Between Repression and Heroism: Young People's Politics in Mexico City After 1968

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

During the last four decades, diverse spokespeople for a post-1968 student left in

Mexico City have developed an organized memory of 1968. Their commemorative

reactivations of the year represent the state's repression of the 1968 student movement on

October 2, 1968 – in the shorthand, 'Tlatelolco' – as the point of departure for an

antagonism that continues to run through young people's politics today. This dissertation

draws from eight rounds of ethnographic and historical fieldwork, and an engagement

with theories of space, politics, and aesthetics (of Doreen Massey, Jacques Rancière,

Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari), to examine how and to what

effect these spokespeople for Mexico City's post-1968 student left have used Tlatelolco

to mobilize for political engagement as well as how young people might practice politics

otherwise.

Analysis suggests that, in response to a first erasure immediately after Tlatelolco

through which governing elites sought to cover up the massacre and downplayed their

responsibility, activists and affiliated cultural producers (visual artists, writers, musicians,

filmmakers, and so on) have established and continue to maintain a second erasure that

reduces the multiplicity of politics in the late 1960s to a predictable, enduring antagonism

between a force of repression embodied by the PRI and a heroic student movement that

resists repression in the name of a self-sacrificing movement family. I show that young

people act into a repression-heroism political framework erected around this antagonism,

and that by performing politics within the limits of that framework, they produce student movement space in which young people – even if not enrolled in school – will tactically identify as student activists in order to gain access to politics. Analysis suggests that student-left rituals of anti-state protest contribute to socially reproducing a 'police state' of fixed social categories through which post-1968 young people's politics is channeled. I show that the repression frequently invoked to characterize the adversary of Mexico City's student left is secondary to shared rituals of protest and representation that make that repression possible.

Upon first specifying the disparate procedures through which the contours of the properly political are naturalized, I theorize activist and aesthetic practices of *vinculación* that squeeze between the terms of the post-Tlatelolco repression-heroism framework and create conditions for solidarities around always unfinished political identities, both for activists and also for space. The political-theoretical argument explores how to construct a 'we' without repetitively reactivating the past as a measure of what can be done in the future. Analysis of examples from contemporary art (Ximena Labra, Thomas Glassford), literature (Roberto Bolaño, Carlos Fuentes), and activism (*Artistas Aliados* #YoSoy132) suggest potential for restoring post-1968 youth politics to a co-constitutive relationship with space, so it might be understood and practiced not in terms of a history rendered circular but as a singular effect of ongoing processes through which as yet unaccounted-for solidarities might be forged.

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Fields of Study

Major Field:  Geography

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction: Tlatelolco, the second erasure, and young people's politics

On October 2, 1968, in the then recently modernized Mexico City neighborhood of Tlatelolco, security forces controlled by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) opened fire on activists and sympathizers in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*. An estimated 10,000 people had assembled in the plaza to protest restrictions on free speech and assembly imposed by the government of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz prior to the start of the 1968 Summer Olympics as well as the state's violation of constitutionally guaranteed autonomy for Mexico City's two most prestigious universities – the National Autonomous University (UNAM) and the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN). In a police action to disperse the assembly, hundreds of protestors and bystanders were killed, hundreds more were wounded, and still hundreds more were arrested.

The Tlatelolco Massacre is now treated as an event that inaugurated an enduring genre of conflict. It is typically referred to in shorthand as 'Tlatelolco,' a proper name that captures not only the massacre but also other events of state repression to which the massacre is oftentimes linked. One might think of the 1971 *Halconazo* (sometimes treated as a 'mini-Tlatelolco'), or, for example, a 2006 police action to violently crush a demonstration of flower vendors in San Salvador Atenco, Mexico State, where President Enrique Peña Nieto was then acting Governor. In each case, the specificity of the given moment (the threat to university autonomy in Nuevo Leon in 1971, resistance to a land

grab in Atenco in the early 2000s) is lost in the commemorative reduction of these events

to instances of a timeless antagonism with the state, modeled after Tlatelolco.

Tlatelolco occupies a central place in the understanding and practice of politics in

Mexico City. According to a Mitofsky public opinion survey, October 2 is the third most

recognized date of Mexico's history behind only September 15 (Independence Day) and

November 30 (Revolution Day) (interview with the author, Alberto del Castillo

Troncoso, February 4, 2013). The latter two dates are clearly important for the state

insofar as they speak to its glory. While October 2 appears to speak more to people who

self-consciously resist the state, I would argue that – as an imagined point of departure

for contemporary anti-state politics – its commemoration is also an operation of state

power. As archivist Kate Doyle of Washington D.C.'s National Security Archive

describes Tlatelolco, "It is Mexico's Tiananmen Square, Mexico's Kent State: when the

pact between the government and the people began to come apart and Mexico's extended

political crisis began" (Doyle n.d.).

But if, after the Mexican Revolution, Tlatelolco is the most insistently textualized

event in twentieth century Mexican politics, there is nonetheless a great deal about it that

remains unknown. For example, while the contemporary student left[1] typically holds both

Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and his successor (then Secretary of the Interior) Luis Echeverría

responsible for Tlatelolco, it is unclear who exactly was involved in the attack and gave

orders to violently disperse the assembly. Documents housed in the *Archivo General de*

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[1] I use the term "student left" to refer to constituencies that identify as participants in student movement mobilizations or as inheritors their history. I share the formulation with René Rivas Ontiveros (2007) who wrote the history of the student left at UNAM, 1958-1972.

*la Nación* (the National Archive) suggest that Presidential Guard units were stationed on rooftops around the plaza and fired on soldiers and police to legitimate the assault on protestors (Aguayo Quezada 1998; Bosteels 2008; Carey and Román Gaspar 2008). This is suspected but not confirmed, and it is unclear what could ensure its confirmation. Even the death toll is uncertain; counts have varied from dozens to thousands of casualties, with most historians and commentators agreeing that soldiers and police killed more than 300 people.

Compounding uncertainty about the truth of Tlatelolco, the Mexican government has yet to lift the veil of secrecy over the event. In the immediate aftermath of Tlatelolco, press agencies aligned with the PRI (e.g., *El Heraldo de México*, *La Prensa*) produced an alibi for the repression by placing responsibility on "terrorist outsiders" and "communist students" (del Castillo Troncoso 2012, 18-20). In a revealing example, the government news agency Notimex, founded in 1968 to disseminate news about the 1968 Olympics, famously adhered to a policy of not using the words massacre, repression, or Tlatelolco in its reports. Even today, after October 2 was declared a national day of mourning in 2011, representatives of the government primarily address Tlatelolco as an episode in triumphant state history, casting the event as a national tragedy through which Mexico needed to pass in order to achieve progress.

This dissertation works in the tension between Tlatelolco as an important marker of modern Mexican politics and the uncertain truth of the massacre itself. The paradox of Tlatelolco is that, despite a lack of certitude about what exactly happened on October 2, Tlatelolco is used in simple noun form to identify both the repressive essence of the

3

Mexican state and the heroic, self-sacrificing qualities of a student left arrayed against it. In this sense, governing elites' post-1968 cover up gave Tlatelolco a positivity that they wished to deny it. This is clearly evident in terms of how young people, especially those identifying as student activists, have come to terms with the massacre. Throughout this dissertation, I invoke youth in a performative sense (Evans 2008, 1663-1664), as a social category that one enacts. I accordingly show that, for many young people in post-1968 Mexico City, both the massacre and the wider political geographies that Tlatelolco has come to represent have been reduced to an uncomplicated binary of oppositional conflict between the state and the student movement.

Consistent with a wider post-1968 Mexican left – at times communist, sometimes independent socialist or anarchist – that once did and today continues to view the state as "authoritarian and bourgeois, a structure which presides over a corporate system employing a subjugated labor force" (Semo 1986, 20), young adherents to the student left in Mexico City tend to treat their antagonism with the state as both a conviction as well as an inheritance. The relevance of past repression for understanding and practicing politics is deeply felt, and for good reason. In the wake of 1968, the forced disappearance of young people on the left (part of a generalized proceeding: location-apprehension-detention-disappearance) would reach a crescendo in the 1970s, during Mexico's Dirty War, and then would persist to the present day, now often under the guise of the 'War on Drugs' (González Villarreal 2012, 67). Repression's function as one pole in a political framework for contemporary student activist mobilizations is exemplified in projections of the state's repressive essence onto contemporary adversaries in relation to which the

4

practitioners of student activism can take political positions adequate to a predictable re-encounter with the state (see Figure 1, below): a restaging of 1968. I do not question the experience of repression. Nor do I argue that young people should not commemorate past repression. Rather, at issue in this dissertation is how the repression in 1968 haunts young people's politics today, and how it is called upon to the effect of overcoding specific political conjunctures and thereby establishing limits on what young people can think, say, and do as politics.



Figure 1: Poster from the 1999-2000 student strike at UNAM, produced by the Antídoto Visual collective at the *Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas* (ENAP)

In the face of a pervasive presentism in geographical youth studies (Mitchell and Elwood 2012), the practical reality of this inherited antagonism suggests a need for attention to how geographies of young people are shaped by representations of the past, and by history making practices (Mills 2012; Mitchell and Elwood 2013). This dissertation accordingly specifies how young people's politics in Mexico City after 1968 has been and continues to be facilitated and given shape through commemorative reactivations of Tlatelolco as a founding moment of the repressive state's war against heroic, self-sacrificing students and their allies. The dissertation problematizes a political framework within which young activists who oppose the post-1968 Mexican state have nonetheless come to "hope for repression" (interview with the author, 'Trippy' of Okupa Che in *Ciudad Universitaria*, February 8, 2013). I develop my analysis in conversation with recent scholarly, activist, and artistic attempts to complicate the repression-heroism framework. I take, as a point of departure, an argument that the post-1968 student left responded to the PRI regime's cover up of Tlatelolco with an ongoing 'second erasure' that young activists and their allies might today interrupt.

The second erasure, in the wake of the PRI's first erasure, can be characterized in general terms as a rigidification of social categories, realized through a repertoire of practice under the banner of post-1968 student activism. The categories – repressive state and heroic student – through which ritualized student activism is enacted obscure the multiplicity of what happened in 1968 and what could happen in its wake. The conditions for a gathering of so many people in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* on October 2 were set by dispersed acts, demands, and justice claims in the decades before. Women gained the

6

right to vote only fifteen years earlier, in 1953, and would vote for president for the first time in 1958. For women, the feminism that facilitated this victory was an unprecedented condition for making claims on the state. Workers agitated in the late-1950s and early-1960s, against *charrismo* (labor union bossism) and for union democracy. The strikes of railway workers, teachers, and telephone operators were, soon after, followed by a strike of medical students in 1965. Adherants to the extra-governmental left could not but understand these waves of protest in light of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, and student activism of this period shared the anti-imperialist rhetoric of Cuba's post-revolutionary state. Throughout the 1960s, and particularly after he was killed in 1967, the hero-martyr Che Guevara stood as a model for revolultionary masculinity that student activists could enact in 1968 and then reactivate in subsequent commemorations of that year as Tlatelolco.

As a recognizable student movement emerged in 1968, it would bear the remnants of the diverse social movement histories of the 1950s and 1960s, and would necessarily mobilize in spaces of politics shaped by previous waves of contestation. But the student movement was – in commentary on, and government policy to address, a student problem (Pensado 2013) – nonetheless elevated to the status of a universal. The PRI regime had, in the 1960s, proven willing to destroy its opponents, and thereby opened a void wherein no other political identity was so readily available to count-as-one for the left. In the words of the 1968 activist (later an academic) Gilberto Guevara Niebla, "It was in this vacuum that students injected their demands, aspirations, and desires that were not exclusively of student interest, but also of interest to campesinos, workers, intellectuals,

political parties, etc." (Carey 2005, 29). Adherents to the post-1968 student left would bring about what I call a second erasure when, in the wake of Tlatelolco, they cut the context of this "injection" from their representations of the 1968 student movement's antagonism with the state. As a result, the past repression made relevant to young people's politics today is consistent only with "a 'kaleidoscope' history of the long sixties" (Pensado 2013, 240-242) in which Mexico's 1968 student movement appears as the heroic force of freedom in the face of a monolithic apparatus of repression.

The political framework through which the relevance of this past is delivered can facilitate only a narrowly defined and markedly gendered repertoire of activist practices. Adherents to the student left enacted the second erasure, not of Tlatelolco, but of the diverse array of activism that provided the conditions for it, under the all-encompassing sign of an implicitly masculine student movement. Some of the second erasure was accomplished through authoritative accounts. Lessie Jo Frazier and Deborah Cohen note that, although there were clearly "'many '68s'," the narratives of male spokespeople for the 1968 student movement, especially those who were imprisoned as the identified leaders of the 1968 student movement, "have reduced this multiplicity to just one of the possible many" (Frazier and Cohen 2003, 620).

Edward McCaughan's analysis of the relationship between artistic practice and activism suggests that similar reductions were effected in other fields of practice; he observes that, in representations of 1968 that continue to circulate among young activists today, "male protagonists literally point the way toward freedom and victory over the state's repressive forces" (2012, 57). Jaime Pensado usefully clarifies the *ex post facto*

gendering of the 1968 student movement through methodological discussion of historical

analysis in his recent *Rebel Mexico*:

> "[Because] the overwhelming majority of students who engaged in public
> activism, provocation, violence, and *desmadre* (a more aggressive culture of
> youth defiance) were young men, these [hegemonic voices] speak primarily to a
> male perspective" (Pensado 2013, 8).

But the apparent masculinity of young people's politics *qua* student activism is not only a

question of sources. It also continues to be naturalized in practice, or in a relay between

text and practice, so that young people can today recognizably practice politics only by

simultaneously inhabiting the "masculine label of *revoltoso* [state-defined troublemaker]"

(Pensado 2013, 9). In Chapter Three, I focus on the inhabitation of this category through

rituals of violent public protest. More generally, this dissertation shows that, while this

post-Tlatelolco reduction of state-civil society relations to repression-heroism provides a

political framework that is easily taken up and put to work by young people who seek

access to an imagined sphere of true politics, the maintenance of this political framework

also sets limits on what counts as politics, and is in this sense depoliticizing.

This project responds to the post-1968 dilemma of remembrance and erasure by

examining how adherents to the student left propagate and inhabit the repression-heroism

framework. I suggest that rituals of post-1968 student activism secure the certainty of

'student movement space,' and constrain young people's politics from being anything but

a set of predictable rituals that confirm the visible and the sayable of that space. Through

fieldnotes, collected texts, and interviews, I show how the narrow oppositional legacy of

Tlatelolco is naturalized by young people today; how young people use Tlatelolco as a

frame through which to seek political recognition, and how, in so doing, they consolidate

social categories through which political practice is channeled. I examine how memories of 1968 as the year of violent confrontation between a repressive state and heroic student movement facilitate young people's participation in the neatly delimited spaces of post-1968 politics to the effect of giving young people a voice but also hemming young people in from disrupting the larger political order of which they are a part.

This dissertation examines both how 1968 is codified in archival representations and also how codifications of that past have been enacted to the effect of making possible and foreclosing what young people can think, say, and do in the name of politics almost fifty years later. Of course, my intention is not to reify this political framework, which receives most of my attention in the first three chapters. In the last chapters, particularly in Chapter Four, I accordingly examine certain activist practices and artistic and literary works that challenge the certainties of the repression-heroism problem sketched out in the earlier chapters, and which destabilize the limits of what can be said and done in relation to the past, and by whom.

On the emergence of a regime of representation

One can trace the emergence of the repression-heroism framework by examining influential representations of Mexico City's 1968 through which it was established and has been sustained. Given its echoes in contributions to what I will describe as a major treatment of Mexico City's 1968 (see e.g., Ayala 1998, 10; Carey 2005), Octavio Paz's narration of Tlatelolco as a "sacrifice" in *Posdata* (Paz 1970) is as appropriate a place as any to begin such an analysis.

Published in 1970, Paz's *Posdata* is based on a 1969 lecture he delivered at The University of Texas after he noisily resigned from a diplomatic post as ambassador to India, claiming, "I [choose] not to continue as a representative of the Great Moctezuma" (Krauze 2011, 214). The theme of the lecture was projected to be what had taken place in Mexico since the publication of Paz's 1950 book of essays *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, a well-known contribution to literature on *mexicanidad* or *lo mexicano*, contiguous with Samuel Ramos' 1934 book *The Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico*. Paz's question of what constitutes mexicanness persisted in the 1969 lecture, but his reflections were quickly drawn into the orbit of the 1968 massacre, and what that "sacrifice," in his terms, reveals about the character of the Mexican nation.

In chapter three of the published version, Paz explains the massacre: "*Se tendió un hilo invisible de continuidad: el hilo de la dominación* (1970, 123); it expresses an invisible thread of continuity and domination from the Aztecs to the Spanish conquest to the PRI of Mexico's twentieth century. According to Paz, at all moments, Mexico City was "the platform of the pyramid," a scene of ritual sacrifice that assured the continuity of national time. The name "México-Tenochtitlan" evoked Aztec domination over the nation that would be given its name; logically, for Paz, this continues today. Domination and sacrifice in the nation's capital, the origin and source of power; for Paz (1970, 116), this is the essence of Mexico's "*verdadera historia*" – its true history. Although he begins his lecture with a claim that Mexico has "not an essence but a history" (Paz 1970, 10), Paz pursues, in Tlatelolco, precisely the essence of that history, one premised on and offered to the effect of postulating as well as consolidating a spatial-temporal continuity

11

between all phenomena proper to Mexico. Chilean novelist Roberto Bolaño had these formulations in mind when he attributed the following to Paz in his novel *2666*: "Everything you might see today […] had already been *set* before […], and for the most part was a repetition, a filip on an already-gazing gaze" (Bolaño 2008, 536).

Despite an early affiliation with communism, Paz was an outsider in relation to post-1968 currents on the Mexican left, particularly those that were Soviet-aligned (e.g., the Popular Socialist Party [PPS] of Lombardo Toledano). Paz's move to resign from his prestigious diplomatic post after Tlatelolco briefly secured him support from the student left, but this coziness would not last. Amidst Mexico's Dirty War of the 1960s and '70s, through which the state suppressed insurgent groups and many idealistic young activists and their friends were "disappeared" (Gonzalez Villarreal 2012), many criticized Paz's treatment of the 1968 massacre as an expression of continuity-ensuring sacrifice. For the cultural crtitic Carlos Monsiváis, Paz was politically careless and out of step (Brewster 2005). I would suggest, however, that, in seeking to displace both the familial narrative mobilized in support of the PRI as well as Paz's equally genetic and depoliticizing liberal critique, diverse variants of the post-1968 Mexican left established another totalizing regime of representation – based on a repression-heroism couplet – within which young people in Mexico City now understand and practice politics.

Paz's tensions with the student left were exacerbated by an initial defense of Díaz Ordaz's successor Luis Echeverría after Echeverría promised to investigate the repression of activists in the *Halconazo* of June 10, 1971 (discussed in Chapter Two). Paz's position was not inconsistent with that of other prominent intellectuals whose criticism of the PRI

had in the past secured them a left identity. Consider, for example, Carlos Fuentes, whose novels famously explored how ideals of the Mexican Revolution were corrupted under the PRI regime, demystifying the history of a revolutionary family that was called upon to legitimize the endurance of the PRI's control (e.g., *Where the Air is Clear* [1958], *The Death of Artemio Cruz* [1962]).

Despite Fuentes' willingness to critique the PRI, he, like Paz, proved sensitive to what he understood as political exigencies, famously claiming in the wake of Tlatelolco that the choice was simple: "Echeverría or fascism" (Carr 1992, 241). Both men would therefore, at one time or another, be cast as enemies of the student left. Despite tensions with this left, however, their works provide major signposts for young people's engagement with politics through resistance to the PRI *qua* repressive Mexican state. These authoritative works reveal the adversary of the student left either betraying the revolution (Fuentes in e.g., *The Death of Artemio Cruz*) or repressing its still-living essence (Paz in e.g., *Posdata*). Echoes of this framework for understanding and practicing politics attest to the effect of these characterizations: an erasure, part of a second erasure, of the uncertain boundaries of political violence that was not carried out exclusively by the PRI (Pensado 2013) but would retroactively be cast as its essence, and a rigidification of the social categories that serve as a template for subsequent student-left activism.

The ur-text for the sacrifice trope and the repression-heroism political framework was arguably published almost two decades before the events of 1968. In Chapter Four of Octavio Paz's 1950 book *Labyrinth of Solitude*, titled (in English) "Sons of La Malinche" (Paz 1985, 65-88), Paz makes inescapable the myth "*la Chingada*" or "*la Malinche*" – the

indigenous translator and later mistress of the conquistador Hernán Cortés who suffered

his violation in an original violence from which modern Mexico was born. Paz narrates

this original violence as the birth of Mexicans as "*hijos de la Chingada*," the "children of

la Malinche." This violence is natural to the nation – "the pyramid" (Mexico), in Paz's

terms, and it is naturalized in everday practice. Today, one can easily point to the

expression's ubiquity in Mexico's capital; "*hijo de la Chingada*" is as often a descriptor

of enemies as of best friends; it is, as Paz suggests, "poetry within the reach of everyone"

(1985, 74). But also more than that: the expression is, for Paz at least, a symbolic order

into and from which Mexicans are born (Gaspar de Alba 2005).

      Paz's circumscriptive geography of Mexico is limited to a nation centered by a

capital in which, consistent with an inherited symbolic order, the possibilities for political

life are only to dominate or to be dominated. In both *The Labyrinth of Solitude* and in

*Posdata*, Paz offers a pedagogical narrative of the lifecourse of the nation: Mexico is the

effect of a transcendent organizing principle, "Aztec" violence. In Chapter Four of *The

Labyrinth of Solitude*, Paz examines *chingar* in such a way as to transfigure the nation's

mother into a sexually passive victim who is locked in an interminable conflict with the

aggressive *chingón*, alternately a Spanish conquistador or captain of industry or president

of the republic (Paz 1985, 87). Regardless of institutional position, macho *chingónes*

commit endless *chingaderas* (unspecified "fucked up" events) and dominate at whim the

feminized object of violence.

      For Paz, the nation's history will obey these constraints, which are, in Althusser's

sense, outside history (Alarcón 1989, 66-67; cf. Althusser 1971): "To the Mexican," Paz

claims, "there are only two possibilities in life: either he inflicts the actions implied by *chingar* on others, or […] suffers them himself (Paz 1985, 78). And, indeed, domination by *chingónes* of those who are *chingado* is written into what Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 100-110) would call the "major" treatment of Mexico City's 1968. This is a language of invariants, deployed as "order-words" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 75-85) that establish coordinates for understanding and practicing politics. The major treatment of politics consolidates a distributive relay of language and action, and overcodes post-1968 politics as an enduring violent encounter between two great molar aggregates (ibid, 86-89).

For example, in almost any given discussion of antecedents to October 2 during the summer of 1968, the armed occupations/police actions at the IPN and the UNAM are discussed in the language of rape, as a 'violation.' Consider Roberto Bolaño's novella *Amulet*, first published in 1999. After "September 1968, when the riot police violated the autonomy of the university" (Bolaño 2006, 91), the novella's narrator Auxilio Lacouture gives birth while trapped in the bathroom of the UNAM's Facultad de Filosofia y Letras, a metaphorical birth later characterized as the "birth of History" (Bolaño 2006, 151-152). One might reasonably ask whether it is for reason of her giving birth upon suffering the "violation" of 1968, that she is characterized as "the mother of Mexico's poets" (Bolaño 2006, 172), which is to say the mother of so many *hijos de la chingada*.

The reinscription of the *chingón-chingada* binary – embodied in the 'repressive' state and 'heroic' student movement respectively – is accompanied by a widespread fixation on Tlatelolco, the event around which historical discourse contracts, and upon which the multiplicity of 1968 and the late 1960s in general are telescoped. In the 1970s,

'80s, and '90s, left leaning, frequently movement-affiliated activists, artists, scholars, and politicians accompanied Paz in inscribing this continuity. These actors did not move as a unified block. Indeed, those decades were characterized by great cleavages on the left. Some of the communist left continued pursuing convergences with the PRI. Others, of course, recognized the despotism of the PRI regime, and agitated for change. Meanwhile, the non-communist left exploded, diversifying across new party formations and groups that sometimes carried Marxism with them but would organize not only around class but also around gender or, for example, community. This diversity is important. But individuating these actors, and setting them apart from a social field that was shaped so significantly by Tlatelolco, would obscure how a multiplicity came together to establish a regime of representation, repression-heroism, that has functioned, in subsequent decades, as, in Henri Lefebvre's sense, the "everyday" of the Mexican left (Lefebvre 1987, 9).

In the immediate wake of Tlatelolco, in the first half of the 1970s, the government of Luis Echeverría, offered subsidies to state universities like UNAM, generating more opportunities for higher education in what was arguably part of a wider effort to obscure Echeverría's complicity with the violence of 1968 (Mraz 2009, 206). The subsidies deepened previous tendencies of state investment that were part of an approach to stabilizing development concurrent with the so-called Mexican miracle (background for Mexico's successful bid to host the 1968 Olympics). The numbers are astounding. In Mexico City in 1960, one in every 111 citizens was a university student; in 1970, the proportion of university students increased to one in every 66 citizens; and by 1977, one year after Echeverría left office, one of every 55 residents of Mexico City was enrolled in

higher education (Carr 1992, 230). More significant for this study of young people's politics, not only did the university student population expand; it also, at the same time, became more radical in tactics and in orientation. Put briefly, the experience of 1968 and of violence towards the citizens assembled in Tlatelolco on October 2 effectuated "new sensibilities and ways of organizing political interventions" (Carr 1992, 2).

Some would characterize 1968 as a shift from a "politics of demand," expecting a state apparatus to make changes appropriate to demands from its citizens, to a "politics of the act," increasingly realized through direct action, which breaks the "loop" of political practices that, by anticipating a response, in fact perpetuate structures of domination and exploitation (Day 2004, 733-734). But not only does the projection of this macropolitical shift repel deviations from an inherited narrative about 1968, its assertion also obscures the "something unaccountable" that was "escaping" in the years before, and even in 1968 before it became '1968' (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 215-218). This molecular flow (evident, for example, in the 1958-1959 railway strike, or perhaps in the communist student activism that emerged in Morelia in the first half of the 1960s) exceeded, and as then, still today may potentially reshuffle more immediately perceptible molar aggregates of the repression-heroism framework.

What I am calling a "molecular flow" is fleetingly and strikingly represented in Alfredo Joskowicz's 1970 film *Crates*, in which the viewer is presented with one man's refusal of the consumer society realized through the Mexican miracle. In a minimally choreographed scene, the protagonist Crates, of the title (played by 1968 National Strike Council representative Leobardo López Arretche), stands on the sidewalk of a busy

17

Mexico City street and offers a half eaten loaf of bread to passersby. Viewers observe an uninhibited willingness on the part of many young people to accept this unkempt man's offer of a pinch of bread. One young man with long hair accepts the bread and then sits with Crates on the curb of the crowded sidewalk to share a cigarette and a bottle of liquor. Amidst the well-dressed professionals with whom they share the sequence, Crates and the young man appear as participants in a form of sociality that exceeds the inherited post-Tlatelolco narrative. This film is not the art of protest, and its content refuses the tropes of propaganda. I suggest that the effect of this "colliding, mingling, or separating" of bodies would be missed through the pursuit of "more substantial truth" beneath their surface (Foucault 1977a, 169-173), and so, in the following chapters, I set such questions aside. To be clear, of interest in this dissertation is not the truth beneath an illusion of 1968. Rather, of interest is the function of that illusion. Dispensing with concern for truth or falsehood of how 1968 has been represented, I focus instead on what a post-Tlatelolco regime of representation allows and limits young people from doing in the name of politics after 1968. At the same time, I am interested in how young people's politics after 1968 could be or could have been otherwise.

A methodology for examining young people's politics

My analysis suggests that a multiplicity came together to establish a repression-heroism political framework that has functioned, since 1968, as the "most obvious and best hidden" (Lefebvre 1987, 9) of Mexico City's student left. What mode of engagement is adequate to revealing how geographies of young people are shaped by history making

practices and representations of the past? What methodology is appropriate for examining how young people's ostensibly political rituals of protest are determined by but may also sometimes challenge existing political frameworks?

While scholars of the past's distortion through inherited categories have tended to work only with texts (e.g., Ross 2002), a synthesis of ethnographic and archival fieldwork allowed me to examine not only the texts but also the practices through which historiographic and political closures such as this have come to arise (Ashmore et al. 2012; Kurtz 2001; Stoler 2009). This research suggests that the naturalized framework through which young people's politics must today be squeezed was not inevitable, and is fragile, but is nonetheless a perceptible constraint in relation to which instances of politics will take shape. My methodology challenges a tendency in non-representational variants of the practice turn in human geography to eschew texts (or so-called textualism) for the more visceral material thought to be available through ethnographies of 'the event' (Dewsbury et al. 2002; Lorimer 2007; Thrift and Dewsbury 2000). After the non-representational practice turn, attending to everyday practices is no doubt essential. But, for my work, textual data and archival representations are also been indispensible (Griffin and Evans 2008; Patchett 2008). I complement participant observation and interviews with archival work, to highlight different dimensions of the problem and add depth to my presentation of the case. A combination of more obviously ethnographic methods with archival research allowed me to account for practices of enacting the past and of acting politically which would be obscured through an exclusive engagement with either texts or practices (Crane forthcoming; Herbert 2000; Hitchings 2012).

How can one take note of what falls outside the categories around which a relay between the language of 1968 and the ostensibly political practices of young people has been organized? On the one hand, one must examine representations of Tlatelolco's apparent outsides with an eye to establishing typically overlooked connections, and not so much to represent existing collective identities as to open them to revision (Kurtz 2002). The apparent outside is only made visible as such through an imagined coherence: Tlatelolco, and a history that follows from it, in which young people can be called upon to occupy their proper place. I return to this imaginary as part of my discussion of artistic interventions in Chapter Four. For now, however, I should note that I pursued archival research to amplify the role of the 'outside' in post-1968 youth politics, and to signal the co-presence of multiple accounts (Fraser and Weninger 2008; Massey 2005), denaturalizing the unified trajectory within which practitioners of young people's politics after 1968 after often presumed to operate.

An appreciation of the materiality of the archive is crucial here. The texts are part of a relay with student activist practice, and are organized and made available as part of that relay. At issue are organizational practices like those at a location in Coyoacán bookstore *El Tomo Suelto* (near UNAM), where an early-1968 pamphlet (Castillo 1968) from the inclusively left activism of the *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional* (Movement for National Liberation, MLN) is catalogued on shelves designated specifically for the "The Student Movement" by virtue of its provenance in 1968. This is another moment of the second erasure, which cuts away the context of the student movement's "injection" into political life of the 1960s (Guevara Niebla quoted in Carey 2005, 29) and makes the

1968 student movement appear as a heroic force in the face of a monolithic repressive state. The important point is that this cataloguing practice exemplifies a tendency across a spatially diffuse, formally diverse set of archives on the repression of 1968 (maintained by artists, historians, used book sellers, activists, and others in the orbit of youth protest), which is a key pedagogical resource for student activists today in that it provides them with a template for understanding the state and for practicing politics. Archival research is therefore clearly essential for taking note of what falls outside but has been forced into the categories around which the relay between practice and text is organized.

On the other hand, in addition to archival research, I committed to fieldwork, even if perhaps not in a traditional ethnographic sense (Borneman and Hammoudi 2009). The research problem demanded my presence not only in obviously relevant spaces (e.g., the annual commemorative march from Tlatelolco to the *Zócalo*) but also in other spaces of practice through which the legacy of 1968 is given shape and young people take on political positions (e.g., youth social centers, punk shows). These pages benefit from an admission that 'there' is not any one point in absolute space that can "be understood by appeal to what exists only at that point" (Harvey 2006, 274). 'Being there' must also include fieldwork in quotidian spaces, in part as a corrective to much work on places of memory that has focused more exclusively on monumental sites (Hague 2008)

From 2010 through 2013, I traveled to Mexico City eight times for my research. I organized this fieldwork around the calendar of young people's engagement with the legacy of 1968, and around emerging waves of student protest with which I necessarily came to be involved, even if sometimes only as an interlocutor. For example, in 2010, my

first year of fieldwork, I returned to Mexico City in late September, despite having only just returned from a previous round of fieldwork in August. This was necessary so I could participate in the annual commemorative march on October 2 (something I would do again in 2011 and 2012). Or, for example: in 2013, I pursued fieldwork in February and (after completing my teaching in the United States) returned for an extended round of fieldwork in May-June in order to keep up with a then-regular schedule of activism under the sign of #YoSoy132. These 2013 trips included attending and documenting the first anniversary celebrations of a May 11 demonstration at the *Universidad Iberoamericana* which threatened to turn the 2012 election against President Enrique Peña Nieto.

In addition to keeping up with the calendar of activism, my reason for taking so many trips was practical. Qualitative research on a topic of this breadth takes time, and in Mexico City especially, the best-laid plans are rarely born out in practice. Meeting times are frequently approximated, and appointments with research participants are often tentative. A passage on fieldwork from Craig Jeffrey's book about young men's cultures of waiting in Uttar Pradesh resonates with my experience. (2010, 29):

> [I experienced fieldwork] as long periods of relative inertia interrupted by moments of tremendous excitement. Most of the time, I was either traveling to meeting someone, dealing with practical aspects of the research process, waiting for an interview or talking to an informant who had little interest in my questions. But at other moments, the research […] almost seemed to be doing itself […]

I should also emphasize that I took as many trips to Mexico City not only to keep up with the calendar of activism and to account for the unpredictability of fieldwork, but also to ensure that my processes of data collection and interpretation most fully benefit from longitudinal fieldwork. In terms of data collection, the most significant effect of my

eight trips over four years is the trust I established with contemporary activists, and the legitimacy I garnered with participants in and commentators on past activism.

At this point, on the topic of trust and friendship, I should mention that my field research was preceded by a life-changing solo trip to Mexico City in 2009, before I re-enrolled in graduate school. I left for Mexico City after years of participation in Do It Yourself (DIY) punk and radical politics in the United States, and with greater interest in Mexico City's punk scene and cultural politics than with any sense I might explore a disseratation topic. My initial understanding of the post-1968 limits on young people's politics was more intuitive than research-derived. I owe my insights to afternoons spent reading and discussing punk and anarchist zines with friends in the *Fanzinoteca* of the *Okupa Che* in the *Ciudad Universitaria* (a squatted social center on UNAM's campus), and to a series of long nights with the punks – El Podrido demonstratively kicking his boot in the morning after a show and party (see Figure 2, below), growling of "hate for the state." Many of the friendships I developed during my trip in 2009 sustained me in my subsequent fieldwork (2010-2013), and provided otherwise unlikely opportunity for casual conversation that pushed the research and arguments in unanticipated directions. During the fieldwork itself, my interviews would plainly not have been possible without regular trips through which I became a familiar either to interviewees or to the gatekeepers who helped me establish contact with interviewees by "snowballing" (Valentine 2005).

Figure 2: Flyer for a Do It Yourself punk show in Xochimilco in 2009, weathered from a long night

More relevant to the process of interpretation, the multiple trips through which I pursued fieldwork clarified the necessity of conceiving young people's spaces of politics after 1968 as relational spaces, which is to say, as spaces defined through practices, so that a "variety of disparate influences" can be seen to "concentrate and congeal" (Harvey 2006, 274) in, for example, the annual march for Tlatelolco. In this case, although the

march is widely represented as organized in the memory of specifically the massacre on October 2, my regular participation in the march allowed me to take note of how activists use Tlatelolco to do more than simply look back to what happened on that day, in that place. For example, the march in 2011 was a venue for expressing solidarity with the post-neoliberal aspirations of Chilean students, and the 2012 march was a venue for demonstrating against what participants in the march named the *imposición* (imposition) of PRI President Enrique Peña Nieto through what is regarded by many as a fraudulent election.

My multiple trips and mode of engagement have allowed me to correct what I see as the presentist and statist shortcomings of much geographical research on young people's politics. I discuss my corrective in some depth in Chapter One, so I will only briefly treat it here. In short, I suggest that statism is evident in research on young people's geographies that posits, as a challenge to so-called adultism (adult explanation of young people's lives), the simple act of making young people visible within political-legal structures from which they have heretofore been marginalized. Related to this statism, I see evidence of presentism in non-representational work on young people (and, more generally, a micro-scale treatment of young people's lives) that focuses on the immediacy of 'the event' at the expense of attention to context, and to the effect of insulating power relations from interrogation. These two tendencies are related, and I suggest they can be resolved by restoring present practices to their conditions of possibility and examining, as politics, practices of young people that disrupt or otherwise refuse the predictable social-spatial order of what I will refer to as 'the police.'

If one adopts the conception of politics advocated here, and seeks to examine the perhaps rare instances in which young people realize it in practice, one begins, as I have, by delineating the historically and geographically specific configuration of governable order that an instance of politics would throw into question. This starting point clearly complements contemporary efforts to break from teleological "youth transition" models and show that growing up is contingent (Holt and Holloway 2006, 135; Valentine 2003). I examine post-1968 social-spatial order as a fragile outcome of multiple intersecting trajectories, and as an order partitioned in part by the very people whose history-making refusals of identities could come to effect its disruption (Ross 2009). By attending to specific space-times and admitting the relational composition of spaces through practice, this move to specify the configuration of governable order challenges a depoliticized sociology of youth that naturalizes a locally meaningful linear movement from childhood to adulthood through engagement with student left politics. My approach therefore clearly corresponds with a critique of the historicist notion of the present as a predictable expression of Spirit, the space of "only one history, one voice, one speaking position" (Massey 2005, 41-42), or, in Foucault's terms, of a "timeless and essential secret" (Foucault 1977b, 142).

I conclude the dissertation by examining artistic and literary works through which the partitioned elements of Mexico City's 1968 are placed in variation so that the major language of 1968 is, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms (1987, 96-105) "sent racing." Before examining the disruption promised by a minor treatment of 1968 – that is, before examining this mode of politics – one must first identify procedures through which the

26

contours of the visible and sayable after 1968 have been established. The procedure of tracing through which the world of young people's politics in Mexico City is made intelligible and practicable after 1968 can then be placed back on the map and opened to experimentation.

Chapters

The following chapters examine the lingering significance of the post-Tlatelolco political framework. Each chapter advances my overall argument that the repression-heroism framework has been and continues to be enacted to the effect of making possible but at the same time setting limits on what young inheritors of Tlatelolco, particularly student activists, can think, say, and do as politics almost five decades after 1968. My analysis gradually moves in the direction of creative practices of memory-work and *vinculación* (linkage) through which the post-Tlatelolco regime of representation, despite its persistence, is currently unraveling. This final section of my introduction reviews my arguments, and points to conceptual and theoretical contributions to existing debates in relevant disciplines and fields of study: political geography, cultural geography, social movement theory, memory studies, youth studies, and post-Marxist political theory.

Chapter One draws from fieldnotes, field recordings, interviews, and archival representations. I specify how categories of the post-Tlatelolco political framework are put to work, inhabited, and sustained in practice. At issue is 1) the commemoration of Tlatelolco, 2) the production of student movement space, and 3) the practices and imaginaries of affiliation through which student movement space is sustained. In relation

27

to these topics, my analysis contributes to debates on the geographies of young people and social movement studies.

Relevant to social movement studies, I suggest that, through what young activists call *vinculación*, they can establish connections to the naturalized outsides of student movement space, and disrupt ordering processes that make present to the senses only a circumscribed world that is the basis for government. Through *vinculación*, activists can challenge the limits of what counts as young people's politics after 1968 (an argument I echo and expand in subsequent chapters). But, if I reveal experimentation, I also marshal examples from fieldwork that show how the repression-heroism framework continues to constrain how young people formulate demands and cultivate political identities. By revealing how this social movement frame facilitates but also attenuates young people's politics, I contribute to a still wanting political geography literature on specific forms and practices of movement organization and mobilization (for exceptions to this neglect of social movement theorizing in political geography, see Chatterton et al. 2013; Clough 2012; Nelson 2003; Nicholls 2009). In particular, I show how activist subjects are constituted prior to and through their participation in events coded as those of a specific subset of activists (Rutland 2013), in this case student activists.

Relevant to youth political geography, Chapter One responds to an urgent need to theorize how young people practice politics. To be clear, this urgency to theorize does not reflect a lack of attention. Indeed, if geographers do not have a consensus around terms through which one should examine young people's politics (Kallio and Häkli 2013), an uptick in articles and monographs on the topic has nonetheless been ongoing for at least

28

two decades (see e.g., Aitken 1994; Bosco 2010; Philo and Smith 2003; Ruddick 2003). The urgency I perceive has more to do with what I discussed as twin tendencies toward presentism and statism in youth political geography. This chapter concludes by suggesting that writing political geographies of young people demands historical-geographical contextualization and analysis of specific tensions with a governable given in relation to which young people become political. As for young people's politics in Mexico City after 1968, I show that adherence to the repression-heroism framework has effectively mobilized many tens of thousands of young people in pursuit of social justice, but has simultaneously hemmed young people in from forms of politics that exceed the political identity student. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the 'non-student "student"' is an expression of this imposition of an inherited regime of representation, repression-heroism, which makes young people's politics appear determined by the experience of 1968.

Chapter Two continues the analysis of the non-student student. Informed by post-Marxist political theory (especially writings by Jacques Rancière and Alain Badiou), I question whether the political identity student is indeed a road to politics or if it may paradoxically secure a police order that makes present to the senses only a circumscribed world that is the basis for government. This line of thinking is even more fully developed in Chapter Three. Chapter Two functions more modestly as an empirical and conceptual bridge between the first and second halves of the dissertation. I sketch two genealogies of the non-student student in Mexico City – of the *porros*, and of the punks – and I reveal how these examples complicate facile attempts to either embrace or write-off the non-

student student as a political actor. In short, my analysis suggests that the field of young people's politics in Mexico City after 1968 could be less constrained, and that, precisely by virtue of inhabiting the repression-heroism framework, the non-student student is a key vector for this potential change.

Chapter Two also clarifies the political-theoretical stakes of my dissertation through a critique of Fabio Lanza's provocative recent book on the non-student student in early-twentieth century Beijing. My reading challenges Lanza's theoretical debt to Alain Badiou (2005a) and Badiou's notion of "true politics" found at a distance from the state. Leaning on Badiou, and adopting his capitalization of state as "State," Lanza argues that the boundaries around the politically proper are unsettled by true politics, and that this possibility exists on the condition that practitioners expose the State's classificatory order to inspection and thereby interrupt the errancy of the State. For Badiou (2005a, 144), this denaturalization of categories otherwise be taken for granted invariably "summons the power of the State." For Lanza too, destruction of the bond inscribed in State classifications produces a "need for repression" (Lanza 2010, 213). As a rule, then, the State is understood to reveal itself to practitioners of true politics and, through repression, reestablish proper boundaries of the political.

The genealogical work in Chapter Two indicates the problems with dogmatically adhering to a vision of the state (or State) as invariably repressive or even as a reified thing that can be understood apart from an apparently separate sphere of politics (true politics). My critique of Lanza and Badiou allows me to argue, perhaps somewhat counter-intuitively, that the notion of true politics at a distance from the State is in fact

30

depoliticizing insofar as it "implicitly shores up [the State] against which [true politics] is targeted," while at the same time "crediting [the State] from the outset with the status of the hegemon" (Gill et al. 2012, 512). I suggest that, to seek this 'outside' analytically or in political practice is to invest the state with a preestablished, self-present, original stability against which resistance can only ever be a response (Mitchell 1991; Rose 2002). I put my work in dialogue with certain critical geographers of resistance to conclude by briefly advancing my conception of the police (after Rancière) as a generalized social-spatial order, which serves to correct Lanza and Badiou's theorization of non-state politics in opposition to what is, in effect, a reified state. This prepares the ground for my elaboration of an alternative conception of politics that is intertwined with a 'police state' in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three examines the emergence of #YoSoy132 and the activism of people who have identified as being members of that movement, and have contributed to casting it as student-led. At issue is a ubiquitous narration of continuity from 1968 to 2012, and activists' reassertion of a student identity that is enacted as masculine and heroic. I argue that the narration of genetic continuity in a movement family that extends from 1968 to 2012 reflects what Kristin Ross (2002) names a "police conception of history," which naturalizes inherited political classifications. I suggest that, by adopting this conception of history, the student left secures the certitude of what is and is not there; they postion themselves only to enact politics proper to student movement space, a predictable venue for victories and defeats. Whether acting in the name of the state or not, they establish a police state; they configure the perceptible world in a way that discourage politics; they

make young people's politics available to perception only as an expression of one term in a predictable antagonism for which the endurance of its opposite (the repressive state *qua* PRI) can be assumed.

Advancing my state-theoretical argument, I reveal a generalized state of police in which the State (in the reified sense) is socially reproduced through anti-state protest. My analysis decenters state formation from people acting in the name of the state to anti-state constituencies ostensibly arrayed against it, and thereby supports Nick Gill's (2010) call for attention to the constructive power of statist imaginations for activist practice. The analysis also underscores a need to investigate how activists' imaginations of the state may matter for the exercise of power through the peopled institutions that are identified as the adversary of the student left. I not only respond to post-Marxist political theory but contribute to youth political geography in that I situate young people within processes of state formation in relation to which they tend to be construed as marginal.

More explicitly than before, Chapter Three presents politics as a disruption of social-spatial order, instantiated through a break with historicist notions of the present as the inevitable and predictable expression of a timeless antagonism. In this sense, Chapter Three connects with and extends arguments in Chapter One. I clarify the police-politics dynamic through analysis of evidence from recent waves of protest that some young people are challenging the political identities naturalized within the repression-heroism framework by seeking productive linkages to what has, through the second erasure, been made to appear as if it is outside student movement space. I suggest that disruptions of police order may denaturalize inherited exclusions, and that, in this sense, an autocritical

student politics squeezed through the repression-heroism schema – working transversally between its categories – may facilitate other ways of knowing, speaking, and doing: a restoration of mobility to spaces of politics that were arrested through the second erasure.

Chapter Four further examines such potential for disruption through my analysis of artistic and literary practices of memory-work. I twin the interruptive intent of activists in Chapter Three (and also of this dissertation) to the memory-work of artists and writers who challenge inherited historiographical and political closures, and who seek to disrupt the sense of destiny inscribed in the post-Tlatelolco repression-heroism political framework. Nods to a wider field of artistic and literary practice provide context for analysis of works by Roberto Bolaño (author, *Amulet*), Thomas Glassford (artist, *Xipe Totec*), and Ximena Labra (artist, *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey*). I show that, taken together, Bolaño, Glassford, and Labra work to denaturalize the spatiality of young people's politics after 1968.

I draw inspiration from interdisciplinary memory studies scholarship (e.g., Jelin 2003; Till 2012) to suggest that these artists and writers expand or, in their shortcomings, create conditions for the expansion of what counts as politics after 1968. If, in the face of the PRI's first erasure, commemorative reactivations of Tlatelolco have produced and then confirmed durable figures with reference to which young activists can enact politics in any recognizable sense only as members of a student movement, these practices of memory-work promise to destabilize the limits of what can be known, said, and done in relation to past repression, and by whom.

33

In place of a historicism that sees the past as a necessary development through which resolution is realized in the present, or will be in the future, I ally my project with efforts to record "the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality" (Foucault 1977b, 139), and without the certainties effected by the "major" language of 1968 (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 94-95). In Chapter Four, I examine how memory-work can challenge the inherited certainty of beginnings and endings, and of who enacts those beginnings and endings, and can thereby move towards disrupting the police state within which spaces of and for young people's politics have heretofore been practiced. If, as for Premesh Lalu (2009), "the event of history" is a moment (i.e., Tlatelolco) in which what can and cannot be said about the past is defined, then the task of memory-work, and also of this dissertation, is to contribute to calling forth a political moment that redefines what can and cannot be said about the past, and opens new directions for writing and enacting the history of young people's politics in Mexico City.

Chapter One: No Rehearsal Necessary: Enacting Student Movement Space

"The student movement began as a street brawl between rival groups of adolescents. Police brutality united them. Later, as the repression became more severe and the hostility of the press, radio, and television – almost all pro-government – increased, the movement strengthened, expanded, and grew aware of itself" (Paz 1985, 231).

"The most tenacious subjection of difference is undoubtedly that maintained by categories. By showing the number of different ways in which being can express itself, by specifying its forms of attribution, by imposing in a certain way the distribution of existing things, categories create a condition where being maintains its undifferentiated repose at the highest level" (Foucault 1977a, 186).

Introduction: intervening after the second erasure

The reduction of 1968 to Tlatelolco is promulgated through artistic and literary works, in practices of commemoration and archive organization, in popular histories, and in the organization and enactment of student activist politics. Accordingly, people can invoke 1968 to mean specifically a violent encounter between the student movement and the state, past or present. Young people's engagement with politics is facilitated by rituals of commemoration that effectively mobilize young people and allies of the student left but also obscure the content of specific contemporary conjunctures and set limits on how activists might intervene in them. This dynamic is the object of my chapter.

As an example of the dispersed quotidian practices that cut away the context of the student movement's injection into political life in the 1960s, consider an exhibition in

the *Museo del Estanquillo* of Mexico City's *Centro histórico* (Historic Center) in 2010.

Amidst commemorative fanfare for the 1910 Mexican Revolution and the nation's

bicentennial of independence from Spain, political and historiographic closures effected

by a reduction of post-1968 young people's politics to Tlatelolco were evident in *México:*

*a través de las causas* (Mexico: through the causes), a nationalist celebration of selected

social movements and protest waves that gave shape to contemporary Mexico. The

following selective quote from a book by then recently deceased cultural critic Carlos

Monsiváis (2005, 14-15; 2008) found prominent display on the wall of a room devoted to

*La causa del 68* (author, fieldnotes, August 22, 2010, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City). The

exhibit's presentation of "*La causa*" ("The Cause") of 1968 in the singular is legible from

the quote itself.

> In 1968 there emerged in Mexico City, a large (in fact, mass) student protest
> against the government of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970). … Everything that
> constitutes the 68 epic and the tragic event of October 2 in the Plaza de las Tres
> Culturas leads to the unmistakable conclusion: 68 is the most important political
> fact in the second half of Mexico's twentieth century, because there came together
> a will to resist, the brilliance of the crowds who marched, and a spirit that
> supported their heroism…

Regardless of the curators' intent, in this reduction of 1968 to heroic student

resistance to the Díaz Ordaz government, the Monsiváis quote maintained a consensus on

1968; it reiterated a commonplace abstraction of a student movement with broad based

support, which found its opposite in the state and met its end in Tlatelolco (Zolov 2006).

Never mind that, even accepting the reduction of 1968 to Tlatelolco, which one should

not, this narration of beginnings and endings does not reflect the facts of the year. For

example, if one accepts the centrality of the student movement to what happened in 1968,

36

one must still note that the *Consejo Nacional de Huelga* (National Strike Council, CNH), often taken to be the voice of the student movement, officially lifted the general strike only on November 21. October 2 was not, in any obvious sense, the end of the agitation in 1968. Neither was July 22 the beginning. Octavio Paz (1985, 231) declares the July 22-23 "street brawl" between secondary school students at an IPN *voca* (vocational school) and an UNAM *prepa* (preparatory school) the movement's "beginning," and some historians echo this (e.g., Carey 2005). But conditions for the mobilizations sparked by the violent police response to these street fights were set long before the events of that day. And the evidence is clear in the language of protest as well as in the demands asserted by spokespeople for what became visible as a CNH-led student movement. For example, in the early-1960s, supporters of jailed railway worker and labor activist Demetrio Vallejo had already successfully publicized the issue of freeing political prisoners, and this would only later be taken up as one of the six CNH demands.[2]

I suggest elsewhere (Crane forthcoming) that this quote in the bicentennial exhibit may have been chosen for display precisely because it delivered on a set of expressions proper to a historical discourse that sets limits on what is knowable, sayable, and doable in relation to 1968. The assumption and promulgation of this set of expressions is part and parcel of what I will later elaborate as the maintenance of a depoliticizing consensus. I read Foucault (2000a, 299) to ask how maintaining consensus in this way threatens to place post-1968 politics in Mexico City "under the sign of a unitary necessity" with its

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[2] The spokespeople for the movement drew up more than one set of demands over the course of 1968, one set on August 4 and another on August 14 (see Álvarez Garín 1998, 52-54), but they maintained the demand of freedom for political prisoners, and, as Edward McCaughan (2012, 37) notes, Demetrio Vallejo was a "*cause célèbre*" of the students in Mexico City.

origins in Tlatelolco. In this, I echo certain Mexicanist historians who note a tendency, in

revolutionary nationalist discourse and in historiography alike, to weave origin stories

from Tlatelolco or treat is at turning point in democratic transition (Walker 2013, 12; see

also Steinberg 2009).

In February 2013, I interviewed the historian Alberto del Castillo Troncoso,

author of *La fotografía y la construcción de un imaginario* (del Castillo Troncoso 2012),

a book on the circulation of images of 1968 and the construction of collective memory

after that year. He identified the reduction of 1968 to Tlatelolco as a persisting problem

for historians of modern Mexico (interview with the author, Alberto del Castillo

Troncoso, February 4, 2013):

> Within the construction of memory about this episode, something happens which
> is very interesting. There emerged a movement so rich, and so heterogeneous,
> with urban protest, etc., etc., and in the years after, in the moments after, some
> 95% percent of the memory is of October 2. […] This is logical, for reason of the
> impunity, basically. Because it was an instance of state crime, a massacre, […]
> after which there was no serious investigation. The authors of the crime, the
> intellectual authors, are practically untouchable. […] From this vantage point, I
> understand it. But from the point of view of a historical investigation, this is an
> inadmissible reduction […]. The movement was much richer, and had a series of
> much more important repercussions [than simply Tlatelolco]. […] Historically, it
> is important to recover the movement in all of its plurality, in all of its richness.

In this extended quote, del Castillo Troncoso points to the relationship between what I

called the 'first' and 'second' erasures of 1968. Specifically, he recognizes that the

second erasure was, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms (1987, 216), an "overcoding" that

obscures the richness and heterogeneity of that year. I would add, however, that, not only

from the point of view of historical research but also in terms of politics, the reduction of

1968 and of post-1968 youth politics to Tlatelolco is, as del Castillo Troncoso puts it,

"inadmissible." Not just for historical understanding, also for contemporary activism, it is important to allow for what del Castillo Tronscoso invokes as "the movement's plurality."

This being said, I hesitate to frame 1968 in terms of the movement. This category begs for a restoration of the multiplicity it contains, which is to say encloses and restrains from articulation. Frazier and Cohen (2003) show that movement-centric accounts of the late 1960s, many of them produced by former leaders (now-spokesmen) of the student movement, foreground a heroic masculinity, not only with reference to the movement but also with reference to the state. The actions of other people who actively constituted spaces for politics are erased (Frazier and Cohen 2003, 636). In reactivations of the self-sacrificing heroism contained in these narratives, "the relationship between the state and the student leaders becomes the centerpiece of public narratives, while women and other nonleaders [of the student movement] are written out of the story" (Frazier and Cohen 2003, 627).

More abstractly, and with an eye less to the correct narration of the past than to the effects of that narration for practicing politics today, I hesitate to frame 1968 in terms of "the movement" (per del Castillo Troncoso) because I do not want to confine the multiple to an undifferentiated aggregate condemned to predictable re-encounter with its antagonist (the repressive state). Doing so, I argue, would demand subscribing to a dangerous form of historicism. One lifts these names (e.g., the state, the movement) to the status of universal categories for the sake of an analysis that, even if unacknowledged, is founded upon "a final authority, valorized as a profound and unique agency" (Foucault,

39

2007, 63). This universalizing maneuver figures the violent past as a necessary stage through which a people must pass in order to reach some resolution.

Mexicanist literary critic Ryan Long (2010) has argued that, when the events of October 2 are cut from and made to stand for the past (as in Octavio Paz's *Posdata* and in subsequent commemorative reactivations of 1968), Tlatelolco is naturalized as proper to Mexican history, and student heroism becomes *the* frame through which young people can seek political recognition from the state and therefore practice politics. In this move, other avenues for practicing politics are blocked, and what I will later name the 'police state' is preserved. Put differently, positing the Tlatelolco Massacre as the origin of contemporary order or as an expression of an essence shared with other episodes of self-sacrifice will enforce the political closure impressed upon activists in 1968 (Steinberg 2009). As a result, the multiplicity – or, for del Castillo Troncoso, "plurality" – of young people's politics in Mexico City is subsumed by a movement identity that has already in the past been exhausted.

After 1968, young people, as students, are figured as the inheritors of the student movement's heroism. Even if often non-students, still 'students' in political terms, young activists today appear as the next of kin in a movement family with its origins in 1968. Across multiple fields of practice, the consensus around Tlatelolco constrains young activists from enacting anything but one possibility: heroic self-sacrifice with a precedent in 1968. Student activist history becomes a narrative of strained "relationship between the patriarchal state and its recalcitrant sons" (Frazier and Cohen 2003, 636). In terms I unpacked through reference to Octavio Paz in my Introduction, young people are figured

as *hijos de la chingada* set to predictably reencounter domination by the *chingón*. This chapter is one step in an extended intervention into the political framework that emerges through the reduction of 1968 to Tlatelolco. My work shows how contemporary youth political geographies are shaped by representations of the past and history making practices, and also how young people's political engagement is often determined by but may also sometimes be "squeezed through the pores" of a regime of representation (Katz 1996, 489), the post-1968 repression-heroism framework.

This chapter shows that what young people understand and enact in the name of politics tends to be a set of ritualized performances that obey the certainties of the repression-heroism framework. I examine enactments of student movement space to demonstrate how activists participate in making present to the senses a single, enduring antagonism between the state and the student movement. I show that young activists not only obey this inherited political framework, they also actively configure it. In this sense, the framework is not a lifeless discourse that hangs over individuals but rather a framework with strength derived from its production and reproduction by those who take it up. In analytical language I explore more thoroughly in Chapter Three, young activists in the wake of 1968 actively consolidate a perceptive field "in which certain discourses and ideas are inscribed and articulated, [and] certain objects are given to sensory experience, and […] made to make sense" (Dikeç 2013, 30). In subsequent chapters, I argue that, beyond these rituals of protest and representation (or 'between' repression and heroism but not moving from one pole to the other), young people's politics could disrupt the categories of activists' inherited perceptive field.

After a brief discussion of methodology, I pursue this argument through three sections and a conclusion. In the first section, I show how activists commemorating 1968 understand diverse instances of protest, resistance, and popular movement through the categories of the repression-heroism framework. In the second section, I show how these activists imagine and enact the space of these categories, which I discuss, following an interviewee, as student movement space. The third section examines a depoliticized process of becoming political which is proper to student movement space. I show that the student left naturalizes a youth transition to adulthood, available through revolutionary heroism of a post-1968 student movement that anticipates a violent reencounter with repression. In the conclusion, I argue that, for Anglophone political geographers of young people, this situation begs a reassessment of where and through what practices young people are understood to participate in politics. I argue that a well-intentioned move to make young people visible as political actors may paradoxically foreclose understanding the unaccountable, or by definition unaccounted-for, political potential of young people's practices.

Methodology

In his review of work by Gilles Deleuze, Foucault characterizes Deleuze's books as experiments in the liberation of difference. He argues that thinkers have hemmed in difference through their imposition of categories on the world (Foucault 1977a, 185-187). Against this "tenacious subjection of difference," Foucault argues for "thought without contradiction" (Foucault 1977a, 185-186). That is, Foucault seeks a way of thinking and

writing history that would admit the restlessness of the multiple in place of a tidy

dialectical confrontation between two molar aggregates. In this, Foucault clearly twins

his project with Deleuze and Guattari and anticipates the arguments of Jacques Rancière,

for whom categories of history must be problematized because they provide legitimacy

only for proper actors in the movement of official history (Rancière 1994).

Hayden White (1994, x) clarifies that, for Rancière, history was "a discipline of

'propriety'." For him, an order-oriented "'royal-empiricist' historiography" limited itself

to "'what really happened' on the basis of what could be justified by appeal to the

(official) 'historical record.' [Historians] would deal in proper language and tell proper

stories about the proper actions of proper persons in the past" (White 1994, x). Rancière,

like White (1978, 126-128) and his contemporaries, is relentlessly critical of empiricist

claims to provide a "value-neutral" and "correct original description" of an object. The

order that would license such a description is to be undercut by tracing its fragile

constructedness. One can look to Rancière's doctoral dissertation (1989) for an example

of post-empiricist historiography that suspends categories around which historians (in this

case, labor historians) construct the ordered world of their protagonists. Here, Rancière

rejects a Hegelian world history, which holds categories steady so that specificity can be

forced into them and everything can be made to make sense (for this reading of Hegel,

see Derrida 1978, 261). A passage on the status of unaccounted-for voices in Rancière's

archive, from his preface to *The Nights of Labor* is revealing:

> Leaving the field open, for once, to the thinking of those not 'destined' to think,
> we may come to see that the relationship between the order of things and the
> desires of those subjugated to it is a bit more complicated than scholarly treatises

realize. Perhaps that may help us to acquire a certain modesty in wielding big words and expressing large sentiments (Rancière 1989, xii).

In short, Rancière's historiography suspends and actively challenges categories, and in so doing, disrupts and denaturalizes inherited modes of representation.

Readers of Rancière's later political theory will recognize, in this suspension of categories (e.g., class), a methodology for writing history politically, or disrupting what Rancière calls a "partition of the sensible". I unpack the "partition of the sensible" in subsequent chapters, as well as what Rancière says about the policing function of much of what is understood as politics. For now, it is enough to say that Rancière understands history as one mode of representation through which the world can be made to make sense in a way that facilitates the maintenance of historically and geographically specific wrongs. Against "'royal-empiricist' historiography" (White 1994, x), he envisions an acategorical historiography that breaks from the categories through reference to which multiplicity is subjugated. Rancière's "leaving the field open" would challenge the cataloguing practice in *El Tomo Suelto* (discussed in the Introduction), which conflated all left politics of the late-1960s with "The Student Movement," and would also challenge the curation practices in the *Museo del Estanquillo* which open this chapter. By releasing history from categories that anchor it and into which specificity can be forced, Rancière's history-writing practice would allow politics to be more than the rituals of representation proper to an inherited political framework (see Davis 2010, 40-41).

In addition to guiding this chapter's engagement with data (fieldnotes, interviews, and archival representations), this formulation of acategorical thought facilitates my argument in the conclusion on youth political geography. I lean on Rancière to conceive

of politics as a disruption of an historically and geographically specific social-spatial order. This allows me to argue that writing political geographies of young people (after Staeheli [2010], with an emphasis on the political) would require two moves: first, specifying the procedures through which the contours of the visible and the sayable in a particular place have been established, and second, examining a potential disruption effected by young people's practices. One would finally describe such practices as political only insofar as they exceed and challenge the categories given which historically and geographically specific techniques of governance proceed.

My analysis in this chapter is informed by data assembled through three key field methods: informal interviews, the writing of fieldnotes as a participant observer, and the collection of textual artifacts from a spatially diffuse and formally diverse informal archive of state violence and student activism. I attended demonstrations and marches as a participant observer, interviewed participants in student-left activism, and collected relevant archival representations during my research in spaces of commemoration and protest. I also pursued sound recording and photography as a supplement to the data assembled through these three methods. No one particular field method sufficiently provides access to – on the one hand – the "major" language of Mexico City's 1968, the order-words that establish always insufficient coordinates for young people's understanding and practice of politics, and – on the other hand – the myriad practices that disrupt social-spatial order and which challenge the political framework that this "major" language of 1968 would maintain (on order-words and major language, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 81-101; see also my Conclusion).

Some of my field methods are typically identified as ethnographic, while others are traditionally historical. A combination of field methods has been necessary. Excerpts from informal interviews, and a spatially diffuse and formally diverse archive, provide evidence of what exceeds Tlatelolco but is nonetheless hemmed in by categories of its narration. On the other hand, my fieldnotes from participant observation are a primary source for evidence of how young people (particularly self-identified student activists) inhabit and sustain categories of the repression-heroism political framework. In some cases, these methods provide fundamentally different evidence that could be drawn upon to support the two moves I mention above: first, tracing the political framework, then, mapping the practices that exceed its categories. In other cases, these distinct field methods were mutually supportive, as in the case of *in situ* "walking interviews," which, by virtue of interviewees' continuous reference to the immediate situation (e.g., a march, demonstration, or meeting), elicited detailed reflections on the practices at hand and complemented my composition of fieldnotes (Kusenbach 2003). Taken together, my fieldwork generated data with reference to which my analysis does not so much represent existing collective identities as to open them to revision.

Commemorating Tlatelolco on October 2

For three consecutive years (2010-2012), I stayed in Mexico City in September and October to attend an annual march on October 2 to commemorate the Tlatelolco Massacre. Each year's march begins in Tlatelolco, in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, and moves slowly toward the *Zócalo*. Among messages specific to the year, participants in

46

the march repeat a chant, "*¡dos de octubre no se olvida!*" ("October second is not forgotten!"). Articulation of this message begins even before participants in the march convene in Tlatelolco. One sees it on stickers and wheat-pasted flyers in the metro and on buses, and on the front page of radical newspapers (e.g., *La revancha del Ahuizote*, and *MacheteArte*) that are distributed by anarchist punks at the weekly youth subculture street market *El Chopo*. The chant is repeated through graffiti sprayed amidst the gradual concentration of *granaderos* (riot police) in Mexico City's historic center in the days before the march. It is echoed through performances and art exhibits (e.g., the 2010 dance performance "In Memoriam del 68" at UNAM), and even through the newspaper of the capital's center-left PRD government, *La Fuerza del Sol*, which presents a "*¡no se olvida!*" spread alongside stories less obviously related to 1968 as part of an effort to unite its constituents against the PRI (e.g., a 2012 article promoting opposition to PRI President Enrique Peña Nieto's labor reform).

The annual commemorative activity for October 2 is concentrated in the above-mentioned two key sites: 1) Mexico City's central plaza, the *Zócalo*, and 2) the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, in Tlatelolco. The concentration of commemorative activity in these spaces is an effect of habit and planning. On the one hand, the annual march predictably begins and ends in these spaces. Its realization in Tlatelolco and the *Centro histórico* (Historic Center) is unsurprising for shopkeepers, residents, and drivers, for whom the recognition of October 2 may be nothing more than something around which to schedule business, plans with family, or a trip across town. On the other hand, in student-left planning meetings for this and other commemorative marches (e.g., an annual June 10

march for the 1971 'little Tlatelolco'), the site of violence (the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*) and the symbolic center of state power (the *Zócalo*) are unquestionably treated as sites in which commemoration should occur. On October 2, the march connects these two spaces. Over the course of approximately five hours, participants assemble in or near the *Plaza de as Tres Culturas*, then march from north to south on the major thoroughfare *Eje 1* (or, as it is called, '*Lázaro Cárdenas*'), and then finally arrive in the *Zócalo* to offer and listen to megaphone-amplified speeches, to socialize, and to sell or buy merchandise (food, literature, t-shirts, etc.). As I discuss later in this chapter, the people arriving in the *Zócalo* from Tlatelolco will also sometimes to participate in or watch theatrical performances through which the contours of the post-Tlatelolco political framework are sustained.

If taking the metro or walking on the morning of October 2, one will observe an increase in police presence, with many officers wearing the helmets and pads that distinguish them as *granaderos* (the riot police). In 1968, the CNH called for abolition of this police force, and in the decades since, activists and commentators have continued to cast the granaderos as violent *gorilas* (see Figure 3, below). Assumptions about the inevitably violent nature of the day's encounter between *granaderos* and activists are widespread. In 2010, while lost in *colonia* Guerrero on my way to my first annual march, I asked for directions to Tlatelolco from a young man with whom I was waiting for a light to change on a busy street corner. I specified that I wanted to go to the museum at the *Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco* (home of a permanent exhibit about 1968) so as to indirectly elicit his impressions of the place on that day without mentioning the

48

march itself. He pointed me towards the museum, in the direction of the adjacent *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, and then warned, "but today is dangerous" (author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2010, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).



Figure 3: A sticker on a trashcan, posted during the *dos de octubre* march of 2010. Felipé Calderón ("FeCal") is superimposed on the silhouette of a *granadero* as *gorila*. The sticker quotes George Orwell's *1984*: "War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ingnorance is Strength."

Assumptions of the danger found in post-1968 marches and demonstrations are not totally unfounded. But there is arguably something more important that is evident in such casual assessments of a danger predictably realized in the absolute space of the annual march (i.e., *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, *Lázaro Cárdenas*, the *Zócalo*). In these

49

assessments, as in so many other order-words that secure the predictability of post-1968

social-spatial order, there is a projection of the same, an assumption of activists enduring

antagonism with a repressive state that finds expression across time and across space,

even in other, far-flung struggles. In 2010, such claims of continuity and endurance were

made on behalf of the *Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Triqui* (MULT), as clarified in

this message from a flyer distributed in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*.

> The predatory oligarchy […] and their misgovernments in turn have, as on
> October 2, been brutally expressed through the repression and slaughter of
> students and other dispossessed people, ending with the insurgency coming down
> from the mountain to the plain and increasingly extending into every corner and
> in all areas of our suffering country.

The content and grammar of the MULT statement posit brutal "misgovernment"

and "the insurgency coming down from the mountain" as oppositional elements of a

single trajectory, which shares its essence with the "repression and slaughter of students"

on October 2. Oligarchy finds its end in an insurgency that extends to the limits of a

national-cultural space. Paz's statement in my epigraph for this chapter (Paz 1985, 231) is

similarly formulated. Repression begets an expansion and intensification of the student

movement. The one begets the other in a genetic sense. This is the history of a trajectory

propelled by contradiction. Foucault (2008, 42) would describe it as the coherent

narrative of "contradictory terms within the homogenous." The repressive adversary of

the student movement or of the insurgency is given a "heart" (see Foucault 2008, 76-77);

the repressive adversary is presented as if it has an interior, as are the protagonists of a

movement against repression. The two ostensibly contradictory terms are treated as

universals from which one can deduce the movement of history. The present tense of the

MULT statement, which represents an ongoing "end" to "the predatory oligarchy,"

underscores that these universals are joined in a trajectory that will find resolution in a

post-transition unity: Mexico.

One also finds the presumption of this repressive adversary with its interior or

essence in a 2011 statement from the oppositional independent teachers' union

*Coordinadora Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación* (CNTE). The flyer in question

was distributed during the October 2 march to the *Zócalo* down *Lázaro Cárdenas*.

Groups of activists often distinguish themselves by walking behind a banner, or wearing

specific t-shirts or hats. When I received the flyer, I was walking in step with a slow-

moving pickup truck around which the CNTE representatives were clustered. The pickup,

white with "long live the CNTE" spray painted on the exterior, was slowly driven along

with the march to transport speakers that would amplify the monologues delivered by

CNTE members. Many of monologues of that year situated the 1968 massacre in relation

to the drug war violence that consumed the 2006-2012 administration of then-President

Felipe Calderón. For example, a teacher in his forties wearing a collared shirt and jeans

took the microphone to speak of an enduring antagonism with a system guaranteeing "the

impunity" that found expression in 1968 and, in 2011, was again finding expression in

the "repressive reforms" of Felipe Calderón, particularly Calderón's controversial *Ley de*

*seguridad nacional* (National Security Law), which promised to abridge demonstrators'

right to assemble for peaceful protest (author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2011, Cuauhtémoc –

Mexico City). As I wrote fieldnotes and took note of these themes in the man's speech, I

was handed the CNTE flyer cited above. I glanced at the statement on the flyer to see the

teachers' claims of equivalence between past and present state violence being repeated. If anything, the statement on the flyer erased the specificity of each situation even more baldly, isolating the essence of activists' adversary as a proper noun: the authoritarianism. "After 43 years [i.e., since October 2, 1968], the authoritarianism continues to claim innocent lives, now through the 'war on drugs'."

Between 2011 and 2012, little changed in the projection of an enduring antagonist against which the student-left's energies should be directed. I found evidence in the *Zócalo* at the conclusion of the 2012 march, during megaphone-amplified speeches by representatives of left social movements, *campesino* (peasant) organizations, and student activist *asambleas* (assemblies). From among a cluster of speakers assembled on a stage, itself erected against the background of the National Palace (see Figure 4, below), an activist for the embattled electrical workers' union *Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas* (SME) addressed "the student struggle" and the #YoSoy132 movement (see my discussion in Chapter Three). To these "*compañeros estudiantes*" ("student comrades"), he offered a "*fraternal y combativo saludo*" ("a brotherly and militant greeting"), and declared, "*los asesinos de ayer son los asesinos de hoy*" ("the murderers of yesterday are the murderers of today"). Months after an election through which PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto became Mexico's President Elect (he would be sworn in in December), the SME representative continued, "the same people who murdered the youth [the *juventud*] of '68 have now returned to power [*han regresado a poder*]" (author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City). Here again, activists invest the adversary with a repressive essence against which "the student struggle" must endure.

Figure 4: A young man speaking to the assembled crowd in front of the National Palace in the *Zócalo*, at the end of the *dos de octubre* march in 2012. The people in front of the stage are representatives of the *Comité 68*, 1968 activists who seek to establish the truth of what happened in 1968 and in the repression of the decades since.

How do these narrations of a single, unified trajectory matter for the production of a space for politics? One answer is that these narratives function in the manner of what sociologist Verta Taylor (1989) calls "abeyance structures." Taylor's key contribution to debates in social movement studies offers an explanation of social movement continuity. The concept of "abeyance structure" agrees with and extends an influential Weberian line of thinking on social movements inaugurated by Charles Tilly (1978; cf. Almeida 2003).

At issue is how groups maintain campaigns and persist through organizational remnants despite an absence of, in the language of the analysis, an "opportunity environment" (see Almeida 2003, 350). Taylor argues that the significance of social movement abeyance structures lies in their capacity to link one upsurge in activism to another, a function performed "through promoting the survival of *activist networks*, sustaining a repertoire of *goals and tactics*, and promoting a *collective identity* that offers participants a sense of mission and moral purpose" (Taylor 1989, 762, *italics in original*). In this way abeyance structures are supposed to function in the service of "social change."

Taylor's analysis does indeed effectively specify social movement continuity, but, at risk of making a circular argument, it does so through a problematic delineation of a unified movement with its own proper places for practicing politics. For example, they are the *Zócalo* and the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, containerized absolute spaces within which the student movement can be expected to make its appearance. By adopting this social movement analytics, Taylor accepts the transposition of a durable organizational form across time (in her case, that of the US women's movement), and then presumes the existence of an enduring and well defined set of demands, strategies, tactics, and finish lines that are proper to the movement in question (i.e., a repertoire).

Doug McAdam and his colleagues argue that, within the social movement studies field to which Verta Taylor contributed, the repertoire projected onto social movements tends to be consistent with a "stylized image" of the "movement family" of the late 1960s and 1970s (McAdam et al. 2005). The continuity of a particular movement is confirmed by endurance in fixed spaces in which it has in the past been visible. These are often, as

54

in Mexico City, the spaces presumed self-evidently proper for the movement in question, and activists practice them as such. The problem here is a heuristic that anticipates the continuity of a social movement but does not require interrogation of the depoliticizing process through which these absolute spaces become movement adherents' proper places for practicing a recognizable politics. In short, an analysis taking on this heuristic presupposes an object with universal features, found in spatially or temporally distant cases of movement continuity, and therefore carries with it an elision of trajectories that complicate the spatiality of activism but also constitute relational spaces of politics (Crane and Ashutosh 2013).

Alternatively, one might examine the ubiquitous narration of a single, unified trajectory in terms of how it attenuates modes of politics that might exceed categories of that narrative and invite the articulation of trajectories apparently foreign to what I will call student movement space. It follows that one would therefore examine the maintenance of political energies not only through practices performed within absolute spaces but also through spaces of politics defined through disparate practices that might "concentrate and congeal" in particular sites (see Harvey 2006, 274). It is important, for example, that the aforementioned SME activist, who talked of "a return to power of the same murderers" (and thereby rejected Peña Nieto's claim to represent a 'new PRI'), was immediately concerned not just with opposition to a repressive state but with a labor reform that would only enrich the "biggest capitalists" of Mexico and from abroad ("*los grandes capitalistas nacionales y extranjeros*") (author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

The composition of the march is also important. In 2012, as in years past, a wide range of people converged for the march: parents and children, union members (e.g., of SME), 1968 activists (including members of *Comité 68*), educators (e.g., the teachers of the CNTE), communist and socialist youth, punks, dropouts, and, of course, students. In 2011, on a quiet Sunday, an estimated 15,000 people converged for the march, carrying with them diverse concerns and histories of engagement with the commemoration of Mexico's past repression (discussed below). In 2012, after a return of the PRI embodied by then President-Elect Enrique Peña Nieto, left-leaning newspaper *La Jornada* reported 45,000 participants in the commemorative march.[3]

The crowds in the 2011 and 2012 marches may at first appear only to confirm the ongoing importance of Tlatelolco, its centrality in Mexico's oft-cited political transition. But practices in the space of the march indicate a use of the past to delineate adversaries, reach out to allies, and pursue hoped-for futures that exceeds closure around national-cultural categories, the student movement, the *chingón*, and so on. If examined with an eye to the disparate intersecting trajectories that converge in the space of the march, the participants' use of the past to gain political traction exceeds naturalized visions of coherence and stability within a given culture of memory. Put differently, it exceeds the spatiality of a simplistic "biography of a site" (Till 2006, 327) that would naturalize the boundaries of a place of memory and close the obvious spaces of commemoration (e.g., the *Zócalo*) from their apparent outsides.

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[3] "Organizers" of the march (members of *Comité 68*) estimated 45,000 participants. "Mexico City authorities," on the other hand, estimated 22,000 – less than half (Olivares and Poy 2012).

Participants in this commemorative activity do not always offer memories of 1968 as expressions of oppositional resistance to an undifferentiated adversary that determines politics within given national-cultural space. They also can be seen to disrupt alignments around an inherited antagonism and thereby disrupt the certainties of social-spatial order written into widely shared narratives. I would suggest, and will later demonstrate, that the heterogeneous composition of each year's commemorative march suggests the need to examine ongoing processes of linkage that some Mexico City activists name *vinculación*. In chants, propaganda, graffiti, and the megaphone-amplified speeches, participants in the 2011 and 2012 marches draw Tlatelolco into contact with struggles for demilitarization and against the drug war, the commemoration of recent repression by paramilitary forces, movements for community autonomy in western and southern Mexico, and, in 2011 especially , mobilizations of young people for free education and against privatization in other countries.

At the beginning of the 2011 march, still in Tlatelolco as participants arranged themselves in groups for the march to the *Zócalo*, I asked permission to take a picture of a young woman whose sign underscores how young people sometimes tactically inhabit the category 'student' to establish a position with respect to a specific contemporary conjuncture (see Figure 5, below). The sign emulates a style that would be familiar to residents of Mexico City from restaurants advertising *comida corrida* (small fixed priced lunches available throughout the city). It lists the "*menu estudiantil*" ("student menu"), and playfully captures the student left's solidarity with their contemporaries in Chile. The last item is a pun – "*México a huevo con Chile,*" which reads, on the one hand, as an "egg

with pepper" and, on the other, as a slang affirmation ("*a huevo*") of the anti-neoliberal

activism in Chile.



Figure 5: Young woman in Tlatelolco before the *dos de octubre* march in 2011, tactically inhabiting the category 'student'

Not only during the march, also in activist forums before and after October 2, activists' inspiration from the massive 2011 demonstrations in Chile (Urra Rossi 2012) was especially marked. Just before the annual commemorative march, on September 29, 2011, student activists in the Law Faculty at the UNAM hosted the meeting *Las Luchas Juveniles y Estudiantiles de Ayer y Hoy, México 68 - Chile 2011* (Youth and Student Struggles of Yesterday and Today, Mexico '68 – Chile 2011). Simultaneously, on the southern end of UNAM's *Ciudad Universitaria* campus, students in the *Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* hung banners to express solidarity with the "struggle of the Chilean students" (author, fieldnotes, September 29, 2011, Coyoacán – Mexico City).

These moments of articulation with far-flung activism are full of potential for what David Featherstone (2012, 5-6) describes as the realization of "solidarities" that are forged not around preexisting likeness but through political struggles that link places and activists that are distinctive but open to their ostensible outsides. I use the word 'political' very specifically, here, to describe activists' disruption of the stability promised by self-enclosed identification through the categories of an inherited political framework (e.g., repression-heroism in post-1968 Mexico City). A politics of *vinculación* would therefore be realized when activists in one place energize their distinctive struggle, through an exchange with other activists in other places, to the effect of suspending the certainties of an inherited political framework.

In this sense, *vinculación* is precisely not about bringing together more than one predetermined group around a common identity; it invites influences from an 'outside,' deliberately placed in scare quotes because it suggests a discreteness that is inadmissible

59

for the acategorical praxis of *vinculación*. Practitioners of *vinculación* forge their identities "in and through political struggle" (Braun and Disch 2002, 506; cf. Massey 1999), in order to challenge concretions of social-spatial order that preserve a historically and geographically specific wrong. In Mexico City, such openness to the outside is not new, but is obscured through a "construction of the histories of radicalism as bounded" (Featherstone 2004, 251). The second erasure is enacted in commemorative reactivations that stage a heroic confrontation with state repression in place of practices, past and contemporary, that exceed and betray these categories.

On October 2, 1968 itself, according to testimony from people who survived the massacre, the meeting in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* did not reflect undifferentiated opposition to the repressive state. Instead, as would be appropriate to a meeting that emerged upon conditions set in large part through initiatives of people who would not be recognized in (and in would later be erased from) the student movement (conditions set through, e.g., the workers' strikes of the late 1950s and 1960s), the October 2 meeting in Tlatelolco was shot through with calls to, among other things, link to "other popular sectors" of society ("*extensión del movimiento a otros sectores populares*") (Sánchez Rebolledo 2012). These often-neglected elements of 1968, the exploration and pursuit of which one could name acategorical praxis, are echoed in some activists' contemporary calls for *vinculación*. In these moments, contemporary waves of activism might be read as less a movement than a "*convocatoría*," which is to say, a call for shared engagement in political struggle through which identities – of practitioners and of spaces – are forged (personal communication, Benjamin Arditi, February 6, 2013).

60

Foucault's criticism of "traditional history" has it that historiography is too often informed by the historian's faith in the development of a social formation from a unitary necessity (Foucault 1977b). This is to say that traditional history is problematically written as a historicist tale of "descent," which follows a trajectory back, from a social formation's penultimate expression of development to its ostensible origin. Foucault was not addressing himself to activism, but his critique of traditional history carries lessons for understanding and otherwise engaging in activist practice. Foucault's argument for "analyzing an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it" (Foucault 2000a, 227) can be read as a provocation to release one's engagement with politics from "the sign of a unitary necessity" (Foucault 2000a, 229). After Foucault, young people's politics after 1968 is not doomed to repeat Tlatelolco. Rather, young people's politics can be understood and practiced as a singular effect of intersecting trajectories through which a *convocatoria*, or un-predetermined solidarity, is forged.

Even if young people's politics can be thought this way, as a singular effect of disparate trajectories, practitioners of post-1968 student activism in Mexico City tend to enact the line of descent written into traditional history. For example, in the *dos de octubre* commemorative activity of 2011, the specificity of the anti-neoliberal activism in Chile was typically lost or at least diluted in calls to support Chilean students on the basis of a shared identity as student activists confronting a repressive state. The iconic image of Chile was of the student activist suffering mistreatment by *carabineros*, Chile's equivalent of the *granaderos*. That is, Mexican students' solidarity with Chilean students was proposed upon a foundation of a predetermined commonality.

61

At a student activist panel at UNAM's *Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* in the days after the *dos de octubre* march, organizers hung a banner that asserted solidarity with the activists in Chile because they too suffered "repressive actions committed by the government" (author, fieldnotes, October 4, 2011, Coyoacán – Mexico City). In this, the post-neoliberal aspirations of Chilean students born after the Pinochet dictatorship (McSherry and Molina Mejía 2011) were forced into the categories of the post-Tlatelolco political framework of Mexico City's student activism. This 'solidarity' around a given identity obscures the extent of what Foucault would call the "disparity" of trajectories that come together to produce spaces of politics. The singularity of young people's politics in Mexico and in Chile was dissolved into the functionalism of a popular sociology. In light of this overcoding, one should again recall Foucault, whose words will resound through the analysis I carry through this chapter: "What is found at the historical beginning of things" – the beginning, for example, of young people's contemporary spaces of activism – "is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity" (Foucault 1977b, 142).

Imagining and enacting student movement space

In May and June 2013, I visited the *Comité Estudiantil Metropolitana* (CEM) in an office in the *Facultad de Ciencias* at UNAM. Like other student activist social centers at UNAM, the CEM office was discreetly tucked amidst classrooms, auditoriums, tack boards covered with flyers, and food and book vendors. My occasion for visiting was a meeting with Citlalli Hernández on June 3, during a period of intense excitement among

Mexico City's student activists for the #OccupyGezi activism Istanbul, which, like the 2011 activism in Chile, was generally understood through the post-Tlatelolco framework as oppositional resistance to a repressive state. Hernández was a sociology student in UNAM's *Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* as well as a student activist aligned with the CEM and a movement of aspiring students, the *Movimiento de Aspirantes Excluidos de la Educación Superior* (Movement of Applicants Excluded from Higher Education, MAES). We met for an interview on the history of Mexico City's student activism and its contemporary conjuncture, with a special emphasis on #YoSoy132, with which Hernández had been actively involved and about which she had recently published an article (Hernández 2013).

Hernández's formation and her parents' political preoccupations would appear to offer a foundation for understanding and practicing politics in excess of the repression-heroism political framework. For example, Hernández's father is a lawyer contributing to a collective that defended the political prisoners of the *Consejo General de Huelga* (General Strike Committee, CGH), which spoke for and visibly led UNAM's 1999-2000 student strike, but he also worked on behalf of activists less directly involved in the post-1968 student left (for example, victims of a violent 2006 police action in San Salvador Atenco). More recently, Hernández's father provided legal support to people detained during the December 1, 2012 protests against the inauguration of President Enrique Peña Nieto. In short, Hernández's family has engaged in political work that could be placed along the student movement's apparent line of "descent" from Tlatelolco only if one were to deprive these moments of their specific political content (the 1999 experience of

marketization, the 2006 experience of displacement, and so on) (again, on 'descent' and traditional history, see Foucault 1977b).

The social-political formation of young people – their route towards politics and social institutions – is arguably best understood through attention to the social and familial relationships in which young people are and have been entangled (Agger 2009; Mitchell and Elwood 2013), the historically and geographically specific relationships through which they grow up. This is certainly the case for understanding Hernández's identification as a student activist. Hernández reports that she became an activist in 1996, by way of joining her father at a demonstration at the *Ángel de Independencia* in Mexico City's corporate center. Hernández describes the formative experience of the demonstration in terms of affect:

> I was touched (*me tocó*) by the demonstration there at the *Ángel*. […] I remember going with my Dad to marches, and such things, since I was very, very young. But this one impressed me so much for the atmosphere it had. I had not understood what was going on, but one day I came home from secondary school, I came home, and my father gave me a human rights report, the one from Acteal [where a paramilitary group killed a peaceful group of activists in Chiapas]. And the protest that we were to attend was for Acteal. […] But again, the vibe and the atmosphere [of the protest] were very, very, very strong. […] And then I wanted to do something in that moment, but I could not (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013).

Hernández's formative experience was not of the student movement specifically; rather, it was of Mexico City activists' solidarity with the Zapatista insurgency in Chiapas, which, in 1997, called forth the brutal repression of the Tzotzil pacifist organization *Las Abejas* by a paramilitary group in Acteal. But, even if far flung from student activism per se, these experiences prepared the ground for Hernández's eventual involvement in student activism through a branch of the *Colegio de Ciencias y*

64

*Humanidades* (CCH), an UNAM preparatory school. Indeed, as she puts it, although she "wanted to do something in that moment" before she was enrolled in school, she "could not" because her context did not facilitate political engagement. In short, Hernández could not do anything because, being as young as she was and not in school, she felt she not yet in a position to be an activist. This would change when she enrolled at the CCH on the eve of the 1999-2000 UNAM student strike.

Nearly simultaneous with Hernández's enrollment at her CCH, students began a nine-month strike at UNAM. Hernández joined the CEM, which incorporates collectives of students for social justice from across Mexico City. The *Comité* is organized around the principle that its *integrantes* (members) are "*lo mismo que ellos*" ("the same as the people"), which suggests that involvement in the CEM would have left Hernández well positioned to pursue the solidarity activism she had imagined in 1997 as a young woman with her father at the *Ángel* (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013). A discourse that cast students as the vanguard in a struggle against the marketization of higher education (López De Lara Marín 2011) was already well sedimented at the CCHs. That is, a heroic student-left discourse had by then been "settled in place" (Nelson 2003, 561-564); the student activist identity was readily available to Hernández and her allies. Activists in the CCHs could still remember a 1995 student strike in the "*prepas*" (a slang term for the preparatory schools), and they were themselves, along with their peers at UNAM, engaged in protesting neoliberal reforms to their plan of study.

Activists at the CCHs and at UNAM frequently attributed the neoliberal reforms to a repressive regime that changed little in the decades since 1968. For example, in an

analysis of activist practices in the 1999-2000 strike, one activist imagines the essence of the adversary as somehow unchanging: "Díaz Ordaz comes back to us through the television and the radio, through the newspapers" (Martínez León 2011, 68). Or consider the timeline of the UNAM strike as offered in *Hueelga*, an activist-produced history of that year (La Guillotina 2011, 30): although the 1999 strike did not officially begin until student activists rejected a hike in fees in February, *Hueelga* editors present the thirtieth anniversary *dos de octubre* march, on October 2, 1998, as the start of the 1999-2000 activism. The anthropologist Matthew C. Gutmann offers a resonant vision of the second erasure through a field narrative from his work in Colonia Santo Domingo:

> 'Can 1968 happen again?' was the question that many on Huehuetzin Street were asking themselves in 1999. In other words, they gauged the possible outcomes of the [1999-2000] UNAM strike by the events of 1968. Juan had gone out to find a birthday cake for this son on October 2, 1968. As it turned out, he had managed both to find a cake and avoid getting picked up by police or soldiers that night. Now, in August 1999, he told me he was worried again that the only way to end the UNAM strike would be by brute force (Gutmann 2002, 69).

Given that young participants in student activism frequently understood and enacted the 1999-2000 strike in relation to a stylized image of 1968, the continuation of the strike into 2000, and student activists' rejection of conciliatory offers from administration, was therefore unsurprisingly aligned less with the *moderados* (moderates) of the electoral left (e.g., the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* [PRD]) than with the *ultras* (leftists) of the non-parliamentary student left (see Rhoads and Mina 2001, 339-344).

Although, in joining the CEM, Hernández gradually came to participate in politics as a student activist, she did not sever ties with other currents of dissent that exceed the political identity student. Hernández can therefore be seen to have used the category

66

student in a tactical sense, to gain political traction in spaces of politics shaped by waves

of activism identified with the post-1968 student movement. Recall that it was her

experience with one of these currents, articulated with but not subsumed by the student

movement (a rally for victims of paramilitary violence in Acteal, Chiapas), which

initiated her desire to "do something" (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June

3, 2013). And, as a student at her CCH and later at UNAM, Hernández would witness an

array of contemporaneous yet disparate activism exerting an effect on the tactics of the

CEM. For example, when *integrantes* of the CEM were consolidating their 18 organizing

principles in 1996, they sought the basis of these principles in those around which the

Zapatistas had famously organized themselves in Chiapas in 1994 (see Figure 6, below).



Figure 6: Posters on the wall of the social center for *Comité Estudiantil Metropolitana* at UNAM

Also revealing were posters on walls of the CEM office where I interviewed Hernández. The dozens of posters pasted to the walls refer to actions amidst the 1999-2000 student strike and to marches for October 2, and also to protests and demonstrations organized by committees whose more immediate reference was not student politics but labor, or indigenous peoples' agitation for self-determination.

Acknowledging the possible connections to non-students in relation to which a student activist identity has been articulated is crucial for examining a politics of memory after 1968. To shear the experience of 1999-2000 at UNAM from its wider context, or to cut that context away from the late-1990s activism in solidarity with *Las Abejas* in Chiapas, would depoliticize the processes through which young people practice what they understand as politics today. Hernández, for example, recalls being "touched" by the atmosphere of the Zapatista solidarity activism in Mexico City (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013). Geographers interested in affect (Dewsbury et al. 2002; Harker 2005; Horton and Kraftl 2006) might therefore be tempted to fix on this moment as the one in which Hernández decisively became a political actor. But the wider context is crucial, and cannot be cleaved from one's analysis lest one risk missing the process by which the second erasure has been consolidated and the heroic and implicitly masculine student activist came to be understood as the figure through which young people practice politics. According to Hernández, she "could not" do anything until she later joined student activist groups (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013). She took on and enacted the identity student because it would facilitate political engagement.

68

From this position, as a student activist, Hernández could presumably establish linkages with the embattled communities in Chiapas with whom she stood in unequipped solidarity before. This, again, was a tactical appropriation of the student movement for participation in politics.

There are, however, limits to linkage if it is pursued in a categorical sense, as something achieved on the assumption of pre-existing political identities. These limits can be interrogated through the above-mentioned principles around which *integrantes* of the CEM organized themselves. Recall, for example, the notion that *integrantes* of the CEM are "the same as the people," the same as "*ellos*," or "them" to which posters in the CEM office refer. The problem here is that the formulation of inter-activist solidarity sought by the CEM facilitates the presumption of a preestablished distinction between 'us' and 'them.' In insensitive hands, this formulation preserves a conception of young people's politics in which student activism is and must be central. The student activists are 'we,' 'us.' Other groups are peripheral, but 'we' can recognize them as "the same" and therefore as potential partners in solidarity. The problem is that, on the basis of the 'us' and 'them' mapping that this formulation invites, this partnership would be a solidarity realizable only on a foundation of likeness, or, in David Featherstone's (2012, 7) words, "the binding together of pre-existing communities."

More problematic still, the 'us' in this formulation tends to refer specifically to student activists at UNAM or in its orbit. This is an aspect of the second erasure that runs in curious parallel to the favoritism towards UNAM by the Mexican government. Jamie Pensado suggests that the enormous growth in government investment in UNAM from

69

the mid-1940s through the 1970s (under Luis Echeverría) reflected the governing elite's developmentalist faith in UNAM's capacity "to transform Mexico into a fully developed and modern nation" (Pensado 2013, 34). Even student activists in the city's other major public universities (e.g., IPN, and the *Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana*, UAM) are not immediately understood to belong to 'us.' Aware of this, Hernández questions the centrality of the UNAM activists to "popular movements" when she notes that the composition of the "we" of the student movement has "*desde siempre*" ("always") been a problem for the student left (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013). But, as evident in the CEM's formulation of "*somos lo mismo que ellos*," the assumption of UNAM's centrality to agitation in civil society persists. This persisting assumption allowed Hernández to characterize the October 2 march accordingly:

> It is the day of the students, it is our space, our time, the only mobilization of the left that is independent of the political parties. […] It is the only permanent mobilization of the student movement (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013).

In short, on each October 2, the *Zócalo* and the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* are made student movement space. One can marshal countless examples of how the categories of 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco are enacted in these symbolically important spaces to secure them for the student movement. For example, at the conclusion of the commemorative march in 2011, young people explicitly staged the antagonism of a repressive state and heroic students (see Figure 7, below). The performers wielded fake guns, and acted as soldiers. They pulled young people from the assembled audience, and declared them "students." The soldiers shouted in the students' faces: "*¡maricónes!*" ("fags!"), "*¡comunistas!*" ("communists!"). The young audience members could easily

and immediately participate in the performance. No rehearsal was necessary; they tacitly understood and could play their role. In response to the accusations and insults from people acting as soldiers, the people enlisted as students responded with their own shouts of "*¡Justicia!*" ("Justice!"), or "*¡Libertad!*" ("Freedom!") (Author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2011, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).



Figure 7: Performing state violence in the *Zócalo*, Cuauhtémoc, Mexico City, October 2, 2011

As an enactment of categories presumably proper to student movement space, one can also examine the participation of many young people who are not enrolled in school

but nonetheless assemble behind banners for student movement organizations with little direct relationship with any particular educational institution (e.g., *Contracorriente Estudiantil*). I examine the situation of these non-student 'students' in greater depth in the next chapter. For now it is enough to say that, for non-students who gravitate to student activism, the identity student is inhabited to legitimize participation in what is understood as young people's politics after 1968.

The effect to which the political identity of the student is taken on and inhabited should not be taken lightly. It matters not only for the October 2 march but also for mobilizing young people for marches and demonstrations throughout the calendar of student activism, e.g., for the commemorative march on June 10, recalling the violent police action of June 10, 1971. But this claim to the annual march as (in Hernández's terms) a "permanent" student movement space is also deeply depoliticizing. The ritualized enactment of categories through which 1968 is remembered makes the annual march into a predictable space. Student movement space thereby becomes unthreatening to governable order, and intelligible within the grid of 'politics as usual.' As a space for the enactment of inherited categories, student movement space is, in Foucault's terms, a space in which "the distribution of existing things" is imposed, naturalized, and made available to perception as the given (Foucault 1977a, 186).

Young people, acting as student activist inheritors of Tlatelolco, participate in the distribution of what is available to perception. They enact the categories proper to student movement space to the effect of naturalizing what is visible and sayable as politics after 1968. As I elaborate in Chapter Three through my reading of Rancière, participants in

student activism tend to engage in rituals of protest under the name of politics to the effect of consolidating a social-spatial order in which disruptions of governable order are deferred. I suggest that, if young people identify as student activists to the effect of legitimizing participation in "the only permanent mobilization of the student movement" (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013), they also take on the identity student to the effect of rigidifying social categories (heroic student movement and repressive state) through which their ostensibly political practices are channeled or, in terms developed later in this dissertation, 'policed.'

If the space of the October 2 march is indeed "the only permanent mobilization of the student movement," and perhaps also permanently a student movement space, then the enactment of inherited categories could foreclose alliances through which young people may create hoped-for futures. The object of Hernández's discussion of the "we" were commentators and self-identified student activists who presume that the student movement is the "central actor" in Mexican civil society, the key democratizing force in pursuit of which some scholars problematically examine contemporary Mexican politics (e.g., Wada 2014). Missed in such analyses, and ignored in activist practice that asserts student movement participants' centrality, is how a post-Tlatelolco repertoire of student activism has been brought forth through disparate reactivations of the repression-heroism political framework that sustain a depoliticizing second erasure. Through this erasure in authoritative narratives of movement leaders (Frazier and Cohen 2003), movement-affiliated or activist art (McCaughan 2012), in the press (del Castillo Troncoso 2012), and "kaleidoscopic" commemorative practices (Pensado 2013, 240-242), the categories of a

73

grid are defined and then held steady; historical and geographical specificity is forced into them, and politics is ritualized and made unthreatening.

Walter Nicholls (2009) recently offered a relational theory of "social movement space." Nicholls (2009) suggests that, while activists in any one place have access to a distinctive set of resources that are "sedimented" or "settled in place" (Nelson 2003, 561-564), they may also participate in "stringing together" these specific places of activism into a topological space of social movement politicking (Nicholls 2009, 85-86). Nicholls envisions what I, following activists in Mexico City, would call a process of *vinculación*, a process through which solidarities are actively forged but do not necessarily follow from preestablished or self-evident likenesses.

Student movement space is very different. As I theorize it, practitioners of student movement space tend to refuse potential for *vinculación* by asserting identities given in a student-left discourse that is ritually activated on October 2 in the *Zócalo* and in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*. Although the annual march can potentially draw together distinctive activist trajectories, and can serve as a contact point for multiple initiatives, the dynamics of contemporary student movement space in Mexico City nonetheless encourage both students and non-students alike to act under the banner of student activism counterposed with a repressive state that gives it meaning. Although the annual march is constituted through an articulation of disparate practices, and some participants tactically inhabit the student identity to establish an actionable position with respect to a specific contemporary conjuncture, practitioners of student movement space tend to force disparate practices into the categories available in representations of the heroic student movement past. They

adopt repression-heroism as a frame in which to be recognized as political actors, but miss opportunities afforded by *vinculación* to disrupt state power.

Youth transition, politics, and the non-student 'student'

On July 17, 2011, several dozen young people came together for a march against the militarization of drug control efforts during the Calderón administration. The march was promoted as the "*kaminata por la desmilitarización*" ("walk for demilitarization") and organized by several youth and student activist organizations, e.g., the *Coordinadora Metropolitana Contra la Militarización y la Violencia*, and *Contracorriente Estudiantil*. The *kaminata* would eventually arrive at the *Zócalo*, which was then occupied by SME workers protesting the privatization of electricity provision, and demanding justice after having been fired through government takeover of generating stations in October 2009. Before they would depart for the *Zócalo*, more than one hundred people converged at the *Monumento a la Revolución* (Monument to the Revolution) in central Mexico City. They displayed their banners at the base of the monument, which doubles as a mausoleum for the hero/father figures of their contemporary movement family.

Slogans on banners at the base of the monument spoke less directly to the drug war violence (nominally the context of the march) than they did to the identity assumed by participants. "End the criminalization of the youth!," one read. Another situated the march participants within a wider of field of higher education, as *universitarios*: "Education workers for the demilitarization of Mexico!" Still another established a link between student activists and their working class counterparts, as two groups, one in a

75

process of becoming the other: "Because we students will be workers, worker-student unity!" This ontological ground for worker-student solidarity was repeated in the slogan on a banner that serves as my point of departure for this final section of the chapter. The oft-repeated truism underscores a developmentalist imaginary around which activists organize to participate in a muscular, revolutionary politics often identified with student activism: "Being young and not revolutionary is an almost biological contradiction" (author, fieldnotes, July 17, 2011, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City) (see Figure 8, below).



Figure 8: Cover of a Tlatelolco-themed October 2011 edition of leftist newspaper *MacheteArte*.

Sometimes attributed to Che Guevara, this truism, "*Ser joven y no ser revolucionario es una contradicción casi biológica,*" would also appear later that year on the front page of a 2011 Tlatelolco-themed edition of free leftist newspaper *MacheteArte,* a publication distributed on busy street corners and at political demonstrations.

The equation between youthfulness and being revolutionary in the march on July 17, 2011 suggest that some participants in the *kaminata* were enacting politics as a stage or transitional moment in their passage to fully realized leftist adulthood. The truism is, of course, remarkably teleological. Written into the claim of "an almost biological contradiction," is a homogenizing sociological definition of youth as a stage in transition from irresponsibility, frivolity, and play to an advanced state of fully realized and politically capable responsibility (Evans 2008 1663-1664; Valentine 2003). Written out of this movement from dependence to autonomous selfhood are heterogeneous lifecourses that exceed assumptions of inevitable maturation, and suggest that how and towards what one "grows up" is historically and geographically contingent (Holt and Holloway 2006, 135). Caught in a relay with these statements that provide order to the field of young people's politics, student activists tend to deny heterogeneous lifecourses in practice by instead enacting categories proper to a student movement space that accommodates their revolutionary politics. In the place of heterogeneity, the pre-existence of a passage through the stage of student revolutionary is naturalized through reactivation of the categories through which 1968 is remembered: a revolutionary mass of students heroically rising against the repressive state.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) would recognize this as a reduction of multiplicity to contradiction. Their example is France's May 1968, but in Mexico City too, something exceeded the categories presumably locked in history-making contradiction, "even if they are necessarily 'represented' as a confrontation between molar segments" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 216). The reductive representation of 1968 by projecting a confrontation between antagonists is what I have called a "major" treatment of politics, consistent with the second erasure. The major language of Mexico City's 1968 obscures continuous variation and contingency and instead presumes a predictable struggle of two invariants: the repressive state and heroic students. For Deleuze and Guattari, the disruptive potential of young people in relation to the world of this major treatment would, however, be unassignable or "unaccountable" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 216). Similarly, for their contemporary Jacques Rancière (2010), disruptive potential is found in the unaccounted-for, which exceeds social categories on the assumption of which social-spatial order is partitioned (Dikeç 2005, 177-178). The reduction of multiplicity to contradiction effaces this excess.

In relation to Mexico City's 1968, some cultural producers identify and work to denaturalize the resonance of a dualistic vision around which major treatments of politics have been articulated. This is the focus of my Chapter Four. For now, we might look to Roberto Bolaño's novel on Mexico City's 1968, where he explores the encounter with repression through which young people can be "promoted to the rank of revolutionary veteran." The occasion of promotion is Arturo Belano's return to Mexico City from Chile in 1974.

When, one night, Arturito finally appeared in the Café Quito [Mexico City's Café La Habana] on the Avenida Bucareli, his old friends, the young poets, saw him in a different light. Why? Well, because for them, Arturito now belonged to the category of those who have seen death at close range, the sub-category of hard men, and that, in the eyes of those desperate Latin American kids, was a qualification that commanded respect, a veritable compendium of medals (Bolaño 2006, 80).

Again, the notion of revolutionary heroism as passage to adulthood is explicit here, but its presumption is attributed to young people who, in the wake of 1968, understand Arturo's encounter with repression in Chile through categories made available through representations of Mexico City's then recent political violence. In the eyes of these young people, "sprung from the open wound of Tlatelolco" (Bolaño 2006, 77), "Arturito now belonged to the category of those who have seen death at close range" (Bolaño 2006, 80), the mythical revolutionaries of guerilla campaigns across Latin America. Arturo had been young and revolutionary (no "biological contradiction" here), and he had therefore matured into a "hard" man. Bolaño's autocritical presentation of these young people (he is Arturo Belano) asks us to consider whether, in seeking transition to adulthood through encounter with a repressive adversary, young people defer disruption of their adversary's naturalized dominance and thereby construct an obstacle to politics.

This presumption that participation in revolutionary politics is a rite of passage through which one matures to adulthood marks other iterations of young people's politics in Mexico City after 1968. In the immediate wake of Tlatelolco, there emerged what Barry Carr (1992, 235) characterizes as the "armed struggle phase" (1968-1974) of the Mexican left. For Carr, the "armed struggle" in question was enacted by guerilla groups, or, in other accounts, "*focos*," that drew inspiration not only from previous guerilla

79

groups in Mexico but also from the Cuban Revolution (see Castañeda 1993; Castellanos 2007). Although *foquismo* was mostly concentrated in rural Guerrero, it also found expression in major cities, notably Mexico City, where "hard-line" participants in the student movement (Carey 2005, 170) advocated a masculinist frontal confrontation with the state. This was arguably part of what Pensado (2013, 4) characterizes as an emerging "culture of aggressive public protest and political violence."

The "armed struggle phase" cannot be understood through some telescoped focus on only the guerilla groups. There was simultaneous agitation in other sectors, for example, among union activists seeking "extend the boundaries of trade union democracy and autonomy" (Carr 1992, 246). In general, willingness to pursue armed struggle against a despotic state was, after 1968, not exclusively found among guerillas. In the early '70s, after experiencing the repression of party militants who the government identified with communist students, and having been criminalized and denied registration by the PRI as well as the *Lombardista* socialist left,[4] even the *Partido Comunista Mexicano* (Mexican Communist Party, PCM) advocated electoral abstention and expressed openness to non-parliamentary tactics. Situating this shift in tactics within a geography of contestation that exceeds the Mexicanist *chingón-chingada* antagonism described in my Introduction, Castañeda (1992, 83-85) argues for understanding the PCM's accommodation of the guerilla as part of a wider reconciliation between Latin America's communist parties and the Castro regime in Cuba.

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[4] *Lombardistas* followed labor leader and founder of Confederation of Mexican Workers, Vicente Lombardo Toledano (1894-1968), who advised socialists and labor leaders to accommodate the PRI and was tirelessly critical of participants in the 1968 mobilizations.

Mexico City's post-1968 urban guerillas were not, however, aligned with either the PCM or class politics in the unionist sense. Many *guerilleros* became involved after having been disillusioned with the PCM's *Juventud Comunista Mexicana* (Mexican Communist Youth, JCM) after 1968. Despite the PCM's explicit accommodation of non-parliamentary tactics, the PCM was still widely understood to be seeking convergence with a despotic regime unlikely to respond to this demand-oriented approach. The converts from the JCM, and independent socialists from Mexico City's major public universities, therefore openly characterized the institutionalized labor movement as an obstacle to "independent political actions by workers" (Carr 1992, 269). Guerillas groups elsewhere in Mexico would also assert their distance from what they saw as the reformist left, in some cases violently, by murdering leftist activists who, the view of *guerilleros*, had been "co-opted" during Echeverría's so-called democratic opening (Carey 2005, 174-175). For the guerillas, the politics of official mass organizations, and especially the PRI-aligned national industrial unions, lacked any credibility by virtue of their proximity to bourgeois state power. The death of a reformist was "one less pig" (Guevara Niebla quoted in Carey 2005, 174).

Statements issued by the *guerilleros* identify a situation of what Marx (1977, 1061) named "real subsumption," when the wage-relation is generalized so that the class antagonism runs through the whole of society. In this situation,

> The entire development of the productive forces of *socialized labor* (in contrast to the more or less isolated labor of individuals), and together with it the *use of science* (the *general* product of social development), in the *immediate process of production*, takes the form of the *productive power of capital* (Marx 1977, 1024, *italics in original*).

Put differently, Mexico's urban guerilla activity of the 1970s emerged upon participants'

understanding of Mexican society as thoroughly marketized. The government had

apparently abandoned the ideals of the 1910 revolution and become an organ of what, in

the first issue of the clandestine guerilla newspaper *Madera*, the spokespeople for

Mexico's guerilla groups would characterize as "bourgeois power" (Liga Comunista 23

de Septiembre 1974, 1).

The *guerilleros* saw Mexico's universities, especially UNAM, as key sites in the

application science to a production process that was enriching "the capitalist oligarchy"

(de Mora quoted in Carey 2005, 172). With the benefit of hindsight, some participants in

the armed struggle of the 1970s suggest that the marketization of that decade, which Luis

Echeverría would pitch as modernization, in fact anticipated the neoliberalization of

Mexican higher education in the 1980s and 1990s. In a 2012 interview, a former guerilla

(interview with the author, David Cilia Olmos, July 27, 2012) explained,

> It was the attempt to replace [the political culture in] the schools that had been
> taken by the rebellion [of the late 1960s] with a new generation of people who
> had no contact with anything political… This was the end of public education.

Arguably for this reason, while many *campesino* communities would actively support the

rural *guerilleros*, the urban *focos* were largely composed of students from middle-class

origins (Aguilar Camín 1990), "educated children of the bourgeoisie" who "abandoned

their comfortable lives" (Carey 2005, 171; see also Walker 2013, 40-41). Proletarianized

students of what spokespeople for the guerillas would characterize as "*universidades

fábrica*" ("factory universities") had displaced the student-worker once celebrated by the

JCM (Carr 1992, 269). If, as editors of clandestine guerilla newspaper *Madera* would

82

frequently assert, "the struggle [*lucha*] continues," the vanguard of this ongoing struggle

was definitively outside and against the despotic state (Walker 2013, 25).

Spokespeople for the *guerilleros* suggested that post-1968 young people inherited

a struggle between two adversaries with internal essences: on the one hand, an essence of

liberty, and on the other, one of violence (Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre 1974, 20).

This major treatment of politics suggests that the two antagonists were locked together in

an immediately internal relationship. For the side of freedom, the *oficialista* labor

activists' "class collaborationist" formulation of demands was inadequate, and needed to

be replaced by a "frontal confrontation" with the repressive bourgeois state (Carr 1992,

269-271).

One can read this alongside contemporary currents in autonomist Marxist political

theory for a complementary elaboration of political ontology. Consider Antonio Negri's

writings on "sabotage" during The Long May in Italy (1967-1977), particularly his

treatment of confrontation with the capitalist state as a "self-valorization" through which

workers can liberate their productivity (Negri 2005, 261-269). According to Negri (2005,

261), the real subsumption of labor "comes about through command, through hierarchy,

and through income-as-revenue." He continues,

> Capital tries to dominate and control, via divisions, that unity of social labor that
> the working class, with its struggles, has tended to bring about. The fundamental
> issue of the communist project has always been that of the unity, the
> recomposition, of the working class. *Today the issue of unity must be tested
> entirely in relation to the problem of the recomposition of social productive labor*
> (Negri 2005, 261, *italics in original*).

Drawing on this language, one can look to the urban guerilla groups in Mexico City and

see their tactics as a direct assault on mechanisms of control through which a betrayal of

the 1910 revolution was apparently secured. Still today, Negri's analysis has traction

within the social and political science faculties of some of central Mexico's major public

universities,[5] and one might effectively map what Cindi Katz names "a topography" of

contestation, linking the armed struggle phase of 1970s Mexico to autonomist activism of

approximately the same time in southern Europe. For Katz (2001, 1216), this may enable

"formation of new political-economic alliances," solidarities "that transcend both place

and identity." But more relevant to the practices through which student movement space

in Mexico City was then and is today sustained is the urban guerillas' presumption of a

fully necessary encounter with a repressive state, and their formulation of tactics on that

basis. The guerillas' political ontology has arguably contributed to consolidating the

repression-heroism political framework that today continues to facilitate and set limits on

what young people can do in the name of politics.

There were several guerilla groups active in Mexico City, including the *Comité*

*Comunista Estudiantil*, *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación*, *Fuerzas Armadas*

*Revolucionarias*, and the *Brigada Lacandones*, which drew significant membership from

among former UNAM and IPN students who assumed the revolutionary mantle through

mobilizations in 1968. After years of police infiltration, many guerilla actions after 1973

(including high profile kidnapping, bank robbery, and assassination) were coordinated by

the umbrella organization *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre* (the September 23

Communist League). The organization took its name from the date, in 1965, of a by-then

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[5] For example, I am thinking of the "Subjectivity and Critical Theory" seminar organized by John
Holloway, Sergio Tischler, and Fernando Matamoros in the *Benemérita Universidad Autónoma
de Puebla*. Participants in the seminar contribute their writing to, among other venues, the journal
*Bajo el Volcán*. In 2011, I had the pleasure of participating in two meetings of the seminar.

dormant group of Chihuahua guerillas' assault on an army barracks in Ciudad Madera. The influence of this assault was institutionalized in the late-1960s, before Tlatelolco, in the form of rural guerilla groups in Guerrero, asserting land rights and combatting government corruption. The relationship between the rural groups and radicalized former students, after 1968, was sometimes direct. As the guerilla activity multiplied, and the spying and repression became more intense, this name became an alibi both for anti-state protest and reactionary policing alike. For the urban *guerilleros*, it secured their place within a movement family of the Mexican Revolution's still living essence, and clarified the struggle to which invocations of '*la lucha sigue*' ('the struggle continues') would refer. Secondary referents for the *Liga Comunista* included local iterations of that "struggle" in Sinaloa and in Guerrero (interview with the author, David Cilia Olmos, July 27, 2012).

      With what consequences did the guerillas postulate this uninterrupted movement of resistance and repression? Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 76) discuss "hearsay" as the transmission of "order-words" from "what someone else said to you." With order-words, Deleuze and Guattari refer to an ordering function of language, the way language sets bodies in relationships that are distinct from those they held before deployment of a given word. With this in mind, one might say the guerillas' identification as *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre* established them as one term in what was already by then a predictable antagonism for which the endurance of their opposite, the repressive state, was assumed. Their homage to the 1965 assault on the barracks in Ciudad Madera arguably reactivated the post-1968 relay between an archive of repressive state violence and the repertoire of

85

heroic student politics. Like contemporary student activists' invocations of 1968 as

Tlatelolco, it effectuated redundancy. To be clear, this is not to say there is "an identity

between the statement and the act" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 80). Rather, it is that a

sanitized commemoration of revolutionary forefathers during "Latin America's hour of

the hero" (Guillermoprieto 2001, 85) established coordinates for action to come. I do not

assume that these specific coordinates channel *all* subsequent engagement with politics

into a repetition of the same. But I suggest that this moment in the early-1970s, alongside

contemporary student activists' use of Tlatelolco as the point of reference that legitimates

their participation in rituals of politics, consolidates a consensus. In this major treatment

of politics, the two invariant sides in a given articulation of post-1968 young people's

politics appear to be determined in advance.

Historians estimate that, during the frontal confrontation with a despotic state to

which spokespeople for the guerillas referred in their statements, government agents

killed more than 1,500 young participants in guerilla groups (Carr 1992, 271; Gonzalez

Villarreal 2012). Most of the *guerilleros* who were not killed were either arrested or fled

into exile. Many who are unaccounted-for are the *detenidos-desaparecidos*, the detained-

disappeared. Among the *detenidos-desaparecidos* were many young people uninvolved

in the guerilla activity but nonetheless targets of military and paramilitary units organized

to combat it. A recently published history of disappearance as a "technology of

repression" (González Villareal 2012) reveals the inadequacy of the repression-heroism

framework for knowing the political violence of these years and practicing politics in its

wake. Roberto González Villarreal's analysis suggests that the poles of this framework

86

(repressive state and heroic student movement) could only have been rigidified in hindsight. The object of repression, and the agents of its realization were – and, amidst the contemporary drug war, still are – uncertain in practice. The "*identificación perfecta*" ("perfect identification") is betrayed by an account of disparity written out of the records of repression (see González Villareal 2012, 69-74).

One arrested participant was David Cilia Olmos, a former militant with the *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre*, later a political prisoner, who is today active with the *Foro Permanente por la Comisión de la Verdad* (Permanent Forum of the Truth Commission, FPCV). Cilia Olmos' work with the FPCV challenges specifically the first erasure of these years (i.e., the PRI cover-up of Tlatelolco and the Dirty War). The work demands frequent collaboration with the *Comité 68*, and former movement leaders of the CNH.[6] The FPCV was founded in 2000, with support from the *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN) President Vicente Fox, whose electoral victory over the PRI ended the PRI's continuous rule from *Los Pinos* since 1929. Amidst what was then widely regarded as a democratic transition (see e.g., Gutmann 2002, 70), Vicente Fox supported the FPCV in its efforts to pursue the truth of government involvement in post-1968 repression of leftist activism, and specifically in cases of the *detenidos-desaparecidos* of Mexico's Dirty War. In 2001, Fox ordered the Ministry of the Interior to deposit, in the National Archive, reports written between the 1940s and 1970s by agents of Mexico's major security agencies, the

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[6] A combined effort from the *Comité 68* and the then nascent Truth Commission resulted in the opening, in 1993-1994, of government archives relevant to the 1968 mobilizations and the police action in Tlatelolco. Though nominally public, these documents are now inaccessibly housed in the National Archive in Mexico City. More than twenty years after the declassification of these Tlatelolco-related documents, the student left continues to call for identification of those responsible for the violence in Tlatelolco.

Office of Federal Security (DFS) and the General Directorate of Political and Social Investigations (IPS). This was a boon for people like Cilia Olmos, seeking to correct the first erasure. But the release of these documents did not, in itself, curtail the second erasure.

In a July 2012 interview, Cilia Olmos looked back to his experience with the *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre*, and sought to connect it to his current work with the FPCV. He invoked the ubiquitous movement family figure, and represented his contemporary work in familiar developmental terms of genetic filiation through which 1968 is so often linked to the present. "My generation," he said, "qualified as the last generation of 68" (interview with the author, David Cilia Olmos, July 27, 2012). He suggested that, if "the student movement […] had its greatest expression in 1968," its inheritors in the 1970s, including those currently active in the FPCV, were nonetheless, "in some way, part of the student movement" (interview with the author, David Cilia Olmos, July 27, 2012). Here, as for Verta Taylor, the movement is cast as an invariant in a line of antagonism along which one can trace political continuities. The generations of movement family: looking backward, this assessment of the *Liga Comunista* and the masculine revolutionary who could, like Che, heroically "rise above adversity" (Carey 2005, 15) underscores a sense of inevitability with which young participants in the armed struggle of the 1970s looked ahead to, and in fact invited, a reencounter with the repressive state.

How does this palpable sense of inevitability find expression in student movement space? How does the reactivation of categories proper to that space assure the "distribution of existing things" (Foucault 1977a, 186), and to what effect for politics? I

again return to the second erasure through which adherents to the student left reduce 1968 to Tlatelolco and impose certainties on student movement space. Witness the student-left discourses that presented the 2012 hashtag activism of #YoSoy132 as a student-led movement despite the fact that conditions for the emergence of a recognizable movement were set in significant part by activists with respect to whom student activists would later deny an affinity (e.g., the *Movimiento Regeneración Nacional* [MORENA] and its leader Andrés Manuel López Obrador). The reduction of multiplicity to a contradiction in which the student movement would count-as-one would also be evident in an episode I discuss in Chapter Three, when activists who would later be recognized as spokespeople for the #YoSoy132 movement asserted their student identity in the face of Peña Nieto supporters who called the legitimacy of their protest into question. One might also witness the decision by rejected applicants to major public universities, who, though not students in the sense of being enrolled for classes, nonetheless would organize as "aspiring" students when they participated in the anti-PRI demonstrations (author, fieldnotes, July 22, 2012, Miguel Hidalgo – Mexico City). Or one might consider a chant from demonstrations and marches (like the annual commemorative march for the Cuban Revolution) that are neither today nor have historically been aligned with specifically student issues: "*¡Alerta, alerta, alerta que camina! ¡La lucha estudiantil por América Latina!*" ("Attention, attention, attention to those who walk! The student struggle for Latin America!") (author, fieldnotes, July 26, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

In these examples, non-students clearly inhabit the political identity of student in the service of legitimizing participation in what is understood as young people's politics

after 1968. Both prior to and through participation in space-times that are categorized as proper to a specific subset of activists, and to the effect of ensuring that the practices in question can be recognized as properly political, young people who are not enrolled in school nonetheless march under the sign of student activism. Student movement space is in that sense arguably brought about by young people who perform political engagement in relation to an enduring regime of representation, to the effect of making their politics appear determined by the revolutionary heroism of 1968.

Conclusion

The conflation of young people's politics and student activism suggests a need for careful attention to how geographers theorize the spaces and practices through which young people participate in politics. Sarah Elwood and Katharyne Mitchell (2012, 1) note in a recent article that the 'public sphere' of rational, deliberative debate remains an ideal type guiding much of the geographical scholarship on youth political engagement. Their assessment evokes a research agenda oriented toward identification of best practices for encouraging responsible citizenship (Staeheli 2013). With an eye to how such an agenda informs governance in liberal-democratic contexts, like the one to which spokespeople for the PRI pay lip service, one might look to curricula in citizenship education aiming to counter declining electoral turnout and ensure the "future health" of a given polity (O'Toole et al. 2003, 45; cf. Pykett 2009), or one might look to local programs for youth participation, problematic for so often cleaving the local from "policies and practices that cannot be addresses at a local level" (Ansell 2009, 205).

90

Elwood and Mitchell (2012) acknowledge that some contemporary geographical research on young people's politics does recognize that this ideal type represents some but not all of what young people do in the name of politics. For example, recent research on embodied spatial practices as sites of youth political agency (Bosco 2010; Holt 2004) moves away from modernist ideas of communicative rationality animating invocations of the public sphere. But Elwood and Mitchell rightly identify a consensus-oriented form of deliberation that is too often presumed in advance to represent 'politics' in general (Parry et al. 1992; Tonge 2009; cf. O'Toole 2003).

Alternately, at issue may be an inherited framework that provides the contours of a political sphere in which young people might be given a voice. The case of post-1968 Mexico City suggests that this too can be limiting. To assume a sphere of politics in advance as the one in which young people can find inclusion, or in which they should be encouraged to participate, is to limit the questions one may ask to simply of whether or not, or of how or how much, young people engage in or adopt a clearly delimited set of behaviors and political visions that does not disrupt the social relationships that pitch the sphere of politics 'over there,' as something in which young people might participate. Put differently, and in light of young people's long marginalization from the stuff of capital-P Politics (Kallio 2012; Philo and Smith 2003; Skelton 2010), the question becomes one of what it takes to 'include' young people.

In an oft-cited geographical reading of Rancière, Mustafa Dikeç (2005) suggests that politics, strictly speaking, is blocked through the delineation of a sphere in which one can be included or from which one can be excluded. Dikeç argues that this delineation

naturalizes the social-spatial order that serves as given for any number of governmental interventions. The language of inclusion erases the wrongs that produce and reproduce a social stratification to which this distinction between included and excluded pretends to refer. Dikeç explains that,

> Politically, [to identify] 'the excluded' as *the excluded* is already to include 'them' in the whole; nothing escapes the police, especially 'the excluded.' And, once the excluded are identified as such, the possibility for politics is canceled out at the outset; there is room merely for modifications in the police order, motivated either by more effort to 'include the excluded,' or by a concern with the security of 'the included' threatened by the outside (Dikeç 2005, 177, *italics in original*).

In short, an agenda of including the excluded – for example, of giving young people "a seat" at the metaphorical table (Philo and Smith 2013, 137-138) – would not challenge the configuration of the world that facilitates the so-called exclusion (see Thomas 2011 for a complementary critique of multicultural inclusion).

I more explicitly challenge inclusion-exclusion through Rancière's (and Dikeç's) language of the police in the next two chapters. In Chapter Two, I also critique Alain Badiou's (2005b, 93-103) apparently complementary but nonetheless problematic argument about inclusion and depoliticization. In doing this, I depart from the normative impulse of a rich tradition of critical human geography in the 1990s that valorized 'the margins' but at the same time assumed that power emanates or is necessarily exercised from so-called centers. Cindi Katz (1996) anticipated my challenge to this impulse in her writing on "minor theory" that disrupts distinctions between margins and center. Katz (1996, 487) promotes "reworking marginality by decomposing the major." The minor, Katz explains, "reworks the major *from within*" (1996, 491, *italics in original*). For Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 83; 102-105), the minor elicits variation in major language,

and challenges invariants that make perceptible only a quasi-genetic reproduction of the same. That Cindi Katz draws inspiration primarily from Deleuze and Guattari (1986) while Mustafa Dikeç (2005; 2013) leans on Rancière does not indicate inconsistency; it can be taken to suggest that these theorists share an understanding of politics working through and opening up a naturalized social-spatial order. My arguments at the end of Chapter Three and in Chapter Four in fact reflect the complementarity of Rancièrian and Deleuzoguattarian analytics.

In relation to geographical scholarship on young people's politics, my challenge to the apparently self-evident importance of valorizing the excluded margins is aimed at a statist response to adultism. In the late 1990s and 2000s, critical scholarship in the political geography of young people posited, as a challenge to adultism, a move to make young people visible in legal structures or tacitly accepted political frameworks from which they had heretofore been marginalized. The problem is that, towards including young people, these geographers frequently left an ideal type politics unquestioned to the effect of insulating historically and geographically specific wrongs or injustices from disturbance (Rancière 1995).

On the other hand, if one conceives as a politics the disruption of an historically and geographically specific social-spatial order that serves as a ground for governmental practice, conceived here to include rituals of protest and representation, perhaps it is with an eye not only to young people but also to effects at the level of institutions that young people's struggles to redefine what counts as politics may become visible. At issue is how heterogeneous practices, even ones not readily seen as politics, may reconfigure the

world given to perception. The lesson, in short, is that political geographers need not reveal young people's engagement with a public sphere or bring them 'out of hiding' in order to recognize young people as political actors.

Complementing the statism of geographic scholarship on young people's politics are presentist currents that discourage the first analytical move of this approach, i.e., the specification of procedures that establish and maintain a relatively durable social-spatial order. A tendency to cut young people's politics from these procedures, and therefore to obscure young people's participation in state formation and policing, is evident in some scholars' deliberate and exclusive focus on the micro-scale and contingent, sometimes problematically conflated with "the everyday." Recall that, for Henri Lefebvre (1987, 9), the everyday was that which is both "most obvious and best hidden." Everything in its proper place; there are no surprises. The reproduction of everyday life is a naturalization of order, which is depoliticized and put beyond question. Presentist political geographies of young people deny the functionalism Lefebvre witnessed in the everyday, and instead celebrate the abundance of individual agency apparently available in 'the event.'

Nonrepresentational scholars, in particular, argue for this abundance of agency by narrowing analysis to a specific configuration of bodies, and then recasting the research process as a performance or enactment carried out in relation to young people, whose everyday lives, in principle, will exceed adultist efforts to explain them (Harker 2005; Horton and Kraftl 2006). But what if, after Mitchell and Elwood (2012, 789), this emphasis on excess in the nonrepresentational literature works to "individualize and depoliticize processes and relations of power"? What if, by cleaving present

94

performances from past practices, and from a naturalization of categories and social-spatial order that these practices portend, nonrepresentational scholarship limits itself to taking "subjects' stated intentions […] at face value" (Thomas 2011, 142)?

These consequences are significant in light of efforts to bring geographical work on young people into contact with political geography, and I would argue that they can be avoided while still respecting young people's voices and lived experiences. This is why I acknowledge the potential for young people to tactically inhabit inherited categories and, at the same time, suggest that inhabitation and naturalization of inherited categories may effect a reproduction of the social-spatial order they aspire to disrupt. Such an analysis is necessary for a youth political geography adequate to the name. Indeed, the enduring goal of "mainstreaming" geographies of young people, or bringing the field into wider geographical debates, will, if anything, be hamstrung by inattention to anything more than young people's "local" and, in a naïve sense, "everyday" experiences (Hopkins and Alexander 2010).

Tracey Skelton suggests in a recent review article that recognizing young people as political actors may "create new definitions for the political and demonstrate other ways of conceptualizing geopolitics and political geographies" (Skelton 2010, 145). I agree. But I would argue that to realize the implications of youth political geography, one must suspend and interrogate naturalized forms of ideal type politics. If one instead treats as politics a disruption of an historically and geographically specific social-spatial order, young people can be said to realize politics by, for example, denaturalizing the categories that demand of them a transition to adulthood through stages proper to a past movement.

If Mexico City's contemporary student activism is made to make sense in terms of 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco, one can glimpse politics in practices that erode the certainties proper to the social-spatial order consolidated through its commemoration. This is to say, writing political geographies of young people in relation to the legacy of 1968 requires two moves: first, a specification of procedures through which the contours of the visible and the sayable in this particular space-time have been established, and second, a study of potential disruptions brought about by young people in practice. Only then, on how they exceed the categories of a history "rendered circular" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 95-96), could one describe young people's practices in post-1968 Mexico City as a politics. Geographical study of young people's politics in Mexico City may indeed, thought this way, deliver on Skelton's projected "new definitions for the political" (Skelton 2010, 145).

Chapter Two: The non-student 'student,' the state, and so-called 'true politics'

"If the distinction between politics and the police can be useful, it is not to allow us to say: politics is on this side, police is on the opposite side. It is to allow us to understand their form of intertwinement. We rarely, if ever, face a situation where we can say: this is politics in its purity. But we ceaselessly face situations where we have to discern how politics encroaches on matters of the police and the police on matters of politics" (Rancière 2009, 287-288).

In the decades since 1968, young people not enrolled in school have frequently inhabited the political identity 'student' to legitimize participation in what is understood as young people's politics after 1968. The figure of the non-student student examined in this chapter is made practicable given a post-1968 regime of representation that translates young people's politics as specifically student politics. That is, the figure of the non-student student is an effect of a reductive commemoration of 1968 as a year of repressive state violence against heroic students, and use of the shorthand 'Tlatelolco' to understand young people's relationship to the state in subsequent activism. But who are these students who are not students? Who are these young people who take on a category, and enact it to the effect of producing student movement space? And if post-1968 rituals of student activism prolong the endurance of the repression-heroism framework, how can young people realize a politics that suspends its categories?

In this chapter I argue that student movement-based politics is possibly disruptive but rarely so by virtue of its practitioners' reproduction of a social-spatial order that they

assume in order to make their rituals of protest recognizable as politics. In order to make this argument I draw heavily on Jacques Rancière's exploration of social order through the terms 'politics' and 'police.' The police refers to a naturalized social-spatial order or configuration of the world that discourages disruptive politics. An historically and geographically specific police order, in this sense, includes the apparently stable and preestablished force against which practitioners of resistance position themselves (on this imaginary in resistance studies, see Crane 2012; Rose 2002). On the other hand, 'politics,' in Rancière's terms, is not resistance. It does not adhere to a pre-given formula or obey the contours of a world available to perception. Instead, politics is a rupture from within the given; it reconfigures the world, and exceeds what can be counted upon in the existing order. Politics is, in Mustafa Dikeç's terms, "a surplus to the saturated and partitioned whole" (2005, 178); there is therefore "no way to be able to say where politics might emerge."

The chapter is broken into three sections. In the first, I develop two genealogies that demonstrate how different non-student students prove differently inclined towards a disruptive politics. The two examples are 1) of anarchist punks, who inhabit one pole of the post-Tlatelolco regime of representation in order to legitimate an endless struggle against the repressive state through which they have elaborated an anti-state identity; and 2) of *porros*, or young people who are typically enrolled in school, and have been trained to infiltrate student activism, but who the student left does not acknowledge as students because they are suspected of alignment with the repressive state. The methodological discussion with which I begin this section clarifies my use of these examples to challenge

the coherence of categories through which young people's politics is known. Put briefly, these genealogical sketches are meant to repoliticize the student, which young people in Mexico City arguably invoke to the effect of dissolving politics into sociology. The genealogies also anticipate a state-and political-theoretical argument that I carry through to the end of the chapter.

In the second section I critique contemporary efforts to extract and celebrate some kind of pure or 'true' politics that might be pried from "matters of the police" (Rancière 2009, 287-288). This second section of the chapter follows from my genealogies and clarifies the stakes of the dissertation more generally through a critical reading of Fabio Lanza's *Behind the Gate: Inventing Students in Beijing* (Lanza 2010). *Behind the Gate* explicitly seeks true politics. Lanza follows Alain Badiou (a frequent interlocutor of Rancière) to suggest that true politics is found only at a distance from the state. For Lanza (using Badiou's capitalization, 'State'), the practitioners of true politics destroy a bond inscribed in State classifications (e.g., of students), and thereby produce an urgent "need for repression" (Lanza 2010, 213). As a rule, the State reveals itself to practitioners of true politics and, through repression, reestablishes the proper boundaries of the political. I unpack Lanza's argument to show how genealogy reveals problems of adhering dogmatically to a vision of the state as invariably repressive or even as some reified thing that can be understood as existing apart from an apparently separate sphere of people who practice politics. This is in fact a mainstream assumption in political science, i.e. that civil society is an entity apart from and fundamentally unlike the state (Mitchell 1991). It also has traction in political geography, which is a problem I address in Chapter Three. Here, I

argue that such dogmatism about the distinctiveness of politics vis-à-vis the state/State, although typically advanced in the name of resistance, paradoxically secures the classificatory order that true politics is presumed to disrupt.

I conclude this chapter by briefly reiterating my argument with specific reference to geographies of resistance as related to the state. With an eye to scholarship and also to activist practice, I suggest that to seek an outside from which to launch resistance is to invest the state with a preestablished, original stability in relation to which resistance can only ever be a response (Rose 2002). This brief conclusion extends my critique of Badiou's/Lanza's theorization of true politics to argue for an analysis of how apparent antagonists may sometimes unwittingly collaborate in processes of social-spatial ordering or policing.

For genealogies of the non-student 'student'

The figure of the non-student student has been made possible through a regime of representation which makes young people's politics appear equivalent to rituals of post-1968 student activism. This is not to say this figure is a "product," or that the regime of representation is "an originating cause" (Foucault 2008, 49). Rather, the post-1968 reduction of young people's politics to student activism has been effected across multiple fields of practice. The student left's major treatment of politics, its insistent appeal to a struggle between "molar aggregates" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 216), has universalized figures proper to the repression-heroism antagonism and obscured what Foucault (1977b, 142) would recognize as the "disparity" of trajectories that elude this reduction. In the

two genealogies examined in this chapter, the second erasure that organizes this major

treatment of post-1968 youth politics would obscure punks' necessary relationships with

an infrastructure of everyday life that exceeds the geography they identify as their own,

and would also obscure the *porros'* frequently tentative connection to a repressive state

*qua* PRI and ambivalent relationship to the norms of student life. Keeping this erasure of

disparity in mind, the genealogies disrupt a unilinear course along which the antagonism

– repressive state and heroic student – finds expression. They contest the repression-

heroism narrative, organized around family tropes, which has made present to the senses

only two coherent adversaries.

A Tlatelolco-centric post-1968 narrative of young people's politics traces the

certainties of an inheritance, and in this sense, can be called genealogical only in terms of

"tree logic," with its endlessly reproductive "genetic axis":

> All of tree logic is a logic of tracing and reproduction. […] Its goal is to describe a
> de facto state, to maintain balance in intersubjective relations, or to explore an
> unconscious that is already there from the start […]. It consists of a tracing, on the
> basis of an overcoding structure or supporting axis, something that comes ready-
> made (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 12).

What, then, do I mean by genealogy, and how can a practice going by a name so

invested with a sense of filiation disrupt the "genetic axis" that hems young people in

from knowing and doing politics otherwise? How does genealogy break this closure

around a predetermined form? Foucault (2008, 76-78) clarifies genealogy in a 1979

lecture on the emergence of the neoliberal state. Foucault (2008, 77) defends and then

asserts a need to do without a theory of the state in order to address the question of how

this state form came to be; he writes that, if "doing without a theory of the state"

means not starting from the state considered as a sort of political universal and then, through successive extension, deducing the status of the mad, the sick, children [or students] in our kind of society then I reply: Yes, of course, I am determined to refrain from that kind of analysis (Foucault 2008, 77).

Foucault then continues, by challenging the essentialism written into accounts of politics that, lifting subject-objects to the level of universals, invests them with essences. His focus remains the state, but could equally be universalized agents of a locally meaningful anti-state politics. "There is no question," he writes,

of deducing practices from a supposed essence of the state in and for itself. We must refrain from that kind of analysis first of all because, quite simply, history is not a deductive science, and secondly, for another no doubt more important and serious reason: the state does not have an essence. The state is not a universal nor in itself an autonomous source of power (Foucault 2008, 77).

In short, Foucault's genealogical approach allows one to know the state as an effect with "no interior" (Foucault 2008, 77). The same can be said for the apparent antagonists of post-1968 youth politics in Mexico City. Despite pretense to universality, the repressive Mexican state and its student movement adversary have no interior. There is no genetic axis. The uninterrupted filiation of a movement family and its revolution is a convenient fiction.

The events of October 2, 1968, and of young people's politics in its wake, do not express an organizing principle. To the contrary, the heterogeneous practices of young people in Mexico City, which the student left overcodes as student activism descending from Tlatelolco, have come to exist through an articulation of disparate things that are made to appear outside the objects in question and therefore are justifiably excluded from their history. The organization of post-1968 social movement histories around a universal is not exclusive to Mexico. One finds a similar move in Alain Badiou's major treatment

102

of the May 1968 general strike in France, which he presents as an event with essential political content visible in the communism of today (Badiou 2008). The problem here is Badiou's will to elevate politics to the status of a universal, which he realizes only by writing out the historical and geographical specificity of an instantiation of politics as a singular disturbance a social-spatial order that then-there (in twenty-first century France) is a basis for depoliticized techniques of governance.

The following genealogies reflect a willingness to "suppose that universals do not exist" (Foucault 2008, 3). I draw on primary and secondary sources – such as flyers, song lyrics, fieldnotes, interview transcripts, short stories, and histories – to establish possible connections between disparate terms without reducing them to "the One" or "the One that becomes two" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 5). The material on which I draw to write these genealogies exceeds inherited historical categories but is often awkwardly forced into them in traditional histories of post-1968 youth politics.

Acknowledging the materiality of the archives from which I draw primary sources is crucial here. My sources are drawn from sometimes unlikely spaces of practice (social centers, street markets, used-book sellers, punk shows, protests, and so on) in which they offer practitioners of these spaces certainty regarding the identity of the space in question. For example, Tiburcio's used-book stand near the Televisa studios on Balderas is not only a site at which books and magazines are bought and sold (see Figure 9, below). It is also a site at which these materials are organized, made contiguous or separated, foregrounded or buried. The messy producedure through which the texts' circulation is modified is furthermore affected by Tiburcio's commitment to social justice movements

in his home state of Guerrero (author, fieldnotes, June 17, 2013, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City). This spatially diffuse and formally diverse set of archives is therefore not simply a repository of truth. The boundaries of the spaces of practice, which together compose my archive, are each in their own way policed by their practitioners.



Figure 9: Tiburcio at his used-book stand, explaining a campaign for potable water in Guerrero

Ann Laura Stoler speaks of similar policing in colonial state archives, sites of "piecemeal partiality," monuments to "spasmodic and sustained currents of anxious labor that paper trails could not contain" (Stoler 2009, 19). The archives from which I draw sources informing my analysis of the punks and the *porros* are also practiced in ways that exceed the representations they contain. Any claims I make for the outsides of Tlatelolco with reference to these archival representations are therefore tentative; in a strong sense, they only establish "possible" connections (Foucault 2008, 42). The sites from which I draw my evidence endure in their fragility through practices. By virtue of how the spaces endure, I must also necessarily examine this set of archives not only for the sources they contain, the archival representations themselves, but also for boundary drawing practices through which these spaces of circulation are maintained in their specificity: all of this to open existing collective identities to revision without, then, seeking to reestablish closure (Kurtz 2002).

My intent here is to denaturalize the unified trajectory of student activism within which young people in Mexico City are often presumed to operate. My two genealogies correct the homogenizing force of deductive-predictive analysis, and they highlight lives of young people in Mexico City whose singularity is typically denied in student movement space. The following two sketches also gesture towards a possible acategorical politics that may disrupt the certainties of a world in which young people feel they must reactivate the categories of a post-Tlatelolco political framework by heroically rising up as student activists against the repressive Mexican state.

On July 8, 2012, the legendary Ecatepec punk band Catarsis Liberada organized its twenty-second anniversary show as an opportunity to release the album *Fachas no!!!* ("No fascists!!!"). I picked up my copy as an attendee. The *Festival Catartico* began at 14:00, with a 50 peso ($4.00) cover charge that allowed me to see approximately twenty bands. Paying 80 pesos would get attendees through the door with the new compact disc (see Figure 10, below).



Figure 10: Inside the *Clandestino Multiforo* during the *Festival Catartico*, July 8, 2012

I arrived on time. The show was still only sparsely attended an hour later. Many younger attendees (by appearances, 12-16 year olds) were adorned in their punk rock best – all black, some with metal spikes, or with homemade patches indicating they belong to the fandom of select Mexican bands (e.g., Atoxxxico, Masacre 68, Bio Crisis), Spanish bands (e.g., Eskorbuto, Elektroduendes), or US/UK bands (e.g., Nausea, Discharge, Doom). The sub-genres of punk (crust punk, street punk, etc.) clearly mattered less for these young attendees of the *Festival Catartico* than the anti-authoritarianism that united them, which the organizers communicated through the show flyer with an anarchist circle-A symbol, a 'no Nazis' circle-backslash-swastika, and the band names, among them *Asociacion Delictuosa* (Criminal Association), *Rabia Proletaria* (Proletarian Rage), and *Ocupando Lugares* (Occupying Places). The younger attendees, visibly eager to arrive on time and see all twenty bands, stood against the walls, shared beers from a bar managed by punks with spikey neon hair, browsed merchandise from distros maintained by older punks who ventured into the show before their peers,[7] or huffed *tiner* or *activo* (paint thinner, or other industrial chemicals, the sniffing of which became markedly popular among central Mexico's street children and punks in the past decade; see Herrera et al. 2009) (author, fieldnotes, July 8, 2012, Ecatepec).

The older punks mostly remained outside the door until 4:00 pm. They watched the street outside the *Clandestino Multiforo*, where the show was hosted, observing other punks as they walked north to the show from the Río de los Remedios metro stop, and

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[7] 'Distro' refers to a node in a global network through which goods manufactured by punks (e.g., zines, tapes, compact discs, patches, records, buttons, t-shirts, etc.) are distributed. At shows, they are often realized as a blanket on which a given owner-manufacturer displays his or her wares.

going inside only for another *caguama* (a 32 ounce bottle of beer) from the bar, to be shared among friends – the *banda*. Several of these older punks – the "old guard" punks, as Rikis of Catarsis Liberada put it in our conversation that day – watched the door, tacitly agreeing to volunteer as people who would collect the 50-peso cover. Many of these older punks directly experienced what is, in histories of young people's politics, cast as the Mexican government's targeting of youth culture in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. If the old guard punks did not directly experience this targeting or criminalization, they are nonetheless swept up in and actively deploy a narrative that "consists not in communicating what one has seen but in transmitting what one has heard, what someone else said to you. Hearsay" (Deleuze and Guattari's terms 1987, 76).

The punks at the *Clandestino* clearly diverged from the iconic student activist – light-skinned, well-groomed, of middle class origin – that is identified with institutions on which Mexico's governing elite have historically affixed their discourse of modernization (Camp 1976). But the punks, caught in a relay between the hearsay of a post-Tlatelolco narrative and a repertoire of subcultural *qua* student activist practice, perform an anti-authoritarianism that not only proves compatible with the repression-heroism schema but consolidates its *chingada* pole. Punks' inhabitation of the repression-heroism political framework in a way that aligns them with student activists is perhaps most clearly evident in their annual concentration around a circle-A flag of more than twenty square feet in Tlatelolco (see Figure 11, below), which the punks, most in all black, carry to the *Zócalo* as part of the *dos de octubre* commemorative march (author, fieldnotes, October 2, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

Figure 11: Punks claiming space in the October 2, 2012 march from Tlatelolco to the *Zócalo*

Attendees of the *Festival Catartico* circulated a dialectical-historicist narrative of anti-authoritarian punk through the *Clandestino*, just as they do on other days in other spaces of punk practice. This narrative is often echoed, and its categories are enacted, by punks who understand contemporary anti-authoritarian youth culture to have passed through the *Onda Chicana* of English-language Mexican garage bands in the early 1970s to a subsequent stage in which precursors of contemporary punks established spaces outside state purview which would come to facilitate their contemporary practices of

109

*autogestión* (self-management). In what Foucault (1977b) would see as a traditional history of Mexican punk, the adversary of these punk predecessors was then, as it is now, the "heavy hand of a rigorously repressive society" inaugurated through the violence of 1968 (Detor Escobar and Hernández Sánchez 2011, 34-36).

According to this narrative, contemporary punk emerged through "'an extended battle against conditions which are essentially and constantly unfavorable'" (Foucault 1977b, 149-153); the generative motor of history has been an anti-authoritarian rejection of Capital, the State, the Church, and most generally the "*dominación del sistema*" ("domination of the system"). Punks in central Mexico who participate in circulating this narrative promote an understanding of their predecessors developing into contemporary "*anarcoautonomista punk*" ("anarchist-autonomist punk") through an antagonism with dominators (see Reguillo 2000, 104-116). The punks, then, arguably position themselves at the *chingada* pole of Octavio Paz's reductive *chingón-chingada* schema (Paz 1985, 65-88). The magnetism of the student movement for punks, and punks' participation in politics under the sign of the student movement, can therefore be explained through their assumption of a shared history of domination vis-à-vis the repressive state.

One can, of course, trouble this narrative to reconstruct some apparently far-flung conditions of possibility for Mexico City's punk scene. For example, if not by projecting an uninterrupted and continuous line along which Foucault's traditional historian could trace a genetic line of descent, one can examine the history of the punk scene with reference to young people's experience, in the 1980s, of the fast-growing, under-serviced, low-income barrios of the *zona metropolitana*, much of which spreads into *EDOMEX*,

110

the *Estado de México* (Mexico State). The geography of punk in the *zona metropolitana* is composed of a multiplicity of places that tie together far-flung social relations and attest to the constitutive importance of trajectories that exceed a heroic anti-authoritarian narrative of Mexico City punk. In Doreen Massey's terms, the geography of punk is not the developed outcome of some "introverted, inward-looking history" that must be traced along a single line of descent to its "internalized origins" (Massey 1994, 152). Rather, it takes its specificity from the "meeting and weaving together" of a "constellation of social relations" at "particular loc[i]" (Massey 1994, 154).

The *Clandestino Multiforo* (or *Clandestino*), where Catarsis Liberada released its *Fachas No!!!* album in July 2012, is an exemplary locus of punk in these terms. It is the site where punks from Ecatepec (in *EDOMEX*, northeast of Mexico City) most frequently converge for shows. It is also a site arguably inclined towards articulation with radical politics – Zapatista, anti-capitalist, anti-state (O'Connor 2003). If, by virtue of punks' anxious disavowal of the commodity form (Culton and Holtzman 2010), the punk scene in Mexico City is potentially articulated with leftism, sites like the *Clandestino* are also potential 'convergence spaces' in which young people of heterogeneous life experiences can come together, without denying their specificity, for the collective pursuit of social justice (Routledge 2003, 345). This is to say that punks' spaces of practice may tend to be, but are not necessarily, containerized spaces in which practitioners will predictably perform a given social identity (here, punk).

The realization of convergence in these spaces of practice is sometimes marked. For big shows like the annual *Festival Catartico* or the twenty-fifth anniversary *tocada*

111

for Mexico City anarchopunk band Atoxxxico, young people from dispersed parts of the *zona metropolitana* ride *micros* (minibuses) or the metro to Ecatepec. The geography of central Mexican punk is, in these moments, clearly stitched together by its practitioners' necessary relationships with an infrastructure of everyday life that exceeds the one that punks typically identify as their own (for a similar reading of punk in the US, see Crane 2012). Of course, this does not mean that practitioners of punk spaces in central Mexico will not relate to this wider infrastructure in their own way, perhaps to subvert it. As I experienced in my metro ride from Colonia Guerrero to Ecatepec for a 2009 performance by Venezuelan hardcore band ¡@patia no!, show attendees sometimes arrive in Ecatepec by metro after having overwhelmed metro station police officers with a massive turnstile-jumping "punk discount" (author, fieldnotes, August 1, 2009, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City; on the punk discount for buses in Mexico City, see Straub 2005).

But even in moments like the metro station punk discount (see Figure 12, below), when young people assert a distinctly punk relationship to the wider infrastructure of their everyday life, the punks coming together in Ecatepec for shows at the *Clandestino Multiforo* arguably pursue lives that exceed categories through which central Mexico's subcultural *tribus* are immediately intelligible. Nadia is a women's health provider. Chato is a father. The list could go on. The point is that a relational geography of central Mexico's punk scene would trouble the spatiality of a traditional history that treats these sites as expressions of a stage in the development of anti-authoritarian youth subculture.

Figure 12: Punks rushing a turnstile in the Buenavista metro station, August 1, 2009.

Punks' negotiations with the apparent outsides of their space of a category are often denied in practice. Punks tend to perform their anti-authoritarianism and construct their adversary in a way that erases the wider set of relations that facilitate their convergence in punk spaces of practice. Upon arriving in the *Clandestino* or other such sites (e.g., the *Espacio Anarcopunk* [Anarchopunk Space] of the *Tianguis Cultural del Chopo* [Market of Popular Culture]), young practitioners of the spatially diffuse spaces that constitute this relational geography tend to enact an identity that consolidates a post-1968 antagonism with the repressive Mexican state (on the discourse of anti-authoritarianism at *El Chopo*, see Hernández 2011, 45). Again, no rehearsal is necessary.

113

The comportment proper to punks' performance of an anti-authoritarianism compatible with post-1968 student activism is immediately recognizable, and the contours of proper performance are inscribed through all manner of articulations.

For example, on the cover of Catarsis Liberada's *Fachas no!!!* album, antagonism with a repressive state is represented as a commonality around which punks and others in their movement family will unite in solidarity. In the foreground, an anarchist punk and an anti-fascist skinhead toast Molotov cocktails, ready to firebomb a gathering of fascists. Punk-produced literature that is distributed through central Mexico's distros during demonstrations and at *tocadas* (or *toquins*, shows) indicates that this solidarity of likeness is programmatic. "Punks and skins" are "united against the fascism" that is immanent to a wider political-economic system of domination, of which the PRI has been the most recognizable representative in Mexico (Frente Antifascista n.d.). The anti-authoritarian punks therefore "call for a frontal attack, not just on neo-nazi and fascist cells, but on the entire structure of the system that oppresses [them], represses [them], and seeks to subject [them]" (Coordinadora Antifascista n.d.).

A similar representation of punk anti-authoritarianism can be found on the cover of a 2012 album from Rabia Proletaria, *Hijo de puta, E.P.N.* (Son of a bitch, Enrique Peña Nieto) (see Figure 13, below). On the cover, twelve anarchopunks are crucifying rats that represent PRI-affiliated politicians. The rats' party affiliation is confirmed by a use of the colors of Mexico's post-revolutionary tri-color flag for the font of "*E.P.N.*" in the album title. Further reinscribing the certainties of an aggressive post-1968 culture of protest, certainties that were arguably made available as an effect of the second erasure

114

realized through commemorative reactivations of repression-heroism, the anarchopunks on the cover are all men. The cover art testifies to a space of violent oppositional resistance that anarchopunks sustain on the model of a "true revolutionary" imagined by his past proponents as one who "wore an olive green uniform, stood up with dignity on their feet, and picked up arms" (Pensado 2013, 171).



Figure 13: Cover of 2012 Rabia Proletaria album, with anarchopunks crucifying PRI-aligned rats

Punks' investment in a totalitarian adversary as a condition for their participation in politics is also represented in the lyrics and composition of anarchopunk songs. Track ten on *Fachas no!!!*, "*Mas vivos ke los muertos*" ("More alive than dead"), is sung to the familiar melody of the Christy Minstrels' "Camptown Races." Before the song itself, the track begins with a fictional short news story about a "contingent of *granaderos* [riot police]" which has assembled on the route of the annual October 2 march for Tlatelolco and is confronted by protestors in the *Zócalo*. This news story is followed by the chaotic sounds of a protest, familiar to me from my own field recordings during marches. When the song finally begins, the lyrics unmistakably speak to an antagonism the punks enact but must not dismantle, insofar as – "*siguen protestando*" – the punks' anti-authoritarian identity is maintained by continuing to participate in rituals of protest that necessitate an adversary. Rikis rhythmically chants the lyrics, bouncing his voice over the drums: "*luchando hasta morir, toda la vida / luchando por existir, seguimos aqui*" ("struggling until death, all of life / struggling to exist, we endure here").

A shared vision of the world in which the punks must persist or endure in their anti-authoritarianism is found in the lyrics of other bands from the central Mexican scene, for example, in the final track of an album by anarchopunk band Desobediencia Civil. The song is revealingly titled "*Lucha sin final*" ("Struggle without end"). El Chomsky's lyrics echo rhetoric from the urban guerilla groups of the 1970s, discussed in Chapter One. They particularly resonate with statements found in the urban guerilla's "clandestine newspaper" *Madera* (Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre 1974), where the editors assert a continuation of same struggle, "*la lucha sigue*" ("the struggle continues"), and thereby

116

locate themselves in a movement lineage. Desobediencia Civil also shares this with anti-fascist punk and skinhead organizations, like Coordinadora Antifascista (n.d.), who cast themselves as participants "in a permanent struggle." Accordingly, in *Lucha sin final*, El Chomsky sings,

> As we continue to endure more humiliation / more exploitation / we fight a battle without end / now we continue the fight / we inherited from the past when our grandparents fought and died / to get sacred freedom / struggle / struggle / struggle / until the end / struggle / struggle / struggle / for your freedom (author's translation).

In the 1980s and '90s, this oppositional discourse settled in spaces of punk anti-authoritarianism. A discourse of permanent struggle was therefore available for adoption by practitioners who cast themselves outside and against the system, or in resistance. Young people's invention of place names reflects this oppositional identity. In casual conversation, on flyers for shows, and in song lyrics, punks from across central Mexico refer to Ecatepec as "*Ecatepunk.*" The name functions as a territorial identity for the *banda*, which is to say for any one of the many voluntarily organized groups of young people, resembling gangs, which come together around shared interests (e.g., punk) and often share in self-conscious resistance to perceived marginalization (Castillo Berthier 2002, 61-62). In this claim to territory, the *Ecatepunk* punks subvert designations that are imposed on their city from afar. They also arguably rearticulate a Mexicanist regime of representation, organized around a shared experience of state repression (Torres 2002) in which Ecatepec – now *Ecatepunk* – is a place of neglect or abuse by authority.

Not just in Ecatepunk, elsewhere: central Mexican punks articulate oppositional claims to space in working-class suburbs like "*Neza York,*" another local designation that,

117

this time, refers to Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl. *Neza York* suggests both the size of *Neza*, and the community of migrants from *Neza* who now live in New York City. *Neza* initially emerged to the immediate east of Mexico City in the 1960s as a settlement of rural migrants from other Mexican states (e.g., Hidalgo, Veracruz, Oaxaca). Between 1970 and 1985, the population of the wider Valley of Mexico would rapidly grow from approximately nine to almost twenty-five million people. Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl was the region's fastest growing municipality (Debroise 2006a, 265). By the 1980s, many of the young people in *Neza* had been born there, and had taken on and fashioned styles of life that reflected *Neza*'s emergence as a meeting place of migrant trajectories. This is clearly witnessed in photographer Frederico Gama's books on identity formation among central Mexican young people, such as *Mazahuacholoskatopunk* (Gama 2009), on urban *tribus* whose syncretism combines elements typically thought proper only to any one among the array of youth identities enacted in the region. But, historically and still today, *tribus* are rarely realized that do not compromise multiplicity through a reduction to the 'one' (often punk, sometimes *cholo* [the modern day *pachuco*]) that is permitted to count. Some punks' prideful involvement in evicting the relatively androgenous, often homosexual, and explicitly syncretic *emos* from a claim to cruising space at the Insurgentes metro station in 2008, on the ground that *emos* are "non-political," testifies to how punks police the boundaries of what counts as youth politics or resistance (Hernández 2011, 66-93).

Beginning in the 1980s, young people in *Neza* began to police the boundaries of emerging subcultural styles through assertions of an oppositional punk identity, sometimes invoked as equivalent to the *banda*, in relation to which disparate practices of

118

young people were made comprehensible. Devotees of *banda* tended to assert claims to

one pole in the post-Tlatelolco antagonism, by performing an endless struggle against the

repressive authorities symbolized by the PRI's continuing dominance. An important

background: the young people of *Neza* elaborated their oppositional punk identity amidst

effects of the neoliberal restructuring rolled out by the government of President Miguel

de la Madrid (1982-1988). Residents of working-class suburbs and cities outside Mexico

City disproportionately felt the consequences of an economic crisis in the late-1970s

(capital flight, inflation, devaluation of the peso). Levy and Székely (1983, 37) offer a

brief, revealing assessment of Mexico's economic crisis on the eve of de la Madrid:

> The peso, which had held steady for more than two decades at 12.5 to the U.S.
> dollar before weakening to roughly 25 in 1976, plummeted to 45 in early 1982
> and to 70 by later that year […] Inflation, which had held at less than 5 percent
> annually from the late 1950s through the 1960s before increasing markedly in the
> 1970s, shot up to over 60 percent by 1982 […] And against an enviable
> background of decades of strong growth rates, stymied for only a few years in the
> 1970s, the government was forced to predict zero growth for one to two years.

*Neza York* was one of the most famously underserviced cities that would suffer

through the subsequent Lost Decade of high unemployment, inadequate real wages, and

cuts to government spending. A situation of *Neza*-like underserviced migrant settlements

– the "*sectores marginales*" of the punks (Reguillo 2000, 105) – is evocatively described

in Carlos Fuentes' short story "The Son of Andrés Aparicio," about the children of

migrants from previous generations. "Here no name, no sewers, and the only light was an

occasional light bulb where someone had tapped into the city power lines. No one had

named the place because everyone pretended they were there temporarily" (Fuentes 1980,

188). The marginality would in fact not be temporary, and, in the 1970s and 1980s, cities

119

like Nezahualcóyotl and Ecatepec became places of self-management in the face of a
government that inadequately provided for residents and would adopt authoritarian tactics
to rein in an ensuing legitimacy problem.

The turn to anti-authoritarian self-management was captured in the films of Sarah
Minter, a series of semi-documentaries on *Neza*'s punk scene. Minter used a synthesis of
documentary and narrative styles to capture punks' oppositional claims to space against
the background of an economic crisis in which the punks are distinctive even as they, like
their neighbors, "lack a future" (here, using the words of one of Minter's characters).
Minter's best known film *Nadie es inocente* (1986) follows the self-named *Mierdas
Punks* (Shit Punks) as they get drunk or stoned with friends, dye their hair, sort through
the trash in the *Neza* dump, mosh to a Ramones cover at a *tocada*, run from the police,
burn a police car, and make future plans for the *banda*. On many occasions during *Nadie
es inocente*, and in Minter's follow up *Sábado de mierda* (1988), members of the *banda*
explicitly pitch their existence against a system of repression, and underscore a position
in the repression-heroism framework. In one scene, three punks sit on a bed, wearing
distinctively punk clothes, and imagining a possible reorganization of the *banda*. One of
the young men vaguely refers to a time when the "*chavos*" (the "kids," in the sense also
used by contemporary punks) were more coherently united against "the system" and for
*autogestión*. He recalls, "When the shit came down, everyone would be there." If this was
to be recaptured, he speculates, "They won't be able to repress us."

One specifically punk practice of *autogestión* in the face of repression has been
the voluntary organization of *tocadas*. Minter's films show how, in the *Neza* of the

120

1980s, punks would book shows for friends (or friends of friends) in the scene. The show venues themselves, the so-called *hoyos fonqui* (funky holes), were sometimes violently policed in the 1980s. Despite changes in the late-1980s and '90s, when authorities sought to co-opt the energy of emerging youth culture and channeled money into the promotion of concerts and magazines (Zolov 1999, 254-255), practitioners of contemporary equivalents of the *hoyos fonqui* (houses, anarchist squats, and social centers) continued to invoke repression as a point of reference for anti-authoritarian identity.

Investment in state repression persists in the punk scene of the early twenty-first century, for example, in the low-income *colonias* of Xochimilco, a southern delegation of Mexico City, where punks organize *tocadas* that are explicitly promoted as spaces of *anarcoautonomista punk* (see Figure 14, below). The punks of Xochimilco, as elsewhere in the region, engage in mutual aid to relieve one another of the prohibitive costs. They share drum kits and other instruments, and prepare food to share with the *banda*. A July 2009 *tocada* for *Lucha Autonoma* (Autonomous Struggle), *Azquiados del Sistema* (Sickened by the System), and *Ingobernables* (Ungoverables), among other bands, was organized in the house of a family, with parents, grandparents, and young children in attendance. Attended as it was, the *tocada* was a space of youth culture only in a strictly performative sense: a space in which people converged to be recognizably youthful, which – in post-1968 Mexico City – demands intelligibly enacting a heroic confrontation with repression (author, fieldnotes, July 19, 2009, Xochimilco – Mexico City).

121

Figure 14: A *tocada* at a house in Xochimilco, July 19, 2009

The repression against which the *banda* is organized is typically imagined to have started in 1968, understood as the year of Tlatelolco. This periodization is distinctive in light of the very different penchant, among Anglo-Americans, to date punk to, at earliest, the early-1970s cultural scenes around the New York Dolls, The Stooges, or garage rock. The crucial point is that, while punks in the United States date the origins of their scene around music and cultural forms, punks in Mexico put politics at the heart of punk, even in the sense that Foucault (2008, 77) meant "heart" as "interior" or essence. Punks in central Mexico accordingly trace their development from 1968 because their antecedents encountered the repressive adversary of oppositional youth culture in that year (Detor Escobar and Hernández Sánchez 2011; Hernández 2011).

122

It was after 1968 that the conservative press would first print panicky headlines about an invasion of youth culture that was later specified as the rebelliousness of the *chavos banda* (Zolov 1999, 249-259). But in the service of genealogy, it should be noted that this process of fixing would-be *banda* within a grid of intelligibility that makes its relationship with the state recognizably antagonistic predated 1968 and also significantly exceeded the territorial boundaries of spaces with which the *banda* closely identifies. My discussions of *Ecatepunk* and *Neza* indicate that the repression-heroism narrative of punks and of student activists has become sedimented in punks' spaces of practice, even if not strictly through processes proper to those spaces.

For a final example that troubles the spatial-temporal certainties of post-68 *tribus urbanas*, one might consider a pre-1968 moral panic around another invasion, this time of the *jipis* (hippies). Beginning as early as 1962, Mexican *jipis* and young people from the United States carved a psychedelic pilgrimage route through Mexico City to Oaxaca in search of mushrooms and exotic, indigenous experience (Zolov 1999, 106-111). Conservative news agencies and government functionaries identified these young people as a threat in relation to which new forms of policing were necessary. By October 2, this would be the given in relation to which the Díaz Ordaz government could justify not only a violent police action but also the subsequent first erasure of the violence (see Pensado 2013, 209). That the pre-1968 elaboration of this given was a condition for post-1968 repression is obscured by punk rituals of anti-authoritarianism that reify a repressive adversary and the above-described post-1968 periodization in histories of youth culture.

A second genealogical sketch and theoretical discussion of 'true politics' will clarify this argument.

*The porros, the Halconazo, and the proper boundaries of the student*

In the 1950s and '60s, the PRI supported youth organizations, like *Confederación de Jovenes Mexicanos* (CJM, Confederation of Mexican Youth), through which it sought to recuperate students' discontent in a rapidly expanding tertiary education sector that would expand further under President Luis Echeverría (Carr 1992, 229). In the wake of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the sympathy of young activists in Mexico City's expanding universities was notably drawn away from the revolutionary nationalism of the PRI to the anti-imperialist revolutionary model offered by Che Guevara (Carey 2005, 13-16). In the government's *charrista* response to students' anti-imperialist positions during the Cold War, for example, at the IPN from the mid- to late-1950s, the various PRI-aligned organizations were increasingly discredited. Student activists in the universities of Mexico City, and also in Michoacán, Puebla, and Baja California, would abandon the PRI to mobilize with leftwing groups, some of which were supported or would later be co-opted by Mexico's major oppositional parties (Guevara Niebla 1978, 18). Some of the youth and student agitation of these years was not aligned with any particular opposition party, but the emerging activism was generally consistent in a challenge to government policy realized by actively linking student demands and analyses to claims made by particular groups of workers and peasants who – with reference to cases like that of

124

imprisoned railway worker Demetrio Vallejo – were perceived to be abandoned or criminalized by the PRI.

In the absence of effective PRI aligned youth organizations, the PRI financed and trained infiltrators or provocateurs, *porros*, as an instrument through which authorities might effectively rein in the disruptive potential of student activism that was challenging the limits of what youth engagement in politics previously meant. For Mexican youth studies scholar Rossana Reguillo (2013), *porros* have in the past and are now organized into "*grupos de choque*" (literally, "shock groups") that infiltrate social movements and generate violence that can be called upon to justify repression. This demands context. Historian Jaime Pensado (2013, 4) generally defines the *porro* phenomenon, *porrismo*, as "an extralegal tool of repression and conciliation by the government and rival political elites inside the secondary schoolas and universities [in the 'long sixties']." This is to say the *porros* were financed and would be deployed in relation to young university students' efforts to work through and break up a political framework that had previously organized their public life around unthreatening rituals of the emerging middle class. Focusing on this history of *porrismo*, Pensado (2013, 4) writes, "Its purpose was both to crush and to negotiate with what authorities in various positions of power saw throughout this confrontational era […] as the 'rise' of 'radical' student political forces."

A student activist in the 1980s, the academic and one time PRD affiliate Imanol Ordorika further clarifies the situation of *porros* with respect to Mexico City's public universities and student activists. Ordorika writes that *porros* have long been "promoted and employed by internal and external politicians in order to confront opposition groups

125

within the University [in his case, UNAM]" (2003, 378). This clarification is appropriately vague about the political affiliation of the authorities. In student-left discourses through which the second erasure is inscribed, these authorities are often too quickly assumed to naturally align with the PRI, in this sense overdrawing the coherence of a hegemonic project to which the state is aligned (Joseph and Nugent 1994).

The young people who continue to come together as *porros* at UNAM are often themselves students in UNAM secondary schools (e.g., branches of the *Colegio de Ciencias y Humanidades* or 'CCHs'), who have been prepared by authorities to present themselves as allies of the student left. For example, in the 1999 UNAM student strike, participants in the *Grupo Alfonso Peralta* named their *grupo de choque* after a former professor who had been involved in the *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre* and was killed by government agents during the Dirty War of the 1970s. That young people in the late-1990s would remember Peralta is surprising; he is reportedly remembered only by his "*viejos compañeros*" ("old comrades") (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013). The *grupo*'s use of the name to facilitate infiltration of student activism in 1999 therefore seems to suggest the existence of relationships between former *guerilleros* and university authorities.

Contemporary student activists frequently invoke additional characteristics to identify their *porro* adversaries. In their estimation, *porros* can be identified with fans of the university sports teams, specifically the *grupos porriles* (cheering squads) of American football teams (in e.g., Coordinadora Estudiantil Anarquista 2011). As student activists begin to rely more heavily on social media networks like Facebook to mobilize

their allies for demonstrations and marches, caricatures of the *porro* circulate online (see

Figure 15, below). If, as was the case in early weeks of #YoSoy132 activism in 2012

(author, fieldnotes, July 9, 2012, Coyoacán – Mexico City), a UNAM student activist

might arrive to an *asamblea* marking himself with a worn copy of Lenin's *The State and*

*Revolution* sticking from his jacket pocket, a *porro* would hover nearby wearing a jersey

for the football team.



Figure 15: A meme circulated through student activist social media networks on June 3, 2013, in support of the then ongoing occupation of UNAM administration offices. It reads, "Reject the violence and occupy the administration. He [current university *Rector* (or President), José Narro Robles] is protecting all of the *porros* of the UNAM."

In a June 2013 interview, student activist Citlalli Hernández notes that *porros* tend to share in the economic marginality of "*chavos banda*," with origins in "*condiciónes delicadas*" ("delicate conditions") by virtue of which they are presumably vulnerable to cooptation by authorities. Hernández speculated on the recruitment of would-be *porros*, suggesting that they might be invited to "*un reven*" (a big, indulgent party) where there will be free alcohol and drugs, "*lo que sea, gratis*" ("whatever, free"), and where they will thereby become indebted to benefactors who can later deploy them as *porros* to infiltrate and disrupt student activist groups (interview with the author, Citlalli Hernández, June 3, 2013).

Carlos Fuentes' short story "The Son of Andrés Aparicio" (1980) offers a vision of the marginality from which some young people have emerged as an ostensibly state-aligned enemy of the student activist. The story's main character, Bernabé hails from the working class *barrios* east of Mexico City. Textual evidence suggests that Bernabé is imagined to hail from Iztapalapa, which underwent rapid urbanization in the late-1970s, concurrent with the aforementioned population growth across the region. Bernabé is desperate after dropping out of school and then facing the challenges of informal work as a car window cleaner near UNAM (in the southern part of the city, on the major avenues running north-south, either Insugentes or Universidad). Fuentes is ambiguous about the cause of Bernabé's becoming an infiltrator, and he does not treat poverty as the ultimate motor of the narrative. But it is from out of economic desperation and for the promise of security against the routine vulnerabilities of everyday life that Bernabé is shown to join a *grupo de choque*. In the text, the *grupo* appears as a "brigade."

128

The Chief of the "hawk brigade" will deploy his young men to infiltrate a student

activist demonstration and call forth the heavy hand of the *granaderos*. In the following

passage, which I quote at length for what it reveals about young people's inhabitation of

student-left discourse, and as an exemplary statement that sustains it, Bernabé and fellow

*brigaderos* receive orders from their Chief. Fuentes (1980, 224) writes,

> All of you are to wear your white armbands and white cotton neck bands and have
> vinegar-soaked handkerchiefs ready to protect yourselves against the tear gas
> when the police arrive. When the demonstration is a block and a half from the
> Carlos IV statue, you who're on Héroes come down Rosales and attack from the
> rear. Shout, Viva Che Guevara! over and over, yell so loud that no one can doubt
> where your sentiments lie. Yell *Fascists* at the demonstrators. I repeat, *Fash-ists*.
> Get that straight, you must create total confusion, real pandemonium, and then lay
> into them, don't hold anything back, use your clubs and brass knuckles and yell
> anything you want, let yourselves go, boys, have a ball, those coming from the
> south will be yelling Viva Mao! but you send them flying, they won't give you
> any trouble, […] you're members of the Hawk Brigade and the moment's come to
> prove yourselves in the field my boys, in the street, […] break as many windows
> as you can, that stirs up a lot of resentment against the students, but the main thing
> is that when you overtake them you go at it heart and soul, have no mercy for the
> bastards, kick and punch and knee and you, just you two, ice picks for you and
> see what happens and if you put out the eye of some Red bastard so what, it will
> be a lesson to them and we'll protect you here, you know that, get that in your
> thick heads, you bastards, we'll protect you here, so do God's will and do it well
> and the street is yours, you, where were you born? and you, where are you from?
> Azcapolzalco? Balbuena? Xochimilco? Canal del Norte? Atlampa? the Transito
> district? Mártires de Tacubaya? Panteones? Well today, my Hawks, you get your
> own back, just think about that, today the street where you've been fucked good is
> yours and you'll have your chance to fuck them back and go scot-free, it's like the
> conquest of Mexico, the man who wins wins.

Here, Carlos Fuentes clearly alludes to the *halcones* (hawks) of the June 10, 1971

*Halconazo*, an event of post-1968 state repression that activists and sympathetic

commentators of the city's student left frequently invoke alongside Tlatelolco (see e.g.,

Espinosa Altamirano 1973). The annual June 10 march to commemorate fallen comrades

of the *Halconazo* is, like the October 2 march, a performance of student movement space.

129

But the absolute spaces to which participants make claims are different. The march begins in San Cosme, near the IPN, instead of in Tlatelolco, near the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*. But, as on October 2, the march arrives in the *Zócalo*. And, as on October 2 on June 10, a relatively predictable student activist repertoire is performed through disparate commemorative reactivations of the repression-heroism political framework. I suggest that these reactivations maintain boundaries of spaces proper to specific social identities.

At the conclusion of the 2013 march, some participants enacted the "*no se olvida*" ("it is not forgotten") of 1968 and 1971 through an explicit provocation of *granaderos* who had concentrated on the western edge of the *Zócalo*. The march had been peaceful and activists could reasonably understand this show of potential force as a provocation to violence. The veteran activists of *Comité 68* (the organizers of, and spokespeople for the march) kept their distance. They and their supporters clustered near the flag in the center of the plaza and repeated calls for unity through a megaphone in an effort to draw other participants in the march away from a seemingly inevitable violent confrontation with the *granaderos* (author, fieldnotes, June 10, 2013, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

The participants who had clustered near the flagpole in the *Zócalo* were especially concerned to draw the "*chavos encapuchados*" ("hooded" or "masked" youth) away from the *granaderos*. In months before, street battles with *granaderos* had become routine to the point of being expected. In the language of my analysis in the next chapter, members of *Comité 68* were seeking to draw the young prople from their participation in enacting a 'police state.' The anticipated performance was, however, already underway. The c*havos encapuchados* assembled quickly to throw construction materials and rocks at the

*granaderos* who, in turn, would brutally and arbitrarily target their response toward

onlookers. Positions in the performance of an inherited antagonism were already realized;

inertia had set in (author, fieldnotes, June 10, 2013, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

While adherents to the *Comité 68* shouted for unity from the flag in the *Zócalo*,

the journalists and photographers covering the march clearly found that, as an expression

of the commemoration of the 1971 *Halconazo*, this *enfrentamiento* at the edge of the

*Zócalo* was most deserving of their attention. The rally near the flag in the center of the

*Zócalo* was now of secondary importance. An organizer with *Comité 68* observed that the

journalists and photographers were in fact actively creating the "spectacle," encouraging

the *enfrentamiento* by taking photographs and documenting the performance (interview

with the author, Ana Ignacia Rodríguez, June 10, 2013). Other people clustered around

the organizers began to grumble about *porros*, clearly equating these *chavos* with

infiltrators (author, fieldnotes, June 10, 2013, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City), and reflecting

trends in popular commentary in which one profile proper to student movement space

slides into another: "*encapuchados/anarquistas/infiltrados/porros*" (Hernández 2013). *La

Jornada* reported that 23 people were arrested that day (Olivares Alonso 2013). Many of

the people detained had not been involved in confrontations with *granaderos*, but were

lingering near the *Zócalo* or in nearby streets. Student activists' efforts in the days after to

secure the freedom of detainees would unfortunately maintain a capacity draining "*baile

de putazos*" ("dance of blows") (Hernández 2013) in place of substantive attention to key

issues of the day (e.g., Peña Nieto's proposed anti-union *Reforma Educativa* [Education

Reform]).

The contemporary erasure of specific content (part of the second erasure) for the form of aggressive street protest complements a repertoire of commemorative practice through which the specificity of 1971 is written out of the past. Again, as in the case of the *dos de octubre* march, some participants in commemorative activity are drawing on the past to gain political traction in the present. But, in their work to gain footing in contemporary politics, many young people lose sight of the inconsistencies between 1968 and 1971, that the former was neither the point of departure for the development of the latter nor the expression of a specific, single world that student activists once did and must now necessarily continue to inhabit.

In the early years of his *sexenio* (six year term), President Luis Echeverría would shuttle back and forth between his liberal commitments (Echeverría regularly gestured to anti-imperialism; his brother-in-law was jailed during the railway workers' activism of the late-'50s) and, on the other hand, the expectations of an "old-guard" *Carrancista* PRI, which, with private sector support, sought "order" above all (Bartra 2002, 97-99; Walker 2013, 25-30). Echeverría granted amnesty for many of the political prisoners from 1968, and publicly promoted reconciliation with the former activists, but angered "conservative sectors" in government and business who continued to cast students, as would the Chief in Fuentes' short story, as Red bastards representing "*manos extrañas*" ("foreign hands") (Fuentes 1980, 224; Walker 2013, 27; see also Pensado 2013, 83-99).

For June 10, 1971, the *Comité Coordinador de Comités de Lucha* (Coordinating Committee of the Struggle Committees) had organized a march with representatives from Mexico City's secondary schools and universities in support of activists challenging the

composition of a governing body, the University Council at *Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León*. The conflict would be resolved on June 5, before the scheduled march, but the organizers decided to proceed as planned, with a convergence at the *Casco de Santo Tomás* before departing for the *Zócalo*. The language of signs and banners promoting the march after the planned objective of the march had changed would anticipate the conflation of 1968 and 1971: "'The student movement ended in Tlatelolco, but the movement in Nuevo León is just beginning,' said one" (Walker 2013, 28).

Soon after the march began, the *halcones* arrived. The *halcones* had initially been organized into a paramilitary group in 1968, and had been subsidized by the Mexico City government in the intervening years. They would infiltrate the June 10 march as a group of leftist demonstrators, shouting revolutionary slogans in an appeal to the stereotype of young people who abandoned middle class comforts for urban guerilla groups I described in Chapter One. It remains unknown who deployed the *halcones* on June 10. Despite Echeverría's efforts to distance his administration from the violence (he fired the mayor and the police chief after the massacre), the contemporary student left tends to lay blame on the former President. Also unknown is the number of deaths and injuries the *halcones* inflicted. Historians tend to estimate that they killed between thirty and fifty people (Delegación Gustavo A. Madero 2009; Walker 2013, 29). But if these specifics are unknown, for the student left, the meaning of the June 10 demonstration and repression is uncontroversial. With hindsight, journalist Arturo Cano (2002) accordingly writes in *La Jornada*, "The marchers were animated by the idea of retaking the street and reactivating the spirit of 1968."

All of the foregoing on the June 10, 1971 *Halconazo* is a background for Fuentes'

story. Beyond being a historical-fictional representation of the post-Tlatelolco student-

state antagonism as it found expression on June 10, Fuentes' short story about Bernabé

and his experience as a member of the hawk brigade effectively presents the *porro* as a

figure against which both authorities and also activists define the student. Fuentes writes

the Chief of the brigade as a representative of the role of authorities in this policing. The

Chief calls upon "[his] hawks" to "get [their] own back" from the students (Fuentes 1980,

224). In his orders, the hawk brigade's brutality towards students is justified by reference

to the relative poverty of *chavos banda*. The Chief later underscores this point.

> The students are spoiled young shits who one day will be landlords and pen-
> pushers and quacks like their papas but you're going to get even, you're going to
> give blow for blow […] the police will recognize you by your white neck bands
> and armbands, they'll act like they're attacking you, play along with them, they'll
> pretend to shove a few of you in the Black Maria [police van], but it's all a fake to
> put off the press because it's important that tomorrow's papers report a clash
> among leftist students, subversive disturbance right in the heart of the city, the
> Communist conspiracy rears its ugly head, off with its head! save the republic
> from anarchy, and you, my hawks, just remember that others may be repressed
> but not you, no way (Fuentes 1980, 225).

Here, the students (read: student activists) are cast as bourgeois social climbers who are

out of touch with the lives of young people in *condiciónes delicadas*, who these students

will later exploit when they leave social justice activism behind for the privileges of

middle class Mexico City. The Chief naturalizes class divisions that privilege students at

the expense of the *chavos banda*, and obscures how student activists in fact sought to

establish linkages with workers and peasants; he reinscribes a reductive antagonism

between students and the state. In place of the historically contingent alliance between

these leftwing students and groups criminalized and tortured during the PRI's Dirty War,

the Chief offers his *halcones* certain victory over a readymade antagonist proper to a Tlatelolco-centric narrative of Mexican history. Echoing Octavio Paz (1985, 65-88; 1970, 123) on his history of domination by *chingónes* of those who are *chingado*,[8] the Chief of the hawk brigade reactivates an antagonism that is, in his own words, as old as Mexico. "Today the street where you've been fucked good is yours and you'll have your chance to fuck them back and go scot-free, it's like the conquest of Mexico, the man who wins wins" (Fuentes 1980, 224).

The passage from Fuentes' short story also hints at the context of uneven development that fosters the authorities' naturalization of a distinction between students and would-be *porros*. The Chief lists working class neighborhoods and migrant settlements from which members of the hawk brigade presumably originate, and in doing so, confirms the marginality of his hawks, and the *porros* more generally, a marginality ensured by a government that, in the late-1970s and early-'80s, arguably saw "economic growth, not increased economic equality, […] as political stability's most critical partner" (Levy and Székely 1983, 37).

For all that this passage captures of the imagined profile of *porros*, however, it obscures the fact that many of the young people recruited to infiltrate student activism are themselves enrolled in school, and, in that most basic sense, students. The members of the hawk brigade may not be "Red bastard" student activists, but many of them were and are in fact enrolled in school. It is therefore important that Fuentes' Chief categorically invokes 'student' as if that category self-evidently corresponds to a social group in which

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[8] Morton (2011, 155) similarly observes that the stories in *Burnt Water* eschew any break from cycles of domination or being dominated. Each explores a particular experience of *chingar*.

his would-be *porros* do not belong, perhaps because, unlike the working class *barrios*

listed in his orders to the brigade, and despite the student left's promotion of proletarian

identity in the 1970s, university space still overlapped with middle class space. A neglect

of the category's insufficiency is repeated in other portrayals of *porros* as non-students.

The neglect of the category's insufficiency has a history.

A cartoon in the July 29, 1968 edition of the newspaper *El Universal* shows two

young men hiding behind a shield on which is displayed the image of a responsible

student with books under his arm. The hiding men are bearded, with sinister grins. In

stark contrast, their cover on the shield, the student, is conservatively dressed in collared

shirt and a sweater. The student appears unthreatening, and interested only in his studies.

Behind the shield, the young men hide stacks of paper labeled "propaganda," which is

identified with the "Communist conspiracy" of Fuentes' Chief by a hammer and sickle.

The young men wear shirts that identify them as "*agitador profesional*" ("professional

agitator") and "*vendepatrias*" ("traitor"). The message of the cartoon for readers in 1968

is clear: the young people in the streets are not in fact students. They may not even be

Mexican (here an echo of the Cold War discourse that ran through commentary on "the

student problem" of the 1950s and early 1960s [Pensado 2013, 83-99]). These are not the

middle class youth on which our continued economic growth and political stability

depend. They are not our future leaders who can properly make claims to the *Ciudad*

*Universitaria* as "neutral space of progress" (Pensado 2013, 35). They are outsiders,

traitors, and these "*pseudo-estudiantes*" (a formulation echoed today: Viale Toledo 2013)

therefore have no right to make claims on the future of our country.

136

A similar policing of boundaries can be found in official government statements that charged the whole of UNAM with "Communist subversion" (Levy 1980, 30), and which arguably prepared the ground for the army's occupation of the *Ciudad Universitaria* on September 18, 1968. More than four decades later, a similar conflation of universities with radicalism was enacted on May 11, 2012, when the campaign team of the PRI's then-candidate for the presidency Enrique Peña Nieto sought to invalidate the dissent of student activists at the private *Universidad Iberoamericana*, outside Mexico City in Santa Fe. The campaign team dismissed suggestions that they might worry about what this meant for a candidate who had, to that point, polled well with young voters. The team declared the protestors at the Peña Nieto event "*porros*" in the pay of an opposition party (Estrello and Modonesi 2012, 221), outside agitators. Clearly, then, opponents of the student left have in the past and still today continue to invoke *porros* to discredit students as non-students.

Self-identified student activists also invoke the figure of the *porro*, but with very different intentions. Spokespeople for the student left may accuse certain people of being *porros* in order to distance themselves and their allies from the behavior with which they disagree. The *porro* was once identified specifically with the PRI. For example, activist-videographers in 1968 were targeted not only by *granaderos* because they were presumed to be members of the movement; they were also simultaneously objects of scrutiny for activists who suspected them of being PRI-aligned (Mraz 2009, 202). In the four decades since 1968, however, the student left has dissolved the specificity of the PRI into a more generalized adversary, with which student activists might identify members of university

137

administration (e.g., former Rector of the *Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México* Esther Orozco) or politicians from opposition parties (e.g., former President Felipe Calderón of the PAN, or PRD Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Ángel Mancera). To ensure that people invest contemporary politics with the correct anti-PRI sentiments, activists sometimes brand their adversaries with the PRI's tri-color (see Figure 16, below).



Figure 16: Flyer circulated through social media on June 12, after the June 10, 2013 arrests

Today, young people whose tactics or analyses differ from those being promoted by a given spokesperson for the student movement risk being labeled *porros*. Student activists use '*porro*' to invalidate the practices or statements of anyone against whom they position themselves. For example, an UNAM professor in the *Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales*, whose collaboration with young activists in Mexico City is beyond question,[9] reported being declared a *porro* simply for having expressed skepticism towards an April-May 2013 *toma de rectoría* (occupation of an UNAM administration building) (personal communication, Benjamin Arditi, June 18, 2013). In this, student activists, like the authorities that student activists count as their enemy, invoke *porros* to police the boundaries of what is properly political behavior for students, or more generally the boundaries of what is proper to the enactment of the post-Tlatelolco political framework. Put differently, and to anticipate my analysis of the state in Chapter Three, the *porro* has a well-defined place in their shared "dividing-up of the world" (Rancière 2010, 36).

In the face of what, after Tlatelolco, appears to be a predictable encounter with the repressive state, what is at stake in, as Foucault (2008, 3) puts it, supposing that universals do not exist? What does suspension of naturalized boundaries between figures of the partitioned world allow one to think, say, and do as politics? Where historicism (after Hegel) starts from universals ("the sovereign, sovereignty, the people, subjects, the state, and civil society"), and then reads the movement of history as the ever more fully

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[9] As evidence of the accused professor Benjamin Arditi's commitment to collaborating with young activists, see the *Politica Viral* (Viral Politics) project, pursued in collaboration with youth studies scholar Rossana Reguillo and social movement studies scholar Guiomar Rovira Sancho.

realized development of a social formation from its internal essence, genealogy suspends any "grid of intelligibility" that fixes these objects as the givens for an analysis of politics (Foucault 2008, 2-3). Genealogy makes the certainties of the partitioned world of politics more fragile, and reads the emergence of a singularity (here, the student activist who is not enrolled in school) as an effect of multiple determining elements. That is, genealogy restores heterogeneity to what appeared to be the history of an antagonism "within the homogenous" (Foucault 2008, 42).

For Foucault (2008, 42), genealogy establishes "possible connections between disparate terms which remain disparate." It therefore may exact changes in possibilities for thought and action. In this dissertation, genealogy specifically intervenes in a relay between an archive of state violence and a repertoire of young people's politics *qua* student activism. It reveals how ostensibly political practices are intertwined with but may also sometimes be "squeezed through the pores" (Katz 1996, 489) of a political framework that effectuates closure around specific practices that count as politics. The final two sections of this chapter unpack these formulations, first through a critique of one contemporary effort to universalize politics (for Alain Badiou, as a true politics, in resistance to the State), and second through a conclusion on geographies of resistance related to the state.

On the pursuit of 'true politics' at a distance from the state

My remit in sketching genealogies of the non-student student has been to reveal how each singular example complicates facile attempts to either embrace or write-off the

140

non-student student as a political actor. This move implicitly challenges the pursuit of true politics, or universalization of politics alongside but defined in opposition to the state. In this second section, I critique Alain Badiou (and historian Fabio Lanza's recent book on the non-student 'student' in Beijing) to demonstrate specifically how my work challenges a will to universalize anti-state politics.

In *Behind the Gate: Inventing Students in Beijing*, Fabio Lanza (2010) examines a mode of politics that was inaugurated by the May Fourth movement of 1919. Lanza traces two processes that overlap but do not completely converge: first, the politicization of students, and second, the invention of a political category (student) that activists since May Fourth have invoked to identify individuals with a particular brand of political action. Lanza argues that, through a wave of activism in "the May Fourth years" (1919-1923), students experimented with their classification as students to the effect of practicing politics. That is, through experiments in declassification – through " a specific political struggle that was located precisely around the definition of 'student'," students of the May Fourth years achieved distance from the State (capitalized in the original), and thereby came to practice politics (Lanza 2010, 5).

Lanza's postulation of an identity between politics and distance from the State reveals his debt to Alain Badiou. In *Being and Event* (Badiou 2005b), Badiou elaborates his ontology for a world of infinite multiplicity and indeterminacy. In this world, nothing is certain, but something (in principle, anything) can nonetheless be made to count. Out of the void of not-one, or what Badiou describes as "inconsistency," something is made to "consist" when it is spoken of and counted as "one" (Badiou 2005b, 52-59), when it is

made to count-as-one. This structure of the count-as-one is proper to any local situation, and is an obstacle to local instances of politics. Within this world of inconsistency, made to consist and be counted as one – a specific, single world, Badiou uses the name politics for a break from routines of political representation wherein any specific "one" (e.g., the student movement) can pretend to advance the interests of others.

To count as a one is to become a point of organization for the social world and social classification. Multiplicity is made to cohere, and becomes intelligible, around this point. Counting therefore tends towards statism; it statifies, which is to say it facilitates the consolidation of reactionary interests. Politics, on the other hand, subtracts itself from a statified/counted social world; for Badiou, that is, a political procedure is a withdrawal from the State, a procedure for putting the State at a distance. The egalitarian logic of politics (after Jacques Rancière) can be realized only when statist classifications of the count-as-one structure are exposed. Politics does not recast social bonds; rather, it unbinds them so as to create an opening for as yet unaccounted for political prescriptions.

Left here, Badiou's (and, by extension, Lanza's) treatment of politics will appear to complement the arguments in this dissertation. Badiou and Lanza examine politics as the active disruption of classificatory orders, and I similarly present instances of politics as disruptions of social-spatial orders (police configurations) that fix people, things, and activities in their proper places. An instance of politics is an aesthetic reconfiguration of the world that makes objects, subjects, or issues intelligible as questions, open to dispute and not given. I suggest that the givens of a police order – its "sensible evidences," in Jacques Rancière's terms (Dikeç 2007, 18-19) – encourage commentators and activists

142

alike to mistake predictable rituals of protest and representation for politics when they are instead confirmations of police order. These givens are, in Rancière's terms, conditions for the social reproduction of a world shot through with objectionable wrongs (Rancière 1995).[10] On its face, then, I share with Badiou and Lanza a notion of politics as disruption of a classificatory order.

But if our theorizations initially appear to rhyme, a distinction should nonetheless also be apparent. Whereas, for Badiou, politics is an absolute break from the State, or a self-authorized singular non-relation to the State (Badiou 2005a, 23), for me, as for Rancière (2009), a politics is intertwined with matters of the police: "politics encroaches on matters of the police and the police on matters of politics" (Rancière 2009, 287-288). It is important to note that my disagreement with Badiou's theorization of politics rests in large part on my disagreement with his assumptions about the state (and, for Badiou, "the State"). Some brief discussion of these assumptions is necessary.

Badiou uses the term state to refer to one of two things. First, the lowercase-s "state" refers to the ontological "state of the situation," a metastructure in which the one that counts as one is included or made to count (Badiou 2005b, 93-103). Second, there is the capital-s "State," which Badiou uses only when discussing depoliticized rituals of politicking synonymous with parliamentary and capitalist configurations, e.g., "the non-thinking politics of no alternative" (Badiou 2005a, 8). For Badiou, the power of this latter State is immeasurable in the absence of a singular rupture of the consensus (i.e., in absence of true politics); the excess of the power of the State with respect to individuals

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[10] I verify the coherence of this conceptualization in the next chapter, in my analysis of student activists' social reproduction of the state.

is not measurable (Badiou 2005a, 144). For Badiou (2005, 125), the practitioners of true politics expose the classificatory order of the State to inspection, open it to measure, and thereby "summon" the power of the State, revealing its repressive essence.

In the state of the situation, the certainties of the State are opaque, and, absent a singular political disruption, the bonds of ritualized politicking are naturalized and beyond question. But instances of "true politics" undermine "the illusion of the bond" (Badiou 2005a, 77); singular realizations of a self-authorized non-relation with the State will put the State at a distance. These instances of rupture find their end when their capacities are exhausted, punctuated by the State's repressive response. According to Badiou (2005a, 213-215), the destruction of an enslaving bond, which is inscribed in state categories through which one is counted, will call upon the State's "consequent need for repression and reordering." As a rule, then, the State will reveal itself to practitioners of true politics and, in the face of being distanced, will reestablish a proper boundary for the political through repression. The world of true politics is haunted by this repression.

Fabio Lanza's analysis of the May Fourth Years is quite reasonable in light of his subscription to Badiou's theorization of politics as a distancing of the State. Accepting a world of infinite multiplicity and indeterminacy, in which nothing is certain except perhaps the repressive response of the State to politics, Lanza appropriately cautions that neither the process of the politicization of students nor the process through which the student is invented as a political category or identitarian sign can be examined upon the assumption, in advance, of students' position in relation to the State. Students are not "always already there," fixed in a preestablished or natural political location (Lanza 2010,

115). Their location vis-à-vis the State is constructed. Lanza (2010, 48) claims that, if one intends to invest student activism with any political meaning, one must begin with the specific practices and associational forms that particular students have taken as "the basis from which to propose a wider re-definition of student life." Put differently, for Lanza, the application of theory is not enough. I agree.

Problems arise, however, when Lanza forces the historically and geographically specific practices and associational forms of early twentieth century Chinese students into Badiou's understanding of the relationship between politics and the State. Only by virtue of Lanza's adoption of Badiou's incongruous certainty about true politics does it make sense that, when the May Fourth students made evident an errant classificatory order and thereby challenged habits of identification proper to the state of the situation, they would have summoned the State. Lanza accordingly has it that the May Fourth students called forth a repression that would again rigidly delimit the student and impose strict distinctions between activities appropriate to apolitical students and those that would be "dealt with according to the law" (Lanza 2010, 142).

Despite Lanza's use of Badiou's heuristic, the case exceeds the model. Lanza at times presents the State not only as repressive but also as absorptive or retentive. For example, readers find that, when the May Fourth activism intensified, experiments with declassification elicited repression that would generate widespread sympathy for the student activists among non-students, and, despite the multiplication of student activism and the reordering it summoned, the State's repression alone apparently did not dissolve the students' political action. Indeed, Lanza's account suggests that the activism of the

145

May Fourth years exhausted itself by an overextension that opened it reabsorption through state sociology (see echoes of this in Badiou 2005a, 77). Upon reabsorption, the students' activism would continue only under the auspices of emerging communitarian ties – social ties, tending towards a State-inscribed "bond" – that ensured the eventual renaturalization of the classificatory order previously destabilized. The practitioners of would-be May Fourth activism would come to inhabit emerging categories of state sociology to the effect of being "separated from their 'student' origin" (Lanza 2010, 198), reifying the certainties of the social world.

Lanza continues that, "while students did not disappear entirely from the political scene [after the May Fourth years], their activism became increasingly limited to what was 'proper' to the newly settled category of 'students'" (Lanza 2010, 198). True politics was dissolved into ritualized politicking. If a politically proper position had been held out to students but actively refused, this changed with reabsorption. When student activists retreated from the space for politics that they had opened up through the repertoire of the May Fouth years, it was into this "apolitical" (read: depoliticized) position that they were reabsorbed (Lanza 2010, 126-136).

Towards showing how the non-student student's politics was a "rupture with what is" (i.e., 'resistance') (Badiou 2005a, 7), Lanza helpfully suspends the certainties of state sociology as per the student, even if he simultaneously assumes a repressive response of the capital-s "State." Lanza's move to suspend the certainties of the figure of the student is fundamental for the analysis, and it corresponds with my move, in this chapter, to sketch genealogies that denaturalize the unified trajectory of post-1968 student activism

146

within which practitioners of contemporary youth politics in Mexico City are often presumed to operate. A methodological note of Lanza's could stand in for my analysis of the student movement in post-1968 Mexico City. Lanza writes, "while the influential presence of political active students […] throughout the twentieth century has been widely studied, the confines and very existence of the category of 'students' have been largely taken for granted" (Lanza 2010, 4). And indeed, far from taking the category for granted, Lanza faithfully examines processes through which it has been invented and resignified. He models a methodology to examine what a specific mode of politics may mean to its practitioners.

But one might well ask whether Lanza takes not students but the State for granted. When Lanza looks "behind the gate," as per his book title, does he not reinscribe a fraught distinction between state and society and therefore accept what Timothy Mitchell (1991) calls "ghost-like effect" of the State? In his widely-cited paper, Mitchell's claim was that, in statist social science, "the state appears to stand apart from society in the unproblematic way in which intentions or ideas are thought to stand apart from the external world to which they refer" (Mitchell 1991, 82). It would certainly be too strong to call Lanza's analysis statist. It is not, at least not in the sense Mitchell means when he writes of studies in which the state becomes a "disembodied ideality" set apart from society, and not co-constituted through it (Mitchell 1991, 86). Lanza does not figure the State as the independent cause of student politics. But, equally, Lanza does not help us think how student activism, or other forms of self-consciously non- or anti-state politics, may have the effect of making an autonomous State appear to exist, partitioning the

147

world in a way that ensures the State is given to the senses. My question, of how central

Mexico's punks came to assume they share the post-1968 student movement's history of

domination by a repressive state, is foreign to Lanza's analysis.

Badiou's and, by extension, Lanza's is the pursuit of a pure or true politics that is

outside and against, or standing in resistance to the State. This attempt to universalize

politics unfortunately tends to obscure from view how would-be practitioners of politics

may enact a repertoire of activism that reinscribes the givens of a police order, including

the State. That is, the attempt to universalize politics vis-à-vis the State obscures and in

fact participates in naturalizing practitioners' predictable rituals of protest and

representation, mistaken for politics when they are in fact conditions for the reproduction

of a social world shot through with objectionable wrongs. I agree with Dikeç (2007, 19)

when he argues, following Rancière, that, "the essence of the police is not repression but

*distribution* – distribution of places, people, names, functions, authorities, activities, and

so on – and the normalization of this distribution." The reinscription of the state-civil

society distinction in Badiou's and Lanza's theorization of true politics stands in the way

of accounting for this distribution. The structure of the count-as-one, and the dynamic

through which politics finds its expression through a distancing of the State, makes the

State's repressive response a given, or, as Dikeç put it, an "essence."

Genealogy prepares the ground for attention to distribution or partitioning of the

social-spatial order that makes the world of politics actionable. The work of distribution

is illustrated in my genealogical sketch of the *porro*, for example, in my discussion of the

policing that is effected by both student activists and also the authorities ostensibly

148

positioned against them. The dividing up of the world, according to which politics would be intelligible only as an antagonism between activists and the State (with respect to which student activists assume *porros* are natural allies), is disrupted. I show that, where student activists invoke *porros* in order to establish and maintain the boundaries around a repertoire of tactics and analyses proper to the student movement, government agents and journalists sympathetic to the government have labeled student activists as *porros* in order to invalidate the activists' identification of a wrong. The *porros* are not there in advance. The *porros'* existence in distinction from student activists is a naturalized effect of dispersed practices, multiple determining elements that exceed the space of the protest, or the activist meeting, and so on, in which these *chavos* are intelligible only as infiltrators.

Analysis of young people's politics through attention to the distribution of objects and subjects proper to a commonsense world of politics is also facilitated by my genealogy of the punks. I suggest that self-identified punks enact their anti-authoritarian identity to the effect of representing and reproducing a repressive state in cultural forms (music, art, norms of comportment) that make their adversary available for reactivation in student movement space. I suggested that the heterogeneity of spaces of practice in which multiple trajectories converged, and the variety of young people's connections to the outsides of punk, is often written out of the punks' world of politics so as to make it intelligible and practicable for punk anti-authoritarianism. My account of this active overcoding in central Mexico's punk scene calls for caution against dogmatic adherence to a vision of the state (or the State) as invariably repressive. More generally, it disrupts a

149

commonsense treatment of the state/State as 'a thing,' an irreducible and preestablished entity to be understood apart from a separate sphere of people (read: 'civil society') who might come to practice politics in the name of resistance. My analysis in the next chapter, of a state as naturalized in student activist practice, shows that the state is not foreign to a theory of the distribution or partitioning (*partage*) of the sensible (Rancière 2010). Rather, accounting for the efficacy of the state in politics requires attention to the statism of people who may not act in the name of the state but who lend the state its coherence by identifying themselves in opposition to it.

Conclusion

More than a decade ago, Mitch Rose (2002) argued that geographical scholarship on resistance tends to represent dominant systems as if they have an original stability to which the subject of resistance must respond. Rose (2002, 384) argued that, by treating resistance as a response, analysts posit domination as a "pre-established force" that is "self-present and operative" and which practitioners of resistance are, in a sense, outside. Scholars of resistance were seen to rely on a structuralist understanding of power, an understanding of power "modeled on the commodity" (Foucault 1980, 89; see also Allen 2004) according to which power is possessed by some and therefore our of others' reach. More recently, Arun Saldanha (2008, 2093) observed that this structuralist understanding of power also informs interdisciplinary literature on spatial differentiation, which posits "an underlying binary structure to change." Again, the subject of resistance is locked in an asymmetrical but necessary relationship with the presumed system of domination; the

150

subject of resistance is self-evidently marginalized from and positioned against a system supported by or otherwise reflecting the interests of social groups that hold power. While geographers of resistance may present their work as a challenge to hegemonic space, the understanding of space and power upon which they pursue their analyses therefore tends to be politically problematic. Resistance becomes imaginable only for practitioners of a space that is organized in advance by power-holders. Practitioners of resistance must therefore heroically resist a system that has been structured through ordering processes from which they are excluded (Crane 2012, 354; Spinney 2010). Put differently, analysts cast resistance as the counterpart to dominant codings of space, and, because they conceive its subject as an effect of the State (as per Alain Badiou) or of "the City" (as per Michel de Certeau), they thereby rob politics *qua* resistance of its potential to effect change.

It may at first seem that Alain Badiou offers something distinct from this logic of resistance. Richard Day (2005, 80-90) might suggest as much, by casting what Badiou calls true politics as a "politics of the act." A politics of the act moves beyond the limits of a "politics of demand." Accordingly to the logic of the latter, liberal activists would strive to "compel/persuade state and corporate apparatuses and other social structures to give 'us' (a little more of) what 'we' think we need" (Day 2005, 80). This does not challenge routines of political representation according to which activists presume one is capable of advancing the interests of others (we can follow Badiou in this critique).

A politics of demand is wedded to the certainties of recognition. For Day (2005, 80), it is politics "oriented to improving existing institutions and everyday experiences by

appealing to the benevolence of hegemonic forces and/or by altering the relations between these forces." By contrast, a "politics of the act" subtracts itself from the liberal "feedback loop" of the recognition paradigm, according to which activists would submit their demands to, and thereby perpetuate, structures of domination and exploitation (Day 2005, 88; cf. Buccellato 2012). Day's notion of subtraction in a "politics of the act" is the distancing that Badiou writes into his theorization of true politics. Badiou's true politics is similarly oriented towards undermining the formal boundaries of representation. Badiou (2005a, 7) accordingly writes, "all resistance is a rupture with what is. And every rupture begins, for those engaged in it, through a rupture with oneself." That is, true politics will break with the count-as-one of the "state of the situation" (Badiou 2005b, 93-103); practitioners of true politics refuse the categories of political rituals, and thereby open themselves to something unaccountable.

Perhaps somewhat counter-intuitively, however, I would argue that the notion of a true politics that withdraws from the State but which summons its repressive response is depoliticizing. The problem is, as Timothy Mitchell (1991, 89) puts it, an "assumption that [the State] is a distinct entity, opposed to and set apart from a larger entity called society." This larger entity, society, may initially appear irrelevant here. After all, within the limits of Badiou's ontology, true politics is a singular "subtraction" from the social world. The social is a fiction of the state of the situation. But recall that true politics finds its end in a Thermidorean, counter-revolutionary, space of termination characterized by practitioners' reencounter with State repression (Badiou 2005a, 127). The social world cannot be wished away. The absorptive function of society, in this analysis, is reflected in

152

Lanza's account of the end of the May Fourth years. The universalization of true politics is premised on a move to "fix the elusive boundary between the political system or state and society" (Mitchell 1991, 89). The social world from which true politics subtracts itself is separate from and subjected to the State's exertion of power (Barker 2005, xvi), but it is out there all along. Put differently, Badiou and, by extension, Lanza implicitly shore up the State against which an instance of true politics would be targeted, and simultaneously credit it "from the outset with the status of the hegemon" (Gill et al. 2012, 512).

These pitfalls of resistance studies carry lessons for analysis of young people's politics in Mexico City. If one were to adopt a theorization of politics *qua* resistance for the analysis of post-1968 Mexico City, one would reify the boundary between state and civil society and therefore likely obscure the disparity of trajectories that would elude a reduction of young people's politics to student activism. That is, one would overcode the heterogeneous practices of young people in Mexico City by treating them as the most fully realized stage in a development of student activism that descends from Tlatelolco.

My reading of Badiou and Lanza is instructive here. Despite their gesture to singularity and the local instance, true politics ironically provides rigid coordinates for non-statist politics. The concept is insufficiently flexible to facilitate analysis of how politics is, in Rancière's terms, "intertwined" with matters of the police, or how practices that activists tacitly accept as politics might in fact effect a consolidation of partitioned spaces in a police order. The genealogical work I pursued in this chapter models a politically important move to suspend the universality of the State and true politics (and,

153

e.g., the movement, the people, etc.), and it thereby lays the ground for examination of procedures by which people actively construct a historically and geographically police order. This chapter's account of young people's politics in post-1968 Mexico City breaks from the reductive appeal to a timeless struggle between molar aggregates (repressive state, and heroic students) that can be traced back to Tlatelolco. The following chapter will extend this line of argument to reveal a generalized state of police in which the student left socially reproduces a 'police state' through rituals and representations of anti-state protest.

Chapter Three: Student activism and the 'police state' in Mexico City after 1968

"[The police is] another name for the symbolic constitution of the social: the social as made up of groups with specific, identifiable ways of operating – 'profiles' – [that are] assigned directly, quasi-naturally, to the places where those occupations are performed" (Ross 2002, 23).

Introduction

Contemporary filmmaker, Carlos Bolado is a former student of UNAM's *Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos* (University Center for Film Studies, CUEC). In 1968, students in Bolado's alma mater worked to challenge the government-aligned media in the months before Mexico City hosted the Olympics (Rodríguez Cruz 2000, 45). After July, when what would be recognized as the student movement became visible as such, CUEC students set themselves to creating newsreels that were explicitly intended to counter the "officialist" media. Historian John Mraz (2009, 202) clarifies this orientation:

> The moving footage often appears to limit itself to simply presenting events […]. However, the edition [sic] of still photographs and the soundtrack are a searing indictment of the army and police, as well as the president and the ruling class, for their role in the repression.

If CUEC films were targeted at the state, by opposing state-aligned media's accounts with coherent representations of unmitigated repression (Vázquez Mantecón 2006, 38), I would argue that the student filmmakers contributed to establishing a 'police state.' In the wake of 1968, such oppositional representations of state power secured the categories of

a social-spatial order through which young people's practices would become identified as student activism, set against the ghost of state repression, and, in that sense, policed.

A more recent alumnus, Carlos Bolado maintains the late-1960s CUEC students' oppositional orientation towards the state. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, Bolado has been a dedicated thorn in the side of the PRI. He directed the critically acclaimed 2012 film *Colosio: El asesinato*, which reconstructs circumstances around the March 1994 murder of one time PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio, who, before his death, had publicly announced his intent to enact democratic reforms if elected. Against the PRI regime's story that that shooter acted alone, without training, Bolado's 2012 film suggests that Colosio's murder was organized at the highest levels of a PRI-led government. Significantly, the film was released in June 2012, only weeks before a presidential election in which the PRI, brandishing a reformed look, threatened to displace the *Partido Acción Nacional* after 12 years in power. A moviegoer quoted by a journalist (Villagran 2012) reportedly asked, as the film ended, "After seeing this movie, who can vote for the PRI?" It is easy to imagine that Bolado intended his film to provoke precisely such questions. In July, PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto did in fact win the presidency, but in a hotly contested election that many commentators still see as fraudulent.

Late 2012 saw the release of Carlos Bolado's *Tlatelolco: Verano de 68*, another historical film critical of the PRI. By that time, young people had been in the streets for months, organized under the sign of #YoSoy132 for marches, encampments, and demonstrations against the *imposición* (imposition) of Enrique Peña Nieto and the return

of the PRI to the presidency. Amidst #YoSoy132 activism, Bolado asserted "a certain

continuity" between contemporary student activists and those of 1968 (Vértiz de la

Fuente 2012, 83). For readers of Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 89), this assertion begs the

question of how his filmmaking practice may sustain categories available for enactment

in practice (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 530 n. 39). It would appear, from his assertion of

continuity between #YoSoy132 and 1968, that Bolado's 2013 film *Tlatelolco* is likely to

sustain the certainties of an inherited narrative. One might reasonably assume that Bolado

will reassert historiographical and political closures, and thereby delimit possibilities for

future action, with young people's politics forced into recognizable student activism. But,

in relation to the repression-heroism political framework, Bolado's *Tlatelolco* can at first

be read to expand what counts as politics after 1968.

Bolado's *Tlatelolco* focuses as much on the taken for granted content of Mexico

City's 1968 as on a love story between two students of distinct social backgrounds. Most

of the action orbits around two primary characters: one a young man of working class

origin who lives in a modest apartment with his brother and is enrolled at UNAM, and

the other a young woman from a posh neighborhood, raised by servants, who is enrolled

at the private *Universidad Iberoamericana* (hereafter, *Ibero*), where, as it happens, the

post-electoral hashtag activism of #YoSoy132 would emerge in 2012.[11] The love story is

set amidst preparations for Mexico City's 1968 Olympics, the first to be hosted by what

was still then cast as a developing country. A carefully assembled historical film,

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[11] This is coincidental. The film was completed before May 11, 2012, which marks the beginning
of #YoSoy132. But the coincidence was not lost on viewers. When I saw the film in Mexico City
on May 8, 2013, the audience audibly registered that the wealthy student was at the "*Ibero*."

Bolado's *Tlatelolco* is replete with icons of the year. The landscape is marked by colorful

banners, adorned with the omnipresent white dove of peace and the distinctly modernist

concentric lettering of Lance Wyman's MEXICO68. The symbolic importance of the

1968 Olympics is palpable. Bolado clearly appreciates that, as historian Eric Zolov

(2004, 160) puts it, "nothing less than the reputation of the 'Mexican Miracle' itself was

at stake in the successful staging of the Games."

The father of the young student from *Ibero* is a government functionary who, in

the film, orders the brutal torture of activists cast as communists. The father is obsessed

with order; he is, in Roger Barta's terms, part of the "*Carrancista*" reactionary rightwing

of the PRI (Bartra 2002, 97-99). In some cases, the tortured activists are new friends of

his daughter, who takes up photography and is fascinated by an object that, for her, is just

now coming into view: the students and their rejection of subservience to authority. The

daughter is shown repeatedly leaving her home to explore the city and take pictures of

student activists who refused to glorify a government increasingly intolerant of dissent.

But away from the streets, the domestic conflict between father and daughter drives much

of the plot. As in Felipe Cazals' 1975 film *Canoa*, which presents reactionary paranoia

about student radicalism as located not only in the state but also in wider geographies of

constituted power (especially the Catholic church), in *Tlatelolco*, the viewer is offered a

decentered view of state power as an effect of embodied geographies of bureaucracy,

administration, and patriarchy (Coleman 2008; Mountz 2004; Painter 2006). The brutality

of torture suffered by the communist students appears as an effect, at least in part, of a

conflict in upper class domestic space. For much of the film, repression is not presented

158

as the essence of the Mexican state so much as a multiply determined effect of dispersed practices (Foucault 2000a, 226-229).

Finally, however, *Tlatelolco* orbits around a repressive essence of the state, and gives it a face, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz: the evil above all evil. In the second half of the film, Bolado overcodes his messy embodied geographies of state power with this face of repression. He provides a caricature of the President, with the exaggerated overbite often emphasized by activist artists in the late 1960s and 1970s. In this, Bolado clearly takes on the tropes of activist art from those decades. The images and script of the 2012 film are run through a grid of intelligibility made available through previous representations of 1968 as Tlatelolco. For example, one scene has Díaz Ordaz explicitly order the violent repression of activists from tee time on a Mexico City golf course. Bolado also gives Díaz Ordaz the last word. *Tlatelolco* concludes with the president's famous 1969 speech during which, to resounding applause, Díaz Ordaz assumed complete responsibility for the violent police action in Tlatelolco. Finally, then, *Tlatelolco* circulates around the October 2 massacre and the repression-heroism essence that it presumably expresses. The final sequence clinches Bolado's portrayal of Díaz Ordaz as pure evil, but also projects certitude onto the past and poses Tlatelolco as the container of everything for which 1968 might be called upon to stand.

This chapter examines similar delineations of a repressive adversary, the state, in student activist practice. The "police state" of my title purposely invokes a conception of police power as ideal-typical state power, consistent with a Weberian-Parsonian functionalism in which the state embodies physical force in simple contradistinction with

159

civil society. Following Weber's ideal type, the state appears as an organization that is closed off to outsiders, that operates through social forces that are restricted to territorial boundaries, and that functions first and foremost for its own maintenance (Mann 2006). This is the case even for scholars like James Scott (1998; 2009) whose acknowledgement of the influence of Weber's statism for their work is muted.

The strength of the statist approach is clarity around "organizational differences between two spheres," state and civil society (Gill 2010, 1049). In some cases, therefore, the Weberian/statist position on the state's organizational distinctiveness has usefully informed arguments that, contra neoliberalism, state intervention is crucial to economic development (e.g., Glassman 1999). This clarity has prompted some post-structuralist state theorists, who appreciate the blurriness of the distinction between state and society, to nonetheless pursue a compromise with statist theorization. Bob Jessop (2001) stands out here for his treatment of the state as a social relation, and his discussions of how the specificity of a state corresponds with distinct processes of societalization. For all that this may be beneficial, however, the danger of statist theorization is that its proponents will ignore their role in making the state, or, in Mitchell's (1991) terms, drawing the ostensible boundary between state and society.

Among political geographers, this statism has been tempered by interrogations of the notion that power is held by the state, and exercised from a center (Allen 2004; Marston 2004; cf. Foucault 1980, 89). Many contemporary geographers problematize the state's commonsense boundary with society (Bernazzoli and Flint 2010; Painter 2006). But political geographers can arguably go further in this decentering (see Coleman 2013

for a similar argument on a persistent state-centrism in critical geopolitics). For example, advancements towards a practice-based definition of the state have not examined how self-consciously anti-state actors may also produce the state effects of a police state. Despite a now common move to decenter the state, political geographers still tend to present state power as if it is only people obviously identified with the state who exercise state power. The *Carrancista* father in Bolado's 2012 film is a prime example of the figures through which political geographers have sought to decenter the state. By distributing authoritarianism into domestic space, the father appears as the perfect figure for decentered analysis of the state. But perhaps he is too perfect.

This chapter is organized into four parts and a brief conclusion, which together open the post-Tlatelolco state to an assumed outside embodied by anti-state activists. The first reviews some methodological considerations as they relate to relevant literature, field methods, and the data presented in this chapter. The second part of the chapter discusses the December 2012 protests against the inauguration of President Enrique Peña Nieto, to show how young people engage in student activism to the effect of socially reproducing what I call a police state. The third part of this chapter situates my terms – police and politics – within post-Althusserian political theory, and discusses their uptake by geographers. This also provides opportunity to re-engage with political geographers who decenter the state. The final part of the chapter returns to my analysis of recent student activist mobilizations, placing special emphasis on the 2012 hashtag activism of #YoSoy132. My treatment of #YoSoy132 in part four retains my Rancièrian conceptual framework but pushes the argument into new terrain. I argue that spaces of politics can be

161

realized through *vinculación* – the forging of alliances around as yet undetermined political identities. I extend the discussions opened in Chapter One by arguing that young people's practices of *vinculación* can disrupt the partition of the sensible reinscribed through Tlatelolco-centric commemorations of 1968. I conclude with implications for theorizing the geographies of state power.

Overall, this chapter reveals a generalized state of police in which the state is socially reproduced through rituals of anti-state protest. I examine a 'police state' of fixed social categories that are maintained in contemporary student activism, and through which young people's protest is channeled. My analysis suggests that the repression so frequently invoked to characterize the post-1968 Mexican state is secondary to rituals of protest and representation that make the repression possible. With an eye to writing political geographies of the state, this analysis of protest decenters police power from people acting in the name of the state to anti-state activists apparently arrayed outside and against it. In so doing, the analysis supports Nick Gill's (2010) call to examine how statist imaginations matter for activist practice; how people who self-consciously resist the state may enact the boundary between the state and civil society. Analysis also indicates a need to investigate how statist imaginations may matter for the exercise of power through institutions that activists identify with their repressive adversary.

Methodology: tracing the police state, mapping politics

As in the prior chapters, this chapter borrows from Jacques Rancière's writing on aesthetics and politics to examine how student activists enact narratives of continuity

162

within a movement family ostensibly born in 1968, and also how a politics might disrupt what Kristen Ross (2002, 19-64) describes as a "police conception of history." For Ross, as for Rancière, the police naturalizes inherited political classifications, and configures the perceptible world in a way that discourages politics. The police-politics distinction upon which this assertion rests, and which I briefly introduced in Chapter Two, is a heuristic that political geographers still rarely adopt (for exceptions, see Gill et al. 2012; Swyngedouw 2011). I take on the distinction to argue that, absent a disruption of police order, student activists in Mexico City assert identities given in an existing partition of the sensible. I suggest that if activists now call upon 1968 to lend a foundation for their activism and to underscore their membership in a movement family, their narrative of familial continuity obscures time-space specific articulations through which their hoped-for futures can be realized.

Contrary to celebratory scholarship on the commemoration of past struggle as a form of resistance to domination (Hackett and Rolston 2009; cf. Till 2012, 7), my analysis complements the work of scholars who recognize the contingency of memory's effect on political engagement (Bosco 2004; Featherstone 2004). It strategically advises caution, and warns against assuming that stories of past struggle are always effective resources for becoming political. This caution is timely in light of enthusiastic commentary on the spatial-temporal diffusion of recent political unrest (e.g., the Arab Spring, the *Indignados*, #Occupy), which tends to obscure the specific spaces and practices through which political subjectivities animating this agitation are articulated (Hardt and Negri 2011; cf. Crane and Ashutosh 2013; Tyner and Rice 2012). Instead of

163

taking on a "stylized image" (McAdam et al. 2005) of what it means to be part of the movement family in question, this chapter contributes to activists' ongoing labors of autocritique. The argument here, like those in my other chapters, is offered towards denaturalizing a political framework – a major treatment of politics – that makes present to the senses only a predictable world of victories and defeats.

In order to effectively contribute to denaturalizing this framework, I first trace the contours of the historically and geographically specific police state, and then I explore the forms of politics that might disrupt it. This brings together Ranciére's diagnostic tools (the police, and politics) and the "minor" treatment of language and politics advised by Deleuze and Guattari. With reference to examples from fieldwork, I suggest that stories of Tlatelolco as the origin of an antagonism around which young people's contemporary activism is structured will hem young people in from linkage with groups outside their inherited spaces of practice. I suggest that these linkages could, however, facilitate the disruption of a police state given which young people's lives are governed. That is to say: on the background of the essential antagonism of dominator and dominated (reinscribed in film, literature, and activist art [McCaughan 2012, 20-100; Steinberg 2011]), a politics that is oriented towards the establishment of linkages to the apparent outsides of student movement space would denaturalize the immobilized power relations perceived as proper to Mexico City as a static space of "completed simultaneity" (Massey 2005, 11).

In an essay on 'spaces of politics,' Doreen Massey (1999, 284) suggested that spatial closure is proper only to a space "in which all interconnections have been established," a space in which no possibilities for productive linkage or *vinculación* exist.

164

Towards recognizing the insufficiency of this social-spatial order in Mexico City, I therefore take inspiration from contemporary activists – and, in the next chapter, from artists and writers – whose pursuit of *vinculación* is arguably premised on an assumption that loose ends persist and that the spaces of activist practice are incomplete. My part four of this chapter accordingly suggests that *vinculación* would generate figures that are wholly foreign to the police state – incompatible with that system of identifiable groups who engage only in behaviors proper to their respective 'profiles.'

My fieldwork involved contributing to an ongoing conversation among student activists, and people otherwise engaged with the legacy of 1968, about what it is to appropriately remember Tlatelolco and practice politics in its wake. More concretely, it involved participant observation in multiple sites, description of people and places in fieldnotes, archival research, and semi-structured interviews. Most crucial for this chapter, fieldwork involved collection and analysis of widely circulating representations of student activism: activist-produced flyers, pamphlets, and videos, and media representations of what student activists are doing. Among these, there is remarkable symmetry. In Rancière's terms, both student activists and commentators on their activism tend to reproduce a partition of the sensible that discourages politics. Taken together, the representations configure an aesthetic order within which Tlatelolco exemplifies post-1968 state-civil society relations and young people perceptibly engage in politics only by asserting an already-given identity.

Relevant to my engagement with representations of student activism and the partition of the sensible to which they contribute, I partially develop my discussion in the

second part of this chapter by examining what can be seen in activist-produced videos

posted to YouTube and social media networks like Facebook. This material presents

peculiar methodological problems in that it encourages analysts to unquestioningly frame

events in a way that maintains activist narratives. In order to resist reinscribing post-

Tlatelolco historiographical and political closures, I weave into my use of these videos an

acknowledgement of the relationship between activist videography, my fieldwork, and

the post-Tlatelolco regime of representation – a relationship that is further complicated by

the fact that hashtag activism is often galvanized at least in part by the circulation of such

videos (Castells 2012; Treré 2012). I also draw my analysis of the widely circulating

representations into contact with the qualitative data I collected while being there as a

field researcher (an interviewer, a photographer, a participant observer), which allows me

to call attention to what falls outside the categories of the police state through which, I

argue, student activists' political practices tend to be channeled.


"The dove of peace was killed during and after 1968"

Early on December 1, 2012, critics of Mexico's then President-elect Enrique Peña

Nieto converged outside Mexico City's *Palacio Legislativo de San Lázaro* (Saint Lazarus

Legislative Palace) to protest Peña Nieto's inauguration and, more broadly, the return to

power of the PRI. The demonstrators clearly refused to accept Peña Nieto's claim to

represent a new PRI distinct from the old PRI of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. As evidence of

Peña Nieto's inheritance of his party forefathers' repressive state, the demonstrators

invoked Atenco. They recalled that, six years before Peña Nieto would be inaugurated as

President, in 2006, he was the PRI-affiliated Governor of Mexico State who ordered an infamously violent police crackdown against demonstrating flower vendors in San Salvador Atenco. The National Human Rights Commission reported that federal and state police used excessive force resulting in two deaths, 26 sexual assaults, and 145 arbitrary arrests (Alcántara 2006). Not only at the 2012 inauguration protests but also at other demonstrations by Mexico City's student left, Atenco has been and continues to be remembered as Peña Nieto's Tlatelolco. Protestors have used the event to play on Peña Nieto's name, calling him the "*nieto*" ('grandson') of Díaz Ordaz (see Figure 17, below). Given this chain of association, it is unsurprising that activists would invoke 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco on December 1, 2012.

The inauguration protests were promoted through social media as #1DMX. The hashtag acronym for the protest resonated with young activists who frequently identified as student activists, and had been organizing since May under the sign of #YoSoy132. This resonance of the hashtag acronym for young activists was consistent with trends in the use of Internet and social networks in grassroots activism in that it did not indicate a retreat from activism in physical spaces of the city. Rather, young activists' use of such hashtags complemented activism in physical space, and particularly – as was the case in other places around the world since 2011 – in symbolic spaces (see Pleyers 2014).

In the days before the inauguration, it is therefore unsprising that activists not only promoted the demonstration through online social networks but also continued to meet in person and distribute flyers for #1DMX through #YoSoy132 university- and neighborhood-based assemblies. The #1DMX flyers called for "everyone" to "surround

167

the congress building," and declared, "Peña Nieto is not my president." Amidst this promotion of the protest, and in the months before and after, the activists who identified with #YoSoy132 would invoke past confrontations with the Mexican state, and would identify their contemporary adversary (Peña Nieto and the PRI regime) with the 1968 repression of the student movement in Tlatelolco.



Figure 17: A wheat-pasted caricature in the *Ciudad Universitaria* questioning Peña Nieto's claim to represent a new PRI (photo taken February 6, 2013). The portrait of Díaz Ordaz is modified by the addition of Peña Nieto's instantly recognizable hair.

While Peña Nieto's campaign characterized their PRI as unlike the PRI of old, or as a PRI once in crisis but now reformed, student activists and student-left commentators cast #YoSoy132's adversary as essentially the same repressive state, or in slight variation, as the PRI-aligned media that once did and now continues to insulate the state form scrutiny. Here again, as during the 1999-2000 UNAM student strike, the adversary is imagined as somehow unchanging. As a student-left commentator put it in 1999, "Díaz Ordaz comes back to us through the television and the radio, through the newspapers" (Martínez León 2011, 68). The centrality of the student to the 2012 activism was never in question, and was reinscribed through the assertions of continuity in the Mexican student movement's traditional adversary. Non-students involved in #YoSoy132 mobilizations were cast as citizens who were sympathetic to the students' cause but not themselves the protagonists (Gómez 2012, 19).

In October 2012, several student activists in the hallway of UNAM's *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* distributed a flyer that effectively captures this projection of continuity in the allies and adversaries of the post-1968 student movement (see Figure 18, below). Across the top, a question is written in a hand-drawn approximation of the previously described promotional lettering from the 1968 Olympics: "*¿MÉXICO68?*" The question is then addressed in the affirmative, with a cartoon of Peña Nieto and then-President Felipe Calderón sitting together atop a tank. Recipients of the flyer in that hallway, adjacent to a Zapatista-solidarity coffee shop and permanent photo/newsprint collages that document that *Facultad*'s rich activist history, would recognize the cartoon of the tank as an echo of 1968 activist art: a stark image of a tank around which bold text

169

announced, "we do not understand this dialogue" (on contemporary appropriations of

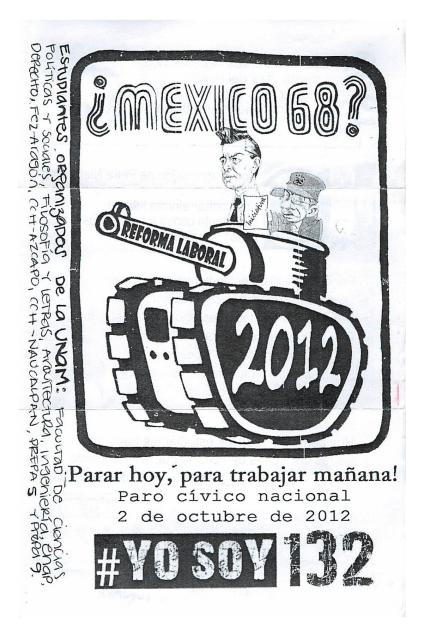1968 activist art, see García Hernández and Poy Solano 2012; Vázquez Mantecón 2006).



Figure 18: #YoSoy132 flyer circulated through the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*, October 2012

On the back of the flyer is a call to self-sacrificing student activists, who, as in the past, are urged to take on the pressing issues facing a nation that has been betrayed by its would be protector, the post-revolutionary state: "*hoy como en 1968 los estudiantes hacemos nuestras las luchas de nuestro pueblo*" ("today as in 1968, our students pursue the struggles of our people").

The flyer does not specify the struggles that the students are anticipated to take a leading role in pursuing, and it furthermore conflates Peña Nieto and Calderón, twinning them under the sign of past repression to establish them as the students' adversary. The flyer therefore extends a second erasure that obscures the long-standing lack of internal coherence and competing ideological positions within peopled institutions through which emerged distinctive technologies of repression (see González Villareal 2012; Pensado 2013); it also overcodes distinctive left projects as a homogenous resistance to repression. Although in a distinct context from Anglophone social movement studies, in this student activist flyer, one can therefore observe – with Doug McAdam and colleagues (McAdam et al. 2005) – the persistence of a "stylized image" that, despite observable changes in activist practices and epistemologies, is put to work in the service of mobilizing allies and understanding contemporary targets of protest. It is but one widely circulating representation of student activism that secures the visibility of the student movement in a partition of the sensible, as a force in enduring struggle between civil society and the state.

On December 1, 2012, the first protestors to arrive at *San Lázaro* were the young people affiliated with *Acampada Revolución* (Revolution Encampment), which was then

171

a meeting place and site of occupation under the Monument to the Revolution in central

Mexico City (see Figure 19, below). Since June, the encampment had been identified

with #YoSoy132. Its occupants were said to bear the torch of the 1968 student movement

(Rivas Ontiveros 2012; Zavala 2012).



Figure 19: The *Acampada Revolución*, which had previously been a site of convergence for the
October 11, 2011 Global Day of Protest, and then was under control of young people identified
with #YoSoy132 between July and December 2012

Soon after the arrival of the *Acampada Revolución* contingent, hundreds of other

demonstrators arrived, a diverse group that could be 'profiled,' in terms of this chapter's

172

epigraph, only if one took a singularly myopic view. The assembled were old and young. Some were draped in Mexico's tri-color, and others carried banners that registered their affiliation with a university or neighborhood assembly. Some protestors marched under the hammer and sickle of Mexico's PCM or flew a black and white variation on the tri-color Mexican flag in protest of the PRI's identification with red, white, and green. Some demonstrators wore huarache sandals, others wore high-top Nikes or Converse All-Stars, and still others wore the Guy Fawkes masks associated with the global hacktivist group Anonymous. These masks appeared with greater frequency after many commentators and activists enthusiastically recognized #YoSoy132 as the face of a *Primavera Mexicana* (Mexican Spring), clearly invoking the 2011 Arab Spring.

Many demonstrators and their supporters also carried cameras or carried cellular phones for use as cameras. These would be used throughout the day to capture activists' violent confrontations with *granaderos* (specialized riot police). As part of the same preparations for encounter, many other protestors wore bandanas over their faces, and arrived with homemade shields and sticks. In this, the protestors prepared for what they apparently assumed would be a violent confrontation with the security forces – the infamous *granaderos*, who had been standing guard at the *Palacio Legislativo* behind a widely criticized ten-foot barricade.

The *granaderos* stood behind shields, wore helmets and pads, and were visibly prepared to subdue the #1DMX demonstration with batons, tear gas grenades, rubber bullets, and high-pressure hoses. In short, the *granaderos* were also ready for anticipated confrontations, their appearance consistent with a student-left discourse that casts

173

*granaderos*, as well as political leaders of the moment, as violent *gorilas*.[12] For student activists in 2012, the *granaderos*' preparation for battle with the protestors recalled even the most exaggerated caricatures circulated online and in newspapers after the repression of activists at the rural teaching schools of Michoacán in late April (Martínez 2012). As the morning wore on, the number of *granaderos* outstripped early estimates of more than 6,000.

Activist videography from December 1, 2012 shows that the protestors' first gestures of opposition were tentative, limited to graffiti, verbal barbs, and rattling the barricade. The atmosphere intensified as some young people used rope and chains to collaborate on looping and then removing panels from the ten-foot barricade. In Judith Butler's terms (2011), this amounted to "collect[ing] the space itself, gather[ing] the pavement, and animat[ing] and organiz[ing] the architecture." However fleeting the removal of panels may have been, it was nonetheless the temporary realization of a world-reconfiguring politics. These protestors refused the boundaries of a place designated as their site for predictable rituals of protest. The *granaderos* would restore police order through practices that further consolidated the post-Tlatelolco "police conception of history" (Ross 2002, 19-64). That is, the violent response of *granaderos* would clearly adhere to the inherited expectation of yet another act of repressive state violence: another moment in Mexico's continuous series of *chingaderas* (roughly translatable as unspecified "fucked up events") against which student activism has in the past been and should today be pitched (see Figure 20, below).

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[12] As Pensado (2013, 104) notes, the name derives from a group of pre-1968 *porros* financed by authorities at the IPN to commit vandalism that would discourage sympathy for student activists.

Figure 20: A participant in the 2012 *dos de octubre* march spraypainting "*chingadera*" on walls along *Eje 1*, on the way to the *Zócalo*

The *granaderos* violent restoration of order would confirm activists' assumptions about the configuration of the world as a stage for their performance of the latest in an enduring post-Tlatelolco drama of repression and heroic self-sacrifice. Protestors' initial disruptive challenge at *San Lázaro* created an opening but was insufficient to reconfigure the boundaries within which acceptable political practices could be pursued (Dikeç 2013, 30). Indeed, if anything, the "dance of blows" (Hernández 2013) apparently confirmed the adequacy of the police conception of history. This performance of expected roles would persist for hours, and with consequences.

175

Activist videographers circulated videos under the title *Batalla de San Lázaro* (Battle of Saint Lazarus), as if to underscore that this was but one episode in an ongoing post-Tlatelolco war.[13] Videos reveal protestors pulling and pushing the barricade, opening it to swing sticks or chains at the *granaderos* they exposed, or throwing rocks, Molotov cocktails, and spent police projectiles across the battle line. The videographers would also devote significant attention to the other side, the side of repression. The *granaderos* are shown huddled in an anonymous mass behind their barricade, or maintaining a cluster of shields and then aggressively unfolding from their formation to launch tear gas grenades, shoot rubber bullets, weaponize their shields, or advance on the protestors with batons. In one widely circulating video,[14] a group of protestors atop a truck passes through the crowd at *San Lázaro*, shouting through a megaphone of the need to help the young people of #YoSoy132. As the truck approaches the barricade, the driver applies a weight to the gas pedal and, with the other protestors, swiftly climbs down to the pavement and sends the truck into the barricade. The barricade is broken, and the *granaderos* pour out of the breach. They respond with tear gas grenades, water cannons, and rubber bullets. The camara rests on the *granaderos* to capture several of them taking visible pleasure in the use of force, laughing at protestors who flee from the severe injury that being shot with a rubber bullet could inflict.

The confrontations at the *Palacio* were later accompanied by confrontations at other sites. Before midday, a call from #YoSoy132Media circulated through social media

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[13] See http://youtube.com/watch?v=0n39du57Ak4, http://youtube.com/watch?v=cKlhNVrFbwY, http://youtube.com/watch?v=D0Xcuax0L5o. All accessed 11 September 2013.

[14] "1 de Diciembre de 2012, Parte I" – http:// http://youtube.com/watch?v=F88aVsRwjts. Accessed 11 September 2013.

networks and provoked many protestors to move towards the *Zócalo*. The improvised march was blocked. Peña Nieto was making his first address as president in the *Palacio Nacional*. Their destination thwarted, some participants in the improvised march broke from the route to loot two gas stations. Many sympathetic commentators and student-left activists would retroactively attribute the looting to *porros* who were said to have been participating in the demonstration only to provoke and legitimate a violent response from the police. Other participants in the impromptu march converged to rally at the *El Caballito*, a famous landmark near the central post office, and still others were drawn into confrontation with *granaderos* in front of the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* (Palace of Fine Art). Some 'encapuchados' (i.e., hooded young people) would again engage in vandalism that otherwise sympathetic commentators would assign to *porros* as part of an effort to police the boundaries of proper student activist tactics. The *granaderos* anticipated the crowds, responding with immoderate force and arbitrary detention of standersby. Photographers and activist-videographers near the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* witnessed the arbitrary detention of peaceful demonstrators, and, in subsequent days, these witnesses would circulate their videos and photographs as proof of overzealous policing (Olivares Alonso 2012a).

Immediately southwest of the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*, activist-videographers would record a group of young men pelting *granaderos* with anything at hand – bottles, rocks, street signs, park benches, and police projectiles that had already been spent. The videos confirm a homosocial norm of violent, macho posturing in reactivations of the encounter with a repressive state. Their adversary, the *granaderos*, was no less violent,

177

and – on the basis of a partition of the sensible in which the legitimacy of violent public protest was, at best, in question – would act with the assurance of a force reestablishing the movement of progress in the face of *desmadre* (on *desmadre* [anti-social behavior] and its relationship with the 'revolutionary family,' see Zolov 1999, 27-28).

As in the battles outside *San Lázaro*, in these later confontations, videographers maintained their focus on these unambiguous performances of opposition to the state. In this, the videos reinscribed a gendered partitioning of space by virtue of which female-bodied activists – and really, anyone uninterested in violent and dangerous protest – are made to be, as they have in the past been (Carey 2005, 51-53), inappropriate practitioners of student movement space. Activists would circulate these videos through social media networks to reveal a level of *jouissance* among participants in the #1DMX confrontations. In one such video,[15] a young man awkwardly tosses a tire atop a cluster of *granaderos* huddled under interlocking shields before inevitably advancing on the young people. The demonstration had, by then, disarticulated into disparate individualized performances of tacitly agreed upon rituals proper to a police state. Commentators and activists of the student left would later find it difficult to distinguish between their anti-PRI allies and *porros/infiltrados*. The video reveals other participants in the encounter busying themselves with their own tasks, unconcerned with the young man but nonetheless working in parallel with him. Successful in a display of resistance, the young man runs toward the camera and shouts to no one in particular "*¡Ahuevo!*" (That is, "Hell yeah," but as crude reference to testicles, more like "Fuck yeah!").

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[15] "Centro Historico D.F., Parte II" clip – http://youtube.com/watch?v=Wa4sqYFugQs. Accessed 11 September 2013.

Newspapers reported that, further west on *Avenida Juarez,* the major avenue that

runs east-west in front of *Bellas Artes*, "hooded and masked" young people destroyed the

façade of tourist hotels, international chains, and banks near the recently restored *Parque*

*Alameda*. Activist-produced videos capture participants in the confrontations on *Avenida*

*Juarez* stealing tables, chairs, and other materials from nearby businesses for use in

constructing a barricade to which they would set fire. Activist produced videos captured

this display. Also for commentators who were not necessarily sympathetic to the student

left, these were the iconic moments of #1DMX: street fights between *granaderos* and the

"*encapuchados/anarquistas/infiltrados/porros*" (Hernández 2013), young people

"wearing black clothes with a [circle-A] symbol of anarchist movements" (e.g., Camacho

and Poy 2012). Their shared partition of the sensible made visible only this violent anti-

dialectical relationship that could be interpreted in relation to widely circulating

representations of Mexico City's student activism as the essence of a violent history, in

which consensual negotiation and liberal "dialogue" becomes incomprehensible (cf. Ross

2002, 27).

Commentators sympathetic to the protests, and willing to overlook the uncertainty

of who, exactly, was participating, would claim that, in the wake of Tlatelolco, there was

no choice but to violently confront the *granaderos*. This position is captured in a press

release from which I drew the title for this part of the chapter; a #YoSoy132Media writer

(#YoSoy132Media 2012a) invoked an image from the subversive 1968 activist art (the

dove pierced by a bayonet) that appropriated promotional images for the 1968 Olympics

(the dove of peace), asserting, "The dove of peace was killed during and after 1968." For

others, including former Mayor of Mexico City Marcelo Ebrard of the PRD, the historical record of state-perpetrated violence was no excuse: the violence of the black clad young people was "barbaric" (León et al. 2012), an improper way to practice politics. Ebrard's statement, and his apologetic relationship with the archive of state violence more generally, is consistent with celebratory progress narratives of Tlatelolco as a watershed moment in Mexico's passage from authoritarianism to democracy – narratives of a transition that, for Ebrard, was perhaps realized in the rise of his center-left PRD, but not in the combative direct action of "hooded youth" (on this narrative in literary representation of Tlatelolco, see Long 2010).

This policing of what counts as politics should be understood on the background of assumptions that the central lesson of 1968 was the need for a structurally unchanged Mexican society to pursue democracy; a narrative of 1968 as a watershed in transition to democracy. By distinguishing between forms of politics proper and improper to Mexico's contemporary liberal democracy, or differently, in this "exclusion of what 'is not'" (Rancière 2010, 36), Marcelo Ebrard's assessment of the #1DMX protests would confirm the ritualized certainties of student movement space. The protests and the PRD *moderados*' efforts to put them at a distance were proper to a partition of the sensible that, the very next day, facilitated a *Pacto por México* (Pact for Mexico) to united the three main political parties (the PRI, PAN, and PRD) behind the new PRI administration's 'reforms.' Ebrard himself actively naturalized the already existing limits on the visible and the sayable, anticipated by student activists, which the *granaderos* would readily enact on December 1 and in the months to come.

180

An early #YoSoy132Media report from December 1 (#YoSoy132Media 2012b) indicated that, of the nearly 100 people then known to have been detained in the day's events, almost 80% were arrested near *Avenida Juarez* in confrontations with *granaderos* outside the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*. Videos from streets in the nearby orbit of those confrontations suggest that many of the people who the *granaderos* attacked or arrested were in fact onlookers, uninvolved with confrontations with police,[16] or perhaps involved only in that they saw something when the *granaderos*' policing was intended to have them see nothing; as for Rancière's uniformed officer, "Move along, there's nothing to see" (Ross 2002, 22). In the week after the protests, witnesses circulated the videos along with posters for "arbitrarily detained" political prisoners. In addition to detainees, the violent tactics of the *granaderos* resulted in many injuries. *La Jornada* (Cruz Martínez 2012) reported that the day's policing of protest resulted in 105 injuries.

Among the people who *granaderos* injured was 67 year-old Zapatista solidarity activist Juan Francisco 'Kuy' Quinquedal. Quinquedal suffered severe brain trauma when the *granaderos* hit him with a tear gas grenade during the morning demonstrations outside the *Palacio Legislativo*. In subsequent months, activists would share his – "Kuy Kendall's" – story through social media networks, alongside photographs of him lying unconscious with his blood on the pavement. Over the next year, activists would also invoke Kuy for events organized "in the face of the repression" (see Figure 21, below). On January 25, 2014, Kuy died of cardiac arrest while still unconscious after more than a year on life support.

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[16] For arbitrary detentions, see http://youtube.com/watch?v=wCV7_I6CUzg; see especially this video: http://youtube.com/watch?v=YvqNT3J8PSM. Both Accessed 11 September 2013.

Figure 21: A poster outside the *Auditorio Ché Guevara*, a squatted activist social center near UNAM's *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*. The poster was pasted to the wall of the social center's entrance in the wake of #1DMX. Photo taken February 6, 2013

Police violence and the resulting injuries confirmed longstanding assumptions

about the repressive essence of the state against which Mexico City's student movement

has historically been opposed. For example, activists' assumptions about the state's

repressive essence were evident in a December 1 statement from the #YoSoy132

*Comisión de Comunicación y Prensa* (the Communication and Press Committee) (2012)

regarding the likely treatment of detainees from #1DMX.

> They [the detainees from the *Palacio Legislativo*] could go through a federal
> criminal procedure […], more violent than that of the local police. […] Detainees
> at Saint Lazarus are likely to be processed by [an] institution historically engaged
> in practices that are more aggressive, repressive, and in violation of human rights.

This was undoubtedly true, and my intent is not to apologize for repression. The use of

force by *granaderos* in 2012, like the use of force in 1968, is inexcusable. But of interest

is how assumptions about the apparently resurgent adversary of Mexico City's student

activists (i.e., the repressive state *qua* PRI) found practical expression in student-left

identified activism before and after #1DMX. Of interest, for example, is why, after the 23

arrests during the June 10, 2013 march to commemorate the little Tlatelolco of 1971

(discussed in Chapter Two), even the PRD-affiliated Mexico City Mayor Miguel Ángel

Mancera would be identified with the violence of the PRI. In short, of interest is the

effect, for politics and for police ordering, of student activists' investment in the

existence and persistence of a repressive adversary that is available for invocation as 'the

state.'

Political geographer Nick Gill (2010) argues that, activists' imaginations of the

state matter in practice, and perhaps not only for activist endeavors but also for the

exercise of power through peopled institutions identified with the state (e.g., riot police).

My narrative of the events of December 1, 2012 suggests that this is the case specifically

because both activists and their critics, or would-be adversaries, operate on what Jacques

Rancière (2010, 36) names a shared "dividing-up of the world." The next part of this

chapter reflects on the conceptual framework that undergirds my argument. I situate my

conceptual framework within currents of post-Althusserian political theory, and

decentered analyses of the state, particularly as these literatures have found expression in

political geography. In part four, after this brief theoretical reprise, I return to the case to

argue that a narrative of continuity in the student movement offers the categories proper

to a police state. I draw examples from fieldnotes to show how a generalized state of

police hems in student activism from lateral connections that could facilitate a change in

the police order upon which government is practiced. Further, I suggest that, in this

context of police order, activists may realize politics by intervening in "the visible and

the sayable" (Rancière 2010, 37) maintained at least in part through the promulgation of a

Tlatelolco-centric narrative of October 2 as the origin of self-sacrificing student heroism

in the face of the repressive state. I am therefore moving towards an argument that, in

absence of such intervention (unpacked still further in Chapter Four), Mexico City's

student activism may be understood as the expression of one term in a predictable

antagonism that assumes the endurance of its opposite.


The Police and Politics After 1968

The notion of the police taken up in this chapter and elsewhere in the dissertation

dates to the years after Jacques Rancière's break with Louis Althusser and the founding

of the radical history journal *Les Révoltes Logiques* in 1975. 'The police' was a

conceptual innovation spurred, at least in part, by Althusser's inability to comprehend or

connect with France's May 1968, and it was elaborated as part of Rancière's more

general anti-functionalism. Kristin Ross (2009, 24) suggests that Rancière took issue with Althusser's presumption of a "temporality that others [would be revolutionaries] are not presumed to share." Althusser's was a hierarchical temporality of "those who know," a temporality of the pedagogue or expert strategist. This hierarchical temporality would be inadmissible if, as for Rancière, anyone is presumed to be equal with anyone else. And so, against Althusser's presumption that he knew the timing of true revolt and that it was "best to wait it out," Rancière offered the police-politics distinction as a way of "short-circuiting the temporality of [his mentor's] pedagogy," and questioning the functionalist identifications upon which its hierarchy rests (Ross 2009, 24-26). For Rancière, this assertion of equality in the face of hierarchy, and against self-certain spokespeople for the left, is a condition for any staging of politics.

For Rancière, and also for his contemporaries who inform my arguments, people make history through a refusal of inherited identifications. Witness similar formulations in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, where the authors have an Althusser figure in mind when they write,

> [So it was] with May '68: those who evaluated things in macropolitical terms understood nothing of the event because something unaccountable was escaping. The politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that 'conditions' were not ripe. It was as though they had been deprived of the entire dualism machine that made them valid spokespeople. Bizarrely, [President] de Gaulle, and even [Prime Minister] Pompidou, understood much more than the others. A molecular flow was escaping, miniscule at first, then swelling, without, however, ceasing to be unassignable (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 216).

Here, Deleuze and Guattari envision a politics that exceeds a grid of intelligibility (the 'major treatment of politics' I discuss Chapter One) through which people have percieved

185

political problems as macro-scale in design. As for Rancière, the people who would enact a politics that disrupts this grid, and the flows to which they contribute, are not accounted for. The complementarity of Rancière and Deleuze and Guattari on what the latter would call "minor" politics is explored in greater depth at the end of this chapter and in Chapter Four.

Foucault too imagines the disruption of classificatory order in similar terms. He writes, "Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are" (Foucault 2000b, 336). What Foucault is after is not of course the refusal of an unhistorical humanness. Rather, Foucault suggests we might refuse the historically and geographically specific identities that may appear to be permanent and natural but which are in fact natural*ized*, and in that sense – having emerged upon specific conditions without which they could have been otherwise (see Crane forthcoming) – fragile. In the late-1960s and early 1970s, then, Rancière worked in parallel with his contemporaries to develop a way of thinking the history of the present that was complementary insofar as it aspired to be acategorical. Ranciere's thought is distinctive, however, for its distinction between the police and politics. Rancière (2009, 287) would later describe this historical work as a "history of the political, which is a history of the forms of confrontation – and also the forms of confusion – between politics and the police."

In my discussion of #1DMX, I invoked politics as a possible denaturalization of governable order made perceptible through commemorative reactivations of 1968 as Tlatelolco. Similar formulations find expression in other commentary on contemporary hashtag activism and the successive waves of protest since 2010 (Arditi 2012; Butler

2011; Crane and Ashutosh 2013; Decreus et al. 2014). With an eye to the demonstrations of 2011 (e.g., the Arab Spring, #OccupyWallStreet), for example, Judith Butler (2011) offered a compatible formulation of politics as the instantiation of anarchist passages, in which "the legitimacy of a regime is called into question, but when no new regime has yet come to take its place." If politics is thought in this way, most of what young people do under the sign of student activism in Mexico City does not qualify. Self-identified student activists tend to enact the predictable categories proper to a narrative of continuity with predecessors in a movement family; they posit an unchanged antagonist in relation to which they are, as previous activists have been, powerless to do anything but resist. The problem, as I discussed it in the conclusion to Chapter Two, is that this notion of resistance posits a preestablished stability against which one's resistance might be elaborated. By organizing in resistance to an adversary one casts as self-evidently dominant, activists undercut their ability to reconfigure a partitioned world which serves as the given for any elaboration of political strategy.

The "regime" in question in this notion of politics – the regime that, for Judith Butler (2011), is suspended with no guarantee of what will come next – is not necessarily a state. In this account of politics, it is a naturalized social-spatial order that politics can potentially disrupt. Politics, thought this way, is difficult to discern. It may be especially difficult to identify in the post-political condition that political geographical scholarship on police order describes (Gill et al. 2012, 513; cf. Staeheli 2010; Swyngedouw 2011). In part, I would argue that this is the case because of a tendency to conflate Badiou's theorization of politics with Rancière's. I showed in Chapter Two that Badiou's theory of

187

politics posits a sharp distinction between practitioners of true politics and the State. On the other hand, politics, in my account of young people's politics, is intertwined with matters of the police. Would-be practitioners of politics are positioned within police order and will realize instances of politics only by reworking police order from within.

So, yes, politics is difficult to discern. But this is also because, as defined here, politics cannot be pursued through the assertion of identities given by existing police order. If politics are by definition unaccounted for, they are nonetheless also permanently possible. The police order is not objective. It is an outcome of processes of naturalization, the outcome of a polemic. Moments of inconsistency are endemic to processes of police ordering; these are, after all, enacted in part by the very people who, in history-making refusals of inherited identities, could come to pursue their disruption. For Rancière, people would cultivate moments of disruption through interventions that denaturalize an otherwise apparently 'true,' objective identification of individuals with proper places in society. In such moments, politics offers a disjunction between political subjectivity and the social groups (e.g., self-evident student constituents of the student movement) that are sometimes confused with political actors but may just as often actively police the limits of politics. Instances of politics are, in this sense, suspensions of seemingly natural identities around which solidarities of likeness are typically established (on the solidarity premised on preestablished likeness, see Chapter One and Featherstone 2012).

For Todd May (2009, 115), "to become a subject" – i.e., the emergence of a "subject of action" in the place of what has heretofore only been an object of governance – "is to refuse one's particular place in a given police order, to reject the hierarchy that

has assigned one a certain role." This subjectification is a disruptive rejection of ways of operating proper to one's profile in the social whole invoked in this chapter's epigraph. Recalling the anachronistic orientation towards historiography that I discussed in Chapter One, politics also refuses the unilinear course of development tending toward spatial closure, or what Massey (2005, 11) describes as the space of "completed simultaneity." In place of this historicism, the acategorical work modeled by Rancière (2009, 287) and his contemporaries suggests writing a "history of the political" to reveal the fragility of police order, or its construction through dispersed practices of people who could come to pursue its disruption.

Rancière once said, of his relationship with Foucault's scholarship, that the "idea of the partition of the sensible is no doubt [his] own way of translating and appropriating for [his] own account the genealogical thought of Foucault" (Rancière 2000, 13). It might be better to say that, left here, Rancière is in fact aligned with Foucault on archaeology, and the limits of what can and cannot be said. But Rancière does something that Foucault on "archaeology" does not, and it is his additional move that reflects the complementarity of the police-politics distinction and genealogy. Foucault's notion of the "episteme" (in his archaeology) is like Rancière's "partition of the sensible" insofar as it refers to what is thinkable, sayable, and doable at a given moment. But Rancière also examines, as instantiations of politics, the ways of thinking, saying, and doing that a particular people properly *cannot* enact. Instantiations of politics confront a given partition of the sensible with something that is supposed to be improper to that partition. As Rancière (2000, 13) puts it, "we are in a polemical arena rather than an archeological one."

189

If one takes seriously the relationship between Rancière's history of the political and Foucault's better-known genealogy, one can say that a politics offers a break with historicist treatments of the present as an inevitable, predictable expression of a "timeless and essential secret" (Foucault 1977b, 142). In post-1968 Mexico City, instantiations of youth politics would therefore denaturalize the spatiality of student activism, and problematize a vision of contemporary politics as the expression of an internal essence. Contemporary youth politics would be understood as articulated together, and not as the predictable expression of a necessary progression (see Featherstone and Painter 2013). At issue for my scholarly engagement with post-1968 young people's politics – and also for activists pursuing *vinculación* – is the creation of productive linkages with the apparent outsides of student movement space. The analysis, and the possible politics it explores, would refuse the inherited categories of student movement space, and thereby trouble the partition of the sensible through which young people in Mexico City still tend to perceive their political possibilities and obstacles.

*¿El jaguar desperto?* Spaces of politics after 1968

In stories of recent student activism, May 11, 2012 typically marks the origin of #YoSoy132. In the midst of his campaign for the presidency, Enrique Peña Nieto visited the *Universidad Iberoamericana* (hereafter *Ibero*) for a rally at which he expected a supportive audience. Contrary to Peña Nieto's expectations, and challenging his attempts to distance himself from the 'old' authoritarian PRI of Tlatelolco and the Dirty War, many audience members interrogated Peña Nieto for his role as then-Governor of Mexico

State in ordering the violent 2006 police action in San Salvador Atenco, which activists now remember through the shorthand 'Atenco.'

Protestors at the campaign event captured videos on their cellular phones, and would circulate them online in the days after May 11. Videos reveal the auditorium at the *Ibero* becoming louder and falling further from Peña Nieto's control before he finally stepped to the microphone to affirm that he approved the police action in Atenco as a measure to restore order and that taking such measures was within his remit as the then-Governor.[17] Infuriated, the dissenting audience members heckled Peña Nieto from the stage and pushed him, first, into a bathroom and then off campus altogether. This too was captured on grainy videos from cellular phones, by amateur videographers who were clearly jostled by the crush of excited crowds. The quality of the images and their content suggest that the videographers hounded Peña Nieto, and were eager to capture his embarrassment.[18] Many months later, on November 27, just before the inauguration through which Peña Nieto would take office, the #YoSoy132 assembly at the *Ibero*, *Más de 131* (More than 131), would circulate an open letter that recounted the events of May 11. The letter playfully invites Peña Nieto to return to the infamous bathroom.

> Interested in your comfort, and because a recent constitutional amendment allows you to be inaugurated in the *Palacio Legislativo de San Lázaro* on December 1, we propose that you avoid any possible inconvenience and use as an alternative […] the bathroom of our university, with which you are already familiar (Building S, first floor, below [the student radio station] *Ibero* 90.9). We know this space feels safe and comfortable. Accordingly, you can put away the police

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[17] For video from the auditorium, see http://youtube.com/watch?v=DSEmgX296Qo. Accessed 13 September 2013.

[18] For videos of then-candidate Enrique Peña Nieto's flight from the Ibero, see http://youtube.com/watch?v=fTgiSjprjyw, and http://youtube.com/watch?v=fIprnXztTW8. Accessed 13 September 2013.

cordon that remains around the Congress Building and which is generating so much discomfort within the population of the capital (author's translation).

After the embarrassing campaign appearance in 2012, spokespeople for Peña Nieto cast the May 11 protestors at the *Ibero* as *porros* in an attempt to throw doubt on the legitimacy of their voice, and thereby transform their dissent into the inaudible "noise" of infiltrator thugs, improper to a forum in Mexico's contemporary democracy (on a voice-noise distinction as it functions in a police order, see Rancière 2010, 38). Officials of the PRI and also the *Partido Verde* (Green Party), an ally of the PRI, asserted that the protestors were "alien to the university, linked to the PRD" (Estrello and Modonesi 2012, 221). But a viral video and a series of newspaper articles corrected the Peña Nieto campaign's story and asserted that the "*antipeñistas*" (that is, the anti-Peña Nieto activists) were indeed students (Reguillo 2013).[19] Here again, the attempted first erasure is countered by an assertion of a readily available political identity through which to make sense of, and legitimize, young people's participation in politics.

Now recognizably students, the *antipeñistas* at the *Ibero* released a statement that would be echoed in multiple formats (video, audio, print, etc.): "We exercised our right to disapprove. We are students at the *Ibero*; not puppets not infiltrators; and nobody trained us for anything" (Olivares Alonso 2012b). In solidarity with the 131 students who appeared in the video displaying their *Ibero* student identification cards, social media users generated a Twitter trend through which they announced, "*Yo soy 132*" ("I am 132"). The trend would verify the potential for 'student' to serve as a locally meaningful

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[19] For the viral video, see http://youtube.com/watch?v=1iZp5ThcH8M. Accessed 13 September 2013.

empty signifier that activists can inhabit. The Twitter trend, in turn, propelled a series of marches in which the participants chanted "*no somos porros, somos estudiantes*" ("we're not *porros*, we're students"). Again, as discussed in Chapter Two, adherents to the contemporary student left secured the legitimacy of young people's politics by policing the boundaries of the student and non-student and investing the figure of the student with a particular repertoire of politics.

Marches in the wake of May 11, 2012 were linked explicitly to past mobilizations of Mexico's student movement. On July 7, 2012, days after what many commentators understood as a fraudulent election, more than 70,000 people marched against the *imposición*. At 3:00 pm, protestors converged for a *megamarcha* (that is, a 'huge march') that would snake slowly from the *Ángel de Independencia* statue to the *Zócalo*. The *Ibero* students, who were by then credited with initiating #YoSoy132, and who were frequently identified in the press as the student movement leaders and spokespeople, were in Morelos, southeast of Mexico City, for the year's first National Assembly of students. This absence of the movement's apparent leaders did not, however, stop the demonstrators in Mexico City from identifying as one of the 132, or from carrying banners or flags on which #YoSoy132 was emblazoned. On *Paseo de la Reforma*, the major east-west boulevard through Mexico City's corporate center, a man more than sixty years old carried a sign that identified him with #YoSoy132. His sign explicitly situated the 2012 mobilizations as the offspring of a movement family to be traced along a line of descent through the activism of 1968. The man's sign indicated that contemporary activists' membership in that family was secured through their as yet

193

pending encounter with the same adversary as that of student activists past, a repressive

adversary in response to which, to invoke the October 2012 student activist flyer

discussed earlier in this chapter, "we students make ours the struggles of our people." The

man's sign traced a history of repression from "1968/Tlatelolco" through the violent

police response to the October 2006 uprising in Oaxaca of the *Asamblea Popular de los*

*Pueblos de Oaxaca* (Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca, APPO). State

repression and heroic activism were presented as oppositional elements of a single

trajectory, one begetting the other in a genetic sense: a history of descent. Below the

pictures and captions by which its history was emplotted, the man's sign read, "This can't

happen again and we're here to stop it – #YoSoy132" (author, fieldnotes, July 7, 2012,

Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

At the crowded conclusion of a subsequent "*megamarcha contra la imposición*"

("huge march against the imposition") on July 22, 2012, several activist artists had set up

shop in the *Zócalo* to distribute stickers through which a continuity among members of

the post-1968 movement family is similarly established. The artists scattered their

stickers on a sheet and were distributing them in exchange for voluntary donations of a

few pesos (well less than a US dollar). In subsequent weeks and months, supporters of

#YoSoy132 would post such stickers across Mexico City. Their ubiquity testified to the

excitement around that summer's activism. For example, bold #YoSoy132 stickers were

posted in metro cars on the north-south green line, which ended, to the south, with several

stations near UNAM (Miguel Angel de Quevado, Copilco, Universidad). Underscoring

the willful, heroic politics that young people *qua* student activists were understood, and

194

even expected, to enact, these stickers were typically applied over the icon for the *Niños*

*Heroes* (Children Heroes) metro station (see Figure 22, below).



Figure 22: #YoSoy132 sticker posted on the green line of Mexico City's metro, atop an icon for the *Niños Heroes* (Children Heroes) metro stop. Photo taken August 6, 2012

On July 22, I purchased two stickers from the activist artists in the *Zócalo*. On

one, a cartoon jaguar labeled "132" aggressively bares its teeth. The link to 1968 is clear

but unstated; *El Jaguar Rojo* (The Red Jaguar) was the proposed Olympics mascot prior

to the adoption of the dove. On the sticker, the jaguar is framed by a bold caption, "*el*

*jaguar desperto*," as if to suggest that some natural essence of #YoSoy132 is awakening (*despertar*) from slumber. Of course, in order for the jaguar "132" to come "awake," it must be the same animal as that which found expression in awakenings past (e.g., Tlatelolco, the student activism of the mid-1980s, the student activism of the mid-1990s, the 1999-2000 UNAM student strike, etc.). On the other sticker, the designers are more explicit about the temporality of the jaguar's slumber, its first naps and subsequent restlessness. The sticker reads, "revolutionary youth, since 1968," with "1968" tattooed across the knuckles of a fist (author, fieldnotes, July 22, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City): a combative awakening, then.

The July 22 *megamarcha* lasted for hours. After purchasing the stickers in the *Zócalo*, I returned to the street. Just to the west of the *Zócalo*, on *Avenida Juarez*, a young man lacking any clear affiliation with an assembly carried a poster similar in content and grammar to that of the older man in the previous *megamarcha* (see Figure 23, below). At the top, the young man's poster offered the playful formulation, "*PRImero represión*," which is to say "first repression," and also a "first" in which the PRI was involved. Under this heading was a drawing of a tank, and under that, a list that began with Tlatelolco and then marked a series of subsequent acts of state repression to which that "*PRImero*," original massacre is apparently related. Below the list of Tlatelolco-related violence, the 'we' of those who oppose the repressive state, with us since the *PRImero*, is cast as united around a practice. The poster announced, to an adversary that presumably needs to be reminded, "we have memory!" (author, fieldnotes, July 22, 2012, Cuauhtémoc – Mexico City).

196

Figure 23: Young man holding the flyer describing a history of state repression after the "*PRImero represión*," on *Avenida Juarez* during the July 22, 2012 *megamarcha contra la imposición*

In light of the line of descent that is shot through these popular invocations of past politics, how might one characterize the "memory" that "we have"? To what effect is this promulgated? My previous discussions of solidarity and *vinculación* in this dissertation suggest that practices of narrating past struggles could facilitate a relational composition of spaces for the rituals of what, at any moment, student activists might name politics. The relational composition of a space of politics could but would not necessarily

subjugate any of the multiple trajectories that come together to produce it. It need not be the case that memory and commemoration extend or deepen the second erasure. And, if young people tend to commemoratively reactivate Tlatelolco and thereby reinscribe the boundaries of student movement space, a relational perspective on this would-be space of politics suggests that its relatively durable certainties are nonetheless open to challenge and contestation.

In this sense, taking off from the assertion of memory in the July 22 *megamarcha*, "we" could reactivate memories towards mobilizing to form a "relatively coherent social movement space" that is more than the sum of its individual parts (Nicholls 2009, 88). The "we" who "have memory" could "[string] together" specific places of activism into a topological space of social movement politicking that does not follow from the self-evident likenesses of student movement space (see my Chapter One, and Nicholls 2009, 85-86). We can serve as a contact point for multiple initiatives by suspending the certainty of categories that, when enacted, tend to subjugate singular trajectories for the realization of a solidarity of preestablished likeness. This is to say that, contrary to the boundary-making tendencies of commemorative activity in the student left's post-1968 Mexico City, the reactivation of memory could be part of a process of *vinculación* through which solidarities and political identities are actively forged. In a very different context, Paul Gilroy (1993, 144) makes these mobile spaces of politics thinkable in terms of trajectories that "remain uncompromised by their confluence."

According to the relational conception of space I explore here, each trajectory (e.g., a young person's lifecourse, the repertoire of student activist protest, the discourse

198

of a persisting communist left, the claims of autonomy advanced in Chiapas) would be permitted its singularity even as it is seen to converge with an indeterminate multiplicity of distinctive singularities that, together, articulate to produce a space of politics. Thus articulated, these are spaces of solidarities that exceed likeness (Brown and Yaffe 2014; Featherstone 2012); they are the incomplete spaces of a *convocatoría*, and not the settled spaces of a given social movement. Doreen Massey (2005, 10) clarifies that the identities of such spaces of politics are "one of the central stakes of the political." That is, the identities of their practitioners, and the identities of the spaces themselves, are not given in advance but are realized and can be reworked in practice.

Returning to the case, the diverse constituencies who sought to be involved in the apparently student-led activism of #YoSoy132 could be imagined as coming together in their singularity to potentially effect a transformation of a police order given which young people tended to enact a relatively limited repertoire of student activist practices which could be recognized as politics. Against the rituals proper to student movement space, and against what I described (after Deleuze and Guattari) as a major treatment of post-1968 politics, a politics of *vinculación* could reconfigure the relationships between people whose place in the police state has been rendered predictable. Of course, to explore this geographical imaginary, and to recognize that the apparently given can be reworked, does not mean that the enactment of bounded spaces simply disappears. This is only to say that the boundary making practices that harden such boundaries or partitions, including the "territories" of geopolitical discourse, are historically and geographically contingent (Agnew 1994; dell'Agnese 2013).

I do not impose this theorization of space and politics from outside, as if there is indeed an outside from which to write and/or to seek a way in. Activists shared similar visions of politics in the months before and after #1DMX. For example, on July 14, 2012, as part of a two day *Convención Nacional Contra la Imposición* (National Convention Against the Imposition) in San Salvador Atenco, a young man from a #YoSoy132 assembly at UNAM spoke as part of a *mesa de trabajo* (working group, or literally "table of work"). The day's event was organized in the name of #YoSoy132 and the *Frente del Pueblo en Defensa de la Tierra* (People's Front in Defense of the Land, FPDT), the latter of which was the face of the 2002 challenge to a state land grab in Atenco that would have facilitated the construction of an airport. A rumor circulated that 1,400 people had registered to attend the July 2012 convention (interview with the author, Jonathan Hernández Cantú, July 14, 2012). That morning, after several representatives of each host organization provided brief introductory remarks, attendees broke into seven *mesas de trabajo* and elected moderators and note takers.

At *mesa de trabajo* number five (see Figure 24, below), the above-mentioned young man from a #YoSoy132 assembly at UNAM began giving his contribution without a microphone, speaking passionately from where he stood among the dozens of people clustered around the moderators and note takers. Despite his excitement and visible passion, his voice would not carry. Participants clustered around the *mesa* were straining to hear. An older man, circulating through the assembly to distribute Communist Party pamphlets about #YoSoy132 as the student movement "*encabezar*" ("leading") a new period of struggle "against the old oligarchy," called for the student to come forward for

the microphone: "*pasa por el frente, compañero*" (author, fieldnotes, July 14, 2012, San

Salvador Atenco).



Figure 24: A *mesa de trabajo* at the *Convención Nacional Contra la Imposición* in San Salvador
Atenco, July 14, 2012

Beginning again with microphone in hand, the UNAM student spoke about what

he saw as the opportunity to be captured before Peña Nieto's December 1 inauguration.

The inauguration was then in question because of a legal challenge put forward by former

PRD presidential candidate Andres Manual López Obrador or AMLO. Although

recognized spokespeople for #YoSoy132 regularly asserted their independence from

Mexico's leftwing parties, this student clearly understood that AMLO's challenge to the

PRI was a favorable condition for *apartidista* (non-party) post-electoral activism. In

terms used elsewhere in the dissertation, the student worked against extending the second

erasure – cutting away the context of #YoSoy132's injection into and active construction

of spaces of politics. The student recognized the stakes of boundary making/policing, and

he assessed the current conjuncture in terms of the student movement's apparent outsides.

He continued, asserting that the task ahead, for this, "our last opportunity," was large, but

also that he was hopeful. With the participation from everyone assembled at the July 14-

15 *Convención*, he imagined, the necessary work would be done. "This is the first

conjuncture in which we have all the actors. Before, we were only students. Now, we are

peasants, workers, housewives… *¡Hay mucha banda!* [A huge contingent is here!]"

(author, fieldnotes, July 14, 2012, San Salvador Atenco).

This student's rousing comments on the strength of having been drawn together

was greeted with supportive applause at the convention, and was shared as part of a wider

discourse on *vinculación*. His vision would distinctly resonate with commentaries many

months later, on February 9, 2013, at an event organized by *Artistas Aliados #YoSoy132*

at the *Estela de Luz* monument, near Mexico City's *Bosque de Chapultepec* (Chapultepec

Forest). Even the name by which the event was promoted, #YoSoyPorqueTúEres132

(#IAmBecauseYouAre132), suggested a creation of linkages that might sustain post-

electoral activism of #YoSoy132 after the mobilizations against Peña Nieto's imposition.

The name notably lacked categories through which student-left politics has in the past

been known or linked. That is, #YoSoyPorqueTúEres132 called for solidarities exceeding likeness. People were invited to participate around only a "You" and an "I." The invitation to solidarity between attendees was not hemmed in but was opened to ongoing articulation.

More than the name, practical elements of the February 9, 2013 program (e.g., collaborative painting, t-shirt printing, and a book exchange) were organized to cultivate lateral connections between unaffiliated attendees and members of student activist assemblies who planned to volunteer their comments that afternoon. Attendees included parents and children, students, academics, skateboarders, and journalists. Most of the people who chose to speak were affiliated with a #YoSoy132 assembly, and spoke as an active member of a movement (author, fieldnotes, February 9, 2013, Miguel Hidalgo – Mexico City).

The comments from members of *Artistas Aliados* and the other student activist assemblies returned again and again to the question of *vinculación*. A presenter-facilitator from *Artistas Aliados* opened the event with fifteen minutes of his own comments. He stood behind a collage of banners representing the assemblies that had convened for the day's event. A sign-up sheet was passed from hand to hand through the convergence, as an invitation to contribute to the proceedings. Meanwhile, the facilitator's tone-setting comments emphasized that the success of forthcoming #YoSoy132 activism – the success of this "front" – would depend not on the decisions of apparent leadership but on the *"eje rector de acción"* ("the linchpin of action"). He suggested that activists will most effectively generate further action if they commit to augmenting #YoSoy132's existing

203

spatiality through articulation with trajectories heretofore apparently outside the "student-led" movement's core constituency (i.e., students, and specifically students in greater Mexico City, the *"zona metropolitana"*). The commentary's immediate referent was the use of available technology to link activism in the *zona metropolitana* to activism in the other 31 states.

> We suggest that this front may achieve the participation of Mexico's 31 states without demanding their physical presence in the capital. In this way, the actions of the front may be realized at the national level. We are obligated to use available technologies to reduce distances [that discourage the participation of people who do not live in Mexico City] (author, fieldnotes, February 9, 2013, Miguel Hidalgo – Mexico City).

Other commentators at #YoSoyPorqueTúEres132 emphasized the importance of linkages not only across space but also over time (i.e., between multiple pasts and the shared present). Commentaries explored how contemporary activists might draw upon but not lose themselves in these past struggles, recombining apparently eclipsed repertoires of action by putting them in contact with distinctive contemporary practices (author, fieldnotes, February 9, 2013, Miguel Hidalgo – Mexico City). In terms of this chapter, this putting in contact would mean drawing on disparate repertoires of activist practice to make visible a disagreement about the identities assigned in an ostensibly coherent, self-contained social whole – a given, partitioned context of action – that only includes clearly delimited and already identified spaces within which practices coded as politics are proper. This putting in contact would be part of a generative articulation of place-specific possibilities that are obscured through Tlatelolco-centric commemorative reactivations of past repression, which adherents to the student left invest with a capacity for replication.

An extant activist discourse of *vinculación* therefore allows one to envision an ongoing construction of new terrains of struggle, by actively squeezing through the grid of the old and, in the process, breaking apart its social-spatial certainties. To realize a politics of *vinculación* would demand dogged pursuit of "loose ends" that exceed the closure of an immobile space for the performance of an interminable encounter between the dominator and the dominated (Massey 1999, 284). Put differently, the realization of *vinculación* challenges the categories of student movement space, which, when enacted, secure a major treatment of politics according to which young people engage in political action after 1968 only in a pre-given, static space of "completed simultaneity" (ibid). These "loose ends" to be pursued in the service of reworking spaces of politics may be unimaginable within the terms of student movement space, but awareness of these limits on what one can think, say, and do in the name of politics only clarifies the importance of a non-essentialist challenge to the solidarities of likeness that have authorized the subjugation of difference in young people's politics after 1968.

If, as Kristin Ross (2002, 207) argues, the category "student" can sometimes be invoked to the effect of "[dissolving] politics into sociology," and may be depoliticizing insofar as it offers a movement a definitive social position that is beyond question and therefore universalized, the forms of *vinculación* discussed here can be understood as unaccounted-for variations on an ongoing "*flight from* social location." This acategorical politics is disruptively "squeezed through the pores" of a regime of representation that would set the terms of what passes for politics (Katz 1996, 489). This is to say, *vinculación* remobilizes and exceeds naturalized invariants of the "major language"

through which politics is known, and, by giving these categories over to variation, opens up possibilities for something entirely different (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 102) – a world given to the senses that is unrecognizable through the grid of what is.

People who practice such a politics in Mexico City are 'between' repression and heroism (as per my dissertation title) only insofar as they transversally work through these poles and challenge their immobility. In a passage I continue to unpack in Chapter Four, Deleuze and Guattari usefully clarify that, "*Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25, *italics in original*). Accordingly, I suggest that, by working between repression and heroism but suspending the certainty of their positions in the symbolic constitution of the social, or – put differently – by placing the figures proper to each of the poles (i.e., the state, students) "in variation," young people who practice a politics of *vinculación* might "*send the major language racing*" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 105, *italics in original*). Put differently, young people might transform compositions of order into components of passage (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 110).

The July 2012 *brigadas informativos* (information brigades) of a #YoSoy132 assembly within the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* offer one rare example of these imagined experiments with transversal extension among Mexico City's self-identified student activists. Participants in the *brigadas* borrowed their practice from a past activist repertoire (Zolov 1999, 126), but without reinscribing the social-spatial order through which that practice has retroactively been understood. The *brigadistas* self-consciously organized in spaces not identified immediately with the university (e.g., in the metro, in

neighborhood shops, on busy street corners, etc.) by passing out flyers, occupying space, staging encounters, and most generally pursuing convergences that they hoped would erode the social categories into which their student politics may otherwise be dissolved (author, fieldnotes, July 20, 2012, Coyoacán – Mexico City). The *brigadistas'* intent to challenge the category student for its function as an "*obstáculo*" ("obstacle") to solidarity with non-students was explicitly declared by several attendees of a July meeting of the #YoSoy132 assembly of the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*, one afternoon in the historic *Auditorio Che Guevara* (Che Guevara Auditorium) (author, fieldnotes, July 10, 2012, Coyoacán – Mexico City).[20]

But again, even if many of the activists identifying with #YoSoy132 in 2012-2013 clearly understood politics as a question of disrupting the family traits of inherited student movement space, a pervasive Tlatelolco-centric account of Mexico City's student activism has continued to cast contemporary activists as self-sacrificing victims of a state repression that is inevitably to come, or as arrested in place by repressive state power *qua* domination. This dualistic notion of power as domination, arresting the student activists in their place for the movement of history, was clearly at work in a April-May 2013 *toma de rectoria* (occupation of the administration building), near the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* as UNAM. The activists' anti-neoliberal messaging blurred quickly and often without clear referent into a post-1968 refrain to stop the repression (Jiménez 2013). To the detriment of activists' ability to challenge either the neoliberalization of the UNAM *prepas* or the February 2013 expulsion of student activists from one of the *prepas* in

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[20] Approximately 125 people came together for this meeting, which lasted for more than 10 hours.

question (CCH Naucalpan), participants in May 2013 *toma de rectoria* problematically

enacted the world of Octavio Paz's 1969 reflections on Tlatelolco. Paz's vision of an

unremittingly repressive adversary (Paz 1970, 114-116) is echoed in a excerpt from a

statement of solidarity with the *toma*, circulated on behalf of *Movimiento Estudiantil*

*Proletario-Popular* (Proletarian-Popular Student Movement), a student activist group

without any clear affiliation with a university.

> We believe that the struggle, which our *compañeros* of the CCH have dedicatedly
> sustained, is an example of tenacity and dignity against a system that seeks to
> completely pulverize our precarious people.

Where the authors of the statement claim a place in the movement of Mexico's history, it

is the place of the dominated, that of the ritually sacrificed who dominators would seek to

"pulverize."

After Rancière (2009, 287), a politics such as this, which reasserts the certainties

of the visible and the sayable in a partitioned police order, is in fact policing

misrecognized as politics. When student activists assume their place in Mexico's history,

they are therefore not only policed but also actively involved in effecting the maintenance

of a police state. In the unrehearsed performance of tacitly understood roles, they too

engage in policing. Fully consistent with a partition of the sensible that commemorators

suggest was forged in 1968 by the activists whose torch #YoSoy132 is supposed to carry,

and fully consistent with a world populated by members of a society who do not and will

not betray behaviors proper to their respective profiles, policed-policing student activists

enact their would-be spaces of politics, student movement space, as the stage on which to

perform the latest in an enduring conflict of repression and heroic self-sacrifice. On the

208

stage of "unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things" (Foucault 1977b, 142), the roles are inflexibly defined in advance. Acting into the categories of the major treatment, these student activists assert already-given identities that may serve them tactically (i.e., to the effect of mobilizing tens of thousands for a march), but which are inconsistent with their stated desire to disrupt repressive state power because the oppositional identities are invested precisely in its endurance. In absence of *vinculación*, student activists act, alongside the state, to "perfect" space (de Certeau 1986, 193-198), making it an instrument of domination. Though typically not, in any obvious sense, agents of the state, they nonetheless consolidate a police state. That is, they enact a society "made up of groups tied to specific modes of doing, to places in which these occupations are exercised, and to modes of being corresponding to these occupations and these places" (Rancière 2010, 36).

Conclusion

This chapter suggests the state is socially reproduced through anti-state protest, and that this social reproduction carries consequences for young people's politics. I have shown that, through their observable naturalization of social classifications, many student activists in Mexico City are enacting a police state. This notion of enactment carries with it a notion of the state not as unchanging but as emerging in relation to apparently external conditions, in this case, anti-state activism. The exercise of state power in post-1968 Mexico City is not, in this way of thinking, an expression of an internal essence; recall from the previous chapter that the state has "no heart" (Foucault 2008, 77). Rather,

state power is understood to emerge through an "eventful" temporality that disrupts the predictable teleology of the historicist accounts (Agnew 2001, 12; cf. Elden 2001), which have tended to prevail in commemorative reactivations of Mexico City's 1968/Tlatelolco. Put differently, my account of student activists' social reproduction of the state contests the predictable story of progress and self-actualization written into statist theorization (e.g., in narratives of Mexico's "democratic transition") that inexorably culminates in the State (Hegel 1953, 39; cf. Guha 2002, 2; Rodríguez 2000, 51).

The historicism contested by this account of enacting the state corresponds with an assumption of "separate spheres" that takes the state's space of intervention (civil society) as given (Painter 2006). The commonsense definition of the state as a distinctive institutional realm, which applies its capacities to a self-evident space of intervention, is an obstacle to apprehending the permeation of everyday life by "stateness" (Painter 2006), and more specifically, the dispersed social reproduction of a ghost-like effect of the state which haunts and sets limits on the political geographies of people who not only would not act in its name but also would identify against it. Statism, here, refers to top-down accounts of the state as a relatively independent entity that, in relation to society, embodies distinctive qualities of organization and administration (Gill 2010, 1048-1052). Contrary to statist theorization, which defines the state with reference to its centralizing function, or in terms of how the state "'intervenes in,' 'regulates' or 'affects' another autonomous sphere labeled 'society'" (ibid, 1051), this chapter indicates a persisting need to instead examine the state through attention to the 'how' of power (Corrigan 1994; Foucault 1980).

The functionalist assumptions of statist theorization are revealed by its adherents' definition of the state "*ex ante*," before the fact, and subsequent tracing of "observable social trends back to those institutions labeled 'the state'" (Gill 2010, 1052; Jessop 2001). Political geographers have challenged this functionalism by, among other things, examining how state power is exercised in historically and geographically specific ways (Marston 2004; see also Foucault 1980, 89), how processes of statization correspond with and are accompanied by uneven processes of societalization (Bernazzoli and Flint 2010), and how state effects are promulgated in spaces of everyday life (Painter 2006). All of these geographers indisputably decenter state power. After their analyses, state power is not simply held in or exercised from an institutional configuration, the state, which can be understood as given to contemporary politics. Nonetheless, political geographers engaged in this decentering have also arguably tended to retain a conception of police power as ideal-typical state power, in that they, in language I borrow from debates in critical geopolitics, "recenter analysis on that which is being decentered" (Coleman 2013, 500; see also Ó Tuathail 1996). In this chapter, I have therefore tried to more thoroughly decenter police *qua* state power from people who act in the name of the state to those activist constituencies apparently arrayed outside and against it. At issue here is how state power is counter-intuitively exercised by self-consciously anti-state actors whose lived experiences of the state have not been admitted even in political geographers' grounded accounts of "the geopolitical intellect" (Coleman 2013).

This chapter's account of a naturalized police state in post-1968 Mexico City calls for acknowledging that the spatiality of state power exceeds the social-spatial order of

taken-for-granted imaginaries in contemporary politics (e.g., the territory of the nation, the commemorative rituals of, in this case, student movement space). At the same time, this chapter shows that state power may be exercised by people whose practices do not lend them to being identified with the state. My attention to the apparent outsides of statecraft – 'outsides' that are critical for the operation of police power despite their non-conformity with an ideal-type state – therefore corresponds not only with theories of the state beyond the "territorial trap" (Agnew 1994; Fall 2010) but also with political geographers' theorizataion of social reproduction through which the ostensible givens of contemporary politics (e.g., the state, civil society, the nation and territory) come to be (Coleman 2008; Mitchell et al. 2003).

The case of student activism in Mexico City is a rich resource for problematizing these taken-for-granted givens of contemporary politics. Practitioners of student activism insistently invoke and enact the certainties of a political framework but they also observably aspire to, and sometimes do, engage in a politics that exceeds the categories of that framework. Just as Octavio Paz (1970, 123) once posited an unbroken "thread of [Aztec] domination" as the line of descent for Mexico's "true history," many contemporary activists in Mexico City cast their contemporary mobilizations as part of an awakening of political energies which have in the past been dominated, specifically those of the 1968 student movement. In doing so, these student activists enact a space of immobilized power relations that impede potential for the inscription of other realities. They reinscribe a world of heroism and repression that is already given to the senses. I have shown that, by practicing what passes for politics within the partitioned social-

spatial order of this police state, student activists paradoxically confirm the obviousness of the given world – the perfectly governed city of the police in which nothing happens and, as the unformed officer would say, there is "nothing to see" (Rancière 2010, 36).

But, despite what is given to the senses, spaces of politics are never simply fixed, inert, or dead. There are always, as I argue through reference to the writings of Doreen Massey (1999; 2013), "loose ends." As some contemporary activists in Mexico City are now exploring, *vinculación* may facilitate the realization of something altogether different, something which student activists might initially begin to pursue by questioning the world of repression-heroism that is so readily given to the senses. Young activists' non-dogmatic reactivation of disparate conditions for existing social formations, a genealogical reminder of the world's fragility, may disrupt the certainties of inheritance that inform the ongoing production of student movement space. At issue is challenging the configuration of the given, with all things in their proper place, for which President Peña Nieto famously claimed upon his electoral victory, "*México ganó*" ("Mexico won"); or perhaps challenging the specific single Mexico on behalf of which, on May 11, 2012 in front of the crowd assembled at the *Ibero*, Peña Nieto said he justifiably restored order through the police brutality in Atenco.

Politics, formulated here through a grounded account of the social reproduction of a police state, refuses the completion of identities and the spatial order in which those identities are performed. A possible inaugurating moment for such a politics was evident in the autocriticism at the above-mentioned event, #YoSoyPorqueTúEres132, when the opening commentator from *Artistas Aliados* asserted "*México es 132* ("Mexico is 132")

213

after ten minutes of exploding the limitations of the "we" on behalf of which activists had

formulated claims on behalf of a student-led #YoSoy132 (author, fieldnotes, February 9,

2013, Miguel Hidalgo – Mexico City). The assertion *México es 132* arguably inaugurates

such a politics because it makes visible a disagreement about the ostensibly coherent,

self-contained whole ("*México*") in which – as the pyramid of ritual sacrifice (for Paz), or

as the realization of a passage to liberal democracy (for Ebrard), or as the nation that

above all desires order (for Peña Nieto) – one can expect only a predictable performance

of asymmetrical antagonism that undermines any possible transformation of the social-

spatial order that now serves as a basis for government. To the contrary, "*México es 132*"

was offered in the context of an event that deliberately suspended the categories through

which student politics, as per the major treatment, is known. It thereby called forth a

solidarity that refuses to be hemmed in, and is open to unaccounted-for articulation.

Against the imposition of a predetermined form, the assertion presents a different world

to the senses. A statement of dissensus, it opens a space of politics, "a world of

competing worlds" (Rancière 2003).

Chapter Four: Disrupting repression-heroism: space, politics, organized memory

> "The hero has molar perception which takes in overall aggregates and clear-cut elements, well-distributed areas of fullness and emptiness (this perception is coded, inherited, and overcoded by the walls […])" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 535 n. 11).

Introduction

Adherents to Mexico City's post-1968 student left have naturalized a timeless world of ritual sacrifice by the dominators of the dominated. Many have observably taken their place in the sweep of what Octavio Paz (1970, 114-116) calls Mexico's "true history," a saga of self-sacrificing heroism in the face of state repression. This is not to say that Paz's interpretation of Mexican history is indeed "true," a belief for which one can sometimes find evidence in otherwise nuanced and carefully composed sociocultural analysis of modern Mexico (e.g., Coffey 2012). The point is to neither take the authoritarianism of the ruling party for granted nor pursue a "more substantial truth" (Foucault 1977a, 169-173) beneath the surface effects of Paz's reductive representation. Again, of interest is not the truth beneath an illusion of what 1968 in fact was; rather, of interest is the function of the illusion, or what the post-Tlatelolco regime of representation allows and limits young people from doing in the name of politics after 1968. Previous chapters have examined how and to what effect adherents to the student left act into Paz's words and reactivate the primordial violence that, he claims, found

215

expression in Tlatelolco. Here, I will expand on *vinculación*, elaborated in the last section of Chapter Three, and will show how other people (two contemporary artists and a recently deceased writer) have sought to intervene in the unfinished production of spaces of politics through practices of 'memory-work,' squeezed through the grid of an inherited political framework.

In previous chapters, I examined how, and to what effect, Mexico City's student left responds to the first erasure of 1968 (i.e., the Mexican government's abdication of responsibility for the murders on October 2, and a sustained cover up that left the archive of state violence so fragmentary). I argued that the student left's efforts to recover 1968 and assign responsibility for October 2 have produced a second erasure, enacted through dispersed practices, but often in the name of the student movement. This second erasure brought about the rigidification of a social-spatial order that provides young people a way into politics but set limits on what can be recognized as such. I have shown that the student left's practices of commemoration have produced a center of resonance around which memory of the past is organized: 1968 is Tlatelolco, and Tlatelolco is the essence of subsequent student activist practice against the repressive state. Consistent with a student-left discourse that has settled in sites coded as student movement space, Tlatelolco is the proper name that student activists can use to capture both the year 1968 and also a number of subsequent encounters with the state to which Tlatelolco appears naturally linked.

I have shown that, by adopting and reactivating this chain of equivalence (1968 as Tlatelolco, as subsequent state-civil society relations), adherents to the student left have

216

overcoded multiplicity with lines of uninterrupted filiation. In the language elaborated in this chapter, student activists have acted into a "genetic axis" of "organized memory" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 12-25), which has hemmed in experimentation and imposed a predetermined form on young people's politics. At the end of Chapter Three, however, I suggested that that some young activists in Mexico City understand politics as a question of disrupting the categorical certainties of student movement space. This chapter extends that analysis by looking to artistic and literary practices of memory-work that disrupt the certainties proper to Mexico's "true history" (Paz). I draw inspiration from the examples of memory-work to theorize how young activists might pursue what Massey (1999, 284) would call the "loose ends" of student movement space.

This final chapter examines artistic and literary approaches to denaturalizing the post-Tlatelolco repression-heroism framework. The chapter is organized in three parts. The first is a lengthy methodological discussion that recalls the stakes of the dissertation as a whole. I draw mostly from Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Rancière, writing on politics and aesthetics, as well as from a selection of interdisciplinary studies of memory and politics. This methodological discussion theorizes the denaturalization of the post-Tlatelolco repression-heroism political framework through practices of memory-work. I clarify why I read these artistic and literary works as I do, and I provide a definition of memory-work as practices that disrupt how the past is known and therefore the limits of how one might reactivate it.

The second part of the chapter examines three examples of memory-work: first, Ximena Labra's *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey* (2008), second, Roberto Bolaño's

217

*Amulet* (1999), and third, Thomas Glassford's *Xipe Totec* (2011). These individuals do not belong together in any obvious sense. They do not represent an aesthetic movement of any kind. But they each, in different ways, have produced their works in solidarity with young people of the student left while at the same time intervening in the political framework upon which young activists have drawn to lend their post-1968 student activism its coherence. Using language from Deleuze and Guattari (1987), I argue that Labra, Glassford, and Bolaño challenge the genetic axis of organized memory, with consequences for young people's politics after 1968.

Finally, this chapter's conclusion connects my analysis of art and literature to my ongoing discussions of *vinculación* (as solidarity exceeding likeness) in young people's politics. I suggest that, taken together, Labra, Glassford, and Bolaño work in the service of configuring a world that facilitates *vinculación*. That is, the artistic and literary works point towards obstacles and possibilities for forging as-yet unknown identities through political struggle. Where the memory-works fail, they nonetheless reveal the spatiality of the repression-heroism framework and thereby open it to critique. Most generally, Labra, Glassford, and Bolaño expand, or work towards expanding, what can count as politics after 1968. They destabilize the limits of what can be said and done in relation to the past, and by whom.

A methodology for examining memory-work after the second erasure

This chapter examines artistic and literary practices in the wake of Mexico City's 1968. The selection of artists and writers was necessarily partial. The events of 1968 have

exerted a magnetic pull on practitioners of creative work in Mexico City, so I could have examined the work of other individuals for what they do in relation to 1968. For example, Belgian artist Francis Alÿs' *Cuentos Patrióticos* (1997), a video of sheep following Alÿs around the flagpole in the *Zócalo*, could be read, in terms of commemoration, as a *cuento* (story) of the insistent return to repression around which post-1968 politics is organized. Works by other individuals are also relevant. But the three individuals examined in this chapter were selected for how their interventions in the spatiality and temporality of Tlatelolco suggest, at once, a potential for other ways of knowing 1968 and the durability of the repression-heroism framework through which the year is known.

I show how this trio of artists and writers realize or, at least, draw attention to a politics by "squeezing through the pores" (Katz 1996, 489) of a regime of representation that adherents to the student left have insistently reactivated to the effect of making visible only an antagonism between forces of repression and those of heroism. Reflecting on the dissertation title, these artists and writers are not 'between' repression and heroism in that they continuously move from one pole to the other. Neither are they between in the sense that they follow their forefathers in a continual negotiation of the two – the state and civil society (or perhaps 'the people') (see Scott 1994, viii).[21] To be clear, I say these artists and writers work 'between' repression and heroism because they work across and disrupt the framework that the figures of repression and heroism share.

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[21] I agree with historians of post-revolutionary Mexico (e.g., Joseph and Nugent 1994) that one cannot assume in advance the existence of a single hegemonic project to which the state is aligned, and equally, that one should not reduce resistance to any one specific model. That is, I am sympathetic to the claims for continual negotiation. But I want to problematize how this apparent negotiation between the state and civil society defines statist limits for what counts as politics, no matter how plural one or the other is admitted to be.

*Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one *and* the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25, *italics in original*).

Like other scholars of art in the wake of political violence (e.g., Calirman 2012), I situate the artistic and literary works by Labra, Bolaño, and Glassford within a wider context,[22] in this case, the context of the repression-heroism political framework. At the same time, my analysis and the works in question cut across this schema and challenge its certainties. This minor working through of the major treatment of politics can be said to call forth a political moment in relation to an established event of history. For Premesh Lalu (2009), the "event of history" is the moment in which what can and cannot be said about the past is defined, and the certainties of the visible and the sayable are established. The event of history is the moment when context is pitched beyond question. To the contrary, memory-work suspends the certainty of context, and suggests that what can and cannot be said about the past may be redefined so new directions can be opened for writing and enacting the world. Analysis of how these artists and writers configure the world of young people's politics after 1968 can therefore itself be a practice of memory-work, twinned with their works of world making.

I draw inspiration for my analysis from interdisciplinary memory studies literature in the humanities and social sciences. For example, geographer Karen Till's recent work

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[22] In that I examine creative practices in the wake of political violence, and with reference to a wider field of art, literature, and politics, my analysis resembles Claudia Calirman's "contextual approach" to Brazilian art under dictatorship. Calirman (2012, 7-8) draws from a variety of texts to situate three artists within the politics of their moment, and thereby show how certain works may not have closely adhered to the tropes of protest movements but nonetheless could arguably perform political work by elaborating new visual languages.

on "wounded cities" examines cities marked by past violence, among them Cape Town, Berlin, and Bogotá. Mexico City could be added to this list. Till (2012) claims that, by understanding these cities as "wounded," one prepares the ground for interventions that denaturalize historically and geographically specific epistemologies that legitimate past violence and continue to structure their inhabitants' political lives. For Till, these cities' designation as "wounded" inaugurates an interventionist research practice that disrupts the representational closure imposed by dominant or 'major' ways of knowing, and which broadens the field of possibilities within which inhabitants of these cities construct their lives.

By designating cities riven by past violence as "wounded," Till (2012) positions her work alongside that of other artists, activists and scholars, who intervene in epistemologies that permit and also arguably prescribe only the predictable perpetuation of the same. This approach is accompanied by additional geographical scholarship on a co-constitutive relationship between memory and space. It is argued that memory not only "changes through spaces" (Legg 2007, 457), but also is maintained to the effect of sustaining and sometimes challenging social-spatial order (Hoelscher and Alderman 2004, 348). Geographers interested in the potential challenges to social-spatial order effected by memory (e.g., Kanouse 2008; Lloyd 2013; Till 2008) show how artistic and activist memory-work can make visible, or otherwise give to the senses, a set of possible transformations in enduring social-spatial order. Memory-work is shown to perform "dissensus" and make the past erupt in the present with a specifically disruptive force (see especially Kanouse 2008). Such geographical memory studies scholarship not only

examines but also arguably models memory-work insofar as it productively disrupts inherited ways of knowing that have condemned practitioners of the sites in question to a repetitive reactivation of past wrongs.

The interventionary approach modeled in geographical scholarship is echoed in the work of historian Premesh Lalu. Lalu performs a similar task in relation to narratives of South Africa's political transition. In *The Deaths of Hintsa* (Lalu 2009), he examines regimes of representation concomitant with a democratic transition long defined in terms of the juridical truth pursued by post-Apartheid South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Of interest for Lalu is persisting doubt around the shooting of Xhosa King Hintsa by British colonial forces in 1835. The key source of evidence for writing on the matter, and all else from the colonial and Apartheid past, had long been reports of colonial officials directly or indirectly implicated in his killing. Lalu argues that, leading up to and persisting through the transition from Apartheid has been a proliferation of sources that adhere to and are intelligible only in terms of a "regime of truth" shared with the reports of the colonial officials. After Apartheid, the TRC experienced an imperative to adhere to this regime of truth insofar as it gleaned from the colonial archive a kind of evidence with reference to which it could identify and account for human rights abuses that the archive had long functioned to cover up.

The use of the colonial archive to account for colonial- and Apartheid-era human rights abuses was, in the terms of my argument, a response to the first erasure. The first erasure, in this case, would be specifically that of the colonial authorities. For Lalu, the TRC's post-Apartheid response produced what I have been calling a second erasure. This

second erasure was secured by the TRC's inability to shake its reliance on the mode of evidence through which colonial authorities brought about the first erasure. In light of these erasures, Lalu argues that overcoming Apartheid will demand more than the TRC is, as such, capable of doing. For him, realizing a post-Aparthied epistemology would demand breaking from a colonial regime of truth with which South Africa's ostensibly post-Apartheid leadership is in fact still intertwined. Although Lalu does not use the word, I would suggest that Lalu's memory-work offers a model for my efforts to work transversally, between repression and heroism. After Deleuze and Guattari, Lalu (2009, 23) disruptively seeks a line of flight that would allow one to "relocate the force of agency in the very conditions of constraint to which it is ultimately bound." That is to say, instead of seeking the possibility of politics in the margins, among the excluded, or otherwise outside the inherited social-spatial order, Lalu identifies political possibility in a situation of apparent closure. From within and by way of dissensual memory-work, Lalu seeks to reconfigure the world proper to a regime of representation that a historical discourse on the event of Hintsa's death has heretofore assumed.

The 'memory-work' I examine in the following three examples (Labra, Bolaño, and Glassford), and with which I hope to twin my own project, is advanced in the face of a genetic axis reiterated through the student left's claims to membership in a post-1968 movement family. Some further specification of the context of these memory-works is appropriate before I proceed with the analysis.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, artists' assertions of independence from the PRI regime carried with them a vocabulary that was inextricably tied up with memories of

223

1968 as the year of student-led mobilizations confronting the repressive state. For example, at the opening ceremony of the *Salón Independiente 69* (Independent Salon '69) exhibition at UNAM, the firebrand artist José Luis Cuevas explicitly echoed the message of Adolfo Mexiac's widely circulated 1968 engraving *¡Libertad de expresión!*, produced concurrent with the previous year's mobilizations, when he asserted, "This is not a commercial exhibition. This is the result of a struggle conducted in order to break with official art. Its character? Freedom of expression" (García de Germenos 2006, 52; McCaughan 2012, 20).

In contrast to previous generations of movement-affiliated or activist artists (e.g., Mexican muralists like Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros), who – in the first half of the twentieth century – were supported by the post-revolutionary PRI regime or threw in with a Mexican Communist Party that sought convergence with the revolution's official party, many post-1968 artists embodied an increasing "mistrust of State funding," and followed "the anti-official lead" of the *Salón Independiente* (Vázquez Mantecón 2006, 39). The example of the *Salón Independiente* was instructive in this regard, having initially come together to agitate for changes in the structure of a state-sponsored cultural event that was to be organized alongside Mexico City's 1968 Olympics, the *Exposición Solar* (García de Germenos 2006, 40). For these artists, 1968 marked a necessary break with tradition in leftist cultural production.

In broad terms, however, it is clear that, while post-1968 activist artists rejected the nationalist iconography of early twentieth century Mexican School social realism and muralism, the emerging regime of representation was not unproblematic. The artists'

224

tendency to contract their vision around the figures of repression and heroism is clarified by examining posters, leaflets, and picket signs of students and faculty in Mexico City's famous arts schools, the ENAP and *La Esmeralda* (the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes*). In 1968, artists from these schools would work within propaganda brigades, an organizational form echoed but modified in the previously-discussed information brigades of #YoSoy132 in 2012.

I argued in Chapter Three that widely circulated representations of contemporary student activism confirm a homosocial norm of macho posturing and thereby reinscribe a gendered partitioning of student movement space by virtue of which female-bodied activists are made to be, as they have been, apparently inappropriate practitioners of the student activist repertoire (Carey 2005; Frazier and Cohen 2003). The conditions for this reinscription were set in contributions to the second erasure in the years immediately after Tlatelolco, and also in the masculinist activist art of 1968. Mexicanist sociologist Edward McCaughan's recent analysis of activist art in the 1960s and 1970s reads Stuart Hall to formulate the situation accordingly; he writes, "If identities are constituted within representation, then the identity of the Mexican student movement was masculine and heroic" (McCaughan 2012, 57). Through dispersed practices of representation that together constituted the second erasure, this heroic identity came to be proper to spaces of young people's politics conflated with student activism. The genetic axis of post-1968 student activism, a patriarchal line of filiation, functions as a center of resonance around which the student left unified but also unwittingly erased differences in the movement family that stands opposed to the PRI's official revolutionary family.

225

In the paternal and maternal lineages of the origin-rape in Paz's *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (Paz 1985, 65-88) – the revolutionary family with reference to which adherents to the PRI claim their legitimacy as leaders of Mexico, and the movement family with reference to which contemporary student activists claim to inherit the struggle of a past student movement – the genetic axis of an organized memory of 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco imposes a predetermined form on young people's politics. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 12), "a genetic axis is like an objective pivotal unity upon which successive stages are organized." I will continue to use the analytical language of Deleuze and Guattari with reference to the case. It allows me argue that, if memory-work names any number of heterogeneous practices that disrupt how the past is known and therefore the limits of how one might reactivate it, memory-works are minor treatments of a major language of politics that activist artists elaborated in the years after 1968.

A "major language" of, for example, Mexico City's 1968 is a standard extracted from the variations of day-to-day use. It is a language that is "homogenized, centralized, standardized, becoming a language of power, a major or dominant language" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 101); it is the language of the student left's repetitive reinscription of repression-heroism through commemoration of that which governing elites sought to obscure through the first erasure. The memory-work examined in this chapter can be seen to function in a minor mode insofar as it suspends the naturalized invariants of the major language through which young people's politics in Mexico City has been known. By giving naturalized categories of the major language to variation, the minor treatment of a major language opens up possibilities for something unaccountable and entirely different.

226

While the memory of Mexico City's 1968 has tended to be, in a word, "organized memory," "with centers of significance and subjectification" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 16), the memory-work explored in this chapter disrupts the genetic axis along which the student left narrates its descent. The memory-work of this chapter therefore complements the genealogies of Chapter Two, and corresponds with Foucault's well-known criticism of "traditional history" written as a tale of descent that follows a social formation from its penultimate expression of development to its ostensible origin (see Foucault 1977b). In relation to the epigraph with which I begin this chapter (unpacked below), the three examples of memory-work disturb or at least denaturalize the molar perception of the hero (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 535 n. 11). That is, they suggest a way of thinking and reactivating the past that would allow the restlessness of the multiple to flourish in the place of a tidy dialectical confrontation between the two familiar aggregates. The three examples problematize a repertoire of young people's politics that has been reduced to an enduring confrontation between a repressive state and heroic students, available to be enacted in the "well-distributed areas" of student movement space (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 535 n. 11).

For memory without organs: Labra, Glassford, and Bolaño

I began this chapter with an epigraph on the figure of the hero from Deleuze and Guattari's plateau on short fiction in *A Thousand Plateaus*. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 535 n. 11), the "molar perception" of the hero allows the hero to "[take] in overall aggregates and clear-cut elements." These aggregates and elements are the

visible and the sayable of the past and therefore the given world in relation to which, in the language of Jacques Rancière (2010, 37), police order is composed.

My previous discussions of acategorical thought suggest a frequently unremarked affinity between Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault, and Rancière on the questions of politics and social-spatial order. In the epigraph for this chapter, Deleuze and Guattari's affinity with Rancière's theory of politics and aesthetics is confirmed in a suggestion that we might expect the hero's molar perception to conform to a particular distribution of the sensible. As related to post-1968 rituals of protest in Mexico City, that is to say that the molar perception of the hero takes in figures of repression and heroism that correspond to "well-distributed areas" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 535 n. 11). These might otherwise be identified as proper places in a symbolic constitution of the social (Ross 2002, 23), or as fixed spaces wherein this antagonism's forms of appearance would be appropriate. Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that the hero's molar perception is "coded, inherited, and overcoded by the walls" (1987, 535 n. 11) evokes the bounded, properly distributed spaces in which expressions of each overall aggregate – repressive state, heroic students – can be anticipated. Again, the epigraph reveals affinity between Rancière and Deleuze and Guattari. To draw out the voice of the former, one could say the examples of memory work in this chapter cultivate a "dissensus" (Rancière 2003) in that they make present to the senses, and therefore actionable, a different world than that which is overcoded by the walls naturalized for the hero's molar perception.

The student left commemorates Tlatelolco as a name that captures not only the whole of 1968 but also subsequent state-civil society relations to which it has been made

to appear naturally linked. Post-1968 artists and writers have been and continue to be important actors in overcoding multiplicity with lines of filiation. I showed in Chapter Three that young people in Mexico City have enacted a repertoire of student activism to the effect of socially reproducing a police state. Similar analysis in the fields of literature and art would reveal that attempts at visual and literary subversion (Vázquez Mantecón 2006, 39) in the years since Tlatelolco have similarly consolidated a police state through which young people channel their practices of representation and protest. Post-1968 activists and activist artists alike posit their adversary as a dominating force against which only a muscular, masculine social movement can adequately respond. The erasure of women and homosexuals from this confrontation with dominating power, within, for example, the student-left cultural production of the propaganda brigades discussed in the previous section, suggests that the PRI's immediate cover up of Tlatelolco – the first erasure – spawned a second erasure under the sign of heroic student movement defined starkly against the repressive Mexican state.[23]

With regard to art and literature, previous chapters of this dissertation witness the composition of a second erasure across diverse works, including the short stories of Carlos Fuentes, the films of Carlos Bolado and students in the *Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos*, the essays of Octavio Paz, the curatorial practices of a show in the *Museo del Estanquillo*, and songs of anarcho-punk bands like Desobediencia Civil and Rabia Proletaria. In the following, I reveal how some artists and writers actively

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[23] McCaughan (2012) shows how, amidst a fraying of Mexico's 'revolutionary family,' Mexico City artists created visual discourses that facilitated new modes of citizenship which themselves were shot through with unresolved exclusions along lines of race, class, gender and sexuality.

challenge the second erasure through my analysis of Ximena Labra's *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey* (2008), Roberto Bolaño's *Amulet* (1999, published in English in 2006), and Thomas Glassford's *Xipe Totec* (2010).

*Ximena Labra's 'Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey'*

In 1993, for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tlatelolco Massacre, a memorial was erected in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, the site of the massacre. The stone *estela* (stele) was etched with, 1) a reference to the duration – 1968-1993 – during which *compañeros* have marched "*adelante*" ("onward") against repression, 2) a list of names of the few people officially recognized to have been killed on October 2, and 3) an excerpt from the poem "Memorial de Tlatelolco" by Rosario Castellanos (Castellanos 1995, 296). When viewed from a short distance, the text disappears into an unremarkable stone slab that is set against the background of a seventeenth century Catholic Church, adjacent to a modern museum, an archaeological site, and dozens of apartment buildings of late-twentieth century provenance that dominate the visible landscape.

Art historian Robin Greeley (2013, 24) separates the *estela* from its wider context when she claims that the memorial reiterates "the outmoded tenets of commemorative statues and plaques" by maintaining "a rigid separation of object and viewer." The *estela* is not, however, only an object to be viewed. It is a point of organization for the annual commemorative activity on October 2. As a photograph from the 2010 commemoration shows (see Figure 25, below), it is a site at which one pays testament to the "*compañeros caidos*" ("fallen comrades") of 1968 through offerings of flowers, notes, candles, and so

on. In my years of fieldwork amidst commemorative activity, I also witnessed the *estela* and the immediately adjacent space being used for performance and dance, distributing propaganda, selling pirated DVDs and books, and taking photographs with recognizable spokespeople for 1968 activism.



Figure 25: People collecting around the *estela* to commemorate 1968 on October 2, 2010

In 2012, the *estela* was bordered by a suspended line of string on which activist

commemorators hung flyers that framed the day's events accordingly: "Our fight is for a

Mexico where there is no repression" (see Figure 26, below). This text is embedded in an

illustration (a photocopied engraving) of repression, embodied in an anthropomorphized

tank that is running over a protestor. The protestor is marked as a student by books

splayed next to his body. Alongside the illustration, the flyer includes additional text that,

in terms of the Mexico of "no repression" message, incongruously echoes the contours of

the "police conception of history" (Ross 2002), discussed in Chapter Three. Activists are

encouraged to "Occupy [their] place in history."



Figure 26: A flyer hung on string suspended as a border around the *estela* on October 2, 2012

Of course, to fight for a Mexico in which there is no repression is also to pursue a break from the history in which activists are being encouraged to find their place. The one action cannot abide by the other, because – in finding their place in history – activists necessarily maintain the social-spatial order to which their enactment of that history would conform. Following Ross (2002), the fight against repression is therefore dissolved into social ritual. In the flyer's call to occupy a place in history, a "properly functional order" (i.e., the police) is made to function properly; "any singularity of experience – and any way in which individuals produce meaning that attempts to capture that singularity – is cancelled out in the process" (Ross 2002, 23). Behind the line of string on which these flyers were hung, then, the *estela* stood as a point of resonance for ritualized reactivation of 1968 as Tlatelolco, a site of "intrinsic relations" between dominator and dominated in the site most frequently associated with what 1968 can be invoked to mean (on intrinsic relations that obey well distributed areas, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 196).

On the fortieth anniversary of Tlatelolco, in 2008, the artist Ximena Labra worked with teams to produce three fiberglass replicas of the *estela*, which she then installed in various locations around Mexico City between October and November. Labra named the project *Tlatelolco odisea del espacio* (in English, *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey*) to evoke Stanley Kurbrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and thereby to situate the *estela* alongside the recurring monoliths of Kubrick's film, which mark watershed moment's in the evolution – for Labra, the "*transformación*" – of human life (interview with the author, Ximena Labra, February 3, 2013). The replicas of the *estela*, as *monolitos* (monoliths), were accordingly distributed at sites across the city. Labra placed

233

three monoliths in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, alongside the original, from October 2 to October 8; she placed three in the *Zócalo* between October 10 and October 19 (two by the flag and one by the entrance to the metro); she placed one *estela* each in the plaza in front of the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*, the plaza of the *Monumento a la Revolución*, and the expansive metro station plaza *Glorieta Metro Insurgentes*, from October 23 to November 3; and, finally, she placed three monoliths on the campus of UNAM, at *Las Islas* (a popular meeting place near the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*), from November 6 to November 30. At the end of the *estela*'s migration through Mexico City, Labra donated the replicas to UNAM, where her father had been a student activist in 1968.

I interviewed Ximena Labra on February 3, 2013, at a restaurant in Coyoacán's *Plaza Hidalgo*. We discussed the commemoration of 1968 at a time when activists were still reeling from the heavy-handed police response to the December 1 protests against the inauguration of Enrique Peña Nieto discussed in Chapter Three. Labra is a graduate of the *Universidad Iberoamericana*, where students who identified as the '131' of the slogan '*Yo soy 132*' ('I am 132') famously protested the return of the PRI on May 11, 2012, and, in terms of the post-Tlatelolco political framework, thereby awoke the jaguar – a previously dormant student movement that would be reanimated by young people taking their place in history. In June 2012, soon after the May 11 protest at the *Ibero*, Labra publicly expressed her support "for the students of the movement Yo soy 132" through a letter of solidarity signed alongside many other well known contributors to contemporary art, literature, museum curation, and scholarship (La cultura es 132 2012). Our February 2013 interview revealed the attraction of analogy with the past, as when

Labra characterized activists of #YoSoy132 as "the same as" those of 1968. But more important was Labra's discussion of Mexico's ghosts, its "*fantasmas políticas*" ("political phantasms") that resurface after 1968. Labra suggested that her installation, *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey*, responded to an apparent "*continuidad en la forma de fantasma*" ("continuity in the form of the phantasm") (interview with the author, Ximena Labra, February 3, 2013). Put in language from previous discussions of acategorical praxis in this dissertation, this is to say that the installation intervened in dispersed spaces of a phantasmal continuity that, after Foucault (1977a, 170), effects the organization of memory through a process of centering.

In "Theatrum Philosophicum," a review of then recent books by Gilles Deleuze, Foucault (1970a, 169-170) discussed the phantasms of history as "extra-beings" that "function at the limits of bodies" to present themselves as "centered organism[s]." The surface effects of phantasms are the sensible clear-cut elements of molar perception. In Labra's work, these surface effects are clearly captured in the direct reproduction of a memorial to past violence around which, at least in Tlatelolco, people gather for commemoration. The continuity of phantasms to which Labra referred in our interview, and which she concretizes in her reproductions, therefore arguably makes intelligible the world of repression-heroism that, after 1968, activist artists would endlessly reactivate to the effect of consolidating a regime of representation through which the phantasm will, barring disruption, predictably continue to be called forth.

The emerging figure of the repressive state and centrality of repression in post-1968 representations of youth politics is exemplified by a 1968 work of Arias Murueta,

235

part of the famous *Mural efímero* at UNAM. The *Mural efímero* project was a collective

mural elaborated on a structure of corrugated metal that had been erected to cover the

vandalized remains of a monument to President Miguel Alemán. For his part, Murueta

produced a torn-up doll with strings hanging from its belly to refer to a young woman

who was killed during an act of repression in the *Zócalo* on August 28, 1968 (García de

Germenos 2006, 41; Vázquez Mantecón 2006, 38). In the late 1970s and '80s, the figure

of repression would also mark the work of *Proceso Pentágono*, as part of the *Grupo*

movement, in this case as a response to repression by young people who did not directly

experience Tlatelolco but nonetheless practiced cultural politics through categories of its

interpretation in decades that followed (McCaughan 2012, 103-123).

On the other hand, for a genealogy of the heroic student in activist art, some of the

*Obra 68* (Oeuvre '68) exhibition of the *Salón de la Plástica Mexciana* exemplified the

emergence of that figure's centrality in youth politics. The members of the *Salón* would

sign their names below a work by Francisco Icaza titled "*Apoyamos a los estudiantes*"

("We Support the Students") to underscore their resistance to a repressive state (Vázquez

Mantecón 2006, 38). In the binary treatment of what was happening in that year, reducing

the conflict to two great molar aggregates (the student movement and the state), post-

1968 artists obscured what Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 215-217) call an "unassignable

molecular flow" for which the students were no doubt carriers but not the obvious

protagonists. That is, they obscured an ongoing agitation of social location, and acted into

a grid of intelligibility that gave social location to perception. Subsequent performances

of student movement space were made possible by this second erasure that activist artists

continue to maintain today. Endurance of this regime of representation in visual art is

confirmed by artists' insistence, decades later, on linking all manner of aesthetic and

political shifts to "the beginnings of the Student Movement" (García de Germenos, 2006,

50): an origin in protest as well as in cultural politics.

It is in this light that one should understand Ximena Labra's interventions. The

migration of the *estela* expresses a desire both to participate in commemoration of 1968

and also to potentially transform what and where the legacy of 1968 should be. In our

interview, Labra recounted that placing the installations in public spaces demanded

overcoming bureaucratic obstacles, and was in fact possible only because the relevant

authorities in each space of installation shared with Labra her belief that doing this work

was important (interview with the author, Ximena Labra, February 3, 2013). This

facilitation of the *estela*'s migration was crucial for ensuring the piece's transformative

effect, or, as the case may be, its revelation that potential transformation of how the year

is remembered is discouraged by the now habitual reactivations of Tlatelolco only in

certain spaces of the city (i.e., the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, and sometimes the *Zócalo*).

Facilitation of the piece's migration on the fortieth anniversary allowed Labra to at least

tentatively put the spatiality of 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco under pressure.

Of course, in an obvious sense, the installation gestures to a wider 1968 than that

to which it the year is typically reduced in ritualized commemorations of Tlatelolco. Its

1968 includes far-flung cultural production such as Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space

Odyssey*. More crucially, the 1968 of Labra's installation is also a year experienced and

subsequently made commemorable in the sites to which it migrated: *Monumento a la*

237

*Revolución*, *Las Islas*, the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*, and so on. For example, in the early twenty-first century, the *Glorieta Metro Insurgentes* is now a gay cruising spot and space of pedestrian circulation (see Figure 27, below). It is circumscribed by an elevated traffic circle, and stands as what Carlos Fuentes (1980) once described as a stack of tortillas. In relation to 1968, the *Glorieta* is most clearly commemorable as an icon of the modern transportation system, developed as part of Mexico's bid for the 1968 Olympics. But Labra's temporary installation could have been read, for the weeks it was there, to claim wider significance for the *Glorieta*: then-there a place in which one could witness surface effects of an unresolved ghost that haunts post-1968 Mexico City.



Figure 27: A replica of the *estela* in the *Glorieta Metro Insurgentes*. Photo by Ximena Labra

For the art critic Cuauhtémoc Medina (2009), the physical migration of the *estela* "restored the monument with a novelty value, bringing it to audiences that would probably never visit it in its original site." That is, even if the *estela* embodied of what Greeley (2013, 24) called the "outmoded tenets" of commemorative art, the distribution of replicas of the *estela* made the monument new to those who would not otherwise encounter it. There is also arguably a politics implied in recontextualizing the object, or redistributing it despite the fact that it is so clearly proper to only specific locations. Using the language of the previous section, Labra placed the *estela* in spaces that are not distributed according to the major language of 1968, and thereby enacted a politics of memory in Rancière's specific sense of challenging the social-spatial order of an organized memory or reconfiguring the world given to the senses (Rancière 2003). Put differently, *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey* could have been seen to cultivate dissensus; it promised to disrupt a perceptive field in which only certain clear-cut elements are given to sensory experience.

Labra is, however, clearly aware that this potential disruption may not have been realized. The installation does not itself resolve decades of haunting by this *fantasma*. More important, however, is perhaps what the migration of the *estela* revealed but could not disturb: that the concentration of commemorative activity in specific spaces is an effect of habit, a possible politics dissolved into social ritual. This is especially evident in a video produced to document the project.[24] In a scene from the November installation in UNAM's *Ciudad Universitaria*, young couples and groups of friends are shown lying on

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[24] See http://webcronic.com/ximenalabra/tlatelolco/. Accessed 14 April 2014.

or sitting around the replicas of the *estela*. A black dog trots past, and the camera pans to follow it. Bodies come together in *Las Islas* just as they normally would towards other objects in the space – a soccer game, a student activist meeting, a group of friends smoking cigarettes, and so on. The banality of what was happening around the replicas of the *estela* at UNAM is emphasized by Labra's juxtaposition of this scene from everyday life with the dramatic score from Stanley Kubrick's film (Richard Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra").

Cuauhtémoc Medina (2009) similarly captures *Tlatelolco*'s ineffectiveness for the transformation of everyday life at its sites of installation when he writes,

> Not only did the audiences generally take it for granted that this slab [a given replica of the *estela*] was not supposed to be located in the places where they encountered it […], but they subjected [the copy] to the specific spatial and practical conditions that prevailed in their new context. In a word, the moving monuments failed to significantly transform their surroundings into a space of mourning.

That is, Labra's installations did not effectively dislocate the phantasm of repression. The surface effects of the phantasm, and the centralization of memory around the genetic axis of an enduring movement family that, viewers understand, is properly reactivated only in certain locations: these persisted undisturbed. Again, after Medina (2009), "the moving monuments failed to significantly transform their surroundings into a space of mourning." But I would suggest this failure in fact marks Labra's success in problematizing the political framework that young people continue to inherit in their lives as student activists. I would argue that the revelation of continuity in phantasms should, for its problematization of a political framework that is given to habit, be understood as a

contribution to denaturalizing the spatiality of young people's politics, thereby making it vulnerable to interventions through which it can again be politicized.

*Roberto Bolaño's 'Amulet'*

Like Ximena Labra's *Tlatelolco: Public Space Odyssey*, Roberto Bolaño's 1999 novella *Amulet* draws attention to the endurance of the post-Tlatelolco regime of representation, specifically the endurance of that political framework through categories and dates that the student left calls upon or performs to the effect of establishing coordinates for action to come. If movement-affiliated artists and writers have tended to consolidate a regime of representation around two central figures, the repressive state and heroic students, Bolaño's *Amulet* is immediately notable for disturbing the certainty of the latter figure. In this, Bolaño's novella has recently been accompanied by the work of other cultural workers like Beatriz Argelia González, whose film in progress *Mariposas en un mundo de palabras* challenges the centrality of the masculine student activist hero by recognizing the contributions of women to 1968 and to processes of social change in the decades since. But again, Bolaño's novella not only suspends the invariant figures of the major language of 1968. *Amulet* also challenges the ordering function of the dates (on ordering and order-words, see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 75-85).

> The year 1968 became the year 1964 and the year 1960 became the year 1956.
> But it also became the years 1970 and 1973 and the years 1975 and 1976 (Bolaño 2006, 32).

In these moments, *Amulet* sets the milestones of the post-1968 family portrait adrift, and thereby intervenes in a well-established relay between the archive of state violence in

241

Mexico City and the practices through which young people continue to enact a cramped reactivation of antagonism with the state that passes for politics.

*Amulet* is narrated by Auxilio Lacouture, presented as a Uruguayan "mother of Mexican poets" (Bolaño 2006, 1 and *passim*). Lacouture was the fictional counterpart to Alcira Soust Scaffo, a poet and schoolteacher who Bolaño met in 1970 (O'Bryen 2011, 474). This is to say that *Amulet*, like many of Bolaño's works of fiction, is semi-autobiographical. In the words of Natasha Wimmer, translator of *The Savage Detectives*, Bolaño "lovingly resuscitates the characters, the love affairs, the squabbles, the pettiest details of bohemian Mexico City around 1976" (Wimmer 2007, xiv).

In the mid-1970s (the object of *Amulet* and also much of *The Savage Detectives*), Bolaño and other members of the Infrarrealist Movement famously sabotaged Mexico City literary events by shouting their own poems over those of authors on the bill. They made enemies of some of Mexico City's most celebrated writers, including Octavio Paz (Debroise 2006a, 214-215). The Infrarrealists are the sometimes barely concealed "visceral realists" of Bolaño's fiction. In one passage of *The Savage Detectives*, one of the narrators captures the restlessness and unpredictability of the Infrarrealists when he speculates about a possible "terrorist act" (Bolaño 2007, 175):

> I saw the visceral realists getting ready to kidnap Octavio Paz, I saw them breaking into his house (poor Marie-José, all that broken china), I saw them emerging with Octavio Paz gagged and bound, carried shoulder-high or slung like a rug, I even saw them vanishing into the slums of Nezahualcóyotl in a dilapidated black Cadillac with Octavio Paz bouncing around in the trunk, but I recovered quickly. It must have been the nerves […]

In commentary on the novella, *Amulet* is most frequently noted to be an expansion of Auxilio Lacouture's testimony from Bolaño's best-known fictional work, *The Savage*

242

*Detectives* (2007, 195-205). In the four pages devoted to her recollections in that book, Lacouture describes having been "the only one who stuck it out at the university in 1968, when the riot police and the army came in" and violated the constitutionally protected autonomy of UNAM on September 18, occupying the campus until September 30 (Bolaño 2007, 202). Lacouture (like the real life Alcira Soust) hides in a bathroom of the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* with nothing to eat but toilet paper on which she scribbles poems from memory. Across the nearly two hundred pages of *Amulet*, this traumatic experience "returns incessantly, long after its physical duration has ended" (Long 2010, 128), and Lacouture establishes linkages between these moments of recollection and the singularity of other space-times.

Auxilio Lacouture would also appear obliquely in Bolaño's other works of fiction, for example, in "Photos," a short story originally published in 1996 (Bolaño 2010). There, Bolaño's fictional persona, Arturo Belano, reads from an encyclopedia of French poets while traveling, and he remembers a woman who carried around "a book on Arab poets or North African poets" in "1973 or '74" (Bolaño 2010, 186). As in *Amulet*, Lacouture is here a mobile point of connection between uncertain places and times.

In *Amulet* and in *The Savage Detectives*, Lacouture's recollections of 1968 are productively vague not only about its chronology but also about the year's protagonists or participants. Lacouture describes, "[making] the rounds of the university" (Bolaño 2007, 196), specifically those parts of UNAM that are today most frequently associated with the 1968 student movement (e.g., the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*), but she does so to the effect of challenging what exactly readers can expect to find in them. Other characters in

243

*The Savage Detectives* describe having "been back to the university (but not to class)" to similar effect (Bolaño 2007, 85). In these moments, UNAM appears as a space for experimenting with forms of life. One can be a student, or maybe a poet, or maybe a drug dealer, or maybe a revolutionary. The boundaries are recognized but are simultaneously suspended. In *Amulet*, one can accordingly read of a spontaneous discussion of literature in the halls of the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* (Bolaño 2006, 18):

> All I remember is that it had to do with Ovid and that Bonifaz Nuño was holding forth interminably. He was probably making fun of some novice translator of the *Metamorphoses*. And Monterroso was smiling and nodding quietly. And the young poets (or maybe they were only students, poor things) were following suit. Me too.

Bolaño's experiments with classification in *Amulet* are complemented by countless passages from *The Savage Detectives* where the narrators express uncertainty about, or otherwise disrupt the identities of, the young people in question. For example, in a testimony from *The Savage Detectives*, a young painter who frequents an intellectual salon in central Mexico City recalls Arturo Belano (again, the fictionalized Bolaño) and his friend Ulises Lima as interlopers at an exclusive party: "Belano and Lima weren't revolutionaries. They weren't writers. Sometimes they wrote poetry, but I don't think they were poets either. They sold drugs" (Bolaño 2007, 348). Elsewhere a prospective member of the visceral realists (an UNAM student) writes in his diary, on November 10, 1975, that, "Lima and Belano were carrying three books apiece [into the bar, where they were to meet], and they looked like students, like me" (Bolaño 2007, 20).

Alternatively, the stakes of classification confusion are established through the narrators' quasi-sociological descriptions of young people who do not necessarily fit into

244

this or that category, including 'youth' if it is to be understood strictly in terms of age. Consider the employee of a book publisher, Luis Sebastián Rosado, on the explosion of poetry during and after Echeverría's democratic opening. On the opportunity to give shape to a poetry anthology, Rosado suggests, "Let's take a closer look at this new horde of poets, of which I'm a part, agewise at least. The great majority are students" (Bolaño 2007, 287). As readers come to find out, these poets' student status affords them a legitimacy in which their non-student contemporaries from "penitentiary Mexico" cannot share (Bolaño 2007, 290). Here again, as in my discussion of the *porros* in Chapter Three, student is an identity to inhabit, and not simply a name for young people who are enrolled in school.

Luis Sebastián Rosado's reflections on these distinctions arise from a love affair with Luscious Skin, a *naco* (offensive slang for unrefined, lower class) poet who socializes and collaborates with Belano and Lima's visceral realists. Rosado's plea to his employer to include his lover Luscious Skin in the poetry anthology are refused for reason of his lover's opacity in the grid of intelligibility that lent the student-poets their privileged status. Elsewhere, a prospective visceral realist writes in his journal after returning home from a party with movement contributors and their friends: "Visceral realists were swarming everywhere, although more than half of them were just university students in disguise" (Bolaño 2007, 80). In these moments, Bolaño's acategorical thought is realized in a denaturalization and reanimation of dispersed spaces of cultural production (e.g., publishing houses, used bookstores, UNAM classrooms, the intellectual salons of Zona Rosa, Roma, and Condesa) that have tended to be understood in terms of

245

1968 *qua* Tlatelolco and in which students or at least *universitarios* have therefore often been understood as the central actors.

Where did 1968 happen, when, and what is it? How does one name it? In *Amulet*, the year is on the calendar before the event of 1968 (i.e., Tlatelolco) fully arrives. Lacouture recalls that she "smelled its scent in the bars and parks in February and March of that year" (Bolaño 2006, 21-22), and that she

> sensed its preternatural quiet in the bookshops and the food stalls, while [she] stood eating pork taco in the Calle San Ildefonso, staring at the church of Saint Catherine of Siena and the Mexican dusk swirling deliriously, before the year 1968 was what it would become.

Similarly, in *The Savage Detectives*, Lacouture recalls (Bolaño 2007, 197),

> I hit 1968. Or 1968 hit me. Now I can say that I felt it coming, that I smelled it in bars, in February or March of '68 but before '68 really became '68. […] I was at the faculty [*Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*] when the army violated the university's autonomy and came on campus to arrest or kill everybody. No. There weren't many deaths at the university. That was Tlatelolco.

Theses parallel passages underscore the equivalence, in memory, of Tlatelolco and 1968. The latter does especially. They also draw readers' attention to the important distinction between 1968 as year and 1968 as Tlatelolco, which is to say as "order-word" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 79) that adherents to the student left invoke as the name for a violent encounter that initiated a series of subsequent violent encounters, all of which apparently express the same essence: repression-heroism.

This distinction between the year and the object of an organized memory that has come to stand in for the multiplicity of that year is related to Bolaño's move to make events like the 1973 coup in Chile and the 1968 massacre in Mexico coexist in unresolved and productive juxtaposition (Bolaño 2006, 69-70). Lacouture's recollections

246

and narrations of possible futures open up these potential linkages as part of a process of struggling to rein in and protect herself from the overwhelming multiplicity of young people's struggle in what Lacouture will characterize as "the abyss" of Latin American history (not exclusively a *Defeño* or even a Mexican history). The heroism of young people in the abyss, which is made to make sense through molar perception, is unmoored and mobilized in Bolaño's admission of a process of political recognition ("mirrors") and young activists' investment in antagonism ("desire and pleasure"). Bolaño (2006, 184), as Lacouture:

> And although the song that I heard was about war, about the heroic deeds of a whole generation of young Latin Americans led to sacrifice, I knew that above and beyond all, it was about courage and mirrors, desire and pleasure.

Bolaño's challenge to periodization through unresolved juxtapositions arguably corresponds with a more general rejection of teleology. Bolaño displaces the widely accepted chronology of the late-1960s, in which a date is simply a date in a march of progress, for what Ryan Long (2010, 128) calls "traumatic time," according to which "lives unfold and events reverberate out of step with linear notions of biography and chronology." The counterpoint to Bolaño's approach could appropriately be Octavio Paz. For Paz too, "the past" ("*el pasado*") is distinct from simply "that which happened" ("*lo que pasó*") (Paz 1970, 111). The past is always threatening to erupt among us. But Paz is also a historicist; he hitches the movement of history to the ongoing expression of its internal essence (domination and being dominated). Paz's is the past of a "sacrifice" that erupts in the present and promises to continue finding expression in the future. His "true history" is "the sacrificial narrative of 1968," which "[inserts] the events of that year into

247

the dominant narrative of democratic transition" (Long 2010, 131; cf. Steinberg 2009). Paz channels the articulation of trajectories that ensures openness to possible worlds (Featherstone and Painter 2013, 5) along a single, predictable, developmentalist trajectory of self-realization.

On the other hand, for Bolaño, in *Amulet* especially, the dates of linear progress are made to run together. Put in the language of my argument in this chapter, Bolaño sets the anchoring points of the major language of 1968 adrift. His destabilization of linear chronology disrupts the appeal to origins around which activists' pursuit of truth after the first erasure has been structured. This destabilization is baldly expressed in Lacouture's recollection of her arrival in Mexico City: "I came to Mexico in 1967, or maybe it was 1965 or 1962" (Bolaño 2006, 2). By challenging the certainty of beginnings and endings, and therefore the metric of evidence for the archive of state violence in relation to which the student left elaborates its commemorations of 1968 as Tlatelolco, *Amulet* arguably evades the fixation on an obscured truth around which the post-1968 second erasure has been organized.

Bolaño is not alone in this among writers of Mexico. Bolaño's fictional works of the 1990s share, in their rejection of teleology, certain characteristics of the later fictional works by Carlos Fuentes. Bolaño's treatment of time in *Amulet* and *The Savage Detectives*, and also in his last major work *2666*, is especially aligned with Fuentes' so-called "postmodern" works (Helmuth 1997), books like *The Hydra Head* and *Terra Nostra*, which oppose the time of progress (enacted by bureaucrats and modernizers) with a mythical time of imagination, evident in juxtapositions of events in the sixteenth and

248

twentieth centuries. Like Fuentes' later novels, if *Amulet* is historical fiction, the fragmented and nonlinear chronology around which it is organized nonetheless disrupts historicism and contains within it an appreciation not only for what happened but also what might or could have happened.

*Amulet* is memory-work, then, for its challenge to the dates and categories around which the student left organizes memory and reenacts the past. In Bolaño's hands, the year 1968 is not an origin of a post-Tlatelolco genre of conflict but, rather, a crystal that multiplies possible worlds to come. Accordingly, Ryan Long (2010, 141) argues, "The traumatic moment that intrudes upon every moment of Lacouture's life is, in its pervasiveness, unbound. But, it is also a binding machine, a narrating machine that […] produces images of possible futures." Consider, as evidence of the narrative force generated by Lacouture's unbound traumatic moment, this sample from several pages of speculation on literary worlds to come (Bolaño 2006, 161):

> Alice Sheldon shall appeal to the masses in the year 2017. Alfonso Reyes shall be killed once and for all in the year 2058, but in fact it shall be Reyes who kills his killers. Marguerite Duras shall live in the nervous system of thousands of women in the year 2035.

*Amulet*'s evidence of the chronological distortion brought about by past violence calls into question the obviousness of what readers know about the past, specifically the past of 1968. *Amulet* challenges a molar perception of clear-cut elements that are linearly arranged in the major language of 1968 by suspending the key categories and dates of historical narration, and, more generally, revealing, as the outcome of a process and not as a natural state, the rigidity of categories and dates that the post-1968 student left has called upon to establish coordinates for action to come.

249

Alongside Labra's installation, Bolaño's novel reveals continuity in phantasms, the "surface effects" of the past, which are given to habit. In this revelation, *Amulet* makes the spatiality of Mexico City's 1968 vulnerable to interventions through which it might be politicized. More than this, I will show in the final sub-section of this chapter that *Amulet* shares with Thomas Glassford's *Xipe Totec* an approach to history that can accommodate uncertain creativity and the ongoing construction of spaces through politics, and politics through space. Against a performance of politics on the stage of a timeless antagonism, Bolaño and Glassford allow us to admit the incompleteness of spaces of youth politics. They lift the weight of inherited coding from contemporary practices, and thereby challenge a historicism through which these practices otherwise appear as a homogeneous and predictable final term in the development of post-1968 student activism (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 12; Foucault 1977b).

*Thomas Glassford's 'Xipe Totec'*

In 2010, the installation *Xipe Totec* opened in Tlatelolco. Installation involved wrapping more than 22,000 feet of fluorescent PVC tubing around a twenty-one-story tower in the aging *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco* housing project, near the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*. The project is therefore situated in a environment that was planned and realized between 1960 and 1965, according to the vision of architect Mario Pani, and notably, on the background of the 'Mexican miracle' (then a key reference point for Mexico's bid to host the 1968 Olympics). UNAM commissioned *Xipe Totec* after the university took over the Ministry of Foreign Relations complex in 2006, and in

order to celebrate the university's hundredth anniversary. *Xipe Totec*'s installation was concurrent with Mexico's centennial of the Mexican Revolution and bicentennial of Independence from Spain (the same context as *México: a través de las causas* in the *Museo del Estanquillo*, discussed in Chapter One). One building in the larger complex was converted to a museum, the *Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco*, which now houses a permanent exhibit about Mexico City's 1968, and directly confronts the first erasure of the massacre (see Aroyo 2009; Vázquez Mantecón 2007).

The name of the 2010 piece, *Xipe Totec*, evokes the Aztec god of life, death, and rebirth, to which believers once performed human sacrifice (Neumann 1976). With this name, the project therefore may initially appear likely to repeat the "sacrifice" tropes of post-Tlatelolco representations that cast state-civil society relations in the wake of 1968 as equivalent to domination by *chingónes* of those who are *chingado*, the trope I trace through student activism and cultural production from the essays of Octavio Paz. That said, the specific characteristics of *Xipe Totec* betray the limits of that reductive historical discourse, and suggest an unforeseeably creative post-1968 trajectory that is irreducible to the "analytic and necessary principle" of teleological history after Hegel (Deleuze and Guattari 1996, 94-95).

The creator of *Xipe Totec*, Thomas Glassford, was born in Laredo, Texas, but he has lived in Mexico City since 1990. He now speaks of Mexico City as where he "grew up." According to Glassford's testimony in a July 2013 interview, Mexico City's art community of the early 1990s was decidedly smaller and more deeply interconnected than it is today (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013). The artists'

community in the *Centro histórico* included many memorable (and, generally, still active) contributors like Francis Alÿs, Melanie Smith, and later, Yoshua Okón. Artists of the period, including many like Glassford who arrived in Mexico City from the United States or Europe, would actively rethink and sometimes simply ignore established norms of art production and exhibition. Spaces like *La Quiñonera* in Coyoacán/San Ángel and *Salón des Aztecas* in the historical center of the city would host exhibitions that often ended as parties and deflected incorporation into commercial art markets (Debroise 2006b, 342-343).

In the mid-1990s, Yoshua Okón and Miguel Calderón's artist-run space *La Panadería* in the Condesa would even more radically depart from norms of exhibition by destroying and reconstructing the space itself, seeking connections with international artists, pushing the boundaries legality, and awkwardly but provocatively squeezing these practices through the conditions of a necessary relationship with public and private funding. The post-1968 appeal of distance from the state (as per *Salón Independiente* and some contributors to the *grupos* of the 1960s and '70s) was apparently in question. These artists of the early- and mid-1990s were arguably well positioned to rethink post-1968 conventions because they had not inherited them. Many were transplants to Mexico, or had lived abroad, and others were very young, with repertoires marked more by the experience of the September 1985 earthquake than by the October 1968 massacre.

In 1990, Glassford moved into the historical center of the city, in a space between the National Palace and the *Templo Mayor* archaeological site, immediately next to the *Zócalo*. During our June 2013 interview, Glassford described the community with which

he became involved as highly accidented – not the outcome of any inevitability, and he suggested that the practices of its contributors reflected that uncertainty.

> It was kind of a strange community that, by pure chance, kind of fell into the center of town, the *centro*, back in the early-90s, including some other artists from outside, who were kind of here the same way I was. It was only really two buildings that would rent to us because […] we didn't have any kind of formality [that would have allowed us to sign a lease] (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).

Glassford would live in the center of the city for a decade and would keep his studio in the *centro* for nearly twenty years. The mass of artists in the historic center was a key draw. Other parts of the city that would later come to be identified with the arts, like the Condesa and the Roma, were not then especially active. But the *centro* was also, in terms of inspiration, "extremely rich," and the specificity of this richness shaped Glassford's early work in Mexico City. Glassford explains,

> Of course, in the center of the city, you're talking about […] the first kind of cultivated pre-Hispanic site in the new world. […] Next door was a feudal church. And across the street was the first printing press in the new world. And across the street from that was the first foundry in the new world. […] There was just enormous richness. At the time, just getting out and walking the streets and working, absorbing an enormous amount of […] culture, a lot of ideas, a lot of visuals, everything connected to contemporary art. Also, just finding a lot strange and rare materials to play with in different ways, and working with different shops as well. That made it possible to create things [in a way that] would have been impossible to do in the [United] States […] without an enormous budget (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).

Reflecting his habit of exploring the city's informal markets (e.g., in Tepito, just north of the historic center) Glassford's work in the early- to mid-1990s juxtaposed incongruous found materials (e.g., gourds, nuts and bolts) for experiments in object art that visibly evoked emerging sexualities and relations of power in the creative communities of which he was a part (Debroise 2006a, 396).

253

For some, these experiments were insufficiently situated, perhaps a reflection of their creator's transplantation. Glassford clarifies that he and the other "foreigners" of the *centro*

> were not necessarily focused on a Mexican style of art. At the time, there was a defiant style still carried over from the '80s. […] There was a lot of painting [in the style of] '*neo-mexicanidad*,' which was figurative and dealing with a lot of historical representation, but almost in a kitschy pop way (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).

For Mexican art critic Olivier Debroise (2006b, 344-345) Glassford's work, more even than that of many of his peers, expressed an unresolved "tension between the 'outsider's gaze' and 'local commitment'." Accepting Debroise's assessment, I would nonetheless suggest that Glassford's later work is less obviously ambivalent about its site specificity.

In the late 1990s, Glassford self-consciously adopted a less didactic, less literal approach to his artwork. This contrasted with some of the more explicitly "political" and "activist" art of those years, such as the *Museo Salinas* exhibition of 1996 (Razo 2002), or, more strikingly, the cadaver art of Teresa Margolles, who once famously displayed tattoos cut from corpses in *La Panadería*. Glassford began to work much more abstractly in his presentation, if not in his engagement with concepts. The UNAM-commissioned production of *Xipe Totec* in 2010 is therefore, given this trajectory since the late-1990s, unsurprising (see Figure 28, below).

*Xipe Totec* clearly extends a theme evident in much of Glassford's recent work: the passage of time. Some of his recent projects draw attention to the decay and modification of objects through use (e.g., his repurposing of colorful used broomsticks for *Untitled Collection*, exhibited as part of the "Mexico Inside Out" exhibition in the

254

Modern Art Museum of Forth Worth in 2013). But *Xipe Totec* is more concerned with the

history of a site and a name Tlatelolco that has become, in his terms, "synonymous with

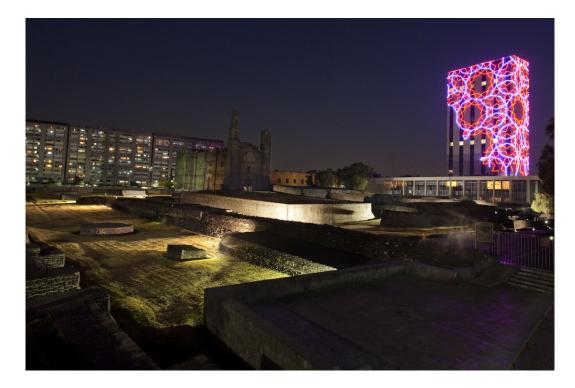violence" (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).



Figure 28: Thomas Glassford's *Xipe Totec*. Photo by Jorge Moreno, used with permission from
Thomas Glassford

The PVC tubing of *Xipe Totec* is illuminated by LED bulbs, which shine in blue

and red to resemble the circulatory system of a body – the movement of life-giving blood.

It is frequently said that the installation's luminous skin recalls the legend of Xipe Totec,

"the flayed one," who cut off his skin to feed his faithful. Art historian James Oles (2011,

82) notes, "Xipe impersonators wore the flayed skins of captives until they dried and fell off, symbolizing the life cycle of the maize." Here again, then, the piece's reference to life-sustaining circulation initially appears to repeat the tropes of a sacrifice narrative and insert the violence closely identified with *Xipe Totec*'s site of installation into a transition (Long 2010, 131). But against the historiographic closure and predictable repetition written into Tlatelolco as 'sacrifice,' Glassford's arrangement of the illuminated red and blue tubing suggests an open liveliness through the geometric pattern of quasicrystals. Indeed, the arrangement can perhaps only misleadingly be called a pattern because, as a quasicrystal pattern, the aperiodic arrangement of the tubes will, by definition, remain undetermined and incomplete.

Glassford's inspiration was the long road to legitimizing the quasicrystal, which only recently found resolution among modern scientists, in the early twenty-first century, with the acceptance of a mathematical discovery by tilemakers in fifth century Iran. Theoretical physicists now accept the existence of a quasicrystal structure for atoms that is ordered but aperiodic, and which therefore evades repetition (Gopalakrishnan et al. 2013). They therefore accept the existence of an ordered atomic arrangement capable of continuously and asymmetrically extending across a plane without ever returning to or repeating an original. As related to *Xipe Totec*, this has implications for the installation of the luminous skin on the building; because the skin is arranged in the pentagonal shape of quasicrystals, it must unevenly drape around the four sides of the building. Glassford's choice of words to describe the necessary asymmetry of *Xipe Totec* points to the potential significance of the installation for imagining politics in Tlatelolco: "because it is this

quasicrystal thing, I can't really close it" (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).

From its situation in Tlatelolco, the open, aperiodic structure of *Xipe Totec* stands in clear contrast to the building on which it was installed. Modernist architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez designed the former Ministry of Foreign Relations building in 1965 as an explicit symbol of Mexico's modernization, underwritten by a narrative of well-defined progress that would cohere around a prevailing nationalist vision of development. Adjacent to the Aztec ruins and seventeenth century Spanish church that, together, surround the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas*, the modernist Foreign Affairs building secured a properly teleological sense of time and an ideology of synthesis with which Glassford's piece simply does not agree. As Glassford was keen to re-emphasize in our interview, the quasicrystal structure "will never repeat itself." In this sense, *Xipe Totec* arguably asserts an incongruous sense of the world, which calls the certainties of the given world – a world of sacrifice, a world of progress – into question (interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013).

Given the organized memory that activists recall to the effect of establishing themselves on a line of filiation, the non-repetitive, aperiodic crystalline structure of *Xipe Totec* draws viewers' attention to the question of how organization is effected. In the face of its aperiodicity, the organization of "organized memory" is no longer given. It is instead a problem: "The problem of the organism – *how to 'make' the body an organism*" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 41, *italics in original*). The organism has no original certainty; it is made through a process of articulation in which Mexico City's student left

actively participates. Like Bolaño's *Amulet*, *Xipe Totec* challenges a molar perception of clear-cut elements that are linearly arranged in major treatments of 1968. The linear arrangement of history itself is questioned, and its movement is revealed in its fragility, as an effect of the unpredictable articulation of singular trajectories. There is, as Doreen Massey (2013) would put it, "no point of departure." And, equally, there is no arrival. The elaboration of the asymmetrical arrangement, of which *Xipe Totec* displays a fragment, is, in principle, unpredictable and irrepressibly creative. When understood in relation to this primary creativity and indeterminacy, the genetic axis of the movement family in which young activists find their place for a ritualized reactivation of the past is a fragile achievement. Here, again, is a piece of memory-work that denaturalizes the certainties of past and allows one to question or even suspend the limits of how one might reactivate it.

As a piece that, Glassford observes, "cannot really be closed," *Xipe Totec* arguably explores the nature of a universal history that is not founded in the development of a social formation from some unitary necessity. This is not to say that, after *Xipe Totec*, the past is somehow not important. The meanings that one can invest in the piece are inevitably shaped by the historical geography of Mexico City and, more specifically, its location in Tlatelolco. This is confirmed in my reflections on *Xipe Totec* in relation to the modernist building on which it was installed. That said, the history-making in which *Xipe Totec* calls upon us to engage is not one that determines the future as the penultimate expression of a people's development from its origin along a line of descent (Foucault 1977b). To the contrary, *Xipe Totec* allows us to imagine a history made by the

would-be hero that now flees the world of well-distributed areas in pursuit of loose ends that exceed the imposition of historically and geographically specific categories that make the body into an effect of organization, or in this case, a clear-cut element of an organized memory of Mexico City's 1968 (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 535 n. 11; Massey 1999, 284).

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari discuss a historical ontology that admits the processes of creativity and becoming to which *Xipe Totec* testifies. They name it, in an admittedly romantic formulation, "geography." "Geography," they claim, "wrests history from the cult of necessity in order to stress the irreducibility of contingency" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 96). To be clear, this is not a claim for the unrestrained agency of some autonomous subject of history. This is not the ontology of a willful and masculine politics of the hero. To the contrary, Deleuze and Guattari's "geography" is a world of unaccounted-for emergences that exceed the categories of a history "rendered circular" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 95-96).

Adopting this historical ontology allows one to say that practitioners of politics seek to address a wrong within and through a space that may appear durable, or hardened, but which is nonetheless unfinished and contestable. Practitioners of politics pursue loose ends, and rework the identities proper to their apparently timeless, practically naturalized social-spatial order, even as they may tend to "fall back" into them (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 95-96). Glassford may not recognize *Xipe Totec* as an instantiation of acategorical politics, conceived thusly. And indeed, Glassford explicitly conceives of the project as a work in conversation with sedimented, locally meaningful categories, including sacrifice

259

(interview with the author, Thomas Glassford, June 9, 2013). But the aperiodic structure of the installation sends these sedimented categories racing. Glassford's cramped, transversal maneuver arguably exemplifies the co-constitutive relationship between space and politics to which this and other instances of memory-work testify.

*Xipe Totec* can and, to retrieve politics from predictable social rituals, should be understood for how it squeezes between repression and heroism, and undermines the "banks" of the channels along which young people's politics after 1968 have been swept (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25). Glassford, like Labra and Bolaño, has produced his work in oblique solidarity with young people of Mexico City's left. Importantly, his solidarity does not find expression in a simple repetition of tropes through which young people's politics have been made intelligible and at the same time predictable and governable. Indeed, since the late 1990s especially, Glassford has refused to work in this crudely didactic way. Glassford's work is remarkable, instead, for how it intervenes in and challenges the periodic certainties of the post-Tlatelolco political framework. As in Bolaño's *Amulet*, the dates marking a forward march, "*adelante,*" of the post-1968 movement family do not hold.

*Xipe Totec* brings to Tlatelolco a movement of unaccountable and therefore less clear-cut elements – inherently unpredictable because it refuses the repetitive return to an origin. Its trajectories are singular. *Xipe Totec* announces that Tlatelolco is not doomed to repeat 'Tlatelolco,' and that 1968 *qua* Tlatelolco does not express the essence of a stage on which one must forever perform a post-Tlatelolco drama of self-sacrifice in the face of repression. By exploring the impossibility of closure, this memory-work contributes to

260

denaturalizing a spatiality of repetitive reactivation, and configures a world in which one might generate a 'we' that is wholly foreign to that closed system of identifiable groups, the police, which is nonetheless a condition for politics.

Conclusion

In my analysis of *Amulet*, I briefly discussed Roberto Bolaño's references to "the abyss," and – because it is a space of politics in the cramped sense explored in this chapter – I return to the abyss as the chapter concludes. As *Amulet* ends, it is clear that Bolaño's abyss is a place between life and death, populated by young people for whom heroism appears as destiny. The mother of Mexican poets, Auxilio Lacouture walks around the valley (the valley of Mexico?), which leads "straight into the abyss" (Bolaño 2006, 180). Lacouture surveys the abyss, observes a shadow spreading across the valley, and then "[realizes] that the shadow sweeping the broad field was a multitude of young people" (Bolaño 2006, 181). Lacouture continues,

> I saw them. I was too far away to see their faces. But I saw them. I don't know if they were creatures of flesh and blood or ghosts. But I saw them. They were probably ghosts.

Here again is a vision of what Labra described as the unresolved phantasm of 1968. The young people appear in the abyss, unstoppably marching, singing in unison as they eventually, inevitably, are swallowed. More young people will follow, and Lacouture desperately wishes to touch them, to make them stop, but she cannot.

Lacouture's experience is shared by the "far-seer" of another abyss, in Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of short fiction from which I extracted this chapter's epigraph.

261

The far-seer of Deleuze and Guattari's abyss has been assigned to the task of maintaining the clear-cut elements and well-distributed areas that are taken in by molar perception. S/he uses the "Cutting Telescope," an instrument of partitioning, to configure the world of politics for young people who would be in it, "for perception always goes hand in hand with semiotics, practice, politics, theory" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 201). But the far-seers do not see the world given to molar perception, and are in fact

> able to detect the slightest microinfraction in the abyss, things the others do not see; they also observe, beneath its apparent geometrical justice, the dreadful damage caused by the Cutting Telescope. They feel as though they foresee things and are ahead of the others because they see the smallest things as already having happened; but they know that their warnings are to no avail because the cutting telescope [sic] will set everything straight without being warned, without the need for or possibility of prediction (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 202).

So much of Mexico City's post-1968 activist art and literature has also precluded a need for prediction because it maintains a neatly partitioned, well-distributed spatial order through which young people's march through history is channeled. For a last brief example of how the world of politics is partitioned through artistic practice, consider the 1989 Jorge Fons film *Rojo Amanecer*, and its confirmation of the repression-heroism framework. The day of the action is October 2, 1968, and the violation suffered by the characters in the film is predictable so as to elude the need for prediction. The *chingón* is embodied by soldiers who burst into an apartment in one of Tlatelolco's apartment towers to slaughter a family that had come to the aid of a student protestor wounded in the plaza during the massacre. The violence had been foreshadowed throughout the day. Continuities with *chingaderas* of Mexico's past are constantly highlighted (Foster 2002; Mraz 2009, 214). When, after the massacre in the plaza, the repressive state enters the

262

adjacent apartment, the only surviving witness is a little boy hiding under a bed. After the

soldiers leave, he comes out of hiding. The last sequence of the film has him stepping

around the bodies of his family, into a debris-strewn plaza as the child of the nation that

emerged from Tlatelolco (Foster 2002). The boy is birthed from violence – a member of

the "generation sprung from the open wound of Tlatelolco" (Bolaño 2006, 77), who,

barring disruption of the repression-heroism framework, will come to occupy his place in

a police conception of history.

The artists and writers discussed in this chapter call attention to and denaturalize

the partitioning of the abyss. Their works are neither arts of protest nor propagandistic.

For example, Bolaño's literary experiments with categories and periodization cannot be

mistaken for the explicitly oppositional discourse of post-1968 writers' collectives like

that of the poetry magazine *El Corno Emplumado*, calling, as it did, for a post-Tlatelolco

"revolution of mind/body/senses and of the social order" (Medina 2006, 155). Less

revolutionary than interruptive, each example of memory-work examined in this chapter

arguably intervenes in and denaturalizes the framework that the student left in Mexico

City has drawn upon to make post-1968 protest by young people intelligible in terms of a

succession of stages in the ongoing student movement. Each in their own way, Labra,

Bolaño, and Glassford challenge the closure of political space that appeals to 1968 *qua*

Tlatelolco as the key to understanding subsequent events of state-civil society relations

that apparently follow a line uninterrupted filiation.

The spatiality of politics explored in this chapter, and throughout the dissertation,

does not have an inside and an outside but is nonetheless animated by a geographical

263

imaginary (student movement space) that offer positions of inside and outside in relation to the state, and in relation to resistance. A political framework proper to this imaginary is promulgated through representations of the past. Participants in the rituals of post-1968 protest that police the boundaries of student movement space posit the existence of an inside and an outside of the state (more generally, an inclusion and an exclusion), which allows them to identify as inheritors and practitioners of a heroic resistance that is proper to certain absolute spaces. By putting the state at a distance, as a repressive force that dominates the people, and to which the student movement – for the people – is opposed, the young people of Mexico City's student left divorce politics from its co-constitutive relationship with space. In rituals of protest, and in movement affiliated art, space tends to be practiced not as the dimension of multiplicity and possibility, but as an already partitioned social-spatial order that offers a predictable role in the service of its reproduction.

Between repression and heroism, this chapter examined instantiations of politics as a transversal working through and opening up of that naturalized social-spatial order. My reading drew from a trio of complementary theoretical vocabularies – of Foucault, of Rancière, and of Deleuze and Guattari – that together allowed me to theorize a spatiality of politics intertwined with the police, a politics enacted by people who worked with and through the given, not outside and against it. Glassford, for example, worked through the sedimented categories that give Tlatelolco to perception as a space of state repression and violence, but his work arguably reimagines the space as one of indeterminate possibility, relieved of the need to endlessly repeat the past.

My analysis suggests a mode of critical geographical theorizing that departs from, on the one hand, the normative impulse to valorize the apparently excluded margins, and on the other, a functionalist tendency in cultural and political geographies of memory and forgetting to read memory in terms how it secures the coherence of and otherwise reproduces the contours of extant social formations. First, as already discussed in some depth in Chapter One, my analysis challenges an inclusion-exclusion paradigm in critical human geography, favoring instead a mode of reworking the major from within (Katz 1996, 491). By working between the categories given to social-spatial order, the mode of geographical theorization modeled in this work restores mobility to perceived invariants that have made actionable only the quasi-genetic reproduction of the same.

Second, my departure from an apparent consensus in literature on geographies of memory: geographers of memory would generally agree that stories of past struggle can be deployed to the effect of mobilizing allies in pursuit of addressing a perceived wrong. This consensus is developed in relation to but simultaneously proposes to challenge a functionalist tradition of social scientific work on collective memory after Maurice Halbwachs (1992), which tends to naturalize social order and write out any potential for its disruption. The endurance of this Durkheimian functionalism in geographies of memory is paradoxically revealed by a relative scarcity of research on how practitioners of a politics may reinscribe the contours of organized memory to the effect of dissolving their ostensibly political practices into ritualized certainties proper to social order. My work addresses this scarcity by theorizing spatial practices that might intervene in these naturalized social-spatial orders.

265

My work suggests that dissensual practices might disrupt a given perceptive field and thereby make possible a reconfiguration of the world of our thinking, saying, and doing. At the intersection of geographies of memory and the acategorical theorizations of space and politics brought to bear on this case, I suggest we find resources to theorize practices of memory – memory-work – through which people not only remember the past given to them by organized memory but also reconfigure the world in relation to which a historically and geographically specific mode of politics, here *vinculación*, might be articulated.

Conclusion: For Another Critique of the Pyramid

In *Posdata*, Octavio Paz (1970, 103-155; 1985, 284-325) outlines the contours of

what he calls a "Critique of the Pyramid," a critique of the history that has unfolded and

will continue to unfold through ritual sacrifice. The pyramid is, for Paz (1985, 295), a

"life-generating space." If "life-generating," it is not, however, a space of unbridled

creativity. For Paz (1985, 295), the pyramid's platform is a stage on which is ensured the

performance of roles that, without rehearsal, coheres to a "secret political continuity," a

thread of domination along which the pyramid, Mexico, has and will continue to develop

(Paz 1985, 295).

The language of Paz's critique of the pyramid – an instance of the second erasure

– demands engagement with theoretical resources that speak of haunting and inhabitation,

embodiment and inheritance. For *another* critique that squeezes through and breaks apart

the political framework that has enlisted adherents to the student left in repetitive returns

to a violent past, I therefore draw on an unlikely trio of authors, Jacques Rancière, Michel

Foucault, and the co-authors Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Their usefulness in this

endeavor is underscored in a passage from Paz on the pyramid as what I have described

as a political framework, or, at times, a regime of representation:

> The image of Mexico as a pyramid […] is the viewpoint of the ancient gods and
> of those who served them, the Aztec lords and priests. It is also that of their heirs
> and successors: the viceroys, the generals, the presidents. And, furthermore, it is

the viewpoint of the vast majority, of the victims crushed by the pyramid or sacrificed on its platform-sanctuary (Paz 1985, 308).

Here, the space of political continuity, the pyramid, is one partitioned by the dominators and dominated alike. Paz witnesses what Rancière (2010, 36) would describe as a shared "dividing-up of the world." He then continues by asserting that, "the critique of Mexico begins with the critique of the pyramid" (1985, 308). But the critique of the pyramid too will be advanced in the partitioned space of Mexico's implacable history (Paz 1970, 149). The space of the critique is not recognized for its multiplicity and possibility. It is instead an already partitioned social-spatial order that offers the would-be critic a role in the service of its reproduction. The history of the pyramid, even as it weathers critique, is, for Paz, the history of an enduring model of Aztec domination.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 81) write, "History will never be rid of dates." This is to say, history tends to bring about redundancy in society through is participation in a distributive relay that establishes certainties of past action as well as coordinates for action to come. They continue, "history undoubtedly recounts the actions and passions of the bodies that develop in a social field" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 81). But history also "transmits order-words, pure acts intercalated into that development" (ibid.). In these terms, the transmission of order-words through a major language of 1968 in the wake of Tlatelolco – in histories, literature, film, visual art, and activist practice; in the statements of politicians and in those of activists – is and has been an establishment of coordinates for the rituals of young people's politics to come.

In a recent analysis of Mexico City's 1968, Bruno Bosteels (2008) also expresses desire for another critique of the pyramid. He reveals, in Paz's writing on 1968, the logic

268

of his "ever more [open]" support of political liberalism (Bosteels 2008, 9), a liberalism

that underwrites the consolidation of the police state I discussed in Chapter Three. But

Bosteels offers his alternative through a suggestion that a "current disarray" of the left in

Mexico City is "preinscribed in the way" that 1968 as Tlatelolco has been so thoroughly

"subjectivized" in the years since 1968 (2008, 6). This leads him to plea for a heroic

politics in the face of a history written from the perspective of the state. Bosteels (2008,

11) claims that, "instead of unwriting the written, the injunction would be to write the

unwritten." Evidence of a relatively coherent post-Tlatelolco regime of representation

does not allow me to agree with this assessment of the left's *post facto* interpretation of

1968, or the proposal of a heroic politics to which it leads.

Young people's politics in Mexico City after 1968 must work through the surface

effects of Tlatelolco and their sedimentation in dispersed spaces of student activism. A

relay between the archive of state violence and young people's rituals of protest is today

unavoidable. Admission of this relay is crucial for understanding the spatiality of politics

animated by people who did not directly experience the October 2 massacre but who

nonetheless must practice politics in its wake. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms (1987, 76),

these are people for whom "narrative consists not in communicating what one has seen

but in transmitting what one has heard, what someone else said to you." The relay

between an archive of state violence and young people's rituals of student activist protest

is maintained through "hearsay." Of course, a different relay of statements and practices,

content and expression, existed before Tlatelolco. But, in the wake of the first erasure,

when representatives of the PRI sought to abdicate responsibility, or – as for Díaz Ordaz

– simply claimed that the violence was justified in the name of order, young people's politics can only be a transversal working through and opening up of social-spatial order that has been naturalized through a second erasure.

Deleuze and Guattari suggest that language (as transmission of order-words) is a map, not a tracing. Language is "entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 12); it is rhizomatic, not, as structuralist linguists would have it, arborescent. They no doubt claim language as a map on the basis of a Spinozan faith that "something always escapes" (1987, 217), that deterritorialization is primary and strata secondary (1987, 55-57), that "there are pass-words beneath order-words" (1987, 110). But, when examining the language of Mexico City's 1968, and the "kaleidoscopic" treatment it received after Tlatelolco (Pensado 2013), this assertion is difficult to defend. To be clear, I have not claimed an identity between order-words and student left rituals of protest and representation. Rather, I follow Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 78-79) when they claim that there is "redundancy," a relay between the archive of state violence and the student activist repertoire that provides a political logic for young people today, facilitating and setting limits on what young people can think, say, and do in the name of politics almost five decades after Tlatelolco.

My term 'second erasure' captures this dynamic whereby the language of Mexico City's 1968 has come to be precisely that of a "tracing," tending to reinscribe the naturalized invariants of historicist discourse (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 12-16). To assess the situation this way is not to cast variation outside the analysis. Rather, it is to acknowledge that a center of resonance has emerged, and that memory of 1968 is

270

"organized memory," that organization has overcoded the map with lines of "filiation" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 16-25); a genetic axis of organized memory has hemmed in experimentation and imposed a predetermined form on young people's politics. With artist Ximena Labra, I agree that a relay between forms of content and of expression situates young people within a "*continuidad en la forma de fantasma*" ("continuity in the form of a ghost"). Young people act into this phantasm in student movement space, and sustain it as a political framework between the terms of which they could potentially enact politics but into which this potential enactment tends to dissolve.

An exclusively major treatment of the language of 1968 that presumes an identity between order-words and contemporary political practice would discourage attention to the relational spaces of the police-politics dynamic examined in these chapters. It would obscure the practices that animate these spaces, or distort them as a final term in the evolution of a movement passing through stages, condemned – as an effect of a circular history – to reencounter the repressive Mexican state. But a study of how languages of the past function as a tracing can, if pursued in a minor mode, hold out the possibility of nonetheless placing the tracing "back on the map" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 14).

This dissertation accordingly calls for another critique of the pyramid. Much of the first three chapters examine, as a process, the practical naturalization of a political framework that has allowed practitioners of student movement space to identify as practitioners of heroic resistance to the repressive Mexican state. Tlatelolco appears as a point of departure for the performance of now preestablished political identities. The analysis of politics in the last chapter and a half are possible only on the condition of this

271

prior problematization of the givens around which student movement space is organized. Upon first specifying procedures through which the contours of that which is visible, sayable, and doable as politics have been established, I theorized practices that squeeze between the terms of the post-Tlatelolco repression-heroism framework and rework the social-spatial conditions for *vinculación* (that is, the generation of solidarities around identities that are always unfinished and therefore contestable). At issue in my analysis of these practices is how to construct a 'we' without repetitively reactivating the past as a measure of what can be done in the future; how to release young people's politics from "the sign of a unitary necessity" (Foucault 2000a, 229) so that politics is restored to a co-constitutive relationship with space and can be understood and practiced as a singular effect of ongoing processes through which as yet unaccounted-for solidarities might be forged.

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