¹²¹ In that sense, Lomawaima and McCarty's work (2006) starts with this idea that, in each period, there were Indigenous peoples who managed to "Remain Indians" inside of the assimilationist education system, which in turn always changed in order to regulate their difference so that it would not constitute a threat to Western society.

institutions. This reclaiming of Indigenous intellectual traditions also served to deny the supremacist logic of the DoD as embedded in Western institutions of higher education.

Additionally, Indigenous nations, organizations and leaders across the continent were always conscious of the importance of education to maintain their cultures and Nations¹²². Thus, schooling has also been part of the strategies employed by Indigenous Peoples to resist colonialism and assimilation. For example, Choctaws and Cherokees in the nineteenth century developed their own bilingual schooling system (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 114; Tippeconnic, 1999, p. 40). Hence, since the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Indigenous Peoples' fight for their right to establish and control their own education was one way of resisting colonialism (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Battiste, 2000; Brayboy, 2005) and of re-affirming their sovereignty (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 26; Tippeconnic, 1999, p. 34; National Indian Brotherhood, 2001 [1972, 1973, 1976]).

Consequently, Lomawaima and McCarty mention that we could learn, as a society, about choice, self-determination, the strength of cultural and linguistic diversity, and about a new vision of democracy, if the Native experiences with schools were taken seriously (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. xxi). The authors remind us that Indigenous Peoples' "schools of thought" have always had something to contribute to humanity, and, in their case, to the American Nation (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. xxi). They take one of Standing Bear (Lakota, 1868-1939) quotes in which he affirmed, in 1933: "America can be revived, rejuvenated, [I would say, decolonized?] by recognizing a native school of thought (...)".

Indigenous schools of thought have taken multiple academic forms in the development of Native/Indigenous studies programs in mainstream academy and of Indigenous institutions of higher education emerging in the late 1960s (Barnhardt, 1991; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; S. Wilson, 2008). Through this diversity, however, I contend that IHE is always meant as decolonial tool, implementing decolonial projects.

¹²² For example, in the North American context, Carr-Stewart (2001) mentions that each of the Canadian numbered treaty included a clause about education (p.128), and that Indigenous peoples had clear plans for their education; they wanted access to formal education, controlling it in a way that would combine it to their own practices, for further generations to prosper (p.126). Similarly, in Montana, USA, each of the treaties and agreements signed in between the U.S. government and Indian tribes (1851, 1855, 1896, etc.) contained a provision that education would be provided to tribal members (OPI, 2001).

In the Andean context, education was also an important demand of Indigenous Movements in both Bolivia and Ecuador, from at least the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) work on education¹²³ confirms this understanding of education as part of a strategy to decolonization as well as for sovereignty of First Nations. AFN describes Indigenous Institutions of Higher Learning¹²⁴ as a tool to maintain and develop language and culture, on the one hand, and to improve the socio-economic situation and serve the communities in general, on the other hand. In the Andean context, the UNIBOL network in Bolivia was created by the Evo Morales government in relation to its decolonization efforts (Morales even created a minister of decolonization). The Amawtay Wasi University in Ecuador also plays an important role in decolonization¹²⁵, as expressed in its founding philosophy,

This is the spirit behind this educational and pedagogical proposal, that is, the recovery of various experiences, reflections, and educational and pedagogical practices in a perspective of cross-cultural dialogue between different "founding myths" that enables us, through dialogue, to understand them as given cultures and in the process of joint construction seen from an educational and pedagogical cross-cultural perspective (J. García et al., 2004, p. 289).

It follows from these examples that Indigenous higher education participates in decolonial processes through the projects it enacts. As an example, the following chart shows 3 different models to Indigenous education: storytelling, community-based pedagogy, and place/land-based pedagogy. While the three approaches differ in their objectives and the means they employed, they all contribute to an underlying decolonial project, be it related to Indigenous voices and stories, communities, or territories. They also share a relational approach to knowledge, where they re-establish the (often broken) relationship between the knowledge they teach, Indigenous perspectives, communities, and lands.

¹²³ www.afn.ca/uploads/files/pse-dp.pdf
http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/katenies-chignecto_review_of_the_indian_studies_supportissp_joint_afn_inac_wg_program_component_of_the_pse_program_2006%5B1%5D.pdf
www.afn.ca/uploads/files/accc-chart.pdf
www.afn.ca/uploads/files/accc-services.pdf

¹²⁴ IIHL, in which they encompass 45 campuses and 14 satellites; although the IAHLA on itself has more than 38 member institutions, and I had counted at least 71 Indigenous programs in Canada

¹²⁵ The fundamental task of the Amawtay Wasi Cross-cultural University is to respond to the decolonization of knowledge on the basis of epistemology, ethic, and politics. It should set up a space for reflection, one that proposes new forms of conceiving the construction of knowledge, considering that the nations and peoples have their own wisdom and that the responsibility of men and women committed to this task is to research, revalue, and enhance local knowledge and build the science of knowledge, as an indispensable requirement to work not on the basis of responses to epistemological, philosophical, ethical, political, and economic colonial structures but rather from a proposal erected on the basis of the [indigenous] philosophical principles [and new western paradigms] (J. García et al., 2004, pp. 280-281).

Figure 8: Table summarizing Indigenous approaches to education (from Fast & Drouin-Gagné, forthcoming)

Model (authors)	Description of the model	Main objectives	Means employed
Storytelling, storring and counter-stories (Grande et al., 2015)	Indigenous voices and stories, as well as Indigenous histories and Indigenous perspectives on histories, as a response to colonial history and colonial violence.	(1) Remembrance: Looking at one's community history, remembering Indigenous knowledges and maintaining Indigenous philosophies. (2) Reclamation: Taking back spaces, places and perspectives, reconnecting. (3) Regeneration: moving forward as contemporary peoples, based on traditional values.	Paired with remembering the history of colonialism and recognizing its effects, the authors propose a way to answer, resist colonial legacy through Indigenous stories. Storytelling of ancestral and contemporary histories in the schooling process (Chi'XapKaid, 2011 [2005]).
Indigenous Community-based pedagogy (Ball, 2007; J. García et al., 2004; McCarthy & Lee, 2014; Urrieta, 2013)	Education that respect Indigenous sovereignty, and is accountable to Indigenous communities (McCarthy & Lee, 2014). The knowledges include daily, complex, relational, and reciprocal relationships in family and community life (Urrieta, 2013), and are transmitted in those community and family settings (J. García et al., 2004).	Cultural sustainability and revitalization (including language revitalization) (McCarthy & Lee, 2014). Nation/Community building. Sustaining the communal wisdom and <i>good life</i> (J. García et al., 2004). Understanding and forging belonging, responsibility, and integration into family and community life (Urrieta, 2013).	Community-based education partnerships between First Nations and postsecondary institutions (Ball, 2007) Intent Community Participation (Urrieta, 2013) Learning Communities and learning through community experiences (J. García et al., 2004) Community-based accountability (McCarthy & Lee, 2014)
Place-Based and Land-Based pedagogy (E. Henry, 2014) (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014) (M. Wildcat, McDonald, Irlbacher-Fox, & Coulthard, 2014)	The transmission of knowledge about the forms of governance, ethics and philosophies that arise from relationships on the land (M. Wildcat et al., 2014). Reinserting people into relationships with and on the land, within frameworks of Indigenous intelligence, as a mode of education (M. Wildcat et al., 2014).	Reinhabitation and Decolonization (E. Henry, 2014) Privilege refusal and reversal (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014). Direct contestation to settler colonialism and resurgence of Indigenous life and Indigenous claims to land (M. Wildcat et al., 2014).	Learn forgotten or unheard Aboriginal, immigrant, and settler histories in their neighbourhood, through arts-based approaches and engagement with specific communities or organizations (E. Henry, 2014). In Indigenous communities and on Indigenous land, positioning non-Indigenous individuals as students of, and dependent on, Indigenous peoples, which reverse the usual power dynamics (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014).

The few models presented here are just some examples of Indigenous approaches to education, going from critical stances resisting assimilation and colonization, to remembering, reclaiming and regenerating Indigenous cultures, languages, knowledges and sovereignty, to re-building Indigenous communities and relationships to the land. These examples speak to the dimensions of

decolonization described in this chapter: continuous existence and resistance of Indigenous Peoples as sovereign peoples, self-determined communities, that maintain relationships to their territories, all their relations, and their culture and knowledge systems. They also involve decolonial projects of re-storying (storytelling), survivance (community-based pedagogy) and resurgence (land-based pedagogy).

Other Indigenous higher education projects take place inside of mainstream academy, bearing equally decolonial potential. For example, "Indigeness" in terms of culture, place and philosophy was developed by Indigenous scholars in diverse disciplines, such as literature, linguistic and Indigenous language programs, or history based on Indigenous knowledges and documents (Brooks, 2008; Corbiere, 2011). Law was also developed under Indigenous perspectives, especially critical perspectives regarding national Indian laws and colonialism (Little Bear, 1982; R.J. Miller, 2008; R.J. Miller et al., 2012; Williams, 1990; Borrows, 2016), and definitions of Indigenous sovereignty (Tsotsie, 2002). Indigenous humanities are currently being developed in Canada (Battiste, Bell, Findlay, Findlay, & Henderson, 2005; Coleman, Battiste, Henderson, Findlay, & Findlay, 2012) in relation to Indigenous education. In all its form, the work done by Indigenous Peoples in education aims at social changes that will benefit their Peoples, communities, and nations, while having an impact on larger society and the state. Consequently, the social changes that IHE programs and institutions build are part of a process of decolonization that may take a myriad of forms according to different groups and institutions. In its diverse forms, IHE remains unified as a decolonizing tool, articulating diverse decolonial projects, throughout the Americas. This understanding of decolonization, of decolonial projects and of IHE as a decolonizing tool informs the next sections of my dissertation, namely, the description of IHE as a hemispheric phenomenon, and the analysis of decolonial projects in Indigenous higher education institutions and programs where I undertook fieldwork.

III) DEFINING THE PHENOMENA: WHAT IS INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION?

It is October of 2015, and I am walking on the beautiful Salish-Kootenai College (SKC) campus, in Polson (Flathead reservation, Montana). I am here for the American Indigenous Research Association's conference, hosted for the third year by SKC. It is an innovative conference, always very challenging and stimulating. It is my second time in attendance, but this time is different. I know the place, I have been visiting the college with my friend and colleague Michael who works here.

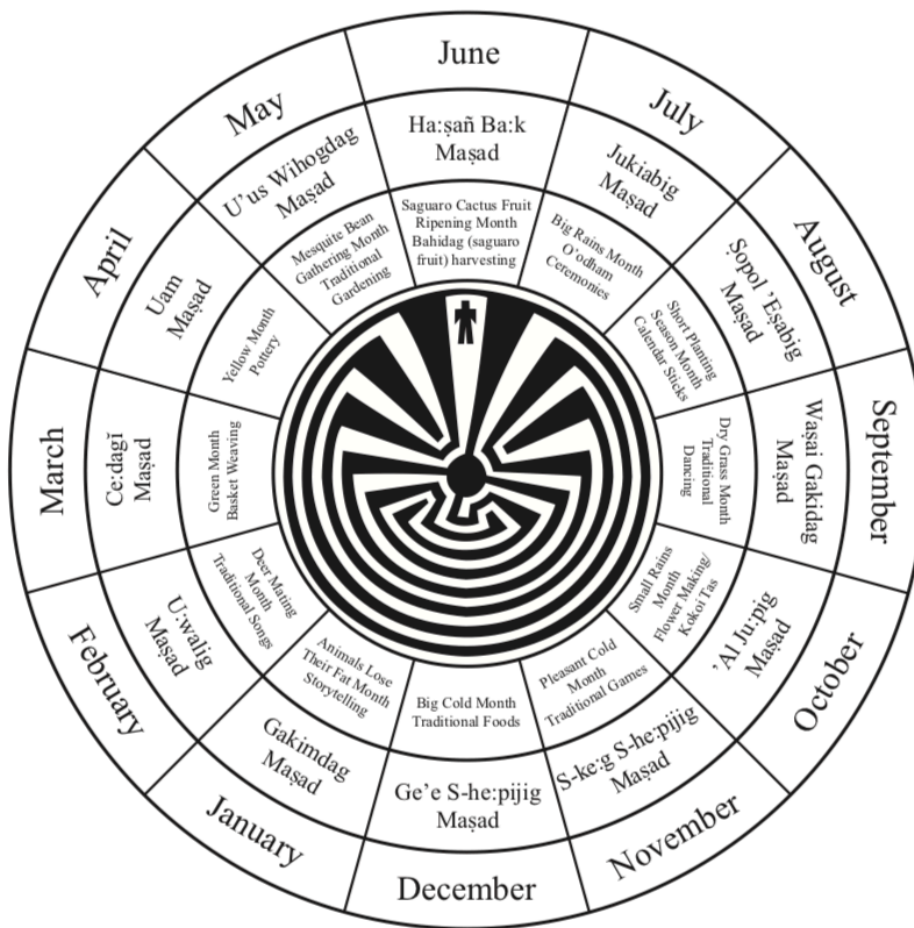
The campus makes a beautiful landscape, with the Mission mountains in the background and the architecture of the buildings includes art that expresses parts of the Salish and Kootenai cultures. The material expression of Salish and Kootenai cultures is also reflected intellectually in the space made in various programs for local knowledges, Indigenous methodologies, and community members. The college is conceived as belonging to the community, a conception that is embodied by a physical bridge passing over the highway and leading to the Tribal government buildings on the other side. As the former vice-president of the College, Sandra Boham (now president) expressed it this is a great metaphor for the relationship that exists between the college and tribal sovereignty and governance.

As part of the particularities of the campus, are the metal sculptures, many of which represent Buffalos. When considering the prominence of these sculptures, I am reminded of that sentence I heard and read so many times – “education is the new Buffalo”. The buffalo was the basis of the lifestyle and support of families and communities for Indigenous Peoples of Montana, but with land encroachment and the quasi-extinction of the species the "original" lifestyle was not possible anymore. The Salish People, as many other Indigenous nations in Montana and throughout the continent, had to find new ways of living. This did not mean they forgot or abandoned their culture. Instead, the college mission today expresses cultural continuity with the promotion of "community and individual development" to “perpetuate the cultures of the Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Nation" (SKC Annual Report, 2013: p.16). In other words, education became the way by which the nation's culture, history, traditions, but also its vision for the future, are transmitted. Hence, it became the new Buffalo. This is not particular to the Salish and Kootenai People: throughout Montana, when I visited other Tribal Colleges, like the Aaniih Nakoda College, Stone Child

College, and the Blackfeet Community College, the Buffalo is a powerful metaphor to talk about the type of education that these colleges are aiming at offering to their students, and for their nations¹²⁶.

While the Buffalo is a good metaphor for colleges in Montana, it is not used in Arizona. Other symbols, however, are used to express that continuity between the historical lifestyles and values of Indigenous nations, the knowledge they built throughout their history, and the modern education they offer to their nation. For example, at the Tohono O'odham Community College, the seasonal calendar and the Himdag are the main references:

Figure 9: Tohono O'odham Himdag, according to the Tohono O'odham Community College (<https://www.tocc.edu/himdag-committee>)

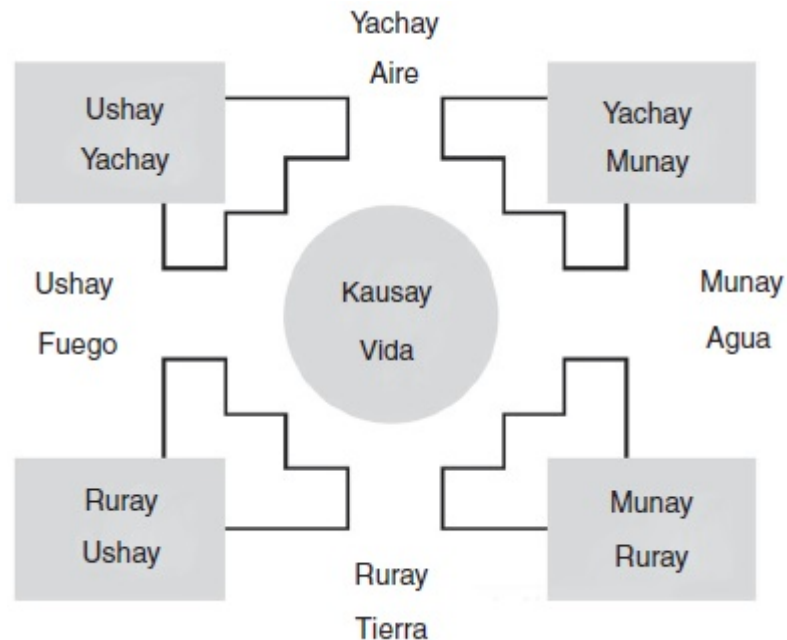


¹²⁶ Karl Hele reminded me that this is a great example of how plain people are great adapters, having faced vast and quick changes between the eighteen and twentieth century. They moved from dog/foot culture to a horse culture very quick and came to be experts with horses. This is just one example, but it reminds me how culture has always been both rooting and adaptive. Articulating institutional education as the new buffalo is just one of the ways to adapt deep rooted culture.

Their website explains that "The Tohono O'odham Himdag consists of the culture, way of life, and values that are uniquely held and displayed by the Tohono O'odham people. Himdag incorporates everything in life that makes us unique as individuals and as a people. It is a lifelong journey" (<https://www.tocc.edu/himdag-committee>).

Similarly, in the Andes, the Amawtay Wasi's philosophy is based on the Andean Chakana, an ancient Andean symbol that serves as the university's symbolic representation. In the context of the university, the Chakana is presented as being both a "cosmic bridge" that links life's different dimensions and an organizer/regulator principle between those different dimensions (J. García et al., 2004). As the university's central principle, the Chakana represents the organization of the complex relational order of life (Kawsay – at the center), surrounded with the principles of knowing (Yachay), loving (Munay), doing (Ruray), and power (Ushay) (J. García et al., 2004, pp. 298-299). Thus, each Indigenous institution of higher education builds on its symbolic traditions to either express their nation-building mission (as in the case of the Tribal Colleges), or to organize the knowledge built and transmitted (as in the case of the Amawtay Wasi).

Figure 10: The Amawtay Wasi's knowledge centers based on the Chakana (from: Krainer, A., D. Aguirre, M. Guerra and A. Meiser, 2017)



At the same time, the variety of symbols used also reminds me that "Indigenizing" the academy takes different forms in diverse contexts. Accordingly, the development of Indigenous higher education institutions in a given context is quite different from the work done by Indigenous

programs of higher education (ex: Native American/Indigenous Studies - NAIS) in mainstream university contexts. These are not necessarily rooted in one particular culture and face different challenges than the building of a nation/tribe/community or the revitalization of a specific tradition. NAIS finds itself serving a diversity of Indigenous nations, and most of the time, also teaching non-indigenous students. For example, the classes I attended or in which I guest-lectured at Montana State University and University of Arizona had a majority of non-Indigenous students.

When I interviewed Dr. Wayne Stein, Turtle Mountain Chippewa Scholar whose work has focused on Tribal Colleges and Universities (he also held a lot of leadership positions in different TCUs, and was the head of the NAS program at MSU for years), he expressed the difference between teaching in a NAS program at a mainstream institution, and teaching in a Tribal College at Fort Belknap (the Aaniih Nakoda College):

When I teach here at MSU, or when I did teach, I realized that I had to constantly keep telling the students - 90, 95% of them were Euro-Americans - that I'm just telling them the facts, I am not giving them my opinions [...]. You know, I was doing that, because if you just teach the facts, most non-Indian people in this country have no clue what happened to Indian people. None! And the facts just horrify them. What happened to Indian People. Their Christian society did this to the Indian People, deliberately, and lived with themselves because of cognitive dissonance. And then you tell them, they go, I can't believe, no, you are lying! [...] I had to be really careful because if I horrified them too much, they would shut off. They didn't hear anything. "Dr. Stein is being mean to us". So I had to always be cognizant of that. But at Fort Belknap I realized that I never said that! These are just the facts, I just told them what happened and they believe me. Because they saw it, they were the end product of it. So I didn't have to justify what I was giving them. They accepted it. I mean it was like, oh! And they probably felt I was being too mild about it! (Dr. Wayne Stein, interview, November 2015).

I experienced first-hand what Dr. Stein was talking about, when I gave guest lectures at MSU and later at SKC. The size of the class was quite distinct (40 students versus 5 students), but mainly, the level of conversation was utterly different. SKC students were much more engaged in deep conversations about sovereignty, colonialism, and legal issues. This all had direct impact in their lives, and they had an experiential knowledge of these realities. MSU students were engaged and interested, but their grasp of the realities we talked about was not informed by experience.

Based on this brief overview of my fieldwork in Indigenous higher education programs and institutions, it becomes obvious that even as a decolonial project Indigenous higher education takes multiple forms in different contexts. Hence, an important question is to figure out some comparative basis between IHE programs and institutions, and some way to define IHE as a general phenomenon that includes possibly multiple decolonial processes. I think back to my encounter with Dr. Brayboy, in the first year of my doctorate, as I was still articulating my project. The question that came up during our conversation was: what is Indigenous about Indigenous higher education? With time, I became more interested in understanding the knowledge taught in IHE, how it differs from (or not), and how it challenges (or not), mainstream academy. A first step requires to situate Indigenous higher education in differing contexts and asks whether it is possible to recognize the different projects briefly mentioned here as part of a common general project. In order to do so, in this section, I first reflect on definitions of IHE developed by international networks and draw on existing comparative studies of IHE (Chapter 4). This will provide elements of commonality in IHE and allow identifying comparative themes through IHE diversity. Against this background, I then turn to the specificities of different IHE projects (Chapter 5). I present an overview of the history of IHE in North and South America in which I situate local IHE programs and institutions with which I worked for my research.

CHAPTER 4: INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION AS A COMPLEX INTERNATIONAL REALITY

I believe the best trend in NAS is viewing it as a borderless discourse, encompassing all the Indigenous peoples of the hemisphere. After all, numerous peoples, numerous Indigenous nations, exist in multiple nation-states. This approach was pioneered, especially, by the Native American Studies Department at the University of California at Davis. Beyond this, however, more and more scholars are making connections and comparisons and forging solidarities with other Indigenous groups—Chamorros, Maoris, Ainus, Samis, Torres Straits Islanders, and so on—around the globe (Weaver, 2007, p. 237).

Education was always part of the "civilizing" project implied in the Doctrine of Discovery, but just as education was an important tool of colonization and assimilation, Indigenous education also became an important tool for decolonization. As Weaver reminds us, Indigenous Peoples are dealing with these processes of colonization and decolonization in many nation-states around the globe. Weaver also points to the fact that decolonial projects, even though they take place in local contexts, involve international solidarities. As a result, IHE is a complex phenomenon that operates across local, regional, national, and international levels.

For example, in Canada, formal IHE emerged from self-determination Indigenous movements that resisted the "termination" attempt (of Indian status and of Indian reserves) by the federal government at the end of the 1960s. The National Indian Brotherhood published a pan-Canadian political stance about education in 1972: "Indian control of Indian education" (ICIE) policy paper (National Indian Brotherhood, 2001 [1972, 1973, 1976]) as part of a general Indigenous response to the assimilationist policy of the P.-E. Trudeau's Liberal government¹²⁷. Nevertheless, the ICIE policy paper and IHE in Canada can also be understood in relation to long term Indigenous efforts for reclaiming their rights, in international contexts. For instance, the two World Wars were important moments for these struggles, since Indigenous soldiers returning from deployment in Europe had developed networks¹²⁸ and new strategies to defend their rights. After the First World

¹²⁷ And especially, Trudeau's white paper presented in 1969, which was supposed to abolish Indian status and reserves, but also any ancestral and treaty rights, as well as any specificities to which Indigenous Peoples could aspire, aside from Canadian citizenship.

¹²⁸ We have to remember that by then, the Indian act did not allow Indigenous political nor religious meetings, and "Indians" were not allowed to circulate freely; they had to obtain permission to leave their reserve, which limited their possibilities of movements and communication.

War, Indigenous Peoples organized the League of Indians in Canada (1919)¹²⁹, which advocated for education, health, land property, hunting rights, religious freedom, economic development, and refusal of enfranchisement (Kulchyski, 1988). The various attempts to create national Indigenous organizations were hindered by policy reforms, including the 1927 revision to the Indian Act, which amongst other things prohibited First Nations from raising funds to organize politically or hiring lawyers to pursue land claims (Kulchyski, 1988; article 141 of the Indian Act of 1927). Yet, Indigenous Peoples continued to organize across Canada creating different regional and national formations to defend their rights, such as the North American Indian Brotherhood, established after the Second World War, the National Indian Council in 1961, and the National Indian Brotherhood in 1968.

The reorganization of Indigenous movements nationally in the 1960s also relates to an international context. Wallerstein identifies the beginning of the decline of American hegemony in the 1960s, and the period following the 1970s as a moment for the rise of multipolarity/multilateralism and new anti-systemic movements of the “excluded” (Wallerstein, 2004). This includes the US African-American civil rights movement, and the movement against apartheid in South Africa. I would of course include here the growing Indigenous Peoples movements in Canada and the emergence of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the US as well as other Indigenous movements internationally (Marie Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000). These movements and the debates that animated them prepared the stage for new critiques and "interdisciplinary" reorganization of academic knowledge with programs such as cultural, Black, Indigenous, and feminist studies. Thus, the emergence of Indigenous education programs

"One of the effects of the Second World War on the approximately 6000 Aboriginal veterans who fought, and on the Euro-Canadians who came into contact with them, was the realization that the liberty for which the war was fought did not exist for them. They could not allow this iniquity to continue unchallenged. The 1947 Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons subcommittee hearings on Indian affairs resulted in a series of sweeping recommendations for change" (Stonechild, 2006, p. 32).

¹²⁹ "The first meeting to the League of Indian Nations in western Canada was held on the Keeseekoowenin Indian Reserve, circa 1920. The League of Indian Nations- modeled after the League of Nations, the precursor to the United Nations – was organized in eastern Canada by Native veterans that returned from World War I. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) attempted numerous times to disrupt the organization because the Canadian government had laws in place that made it a crime for Native people to organize politics and conduct political activities. According to local elders, the RCMP came to disrupt the meeting, but arrived the day after the meeting concluded and all the delegates had already left"

"The Official League of Indian Nations of North America" <http://linna.ca/>

and institutions is directly related to these national and international contexts (Tippeconnic & Gayton Swisher, 1999).

Informed by what was happening on the international stage, Indigenous rights at the national level obviously included education, and one of the first things the National Indian Brotherhood did was to form a committee on education, composed of Indigenous educators (Pidgeon, Muñoz, Kirkness, & Archibald, 2013), which then crafted the ICIE policy paper in 1971¹³⁰. The unifying vision of the National Indian Brotherhood had its influence and the document continues to be quoted today as a landmark and standard for Indigenous education. The paper included a section on post-secondary education and characterized a definitive push for Indigenous nations across Canada to begin working on their higher education projects (Stonechild, 2006).

From 1971, Indigenous leaders, scholars, and organizations began implementing post-secondary educational projects, each region with its own models. In Alberta, the strategy was mainly Tribal Community Colleges linked to local tribal councils (ex: Blue Quills and Old Sun community colleges in 1971). In Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College - the First Nations University of Canada since 2003 - was funded as a full college in 1976 through a partnership with the University of Regina. In British Columbia and Ontario, provincial institutes and private institutions have been more common since the 1980s. Manitoba later also adopted the Tribal colleges strategy (but only one college opened, the Yellowquill College in Winnipeg, 1993). East of Ontario, the situation is very different. While there was an early attempt to develop an accredited Indian College, Manitou College (1973-1979), in collaboration with Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC), Dawson College (English program) and Cégep Ahuntsic (French program), it closed for lack of financial support. It took until the 2010s for the province to support once again an Indigenous higher education institution (with the opening of the Kiuna Institution in Odanak, in 2011; and the accreditation of the first "First Peoples Studies" program of the province, in 2013). In the Maritimes, the Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute opened in 1981 (today called Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre).

¹³⁰ Verna Kirkness, then the Education director of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, and member of the team who worked on the ICIE, remembers how Indigenous educators and leaders involved in crafting the paper saw themselves "free to create a new system, a system where we learn how to read, write, do all the things we have to do, such as science, but based on our Indigenous Knowledge as the foundation to our learning. Instead Indian Affairs' interpretation of the new policy was that Indians would be administering Indian Affairs' programs" (Pidgeon et al., 2013, pp. 7-8).

In addition, beginning in the 1990s, there was a strong emphasis on regional organization of IHE, for example, the *Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium* (Ontario, founded in 1994, currently 7 institutions), the *First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium* (Alberta, founded in 1997, 11 institutions – one in Manitoba), the *Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association* (British-Columbia, founded in 2003, 40 institutions). Furthermore, there were efforts made at the national level in 2000, with the creation of the *National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning* (NAIHL).¹³¹

The Canadian case shows that IHE finds its roots in regional, national, and international contexts. While IHE takes form locally through a diversity of projects, these projects are also linked together regionally and nationally. For instance, the first World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education (WIPCE) was held, in 1987, in North Vancouver (Sheppard Carpluk, 2002), amidst regional developments of IHE. Verna Kirkness, an important Indigenous leader in the Canadian Indigenous education context since the 1960s, was also a key actor in the organization of the WIPCE. Furthermore, on its 15th anniversary, WIPCE returned to Canada¹³². The 2002 WIPCE conference was held in Alberta, hosted by the First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium. On this occasion, WIPCE created an international network, the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium - WINHEC (Helfferich, 2002).

Thus, the summarized history of IHE in Canada renders evident the local-global dynamics at play in IHE: if IHE is always realized locally, through particular programs and institutions, IHE remains as international as colonization and decolonization processes. It therefore demands to be considered in its international context as much as in its local realizations. In this chapter, I focus on the international dimension, presenting international IHE networks and their definitions of IHE. I also present the comparative literature on IHE, in order to identify recurring themes as well as diverse patterns of IHE. This establishes the basis for an international comparison of the specific cases I studied in my field work.

¹³¹ To this day, however, there is no national policy of Indigenous-controlled higher education in Canada. The latest First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act, Bill C-33, was tabled in April of 2014 amidst critiques of it as paternalist by Indigenous organizations.

¹³² WIPCE is held every 3 years, and by then, it had traveled to New Zealand, Australia, USA, and Hawaii.

IHE: International networks and definitions

The World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) is a good example of how IHE is organized through international networks and engages with international instances - WINHEC is active at the UNPFII, for example. Originally emerging out of a meeting in 2000 of Indigenous institutions and educators from the US (including the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and educators from Hawaii and Alaska), Canada, New Zealand (with the Maori higher education institutions, the Wānanga), and Saamiland, the official proposal for an international consortium was formulated by Dr. Ray Barnhardt of Alaska, and Sonny Mikaere of Aotearoa. The commonality of the different Indigenous educational projects globally is at the core of WINHEC project. This includes the development of an accreditation process for IHE institutions and programs, and the development of a World Indigenous Nations' University (WINU), that would be built on global alliances of academic programs. WINU is presented as a "world network for Indigenous higher education and an entity in its own right, founded upon and operating within the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples" (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, 2016b). Accordingly, one of their motto is "Teach Local - Reach Global" (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, 2016a). WINHEC today gathers members from USA, Hawai'i, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Saamiland, and Taiwan around the common vision of self-determination through higher education, but their efforts have not reached South America.

Since its inception, WINHEC affirms educational rights of all Indigenous Peoples¹³³, as stated in the Declaration members signed in 2002:

On this day, August 5, 2002, at Kananaskis Village, Alberta, Canada, we gather as indigenous peoples of our respective nations recognizing and reaffirming the educational rights of all indigenous peoples. We share the vision of indigenous peoples of the world united in the collective synergy of self determination through control of higher education. We commit to building partnerships that restore and retain indigenous spirituality, cultures and languages, homelands, social systems, economic systems and self-determination (Helfferich, 2002).

WINHEC recognizes the role of higher education in terms of self-determination for Indigenous Peoples and in order to support the life projects of Indigenous communities around the

¹³³ Their philosophies built on UNDRIP articles 13-16 (see WINHEC 2014 Brochure: <http://winhec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/WINHEC-Brochure-2014.pdf>), but as they mention: "While WINHEC wishes to focus on Articles 13 to 16, the Consortium acknowledges and supports all 46 Objectives of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (*Ibid*).

world. It uses higher education as a decolonial project answering the political and socio-economic outcomes of colonialism, among which the fact that "indigenous peoples [...] are the most impoverished people in the world" (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, 2014, p. 2). Consequently, "WINHEC has focussed its attention on alleviating the difficulties which confront the indigenous peoples and it chooses to do this through their collective academic skills via the medium of education" (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, 2014, p. 2). From WINHEC's perspective, education is a global tool that can support local Indigenous communities to face up to and deal with the consequences of colonization. Thus, decolonization locally is supported by global, collective efforts, and initiatives of diverse Indigenous Peoples around the world. In other words, a first characteristic of IHE according to WINHEC is its decolonial nature, or the fact that it is based on a transformative project.

When it comes to detailing how Indigenous education's mission and goals fulfill this transformative project, WINHEC defines IHE as enabling Indigenous Peoples in the following ways:

1. To live as indigenous peoples,
 2. To be successful in the Global World,
 3. To enjoy a high standard of living and good health.
- Note: The control of indigenous education by indigenous peoples would be essential to achieve success in the long term.
4. Accelerate the articulation of Indigenous epistemology (ways of knowing, education, philosophy and research);
 5. Protect and enhance Indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture and languages through higher education;
 6. Advance the social, economical, and political status of Indigenous Peoples that contribute to the well-being of Indigenous communities through higher education;
 7. Create an accreditation body for Indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify common criteria, practises and principles by which Indigenous Peoples live;
 8. Recognise the significance of Indigenous education.
 9. Create a global network for sharing knowledge through exchanges.
- (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, 2014, p. 3).

These nine points can be synthesized in three fundamental decolonial projects in IHE. First, "living as Indigenous Peoples" (1), "accelerating the articulation of Indigenous epistemology" (4), and "protecting and enhancing Indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture, and languages" (5) can be understood as sustaining Indigenous Peoples' life projects in their own terms, according to their own intellectual traditions and cultures. It is therefore speaking to resurgence projects of

Indigenous Peoples in education (Taiaiake Alfred, 2004; Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012). Second, “to be successful in a global world” (2), “to enjoy a high standard of living and good health” (3), and “to advance the social, economic, and political status of Indigenous Peoples that contribute to the well-being of Indigenous communities through higher education” (6) all speak to the survivance (Vizenor, 1999, 2008) of Indigenous communities, in relation with the "global world". Third, “creating an accreditation that would recognize Indigenous specificities (through diversity) in education” (7), “recognizing the significance of Indigenous education” (8), and “creating a global network of knowledge sharing and exchange” (9) all speak to the challenge of colonial knowledge hierarchies by a recognized Indigenous Academy. To summarize, WINHEC’s definition of IHE points to a transformative approach that supports decolonial projects such as Indigenous survivance and resurgence, as well as the unsettling of colonial knowledge hierarchies.

While WINHEC held its annual meeting in Cuzco during the 2011 WIPCE conference, the bridge between this network and South American IHE institutions and programs seems difficult to build, language barriers (Spanish V. English) being one difficulty (Barnhardt, personal communication). Additionally, many South American IHE programs and institutions are part of another international IHE network, the RUIICAY, which stands for the Network of Indigenous, Intercultural and Communal Universities of Abya Yala, in Spanish. When defining IHE as an international phenomenon, and in order to identify commonalities across differing IHE models, it is useful to compare WINHEC definition with RUIICAY’s.

RUIICAY was created in 2008 with 3 founding universities – the URACCAN in Nicaragua, the Amawtay Wasi of Ecuador, and the UAIIN of Colombia. Today, the network brings together 10 universities, including the 3 Indigenous universities of Bolivia (UNIBOL Aymara, Quechua and Guarani), the UNISUR of México, the Intercultural Education Institute "Campinta Guazu Pérez” of Argentina, the University of Panama Office of Indigenous Peoples, and the Bolivarian University of Venezuela. These universities collaborate on graduate degrees, train each other's staff, organize student exchanges, and generally support one another. RUIICAY is also involved with International organizations such as the Indigenous Fund, and they are present at the UNPFII as their activities fall under the UNDRIP recognized rights in terms of Indigenous education (articles 13-15).

Similar to WINHEC's mission, the RUIICAY also establishes common goals of revitalization and support of Indigenous Peoples and organizations' life projects. However, where WINHEC defined them in terms of self-determination, RUIICAY works with shared concepts of the "good life"/"life with dignity" as well as interculturality (Dr. Hooker, November 2, 2014, quoted in Drouin-Gagné, 2014). Thus, they work together to develop educational models based on their Indigenous organizations' priorities, histories, cultures, languages, knowledges, and spiritualities (Dr. Hooker, November 2, 2014, quoted in Drouin-Gagné, 2014). Accordingly, it chose shared Indigenous projects specific to the Latin American context to articulate its vision and mission such as the Good Life and interculturality. Still, these two projects can relate to the themes identified in WINHEC nine-point description of IHE. The Good Life concept relates to the importance of sustaining Indigenous Peoples' life projects in their own terms, according to their own intellectual traditions and their cultures. The resurgence dimension of RUIICAY's project is embodied in their claim about the importance of Indigenous and Afro-descendants Peoples' worldview when it comes to establishing a relationship between community and nature, articulating a series of principles, such as: linking, complementarity, correspondence, reciprocity, autonomy, amongst others¹³⁴ (Red de Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias del Abya Yala - RUIICAY, 2018a). Moreover, the idea of interculturality speaks to the possibility for Indigenous communities to exist on their terms, in relationship to other Peoples and communities. Similar to WINHEC's mission and goals, RUIICAY's intercultural principle thus speaks to the survivance (Vizenor, 1999, 2008)

¹³⁴ ***Nuestros Principios***

Nuestros principios de Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias de Abya Yala, están relacionados a la cosmovisión de los pueblos y las nacionalidades indígenas y afrodescendientes y en la relación comunidad y naturaleza.

Vincularidad

Complementariedad

Convivencial Simbólico Correspondiente

Reciprocidad y Solidaridad

Corresponsabilidad

Autonomía

Accesibilidad

Equidad

Comunicación Horizontal

Diversidad cultural

Pertinencia

Servicio Comunitario

Unidad Continental

(Red de Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias del Abya Yala - RUIICAY, 2018a)

of Indigenous communities. Thus, RUIICAY is just as invested in decolonial projects as WINHEC.

Moreover, RUIICAY shares with WINHEC the concern for Indigenous protocols of accreditation, as well as the idea of international exchanges and support between Indigenous Peoples. The vision of the RUIICAY builds on the concept of "intercultural scientific communities" (Red de Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias del Abya Yala - RUIICAY, 2018b) that inform educational and political projects to build intercultural citizenry and the Good Life¹³⁵ for peoples¹³⁶ (*Ibid*). Therefore, their transformative approach also implies unsettling knowledge hierarchies through the recognition of Indigenous higher education, similarly to WINHEC. RUIICAY adds to the recognition of IHE (through protocols of accreditation) the idea of intercultural scientific dialogues, which can contribute to the decolonization of science.

Comparing WINHEC's and RUIICAY's visions and missions, it appears that three main elements define IHE from an international perspective. First, as both networks are addressing the current situation of Indigenous Peoples in the colonial/modern states and international context, they offer Indigenous projects as answers to the current issues faced by Indigenous communities around the world. Thus, IHE always involves a philosophy oriented towards social change; it embodies a transformative approach that might take different forms in terms of each institution's or program's philosophy. Second, this transformative approach is embodied in decolonial projects and both networks are articulating Indigenous resurgence based on Indigenous life projects and

¹³⁵ The concept of Good Life is one shared by many different Indigenous Peoples, and in the Andes, it takes its roots in the concept of *Sumak Kawsay* (Kichwa), and *Sumaq Qamaña* (Aymara), concepts that have been mobilized by Indigenous movements in the past decades, as answers, or alternative, to the idea of "development". In Ecuador, the use of the *Sumak Kawsay* concept in the constitutions and state policies resulted from the CONAIE's claims for many years (Llanes-Ortiz, 2003), together with their claims of interculturality and plurinationality. There were many debates and contested definitions of *Sumak Kawsay*, even inside Indigenous organizations of Ecuador (Bretón, Cortez, & García, 2014), yet, common references included Indigenous communities, their life projects and communal values, as well as their territorial and environmental relations. It not dissimilar to other concepts in North America, such as the Anishinaabe *Mino-bimaadiziwin* concept – or the good life.

However, the concept is widely used by Indigenous political organizations in the Andean context, whereas it is more articulated in intellectual contexts in North America. *Sumak Kawsay* is one of the main claims of Indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia, for example. This might be a reason why it is articulated in the RUIICAY's mission and vision, and not in WINHEC's.

¹³⁶ *Visión*

Las Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias de Abya Yala, son el cimiento de las comunidades científicas interculturales que a través de programas y procesos educativos y de incidencia socio-política contribuyen a la construcción y promoción de ciudadanías interculturales y el Buen Vivir de los Pueblos.

(Red de Universidades Indígenas Interculturales y Comunitarias del Abya Yala - RUIICAY, 2018b)

intellectual traditions. Additionally, Indigenous communities (which I assume can be defined in different ways depending on the context), their survivance, thriving, and sovereignty, are at the core of these projects. Third, both networks support Indigenous academy based on Indigenous knowledges, therefore challenging the colonial knowledge hierarchy inherited by higher education institutions.

To summarize, WINHEC and RUIICAY networks are both (1) articulating a philosophy of social change that relies in decolonial projects linked to (2) Indigenous knowledges and (3) Indigenous communities. In other words, across international contexts and the diversity of Indigenous Peoples' experiences, these three elements are similarities in the projects that IHE articulates. Next section takes a closer look to these and other similarities through the recurrent themes found in the comparative literature on IHE. The goal is to establish comparative dimensions for the different IHE projects I worked with during my fieldwork in the US and Ecuador.

Comparative literature: recurrent themes in IHE

The comparative literature on IHE confirms the recurrent themes identified by the international networks. For example, in terms of transformative projects, the literature on IHE as an emergent phenomenon in the last 50-plus years (Barnhardt, 1991; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; S. Wilson, 2008) often presents IHE as part of a (linear) process going from colonization to decolonization (Marie Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Beck, 1999; J. García et al., 2004; Juneau, 2001; Stonechild, 2006; Szasz, 1999 [1974, 1977]; S. Wilson, 2008). Accordingly, the authors agree that there is something that distinguishes IHE from other higher education projects, namely, the transformative philosophy of IHE, following Indigenous Peoples' control of their own life projects. Smith (Smith, 2012 [1999], p. 89) identifies the decolonization narrative as part of Indigenous perspectives articulating a sense of hope and optimism, through phased progression from (1) contact and invasion; (2) genocide and destruction; (3) resistance and survival; and (4) recovery as Indigenous Peoples¹³⁷. In the Canadian context, Hele (2005) mentions that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (RCAP) adopted a similar vision of the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Settlers. The RCAP progressions goes from (1) separate worlds; (2) contact/co-operations; (3) displacements and assimilation; (4) negotiation and renewal (Hele, 2005, p. 151)¹³⁸.

While it would be easy to situate colonization and decolonization in education as a linear historical continuum, situating colonization as a problem of the past, a more complex understating of these issues is possible when considering Hele's whirlwind model of history. The whirlwind, as he presents it, "spins in ever expanding concentric and interlocking infinite circles of time that bind the past, present, and future" (Hele, 2005, p. 169). Consequently, memories of the past, through land, language, stories and traditions, are always present in Indigenous Peoples' life projects and futurity. But so is also the ongoing colonial violence, which is not only a fact of the past, but remains an unresolved issue, and will be part of any present and future reality, at best in

¹³⁷ Smith presents this general perspective as an alternative to other progression stories that were articulated in Western theory leading to assimilation (and not resistance/survival) and reinvention as hybrid cultures (and not recovery as Indigenous Peoples)

¹³⁸ Hele also warns that the linear perspective towards a better, progressive, future, is a very Western way of looking at history (Hele, 2005). At the same time, Hele avoids the stereotypical "circular" time that is often assumed to be the Indigenous conception, and which, in this case, would bring us back eventually to separate worlds (not probable), potential co-operations, but also new phases of displacements and assimilation. Instead, Hele suggests the whirlwind as a model to think about history.

terms of historical experience and its consequences, if not in terms of ongoing experience. Hence, IHE as a decolonial project is a non-linear, complex endeavour, that entails memories of land, language, stories and traditions, as well as consideration of colonial violence.

Concretely comparing IHE, Barnhardt reviewed IHE in six different countries (Canada, USA, New Zealand, Australia, Greenland and Scandinavia) and listed a hundred programs and institutions "ranging from small, locally sponsored teacher education initiatives to full-scale national and international post-secondary institutions" (Barnhardt, 1991, p. 3). According to Barnhardt, while education controlled by Indigenous Peoples emerged as a response to the colonial nation-states policies it also responds to serious neo-colonial realities in our universities, such as exclusion, invisibility, and colonial hierarchies which have real impacts for Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, synthesizing the diversity of the institutions, Barnhardt writes:

Some have incorporated explicit indigenous perspectives in their design, while others have adapted models of non-indigenous institutions. Some are independently administered and accredited, while others are affiliated with or subsumed within established institutions. Some have been in existence for over twenty years, while others are still in the formative stages. All, however, are controlled or guided by indigenous people and are intended to address the particular social, cultural, political and economic interests of the population they serve (Barnhardt, 1991, p. 2).

Across the different models of IHE that he surveyed, Barnhardt sees a common goal of supporting Indigenous Peoples' projects, in different spheres (social, cultural, political, and economic).

In the Latin American context, Daniel Mato, who compared over 50 institutions in 12 countries (Mato, 2008a, 2008b), argues that since the core interests of these diverse programs and institutions are to serve Indigenous Peoples and communities there is a certain unity in terms of working towards interculturality (*interculturalidad*) – which is also a transformative project. However, Mato points that interculturality takes different forms depending on who defines it (Mato, 2008b). While there is definitely a tension between diversity and unity when considering IHE as a decolonizing phenomenon, a common goal is to support Indigenous Peoples' life projects (interview with Leyer Zemanate Quisoboni, in charge of the pedagogical design, UAIIN, November 2014).

Additionally, some authors in comparative literature on IHE identify common dimensions included in the transformative project underlying IHE initiatives. For instance, Barnhardt sees 10 common characteristics between different IHE programs and institutions (Barnhardt, 1991), including their (1) Commitment to community; (2) Integration of functions (between the community and the institution; and in terms of holistic approaches); (3) Sustained local leadership; (4) Participation of Elders; (5) Spiritual harmony; (6) Use of local language; (7) Traditional ways of knowing; (8) Traditional teaching practices; (9) Congenial environment; and (10) Participatory research. Similarly, Battiste, Bell and Findley (Battiste et al., 2002, p. 85) identify Indigenous characteristics needed in programs aiming at the decolonization of the academy:

- Guidance of the Elders and sustained relationship with them;
- Respectful guidelines for Indigenous knowledge, to protect them, avoiding their use as commodity;
- Educational Material: sufficient and appropriate availability of indigenous knowledge in books, journals, monograph, etc.;
- Curriculum reflecting "the Indigenous difference";
- Community effort to create an academic critical Indigenous mass through hiring, support, mentoring, valuing Indigenous Faculty;
- Dialogues and networks: sharing the diverse transformative praxis identified as working, such as talking circles, participant action research, interdisciplinary dialogues (Bohm), collaborative archival projects, etc.;
- An artistic Indigenous renaissance.

And, following a 2010 discussion paper of the Assembly of First Nations, the unique qualities of "Institutions of Indigenous Higher Learning" (IIHL) include:

1. Boards of Directors at IIHLs are directed and controlled by Indigenous communities;
2. IIHL's have Indigenous faculty who take a holistic approach to education (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual);
3. Curriculum is infused with First Nation history, culture, traditions, and values;
4. Instructional techniques and methods address Indigenous learning styles;
5. Indigenous communities are involved and integrated throughout the educational process;
6. There are linkages and referrals made between the institutes and various community organizations;
7. Indigenous support staff create a focus on student support and support networks;
8. IIHLs integrate Elder support, spiritual and traditional teachings. Mainstream institutions do not (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, pp. 22-23).

These three lists share some key elements that can be assumed to be part of IHE in any context. The three comparisons identify the relationship to community as a key element, which also

includes the participation of community members (organizations, professors, staff, but also Elders) in IHE programs and institutions, and a leadership that relates to Indigenous communities. Communities are also involved in research. Another key element is the knowledge taught in IHE, which includes curriculum that reflects Indigenous realities, as well as specific content such as Indigenous knowledges and languages. The knowledge is also taught in specific ways, that respect Indigenous pedagogies. The specificity of each element (what community and who is involved; what knowledge and language; and what pedagogy) will vary from one place to another, but these general themes are always present in IHE. Thus, the consideration of this comparative literature allows the identification of commonalities shared by IHE institutions and programs that are closely linked to the definition of IHE by international networks such as WINHEC and RUIICAY. These include recurrent themes of transformative objectives/philosophy, relationship to Indigenous communities, and involvement of Indigenous knowledges.

Furthermore, these three elements relate to each other in IHE. For instance, the transformative project of IHE relies on both Indigenous knowledges. Accordingly, Brayboy et al. argue that Indigenous nations cannot successfully engage in nation-building projects that are driven by sovereignty and self-determination – in other words, in transformative projects – unless they develop "independence of mind by taking action to restore pride in their traditions, languages, and knowledge" (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 15). In the same logic, Cook-Lynn (1997) argues that the development of NAIS as a discipline aims at developing an epistemology that supports Indigenous government and sovereignty by articulating to main axes of the discipline: (1) Indigenousness, defined in terms of culture, place, and philosophy; and (2) sovereignty, founded in history and law (Cook-Lynn, 1997, p. 11). Again, here, Indigenous knowledges (philosophy) in relation to culture and place, form one major component of IHE (Indigenousness), while community (the subject of sovereignty) form the other major component, in a transformative project.

It is also enlightening to look at the literature on one of these components of IHE, for example, knowledge. Kovach *et al.* (Kovach, Carriere, Montgomery, Barrett, & Gilles, 2015) interviewed 16 tenured faculty across programs of education and social work at the University of Saskatchewan and of Regina, as well as University of British Columbia and of Victoria, regarding the presence of Indigenous knowledges in post-secondary programs, and they came up with some key shared features of Indigenous knowledges. These included the use of story as a valuable medium; the importance of place and connection to local lands and land wisdom; learning about, and respecting

local protocols; the integral role of Elders as knowledge holders; valuing relationality; and the practice of teaching through Indigenous embodiment (Kovach et al., 2015, pp. 35-37).

To add on the knowledge content of IHE, when considering the epistemology emerging from NAIS programs, Kidwell and Velie (Kidwell & Velie, 2005) identify 5 intellectual premises: (1) the significance of the land and of the relationship to land as a defining force for Indigenous cultures; (2) historical agency of Indigenous peoples and the importance of telling history from their side too; (3) Sovereignty as an inherent right of Indigenous peoples; (4) the importance of language; (5) consideration for Indigenous aesthetics (all forms of arts and literature) to understand the long-term values of Indigenous cultures, and their modern expressions (Kidwell & Velie, 2005).

These two lists of Indigenous knowledge contents add to IHE description the importance of land and place, as well as stories. These elements, in turn, are at the core of two decolonial projects that I described in chapter 3: storying (stories) and resurgence (land). As of the survivance decolonial project, that I also described in chapter 3, it relates more closely to community, which is also present in Indigenous knowledges with elements such as the importance of protocols, relations, and Elders. However, the relationship to community is mentioned enough in the literature to constitute its own analytical element of IHE.

Kidwell details better how community is another central dimension of IHE, when she states that

The common ground is that of community. It is an enduring theme. At the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars in 1970 leading Indian educators and intellectuals came together in Princeton, New Jersey, to discuss the status of American Indians and the need for new methods of study and the creation of a new discipline, one whose "disciplinary work was to defend indigenous nationhood in America." Jace Weaver's term communitism denotes the responsibility of the Native scholar to the Native community (Kidwell, 2009, p. 9)

She adds that key terms that employ community-centered thinking are emerging in the scholarly journals of NAIS, such as survivance, communitism, intellectual sovereignty, and agency (Kidwell, 2009, p. 12). Accordingly, Indigenous communities, their historical and current agency, their sovereignty, and their life projects, are also at the core of IHE projects. Indigenous communities are also involved in the transformative project of IHE (with projects such as

sovereignty and survivance) as well as in the Indigenous knowledge on which IHE relies, with community "knowers" (Elders, community members), for example.

Accordingly, the consideration of transformative projects based on Indigenous knowledges and communities informs my reading of how IHE is a decolonizing tool. IHE supports self-determination and sovereignty, therefore contributing to legal and political decolonization. It also supports Indigenous life projects through Indigenous knowledge systems and intellectual traditions, thus contesting the knowledge hierarchies involved in colonial higher education. Finally, the reconnection of IHE with Indigenous communities to support their wellbeing (or good life) is an expression of the relationality of Indigenous epistemologies in the face of the colonial dispossession and disconnections. Thus, the three recurrent themes seen here are fundamental to consider any IHE project, and when comparing IHE projects. These will consequently inform my analysis of IHE institutions and programs.

These common themes are expressed in very different ways according to the contexts where IHE is implemented. The community and social actors involved in each project, as well as the specific knowledge link to a place and the orientation of the transformative projects all create different patterns of IHE that emerged in the Americas. In other words, commonalities do not mean homogeneity, and the various patterns, as well as the factors that influence these patterns, are important considerations in order to situate the IHE cases I explored in my investigation and understand the commonalities but also the differences that these cases express. The comparative literature also details some factors influencing the diversity of IHE patterns that emerged in the Americas, thus not only allowing the identification of similarities in IHE, but also the understanding the differences in the enactment of IHE in local contexts following diverse patterns. I present next the literature on these differences, before I situate in the following chapter the cases I worked with, and their respective history.

Comparative literature: emerging patterns of IHE

While IHE international networks and comparative literature on IHE show common themes shared across different contexts, local enactment of IHE involves different tendencies and tensions. Here, I consider the comparative literature on the diversity of IHE patterns in order to give examples of the diversity IHE encompasses, and to situate my field sites in relation to this diversity. For example, in the 1991 article that Barnhardt wrote comparing IHE in Canada, the US, New Zealand, Australia, Greenland, and Scandinavia (Barnhardt, 1991), he identified different degrees of organizational autonomy of Indigenous education. These include independent institutions, affiliated institutions, and integrated structures and programs in mainstream institutions.

To illustrate independent institutions, Barnhardt presents the Tribal colleges movement in the US¹³⁹ - to which one of my field sites belongs. Barnhardt describes the specific characteristics of these institutions as being locally oriented on the specificities of their community, both in terms of the knowledge taught and the needs they fulfill. Barnhardt mentions that Tribal Colleges and independent institutions offer a diversity of programs, but their commonality is that they share the following commitments and principles: to be culturally appropriate, readily accessible, and to offer a quality post-secondary education for Indian people. They also present a local function: empowerment through cultural revitalization, spiritual renewal, tribal development and self-government. Aside from Salish-Kootenai College, the case of Amawtay Wasi also represents such type of IHE institutions.

Passing on to affiliated institutions, Barnhardt identifies the Saskatchewan Indian Federated Colleges (IFC - now First Nations University - FNU), which is affiliated with the University of Regina. This affiliation allows the First Nations University to deliver fully accredited university-level education, with its own "distinct flavour". This form of institution is quite usual in Canada, since Indigenous institutions have to be affiliated with mainstream ones in order for

¹³⁹ Other types of independent institutions are the private independent institutions, such as private tribal colleges in USA and Maori's Te Wananga o Raukawa and, in the context of this research, the Amawtay Wasi University in Ecuador, which was never financed by the state. Also, vocational-technical, adult and community training centers, much more common in Canada, are presented as independent institutions specialized and job-oriented (ex: Nicola Valley Institute of Technology; En'owkin Center), sometimes non-academic, but sometimes they end up adding academic dimensions (ex: NVIT), and sometimes become bridges towards the academy (serving the two first years of a university program). Finally, Barnhardt presents institutions established by action of home rule (Arctic College; Yukon College) to serve a specific population in a nation-state. UNIBOL network of universities in Bolivia would fit that category, since it was created by the state, for Indigenous Peoples.

their degrees to be recognized¹⁴⁰. Barnhardt mentions that the First Nations University is first committed to the people and then to academic requirements. This focus on serving the community would have caused a somewhat undermining of the academic debate to generate new ideas and influence the academy and the society in general. However, Barnhardt's text was written in 1991, before the IFC was turned into FNU, in 2003, a change that was marked symbolically with the move of the university to a new building, adjacent to the University of Regina campus. While none of the IHE cases I worked with would fit into this category, the struggle of the Amawtay Wasi for recognition and funding parallels in many ways the struggle of FNU.

FNU went through a lot of changes, especially in a battle with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) between 2005-2008, which was followed by a censure from the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) from 2008-2010. Both associations basically accused FNU of not being independent from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, thus not providing the governing independence, autonomy, and academic freedom that their associations required from universities. There were also issues of questionable expenses and governance. This had a serious impact on the university's funding, which was withheld by the federal and the provincial governments between 2009 and 2010. Funding was finally reinstalled in 2010, but under the management of University of Regina. In spite of all these difficulties FNU is now thriving and becoming an example for IHE. FNU offers more than 16 programs, ranging from literature to sciences, including health and environmental studies, community-based programs and graduate programs. In brief, the university is advancing the incorporation of Indigenous worldviews and knowledges into all aspects of the institution and into a wide range of disciplines. Yet, it still works in affiliation with University of Regina, rather than independently. Furthermore, the dilemma of where to invest the resources and energies, whether in programs oriented to serve the community (i.e. social work, school teachers, and business graduates), or in programs oriented towards the challenge of mainstream disciplines, and innovating in diverse directions, is an important dimension to take into account in limited-resources institutions.

Finally, returning to Barnhardt's categories, integrated programs are all the programs and sometimes structures (i.e. Indigenous spaces, services) that were developed in mainstream

¹⁴⁰ In that sense, one of the First Nations Higher Education Consortium's long-term project has been to develop an accreditation process for their member institutions, a project that they have worked on in relation to international networks such as the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium - WINHEC.

institutions and dedicated to addressing Indigenous needs. The most common form these responses take is the creation of Indigenous-oriented academic programs or service units within the institution, that are usually in the areas of NAIS and/or teacher education¹⁴¹. A good example is the First Nations House of Learning at University of British Columbia (1987). It coordinates the diverse Indigenous programs at UBC, makes the links with Indigenous communities, offers services for students, and builds international networks (held the first World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education in 1987). Two of the IHE cases with which I worked, the NAIS programs in Montana and Arizona, fit this category

Barnhardt was not the only one to try to classify the different tendencies in IHE. More recently, Warrior also reviewed programs in the US and Canada (2012). He recognized 3 categories of IHE approaches, albeit somewhat different from Barnhardt's: Student services/support programs in mainstream academy, Indigenous programs like Native studies, and Aboriginally-controlled institutions (Warrior, 2012, p. 3). In this classification, Warrior introduces an important distinction between student services and academic programs, although these are not always separated: in Montana, the Native American studies program was linked very closely to the Native American student services, while in Arizona, it was not the case. However, Warrior overlooks the distinction that Barnhardt made between the type of Indigenous control over the institution. Tippeconnic (Tippeconnic, 1999, p. 39) goes even further in this distinctions by making a difference between organizational control (having Indigenous peoples forming the institution) and infrastructural control (when the content of the institution is Indigenous), and between community control (community members leading the institution) and tribal control (with the tribal government leading). The community and Tribal control could inform, for example, the distinction between the Tribal college and the Amawtay Wasi cases. Furthermore, Tippeconnic highlights the relationships between different organizational structure of IHE and the different goals it fulfills. Among these goals, he mentions: (1) improving indigenous academic performance; (2) increasing infusion of Indigenous culture and languages in education; (3) increasing parental and tribal involvement; (4) upgrading school facilities; (5) developing Indian leadership and staffing; and (6)

¹⁴¹ Both Canadian and USA universities have developed Indigenous studies programs, yet this is not a development that took place in the Andes. Indigenism and Andinism as trends of thought and academic orientations were developed, but mainly by non-Indigenous intellectuals. "Andean studies" does exist in the Simon Bolivar university in Quito, but "lo Andino" is not necessarily defined in Indigenous terms. Nevertheless, throughout the Andes, linguistic and Intercultural/Bilingual education programs are offered in universities of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador.

obtaining accreditation. In order to reach one or multiple goals, different levels of Indigenous/community control and involvement might be required. Furthermore, the IHE cases I researched engaged with various of these goals at different levels.

The comparison of IHE in South America reveals other factors influencing the type of IHE institutions or programs that are developed. In the Andean context, Daniel Mato is one of the key authors on IHE. He presents IHE as a heterogeneous yet unified phenomenon. Reporting on a study realized in 12 Latin American countries, including 50 institutions of higher education explicitly oriented towards the needs and demands of Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, Mato (Mato, 2008a, 2008b) describes significant conceptual differences leading to a diversity of practices. Amongst the differences, he highlights the population concerned by the education models, the institutional contexts, ideologies, educational models, levels of training and disciplines offered, and conception of knowledge, objectives, and interests. He gives special attention to the social actors actually involved in the different IHE experiences. These include Indigenous organizations and intellectuals, government agencies, mainstream academic institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international cooperation agencies, private foundations, religious groups, and scholar groups (Mato, 2008b, p. 51). A diversity of institutions or inter institutional agreements emerged from the alliances, agreements, and negotiations between these very different social actors, resulting in a diversity of forms, from public to private universities, and from faculties to departments, programs, courses, centres, and institutes.

Similarly, when I interviewed the Rector of the Amawtay Wasi university in Quito, he highlighted the great differences between an institution such as his, which was created by the Indigenous movement for the Indigenous communities and to influence a social change, and institutions created by the state to serve part of the population, as is the case in Bolivia, or other institutions that might want to be recognized by the state through accreditation, as is the case in Peru. According to him, that will influence greatly not only the resources available, but also the degree to which a program or institution can be "Indigenous"¹⁴².

A good example of the diversity of actors involved in IHE in the Andes is the PROIEB-Andes (*Programa de Formación en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe para los Países Andinos*). This is

¹⁴² Barnhardt also presents the paradox that lots of Indigenous institutions face: that of having to "fit" Western criteria of university: "How could an Inupiat educational philosophy be made to fit the Western notion of a university, or should it be the other way around?" and "What would be "Inupiaq" about the Inupiat University of the Arctic?" (Barnhardt, 1991, p. 2).

one of the most renowned Indigenous program of education in the Andes. It was created in Bolivia in 1996, in a collaborative effort between German international cooperation NGO, GTZ, and the Bolivian government¹⁴³, to support Intercultural and Bilingual Education (IBE) in Latin América, by training the "human resources" that this type of education demands (<http://programa.proeibandes.org>). Thus, collaboration between the national government and an international NGO resulted in a graduate program that became an academic unit in the graduate department of the *Universidad Mayor de San Simón's* (UMSS) Faculty of Humanities and Education Sciences. The program's headquarters are at UMSS, located in Cochabamba, Bolivia, nonetheless it ran in diverse universities (from Argentina, Chile, Colombia) and today trains Indigenous educators from Mexico, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, and Bolivia. However, according to García (2014), while the program is oriented towards IBE and training of Indigenous educators who can then work as Word Warriors in Turner's sense (2006) many of the Indigenous graduate students noted that the curriculum is still very Euro-centric, and that not enough place is made for Indigenous knowledges and worldviews (M. E. García, 2014).

Interestingly, GTZ was also involved in the funding of the Indigenous Intercultural University (UII) in collaboration with the Indigenous Fund (Fondo Indígena - FI), which in turn financed a collaborative project between the Indigenous university Amawtay Wasi, in Ecuador, the *Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense* (URACCAN) and the *Universidad Autónoma Indígena Intercultural de Cauca* (UAIIN), in Colombia, for the creation of a Master's program in Administration of development with identity and for the communal Good Life (Buen Vivir), in 2008-2009. The program was later changed in 2014 to a Master's degree in Cosmovision for the Good Life with emphasis in climate change and equity. This choice reflects better Indigenous worldviews than the previous "development" paradigm (interview with Marcia Mandepora, Rector of the Guaraní UNIBOL, November 2014). In this last case, the Indigenous/Intercultural universities involved in the project were the result of Indigenous organizations' work rather than national governments' proposals. Consequently, depending with whom they collaborate, international NGOs might support very different projects. In any case, though, international cooperation institutions have played important roles in Indigenous higher education in the Andes. These institutions include UNESCO, IESALC, COLAM and even USAID.

¹⁴³ It is to be noted that Bolivian government promulgated, in July of 1994, the Law 1565 of educative reform, which established Bolivian education as being participative, intercultural, and bilingual.

In addition to the involvement of international institutions in IHE, along with the work of national and local Indigenous organizations for the creation of their own institutions and programs of higher education, Mato identifies another level of differentiation between IHE programs and institutions: their "recognition" by the State (Mato, 2008b, p. 49). For example, the Amawtay Wasi evolved through serious conflicts with the state for its recognition as a university and its capacity to issue diplomas. In contexts where the accreditation agencies are state-centralized, as is the case in Ecuador, these issues become very important. We also saw that in the Canadian context this can also be important in terms of receiving money from the federal and provincial governments. In that sense, the Amawtay Wasi situation was quite different from the Indigenous universities in Bolivia that were created by the government in 2008. The 3 Bolivian UNIBOL received funds from the government, which the Amawtay Wasi never was able to secure, other than sporadic support to specific projects and programs. Finally, Mato distinguishes between the institutions defining themselves as Indigenous universities, created by and for Indigenous organizations, intercultural universities, and communal universities, or any mix of these identities – which is the case of the Indigenous, Intercultural and Communal University Amawtay Wasi. These reflect different concepts and objectives of education (Mato, 2008b, p. 53).

To sum up the comparative literature on the different models of IHE, these might involve different organizational autonomy (Barnhardt, 1991), address different objectives (Mato, 2008b; Tippeconnic, 1999; Warrior, 2012), and involve different social actors and collectives (Mato, 2008b; Tippeconnic, 1999). For my research, I worked with institutions and programs that represent some of the different models. For example, I worked with 2 NAIS programs (University of Arizona - UA - and Montana State University - MSU), which fit Barnhardt's idea of integrated programs. I also worked with a Tribal College, the Salish-Kootenai College, which fits better the independent institution model. The Indigenous university where I realized field work in Ecuador, the Amawtay Wasi University, is also an independent institution, which eventually had to affiliate with Indigenous universities situated in Nicaragua and Colombia to deliver diplomas.

Even when working with two of each integrated programs and independent institutions, these differed in other aspects of their approaches. The NAIS program at MSU was more oriented towards Student Services from which it had emerged as we will see in next chapter, while NAIS at UA was more oriented towards theory crafting, also because of the program's history. Similarly, the two independent institutions are different since they involve distinctive social actors. The Tribal

College is fostered by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe, while the Amawtay Wasi was originally founded by the ICCI and CONAIE, two Indigenous organizations at the national level rather than governing local communities. Thus, the Salish-Kootenai College takes a more local approach¹⁴⁴.

The national versus tribal articulation of IHE institutions brings up another way of conceptualizing the differences between decolonial approaches realized in IHE institutions and programs. Cook-Lynn describes different modes of theorization for Indigenous studies academic model as developed in the 1970s (Cook-Lynn, 1997). As she contends that Indigenous studies were meant to reflect the principles of Indigenousness and sovereignty, Cook-Lynn recognizes 3 modalities in which to develop theories around those principles:

- Pan-Indigenous: Defined in terms of commonalities between various Indigenous nations, but also in relation to colonialism and decolonization;
- Tribally specific: Linked to the fact that each Indigenous nation has its own sovereignty and specific history, culture, and knowledge;
- Nation-to-nation: Interdependence existing between diverse nations living in a territory or in the world in general (Cook-Lynn, 1997).

I would argue that the 3 different IHE structures that I explore in my dissertation, namely NAIS programs, Tribal Colleges, and Indigenous University, answer the 3 modalities described by Cook-Lynn. NAIS is situated in mainstream institutions and usually addresses a majority (or at least a large number) of non-Indigenous audience, tends to have a more Pan-Indigenous approach. Tribal colleges are obviously tribally-specific. These take on many disciplines in the education they offer, but integrate the specific history, culture, and language relevant to their Tribe into the content and format of their teaching. Finally, the Amawtay Wasi is rooted in Indigenous knowledges before it enters in conversation with Western or other knowledges. Doing so, it challenges the nation-state structures and knowledges, on the basis of a nation-to-nation conversation. The plurinationality and interculturality concepts that it works with also imply nation-to-nation theorization.

Finally, each of these institutions and programs articulate a diversity of interests and objectives in relation to diverse social actors and collectives from a given context resulting from a concrete

¹⁴⁴ Tribal Colleges also have the recognition and (under)financial support of the federal government, while the Amawtay Wasi was recognized originally by the state, but never received fund, and this recognition was revoked in 2013.

history. While they can all be analyzed as decolonial projects and following the dimensions I identified as characterizing IHE – namely, transformative philosophy involving Indigenous knowledges and engaging with Indigenous communities – they articulate these projects differently, using vocabulary and concepts that mark the distinct contexts in which IHE institutions emerged. Understanding the history of IHE in each context explored (Andes and North America) is therefore fundamental to understanding IHE, which is always also realized locally. The next chapter dives into the history of IHE in North America and in the Andes and the historical and institutional context of each IHE projects that I worked with during my research, before moving to the description these projects according to IHE characteristics and in terms of their contribution to decolonial projects.

CHAPTER 5: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION INTO LOCAL ENACTMENTS

"Years ago Indians had the buffalo. The buffalo fed them, clothed them, provided shelters, and a way to share with others. When Indians were placed on the reservations, Indians became dependent on hand-outs from the government. This dehumanizing event created a loss for Indians. Many forget the language, the culture, the lifeway that was theirs and now we fight suicide, drugs and alcohol, bad health and each other. [...] But there is hope and that is education. Education is the 'returning of the buffalo.' Education brings back pride, knowledge of language, culture, and self-awareness that will make us grateful for life, work, health, and each other."

(Al Chandler, quoted by Bishop-Goss, 2015).

Chandler's words, spoken during a ceremony celebrating Indigenous educators' leadership in Tribal Colleges in 2015 reflect the impacts of colonization and how Indigenous education is part of decolonizing processes. Resistance to colonization has taken many forms over the centuries and a diversity of educational strategies, institutions, programs, and networks were developed by Indigenous Peoples throughout the Americas, building on local, regional, national, and international networks. For instance, Chandler's use of the metaphor of the Buffalo is a very relevant one in Montana and for many Indigenous cultures that related (and might still relate) to the buffalo. For other Indigenous Peoples, however, other metaphors would be more relevant: corn, or the three sisters (corn, squash, beans), or salmon, depending on the nation. Thus, as seen in previous chapter, according to the context, to the place, and to the actors involved, the content and enactment of decolonial projects, including higher education, will differ.

While the distinctive models of IHE explored in previous chapter relate to singular contexts, they also relate to the specific history in which they emerged, the needs to which they answer, and the actors that initiated each project. Therefore, this chapter presents the history of the development of IHE models in North America and the Andes, as well as the historical and institutional context of the IHE institutions and programs I worked with, in order to understand better where their respective decolonial projects come from and in what places, relations, and networks they are enacted.

History of IHE in North and South America

I began Chapter 4 with a presentation of IHE according to international networks, in order to highlight the commonalities of the phenomenon. However, the two international networks presented then - WINHEC and RUIICAY – also speak to the specificities of IHE history and patterns they include. Many North American IHE institutions and programs relate to WINHEC; while Andean IHE institutions and programs relate to RUIICAY. This reflects a profound difference in the development of IHE in these two regions, which is important to understand in order to situate the decolonial projects of each particular IHE institution or program.

For example, as a general difference, in North America, IHE was established in the 1960s, and took two main forms: Native (American) or Indigenous Studies (NAIS) programs in mainstream institutions and locally-controlled education – which in the USA is mainly embodied by the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) movement. By contrast, in the Andes, there is no NAIS program but rather Intercultural and Bilingual Education programs. Additionally, Indigenous institutions of higher education are not linked to specific tribes but rather to Indigenous organizations (national or regional), and they were developed much later, towards end of the twentieth century, and the beginning of the twenty-first. The following pages present a more detailed overview for North America and the Andes regionally, as well as for the two countries in which my field sites are situated: the US and Ecuador.

North America/US

The movement for NAIS programs emerged in the context of civil rights, anti-war movements, and Indigenous self-determination movement in the 1960s (Andersen, 2009; Fixico, 2003; Forbes, 1998; Kidwell, 2009; Lambe, 2003; Weaver, 2007; Wheeler, 2001). As such, many authors situate the discipline as "a product of political forces at the national level and now at the tribal level" (Kidwell, 2009, p. 1). Jack D. Forbes, who was involved in one of the first proposals for an Indigenous university in the US, in 1961 and who contributed to the development of NAIS at UC Davis reminds us of the original goals of IHE:

When we established in the late 1960s and early 1970s the first indigenous-controlled colleges and the first Native Studies programs, most of us spoke in strong terms about self-determination, liberation, and decolonization, by which we meant intellectual self-determination as well as political and economic liberation for our communities and nations. Many of our projects were envisioned as having a very close interface between these two goals (Forbes, 1998, p. 13).

Indigenous scholars and activists played important roles in developing these programs, but so did Indigenous students attending universities in the 1960s and 1970s. Civil rights, anti-war, and anti-colonial movements were also student movements that rose their voices across campuses, pushing administrations to invest in, amongst other things, a number of area studies (gender, Hispanic, Black, Indigenous studies). Kidwell recounts,

Some of the very few American Indian students in universities across the country also found their voices. Students at San Francisco State University picketed the university with demands for a college of ethnic studies. At the University of California at Berkeley administrators cancelled a scheduled speech by black activist Stokely Carmichael, leading to a boycott of classes by black, Hispanic, Asian, and the very few American Indian students on the campus. This Third World Strike led the university's Academic Senate to create an ethnic studies department, reporting directly to the chancellor. At the University of Minnesota a group of American Indian students took a different approach by negotiating with a sympathetic dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the establishment of an academic program (Kidwell, 2009, p. 1).

In this context, while self-determination and sovereignty were important claims for Indigenous Peoples, this activism took a particular form in the academy, around intellectual sovereignty. Speaking to this reality, Forbes writes:

Since about 1960 the movements to create Native American Studies as a new discipline and to create Native-controlled colleges have both had as one of their key objectives the liberation of the indigenous intelligentsia from the constraints imposed by the dominance of the European and Euro-North American colonial system (Forbes, 1998, p. 12).

While these developments happened in the 1960s, they were also based on previous experiences and works by Indigenous intellectuals and scholars of the beginning of the nineteenth century (such as Charles Eastman, Zitkala-Sa, Carlos Montezuma), including a number of Indigenous Ethnographers (George Hunt, Francis LaFlesche, Arthur Parker, Ella Deloria) who contributed to fostering Indigenous perspectives in their respective disciplines (Kidwell & Velie, 2005). However, since the 1960s, there were efforts to regroup Indigenous intellectuals to formulate political and epistemological agendas. It was the case in 1961, with the First Chicago Conference of American Indian Scholars (Kidwell & Velie, 2005)¹⁴⁵, and in March 1970, when the

¹⁴⁵ While the goal of developing Indigenous studies and gathering Indigenous scholars remain the claim of a discipline that would be founded on Indigenous epistemologies and intellectual traditions, it is to be noted that the development of the discipline has often involved collaboration with anthropology, or at least, with allied anthropologist. In this

First Convocation of American Indian Scholars was held at Princeton University (Cook-Lynn, 1997). The convocation gathered Indigenous scholars, professionals, artists, and traditional historians who discussed the "development by Indians of bodies of Indigenous knowledges, in defence of Indigenous land and rights" (Cook-Lynn, 1997, p. 9). Hence, this particular discipline had a very specific orientation, for

it challenges almost everything that America has to offer in education and society. It rejects assimilation in favor of tribal nationhood. It rejects mainstream America conservatism in favor of a new history that acknowledges a horrific period of greed and empire building in America during which genocide and deicide was legalized. ... Its principles are indigenoussness and sovereignty rather than cultural contact (or colonialism), pluralism, diversity, and immigration (Cook-Lynn, 1997, p. 26).

While as a discipline, NAIS implies particular epistemologies or ways of conceptualizing knowledges (Cook-Lynn, 1997; Kidwell, 2009), given the political context in which it emerged, NAIS programs are also spaces of contentious questions, such as those pertaining to identity (Andersen, 2009; Kidwell, 2009; Weaver, 2007), and debates around essentialism/separatedness, and adaptability/agency (Andersen, 2009; Kidwell, 2009; Weaver, 2007).¹⁴⁶ Questions about the relevance of the discipline for Indigenous Peoples and/or for the general public are also of importance (Weaver, 2007).¹⁴⁷ Other contentious issues relate to NAIS interdisciplinary nature and what it includes or not (D. R. Wildcat & Pierotti, 2000)¹⁴⁸, as well as the commitment of NAIS to Indigenous communities and what it means in terms of accountability (Weaver, 2007; Wheeler,

case, Sol Tax, who was an anthropology professor at the University of Chicago, and a key actor in developing action anthropology, was part of the coordination necessary to make the conference possible at University of Chicago.

¹⁴⁶ The challenge to American Indian studies as a discipline is to find ways to explicate the nature of contemporary American Indian identity within the constructs of land, historical change, political sovereignty, language, and expressive culture that now constitute one model of a discipline. At the extremes, either Indians remain distinctive cultural groups with a worldview unknowable to non-Indian people, or Indian cultures become totally assimilated into American society. The challenge is to find the grounds to assert that Indian communities have maintained their distinctive identities because their adaptations were based on Indian value systems that are now expressed in ways that can be identified in American society (Kidwell, 2009, p. 9)

¹⁴⁷ In our histories, we know numerous warriors who took up arms to defend their people. Yet we also have ample and equal examples of diplomacy. For every Red Cloud there is a Red Jacket. For every Geronimo there is a Deskaheh. The two are not mutually exclusive; sometimes an individual is warrior at one moment and diplomat at another. As Daniel Justice reminds us, the Chickamauga consciousness is counterbalanced by the Beloved Path. Dragging Canoe and Nancy Ward are two sides of the same coin (Weaver, 2007, p. 248)

¹⁴⁸ For example, Wildcat and Pierotti (D. R. Wildcat & Pierotti, 2000) argue that NAIS has evolved to centre on humanities and social sciences, thus marginalizing the natural world, which in fact should be involved as Indigenous knowledges are about relationality with "all our relations", non-humans/natural world included. Thus, the division between social/cultural and natural world is not relevant. This issue is also coming up in more recent social sciences trends such as socio-nature, and non- or post-human anthropology.

2001).¹⁴⁹ These tensions obviously account for the diversity of NAIS programs developed over the years. Today, the Nelson's Guide to Native American Studies Programs (2012) counts more than 100 programs of NAIS in mainstream universities. Meanwhile, in Canada, the first NAIS program was created at Trent University in 1969 (with the name of "Indian-Eskimo Studies Program") and there are now at least 33 Canadian universities offering programs in Native/Aboriginal/Indigenous studies¹⁵⁰ (Nelson, 2012), including Concordia University, which was the first university to offer an NAIS program (First Peoples' Studies or FPST) in the province of Quebec, in 2010¹⁵¹.

Nevertheless, a common trait to NAIS programs stems from the history of the discipline and remains the commitment to self-determination, decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty, as Wheeler argues:

¹⁴⁹ Over the third years after Indian/Native Studies emerged in universities as a discipline, the question, "to whom we are accountable" - who we are responsible to and whose standards we are obliged to meet? - still arises. The answer is often hotly debated in terms of degrees, but from the position of many Native scholars, the reality is that we are accountable to two distinct, and often disparate, bodies: our Aboriginal communities, and the university system at large. Indian/Native Studies was created to provide professional training and service to meet the unique needs of our communities and so we are judged by community standards. At the same time, we are an academic discipline which imposes another set of standards on us. While some would scream "not fair!" the requirement that we meet to sets of standards should not be much of a surprise, after all, we are "citizens plus", we do want the best of both worlds, and our forefathers anticipated a bicultural education and bicultural future for us when they signed the Treaties. As scholars, Indigenous students and faculty are, therefore, expected to be mediators/translators/bridges between these two worlds, a location which, as all interpreters know, inherently requires us to become fluent in (at least) two intellectual traditions and cultures. The question then, is not so much who we are accountable to - since that is a given - but how we can meet two, often disparate and contradictory, sets of standards (Wheeler, 2001, p. 98).

¹⁵⁰ A significant number of post-secondary institutions also offer cultural spaces and services for Indigenous students: the Assembly of First Nations listed 67 post-secondary education Institutes with Indian Support Program, in 2006, and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges listed 84 institutions with Indigenous/Aboriginal services in 2010

¹⁵¹ The province of Quebec was slow in recognizing the importance of this discipline. Today, apart from Concordia University, McGill and Université de Montréal, and this last year, UQAM, are now offering Indigenous studies programs. Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) and Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) offer microprograms and certificates in Indigenous studies or connected disciplines, and Bishop University also has a minor in Indigenous studies. However, Concordia's First Peoples Studies program remains unique in Québec in terms of its offering of specific FPST stand-alone program, while other universities tend to combine courses with Indigenous content existing in diverse departments, into interdisciplinary programs. This is a very important difference to make, however, in terms of Indigenous higher education. Indigenous studies programs have addressed a number of issues that Indigenous Peoples' face such as exclusion from the academy as well as gaps and barriers to higher education. These programs were created to allow for Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and epistemologies to flourish in academic institutions, as well as to create spaces for Indigenous scholars' and students' histories, experiences and knowledge to exist on their own, and not as objects of studies for another discipline. In contrast, blended programs that combine courses of Indigenous content tend to remain rooted in Western perspectives.

The recognition of a discipline that is rooted in Indigenous epistemologies, and represents an academic culturally safe space, is an important reason why students and scholars choose to come to NAIS or FPST, as opposed to enrolling in interdisciplinary programs where Indigenous Peoples are more the subject of study than the actual knowledge keepers. Furthermore, the contribution of Indigenous Studies programs and Departments to the development of new trends in Indigenous methodologies, pedagogical approaches, and perspectives in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences cannot be denied.

Indian\Native Studies grew out of the Indigenous rights movements of the 1960s which included Indigenous demands for a voice in universities and colleges. As the academic branch of a larger movement, Native Studies is also about decolonization: it is simultaneously a revolt against colonialist representations of Indigenous life and history, a rejection of colonialist relations and treatments, and the means by which new intellectual pursuits are free to develop. As a vehicle for politicization through education and skill development, Indian/Native Studies was also perceived as one of the protectorates of Indigenous sovereignty and rights at the local, regional, national and international levels (Wheeler, 2001, pp. 98-99).

Accordingly, NAIS emerged as a hope and a challenge in mainstream academy for Indigenous sovereignty. Decades after the first NAIS programs were developed in North America, however, Cook-Lynn assessed the actual development of NAIS epistemology and the changes it brought to mainstream academy between 1970 and 1997 as very poor. She claims that "the crisis in Native American Studies twenty-plus years after the fact is directly related to the failure of structural transformation in the learning institutions of America" (Cook-Lynn, 1997, p. 27). Hence, the existence of this interruptive discipline within academic institutions proves limited and problematic. Similarly, in 1998, Thornton's assessment of the status of Native Studies was that its "potential importance [...] in higher education is far from being realized"(Thornton, 1998b, p. 6)¹⁵². Thornton assesses that once established as a separate discipline, NAIS was underdeveloped in higher education (Thornton, 1998a, p. 97) given that

Few faculty or administrators saw the promise of coming to grips in fundamental ways with Native American peoples, societies, cultures, histories, and problems. Fewer still saw the promise of incorporating this effort into higher education in a way that would make sense to native peoples while being fully understood by academics. No major college or university decided that Native American studies had rich intellectual promise and that it would build a first-rate scholarly endeavor, comparable to others at the institution (Thornton, 1998a, p. 98).

In this context, at the beginning of our century, Indigenous studies still has a long way to go in terms of making its place in mainstream academy, developing its own epistemologies, in order to influence it and transform its relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

¹⁵² He later on describes the state of Native studies in the following words:

"Underfunded, understaffed, and generally unsupported at those institutions, Native American studies struggled to survive and has done so now for three decades. In that time, journals have been established, books and monographs published, curricula and academic majors developed, and Native American studies, as an academic field, has moved toward the intellectual mainstream, though it is not there yet" (Thornton & Snipp, 1998, p. 417).

Consequently, when Kuokkanen published her book, in 2007, she still witnessed, more than 40 years after the creation of discipline, the intellectual and financial marginalization of Indigenous studies (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 105). She analyzes this marginalization in light of the Eurocentric nature of the academy, and of the ignorance that is prevailing in its institutions. She states that

In spite of welcoming new fields of study, universities usually fiercely protect their intellectual traditions. Area studies are dismissed "as fringe programs of less merit and credibility", an act which, according to M. Annette James Guerrero, amounts to discrimination and expresses Eurocentrism. The marginalization of indigenous studies programs means that they often are poorly integrated into the academy and are ignored by it (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 105).

Thus, mainstream institutions have a hard time making space for the changes introduced by NAIS since the end of 1960s. Kuokkanen criticizes how Indigenous Peoples' knowledges and perspectives are integrated, when they are, in such Eurocentric institutions. Integrating new knowledges in institutions that have historically ignored them tends to be done in ways that do not challenge Western frameworks of interpretation and analysis (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 105). The consequence of retaining "modern, Enlightenment assumptions" is that universities reproduce "epistemic violence and biased, stereotypical (mis)interpretation" of these knowledges and philosophies (*Ibid.*). In spite of their presence for now more than four decades in North American academy, Indigenous studies programs and departments are still working hard to achieve the decolonization process they were set for in the late 1960s.

NAIS in mainstream universities is not the only IHE strategy developed in the US. Efforts were also invested in the movement for the creation of tribally-controlled institutions of higher education,¹⁵³ associated with the "self-determination area" in terms of Indigenous education policy (Juneau, 2001). Stein mentions that in the "mid-1950s Tribal Chairman Robert Burnette of the Rosebud Sioux (Sicangu Lakota) proposed total tribal control of education on the Rosebud Sioux

¹⁵³ "Another form of this cultural uniqueness that is part of American Indian studies is the tribally controlled community college. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) emerged in the early 1970s, and its membership continues to grow as more tribes seek control of higher education for their members. One characteristic of many of these colleges is tribally specific cultural curriculum, including language studies, history, and worldview" (Kidwell, 2009, p. 8).

reservation and development of a college" (Stein, 2009, p. 19).¹⁵⁴ It was not until 1970, however, that the Sinte Gleska University (SGU) was created in Mission, South Dakota¹⁵⁵.

It is in that perspective of self-determination, a core principle of 1960s Indigenous activism, that the first tribal college, the Diné (Navajo) College, was created in 1968 under the initiative of the Navajo Tribe Council. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) regards this as the result of decades of tribal work after Navajo War Veterans returned to their nation in 1945 and began talking of a Navajo controlled college. Then, in 1960, Raymond Nakai campaigned for the Navajo Tribal Chairman with the promise of "working toward Navajo control of education and creation of Navajo institution of higher education"¹⁵⁶. In 1971, the college received federal support with the Navajo Community College Act, which granted the college funding. Between 1968 and 1972, five other Tribal Colleges and Universities were created, and they began to organize nationally in 1972, resulting in the founding of the AIHEC in 1973. The Navajo Community College Act and the development of this network of Tribal Colleges served the development of a tribally-controlled system of education, with the Tribally Controlled Community College Act in 1978. This 1978 Act also fit into the new politics of self-determination that Indigenous activism succeeded in officialising under Carter's 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

The tribally-controlled system of education evolved into a distinctive structure, including a national organization, a national leadership, a fund raising structure, and a professional journal (Warner & Gipp, 2009). AIHEC grew to count 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) today, all of which are accredited by US regional accreditation commissions. TCUs are conceived as strengthening Tribal sovereignty and they serve today over 28 000 Indigenous Students. Since they

¹⁵⁴ Boyer notes, however, that the idea of an Indigenous university is much older than the 1950s or 1960s:

"In 1911, an Indian named August Breuninger proposed the creation of an Indian university that would focus on Native American culture and be connected to an Indian museum. In a letter outlining his proposal, Breuninger argued that such an institution should both create opportunity for Indians and demonstrate the vitality of Indian culture" (Boyer, 1997, p. 19).

¹⁵⁵ And SGU was accredited only in 1983. It currently is a four-year institution, and even offers Masters in education.

¹⁵⁶ <http://aihec.org/about/documents/AIHECHistorical%20Overview.pdf>

Stein (1990) identifies several factors influencing the creation of this college:

"A number of events came together in the 1960s which led to the birth of the first tribally controlled college on the Navajo Reservation in 1968: the election of President Kennedy and his message of helping others; the civil rights movement; Johnson's war on poverty; veterans of World War II gaining seats on the tribal council; higher education reaching out to the reservation; young Indians demanding a better chance at securing the American dream of the good life; and the vision of several people that a community college could work on an Indian reservation" (Stein, 1990).

organized as a consortium, TCUs hold annual meetings and conferences and share experiences, for example through the Tribal Colleges Journal (TCJ).

Finally, both NAIS and TCUs developed in USA in the same period, as two educational strategies supporting Indigenous sovereignty, and decolonization in different ways. The NAIS movement obviously addresses the intellectual sovereignty of Indigenous peoples and decolonization of knowledge (Fixico, 2003; Forbes, 1998; Kidwell, 2009) while including a commitment to Indigenous communities (Weaver, 2007; Wheeler, 2001). NAIS theoretical developments include works on the significance of land, Indigenous historical agency, tribal sovereignty, indigenous languages, and arts (Kidwell & Velie, 2005), all important concepts that support Indigenous decolonial projects. The TCUs movement add to these elements institutional sovereignty and educational projects articulated by each community according to its needs. Furthermore, TCUs offer programs in a variety of disciplines, including NAIS or local culture studies (i.e. Diné Studies), but also sciences, thus potentially answering Wildcat and Pierotti's critique of limitation of NAIS to humanities and social sciences (D. R. Wildcat & Pierotti, 2000).

Andes/Ecuador

The context for IHE in the Andes is quite different. NAIS programs were not part of the strategies developed by Indigenous Peoples. Rather, since 1930s (Bolivia) and 1940s (Ecuador), Indigenous movements continuously worked toward the development of a bilingual education that would be intercultural, with the explicit aim of maintaining Indigenous languages and cultures alive. In Peru, a national reform of education in 1972 officially defined a national policy of bilingual education. Whereas in Ecuador, in the 1960s, in line with Freirian pedagogical ideas and with theology of liberation, the Catholic Church in Riobamba (central Ecuadorian Andes) supported efforts of popular education through radio, that involved teaching in Kichwa¹⁵⁷. In the 1970s, Indigenous Peoples of Amazonia were developing their own bilingual and intercultural programs through radio too¹⁵⁸, which paralleled the development of Indigenous political organizations, such as the Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuadorian Amazonia (COFENAI) in 1980 and, before that, the development of Andean organization ECUARUNARI (1972). In 1982, the Ecuadorian government officially established cross-cultural bilingual

¹⁵⁷ The *Escuelas radiofónicas populares de Ecuador* of Monseñor Leonidas Proaño.

¹⁵⁸ The *System de Escuelas Radiofónicas Bilingües Shuar* - SEBISH

education, at least in regions where Indigenous Peoples were the majority, and in 1988, two years after the creation of the national Indigenous organization - the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) - the government agreed in establishing the National Cross-cultural Bilingual Education Department - DINEIB (J. García et al., 2004, pp. 275-276). Through the agreement with the governmental, CONAIE succeeded in preserving control over its educational project, including the capacity of electing authorities and staff, making curriculum proposals, creating textbooks, and so on. This was not the case in other Andean countries, such as Peru and Bolivia, where the governments control the intercultural and bilingual programs (Martínez Novo, 2009). Overall, Indigenous movements in the Andes were able to secure intercultural and bilingual education as part of state politics. In the case of Ecuador, this took the form of Indigenous control of the intercultural and bilingual education curriculum through the development of the *Modelo de Educación Intercultural y Bilingüe* (MOSEIB) implemented in schools of the *Sierra* since the 1990s¹⁵⁹, and adapted by 2005 to the Amazonian cultures and communities. DINEIB, however, was addressing the primary and secondary education, and had no provision for the university level.

A parallel movement of Intercultural and Bilingual Education (IBE) was happening in mainstream universities, through programs conceived of by Indigenous Peoples in Ecuador. The *Poticial Universidad Católica Ecuador*, for example, had a Centre of investigation for Indigenous Education running from 1978 to 1986, including programs for the alphabetization in Kichwa and Andean linguistics. The University of Cuenca also developed, by the end of the 1980s, programs to train teachers in IBE, programs of communal development, as well as Andean linguistics. Other similar programs were developed in different universities, yet they remain far from the project that NAIS represents in North America. The closest examples of this kind of programs, in Ecuador, would be the Ethnic Studies program of the *Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* (FLACSO), and the establishment of a Chair of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America at the *Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar*, which includes the teaching of Kichwa and courses focused on Indigenous cultures in Ecuador. These, however, are not entire programs based on Indigenous epistemologies as the NAIS project is.

¹⁵⁹ MOSEIB included, amongst other things: adapting school work to communal calendars; considering a broader array of social actors in the education processes, including families and communities; establishing educational levels in relation to each student's development rather than based on age.

The development of Indigenous controlled education is another educational strategy that Indigenous movements took in the Andes to answer the colonial and assimilationist policies of the states. For example, in Bolivia during the first half of the twentieth century, education, together with the return of usurped lands, became a central demand from the Indigenous movement known as *caciques-apoderados* (Zapata Silva, 2013, p. 175), which was formed in response to the *Exvicunlación* law attempting to redistribute communities' lands into individual lots (similar to allotment policies in the US, and the ongoing ideas of abolishing reserves in Canada). Land-base loss also meant the dismantling of Indigenous communal organization, and was part of a general assimilationist approach. As the state was not attending to the demands of the *caciques-apoderados*, and of other Indigenous groups, experiences of self-managed education were put in place, the most renown being the Warisata school created in 1931. Meanwhile, in Ecuador, Indigenous leaders in 1944 created the Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI) and in 1945 the first four Intercultural and Bilingual schools in the region of Kayambe, as an answer to the 1930s integrative educational policy coming from the State (J. García et al., 2004, p. 274). The collaboration with communist parties became a justification, at the beginning of the 1960s, for the strong repression of these schools, to the point of closure, and arrest of school leaders. The repression also involved a prohibition on the use of the Kichwa language in education¹⁶⁰. Hence, at the time that Indigenous organizations were reaching a breakthrough in North America, they were being strongly repressed in the Andes. This had the consequence of delaying Indigenous control of post-secondary education in the Andes, even if an important percentage of the total population is Indigenous in countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador.

It took until the 1980s for projects of intercultural and bilingual education to grow again, and they were often paired with activism for the redefinition of the nation-state into a plurinational state, that would recognize the specificity of Indigenous nations. In the case of Ecuador and Bolivia, Indigenous mobilization eventually led these states to processes of Constitutional Assemblies, which redefined the countries as plurinational states in the 2000s. In both countries, these processes also involved the development of Indigenous higher education since the 1990s, following a long struggle for Indigenous communities' control over their education in general.

¹⁶⁰ Hence the delayed intercultural and bilingual education policies in Ecuador, which were institutionalized by the state in the 1980s.

Hence, by the early in 1990s, conversations began in diverse Indigenous groups and movements for the creation an Indigenous post-secondary education system. Many models were discussed and put into practice, such as the *Universidad Indígena Intercultural Kawsay* (UNIK), an international project with roots in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, that emerged with the financial support of the Sweden's department of international cooperation. UNIK was never institutionalized as a University but existed in Ecuador through the Kawsay Foundation. It was active until 2010 (Rivera, 2014, interview). Other projects included a governance school led by Luis Maldonado, and linguistic and pedagogical programs that were put in place in collaboration with the University of Cuenca (Montaluisa, 2014, interview) and the Catholic University in Quito (Macas, 2014, interview). The Amawtay Wasi, however, was the only project that stood on its own as an institution of higher education and which graduated students in diverse disciplines.

Meanwhile, in Bolivia, Indigenous organizations such as the *Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu* – CONAMAQ – in 2004 developed a project of "Interculturality". This referred to a process of recuperation, revitalization, and strengthening of culture by Indigenous Peoples, based on their ancestral teachings, characteristics, and values. The objective of CONAMAQ was to enforce self-determination at the ideological, political, territorial and socio-cultural levels (CONAMAQ et al., 2004). Saarestranta (2011) mentions that the development in 2008 of a network of three Indigenous Universities (UNIBOL), each one related to large Indigenous cultural groups (Quechua, Aymara, and Guaraní Universities), by the first government under the leadership of an Indigenous president, is one of the few concrete national actions taken in Bolivia towards the proposed direction by CONAMAQ.

In Ecuador, between 1996 and 2004, the joint efforts of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities (CONAIE) and the Scientific Institute of Indigenous Cultures (ICCI) to answer the need for Indigenous post-secondary education representing the diversity of Indigenous nations led to the foundation of the Cross-Cultural University of Indigenous Nationalities and Peoples Amawtay Wasi (Sarango, 2009). De la Cadena presents the work of the Amawtay Wasi as the materialization of the effort to restructure the old state, questioning the liberal consensus that sustains it, as well as its colonial hierarchies. More specifically, De la Cadena argues that the Amawtay Wasi represents the most ambitious version of cross-culturalism (interculturalidad) since it both questions the knowledge structure and institutions of the liberal consensus and contributes to the rewriting of national history (De La Cadena, 2006).

In spite of these advances, the situation is still tributary of government support. The UNIBOL universities were not created by law and any government could decide to stop supporting them. In the case of Ecuador, the Correa government developed a series of policies against Indigenous control of Indigenous education. These include the repatriation of intercultural bilingual education under the authority of the government and the ministry of education thereby reducing the autonomy of the Indigenous movement to manage this institution, the recent official closing of Amawtay Wasi University, as well as the closing of communal schools, while developing new state schools called "units of the millennium". Nonetheless, the Amawtay Wasi is presently in a process of resistance attempting to continue their activities, supported by the Indigenous movement of Ecuador and by the international Network of Indigenous, Intercultural and Community Universities of Latin America (RUIICAY). It also moved, in 2017, towards an agreement with the actual government in order to re-open the university.

Conclusion

From this brief history of the development of IHE in the US and Ecuador, differences in patterns or strategies can be distinguished. In the US, two main strategies were developed, namely, NAIS and TCUs, both sharing some ideas of sovereignty and decolonization through education, and the latter representing a greater local control of higher education by Indigenous communities. In Ecuador, two main strategies were also developed, but these are different from NAIS and TCUs. IBE programs do not have the same sense of sovereignty and decolonization as NAIS, but they do strengthen Indigenous languages and cultures, by creating greater access to education for Indigenous Peoples. In turn, the IHE institutions created by Indigenous scholars and activists, while relating to Indigenous communities, tend to be more in sync with regional, national, and international Indigenous organizations, rather than with local communal leadership (as it is the case with Tribal Colleges, Tribally chartered). These divergent developments also reflect the history of each region, the moment when the programs, disciplines, and institutions were established, as well as the development of IHE as a whole.

Depending on the region's specificities and on the moment of foundation, IHE has political implications regarding sovereignty, self-government powers, and the nature of the nation-state (i.e. mono or pluri national). IHE is also linked to the socio-economic struggles Indigenous Peoples

face regarding equity, access to land and resources. Accordingly, Brayboy et al. (2012) argue that Indigenous Peoples in the US do not fight for their "inclusion" within the democratic body politic, but rather assert their right to remain distinct, sovereign peoples. Similarly, in Canada modern treaties between Indigenous nations and the government (e.g. James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the Nisgaa Treaty, and the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement/establishment of the Nunatsiavut Government) all involved clauses of self-governance at different levels that often include control over education. From this perspective, Indigenous nation building is not necessarily envisioned as a liberal democratic project of citizenship, even though it might imply such democratic projects for specific nations (not as "Canadian" or "US" citizens). Instead, Indigenous nation building often also includes a combination of kinship, government, shared territory, worldviews, and spiritual community (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 12). In the Andes, the nation building process that is envisioned by Indigenous movements, and supported by the education they articulate, is challenging the colonial idea of nation-state by proposing a plurinational state built on the various nations' cultures, languages, and knowledges. These local developments take multiple forms, yet they share a common thread since IHE institutions and programs are part of the decolonization processes that are always locally specific, while also internationally shared responses to colonialism.

Again, it is important to understand the regional and local context to which each IHE is responding if we want to appreciate how it is part of the decolonial processes of this region and place. In spite of all the commonalities already identified in terms of IHE in the Americas, profound differences exist in the two contexts. Correspondingly, in order to compare the commonalities, one needs to understand the contexts that give a particular shape to these commonalities. IHE history in North and South America also creates the backdrop to situate local context and concrete IHE projects with which I collaborated for my fieldwork.

Local contexts and concrete IHE projects

My research was built on a comparison between IHE institutions and programs in different countries (US and Ecuador), and between IHE institutions and programs that represent different models and theoretical modalities, based on different networks, thus articulating different decolonial projects. To grasp these decolonial projects in education, it is important to first look at each project's historical and institutional context, in order to situate the social actors and collectivities involved, the trajectory of these projects, as well as current structures. I present these elements here, before I move on to the description of each IHE programs and institutions where I did field work, and compare them in terms of their decolonial projects, in the next section of the dissertation (Section IV).

Amawtay Wasi's historical and institutional context

The Indigenous, Intercultural and Communal University Amawtay Wasi was established in 2004. As a higher education project of Ecuador's national Indigenous organizations (CONAIE), the Amawtay Wasi (House of Wisdom in Kichwa) was aligned with the Intercultural and Bilingual Education (IBE) structures that the Indigenous movement fought for in Ecuador. It was established as a response to answer the need for Indigenous post-secondary education representing the 14 Indigenous nations' knowledge systems¹⁶¹ in an intercultural perspective (Sarango, 2009).

The Amawtay Wasi also has a role to play in the official articulation of Indigenous practices and philosophies that support Indigenous movements' struggles in Ecuador for a reform of the state (plurinational state) and of the economy (around the principle of *Sumak Kawsay* - or the Good Life). The project of an Indigenous university came along in the 1990s, as a result of the newly formed CONAIE and at a time of heightened activity within regional and national Indigenous movements across Ecuador.

The institutionalization of an Indigenous post-secondary education system was put forward by Indigenous leaders Luis Macas and Leonidas Iza, the first Indigenous representatives elected as deputies at the National Congress in 1996 under the *Pachakutik* political party (Sarango, 2009).

¹⁶¹ The CONAIE recognizes 14 Indigenous nations in Ecuador, one of which is the Kichwa nation, which is in turn formed of 11 different peoples who all speak Kichwa. Given the importance in number of the Kichwa peoples, and the Amawtay Wasi being a project for Ecuador, Andean and specifically Kichwa philosophies have a weight in its conception and philosophical framing. This is a fact that came out multiple times in my interviews, linked to the fact that the original project was to develop the same pedagogical depth based on, for example, Shuar philosophy, but this would have required more time and resources to develop.

With the goal of having a university officially created and recognized by the government, the deputies put together an intercultural and multidisciplinary team to work on a pedagogical proposal. Indigenous movements and community leaders pushed for a model that would reflect Indigenous philosophies, rather than Euro-Western models. Thus, from 1997, with the support of the ICCI (directed by Luis Macas), conversations and *minkas de pensamiento* (collective work of thinking – namely, putting minds together) focused on the Amawtay Wasi as an epistemic and political project were held. Indigenous and *Mestizos* intellectuals, activists, political leaders, knowledge keepers, and community members collaborated in these *minkas*. The *minkas* culminated with a document articulating the university's philosophy and pedagogical approach, which was published in 2004, and is commonly known as the "Libro Verde" (Green Book).

Once the pedagogical proposal was in place the team moved to having it approved by the National Committee of Higher Education (*Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior - CONESUP*). The recognition of their pedagogical proposal by a national institution that oversees mainstream higher education took several years, but after sustained pressure from a variety of Indigenous organizations, the CONESUP approved a favourable assessment of the university in November of 2003. This paved the way for the creation of the university in July of 2004, with bill no.2004-40, published in the official register in August of that year (Sarango, 2009). The bill officially created the university, but under the figure of a private university, owned by the CONAIE and the ICCI/ARY. This meant that the Amawtay Wasi could not receive any money from the state (Sarango, 2008; 2009).

The Amawtay Wasi thus operated as a private university, with three programs approved in 2003. Thereafter it moved classes into various communities between 2007 and 2008 (Vargas Moreno, 2014). Thus, in agro-ecology engineering, classes and workshops were held in communities of the Pichincha province (Conocoto, La Esperanza, and some work in Cayambe); ancestral architecture was moved to Conocoto; and education specialized in intercultural pedagogy was taught in the Province of Loja (Tenta/Saraguro) and in the Province of Morona Santiago (in Macas originally, then in Chiguaza). Apart from these pedagogical initiatives, the Amawtay Wasi also participated in creating the international network of Indigenous, intercultural and communal universities of Latin America (Abya Yala), the RUIICAY, in 2008.

This is how the university worked, locally and internationally, until 2013¹⁶². That year, its activities were suspended by the Higher Education Council (*Consejo de Educación Superior - CES*). The assessment process, applied to all universities in Ecuador between 2009 and 2012, resulted in the closing of more than 15 universities, and 40 regional campuses. The Amawtay Wasi administration denounced the process for its lack of consideration regarding the intercultural principles of the university¹⁶³. They also filed a complaint to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, regarding the violation of international rights of Indigenous Peoples (Sarango, 2014). According to the ILO agreement 169 (1989) and the UNDRIP (2007), Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination in education and the nation-states have the obligation to support this right with adequate funding (article 27 of the ILO agreement, and article 14.3 of the UNDRIP).

In Ecuador, when the government closes a university, the students would normally be sent to complete their degree in another university with a similar program. In the case of the Amawtay Wasi, the CES quickly realized no other university was offering similar programs, so they had to organize what they called a "contingency plan". This basically meant that CES would run the Amawtay Wasi following the philosophy of the university, until the registered cohort of students graduated. To do so, they recruited some of the professors who had worked with the Amawtay Wasi. This created tensions with the former administration of the university, who were contesting the decision of the CES in national and international courts.

On top of this contestation, the former Amawtay Wasi administration also created a new NGO called the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity, which worked autonomously from the state, in Indigenous communities. This autonomous functioning was possible in part because of the support of the RUIICAY international network. Universities in this network would issue degrees for the Pluriversity students. They developed an intercultural communication program that ran in

¹⁶² By the National Council of Evaluation and Accreditation, at the end of 2009, and by the National Council of Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Insurance of Higher Education, created in 2012.

¹⁶³ In fact, from the Amawtay Wasi administration's point of view, the suspension of the university's activities in 2013 was only the last in a long list of obstacles imposed through time by the government, since its creation as a private university with no financial support, through the demand from the CONESUP to confine the activities of the university to Quito in its first 5 years, which impeded the creation of adequate relationship building with Indigenous communities - a demand that the Amawtay Wasi fought in court and in practice. After winning the battle in constitutional court, the Amawtay Wasi was able to function in other regions (sentence no. 008-09-SAN-CC on December 9, 2009), but the same year, the then National Council of Evaluation and Accreditation began the process of assessment of the country's universities, which situated the Amawtay Wasi in the last category in terms of quality, which meant an interdiction to enrol new students. For a detailed version of the relationship between the state and the Amawtay Wasi, see Vargas Moreno's article (2014).

Saraguro and in Cotopaxi (with classes in Quito on weekends), while also developing Masters' programs in collaboration with the international network. Meanwhile, CES was graduating students from the former programs, some of whom I had met in Conocoto (architecture) and in La Esperanza (agro-ecology) in 2011. These students were now defending their theses, just as others were, in Saraguro and Macas, from the intercultural pedagogy program. Finally, a group of people affiliated with the ICCI, some of whom were involved in the Contingency Plan, were also trying to negotiate with the CES for the re-establishment of the Amawtay Wasi. The hope was that while they were running the programs themselves, the CES functionaries would realize the value of the pedagogical proposal and would reconsider its closure. The negotiations happened between the CONAIE leadership, the new Pluriversity administration (former Amawtay Wasi university administration), and people working with CES and the government, with the ICCI serving as an intermediary between these different groups. The talks culminated in 2017 with a meeting between representatives of the CONAIE, the Ministry of Education, the Secretary of Higher Education, Science and Technology (secretario de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología - Senescyt), and the secretary of the Political Management, in July of 2017. At the time of writing this dissertation, there seemed to be some hope for a reopening, but the context and the conditions remained to be seen. I learned in May 2018 that the new Ecuadorian higher education law reinstated the Amawtay Wasi as a public university part of the nation higher education system. I cannot say to this day what it means in terms of the form the Amawtay Wasi is now taking and who are the actors currently involved.

By the time of my 2014 fieldwork, however, the reopening was a question mark, and the tensions between the different groups – the autonomous project, the contingency plan, and the negotiation process – were tangible. I had contacts with the different groups, and understood the different strategies as complementary to each other, but I could feel how they were also in competition and disagreement with each other. Nevertheless, throughout the conversations with people in each group, I was always struck by one commonality. Everybody agreed on the value of the pedagogical proposal, and the philosophy of the University. Everyone seemed to agree on the goal of having a higher education that would (1) be rooted in an intercultural and plurinational philosophy; that would (2) build positive relationships with Indigenous communities; and (3) would work with their Indigenous knowledges while engaging in scientific dialogues. The pathway towards attaining this goal remained the contentious issue.

Therefore, three general elements define the decolonial project of Amawtay Wasi. However, the project was also marked by the struggle between the different actors and their strategies to sustain the university as well as by the difficult relationships with the state. Certain friction between the Amawtay Wasi as a national project, in relation to the national Indigenous organizations' struggles for plurinationality and *Sumak Kawsay*, and the local implementation of the Amawtay Wasi's programs in diverse communities of different cultures is also a specific reality to this educational project. Finally, a certain tension between the original philosophy of the university, and its actual institutionalization, as well as the struggle for this institutionalization to look like a "modern university" or not, were also specific to the Amawtay Wasi.

Tribal Colleges in Montana, and the historical and institutional context of the Salish-Kootenai College

Another type of autonomous IHE institutions that I worked with are Tribal Colleges in the US, and especially, the Salish-Kootenai College in Montana. In Montana, Tribal Colleges spread widely over a ten-year period, from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, with the creation of seven Tribal Colleges, essentially, one Tribal College per reservation¹⁶⁴. This makes Montana the state with the highest number of Tribal Colleges, which is also reflected in terms of Montana having a high percentage of Indigenous population enrolled in Tribal colleges: 10%, whereas the general percentage of US Indigenous population enrolled in Tribal College is 4% (AIHEC, 2000: TC Contributions to local economic development). Furthermore, in Montana, the Tribal Colleges educated 77.5% of the state's Indigenous students in higher education in 2003-2004 (Shanley, 2009), and sent a large number of Indigenous students to four-year institutions. For example, in 2015, 50% of the Indigenous students that were enrolled at Montana State University were transferred from a Tribal College. The Tribal Colleges also educated a number of non-Indigenous students (609 in 2003-2004 according to Shanley, 2009). In brief, the Tribal Colleges in Montana

¹⁶⁴ There are 12 Indigenous nations in Montana, however, they are grouped in 7 reservations, which means that 2 or more nations are often confederated in one Tribal government and regrouped on one reservation. It is the case, for example, of the Salish-Kootenai Confederated Tribes grouped on the Flathead reservation, the Aaniih-Nakoda nations grouped on Fort Belknap reservation. This, in turn, means that the tribal colleges on these reservations serve more than one culture, more than one language, and teach the history and knowledge of more than one nation. In the case of the Little Shell nation, however, who are still fighting for recognition, they have no land base nor do they have a college, for the moment.

had important impacts for the Indigenous communities in Montana, but also for Montana higher education institutions in general.

The Tribal Colleges in Montana are, in order of their year of foundation:

- Blackfeet Community College, funded in 1974, as an extension of the Flathead Valley Community College, which became independent in 1979;

- Chief Dull Knife College, funded in 1975 by the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, with an original mining/vocational training offer, that was diversified towards 2-year associate degrees from 1978 on;

- Salish Kootenai College, funded in 1977 on the Flathead reservation, also as an extension of the Flathead Valley Community College, and it became independent in 1981, was accredited in 1984, and is today accredited as full 4-year institution (first BA accredited in 1998);

- Fort Peck Community College, funded in 1978, in Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux reservation;

- Little Big Horn College funded in 1980 on the Crow reservation, which was actually accredited in 1990 (renewed in 2001), and where 75% of the students speak Crow as their first language;

- Aaniih Nakoda College in Fort Belknap, funded in 1984, accredited in 1993;

- Stone Child College, on Rocky Boy reservation (Chippewa-Cree), funded in 1984, and with a new campus in 2003.

Of these seven Tribal Colleges, however, I was only able to visit four of them and to realize deeper fieldwork in one of them, the Salish-Kootenai College (SKC). SKC is in a particular situation as a full 4-year institution and it is considered relatively wealthy for a Tribal College. Before I get to more details about SKC particular case, it is important to describe, even briefly, the other Tribal Colleges I visited, so as to situate my observations in the broader context of Tribal Colleges in Montana.

I first visited Stone Child College, on the Rocky Boy reservation. The College is relatively small, with less than 400 students and a campus that consisted of two main two-story buildings, each with an open hall and linked by an indoor "passerelle". There is also a gymnasium, in the hall

of which we were invited to participate in a pipe ceremony that was followed by the Monday drum circle (basically, the students' association meeting) and food. Community members attended the ceremony that day, as well as faculty and staff members. During the ceremony, I met with Robert Murie, who teaches Native America Studies program at the college, and who has a deep knowledge of Cree language and its influences on place names in the US and Canada. I was told by some of his students that he reinforces traditional cultural values in his teaching, especially respect, honesty, and responsibility through community involvement. He also asks of his students that they go in the community to learn stories and then bring them to class. Amongst the culturally specific courses that he taught at Stone Child college are: HUM 140 - Storytelling; NAS 145 - Chippewa Cree History and Culture; and NAS 166 - Musical Heritage of Rocky Boy Reservation. The college offers associate of arts and of sciences degrees. The gymnasium is also an important feature of the college, as it received a USA Rural Development Tribal College Initiative Grant for equipment for the Little Bear Health Enhancement Center, Physical Fitness Certificate Program, Athletic Program, Allied Health Program, and Nursing Program.

I next visited Aaniih Nakoda College (ANC), where I had a long conversation with the president, Carole Falcon-Chandler. I also interviewed the head of the American Indian Studies program, Sean Chandler. ANC enrolment numbers are officially even smaller than Stone Child (it has grown to serve around 300 credit students, plus about 50 non-credit students). However, the ANC campus feels bigger, with a street crossing it, and 10 different buildings (most of them, one-story - except for the Returning Buffalo building, which is new and has two stories). Since President Falcon-Chandler's hiring, new buildings were built, including the Library/technology centre, named Wiyakja Wicot ("it thinks by itself"), and the Sitting High cultural centre, that hosts American Indian Studies, and the White Clay Immersion School (Aahnii immersion school). The cultural centre also houses the tribal archives. These represent an important source on the history and culture of Fort Belknap communities, including interviews with local elders, accounts of local legends, land records, census material, and treaties documents. Sean Chandler explained that the new buildings were part of the cultural turn at the college, under the leadership of President Falcon-Chandler. This cultural turn also involved the reformatting of many programs. Sean highlighted the fact that the degrees now had mandatory AIS credits. As an example of how infrastructural development reflected the cultural turn, Sean mentioned the round room in the NAS building that served for storytelling and other Aaniih/Nakoda pedagogical approaches. Sean underlined the

importance of having the immersion school in the college as a way to build inter-generational bridges and have young children feel at home in the college. After all, this is where they could, later in their life, complete an associate of arts degree, an associate of science degree, an associate of applied science degree (carpentry or welding), or a one-year certificate degree. The mission of the college revolves around the delivery of high quality, culturally-grounded, student-centered educational programs, and the motto of the college is "Where Native American Culture and Technology Meet". Furthermore, an important dimension of Aaniih Nakoda College is its community outreach that is expressed in programs such as the public radio station hosted at the college, and a demonstration farm.

Finally, I visited, briefly the Blackfeet Community College (BCC). BCC articulates its programs around the following core values:

Tsi-ksi-ka-ta-pi-wa-tsin – Blackfeet Way of Knowing: Blackfeet Culture/Spirituality in philosophy, thought, and action

Nin-na-wa-tsin – Being a Leader: Professionalism, Integrity, and Responsibility in human interaction.

Ini-yimm – Respect: Respect for ones self, all other people, all ideas and each thing in the natural world.

Ni-ta-pi-pa-ta-pi-tsin – Living in a Good Way: Honest in all thoughts and actions.

Ii-yi-kah-kii-ma-tsin – Trying Hard: Commitment, Dedication, Sincerity in the pursuit of all our goals.

Aoh-kan-otah-tomo – Accepting Everyone: Embracing the unique talents and contributions of each individual.

Ii-ta-mii-pa-ta-pi-yoip – Happy Living: Humor, laughter and enjoyment of life (BCC website: <http://bfcc.edu/blackfeet-community-college/#vision>)

Hence, BCC, as all the Tribal Colleges I visited, is firmly rooted in the local Indigenous culture and life ways, while projecting them in a 2-year higher education institution, which is now moving towards a 4-year programs institution (then working on an agreement with University of Montana for 4-year program in education and social work). BCC also has a specific Piikani (Blackfeet) Studies program, rather than a general NAS or AIS, and a Piikani language studies program, that also relied on the first language app developed in Montana. With nearly 500 students, BCC has an impressive and lively campus, with a lot of energy and activities. BCC has also a clear STEM

orientation with a Native Science Field Center (NSFC) that emphasizes outdoor learning. In 2017, BCC was ranked #5 best community college nationwide (and ANC, #6)¹⁶⁵.

In brief, the visits to these Tribal Colleges allowed me to see how they are all rooted in the community and promote the community's local Indigenous culture(s), language(s), and knowledge(s) while also bringing the opportunity of higher education to the community. In the colonial context, and the continuous violence that dispossession creates, Tribal Colleges represent the possibility of maintaining the communities' life ways and life projects in the contemporary situation. The colleges thus contribute to perpetuating and sustaining the communities they serve. From my visit to these colleges, my understanding is that the work SKC is doing reflects what other colleges are doing too, in terms of mission, working with Indigenous knowledges, and the relationship established with the community.

In the Tribal Colleges movement in Montana, SKC was the third college to open in 1977 as an extension of the Flathead Valley Community College. The extension was chartered by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council (CSKT). The Council created a board of directors made up of enrolled Salish and Kootenai tribal members. The board was given the responsibility to control the college independently from Flathead Valley Community College. As Grob (Grob, 2009) explains the context of the creation of the college, in

1972, only 2.6% of all enrolled students at Montana universities were Native Americans and therefore Native people were greatly underrepresented at all degree levels (O'Donnell 8). As a response to decades of unsuccessful education, SKC was created to respond to Salish and Kootenai higher education needs and aimed at improving American Indian education on the reservation (Grob, 2009).

The goal of a local successful higher education was a long-term one, and the college began by responding to the needs of the existing lumber and construction industries on and around the reservation. It offered classes in forestry, first, which were followed by certificate and degree programs in environmental science, highway construction, and building trades (Grob, 2009).

According to O'Donnell (1992), the decision to create a college owned by the tribe came out of a decision made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to reduce the scholarship support it was

¹⁶⁵ <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-community-colleges/15076/>

providing to the Flathead Indian Reservation, by half. Joseph McDonald, the founding president of the college, remembered that,

The [Tribal Council members] were so mad at the BIA [that] they never thought of asking questions about the feasibility of a tribal college on the reservation. We had no campus, no teachers, no library, no buildings, no tax base, and a small budget controlled by [the] Flathead Valley Community College. If they [had] asked the obvious questions, I'm not sure they would have gone along with it (McDonald, quoted in O'Donnell, 1992, p. 78).

Thus, the creation of the college in 1977 was, in part, due to a reaction against BIA policies, and as a way to reinforce the sovereignty of the tribe. Consequently, it followed tribal law, which governs organizations and corporations on the reservation. The purposes of the college were thus delineated by its incorporation under tribal law, and included post-secondary educational opportunities along the following lines: 1) Vocational Training, 2) College Transfer Programs, 3) Occupational Training, 4) Community Service, 5) Indian Culture and History, and 6) Adult Basic Education (Salish Kootenai College, 2013a, p. 1).

In the same year of its official creation, the college integrated the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), and was able to secure a \$182,000 budget for the following year. The numbers of students and the demand for courses grew that year as well. In 1979 the college had grown to 74 full-time equivalent students and had secured new offices and teachings spaces, including a library and student services offices, although it was still spread around the reserve, in Ronan, Pablo, St. Ignatius, and Turtle Lake. Additionally, agreements originally made with Flathead Valley Community College expanded to Montana State University. Hence, O'Donnell describes the college in its initial three years as "a loose association of federal, state, and tribal grant programs, and employees identified with the grant programs paying them" (O'Donnell, 1992, pp. 108-109).

1980 was a turning point for the college, as it began to move towards an independent institution and, by the fall of 1981, SKC was a complete, 2-year institution of higher education. It continued growing in student numbers, physical installations, and academic offers, and today it is a full 4-year institution. The current day college campus boasts 20 major buildings on 128

contiguous acres and receives 800 students in a diversity of programs¹⁶⁶ ranging from fine arts, hydrology, NAS and education, to entrepreneurship/administration, social work, and psychology.

Since its foundation, SKC has granted 3,011 Bachelor and Associate Degrees and Certificates of Completion, in a community of about 18, 000 people¹⁶⁷. According to college numbers, of the 2011-2012 graduates responding to a career placement survey 87% were either continuing their education or employed in a field related to their academic major (<http://www.skc.edu/fast-facts/>). The college reports that at least 30% of SKC graduates are tribal members/descendants of the CSKT, and enter employment on the Flathead Indian Reservation, while 75% of their graduates work in reservation communities and/or with tribal populations (Salish Kootenai College, 2013a).

While these numbers demonstrate the success of the college in terms of graduating students who then serve the community, certain limitations remain. For example, even today, approximately 70% of faculty members are not Indigenous, which renders the cultural rooting of the education difficult at times. Moreover, during my fieldwork in the fall of 2015, the college was in the middle of significant changes in senior leadership following the retirement of SKC's founding president, Dr. Joseph McDonald, after 30 years of service to the institution.

In spite of the turmoil happening within the senior administration, the college continued to advance in its academic offerings, polishing its fine arts associate degree, and pushing to become a leader in STEM. SKC also assumed leadership in Indigenous research methodologies, with an annual conference at the college since 2012 and the establishment of an Indigenous Research Center that was under a feasibility assessment in 2015. When interviewing Sandra Boham in 2015 (then Vice-president of SKC), I asked her about the greatest success of the college. She identified the natural resources and the education programs, as well as the Tribal Historic Preservation and the Tribal Governance and business programs as the leading initiatives at SCK. The Historic Preservation program was one of its kind in the nation, and the hydrology program (part of the natural resources programs that Sandra identified) was one of 7 or 8 programs existing in the US. At SKC, it was specific in its efforts to root hydrology in the local Indigenous perspectives.

¹⁶⁶ 12 Bachelor of Sciences programs; 4 Bachelor Of Arts programs; a greater number of Associate degrees in sciences, applied sciences and arts; and a number of certificates and workforce certifications.

¹⁶⁷ The Flathead reservation is in a very peculiar position, with a tribe that has over 7,500 members, some of whom live outside of the reservation, but also about a thousand residents that come from different tribes, and about 10,000 non-native residents on the reservation. Flathead reservation has 1.3 million acres, but under 1910 allotment laws, land encroachment became a real issue, and today, the SKCT actually owns 60% of the land.

Thus, SKC represents a different model of IHE autonomous institution, than the Amawtay Wasi. SKC relates to other TCUs nationally, through AIHEC, but it is also based on a strong local network, in relation to the history, needs, and experiences of the specific Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes. Receiving money both from the Tribe and from the Federal government, SKC was able to build a much stronger institution than the Amawtay Wasi, at least in terms of infrastructures, programs offered, staff and faculty employment, and student services. However, as any TCUs, SKC follows a Community College model. It is controlled by the Tribe and infused with local knowledges, cultures, and languages, but it still follows a more Western model of education than Amawtay Wasi. This comes with the advantage of degree recognition by other institutions and support of the state. However, it also implies certain limitations on more community oriented, out-of-the-classroom teachings, or other non-traditional pedagogies.

Native American Studies at MSU: historical and institutional context

Other models of IHE that I explored in the fieldwork for this dissertation are NAIS programs in mainstream universities. To have a better understanding of such programs, I realized fieldwork in two of them. The first one was Native American Studies (NAS) at the Montana State University (MSU) in Bozeman, Montana. To understand the creation of an NAS department at MSU, and its relative influence on campus and in Bozeman in 2015, one needs to go back to the Montana political context by the time the department was created. Montana was not immune to the social and political turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which included the emergence of AIM, and a lot of activism across the country, especially, for Indigenous Peoples of Montana, around land and right claims.

In 1972, representatives of Montana State were in the midst of changing the state's constitution that dated to 1889 (Juneau and Broaddus, 2006). Public hearings were taking place, and two Fort Peck high school students testified before the bill of rights, about the need to integrate Indigenous content in k-12 education. The new constitution, passed in 1972, included article X about education and public lands, of which Section 1(2) reads: "The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity" (Constitution of Montana, 1972, Article X). The effects of the new constitution were not immediate, since the Indian Education for All Act, which implemented

section 1(2) of article X, was only passed in 1999, under the pressure of Representative Carol Juneau a resident of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of North Dakota. However, according to people who were involved in education during those years, the impacts followed shortly after. Walter Fleming, director of the NAS department at MSU, who was involved in education since the 1970s, remembered that,

In the early 70s, 1972, the state of Montana changed the constitution and had a constitutional convention, and it inserted a phrase in to the constitution that obliged the State to protect Tribes of Montana, their history, culture, and so that was put into the constitution, and then somebody decided that they would do that by proposing a law by which certified personal, teacher, superintendents, counsellors, principals, working in schools that were on or near Indian Reservations, they would have to have 6 credits of Indian studies. And the reasoning for that is that, certainly they would better understand the children that they were teaching. And so, in 1974, *then, the Indian Studies law was passed*. No one really was sure exactly what on and near [the reservations], on is pretty clear, but what near was. *And so a lot of the colleges started to create courses that would satisfy the requirement of the Indian Studies law, because they wanted the pre-service teachers who were in teacher education programs to have a, to take these 6 credits, while at the university*, rather than waiting until they got out, and it maybe that they'd be in school district that were required to comply with the law, or it could be that they were in schools that didn't, but that uncertainty was, well, let's just require that all of our pre-service teachers, teacher education students, that way, if they end up in a reservation school, they'll be compliant. *And so a lot of the colleges in the state then started to add Indian studies courses* (Fleming, 2015, interview, my emphasis).

While MSU had created, since the late 1960s, a counselling program to support Indigenous students (American Indian Counsellor), and later on, an outreach program to the reservations, it was not until the 1970s, that MSU began offering classes (1 or 2 at the beginning), under the intercultural communication rubric, at the level 200, an effort led by Barney Old Coyote, of Crow Agency. Barney Old Coyote left MSU in 1973, but Bob Peregoy, who was then undertaking his Ed.D. at Montana State University, continued the project and helped create an independent academic program. Walter Fleming, who had been related to NAS at MSU from the beginning, recalled the creation of NAS courses in the following way:

You know, we already had the intercultural communication number, rubric. But there were also some other classes that were being taught, a class on American Indian literature over in the English department, and Montana Indian culture, and, you know, there was a course in anthropology on Montana Indians, there was a history course in history department on Montana Tribes. And so what Bob wanted to do was capture those, [...] he started writing grants for programs, [...] he started to build courses by grant writing and faculty lines. And

initially we had 3, structurally, it wasn't a department, it was a centre. And so, then he created this autonomous centre for NAS, within the college of Letters and Science. [...]

In addition to creating courses, like American Indian Counselling or whatever, he then started to take some of the other classes from existing departments, which didn't make him very popular, because these were, people get really possessory of their courses, and so there were lots of tensions between the other programs, and, in art what Bob did was to use the grant then to build an academic program. The line items, though, for Faculty, was soft money, and so over time, he came in 1975, I believe, I came in 77 as a student, as a Master's program, but I was supported by a grant that he wrote. And so, that is how I came to know him, and came to know the department. And so our first coursework was CNAS, our rubric, CNAS in 1974, so that's when the first courses were offered. I came in 77 as a student, and then I came here as a Faculty member in 79 (Fleming, 2015, interview).

The context of the constitutional change and the passing of Indian Studies law must have influenced, at that time, the success of the grants, to support the creation, little by little, of what would become a Native American Studies department in the College of Letters and Sciences. While there was an increasing awareness of the need for "people who would work on the reservations" to learn minimally about local Indigenous communities, cultures and histories, and possibly the need to integrate some Indigenous content to the teachings on reservations (although not everyone would follow this idea)¹⁶⁸ the well-intentioned article in the Montana Constitution was not fully applied until the passage of the Indian For All Education (IEFA) in 1999.

Montana Indian Education for All policy introduced seven essential understandings to be integrated in the k-12 curriculum: (1) Tribal diversity, (2) Individual diversity, (3) Cultural continuity, (4) Land and treaties, (5) Federal Policy, (6) Subjective history, (7) Sovereignty¹⁶⁹. The

¹⁶⁸ Walter Fleming, for example, recalled that professors resisted strongly the application of the Indian Studies Law, to the point that it became irrelevant:

"with the Indian studies law, which then, because the teacher association, the Montana Teacher Association, the Union for teachers, pushed hard to have that law presented because they felt it was, you know, they were being required to like Indians (laughing). [...] this was before the word Political Correctness was even invented, but it was a similar idea that they were protesting. That they had to take these classes, they were forced to take these classes to better understand Indian children and of course they felt like they didn't need to do that. And obviously, I think, from their reactions, they did! (laughing) And so the next legislature, we meet every 2 years, the next legislature resented the law, and that made it, instead of being required, it made it permissible. So a school district could say, well we just won't require our teachers to be, to have the 6 credits in Indian Studies. Predictably, the schools where there were some Indian control required teachers to do this, like Browning high School, or Browning school district, not just high school. And so, you know, some of the teachers there required to do it, but other schools that did not have an Indian-Controlled school board, [...] they just simply said, well it's not necessary for our teachers to do that. So, there's, the law was resented, so basically the Indian Studies law went away" (Fleming, 2015, interview).

¹⁶⁹ For an analysis of the implementation of IEFA in Montana, at the k-12 levels, but also its impact on higher education, I would refer the reader to Jioanna Carjuzza's work, as well as Michael Munson's work, two people who have worked directly in the implementation of IEFA in Montana school and university systems, and who have written critically about this implementation, and who informed me a great deal regarding IEFA in Montana.

Office of Public Instruction (OPI) developed resources and curriculum content, in consultation with the different Tribes in Montana, to support the teachers in integrating and transmitting the seven understandings¹⁷⁰. The details of the implementation of IEFA in Montana, or lack of implementation, at the higher education level, could be the subject of a dissertation in and of itself. Thus, some of the people I worked with in Montana, such as Jioanna Carjuzaa, have been working on IEFA implementation for a decade now (Jioanna was offering training both to k-12 and to higher education professors, regarding IEFA implementation). In any case, IEFA certainly had an impact on the student population attending NAS classes at MSU, as the teacher education required future teachers to demonstrate a basic knowledge in the seven above-mentioned essential understandings. Thus, on top of serving Indigenous students and Indigenous communities in terms of knowledge development for sovereignty, NAS was now also serving non-native education students in fulfilling their program requirements.

The NAS department at MSU has to serve these different interests and demographics with a total of four full-time faculty members, plus the director, Walter Fleming, and some graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and part time instructors. The department offers a minor in NAS and a Master's degree. Some undergraduate classes, such as "Introduction to NAS", and "Montana Indian Culture, History and Current Issues", for example, are offered to any student, and attended largely by students from education who are required "diversity" credits. Other courses such as "Federal Indian Law and Policy", "Native American Literature", "World Indigenous Humanities", or "Native Food Systems" are more specialized. In Walter Fleming's words, his department's programs are heavily influenced by the faculty members teaching them. According to him, it does so more than in other programs. He explained that

NAS also reflect the faculty because you are not going to have a department which has 17 scholars. You are going to have 3. So consequently, the program takes on the personality of the Faculty that you have. If you have several people who are interested in literature, suddenly your NAS reflects literature. And, so, you try to be generalist, I guess, and a lot of people who came into NAS, they came out of standard discipline, on our own Faculty, Matt, literature, Kristin, anthropology, but with interests (Fleming, 2015, interview).

In spite of the small number of Faculty members the department had, Walter also pointed to the special status it had, as a stand-alone department, which is quite rare for NAS. NAS could

¹⁷⁰ I would refer the reader to the OPI website and all the resources they developed that are available there: <http://opi.mt.gov/Educators/Teaching-Learning/Indian-Education>

make departmental decisions regarding the direction of its programs. Furthermore, as a department with a Master's program, NAS was able to develop specific methodology and theory classes, plus a professional and thesis seminar. So for a relatively small university, the NAS department was fairly well developed, even if many would have wished to see it go further, with a PhD program and potentially more innovative research development. It was probably with that vision in mind that Gina Stuart, a recent graduate from University of Arizona, was hired in the summer of 2015, with the hope that she could bring the department in a new research direction in Indigenous mapping and GIS techniques. There was a will to grow in new, innovative directions for the discipline, as I witnessed it in Kristin Rupel's Indigenous food systems course, oriented towards Indigenous sciences; in Gail Small's research to develop classes in Indigenous religions and philosophies; and in Matthew Hermann's new World Indigenous Humanities bringing an international perspective.¹⁷¹

The development of NAS was possible in the specific institutional framework of MSU. According to Walter Fleming there were about 50 Indigenous students at MSU when he first became involved in the NAS program in 1979; over 25 years later, there were 550 Indigenous students at MSU. Obviously, not all 550 students were in NAS, meaning that an institutional context had arisen that helped create the appropriate environment for this growth to occur. Upon my arrival at MSU, Jioanna Carjuzaa, director of the Center for Multicultural and Bilingual education, invited me to participate in the Monthly Council of American Indian Programs (CAIP) meetings that she chaired. Doing so, I quickly learned there were over 40 programs for Indigenous students at MSU that ranged from the student services (American Indian/Alaska Native student success services office, and the American Indian Council), to academic programs in STEM to support "underrepresented minorities", or to help bridge high school or event Tribal Colleges Indigenous students to programs at MSU. MSU had a Native Youth and a Tribal College Transfer Preview Day recruitment model, together with a "Rock the Rez" recruitment person who would visit all the reservations. They had a special program to support Indigenous students in health programs, and Education programs to either support students following a family model (Wanji Oyate), or to recruit, educate, certify and place Indigenous educators into administrative positions

¹⁷¹ Since then, though, Gina had an offer in Oklahoma, her home, so she left MSU, and was not replaced yet, so this had an impact on the development of NAS programs. There was also a rivalry with University of Montana NAS program, that was also planning on a PhD program.

in schools with high populations of Indigenous students (ILEAD program). They also had an ongoing IEFA Professional Development series of conferences and workshops to push the implementation of the policy in higher education. These are only some examples of the programs targeting Indigenous students on MSU campus, to recruit them but also to ensure their success. What was impressive is that all these programs would meet every month and collaborate for financial support (sometimes with collective grant writing), and inform each other of what was happening. They would also coordinate for events such as the Native American Heritage Day, the American Indian Heritage Month, and the annual Pow Wow. Finally, and not insignificantly, MSU had a council of Elders, composed of Elders from the different Tribes in Montana, that would meet every semester, and had an advising role to the President. All of these elements contributed to create a space, at MSU, where NAS could develop content and influence the MSU community.

Thus, the historical and political context of Montana had a direct impact on the development of NAS. With the state's constitutional change, and later the IEFA act, NAS at MSU developed out of the first attempt to provide Indigenous content for future professors, and services for Indigenous students. It was conceived from the beginning as a program that would support the socio-political changes in Montana for a better relationship with Indigenous Peoples. In other words, while it supports a transformative project in relation to Indigenous Peoples, the department educates a majority of non-native students, in comparison to both Amawtay Wasi and TCUs, there is a palpable difference in the approaches and content implemented in the department. They all contribute to decolonization processes, but from a different position.

Finally, NAS represent a specific model of IHE attached to mainstream academy, but it has certain specificities in comparison to other similar NAIS projects. Walter Fleming highlighted the fact that NAS is a department rather than a program as an important characteristic, together with having an MA program, which differentiated MSU from University of Montana, for example, who had a BA program in NAS. These elements contribute to make the uniqueness of NAS at MSU.

American Indian Studies at UA: historical and institutional context

As a NAIS program in a mainstream university, the American Indian Studies program at the University of Arizona is markedly different from the MSU program. When I arrived at Tucson, Arizona, in the winter of 2016, AIS had just changed from being a program under the Graduate College, to being a department in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. It had just hired a new Department Head, Keith James, from Onondaga nation, who had a degree in psychology and organizational behaviour and who specialized in entrepreneurship. James' hiring and the new vision he had for the department marked a turning point for the future of AIS at UA. The historical context of the program's formation offers a better understanding of this turning point.

The history of the department is presented by key actors (Stauss, Tippeconnic Fox, & Lowe, 2002) as a history of diverse influences and efforts coming together over time, which might explain the different visions that were co-existing in the department. On the one hand, UA is a land-grant institution, therefore has a mission oriented towards service to rural people, many of which in Arizona are Indigenous communities. Thus, UA has had many programs related to the Tribes across Arizona and its first Indigenous graduate was in 1930. On the other hand, archaeology of the Southwest was developed early on at UA in relation with the university's museum, involving research in (and "on") Indigenous communities. With the development of the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) in 1952, there was a turn in the university's research orientation, with professors beginning to think more about anthropological research that would potentially serve Indigenous communities and research oriented on social change and problem solving.

The 1950s therefore marked a turn in the institution's attitude towards Indigenous communities with the creation in 1958 of an Indian Advisory Committee (IAC). This was put in charge of the leadership regarding university-tribal relations. The following year, the university hired a part-time Indian student advisor, which, ten years later (1969) would become a full-time position under the Dean of Students, one of the first positions of its kind in the USA (Stauss et al., 2002). In 1968, the efforts to coordinate the different programs related to Indigenous Peoples on campus culminated with the creation of an Office of Indian Programs (OIP). These changes were of course the result of activism and efforts from the Indigenous communities, students, and faculty at UA, and they were in part possible because of the land-grant mission of the university.

Furthermore, and in a parallel movement, in 1968, Professor Edward P. Dozier, who was the first Indigenous person (Tewa from Santa Clara) to earn a doctorate in anthropology at UA, began the work of advocating and writing grants for a formal AIS program. He worked with the support of another professor in anthropology, Edward Spicer, as well as with the advisory staff and coordinator of the Office of Indian Programs (OIP). Together, they wrote a Ford Foundation grant, and the anthropology department received \$500 000 in 1971 to establish an AIS program. The money supported the development of the program in the anthropology department. Consequently, a major difference between MSU and UA is that AIS developed out of anthropology at UA, whereas it developed out of Indigenous services and diversity courses for teachers at MSU.

The founding money for AIS at UA was supposed to be mainly dedicated to the hiring Indigenous faculty and staff. Dozier became the head of the program, but he passed away that same year, and was replaced by Hopi scholar Emory Sekaquaptewa. Stauss et al. mention that: "By 1975 the anthropology department had four AIS faculty members, and the English, political science, and sociology departments each had one AIS faculty member" (Stauss et al., 2002, p. 87). However, of all these new hires, only one was an Indigenous scholar (Jay Stauss). With this lack of Indigenous hires and given internal conflicts going on at the time, the grant was seen by many as benefitting the anthropology department rather than AIS as a discipline, which led to the termination of the grant by Ford Foundation.

Maybe the termination of the grant was a wakeup call for the program, since new hires were then made, amongst whom were influential scholars in AIS such as Vine Deloria, Tom Holm, Scott Momaday, and Ofelia Zepeda. Jay Stauss assumed the chair in 1976 and reorganized the program so that it would be oriented towards the interpretation and appreciation of Indigenous life for everyone. Later on, Deloria who was hired in 1978 in political sciences became the head of the AIS program and took it in a different direction. His vision included educating graduate Indigenous students with a solid understanding of Federal Indian law and policy. To this end, he created a concentration in political science that became an MA in Federal Indian Policy in 1979 that eventually became the basis for the AIS graduate program. Deloria's vision, however, encountered resistance in the university and the lack of support led him to leave UA for Colorado in 1990.

Nevertheless, Deloria's efforts did give results during his time at UA. In 1982 an AIS interdisciplinary Master's degree program was created, housed in the Dean's office of the College

of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS), with Cherokee scholar Robert Thomas as the director. This was the first freestanding MA program in AIS in the US. Between 1982 and 2001, it graduated 160 MA students – an average of 8 students per year. In 1984, a minor in AIS at the PhD level was created. At this point, the curriculum included political sciences, history, literature, and languages, thus reflecting past hires. This allowed the program to become less anthropology-centered and more rooted in policy, law, and literature. UA was then a leader in AIS, with its graduate programs among the first ones in the US, developed by renowned scholars in AIS. Accordingly, it is not surprising that many other AIS/NAS programs in the US followed this type of core curriculum with an important space for policy/law and for literature. The law and policy area were re-energized in 1986-87 with the hire, in collaboration with the law college, of Robert A. Williams, a Lumbee scholar who specializes in Indian law, critical race theory, and analysis of the Doctrine of Discovery. Williams joined the Faculty of Law, but many of his courses were cross-listed, in collaboration with the AIS program.

In spite of these advances, being in the Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS), AIS was poorly financed in comparison to other departments (i.e. sociology, anthropology, psychology) and demands by AIS were often ignored – unfortunately, a too familiar pattern for NAIS programs. Nevertheless, a positive program review in 1992 allowed for new resources to be allocated, which were used to create a full doctorate program. These resources also allowed for full time faculty to be assigned to the AIS program (Tom Holm, from political science, Taigue, from English, and Mary-Jo Tippeconnic-Fox) and for the acquisition of new spaces for the program. With these changes, the student enrolment doubled, and in 1994-95, AIS was moved from SBS to the graduate college under the AISP (p for programs) name, merging with the OIP. Graduate students' enrolment at that point was about 50 students per year.

In 1996-97, the doctorate program proposal passed the Graduate Council, and the first doctorate students, four women, began their program in the fall of 1997. At that point, the program was developed with four concentrations: (1) American Indian law and policy; (2) American Indian languages and literature; (3) American Indian societies and cultures; and (4) American Indian education. By the fall of 2000, the program counted 14 doctorate students, 10 of whom were Indigenous students, and the first graduate of the program took place in 2001. At the height of its existence, when Stauss, Tippeconnic-Fox and Lowe wrote about the history of the program (2002), they described it as "an interdisciplinary program housed within the graduate college. Its

permanent and affiliated interdisciplinary faculty numbers twenty-six, of whom eighteen are Indians" (2002, p. 93). So it was a huge, historically significant, AIS program that I thought I was visiting in 2016.

As each faculty member mentioned to me in interviews, however, the program experienced new turmoil for several years when I arrived. I was already vaguely aware of the situation, given the three changes of head of department in the previous three years. In 2013, Ronald Trosper was brought in as head of the program, by the then interim head, who felt like Dr. Trosper could help "shake up the program" (in Ronald Trosper's words). Ronald Trosper has a degree in economics from Harvard, but was always an interdisciplinary scholar and practitioner¹⁷², who helped develop Indigenous studies programs and programs for Indigenous students at Washington University in 1975, and later on, at Northern Arizona University, where he has worked in the School of Forestry. He described himself as an actor of change, which had always been a factor for him moving around, since change is not always welcome in the academy. He had found a space in the Faculty of Forestry at UBC, where he was working on Indigenous theories of economics, when he was recruited to UA.

Upon his arrival, Trosper told me that he found the department deficient in several ways, including its relationships with Arizona Tribes and the relationships within and between faculty

¹⁷² Describing his doctoral research (back in 1970s), Dr. Trosper told me:

"Well, economists were arguing the reasons Indians are poor is because they are discriminated against by the government and they are not allowed to participate in the economy fully, because Indian Affairs gets in the way. They are very vague about what the discrimination is. And I said, Indians, we have to figure out how much of the poverty is due to the fact that they had land taken away from them. There is a certain amount of poverty in Indian communities is because they had non-compensated land taken away. And if you go out there and it does no good to blame the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or bad governments on the part of the Indians, for their poverty! Because they had a whole bunch of property and it was taken away! So in my dissertation I proceed to estimate how much of the income difference between Indians and non-Indians on the reservations was due to the loss of property. I found out half of it was due to loss of property. The other half was due to discrimination in education. And, possibly, troubles in organizing economics and so forth. But the taking of the land was a significant cause of that poverty. I could not get that point published in journals of economics. The history journals said this is not history. This is about contemporary income. The economics journals said, this is not about economy, this is about economic history. Because I was connecting a historical fact to a contemporary fact. And the Economists think that all causes are involved in today's activities. The fact that some causes might be background conditions that were inherited, is not part of the economics, they don't accept that, everything is reorganized, it's all based on individual characteristics, and it's all contemporary, there is no... Later, economics started talking about path dependence. Well, that brings in history. But the guy that published path dependence published after I was working on my stuff. And so... I was moving from place to place but I could just not get my fundamental idea from my dissertation published in economics journals... (Ronald Trosper, 2016, interview).

and student groups¹⁷³. However, the changes he wanted to install were not welcome by faculty members. Indeed, Trospen faced resistance and efforts to remove him as head of the program:

We had turmoil. So my strategy was to have an external review of the department, let people come in from the outside, and tell us what we needed to do. Because the upper administration would not listen to me, but they would listen to an external review. And that external review recommended that we move from the research office (...) that we'd be put into a college, that we do an external search and hire a head with an external head. They knew that the faculty was reviewing me and that I would probably not survive as head. And so that we do an external search, and that we re-organize our graduate program to be like other interdisciplinary programs, the faculty has to discuss that... And that we create an undergraduate degree. So move to a college, create an undergraduate degree, re-invigorate and fix your graduate program, because it's not up to (incomprehensible) and do an external search and hire somebody. Because they had not had an external search for years, and my hiring was an inside deal (Trospen, 2016, interview).

In brief, he moved to a professorial position, while the program was moved back to being a department in SBS, and Keith James was hired with the task of developing the undergraduate program and "fix" the graduate program. Dr. James had a vision for AIS: it should be oriented towards tribal economic development. His vision was not embraced by everyone at the department, and many questions were raised, that continued to rattle the department for the months I was there. These questions included conflicting "old" and "new" versions of AIS as a discipline and as a program; vision of the discipline as an applied field or as an intellectual and theoretical enterprise; as well as the question of how to support nation building. In brief, the overall question was what discipline the department wanted to develop, and with what objective.

Hence, while AIS at UA and NAS at MSU are two NAIS programs in mainstream universities, and they certainly share some aspects of the discipline and history, the political contexts in which they emerged are very different. Furthermore, the networks on which they rely vary both in scale and nature: AIS at UA brought together a large array of faculty members, through its history, that

¹⁷³ It is to be noted that, when I met with Karen Francis-Begay, then Assistant Vice-President of Tribal Relations, she mentioned many changes, in 2007, on the place of Indigenous communities in the government structure of the institution. With a change of president, her position went from Ambassador of the Native Nations, right under the president, and a voice for the Tribal communities to the president, to that of Special Advisor, in 2007. Then, another change in her position moved her from working with the president to working with the provost of academic affairs, and amongst other positions in terms of the university relations. In her perspective, the change in the leadership affected the relationships with the communities. Similarly, when I talked to Steven Martin, then Director of the Native American Student Affairs, he mentioned how student services at UA began going down 6 years ago (so around 2010), and he was now operating under a 14 000\$ budget per year for 1200 students, which was the equivalence of 11\$/student, per year. So the overall Indigenous programs were in crisis at UA when I visited the university.

were coming from different Indigenous nations, and some from non-indigenous backgrounds. These scholars also made important contributions to the discipline in general, which influenced other departments, NAS at MSU included. In turn, NAS at MSU relied on a much more local network, which probably facilitated the relationships with the communities, but was more modest in scope. The sizes of the two departments were very different, and the vision and directions they were taking differed too. Nevertheless, both programs share the commonality of making space in mainstream university for Indigenous knowledges. They also share the objective of relating with Indigenous communities to better serve them and represent them in a mainstream institution. Doing so, these programs contribute to unsettling the colonial knowledge hierarchies and the history of exploitative research in relation to Indigenous communities.

Summarizing the comparison themes

The overview of local programs and institutions of IHE shows how each of them involve different actors, following diverse histories, political agendas, and cultural contexts. As a result, even if IHE in general is oriented towards decolonization, each institution and program present different philosophies, objectives and interests and contributes to different decolonial projects. The review of the comparative literature (Chapter 4) highlighted common themes such as the use of Indigenous knowledges (which again, can be defined in different ways), and the relationships with Indigenous communities (local or national). It also unveiled the diversity of patterns that IHE take across institutions and programs. The present chapter unfolded the history, context and actors involved in each of the programs and institutions I worked with during my research, thus contextualizing the IHE patterns of these programs and institutions.

The table is therefore set for the consideration of these programs and institutions as case studies of IHE contributing to decolonial projects. In the following section, I present and compare each case based on the diversity explored here, which is directly reflected in the philosophy that each institution or program put forward. I will consider this in my comparison of IHE projects. Furthermore, the descriptive themes that I use for the presentation and comparison of IHE institutions and programs include the ones reviewed in this section – namely, the philosophy of the program/institution; relationship to Indigenous knowledges; and relationship to community(ies). I will describe these elements for each institution and program and consider how they contribute to decolonial projects explored to this point: storying, survivance, and resurgence.

IV) DECOLONIAL PROJECTS IN INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

The objective of this section is to present four case studies of Indigenous higher education programs and institutions based on the fieldwork I realised in Ecuador and in the US (Montana and Arizona). I already presented, in the previous section, how each program and institution fits in the broader context of IHE, what patterns of IHE each case represent, and what actors it involves in what historical context. The previous section also situated the broader picture of IHE as a decolonial tool that articulates at least three characteristics: (1) a transformative project embodied in the philosophy of each program or institution; and the realization of that project through (2) a relationship with Indigenous knowledge, and (3) a relationship established with Indigenous communities. Thus, the description of each individual project presented here also alludes to that broader context of IHE while detailing separately the institutions and programs that I worked with according to the three recurrent IHE characteristics I mentioned. These common themes will allow for a comparison between the cases.

My argument about IHE being a decolonial tool also rested in my definitions, in Section II, of colonization (chapter 2) and decolonization (chapter 3). I have defined colonization based on the Doctrine of Discovery and its hierarchical/supremacist logic that affects Indigenous Peoples' relations to land, but also Indigenous communities' life projects, based on the denigration of Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge systems. Accordingly, I have defined decolonization a not only the political and legal resistance to the Doctrine of Discovery and the resulting colonial nation-states, but also the intellectual resistance to the DoD's supremacy logic. I developed the idea that decolonial projects such as storying, survivance, and resurgence support Indigenous futurity, Indigenous communities' life projects, and the reconnection to Indigenous knowledges and epistemologies.

The analysis of the case studies presented in this chapter aims at relating them to decolonial projects. I will look at how each transformative projects' relation to Indigenous knowledges and communities contribute to broader decolonial projects of storying, survivance, and resurgence. While I do not pretend that each IHE program and institution completely fulfills these decolonial projects, I do argue that each IHE program and institution contributes to the projects in ways from which we could learn if we are to decolonize and Indigenize the academy.

CHAPTER 6: ECUADOR. THE AMAWTAY WASI AS A POLITICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROJECT FOR AN INDIGENOUS, INTERCULTURAL AND COMMUNAL UNIVERSITY

It is November third, 2014, and I enter the CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador) offices, in Quito, for the first time to attend the one-year commemoration of the Amawtay Wasi university closure by the Ecuadorian state. Climbing the stairs to the room where the event will take place, I think about how this is a first concrete connection I see between Amawtay Wasi and the CONAIE, even though the Indigenous university project emerged from the CONAIE in the 1990s. It is a good reminder of the origin of the university and its link to the political organization that fostered it, as well as to Indigenous political struggles and demands.

I came early to help the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity crew, who organized the event, to set the room. This "crew" consists of two of the previous university administration staff, two professors, and the head of the former university, now head of the Pluriversity. They are the ones who decided to stick around when the decision was made to answer the university closure with the creation of an NGO oriented towards higher education that would deliver training in communities. The panel is formed of representatives of the RUIICAY, in town for a week of meetings, together with representatives of the CONAIE, the head of the Amawtay Wasi University Fernando Sarango, and Catherine Walsh, professor at the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar, and long-term ally of the Amawtay Wasi. I noticed that no one associated with the contingency plan is present. Many people that I would have expected there are missing: previous students, professors, and collaborators, as well as members of ICCI who were part of the original framing of an Indigenous university. The explanation I am given is that people are out of town, given the *Dia de los muertos* (November 2) holiday, but the date was chosen to facilitate the participation of RUIICAY members. This was a good example of the underlying divide and friction I perceived between the Pluriversity, the ICCI, and previous university community now involved in the government's contingency plan.

The evening keynotes are Alta Hooker, head of the URACCAN University in Nicaragua, whose presentation is about interculturality and other educational forms; and Catherine Walsh, who is presenting Fernando Sarango's book. In his book, Sarango contends that each civilization represents a matrix from which valid paradigms of education emerge, but that Western civilization through colonization imposed its educational matrix on Abya Yala (the Americas). However, his

book is about the possibility for Indigenous Peoples to recover their own matrices, including their own concepts of education (he specially addresses the Inkas, Mexicas and Mayas), which can then serve to create a paradigm shift in education, create new concepts of universities - or, in this case, of pluriversities (Sarango, 2014). In other words, Dr. Sarango is addressing the intellectual structures of colonialism and presenting significant challenges to it, in the academy and sciences.

Similarly, Dr. Catherine Walsh addressed the audience that night, situating the closure of the Amawtay Wasi in the broader framework of knowledge coloniality (*colonialidad del saber*). She explained that for more than 500 years, education has been a tool of domination, exploitation and colonization, disciplining Peoples, minds, souls, knowledges and life itself. She described the continuous coloniality from the Crown to the Church, to the *hacenderos*, to large landowners, to the modern state, all of which always sought to realize the Western civilizatory project, which is based on extractivism, not only of nature, but also of Indigenous epistemologies. Education was part of this civilizatory project, imposing a western concept of truth (religion and/or science) and furthering the western concept of science, onto Indigenous Peoples, with the idea of bringing them into the “light” of progress. This, she contended, was the basis on which knowledge hierarchies were built, according to which the West has science and Indigenous Peoples have traditional knowledges. Based on these hierarchies, education became a destructive weapon. Since the current government in Ecuador was painting itself as being progressive, it was not surprising that it would follow the Western civilizatory project. This did not leave space for the articulation of Amawtay Wasi’s educational project, even if Ecuador’s Constitution recognizes the plurality of sciences and of ancestral knowledges.

That night, commemorating the closing of Amawtay Wasi was also a way to reaffirm its decolonial projects, which addresses the intellectual structures of colonialism, including the knowledge hierarchies implied in the Doctrine of Discovery. Of course, as the place where the commemoration took place reminded us, this intellectual project relates to the political and legal struggles of Indigenous organizations, such as the CONAIE. The unsettling of colonial hierarchies imposed through the application of the DoD relies on knowledge but eventually also transform the political and legal relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the settler state.

The project: Intercultural philosophy to unsettle epistemic and political hierarchies

The Amawtay Wasi Cross-cultural University belongs to the perspective of a cross-cultural paradigm, where education is assumed as a responsibility that is shared by all the social players of the many cultures intervening in the process of transforming and managing local, national, and international human development, in order to achieve adequate "living well" for current and future generations, [...]

Amawtay Wasi's "Libro Verde" (J. García et al., 2004, p. 284).

The Amawtay Wasi's philosophy includes an epistemological and political decolonial project relying on two main aspects: the intercultural¹⁷⁴ paradigm on which it relies for knowledge building and transmission; and the political goal of living well (Good Life) in an intercultural perspective. The decolonial project that the Amawtay Wasi articulated as a university and continues articulating through both the contingency plan and the pluriversity NGO, follows the particular form of an intercultural conversation between knowledge systems - Indigenous and non-Indigenous - that would foster social and political changes for a plurinational good life. "Good life", in this case, refers to the support of the multiple life projects of the different nations composing the Ecuadorian State, including Indigenous Nations. In spite of the tensions and diverging visions I encountered between original participants to the Amawtay Wasi project, current actors involved in the contingency plan, and participants to the new Pluriversity NGO, everyone agreed on the validity and importance of this philosophy.

In the original elaboration of the Amawtay Wasi's philosophy, the intercultural paradigm included the recognition of worldviews, myths, and axioms as the context in which knowledges are developed. In this intercultural view, any way of producing, organizing and transmitting knowledge will imply a specific relationship to traditions, ancestral philosophies, symbols and myths that organize the scientific logic (J. García et al., 2004). This context does not invalidate knowledge as pseudo-scientific, but rather, is a first step in understanding the differences between knowledge systems, in order to establish a conversation between them. Part of Amawtay Wasi's epistemological project aims towards establishing "universal" knowledge based on what is shared and true across various contexts (J. García et al., 2004). Thus, as part of the decolonial project of

¹⁷⁴ *Intercultural* and *Interculturalidad* was translated here with cross-cultural, rather than intercultural. However, my understanding of the *interculturalidad* as described and put forward by the Amawtay Wasi includes a deep respect, understanding and conversation between different cultures - intercultural - rather than a comparison, acknowledgement of cultures and their differences - cross-cultural.

the Amawtay Wasi is an epistemological project that reasserts the validity of Indigenous knowledges, and which fosters conversations between Indigenous and non-indigenous knowledges, with the aim of decolonizing science and the knowledge hierarchy it implies.

One example could illustrate the intercultural approach of Amawtay Wasi. In 2011 - when the university was still functioning as an officially recognized Indigenous, Intercultural and Communal University - I visited the *chakra* in Conocoto. I attended classes and workshops there, with a group of non-Indigenous students who had started an architecture program in another university, but had transferred to the Amawtay Wasi when their university closed. The group of non-Indigenous students were attending mandatory classes when I visited that year: Kichwa language, Pachamanka (linked to food, food practices, calendar and ceremonies), Runa (understanding the human being from a Kichwa point of view), and Environment and Architecture (linked to the understanding of the house as a body and family unit). The underpinning principle behind this educational process was that students had to learn first about Indigenous knowledges, generally and in relation to architecture, before they would approach it from a more traditional (i.e. Western) perspective, which would happen in conversation with the Indigenous knowledges they learned.

Doing so, they were following principles of complementariness and convergence that support the type of intercultural epistemology the Amawtay Wasi stands for. The complementariness principle was expressed formally in the following manner:

In terms of education, teaching, and learning, each one of these rationalities faces different perspectives which, from our point of view, are complementary (fragmentation, maieutics, insight, constructivism, dialogic, systemic, experience, among others), which necessarily implies looking at them from a cross-cultural and polylogical perspective, in the sense of a "dialogue" between various rationalities, among diverse logic (J. García et al., 2004, p. 289).

The convergence in diversity principle expresses the search, in each present experience, for what is shared by other cultures and peoples, in synchronic and diachronic perspective. Thus, the building of one's knowledge base should integrate various cultural perspective to achieve a broader understanding of the complexity of architecture as a knowledge and practice that is related to the human being and other beings (environment).

This intercultural approach to knowledge was at the heart of the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity. For example, the intercultural communication program that the Pluriversity had started in Saraguro and Cotopaxi in 2014, was making sure to follow the original plan of beginning any program with the learning of Indigenous knowledges in that field, before establishing a conversation with non-Indigenous perspectives. However, this approach did present some difficulties. When assessing the students' projects at the end of the term, Fernando Sarango, head of the Pluriversity, mentioned the difference that students had created between the "scientific" information, and the community's information – the latter often presented by the students as "beliefs". In his perspective, this was hindering the revaluation of their own epistemological positioning: once presented as “beliefs”, these knowledges were assumed to be inferior to "scientific knowledge". In turn, Fernando Sarango's vision was to understand different scientific paradigms, rooted in different civilizations' traditions (Sarango, 2014).¹⁷⁵ His position seemed to challenge even for some professors of Amawtay Wasi, and for the students. This also denoted a discrepancy between the philosophical project of Amawtay Wasi, and its practical application¹⁷⁶.

As the head of the Pluriversity, Fernando Sarango continued defending the intercultural project of the Amawtay Wasi on different scenes. For instance, I attended one of Fernando's talks during the "International Encounter on Good Life, Plurinational State and Interculturality in Latin America", at the University of Otavalo, at the end of November. He was part of a panel on university reform and good life, where he presented how the Amawtay Wasi's philosophy was a contribution to the decolonization of the academy, both in its content (epistemic decolonization) and its form (institutional and pedagogical decolonization). Hence, the intercultural approach of the

¹⁷⁵ I also recognized the problematic situation of presenting the non-Indigenous perspective as being scientific, versus the community knowledge not being positioned explicitly as scientific. This maintains the knowledge hierarchy between Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. However, by putting these knowledges in dialogue, there was an effort to put distinct knowledge systems of an equal footing.

¹⁷⁶ Paola Vargas Moreno (2014) wrote an article about the institutionalization of the Amawtay Wasi project, and the contradiction between its philosophical project and the modernity project that universities embody. She notes that Amawtay Wasi encountered many obstacles and difficulties in its institutionalization and practices as a university, which eventually led to its closing. The move from a university to a Pluriversity might be seen as an effort to escape the modern academic institutional framework and close the gap between the philosophical project and its application. But this was still an ongoing process when I was on the field.

As mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, the strength of the Amawtay Wasi is definitely its philosophical and political project, but they had a hard time applying it, at least in part because of the resistance of the Ecuadorian state and academy to its recognition and financial support. Many of the people I interviewed also expressed that the most interesting phase of the Amawtay Wasi was the development of the project and collective conceptualization of the pedagogy and curriculum.

Amawtay Wasi serves the unsettling of knowledge hierarchies existing in the academia as a result of colonial legacy.

This unsettling of knowledge hierarchies is meant to also challenge socio-political hierarchies in Ecuador. When I visited the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity team in Saraguro in 2014, I met with Miguel Ángel Contento, former professor for the education program in Tenta (Saraguro), and then coordinator of the Pluriversity activities in Saraguro. During our conversation, Miguel drew a direct link between the recognition of diverse knowledge systems and the possibility of creating a plurinational state. He said that,

Because all peoples that live on this earth have their own knowledges. If we observe a lack of respect towards these knowledges, then we cannot talk about a pluri[national] country. But if we do have this respect, if we observe the knowledge of each other, our planet becomes much wealthier, we all contribute to developing the *Sumak Kawsay* (Contento, 2014, interview, my translation)¹⁷⁷.

Thus, the epistemological project was aiming at a social transformation in which Indigenous concepts of *Sumak Kawsay* and plurinationality would be taken seriously, and applied politically. This was a shared vision amongst people who had been involved in the Amawtay Wasi activities. For example, Amazonian part of Ecuador, I met with Marcelo Shakai, who had been one of the professors in the *chakra* in Macas, before the closure of the university. He explained to me how the concept of intercultural dialogue was at the core of the university's approach and how it differentiated it from other universities. He also added that this intercultural dialogue's aim is the practical change of the country, towards plurinationality. In his own words,

The intercultural dialogue. I think this is the level that we reached. This was the University's way of thinking. So we worked, and this is the big difference with other universities that I know well, and which do not aim at strengthening plurinationality and interculturality. In this university, we wanted to push for the development of the practice and knowledge of plurinationality and interculturality of the country (Shakai, 2014, interview, my translation)¹⁷⁸.

¹⁷⁷ "Porque todos los pueblos que habitamos en este planeta, tienen sus saberes y todos sus conocimientos. Si hay, si se observa este irrespeto a estos saberes, a estos conocimientos, no podemos hablar de un país pluri, no. Por tanto, si hay este respecto, si se observa este conocimiento del uno y del otro, nuestro planeta se vuelve mucho mas rico, todos ofertamos a que se desarrolle este Sumak Kawsay".

¹⁷⁸ "Eso, el diálogo intercultural. Yo creo que a este nivel tenemos que haber llegado. Y esto (incompreensible) el pensamiento que tuvo la universidad. Entonces, así hemos trabajado y es la gran diferencia con las universidades a las cuales yo conozco muy de cerca, y no apuntan el fortalecimiento de la plurinacionalidad y la interculturalidad. Mas

Again, what is striking from Marcelo's statement, is that the project was both an epistemic one, oriented toward knowledge building and practice; and a political one, addressing realities and issues in the country, namely, plurinationality and interculturality, two main demands of the Indigenous movement in Ecuador since the late 1980s.

As a concrete expression of the collapsing between the epistemic and political project and struggle, while I was realizing my fieldwork with the ICCI and the Amawtay Wasi, I ended up participating with them to many demonstrations and marches contesting the policies of the government. These marches and demonstrations, in turn, were often met with strong repression and criminalization of Indigenous groups and movements. People from the ICCI and the Pluriversity, as well as representatives of Indigenous organizations such as the ECUARUNARI and the CONAIE, all participated in the national uprising of September 17th 2014, for example. The uprising was called by national unions, against the government's reform of the Labour Code, but people converged to Quito on that day to protest against many issues, including access to education in public universities and the government's support of extractive industries. While walking towards the Plaza San Francisco to meet the demonstration, that day, we ran into a block-full of police and army trucks ready to arrest people. The repression was intense that day, and even high school students from the Colegio Mejias were arrested and some jailed, spurring a public outcry. This is only one example of the type of social and political tensions that were at play between various social sectors, including the different Indigenous movements, and the Correa government. The struggle of the Amawtay Wasi to maintain its decolonial project was very much caught up in these tensions.

This shows how the educational project of the Amawtay Wasi also retained a deep relationship to the political demands of the Indigenous movements. Maybe one of the most striking expression of the continuous relationship between the Amawtay Wasi and the Indigenous movement, beside its loose ownership by the CONAIE¹⁷⁹ and the ICCI, was the fact that, in 2014 in Saraguro, the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity NGO had its center of activities in the local Indigenous organization's headquarters, the *Coordinadora del Pueblo Kichwa de Saraguro* – CORPUKIS. They offered there

bien, esta universidad quería potenciar a evolución de la práctica y del conocimiento de la plurinacionalidad y de la interculturalidad en el país" (Shakai, 2014, interview).

¹⁷⁹ Loose in the sense that, at least in 2014, there was no real relationship established. The CONAIE was owner in name only, with no implication really in the functioning of the university.

an intercultural and communal communication degree, and the students participated in a number of activities organized by the CORPUKIS. Since the Amawtay Wasi university had been closed in the previous fall, the Pluriversity was offering this degree in an autonomous manner, with the support of its international network (RUIICAY), but also with the recognition of the local Indigenous organization, and the National Andean one (ECUARUNARI). The idea was that this degree, if not recognized by the state (for lack of accreditation) would nevertheless be recognized autonomously by Indigenous communities and organizations while the students would receive an official degree from affiliated university in Nicaragua - the URACCAN. The same degree was also offered in Cotopaxi, in collaboration with local organizations, in which some of the students were involved too. Hence, the intercultural nature of the Amawtay Wasi remained to this point completely linked to political projects of Indigenous communities' self-determination in a plurinational state.

At the same time, the whole project was not simply turned inwards for the Indigenous communities: it was calling for the transformation of the society in general, based on principles and concepts that Indigenous Peoples had worked hard, since the 1990s, to integrate in the constitution of the country, such as the idea of a plurinational state that would aim at *Sumak Kawsay* (the good life) rather than development. While these Indigenous contributions to the nature of the state and its economy were officially integrated to the constitution in 2008, by 2014, the application had yet to come to effect. Some authors (Ávila, 2013; Gargarella, 2011) have pointed to the contradiction between the new concepts and rights expressed in the 2008 constitution, and the same constitution's reaffirmation of the state's central control to apply these new concepts and rights. In other words, the application of Indigenous concepts and rights occurs in the perspective of strengthening and "modernizing" the liberal state (Chuji, 2009).

In this context, ideas such as the *Sumak Kawsay*, supposed to challenge capitalist ideas of development, are appropriated by the government to support its own idea of modernization of capitalism (A. Acosta, 2014), following a natural resources extraction model - paired with the extraction of Indigenous knowledges through the government's idea of interculturality (Walsh, 2014, quoted in Drouin-Gagné, 2014). Instead of engaging in a decolonizing dialogue with the Indigenous movement, and by the same token, with the Amawtay Wasi, the government appropriated Indigenous knowledges and translated them into its own capitalist and neoliberal frameworks. How, then, is it possible to decolonize through dialogue when one is always forced

onto one's interlocutor's space and framework? The "dialogue" that the Amawtay Wasi calls for can only happen with an engaging interlocutor, who is ready to challenge their framework and safe space. The Amawtay Wasi's project was always both an epistemological and a political one, but these hard times were exacerbating the political struggle implied in the Indigenous, Intercultural and communal university. At the same time, the political movement was in need of more epistemological support to defend their vision of an intercultural, plurinational state that would be rooted in *Sumak Kawsay*.

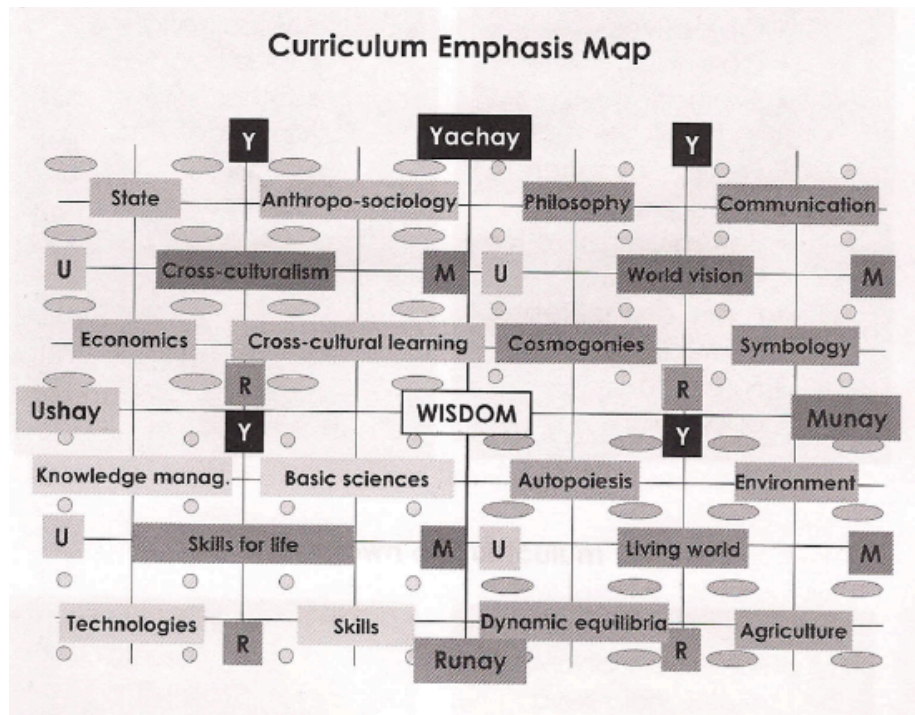
Indigenous knowledges: revitalizing the knowledges in all disciplines

The rationality of Abya Yala is a rationality that is not well known. Its wisdom and knowledge have been largely ignored by the academic community and official culture, nor does the population at large know about it. This lack of knowledge about it dates back to the Conquest itself and has continued until now. This wisdom is now running the risk of disappearing completely because of the implacable process of neocolonial scientific and religious acculturation, which is sweeping away our own ancestral nations and peoples, who are being convulsively forced to transfigure their own identity.

Amawtay Wasi's "Libro Verde" (J. García et al., 2004, pp. 289-290).

The foundational vision of the Amawtay Wasi University is to not only make higher education available to Indigenous students and in Indigenous communities, but also to build a higher education system that would rely on Indigenous knowledge systems. The idea is to bring Indigenous knowledges into the academy. The Amawtay Wasi explicitly builds knowledge and curricula based on Andean symbolism of the *chakana*, and the philosophical principles it entails. In doing so, the Amawtay Wasi is not only bringing Indigenous knowledge as content, but also employs epistemological principles as central to its educational model of the Amawtay Wasi. Figure 11 shows the use of the *Chakana* to organize knowledge at the Amawtay Wasi:

Figure 11: Amawtay Wasi Curriculum based on the Chakana (in J. García et al., 2004)



In terms of knowledge structure and organization, the Chakana brings together four areas of knowledge (see Figure 11), each one in turn divided into four other dimensions of that area. At the centre of this knowledge structure is wisdom (not expertise or control). Therefore, the first principle of education is wisdom, which in turns combines knowledge (*Yachay*, theory, but also learning), love/will (*Munay*, passion, intuition), practice (*Runay*, doing), and power (*Ushay*, will). These principles allow the learning of one's world vision, the living world around him/her, the skills for life, and how to live in interculturality (J. García et al., 2004). While recognizing that this is a very "Andean" way of producing, organizing and transmitting knowledge, the Amawtay Wasi's point is not to claim this as the only way of knowing. In a relational perspective rather than a hierarchical one, the idea is to start from this Andean epistemological standpoint (of what is knowledge), in order to relate it with other epistemologies, in a "knowledge dialogue".

This knowledge dialogue happens in all discipline by considering contemporary and ancestral Indigenous knowledges. For example, when I talked with Miguel Ángel Contento in Saraguro, he mentioned various ways of integrating Indigenous knowledges in education: ancestral weaving, *quipus*, ancestral mathematics, as well as plant knowledges and use of traditional material to create a pedagogy that would revive Andean wisdom and bring all the dimensions of being in the learning process. Miguel Ángel argued that the university was contributing to recovering these knowledges by writing about them, and integrating them in the academic literature, at least through the informative modules the academic team was writing, and through the students' projects and theses. Accordingly, one of the objectives of the Amawtay Wasi is to revitalize Indigenous knowledges, by approaching Elders and knowledge keepers in the communities, and writing down some of the information they could pass on, in the students' theses¹⁸⁰. This revitalizing of Indigenous knowledge can be related to decolonial projects of storying and resurgence, reconnecting with Indigenous communities, their stories and knowledges.

With this approach to synthesizing Indigenous knowledges, in 2014, the Pluriversity accumulated a library full of BA theses conceived and written during the nine years of the

¹⁸⁰ This documenting Indigenous knowledges in written documents was called "systematizing knowledge" and it was also meant to be given back to the community, either through implementation of educational programs or with information that would serve the Indigenous organizations. At the end of each semester, the students also presented their projects (and at the end of their degree, their dissertation) to community members through what was called a "harvesting ceremony". Professors would then assess the students' work, but community members would also be invited and could weigh in on the students' projects.

university's functioning. The theses are mainly about systematizing knowledges and practices that exist in the communities and often creating models (of education, agriculture, architecture) that could be used today based on these knowledges. Furthermore, students were expected to use Indigenous knowledges as the basic theoretical framework for all the research and project realized at Amawtay Wasi. Additionally, the harvesting feast, at the end of each semester, was a great moment to hear about the engagement of students with local Indigenous knowledge relevant to their respective projects.

For example, the harvesting feast of the intercultural communication students in Saraguro, at the end of the 2014 year, was structured around "scientific information" and "information of Saraguro people", which were followed by an analysis that synthesized both conceptions, and a conclusion re-situating the analysis in relation to communication, more broadly. A few people chose to work on the relationship that *Saraguros* have with animals in terms of communication: how certain animals, for example *Cuys* (guinea pigs), often communicate information about the surrounding world to human beings – they could tell you someone is coming to visit; or they can point to someone's sickness cause, for instance. As the students noted, this conception is quite different from Western (and I would say especially capitalist) understanding of human-animal relations, which often considers them more in terms of their use, or their nutritional value, or their monetary value, or, if the relationship established with them is considered, it is rather one of master over pet, or parenting. But in the case exposed by the students, the animals were considered capable of communicating relevant information to human, in an interspecies communication model. The students did not necessarily highlight it, but to me, this was an important example of the relationality implicit to Andean knowledge systems, and a priori understanding of inter-species relationships. In this structure of work, one can see already how the Amawtay Wasi model prioritizes the movement of students into communities, encouraging learning about these communities' knowledge on a chosen subject, and then challenging them to integrate that knowledge with another (usually "scientific") source.

The communication students were in their first year, and their use of Indigenous knowledge was to a certain extent still at the level of the content. The recognition of Indigenous knowledge at Amawtay Wasi is meant to go further. For example, the architectural student group, during the Harvesting Feast/thesis defence that I attended at the end of the fall, presented projects that had a theoretical section in which they would consider the Indigenous worldview as a theoretical

framework. More precisely the "Andean Cross"/ *Chakana*, as well as astronomical knowledge related to the solstices, and the sun's movements, were used to rethink the places, shapes, and meanings of their buildings. This approach was in line with the architectural perspective of professors who had taught them under the Amawtay Wasi university. For example, Julio Saransig, Otavaleño architect who had been involved in the degree offered by the Amawtay Wasi, mentioned the work done with the students:

[...] What we did with the students of the Amawtay Wasi, in the area of architecture and territory. It was about managing a lot of integral parts, if I am going to be an architect, a house can't be only built there because I want to. There had to be an integration with the solstice positions, and position in relation to what is around us, to the context... I'm talking about the mountains [for example] (Saransig, 2014, interview, my translation).¹⁸¹

Hence, in the education they received at the Amawtay Wasi, architecture students engaged with Indigenous knowledges about places and land, in a relational perspective that included how a place relates to history, and to the broader territory and cosmos.

This dimension of the education received at the Amawtay Wasi is distinctly different from the one received at any other university, and the architecture students were well aware of this. One of them mentioned that it had:

Helped me understand the meaning of many things. For example, with conventional architecture, I knew that I needed to pay attention to lighting, but I did not have a clear idea about solstices and equinoxes. I did not know why these phenomena happened, and what kind of energy comes out of it, things that I learned here. And, to me, this had become more than academic, this degree/career has become something personal (architecture student, 2014, group interview, my translation).¹⁸²

Therefore, the relational perspective that students learned was also transformative in the sense that it rendered the knowledge and the discipline they learned more personal. The sense of a place and the relation established with it created meaning that the simple learning of design techniques

¹⁸¹ "[...] que se hizo con los estudiantes de la Amawtay Wasi en el tema de arquitectura y territorio. Era manejable, muchas de las partes integrales, si es que yo voy a ser un arquitectura, una casa, no debe estar solamente hecho allí porque me da la gana, tiene que tener una integración con la posición de los, de las (incomprendible) solsticiales, y una posición respecto a lo que nos rodea en el contexto, estoy hablando de las montañas" (Saransig, 2014)

¹⁸² "Y me ayudó también a darle sentido a muchas cosas. Por ejemplo la arquitectura convencional yo sabía que tenía que tener pendiente la iluminación pero no me quedaba muy claro los solsticios y equinoccios. Y no sabía del porque se da este fenómeno, no sabía que tipo de energía sacaba esto, cosas que aprendí acá. Y para mí, ha sido mas que académico, se volvió algo personal, esta carrera".

would not have given them. It had placed the students in relation to the world around them which turned out to be more personally fulfilling.

The architectural program also included Indigenous knowledges such as basic measurements coming from ancestral architecture, and consideration of eco- and bio- architecture¹⁸³ as important components of the students' projects. This, in turn, aligned with the general philosophy that was set behind the architecture program, as Jorge Garcia, who participated in the *Mingas de pensamiento* to organize the university proposal in the 1990s and early 2000s, told me: "What architecture builds in Abya Yala is a living landscape, not a building, a living landscape. It's an environment, a place, which nurtures us, that we nurture and it in turn nurtures us. It's a process of mutual nurturing" (Garcia, 2014, interview, my translation)¹⁸⁴. In this case, more than land, territories, and Indigenous relational knowledges of the territories, were at the core of the teachings in architecture.

This respect for Indigenous ways of knowing and transmitting knowledge was not only in the epistemological foundation and content of the courses and the theses, but in the pedagogical form too. Much emphasis was put on learning by doing, and on the relationship with the communities in the learning process. Another dimension, though, was the integration of rituals as ways of transmitting knowledges, and of the language as transversal to the teachings. Even if many students did not speak Kichwa (in the Andes; or Shuar for the *chakras* in the amazon), due to the colonial history and reality, the language was used as often as possible and had an important role for conceptual thinking. One example was the theses defence of education students in Saraguro, who were finishing their degree under the CES contingency plan. The theses defence were held at the Waka Cultural Center, and it began with a ceremony that entailed creating a *Chakana* on the floor with corn and beans, as well as potatoes, fruits, and flowers, with a fire/smudging space in the middle. Words were shared by the professors, local authorities, and Luis Macas, who was attending the defence. Some of them spoke in Kichwa or both in Kichwa and Spanish. The graduating students stood around the *Chakana* and were *challados* (a type of blessing in Andean cultures – the word is Kichwa - that includes spreading alcohol). The significance of following Indigenous

¹⁸³ Eco-architecture refers to sustainable architecture, in terms of material, techniques and impacts of the building. Bio-architecture refers to architecture that respects life and earth as foundation of architecture.

¹⁸⁴ "Porque lo que la arquitectura construye en Abya Yala es un paisaje vivo, no es un edificio, es un paisaje vivo, esto. Es un ambiente, es un sitio, es un lugar que nos cría, que nosotros hemos criado y a su vez nos cría. Un proceso mutuo de crianza".

protocols and Kichwa language to realize the classic "thesis defence" academic protocol had many implications. First, it brought representatives of the community in the protocol, rather than having a separate, academic ceremony. It also brought in "all the relations" that students have with the community, the territory (with the flowers, fruits and vegetables that come from it), the ancestry of the place and knowledge represented by the symbol of the *Chakana*, and the spiritual aspect of knowledge. The students themselves built the *Chakana* and initiated the protocols, as a way to root their work in their intellectual traditions, in their community, and in the specific place, to present their project that had emerged from these elements.

Some of the students (or group of students, as some realized their projects in a group) presented in Kichwa and, as they were evaluated by the committee formed of professors of the CES contingency plan, I assumed these professors understood Kichwa (no translation was offered). Making space for the language as an integral part of the knowledge transmission was thus important for many of the students and respected by the evaluators. Although I cannot speak completely to the content of the presentation - as I do not speak Kichwa - it was obvious that the choice of the language also made space for different concepts and ideas to be conveyed and articulated in specific ways. The theses defence of the students in the pedagogy program thus articulated relationality, place, spirituality, and language as important dimensions of Indigenous knowledges articulated at the Amawtay Wasi.

The integration of Andean ceremonies to the pedagogical practices at the Amawtay Wasi had an impact for non-Indigenous students too. On a Saturday morning when the architecture students of the contingency plan were having a class¹⁸⁵, I sat with the group and conducted an interview with them. Reflecting on their culminating process, some students expressed how important it had been for them to attend the Amawtay Wasi, since as non-Indigenous members of the society, they had known nothing about Indigenous cultures and knowledges. They expressed how they saw the learning being different at the Amawtay Wasi, in comparison to their previous university, and especially in the *vivencial* nature¹⁸⁶ of the education, which implied "life learning" and holistic

¹⁸⁵ The *Universidad Central* of Quito was letting the contingency plan team for the architecture degree use their installations on weekends for them to give classes, for the students to work on their thesis, and for defence and presentations to be held there.

¹⁸⁶ It is difficult to find a proper translation for *vivencial*, which refer to what could be called "life learning". What it means is that the learning is not separated from other spheres of life, and actually integrates the whole human experience - body, spirit, emotions included.

For example, Gerardo Simbaña, part of the Amawtay Wasi Pluriversity NGO team in 2014, mentioned:

learning, rather than limiting the education to the classroom and to technical knowledge of architecture. At Amawtay Wasi, architecture would include learning about the earth, the sun, their movements, and the many interconnections between a place, an environment, and the buildings conceived architecturally. While some students expressed that since their integration into the contingency plan, this *vivencial* or experiential way of learning had been set aside, others expressed that this was normal as they were moving on to the official process of writing a thesis. Still, some argued, what they had learned about the worldviews (*cosmovisiones*), and in relation to Indigenous knowledges, had to be integrated in the thesis, and therefore was still an integral part of their learning and knowledge building process. For example, one group was working on a cultural interpretation centre as their final project, and they described how they needed to put in practice, in this project, what they had learned about Indigenous theories, worldviews, ancestral values and ancestral architecture. Their final projects and theses were going to be intercultural in their content and approaches.

With all this being said, though, the knowledge practice at the Amawtay Wasi might have been too different to a mainstream university to pass the accreditation assessment. When all the universities were assessed in Ecuador, the Amawtay Wasi ended up in the bottom category, thus not meeting the higher education standards of the country to remain open. And while the CES recognized the Amawtay Wasi's philosophy as positive, the application of the project seemed to be problematic at least in terms of an academic institution. In other words, the knowledge dialogue promoted by the Amawtay Wasi was not effectively put in place with other knowledge institutions in the country.

"Entonces, en cambio, acá nosotros construimos el pensamiento a partir de la práctica, a partir del trabajo, del hacer. Entonces, y este hacer estaba también ligado al sentir. Y este sentir, a otras cuestiones mas como el sueño. Para nosotros el sueño es importante, la espiritualidad es importante, entonces, todas estas, estos elementos se integran para generar pensamiento de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades. Lo que muy diferente a occidente, que es mas lógico, racional en sí. Es una estructura super restringida, no dialogada" (Simbaña, 2014, interview)

"So, in turn, here we build our thinking from the practice, from the work, from doing. And this doing is also linked to feeling. And feeling is linked to other issues, such as dreams. For us, dream is important, spirituality is important, so all these elements are integrated to form the thinking of [Indigenous] Peoples and Nationalities. This is quite different from the West, which is more logical, and rational. It's a structure that is very limited, and not dialogued" (my translation).

Community relationships: multiple campuses and the communal approach to knowledge

The process of learning is articulated with dialogues, reflections, forums, research, and community production and service projects that start the first semester of the academic program and become increasingly important in subsequent semesters, aimed at obtaining an increasingly higher quality in building significant knowledge.

Amawtay Wasi's "Libro Verde" (J. García et al., 2004, p. 311).

The philosophy of Amawtay Wasi emphasizes a construction of knowledge in a reciprocal relation with communities: communities are the subject and not object of knowledge - they contribute to its production - and the knowledge and activities of the university are meant to serve the communities. Community engagement serves the scientific decolonial project, by challenging the hierarchy between university and community knowledges, and it serves the political decolonial project, by putting the institution to the service of Indigenous communities. In other words, the life projects of Indigenous communities are at the center of the Amawtay Wasi's educational model.

Correspondingly, a recurring theme throughout my interviews was the importance of serving communities through the university. For example, when remembering how they decided what disciplines the university would offer, Luis Macas explained to me that,

all these degrees, or these paths as we called them, they did not come from the university designer, from us who were thinking [about the university], or from us who were organizing and synthesizing all the... They came from the communities! I mean, they emerged from the necessities: education, of course, because we had national [intercultural and bilingual] education so we needed to prepare professors; health, because it was people's necessity. So, of course, health and law also, one of the people's felt necessities, now with or without the university and without law, people are administrating justice in the communities, right? So, there were four fundamental degrees that came from bellow (Macas, 2014, interview, my translation).¹⁸⁷

Interestingly, the three disciplines that the university ended up offering (education, agroecology and ancestral architecture - four if we add the communication degree that the Pluriversity was offering in 2014) did not include health and law. While participating in community and

¹⁸⁷ “Ahora, todas estas carreras, o estas trazas que se llaman, no venían desde los diseñadores de la universidad, de los que estábamos pensando, o, o no digamos, este, de los que estábamos organizando, de los que estábamos sintetizando toda la... Venía desde las comunidades, pues! O sea, nacía desde las necesidades, la educación, claro, porque tenemos la educación a nivel nacional, entonces necesitamos preparar maestros. Salud, porque es una necesidad de la gente. Entonces, claro, salud y derecho también, una de las necesidades sentida de la gente, ahora con o sin universidad y sin ley, la gente esta administrando justicia en las comunidades, no? Entonces, eran 4 carreras fundamentales que venían desde abajo”.

organizational events in Saraguro, I kept hearing demands for these two disciplines. This raises the question of the Amawtay Wasi's capacity to actually answer communities' needs, in spite of best intentions. Who decided to go ahead with different disciplines, and why, were two questions I never really got answers for. My feeling was that the foundational team of the Amawtay Wasi created a curriculum based on the expertise they had. Two members of that team were professors in architecture (Alfredo Lozano) and agro-ecology (Julio Olivera). It might have appeared more feasible to go with their expertise to develop degrees, than to find other people to build the needed disciplines.

Throughout my interviews, however, I understood that if these disciplines (health and law) were delayed in the process of institutionalization of the university, they remained an eventual goal for the Amawtay Wasi (the head of which, Fernando Sarango, is a lawyer). In any case, the idea that the degrees offered at the university should respond to the needs and desires of the communities involved remained an important point shared by people across the Amawtay Wasi (from the Pluriversity to the ICCI, to the CES contingency plan). Besides the intercultural nature of the university, the relation with the communities, and the idea of creating *Sumak Kawsay* (good life) in the communities through relevant education, was a distinctive characteristic of the higher education project embodied in the Amawtay Wasi. In other words, the survivance of Indigenous communities, following their own definitions of a good life, was at the core of the political project of the Amawtay Wasi.

Consequently, the education that the Amawtay Wasi offered as a university was meant to support the life projects of Indigenous communities, including the development of intercultural education for the children, the development of agro-ecology that would sustain food sovereignty and respect the ecology in the communities, and the development of architecture that would reflect the ecological and cultural context of Indigenous communities. The Pluriversity also followed this model. When I asked about the choice of offering an intercultural communication degree, the answer I received was that Indigenous organizations and communities needed to improve their communication strategies. In the political context of continuous confrontations with the state, communication was indeed a strategic area to get expertise in, and control of. Thus, the teaching of a certain discipline was in line with decolonial and life projects of Indigenous organizations and communities.

Another dimension of the communities' involvement at the Amawtay Wasi (whether the University or the Pluriversity) is their involvement in “knowledge conversation”. When I first visited the university in 2011, in the *Runa* class that I assisted, we attended a marriage in a community in Guaranda. As the community's authorities also attended the marriage, it was an opportunity to teach the students about the conception of the human being (*Runa*) from the community standpoint, from how people understood them to be social entities and situated in family networks. In 2011, the learning modules in both *Runa* and *Pachamanka* classes included exercises where the students were required to converse with Indigenous leaders and Elders around the subjects they were approaching in class. Thus, it was assumed that the knowledge acquired by the students would come as much from community members, leaders and elders, as books and university professors. This was part of recognizing the knowledge that communities already have, rather than thinking that knowledge comes from the outside, from the academy and from the West.

In the original project of the Amawtay Wasi, the process of creating knowledge was elaborated through four areas: informative modules, preparation to investigation, undertaking (practice) and conversations. While all the areas were related to the communities in different ways, the conversation part explicitly implied that students would enter in conversation with people in the communities, who were considered knowledge keepers, or experts in their field, to learn from them and have a conversation about whatever subject or field they were studying. As Bolívar Yantalema, who was teaching the Cotopaxi group of students in intercultural communication in 2014, explained to me, conversation (*conversatorio*) was about establishing a knowledge dialogue with the communities, part of them, or specific community members, regarding the thematic students were learning about. Following this principle, and for the fall semester of 2014, Bolívar undertook a two-day journey with his students to visit people in different communities around Cotopaxi, based on the projects that his students had elaborated in regard to communal and intercultural communication. Thus, it was assumed that the students would undertake concrete projects that would be informed both by the informative modules that Bolívar was teaching them, and by the knowledge of the community members they would have met with during these two days. In this case, most of the students were locals and worked for Indigenous organizations, so this community-based learning served as a remembrance/continuance process in which to root their work for the survivance of their communities.

Similarly, for the same program in Saraguro, Manuel Medina who was teaching the group of students there, explained to me that

Now, the argument is that they [the CES] will never understand nor did they ever understand that the university is thought of from the Indigenous philosophy, that the university happens in the community, with the community, for the community. And the knowledges are in the community. Especially the Andean knowledges, they are in the wisdom, in the oral memory of the elders, men and women. This is where knowledges are. This is why we think that our libraries are in the communities, at least in terms of studying our own knowledges. The Western knowledge we access it in libraries, in the internet. But what is ours is in the communities. So we consider that communities are the university, this is where the university has to be, understanding it not only as a separate apparatus or physical space super structured as the other universities. Which is what university means for these universities, as a symbol. For us, the symbol of the university is in the communities, in the knowledge that communities have, this is what we understand (Medina, 2014, interview, my translation)¹⁸⁸.

Following Manuel's assertion, it was made clear by everyone I met that the knowledge about any discipline could and should be found in the communities, first. This approach to knowledge plays a major role in the decolonial projects of the Amawtay Wasi regarding the dismantling of knowledge hierarchies existing between Western and Indigenous knowledges, and between academic and communal knowledges.

Hence, while the choice of the disciplines taught was oriented by concepts of community service, the way that these disciplines were taught involved service of the community to the university. In return, as knowledges come from the community, and as students then put these in dialogue with their own projects, practices, and with Western knowledges too, at the end of the process, it is also important, in the Amawtay Wasi's perspective, to return the outcomes to the communities. This was usually done with a "harvesting feast" (*fiesta de la cosecha*) through which the students present their projects to each other, to their professors, but also to the community,

¹⁸⁸ "Ahora los argumentos, ya es mas bien, por un lado, nunca van a entender ni entendieron de que esta universidad pensada desde la filosofia Indígena, es que la universidad la hacemos en la comunidad, con la comunidad, para la comunidad. Y los conocimientos están en la comunidad. Especialmente los conocimientos andinos están en la sabiduría, en la memoria oral de las personas mayores, hombres y mujeres. Allí está este conocimiento. Entonces, por esto pensamos que nuestra biblioteca está en las comunidades, para el estudio al menos de la parte del conocimiento propio. No así, en cambio el conocimiento occidental está en la biblioteca, está en el internet. En cambio lo nuestro, está en las comunidades. Entonces, nosotros consideramos de que las comunidades, allí está la universidad, y debe estar la universidad, entendida como universidad no, no somos un aparato o como un espacio físico tremendamente estructurado como tiene la otra universidad. Que esto esta una universidad, esto significa una universidad, es el símbolo de la universidad. Para nosotros en cambio, el símbolo de la universidad está en las comunidades, en el conocimiento que tienen las comunidades. Esto lo podemos entender".

whose members are invited. This is a time to give back, and to also receive feedback from community members. Moreover, the goal was to produce projects and knowledges that would serve the community, and not only serve the purpose of knowledge in and of itself, or the academic purposes.

The importance of community, in spite of Manuel's scepticism, was respected to a certain extent even in the CES contingency plan. In the Harvesting Feast of the architecture students, in the fall of 2014, part of the process was to formally deliver an urban planning assessment that they had realized in the community of el Quinche, to the authority of the community. While some students admitted, in a later conversation, that their assessment and planning was lacking information about the Indigenous history of the community, they were still proud to be able to give their assessment to the community, as a concrete contribution. In other words, the CES might have failed the part where the Indigenous community, leaders and elders should inform the students' projects, but they were still developing community engagement by creating a project relevant for a community and delivering the outcomes to the community authority. The students' work was not going to stay only in a university library, but the authority of the community could assess their work and use it to re-organize this community that had grown fast with the touristic activities around an annual pilgrimage. The students mentioned that,

the whole process was done in relationship with the communities. The proposals [the Quinche project was one of the various project presented during the Harvest Feast] that we did were in relation with and in function to the necessities of some communities that were contacted by people of this university. The communities presented their necessities, and we presented projects in line with what they needed. So we did not sit there, doing our projects with only academic goals in mind, but rather in relationship with the communities (architecture student, 2014, group interview, my translation).¹⁸⁹

From the knowledge building, to the knowledge transmission and the knowledge use, the community is always the center of the attention of the epistemological and political goals of the Amawtay Wasi and the higher education system they created.

¹⁸⁹ “Si, todo. Todo el proceso ha sido en relación con las comunidades. O sea, las propuestas que nosotros hemos hecho ha sido en relación y en función de las necesidades de algunas comunidades que han sido, digamos, contactadas por medio de las personas de la universidad. Las comunidades presentaban algunas necesidades y nosotros presentábamos proyectos de acuerdo a las necesidades de las comunidades. o sea, no nos hemos sentado acá haciendo los proyectos únicamente con objetivos académicos, sino (incompreensible) en relación con las comunidades”.

Similarly, the agro-ecology students had projects that revolved around the possibility of sustainable and sovereign food systems in their communities, as well as the development of an economy based on organic and sustainable gardens. Their projects went from models of gardens, to markets and sowing strategies, to the development of organic, sustainable and affordable fertilizer. These were all practices that could be applied in the communities. While these projects once again lacked some of the dimensions implied in community conversations - they were also the result of the CES contingency plans - they took into account existing communal practices, and the projects could be of direct use by the community members.

The intercultural pedagogy students whom I saw defending their thesis in Saraguro made more use of communal knowledge, or pedagogical knowledges that came from families and community members, and their ways of teaching and learning. They involved the materials and practices that they observed or were told that the community members used and still use to teach their children. In that sense, they were developing models outside of the paradigm "education = schools", and re-situated the roles of the community, the parents, the families and the elders in educating children. They also involved didactic tools and materials that were traditional to the community - working with weaving, wools, earth, but also mathematic tables that found their origins in Andean mathematics.

Thus, the decolonial project of the Amawtay Wasi included putting the community at the center of their knowledge practices, in different ways. First, by answering to needs expressed or identified in the communities, and in some case, in the Indigenous movement or organizations - as in the case of communication. Second, by considering the community as an integral part of the knowledge building process. The community was not only an object of knowledge - or an object of study - but it was also the subject expressing knowledge, and teaching it to the students, as well as assessing the students' projects, to a certain point. This is the place where the CES contingency plan seemed to have failed in comparison to the original project of the Amawtay Wasi, and the pedagogy put forward by the Pluriversity. Finally, the community was envisioned as being at the receptive end of the knowledge practice: the knowledge produced was to be useful for the community, to give back the time and efforts invested by community members, elders, and leaders. This directly challenges the power dynamics that exists between communities and the academe.

Thus, in its engagement with Indigenous communities, the Amawtay Wasi's decolonial project aims at supporting their life projects in ways that will ensure their survivance as Indigenous communities. That includes working at remembrance and continuance of Indigenous knowledges as they exist and live in the communities. It also includes the intention of serving direct needs of the communities through training of local students who will then be able to work locally or in Indigenous organizations. While these principles are laudable, in practice, there were some discrepancies between the needs of the communities, for example in terms of Indigenous justice (law) and intercultural health that the Amawtay Wasi delayed in answering, to this day. With the possible re-opening of the university as a public one, receiving financial support from the state, there is the hope that degrees in health and law will be developed.

Conclusion: political and epistemological decolonization

The fundamental task of the Amawtay Wasi Cross-cultural University is to respond to the decolonization of knowledge on the basis of epistemology, ethic, and politics. It should set up a space for reflection, one that proposes new forms of conceiving the construction of knowledge, considering that the nations and peoples have their own wisdom and that the responsibility of men and women committed to this task is to research, revalue, and enhance local knowledge and build the science of knowledge, as an indispensable requirement to work not on the basis of responses to epistemological, philosophical, ethical, political, and economic colonial structures but rather from a proposal erected on the basis of the [indigenous] philosophical principles

- Amawtay Wasi's "Libro Verde" (J. García et al., 2004, pp. 280-281).

The project Amawtay Wasi embodies is a decolonial one in the sense that it not only searches to address colonization, and the Doctrine of Discovery logic that supports it; but it also disconnects itself from the colonial matrix (Mignolo, 2011) and instead builds an education model up and out of Indigenous communities' life projects and knowledges. Doing so, the Amawtay Wasi aims at dismantling the hierarchies – social, political, and academic ones – of Ecuador while making space for Indigenous Peoples to exist equally in the country – socially, politically, and academically. This project is a broad, ambitious one, that presents a certain idealism, and encountered many difficulties in its practical application. Nevertheless, it remains a valuable project that different groups aimed at rendering concrete, through diverse strategies (Pluriversity and the re-negotiation with the state, for example).

Amawtay Wasi, both as a university, and later as a Pluriversity, developed a community-based pedagogy that involves responding to the needs and aspirations of the communities and organizations it works with, while at the same time valuing and revitalizing their knowledges. On that basis, it participates in the survivance (Vizenor, 2008) of Indigenous communities, not only as historical entities, but as dynamic ones, with their own conceptions of "good life". Indigenous communities then are situated as participants to the Ecuadorian society, who can bring alternative knowledges and projects for the broader society, in any field: agronomy, architecture, education, and communication were the one they had developed - with the aspiration of developing health, law, and other disciplines. As a result, the Amawtay Wasi challenges the colonial hierarchies that prevail in Ecuadorian society, politics, and academy.

Furthermore, the work done in the communities is also oriented towards the resurgence of Indigenous knowledges (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012), and specifically, Indigenous languages, sense of place, experiences (through lived and embodied knowledges),

spirituality, and overall relational approaches. The Amawtay Wasi re-establishes relationships that colonialism tries to sever and erase. For example, through the knowledge taught and the student projects, spiritual, ontological and epistemological relations to territories were always re-established. Recognizing the knowledge that exists in Indigenous communities as valid, the students not only learned to (re)connect with Indigenous intellectual traditions, but also adopted a sense of responsibility towards the communities and the places they engaged with. The projects they undertook needed to be useful for the communities, and respectful of the places where they realized them, often embedding their presentation in the web of relationships that forms these places - following local protocols to defend their theses.

This commitment to Indigenous communities and to Indigenous knowledges was a consequence of the objectives, or the overall decolonial project, of Amawtay Wasi. The university was created, after all, to serve the political goals of Indigenous organizations and movements, locally and nationally. This is a particularity of Amawtay Wasi that needs to be stressed: as an Indigenous institution, it was created by the national Indigenous organization (and not by a governing entity), with the goal of supporting Indigenous movements' demands and life projects. The intellectual work achieved by the university supported demands of CONAIE such as: an intercultural society that would dismantle the colonial cultural hierarchies of the Ecuadorian society; a plurinational state that would recognize Indigenous communities' self-determination; and an economy centered on *Sumak Kawsay*, the good life as defined by the communities, rather than endless development based on extractivism that affects Indigenous territories. In that sense, a specificity of the Amawtay Wasi is its alignment with national Indigenous movement towards the decolonization of the society as a whole, and the state at large. Consequently, Amawtay Wasi is developing a higher education that challenges Ecuadorian society, politics, and economy that is based on an inter-civilizational and inter-epistemic conversation, a critical interculturality (Walsh, 2011) which could potentially transform the society and the state through the consideration of Indigenous knowledges, concepts, and practices.

This position did not come without difficulties and resistance, however. Amawtay Wasi project's realization was embedded from the beginning in political tensions, to the point that the state tried to close it. The closing of the university by the CES should be understood in relation to the state resistance to the general decolonial project proposed by the Amawtay Wasi. This project went against the ideas of the Ecuadorian government, under the *Alianza PAIS* party and its

"*Revolución Ciudadana*" (under Correa until the elections of 2017, which maintained the same party in power, now under Lenín Moreno). The "revolution" proposed by the government was pushing for the "modernization" of the state and its economy, in order to become a more independent and "developed" country, on the international arena¹⁹⁰. This "modernization" process entailed a centralization of the state power, thus excluding the Indigenous control over their constitutionally recognized rights.

In terms of educational policies, this "modernizing" approach translated into the closing of communal schools¹⁹¹ judged "precarious" and of poor quality, and the opening of 51 "millennial educational units"¹⁹² in the country's 24 provinces to replace those schools¹⁹³. The government's discourse on education modernization and quality was emphasizing infrastructures, technologies, and teachers' professionalization. Yet, as analysts have noticed, the result was an imposed homogenization of curriculum, of teaching models, and of pedagogy (Kowii, 2014). This homogenization targeted, besides the teaching format, the Intercultural and Bilingual content since the government also repatriated Intercultural and Bilingual Education (IBE) under its responsibility, creating a model for an IBE system (referred to as MOSEIB), to which intercultural schools (generally in Indigenous communities) have to subscribe if they want to stay open¹⁹⁴.

This "modernizing" and "progressive" (in the sense that it comes from a discourse about progress) ideology also applies in higher education (Castro Riera, 2013; Oviedo, 2013). For

¹⁹⁰ It is important to understand that in the Andean region, the so-called "21st-Century Socialism", or the "new left" (represented in Ecuador, until 2017, by Rafael Correa, and in Bolivia, until now, by Evo Morales) presents itself as a socialism that integrates Indigenous concepts and principles, such as *Sumak Kawsay* (Kichwa)/ *Sumak Qamaña* (Aymara), or the *Pachamama* rights, and plurinationality. However, while using these concepts and ideas, the ideology still pursues Western ideals of modernity, progress, development and extractivism. In that sense, it becomes a new "assimilation", a new colonization.

¹⁹¹ On September 4, 2013, the government announced its plan to reduce the number of communal schools from its then 18 000 to 5 500, or less than the third of the schools put in place in various Indigenous communities since the 1940s.

¹⁹² Education Ministry: <http://educacion.gob.ec/uem-en-funcionamiento/>

¹⁹³ In many cases, these structurally impressive units can receive thousands of students, coming from many diverse communities. These schools could function as residential/boarding schools for students coming from too far to travel from their community to the school everyday. While communal schools were looked upon as being "backward" because they often were very small and many even worked with a single teacher teaching across the grades, they had the advantage to keep children in the community and close to their homes and families. In the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada, and the realities learned from the testimonies of Residential Schools survivors in Canada, I could only be horrified when hearing and learning about these realities in Ecuador.

¹⁹⁴ For example, the Inca Samana school, opened in 1986 in Saraguro, was closed in the fall of 2013. An Indigenous schools system in Cotopaxi, as well as other 2 schools of the Pichincha province were also closed because their models did not fit the state MOSEIB.

example, while using the criteria of quality and relevance to assess the country's universities from 2009 on, and closing all the institutions assessed as being part of the "E" Category (including the Amawtay Wasi), the government was investing in the development of a network of new "modern" national universities: one for sciences and technologies (Yachay, already opened in the North part of the country), one for the Arts, one for pedagogy training, and one centered on biology and biodiversity to be established in Amazonia. The process was very similar to the communal schools closing/opening of "millennial units", especially in the case of closing the Amawtay Wasi. Furthermore, as the government expressed it (for example, in the National Assembly address by Guillermo Long – Minister of knowledge and human talent – in 2013), this higher education plan aimed at establishing the social, productive, and cognitive transformation of the country. However, this transformation follows the modern, "new socialism" ideology, which once again marginalizes Indigenous communities' life projects, undermines the control they have on education, and negates Indigenous Peoples' self-determined higher education.

Thus, the political and epistemological project of decolonizing higher education through the creation of an Indigenous, communal, and intercultural university was met with resistance, both politically and academically, since its beginning, and never enjoyed real support from state institutions. In spite of this situation, the university had existed and functioned as a private one, owned by CONAIE and ICCI, and remained responsive to the Indigenous organizations. Furthermore, they were able to establish an international network of Indigenous universities, the RUIICAY, that also supported the university's existence. Financial support from international cooperation contributed to the fact that Amawtay Wasi survived for almost 10 years. However, the new vision of a central, progressive left government judged the project as lacking quality, relevance, and going against the modernization of the Ecuadorian country. In spite of this situation, the Amawtay Wasi found a renewal in the articulation of a Pluriversity, that was pushing for an autonomous higher education system, outside of the categories imposed by the state, and functioning in a self-determining manner, in relation to Indigenous communities rather than the state. Another strategy developed by the ICCI and people involved in CES' contingency plan was to re-negotiate and keep pushing the state for the recognition of an Indigenous, communal, intercultural university.

By working autonomously from the community (bottom-up) and by challenging the state through negotiation (top-down), Amawtay Wasi articulated notions of knowledge, sovereignty and

nationhood, well-being beyond the constraints of the colonial state. The Amawtay Wasi, as a university and later as a Pluriversity (NGO) is pursuing a decolonial project that was both political and epistemological, participating in the decolonization of higher education in many levels. First, as a University by and for Indigenous Peoples/Nations of Ecuador, claiming their right to self-determination, it represents a political change in the power relationships with the state. The project allowed the overcoming of social inequities in terms of higher education access in Indigenous communities. Moreover, the project of an academic institution rooted in the communities is a move towards institutional decolonization from the modern project of a university (and knowledges) "emancipated" from their social and cultural context. Finally, the Amawtay Wasi was also a unique epistemological project, suggesting a "scientific dialogue" (but one could think of a multi-party conversation) between Indigenous and Western knowledges, in order to decolonize science and its hierarchy of knowledges, through a curriculum and a methodology inspired by Andean worldview and symbolism, which support recuperation and revalorization of Indigenous and community-based knowledges (J. García et al., 2004). What the Amawtay Wasi case demonstrates, in fact, is that Indigenous higher education can serve to challenge our cognitive framework and re-think our societies, politics, and our concepts of knowledge and academy.

CHAPTER 7: MONTANA. TRIBAL COLLEGES AS COMMUNITY BUILDING INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL CENTERS

On October 30, 2015, and I had returned to Polson, Montana, to continue the fieldwork at the Salish-Kootenai College¹⁹⁵. I had arrived a little more than a week earlier, for the American Indigenous Research Association's conference going on at the College, for the third year. I participated in the conference and I was then staying for another two weeks to finish some interviews and visits planned in late August/beginning of September, when I first arrived for my fieldwork. My friend Michael and her partner Steve were hosting me, which was great because I could debrief with them my experiences at the College. Michael works at the College, in the Native American Studies department, and Steve works at the community's Salish immersion school and also teaches Salish classes at the college. Their insights were really helpful in terms of situating my experience in the broader context of the college and of the reservation.

Michael asked me to visit her class, and talk about the UNPFII and the UNDRIP, since I went twice to the Permanent Forum, and was involved with the Global Indigenous Women's Caucus in the past years, doing translation for their pre-Forum meeting in New York. The day before the class, though, Michael had a family emergency, so that morning we decided I would directly cover her class with my visit. We had talked about her class in the past months, and I knew they were going through Federal Indian Law cases, and had discussed the Doctrine of Discovery, and its implication in modern law, and for Tribes Sovereignty in the USA. Michael had mentioned her pedagogy for this course, of basically reading court cases with the students, commenting on them, and opening for conversations around them. I decided I would adopt the conversational tone of the class, rather than go with a power point or a specific lecture.

Michael told me it was a small group, but I was still surprised to see that five students were the whole group (SKC has a students-teacher ratio of 10:1). The classroom was arranged so the

¹⁹⁵ While the Salish Kootenai College and the Salish Kootenai Confederated Tribes only name two nations, the Flathead reservation actually includes Séliš, Qíispé, and Ksanka Peoples. « Salish People » in this case would include two different groups: Séliš, and Qíispé. The former are often referred as “Salish” and the later as “Pend d’Oreille” – a name obviously attributed by the French missionaries. However, both Séliš and Qíispé share a same cultural committee on the reserve, and “Salish language” would be shared by both groups. Ksanka in the name for Kootenai People in their own language. However, on the reserve, and as a Tribe, people referred commonly to Salish-Kootenai, sometimes they would make the difference with Pend d’Oreille. Because of these interchangeable uses, I use these different names throughout the chapter, reflecting the use that people made of them.

tables formed a square, which facilitated the conversation, as we would sit looking at each other. After I presented myself, and they also all presented themselves, I asked them if they could tell me the relationship between the Doctrine of Discovery, Indigenous sovereignty, and the UNDRIP. One of the students immediately answered that the Doctrine of Discovery diminishes Indigenous sovereignty, while the UNDRIP supports it, or at least, the self-determination right of Indigenous Peoples. While this is an obvious answer, I was surprised because, having taught and given guest lectures in undergraduate classes, I was used to students not being able (or maybe not being willing) to answer the question. Here, the answer came right away. From there, we are able to have a much deeper conversation about the limits of the UNDRIP in terms of Indigenous sovereignty, when the document reaffirms the states' sovereignty over their territories. This conversation was at a level that I would not have expected from an undergraduate group. We discussed at length the different meanings and legal uses of sovereignty and self-determination concepts. We also drew parallels between local, national, and international political struggles.

The level of discussion and debate was a result of both the conversational pedagogy that Michael put in place in her class, which opened a sharing space, and of the students being rooted in their culture, their history, their experiences – the students were all from the community. In this context, the students had already experience and knowledge of the implications of the DoD in their life, they knew about Tribal sovereignty in the USA, and had heard of the UNDRIP. Thus, they approached this undergraduate course with a knowledge and engagement that elevated the conversation to that of an advanced seminar.

I remember reflecting on the deficit-based discourses that exist about Indigenous students and their difficulties in school. I thought, in this example, the students were rather more advanced than other students I had taught at Concordia or MSU. This came as a concrete illustration of what it means to have one's history, experience, and reality, at the core of the curriculum, and how it facilitates the learning of complex issues and concepts. This is exactly the type of privilege that white, middle-class, Canadian students have, for example, in a mainstream history, political sciences, or sociology course in a Canadian university. Except here, at SKC, Indigenous students could enjoy that privilege, which put them in a much better place to learn, debate, and thrive in an academic setting. I remember reflecting on how, if these students were to continue studying at the graduate level - which they clearly all had the potential to - they would then probably have to do so in a mainstream context, in a predominantly white institution. In fact, as the majority of Tribal

Colleges are two-year institutions, most of their students eventually go to a mainstream university. I thought of how in mainstream academy, Indigenous students are developing bi-cultural (or multicultural), and in some case bilingual, skills that white Francophone or Anglophone rarely have to develop in Canada. How ironic is it, then, that they would be looked at often as having difficulties achieving the university's criteria?

From this experience, I kept in mind that having a Tribal College on a reservation did not only make higher education accessible, but the Tribal College model had made higher education relevant to Indigenous students. Rooted in the local history, realities, cultures, and community, SKC was able to create an environment where the students could develop knowledge from where they stand culturally, historically, and socially. This was definitely a strength that can be carried on to further education: Stein reminds us that in 1983 "AIHEC found that American Indian students who completed a course of study at a tribal college went on to complete a four-year degree program at a senior institution with a 75 percent greater success rate than American Indian students who bypassed tribal colleges and went directly to four-year institutions" (Stein, 1992). In other words, Tribal Colleges contribute to unsettling colonial hierarchies by reversing the privilege position for Indigenous students, in their own institutions, which in turn provides better bases for these students to go on and succeed in higher education, even later in other settings.

The project: access to education as a mean to continuity and survivance

The mission of Salish Kootenai College is to provide quality postsecondary educational opportunities for Native Americans, locally and from throughout the United States. The College will promote community and individual development and perpetuate the cultures of the Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Nation.

- Salish Kootenai College, *Seven Year Report* (2013b, p. 16.)

The mission of the Salish-Kootenai college does not explicitly refer to a decolonial project, as it was the case for the Amawtay Wasi. However, by promoting community and individual development in a way that perpetuates Séliš, Q'Íispé, and Ksanka cultures, it reflects a project of survivance (Vizenor, 2008) of the Nation and Tribe members. The College offers access to an education that fosters the continuous existence of Séliš, Q'Íispé, and Ksanka Peoples. In the context of a colonial state that tried to erase Indigenous Peoples, this is a decolonial project, in an of itself.

This mission of the college is often represented by citing 4 essential elements or core themes (see SKC website)¹⁹⁶:

1. Provide Access to Higher Education for American Indians
2. Maintain Quality Education for Workforce or Further Education
3. Perpetuate the Cultures of Confederated Salish and Kootenai Peoples
4. Increase Individual and Community Capacity for Self Reliance and Sustainability

While the access part of the mission might seem obvious in the context of creating a college on the reservation, it is to be noted that SKC also provides access to education to an important number of Indigenous students who are not from Flathead reservation: 44% of their students are enrolled Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes members, while 31% are members of other tribes in Montana, and 23% are members of tribes from outside of Montana (and 2% are not enrolled in any Tribe). Access is therefore not only about being present in the community, although this is an important factor. When thinking about the role of Tribal Colleges, Dean Nicolai, head of the Native American Studies department at SKC, referred to the access to education in terms of a culturally safe place. For Nicolai, the college was a safe space for Indigenous students, in the sense that,

But it's also very important to have something where Native Students can come somewhere and feel safe, and to just be Native and not have to worry about that part. Because it's hard enough to just go to school, because the Native community has a lot of other problems, just

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.skc.edu/mission/>

alcoholism, domestic violence, I mean, drugs, I mean, there are so many things going on where, you know, just leaving your community to go somewhere else to go to school isn't always an option for them. So having something in our community here, that they can access, as far as education, is very important. Because, they feel safe, they want to come here because they know people that are here, they have instructors that they feel they know who they are, and things like that (Nicolai, 2015, interview).

Hence, for Nicolai, the accessibility of the college was just as much about being in the community than about being *tribal* in the sense of having a college that is rooted in Indigenous culture and where one does not have to worry about being Indigenous or being different from the rest of the students. Claiming the space as being Indigenous allowed students to feel safe, like they belonged and like they would be understood by their peers, professors, and the people with whom they interacted every day at the college. The project of higher education accessibility revolves not only around physical proximity and affordability of the college, but also in the well-being it fosters. Thus, the college renders higher education *accessible* in the sense that it relieves students from many barriers that could hinder their well-being in a mainstream university - including cultural difference and racism to which they might be confronted.

The second core theme of SKC mission, in terms of quality education, may also seem obvious, as any educational institution aspires to quality that will allow their students to either become well trained professionals (workforce) or to continue their education at other levels (further education). However, at SKC, the definition of quality education was a specific one, which I heard described by many people as the College's "4 Cs". Those were "Critical Thinking", "Communication", "Cultural Understanding", and "Citizenship". Thus, the type of "quality" that the college fosters can once again be inscribed in the continuity of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT): it alludes to the culture of the tribes, and nation building through citizenship *of the CSKT*. In particular, the fact that cultural understanding is part of their definition of a quality education is very revealing. It plays into the understanding of accessibility that Dean Nicolai expressed, and it links to the third core theme of the college mission, namely, to perpetuate the cultures of the Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Nation.

In order to fulfill the third core theme of SKC mission (to perpetuate the culture), the college is committed to "provide place-based, culturally relevant education that increases students' knowledge of American Indian history, languages, and culture" (Salish Kootenai College, 2013b, p. 24). These are dimensions of the Indigenous knowledges that SKC thrives to include in its

programs and teaching. Being situated on the reservation obviously facilitates place-based education at SKC. The place-based orientation of the college is also reinforced by its campus, which roots the students on the land surrounded by the mountains and gives them access to a large space where cultural activities can be undertaken. Moreover, the architecture and arts displayed on the campus are a constant reminder of the cultural context in which it is situated. Thus, there was a conscious effort to create a culturally relevant place on the campus that would also facilitate culturally relevant teachings, in relation to the Tribe's history and languages.

In relation to this core theme of SKC mission, the college identifies five key concepts that should be integrated transversally to the teachings. These represent critical components of knowledge about tribal culture, sovereignty, current issues, and language: (1) a definition of tribal sovereignty, (2) an understanding of the Hellgate Treaty which created the Flathead Indian Reservation, (3) the definition of a Tribal College and ways tribal colleges are funded, (4) an explanation of at least one current issue impacting the CSKT, and (5) simple greetings in the Salish and/or Kootenai languages. Consequently, the local historical and contemporary realities are the basis of the educational project embodied by SKC. The transmission of many of these components to the students is ensured through Native American Studies courses, and Native American Languages Studies ones, which are part of many degrees at SKC (including degrees in psychology, business, and forestry, for example). However, some degrees still do not require students to take Native American Studies or Native Language classes, which could be questioned in the context of a Tribal College, especially since not all courses are infused with Salish, Kootenai, or even Indigenous materials.

While most of the people with whom I interacted and interviewed, where Indigenous and were mainly coming from the Flathead reservation, this does not reflect the reality of the college. At SKC, approximately 70% of faculty members are not Indigenous. Moreover, in an assessment exercise reported in the 2013 Year Seven Report of SKC, which was filled by 65 faculty and staff members, most of the faculty/employees did not have sufficient understanding of the 5 key concepts mentioned above (Salish Kootenai College, 2013b, p. 108). To be sure, some Faculty members whom I interviewed also expressed their need for more training and professional development that would be centered on SKCT cultures. As I was reminded, being Indigenous from the Flathead reservation is not a guarantee of having the knowledge of the cultures and languages of the Tribes, given the colonial realities. The language dimension was a particularly complicated

issue, since the number of fluent speakers of both Salish and Kootenai languages is very limited today. Nevertheless, many of the Faculty members and administrators I interviewed did have a deep knowledge of the place, the community and the culture, and some of them expressed their desire to share more of their cultural knowledge with their peers.

Finally, the fourth core theme of the college's mission, centered on individual and community sovereignty and sustainability, expresses an important decolonial dimension of SKC educational project. The sovereignty and sustainability of Séliš, Qíispé, and Ksanka individuals and communities as Séliš, Qíispé, and Ksanka corresponds to the continued "presence over absence" of Indigenous survivance (Vizenor, 1999). As an educational project that was put forward by community members, and chartered by the Tribe, SKC expresses sovereignty through self-determination of the form and content of education - to the extent that it can be accredited by regional entities, in this case by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Still, the programs and disciplines taught at SKC emerged from the Tribe assessment of the needs, for the communities on the Flathead reservation, and were meant to express the local cultures and traditions, to build the future of the Tribe.

Accordingly, the fourth core theme is also well expressed in the college's logo that includes the motto "Grounded in Tradition. Charging into the Future". It is also well reflected in the vision statement of the college:

Salish Kootenai College aspires to be the pre-eminent educational center of excellence for American Indian Students, grounded in the cultures of the Séliš, Ksanka and Qíispé people of the Flathead Nation. The college will empower students to improve the lives of their families and communities through research, leadership and service (SKC website: <https://www.skc.edu/mission/>).

Improving the life conditions of the community and of the individuals who make the community, is a fundamental goal of the college, and in fact, of all Tribal Colleges. Salisha Old Bull, who was hired in 2015 in relation to the new Tribal Governance program at SKC, expressed that dimension as one of the main goals of the college. She said that,

We [SKC] are playing several roles, because, there is a role right there, it's like, *a Tribal College is creating an employable person to work for our Tribe*. Because we are teaching tribal issues in every department, and as a role of the Tribal College that's part of the mission. Like here part of the mission is integrating Salish, Kootenai, Pend D'Oreil, knowledge into your work. That's cultural values right there. We get criticized for that,

because people lose the purpose of the school, but it's there, and I don't think it's just our schools, that's every Tribal College that probably has that within a goal of theirs. Well, the school is here, on our reservation, so I mean, that's there for a reason, so that people here can attend the college. Think about that perspective (Old Bull, 2015, interview).

While referring directly to her discipline (NAS) and the program she was involved in, which graduates students with the skills to work for the Tribal council and for the Tribe's organizations, Salisha was conscious that the role of the Tribal College was to integrate local Indigenous knowledges in all disciplines. She continued the interview linking this objective with the role of the college in bringing the community into the future. This grounding into Indigenous knowledges in order to support the community, and to a certain point (or in certain cases) its government (or at least, the self-determination of the community) appeared to me the central roles of Salish-Kootenai College, based on the time I spent there.

Following SKC's project described here, there is probably one main distinction between the Amawtay Wasi's and SKC's decolonial projects, as two Indigenous institutions created by and for Indigenous Peoples. As the Amawtay Wasi was created by a national organization, to support its intellectual process and political, social, and economic claims, it was also aiming at decolonizing the Ecuadorian society at large. At SKC, the project felt more contained to the affirmation of the Tribe's sovereignty, and the fulfillment of its needs, for its sustained existence as an Indigenous Nation. Of course, this more locally-grounded objective is inscribed in the broader context of the 37 Tribal Colleges that form AIHEC. Yet, TCUs in general aim at supporting Tribal sovereignty, and consequently are chartered by each Tribe, thus embodying this sovereignty locally. Strengthening Indigenous communities, supporting their continued existence, and fostering their self-determination are the core objectives; not decolonizing US society or its government. Similarly, while there is an explicit effort to root the knowledges taught in Tribal Colleges in the culture of respective Tribes, there is no explicit goal to decolonize science and academy in general. That does not mean that this decolonization does not happen, in fact, when working with Indigenous knowledges in the academy. Simply, it is not expressed as a main objective and philosophy of TCUs in general, and of SKC in particular, in contrast to the objective expressed by the Amawtay Wasi.

Indigenous knowledges at SKC: beyond NAIS discipline, integrating Tribal perspectives in science and research

About Indian studies [...] people are still, what can you do with Indian studies? (laughing) What can't you do with Indian Studies! Tell me that! [...] Indian studies is more than you think. [...] when they started a college, which was in the early 70s, they had a goal, when they started the Indian studies as a program, a degree program. Their goal was to phase it out. Because it should be, the whole college should be Indian Studies...

- Sean Chandler, 2015, interview

One of the general characteristics of Tribal Colleges, as Sean Chandler, from Aaniiih Nakoda College, expressed it during his interview is its grounding in Indigenous knowledges. It is to be expected that Indigenous knowledges would be present in all the disciplines offered at a Tribal College, rather than confined to NAIS. Tribal Colleges came about in the same epoch that NAIS programs came along in mainstream academy, and they generally have NAIS, or even more culturally-specific (ex: Piikani Studies), programs. Ultimately, the whole college should be influenced or infused by NAIS, to the point, according to Chandler, that NAIS might not necessarily be a discipline anymore within a Tribal College. While this orientation would bring Tribal Colleges closer to what the Amawtay Wasi is doing - no particular "Indigenous Studies" program, but Indigenous knowledges in all disciplines - I have not visited one Tribal College that had gone down that path yet nor expressed any plan to. Nevertheless, some Colleges were seriously pushing to include Indigenous knowledges in a variety of disciplines, or to have the different departments collaborate with NAIS programming.

At SKC, rather than phasing out their NAS department, this was the place where new programs were arising, to serve the specific needs of the community. In 2012, the college developed an Associate of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts programs in Tribal Historic Preservation and in 2015 a new program in Tribal Governance and Administration Associate of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts were started. The NAS department also supported the teaching of the Séliš (Salish), Ksanka (Kootenai) and Q'Íispé (Pend d'Oreille) histories and languages. Thus, the department was offering courses that could have been offered in a mainstream academy's NAS department - such as "Native American Women", or "Introduction to Native American Studies", to name just a few¹⁹⁷ - but it also offered culturally-specific courses - coyotes stories, offered only in winter, Kootenai prayers, Salish hymns, sally bag weaving, encampment - some of which were

¹⁹⁷ SKC has a list of over 60 NAS courses it offers.

taught by Elders. The department likewise offered courses that were specific to the history and the politics of the tribe - such as History of the Tribal Government on Flathead Reservation, or Flathead reservation history courses. These tribally-specific courses differentiate NAS in a Tribal College from the same discipline in a mainstream institution, which ends up being much more pan-Indigenous, as is the case at Montana State University and University of Arizona, as we will see.

Even when tackling subjects that were more national and international, there were efforts to link them to the local reality, experiences, and knowledge that students might have. For example, in the Indian Law class that Michael taught, while looking at national bodies of law and the history behind them, the students were also learning about treaties that impacted the formation of SKCT and the reservation. The relationship between locally experienced realities, national laws, and international processes allowed the students to have high-level debates that they could directly relate to, as I witnessed it when giving a guest lecture about the Doctrine of Discovery, UNDRIP, and Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, educational content was rendered relevant, and useful for the students.

NAS was not the only department where serious efforts were being made to root the content in local Indigenous knowledges and experiences. In the department of hydrology, for example, there was a clear goal of working with "tribal perspectives" on water-related issues, such as water rights, agriculture, environment, and sustainability. Space for local knowledges, but also for local beliefs and spirituality in relation to water, was built into the program. Shandin Pete, who was then teaching at the department but also helped create the program, was in charge of a particular class, "Tribal waters", where students had to present their projects to the Selis Qlispe Culture Committee. Shandin Pete's vision for the hydrology program was the following:

I'm just a practical guy, and I like people to come out with a skill. And going off of that idea of how I would want to see this hydrology program, the ultimate end goal of this, of the ideal program would be to produce *culturally knowledgeable students with this bucket of hydrological skills*. So that they can go, no matter what they do, whether they go on to the graduate school and get a MA and go to work, or just go right to work, the idea is ultimately one day, those folks are going to make decisions about something very important, *and it would be a shame for me not to pile along and cover them with traditional ideas and thoughts*. Cause then those *decisions will be made with the people in mind, and with the land in mind*. Too often we see education is been valueless, especially science education. Devoid of value. This is the Western concept of science. But I think it's an

excellent opportunity to impart as much knowledge as I can about how to be, how to behave, and also the *cultural knowledge, the knowledge about the culture piece, you know, the bits and pieces I can add about the stories, the language, beliefs, behaviours, I can model these things into the classroom*, and the hope is that they will take that and grow it even further (Pete, 2015, interview, my emphasis).

According to this vision, Shandin Pete was bringing into a scientific classroom the local Indigenous knowledges about water, which included stories and values of how to relate to water. This represents an important difference from having a mainstream "valueless" teaching of hydrology. I suspect it made his students much more engaged with the content of the class, similar to what I witnessed in Michael's class. From his perspective, the importance of teaching Indigenous knowledges in hydrology was related to the fact that decisions are made about water - and for what matters, about forest and other "resources" - on the reservation and elsewhere, and these need to include concerns about the land and the people. Thus, community and land were part of the dimensions he included in Indigenous knowledges, alongside stories, language, beliefs and behaviours, or protocols.

Shandin Pete is one example of a professor who was trying to bring local traditional knowledges into science. Lori Lambert was another professor, at SKC, who helped develop the Indigenous Research Methods certificate that SKC offered, and put together the Indigenous Research conference at SKC in 2012. She insisted on the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to develop scientific knowledge, and the importance of understanding the methods they used to do so. Describing her approach to Indigenous Sciences, she told me:

So I thought about how did we learn stuff in our own landscape, in our own environment? We watched animals and animals taught us things, it was observation, trial and errors. For example, even in the north, the Inuit watch the Polar bear, how they hunt the seal, and so when the polar bear is over the hole, the seal hole and when the vibration moves his whisks he knows the seal is coming up for a gasp of air and he is right their. And so the Inuit People they made a harpoon with feathers and they stood over the hole and then the feathers move they were right there to... They watched the animals, an some animals tell them what kind of medicines to have, and... It's trial and error and observation. So another part of that is learning how smoked buckskin is waterproof, and buckskin that is not smoked is not waterproof, how did that happen it was probably serendipitous, people standing around a camp fire, and it would start to rain and their buckskin is smoked and they thought, oh, look its not going through... (Lambert, 2015, interview).

In other words, Lori was pointing at what she saw as a very scientific approach, reproducing experiment for the same results. She mentioned that many people assumed that Indigenous

knowledge was always qualitative and not necessarily scientific. She admitted that to her knowledge, "there is no word in Native languages for science", but she added: "it's how the world works and how you fit into the world". I would like to highlight, here, the relational nature of the description of science that Lori makes. She does not only talk about how the world works, but she includes our place in it, how we relate to the world around us. In any case, for Lori, Indigenous methodologies are worth teaching, and there is a special place for them at SKC. Thus, Lori was involved, together with other Faculty - from psychology and from science education - in a feasibility assessment research for the development of an Indigenous Research Center at SKC, with the idea of collaborating with other TCUs and universities across the US and the world. Already, SKC was offering a certificate in Indigenous Research Methodologies, which focused on the relational approach to research, including the important questions of relations to Indigenous communities.

Of course, Shandin Pete and Lori Lambert both had received family education that rooted them in their respective Indigenous cultures, and had allowed them to carry their knowledge in their research and in their teachings, which is not the case for everyone at SKC. In this context, Shandin Pete mentioned elements of cultural training that he had done for the college faculty:

Even in, another example, I have another lesson that is very similar to what I do up here, it's kind of Salish knowledge of the stars. So our faculty in service, one of our go-to people that usually does the cultural piece, you know, we get to do a cultural piece at the faculty in service, he couldn't make it, he said, can you fill in for that? And he said, just, I don't know, tell them about powwows or something... (laughing) I was like, I'll do one better! I'll do this lesson where I teach people... So an example of a lesson, where I make culture the foundation. So I did it, and it's this story about this young lady and she goes on a buffalo hunt for the first time. It's kind of a long story [...] And the story goes along, and I impart more cultural knowledge, and I sing songs, appropriate songs, like the parade songs, when they are leaving the camp, or the song they use to wake everybody up. Songs, lullabies that they would sign to their kids... So I try to bring different parts of the way (incomprehensible). In the old ways, everybody sing, there is a song for everything. And so I try to bring that... [...] So it really validates the power of story, and the brain to remember that content. Which is a traditional method of learning, the story (Pete, 2015, interview).

Again, Shandin was here making real efforts to integrate storytelling, and local Indigenous stories, to the knowledge of the faculty and the teaching of the college. As stories are important elements of Indigenous knowledge, allowing theorizing (Brayboy, 2005), remembrance, regeneration, and reclamation (Grande et al., 2015) it seems to be obvious that they should have

an important place in the college. However, I heard from many faculty members that there was a serious need for more of this kind of cultural training at SKC for the college to fully integrate Indigenous knowledges at all levels. Shandin Pete himself mentioned that he did this cultural training once, and while he got the sense that Faculty enjoyed the process, he was never invited again to perform it. He could not explain why.

Still, efforts were made in all departments, often by non-Indigenous faculty members, to adapt the curriculum of their discipline to the reality and knowledges of the place where they were teaching it. For example, Carole Baldwin, a non-Indigenous faculty member in psychology who helped develop the psychology BA program, remembered that the goal was to create a "psychology program that is centred on Indian Country". Consequently, the program included a "Western side, and Indigenous side, specifically". Recalling how they put together the program to include Indigenous perspectives, she explained that,

For the Indigenous side, I looked it up, I looked at our catalogue, and I selected a lot of stuff that was already here, so you can see there is quite a bit of NAS, a couple of Social work things, and then we created some really specific psy courses, like historical trauma, counselling a Native American client, counselling methods we also, that is sort of the Western white guy type, but we added some non-Western style and the woman who teaches it is a person who has done clinical work in Indian Country all her life, and she is Native American, so she got a really good perspective. And then we did Indigenous Science, (incomprehensible) Indian Ed, contemporary issues, and then Lori did the Indigenous research in psychology which ended up creating the conference. Then we thought that anybody working in Indian Country needs to know something about addictions, something about violence, cycle violence, so then, we also were interested in teaching how to do counselling therapy with small children and people who are pretty non-verbal, so these 2 courses are the ones that teach expressive arts... And at the end, in their last year, they do a capstone project which is embedded in Indigenous way of knowledge, most of the students have been native, like Blackfeet, or Kootenai, from up in Canada, or here, so they do something related to their community (Baldwin, 2015, interview).

Carole still saw SKC as a "pretty westernized institution" but, with the American Indigenous Research Association's conference that began in 2012, she was seeing more and more place made for Indigenous research methodologies, which were now increasingly seen as viable ways of knowing. The efforts that Drs. Lambert, Pete and Baldwin put in their respective disciplines and courses to link the content with Indigenous knowledges are just some examples of a bigger trend that happened also in fine arts, in social work and in science education, to cite only areas where I observed the teaching and met with faculty members. That being said, I also heard critiques about

the lack of serious relationships with the cultural committees and how NAS, languages and traditional knowledges should have a more central place at SKC, and Elders, a more central role.

One of the possible limits to the integration of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing in the curriculum, and to the development of specific Indigenous programs and courses could be explained by the accreditation process, and the need to offer an education that would lead to diplomas equivalent to those offered in other universities. The accrediting entity for SKC is the same as the one for other colleges and universities in the North West US, and the diplomas need to have equivalence in other institutions too. Many of the degrees offered at SKC, as is the case for other Tribal Colleges, are Associates of Arts and or Sciences; the contents of which need to be recognized by mainstream universities for the students to continue their education. Thus, while there is space to include Indigenous knowledges in all disciplines and courses, agreements with mainstream universities for the recognition of TCUs education might have a limiting effect. Moreover, the number of non-Indigenous Faculty members might also be a limiting factor since not everyone has the required knowledge to include Indigenous perspectives, and while some non-Indigenous faculty members are willing to undertake the necessary learning and collaboration needed to develop Indigenous courses and programs, it is not the case for everyone.

This might be another significant difference with the Amawtay Wasi, as Indigenous institutions go. Even when it was recognized as a university, the Amawtay Wasi seemed to have more flexibility to base its entire curriculum on Indigenous philosophy. This was part of an important struggle it had with accrediting institutions from the beginning, but it did win the fight, at first, at least. Even if some of its professors were non-Indigenous, they knew they had to situate themselves in the university's philosophy. In contrast, TCUs obviously have the concrete goal of serving the Tribes, Tribal sovereignty, and rooting their students in Indigenous places, cultures, and languages. But TCUs are also an adaptation of the Community College model to the Tribal context, thus fitting into a more mainstream academy trend.

Furthermore, as most TCUs are not research institutions, their capacity to revitalize knowledges coming from the Tribe is limited. When talking with Gail Small, NAS professor at Montana State University, who worked at the Tribal College of her Tribe – Northern Cheyenne – as well as at the Tribal College of the Crow Tribe, she mentioned the difficulty of working in a 2-year institution that has limited resources, and almost no research capacity, since the professors

are caught in teaching 3-5 classes per semester, on top of all the students services and administrative tasks that keep them at the college 8-5 everyday. She said,

That's a real handicap! Because that is where that knowledge should be coming from. So the dilemma, the challenge, is how do you help Tribal College develop a research agenda, as a 2-year university, that our students could thrive. They would thrive doing that kind of research. But see, we are caught up in the Western paradigm and we are getting them through the STEM, right? Maths, sciences, English... Get them through all these fundamental Western science classes, because the goal of Tribal Colleges is to mainstream into university and get the 4 year degree. But if we focus on just our cultural knowledge, cause I have done that in my, some of my classes that I teach, at these Tribal Colleges. Both Little Big Horn and Chief Dull Knife, both Crow and Cheyenne. And I would design my courses to do research projects for these students (incomprehensible) themselves. And a lot of them picked family research topics. Interviewing their grandmas, their grandpas, knowing their Family line and history. But in doing so, it creates, it cemented their identity, and it gave them a lot of confidence, and it also gave them an interest in learning. An interest in learning about their own culture and their own knowledge that they never had. So the challenge is, how do we continually fit in the Western paradigm, the Western academy, yet at the same time, we are loosing so much knowledge on the reservations, we are not enabling our students to jump that hurdle (Small, 2015, interview).

Interestingly, what Gail tried to do in her class was close to what Amawtay Wasi developed as a method of teaching through students' projects, in conversation with their community. However, Amawtay Wasi was not operating on the premise of sending students to other universities to continue their education, which most of the Tribal Colleges are, at least the 2 year institutions.

Of course, as a 4-year institution, SKC has more flexibility. SKC also develops courses and programs to train people to work for the Tribe and in the reservation's communities, rather than to pursue other programs in mainstream universities. In those cases, there is more flexibility to create programs relevant for the community. As Carole Baldwin expressed it, Faculty members understand the importance of creating content that is locally relevant and locally grounded. SKC also has more research capacity, with many professors at SKC writing grants for research, or collaborating with MSU or UofM on a diversity of research grants. But as a Tribal College, SKC is still rooted in the model that demands a lot from its professors in terms of teaching responsibilities, leaving them limited time for research.

Community relationships: hub for the people, serving the nation, and relating to the Tribal government

And I think Tribal Colleges are kind of the intellectual heart of these reservations. So that you go to, say, Chief Dull Knife [Northern Cheyenne reservation]. You go to the library, it's the only library in town. And you walk in there and it's free wifi. And you walk in there, it opens at 8:30, there is people there. It's the hub of activity.

- Gail Small (2015, Interview)

While spending time at SKC, the library was my place to go read and write. It was always full of people, resulting in many unplanned encounters. Besides the library, SKC also has a gym and a basketball team that plays tournaments with other Tribal Colleges, which became another important social point in the community. Community members can also take language courses, and participate in courses on weaving or hide tanning, for example. In this way, the college serves as a cultural hub. Thus, Tribal Colleges are important places and play important roles for the community. Their library becomes an important hub for intellectual but also political activities. It offers free Internet and a lot of resources, including journals and newspapers. More importantly, Tribal Colleges are a source of revitalization and motivation for the whole community, a place to gather but also where the future of the community is being built, through education.

As a result, if a Tribal College on the reservation is meant to provide education that is rooted in Indigenous knowledges, or knowledges that come from the community, it is also generally seen as a tool of nation-building. It serves the community's social, intellectual and political life, as Vice-President Sandra Boham stated:

So this college has grown most of the professionals that we have. It has significantly worked in the perpetuation of our culture because we didn't have a way to teach the language other than in the family and there were few of those. So when the college came into existence and started teaching the language, it was huge. And that continues to be a very important piece of what we do, the language, the culture, all of our traditional skills, hide tanning and tool making. And we build the professionals that will become the teachers of our children, the people who manage our natural resources, who fill our tribal governments, and it's made a huge impact on us, both culturally and economically (Boham, 2015, interview).

According to this presentation, the college is a tool for the Tribe to build its communities, and its nation, rooting them in the cultures, languages and history of the Tribe, and training the people who will work on the reservation, participating in, and forging, the future of the Salish-Kootenai Nations. The college also has an important economic impact by training the professionals who will

get employed on the reservation, thus answering the recurring problem of unemployment on reservations.

Sandra also explained that there were mechanisms in place for the College to relate to the community and ensure that the education offered is useful to the community. One of these mechanisms is the board of Directors that she saw as a bridge between the college and the community "because they are tribal members, and they bring concerns from the community to the college, and back also inform the community on what the college is doing...". Another one is the work done to consult with the tribal government regarding the community's needs, when creating a program. In Sandra's words,

So we work with the... there is a woman across, at the Tribe, who does all the economic forecasting, so they just completed a survey of tribal needs, and it was everything from housing to education, and tribal job needs, and projections... And the community health, larger than just the native one. So then from that they compile some areas that there are needs in. So maybe they need somebody who knows how to do, that understands administration, or understand business, or maybe they need people that are teachers, or maybe they need plumbers. And this whole thing will show this, and will show what the interest in the community is, for vocational skills program, all of that. So we look at what the needs are, and then we try to decide how many students would that be, how long would that program need to run, and then, if it's something that could potentially need quite a few students over lots of time, then we talk to the board about our ideas for developing programs, they ask us about the data support them... Then we look at designing, having the end in mind, what does that person need to know, to fill these expectations. And we design backward (Boham, 2105, interview).

The College therefore has the ability and the will to serve the community in its needs, by providing the education and training to the people who form the community and its future. Maintaining distance between the tribal government and the college was important for many people, in order to maintain their independence. Yet, constant relations were also established with the tribal government, and an actual, physical bridge was built, over the highway, between the college campus and the Tribal Government offices, embodying the relationship that exists between the two – separate yet connected.

Sandra indirectly touched on the political impact on the community, by training the people who will then "fill the tribal governments". Similarly, Salisha OldBull, Dean Nicolai as well as Lori Lambert mentioned to me how the Tribal Governance program was filling an important role in providing a solid education to the future political and administrative leaders of the community:

so when they leave here with that 4 year Tribal Governance and Administration degree, they can go in their communities and they'll have a well-rounded education within the native world, that gives them worth, in all kinds of different areas. Or even background enough to be able to step right into a Tribal Council position or something like that. So we said, ok, what can we give our students that will allow them to go out to the communities and be able to, from day 1, help them out, help their communities out? So that's what this program is all about, our new program (Nicolai, 2015, interview).

Accordingly, the relation that SKC establishes with the community is one of service, and it participates, in collaboration with the Tribe, to the nation-building process¹⁹⁸.

Community service is not limited to the Tribal Government implications, through. Students graduating from SKC move on to serving the community, as Lori pointed out. According to her, students coming out of Tribal Colleges want to go back to their communities and help "fix things". They acquire more education to serve their communities, for example, in "cleaning land and water from oil" (Lambert, 2015, interview). The college also offers ways in which students contribute to the community before their graduation, through internships, for instance. Dean Nicolai saw the Tribal historic preservation program as a great cultural support for the community, with students doing internships in diverse areas, including Language revitalization.

An important note here, in comparing this relationship to community to the one that Amawtay Wasi built, is how the college approach is centered on help, service, building the professionals, and economic development. It also entails, obviously, a cultural continuity and sustainable future approach for the community. However, in comparison to the Amawtay Wasi, the community's involvement in building the knowledge that the college is teaching relies on bringing community members, knowledge keepers and Elders in the college, rather than having the students go to the community throughout their learning process and knowledge building.

Of course, some opportunities existed for the College to collaborate with other cultural and language experts in the community. On Flathead reservation, the Séliš and Qíispé Culture Committee, created in 1974/75, has an important role in the transmission of the Séliš and Qíispé cultures and languages. The Committee organizes language classes, and cultural nights as well as other more traditional activities at the longhouse. The College worked occasionally with the

¹⁹⁸ "Native scholars advocate a nation-building stance that marries the contemporary needs of the community with traditional values, as a replacement for more common and less effective mainstream models, in meeting the unique needs of tribal communities" (Lansing, 2017, p. 59).

Committee for some courses, and some College faculty members attended the Committee's monthly meetings. I knew at least of Michael attending the Committee's meetings every month, with the college releasing some hours for her to attend these meetings, which shows the College's willingness to be involved with the culture committee. Other relationships between the College and the Culture Committee took place with groups and classes visiting the Committee. For example, in the class Tribal Waters that I mentioned earlier, Shandin Pete would ask his students to present their project to the cultural committee, at the end of the semester. To facilitate that presentation, he would also take them to the cultural committee once before their presentation. He described the relation with the Cultural Committee in these words:

So part of this is, we actually go and sit in at one of their cultural committee meetings. So they get used to, not really used to, but they get to see the room they are going to be in, and see the this is the people they are going to talk to. And I think that lessens their anxiety a little more, but the biggest challenge is pulling them out of the science presentation mentality, where they have to do it in a certain way... This is my rational, this is my methods, these are my results. This is my conclusion. I mean you have to, so I tell them, you have to tell a story, you can't make it boring (laughing). Science can be boring, unless the audience is really interested in the science that you are doing. But if you can't tell a story, they just are going to check out, they are not going to listen to what you have to say. So you have to address, you have to put your soul into your story. You have to... a lot of them are scared because they are not knowledgeable in the cultural ways. And because they are addressing folks that are part of the culture that they are going to be presenting (Pete, 2015, interview).

Presenting the final project of a course to the Cultural Committee is thus a way to create a link between the academic content and the community, anchoring the science in a concrete cultural context and community of Elders. This is also close to a "Harvesting Feast" happening at Amawtay Wasi. It was more of an exception than the rule at SKC. Shandin Pete explained that the Cultural Committee appreciated this visit from the students, but that it was one of the rare moments that they would hear about activities happening in the college classes. In an interview, he told me: "They enjoyed it, I mean, rarely do they get to see any presentations by our students here. If at all. I don't know of anyone else who bring their students, I don't think anybody does, to present... and likewise the cultural committee, they rarely come up here to the college...". So, while certain efforts existed to establish relationship with the cultural committee, I heard more than once the critique that more could be done to build on this relationship and establish more frequent and more numerous visits between the two organizations.

Yet, when talking with Sandra Boham, she mentioned that the College administration was conscious of the needs to establish relationship with various organizations in the community, and that real efforts were made in that direction. She explained that,

We connect with them [other organizations, for example the cultural committee] a lot, and sometimes its me and sometimes it's the department, maybe education, or NAS, or whoever is wanting to look at some cultural content inter courses. We do seek the advice of our cultural committees to say is this appropriate to have in an academic setting. Sometimes just to get the information. They guide us on all of the, what the important things are for perpetuating our culture. Right now, we've had these long conversations and we are in a place where we know that college is going to have to play a larger role in helping to perpetuate the culture because the community has told us it's hard to find people that can teach basket weaving or tool making, and we have to grow them somehow. So we are looking at us being an integral role in that perpetuation. And yet work the balance because we want to share de information, but we don't want to have it appropriated or used for economic gain... (Boham, 2015, interview).

Thus, efforts were made, and mechanisms institutionalized, to connect with groups of Elders, knowledge keepers, and cultural experts in the community, to integrate some of their knowledges and perspectives in the courses and programs. It was institutionalized differently than at the Amawtay Wasi, but it was part of the project of the College.

One area where the relationship to the community was also more obvious and linked to the knowledge building process - and therefore more of a reciprocal relationship than a community service one - was in the development of Indigenous Research Methodologies, which was an important part of the College's work and specificity. Lori Lambert was involved with the American Indigenous Research Association's (AIRA) conference going on every year at the college, with the certificate offered, and with the project of an Indigenous Research Center. She also developed a framework (Lambert, 2014) that was adopted by AIRA for their annual conference (see Figure 12, following page).

In this framework, the community is involved in all aspect of the research process, and consequently, of knowledge building - and dissemination. The framework definitely appeals to community service, with dimensions such as the needs and interests of the community, and a dissemination form that can be accessed by the community. Moreover, the framework also takes into account the community as the source of knowledge, with Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, the consideration for protocols, Elders, and Tribal Council. The most significant

elements in terms of the decolonial project entailed in this framework, which represents well SKC project as a whole, is the importance of a research that moves the community past trauma. The survival/recovery dimension that links the college to the community encapsulates the project of nation building, and of survivance of the Séliš, Q'íispé and Ksanka Peoples on their land, or at least on the Flathead reservation.

Figure 12: AIRA Methodological Framework, as developed by Lori Lambert (2014)

Indigenous Research Paradigm: A Conceptual Model



Conclusion: Colonization, lifestyle changes, and Tribal Colleges

To build something worthwhile that is lasting, whether as an individual or community, one must have a working philosophy that also allows one to dream and envision a better future. For American Indian people and indigenous people around the world who have suffered the ravages of colonization, this becomes especially true as they set out to build education institutions to serve their communities. A strong core of ethics, a clear set of professional education principles, and a worldview of their own can and should be their guiding force as they build their dream educational institution.

- Wayne Stein (2003, p. 25).

Dr. Stein reminds us a crucial aspect of Tribal colleges: they are an answer to the "ravages of colonization", through an education that is centered on Indigenous philosophies, which support dreaming and envisioning better futures for Indigenous communities. Thus, SKC's work is situated in this bigger context of the Tribal Colleges movement and its work to resist and overcome colonial violence. Tribal Colleges were initially conceived of as an answer to colonization through an educational model that thrives on Indigenous philosophies and as a means of creating better future for Indigenous communities. SKC represents this decolonial project very well, with a mission and vision that appeal to both local Indigenous knowledges and community service, for the building of the Salish and Kootenai Confederated Tribes, creating a better future rooted in their own cultures and histories. In the context of cultural, language and land loss, the College emerged as one of the strategies to reclaim Indigenous sovereignty on the reservation. With the courses it offers and with the relations it maintains to the local community, SKC contributes to the continuity of Salish and Kootenai lifestyles and life projects on their reservation. The college reclaims Salish and Kootenai Culture, traditions, stories, histories, and languages as the basis of a modern community. They reinforce tribal values as criteria to decide what is socially important for the community, in order to build a society that will eventually overcome colonial violence. SKC therefore also redefines health and wellness in the community, and contributes to its healing, moving the community past historical trauma. Thus, the College is an agent of survivance for the community (Vizenor, 2008).

One has to remember that the different Indigenous nations in Montana have viewed education as an answer to the colonial encroachment on their land and their life ways for a long time. Thus, each of the treaties and agreements signed in Montana Territory between the American government and Indian Tribes since the nineteenth century contained a provision that education would be provided to tribal members (OPI, 2001). This reflects the understanding that by signing the treaties, the Tribes knew they could not continue living the same life, and they knew education would be

necessary to build new life ways and projects. While education also served to impose colonial life ways on the nations, the repatriation of education, and especially of higher education, into the hands of the Tribes in the 1970s and 1980s was a turning point in terms of self-determination and building communities that are rooted in local knowledges to realize people's collective and individual life projects.

Tribal colleges, and specifically SKC, support the communities' life projects in many ways. In terms of the economy needed to thrive as a community, the College develops the workforce, the leadership, and transfer technology, which results also in high rates of employment of its graduates, most of whom work on Flathead reservation or often on other reservations. The College also contributes to developing small business and entrepreneurship, and attracts business on the reservation by realizing direct spending on the reservations, and employing people from the reservations. Additionally, the College establishes connections with local organizations in the community, as well as with organizations outside of the community. In terms of higher education institutions, for example, Tribal Colleges connect with other Tribal Colleges and mainstream institutions such as University of Montana or Montana State University. With the American Indigenous Research Association's conference, in the past year, the college also branched out to international scholars, and their activities now range from the local to the international levels. Accordingly, the decolonial project of SKC, while very locally rooted, relates the community to the international context.

The College also supports the community with knowledge, and identity building, by being one of the intellectual centers of the community (eg: libraries, research center, organizing conferences), and by building curriculum on local, community, Elders', and historical knowledges. While the research and teaching at SKC involves some level of re-vitalization of knowledges, more importantly, the teaching and activities center the students in these knowledges, opening the possibility for them to become "word warriors" (Taiiaki Alfred, 2004), rooted in their traditions and equipped for modern life. This is what many of the Faculty members I interviewed at SKC mentioned, when asked about the role of Tribal Colleges. For example, Salisha OldBull told me:

And then another role that we play is, you know, maybe we can never go backward to what we were, even though as much as there is people that wish, can't we just go back! It's never going to be that way, because of how things changed and our elders who are all passed now, would have say, they would prophecize or they would say, this is what you have to

do to make it then, in the future, these are things that you have to do, or they would prophecize something that's kind of scary, this is what's going to happen when you see the end, they mean the end of the world, and you are like, wait a minute, let's take a step back there (laughing). Part of it is in order for tribes to survive nowadays, you have to know your way, and you have to know mainstream. And knowing those things together is what makes you make better decisions in everything that you do, and I think the Tribal College is what introduce things to students who are not ready for mainstream. So you are showing them a glimpse of, [...] showing [them] the ropes (OldBull, 2015, interview).

In other words, the College re-connects the students, as well as the faculty, staff, and community members who relate to the institution, to the history, cultures, languages and traditions of the confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The College also provides knowledge that relates to broader contexts than the local tribe, either with courses that include learning about other Indigenous Nations, and Indigenous Peoples' contributions to the world, or with courses that bridge Indigenous and Western knowledges in specific disciplines, such as hydrology, forestry, or psychology. This builds an empowering environment for the students and community members who relate to the college, and it does so in a way that allows for a projection in the future, as a healthy community.

Hence, the College challenges the logic behind the Doctrine of Discovery by re-centering on the Tribe's sovereignty, re-affirming its presence through time, and towards a bright future. It also brings in the academy Indigenous knowledges and languages, thus challenging the knowledge hierarchy that comes with the DoD. Although elements like storytelling and land-based pedagogy could be improved in terms of their presence at the College, I did find examples of the presence in certain courses, and even in faculty training. A fair amount of effort and money have been spent in creating the College as an Indigenous place, physically, and in relation to the land on which it sits, thus reaffirming the presence of Indigenous future on the land.

As an Indigenous institution of higher education, SKC displays some differences with Amawtay Wasi, in terms of the projects they respectively put forward. SKC is oriented towards the growth, including economic development, of CSKT. It works in collaboration with the Tribal Government, and it follows an institutional Community College framework. Amawtay Wasi's vision was also to answer to the needs of the communities it works with (training professors, architects, agro-ecologists, and communicators), but the vision is not necessarily to fill the employment gap, create entrepreneurship in the community, or participate in the "development" of the community. Rather, the community is put at the center of the knowledge developed and

taught at Amawtay Wasi, with the idea of supporting the intellectual, political, and practical thriving of the community. These are subtle differences, but they do make for concrete different experiences in both higher education institutions.

The two institutions also function in very different political and economic contexts, which influence the projects each puts forward. The organization of Séliš, Q'Íispé, and Ksanka Peoples into a Tribal government, with all the political and economic implications it has, creates the possibility of thinking about a Tribally chartered College, that would develop jobs, the economy, entrepreneurship, and natural resources on the reservation. Amawtay Wasi operates in a different context, and the communities do not officially (or constitutionally) have the power and the means to create such institutionalized higher education. The National Indigenous movement had to push for it to exist, and its decolonial project is still oriented towards the society and state as a whole, to create those pockets of sovereignty that Tribes have managed to retain. Both institutions, however, are participating in decolonizing efforts by re-centering and valuing Indigenous knowledges, and by focusing on the well-being of their respective communities.

CHAPTER 8: MONTANA. NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES AT MSU, OR TEACHING COLONIAL PROCESSES AND INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES TO A BROAD AUDIENCE

When thinking about the decolonial project embodied at the Native American Studies department at Montana State University, I always think about my experience and brief involvement in the grassroots movement in Bozeman to replace Columbus Day with an Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration. My office roommate at the MSU department of Native American Studies, and then instructor at the department, Marsha Small, got the movement rolling at the beginning of October (October 12 was the Columbus Day that year - always the 2nd Monday of October). I was shocked by the fact that Bozeman, or any place in Montana, would celebrate Columbus Day: what was the relevance of Columbus here? In fact, for the entire US, it seemed odd that Columbus would be celebrated at all: an Italian explorer who claimed a Caribbean island in the name of Spanish Crown? I knew about the celebration of Columbus in Latin American countries, where his colonial enterprise for Spain's account still resonates. In fact, Latin American Indigenous movements organized a campaign in 1992 in resistance to the celebrations commemorating the 500 years of Columbus' so-called "discovery". The campaign impacted Indigenous movements throughout Latin America for the following decades. But I had never really thought of the link between Columbus and Indigenous Peoples in the US. When I asked, baffled, about the meaning of that celebration in Montana, or anywhere in the US, I was told that this was put into place decades ago, as way to uplift the Italian communities across the country. I did not understand the explanation and asked "But Columbus claimed the Americas in name of the Spanish Crown! What does it have to do with Italy?". In fact, the logic did not really matter as the "uplifting of Italian communities" soon enough appeared to be an excuse to impose yet another layer of colonial history that would identify the roots of the US with the "superiority" of the European "explorers" and settlers. Consequently, "Columbus Day" was an expression of the Doctrine of Discovery and the white/Western supremacy logic it entails¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁹ The US has plenty of other "discoverers" celebrated as part of its national narrative. One has only to think about the "thanks giving" celebration and the narrative it entails regarding first settlers. In Montana, Lewis and Clark are recurring figures commemorated in place names, names of institutions, and history teachings as the discoverers of the West, a narrative that expresses the Manifest Destiny ideology that accompanies the DoD in the United States (R.J. Miller, 2008).

In any case, Marsha made me aware of the Columbus holiday, and the need to "dismantle" it and replace it with an Indigenous Peoples' Day. She convinced me to get involved in the campaign, attending meetings and volunteering to gather signatures for a petition to that change. She was working with the Mayor of Bozeman, the NAS department, its administration and students, as well as activist organizations in Bozeman such as the Montana Racial Equity Project. The movement gained momentum in November, and by December, we were collecting signatures at events, such as the Christmas Stroll. The petition efforts were also educational moments in relation to the people who would ask, either genuinely or rhetorically, "why should we do that?". Discussions on the processes of colonization of the hemisphere, Columbus' role, and current impact of continuous colonial violence for Indigenous Peoples today were certainly not easy to have with people who had come to Bozeman main street to enjoy early Christmas celebrations and shopping. However, for all my colleagues circulating the crowd with their signature pads, or sitting at the petition table for hours, there was no question about Columbus Day as a concrete manifestation of the colonial reality, supported by the Doctrine of Discovery. The replacement of the holiday with an Indigenous Peoples' Day was envisioned as part of decolonization processes. We collected hundreds of signatures that night, and in March of 2016, Bozeman Mayor proclaimed that the city would observe Indigenous Peoples Day rather than Columbus Day, as did Montana State University (MSU) in April of the same year. Thus, October 2016 was the first celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day (IPD) at MSU and in Bozeman. The movement is now pushing for a state recognition of IPD. These steps and strikes are part of a broader decolonization process, taking place through the interactions and conversations in the streets, in the municipal library, at the City Commission, at MSU, and in so many other places, regarding the relationship between Indigenous and Settler people in Montana and the US. Everyone involved in the IDP coalition knew the meaning of colonization and decolonization, which was always implied in their work.

When I think about NAS at MSU, and how it participates in decolonial processes, the efforts the department invests in educating the university community and the general population of Bozeman about colonial processes and Indigenous communities of Montana always come to my mind. Dismantling Columbus Day and replacing it with an Indigenous Peoples Day is but one example of these efforts. In the fall of 2015, I also participated in a panel on Indian Education for All (IEFA) and UNDRIP for the Heritage Day (September 25), and I attended some of the activities the department held for the Native American Heritage Month, in November. I also traveled with

Walter Fleming – head of the NAS department – to Helena for a meeting of the University President's Council of (Tribal) Elders. Accordingly, the department is continuously engaged in activities to raise public and academic awareness of colonial realities and decolonial struggles. This would define their overall educational project.

The project: challenging the colonial narrative and supporting Indigenous Nation's Sovereignty

"Native American studies' ambitious objective is to understand Native Americans, America, and the world from Native American indigenous perspectives and thus broaden the knowledge and education of both Native Americans and non-Native Americans"

— Russell Thornton

"Indian Studies is about government and politics and sovereignty for Indian nations. It is about rights based on the extraconstitutionality of a government-to-government relationship with the U.S. Federal government unlike any other in the United States"

— Elizabeth Cook Lynn

- NASX - 105, Introduction to Native American Studies, Syllabus, Fall 2015, Montana State University

When I arrived at the NAS department of MSU in the fall of 2015, I established relationships with faculty members and graduate students, including the Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) teaching the class "Introduction to Native American Studies". Engaging with the content and form of this class was perfect, for it allowed me to approach the discipline and situate its meaning, roles and content, in this department. The syllabus for the introductory class varied from one instructor to the other, obviously, but they shared the same general content and readings. Their syllabus had some basic features in common, including the two quotes above.

These quotes define the discipline in two different ways; one in terms of the broadening of horizon for the academy and society at large, and the other in terms of Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty and sovereignty rights, as well as their relationship to the federal government. My understanding is that the MSU NAS department fulfills the two expressed facets, by challenging nation-state narratives through the uncovering of colonial histories; and by teaching Indigenous histories and perspectives in different areas, including theory, methodology, and subject such as food studies or literature. Moreover, the NAS department's involvement in many programs and events facilitates reaching not only NAS students, but students and faculty from a variety of programs as well as the Bozeman population in general. Because of this involvement with non-Indigenous students, faculty, and general population, a major objective of NAS is to challenge the colonial narratives underlying mainstream society and institutions.

For example, Francine Spang-Willis, a member of the Northern Cheyenne Nation, graduated with a Master's degree in NAS in 2013, and was hired by the university to work in Indigenous students services and to teach. She taught many Introduction to NAS classes, gave professional training workshops about colonialism from a critical race theory framework, and was teaching in the winter of 2016 an online graduate class in NAS. Francine understood the role of NAS as the uncovering of colonial processes, for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, by teaching Federal Indian Law (the Marshall trilogy), policies, and history. She recalled her experience as a student in the following way:

Well I guess I can only go off of what they [NAS at MSU] taught me, which is they taught me about the processes of colonialism. Whether it's the Marshall trilogy, or the different policies towards Native Americans. Those are things that I didn't learn in my k-12 education. But like I said before, I knew when I came here [NAS, MSU], it wasn't going to be like, I was going to sit down with Joe Medicine Crow and talk about the creation and migration, or you know... Counting Coup, or how did he become a warrior, or who is Sweet Medicine, or [...] what spiritual teachings did they bring to Cheyenne. I knew, I don't really think that was what I was going to learn. And I didn't learn that here. I learned about those processes [colonialism] and the impacts of those processes (Spang-Willis, 2015, interview).

This is a role that everyone with whom I talked in NAS department, students included, agreed on and practiced. Courses like "Federal Indian Law" are obviously addressing this role, but it is also fulfilled with other classes, like "Introduction to NAS", "Native Americans Contemporary Society", or "Montana Indian Culture, History, Current Issues", which content includes treaties, colonial histories, and their current impacts. These courses are important in terms of challenging the mainstream national narrative, challenging stereotypes, and opening non-native students to realities they might not be familiar with.

For instance, Alexander Newby, a Graduate Teaching Assistant who was teaching an "Introduction to NAS" section in the fall of 2015, and was also taking graduate classes for his own Master's degree, said that NAS represented a challenge for his students, and to a certain extent for himself. He explained that NAS

challenges our understanding of history. It challenges the face of the state puts in front of itself, the face of freedom, of opportunity for all, of championing free speech, and any other American ideals. Because you find out that, oh! the textbook didn't teach me about this, the textbooks didn't tell me that the US army massacred the Cheyenne people, massacred the Blackfeet people, massacred, [...] with the mormons who massacred the Shoshone people.

What we hear is that the Native People were, uncivilized, they were fighting us tooth and nail, they were killing all these people, but we have, out of the goodness of our hearts, allowed them to remain on our land, and given them certain status. If you hear anything at all! You know, lots of these kids [students] really don' know much (Newby, 2015, interview).

Accordingly, NAS provides an important response to the official history of the US as most students received in their K-12 education, in spite of IEFA policy in Montana. In fact, NAS has a special role to play, from its beginning, in terms of the k-12 education provided in the state. This is why teacher education is an important dimension of NAS activities. Walter Fleming, head of the department, would define himself the mission of the department in these terms:

One of the, one of our mission is still teacher education, and, so I think part of our obligation is to make sure that pre-service teachers, or teachers, potential teachers in the teacher ed program have access to the knowledge that will help them once they get into the field. And we do that by working with the college of education, and so... We have a general education requirement at MSU, [...] at one point, all students had to take 2 classes in multicultural and global studies. And so, we propose our classes to be included in that, they were all the lower division, intro to NAS was one of them, and then the Montana, it used to be called Montana Indians, and so, those were, the courses were part of a general education requirement [...]

And so, part of our mission is to provide coursework for the diversity requirement. The college of education, though, requires their pre-service teacher education students to take intro to NAS or Montana Indian Cultures, as their required class, as their diversity class. And that was one way we thought we could make a difference, because at least we know that every student who is in the educational department, and then is later certified as a teacher, will have at least one class in NAS. Not so much for other disciplines, but... And so that's part of our mission, is to teach in the core curriculum (Fleming, 2015, interview).

Walter was referring to the NAS minor that many student-teachers take because it helps them to fulfill IEFA requirements. Therefore, a large part of the work done in the department serves to broaden the horizons of the student population in general, amongst which non-Indigenous student-teachers have a preeminent place. In the words of Gina Stuart,

you are changing their [students'] outlook, and they are there and they are learning, and you are getting them on their younger and you are changing their outlook, if they are taking a Native Studies course, and a lot of time they take it because they think it's easy. And then they get in and realize that their mind is being open. And I tell the students all the time, this is your box that you came in, is this box called the American meta-narrative, that you have been indoctrinated in, and you don't even realize it. My job is to open the lid of that box, and give you a safe place to look around and explore other things. You can climb back in the box when we are done. You probably won't want to. Because I enjoy showing them

something that they have never seen, they probably didn't get that from their parents, maybe they have a stereotypical image of Native People, and we deal with that the very first week of class, to get them out of that mentality.... And so I think the role of Native Studies is also to open the minds of students that there is a world out there they don't know anything about, but they can learn in a safe place, and move on to better things (Stuart, 2015, interview).

While all Faculty and instructors in NAS were passionate about the challenge of the "box called the American meta-narrative", some of them also mentioned that this challenge was often received with resistance and pushback from the students. For example, Gail Small, long time Indigenous rights activist and lawyer from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and now professor at MSU, explained some of the difficulties she encountered in her class:

There is some resistance, but I really see the resistance coming primarily from students who are from these border towns. So like these border towns are towns along the reservations that are racially polarized. And those students who grew up in those towns, they have these racially polarized views toward the Indians (Small, 2015, interview).

In relation to the non-Indigenous students, the best strategy to face this resistance is often to present the laws, treaties and policies that were put in place through time, which are colonial in nature, and are just facts – they exist today, and anyone can read them. This was Kristin Ruppel's strategy, which she described in the following words:

As one [professor], I think his name is Linzy Robert, and he's a law professor in Wisconsin, and he writes about teaching the treaties, and he said, you know, you don't have to editorialize, you just teach straight, you don't have to tell what to think about it, and that's true of Federal Indian Law and Policy. All you do is, let them read the cases. And look at the policies. And you know, then you give them some background on... What it did, you know, you read Indian Removal act, it's only that long, and it's very, it's just... [...] Over all, it's not just the Cherokee, the experience, it's over, and over, and over again. And thousands, and thousands of people dying, and ethnic cleansing. You don't have to call it that, but that's of course what it is (Ruppel, 2015, interview).

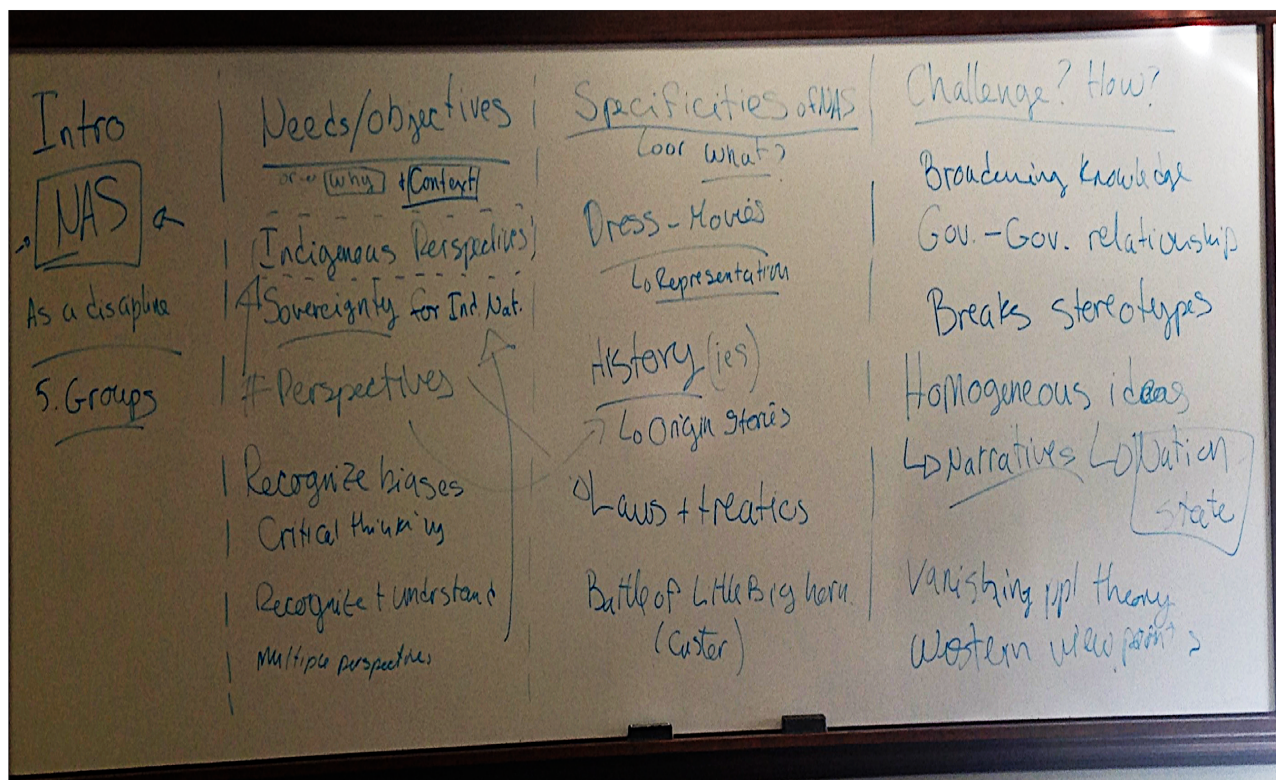
Resistance would often come from students (and sometimes colleagues, or even the institution as a whole) feeling defensive about their society and their history. While US history tends to celebrate colonial violence as acts of heroism, liberation and justice, NAS and the professor who teach it might appear biased when presenting this history as *colonial violence* on which the US is built. However, the Federal Indian Law and Policy teaching, that happens in all NAS departments and programs throughout the country, helps bring objective examples of the colonial relationship established with Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, for Gail Small, the bottom line was also for

students to understand the Doctrine of Discovery as the flawed principle on which all other "Indian" laws, policies and treaties are generally based. She said:

But I think too, like I teach Indian law here, and I start up with, you know how all these Indian Law courses are taught throughout the university in law schools. You need to start up with the Doctrine of Discovery. And I always talk about the flawed legal context of the Doctrine of Discovery, and how today it's been challenged by these tribes (Small, 2015, interview).

While these perspectives express the intentions and objectives of teachers in NAS, it is to be noted that the students also understood these objectives quite clearly. On November 18th, Cassidy Medicine Horse, one of the GTAs teaching the Introduction class, invited me to give a presentation to her class, as she was traveling for a conference. Having her class to myself, and the class being towards the end of the semester, I decided to create conversation groups, and ask students about NAS as a discipline, how they understood it. After I explained my own research project, I basically asked them to answer to my questions, namely: (1) What are the needs and objectives of NAS (or, why NAS? And what is the context of the discipline)?; (2) What are the specificities of the discipline (what is taught)?; (3) What does it challenge and how? Figure 13 shows their answers as I wrote them on the class board, and a transcription of these answers:

Figure 13: Students' understanding of NAS in an introduction class at MSU (transcription below)



Introduction to NAS As a discipline, discuss in 5 groups:	Needs/Objectives (or "Why" the discipline; context)	Specificities of NAS (or What does it teach?)	Challenge? How
Students' answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indigenous perspectives - Sovereignty for Indigenous Nations - Diverse perspectives - Recognize biases - Critical Thinking - Recognize and understand multiple perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dress and Movies: representation - History(ies), including Origin stories - Laws and treaties - Battle of Little Big Horn (Custer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadening knowledge - Government-to-Government relationships - Breaks stereotypes - [challenges] Homogeneous ideas and narratives of Nation-State - [challenges] Vanishing people theory - [challenges] Western view points

Amongst their answers regarding the content taught, Laws and treaties, as well as events such as the Battle of Little Big Horn were repeated several times. They also mentioned that these teachings served to broaden their knowledges, and to challenge homogeneous ideas and narratives, such as those linked to the nation-state. These challenges, in turn, were also responding to the objective of developing critical thinking that would help them recognize biases. These answers were touching on the role that NAS faculty members had identified, namely, to uncover colonial histories of the state and the country.

Another set of answers, however, was addressing other dimensions of NAS: the support of sovereignty for Indigenous peoples, by addressing the government-to-government relationship; and the teaching of Indigenous perspectives in ways that facilitate the understanding and recognition of multiple perspectives, thus breaking stereotypes and challenging western viewpoint, such as the vanishing people theories. This in turn was addressed by teachings around history and histories, including origin stories, and representations. This is the other side of the decolonial coin: uncovering colonial histories is not enough in and of itself, and addressing Indigenous Peoples' cultures, knowledges, experiences and histories is also necessary, especially in order to have people understand the concept of Indigenous sovereignty and to support Tribal sovereignty in the state and the country.

Gail Small also recognized the importance of learning about Indigenous Peoples too, in order to show how the Doctrine of Discovery is flawed in its fundamental assumptions about Indigenous Peoples' inferiority. In her perspective,

Sometimes just learning that there were tribes here with very sophisticated governments, cultures, is very enlightening to them. But I also think that, just the basics that we teach here. We don't delve into culture in a deep way. Because we teach at a very broad-based NAS perspective. But I see my students, they get it! Most of them get it (Small, 2015, interview).

NAS also brings in Indigenous cultures to challenge stereotypes and to broaden knowledges, but in limited ways, since it is not circumscribed to one Tribe or one nation, as is the case for Tribal Colleges. This probably explains the feelings expressed by Francine Spang-Willis, regarding the teaching being much more about colonialism. As a Northern Cheyenne woman who worked with many tribes in Montana, she found the cultural knowledge in NAS not as deep as she encountered it in other circumstances. She explained that,

I knew I wanted to come here, to the NAS department here. And I knew the difference between the knowledge that I was able to access, with the Crow, the Cheyenne, Chippewa-Cree, was, like a different type of knowledge than I would get here. But that was, I was ok with that, it was like, you know, I do want to know more about the processes of colonialism... And so I came here and I learned way more than I ever imagine that I would learn, as far as Native American history (Spang-Willis, 2015, interview).

Thus, while teaching Indigenous histories and perspectives is certainly part of NAS, the uncovering of colonial histories seems to be the bulk of the work done in NAS at MSU. This is especially true from the perspective of Indigenous students who might have specific Indigenous knowledges but experienced colonialism without a clear explanation on its processes. For non-Indigenous students, understanding the colonial settings might be a first step to broaden "the discourse on how this country was formed, how it was established" (Small, 2015, interview).

In light of this experience, the decolonial project of an Indigenous program in a mainstream university is quite different from the decolonial projects enacted through Indigenous institutions of higher education, which are created by and for Indigenous Peoples. NAS is not expected, at MSU, to fulfill the nation-building role of Tribal Colleges, although collaboration with Tribal Colleges might support that objective, in particular regarding the transition of students from 2-year institutions on the reservation to MSU. Given the fact that NAS addresses the general population of MSU, Bozeman, and Montana, it might be closer to the decolonizing project of the Amawtay Wasi, which aims at decolonizing the Ecuadorian society, economy, and the state in general. This will not happen without educating non-indigenous populations about Indigenous realities, perspectives, and aspirations, as well as training non-Indigenous allies.

Indigenous knowledges at MSU: Indigenous realities and perspectives to counterbalance colonial narratives and unsettle hierarchies of knowledge

And, here [MSU], NAS students, 90% are non-Indians. And so you really have to focus on the American Indian point of view to get that understanding, that point of view.
- Wayne Stein (2015, interview).

While the uncovering of colonial histories helps in opening the knowledge that people have of the US society in relation to Indigenous nations, to fully grasp the concept of Indigenous sovereignty and the possibility for a different relationship than the colonial one, students need to learn about Indigenous societies, nations, their specific histories and current experiences. Therefore, counterbalancing colonial narratives by making space for Indigenous perspectives and knowledges in the academy is also an important role that NAS plays, in general, and at MSU in particular. For example, in Abbie Bandstra's words (one of the GTAs teaching the introductory class in the fall of 2015),

I see the role of the class to be like, making a space for these students to be ready to hear when a Native person does come and speak. Like, or, maybe, not even speak, just like, they are reading an article, and there is, like, well who's not here? This Native person, they can actually hear it, and not just analyze it in the same sort of pattern as we always do in ways of learning. In sort of Western public education thinking. So, that's really how I think about the course (Bandstra, 2015, interview).

Thus, if challenging the colonial meta-narrative is one step in terms of NAS' decolonial project, the goal is to eventually push students' perspective to make space for Indigenous Peoples', to the point that they can recognize when these perspectives and voices are missing. Indigenous stories and testimonies are an important dimension of Indigenous knowledges that professors and GTAs bring to their class. This is important for NAS because it speaks to a majority of non-Indigenous students, who might lack the knowledge and context about Indigenous Peoples that Indigenous students might have. Indigenous stories, and personal testimonies, therefore bring a different set of lived experiences that can broaden the horizons of non-Indigenous students, while also validating Indigenous students' own experiences.

This dimension of NAS for non-Indigenous students was also expressed by Matthew Hermann, professor at the NAS department, and supervisor of the Introduction to NAS GTAs, who argued that:

I do believe that in many ways, NAS is for everybody. And it is an outlook on the world. But it is a world that we all share. And especially as citizens of the USA, Native American history belongs to, or I should not use the word belongs, because that's such a difficult word to use, but, pertains to everybody. We are all, we all descend from it, one way or another. Some of us benefit from it, some of us maybe don't. But I think it is important to know that, and to understand it, and that we are all implicated within, and we are all affected by the history of colonialism in North America. That's one way of thinking about the Thornton quote [that appears on the introduction to NAS syllabus] [...] [We] spend some time talking about issues of authority, cultural authority and propriety and protocol, I don't think that's what Russel Thornton is saying, is that all forms of Indigenous Knowledge should be accessible to all Peoples, so, we talk a little bit about how knowledge, just the concept of knowledge differs across culture (Hermann, 2015, interview).

Matthew's point is important to understand the type of Indigenous knowledge taught in NAS. As NAS addresses a different audience, and it is situated in a mainstream institution, some of the knowledge taught in Tribal Colleges – for example, coyote stories, or Sally Bag weaving – is not suited for NAS or could be seen as an appropriation in the mainstream context. Rather, the type of knowledge involved in NAS is for the overall public to learn from Indigenous perspectives to counterbalance the colonial histories and exclusions.

Counterbalancing the colonial narratives might also imply considering Indigenous Peoples' contributions to the current society. Wayne Stein mentioned that part of what he would teach in his class included Indigenous influences on the American culture:

You live and act more like an American Indian in 1492, than you are doing a European [of the same time]. You have the same value system, you claimed to have the same value system than American Indians. They aren't what the Europeans had in 1492. If you'd had their value system, we would have a King, and we would have Dukes, and Princesses and Princes, and, you know. You wouldn't know shit, you wouldn't know anything! But here, you believe in Individual freedom. That's an American Indian value. That's not a European value. Our government looks more like the Iroquois' government than anything in Europe. We eat more like Indian ate than did European. 60% of the food that is eaten in the world today were developed by American Indian framers! You dress and wear clothes that are more like American, you know, 80% of American Indians didn't wear buckskin, they wore cotton. And they developed... I mean none of that shows up in history, but that's the facts. And I say, you act and believe more like an Indian then, in 1492, than you do... And you smoke like an Indian! On top of it. And so, yeah, in a lot of way, you know, Indian People were, I tell my students, both Indian and non-Indian, and it's a hard thing for them to accept, for non-Indian students. But Indian People were way healthier and happier pre-1492 than they are today. They were much healthier in 1492 than they are today. And there is a reason for that, you know. So that's what we look at (Stein, 2015, interview).

In other words, NAS pertains to everyone because not only is there a colonial history, but also a history of appropriation of Indigenous knowledges that needs to be recognized, to recognize Indigenous knowledges' values and unsettle colonial knowledge hierarchies. This is important in order to challenge the colonial mindset based on white supremacy and the Doctrine of Discovery, claiming the superior interests of settlers over Indigenous Peoples.

The learning of Indigenous perspectives and knowledges as a counterbalance to colonialism also has a very concrete objective that nearly everyone teaching NAS at MSU mentioned to me, namely, the support to Indigenous sovereignty. This is what Gail Small claimed when she told me that,

from myself, moving into NAS, I'm more hands-on, and I take the approach of Sovereignty. How can you use NAS to be Nation-Building, but also to have all of our students here understand that Indian Tribes are governments, with not only proprietary rights, because we are land owners too, in this area, we are large land owners, right? But we also have the right to regulate that land, as a government. So that's been my focus, but I also want to do, I want to infuse culture into all of that. Because we are different from other governments, because we are cultural People. And culture sustains us. So that's the nexus that I am trying to build (Small, 2015, interview).

The sovereignty approach in NAS consists of informing students about the other side of the colonial reality regarding the fact that Indigenous Peoples were sovereign nations before colonization, and continue to be inherently sovereign as nations, and legally sovereign as Tribes according to treaties. Following Gail's words, it is also important to bring in Indigenous perspectives on sovereignty, in order not to confine it to the Western, often state-centered, conceptions of sovereignty²⁰⁰. Indigenous knowledges included for Gail the cultural understanding of politics and governments, or the fact that any notion of politics, sovereignty, and government is culturally situated and relates to a given context. Gail also included the relationship to land as an important dimension of the knowledge she included in her classes.

²⁰⁰ "Discussion of the term sovereignty in relation to indigenous peoples, however, must be framed differently, within an intellectual framework of internal colonization. Internal colonization is the historical process and political reality defined in the structures and techniques of government that consolidate the domination of indigenous peoples by a foreign yet sovereign settler state. While internal colonization describes the political reality of most indigenous peoples, one should also note that the discourse of state sovereignty is and has been contested in real and theoretical ways since its imposition. The inter/counter play of state sovereignty doctrines—rooted in notions of dominion—with and against indigenous concepts of political relations—rooted in notions of freedom, respect, and autonomy—frames the discourse on indigenous "sovereignty" at its broadest level" (Taiaiake Alfred & Mihesuah, 2005, p. 33).

Accordingly, the sovereignty as supported and expressed in NAS is not only linked to law and politics, but to other areas of knowledges too, such as food systems:

one of the most political subversive things you can do is grow your own food. Which is where Tribes are at, now. You know, across, all across the world, Indigenous Peoples in that sort of very fundamental form of sovereignty, that, teaching the Federal Indian Law class, which I did for 10 years here, you get really focused on the legal aspects of that sovereignty, which are, have their own challenges in helping students wrap their heads around that stuff. But then you start to pull out from that and there are all of these others forms of sovereignty which then again, and then there is the decolonization process of that (Ruppel, 2015, interview).

With that understanding of sovereignty as being expressed in many different knowledge systems, Kristin was teaching a Native Food Systems course, in which she presented Indigenous sciences and ecosystems knowledges, through the study of food systems. Food systems allows inclusion of Indigenous stories – such as creation stories, migration stories, stories of dispossession, and contemporary stories of resistance. It also includes Indigenous nations' relationships to land, to territory, and all the relations and kins that form the territories. Furthermore, food systems opened the door to talk about sovereign practices of relating to land in self-determining ways, that often challenge settlers' ideas of land properties. For example, the case of wild rice harvesting by Anishinaabek on and around the Michigan lake brought together stories of migrations, Indigenous long-term ecological knowledges of the region, notions of health and spirituality, and legal battle to maintain the harvesting right and affirm Indigenous sovereignty over Indigenous lands/waters.

Additionally, the class on Native Food Systems allowed for the integration of Indigenous pedagogies, with a 2-day visit to a Northern Cheyenne Elder who shared his botanical knowledge with the students, and practical work including students cooking traditional food, and sharing knowledge while sharing food. Kristin also used Robin Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* book (2014), in the class, which uses the storytelling form to talk about Indigenous sciences and wisdom. This is just one example of the courses that were happening at MSU, where the NAS department faculty members were conscious of the importance to develop Indigenous perspectives and knowledges across the curriculum, and made effort to include land-based pedagogy, relationships to Elders, and storytelling, in their teachings.

In fact, as an interdisciplinary field, NAS developed Indigenous perspectives in many areas: humanities/literature; law and political sciences; history and sociology; and botany, ecology and geography. In that last discipline, NAS had just hired Gina Stuart-Richard, who specializes in Indigenous mapping as a legal-cartographic strategy, and has knowledge of GIS technologies. NAS was making real efforts, in 2015, to bring in the department Indigenous knowledges relating to land and environment.

When discussing with NAS Faculty members, they all agreed that Indigenous knowledges should be part of all disciplines, and they mentioned how there could be more effort into inter-departmental collaboration, so that other departments and disciplines would consider Indigenous knowledges in their curriculum. When commenting on Indigenous knowledges in various disciplines, Gail Small also returned to the fundamental principles of IEFA, which should be applied at the higher education level. She said:

There has to be a broader understanding of what we are trying to do with Montana Indian Education for All. It's like, how can we mainstream Indian Education for All throughout the curriculum? That's the challenge. Where are we in math? Where are we in political sciences? Where are we in history, philosophy. We have amazing philosophies and religions, my god! It is so rich! And why is it that, you know you say, studying greek mythology? Or you know... And why is it that government classes, students don't include Tribal governments? So people get, the state legislature of Montana and they are shocked that tribes are governments and they have rights to pass their laws, they have their own cops, they have their own courts (Small, 2015, interview).

General teaching of Indigenous histories, knowledges, experiences and perspectives were central in all areas of knowledge, in NAS, but there was still work to be done to reach other departments and disciplines at MSU. The decolonial dimension of bringing in Indigenous knowledge in the mainstream academy, and establishing a conversation with non-Indigenous knowledges, as Amawtay Wasi attempts, is also an objective of NAS. As Gail pointed out, however, it was still a work in progress, in spite of the IEFA politics in place in the state.

Community relationship: to which community is NAS accountable?

The generalizations of NAS are so broad, that you are on the periphery all the time. You are just teaching the periphery. You never lean in and teach actual cultural, or actual Tribal, you know, knowledge. Because that's not our role here. Our audience is primarily, at the university level, and we are just giving them a rough outline. And if they want more they can learn more, but most of your Indian students from the reservations, they already know all that.

- Gail Small (2015, interview).

The conundrum in which NAS is placed at MSU is that while it is situated in Indigenous perspectives and knowledges and aims at supporting Indigenous sovereignty while uncovering colonial realities, it is mainly addressing a non-Indigenous audience. It does offer a space for Indigenous students, and for them to push their own graduate projects, but its core mission and task appears to be the education of settler populations to change their perspectives and address the general ignorance regarding Indigenous histories, cultures, knowledges, and experiences. Consequently, NAS relationship to Indigenous communities differs from the relationship that Indigenous institutions establish with communities. Tribal Colleges and Amawtay Wasi are situated in the communities they serve: their education is mainly for Indigenous students, and answers the needs and aspirations of these students' communities.

Even if Indigenous students in NAS classes and programs might also go back to their community, and though NAS education entails a concern for decolonization and support to Indigenous sovereignty, the community it mainly serves remains "the university". Consideration for Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty and the transmission of an Indigenous perspective on this sovereignty to students in NAS is still an important objective, as Matthew Hermann highlighted, when using the Cook-Lynn quote in the *Introduction to NAS* syllabus. He told me that

the Cook-Lynn quote, I think, is great too, because, especially nowadays, for me, still the central problematic within NAS is tribal sovereignty. The question of Sovereignty is still a central question. Students need to know that, even introductory students, they need to know that on some level. What is at stake in all that, what that means, and why somebody like Elizabeth Cook-Lynn would take what's kind of a (incomprehensible) tone in expressing that first and foremost NAS is a political field of inquiry and has to deal with questions of autonomy, tribal autonomy, over a whole range of things. And again, from a more practical stand point, just in terms of my own experience with students, so many of the misunderstandings that people have stand from ignorance from the political status of tribes (Hermann, 2015, interview).

The conviction that the understanding of colonial history and of the current political status of Tribes in the US would somehow bring a different relationship between settlers and Indigenous

Peoples in Montana and the country seemed to be profoundly anchored in the teaching of NAS at MSU. Many professors understood their discipline as being inherently political. For example, Kristin Ruppel described her role in NAS in the following way:

I see that as a political and as supporting sovereignty, native sovereignty. However that gets define by the Tribes. And by the Nations. And, yeah, so I see it from a, as kind of inherently political, in that sense, in a way that other disciplines are not like it. The research that we do needs to be connected to the interests of the Tribes. How it gets defined is sometimes really complicated (laughing) and not uncontroversial (Ruppel, 2015, interview).

Hence, the NAS minor offered at MSU was conceived to give a basic knowledge of Indigenous realities, with courses such as *Introduction to NAS, Federal Indian Law and Policy*, and the *Montana Indian Culture, History, Current Issues*. The rest of the credits are electives. Although I have seen a lot of Indigenous students who would combine this minor with their major in a diversity of disciplines, they remained a minority in the classes, while the majority of non-Indigenous students came from education. The minor is therefore one way that NAS is educating the general public about Indigenous Peoples, and to the students from other programs, such as education. It also does so indirectly, through the impact that these students will have in their respective communities and workplaces (especially the teachers).

Another way that NAS is fulfilling the mission of educating their "university level audience" as Gail Small called it, is through campus activities (i.e. Heritage Day, Native Heritage Month, and Indigenous Peoples Day). The department is also involved in the Spring Pow Wow. While these are seen as important events and spaces for the Indigenous students to feel pride and a sense of being valued by the community, Walter also reckoned that it was taking a toll on the NAS department to lead these events, especially when he felt all activities should have been supported better by the whole university. In Walter's words,

It's like this Native American heritage day. That's mandated for the university system to observe Native American heritage day, the 3rd or 4th whatever Friday of the month of September. And it always falls on NAS to do something. And because it's a box that needs to be checked off. Ok, yeah, we did that. The university say that, yeah, we had, they did it. It's not a requirement of NAS to do it, it's the, it's a requirement that the university, and so, why does that fall on us? It's the same thing with, you know, all of the programming. And that's another one where, I think the university system has said, well, that's something you guys should do. And we are saying, well no, it's the university system that needs to do that. So we keep pushing a little bit on that, but... (Fleming, 2015, interview).

Hence, while the institutional context of MSU seemed supportive of collaboration with Indigenous communities and creation of spaces for Indigenous Peoples, Elders, scholars and students, and their knowledges, it kept deferring the responsibility to the small NAS department, which has limited resources to fulfill its own needs and objectives, let alone external activities. Yet, with its limited resources, the department kept adding to the matters it was taking on, as illustrated by the process of dismantling the Columbus Day holiday and replacing it with an Indigenous Peoples Day holiday.

One reason for NAS to undertake these activities, in spite of the limited resources it has, is because these also serve, to a certain extent, the Indigenous Students community at MSU, including those who are not in any NAS program or courses. Francine Spang-Willis explained this to me in the following way:

The spring Powwow, the American Indian Heritage Day, the American Indian Heritage month. You know, just providing events that allow our students to have pride in who they are, and honour who they are, and being able to share if they want, share their heritage, whether it's through dancing, or you know, well you were part of SAIGS, during the American Indian Heritage Day, where they were talking about things that are important to them. I think that's really important to have that space for the students, whether they are undergrad student or there are specifically in NAS, or they are engineers or nurses, or... just to have I think a place to be American Indian, if they so choose. I mean we have over 500 students and we don't have all 500 students come to our student centre. But they are welcome. They can engage whatever level they want to engage. And then we also have different programs like EMPOWER, and ACES, and the co-op, so the students who are specifically into nursing or engineering, or STEM, they have these places too, that they can go to. Not just here, not just American Indian and Alaska Native Students Success, so... So I think that strength is that they do exist and they do create that space (Spang-Willis, 2015, interview).

Therefore, while the majority of NAS students were non-Indigenous, the program was still aiming at serving the broader MSU Indigenous students community, and they were doing so through the different activities they were involved in. Furthermore, the courses and programs NAS offers allow Indigenous students from different programs to learn more about the history of colonial processes, and often to learn more about resistance to colonization, nationally, and internationally. The Federal Indian Law courses also give them the legal tools to understand many of their everyday realities. These are also spaces where Indigenous students' communities, histories, and knowledges are valued, and as such, they can become safe spaces in a sea of courses

in which their cultures and communities do not always exist. It is therefore creating a space for Indigenous students to have a community inside the institution. As Gina Stuart described it,

[It] is a way for Native Students to be able to come here and feel safe in getting an education in whatever field they choose through NAS. And I think that having a minor in NAS allows them to do that. So they can have the support of a familiar community, rather than outsiders who don't understand what might be going on with the students. And, I think there is a larger role as far as being able to train researchers, especially in the graduate programs, to be better researchers if they want to work with Native communities or have any sort of, even tangential impact with Native Communities, to understand... (Stuart, 2015, interview).

According to Gina, and to many other Faculty members, NAS was serving Indigenous communities by providing a space for their students who might go back to their communities, and by educating people who might eventually work with and interact with communities.

Accordingly, one important role that NAS plays, at MSU, is to create a community, in the university, for Indigenous students and Faculty, to gather around the department and the activities it supports. This is part of the decolonial projects of NAS: making room, in mainstream academy, for Indigenous knowledges, students, and Faculty, creating a space where they can come together and acknowledge each other and value their respective cultures and experiences. To do so, NAS is involved in the Council of American Indian Program (CAIP), in the American Indian Council (formed by undergraduate Indigenous students), and with the Society of American Indian Graduate Students (SAIGS), amongst other groups. In this context, people knew each other and supported each other in the department, and there was a feeling of being "at home", and part of a community. Walter hosted a barbeque at his house at the beginning of the semester, where he invited NAS Faculty members, as well as other Indigenous Faculty members of the university, and allies. The importance of creating relationships and fulfilling these relationships was what NAS brought to MSU. Additionally, by building an Indigenous community at MSU, NAS is contributing to supporting the urban Indigenous community of Bozeman, be it permanent urban Indigenous community, or those who are temporarily in Bozeman for studies or work.

In terms of the relationships with Indigenous communities outside of the university and the urban settings, however, these are more limited. Being situated in Bozeman, and answering to a mainstream academic context, the relationship with external actors is often distant. Some professors obviously developed research with communities and community members, and some

of them were from Indigenous communities with whom they maintained close ties and accountability. The department also participated in programs to facilitate the transition of students from high school or Tribal Colleges, to MSU, thus supporting the education of Indigenous community members. In spite of some efforts, I also heard critiques about how students coming from Tribal Colleges could not always have their credits recognized in all disciplines, and often had to begin their whole undergraduate program over again. Despite the issue of transfer credits being a common problem in higher education, given the power relationship, there is a feeling of “violation” or “betrayal” when credits from TCUs do not transfer to mainstream universities. Furthermore, many efforts to build relationships between MSU and Indigenous communities came from the department of education. For example, Jioanna Carjuzaa worked hard to obtain a class-7 grant that would serve for training bilingual teachers and language revitalization on the reservations, and for cultural sensitivity training at MSU. She also put together a support program for Indigenous students in education, called Wanji Oyate, with the objective of fostering a sense of community, belonging and purpose essential to their success. Through the program, students would form a sense of cohort and receive financial, emotional, and academic support. Thus, NAS is not the only place, at MSU, where a sense of community is fostered, and where serious outreach programs with Indigenous communities are developed.

In fact, I heard many times that the department could do more in terms of its outreach to communities and Tribal Colleges. It is difficult to judge these efforts, because I saw the will existing, as well as the endeavour of some professor to relate to Indigenous communities in Montana, through their courses or their research. The limitations that I heard about could also be attributed to the burden of so much work to do with such limited resources. Other departments, such as Education, might have more resources and more influence in the university than NAS. Still, I witnessed NAS efforts for outreach. For example, the participation of the head of NAS to the University President's Tribal Elder Council was also a way for the department to stay in touch with representatives of the communities across Montana and hear from their needs and aspirations. Many of these Elders were also active in their communities' Tribal Colleges, which also served to maintain the relationship. Yet again, the level of accountability is not like what Tribal Colleges and Amawtay Wasi established with the communities and organizations they serve.

It is also to be noted that NAS at MSU, as in other mainstream universities in general, might have a broader perspective on the Indigenous communities it serves. For example, Matthew

Hermann was developing a World Indigenous humanities course, and it is not uncommon for NAS Faculty to work with Indigenous communities abroad, or at least in different states. This does not mean that each researcher is not accountable for the work they do with the communities they work with. Nevertheless, in this case, the responsibility falls more individually on each Faculty member. The institution's and program's accountability for local Indigenous communities is still very different from what is established in Indigenous institutions working directly in specific Indigenous communities.

Another way that NAS established relationships with local communities was through inviting guest speakers into classrooms or taking students to the communities in Montana. That happened in the Native Food Systems class, when we went to the Northern Cheyenne reservation, I spent the night there, and visited with an Elder who is also an expert botanist. I heard many of the GTAs talking about the people they had invited to their classes to share personal, or collective, stories from their communities. In that sense, the relationship with the communities was also one of learning, of recognizing the knowledge that Indigenous community members have and can share with the students, most of the time through stories or sharing of experiences. Inviting Indigenous community members to share their knowledge in the academy is also part of a decolonial project, because it challenges the power relationship between the "experts" in the academy and Indigenous communities.

This again is something that happened also at the Tribal College, and in a much more intense way at Amawtay Wasi. Although in the last case, students would go to the community members and Indigenous leaders, rather than "inviting them in the classroom". The organization of exchange between community members and students, in the context of a mainstream university that is not situated in a community, thus poses certain limits. Often, it demands that the community member travel to the university and deliver their "guest lecture" in a setting that is very far from a community-based learning setting. When students do travel, sometimes it is on a volunteer base, as there is no way to oblige students to undertake visits and often questions of liability arise. In both case, resources to support these exchanges are often missing, and professors sometimes have to pay out of their own pocket. Tribal Colleges and the Amawtay Wasi definitely have more mechanisms, flexibility, and possibility for these types of encounters. The relationship to the community is deeply engrained in the decolonial projects. It is also part of NAS projects, but often in a more superficial, or secondary way.

Conclusion: challenging colonial narratives to build different relationships between Indigenous and settler societies

You see, but the issue, for the NAS, like in our department, as academy, we are a core diversity course. We have to continue teaching the courses that the students pay for. Montana Indians, to give an example. I taught that for 8 semesters, and my classes were full! I have huge classes learning, so you have to teach to the need that these institutions basically say, we are going to do this, we are going to meet the core diversity courses and you are going to teach a class on Montana Indians. So now my research focus has shifted, because there is no book to teach Montana Indians. Right? So I am thinking, the book I should probably come with is a book on Montana Indians, so we'll have the book in our department, but all of these others, UofM and everybody else can have a book to teach from. Because now we are stumbling, we are trying in all of our classes, they are taught really different way, depending on what your interest is. And so the need drives the research. And then the passion of the individual professor also has a bearing on that. And where does that leave these Tribal governments?
- Gail Small (2015, interview)

I began the description of NAS at MSU with two quotes that speak to the two-fold objective of NAS, namely, to teach Indigenous perspectives to Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, in order to broaden their knowledge; and support Indigenous sovereignty by teaching about Indigenous Peoples and their political and legal status. However, as Gail expressed it, the two mandates were not easy to combine. Situated in a mainstream institution, NAS is accountable to that institution and its needs. While MSU is asking to teach "core diversity courses", this leaves very little room for research that would serve Tribal governments and their sovereignty, as Gail was wishing for. The needs of the institution, as well as the everyday reality of teaching in that context – for example, the lack of educational material to teach local Indigenous perspectives – takes over the research agenda of the professors, who are left with little time to focus on the Tribes' needs.

In this context, NAS fills a very specific decolonial goal when teaching colonial histories, laws, and their ongoing violence. It directly addresses the Doctrine of Discovery and its legacy. When teaching Indigenous histories, cultures, knowledges, and experiences in diverse fields, NAS also challenges the colonial narratives and the knowledge hierarchies in the academy. Consequently, NAS mission is to change society, at least in Montana, by educating settler populations, at the university and abroad, on Indigenous Peoples, in ways that would contribute to changing the colonial relationship established with them, towards a nation-to-nation relationship

that supports Tribal sovereignty. In doing this, NAS is creating a network of allies to Indigenous communities, in a mainstream institution.

In an institutional context that claims to be supportive of Indigenous Peoples, communities and colleges, and in a state that expresses, in its constitution and in bills such as IEFA, a desire for more equitable relationships with the twelve Indigenous Nations on whose territories it was built, NAS at MSU is a constant reminder of these good intentions, and their fulfillment. It definitely contributes to the actualization of IEFA in Montana, and consequently to the change in mentalities throughout the state, by training many of the education students who will become teachers. NAS is also constantly reminding the university and broader community in Bozeman, of the presence of Indigenous Peoples in the institution, the city, the state, and the country, as well as reminding other contributions to all levels of the society. NAS teachings, as well as the events and activities they organize or participate in, therefore challenge the established meta-narrative of the state and the country, reminding people on what land they are standing, and what colonial processes made it possible for them to be there.

Obviously, the way in which NAS at MSU serves Indigenous communities in Montana is quite different from the way Tribal Colleges serve their own communities. NAS remains a broader, more general perspective on Indigenous Peoples. It is not anchored in any particular community and culture, but rather approaches communities in terms of their political and legal status, their relation to the colonial history of the country, and sometimes in a comparative perspective through certain transversal themes such as methodology, literature, cinema, food systems.

While the NAS' mission is different, it aims at maintaining a relationship with the diverse Tribal Colleges across Montana, often relying on Faculty members' relationships to these colleges. Obviously, more investment in partnering with Tribal Colleges is always needed, especially in terms of supporting Tribal Sovereignty. In my conversation with Gail Small, she pointed to this lack of collaboration, and how it could be beneficial to invest in this direction:

I think it would also, if we could work collaboratively with these Tribal Colleges, like this Cheyenne Studies professor, it would also give them a little wind under their sails, to know that they are working with the university, with their Cheyenne Studies research project, that they will have a real impact in determining where that research goes. So I think those kind of collaborative projects with these Tribal Colleges is important. But the other question is how do you respond to requests from Tribal Governments. Not just Tribal Colleges, but Tribal Governments (Small, 2015, interview).

Thus, as far as NAS claims to support Tribal sovereignty, resources need to be invested in collaborative research with Tribal Colleges and Tribal governments, and I would add, with community members and organizations (outside of the Tribal focus), to answer their needs and aspirations. Yet again, this is a difficult task to undertake by a very small, already overburdened, department. As long as universities do not make NAS programs and the department a priority, it will remain difficult to go in that direction.

The difference of the NAS mission from those of Indigenous institutions such as Tribal Colleges and the Amawtay Wasi, is also reflected in their engagement with Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous communities. The knowledge they teach is much more general, from a state, or national, or sometimes international perspective, so that it does not delve into the depth of a particular community and culture. It is not engaged in the survivance of a particular community like Tribal Colleges are. However, efforts are made to bring in Indigenous stories and narratives, in the curriculum, which is closer to Amawtay Wasi's objective regarding the establishment of a knowledge dialogue between Western and Indigenous knowledges. NAS does relate to Indigenous communities, through "field trips", or inviting guest speakers, which allows to bring community knowledges into the academy. But the community that NAS addresses remains the Indigenous students community at MSU, as well as the settler community it tries to educate and challenge. In that sense, there is a very specific decolonial role of NAS, that the Amawtay Wasi does not have, but the Tribal Colleges do if only in a minor way. It consists of looking critically at the colonial processes and mechanisms, and making the general population aware of them, so that they are not blindly reproduced. The challenging narrative presented in NAS classes is therefore carrying the possibility of a better future for Indigenous communities, by informing the state's population on the colonial processes, their impacts, and the resistance that Indigenous Peoples. NAS is one of these places where collaboration is established between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, slowly, one student at a time, and one event at a time.

CHAPTER 9: ARIZONA. AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES AT UA, OR THE TURNING POINT OF A DISCIPLINE

On February 18, 2016, Dr. Ronald Trosper, professor at the American Indian Studies (AIS) department of the University of Arizona (UA), was invited to give a talk to the Management and economy school, on Indigenous economy. As I was attending Trosper's class on "Principles of Indigenous Economics" for the semester, and as he knew about my research on decolonization through Indigenous education, he invited me to attend the talk. He thought it would be a good example of how AIS builds on Indigenous knowledges to present alternative theories that can challenge mainstream education and theories including economic. Of course, I accepted the invitation. We walked together to the school of management and economy building, and we had a conversation about how AIS had been branching out, in the past years, to collaborate with other departments in order to bring Indigenous knowledges and AIS to a diversity of disciplines. This had been the case with the Law College, which now had a whole program on Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy. More recent collaborations took place with geography and environmental sciences, and now, based on his efforts, it seemed to be happening in economy. Logically, this branching out to other departments seems to have followed the evolution of AIS as a discipline at UA. It used to be much more rooted in political sciences and law, then had moved in the previous year towards environmental studies and "resource management", and was now advancing in a more economic, entrepreneurial direction.

The auditorium in which Trosper gave the talk was able to accommodate about 200 people. It was very full that evening which surprised me as I was not sure how many economics and management students would attend a talk on Indigenous economy. It turned out that faculty members from these disciplines also attended. And, to be fair, some students in the room turned out not to be in economics or management programs at all. It demonstrated a definite interest for Indigenous economy, on campus, and outside of AIS department.

During his talk, Trosper presented four cases of Indigenous community economic projects, to show how these communities were not thinking about going "back to the old ways" but were rather using their Indigenous knowledges and applying them to the reality they were facing, today. The cases he presented were:

- the Menominee Tribe's forestry program, and the sustainability concept they develop, as a challenge to the mainstream ideas of economic growth;
- The Nisga'a fishery activities to talk about the concepts of collaboration, common bowl, and reciprocity, which challenge the "rational" individualistic conceptions in economy;
- The Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes' acquisition of the Kerr Dam, and how the operation of the dam changed under the Tribe's leadership, with a focus more on the respect of the downstream river than on the mere production of electrical power for profit;
- The San Xavier cooperative farm of the Tohono O'odham nation, and how it has worked against allotment (the policy of dividing Indigenous land into individual lots) to pool the land together and farm it as a cooperative.

The presentation was interesting in many ways, but specific points attracted my attention. The talk presented Indigenous knowledges and theories and their application to nation-building and community self-reliance from the perspective of sustainability. All the examples showed ways of remaining Indigenous (Menominee, Nisga'a, Salish/Kootenai, or Tohono O'odham) in the contemporary world, while moving the communities in betterment of their economic situation, following theories that were not mainstream "development" ones. Doing so, Ronald Trosper was able to show to economy and management students and Faculty that alternative theories were possible. Furthermore, these theories were all coming from Indigenous communities in relation to their land and territories. This was a clear case of inverting the power dynamics and putting the academic institution in the learning position while the communities were in the expert position. By bringing Indigenous knowledges to teach economic theory, Dr. Trosper was unsettling colonial knowledge hierarchies, and therefore articulating a decolonial project.

Additionally, all the examples that Dr. Trosper presented related to nation-building in the context of Tribal economic development. This was revealing in two ways. First, it spoke to the role of AIS in relation to Indigenous communities and how it can support Tribal sovereignty and community development. Second, it spoke to the new tendency of AIS at UA which was focussing more and more on economic development and entrepreneurship. Thus, the evening encapsulated two main decolonial projects of AIS at UA: the challenge of colonial narrative and western theories on land and economy (which MSU also does), and the nation building project, which is close to what TCUs are doing in terms of Indigenous community survivance. While the two projects do

not have to be mutually exclusive (or opposed), their realization do bring to light tensions in terms of the knowledge taught and the audience addressed (or the community served).

The Project: Old and New versions of AIS at UA

"American Indian Studies seeks to develop a strong understanding of the languages, cultures, and sovereignty of American Indians/Alaska Natives, which honors our ancestors and their wisdom."

"American Indian Studies maintains productive scholarship, teaching, research, and community development; and provides unique opportunities for students and scholars to explore issues from American Indian perspectives which place the land, its history and the people at the center."

"American Indian Studies promotes Indian self-determination, self-governance, and strong leadership as defined by Indian nations, tribes, and communities, all of which originated from the enduring beliefs and philosophies of our ancestors."

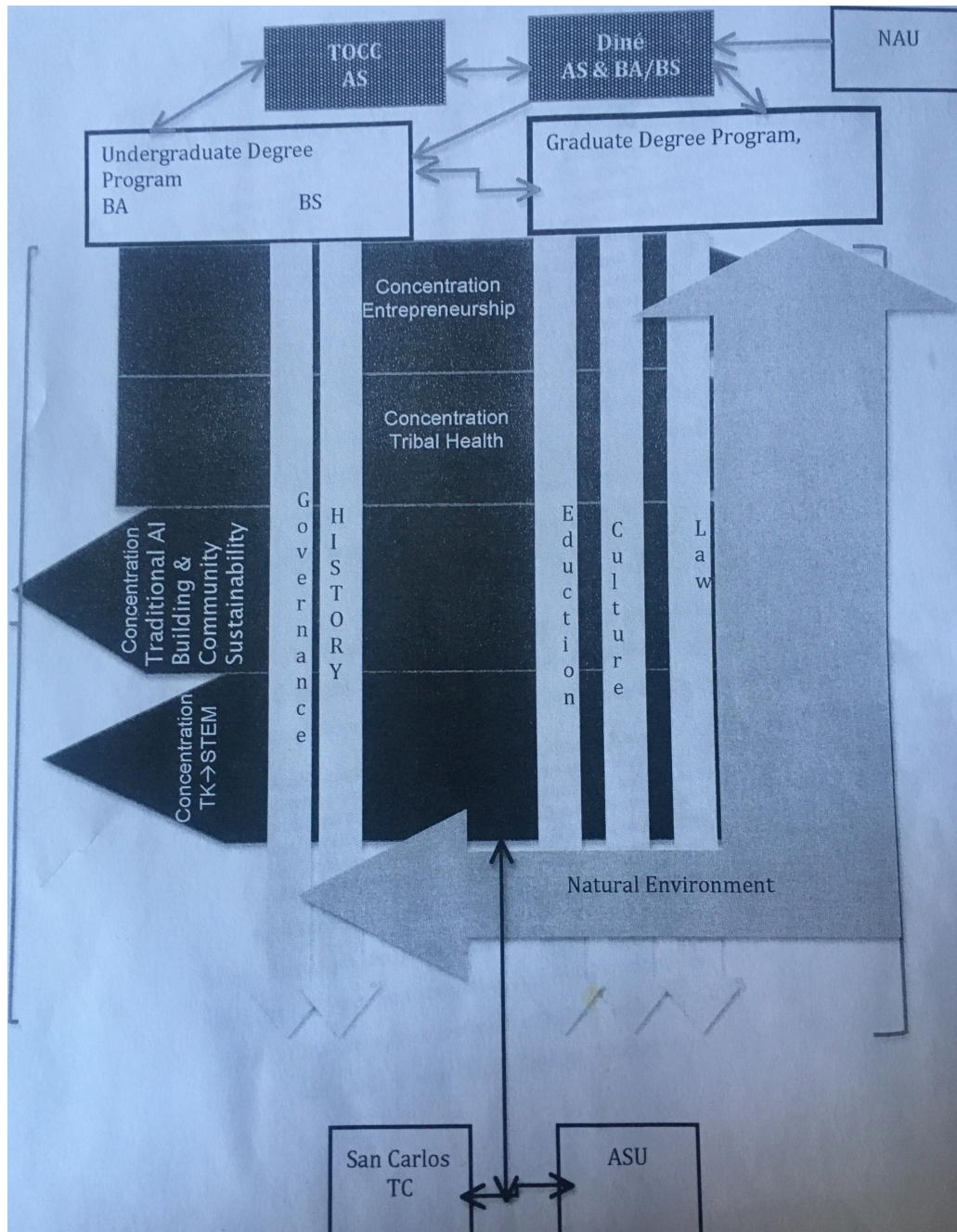
- American Indian Studies Mission, AIS website, University of Arizona²⁰¹.

The explicit mission of AIS at UA expresses complementing visions of AIS as a discipline, which nevertheless co-exist in tension, inside the department. The first part of the mission, alluding to the understanding of language, cultures, and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, corresponds to a certain foundation of the discipline in terms of knowledge building centered on land, history, and people which deconstructs the hierarchy of the DoD (challenges the "civilization" assumption) and supports Indigenous sovereignty in a pan-Indigenous perspective. Accordingly, the second part of the mission expresses the application of these knowledges in research, including theory crafting, which is a traditional strength in UA's AIS. However, this second part of the mission also alludes to community development and "productive" scholarship, teaching and research, which testifies to a turn that the discipline is taking since beginning of the century towards nation building rather than addressing the knowledge hierarchies and colonial narratives. Finally, the last part of the mission grounds AIS in this new turn, aiming at Indigenous self-determination, self-governance, sovereignty and, to a certain extent, nation-building. Tensions existed in the department around how to combine these dimensions of the mission.

Upon arriving at UA and assuming the AIS director position, Keith James developed his own vision of what AIS should be in relation to the existing tensions. He framed his new disciplinary vision in a much closer manner to the "community development" perspective, especially for the entrepreneurship Bachelor of Science Program he wanted to build. He synthesized his vision in the construction of the following figure:

²⁰¹ <https://ais.arizona.edu/american-indian-studies-mission>

Figure 14: Dr. Keith James' vision for the programs in American Indian Studies, University of Arizona



James' vision was based on agreements with Tribal Colleges (Diné and Tohono O'odham; and the future San Carlos TC) to transfer students with Associate of Science degrees, or to train Bachelor of the Arts or of Science in collaboration with the Colleges. He also aimed at collaborating with Northern Arizona University (NAU) and Arizona State University (ASU). Four concentrations would be offered, two for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) (Traditional Knowledges and

Building and Community Sustainability), and two for a Bachelor of Science (BS) (Entrepreneurship and Tribal Health). The traditional themes of law, culture and education would be maintained in the graduate program, while the BA/BS would mainly integrate notions of Indigenous history and governance²⁰².

To help me comprehend the vision he had, he described it in the following way:

This is a version of what I presented at the conference, and the wide arrows are what AIS has traditionally been, and what Indigenous Nations Studies have traditionally been, they focus on Culture, Education, Governments, the unique laws that are covering relations with American Indians groups and Native groups, Alaska Native groups. And so then is the traditional strikes of this department and what has been done here as well. And I think it's good, and I think we need to keep it, but I think its what necessarily serves Indian Students or Indian Communities in contemporary times. The students, even though there is some direct scholarship support for American Indian students (...), we have to convince them that whatever program they are getting educated in, it is going to pay off, that the degree they are getting is worth something, it's going to produce a job for them or benefit. And I don't think there is a lot of conviction amongst students that the traditional AIS focus areas is going to get them a job. And a lot of Tribal governments also are unconvinced that this is what they need. When Vine Deloria was here and into the late 90s or something, there was more concerns about that kind of things, about making sure the history was adequately represented, that there were a number of people trained in the unique legal things... I think the tribes have recognized that does not get them a lot of their problems solved these days. So there is more desire by the Tribes, the education piece is still very important. A lot of Tribes see the education, and getting students successfully through K-12 cause there is a high drop-out rate before high school graduation, and then through college graduation, is critical. But then beyond that, a lot of the traditional AIS strengths is not what the Tribes are looking for. They want economic development, they want, they got natural resources that need to get managed and addressed in a sustainable way now, not a way that ill's people. Navajo reservation has all kinds of problem with pollution from uranium, coal mining, water that has been mismanage, used for wrong purposes, so that now people don't have adequate access to clean, drinking water. On the other hand the traditional AIS discipline, you need that understanding of the unique laws, the unique approaches to government, the historical background for all the Tribes, if you are going to succeed in doing things in the communities. And that is where a lot of the mainstream non-Indian scientists and other educated people fall down. They get in the community they say, I don't understand the context of what they are dealing with in the communities, and that they have to adapt and just do things in a different way. So I am hoping to do both, keep the traditional strength but build the disciplinary skills that will 1) get students jobs, and 2) help the communities

²⁰² It is to be noted the "Native American and Indigenous Entrepreneurship Program" design that Dr. James presented to me (BS level), seemed more like an entrepreneurship program with a minor in AIS. It included 1-2 courses in AIS per semester, out of 5 course/semester. It was building on introductory classes already offered at the undergraduate level, and a few new classes such as Business Law in Indian Country, and Indigenous Entrepreneurship.

really address the kind of goals and problems that they want attended to (James, 2016, interview).

There is much to unpack here, including who AIS is serving and how, what different branches should AIS entail, and what should a good AIS program offer as skill sets. The bottom line is that James' vision is moving away from the founding vision of the department, by Vine Deloria and others, which aimed at unveiling colonial processes and narratives by teaching Indigenous history, policy and law to a broad audience (similar to MSU). Instead, his vision entails an AIS model of economic development for the Tribes.

James' version of AIS was therefore at odds with that of many current faculty members who participated in the program for years. For example, Robert Hershey, adjunct professor of Law who had a joint appointment in AIS, had other ideas of how AIS should Indigenize the academy, following a number of steps. First, situate Western imagery of Indigenous peoples and its effects on American Indian policy, so students understand the relationship between the colonial imagination and Federal Indian policies. To understand that, he said, teachers should assign books about the colonization process and the colonizing imagery it creates. Second, the curriculum should move students towards authors who decolonize that imagery or who create a different imagery: for example, books focused on the contribution of Indigenous Peoples to US history, society, politics, and current scientific knowledges. Only then could students actually be open to Indigenous perspectives through poetry (Ofelia Zepeda for the O'odham poetry or Luci Tapahonso for the Navajo Poetry) or storytelling. As an example of storytelling approach in his discipline, he mentioned John Borrows' work on Indigenous laws and their expression through stories. This vision fits with the work of Deloria, Holm, and other intellectual founders of the AIS program. Of course, Hershey's vision is also oriented towards the education of non-Indigenous students who lack education about these issues. This version of AIS could still serve Indigenous students, as described at MSU, where Indigenous students learning about colonial processes was important to understand past and present realities that they face on a daily basis (see Francine Spang-Willis' perspective).

During a conversation with Tom Holm, he expressed his discomfort with the kind of model that Keith James was presenting, which was, according to him, based on money and administration, at the institutional level (i.e. how to bring in more students) and on a definition of the Tribes' needs in terms of economic success in the market, or following the model of society

that the US is creating (so teaching in mining, computing, for example; Tom Holm, personal communication, March 2016). In other words, he felt the AIS model was based on economic development as defined from a capitalist standpoint. He thought that the good intentions of serving the tribes' needs and goals through development and nation-building often served to impose mainstream economic ways. Accordingly, this model would support sovereignty defined in terms of governance, which denotes a top-down Western concept of sovereignty and reinforces colonialism.

However, James' vision for AIS also had its supporters; among those was Ronald Trosper, who had himself begun the shift when he was the head of AIS. He came to UA with a vision more oriented towards environment and natural resources, for the Tribes, and developed courses around Indigenous principles of economy, sustainability, and such. He was already working in a more nation-building and development perspective and was supporting the idea of developing an entrepreneurial focus in AIS.

While Ronald Trosper was relatively supportive and enthusiastic regarding James' vision, Benedict Colombi, an anthropologist who had arrived to the program before Ronald Trosper, and who first opened the door in the direction of environmental studies and natural resources, was less sure about the economic development and entrepreneurship turn that the department was taking. He remembered that,

When I started here, our goals were to teach different areas. Education, Societies and cultures, language and literature which was combined, and law and policy. Then I helped to add natural resources and environment, and then they got Trosper to come in, to help with that. I don't know where we are going to go in the next 5 years, because we have a new head, we have potentially some new hires, who are really narrowing the focus on economic development. We have people getting ready to retire. So I think it's pretty unpredictable at this point in time (Colombi, 2016, interview).

Colombi was expressing, in a nutshell, the turning point where AIS was, and the friction between the different visions. He conceived of his contribution to the department as adding an area to AIS, while maintaining its general orientation towards Indigenous knowledges in these areas, and support of Indigenous sovereignty. The turn towards economic development represented for him an unwelcomed change in the nature of the discipline.

As it turned out, the new turn towards entrepreneurship does not seem to have taken root, as Keith James is no longer the head of the department, Benedict Colombi currently being interim. Additionally, the Bachelor in Science in entrepreneurship was not launched. Yet, the new turn in terms of relationships with local Tribes seems to have been applied, as James now assumes the title of "Director of Tribal Initiatives", and a new hire, Tristan Reader, specializing in food sovereignty amongst other things, and someone with 20 years of experience with the Tohono O'odham Community Action, is now assistant professor of practice. To sum up, the move that would have changed the knowledge taught in AIS was rejected, while the aspect of strengthening the relationships with communities (defined as local Tribes) was accepted. But for the time I spent at UA, both what knowledge to teach and what community to serve were up to debates.

Indigenous knowledges at UA: Development of Indigenous theories out of a diversity of experiences

The concept at contact was that we were not civilized and we didn't have all the things that civilization had, we didn't have, you know, science, we didn't teach all that, but yeah, it's there! I think that in that way, (...) people are realizing that people, Native people had philosophy, had science, and I think you can see that happening in some of the STEM area because some of the natives are going in STEM because this is where the money is. Looking at science from a different perspective, I think more people are starting to do that... that's progress, that's good.
- Mary-Jo Tippeconnic Fox (2016, interview).

One of the important goals of AIS at UA is, as Mary-Jo Tippeconnic Fox expresses here, to make space for Indigenous knowledges and science, in a way that challenges the Doctrine of Discovery's logic of supremacy, or the idea of civilization. With her experience with Tribal Colleges (she sat on the board of her Tribes' college), Dr. Fox represents the Education branch of AIS that was included in the envisioning of the program with the concentrations in Law and Policy, literature and language, culture and society, and education. Her vision is in line with the tradition of the department, where the knowledge taught in AIS focuses on decolonizing the academy, including through the development of Indigenous theories (which is similar to what is done at MSU, too). She explained the tradition of the department in the following way:

You have to have the law and policy because we are a political group. You got to understand that. But you also got to understand education. Because education was used as an assimilation tool historically, and still is used as a socialization skill, it's the heart of all that history and in order to understand Native people, you got to understand the education component of it. I think it has to be there. But societies and cultures have to be there too. And the literatures, I think, because so many, literature is an area where a lot of native People have gone into (...) so I think you have to have all of that. But you also got to have language, this and that... So I don't know, I think Law and policy stays, I hope education stays, societies and cultures stays (...) (Tippeconnic-Fox, 2016, interview).

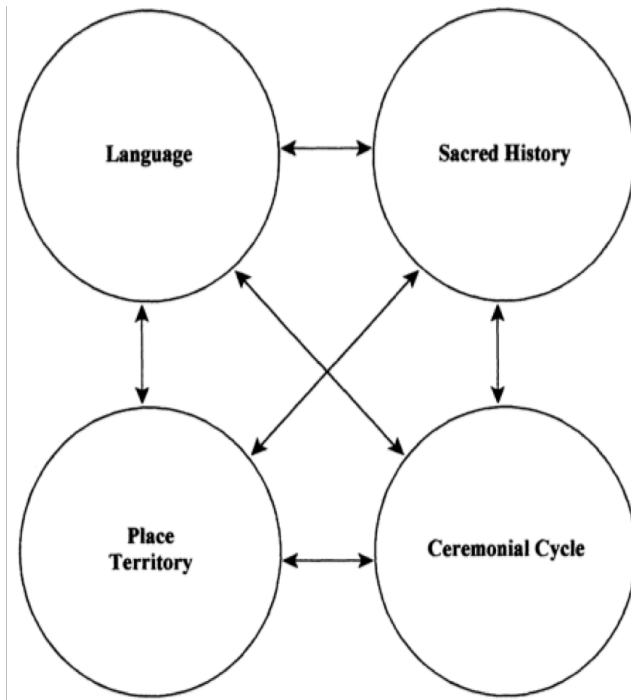
According to her, there is a logic to have the different areas included in AIS, which she also explained as how each of these areas challenge the "civilization" logic of DoD, while supporting sovereignty, a transversal theme and objective in AIS. In this "traditional" vision of AIS, sovereignty includes intellectual sovereignty based on Indigenous scholars' active work to develop theories rooted in Indigenous perspectives. This "traditional" theoretical work done in AIS includes the crafting of concepts such as Peoplehood (Holm), safety zone (Lomawaima), and

Tribal critical race theory (Brayboy). These contributions all come from Indigenous scholars in AIS, many of them from UA.

The concept of Safety Zone, for example, was developed by Tsianina Lomawaima (who was at one point the head of the department – she is now at ASU in Phoenix). Based on the experience of Indigenous Peoples in education, and the way the American government dealt with their cultural differences in educational policy, Lomawaima and McCarty points to the tendency of establishing "safe differences" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 53) or a "safety zone of tolerable cultural difference" (2006, p. 66). In the context of mainstream education, Western cultural norms usually become the standard against which to measure this difference, in "an ongoing struggle over cultural difference and its perceived threat, or benefit, to a sense of shared American Identity" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 6). Thus, with the Safety Zone, Lomawaima and McCarty developed a powerful analytical tool to unveil the coloniality of education, but also to open the possibility of challenging that safety zone or colonial mindset.

As for the Peoplehood model, it was developed by Tom Holm in collaboration with Pearson and Chavis (2003). The Peoplehood matrix aims at an integrative model that represents the dimensions important for Indigenous Peoples, yet leaving place for the diverse specific contents of these dimensions depending on what Indigenous nation is considered. The authors developed the model as the epistemological basis to "Indigenous studies". They considered it effective in representing Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being. Figure 15 shows how they represent their model:

Figure 15: Peoplehood Matrix, according to Holm, Pearson and Chavis (2003)



In this matrix, while each component can and will change for each specific nation (i.e. what language, what territory), what will remain is the relation that the nation entertains with these components and how the components themselves relate to each other. Corntassel and Alfred explain "Peoplehood" as a "dynamic and interconnected concept of Indigenous identity constituted in history, ceremony, language and land" (Tiaiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, p. 609) at the core of which we find relationships (to the history, to the land, to the community, to culture, etc.) taking different forms in each nation. For these authors, relationality is the central characteristic of Indigeneity/Indigenous knowledge, even if each nation might understand it in different ways. The Peoplehood model is still used today by many Indigenous scholars, and it was used in AIS at UA. For example, Ronald Trosper used it in his class, when addressing Indigenous Peoples' specificities and identities. Thus, it is an important model to consider and to understand the dimensions of knowledges included in AIS.

The Peoplehood matrix is a good example of how the combination of various community-centered, place-specific approach to knowledge with an attempt to theorize generally about "Indigenous principles" leads to innovative conceptualization. While the arrival of faculty members specialized in environment, "natural resources", and economy, such as Trosper and Colombi, marked a new turn in the department, they were still building theories based on a

diversity of local experiences. Their theories were contesting other dimensions of the colonial system, such as developmental and capitalist. Accordingly, Dr. Trosper's course "Principles of Indigenous Economics" included a theoretical component. In his perspective,

Indigenous and Aboriginal Peoples in the Americas developed distinctive economic systems prior to contact with Europe. As the world economic system developed, Indigenous peoples attempted to preserve their ways of life as best they could, with some success. This course examines the ontological, epistemological and moral bases of Indigenous economic theory with application to contemporary problems (Ronald Trosper's Principles of Indigenous Economics, syllabus, description of the course).

Additionally, Trosper was beginning to collaborate with the department of economics at UA, presenting alternative theories that emerged from his work with different Indigenous nations and their "distinctive economic systems". He was therefore contributing to the decolonization and indigenization of the academy.

To do so, Trosper challenged many assumptions central to modern economics. He described his approach in the following words:

It's taken me a long time to figure out, sort of where the fundamental issues are in terms of the differences. At first I focused on the fact that economics assume that people weren't generous, they were just selfish. They also, economists were very hostile to the notion of government, lots of economists, the only kind of government they like is the government that they can be consult to, to give them policy advice about what, or how to set taxes, or what to do with regulation of industry... The notion that the intermediate level of organization that is a non-profit sector, the Indigenous sector, anything other than corporations was worth studying, probably was not very popular in economics. Economics is highly mathematical. And so your models have to be highly mathematical, and only certain questions can be resolved with data and be mathematical in nature. (...) But then my problem would have been that I would have come up with a mathematical formulation that didn't fit into the underlying assumptions of economics, which is individual decision making, and a nation-state with a little bit of attention to corporations, but they don't really focus on how corporation challenge all their assumptions. Cause corporations can be treated just as big individuals. (...) So the dominant mathematical model, combined with the hidden assumptions that sneak in, makes economics a very frustrating field, especially for someone like me (Trosper, 2016, interview).

Answering to these mainstream economic assumptions, Trosper presented "Indigenous principles of economy", in which economy is integrated with ecosystems and governance, following principles of cooperation, reciprocity, and resilience. This is an alternative view of economy than the usual disembodied economy (in Polanyi sense), where rational individuals are

the actors, in competition with each other. In that sense, the class was very critical of western concepts of development, growth, and sustainability, based on diverse Indigenous perspectives. Thus, Trosper was bringing a new perspective to the department, and opening the door to the new AIS version that had begun a few years before his arrival.

In our conversation about the knowledge he brings to the classroom, he mentioned that Indigenous knowledges come from the land, and demand locally-based work. He explained:

I have a friend back home, who her view, she is deep into knowledge of plants, and very good at it, and she really dislikes the idea that when we study traditional knowledge, we should be worried because it's been lost. Because her view is, it's not lost, it's out there in the country side. It's still there, the knowledge is still there, we can always go back and find it again, if we have the right processes. And so she has this sense that she and her friends have a process of getting knowledge from the land, that works. So the process of getting knowledge from the land functions. So you don't lose knowledge as long as you have the process. [...] So they say we listen to the land. Well, immediately we assume that the land is talking to you in English or in Navajo. No, it's not what they mean. They mean they carefully observe [...] (Trosper, 2016, interview).

According to this perspective, knowledge thus requires access to, and relationships with, the land. Of course, Trosper recognized that it is often easier for Tribal Colleges to get their students onto land and learn from it. Nevertheless, the strength of his course was to bring in experiences from a diversity of Indigenous communities and comparing them to understand better the general "Indigenous principles of economy". Similarly, in Mary-Jo Tippeconnic-Fox's class, the development of general understanding of Indigenous higher education was based on the experience of local communities, institutions, and programs. The study of locally-rooted Tribal Colleges and Universities' experiences, and their coming together in AIHEC national network, was providing a better picture of education's role in processes of nation building, both for the colonial nation-state, and for Tribal sovereignty.

In all cases, the teaching was based on the efforts in the communities to build alternative economies and educational programs according to their own knowledges and principles. The courses in AIS compile these local experiences and theories, in order to articulate a broader pan-Indigenous decolonial perspective that could then challenge general mainstream principles of economy and education (and, in other classes, of natural resource management). Thus, while it also taught about colonial processes, AIS' support of Indigenous sovereignty took the form of developing Indigenous theorization, in the academy. It was not surprising, then, that AIS would

also be a place of new initiatives in the discipline, even if these also brought their contingent of tensions.

However, another new tendency was emerging in AIS under the leadership of Keith James. His vision was to offer programs and knowledge that would be useful to Indigenous communities, as defined by Tribal government, and to support Tribal nation building. He considered that Indigenous knowledges exist in all fields, including economy, environment, and entrepreneurship. He thought AIS had been confined to humanities for too long, and thought it was time to develop and teach Indigenous knowledges in fields that would actually help economic and social development in Tribal nations. This vision represents another turn in the discipline: where former vision articulated the possibility of theorization coming from Indigenous communities to the university to decolonize it; his vision was that university should train people the right way to serve the communities. He was, to a certain extent, returning the power relationship to where university is the expert knowledge keeper in charge of training citizens – in this case, Indigenous citizens of Tribal nations. Thus, the new turn in which Keith James wanted to engage the AIS department actually rose the question of what community is AIS serving, and how?

Community relationships and nation-building in AIS

We need to really have a good heart to have a discussion about, does Indian Country really need AIS? In terms of practicality... Do Tribes, if you are going to do the practical route, do Tribes need people with degrees in AIS, or do Tribes need people in Law enforcement [as an example] with a minor in AIS, so they understand how everything works. (...) The intellectual discipline definitely needs to get going and we can socially reproduce ourselves like any other discipline. We are all good at that (...). But (...) actually, at the undergraduate level, an AIS minor might be the ideal thing to do for anybody who wants to work in Indian Country, or with non-profits, and with the government, so you understand the history, the diversity, and maybe have some cultural sensitivity (...)

- Nancy Parezo (2016, interview).

The new turn in AIS thus raised the question of AIS' role in terms of nation-building for the Tribes in Arizona, and the idea of building the capacity of students to benefit their home communities – or, in the case of non-Indigenous students, to serve appropriately in “Indian Country”. Hence, a common objective was to support nation building, but the meaning of nation building, and the way to support it, was not necessarily agreed upon. This ambivalence was expressed by Nancy Parezo, wondering if the tribes really needed AIS, and if so, how could it benefit them. Up to this point, AIS had developed political, legal, literal, and philosophical theories supporting Indigenous sovereignty in a broad definition (including cultural and intellectual sovereignty). Increasingly, however, AIS was taking on the task of sovereignty in the sense of Tribal nation-building through resource management, economic development and entrepreneurship. The perspective expressed by Parezo implied that to serve “Indian Country” meant to develop professionals in any field, with a minor in AIS in order to learn how to adapt these professions to the cultural context. In this perspective, AIS was not necessarily there to decolonize knowledge hierarchies and civilization claims of the settler-state, but rather to teach economic development and political governance in the context of Indigenous communities.

For instance, Ronald Trospen had participated in a committee to create, at Northern Arizona University, a program in Applied Indigenous Studies, located in the College of Ecosystem, Sciences and Management. This was an innovative approach, that he defined as one AIS model, "getting an undergraduate degree to train students to work for their tribe" (Trospen, 2016, interview). This was also clearly James' vision, to develop undergraduate programs that would attend the Tribes' needs and goals. To do so, his proposal was also to collaborate more closely with

Arizona Tribal Colleges; an answer to a critique I heard at MSU, regarding the lack of collaboration with Tribal Colleges.

The orientation towards a community engagement was also reflected at other levels, for example, in the courses taught. Adam Murry, PhD in industrial-organizational psychology, came to UA as a post-doctorate under the leadership of James, with whom he had work in the past. He was put in charge of the methodology class, as he had an extensive knowledge and experience of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. His mandate was also to re-organize the methodology class. While Indigenous research methodologies emerged in the past decade or so, with the works of Smith, Kovach, and Wilson, Murry explained in his first class that methodologies' content range from epistemologies, to research design and methods, and that his focus was to look at how one could bring the epistemology to the design and methods. He said he was more inclined towards Community-Based Participatory methods, and "getting things done" (policies, for the Tribes) with the tools of methods. His class still included discussion on the philosophy, on science, and on the ethics of research. Nevertheless, he was mainly interested in looking at positive examples of research with and by Indigenous communities on subjects like education, health, and traditional ecological knowledge, that were using qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. His goal was to help students go from a research question to research design and methods. Thus, rather than discussing in detail Indigenous research methodologies' epistemology, it was more about research ethics in terms of benefitting the communities. CBPR was presented as the golden standard.

Murry's approach was in line with the idea of training students to work in the communities and tended to fall on the nation-building role of the department. However, this approach was looked upon by part of AIS faculty as neglecting the role of the discipline in terms of intellectual sovereignty. For instance, in Dr. Parezo's words, AIS more and more

exist[s] to help, let's face it, reservation communities. We tend not to even look at where 60% of Native Peoples are living [urban areas] and think about them. And that is because of the Federal Recognition process, here and in Canada. Or is it an intellectual discipline. And so we now have a leader in AIS that only, does not understand as it turns out, AIS as an intellectual discipline and he only wants to do helping reservation communities. The applied stuff. We should be doing both (Parezo, 2016, interview).

While Nancy Parezo was raising a question regarding the new turn of the discipline in her department, she was also raising the question of who the discipline is for – the reservation communities which represents 40% of the Indigenous population? What about the urban Indigenous communities – 60% of the Indigenous population²⁰³? Given its history and ties with pan-Indigenous movements such as AIM in the 1906s and 1970s, AIS used to serve a broader idea of intellectual sovereignty, cultural claims and decolonizing perspective that served the urban Indigenous communities as much as the Tribes in terms of self-identification, self-determination, and nation-to-nation relationship with the US State. Accordingly, AIS generally applies a pan-Indigenous perspective that fits well the overall political and legal challenge of US nation-state. However, Nancy Parezo, a longstanding faculty member at UA, observed that,

in AIS if you talk to the students and the people [...] they are in a period where their identity is Navajo, and Hopi, and everything, they are not thinking AIS. And we are in a period where what you are going to see is that the Tribal Colleges, they can do that cultural studies for specific cultures really well, which we can't. We have one cultural course, which is Navajo. We shouldn't be doing that, we are privileging Navajo [...] It should be one of them, if we are doing this right. I think we are in that kind of stage (Parezo, 2016, interview).

Here Parezo addresses the community-centered tendency of Indigenous higher education, which is difficult to fulfill in an AIS department that is addressing a diversity of Indigenous nations and cultures. Meanwhile, the turn towards nation building and tribally-specific approach was running the risk of leaving behind an important segment of Indigenous communities, in the urban context²⁰⁴.

During my fieldwork in Arizona, AIS was in this intense re-consideration of its role in nation building, and what it meant in term of community relationship: what communities was the department serving, and what audience was it addressing? These questions were sources of debates

²⁰³ I am here following the numbers with which Parezo was working at the time. But according to the US census, in 2010, it was 71% of Indigenous Peoples in the US that lived in urban areas. This does not invalidate her point, and only makes her question even more pressing.

²⁰⁴ It is also important to think about the overlap that exists between urban and reservation Indigenous populations. Many people move from one place to another, and living in the city does not mean that someone is not tied to a reserve community, where they might spend a lot of time too. This is even truer for university students, some of whom might have moved to the city for their studies, yet remain attached to their community. This is not to overlook the fact that some Indigenous people are also born in the city, with little or no ties to a reserve community. Indigenous urban studies are out of the range of this dissertation, but it seems important to highlight the complexity of the issue and not dichotomize between urban and “on reserve” populations.

and tensions that I did not observe at MSU. One of the reasons that might explain the presence of these debates at UA more prominently than at MSU is the institutional context, and the fact that Indigenous nation-building was also the concern of other programs and institutes at UA, thus questioning the stand that of AIS was taking on this issue.

For example, the "traditional" sense of nation building, put forward by Deloria when creating the graduate program in the first place, with a strong training in law and policy, had since evolved into the Indigenous Peoples' Law and Policy program, in the College of Law. The program provides "legal education in the field of federal Indian law, tribal law and policy, and indigenous peoples human rights. Students are trained in the classroom and in real-world settings by faculty who are leaders both in their academic fields and as practitioners in tribal, national, and international forums" (program's website)²⁰⁵. While at least one professor of the program, Robert Hershey, is listed as an affiliated faculty member for the AIS, in reality, there was very little active collaboration between IPLP and AIS. Even Robert Williams, originally hired as a collaboration between the College of Law and AIS, was now entirely dedicated to IPLP and the College of Law, and did not have anything to do with AIS anymore. Furthermore, IPLP had built a strong reputation with brilliant, international and active students as well as internationally renowned professors, like Robert Williams and James Anaya, who assumed the role of Special Rapporteur on Indigenous rights for the UN between 2008 and 2014²⁰⁶. With such a great program in the College of Law, offered at all undergraduate and graduate levels, there is little place left for AIS to be relevant in this area of work at UA. That is not to say that AIS was not an actor in making the space at UA for the development of such a dominant program but AIS had to find other avenues to assert its influence.

Another example of nation building efforts at UA is the Native Nations Institute. Created in 2001 as an outgrowth of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (created in 1980 by Joseph P. Kalt and Stephen Cornell, who is now at UA), the Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, and Policy (aka Native Nations Institute or NNI) is a research and outreach unit within the Udall Centre for Studies in Public Policy²⁰⁷. The NNI defines nation

²⁰⁵ <https://law.arizona.edu/indigenous-peoples-law-policy-program>

²⁰⁶ Dr. Anaya was then offered the position of Dean of the Law School at University of Colorado Boulder, where he began working in August of 2016.

²⁰⁷ See the NNI history webpage:
<http://nni.arizona.edu/about-us/history>

building as the "efforts Native nations make to increase their capacities for self-rule and for self-determined, sustainable community and economic development"²⁰⁸, which entails, according to NNI:

building institutions of self-government that are culturally appropriate to the nation and that are effective in addressing the nation's challenges. It involves developing the nation's capacity to make timely, strategically informed decisions about its affairs and to implement those decisions. It involves a comprehensive effort to rebuild societies that work²⁰⁹.

To sum up, many "new" tendencies at AIS were addressing issues that the NNI was working on. For instance, NNI is working on policy analysis and research, as well as educational and tribal services. It has projects specifically dedicated to governance, constitutions, and Indigenous data sovereignty. While the "new" kind of AIS that the department was proposing included a perspective focused on tribal needs and economic development, for example, the NNI was already doing nation-building work. While AIS is collaborating with NNI, it is not leading the institute, which is situated in a different department (Udall centre) and is not listed amongst the institute's partners (IPLP is), nor are any AIS faculty members listed as affiliated to the institute (while many College of Law faculty are, including Robert Williams and newly hired Rebecca Tsosie). This situation asks questions about the role and leadership that AIS can take as a discipline and department at UA.

With these questions in mind, many faculty members in AIS wanted to play another role that neither NNI nor IPLP were fulfilling, namely supporting UA to educate the greater public about Indigenous Nations. This is why some were keen on retaining the "older" version of AIS in his department. The education of non-Indigenous students remains an important way to support nation building and Indigenous sovereignty, as the NAS project at MSU demonstrates. It was also part of the AIS project, and Amy Fatzinger mentioned that challenging mainstream history was very important, in ways that would help students understand sovereignty, a question she always included in her final exam. To her, that was an important way of supporting Indigenous nations in their sovereign work, since,

²⁰⁸ NNI - What is Nation Building?
<http://nni.arizona.edu/programs-projects/what-native-nation-building>

²⁰⁹ NNI - What is Nation Building?
<http://nni.arizona.edu/programs-projects/what-native-nation-building>

The National Congress of American Indians, year after year, the president's address that they give, the State of American Indian Nations, they do it around the State of Union Address time. What they say every year, every president, is that one of their biggest issues is the difficulty of relations with the surrounding communities. And as long as you have complete ignorance in those communities, it is not going to get any better. So at least a little bit of education helps (Fatzinger, 2016, interview).

So the education of non-Indigenous students, the efforts to re-frame their narratives around the US nation-state and its relationship with Indigenous nations and territories, is also part of supporting Indigenous nation-building, in a mainstream institution. Amy Fatzinger was not the only one with this perspective. Benedict Colombi also stressed the importance of training students so that they would understand better the relationship to territory and natural resources, from an Indigenous point of view, and from the point of view of Indigenous laws and policies. He said:

If you look at the economies of the tribes, especially in the West, western US and North America, most of it is natural resources (incomprehensible) forestry, fisheries, (incomprehensible) mining extraction. So it's a perfect area for us to focus on in terms of training our students, to be conversant in the management and understanding of natural resources on Indigenous lands. It can be from a historical approach, or it can be more from a cultural perspective (Colombi, 2016, interview).

Thus, both in terms of political sovereignty and of economic development of the Indigenous nations and communities in the US, AIS seems to still have an important role in terms of educating non-Indigenous peoples and challenging mainstream narratives and perspectives of the colonial state.

This attention to Indigenous communities' knowledges and their decolonial potential was therefore at play when considering reforming AIS program to serve Tribes' nation-building processes. Is the university the knowledge expert that can support the Tribes in their projects, or are Indigenous communities the ones that can teach universities alternative ways of thinking and theorizing in social, political, environmental, or economic sciences? Up to this point I mainly presented examples that address a perspective rooted in the "community service" type of collaboration, not necessarily in the perspective of learning from the communities and from the Tribal Colleges. Community relationships were also brought into AIS as ways to learn from the communities. Guest speakers were common practice in Benedict Colombi's class, who also included field trips to cultural centers. In Mary-Jo Tippeconnic-Fox's Tribal Colleges and Universities class, directors of the Diné College and of a newly founded Tribal College (San Carlos

Apache Tribe's college) were invited to talk about their experiences. Similarly, Ronald Trosper invited someone from the San Xavier coop farm (Tohono O'odham) to discuss their economic model with the class. Thus, just as observed at MSU, AIS at UA also brought to the classroom the experiences, stories, and knowledges of Indigenous communities, as an important source of learning. Indigenous communities were therefore still considered as knowledge holders, and solution bearers to contemporary society's problems is a powerful decolonial move that challenges the supremacy logic of the DoD. It would be possible to take into account a reciprocal process of both learning from the communities to challenge mainstream academy's theories, which then could invest back in communities to support their project and nation-building projects, rather than seeing these two approaches as opposite to each other.

Conclusion: What discipline for what decolonization?

AIS was meant to rock the boat, always: it is for sovereignty and thus, decolonial or anti-colonial. Based on Native ways of knowing, from which we can learn.

- Dr. Tom Holm (personal communication, March 2016).

Tom Holm reminded me that NAIS, as a decolonial project, was always meant to "rock the boat", and as a discipline, the boat it is rocking is the mainstream academy's. That is the fundamental point of developing an Indigenous studies program or department which should therefore work as agent of change within the context of mainstream institutions. The question remains, though, as to how AIS is actually challenging UA institutionally. Historically, AIS brought Indigenous politics and legal questions to the nation state and with the telling of alternative histories. This is closer to the initial founding of AIS graduate program at UA, with Deloria, Momaday, Holm, and Zepeda, amongst other Indigenous scholars. This original take on AIS was also influential to other AIS/NAS departments, as for example MSU's NAS that remains close to these endeavours. At MSU, but much more deeply at UA, a "new" way of challenging settler/mainstream society and academy seems to be through the consideration of other areas of work, such as environmental sciences and economy. While opening to new fields, the decolonial project remains a political, legal, economic and intellectual one. This speaks to decolonizing the discursive dimension of the doctrine of discovery, while also addressing structural dimensions such as land, economic and political hierarchies.

Moreover, the AIS department at UA has a new impulse for another decolonial project, focused on tribal nation building processes, and the structural survivance of Tribes in the US. This requires establishing new relationships with the Tribes, and playing a different role, as AIS, in terms of training professional in a community-serving perspective. This nation building process is also questioning the more pan-Indigenous (or at least, in the US, a "pan-Indian") perspective on sovereignty and nation building, with an increasing culturally-specific and community (or "Tribally") centered approach to nation-building. Tribal Colleges might be better equipped for the task of supporting specific nation, while AIS might be better adapted to the task of challenging the nation-state and creating space and support for sovereignty and nation-building. Therefore, establishing relationships with Tribal Colleges and local Indigenous communities at AIS was an attempt to establish balance between Tribally-specific education and general understanding of colonial and decolonial processes. Collaborating with Tribal Colleges can become a way to support

locally-rooted education, while combining it with a broader, comparative and national, or even international perspective.

While a new relationship with Tribes and Tribal Colleges can bring important changes in the discipline, it is important to keep in mind the power relationship that AIS is questioning: AIS historically has considered Indigenous communities' knowledges to challenge the theories and knowledge hierarchies in the Academy. Wanting to train people in the mainstream academy to serve better their communities bears the danger of returning the power of "expertise" to mainstream academy. There could also be more learning from AIS in mainstream institutions and urban settings regarding what knowledge are taught in community-settings of Tribal Colleges. For example, Ronald Trosper's considerations about traditional knowledge and relationship to the land discloses that land-based approaches are easier done on the reservations, in TCUs. But he also highlighted the fact that all universities are situated on Indigenous lands, and there are knowledges to learn on any campus and its land too. Learning from TCUs practices, AIS could have an important role to play in bringing up alternative stories that mainstream institutions too often overlook – including the stories of the land on which universities sit. This can be a powerful decolonial project in and of itself, addressing both the colonial history of institutions, and the Indigenous knowledges and stories of these places. This is something that I have not observed, neither at UA nor at MSU. Land-based pedagogy, just as community-based one, seems to always allude to reservations and Tribal communities, which is a serious limit to considering the extent of Indigenous territories, knowledges, as well as the fact that Indigenous communities exist outside of reservations. In reality, all land in the Americas correspond to Indigenous territories – including when urban centers were developed.

Renewing the discipline and establishing more reciprocity with the Tribes is an important development at AIS, but another decolonial dimension of the AIS project refers to the challenge of knowledge hierarchies in the academy. When defining Indigenous knowledge, Trosper referred to it as differing from a western scientific process that includes experimentation. Explaining his friend's process, he said: "careful observation, without experimentation, can lead to reliable knowledge. Experiment helps, sometimes you do that, but it's not essential" (Trosper, 2016, interview). In other words, Indigenous knowledge as a process, and not only as content, challenges the mainstream academy. In order for Indigenous knowledge processes and contents to challenge

mainstream ones, Trospen mentioned the importance of space like AIS, where one could work on Indigenous knowledges, without relying on different disciplines' assumptions:

I feel that in AIS is useful to have our own home, because we can dismiss certain assumptions from the disciplines and go after doing our own thing. So if I was in an economics department, I would constantly be bombarded with the economic worldview, and it would be hard to dismiss it. But if I just walk away and go teach in the forestry school, I can work on my own economics theory without conforming to some of the basics requirements in economics (Trospen, 2016, interview).

Here, Dr. Trospen addresses the limits of Western knowledges and of the academy, in relation to Indigenous knowledges, because of basic frameworks and assumptions, and certain "epithets that are coming from the settler colonial framework, that operate to create barriers" (Trospen, 2016, interview). He mentioned epithets such as the noble savage, or "going native", and other expressions that are often applied in discriminatory manner, limiting the possible space made for Indigenous knowledges in different disciplines.

AIS, as a place and space for developing and sustaining Indigenous knowledges, questions the assumptions maintained in other academic disciplines. For example, in his book about Indigenous Sustainability in the Northwest Coast of Canada, Trospen questions the evolutionist assumption that regards the state as the highest form of political organization. We talked about this passage, and the economic and political model he described for the Indigenous nations of the West Coast, and he said:

from the political evolutionist people, who have this evolution model of the growth of the state, and they asked me, where is it that you fit in this model? And my answer was, I don't fit, because, we are not on that continuum. And then I read their book, and they don't ever show an example of a society that goes through those stages. They have the stages, they put different people from different societies on each stage, but they don't have a society that goes through those stages, it is not an empirically proved notion (Trospen, 2016, interview).

From this perspective, and from the work he had done throughout his life in Indigenous communities and their economic principles and sustainable development, Trospen was thus questioning western theories of social, political and economic evolution, as well as western ideas of development. It would have been hard to do so from outside of AIS, which gave him a place and space to develop these ideas, against the mainstream socio-political and economics assumptions. AIS offered the possibility of bringing Indigenous knowledges in the academy, thus

challenging Western scientific assumptions. This relates to the epistemological decolonial project of the Amawtay Wasi, more so, than NAIS discipline's goal to unveil and understand colonial processes.

This might be the niche that AIS will find, in the future, at UA: looking at new theoretical avenues to explore, rather than the classic historical, legal, and political ones, and doing so in reciprocity and closer collaboration with Tribes and TCUs – hopefully, without dropping their responsibilities towards the majority of Indigenous Peoples living in the urban context. It remains to be seen how much connections and relationships they are able to develop with Arizona state Tribes, and how much applied work they will be doing in collaboration with these Tribes. Nonetheless, as Keith James, Nancy Parezo, and Ronald Trosper highlight, the work of Tribal Colleges is key in this tribally-centered knowledge, therefore, it would require at least partnering with TCUs to take this avenue. The articulation of AIS intellectual tradition as a discipline to the academic work done in TCUs could strengthen the complementarity of tribally-specific and pan-Indigenous perspectives in the development of theories that can be put in practice locally, in a useful way for both Tribal and urban communities. Similarly, articulating both discursive (challenging narratives) and structural (through nation-building) decolonization is important in the redefinition of nation-to-nation relationships between Indigenous and Settler nations²¹⁰.

²¹⁰ Of course, this is from the perspective of AIS as a discipline. Part of the work would of course need to come from the nation state, as the articulation of a nation-to-nation relationships would require that US (or Canada, or any settler state) restructure its foundation so that it would not rest on the DoD anymore. AIS contributes to that discussion and reflection, but it cannot achieve this on its own.

CHAPTER 10: ANALYSIS. HOW ARE IHE INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTING TO DECOLONIZATION?

By the end of the spring of 2016, I had compiled material about four projects of Indigenous higher education, two of them Indigenous institutions, one in North and one in South America; and the two other programs of Indigenous studies (or NAIS) both in North America. I concentrated my fieldwork in two countries - USA and Ecuador - so that it would remain manageable, yet it would also provide comparative material drawn from different political and cultural contexts. The objective of this chapter is therefore to compare these IHE projects, and the three dimensions I described for each of them – their respective projects, relationships to Indigenous communities and to Indigenous knowledges – in relation to the theoretical framework of colonization/decolonization that I presented in chapter 2 and 3. I am especially interested in looking at how the IHE programs and institutions that I presented here relate to the three decolonial projects I detailed in Chapter 3 - survivance (Vizenor, 2008), storying (Grande et al., 2015), and resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014) – in order to answer the colonial logic of the DoD described in Chapter 2.

This is of course assuming that the unifying factor underlying all IHE institutions and programs I worked with is that each was created in response to colonial situations, which follows my argument that IHE as a general phenomenon is a tool for decolonization. The description of each institutions' and programs' project supports this claim: these projects are all transformative in that they respond to colonial contexts and aiming at decolonization, but they do it in their specific situations, networks, audience, and means. The description also displays some limitations in the transformative capacity of each case.

For example, Amawtay Wasi's project, in Ecuador, is centred on interculturality, plurinationality, and *Sumak Kawsay* as political proposals coming from Indigenous communities, for Ecuadorian society in general. The project is also focused on a scientific intercultural dialogue. Accordingly, Amawtay Wasi's project can be understood as unsettling the social, political and knowledge hierarchies put in place by the DoD in Ecuador, through the re-connection with Indigenous knowledges. The project, however, is limited by the State, which rejected the academic

nature of Amawtay Wasi. It is difficult to engage in such a general decolonial dialog when the institution is not even recognized as a university.

The transformative project of Amawtay Wasi is quite different from the Tribal Colleges and Universities' (TCUs) project, and more particularly, of the Salish-Kootenai College's (SKC). Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) emerged locally, in each community, following the Community College model of access to higher education. Each TCU works independently from each other, is chartered by its Tribal Government, and answers to an external board composed of Tribal members. Thus, while TCUs emerged in relation to national Indigenous movements such as American Indian Movement, TCUs are following the current Tribal governance structure (they are chartered by the Tribe), which is often seen as problematic by other Indigenous organizations in the US²¹¹. The relationship with the Tribe also means that TCUs as decolonial projects are closely linked to local communities in culturally and territorially specific ways. Accordingly, SKC's project is centered on community development through the perpetuation of Salish/Kootenai cultures in line with the community's sovereignty. In other words, the College strives to support the community's life projects and future on the basis of its own history, experience and knowledges. In that sense, SKC project can be understood as working against the erasure and the supremacy logic of the DoD. A limitation to the project remains the fact that, because it follows the community college and community development models (including economic development models), the education offered at the College does not always rely on Indigenous cultures and knowledges. For instance, Indigenous knowledges are often confined to the department of NAS rather than spilling over into all disciplines – this spreading being left to individual initiatives in other disciplines rather than institutionalized.

Alongside the creation of TCUs in Tribal communities of the US in the 1960s, "Native American", "American Indian" and other Indigenous studies programs (NAIS) were developed in mainstream universities – in urban settings generally – as a different response to the colonial context. The program offered at MSU, which teaches to mostly non-Indigenous students, presents a project centered on unsettling the colonial narratives and counterbalancing them with Indigenous

²¹¹ For example, the Cultural Committees on the Flathead reservation tend to represent the more traditional type of leadership, whereas the Confederated Tribe government is the result of a reorganization of the politics, in the face of colonialism. The same happens here, in Canada, with the Band Councils, as imposed structures of governance, versus traditional governments.

perspectives and knowledges. Doing so, NAS at MSU is questioning the concept of “civilization” in the DoD, while supporting the general concept of Indigenous sovereignty. It answers to the political and legal aspect of the DoD, by bringing in Indigenous perspectives and knowledges. Some of its limits include the difficulty in connecting to Montana Tribes’ needs, and the fact that the university tends to delegate all “Indigenous issues” to the department, while providing inadequate resources to assume those responsibilities. The program offered at University of Arizona has a similar project and limits than the one at Montana State University. In addition, AIS at UA tries to support Tribes’ nation-building process in terms of governance, economic development, and resource management. In that sense, the project is answering to the political, intellectual, legal, but also economic colonial conditions. The economic part, nevertheless, was questioned by many faculty members, and AIS had problems fulfilling all of those dimensions at the same time.

The description of the projects of these institutions and programs shows that IHE always involves decolonial projects. For example, by focusing on Indigenous communities, their cultural and intellectual productions, life projects, current experiences, and their self-determination, IHE is a manifestation of native survivance, as "an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion" (Vizenor, 2008, p. 1). Furthermore, by bringing Indigenous knowledges into the academy, IHE also engages in Indigenous storytelling (S. Grande et al., 2015), both as pedagogy and as curriculum content. Stories serve to articulate Indigenous theories, histories, and experiences in the classroom as well as to challenge colonial narratives by proposing new perspectives. In some cases, the institutions and programs are also contributing to Indigenous resurgence (Corntassel, 2012) by bringing in Indigenous knowledges of land and community that can serve as a basis for better futures, or, as Leanne Simpson says: "bring the knowledge of the ancient ones back into contemporary relevance by capturing the revolutionary nature of those teachings" (L. Simpson, 2008, p. 76). While IHE participates in "reconnecting with homelands, cultures, and communities" (Corntassel, 2012, p. 97), the extent to which resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005) can happen in institutions of higher education remains a debatable question (L. Simpson, 2008).

In fact, any decolonial project, as I presented in Chapter 3, is idealistic. Consequently, no institution or program will fully realize any decolonial project on its own. Still, all IHE cases fulfill a small part of these decolonial projects, in limited ways. Nevertheless, it is important not to lose

sight of the fact that they do participate in decolonization processes. Many faculty members in the institutions and programs I worked with expressed how the day-to-day work sometimes makes it hard to keep in mind the decolonial projects to which they are participating. In this context, it is of prime importance to re-situate the engagement of IHE cases with Indigenous communities and knowledges in the broader picture of decolonial projects. This is the objective of this analysis. Thus, in this chapter, I analyse in more details how IHE institutions and programs' engagement with Indigenous communities and knowledges contribute to the decolonial projects of survivance (Vizenor, 2008), storying (Grande et al., 2015), and resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014).

IHE and the survivance of Indigenous Communities

Each of the IHE cases presented in this dissertation engages with different Indigenous communities, in their own ways. Amawtay Wasi teaches in communities and considers knowledges that come from the communities. Furthermore, this engagement serves to bring alternative social projects and decolonize Ecuadorian society as a whole. SKC is also rooted in community, but contrary to Amawtay Wasi, it is rooted in one community, the CSKT. Consequently, its work is really about the needs of this community and organizing higher education that will fulfill these needs and move the community passed colonial trauma. It supports sovereignty and development of the Tribal nation rather than the whole of US society. Finally, NAIS – both at MSU and UA – raises the question of what community(ies) it serves? Not attached to one community but rather answering to a diversity of Tribal and urban Indigenous communities, NAIS is caught in the difficulty of answering to their diverse needs, while also addressing a non-Indigenous audience. NAIS' role might be best described as supporting the general concept of sovereignty, as well as supporting the existence of Indigenous communities in urban settings and in mainstream academy.

These are very different ways to engage with a diversity of communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. There is, however, a commonality. All these IHE institutions and programs contribute to the continued existence of Indigenous communities in their own terms, whether it be in relation to the state, on or off reservations, or in mainstream institutions. Doing so, these IHE institutions and programs resist Indigenous Peoples' erasure, cultural and intellectual assimilation, they support legal and political sovereignty, and sustain Indigenous communities' nation building and efforts to create a better future. These are very concrete means of contributing to the decolonial project of survivance.

In an Indigenous context the concept of survivance was developed by Anishinaabe intellectual Gerald Vizenor. According to Vizenor, survivance means a renunciation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry (Vizenor, 1999): "Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion; survivance is the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent. Survivance is greater than the right of a survivable name" (Vizenor, 2008, p. 1). While survivance involves stories, it emphasizes Indigenous presence and continuance of Indigenous peoples as Peoples, in which stories play a role. Moreover, Brayboy (2005) discusses survivance as the combination of survival and resistance. Used at an individual level, this combination is seen as strategic and necessary in order to adapt to different spaces in a constructive way that develops

personal growth. Used at a collective level, for Indigenous Peoples, it implies a synthesis of tradition and renewal, as support of Indigenous nations' sovereignty (Vizenor, 1999). Accordingly, survivance is the act of claiming Indigenous existence in the face of colonial attempts to erase it.

Survivance responds to the Doctrine of Discovery by reaffirming Indigenous legal interests as the center of socio-political and cultural projects, and by responding to settler sovereignty with Indigenous sovereignty. Consequently, survivance entails re-claiming and re-enacting nationhood as well as Indigenous intellectual traditions and their application in today's reality, in the face of colonial land dispossession, population re-organization, and political domination. In other words, survivance involves building Indigenous nationhood in ways that use Indigenous traditions to move Indigenous communities passed trauma, and towards life projects that reflect their own interests, aspirations, and cultures.

Through the establishment of Indigenous higher education institutions and programs, Indigenous communities are defining how their own people can consolidate who they are, and shape the form that their nation will take, in relation to their changing needs, lifestyle, and life projects, in the twenty-first century. This effort, to create an education adapted to the needs and life projects of the community, is a response to local experiences of education efforts that were going in the sense of assimilation, erasure, and dispossession of Indigenous nationhood. Accordingly, by establishing relationships with Indigenous communities, IHE projects contribute to Indigenous survivance in terms of supporting Indigenous sovereignty and assisting Indigenous communities in building life projects. Of course, when described separately, no IHE case completely fulfills survivance as a decolonial project. After all, decolonization is an ongoing process that decolonial projects are nourishing. However, all IHE projects presented in this dissertation point at elements that support survivance. Following are some of these elements, as well as some of the limits in each IHE I worked with.

Survivance and TCUs

Tribal colleges are in a good position to support community and Nation building because they are directly linked to the communities' needs and to their Tribal government. After all, Tribal Colleges and Universities "were created for the purpose of supporting Tribal Nation-building after Indigenous Cultures endured generations of cultural and economic deterioration" (Stull, Spyridakis, Gasman, Samayoa, & Booker, 2015). Tribal Colleges represent, in higher education,

the presence over absence, beyond mere survival, as they contribute to Tribal sovereignty, and the building, reinforcing, and betterment of Indigenous communities (Stein, 2003). TCUs participate in Indigenous nationhood building, in the maintenance of Indigenous traditions through changing communities' lifestyles and life projects. Accordingly, SKC consults with the Tribe regarding the community's needs and adjust their program offerings, while always fulfilling the general goal of transmitting Salish and Kootenai languages and cultures. Doing so, SKC – and TCUs in general – contributes to survivance in terms of supporting the life projects of its community.

Some of the limits of TCUs in terms of survivance include their articulation inside of Tribal structures and frameworks of Tribal sovereignty within a US context. Such structures are subject to many interpretations and negotiations between colonially-imposed structures (of sovereignty, reservations, and Tribal Governments), and more traditional structures (Taiaiake Alfred, 2008 [1999]; Garrouette, 2003). As SKC is chartered by the CSKT Tribe, the nation building process it participates in relates closely to the Tribal structures, and much less closely to other, more traditional, Indigenous institutions, such as the Cultural Committee. While SKC works in collaboration with to the Cultural Committee from time to time, the structure and content of the College relates to the Tribal government, officially, and practically. SKC nevertheless contributes to nation building and survivance of the Confederate Salish and Kootenai Tribes nation as a sovereign Tribe, following their constitutional, legal orders, intellectual traditions, and cultures. It allows Salish and Kootenai communities to not only survive, but to envision ways to exist based on their own nationhood and sovereignty in spite of the colonial context.

Survivance and NAIS

In contrast to the TCUs model, NAIS programs relate with Indigenous Tribal communities from the outside, but they support Indigenous survivance – Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous Peoples' life projects – in mainstream academy and in the urban context, which represents the majority of Indigenous Peoples in the US. The presentation of colonial history and ongoing violence in NAIS, both at MSU and UA, creates the space to understand Indigenous sovereignty in the broader context of the legal and political status of Indigenous nations in relation to the settler state. This happens in courses such as *Federal Indian Law*, but also in campus activities. At MSU, the NAS department is involved in campus activities to educate people about Indigenous Peoples' cultures, histories, and rights. Faculty and students from the department also play a leadership role

in changing the narrative around Columbus Day and push for an Indigenous Peoples' Day instead. Teaching about colonial processes and violence, thus creates space for change, in support of Indigenous sovereignty. Furthermore, in many of the classes that I attended, the experiences of multiple communities in terms of economic models, food sovereignty, or relationship with the environment, were presented to show their relevance in today's world.

Some of the limits of NAIS in terms of survivance, however, include the fact that NAIS addresses a majority of non-Indigenous audiences renders difficult for the programs to provide an education that answers to the needs and aspirations of Tribal communities. It is often up to each professor to find ways to establish working relationships (or not) with Tribal communities in their research and teaching. When a program tries to directly answer the Tribes' needs, as was the case at UA, it becomes difficult to be responsive to the different audiences and communities it serves. At UA, this made for tensions to arise. Working for Indigenous Tribes' survivance from a distance is more difficult, but the consideration of the survivance of Indigenous land and communities in the cities where NAIS programs are situated could be reinforced.

Survivance and the Amawtay Wasi

Specific to Amawtay Wasi is the role of Indigenous communities in knowledge production, establishing research in collaboration with Indigenous communities regarding any area of knowledge and discipline. NAIS, especially at UA, also worked at theorizing based on diverse Indigenous communities' experiences, but Amawtay Wasi considers the Indigenous communities as the place where to build the knowledge. Furthermore, while TCUs support their own communities' life projects in a Tribal nation perspective, Amawtay Wasi promotes Indigenous communities' life projects as alternatives for the whole Ecuadorian state and society. Yet, the closure of the university in 2013 by the state proved the difficulty of actually establishing an Indigenous presence in the academic system. If survivance implies being rooted in Indigenous intellectual traditions to establish contemporary and future projects in our societies, the Amawtay Wasi's experience proves that this is not easily done. Efforts to create Indigenous survivance in Indigenous intellectual and political terms lead to a renewed erasure – from the national higher education landscape – by the state. The resistance offered by Indigenous groups to either re-negotiate the existence of the Amawtay Wasi, or to run it in an autonomous manner were yet new efforts towards survivance of IHE project in Ecuador – which might have worked now that the

government is planning on recognizing the Amawtay Wasi as a public pluriversity. But the allowed format and content of the institution, and its capacity to foster indigenous survivance, remains to be seen.

IHE as a survivance project

All IHE cases presented in this dissertation are contributing in one way or another to survivance as a decolonial project. Each of the IHE programs and institutions does so in a specific and limited way, with the consequence that survivance as an underlying decolonial project is not always an obvious characteristic of IHE. The comparison of these IHE programs and institutions and the ways they engage with Indigenous communities reveals that they enact complementary pieces of the overall survivance project. While the Tribal Colleges and Amawtay Wasi are to a certain extent better situated to directly support communities' life projects, NAIS departments also contribute to Indigenous sovereignty and life projects by teaching about them to a broad audience so that settler society is educated, and Indigenous students in an urban context are empowered. NAIS programs establish ties to a diversity of communities that are not necessarily local but can be from other states and even international ties. This allows NAIS to theorize about Indigenous realities and life projects at a more general level, by bringing together experiences and knowledges from diverse communities. Amawtay Wasi, as a national institution linked to a national Indigenous movement, can also produce theorization that challenges colonial state's concepts of social order, governance, and economy.

Survivance, as a decolonial project, and in particular how it happens in IHE, is about re-establishing relationships to Indigenous intellectual traditions:

The nature of survivance is unmistakable in native stories, nature reason, remembrance, traditions, and customs and it is clearly observable in narrative resistance and personal attributes, such as the native humanistic tease, vital irony, spirit, cast of mind, and moral courage. The character of survivance creates a sense of native presence over absence, nihilism, and victimry (Vizenor, 2008, p. 1).

Thus, the "sense of presence over absence" that survivance entails is enacted through Indigenous knowledge in the academy, including Indigenous stories and narratives. While SKC is supporting the continuity Séliš (Salish), Ksanka (Kootenai) and Q'íispé (Pend d'Oreille) histories and languages, the Amawtay Wasi is also supporting Kichwa (and in certain cases Shuar) language and the knowledges of Kichwa communities, and NAIS programs and departments bring in the

academy the experiences and knowledges of a diversity of Indigenous communities. They all participate in survivance of Indigenous nationhood, life projects, knowledges and stories. Next, I turn to the actual engagement of NAIS, TCUs, and Amawtay Wasi with Indigenous knowledges.

IHE and the storying of Indigenous knowledges and experiences

IHE programs and institutions engage with Indigenous knowledges, lived experiences and realities of Indigenous Peoples, and they develop theories in relation to these realities and experiences. By bringing personal and collective testimonies into the classroom NAIS programs share stories of injustices and colonial violence but also stories of Indigenous resistance and values for which Indigenous individuals and communities stand for. The stories NAIS brings into the academy serve to interrupt the colonial narratives (A. Simpson, 2014). These stories also serve to bring Indigenous knowledges into contemporary relevance, with new stories being told by Indigenous scholars and community members, and new understandings achieved in the storying of various Indigenous experiences. Hence, in NAIS, "stories in Indigenous epistemologies are disruptive, sustaining, knowledge producing, and theory-in-action. Stories are decolonization theory in its most natural form" (Sium & Ritskes, 2013, p. II).

While TCUs engage in similar activities, especially through their NAIS programs, they have a greater ability to root these stories in local experiences that speak to their students. As the case of SKC illustrates, TCUs also mobilize Indigenous knowledge, stories, and storytelling throughout the disciplines offered. Thus, TCUs are able to relate to a diversity of local stories, knowledges, and protocols, that can be included in the curriculum which then becomes the basis for the community to act as strong, healthy, independent Indigenous nation (Simpson, 2008). As Sium and Ritskes argue "Decolonization demands this specificity, demands this personal and relational understanding, and demands the richness and creative vitality that storytelling brings" (Sium & Ritskes, 2013, p. II). Similarly, while the Amawtay Wasi does not engage in stories and experiences of colonization, it does thrive on Andean symbols, worldviews and intellectual traditions. It also recognizes the roles of myths and narratives in the process of knowledge building, including for Western knowledge.

The commonality of these cases is that they all challenge knowledge hierarchies and support the development of alternative theories and practices based on Indigenous knowledges, experiences and reality. By educating both Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students they resist cognitive imperialism and make space for the possibility of Indigenous futures by unveiling the colonial structures and narratives and supporting Indigenous narratives. Those are concrete ways to contribute to storying as a decolonial project.

Storying Indigenous knowledges and experiences participates in decolonization by challenging colonial narratives and articulating Indigenous theories and concepts. The act of sharing and reflecting on "lived realities through the construction of a shared story and understanding" has been described by San Pedro as "storying" (San Pedro, 2015, p. 137). San Pedro explains the concept of "storying" in a dialogic, interpersonal perspective, but also mentions the possibility of collective storying (San Pedro, 2013, 2015). As storying describes "knowledge construction upon the stories shared over time" (San Pedro, 2015, p. 149), and it refers to acts of resistance and existence for Indigenous individuals, I contend that it is an important part of the decolonial project happening in IHE.

While Indigenous communities and individuals can claim their resistance and existence through "storying" (San Pedro, 2013, 2015), from the perspective of the colonial settler-state, this process also implies re-storying its narratives. It is in that challenge or re-telling of colonial narratives that storytelling becomes not only a process of existing in the face of colonialism, but also opens the door to decolonization in terms of confronting the colonial structures and justifications. Thus, storying implies on one hand storytelling, and on the other hand, challenging the colonial narratives about Indigenous Peoples which in its modern form often implies deficit models and attention to the socio-economic consequences of colonization (Tuck, 2009).

In terms of storytelling, Grande, Windchief and San Pedro argue that it allows for Indigenous communities to survive as collectives organized around shared knowledges and experiences (remembrance), while taking back what was lost, broken or erased through colonization, including relationships that were interrupted but that are re-established through stories (reclamation). These two processes in turn make space for the regeneration of Indigenous Peoples, communities, and their shared "philosophies—ways of knowing, being, and doing through sustaining the cultural values and shared experiences that make communities unique" (Grande et al., 2015, p. 117). The authors describe regeneration as encompassing

learning to speak one's Native language, recognizing sacred places, and understanding the Indigenous historical perspective. Regeneration is the process of exercising traditional Indigenous values and applying them to contemporaneous environments; for example, bringing Indigenous languages into contemporary usage includes the development of new words that were not previously in the language, to serve the purpose of utility. Regeneration also includes recognizing new places of collective cultural importance and thinking critically about what Indigenous peoples are taught as a result of formal education. At the

core, regeneration is the application of Indigenous philosophies applied to various environments and life situations (Grande et al., 2015, p. 118).

Therefore, Indigenous stories, as far as they are linked to processes of remembrance, reclamation, and regeneration, are part of decolonial thinking as conceptualized by Mignolo (2011) and Quijano (2007). They allow for resistance and re-existence of Indigenous forms of thinking, doing and being, in spite of all colonial efforts of erasure. King (2003) emphasizes the importance of stories as knowledge that is constitutive of the social reality we build. In other words, we tell stories about ourselves and we know others by the stories told about them. As stories have power in terms of social reality, they have real impacts on processes such as colonization and decolonization.

In the context of higher education, Brayboy argues that in Indigenous perspectives, stories are theories (Brayboy, 2005) and therefore have a role to play in knowledge building and pedagogy. As "roadmaps for our communities and reminders of our individual responsibilities to the survival of our communities" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427), stories entail important knowledge and information that serve to both understand a community's past and build future projects for that community based on the "memories of tradition, and reflections on power" that stories present (Brayboy, 2005, p. 440). Furthermore, Brayboy explains that as a pedagogical tool, stories put the responsibility on the hearer (active learning) to "get it", which require not only intellectual efforts, but emotional engagement too, as "one must be able to feel the stories. You tell them, hear them, and feel them" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 440). Consequently, stories are important when engaging with Indigenous knowledge in the academy, both as content and as a pedagogical tool.

Furthermore, acts of remembrance, regeneration, and reclamation on behalf of Indigenous Peoples forces the settler-state to re-story its narratives, and for settlers to question their positions "as colonizer-perpetrator and colonizer-ally" (Regan, 2010, p. 27). Indigenous stories can be powerful tools to counter the colonial narratives that support and justify colonization and current settler-states. Hence, storying also involves counter-stories that force re-storying. Woolner (2009) considers the role of stories in colonial relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian state and in the possibilities to heal and transform these relationships. On the one hand, the colonial relationship is sustained by stories about "us" (Canadians, Québécois, settlers) and "them" (Indigenous Peoples) which made its way into "history" as taught in schools and prevalent in social discourses. On the other hand, this colonial relationship is also made of what Woolner calls

silenced and broken stories; that is, stories of Indigenous Peoples' past and present experiences, of their knowledges and histories, that were modified, dismissed as mere legends or myths, or erased and excluded from National history. Woolner also alludes to the stories of trauma, sometimes untold, but still passed down in different ways across generations (Woolner, 2009).

In the colonial context of broken and silenced stories, and of deformed stories that served to justify dispossession, assimilation and genocide, bringing Indigenous knowledges in the academy implies being critical of the stories and histories we learned and re-storying these stories by means of testimonies that address uncomfortable truths (Regan, 2010). Speaking one's truth is part of the healing process, and it is especially important when this truth includes past and present experiences of suffering that have been diminished, silenced, or ignored (Waziyatawin, 2011 [2005], p. 193). Stories can therefore be used to highlight oppressive factors in our society, ongoing colonial violence, and how it affects Indigenous peoples, both as communities, nations and as individuals.

By establishing relationships with Indigenous knowledges, the IHE institutions and programs described in previous chapters all engage in telling Indigenous stories and storying Indigenous experiences, including Indigenous experience with colonial history. Again, I am by no means claiming that any of the IHE programs and institutions with which I worked achieve decolonization through storying. Instead, I argue that each of them engages in storying, counter-storying and/or re-storying, which in turn contributes to decolonization processes. Next are some concrete examples and limits for each IHE case, in terms of storying as decolonial project.

Storying in NAIS

NAIS programs have a special role to play in the storying process. Making space for Indigenous stories in the curriculum challenges academic narratives, which is an important aspect of NAIS programs. NAIS programs, both at UA and MSU, often realize this teaching by bringing Indigenous communities' stories in the classroom, through personal testimonies of guest speakers. They also include material based on Indigenous stories, such as in Kristin Rupel's class on Native food systems, which used Robin Kimmerer's *Branding Sweetgrass* (2013) that draws on storytelling to talk about Indigenous sciences and wisdom. The stories NAIS programs tell also involve Indigenous theories. AIS at UA has been the home of a number of Indigenous scholars who developed theories such as Safety Zone (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006), Peoplehood (Holm et al., 2003), and Indigenous principles of economy (Trospen, 2009). While some of these theories

indirectly engage with the concept of narrative (the Safety Zone), others, like the Peoplehood model, directly engage with Indigenous stories (Holm, Pearson and Chavis recognize Sacred History as one of the dimensions of their matrix). Accordingly, storying involves theory crafting that is linked to re-connection and relationality, in NAIS programs.

Furthermore, NAIS programs at MSU and UA included efforts in terms of storying colonial history and violence, through courses teaching Federal Indian Law, colonial history of Montana and Arizona, current issues, and ongoing colonial violence. Courses on a variety of subjects (i.e. literature, education, natural resources, and food systems) usually included teachings about the treaties, colonial histories, and their effects today. Thus, the content of these courses is challenging the national narratives and associated stereotypes that many non-Indigenous students assimilated in their education.

While NAIS programs are great at re- and counter-storying the colonial narrative based on Indigenous knowledges and the use of Indigenous storytelling, they are doing so in a setting that can actually be problematic for Indigenous stories. Some stories belong to specific times and places and are hard to convey in the framework of a 15-week course structure. The classroom setting might also be an alienating space to tell certain stories, which could feel like appropriation in a mainstream academic context. Stories often come with protocols that are hard to follow in the academy. For all of these reasons, NAIS programs in mainstream academy might fulfill better the counter- and re-storying projects associated to storytelling, rather than the remembrance and continuity projects described by Grande, San Pedro and Winchief (2015).

Storying Indigenous knowledges at SKC

Tribal Colleges are educating new generations of Indigenous youth to help meet the needs of the community, and the education offered in a Tribal College becomes an opportunity to build shared perspectives, narratives, identity, and knowledges, on the reservation, so that the community can move forward in a direction that reflects itself. Tribal Colleges recognize the relation between the knowledge taught, the lifestyle, and life projects set forward by the community, the nation, or the people. There is consequently greater opportunity in Tribal Colleges, for tribally-specific storytelling that respects local protocols and relevant time and place for specific stories. For example, SKC offers a “Coyote Stories” course that respect the calendar and protocols around when and how to tell such stories – stories that can be told only in the winter.

Moreover, many courses were also storying local experiences and knowledges in sciences, botany, arts, and history. Through these efforts, SKC and other TCUs are storying the local experiences and knowledges in the curriculum. The rooting of SKC in local knowledges and stories also takes place in the development of Indigenous research methodologies (IRM). The IRM model developed by Lori Lambert (Lambert, 2014: 220) includes the voice and heart of the researcher, Tribal protocols, and dissemination of data in an appropriate way, which arguably all relate to stories (personal and collective). Hence, the content, and form of the knowledge taught and built (through research) at SKC relates to efforts of storying the community's knowledges.

However, SKC is also limited in certain ways regarding the storying project. While the Indigenous faculty members with whom I talk all related to storytelling and local stories in their own way, they represent only 30% of the College's faculty, and many faculty members expressed the need for more cultural training in order to fulfill the mission of the College. However, Shandin Pete, who had been in charge of such training and had then used storytelling of local stories, pointed to the fact that he was never asked again to repeat the experience. Even if the College has more opportunity to engage in Indigenous storytelling, it is not yet an institutionalized content or pedagogy, and it is up to the faculty members to use it or not. This made some Indigenous faculty members feel the burden of pushing the College in the right direction. As Shawn Chandler, head of the NAIS program at Aaniih Nakoda College argued: "We are in the trenches, you know, the Tribal Colleges are in the trenches, and then I say, Indian studies at a Tribal College is in another set of trenches bellow that, trying to keep these guys going alive. Cause I think Indian studies should be, the Indian life ways, or Indigenous knowledge, should be central to the whole college" (Chandler, 2015, interview). The use of stories and storytelling as pedagogy in Tribal Colleges could therefore be improved, for example, through their institutionalization in the College's teaching philosophy.

Storying Andean symbols in science at the Amawtay Wasi

An example of the institutionalization of Indigenous knowledges and the stories that they entail is Amawtay Wasi, which roots its curriculum and activities in the Andean worldviews, myths and symbols, especially the Chakana. Amawtay Wasi recognizes existing relationships between scientific knowledge and worldviews or myths, and challenges the Western perspective in which these relationships discredit non-Western sciences as anti-scientific (Bala & Gheverghese Joseph,

2007), while unsettling knowledge hierarchies that Western sciences construct. After all, Western science's development, as Gorelick mentions (2014), is also embedded in myths and beliefs just as much as Indigenous sciences²¹². In other words, beliefs, worldviews and myths are not the opposite of scientific knowledge; they are what makes its development possible²¹³. By considering the role of narratives (including myths) in science, and by admitting that Western knowledges also thrive on narratives and myths, Amawtay Wasi is using stories and storying in a different way, but it still serves to unsettle knowledge hierarchies between Indigenous and Western sciences.

Contrary to NAIS programs and to part of TCU's teachings, however, Amawtay Wasi does not engage in systematic storying of the colonial processes and its continuous violence. Amawtay Wasi's project is not that of counter-storying or re-storying. Rather, it presents Indigenous and Western knowledges as alternatives that can also relate in productive dialogues, once the power dynamic is unsettled. This means that a multicultural recognition of scientific knowledge systems and cross-cultural exchanges between them could prove to be both creative and helpful in the advancement of our understanding of the world and its complexity (J. García et al., 2004; Walsh, 2012). This is a slightly different move in terms of storying, but it does contribute to unsettle the scientific claims to universality, predictability and control of variables.

IHE decolonial projects, Indigenous knowledges, and storying

NAIS programs, Tribal Colleges, and Amawtay Wasi engage with storying Indigenous knowledges in very different ways, whether it be by bringing silenced and broken stories into the academy, rooting pedagogy in storytelling and local stories and their respective protocols, or pointing to the narratives underlying any knowledge. In spite of their differences, the comparison of these IHE cases show that Indigenizing the academy means also engaging in decolonial storying which contributes to decolonizing the knowledges taught in the academy. Storying Indigenous

²¹² For example, most of Western "modern" science done in the twentieth century relied on principles of material and linear causation, mechanical philosophy, and the search for "ultimate factors" or unified explanation of the physical world. These ideas relate to the metaphor of a mechanism regulated by natural universal laws, hidden behind the observable reality (Christie, 1993). This is in turn consistent with monotheist belief in one God (the "watchmaker") who pre-established universal laws (D. Lindberg, 2007 [1992]). Similarly, Putz (2012) mentions the influence of Christian linear time, Aristotelian monism adopted in medieval scholastics, and medieval realist notion of deduction of the nature of things according to their acts, on the forging of evolutionist theory in biology. He concludes that "at least historically, then, Catholicism played an instrumental role in the development of [Western] modern biology" (Putz, 2012, pp. 307-308).

²¹³ Hence, according to science historian Lindberg, 2007 [1992] #763}, the so-called scientific revolution in Europe of the sixteenth century was a shift in terms of metaphysics and cosmology, much more than methodology.

voices and experiences challenge the narrative of "civilization" underlying the Doctrine of Discovery, while also challenging the knowledge hierarchy entailed in the DoD. Since Indigenous theories allude to relationships and relationality, when introducing them into the curriculum, IHE responds to the colonial disconnection with a re-connection to Indigenous stories, and through them, to Indigenous knowledges, languages, communities and territories.

As IHE institutions and programs presented here engage with the storying of Indigenous knowledges, they also echo the work of storytelling:

Indigenous stories are a reclamation of Indigenous voice, Indigenous land, and Indigenous sovereignty. They are vital to decolonization. Indigenous storytelling works to both deconstruct colonial ways of coming to know, as well as construct alternatives - recognizing that these two processes do not happen in a linear trajectory; if we are waiting for the dismantling of colonial structures before we focus on rebuilding Indigenous and decolonial alternatives, we will always be too late. Indigenous stories are a creative force, grounded in rootedness and relationality (Sium & Ritskes, 2013, p. VIII).

As the storying of Indigenous knowledges, experiences, and voices relate to the reclamation of relationship with communities, land, and sovereignty, so a door is open to another decolonial project, that of resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; I. Simpson, 2008), which I explore next.

IHE and Indigenous resurgence through knowledge and land practices

Both survivance and storying as decolonial projects point to Indigenous resurgence. Resurgence, however, implies reconnecting to the land and full sovereignty in Indigenous terms. Survivance and storying contribute to unsettling social, political, legal, and knowledge hierarchies, which are important for decolonization. Resurgence remains a further step, though, since it allows for Indigenous futures in a decolonized world. This requires the repatriation of land and life projects that go beyond storying and survivance and the question is to see if IHE is able to fulfill it.

Alfred and Corntassel (2005) define resurgence as being

Derived from experience of Indigenous warriors old and new who have generated an authentic existence out of the mess left by colonial dispossession and disruption, these pathways can be thought of as the direction of freedom whether we have in mind the struggle of a single person or conceptualizing an eventual global Indigenous struggle founded on the regeneration of ourselves and our communities (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, pp. 612-613).

Accordingly, resurgence is the decolonial project of moving beyond the "colonial mess" by re-centering the thinking, doing and being of Indigenous Peoples and their traditions, in the present. Corntassel added in 2012 to the description of resurgence paths that,

If colonization is a disconnecting force, then resurgence is about reconnecting with homelands, cultures, and communities. Both decolonization and resurgence facilitate a renewal of our roles and responsibilities as Indigenous peoples to the sustainable praxis of Indigenous livelihoods, food security, community governance, and relationships to the natural world and ceremonial life that enables the transmission of these cultural practices to future generations (Corntassel, 2012, p. 97).

Resurgence entails reconnecting with Indigenous knowledges and life projects regarding elements such as food, governance, and the natural world. Based on Indigenous intellectual traditions re-enacted in contemporary ways, resurgence calls for the renewal of Indigenous Peoples' knowledges, relations and responsibilities – which of course are elements to which IHE contributes.

Coulthard adds to this conception by explaining resurgence in relation to Fanon's cultural self-affirmation - for example, the Negritude movement - which constitutes a "critical individual and collective self-recognition that colonized populations often engage in to empower themselves,

instead of relying too heavily on the colonial state and society to do this for them" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 131). Resurgence turns away from assimilative reformism of the liberal recognition approach, and instead builds national liberation on revitalization²¹⁴. According to Coulthard, traditional values as well as political and intellectual traditions do not only serve in a dialectic with colonial traditions – they are the only lasting solution for Indigenous Peoples' existence as Peoples. In this context, resurgence supports Indigenous futures by re-establishing Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the present. Education is about training present generations for the future, and therefore it can play an essential part in the resurgence project.

Additionally, resurgence in Coulthard's, Alfred's, and Corntassel's perspectives is based on direct action and anti-capitalism to address dispossession and Indigenous sovereignty everywhere (and not only on the reserves), gender justice, and thinking beyond the nation-state (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014). In terms of education, it means teachings that enabling the rehabilitation of Indigenous life ways in relation to their territories and their communities. This entails both the content of teaching (based on Indigenous intellectual traditions) and the form of teaching, in a land- and community-based pedagogy. All the IHE programs and institutions I described follow these basic lines and could therefore be considered as contributing to resurgence.

However, Indigenous resurgence is fundamentally about the restoration of the relationships (material, ontological, and epistemological) of Indigenous Peoples with their lands, as well as the knowledges and responsibilities that are embedded in these relationships (Corntassel, 2012; L. Simpson, 2008). Coulthard and Simpson express the central role of land relationship in resurgence project saying that, "Indigenous resistance and resurgence in response to the dispossession forces of settler colonization, in both historical and current manifestations, employ measures and tactics designed to protect Indigenous territories and to reconnect Indigenous bodies to land through the

²¹⁴ However, Coulthard rejects Fanon's concept of dialectical transcendence, according to which Indigenous practices of the past are a means to an end, but once they have served to reestablish Indigenous Peoples as historical protagonist in the present, they ought to be transcended too (Coulthard, 2014, p. 154). Coulthard also writes:

"By now it should be clear that although Fanon saw the revaluation of an Indigenous "past" as an important means of temporarily breaking the colonized free from the interpellative stranglehold of colonial misrecognition, he was less willing to explore the role that critically revitalized traditions might play in the (re)construction of decolonized Indigenous nations. Subsequently, his work tends to treat "the cultural" in a manner inappropriately similar to how Marxists treat the category of "class": as a transitional form of identification that subaltern groups must struggle to overcome as soon as they become conscious of its existence as a distinct category of identification" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 148).

practices and forms of knowledge that these practices continuously regenerate" (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016, p. 154). Accordingly, land-based pedagogy is fundamental to resurgence project (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard & L. Simpson, 2016; L. Simpson, 2008; L. Simpson, 2014; M. Wildcat et al., 2014). I contend that, even if land-based and place-based pedagogies are recognized as fundamental to IHE, their application is actually very scarce. I show next how I understand that each IHE institution and program I worked with both points to the importance of land-pedagogy, while at the same time presenting limits in its application.

Resurgence at the Amawtay Wasi

Amawtay Wasi enacts a resurgence decolonial project by reclaiming Indigenous world-systems as the source of legitimate educational paradigms (Sarango, 2014) and alternatives to the state structure (plurinationality) and economy (Sumak Kawsay), thus articulating a concept of interculturality that challenges the state's socio-cultural hierarchies. As resurgence implies working outside of the colonial state framework and its recognition, it appears that Amawtay Wasi can be situated in a resurgence process.

Furthermore, resurgence in IHE should include Indigenous knowledges about land in the curriculum. Amawtay Wasi does so in an explicit and holistic way when articulating relationships to land in every discipline - architecture, pedagogy, communication, and agro-ecology. Land is also alluded to in the ceremonies mobilized during harvesting feast, for instance, when the Chakana is formed with produces from the land, or when sharing foods that come from the land. "Mother earth", or the *pachamama*, is a present entity in the teachings, research projects, and students' presentations. When engaging in the community for research project, the conversations (*conversatorio*) process always happen on the land too. In that sense, Amawtay Wasi is close to the land-based pedagogy needed in a resurgence project. Nevertheless, Amawtay Wasi as a project is mainly defined as "communal", or in a community-based approach, rather than an explicit land-based or place-based approach. I did not observe any class at Amawtay Wasi that would articulate an explicit land- or place-based curriculum, where the students would have learned from the land or on the land. There is a profound difference between learning about the land and learning from the land (Wildcat et al., 2014). Still, I would argue that the Amawtay Wasi is probably the

institution that incorporates the most knowledges relating to land, among the institutions and programs I worked with.

Tribal Colleges and Resurgence

Like the Amawtay Wasi, Tribal Colleges practice a community-based pedagogy (Ball, 2004; McCarthy & Lee, 2014; Urrieta, 2013) which entails an education that respects Indigenous sovereignty and is accountable to Indigenous communities (McCarthy & Lee, 2014). The Tribes who decided to embrace the Tribal College movement did so in order to define the life they wanted for their children and grand-children. By offering the possibility to students to obtain their education in the community, Tribal Colleges ensure the continuity of community relationship for the youth, who are then more likely to stay in the community and contribute to its perpetuation and growth, to its future. In this manner, the lifestyle and life projects supported by the Tribal Colleges foster the resurgence of individuals and the community as Indigenous, in relation to the culture, intellectual traditions, and the land. Tribal Colleges also contribute to cultural sustainability and revitalization (including language revitalization), which also participates in resurgence.

In spite of the possibility that having a college on the reservation could open in terms of land-based and place-based pedagogy, the reality is that I saw little of this happening at SKC. I am aware of courses that take place on the land - the encampment course in NAS, for example. The land base of the Tribe allows for the existence of the College, and many of the courses taught there relate to the land, whether it be about the treaties, or water and forest management. However, the College still embraces a classroom-based pedagogical model. Certain programs, such as the Tribal Historic Preservation, or the Hydrology, or Forestry programs, required more practical learning, in relation to the land. Even then, Shandin Pete mentioned how land stories and relationship with traditional knowledges keepers were still to be developed, at least in Hydrology. When conversing with Michael and her partner, who works at the language revitalization school, they often mentioned the importance of spending time on the land, to learn the language and the knowledge emerging from the relationship to the land. This, in turn, is something that could be developed further at the college, through explicit land-based and place-based pedagogy (Coulthard & L. Simpson, 2016; L. Simpson, 2014; Snelgrove et al., 2014; M. Wildcat et al., 2014). Resurgence project entails revitalizing and re-enacting knowledges and responsibilities coming from the

relationship to the land (Corntassel, 2012; L. Simpson, 2008). While SKC definitely contributes to the decolonial project of Salish and Kootenai communities' resurgence, more could be done in relation to the land as source of knowledge.

NAIS and Resurgence

If TCUs are still limited in their relationship to land as a resurgence practice, NAIS programs, both at MSU and UA, are even more so. As Ronald Trosper and Tom Holm mentioned, Tribal Colleges are better placed to establish these connections to the land, given their localization. Of course, in both UA and MSU NAIS programs, many courses also included learning about the relationships that exist between Indigenous Peoples and their lands and territories. Classes in environment at both UA and MSU, presented principles of relationality and sustainability, as well as sovereignty and redefinition of health for Indigenous communities, that could present alternatives to the mainstream more fragmented conceptions of environment, food, and health. Courses about Indigenous economies, environment, food systems, especially, bring in the classroom the experiences and knowledges of a diversity of Indigenous communities, in relation to their lands. In some cases, it also includes bringing students to the land and communities. However, Ronald Trosper noted that mainstream universities are always situated on Indigenous lands and could engage in learning from and about the land they sit on. To my knowledge, this is rarely the case. This does not exclude all learnings from the land, as trips to specific places, or to Indigenous communities, are often organized, as was the case in the Native Food Systems class at MSU. Nevertheless, the actual land on which NAIS is institutionalized in mainstream academy is rarely considered.

IHE decolonial projects, resurgence and land

If resurgence is defined as the decolonial project that answers colonial disconnections with reconnection to homelands, cultures and communities (Corntassel, 2012, p. 97), then IHE institutions and programs as we have seen them above contribute to this project when engaging with Indigenous knowledges and communities. By establishing curricula that rely on Indigenous intellectual traditions and that responds to the visions of Indigenous communities, IHE in all forms explored above contributes to Indigenous knowledges revitalization and new theoretical developments based on these knowledges. This revitalization and new theoretical developments are often the result of engaging with communities and with the knowledges and experiences of

these communities. Furthermore, all the IHE projects presented here relate to land and include Indigenous knowledges about land in their curriculum.

While all the IHE institutions and programs presented here are contributing to the decolonial project of resurgence, including to revitalizing Indigenous knowledges about land, and taking into consideration Indigenous communities' relationships to their land, a clear, and explicit land-based and place-based pedagogy seems to still be lacking. I was actually surprised, when looking back on my fieldwork, that it had involved so little actual on-the-land experiences, in relation to IHE. As Wildcat *et al.* argue, decolonization and resurgence demands "moving from *talk* about the land within conventional classroom settings, to studying instances where we *engage* in conversations with the land and on the land in a physical, social and spiritual sense" (M. Wildcat et al., 2014, p. II). While the move towards land-based pedagogy is not a new one, it seems that more developments in that direction could be used, in IHE, as a tool for decolonization. After all, if IHE remains limited in its engagement with land, it remains limited in challenging the origins of the Doctrine of Discovery, which is meant to justify land appropriation. It is important to unsettle knowledge hierarchies, as well as social and political ones, as all IHE programs and institutions are doing through their involvement with Indigenous communities and knowledges. But the last step, resurgence, is meant to also unsettle legal hierarchies regarding relationships to land and sovereignty.

My description of four IHE projects shows that they all engage with Indigenous communities and Indigenous knowledges, and at the conflation of these two dimensions is the role of land, both as place in which communities develop and evolve, and as a fundamental dimension of Indigenous knowledges. By re-establishing connections and relationships with Indigenous communities, knowledges, and lands, IHE contributes to decolonization in various ways. In a general perspective, the re-connection with Indigenous lands, communities and knowledge plays into the disengaging and de-linking from the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2011). More specifically, though, I explored three decolonial projects to which I argued IHE contributes: the survivance of Indigenous communities, the storying of Indigenous knowledges, and Indigenous resurgence. In the latter project, land is of prime importance, as Coulthard argues. Nevertheless, even IHE programs and institutions are limited in their capacity to re-localize education on the land - and not maintaining only education *about* the land.

The way forward: What about land-based approaches to knowledge building and learning?

At the heart of colonialism is the violent separation of our peoples from our social relation to the land. Any education aimed at decolonization must confront that violence – and one of the best ways to do this is to reintroduce and re-place Indigenous peoples on their lands with the knowledge-holders who are experts in living it. That is the thinking behind Dechinta Bush University.
(Coulthard, 2017, p. 58)

In the fall of 2016, the National Women's Studies Association conference gathered around the question of Decolonization. Leanne Simpson, Audra Simpson, and Kim TallBear were among the keynotes of the conference and they all questioned the possibility of decolonizing institutions, and especially, academic institutions. They all expressed doubts about the fulfillment of resurgence in the academy, and pointed to other places where the efforts could be made: Standing Rock resistance camp (with a syllabus that came out of it, in relation with Audra Simpson's work), land-based experiences in the city of Toronto and in other places of Anishinaabe territory, and the work to be done in Indigenous communities and families, rather than institutions. While these three Indigenous women scholars still work in the academy, constantly pushing its epistemological and political boundaries, they also maintain a constant questioning of its coloniality, and a continuous doubt about the efforts to invest in decolonizing the academy or in other alternatives.

For example, Leanne Simpson continuously emphasizes, in her work, the importance for Indigenous Peoples of pulling away from mainstream academy and investing more time in land-based pedagogy. According to her,

Withdrawing our considerable collective efforts to "Indigenize the academy", in favor of a resurgence of Indigenous intellectual systems and a reclamation of the context within which those systems operate, goes much further to propelling our nationhood and re-establishing Indigenous political systems because it places people back on the land in a context that is conducive to resurgence and mobilization. The academy has continually proven its refusal to recognize and support the validity, legitimacy, rigor and ethical principles of Nishnaabeg intelligence and the system itself, so we must stop begging for recognition and do this work for ourselves. This colonial refusal should be met with Indigenous refusal – refusal to struggle simply for better or more inclusion and recognition within the academic industrial complex (L. Simpson, 2014, p. 22).

The academy as an institution, in spite of all the efforts of Indigenous scholars and communities to challenge it and transform it, continues to resist to the decolonial projects that Indigenous Peoples bring in IHE. In this context, it is not surprising that NAIS and TCUs, which

are working, to a certain extent, within the framework of institutionalized academy, are having difficulties to push the resurgence project to its full, through working with education on the land. Amawtay Wasi follows a very different model – an Indigenous, intercultural, communal one - is doing a better job at engaging in learning from and on the land. For the project to continue officially in Ecuador, and for NAIS and TUCs to be able to push further in their resurgence projects, some recognition will be needed, and places of power in the colonial state and institutions will have to be challenged to become places of decolonization. In Simpson's words:

If the academy is concerned about not only protecting and maintaining Indigenous intelligence, but revitalizing it on Indigenous terms as a form of restitution for its historic and contemporary role as a colonizing force (of which I see no evidence), then the academy must make a conscious decision to become a decolonizing force in the intellectual lives of Indigenous peoples by joining us in dismantling settler colonialism and actively protecting the source of our knowledge - Indigenous *land* (L. Simpson, 2014, p. 22).

Accordingly, the full consequence of decolonial projects is the challenge and transformation of the role of land, and the place for building relationships with land, in higher education, intellectually and materially. Colonialism and the Doctrine of Discovery are about the appropriation of foreign lands and imposition of Euro-settler sovereignty in the name of Western superiority and superior interest. Consequently, decolonization must also include land, even in education. In other words, if the DoD is the logic behind settlers' land appropriation in the Americas – and it comes with a logic of supremacy, cognitive imperialism and knowledge hierarchies –dismantling the DoD includes challenging knowledge hierarchies, cognitive imperialism and Western supremacy logic, in order to also challenge the land appropriation. Wildcat *et al.* express this relationship between knowledge decolonization and relationship to the land in the following way:

Settler-colonialism has functioned, in part, by deploying institutions of western education to undermine Indigenous intellectual development through cultural assimilation and the violent separation of Indigenous peoples from our sources of knowledge and strength – the land. If settler colonialism is fundamentally premised on dispossessing Indigenous peoples from their land, one, if not the primary, impact on Indigenous education has been to impede the transmission of knowledge about the forms of governance, ethics and philosophies that arise from relationships on the land. [...] if we are serious about decolonizing education and educating people within frameworks of Indigenous intelligence, we must find ways of reinserting people into relationships with and on the land as a mode of education (M. Wildcat et al., 2014, p. II).

Land is at the core of decolonization in higher education, and especially, the type of relationship established with land. This is why when establishing land-based education in ways that support Indigenous life and knowledges, and Indigenous claims to land, IHE becomes a powerful decolonial force that directly contests settler colonialism and its logic (M. Wildcat et al., 2014).

Addressing the relationship that education fosters with the land has concrete impacts for the students: "Indigenous land-based pedagogy [...] offer a way of fostering individual and collective empowerment for students by re-embedding them in the land-connected social relationships that settler-colonialism, through education and otherwise, sought to destroy" (M. Wildcat et al., 2014, p. III). Land-based pedagogy can support both individuals and communities in their imagining resurgent futures, in which they could exist according to their traditions, as alternatives to the capitalist lifestyle currently offered in higher education (M. Wildcat et al., 2014).

Moreover, land- and place-based pedagogy have the potential of decolonizing also in terms of questioning settlers' position on the land, and relations to the land. Learning from a place, and in relation to that place (and all the relations, genealogy, and power dynamics that a place entails) is a powerful tool to create concrete solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, in relation and care for a shared place. Snelgrove *et al.* develop the concept of place-based solidarities where Indigenous resurgence meets settler colonial power in a relational and practical way that forces an engagement, on both sides, with "the literal and stolen ground on which people stand and come together upon" (Snelgrove et al., 2014). By working on the land, and through the relationships with the land, these authors contend that "solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples must be grounded in actual practices and place-based relationships, and be approached as incommensurable but not incompatible" (Snelgrove et al., 2014, p. 3). The engagement with the land on which we now have come to live, and the revealing of different, contradictory ways of relating to it, between settler and Indigenous peoples, could be at the core of decolonizing process and development of new solidarities.

For example, Irlbacher-Fox recounts her experience, as a non-Indigenous person, in and Indigenous land-based education experience, where she realized that this could be a powerful tool to decolonize settlers, in two ways:

The first relates to being a non-Indigenous person in an Indigenous cultural space. Similar to cross-cultural interaction more generally, in such a situation non-Indigenous individuals are positioned as students of, and dependent on, Indigenous peoples. This effects a reversal of usual power dynamics encountered within the everyday of mainstream society. The second relates to self-awareness that the reversal of power relations engenders. Settlers placed in Indigenous land-based education contexts are forced to understand themselves in relation to the limits of their knowledge contrasted with superior capabilities possessed by Indigenous Elders and land-based knowledge holders [...] Transitioning from a position of dominance to one of dependence constitutes an important moment of "unsettling": reaching a place of potentially transformative discomfort. An often completely new and deeper understanding of Indigenous peoples' cultural practices then begins to fill what was once a space of ignorance and privilege, replacing erroneous beliefs with appreciation and understanding (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014, p. 155).

According to her, land-based pedagogy challenges the settler supremacy logic that underlines the Doctrine of Discovery. Land-based pedagogy consequently offers the possibility not only for Indigenous Peoples to re-connect with their knowledges and cultures, but for non-Indigenous people to question their privilege and live an "unsettling" experience, which might then create space for solidarity, alliances, and decolonization.

While the place-based and land-based pedagogy often takes place in rural spaces, which are stereotypically more associated to Indigenous Peoples in the colonial imaginary (Peters & Andersen, 2013), Leanne Simpson reminds us that cities are also in Indigenous lands, and mainstream universities in urban context can also engage with this place- and land-based pedagogy. According to her,

The beauty of culturally inherent resurgence is that it challenges settler colonial dissections of our territories and our bodies into reserve/city or rural/urban dichotomies. All Canadian cities are on Indigenous lands. Indigenous presence is attacked in all geographies. In reality, the majority of Indigenous peoples move regularly through reserves, cities, towns and rural areas. We have found ways to connect to the land and our stories and to live our intelligences no matter how urban or how destroyed our homelands have become. While it is critical that we grow and nurture a generation of people that can think within the land and have tremendous knowledge and connection to aki, this doesn't have to take away from the contributions of urban Indigenous communities to our collective resurgence. Cities have becomes sites of tremendous activism and resistance, and artistic, cultural and linguistic revival and regeneration, and this too comes from the land (L. Simpson, 2014, p. 23).

Land-based and place-based pedagogy have a tremendous decolonizing power in an urban context for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (E. Henry, 2014).

Therefore, in the past decade, land-based and place-based pedagogies have developed in diverse locations, communities and cultures (M. Wildcat et al., 2014), and can be conceived as the next step to push forward in IHE. A good, concrete example in Canada is the Dechinta Bush university, in the Northwest Territories, with which Coulthard is involved. Dechinta Bush University is a "northern-led initiative delivering land-based, University of Alberta-credited educational experiences led by northern leaders, experts, elders and professors to engage northern and southern youth in a transformative curricula based on the cutting-edge needs of Canada's North" (<http://dechinta.ca/what-dechinta-offers/>). As a unique model, Dechinta is not necessarily exportable everywhere, but the principles that it embodies are. Coulthard and Simpson have described these principles in terms of "grounded normativity", which they define as,

the ethical frameworks provided by these Indigenous place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge. Grounded normativity houses and reproduces the practices and procedures, based on deep reciprocity, that are inherently informed by an intimate relationship to place. Grounded normativity teaches us how to live our lives in relation to other people and nonhuman life forms in a profoundly nonauthoritarian, nondominating, nonexploitive manner. Grounded normativity teaches us how to be in respectful diplomatic relationships with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous nations with whom we might share territorial responsibilities or common political or economic interests. Our relationship to the land itself generates the processes, practices, and knowledges that inform our political systems, and through which we practice solidarity (Coulthard & L. Simpson, 2016, p. 254).

In that perspective, the "grounded normativity" that place-based and land-based pedagogy foster can open the door to new solidarities that could be embraced in the academy, if we are serious in the project of decolonizing and indigenizing the academy. In turn, this could make more space for the realization of decolonial projects in IHE, including more space for land-based pedagogy. In fact, IHE institutions and programs are the leaders in decolonization, from which mainstream academy could learn, and with which mainstream academy could foster more and deeper solidarity. Mainstream academy already has a lot to learn from IHE to support its decolonial projects, towards a fulfillment of Indigenous resurgence and futurity.

Finally, resurgence is both about regeneration of Indigenous knowledges and ways of being, and the contestation of settler colonial power that this regeneration entails (Taiaiake Alfred, 2005). Thus, for IHE to fully engage in resurgence, it ought to challenge settler colonial education, and the power dynamics at play in it. In that sense, IHE is a tool for decolonization, both in terms of Indigenous decolonial projects, and in terms of the challenges it represents for mainstream

academy. In a moment when mainstream universities are considering decolonizing and Indigenizing the Academy, the responsibility of decolonization, in mainstream academy, relies in the learnings and transformation of the knowledge we build and teach, and the pedagogy we enact, by questioning our relationships with diverse knowledges, communities, and land. The question remains open regarding mainstream academy's ability to receive and consider "the gift" (Kuokkanen, 2007) that over 50 years of IHE development could represent, if taken seriously.

V) CONCLUSION: LOCAL APPLICATIONS OF INDIGENOUS ACADEMY'S TEACHING

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

(Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2015a, Call to Action 47).

When I returned from my fieldwork in the US in May 2016, the TRC had published its report with a series of recommendations addressing the Doctrine of Discovery, and "education for reconciliation" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2015a). The recommendations for "education for reconciliation" include curricula that address better colonial history, and the history of Indigenous Peoples and treaties, as well as training for teachers to integrate Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods into classroom. Following the TRC report, many Canadian universities jumped on the "Indigenizing the academy" wagon (Compton, 2016; "Indigenizing the academy: the way forward," 2016; MacDonald, 2016), or at least formed committees and task forces to address "reconciliation" in their institutions (see, for example, McGill University, 2017; Queen's University, 2016; Stewart, 2016). Concordia University also took action and in the fall of 2016 nominated two Special Advisors to the Provost on Indigenous Directions, who in turn, invited a number of Indigenous faculty members and students to form what is now the Indigenous Directions Leadership Group (IDLG).

It is to be noted that the creation of the IDLG followed years of activism and demands coming from the First Peoples' Studies (FPST) program, including the First Peoples' Studies Members Association (FPSTMA, a student body), and from Indigenous Faculty members at Concordia. While the director of the First Peoples Studies Program had advocated since 2011 for an advisory position to be created at the senior administration level, in 2015, FPSTMA circulated a petition to "Support Indigenous Engagement at Concordia", which included the "creation of an Indigenous Advisory Council at the Presidential level, including representation from the local Indigenous communities". In February of 2016, a letter signed by Indigenous Faculty members and students was sent to the President and Provost to include and develop an Indigenous Engagement plan in the strategic plan of Concordia. While I was not a participant to these endeavours, it is important

to understand the creation and the work of IDLG as a continuity of previous efforts of Indigenous community at Concordia, many of which came from the FPST program.

Given the nature of my research, and since I was already working as a research assistant with one of the special advisors to the Provost, I became involved with the IDLG, supporting its work as a research assistant for the 2016-2017 academic year, and I remained a member of the IDLG into the 2018 academic year. The mandate of the group is to advise Concordia on how to respond to the TRC calls to action and to Indigenize the academy. The original mandates areas of IDLG included making recommendations and taking actions regarding cultural spaces; Indigenous student recruitment and retention; curriculum and pedagogy; community engagement; and an Indigenous Web Hub. However, IDLG took on many actions, including consultations; trainings (to hiring committees, to senior administration, and to university faculty and staff); creating positions (for Indigenous community outreach, Indigenous pedagogy consultant, and eventually, a Senior Director of Indigenous engagement); and establishing policy, including the development of an Elder Protocol, and the push for the final approval of an official Territorial Acknowledgement, which had been in the making for years at that point²¹⁵. IDLG is finishing its action plan for the university, and it includes many steps in five different areas²¹⁶. What I want to explore in more detail here however are three actions taken in 2017. I think these actions are revealing in terms of the decolonial projects explored in this dissertation - resurgence, survivance, and storying - their application to a mainstream academic institution, the opposition they encounter, and why the consideration of IHE as a tool for decolonization can help to move forward on these issues.

²¹⁵ Karl Hele, head of the First Peoples Studies (FPST) program at Concordia, and Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean, Kahnawake community member, FPST student, and member of FPSTMA and of the Indigenous Students Council (which she helped create), were involved in discussions and development of that territorial acknowledgement, before IDLG endorsed it and entered in negotiations with the university for its official adoption, for the spring convocation of 2017. They initially worked for a Territorial Acknowledgement to take place during the Spring 2016 Convocation. This was also supported by the Aboriginal Student Resource Center and the Concordia Student Union, with whom they had agreed on an acceptable albeit working draft of the Territorial Acknowledgement. At this time, however, the territorial acknowledgement was rejected. It then took another year of negotiation, part of which was led by the IDLG, to have the Territorial Acknowledgement adopted.

²¹⁶ The areas are:

- 1- Community engagement and participation, including in decision-making and governance structures;
- 2- Recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation of Indigenous Learners;
- 3- Recruitment and retention of Indigenous Faculty and Staff;
- 4- Integration of Indigenous Knowledges in courses and programs;
- 5- Enhance cultural climate (which includes Indigenous spaces, both physically and on the Web and medias).

Indigenizing the academy: relationship to land on which our institutions sit

One of the first policies the IDLG worked on was the official adoption of a Territorial Acknowledgement, at Concordia²¹⁷, thus taking on the negotiation that had been going on for more than a year, at that point (see footnote 214). A territorial acknowledgement is meant for a settler institution or person to recognize the Indigenous Peoples of the land they stand on as well as give visibility to the sustained Indigenous presence on the territory, both in terms of complex histories and current realities. In that sense, the acknowledgement situates the person or the institution and its relationships with the territory and with the Peoples of that territory, which is a step towards addressing the colonial situation, repudiating the *terra nullius* ideology, and re-establishing nation-to-nation relationships. That is, of course, if the territorial acknowledgement is accompanied by commitments and actions for ongoing relationship building between Indigenous Peoples of the territory recognized, and the institution or person making the acknowledgement. Without concrete changes in practices and relationships, a territorial acknowledgement runs the risk of staying on the symbolic level, thus playing the game of neo-liberal politics serving the colonial status quo (Coulthard, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Nevertheless, if it is supported by concrete relationship and practical changes, a territorial acknowledgement can be an important step for an academic institution to take towards supporting the decolonial project of Indigenous resurgence, on the land.

Yet, when negotiating for the approval of the territorial acknowledgement, one of the main oppositions of the administration²¹⁸ was to the language of "Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands". The argument was that "unceded" opened the door for legal claims against the university, which lawyers on the board of the university were concerned about. It was suggested that IDLG review and change the language, in a way that could still support a territorial acknowledgement but avoid legal confrontations "so that everyone is happy". While taking notes for this meeting, the conversation made me think about the fact that unsettling actions cannot make

²¹⁷ The actual Territorial Acknowledgement, as officially adopted by Concordia, reads as follow:

"I/We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community"
<https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html>

²¹⁸ The opposition actually came from one or many layers advising the university at the administrative level. Current and past members of IDLG have more information on the discussions – and often conflicts – that happened around the territorial acknowledge before the IDLG was even formed. As I was not involved at that time and as this was not part of my fieldwork or research project, I decide not to dive in too much details here.

"everyone happy", since they entail for the settlers to give up on their privileges and the superiority of their interests. I also thought that, a university being a place of knowledge building and transmission, it should be held accountable to include the history of the land it sits on, including the fact that the land is unceded, rather than avoiding terminologies that reveal uncomfortable truths. These thoughts set aside, the point that won the argument was made by an Indigenous student member of the IDLG, who called on the responsibility of the university in terms of its relationships established with the land and the people of the land. The student highlighted the fact that the territorial acknowledgement is not an Indigenous protocol, but a protocol adopted by settlers, in the process of reconciliation. As such, they mentioned that the IDLG had made a suggestion of what was considered an acceptable acknowledgement, but it was not the responsibility of the Indigenous faculty and students of the university to establish the relationship the university is ready to foster with Indigenous Peoples and their land, in Montreal. In the end, if the university was not happy with the resulting acknowledgement, it could word its own to express the relationship it wanted to nourish. Finally, the Territorial Acknowledgement was adopted as formulated, with the "unceded" word in it.

Reflecting on this debate, I realized that what was at play was the legal framework of the university, versus the relational framework that the Indigenous student expressed. The tensions over the land acknowledgement were actually speaking to the tensions that arise, in a mainstream institution, around Indigenous acts of resurgence. According to Corntassel (2012), Alfred and Corntassel (2005) and Coulthard (2014), decentering Indigenous actions from the nation-state conceptions is an important dimension of resurgence. This includes, for example, moving away from the rights-based discourse (legality), which creates an illusion of inclusion, in order to instead focus on Indigenous responsibilities to their relations, including the land (Corntassel, 2012). In this case, the university was holding tight to the right-based discourse and IDLG was pushing it to move towards its responsibilities to the people and the land²¹⁹.

²¹⁹ While the Indigenous students and faculty members at Concordia are not only from this land (some are from other places in the province, the country, or even international), establishing the responsibilities of the university towards the land on which it sits, and the people of that land, in a place-based framework, is a first step in resurgence, which is always local. Many resurgence movements can ally with one another and they certainly have national and international impacts, but fundamentally, in Corntassel's perspective (2005), resurgence begins locally. I believe other Indigenous Peoples attending the same university will recognize the importance of this move, even if they come from other places, territories, and relate to other Peoples.

While the Territorial Acknowledgement finally passed university approval, this case is a good example of how, in spite of the reconciliation and Indigenizing the academy discourses, universities and their administration still reject decolonial projects, in that case, Indigenous resurgence. Acknowledging the "uncededness" of the land on which the institution sits is merely the first step to make space for the restoration of the relationships (material, ontological, and epistemological) of Indigenous Peoples with their lands, and the knowledges and responsibilities that are embedded in these relationships (Corntassel, 2012; L. Simpson, 2008). If the university has a hard time doing this, how will it enable an education that fosters the rehabilitation of Indigenous life ways in relation to their territories and their communities? How will it move "from *talk[ing]* about the land within conventional classroom settings, to studying instances where we *engage* in conversations with the land and on the land in a physical, social and spiritual sense" (M. Wildcat et al., 2014, p. II)? The IHE institutions and programs explored in this dissertation show that resurgence projects in education entail establishing curricula that rely on Indigenous intellectual traditions and that answer to Indigenous communities, and that land-based pedagogy is fundamental to resurgence project (Taiaiake Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Jeff Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard & L. Simpson, 2016; L. Simpson, 2008; L. Simpson, 2014; M. Wildcat et al., 2014). If mainstream universities are serious about reconciliation and Indigenizing the academy, they should address their colonial relationship with the land they sit on and support Indigenous resurgence in their institutions. This could take the form of research on the history and genealogy of the land and cities where they are situated, in collaboration with Indigenous communities in these lands, in order to uncover the colonial histories, and formulate alternative relationships, in a nation-to-nation approach with local Indigenous communities.

Indigenizing the academy: relating to Indigenous communities

The relationship with local Indigenous communities is another area that IDLG has addressed in its actions and the action plan for the university. While the relationship with Indigenous communities can take many forms, from including them in the governance of the university, to establishing research partnerships, the underlying assumption is that a better relationship between the university and Indigenous communities would address the colonial dynamics in ways that would serve the communities better. In an effort to sensitize the university to the importance of

good relationships with Indigenous communities, and raise awareness regarding Indigenous communities' needs, IDLG organized a two-day professional development journey to Kahnawake for senior administration of the university, where they spent the night in Kahnawake, visited the cultural center, the economic development center, and a Longhouse²²⁰.

The objective of the professional development journey was to support the Provost and Academic Cabinet members in their efforts to transform the university. During the journey, issues of colonization and decolonization were presented and reflected upon, while taking the time and opportunity to visit, learn about, and build relationships with the Indigenous community of Kahnawake. Given the recently-adopted Territorial Acknowledgement statement which recognizes the "Kanien'kehá:ka Nation as the custodians of the lands and waters we now call Montreal", it seemed important for Concordia University administration to build relationships with specific members of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation and with some of its institutions. The journey also involved a representative of the Urban Indigenous community who has been working closely with Concordia over the past few years.

The journey was a success in the sense that it allowed for potential relationships to emerge. In that sense, it was an effort to apply some of the lessons learned from IHE in terms of the importance of community relationships. However, we encountered many bureaucratic obstacles in organizing the journey, especially when it came to the payment of community members for their participation, and the payments of accommodation and food in a community context where the economy is more informal (for example, no company number for invoice). The institution lacks the flexibility to adapt to the community context, and the institutional assumption is that the community will adapt to the institution. While I understand that tax laws might require the institution to impose its financial accounting terms to the community, decolonizing and indigenizing the academy would require to inverse that expectation, so that the university builds the capacity and flexibility to adapt to Indigenous communities. This could mean being aware of the situation in the communities and foster creative accounting and bending/blurting of processes from time to time, rather than assuming that community members' work will fit in our existing categories. It could also mean to have a yearly budget for Elders and community members who participate in the institutions'

²²⁰ The journey was organized following a model that Sara Terreault and Matthew Anderson, from the Theological Studies department co-designed for the summer course on pilgrimage, with a four-day pilgrimage from Hochelaga Rock to Kahnawake, that they realize every year, in June.

training and activities. This is essential if we want the relationship with the community to be one that participates in the decolonial project of Indigenous communities survivance.

In that perspective, a lesson learned from IHE is that decolonizing the academy requires engaging with Indigenous communities, especially the communities in which territories universities are situated. Nevertheless, Barinaga and Parker highlight the problems that can emerge from such an endeavour if the power dynamics between communities and academe are not questioned. Therefore, they call for a "challenge to the possibilities of re-inscribing the sometimes harmful role universities have played in their engagement with communities, particularly communities of color" (Barinaga & Parker, 2013, p. 6). Consequently, Barinaga and Parker call for the pairing of community engagement with explicitly decolonizing, participative, and transformative methodologies (Barinaga & Parker, 2013, p. 6). Similarly, considering community engagement in Indigenous and Chicano contexts, Zavala explains these problems based on "the often contradictory goals between the university and the community, the hierarchical relation of power that privileges academic over local, Indigenous knowledges, and the production of knowledge that has very little practical value to Indigenous and Raza communities" (Zavala, 2013, p. 57). As universities are embedded in State interests and discourses of Western/Modern research, they often reproduce "axes of difference and power in our society" (Zavala, 2013, p. 66), thus rendering the recognition of Indigenous research methodologies a struggle for Indigenous researchers.

There is much that mainstream universities can learn from IHE programs and institutions, in terms of community relationships that would foster Indigenous survivance. For example, how TCUs and Amawtay Wasi created programs in direct response to the expressed needs of the communities they work with. Similarly, NAIS programs, as well as Indigenous Faculty in many other programs, often inscribe their research program in a collaboration with Indigenous communities – and often find difficult to have this work recognize in equal manner as other scholarly work. Following these models, more sensibility needs to be developed regarding Indigenous communities' life projects, which might differ from the modern/colonial settler life projects. While these are incommensurable by nature (Tuck & Yang, 2012), many tensions are to be expected in the negotiation of these life projects and how the universities support them. This is the challenge of decolonizing and indigenizing the academy, which again, implies an unsettling process where not everyone will "be happy". Another dimension of Indigenous community

engagement that can be learned from IHE decolonial project of survivance, is the challenge to the knowledge asymmetry (Hall & Tandon, 2017) that exists between the academy as "experts", researchers, and "knowers", and the communities as non-knowers. The Amawtay Wasi, TCUs, and NAIS programs all build the knowledge they teach, and the theories they produce, on the experiences and knowledges of Indigenous communities, as valid and alternative knowledge that should also be taught in the academy. Thus, engaging with Indigenous communities in ways that will foster decolonization, and precisely the decolonial project of resurgence, implies engaging with Indigenous knowledges.

Indigenizing the academy: engaging with Indigenous knowledges

The integration of Indigenous knowledges in courses and programs at Concordia is another area where IDLG is taking actions and making recommendations. For example, IDLG put together a proposal for the hiring of an Indigenous Pedagogy Consultant, which was accepted and Donna Goodleaf now fulfills this two-year contract position. However, the two-year contract denotes the reluctance of the institution to invest resources in the long term for changes that will take time and energy to realize. Similarly, some of the recommendations of the IDLG regarding Indigenous knowledges are mainly about bringing more support for the FPST program at Concordia to grow in terms of the courses it offers, the number of Faculty it operates with (two full-time Faculty for the past years), and the development of a fully autonomous program that could potentially offer graduate degrees.

It is telling that, five years after taking the lead in the province with the launching of an Indigenous Studies (First Peoples Studies) program, Concordia University has not invested enough resources to allow its growth in terms of faculty members, or to ensure that the diversity of courses needed to complete a B.A. are offered regularly²²¹. If universities are really committed to Indigenizing the academy, the support of Indigenous studies programs is fundamental, as these programs are the place where colonial history is addressed and where the storying of Indigenous knowledges happens. Indigenous studies programs also contribute in articulating new stories and

²²¹ It is to be noted that the previous director of First Peoples Studies programs left for a position in another university, and the lack of resources available at Concordia for the development of an FPST stand-alone program was one of his motivations for leaving. While it is unfortunate to see someone leave for such reasons after years of advocacy for the program, it somehow forced Concordia to face the problem. The search for a new director was accompanied by the decision to also hire another professor for the program. The increasing of faculty members should help reinforce the program.

theories elaborated in Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies. Of course, as TCUs and the Amawtay Wasi teach us, Indigenous knowledges exist in all disciplines, and their storying should happen across the board, and not be limited to one discipline in Indigenous Studies. This is where an Indigenous Pedagogy Consultant can be helpful, for departments and Faculties that do not necessarily know where to begin their Indigenizing. If the institution is not willing to support FPST as a valid, important, and relevant discipline, how are we to expect that faculties and departments will engage with Indigenous knowledges?

Engaging with Indigenous knowledges, with their storying in the academy, directly challenges the knowledge hierarchy and the logic of supremacy on which settler institutions are based. The Amawtay Wasi case shows that intercultural dialogues are possible in all disciplines, and that these dialogues can bring alternative concepts for the society as a whole. SKC has also developed interesting alternatives in hydrology, psychology, by engaging with the knowledges of the Salish-Kootenai communities it serves. NAIS programs that have adequate resources, such as the one at UA, have developed theories in environmental studies and even economy, that can represent alternatives to some of the problems societies encounter. Again, if Canadian universities, and Concordia in particular, are serious in their attempt to decolonize and indigenize, there are many lessons coming from existing IHE in terms of how to engage with Indigenous knowledges, and the positive outcomes it produces.

In the face of institutional uneasiness with decolonial projects, and the friction it creates with the intentions and discourses of "Indigenizing the academy", the research I presented here might bring three fundamental insights. First, understanding better the role of higher education in the colonial processes, and especially, in the maintenance of the supremacy logic and knowledge hierarchy that supports the Doctrine of Discovery is a first step in accepting the changes needed. Second, a better understanding of decolonization as a process that relies on decolonial projects and Indigenous futurities to which IHE contributes opens the door to a deeper conversation about what it means to "Indigenizing the academy" and how it inevitably comes with unsettling theories and practices. Third, the consideration of four IHE projects and their engagement with Indigenous communities and Indigenous knowledges in ways that contribute to decolonial projects of survivance, storying, and resurgence can provide concrete examples and lessons for universities that want to follow, if they are serious about Indigenizing the academy. After all, IHE institutions and programs exist in various forms since about 50 years, and they have taken on many challenges

and found solutions to many issues in terms of indigenizing higher education. As NAIS at UA was developing in 2015-2016, greater and better partnership with IHE institutions and programs is the best way, for mainstream universities, to contribute in decolonization processes in meaningful ways.

From Indigenous higher education to social and cultural analysis: some lessons learned

In closing this research on IHE as a tool for decolonization, I am also reflecting on where I situate it as a "social and cultural analysis" project, and how I am contributing to the field. In the analysis of the modern/colonial, global capitalist world-system (Wallerstein, 2004), understanding the processes and mechanisms of colonization and decolonization is an ongoing intellectual, theoretical and practical challenge. By taking a comparative approach, this research developed a hemispheric perspective that shows how a similar doctrine - the DoD - and the supremacy logic and knowledge hierarchies that it entails, were applied in the Americas to legitimize the creation of settler nation-states. Understanding the logics and continuous violence of colonialism creates possibilities for changes based on the work of IHE, and the Indigenous claims, decolonial Indigenous futurities, and Indigenous relational knowledges that IHE entails. IHE thus contributes to decolonial projects of survivance, storying, and resurgence through the relationships it establishes with community, and with Indigenous knowledges. The comparison between North and South America also showed the role of education in nation building, both for the colonial nations, and in terms of Indigenous nation re-building, in resistance to the colonial projects. The commonalities of Indigenous decolonial struggles and projects throughout North and South America also highlight the role of IHE as a decolonization tool, taking different shape in different contexts, but always contributing to decolonial projects through its engagement with Indigenous knowledges, communities, and land, in a relational perspective. The contribution I am making here is to link the very local and practical cases of IHE to the broad concept of decolonization, by speaking to the decolonial projects to which the IHE cases participate.

I have argued, from the beginning to the end of this dissertation, that Indigenous knowledges and experiences exist in all disciplines and should be considered not only as objects of study, but as the framework and theories that articulate our understanding of cultural, social, political and economic realities. In an effort to "walk the talk", I presented here Indigenous decolonial theories and projects, and how they are put in practice by Indigenous institutions and programs of higher

education. I contend that these experiences and knowledges represent a lesson for decolonial and anti-colonial theoretical frameworks and practices in the academy. Moreover, the consideration of IHE institutions and programs' knowledges and experiences in both North and South America, in a comparative framework, highlight their participation in the global world and their expertise on global processes of colonization and decolonization in higher education.

Finally, the lessons I learned from Indigenous academy have influenced my way of teaching in my discipline, both in terms of content and in terms of pedagogy. I taught twice the introduction course in anthropology ANTH-204 "First Peoples of North America"; once between my fieldwork in Ecuador and my fieldwork in the US; and once after my fieldwork in the US, while I had begun analyzing my fieldworks. I would like to end my dissertation by presenting some of the lessons and changes the work with IHE institutions and programs have brought to my understanding of my discipline and my teaching in that discipline.

In terms of storying, in my class, I have used Indigenous and critical perspectives to re-situating the discipline of anthropology in the context of colonial history, legacy, and continuous violence. I always start my course by presenting the role of anthropology in colonial logic and practices, as an expert knowledge involved in defining Indigenous Peoples in ways and according to interests that maintain the hierarchies and social structures of the settler state. The storying I put in place in my class means to refuse to objectify and teach Indigenous cultures following classical anthropological narratives (i.e. cultural areas; Bering Strait theory). This way, I was contributing to the questioning of our own safety zone (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006)²²², which circumscribes and contains Indigenous cultural and linguistic differences, as well as Indigenous sovereignty, in order to avoid threatening the settler nation-state. Applied to knowledge, science and social sciences, it means to challenge how the consideration of the "others" is circumscribed and contained in our own framework by questioning these frameworks.

Pedagogically, I use stories that reveal uncomfortable truths and foster humility, in the classroom. I try to set an example out of my own position and experience. I begin my course by

²²² In their book about Indigenous education in the USA, Lomawaima and McCarty have pointed out the tendency for Western leadership (at least, in US history) to establish "safe differences" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 53) or a "safety zone of tolerable cultural difference" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 66), using Western cultural norms as the standard against which to measure this difference. They mention that there has been "an ongoing struggle over cultural difference and its perceived threat, or benefit, to a sense of shared American Identity" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 6).

presenting how I am a settler in Mohawk territory, a fact that I ignored, and was ignorant of for most of my life. While I am careful to situate that ignorance is not innocence, I encourage my students to reflect on their own positionality, from where they come to "knowledge", and to begin seeing some of the gaps that might have existed in their education. While I tend to structure my course so that the first part of the semester is dedicated to understanding the colonial context in which anthropology was developed as a discipline, I also address how it still plays a role as an "expert knowledge" in the colonial system. We question our own categories of knowledge during that first part of the course, and we also discuss how these categories often obscure or erase Indigenous knowledges, histories, and experiences. I include in these discussions works and videos on Indigenous literary forms, scientific knowledges, and architecture and urbanism, and how colonial processes destroyed, marginalized, and continue to invisibilize these knowledges.

In the second part of the course, we engage with current issues for Indigenous Peoples such as land, education, identity, and nationhood/self-determination. For each of these issues, I include texts and activities that consider the colonial legacy and ongoing violence, alongside texts and activities that help think critically for decolonization and present Indigenous proposals and knowledges around these issues. Understanding the Doctrine of Discovery as a colonial tool and the basis for the legitimacy of the Canadian state is a priority in my class. In order to bring in storytelling, I used the Blanket exercise²²³ the second time I taught the course, and I included films and testimonies of residential schools' survivors on the issue of education. I also included in my class a "fieldtrip" to the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center in Kahnawake, which accepted to host my class. The presentation, by a community member, of the center's programs and efforts in language revitalization in relation to the community history, as well as the presentation of the center's museum which narrates this history (including the colonial history up to the present time, with highlights on the St-Lawrence Seaway's impact on the community, and on the "Oka Crisis" events) had a great impact on the students. For many of them, it was the first time they visited an Indigenous community in a conscious way and

²²³ "The Blanket Exercise" by Kairos is an hour-long experiential activity that takes students through 500 years of colonial history while they role-play being part of Indigenous communities that see their land (blankets) shrink before their eyes and see children removed from their arms. The exercise also includes hearing about some of the current impacts and ways that Indigenous peoples have resisted ongoing incursions onto their lands and into their lives.

the testimony and history they heard that day made very concrete many of the issues we had talked about in class.

This engagement with a local Indigenous community also speaks to the survivance project of that community. While I would not pretend that I contribute to Indigenous communities' survivance in my class, I do bring in the efforts of Indigenous scholars, communities, movements, and organizations to develop knowledges and practices regarding all the subjects we talked about: identity, nation/sovereignty, and land/territory. For each of the subjects, I took into consideration current Indigenous scholars' suggestions and perspectives as resistance and alternative to the colonial legacy. The use of Indigenous authors and films also serves to balance the colonial violence in ways that do not maintain Indigenous Peoples as victims, but rather, to show how different Indigenous nations, practitioners and intellectuals had various resisting strategies to the colonial violence, and they also propose different solutions to problems of our society. Presenting Indigenous perspectives on each subject, with proposals rooted in Indigenous intellectual traditions allows for the presentation of Indigenous resistance and survivance. I also end my course looking at Indigenous national and international activisms, diplomacy and resistance through history, from Tecumseh's movement to Idle No More, going through the interventions of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations and in the national politics.

I also make efforts, in a class that has a majority of non-Indigenous students, to foster knowledge that allows aligning with survivors of colonial violences. I use some tools thought to be useful in terms of creating empathy in non-Indigenous learners: Don Featherstone's *Babakiueria* short film (Featherstone, 1986), which presents an Australian Aboriginal satire of colonialism by inverting the roles of White and Aboriginal societies in Australia, with an Aboriginal anthropologist commenting on Western ways of living, seems to have a great impact on students. Similarly, Deloria's *Anthropologist and Other Friends* (1969) helps students in anthropology understand the Indigenous perspective on anthropological research. In brief, making space to critically discuss colonialism, while centering the class on Indigenous resistance to it and Indigenous knowledges and histories, from their own perspectives, has also created space for Indigenous students to be proud of their experiences and cultures, a fact that I also encountered in the journals of other students, Non-Indigenous but from non-Western background, who felt more space to engage with their own legacy and its relation to colonialism.

Finally, the decolonial project that I have the most difficult time implementing is resurgence, but this is not surprising, as I have shown how hard it is, even for IHE institutions and programs, to achieve resurgence in an institutional setting. For ally educators like myself, the question remains how is the teaching we are doing actually fostering resurgence of Indigenous life and Indigenous relationships to land? How is the knowledge that we build and transmit in class connected and useful to Indigenous Peoples? This also poses the question of how we are creating an ethical space of engagement (Ermine, 2007) between settler society and Indigenous Peoples, in relation to the land on which we live, the structure of our societies, and the institutions that constitute them, such as universities and academy.

One of the principles of resurgence that I try to foster in my classroom is the switch from a "rights-based" framework, to a "responsibility" one regarding the relationships we establish with Indigenous Peoples and knowledges. For example, we address the idea of individual privilege in relation to the society's structure, and especially in terms of problematizing settlers' privileges (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014), I address them in parallel with a "Western privilege" or the construction of a "western intellectual tradition" (see, for example, Williams, 2012a) and its participation in the racial and colonial privilege, or, as Kuokkanen calls it, "the white supremacy of intellectual conventions that manifest themselves as discriminatory practices and discourses, both of which have real-life effects" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 65). Batiste (2013) also talks of a displacement from biological racism to cognitive racism. This is the kind of racism that we address in the classroom when I ask my students to reflect on the theoretical perspectives they privilege as "valid knowledge". We look at different maps to see the direct impacts of anthropological theorization of Indigenous Peoples (i.e. "cultural areas", "linguistic families"), when compared to Indigenous maps of their own nations and territories. I also use what I call an epistemological exercise for them to reflect on "how they know what they know". I present a closed box to the class and ask them how they would proceed to know what is in the box, from where they are sitting, including possibly creating tools. Then we debrief on what their answer means in terms of their ontological and epistemological assumptions, and we think about privileged epistemologies and knowledges in our institution.

Responsibility does not entail blaming students for privileging Western ways of knowing, and quite often ignoring Indigenous ways of knowing. It rather means to understand where each of us stand and assume this position, together with the choice of critically analyzing the privilege of

Western knowledge, and of challenging this privilege by entering into conversation with Indigenous knowledges. Similarly, while we cover extensively the relation of anthropology to colonialism, both in the history of the discipline and in its current role in our society, the idea is not to discard anthropology or blame students for engaging in that discipline, but rather, to raise awareness on some of the problems and critiques of the discipline. By engaging with Indigenous anthropologists such as Charles Menzies, Kim TallBear, and Audra Simpson, amongst others, the critical stance is also balanced with the hope of the possibility of doing anthropology otherwise.

In terms of the responsibility and relationships to the land, and to the Indigenous Peoples of this land, the last time I taught the course, I included material about Montreal as an Indigenous place, through history and in contemporary realities. I arranged a walk in Montreal, with a friend and activist from Kanésatake, where we talked about the history of different places in Montreal, from Hochelaga Rock to the place of the Great Peace of Montreal. We addressed the Indigenous histories of these places, as well as their colonial histories. Students also had to write an essay about their and their family's relationship to the land and People of Montreal/Tiohtiá:ke, following the material seen in class and during the walking tour. This was a first step in a place/land-based pedagogy, to foster solidarity through the relationships we establish with the land and water of Montreal/Tiohtiá:ke.

The next research project I am envisioning is to develop a place-based curriculum that would integrate Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies, in collaboration with Indigenous communities in and around Montreal, that could become a model in different places, throughout Quebec. I think that this is the way forward, in terms of supporting Indigenous resurgence, and decolonizing settler relationships to the land and to Indigenous Peoples of these lands. Re-storying (Dahl Aldern & Goode, 2014) the city as an Indigenous space can be at the core of the investigation, to create a curriculum that fosters Indigenous resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred & Cornassel, 2005; A. Simpson, 2014), and resituates non-Indigenous students as settlers in Montreal, with the possibility of creating a relationship with the land and land-based practices that will include respect for, and solidarity with, Indigenous communities in Montreal. Following Indigenous research methodologies (Lambert, 2014; S. Wilson, 2008), the project should consist of a communal co-construction of knowledge in collaboration and reciprocity with Indigenous organizations and communities in and around Montreal, thus building bridges between the academy and the Native communities in the city. My Ph.D. research can certainly serve as a starting point for the

curriculum, with all the lessons I have learned from the Indigenous higher education institutions and programs I have worked with.

Before I undertake such a project, however, my next step is to go back to each of my field sites and present the results and conclusion of this dissertation. This will be the occasion to fulfill the reciprocity principle by giving back the research to the people, communities and institutions who contributed to it. It is also an opportunity to experience what the Amawtay Wasi has institutionalized as a harvesting ceremony, celebrating and harvesting the results of this journey with all the relations I made along the way. In doing this, I will also be able to receive feedback and share my ideas about the ways forward, with the possibility of deepening and maintaining the important relations created during this research journey, for future common projects.

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