

2001

Mapping Enredos of Complex Spaces. a Regional Geography of Olancho, Honduras.

Mark Andrew Bonta
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation

Bonta, Mark Andrew, "Mapping Enredos of Complex Spaces. a Regional Geography of Olancho, Honduras." (2001). *LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses*. 264.
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/264

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI[®]

**MAPPING ENREDOS OF COMPLEX SPACES
A REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF OLANCHO, HONDURAS**

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by

Mark Andrew Bonta

B.A., Pennsylvania State University, 1990

M.A., University of Texas, 1997

May 2001

UMI Number: 3016527

Copyright 2001 by
Bonta, Mark Andrew

All rights reserved.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3016527

Copyright 2001 by Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

**©Copyright 2001
Mark Andrew Bonta
All rights reserved**

To Evita

Acknowledgments

Because this dissertation is in many ways the culmination of my life's work so far, I need to thank first the people who have helped to shape my becoming a geographer. First and foremost is my family: my parents Bruce and Marcia Bonta and my brothers Steven and David. At Penn State, Amelia Harding, the late Peter Gould, and Tom Hale all went out of their way to support my travels and imagination. In the Peace Corps, my *compadre* Jorge Betancourt and family, Oscar Flores Pinot and family, Manuel and Mirza Rey and family, Francisco Urbina and family, and José Mendoza and family were supportive since the very beginning. At the University of Texas, I wish to thank Robin Doughty, Ian Manners, Gregory Knapp, and Karl Butzer. All these people have had outstanding impact on my thinking, personality, and dedication to geography.

For the conditions that made the writing of this dissertation possible, I wish to thank particularly my grandfather Harold Myers. My wife Luz and daughter Eva Luz I thank for their endless patience during the six long months. With Bill and Sharon Davidson I hold a debt of personal gratitude for the many ways they supported me in the field and in the final stages.

At LSU, I am most heavily indebted to Miles Richardson, truly an extraordinary figure in geography and anthropology, who was supportive of all my efforts. Without him, I would have never been able to work through and employ Continental philosophy. He facilitated the logistics of this dissertation in numerous ways, and read it through twice, offering comments that helped me shape it into its final form. His seminar Poetics of Place was outstanding.

Numerous other people, both professors and graduate students, have influenced my thinking and practice at LSU. I thank especially Bill Davidson, for all things Honduran, and for introducing me to archival research. Kent Mathewson's seminars comprised my principal block of classroom experience, and were irreplaceable for their emphasis on the history of geography and on environmental history. John Protevi's amazing class on Deleuze and Guattari was the

single most important seminar I attended, and I owe John a deep debt of gratitude for guiding me along the path toward complexity. Dan Weir and Juanita Sundberg were the two graduate students who most influenced my thinking; they also helped me in several practical ways.

The person who most deserves credit for the accuracy and fidelity of the contents of this dissertation is my wife Luz Medina. She has been not only tireless informant on all aspects of Honduran culture but also constant inspiration for historical research; we worked together in the archives of Olancho, Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, and Guatemala.

I wish to thank the personnel at the Archivo General de Centroamérica, the Archivo Eclesiástico de Comayagua, and the Archivo Nacional de Honduras for their support; in particular, I thank archivist extraordinaire Carlos Maldonado at the Archivo Nacional for his incredible dedication and knowledge. Monsignor Maurus Muldoon in Juticalpa was also very supportive of my archival work in several ways.

In the *municipio* of Juticalpa, my most valued informants for this dissertation were Clara Luz Rojas, Oscar Flores Pinot, Juana Gutierrez, Julio Hernández, José Mendoza, and Antonio Ramos. I also am deeply indebted to the members of the Sociedad Cultural de Juticalpa for their support, and for their facilitation of my seminar; Francisco Urbina Hernández in particular is an extraordinary philosopher and conversationalist who has always had important things to say.

Outside Juticalpa, Anibal Bonilla was perhaps my most important informant for this dissertation, and one of the most amazing people of my acquaintance. In Gualaco, Rafael Ulloa, Francisco Urbina, and Esteban Urbina senior have opened many doors for me. I also wish to thank the communities of El Ocotal and La Venta who fought so hard for *patrimonio*. The communities of El Boquerón and La Avispa I also thank, and wish to recognize José Mendoza as the person ultimately responsible for so many important things that have happened. *La calaguala donde Elena tiene la culpa de tantas historias verdaderas.*

Finally, I wish to recognize the many *gringos* with whom I have worked and talked over the years. Jeffrey Mellmann is an outstanding man of ideas; Vince Murphy the archetypal tireless promoter of all things Honduran. Ray Sabella has continued to be a cultural geographer at heart, and we have learned myriad things from each other. Dave Anderson is the finest ornithologist of my acquaintance, and has always been a valued friend to my family and me. Dan Grimm is a wonderful person with many ideas; Lisa Lemke is responsible for *teocintes*; Dan Thompson for golden-cheeked warblers. More recently, Dan Graham has been a source of inspiration on the geography of Olancho; Robert Rogers on geology and paleontology; Chris Begley on archaeology. Chris Humphrey wrote the best travel guide yet. Pilar Thorn is hands-down the best birder and teacher on birds.

To the one who said *deux fois plus grand que Dieu* I thank for dividing my life into a before and an after. May he rest in peace.

Preface

On the Geography of Hurricanes

A Flood

There was in Honduras...a deluge that caused the greatest calamity for the people. It rained in torrents, without stopping, for 15 or 20 days. The rivers overflowed their banks, sweeping away houses, crops, and livestock. The roads and paths became impassable. All the settlements in the Republic remained in complete isolation for many days...a sacred terror had taken control of the soul of our people. It seemed that the end of the world had arrived. Hunger showed its squalid face in every home...Bands of women and of children plied the streets howling for food. As soon as the rain stopped, they fled to the countryside to dig up roots for sustenance...I was very young, but the spectacle of those emaciated bodies imploring the alms of one tortilla to stave off death moved me deeply. I think this happened around the year 1860. The Tegucigalpa merchants were quick to ask for food from abroad. From the United States, barrels of cookies arrived quickly, and the people snatched them up...when the storm had passed, the immense havoc it had wreaked became known. Not only had all the crops been ruined, but also the already harvested grains had been washed away or had germinated. Livestock died by the thousands. And these immense distresses continued for a long time afterward, the death of a multitude of people, victims of hunger and sickness.

J. A. López G. quoted in R. H. Valle, *Semblanza de Honduras* (my translation).¹

La Avispa Peña Blanca was eight wattle-and-daub dwellings along the Quebrada de La Avispa, which drains from the Sierra de Agalta. It had been raining for several days, and communications with the outside world were cut off. Through the radio, people knew that it was a hurricane, and they decided to sit tight and wait. There was no way out, anyway--Peña Blanca is nestled in a cul-de-sac vale and it seemed safer to stay there than to strike out over the mountains to get help.

They heard a noise "like a thousand helicopters" emanating from somewhere up the steep and narrow wooded ravine of the Quebrada de La Avispa. Guessing the source of the noise, they fled with some of their belongings up the hill, just in time to avoid a flash flood that dumped a load of sediment directly on top of where they had been gathered, burying five houses. No one was injured. For four days, the villagers holed up in a shallow cave on the hill, men sleeping in one corner, women in the other. They erected a makeshift wooden podium on which to shape tortillas. Everyone got along well with each other (they are all closely related,

¹ See also Valle (1938).

which they say was the reason). The owner of the *pulperia* had saved several bags of wares, and so her modest store continued to function on credit.

When I visited Peña Blanca in June 1999 to hear their accounts of “Aquel Mix que le dicen,”² families who had lost their homes were crowded into the remaining houses. They took care of their own—this went without saying. Perhaps outsiders would bring them things, finance new dwellings, or perhaps not. A box of clothes that my wife and I had sent through a reputable aid distributor had never reached them. It had probably had been stolen and resold, they said—no big deal. People get along out here because we always have, “porque nos tienen olvidados.” We are, they intoned, the forgotten ones.

While I worked on the proposal for this dissertation in autumn 1998, a deluge came along that forced me to reshape my research plans in several ways. Hurricane Mitch, downgraded to a tropical storm as it meandered across the Central American isthmus in late October 1998, struck at the heart of the Cordillera de Agalta. I have been entangled with this mountain range in the eastern Honduran department of Olancho since my Peace Corps service from 1991 to 1993 as a “protected areas specialist” for the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. Mitch’s landslides and floodwaters buried villages I used to know, people with whom I used to chat and drink coffee. All the buffer zone conservation and sustainable agriculture in the world, which I used to think were the answers to environmental injustice, couldn’t have saved them. They shouldn’t have been living on or at the bottom of those impossible slopes in the first place.

Hurricane Mitch’s drastic effect on my study area was an awakening for me, and a call to reorient and radicalize my geographic theory and practice. My theoretical orientation as a graduate student, at first grounded solely in phenomenology, came to embrace complexity theory, particularly the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, whose collaborative *A*

² “That Mix, as they call it.” Some Hondurans comment that the hurricanes (e.g. “Fiff”) that strike their country have strange, even unpronounceable *gringo* names. They laugh at their own mispronunciations of Mitch—“Mit,” “Mits,” “Mix”—and qualify the name itself by a doubtful “que le dicen” (“as they call it”).

thousand plateaux (1987[1980]) reveals powerful new ways of understanding the unruly earth. For a geographer and conservationist whose faith in the possibility of orderly, well-planned change was shaken severely by one of the most destructive hurricanes in American history, the insights of post-structural complexity theory have offered me strange comfort. The writings of Deleuze and Guattari suggest to me that static being should yield to fluid becoming, that repressive hierarchies can give way to liberating networks, and that nature and culture should not only be elided but exploded into a multiplicity of complex sociospatial alliances. The *enredo* or entanglement of myriad interwoven spaces became a knot at the heart of this dissertation, a way to map the confusing reality of the world in order to understand, among other things, the geography of a hurricane.

I decided that during my post-Mitch fieldwork in Honduras I needed to investigate a complex sociospatial order that had created fragile margins, for example the rainforest colonization frontier, that were highly vulnerable to extreme environmental stress. How did the human and physical geography of Honduras exacerbate the effects of a hurricane? Were these effects due to “environmental degradation” and “overpopulation,” and thus avoidable through advances in conservation and development, or were there subtler and more complicated processes at work? On what or whom did local people blame the hurricane? Did Mitch discriminate along lines of class, race, or livelihood?

Fifty years before, the nearby flat *valles* (terrace plains) held the permanent settlements, and the Cordillera de Agalta had no permanent villages. But immigrants from local areas and from across Honduras flooded the Cordillera in the latter half of the twentieth century, climbing up there to be out of the way. There was not enough land or patience for them in the fertile, highly-coveted flat lands of the country, where large landowners--ranchers, agribusinesses, multinational corporations--employed repressive methods to ensure that reform came slowly or not at all. The future victims of Mitch, wary of the large landowners' violent tactics, preferred to cling to remote, unstable mountainsides, where they were out of sight and mind. In defiance

of a 1987 conservation law that reserved much of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta for Nature, they continued to expand their domain. Caught between the nearby *valles* that wouldn't have them or couldn't hold them, and the montane rainforests whose conservationist protectors desired to keep them at bay, the victims of Mitch had nowhere else to go. They had been in the way of both progress and conservation, and the Cordillera de Agalta became their mausoleum.



Fig. A. Kilometer-long Mitch landslide in the Sierra de Agalta entombs two children. Photo taken from La Florida, Catacamas in the buffer zone of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. Underlying rock belongs to a highly unstable Mesozoic formation.

Mitch was a Caribbean hurricane, one of the most powerful ever recorded, and though for days it sat on top of Guanaja, one of Honduras' Bay Islands, international weather forecasters insisted stubbornly that it would move northwestward eventually, and could threaten Mexico's Cancún resorts. US television flashed images of uneasy Cancún vacationers wondering whether to pack it up and leave the beach. Then, abruptly and unpredictably, the storm moved south onto the Central American mainland. Immediately it was downgraded to Tropical Storm status as it encountered the Cordillera Nombre de Dios, and it dropped off US weather networks' radar

screens. The major international networks turned to other news--the storm's winds were "weaker," making it no longer technically a "hurricane," and clearly it was not going to threaten the US Gulf Coast.

A day later, Univisión, a Spanish-language, Miami-based TV network, scooped the mainline international media by running ghastly footage of neighborhoods in Tegucigalpa collapsing or floating away. Science's best predictions had gone awry: Tropical Storm Mitch wandered drunkenly across Honduras, seemingly oblivious to all weather models. Its recipe for destruction was quite simple: take steep slopes, add one meter of water over one week, and watch the results. Mitch was an extreme rain event that caused thousands of landslides and flash floods. Wind damage, other than in the Bay Islands and isolated spots on the mainland, was minimal.³

In our apartment in Louisiana, my Honduran wife Luz and I watched Univisión and surfed the Internet for days.⁴ Univisión aired gut-wrenching clips of Tegucigalpa's *barrios marginales* (shantytowns) imploding, towns buried by sediment in the Honduran South, banana company workers stranded on North Coast rooftops, mothers cradling dead children, and children watching as their crushed parents were dug out of wreckage.⁵ Latinos and non-Latinos outside Honduras responded immediately and massively, cleaning out their closets and cupboards. When reporters asked them at the donation centers, many non-Latinos admitted that they didn't even know where Honduras was located. Immediate private response, unconditional and with no interest rate, moved faster and more honestly than most governments-channeled official aid,

³ See also Cembrero (1999) and Serrano (1998).

⁴ As of 2001, the Internet still contains many Mitch-era documents--they dominate the content of keyword searches on "Honduras." There is immediacy--an uncensored, unedited quality--to the first few days and weeks of Internet material that is impossible to capture in formal articles and studies.

⁵ It seemed to us that Univisión provided more graphic footage than CNN and other networks, perhaps for ratings but also to wrench people out of complacency. Two of Univisión's journalists were Honduran, and after winning international prizes for their coverage of Mitch, Honduran newspapers declared them "orgullos" (national prides) of their country.

with the exception of military airlifts.⁶ Predictions were grim, though: Honduras, and perhaps Nicaragua, would collapse into anarchy, starvation, and epidemics.

The well-oiled international emergency aid machine, primed on the famines and wars of the 1980s and 1990s, ensured that help got to most places quickly. Almost miraculously, there were no widespread epidemics or starvation in Honduras. Assuming that aid packages arrive at their destinations, Luz and I tried to do our small part for the devastated villages of El Boquerón and La Avispa in my study area, where we have several close friends. While working in a local donation effort in Baton Rouge, Luz marked a large box of clothes with the name and address of a friend in El Boquerón and sent it through one of the most reputable aid distributors. The box never arrived; indeed, impervious to our effort and inquiries, it ended up in an unknown location. We felt bad that our promised donation did not appear, but also learned, when we arrived in Honduras seven months after the hurricane, that it was not the only missing box. However, the major lesson we learned about disasters was not that some aid fails to arrive at its destination--this is a normal part of massive donation efforts, and is relatively insignificant in the larger scheme of things. Rather, we learned that the lack of epidemics and famine was due to the strength of local cultural connections--family networks, friends, and even perfect strangers had turned to each other for water, food, clothing, and shelter. In myriad places where outside help was insufficient or nonexistent (and even where it was abundant) local people relied primordially on mutual aid networks built into the society.

In Olancho, flash floods are common after heavy rains, and most of the population outside the higher mountains has adapted by not living in *vegas* (floodplains). People inhabit *sabanas* (high-lying terraces) and reserve the loamy, fertile *vegas* for crops. Those who for various reasons put their houses in the *vegas* are the ones who lose the most during flooding. In the

⁶ The exception here was Mexico, whose emergency teams were the first to touch down in Tegucigalpa. People also cherished the Cuban government's medical brigades, who remained in the country up to a year after the disaster.

sparsely populated areas north of the Cordillera de Agalta, it is rare for a family to have a house in a *vega*, because the *sabanas* still have room for them. Few or no homes or lives were lost to flash floods there. However, south of the range in the crowded Valle de Olancho, where rapidly growing *sabana* villages are constricted by large haciendas and are forced to spill onto *vegas*, rivers plunging from the Cordillera destroyed a few houses in almost every settlement. The cities of Juticalpa and Catacamas contain densely populated neighborhoods on the *vegas* next to the rivers, and these were heavily affected.

The worst damage in Olancho, often out of sight and reach of emergency crews for weeks or months, occurred in the mountains. Having become intimate with the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta since 1991, I suspected what could happen there if an extreme rain event were to strike. Twice during the 1990s hard rains of several days duration, localized to the high peaks, had caused flash floods even in watersheds covered solely by old-growth forest. While they went mostly unnoted in the *valles* not far away, the rains' spectacular effects in the national park included landslides opening new stream courses, massive *balseras* (logjams), and rivers changing channels. Just as spectacular was the biotic succession that occurred which rapidly covered the evidence. Mitch caused hundreds of landslides in Agalta, particularly in areas dominated by Mesozoic shales and Paleozoic metamorphic rock. The shales in particular are highly favored for coffee growing, a dominant livelihood in Olancho and across the Honduran highlands.

Though many coffee farms were buried or swept away, their owners were not necessarily entombed. Even poorer, campesino coffee farmers do not always inhabit their *fincas* year-round, but may live in warmer (lower-lying) areas. Mitch struck when migrant laborers employed by the farmers were up doing the weeding and other tasks in preparation for the December to February harvest. Many laborers had insufficient warning and the unlucky ones couldn't get out in time. Families came to look for them later, but farmers claimed ignorance. The migrant laborers remain among the "missing," their deaths never officially confirmed.

I estimate that in the entire 150-kilometer stretch of the Cordillera de Agalta, including the national park and other areas, as many as 100 people, predominantly small children, lost their lives. I can hardly tolerate the widespread blaming of the victim: "It's their fault they were up there, destroying the environment. They knew it was unsafe, that the slopes should be untouched rainforest." It was *not* their fault, as I hope this dissertation shows.

"Overpopulation" and "deforestation," the most commonly cited causes, are too simplistic to offer valid explanations. If old-growth rainforest is also heavily affected by hurricanes, then deforestation by itself cannot be a root cause. Symptom, perhaps, but not cause. As Hondurans are fond of saying, Olancho is larger than El Salvador but has less than ten percent of the latter's population. Densities in rural eastern Honduras rarely exceed 10 families per square kilometer and average two. The fertile *valles* (flat lands) are among the mostly heavily populated areas, but as mentioned above there is highly unequal access to land and other resources. The poor crowd into villages, while the majority of land is taken up by large landholdings. Mitch, to a geographer's eye, revealed not easily understood inequities but tangled contradictions in which the only truths immediately evident were that hurricanes do indeed discriminate by class, race, and livelihood. One use for my dissertation, I decided in my first months of fieldwork, could be as a geographical tool for interpreting Mitch.

Despite the strength of mutual aid networks in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane, calmer introspection in Olancho and across Honduras has allowed each group to find its scapegoats for Mitch. Development workers may blame the effects of Mitch on the campesinos. According to development practitioners, environmental ravages caused seemingly by the desperately poor are the easiest explanation. Development, they think, could have prevented such great losses, and in the future, if done right, will indeed stave off disaster. Conservationists may think, "Now they'll take us seriously. Stay out of the rainforests—national parks are there for a very good reason!" Coffee growers blame ranchers; ranchers blame farmers; farmers blame ranchers. Downstream people blame those upstream for

deforesting the watersheds, while upstream people blame those downstream for forcing them to be in the headwaters.

How can everyone believe they are right? As I will show in the following chapters, the reason is that people, even if they appear to live side by side in the same social space, inhabit distinct overlapping and interwoven spaces that take precedence over societal unity. What in one space is a conservationist's "degraded tropical rainforest" in another space is a village that campesino migrants named Nueva Esperanza. The hills many campesinos and most conservationists consider ugly or "trashed," sown only in grass and speckled with cattle, are visions of beauty for some ranchers, embarrassments for others (chapter 6.4). A road means progress for coffee farmers and is a keystone in many definitions of development. To the conservationist, it can spell disaster. A certain type of coffee farmer may believe that the old-growth rainforest is more productive when fashioned into a shaded coffee farm. Another may want neither access roads nor the refashioning of all rainforest into coffee, preferring to keep vehicles out of the area, maximize subsistence options, and otherwise maintain control over the landscape. The proponents of hydroelectric projects may prefer to gaze at industrial infrastructure rather than waterfalls (chapter 2.1).

Despite such conflictive spatialities, and the inevitable politicizing of problems caused or worsened by events like Mitch, there is reason for hope no matter what may be the combination of spaces in which one dwells. For, as I hope to demonstrate, no one inhabits solely one space or possesses but a single identity, and it is this multiple nature of human spatiality that offers a way forward. Spatial alliances--mutual aid--are the key to living with hurricanes, forests, cattle; they make the sociospatial margins of nation-states productive places to become or stay independent and to scribble commentary on the centers; they are crucial for combating spatialities of repression, hegemony, and homogenization.

Table of Contents

VOLUME I

Acknowledgments	iv
Preface: On the Geography of Hurricanes	vii
List of Figures.....	xix
Abstract.....	xxiv
Chapter 1. Mapping <i>Enredos</i> of Complex Spaces	1
1.1 Overview of Complexity	1
1.2 Entangled Spaces.....	4
1.3 Outline of Research History and Methods	22
1.4 Chapter Outline	28
Chapter 2. Meetings	33
2.1 Gualaco Versus the Company.....	36
2.2 The Red de Cuencas Meets Every Month.....	52
Chapter 3. Cultural Histories	68
3.1 Gold, Violence, and the Vast.....	72
3.2 Beyond the Southeast Maya Periphery	82
3.3 Briefly at the Center: Olancho in the 1520s.....	86
3.4 The State Triumphant: San Jorge de Olancho and Its Domain, 1540-1612... 97	
3.5 Constructing Olancho's Other: Nueva Salamanca, Taguzgalpa, Taycones, and Xicaques	109
3.6 Olancho's Tribute Indians	125
3.7 The Landscape Mosaic, 1525-1662	135
3.8 Spatial Identities in the Franciscan Mission Period, 1660-1807.....	139
3.9 Destiny Manifests Itself: Olancho from 1790 to 1870.....	162
3.10 Abject Migrants: Selections from Twentieth-Century Olancho	181
3.11 Conclusion: Rhizomes against the State	194
Chapter 4. Natural Histories	199
4.1 Geology in Disorder.....	203
4.2 Land Shapes.....	208
4.3 <i>Tierras y Suelos</i>	216
4.4 Waters	219
4.5 Climatic Pluralism	222
4.6 Rethinking Diversities	225
4.7 Cloud Forests and Thorn Forests	229
4.8 <i>Himno al Pino: El Arbol Nacional</i>	243
4.9 Rain Forests	247
4.10 Biodiversities of Minorities	251
4.11 Meditations from La Picucha.....	257
4.12 La Pródiga Tierra	264

VOLUME II

Chapter 5. Local Space	268
5.1 <i>Aldeas</i> and <i>Comarcas</i>	271
5.2 <i>Pueblos</i> and <i>Municipios</i>	282
5.3 Outsides: Teguz, La Costa, Los Estados.....	295
5.4 <i>Valle, Serranía, Montaña</i>	298
5.5 Naming Landscapes	302
5.6 Everyday Obsessions	306
5.7 Bodies and Gazing.....	311
5.8 Sensing Places	315
5.9 Enchanted Waters, Winds, Fires, Earths.....	317
5.10 Enchanted Caves, Hills, Ruins, Trails, Markers, Treasures.....	322
5.11 Enchanted Plants and Animals	333
5.12 Taking Flight	343
5.13 Pasts, Present, Futures	344
5.14 Resilience of Local Space.....	346
Chapter 6. Spatial Identities.....	349
6.1 Church Space and State Space: La Iglesia y El Estado	352
6.2 Development Space	357
6.3 Nomads.....	362
6.4 <i>Ganadero</i> /Cattle Space.....	375
6.5 <i>Campeño</i> /Campeño Space.....	382
6.6 <i>Maderero</i> /Timber Space.....	397
6.7 <i>Cafetalero</i> /Coffee Space/ <i>Montaña</i>	403
6.8 Outlaws and Misfits.....	410
6.9 Summary: Margins of Spatial Identities	418
Chapter 7. Babilonia Revisited: Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta.....	421
7.1 Forest Space.....	423
7.2 Conservationist/Conservation Space: Saving What is Left	425
7.3 The Ideal Conservation Space	436
7.4 Conservation Space and Local Space	442
7.5 Babilonia Revisited.....	451
Chapter 8. Conservation and Development Spaces	
in Boquerón and La Avispa	459
8.1 Local Spatial History	460
8.2 Inscribing an <i>Area Protegida</i> : 1992-2000	475
8.3 <i>El Desarrollo</i> Comes to La Avispa.....	492
Chapter 9. W(h)ither State Space: The Orchestra without a Conductor?	505
Bibliography	512
I. Abbreviations	512
II. Maps published by the Instituto Geográfico Nacional.....	512
III. Olancho Land Titles Consulted in the Archivo Nacional de Tierras	514
IV. Unpublished Sources 1540—1900	517
V. Published Sources; Unpublished Sources from 1900 to Present	522

Appendix A: Colonial Tribute Towns in Olancho el Viejo	552
Appendix B: <i>Municipios</i> of Olancho	556
Vita	557

List of Figures

A. Kilometer-long Mitch landslide	xi
1.1. Ant and acacia rhizome.....	12
1.2. Hierarchical spaces	17
1.3. Rhizomes and rhizomatic hierarchies	18
1.4. Reference map of Honduras and Olancho	25
2.1. Chorros de Babilonia in 1992	35
2.2. Chorros de Babilonia in 2000	35
2.3. Spaces of Babilonia	40
2.4. Thriving nursery of mahogany	49
2.5. The Río de Olancho: Spaces and Movements	56
2.6. Map Key for “Río de Olancho”	57
2.7. Progress of the Mitch Colonia in La Avispa.....	58
2.8. <i>Vegas</i> of the Río de Olancho	67
3.1. Plaque marking birthplace of poet Froylán Turcios.....	69
3.2. <i>Municipios</i> and Roads of Olancho.....	77
3.3. Array of Precolumbian artifacts from the Valle de Arriba	84
3.4. Selected conquistador routes and indigenous <i>comarcas</i> before 1550.....	90
3.5. Provincia de Huilanco in the 1500s	93
3.6. Olancho el Viejo.....	98
3.7. Valle de Olancho Colonial <i>Sitios</i> and <i>Pueblos</i>	99
3.8. Colonial pottery, El Boquerón, Olancho.....	100
3.9. Tayaco.....	116
3.10. Family and friend of Pedro Avila	126
3.11. Valle de Arriba.....	128

3.12. Outskirts of San Esteban “Tonjagua”	159
3.13. “The Valle of the Guayape”	167
3.14. Las Vueltas del Ocote	169
3.15. Juticalpa in 1854	172
3.16. Front of the Casa Güell in Manto	179
3.17. Cerro de Horcones in Lepaguare	189
3.18. Poster marking the 25-year anniversary of massacre	190
3.19. Walking the Stations of the Cross.....	190
3.20. Station of the Cross in Santa Clara shrine	191
3.21. “Jubileo de los Martires,” Juticalpa	197
4.1. Physical geography of central and eastern Honduras: selected features.....	204
4.2. Cap of Tertiary rhyolite in the Valle de Ilamapa	205
4.3. Atima limestone, El Boquerón.....	206
4.4. La Picucha from the Valle de Gualaco	209
4.5. <i>Pura montaña</i> on the high peaks of the Montaña del Carbón	209
4.6. Valle de Olancho from the Boquerón gorge	212
4.7. Valle de Agalta, southwest edge.....	212
4.8. Los Güisiles, viewed from Paya, San Felipe, Juticalpa.....	215
4.9. Las Tinajas, San Felipe, Juticalpa.....	216
4.10. Tall-canopy cloud forest, Sierra de Agalta	231
4.11. Interior of mossy forest on La Picucha.....	233
4.12. Windswept heath covering La Picucha.....	234
4.13. La Picucha	235
4.14. Thick thorn forest or <i>espinal</i>	235
4.15. Distribution of the Honduran Emerald	238
4.16. Distribution of the Honduran Emerald: Map Key	239

4.17. Tropical dry forest in <i>verano</i> on slope approaching El Boquerón	242
4.18. Native short-grass savanna in the Valle de Lepaguare	243
4.19. Sharp divide of <i>serranía</i> pine forest and <i>montaña</i> rain forest	246
4.20. Forest characteristic of the Montaña de Botaderos.....	246
4.21. Pine Forest, Rain Forest, Protected Areas, and Indigenous Peoples in Eastern Honduras	248
4.22. Key to Figure 4.21	249
4.23. Diversities of a human landscape	252
4.24. Peña Blanca, Catacamas, northeast side	254
4.25. Riverine environment: non-forest space for biodiversity	254
4.26. <i>Teocinte</i> (<i>Dioon mejiae</i>) tree cycad grove	256
4.27. Distribution of the Teocinte	257
4.28. Magnolia Warbler in coffee bush	262
4.29. <i>Montaña cruda</i> , old-growth montane rain forest in the Montaña de Babilonia ...	263
4.30. <i>Barba amarilla</i>	267
5.1. The <i>comarca</i> of Lepaguare	273
5.2. Part of El Encino, Esquipulas del Norte	276
5.3. Part of Pacura, Gualaco, a prosperous village of <i>ganaderos</i> and <i>campesinos</i>	277
5.4. “Developed” part of the farflung <i>aldea</i> of Vargas, Gualaco.....	281
5.5. House in Los Encuentros, Gualaco	281
5.6. The <i>caseta</i> in the Parque Central, Gualaco	284
5.7. La Catedral in Juticalpa, from a corner of the Parque Central.....	285
5.8. Street in Barrio Las Flores, Juticalpa	287
5.9. Luz Bonta traverses a thoroughly modern space	287
5.10. “Jumbled” urban landscape in Juticalpa	288
5.11. “La Paz de Olancho Comienza en Gualaco”	291

5.12. Within the Montaña de Las Delicias, Sierra de Agalta.....	300
5.13. Cabeza de Gorila.....	303
5.14. Los Tetones, Esquipulas del Norte	304
5.15. Nacionalista house in Lepaguare: blue and white.....	307
5.16. Exterior and interior of Gualaco's <i>iglesia</i>	309
5.17. Midriff of the Valle de Olancho from the porch of Benito Barrera.....	314
5.18. Shrine to the Virgen de Fátima in Catacamas' Catholic church	314
5.19. Río Seco above Talgua, Catacamas	320
5.20. Cave mouth within <i>pura montaña</i> , Montaña de Chululí	323
5.21. Cerro El Encantado.....	324
5.22. <i>Frijolar</i> and <i>loma</i> in Dos Quebradas de Guacoca	325
5.23. Largest Precolumbian mound in El Boquerón.....	325
5.24. Cerro del Boquerón rises 800 meters above the Río de Olancho	329
5.25. Cemetery of the <i>aldea</i> of Tapiquil, Colón, in Botaderos.....	330
5.26. <i>Ceiba</i> in the Parque Central, Catacamas.....	335
5.27. <i>Coyoles</i> in La Venta, Gualaco	339
5.28. <i>Huesos de gigantes</i>	340
5.29. <i>Pichiches</i> in Pueblo Viejo, Gualaco	340
5.30. <i>Coa</i> in El Boquerón	342
6.1. State space	356
6.2. "Undevelopment" space in San Felipe, Juticalpa	360
6.3. Before and after the advent of cattle space through <i>acapareamiento</i>	376
6.4. <i>Ganadero</i> rhizome manifest in landscape	377
6.5. Campesino rhizome	383
6.6. Hunter rhizome	390
6.7. Gatherings.....	392

6.8. <i>Teocintero/Teocintal</i>	395
6.9. Campesino space overcodes timber space.....	399
6.10. Coffee, <i>chatas</i> , and the holding sway of the frontier <i>rancho</i> in Babilonia.....	404
6.11. “Estos son mis mapas”	409
6.12. Gold rhizome	413
6.13. Contraband space within deep forest.....	415
6.14. Luis Colindres at the house he shares with his partner Ligia	417
7.1. Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta promotional pamphlet.....	422
7.2. Conservation-with-development in the buffer zone of Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta.....	429
7.3. Defending the PNSA	432
7.4. Marker of conservation space.....	434
7.5. What PNSA did not stop	435
7.6. The ideal protected area.....	437
7.7. Markers of a “real” National Park	438
7.8. <i>Champa</i> in <i>pura montaña</i>	439
7.9. What the PNSA looks like: a poster produced in 1999	442
7.10. Bumper sticker landscape with <i>ambientalista</i> declaration	446
7.11. Conflict of <i>Patrimonio</i> and <i>Recurso</i>	450
8.1. Agua Buena	461
8.2. A <i>galapago</i> or woman’s side saddle, showing extinct <i>patrimonio</i> of Guacoca	465
8.3. Juan Barrera in coffee space, Cerro Agua Buena	472
8.4. A “desierto” in La Avispa: buffer zone of Monumento Natural El Boquerón	493
8.5. <i>Enredo</i> of complex spaces.....	496

Abstract

This dissertation is a regional geography of the department of Olancho in northeastern Honduras. It focuses on the *enredos* (entangled situations) that characterize geographic reality, particularly in the interlocked domains of nation-state priorities, local identities, rain forest conservation, and sustainable development. The overarching theoretical framework of this dissertation is the collaborative work of complexity theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The major theme running through “Mapping Enredos” is the multidimensional nature of spatiality (complex spaces), ground for human and non-human existence as well as source of endless conflicts. Fieldwork was undertaken from 1999 to 2000. Qualitative research methods employed include participant observation, oral history compilation, and archival interpretation. The dissertation is written ethnographically, using primarily phenomenology and post-structural philosophy as theoretical guidelines.

Olancho’s prehistory is mapped in terms of its non-Mesoamerican village-scale geography. The historical geography of Olancho, beginning in 1526, is constructed from primary archival sources, and focuses on the creation and rise of different spatial identities that made Olancho an autochthonous region at the margins of Western jurisdictional space. The natural history of Olancho is described through the separate consideration of different spaces and landscapes, with an eye toward unraveling the complexity that characterizes the region’s geomorphology and biodiversity. The histories lead into a cultural geography of contemporary Olancho through the understanding of its inhabitants—what in this work is called “local space.” These include events of everyday life, the gaze, the body, place, landscape, and the “enchanted” qualities of natural features, plants, and animals that emerge in folklore. From this base, conflictive identities involving land use are described—including development, religion, the state, coffee growing, cattle ranching, farming, logging, hutning, gathering, contraband, and gold-mining, among others.

Using these “maps,” this dissertation ends by explicating the spatial conflicts and alliances that characterize buffer zone conservation and sustainable development in and around the Monumento Natural El Boquerón and the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. It concludes that spatial complexity is multidimensional, fluid, and irrepressible. In terms of development, conservation, and the nation-state, complex spaces are in different instances both supportive and disruptive.

Chapter One

Mapping *Enredos* of Complex Spaces

1.1 Overview of Complexity

The title of this dissertation is “Mapping *Enredos* of Complex Spaces, A Regional Geography of Olancho, Honduras.” Its primary theoretical inspiration is the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, particularly their magnum opus *A thousand plateaus* (1987[1980]). I agree with Brian Massumi (1992),¹ perhaps their leading critic and translator, who shows that their philosophy is in many ways a form of complexity theory. While leading proponents of complexity theory, especially Ilya Prigogine (Nicolis and Prigogine 1989; Prigogine and Stengers 1997), focus on what Deleuze and Guattari term the “physicochemical stratum,” the latter authors think and write across boundaries of physics, chemistry, organic life, and the human. Therefore, their philosophy is highly relevant and eminently applicable to the questions asked by academic geographers, whom as I see it are at once and forever crossing the boundaries of nature and culture, people and the environment.

Before anything else, as a disclaimer I need to stress the intense difficulty in understanding *A thousand plateaus*, which remains a barrier to its acceptance in many intellectual circles. To break moulds and I think to convey the sheer joy of “nomadic philosophy,” Deleuze and Guattari employ a barrage of “exotic” terms such as “abstract machine,” “haecceity,” “line of flight,” “smooth space,” and “collective assemblage of enunciation.” Twenty years after publication, the work is still in large part unexplicated by even its finest critics, and undoubtedly the world will be absorbing its extraordinary significance and insights for decades to come. In my work, I am trying to transform and apply some of Deleuze and Guattari’s equations to problems in Latin American cultural geography, but I am by no means pretending to digest or transmogrify their entire oeuvre in the process.

Inspired by De Landa (1991; 1997) and Massumi (1992), I hope to “deviate” from Deleuze and Guattari, taking philosophical license with certain blocks of thinking that to me are most intriguing, particularly “becoming,” “rhizome,” and “spaces.” The last term is especially important—I try to go beyond Deleuze and Guattari’s smooth, striated, and holey spaces to the possibility (that they leave open) for a patchwork quilt of complex spaces² and their inhabitants, who adhere to what I call “spatial identities.”

Enredo (my term) denotes entangled realities in everyday life where conflicting (always spatial) agendas are not easily understood through linear thinking or cause-and-effect reasoning. The *enredo* is the *n*-dimensional encounter of diverse Deleuzian “machines,” geographic spaces, spatial identities in a confusing, conflictive jumble that to the ethnographer and cultural geographer is an invitation for mapping. By mapping, I mean the creation and use of tools for navigating spaces—helping to figure out, through experimental description and critical intervention, just how we got ourselves into this “mess.” For example, as I underscored in the Preface, how does a hurricane, already an archetype of complexity, act upon a region and the spaces that constitute it?

What issues are at stake in this dissertation, and what weaves them together? The issue of what complexity theory has to offer Latin American cultural geography is the “proof in the pudding”: showing how landscapes are *enredos* of complex spaces, and why this should be important in academic geography, is a crucial demonstration that will become strengthened as the chapters progress. In section 1.2 below I justify my shattering of “Space” into “spaces,” which then entails necessity of mapping each space on its own terms, but also as it “plugs into” other spaces. In this way, through ethnographic “thick description” (Geertz 1973), the

¹ In this dissertation I use Massumi’s translations of French terms in all cases.

² “An amorphous collection of juxtaposed pieces that can be joined together in an infinite number of ways: we see that patchwork in literally a Riemannian space, or vice versa.” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987]:476)

trickiest *enredos* can become untangled in our thoughts and bodies, “local space,” “development space,” and “conservation space” will appear to challenge each other but will also emerge as capable of forming localized alliances “for change.” (In Deleuzian terms [e.g. 1987:261], they would be “haecceities.”) The nation-state, purveyor of often-oppressive “state space,” hovers ever-present, both in the foreground and in the background. Cattle spaces, coffee spaces, campesino spaces, outlaw spaces, gold spaces, and myriad others clash and/or become symbiotic. Each historically constructed, they engage the non-human in varying ways--in a geography of complex spaces, a waterfall never can be “just a waterfall,” while a bean field or a cow can be a source of pride or a sinful degradation.

Chapters two through eight show how spaces and spatial identities come about, how they come into conflict and ally with one another, and how certain spatial alliances combat marginalization, hegemony, and homogenization. How can development space, too often homogenizing and hegemonic, “become local,” and does it inevitably become local without forced effort? Can conservation become local, and if so, does it disappear into “local space”? Does the Honduran State have a role in autochthonous Olancho (and regions like it across Latin America), or has it been (thus far) kept at bay to the benefit of Olanchanos? Finally, the question “What endures?” is central in the relevance of this dissertation to theory and practice beyond the specific cases I describe. What lessons can be drawn from a geography of complex spaces for understanding hurricanes, local cultures, protected areas conservation, sustainable development?

To return to the question I posed above, about the weave: it is the *enredo* that weaves all this together. Its maps are moments of clarity within the traps of spatial identity, invitations to step out of everyday uniformity and partisan spatiality into everyday complexity.

In the next section, I outline complexity and relate it to other theoretical approaches. A research history and outline of sources and methods follows (1.3), then a chapter outline (1.4).

1.2 Entangled Spaces

The first sentences of *A thousand plateaus* are:

The two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* [their preceding work] together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:3)

Fourteen chapters later, ending “1440: The smooth and the striated,” they write “Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:500). They begin their book by telling us that individual identities are multiple, and later show us how and why. They conclude the last full chapter by destabilizing their own and the reader’s faith in “smooth space,” a space traversed by nomadic “packs” who resist the “striated space” in the clutches of the State. Smooth space is made to sound attractive and striated space undesirable according to a fluid philosophy of rhizomatic networks eroding rock-hard edifices—but they are in the end revealed to exist only in mixture, becoming each other, productive at all places and times of myriad other spaces.

The first step in accepting and then investigating an *enredo* of spaces is to move from “being” to “becoming.” While “being” is by no means a univocal concept in philosophy, it has served to unify Western thinking and science from Greece until the twentieth century. “Being” is so often taken for granted in the Western world that only a dose of something like non-Western thinking, particle physics, or “post-structural” philosophy can shock one into realizing that concepts like Ideas, Progress, Truth, and Identity can be “bracketed,” contested, relativized, and otherwise called into question. Complexity theory, write Prigogine and Stengers (1997), grew in part out of the realization among “hard” scientists (I use this term to distinguish them from social scientists) that the wholes or beings we observe are apparently more than the sums of their parts. What we observe as phenomena are actually but snapshots of frozen stasis—the reality of the cosmos is in its “becoming.” “Becoming” does not signify evolution as progression toward a final state or goal, but means the process of forming matter into substances, then organizing these substances into “content” and “expression” (in Deleuzian

terms)—but, eventually, dissipating these bodies structures into the world of probabilities whence they arose, what Deleuze and Guattari call (among many names they give it) the “Plane of Consistency.”

For example, we saw Hurricane Mitch as a Being, a bounded identity we could name, moving across sea and land, doing what hurricanes do, but finally and predictably dissipating. Since it was a being, it did not disappear, because it remains in human discourse, while also leaving its indelible imprint on the sedimented landscape. As a being, Mitch was at once unique but also one of a type, the concept and category “hurricane.” But do we err by assuming that hurricanes have “personalities,” that they are nameable, bounded, finite phenomena? How separate was Mitch from the conditions of its creation? We humans, many agree, are created out of sex, out of genes, out of evolution, out of God. We have an origin, a continuity, and a conclusion: we rise above “nature.” But what creates a hurricane? What drives it? What are its limits? Under the gaze of science, a hurricane arises from waves, from micro scale disturbances—it comes about out of local conditions, immanent to rather than transcending the weather. At any scale of examination, the hurricane “being” is almost unbelievably complex, especially if with the name “hurricane” we also include its actions on the landscape and the attendant discourse that allows it a place in history. How is it possible, ask complexity theorists, that complex phenomena like hurricanes appear as unified phenomena? How can we pretend that “What is (the essence of) a hurricane?” is an answerable question? Better, say Prigogine and Stengers (1997), to simply replace being with becoming, and Deleuze and Guattari echo this.

The hurricane, in some ways, is to “the weather” as a new Beethoven symphony was to other Western concert music of its time. The hurricane is a composition drawing from multiple systems and processes in the ocean, the air, the land, the media: the playing of a symphony, always unique, never repeatable, and yet with familiar rhythms, melodies, harmonies. In human discourse, the hurricane is constructed as an almost self-aware, vindictive being from the void,

but is more accurately characterized as an entangled collection of systems coming together into a motile territorial assemblage that intensifies in energy and finally passes away, reclaimed by other territorial assemblages. If the hurricane has an essence, then this is movement, unpredictability, extreme violence (as an “extreme event”), and general disobedience to human territorialities, to the integrity of mountain slopes, to the stabilization of beaches, and to anything else in its path that has “pretensions” of permanence.

The desirability of maintaining stasis over flux and being over becoming was subverted in twentieth century philosophy, and eventually led to openings for complexity theory. Heidegger the phenomenologist tried to save “being,” first as *Dasein* in *Being and time* (1962), and in his later works as the gathering of the fourfold (e.g. Heidegger 1971; 1971a). It seems to me that he took a circuitous route toward complexity and was stalled by a “holding sway”: a force internal to being that guides it, gathers it, distributes it, and calls us to it. Heideggerian thinking, though in many ways breaking with Western metaphysics, still privileges an authentic realm of dwelling, an at-home and in-place quality that privileges stasis and marginalizes flux and flight (see Mugerauer 1994; 1996). “What is the essence of...?,” a phenomenological query, situates the questioner as wanting the answer to be a bounded set of facts, a security that, with the right maps, anything can become universally intelligible. (This is not to say that states of being don’t exist at all, but that, when “scaled” in spatiotemporal context, each and every one can be characterized accurately as a “holding sway,” never an eternal stasis.)

Careful geographical description is a hallmark of certain phenomenology--Bachelard (1994) and Merleau-Ponty (1994), in particular, reveal essential details of human spatiality. But these thinkers are more comfortable at home, with individual bodies, with controlled conditions, than with the chaotic complexity that confronts us when we step out of the comfort zone. Phenomenology, when limited to specific situations, is an exceptional tool for describing local spaces. Applied to complex situations, I think it should be used with great care, and is not nearly as applicable as post-structural theory. In an example of my own trajectory, for years I

struggled over what could constitute “being-in-forest” as a certain universal human condition that could tie together diverse spatialities. By substituting “becoming” for “being,” I have devised a “becoming-forest” (see chapter 6.7) that is not a universal, essential and authentic “end,” but an open-ended process whereby forests and the people that experience them “grow together” symbiotically, each becoming dependent on the other. Becoming-forest, unlike being-in-forest, is always immanent to individual personality, to family, to gender, to “class,” to “race.” It is a process without a goal.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987), in rejecting essence and authenticity, also reject any primordial necessity of pinning down meaning. Meaning is always multiple. Here they are at odds with hermeneutics and interpretation, for example in the work of Gadamer (Gadamer 1994; Weinsheimer 1984). Gadamer, a Heidegger disciple, is best known for his elaboration of a theory of hermeneutics grounded in language, where meaning can be discovered through the fusing of horizons: interpretation as not something applied to an object, but as something flowing from that object, the encounter of valid opinions about that object. According to hermeneutics, the essence of an object lies in its interpretation; the meanings of a text can be mapped through identifying the zones of overlap inhabited by interpreters coming from diverse con-texts. Deleuze and Guattari recognize, however, that what a thing may mean depends on what it does—they are interested in the workings of machines and assume that meanings will spin off from phenomena in all directions, caught and fashioned in myriad ways.

In structuralist-type thinking, whether Marx, Freud, Chomsky, or Lévi-Strauss (for example), pinpointed being is subsumed in or absorbed by structures that transcend all specific situations, becoming the equations for the universe, generating language, human behavior, political systems, kinship networks (according to examples in Deleuze and Guattari 1983; 1987). Structuralism promises to explain “everything” in terms of Cartesian-like coordinate systems, through rigorous scientific testing, long observation, exact writing: and yet even the finest tuning of patterns generated by interlocking structures have consistently fallen short of

explaining how things work and what hurricanes will do. Structures exist, but at the surface, as the manifestation of patterns that have become solidified and appear “eternal.”

While Lefebvre’s (1991) descriptions of space as produced and not just “there” are valid and intriguing, they don’t go far enough. Lefebvre writes of spaces that have been lost and are no longer accessible, through the holding sway of spatial representations, the dominance of spaces that are reproductions of specific sociopolitical situations elsewhere: fast food restaurants multiplying across the globe. Lefebvre fails to recognize that not all is structure, not all is grid—there are endless ways to recapture “lost” spatialities, and “original” spaces are still woven about us (see, for example, chapter 5 of this dissertation). In addition, we have the power to create places and ways, to inscribe new spaces even if we are circumscribed or proscribed by more powerful forces. Deleuze and Guattari recognize that, while the State and its striated space have come to reign supreme, the sign systems currently in dominance may overpower (“overcode”) but do not erase “earlier” or alternate sign systems (“regimes of signs”). This is because the Plane of Consistency, the “virtual realm” of complexity theory (according to Massumi 1992, whom I follow), is available everywhere at every point as a “plane” of probabilities. In the Plane of Consistency coalesce the “haecceities” (hurricanes and other mobile *enredos*: see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, *Memories of a haecceity* [260-5]) that give birth to and that confuse specific histories and spaces. We have many degrees of freedom even if we are produced and situated, because we are also multiple and capable of flight (of flying off in several directions at once, perhaps).

The Plane of Consistency is like the Real of Lacan (1964; 1977). But for Lacan (Lacanian), the Real is unavailable, lost after the child moves through the mirror state of the Imaginary: seeing itself in a mirror, the human becomes a being, a bounded entity that, its gaze tells it, stops at the fingernails and the toenails, and is I. Lacan’s Symbolic is the third stage, “true” human being, where “reality” gives way to representation, where “authentic” contact with “the world” is lost through the intervention of symbols. Symbols “stand between” an

object and perceiving subject, blocking our contact with the thing itself. Symbols can hold sway so effectively that they often delude us into believing that they are what they stand for-- through symbols, apparently unorganized and serendipitous flows of spaces are made intelligible, meaningful, fateful. But a universal semiotic reign of intrusive symbols and signs, suggest Deleuze and Guattari, may not yet be at hand, so why cry over what has not been lost? Symbols are fashioned in different ways by different societies, and are always specific and relative, never universal: there is no one dominant "regime of signs." In the writing of Deleuze and Guattari, the Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic are all immanent, all available to us (and without psychoanalysis).

The writings of Deleuze and Guattari come closer to the work of Foucault (e.g. 1972) and Derrida (e.g. 1993) but the latter two seem concerned exclusively with human endeavor, while the former are as comfortable talking about birds or rocks. This, I feel, brings Deleuze and Guattari closer to geography—they are capable of situating humans within broader realms (within "machines"), bridging gaps of nature and culture. Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze and Guattari intertwine in the realm of signs. They see languages as sign systems that at once create and sustain histories and mythologies, internal rather than external to cultures. Again, while Foucault and Derrida focus on Western issues, Deleuze and Guattari seem as comfortable in the non-Western. In Derrida, signs whirl about in reference systems that have no transcendent (transcendental) signifier—they ultimately refer back to each other. No matter how hard one tries, a phenomenon cannot be brought into presence by language, but is banished to absence in the very acts of writing and speaking. Participants in development, for example, have to use a specific language that denies access to an outside: development signs point at each other but banish phenomena, turning blind eyes to complex external realities. Using Foucault, development (e.g. in Sachs 1992) can be traced as historically constructed sets of interweaving discourses—it can be shown not as universally applicable but rather as having pretensions of universality, inextricably entangled with modernity, progress, and enlightenment. Deleuze and

Guattari, then, show the historical and spatial constitution of “regimes of signs,” the languages (codes, jargon, sets of instructions, patois) that sustain modes of human existence, as variable and intermixed as spaces.

Deleuze and Guattari seek to go farther than destabilizing and relativizing the truth claims of humanity—like complexity theorists in the hard sciences, their goal is not only to describe and critique inflexible “states of being,” but also to show how the disparate truths work within their own referential systems. What are the conditions for Hurricane Mitch to discriminate by class and livelihood? What are the conditions for development to blanket the globe, or indeed for any “revolution” to harbor pretensions of universality?

Deleuze and Guattari replace “structures” and “discourses” with “machines” that are simultaneously the actualized, organized, and expressed *enredos* of virtual possibilities we might call phenomena, and also all openings and connections to other machines. They are both the “category” and the “individual,” the ways that entities arise, the conditions for their arising, and the conditions for their dissipation. A hurricane “machine” is at once the set of all possibilities that can and do result in hurricanes, and also each and every specific hurricane phenomenon that occurs. To be more exact, “abstract machines” achieve all this, while “machinic assemblages” and “collective assemblages of enunciation” could be likened to the “practice” of hurricanes and the “discourse” on hurricanes. Development, by all accounts I think one of the most powerful abstract machines in the world today, has a machinic assemblage comprising all the conditions for development projects to occur and development space to erupt, all the organs that keep development going, all the outhouses built and the pigs tied. This is the “content” of Development. But the abstract machine of Development fails if its collective assemblage of enunciation fails to keep Development’s regime of signs whole and “relevant”—development projects only work (pit latrines only get built, are used, and multiply across the landscape, for example) because they are speakable, significant, symbolic, and can be guided by

coherent meanings. The organs of development hold it up, keep it going, keep it spreading.
(See Massumi 1992 for another interpretation of “machines.”)

How does complexity theory relate to the positivistic scientific endeavor, which I think is still the dominant candidate for what constitutes a “scientific method,” and continues to hold tight to a claim for transcendent validity in “the sciences”? In certain fields once overwhelmingly dominated by positivism, complexity theory and allied chaos theory have made great headway—in predicting hurricanes, for example. But in, for example, evolutionary biology, Deleuzian thought encounters barriers as well as embraces. In numerous passages, Deleuze and Guattari show how Darwinian competition and natural selection are perhaps powerful machines, but not The Dominant Forces guiding the becomings of living things. Deleuze and Guattari blur the boundary of living and non-living, particularly through the example of the virus, which is and does both. They set life off against organic life—the latter a limitation, a bottling-up of the former. What is really false, they lead me to wonder, about the “life” of a painting, a rock, or a party? They also show implicitly how the nineteenth-century theories of “mutual aid” (whom I associate closely with Kropotkin and Réclus, anarchist geographers) were overwhelmed by Social Darwinism, a narrow, deterministic, racist violence done to Darwin. Not only do distinct machines entangle with each other, but their organisms, assemblages, codes, species, guilds, societies, populations, often come to cooperate and then to become symbiotic. Phenomena (“haecceities”) at all scales swap bits of their territories with each other in an endless dance that results in the becoming complexity of the “holobiont” (this term inspired by Margulis 1991). Individuals and populations may not claw to a “top” and leave their weakest members behind, but are always also becoming mutually interdependent. They (we) are (always already) becoming-entangled: the holobiont is the *n*-dimensional *enredo* of complexity.

The ant and the acacia—rhizome, *enredo*, map, holobiont, “block of becoming”—need each other and can’t survive without each other; the orchid and the euglossine bee continually fool



Fig. 1.1. Ant and acacia rhizome. *Cachito* (Bull's-Horn Acacia) of cattle space guarded by symbiont ants that live inside the thorns. In my reading, holobiont of ant, acacia, cattle, and human viewer. In Deleuzian terms, we are witnessing a becoming-ant of the acacia and a becoming-acacia of the ant within a cattle milieu overcoded by human perception.

each other but get along by swapping codes. In Deleuzian terms (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:10), the orchid does not imitate a bee (“wasp”) but “becomes” the bee, “deterritorializing” its “self” to form a “rhizome” with the bee. The bee and the orchid becoming-entangled: the bee and the orchid “map” each other. The orchid “wants” to be pollinated, the bee wants to mate. An example used in this dissertation is the coffee farmer and the forest. They form a rhizome as the farmer deterritorializes the forest, shaping it to her own ends, “humanizing” it. The apparently submissive shaded coffee forest/farm is not an “ersatz” forest, a poor copy of a forest, to many farmers. It is a type of real forest that has to be respected as such. For the forest (what I call “forest space”) continually “reterritorializes” the coffee farm, not only by growing thicker and “taking over” but by pollinating, fertilizing, sheltering. The coffee farm and its farmer *need* to deterritorialize each other because “traditional” shade coffee can only exist “symbiotically” with the forest. But don’t be fooled into thinking that farmer/forest is a dyad. As in any *enredo*, a simple opposition or dual intertwining is a device (heuristic or “machine-

created”) that masks a complex jumble of becomings—in tropical biology, “web” is one of the key expressions for characterizing what I think of as an *n*-dimensional holobiont (mapping the *enredo*).

Beings--blocks of internally-coherent code and material, holding sway--are not rock-hard phenomena but entangled becomings at the intersections of machines. Parts of them (parts of us) are being carted away continually by others, as we are taking from “outside.” “Outside” and “inside” are not absolute parameters bounding a phenomenon, but are locally established conditions. The cell, for example, to hold sway as “itself,” has an osmotic membrane--but no cell is an island. The human body has a skin, a mouth, an anus. On death, these melt away, their physical beings and that of their cells and organs disappearing. Our webs dissolve; we melt into the background. We become food for others--our bodies are “deterritorialized” in final dissipation into little meals and ossified “remains.” Thanks to other machines, however, we may endure in history, genes, and culture.

That phenomena have moving and flowing territories is a central point in Deleuze and Guattari’s thought. They distinguish things that are highly ordered and centered (felines, for example; or nation-states) from others that are dispersed into packs (rats, nomads). This is a highly significant heuristic divide because it points to a real rift between a relatively high rate of mutualism and rhizomatic becoming, and a relatively high rate of “biunivocal” differentiation. stratification, ordering, and centrality: necessary to achieve the organism and the state. A rhizome is also a rhizome of rhizomes (a map of maps): all the tunnels and mycorrhizae that connect local *enredos*, worlds, holobionts, “milieux” together. Rhizomes are uncentered networks that allow movement--of nutrients, words, diseases--to crop up (break out, erupt) almost simultaneously across “great distances.” Rhizomes are “flat” in that they do not take commands from above and without but rather from within, from all points rather from a permanent leader. A flock of birds wheeling in the sky is a good example of a rhizome that has yet to be understood. The Internet tends toward a rhizome, where I can move from one realm to

the next in an instant, where almost anything thinkable can be encountered, where criminal as well as free-thinking tendencies spread like viruses, out of control. If the Internet in the year 2001 were to have a central command authority in addition to its millions of web pages and myriad servers, it could be regulated. But rhizomes cannot be easily controlled, neither in the narrow sense of the local exchange of “code” (sexual intercourse is a good example of this uncontrollable *enredo*: see the orchid and the bee, above) nor in the becoming of a population (the customs of a human society, for example). A rhizomatic mat of crabgrass is in some ways a synonym for human culture, which spreads and spreads and spreads. No matter how vast the web becomes, still, through the workings of machines, we have similar characteristics almost everywhere. There are no real “margins” of a rhizome, because each rhizome “part” is “itself” a rhizome, and each of these is also constituted by its rhizomes (*enredos*).

Rhizomes tend toward the (unattainable) limit condition of pure dispersion and absolute localized power; hierarchies tend toward “pure” biunivocalization and simplification of reality. The “enemy” of the rhizome is the hierarchy: a feature of the organic, and particularly the human strata of reality. Hierarchies organize societies and spaces through, for example, simple division (rhizomes work through addition and multiplication: join our network!). A Unity--whether Primer Mover, Goal, Theory, Big Bang--becomes ever more diverse through splitting and then splitting again, but the original Idea remains in all the copies that are created; each copy is a “small version,” a “child” of the original (in its image). We are the sum of our genes and have the divine breath within us--it all started with Adam and Eve, created by God. In the beginning was a soup, a spark occurred, life arose, competed, and speciated, and today we have biodiversity. The tree of life. At the top is the Emperor, who is or who intercedes for God(s); at the bottom are the serfs; in between are a hierarchy of vassals who do the bidding of those above and give orders to those below. The serfs are close to the Land, and the imprint of the Emperor is in the Land. His gaze follows one everywhere.

Hierarchies purport to distribute “equality,” but by their very centrality and boundeness they create real marginality—a condition for homogenizing, hegemony, and oppression. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) show how (hierarchical) States arose through “striation”: the simplification of rhizomatic, entangled local geographies: through the centralizing organization of village hydraulic cultures (for example, in reference to ancient Egypt); through channeling off the excess energy of local people into public works; through titling private land. States coalesce around nuclei (usually concentrations of people such as towns and cities: haecceities reined in) and seek to control surrounding land and bodies. They “overcode” the land through overpowering, disregarding or criminalizing spatial codes that are dangerously at odds with their own (other regimes of signs—gatherers and hunters, for example). States are never the benign results of a progression through “Savage”(noble and “primitive”) and “Barbarian” (misdeveloped souls; malevolent others) to a stabilized and carefully shepherded Enlightenment and Development. They are simply the oft-unwanted inscription of stasis onto flux, stopping onto movement, swallowing and subduing, and often extinguishing of gatherers, hunters, fishers, gypsies, poets, capitalists—in the maw of some Thing always on the Outside.

The spaces that States occupy they striate along hierarchical lines: geographical regimes of signs. “Striating” space inscribes permanence into flux, draws lines and situates “locales” within universal coordinate systems. Striated space is space organized to the nth degree, at the micro scale, the meso scale, the macro scale. It comes pre-interpreted: like a microwave dinner, the highly-striated space of the nation-state need only be accepted and digested; any tampering is not “normal,” but instead is “change.” It follows that, like mass-produced food, no place in striated space is unique, but rather each is a variation on other places within a set that can be defined by an equation. Each place can be solved in terms of the equations of morals and ethics that inscribe it, or should inscribe it.

States and statelike entities (and to some extent all organic beings) striate spaces by clearing out clutter, by overpowering, overcoding what become “outdated manifestations” (their local

characteristics); by overwhelming local meanings with transcendent and absolute laws, beliefs, territorialities. Striating means reining in spaces' complexity. Given that the land-positive globe, outside Antarctica, is now exclusively owned by nation-states (though of course these are contested in myriad conflicts, as well they should be), is there any other type of space in which we do, can, or should dwell? The answer lies in the mixture. Deleuze and Guattari deny that there is anything like a "pure" striated space. This means that all striated space, while often overcoding suffocatingly each nation-state, is interwoven with other spaces—though at times one has to be careful of admitting one's allegiance to these "rogue" spaces. Striated space—more accurately, spaces becoming striated—is countered by "smooth" space (spaces becoming smoothed), inhabited by anti-State nomads who perform territories as scripts of locally-controllable characteristics: non-centered, uncontrollable, unbounded, rhizomatic. "Smooth" means not "empty" per se but empty of overcoding from beyond and outside. "Smoothing" is returning value to the local; the local always on its own terms as well as on the terms of its outsides. "Smoothing" means mutual aid, anarchism, chaos; smooth space is the limit condition of anti-State space.

This leads one to think not only of hurricanes and Mad Cow Disease but also of the anti-State spaces of the New World that were already in the process of fending off unwanted intruders centuries before 1492 (Clastres 1987). Few spaces in Latin America could be seen as virulently anti-State today, though some (e.g. in Amazonia) are still the territories of forest farmers/gatherers/hunters/fishers overcoded only nominally by "Peru" or "Brazil" (the stereotypical Yanomamo who asks "What is Venezuela?"). But because Deleuze and Guattari suggest we not run out looking for smooth spaces to inhabit, what is the alternative? To find out what is left of smooth space *within* striated space. To experiment with forces of smoothing within State space, and even to smooth out striations. Anarchist geography that would bracket "America," perhaps. I will argue in chapter three that the Honduran State (including its colonial instar) attempted unsuccessfully to striate what is now called the Moskitia, inhabited by what

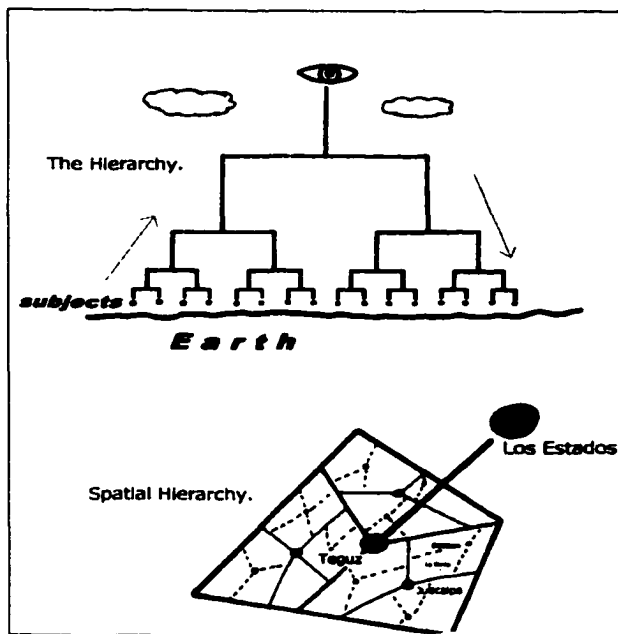


Fig.1.2. Hierarchical spaces.

Spain saw as lawless, stateless nomads. The “Taguzgalpa,” as it was called, was a smooth space of local territories, rebels from the State protected in part by thick forest but open to the sea whence the English and others sought not necessarily to conquer them but to form a rhizome with them. Olancho was the margin between Honduras and the Taguzgalpa; Olancho’s nomadic, rebellious qualities, I assert, flowered in part from this historically liminal condition, always becoming-striated, becoming-smooth together.

In striated Honduran state space, while a manifest overcoding seems to reign supreme--roads that degenerate the farther one gets from the capital, land titles owned by individuals, border posts—there are also myriad shreds and trajectories of alternate and earlier spatialities, as well as all the smooth space of “Nature.” *Municipios* like Gualaco are not only creations of the State, but also historically-formed alliances of local territories that hearken to pre-State days and contrive to keep overcoding from the outside at bay. Rhizomatic forms of mutual aid and untaxed income abound, while the applicability of laws created in Tegucigalpa have yet made little headway against the locally-specific solutions provided by family networks. Global projects sometimes work, but often they are refashioned within local contexts: global codes are

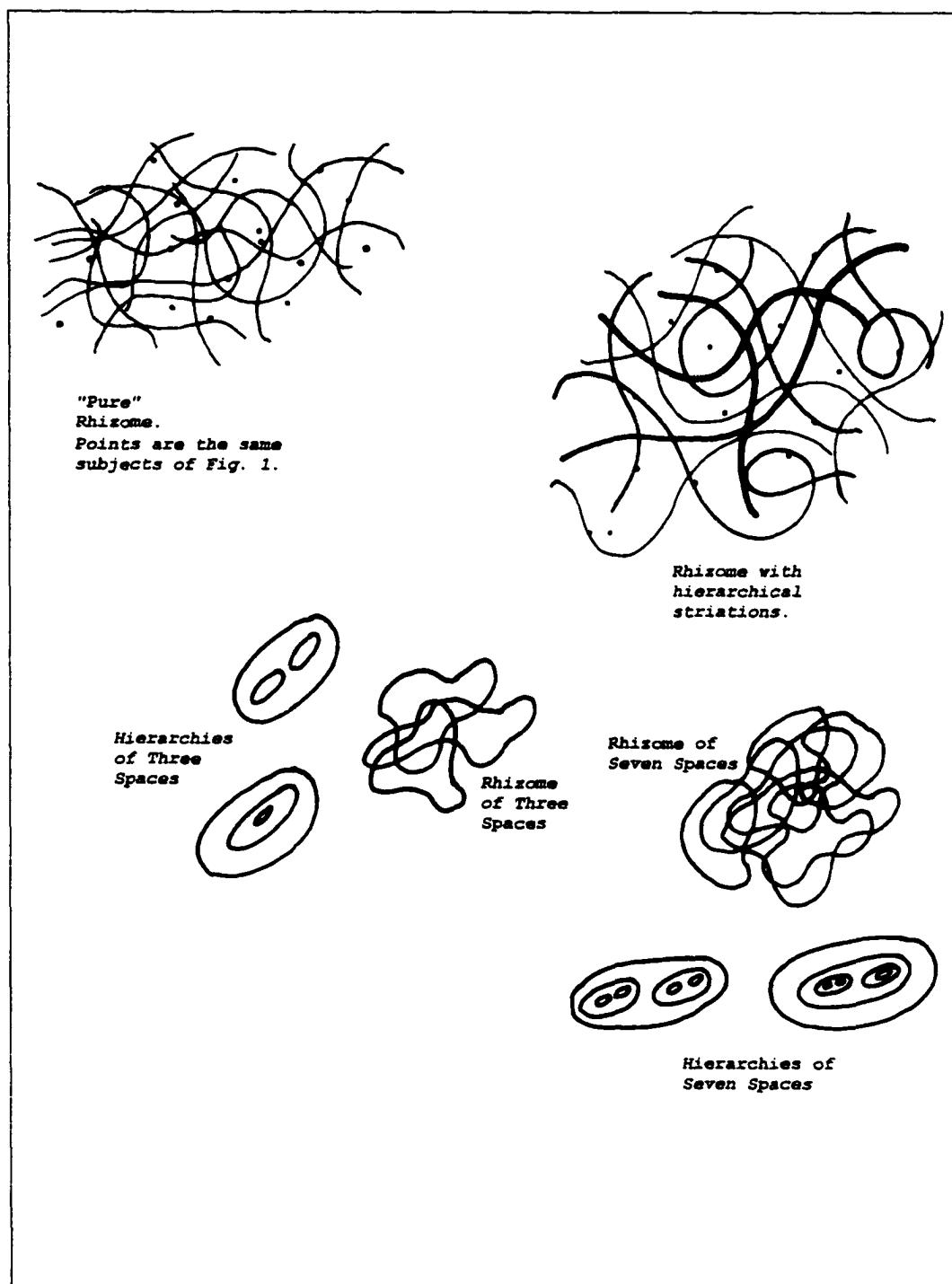


Fig. 1.3. Rhizomes and rhizomatic hierarchies.

deterritorialized from their "origins" (development, in this sense is rhizomatic inasmuch as it takes solutions from everywhere and plugs them in everywhere else). Another example: the striations of the State and its bureaucratic epiphytes are stymied by the "naturally" smooth space

of the deep forest (*pura montaña*) where human and non-human territories interweave without any master, where a certain snake and peccary, the greatest threats, are beyond human control (see chapter four). Even cattle space (chapter six), while in low intensity conflicts with other local spaces, is defined and sustained by an irruptive nomadism that striated space can barely tolerate.

It would be tempting to experiment with only the tendencies of smoothing and striating, playing one off against the other. And yet these two are only limits of processes characterizing spaces far more complex: never dualities nor even triptychs, but always n -dimensional, Riemannian spaces. This is where I take off from Deleuze and Guattari—following what I see as an (unheralded) tradition of “nomad” anarchistic geography that parallels their “nomad philosophy” (philosophy against the State). Nomad philosophy is the philosophy of movement, of immanence, of local solutions and sensitivity to difference. It counters State philosophy, the thinking that shores up empires, that allowed Western civilization to define itself, root itself, justify itself, and spread itself like thick butter into every pore of the earth. (The West is not the only example by any means. Every Empire has to have its philosophers: Confucius comes to mind.) In the nineteenth century, State geography was epitomized in the work of Friedrich Ratzel (drawing from Spencer’s “Social Darwinism”), while Réclus and Kropotkin, as mentioned above, were anarchist geographers seeking to counter hegemony with local empowerment, replacing the State with independent mutual aid societies (Clark 1997; Dunbar 1978; Kropotkin 1989, Livingstone 1992; Martin and James 1993). But State geography, as an academic practice, is more than a justification of nation-state order—it also implies a belief in being subsuming becoming, in structures that determine outcomes, in essences that are completely describable, understandable, and controllable. While it is tempting to equate post-structural geography with nomad geography and “everything else” with State geography, this would be a gross insult to the highly individual natures of geographers, and the fact that most employ the State and the anti-State in mixture. State geography and nomad geography—

striated geography and smooth geography—are unattainable limit conditions. Carl Sauer, for example, and a long line of Berkeley geographers “in his footsteps,” appear to have been more interested in traditional knowledges, local spatialities, echoes of the indigenous and the Iberian in Latin America. Many of the “Berkeley School” were more attentive to and interested in the details that helped local (anti-State, archaic) landscapes endure than to the macro scale political and economic contexts (see Mathewson 1985 on Sauer’s “antimodernism”). But perhaps some played into the hands of State development, and others, by not analyzing political and macroeconomic contexts, could err by exclusion. Sauer himself, like anyone else, was an *enredo* of State and anti-State, being and becoming.³

Another example of becoming-smooth is that of humanistic geography and the place it gives to place—at once a central concept, but by its very centrality marginalizing the way, the movement, the deterritorialization, the “line of flight” (in Deleuzian terms). Seen from one angle, humanistic geographers (e.g. Relph 1976; Tuan 1974 and 1977) are also, like the Sauerians, seeking to rescue alternative local spatialities from the State, from their consignment to unimportance. Seen from another angle, geographers who speak (with Heideggerian overtones) of the erosion of place, of authentic places that need to be preserved, are also favoring being over becoming, stasis over flux. In their own bodies and works there is no doubt a mixture of State and anti-State, ordered chaos and chaotic order, physical poetry and poetic physics: lived, if not acknowledged; acknowledged, if not lived.

A “purer” nomadic geography characterizes the writings of non-geographer Bruce Chatwin (e.g. 1987), as well as (Deleuze and Guattari do not tire of pointing out) much of US literature, poetry, and popular music (for example). In academic geography, authors such as Doel (1995; 1999) and Olsson (1991) push the envelope of spatial constraints, unabashedly

³ In this dissertation, I am beholden greatly not only to the “Louisiana School” of Berkeley-style geography, but also to the works on Honduras and Nicaragua produced by Sauer’s students: see bibliographic references to W. Denevan, C. Johannessen, and J. Parsons.

“poststructuralist,” fully aware of flux. For myself, despite the gypsy attraction of the “shiftless” nomad, I also keep in mind that in the farmer-pastoralist symbiont, gardening has been necessary as well. Places and ways; holdings-sway and becomings; “flows” and “breaks” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980) are inextricably interlocked. A sobering reminder to those who might wax too enthusiastic on smooth space: capitalism is Deleuze and Guattari’s prime example of an almost completely “deterritorialized” rhizome that pops up everywhere, taking advantage of local conditions, holding nothing sacred. plugging into and short-circuiting the State/development/conservation/cattle/coffee/senses of place/gypsies/the Internet. Corporate nomads are employed by centered networks (rhizomatic hierarchies) to further the process of globalizing the local, so that everyone wants to drink the same soft drinks.

I think that Deleuze and Guattari, because they open the door to a fluid, becoming-nomad geography, thus allow all the forces of irrupting complexity to disrupt the landscape. The very term “landscape,” while originally signifying a perspective, has become a powerful way that geographers take slices of space and place them under the microscope (see Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Olwig 1996). The landscape is jumbled, difficult to understand, because it is the ongoing creation of *n*-dimensional *enredos*, the local manifestation of complex machines that may often have little to do one with the next. A “landscape” is always a part-happenstance collection of characteristics culled from local space. Gazed at one way, it is a network of locally significant places and ways; seen another, it is a boring or even “degraded” agricultural expanse devoid of importance, better refashioned into an industrial panorama, or let go the other way, back into a forest. “Landscape” always entangles natures and cultures, and forces us to consider the human and the non-human in rhizomatic encounters. Slug landscape entangles with pig landscape with mud with trees with Pepsi sign urine fences guns.... My way toward explicating “the landscape” is to accept the term as referring to a sort of laboratory sample, a section of local space. Olancho could be characterized as a “landscape of fear” but just as well

a “rural landscape” or a “landscape of desperation.” It would depend on what machines were involved (Climate? Development? Water?) , and how they were entangled.

Examining landscapes, I encounter myriad spaces that are generated by hierarchies and rhizomes, hierarchical rhizomes and rhizomatic hierarchies. I run into so many people who exist side by side but, as far as I can determine, live in almost wholly different spaces. I find a common ground I call “local space”(chapter five), but I do not pretend that it is an absolute and authentic homeland for what is bounded by the horizon. I find cattle space, a centered rhizome that is spun by the cattle-grass-*ganadero* holobiont, entangled with a campesino space, the manifestation of a decentered network generated by family relations, *patrones*, village territories. I see bird spaces and rivers and forest spaces, geological and ecological worlds intertwined: Deleuzian “strata” manifest everywhere and anywhere. What I can find no longer is “Space” as the condition for or background of spaces. I cannot perceive the possibility that what the landscape looks like somehow belies any one, truthful essence, because I find no essence, only essences specific to, created by, maintained by machines. I feel only spaces arising, expanding, shrinking, dissolving; invisible at one scale, hegemonic at another. The virtual realm, the Plane of Consistency, what Deleuze and Guattari also call the “Earth,” offers an endless source of combinations, “thickenings,” probable outcomes, probable territorial alliances. I am overcome not by defeat (Oh, no! It’s all relative!) but by joy that the world is so complex and fluid.

1.3 Outline of Research History and Methods

From 1991 to 1993, I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Olancho, Honduras. I worked in development and conservation at the margins of state institutions, at the margins of a state. But I was becoming Olanchano, too comfortable with local skies and the ring of mountains that followed me everywhere. In those days, I wanted to know how to “stabilize deforestation” or find some way of working out and working through the complexities of everyday life vis-à-vis

biodiversity conservation. I was always struck by the fact that almost everyone thought they had the right answers. I was and still am pushed on by a combination of raw discovery and by the need to work through spatial conflicts.

As a Master's student in geography, I thought and wrote about relationships between people and birds in Olancho. I married Luz Medina, an Olanchana, and became a member of her family network, privy to the types of secrets that Olanchanos prefer to keep hidden from outsiders. My best friends cut down forest for a living, or grew coffee, or raised cattle. They inhabited rich spaces of polyvalent symbols that the development world too often ignored or trivialized, consigning them to folklore or even ignorance. Some of my friends practiced development, and/or conservation. Others wanted to overthrow the state. A participant-observer, I listened attentively while the boundary between fieldwork and everyday life blurred. Luz, always my primary informant on Olancho, has helped keep my becoming-*olanchano* faithful and dedicated.

My research for this work, in many ways beginning in 1991, culminated in slightly over a year's residence in Juticalpa, Olancho, from June 1999 to August 2000, with one break in April 2000. During this time, I took more field notes than I ever had before on everything I deemed relevant to the cultural/natural geography of Olancho.⁴ My research proposal focused on the spatial *enredos* of conservation, development, and "local knowledge," but as the year progressed I found it more useful to shatter "local knowledge" through the notion of complex spaces and the spatial identities that weave them together. The Monumento Natural El Boquerón, in which I had been active since 1992, continued to be a focus of investigation (chapters 2 and 8), while the Río Babilonia hydroelectric project emerged as an important issue

⁴ My sources and inspirations for ethnographic methods, and their relationship to geography, include: Barnes and Duncan, *Writing worlds* (1992); Briggs, *Learning how to ask, a sociolinguistic appraisal of the role of the interview in social science research* (1986); Clifford and Marcus, *Writing culture, the poetics and politics of inquiry* (1986); Emerson et al., *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes* (1995); Lindlof, *Qualitative research methods* (1995); Richardson, *San Pedro, Colombia: small town in a developing society* (1970) and "Writing poetry and doing ethnography: aesthetics and observation on the page and in

(chapter 2 and 7) for my work from out of a more general focus on the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta and its connections with the La Venta, Gualaco region.

As participant-observer, I took any and all opportunities to learn and interact. I never struck off alone but always found at least one person to be companion and informant (most of these peoples' names are changed or omitted in the text, for their protection). They embodied my notions of individuals as traversed by multiple spatial identities: at once conservationist and rancher and campesino; at once teacher and mayor and rancher.... Quotidian commentary on nearly every event and idea took and continues to take place in the home, between my wife Luz and me, with my mother-in-law *doña* Clara Luz Rojas as frequent participant and commentator in Juticalpa.

In addition to doing multi-day hikes and driving trips, I frequently sat down with certain informants for unstructured interviews and conversations, and much of the oral history and folklore in this dissertation comes from older people in Juticalpa, Gualaco, and the Río de Olancho area. I read assiduously two national newspapers, *El Heraldo* and *La Tribuna*, and watched the local news broadcasts most nights. I attended meetings on conservation and development, and kept up my contacts with environmentalists in Tegucigalpa. Finally, I became active in a nascent environmental NGO called Ecoambientes de Olancho as well as in the older Sociedad Cultural de Juticalpa.

Luz and I visited several archives, of inestimable help for drawing out themes in Olancho histories (see especially sections III and IV of Bibliography). The Archivo Nacional de Honduras (ANH) in Tegucigalpa was primarily useful for land titles (1682-1950s: see Section III of Bibliography) and for nineteenth-century history. The Archivo Eclesiástico de Comayagua (AEC) yielded documents from the late 1600s through the early 1900s on all aspects of non-missionary church affairs. The Archivo General de Centroamérica (AGCA) in

the field (1994a); Stoller, *The taste of ethnographic things: the senses in anthropology* (1989); Young, *Taleworlds and storyrealms* (1987).

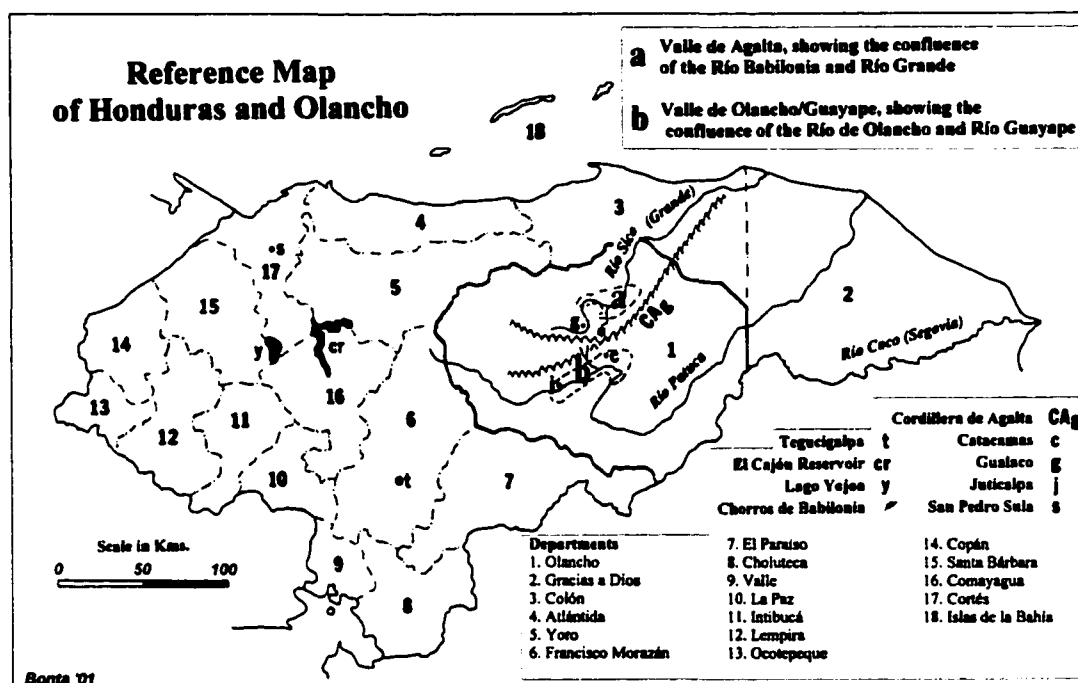


Fig. 1.4. Reference map of Honduras and Olancho.

the Ciudad de Guatemala has been the most illuminating for Olancho and eastern Honduran colonial history, through its sixteenth-century *probanzas*, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Franciscan missionary documents, and exhaustive tribute lists, *tasaciones*, *censos*, *padrones*, and other documents. Smaller church archives became available to us in Gualaco and Juticalpa, Olancho, each with a handful of documents. We examined the Archivo Histórico de Juticalpa (AHJ), mostly nineteenth- and twentieth-century materials, on microfilm in the ANH (see also Arrigunaga 1991). At the US Peace Corps office in Tegucigalpa, Jorge Betancourt allowed me to study his archive of materials on Honduran protected areas, one of the most extensive of its kind in the country.

Primary published sources directed related to my research on Olancho are sparse, and I have gained access to most that are available in Honduran and United States libraries. Nineteenth-century documents include concessions for exploitation of resources. Only one traveler's account of the time, by William Vincent Wells (Wells 1857; see also Wells 1856; 1856a;

1856b), is based on a trip to Olancho, and it is still the longest descriptive work on the region by any author. E. G. Squier's accounts of Honduras (Squier 1855; 1870; "Bard" 1855), which became the standard sources of information on the country, include original data on Olancho. Antonio Vallejo's 1893 *Primer Anuario Estadístico correspondiente al año de 1889* (reprinted 1997) is a one-of-a-kind compendium of geographical information.

The end of the 1800s and the twentieth century saw a few visits by geographers to Olancho: first Karl Sapper at the turn of the century (see discussions in Sampson 1997 and West 1990), then Karl Helbig (n.d. [1953]; 1956) and Carl Johannessen in the 1950s (1954; 1963). The latter two published lengthy descriptive works that contain abundant valuable information based on original investigation. In the last part of the twentieth century, William V. Davidson (e.g. Davidson 1985; 1991; Davidson and Cruz 1988) and his students made numerous trips to Olancho; James R. Sampson published a dissertation on the Pech (Sampson 1997). I have benefited greatly from LSU's geographical commitment to eastern Honduras, particularly through the support and ideas of Dr. Davidson.

Key twentieth-century geographical and ethnographical sources for Olancho include Conzemius' study of the Pech (1928), Figueroa, *Monografía del Departamento de Olancho* (1935), Ramos et al., *Conociendo a Olancho* (1947), and Komor, *La tierra del nuevo hogar* [including] *Apuntes de viaje por los departamentos de El Paraíso, Olancho y Yoro* (1930).

The great Honduran geographer and polymath Jesús Aguilar Paz walked to many places in Olancho, and he included geographical lore from the Department in several of his works (see especially Aguilar Paz 1989[1930]; see also 1935; 1954; 1969; 1970; 1981; 1999; Paz-Cerrato 1995). The largest amount of poetic literature that speaks to peoples' relationships to the landscape can be found in the works of Olanchano authors Froylán Turcios (1941[1938]; 1990[1911]) and Medardo Mejía (1995[1932]; 1998). José Antonio Domínguez, a Juticalpa native, produced the *Himno a la materia*, which many Hondurans consider to be the greatest work of philosophy to come out of their country (see Mejía 1990). An outstanding collection of

poetry on the land, including many poems on Olancho or by Olanchanos, is *Exaltación de Honduras* (Acosta and del Valle 1971). Rafael Heliodoro Valle's edited volume of geographical extracts, *Semblanza de Honduras* (c. 1947), is also quite important.

I employ several recent primary sources, including conservation- and development-oriented pamphlets, meeting notes, Peace Corps reports, and so forth. Some I have in my personal collection, while others, for example, are in the library of Francisco Urbina (La Venta, Gualaco) as well as in Jorge Betancourt's files.

The Honduran Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN, Comayagüela D.C., Francisco Morazán) has published a series of 1:50,000-scale topographic maps that have been my invaluable sources and guides for me (see Section II of Bibliography).

The list of scholars in other fields currently doing primary investigation in Olancho is limited but includes the archaeologist Christopher Begley, with a decade's experience in the Culmí region and the Talgua Caves (Begley 1999); and Robert Rogers, a geologist with similar length of experience in eastern Honduras. At the time of writing, Rogers was doing fieldwork on a dissertation addressing geological "problems" in northern Olancho, the first in his field to seriously look at this region. Both have been invaluable sources. I have also drawn from Mark Gordon's work on the geology of the Guayape Fault and Sierra de Agalta (Gordon 1990; 1990a) as well as the scattering of 1:50,000-scale IGN geological maps for Olancho. Geographer Daniel Graham has offered valuable insights on violence in Olancho and on Esquipulas del Norte.

I am aware of most secondary sources directly relevant to Olancho, and to Honduras, but draw from them sparsely in the interest of speaking directly about the landscape. *Political ecology, mountain agriculture, and knowledge in Honduras* (Jansen 1998) is the work perhaps most relevant to local knowledges in this dissertation, and is, I feel, the first academic work to delve deeply into the Honduran campesino world (through a case study in Santa Bárbara department). Newson, *The cost of conquest: Indian decline in Honduras under Spanish rule*

(1986) is a standard account of indigenous history during colonial times, and includes much of relevance to Olancho, especially the Franciscan missions. Honduran historian Darío Euraque (1996; 1998; 1999) writes brilliantly on late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Honduras; he publishes frequently in the Honduran journal of ideas *Paraninfo*. Other Honduran journals with good quality original research include *Ceiba* (agronomy) and *Yaxkin* (anthropology, principally archaeology).

1.4 Chapter Outline

In Chapter two, Meetings, I immerse the reader in two *enredos* that are both typical and unique in present-day spatial encounters and conflicts in Olancho, while also resembling such entanglements elsewhere in Latin America.

The first is a condensed sketch of a meeting pitting proponents of a hydroelectric project on the Río Babilonia against an entrenched opposition. The meeting was a turning point in a bitter fight (that continues at the time of writing) over what project proponents call “resources” and opponents know as “*patrimonio*” (“patrimony,” heritage). Waterfalls, coffee farms, the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, sustainable development, a fierce village and municipal identity, and a regional identity (“Olanchano”) intertwine in alliances to combat the spaces of industrial development, other coffee farms, other local and regional identities, and the state. In this meeting, many issues important to conservation and development in Olancho play center stage, and so it serves as an excellent introduction to my study area and to some of the issues at stake in a regional geography of complexity.

The second *enredo* is an encounter of the Red de Cuencas, a sustainable development alliance sponsored by a wealthy “Canadian Project” and focused on the watershed of the Río de Olancho, encompassing the protected area of Monumento Natural El Boquerón as well as part of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, and numerous villages where deep conflicts between campesinos, cattle ranchers, and others are occurring. Unlike the watershed *enredo* described in

the first part of the chapter, this one seems all too typical of its kind: The Development Meeting. It serves to point out what development is and what it does in the everyday, and through its omissions and silences what is missing in development's plan for rural Olancho (and by extension the "Third World" in general).

Chapter three, Cultural Histories, maps the becomings of Olancho identities from Precolumbian times to the present day. Olancho is presented as an autochthonous cultural region both within the Honduran nation-state and at its margin; "Olancho" at times oppresses local spaces but also provides them a comforting shell of pride and power when the state comes uncomfortably close. This chapter is intended as a counterpoint to the types of accounts favored by conservation and development—for example, that "deforestation" is solely a recent phenomenon, or that the current spate of *ambientalismo* (environmentalism) is wholly without local precedent. Given the virtual absence of accurate sources on the history of Olancho, particularly its colonial phase, I go into intricate detail, predominately through the use of primary archival sources. I feel that the histories—of tribute Indians, of *mulatos*, of large landowners, of State oppression, of cattle, of gold—are crucial for understanding present-day *enredos*.

Chapter four, Natural Histories, mirrors the previous chapter through an outline of the (largely) non-human spaces created by machines of geology, landforms, climates, soils, and fluvial systems. These spaces are interwoven with biological elements, and in the latter half of this chapter I show how Olancho's biodiversity has come about through the complex encounters of living and non-living. For example, I demonstrate that there has never been a uniform "lowland tropical rainforest" in Olancho, but rather that there has always been a mosaic, and that the lowland rainforest presently existing has neither the highest local biodiversity (contrary to what one might suspect) nor the highest percentage of endemic biota. My overall intent in this chapter is to describe and analyze some of the "choice real estate" that is contested by the spaces described in later chapters. I attempt to portray it as humanized "resource" but also as

self-sufficient: diversity and complexity of land and life inscribed but not erased by human society.

Local Space, chapter five, describes dominant contemporary characteristics of the cultural/natural spaces inhabited by people who live in Olancho.⁵ This is an ethnographical and phenomenological chapter that illustrates both the uniqueness of local places and ways, and how they repeat in “continuous variation” to create and sustain the everyday local world, a “chiasm” with the “global.” I examine local space through its senses, bodies, times, outsides, structure of centers and margins; and through the enchantment it commonly inspires in many who by believing belong to it. I construct an edifice of local space not overcoded by one identity and therefore powerful enough to continually absorb and transmute “invasions” from the outsides (becoming-Olancho). Whether local space endures in its heterogeneous diversity is a question that is woven into the following chapters and addressed unequivocally in chapter nine.

Chapter six, Spatial Identities, contests the simple possibility of there being any underlying shared common ground for complex local space. To show why spatial truth claims are so often contested by different “local people,” for example in the *enredos* of chapter two, I explode “local space” into “local spaces” circumscribed and sustained by “spatial identities.” I describe an array of spaces and the rhizomatic spatial identities that inhabit and define them: Church/State space, development space, cattle space and the *ganadero* (rancher); coffee space and the *cafetalero*; campesino space; loggers, foresters, and timber space. In addition, I insert certain marginal and nomadic identities: the Peace Corps Volunteer, the miner, the smuggler,

⁵ In this dissertation, I focus on central and western Olancho, avoiding substantial discussion of the southeastern and eastern lowland rainforests and their Pech and Tawahka peoples, except inasmuch as they have been, and remain in some ways, Olancho’s “others.” In many ways, the eastern rainforests belong to a non-Olancho paradigm of the Moskitia in cultural/historical geography and to a tropical lowland rainforest paradigm in academic research across disciplines, as well as in conservation and development. See, for example, Barborak (1999), Caicedo (1993), Nietschmann (1973), and Sletto

the mendicant, the politician, the *técnico*. This chapter shows how it is possible for individuals to adhere to different identities at the same time, always spatial but not necessarily “local.”

In chapter seven, *Babilonia Revisited: Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta*, I return to the context of the *enredo* described in the first part of chapter two involving proponents and opponents of a hydroelectric project: in light of the complexity mapped in chapters 3 through 6. I write of the park in terms of its simultaneous existence in different spaces, and how this has come about since it was created in 1987 (and throughout the more expansive spaces and times encompassed by “Olancho” and “Honduras”). I show how the identity of the park is not a static being but an *enredo* of becomings, each a facet of the spatial identities that claim it, share it, reject it, or spurn it. The Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta is described as a Space that has become-multiple, become spaces (has gone from simple to complex). Through the Río Babilonia hydroelectric debacle, it becomes possible to portray the development machine as having bifurcated into a force both for hegemonic repression and for local empowerment. Conservation, inextricably entangled with development, also becomes conceivable as a multifaceted *enredo* rather than a univocal force.

Conservation and Development Spaces in Boqueron and La Avispa, chapter eight, recapitulates the *enredo* of the Red de Cuencas in chapter two in light of the real existence of spatial and historical trajectories independent and quasi-independent of development and conservation as practiced in the 1990s. In a way, I pit this chapter against itself as I sketch an “alternative” history of the spaces within the Monumento Natural El Boquerón and the Río de Olancho watershed, then show what, despite their often shallow understanding of local spatial and historical complexity, development and conservation projects have to offer to spaces that are always already more complex than outsiders can imagine. Though there are no “battle lines” drawn as in the Babilonia hydroelectric debacle, the spaces and situations in this chapter

(1999).

help to underscore my contention that conservation and development machines may spawn local rhizomes, and in this way can work as positive agents in combating the marginalization of margins and the holding sway of spatial homogenization and hegemony.

Chapter nine, W(h)ither State Space: The Orchestra without a Conductor?, maps Olancho and its spaces into “universal” theoretical space by way of an imagined scenario involving Beethoven and the weather. One way to understand the symphony concert is as a striating machine that channels and focuses energies in the development of themes already well known to the audience; another way is to see it is as the orchestrating of “messy” complexity into bounded events. In the absence of a conductor, the orchestra loses its focus but the ensuing chaos actually takes on local order as small groups of people and instruments perform for themselves--what from afar sounds like a cacophony of disoriented players are actually the competing strains of local spaces before, during, and after the State and largely independent of Development, whose practitioners attempt to play Beethoven without a conductor.

Chapter Two

Meetings

Illusions of spatial uniformity are shattered in the meeting. Gathering together does not guarantee consensus but rather allows a forum for an open display of differences. Spaces of the everyday are put under a microscope, their every nuance discussed and contested. Those who plan and host the meetings are inevitably dismayed by the constellation of positions, the jumble of interests, the secret spatialities that wander far from their own stated and hidden agendas. The meeting, whether a turning point or business as usual, concentrates and magnifies the *enredos* of spaces and spatial identities that, left to themselves, do not often congregate in such densities. So much comes out in a meeting, even while more remains hidden. It is a gold mine for the ethnographer, a shortcut to understanding the crucial issues of everyday life, the ongoing contests and alliances that are too often invisible in private interviews or in observation of the landscape itself.

The first *enredo* presented below involves a heated contest over rights to the drainage basin of the Río Babilonia, a small mountain river, one of about 20 that flow from the high peaks of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta into neighboring *valles*. The Babilonia is unique in that along its course it has formed a *vega* (floodplain), the Planes de Babilonia, inside the rainforest at a considerable elevation above the Valle de Agalta. El Ocotal, at the nearby edge of the Valle de Agalta, depends on the Planes de Babilonia for its coffee production, as it has for several generations. Like other impoverished villages along the edges of the big Valles, El Ocotal also needs the montane rainforests and pine forests of the Cordillera for other practices—firewood, hunting, gathering, swidden agriculture.

The Planes de Babilonia and the Valle de Agalta are separated by two linear kilometers but 500 meters of altitude. The Río Babilonia, having forced itself through a metamorphic escarpment, forms more than ten waterfalls in an abrupt descent to El Ocotal. The Chorros de

Babilonia are considered by many to be among the most spectacular natural features in Honduras. I share this feeling, being one of the few outsiders to have scaled the waterfalls' flanking cliffs in order to get a close view. Not only are conservationists and ecotourists fascinated by the Chorros: villagers in El Ocotal and nearby settlements, as well as others in the encompassing *municipio* of Gualaco, consider them to be an integral part of local *patrimonio*.

In the late 1990s, a private Company, whose name I cannot safely reproduce here, with a mandate from the Honduran State, made plans to dam up the Río Babilonia at the Planes, harnessing the tremendous energy of the river by diverting its water down pipes to turbines in the Valle at El Ocotal. Conservationists, including me, had frequently commented on the viability of small hydroelectric projects in Honduras, which would draw from the cloud forests that are humid year round, benefit protected areas such as the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, and in general be environmentally-friendly alternatives to large, unsustainable dams. But as the Babilonia project has taught me, even small projects (under 10 megawatts) can cause considerable grief in local space. To many residents of Gualaco, already bitter after 25 years of outside companies (protected by the State) logging off their pine forests, the idea that the Chorros de Babilonia could disappear was an unthinkable insult. Perhaps another river could be used, but not that one.

Polls have shown that around 90 percent of local villagers are opposed to the project in any form not only because of the damage to or disappearance of their coffee farms, houses, waterfalls, and other integral parts of local space, but because the “*promotores*” that the Company uses insult them, lie to them, and have gone as far as issuing death threats and attacking anti-project activists physically.

The clash between the Company and Gualaco is like the stereotypical unstoppable force meeting the unmovable object. Neither side will concede, and it has become an important test case in many ways for the power of “progress” (in its contested definitions) against the will of



Fig. 2.1. Chorros de Babilonia in 1992. Note thick, intact condition of *serranía* (pine forest). Highest falls are invisible in upper left.



Fig. 2.2. Chorros de Babilonia in 2000. Note *serranía* thinned by Hurricane Mitch. Planes de Babilonia are invisible behind ridgeline; far peak is 2306-meter Cerro Azul. El Ocotal and La Venta are out of the photo in lower left; Pie de la Cuesta is out of photo at lower right at head of cul-de-sac arm of the Valle de Agalta. Photo taken from main road between Gualaco and the Valle de Agalta; note electric lines, installed in mid-1990s prior to Company's incursion.

the *municipio*, which in the 1990s became the political and cultural entity recognized as most able to effect change in Honduras through the practice of development.¹

I hope that the following excerpts from a lengthy meeting give a flavor and convey an immediacy to spatial conflicts and alliances in Olancho: they should become easier to interpret by the time I return to them in chapter seven. Names have been excluded in an attempt to protect identities.

2.1 Gualaco versus the Company

A morning in late June of the year 2000. The mayor of Gualaco and a coalition from El Ocotal and other affected villages had asked the Company to schedule a meeting with them behind closed doors, to reach an agreement on the proposed Babilonia hydroelectric project. The Company had elected to host the anti-project coalition in Juticalpa, the capital of Olancho, and found space at the Club Rotario. Much to the Gualaqueños' surprise, the hours before the meeting saw Company *promotores* distributing invitations to distinguished members of Juticalpa society, and trucking in around thirty of the project's supporters from Gualaco villages. Company engineers set up a scale model of the hydroelectric project on the Club's portico, showing how the Río Babilonia's water would be diverted into pipes above the waterfalls, a trickle remaining for scenic value. Company touts handed out glossy pamphlets for "Proyecto Hidroeléctrico Babilonia" emblazoned with the slogan "Cuidemos los bosques para una Honduras mejor."²

¹ Poerkman, *Plastic words: the tyranny of a modular language* (1995), and Sachs, ed., *The development dictionary, a guide to knowledge as power* (1992) are two sources I have used to situate concepts such as "development." In the unfolding of this dissertation, I have elected not to pin down meanings of "development" and "conservation," in order to show how their definitions depend on who is employing them in what spaces. Poerkman, and the contributors to Sachs, emphasize the hegemonic power that words such as "development" exert on the world—and yet, at the scale of the local in Olancho, I feel that while their hegemonic qualities cannot be denied, it is also important in an ethnographic work to show how they are adopted and transmuted: "made local."

² "Let's take care of the forests for a better Honduras."

The anti-dam coalition was an unkempt lot compared to the smartly-dressed Juticalpa lawyers, journalists, and engineers, many of whom came not necessarily because they worked or sympathized with the Company but because they had been led to believe that Olancho's Development hung in the balance.³ The mayor of Gualaco (a teacher by profession) rumped and rooster-tailed, looked suspiciously like he had gotten up early to supervise his ranch before driving the two hours to Juticalpa. One of the Gualaco "*cabezas calientes*" ("hotheads," as the national press labeled them—i.e., anti-Project activists) remarked that the Company, with its sympathetic audience, expert witnesses, and government sympathizers from Tegucigalpa, would "eat us alive." The coalition felt betrayed by the crush of hostile bodies, since they had come for a private meeting, not a public spectacle. It seemed to them that the Company was exploiting the scene to gain points with influential Olanchanos. To make matters worse, Company supporters from Gualaco's villages outnumbered the anti-project activists two to one.

The coalition's handful of allies in Juticalpa convinced the skittish delegation to make the best of the meeting. A stubborn environmental activist from Juticalpa agreed to serve as co-moderator for the event to ensure that the coalition's voice was heard; the person whom the Company had appointed as sole moderator was a Company engineer's wife. A conservationist who could give expert testimony on two versions of the Environmental Impact Statement agreed to participate in support of Gualaco.

The Gualaqueños were pretty sure that the Company, after several years of studies and "concientización" (consciousness-raising, a word in development space) in the Babilonia area, recently had been granted a 30-year environmental license for a "run-of-the-river" (*a filo de agua*) project in lieu of a full-scale dam that local opposition had successfully stymied (Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente 1999). However, the Company could not begin

³ My frequent use of the passive voice is intentional, and illustrates the way that reflexive verbs shift blame or responsibility for an action or opinion away from the "subject" to an indefinite "they": "se dice," "se piensa," "se hizo."

to operate, it was believed, until they obtained the signature and blessing of the current Gualaco mayor, who remained dead-set against them.⁴ This meeting, according to the coalition, was an attempt to sway the mayor by dumbfounding him with science and engineering, embarrassing the “hillbillies” in front of *diputados* (congressmen), experts, and national news media.

The opening words of a Company representative: “We are young Olanchano businessmen supporting the development of our department.” A *diputado*: “They are here to help the people of Olanchano and Gualaco.” The President of the Central Committee of Patronatos (village councils) of Gualaco hoped a fruitful meeting could be had (he was the leader of the anti-Project activists); the mayor of Gualaco asked God to be with them all that day.

The mayor, Olanchano *diputados*, Company engineers, and a government environmental official occupied the table of honor. Two or three of Olanchano’s *diputados* supported the anti-dam coalition; the rest supported the Company. The most powerful *diputado* wavered. He could become a key ally for either side, since he was close to the congressional president, a leading candidate for the 2001 Honduran presidential elections. The co-moderator from Juticalpa who supported Gualaco was his personal friend.

The Company’s first offering of the day was a highly respected “impartial” engineer from Tegucigalpa who explained the nature of the Project to the crowd in a rational manner. He spoke about the unquestionable benefits of development for the local communities coming from a Project that would be the first of its kind in Honduras: a Project that would protect the rainforest while harnessing energy currently “wasted” by a series of waterfalls. In reference to 1998’s Hurricane Mitch, he wanted to underline that when the Project was in place, villagers would never again have to worry when it rained too hard.

The engineer, who admitted he was not an Olanchano (he was booed for that), stressed that environmental effects would be extremely minimal. Indeed, there would be greater protection

⁴ See Decreto no. 134-90 (1998).

for the entire drainage basin of the Río Babilonia, which campesinos were currently destroying. He enumerated other benefits: wildlife would be preserved, more investment would come to the region, local jobs would be generated, energy would be cheap, the town of Gualaco would earn money from royalties, there would be artisans' workshops, there would be a program of agricultural assistance, all affected villages would be electrified, a scholarship fund would be set up, health, sanitation, tourism would improve.... Why, he wondered, were local residents protesting their *own* development? Because they didn't understand how the Project could benefit them! The Company, if it were financially successful, would make a great contribution to Gualaco, to Olancho, and to Honduras. "Development *cannot* be stopped. The Project *has* to be carried out."

The Company's next sympathizer was a high-up official from SERNA (Secretaría del Estado en los Despachos de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente). This ministry had granted the 30-year environmental license to the Company. The official lamented the intransigence of Gualaco, given that SERNA, thanks to agitators and misinformation, had been forced to deny the Company its first alternative for the Project, a reservoir, in favor of the lesser impact run-of-the-river (which doesn't use a dam). She wondered, why all the fuss about alleged environmental impact, when even opening a highway destroys Nature? We in the head office of SERNA are here to solve problems, she said. We can put all your doubts to rest. We need to help our investors, who are Olanchanos, and stop paying heed to *gringo* agitators. These are our own investors who bring us progress! (A mixture of cheers and boos from the audience.)

The Company then turned over the microphone to the mayor of Gualaco, who deferred to the conservationist. He offered extensive comments on the Company's 1998 Environmental Impact Study, which had been rejected by SERNA, and its 1999 Addendum, which SERNA had accepted and used as the basis of their granting the environmental license. He expressed his surprise that SERNA would approve the Addendum, as not only was it riddled with errors, but also it had been rejected by an anonymous reviewer from the ENEE (Empresa Nacional de

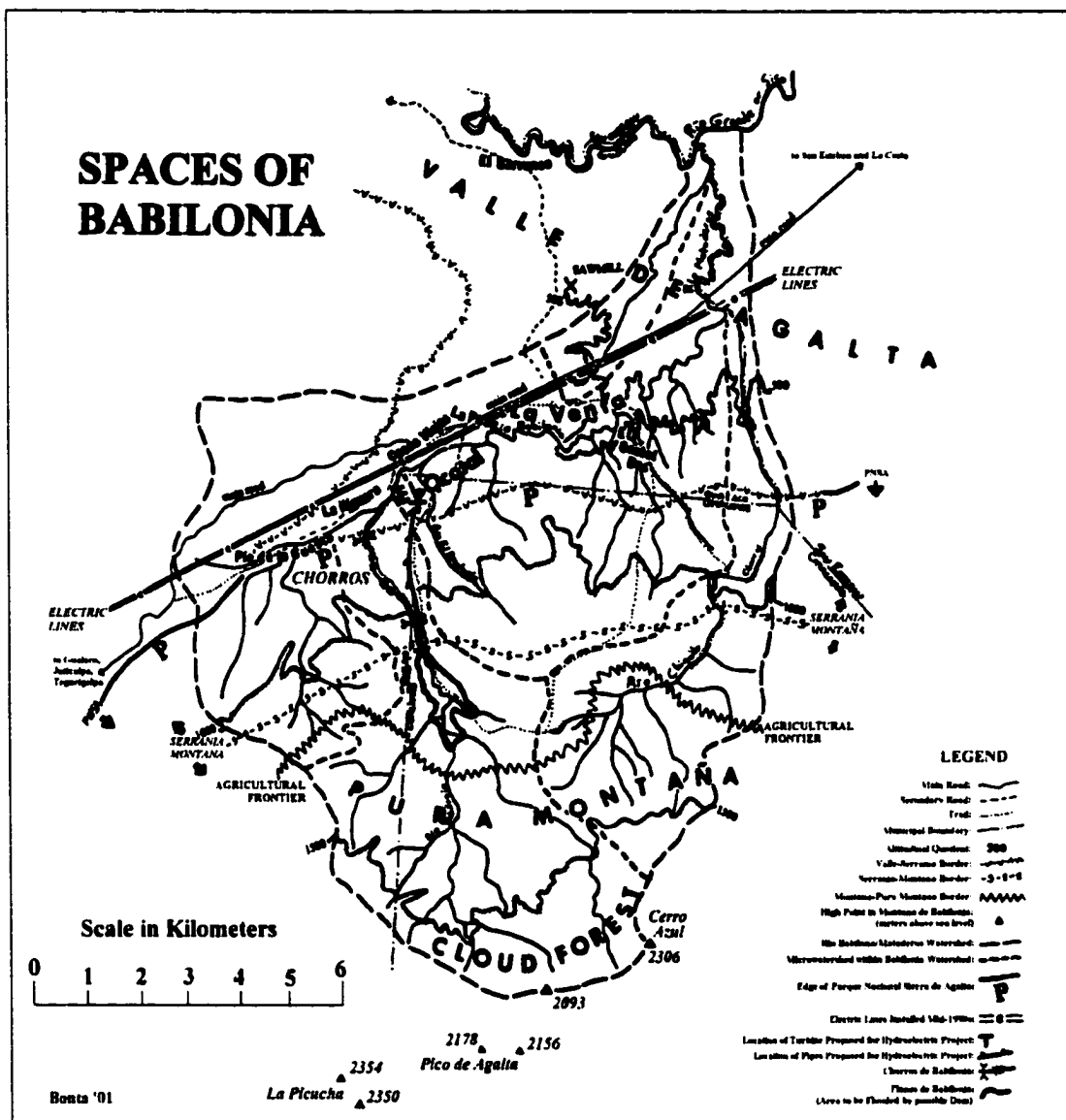


Fig. 2.3. Spaces of Babilonia.

Energía Eléctrica, a government corporation which oversees the construction and maintenance of hydroelectric projects), by the village coalition, by the Gualaco mayor's office, and by the Biology Department of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras. The conservationists underscored the inadequacy of the report's biological data, giving the example of its list of 33 bird species for the Río Babilonia drainage basin. Inventory work carried out by conservationists in the area since 1989 had discovered over 400 species of birds. The Impact Study team had spent less than two weeks in the watershed, and had not consulted the local

office of Areas Protegidas to obtain copies of the inventories. As other commentators had pointed out in previous memos and meetings, geological, meteorological, and limnological studies were also woefully lacking.

He questioned the Company's viewpoint, published in the Addendum, that left to themselves the waterfalls would never generate tourist income, while a series of pipes running down the mountainside were not only, to some people, more pleasing to the eye, but represented greater tourist potential. The conservationist wondered why the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta (PNSA) was mentioned rarely in the documents, since under protected areas legislation such Projects were forbidden in a buffer zone or nuclear zone of a park unless a management plan allowed them, and the PNSA did not yet have a management plan. The proposed hydroelectric project was contained almost entirely within the limits of the Park, so why wasn't its managing body, the Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre of COHDEFOR (Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal) the jurisdictional authority rather than SERNA over a hydroelectric project?

After this testimony, the crowd became restive. The mayor was quite pleased and thanked the conservationist in the name of Gualaco. SERNA's representative thanked the conservationist's participation as well, but wondered why Gualaco did not rely on its own *Unidad Ambiental*, the municipal environmental authority established by law.

The "impartial" engineer asked for an opportunity to respond. This time he was heckled by members of the audience. He expressed sadness that there was opposition to the Project, and that the post-Mitch situation in Olancho had reached the point of a sinking ship, when "everyone has to save themselves." He finally gave up in disgust as it became obvious that he had been discredited through never having visited the Project site.

The Company was in disarray: they had sought consensus, and now there was mayhem. Many hands were raised, and the moderators established that everyone would be heard.

A local Rotarian who was also an *ingeniero agrónomo* stood up and shouted at the “hijos de Gualaco” for daring to come here to Juticalpa, to Our Club Rotario, to fight with a Company. Olancho has to grow as a Department! If you come as *gualaqueños*, you can be allowed to stay. But if you are speaking with the voices of *cubanos*, or *gringos*, or others.... It is obvious to me, he said, that the lumbermen are the ones who do not want the Project. Why have the Gualaqueños not been so virulently opposed to the destruction caused by the [Cuban-owned, North American-owned, and Honduran-owned] lumber companies? Olancho is now a desert that doesn’t rain; they have left us a desert!

Here was the baring of a spatial conflict that went far beyond the Babilonia issue. Whose side were the lumbermen on? Was Gualaco being manipulated by this powerful but anathematized interest group?

The mayor of Gualaco begged to differ, saying that it was not his administration that had given permission to the sawmills to destroy Gualaco’s pine forests. The largest sawmill, funded by North American capital, had not even made good on its promises to bring a few development benefits to the local communities. Later, the mayor commented to me that if Gualaco could keep the Company out, the sawmills might be next to go, “depending on the will of the people.” Apparently, he wanted to follow the pattern of *municipios* across Olancho and Honduras that have successfully banned lumbering operations from their territory in the 1990s (see Solangi Ardila 2000, for example).

A Company representative wondered why there had to be open discussion of the Project. It had already been approved by Congress, even if members of the audience disputed this. He mentioned the day that it had been published in *La Gaceta* (the Honduran government’s official daily newspaper). To him, these confrontations were pointless: the meeting was to decide how, not if, the Project would proceed.

Olancho’s most powerful congressman, he with the ear of the congressional president, wanted to clarify that issue. He stated first that he, personally, had no monetary interest in the

Project, but that, indeed, it had been approved by the National Congress. (A comment from the crowd, *sotto voce*: They slipped it through on a bill at two AM!)

While no one would dare to make open allegations of corruption in a meeting like this, it is always on one's mind. Who is on the take? If one has "interests," then one's spatial allegiances may very well be false. Hints of corruption run invisibly through almost all meetings of this type that I have attended, and this one was no exception.

Another congressman, who owned a Gualaco sawmill, said he thought that the congressional president had suspended the project. The other strong Gualaco supporter among the congressmen, one of Olancho's most successful coffee growers, said he had been led to believe that the Project had been suspended until its environmental effects could be studied by a congressional commission. Both of these *diputados* claimed to be opposed to the Project. Finally, the Company conceded that, though the permit for operation had been published in *La Gaceta*, another initiative, for the Company to get funds from the national coffer, was in suspension pending congressional review of the Project. Unspoken was the mixture of disdain and admiration that most meeting participants held for their *diputados*: the Olancho delegation to the Honduran Congress was weak, unschooled, little interested in or capable of helping either side.

As yet, the anti-Project villagers had been quiet, feeling cowed and out of place, they told me. In a tentative foray, the head of the village coalition, a self-proclaimed radical, suggested that all those present who were carrying (invalid) photocopied invitations should leave, because they had no right to be there according to the agreement the mayor of Gualaco and the Company had made several weeks before. He claimed that the Company had extremely little sympathy among the villagers and townspeople of Gualaco, but that those vocal few who supported the Project were here in force today. But nothing was done to remove the unwanted guests, nor did any heed his appeal.

In support of the anti-Project coalition, an “hijo de Gualaco” with a professional degree tried to explain Gualaco’s intransigence and get at the meaning of “*desarrollo*” (development). The Company’s moderator broke in, saying that this room would not be a forum for conflicts and fights. There were cries of “hear him out!” from several people, including a *diputado*. The Gualaco professional, recovering his aplomb, stated that 97 percent of Gualaco was opposed to the hydroelectric project. Development didn’t need to be forced on Gualaco, because it was already there—it was born in the communities. “What we already have is development, isn’t it? Schools, health clinics, agriculture. I can’t eat energy; I will eat from the struggle: that’s what I’ll eat! I am free to decide.... How will they benefit us--by paying us minimum wage?” (A cynic from the crowd, in a low voice: “But at least it’s a wage.”)

As a polemic, I found this one of the more honest representations of what many Gualaqueños considered to be development. It also revealed the intense pride and tenacity associated with being Gualaqueño, something for which the Company had never bargained.

The Gualaco professional was becoming worked up. “What will happen is that we and our ways of life will begin to disappear!” he thundered. “Development is not in the Project, it is inside each and every one of us! The sawmills, they aren’t Development either!” The only way for Development, he said, is through individual work, as a tradesperson--a carpenter, for instance--or working a bit of land.

This caused a stir in the audience. A *diputado* from San Francisco de la Paz spoke next. San Francisco is a town neighboring Gualaco that has recently been promoted to the rank of “ciudad.” The congressman was known to one and all as a large landowner with interests in coffee, cattle, lumber, and the unspoken.⁵ He was among the most feared participants in the meeting. “We, the Olanchanos,” he shouted shrilly, “have to work for our Development! If it

⁵Activities too dangerous to mention in public. Such people are accorded universal respect in meetings like this, or at least not criticized, because of possibly disastrous personal consequences.

were *gringos* coming to our department to install a hydroelectric project, no one would say anything to them!”

The Company advertised itself as “sons of Olancho,” since the members who made themselves known to the public came from the *municipios* of San Francisco de la Paz, Juticalpa, and Guarizama. They were incorporated in Tegucigalpa, however. The frequent uncomplimentary use of “gringo” on the part of Project supporters appeared to reflect badly on the Company, while the constant invocation of “Olancho” did not impress Gualaquenos at all, whose allegiance to the Olancho identity came well after their pride in being from Gualaco. I sensed at this juncture that many in the crowd detected a certain desperation on the part of Company supporters. Why did the Project and its sycophants refuse to believe that Gualaco was acting of its own accord? Why were they so adamant that the Project had to go ahead? Were these invitees monetarily involved with the Project?

Another *diputado*, a respected member of Juticalpa society and owner of a local radio station, took his turn. “It looks like we’re at war here. We’re scaring away investment. I’m going to talk as a citizen. I’m a businessman—you all know that. The conservationist made good observations about our flora and fauna. *Of course* this Project will have environmental impact, just like a road, where you have to destroy forests, hills, and so forth. That is also environmental impact. Now look: Patuca Dos (a large dam project slated for southeastern Olancho that had been defeated a few years before) is gone. We lost it, thanks to ecological flag-waving. These projects are Development toward National Reconstruction (referring to Post-Mitch efforts in general). How can we let them slip away because of some birds? The birds will *have* their trees, all the trees they need...” he insisted, gently. It suddenly became clear, as the Gualaquenos whispered to me: these people had had stakes in the Patuca Dam, which was seen widely in Olancho to have been defeated by an international coalition of *gringo*

environmentalists. Bitter losers, they wouldn't let such a thing happen again, even over a relatively tiny project like Babilonia.

The next contribution was from a man who claimed to be an *empresario* (entrepreneur) from San Francisco de la Paz, and the largest coffee farmer in the Planes de Babilonia. He said he had been opposed to the Project at first, when he thought it would affect his coffee, but he had changed his mind. He began to shout, his voice trembling with rage: "100% of Olancho should be behind this Company and its Project!" Later in the meeting, a local resident of El Ocotal accused this same *empresario* of personal aggression toward him and widespread death threats against anti-Project activists. The mayor of Gualaco was particularly concerned about these types of people because he knew his own violent death was not unlikely. He had already narrowly dodged one attempt on his life by an incensed lumberman. Like almost all Olanchanos of power or influence, the mayor never went unarmed. He later told me that the *empresario* was a hired gun for a prominent Olanchano, and "ha matado montones de gente" (had killed loads of people). When the *empresario* began to make threats to me at the meeting, I wondered at the wisdom of being a participant-observer in situations like these.

After the *empresario*'s lengthy rant against backward Gualaquenos, a noted Juticalpa lawyer and campaign strategist for a presidential candidate stood up and tried to make peace, saying that compromises should be reached, that even though the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta might have received some protection which should be recognized, other areas of Olancho, like the Patuca basin, were being rapidly destroyed (implying that the Patuca forest was now a national park, but the environmentalists weren't able to protect it--whereas if the river had been dammed, then protection would be occurring.) There were costs to development, but these were outweighed by the benefits, he intoned. A country that had a revolution in 1917 went from being one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world to one of the greatest powerhouses, thanks in large part to its harnessing of hydroelectric power. He said that we shouldn't blame the outsiders, that we ourselves have been the agents of our environmental

destruction. We need a formal agreement with the communities in order to undertake this project. He wished we could have 300 such projects throughout Honduras.

Despite what I thought to be Stalinist overtones to this speech, the lawyer, in later conversations, turned out to be sympathetic both to foreign investment and to sustainable development, and willing to support Gualaco's cause even though he believed that small hydroelectric projects were generally beneficial.

A Polo-shirted representative of SOCIO, a recently-formed Juticalpa-based coalition of groups from Olancho's "civil society," stated that "The Olanchano can no longer be so individualist....Gualaco is not completely independent...they should go along with Olancho."

The mayor, tired of so much bantering, said that DECA (the division of SERNA that monitored environmental impacts of companies with licenses) had told them the Project would only go ahead if the communities wanted it. What Gualaco wanted was an opinion poll from all the families that would be affected by the Project. A Company representative immediately rejected the idea of a poll, asking instead for a one-time plebiscite. Anti-Project coalition members whispered among themselves that a plebiscite would allow widespread fraud and intimidation, whereas a house-by-house poll could be administered by a multipartisan committee and thus be more fair.

The Company conceded in frustration that no decision on the Project could be reached there that day, but would have to await further study. The mayor and his "ragtag band" could be neither wooed nor cowed. What was worse, several previously neutral and even anti-Gualaco invitees began to protest the behavior of the Company's people, as at the beginning they had ridiculed the Gualaqueños. The Company, in disarray, proposed that the meeting be ended, that they had been here too long already, and that everyone was hungry. But a respected and feared Olanchano still had to be given his time to speak: he was from one of the Pueblos del Norte (northern Olanchano towns) that had been active in shutting down sawmills. Not long before, he had caused a stir in Tegucigalpa by being quoted as saying that if the national law enforcement

leaders would not send officers to fight the rampant crime in northern Olancho, he had an army of 550 Olanchanos armed with AK-47 assault rifles ready to do the job.⁶ He was (and knew it well) an archetype of the anarchistic, anti-central government Olanchano whom orderly Hondurans feared.

For the first time in hours, there was a hush in the crowd. He said it didn't matter whether we talked here until tomorrow—this important issue had to be debated (cheers and then an abrupt silence). “I am the *Indio* most preoccupied for the folks who live *allí adentro*, and I will never be against development. But I am definitely against *las industrias*.” There was a misconception, he said: Gualaco, by law, was autonomous, like all *municipios*, and did not have to obey the dictates of Olancho. Though the Project seems to be for the greater good of Olancho, it is really the problem of Gualaco and Gualaco alone. And let us not forget that white elephant over there in Real (meaning Santa María del Real, a nearby town whose river contains a defunct hydroelectric project similar in size and scope to the proposed Babilonia project, and has never provided the inhabitants of Real any of the promised benefits, since it stopped functioning not long after its inception). “En este país somos tres los ricos y un millón de descalsos.”⁷

This was also, it appeared, a battle between the rebellious Pueblos del Norte, to which Gualaco belongs, and the establishment interests of central Olancho who are more welcoming of the State. Such rifts run centuries deep (see chapter 3).

⁶ See “Seguridad envía equipo a investigar lo de los 550 olanchanos armados” (Burgos 1999). The AK-47, a dividend of the Cold War, is the weapon of choice in Olancho, and most families who are not desperately poor own one or are related to someone who does. They are referred to popularly as “AK” (pronounced “Ah-Ka”). In the 1980s, they could be purchased for as little as the equivalent of 50 US dollars, and even now they can be obtained for 200 dollars. There seems to be a virtually unlimited supply of these illegal weapons, and local people often comment to me that if one owns an AK, the real criminals respect one's family. In certain villages nears Juticalpa, the distinctive staccato bursts of AKs can be heard in the early evening hours as enemies (either families or youth gangs) announce to each other “This our territory: we are present” by firing into the air.

⁷ “In this country we are three rich people and a million in bare feet.”

Lunch was had with no decision reached, and promise of more long hours in debate. The Gualaqueños, feeling a tentative victory, discussed strategy; the huddled Company sympathizers did likewise, and invited the *diputados* to eat at their tables. The most powerful *diputado* chatted with his good friend the co-moderator, saying he had to go with the will of the people. It was obvious to him that things weren't as cut-and-dried as the Company claimed. The co-moderator asked him to think about all those votes out there, not only in Gualaco but in the rest of the Pueblos del Norte. There were too many irregularities, commented the *diputado*. He was quite bothered by the Company's refusal to say whether or not the waterfalls would disappear.



Fig. 2.4. Thriving nursery of mahogany (*Swietenia* sp.) in El Ocotal, Gualaco. Owner is auxiliary mayor of the village, campesino, conservationist, and sustainable development expert. Example of the appropriation of development for local ends, in this case proof that Gualaqueños plan an alternative to industrial development for their future.

After lunch, the villagers spoke up on the threats the Project presented to their way of life. The auxiliary mayor of El Ocotal, an environmental extensionist trained internationally in sustainable development techniques, said referring to El Cajón (Honduras' major hydroelectric project) as a model for tourism applicable to the Babilonia hydroelectric project was ironic and misleading. El Cajón, which he had visited, is heavily protected, and the guards don't even allow cameras. There were 87 deaths during its construction. "I am the president of the

community of El Ocotal,” he went on, “and it seems to me that the *botudos* (people with boots, meaning campesinos) have no value here (in Juticalpa, or the outside world in general). The *corbatudos* (tie-wearers) are the important people. We are the marginalized ones.” If the Project went ahead, he doubted that the farmers of El Ocotal would be allowed access to their coffee *fincas* in the Planes de Babilonia, buffer zone of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. However, the Parque was for El Ocotal, he underscored, not for outsiders.

A Company *promotor* from El Ocotal jumped to his feet and said with a trembling voice that he had been born and raised there, but he supported the Project. Pointing his finger, he accused the village coalition of representing only a few people, and of having their meetings in secret. The auxiliary mayor of neighboring Pie de la Cuesta said he had coffee in the Planes de Babilonia, and loved his *finca*, but knew the Project meant his village no harm. Anti-Project activists then shouted that Pie de la Cuesta was not even directly affected by the Project and that they had “interests.”

Since I tended to support the anti-Project coalition, no local people in favor of the Project would speak to me, so I was never able to learn the reasons for their opinions. This was the trade-off, I learned—if I had remained neutral, no one on either side would have trusted me, and in any case, having worked with the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta for a decade, I could hardly abandon it now, just when local people were using it as their umbrella.

Another “radical” from El Ocotal related the various human rights abuses committed by Company followers in the area. He told the audience how they had been threatened by militarization of the zone if they didn’t comply; they had been lied to about the contents of the impact studies, and rarely had they been consulted during the studies’ preparations. They had been told that the Project would go ahead whether or not they wanted it.

The last few hours of the meeting involved wrangling over the details of a commission that would be formed—what its duties would be, when and where it would meet. The Gualaqueños left happy and confident; the Company representatives looked confused and frightened. A

commission met in Gualaco the following week, and after another lengthy meeting, the Company agreed to a house-by-house opinion poll monitored by the Catholic Church, COHDEFOR, and other groups. But instead of participating in the poll, the Company disappeared from the area, while the results of the poll showed 90% of affected villagers were opposed to a hydroelectric project in any form. Gualaqueños celebrated only a cautious victory, since they assumed that the Company was regrouping for another campaign after things calmed down. They were correct: at the beginning of 2001, the Company reappeared in the local media claiming that earlier actions had no validity, that the Project was the best thing for Gualaco and Olancho, and that there was no reason to be opposed. The mayor and the villagers remained as staunchly opposed as ever, but found it ever more difficult to have their voices heard in the media (for example, no accurate coverage of the meeting described above was ever printed in the papers). Furthermore, it appeared that in 2000 the Company had been granted permission to install a dam, realizing the villagers' worst fears. When heavy machinery operators showed up in El Ocotal months ahead of schedule to begin work, they were met by local resistance and several protestors were hauled off to jail. As of the time of writing this dissertation, the future of the encounter between the unstoppable force and the immovable object are uncertain (see chapter 7).

While not ultimately successful in stopping the Project, Gualaqueños cited the meeting as a turning point in their favor, leading to powerful spatial alliances between Gualaqueños, who had felt isolated and unimportant, and sympathizers on the outside who had experience with similar Development-caused debacles elsewhere. It demonstrated in a flash the force of local space, the fierce identity of the *municipio*, and the distrust of the State felt by many poor inhabitants of Olancho. Even after ten years' experience with Gualaco, I had never suspected that its citizens had the mettle to stand up to corporations backed by the State. Like many uninformed outsiders (Olanchanos included), I had assumed that most Gualaqueños, desperate for development, would support a dam project just as they had allowed many lumbering operations to strip them

of their old-growth pine forest (leaving few local economic benefits). This was the assumption that the Company had made, in good faith it seemed, despite the errors they had committed by using strong-arm tactics against villagers.

The Company's position is understandable, though I do not sympathize with them. Industrialized and industrializing countries have reshaped their landscapes drastically, thanks to rights of eminent domain, relocation of local people, and calls for patriotism and setting aside parochial selfishness. In their written statements, the Company show the spatial view of industrialists who gaze at the rural Olancho landscape and see only wasted potential. They believe, I think honestly, that heavy industry and expensive infrastructure will turn Honduras around. But their attitude toward the local is unforgivably arrogant, and it is this that has, more than anything, condemned them in the eyes of Gualaco. One of my friends in Juticalpa has commented that the ideals of democracy keep the Project at bay: the fact is, Gualaco is supposed to have the final say, and the villagers are exercising their democratic rights to defend *patrimonio*, an almost sacred geographical concept that has endured through centuries.⁸

2.2 The Red de Cuencas Meets Every Month

This *enredo* is not nearly as explosive as the Babilonia one. Indeed, at times it is hard to believe that less than twenty kilometers separate the two geographical areas on which I focus in this chapter. But the south side of the Cordillera de Agalta has had far more contact with the "outside world," and currently has far less choice in the exploitation of resources. Unlike Gualaco, where there are still few people and great expanses of land (approximately seven people per square kilometer),⁹ the southern slopes of the Cordillera are crowded (approximately 35 people per square kilometer). Local residents have lived a rapid erosion in quality of life

⁸ "Patrimonio" here means "local heritage"—it is not to be confused with World Heritage Sites, which are "Patrimonio de la Humanidad."

⁹ Unofficial estimate for 2000 based on CIAT-Laderas, "Población y tasa de crecimiento poblacional por municipios, departamento de Honduras" (<http://www.intertel.hn/org/ciathill/BIBLIOT/DP35/olancho/munola.htm>).

during the last generation as agricultural endeavors have dropped in productivity, cost of living has increased, flight to the United States has escalated, and pride in place has diminished drastically. While it is rare to hear an anti-Project Gualaqueño criticize Gualaco, in the *municipios* of Juticalpa, Santa María del Real, and San Francisco de la Paz, where the “Red de Cuencas” is focused, criticism of the status quo seems the order of the day. Development, in almost any form, is a shining promise, a way out of present predicaments. Nevertheless, as this meeting and many like it showed me, development as it is currently practiced is far from capable of responding to the complexity of spatial *enredos*.

The Red de Cuencas (“Watershed Network”) involves the Río de Olancho and its watershed. This river, like the Río Babilonia, arises in what in 1987 became the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. It drains over twenty montane villages before pressing through a famous landmark, the El Boquerón gorge, into the flat and heavily-populated Valle de Olancho not far from Juticalpa. Once in the Valle, the Río de Olancho drains into the Río Guayape, which flows into the Caribbean (as the Río Patuca). The upper watershed (in Red de Cuencas terminology, “Zona Alta”) contains a fringe of the Parque Nacional where it meets the agricultural frontier, while the middle watershed (Zona Media) has little forest, is heavily populated, and is polluted by agrochemicals. Cerro Agua Buena and the Boquerón gorge are part of Monumento Natural El Boquerón (established through a proposal in 1993), and separate the Zona Media from the Valle de Olancho. The lower watershed (Zona Baja) is the Valle, with several populous villages surrounded by ranches.

In the mid-1990s, a wealthy Canadian agricultural development project adopted the Río de Olancho watershed as its model and pilot project, and drew up agreements with other government agencies, NGOs, and local people to co-manage the area through the Red de Cuencas.¹⁰ *Microcuenca* (“microwatershed”) management became a popular emphasis for

¹⁰ Documentation generated by the Canadian Project can be found in the library of SERNA in Juticalpa. A study that helped to select the Río de Olancho for Phase Three is “Selección y priorización de

conservation and development worldwide in the 1990s, and Honduras was no exception. The Canadian Project, “los canadienses” as they are called locally, were an important presence in Juticalpa. After two stages of involvement in the “Valle de Guayape” (as they termed the Valle de Olancho), the development experts realized that the only way to preserve the agriculturally rich flat lands was to work up in the deforested montane watersheds contiguous to the spaces set aside for conservation. Olancho’s mountains, however, are the domain of hillside agriculture, and unlike in the *valles* people almost never possess clear legal title. Government development projects tended to focus on *valles* because agronomists knew little of shifting swidden cultivation, the frontier, or techniques for stabilizing slopes. The *canadienses*’ Río de Olancho phase, as the Canadian co-director put it to me, was a learning experience for everyone, a time for experimentation in an almost “unknown” domain.

The monthly meetings of the Red de Cuencas were designed to be friendly and productive encounters of all development groups involved in the management of the watershed (see *Municipalidad de Juticalpa 1999; Municipalidad de San Francisco de la Paz 1999*). Around five AM, the Canadian Project would send its bus and four-wheel-drive pickups out into the villages (several were two hours by rough road) to bring back interested residents to a meeting spot, usually Juticalpa. At eight or nine o’clock a day-long meeting would commence, punctuated by Project-provided snacks and lunch. Villagers were usually members of GALATAS, “grupos de apoyo local” that had been initiated by the Project but were designed to become autonomous local entities working for sustainable agricultural development in the watershed after the Project departed in 2001. Municipal authorities were invited to these meetings, as well as representatives from any other groups working in the Río de Olancho watershed, including IHCAFE (Instituto Hondureño de Café, the government coffee institute, providing “technical

microcuencas de la cuenca del Río Guayape” (*Secretaría de Recursos Naturales GOH – Agencia Canadiense para el Desarrollo ACDI, Proyecto de Desarrollo Agrícola del Valle de Guayape, Componente de Recursos Naturales, 1996*).

assistance”); COHDEFOR, with jurisdiction over the two “protected areas”; SANAA, the government health authority; and others.

The August 27, 1999 meeting, in the new air-conditioned conference hall of the Juticalpa *municipalidad*, manifested the *enredo* at the heart of the Red de Cuencas. It was, I realized after a few months, a quite typical encounter of development space and local space.

The COHDEFOR Areas Protegidas delegate to the Red, and who was also manager of the Monumento Natural El Boquerón, led a prayer to begin, and then gave a brief introduction, saying how we were all here for a common purpose, the watershed. She welcomed the GALATAS, ADICH (a local NGO), the Canadian Project, and the villages of Tempiscapa, Tempiscapita, Boquerón, Punuare (these from the Zona Baja), La Avispa, Pozos Arriba, Pozos Abajo (Zona Media), and one person from El Gorrión (Zona Alta) who lived in San Francisco de la Paz. It was rare to see anyone associated with the Zona Alta, for its villages had been largely inaccessible to motorized vehicles since the hurricane in November 1998.

One of the Project’s agricultural extensionists, assigned to the Zona Baja, read the objectives of the day’s meeting. Its main objective was to reflect on where we were in relationship to the watershed’s management plan.

The reading of the minutes from the previous meeting provoked a lengthy and heated discussion. The construction of the evangelical church in Pozos Abajo was a major point of contention. Mario, a “dynamic leader” from Pozos Abajo (a village favored by the extensionists because it had a reputation for participation and getting things done), mentioned that their church needed more money to continue construction. The extensionists for the Canadian Project, supported by the COHDEFOR representative, opined that the church could get money from any of numerous evangelical groups doling out funds in the area since Mitch. The Project, however, didn’t give money for religious purposes. At this point a local representative for the other big development project in Olancho (funded by the European Community), whose territory overlapped with the Canadian Project in the San Francisco de la Paz part of the Río de

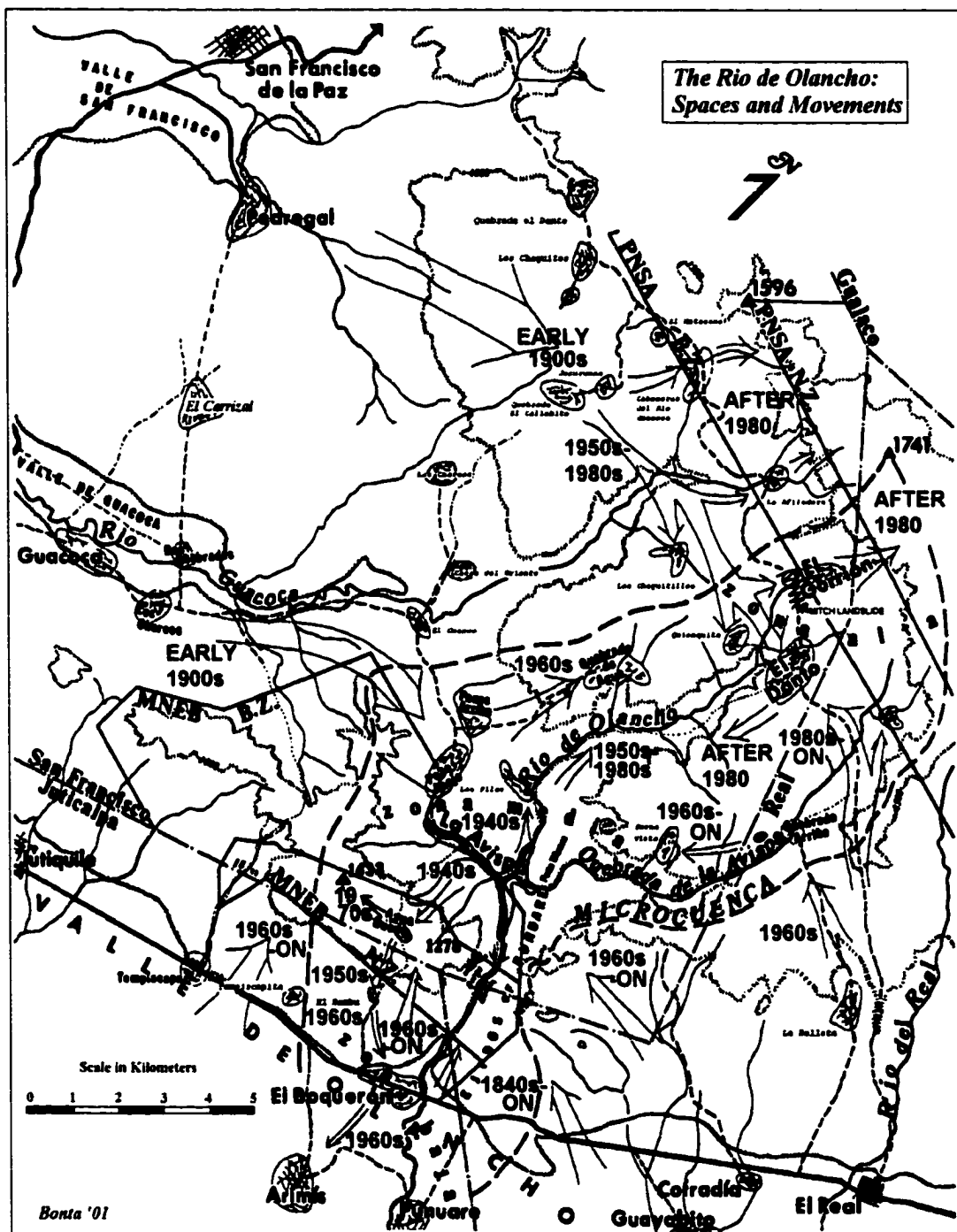


Fig. 2.5. The Rio de Olancho: Spaces and Movements. (See Figure 2.6 for complete key.). Arrows with dates indicate movement of spaces over time, as described in text.

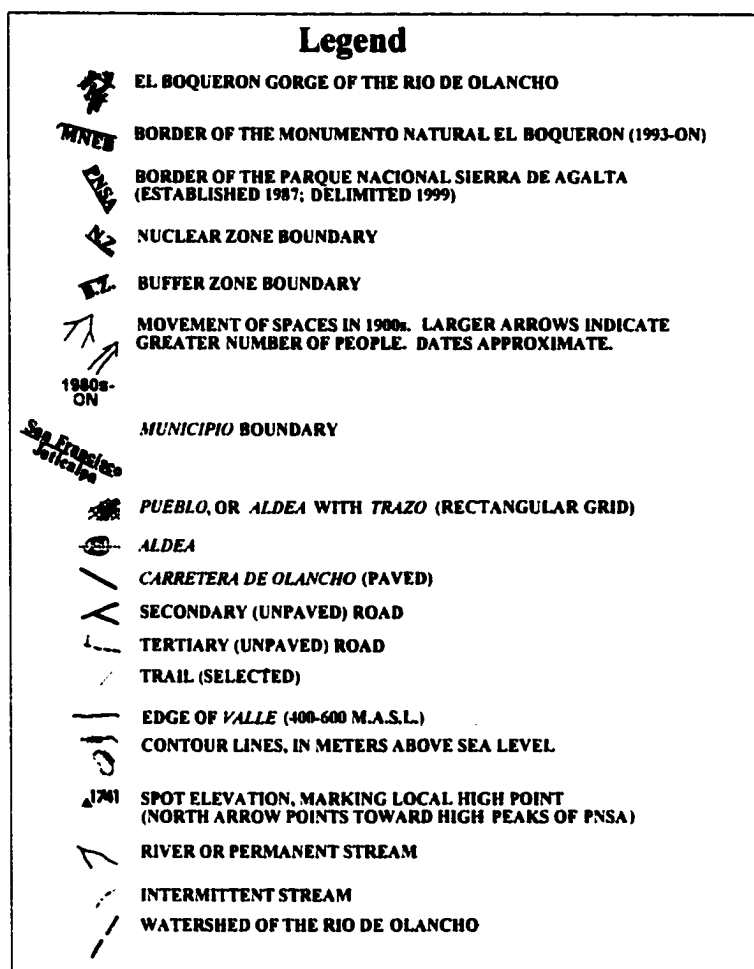


Fig. 2.6. Map Key for "Río de Olancho." (Fig 2.5.)

Olancho watershed, said his group could give up to 5,000 lempiras: drop him a proposal by Tuesday. Further discussion was suspended until the end of the meeting (Pozos Abajo eventually finished its church, with funds from various sources.) I sensed uneasiness on the part of the Canadian Project representatives: was Olancho's "other" development project cutting into their territory?

A man from the local Red Cross complained of accusations in the Press that he had lied about aspects of his management of international funds for the *colonia* they were building in La Avispa for watershed families who had lost their houses in Mitch. This was an explosive issue, because while Mitch *colonias* in Olancho funded by other groups were already being inhabited, this one lagged. A brewing scandal involved the withholding of pay from skilled Juticalpa

masons and from food-for-work villager laborers.¹¹ Someone holding a sub-contract for construction had “disappeared” a large sum, and had mobilized an AK-47-toting Juticalpa youth gang to intimidate Red Cross investigators and inquisitive local villagers. Eventually, some families who had *not* lost their houses were allowed to inhabit the *colonia*, while some that *had* lost their homes decided not to live there. The Canadian Project did not get involved, probably fearful of tarnishing its image.



Fig. 2.7. Progress of the Mitch Colonia in La Avispa, mid-2000. Concrete block houses were funded by the American Red Cross and built with local labor; blocks are being made on site, of materials derived from the nearby Mitch-caused delta at the confluence of the Quebrada de la Avispa and the Río de Olancho. Houses have zinc roofs and are in the full sun, heating them to infernal temperatures on sunny days; local houses of adobe or *bajareque* (wattle-and-daub), with clay tile roofs, are much cooler.

After the minutes had been discussed to exhaustion (a two-hour span), an *ingeniero agrónomo* took over the meeting. He said the main task for the day was to actualize the Project’s information on the state of the watershed, both its land use cover and the development results that had been achieved in the lower, middle and upper Zonas. He needed the villagers

¹¹ See “Albañiles que construyen viviendas de Cruz Roja no han recibido pago” (*La Tribuna* Sept. 1, 1999:15) and Burgos, “Con pala y machete vecinos de La Avispa construyen viviendas,” *La Tribuna* July 14, 1999:14). Stories such as these can be researched through Hondurans newspapers on the Internet: *La Tribuna* is the best source for Olancho; *Honduras This Week* provides interesting reading as well, and sometimes covers Olancho.

here today to cooperate with the Project, especially with the maps that the Project used in its annual reports. He explained that the maps were inside a complex computer program, where they could be manipulated, moved, and so forth (he was describing a GIS). He showed the original map, from 1996, made by a local architect. The watershed had an area of 12,000 hectares, of which 500 to 600 were forest with absolutely no damage. Green represented shade coffee—18% of the total.

He showed Map Two, “Where We Are Going.” This was elaborated in 1996, and was a “big job, taking almost two days.” In those days, it was thought that things were going to turn out better, but in the Zona Alta, almost nothing had changed, he said. In the Zona Baja, the development base was already good, “since it is part of the Valle de Guayape, and the *valles* are the best parts of Honduras for agriculture.” He then showed a table of development actions by year in the *cuenca*: 96-97; 97-98; 98-99. “But the Project needs input from the villagers to determine the veracity of the data. Was there fire in the Zona Media this year? In 1996, there were six systems of potable water in the Zona Media. How many are there now?” This was crucial, since part of the Project’s mission is to leave potable water systems in all villages in the watershed (when the Project ends, in 2001). He wondered why Salud Pública and SANAA (the two agencies responsible for installing water projects) were not here today. The *ingeniero agrónomo* said that there need to be six legal decrees for microwatersheds just in the Zona Media by 2001. At this point there are none anywhere. This was a depressing fact, and the COHDEFOR representative chimed in, “These legal decrees depend on the will of the community.” The agronomist: “Let’s just suppose everyone is willing.” COHDEFOR: “You can say everyone’s willing, but someone has to send the *solicitudes*.” Then “Chago” (Santiago) from Punuare cut in, shifting the blame from the villagers to *las instituciones*, who needed to do the pushing.

The agronomist, moving on, said that the Project will get in trouble because the Evaluators come every two or three years to measure its success. They will say, You don’t have any legal

decrees for watersheds? In a Monumento Natural? This *cuenca* has to set a (good) example if the Project is to continue in the future.¹² The *ingeniero* was suggesting that if the villagers didn't get their acts in gear, then there might be no further Canadian Project involvement in the watershed after this one ended. These veiled threats to withhold development were voiced in all meetings between Project employees and villagers that I attended in 1999.

The *ingeniero agrónomo* separated the participants into three groups by the Zona in which they lived or worked. There was only one person, "Matute," for the Zona Alta group, so the *ingeniero* joined it, along with the COHDEFOR representative and me. First we looked at the land use map that the Project wanted to update and correct. There were two categories mapped, "forested" and "deforested." In the Zona Alta, only nine percent was shade coffee, considered "deforested." There were 1000 hectares of *bosque virgen* (virgin forest). In 1996, the Project Plan predicted a 33 percent afforestation rate per year with the entry of development into the zone. According to Matute, who was a San Francisco de la Paz coffee grower with land in Gorrión, there had been no afforestation. He said nothing whatsoever had been done in the Zona Alta, by the Project or anyone else. The agronomist agreed that the Project had failed in the headwaters, which, we recognized, were key for the protection of the entire Río de Olancho watershed. (The Zona Alta contains the watershed's materially poorest villages and its largest number of Mitch-caused landslides, which took several lives.)

We went on to the Zona Alta development chart, ordered by problem, by year. According to the time frame established in 1996 at the inception of the Project, most of these problems would have been resolved by 2001. According to Matute, most had gotten worse: *descombros* (clearcuts); *ganadería* (cattle-ranching), considered not apt for the 40- to 60-degree slopes of the Zona Alta; *quemadas* (burns), that turn into *incendios* (forest fires). There was not yet any

¹² Strictly speaking, the Monumento Natural El Boquerón includes part of the watershed and a substantial area outside the watershed; a fringe of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta is another fraction of the watershed; the rest is *dominio pleno* (usufruct), belonging simultaneously to the State, the *municipio*, and private individuals or cooperatives, often in overlapping, conflicting claims.

beneficiado del café (modern treatment of coffee). Matute said that IHCAFE, the technical support agency, only came to look around, but didn't offer any assistance. AHPROCAFE, the national growers' association, had never been up there.

Excreta al aire libre, a marker of underdevelopment, remained at 100 percent, because there were no outhouses for the 100 to 150 dwellings in the Zona Alta. Matute expressed "faith" (*tengo fe*) that some project would put in outhouses very soon, at least in Gorrión. The agronomist asked him whether he thought that, without institutional presence, could the villages achieve anything? The answer, according to Matute, was no.

"Vagancia de animales" was very common, because no one tied up their pigs. The pig-tying issue is a difficult thing for the people to understand, they agreed. If the pigs are tied, you have to give them food, whereas if they roam free, they can fend for themselves. (A serious problem in Olancho is trichina, a deadly and common disease that humans get from eating tainted pork.) *Agua no potable*: there were not yet any potable water systems, but El Gorrión had hoses connected from springs, and this was considered a partial success, even though they had not been put in by the Project. It was something, anyway: a development gain that could be checked in the appropriate column. *Derrumbes* (landslides) were widespread. Roads were in bad shape. Illiteracy continued at 80 to 90 percent of the adult population, though the Project had predicted a drop to 50 percent by the end of the 1990s, and then to zero by 2001. Malnutrition was rampant.

Well, we can at least try to do *something*, said the agronomist. We should reforest along the rivers and streams. And you don't have to plant a tree, just prevent them from burning.

The only good news for the Zona Alta, according to Matute and the COHDEFOR representative, was that a powerful landowner from San Francisco de la Paz had been fined several million lempiras after removing 200 *manzanas* of virgin rainforest to stock 50 head of cattle within the limits of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. The agronomist looked a little worried, and muttered that the cattle-ranching part is pretty complicated—then moved quickly

on. He was worried, I sensed, by the danger implicit in even mentioning at a public meeting the problem of invasion by large landowners (*terratenientes*), mostly ranchers (*ganaderos*), into the zone. I have often been told that mentioning the names of dangerous people in public can bring woe down upon the head of the speaker and his or her family—local space has too many ears. The Canadian Project, like many development projects, tried to steer clear of serious conflicts, unlike COHDEFOR, which despite its corrupt reputation was often involved in legal actions against citizens who cut timber without a permit.

Matute, in the group discussion that followed, said he had little to present on the Zona Alta, since nothing had been done and no one had gone there. The COHDEFOR representative mentioned to the group in general that it was difficult to do visits without vehicular access. She mentioned the possibility of an overnight trip by the *técnicos*, with mule support, “into the zone.” She and the agronomist stated triumphantly that this would be the beginning of more involvement in the headwaters. I noticed that the outsiders’ unwillingness to walk into the Zona Alta, spending time there and staying in peoples’ houses and eat their food, seriously hampered their acceptance in the villages. (A few months later, a farmer from La Avispa in the Zona Media was trained as an extensionist and sent to live in the Zona Alta.)

During Matute’s presentation, Chago from Punuare wondered why we were even here doing this exercise, if there had been no institutional presence in the Zona Alta?

Mario, a campesino whose dynamism many recognized to have made development relatively welcome and successful in Pozos Abajo, gave the presentation for the Zona Media. Yes, he said, there have been changes here indeed. Out of 100 producers who used to burn, 12 have discontinued the practice, and 12 have stopped using *agroquímicas*. There have been no clearcuts in the middle zone, because there is no more forest left to cut (ironic laughter and applause from the audience). There are 21 gardens installed, and they hope for 30 by 2001.

The Zona Baja, the “Valle de Guayape,” was presented by Chago. He, and other attendees from Punuare, are high-school educated, have electric light, running water, outhouses, and even

television in a few cases. Punuare is a large and relatively wealthy village, similar to others in the Valle, “far more developed” than those up in the mountains.

Chago’s sister “Meches” (Mercedes), a teacher, complained that Punuare’s new water project had not made headway because they had received no response from their notes to *las instituciones*. It frustrated her, this lack of attention, because they wanted so much to do something for Punuare. The agronomist, in an apparent attempt to slight Punuare, mentioned how Arimis (a neighboring community not in the watershed, but participating in other Project initiatives) had arrived on its own to the Project’s headquarters to *gestionar* (solicit development assistance). This set Chago off. “I’m thinking we’re going badly here. It is obvious that the Project is trying to cover up, doing stuff in the Zona Alta at the last minute. I think the Project will end up the way it is now! It will have minimum impacts. Why is everything concentrated in the Zona Media? The bosses know....” (He was alluding to a rumor that the Zona Media had been “picked” as development’s headquarters in a less than impartial matter, because of benefits it would bring to friends and relatives of Project employees. This was a theory I had heard discussed over *chicha* in several local villages.)

The COHDEFOR representative jumped into the fray. She said that we, *las instituciones*, have to avoid paternalism toward you. But you are not the multiplier effect (sic, “Ustedes no son el efecto multiplicadora”). You are falling into paternalism. You have to be the multiplier effect. You have to do things, as the community leaders. You can’t wait for *las instituciones*: you are the key elements. *Las instituciones* will leave, eventually. Sometimes you ask too much. Everything you want, you think *las instituciones* should give you.

Chago replied that all institutions should have a strategy to reach the people. “They can raise consciousness, they can homogenize groups. It is true—this is paternalism. But is this our fault? No—it is *las instituciones*’ fault. We are not dependent, we are *gestores*¹³—we are

¹³ *Gestores*: those who *gestionan*. To *gestionar* is to strive to bring about change through proactive measures. It is a popular word in development space, since it signifies people and villages that are go-

going to make changes. Would you say Tempiscapa hasn't been *gestora*? Hasn't participated? Now, about bureaucratism. The problem comes from above; from above there are no direct orders. The Project's primordial action was to create a protection zone. You made us the children, and you became our parents. 'Do you need a vehicle?' That's paternalism!"

At this point a peacemaker broke in, a Project *ingeniero* who was the head of the watershed management component. Planning is done together with the communities, he said. We started with 12 institutions in the network, and only half have continued. But a plan was elaborated, and the Red de Cuencas was initiated. A work plan was consolidated. And, thank God, we can do this at the level of Juticalpa (instead of in Tegucigalpa). It's true, it hasn't given many results, but we are all learning. The important part is to get to the children.

This, I thought, is a crucial insight. For all the Project's paternalism and even disdain, it is at least concentrated in Olancho, accessible, and dedicated. Indeed, the Canadian Project's spokespeople, both Honduran and foreign, have been leading proponents of the wealth and potential of Olancho and, in contrast to the Company vs. Gualaco, at least champion the rights and agendas of villages.

Finally, a Project agricultural extensionist assigned to the Zona Media said that "No one motivates anyone who isn't already motivated. We have to learn to manage hillsides now. We have to learn to do things well: *calidad total* (total quality), *sostenibilidad* (sustainability). We have to share experiences with the people who are scattered about ("la gente que está regada): we have to give incentives. The Project tries to help, though at times it doesn't have resources. One can suppose that the Valle has seen a change in mentality—but admit it," he said, smirking, "one still goes into the bushes with a cornhusk" (instead of using an outhouse and toilet paper). "It's not that there's no education...."

getters, who visit the aid projects and government ministries for help and advice, rather than just sit back and wait to be "developed," or do nothing.

After lunch, the rest of the meeting's business was worked through in an efficient and relatively non-confrontational manner. Proving that the Red de Cuencas was not just the villagers and the Canadian Project, an independent NGO, ADICH, took an opportunity to outline its communal bank program, which had been successful in several Valle de Olancho communities, and was now beginning in La Avispa. Audience response was positive, and ADICH seemed very pleased by the attention.

Toward the end of the eight-hour meeting, formal agreements were reached and written on the board. Finally, the next meeting date and time was set, for Punuare—apparently in an attempt not only to assuage the egos of participants from that village, but also to challenge them to back up their positions regarding self-sufficient development. At this point, Mario from Pozos Abajo began to complain about the failed promises of *las instituciones*, especially Salud Pública. A discussion of that no-show began. But the participants were losing interest, and the Project trucks and bus had arrived to take everyone back to their villages.

For me, it had been a typical development day in many ways. “Olanchano” and “patrimonio” had not become issues—this was about a model watershed, a development space, in which development had to take place, development that might already have been applied in Brazil or Lesotho or wherever, and was being tested here. Who could dispute its translocal benefits? In many ways, the local and regional contexts mattered as little as the watershed’s “prehistory.” 1996 was Year Zero (in the Project’s own phrase)—nothing of the region’s long and intricate past seemed to matter. Development space seemed to function in its own time, with local history an unknown, perhaps an embarrassment. (Whether local history can enrich development in this watershed is a theme I take up again in chapter eight.) Despite the arguments over paternalism and institutional ineptitude, such key local issues as why people burn, or campesinos’ relationships with cattle ranchers, were avoided or glossed over. The bickering, though it showed serious rifts in spatial agendas—in effect, the disjunction of development space and local space—was among people already buying into development as it is

touted by initiatives such as the Red de Cuencas. In many ways, the meeting was a discussion by an elite group, not necessarily a representative sample of local space--whose inhabitants have, I feel, many good reasons not to be *gestores*.

Where was conservation space in the meeting? It was spoken of as a given, and yet it seemed marginalized by development. This is because what ensures conservation--protection of a cloud forest, for example--is believed to be sustainable development. The whole idea is to stabilize the expanding deforestation through sustainable agriculture, thus saving the protected areas for nature and reforesting the rest of the landscape. The Monumento Natural El Boquerón was almost invisible in the meeting partly because the most vocal participants were from the Zona Media, which has a generally poor relationship with this protected area. Those coffee farmers who were being benefited by protection of the Monumento Natural had little voice or did not attend that meeting.

One thing was obvious: every village has a unique identity, and this is a keystone of local space as well as a stumbling block to development. Whereas in the charts and plans that overlay and help to reinforce development space people and villages are reduced to figures and statistics, in local space personalities matter more than anything. Though this was perhaps not spelled out in the meeting notes reproduced above, it was implicit in many comments: Arimís against Punuare, traditional rivals. The villages of the Zona Alta, whose residents are descendants of San Francisco de la Paz, against the villages of the Zona Media, whose residents are descendants of Guacoca. Three municipal identities: Juticalpa, Santa María del Real, San Francisco de la Paz. Family identities, crucial but unremarked at the meeting. In local space, there are great differences in temperament and spatial identity between a Mendoza, a Cáliz, and a Figueroa, not to mention a Padilla. Everyone who is local knows these things—who likes to hunt, who likes to farm, whose history and destiny is coffee, who is *puro ganadero* (pure rancher).

Chapter eight shows how development and conservation in the Río de Olancho watershed are becoming or might become local, and why for proponents of local space this is heartening in some ways but frightening in others. But Development and conservation, for all their present-day publicity, are only small elements of a much richer reality in the complex spaces of Olancho. What development and conservation possess is recognition, money, political power, and a wealth of documents (their credibility is somewhat dubious in Olancho). To make their urgent and immediate globalizing and patriotic claims seem paramount, they overshadow everyday life and local histories, at times trivializing local culture and nature. To give local space the voice it deserves, what I do in the next four chapters is to provide a detailed description and analysis of Olancho's spaces on their own terms. I map a small part of Olancho's extraordinary n -dimensional complexity not only to create a testament to Olancho (as a "regional geography") but also to be able to return in chapters seven through nine and entangle development space and conservation space in all the other spaces of the weave.



Fig. 2.8. *Vegas* of the Río de Olancho near La Avispa in the Zona Media, early 1990s. Tall trees in foreground were erased by Hurricane Mitch and replaced by a large sand and gravel beach. Hill at right of photo shows "terracing" of cattle space; forest in background is all shade coffee *fincas*. This space is one of conflicts between non-campesino and campesino coffee farmers, both in conflict with cattle ranchers. All is part of the development space of the Proyecto and the Red de Cuencas. The road terminus from Juticalpa via Guacoca is within the foreground woods.

Chapter Three

Cultural Histories

[Trujillo] is a mere collection of huts, inhabited by a few hundred Caribs, who are engaged in the export trade of mahogany, sarsaparilla, cattle, hides, and other produce brought down by convoys of mules from the magnificent province of Olancho....This highly-favoured upland region...enjoys a perfectly salubrious climate; its soil is extremely fertile, forest glades and woodlands alternating with rich arable tracts and savannas under succulent herbage, while copious streams flow through every valley, washing down auriferous sands from the wooded and picturesque slopes of the encircling heights....Yet with all its exceptional advantages, this glorious region is still almost deserted.

Elisée Reclus, from IV. -Honduras (265) in *The Earth and its inhabitants: North America, Vol. II Mexico, Central America, West Indies*, 1897.

Olancho: ancho para entrar, angosto para salir

Tierra de oro y del talento cuna

República Libre de Olancho

Olancho: Entre si quiere, Salga si puede!

Soy olanchano...¿y qué?

Popular sayings attributed to various sources; the last is a common bumper sticker

This chapter tells stories of Olanchano identities and at the same time describes the formation of spaces and spatial identities that comprise Olancho. Two texts run through the chapter: the main text preserves a flow of narrative in order to let the reader become intimate with Olancho; the footnote text provides ethnohistorical detail for specialists. The size of the footnote text reflects my need to provide solid justification for myriad paleogeographical assertions in a region on which extremely little has been written. Many archival sources are introduced into the geographical literature for the first time, to my knowledge.

Section 3.1 looks at how and why Olancho is constructed as something different from Honduras, as an autochthonous region.

In Section 3.2, the Precolumbian geography of what later became Olancho is considered, particularly in light of the anti-State tendencies of local indigenous *comarcas*.

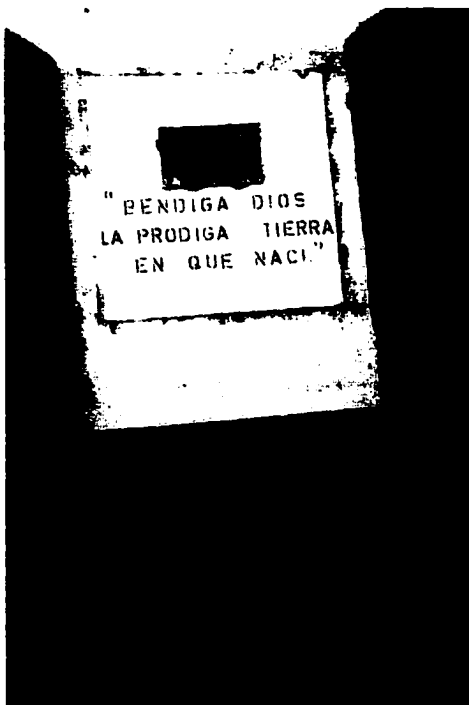


Fig. 3.1. Plaque marking birthplace of poet Froylán Turcios in Juticalpa.

Section 3.3 examines the 1520s, the first years of contact between Spain and Olancho, during which time the latter became a center for conflicting spatial claims, one out of the north (Hernán Cortés), one out of the south (Pedrarias Dávila). Indigenous inhabitants came out triumphant by destroying a Spanish *ciudad* and expelling its inhabitants (though this was but a Pyrrhic victory since the overcoding of Precolumbian geography by the State proceeded after a brief hiatus).

Section 3.4 tells how Olancho was reconquered decisively in the mid-1500s, becoming a resource-rich margin of the new Iberoamerican state to the west. Already, Olancho was “remote” from centers of power in a new hierarchical spatial order, and was constructed as fabulously wealthy in resources, particularly gold. Cattle were introduced and began their nomadic takeover of the landscape. But, as a Spanish territory, Olancho nearly dissolved toward the end of the 1500s, and came to be administered from the outside, its center threatened by Indian attacks.

Section 3.5 examines the construction and maintenance of Olancho's Other, the space to the east that only briefly, in the mid-1500s, submitted in any way to Spanish overcoding. Known eventually as the Taguzgalpa, this smooth space not only harbored unconquered people "sin Ley ni Rey," but also became rhizomatic with other colonial powers seeking to undermine the dominance of the Spanish order. Olancho at times seemed to relish its position squarely within the State's domain, but there was simultaneously hints of a becoming-Taguzgalpa (contraband, for example).

Section 3.6 establishes the currently little-recognized importance of a persisting indigenous tribute town geography within Olancho forged in the early colonial period, not fiercely independent like the Taguzgalpa but rather becoming-*olanchano*.

Section 3.7 discusses the vegetation composition ("cover") of the early colonial period, suggesting that a uniform forest cover (contrary to what conservationists might think) did not exist at Conquest, and that cattle and burning after Conquest favored a mosaic of fields and forests.

Section 3.8 draws from the substantial body of material available for the later colonial period, during which the Taguzgalpa came to haunt Olancho's identity through a 200-year effort by Church and State to conquer the east using outsider Franciscan missionaries, with *olanchano* soldiers to back them up. Even "official" Olancho became ever more striated, its local spaces grew ever more complex as different identities arose and consolidated or contested power. Large private landowners gained titles to vast stretches of territory, but the largest landowner was the indigenous tribute town of Catacamas. Meanwhile, Pech Indians were dragged at gunpoint out of the Taguzgalpa and settled in missions at the outer edges of Olancho, forming or strengthening rhizomatic relationships with other spatial identities to the east and west. The Franciscan missionary effort eventually failed to "civilize" and striate the Taguzgalpa, but nevertheless had lasting effects on the spatial identities of Olancho and its stereotyping by

outsiders. A class of *mulatos*, mostly poor cattle *estancia* owners, came to epitomize the anarchistic tendencies of *olanchanos* that were to take center stage in independent Honduras.

The end of the colonial period and the first half-century of independence are addressed in section 3.9. The first detailed censuses give an idea of how Olancho compared to the rest of Honduras, and what resources characterized it. Two themes dominated nineteenth-century Olancho: bloody rebellion and manifest destiny. Outsiders, looking for gold, timber, skins, and other products, constructed Olancho for the world in glowing terms, leaving a discursive legacy that is present even today. At the same time, their constructions also echoed the almost fanatical pro-Olancho patriotism voiced by some of its residents. But belief in Olancho's destiny was not by any means univocal, and the increasing influence of the outside did not palliate intense social problems rooted in unequal access to resources. A ghastly massacre perpetrated by the State in 1865 put the punctuation mark on a half-century of conflict between and among *olanchanos* and outsiders.

Section 3.10 selects two dominant themes from twentieth-century Olancho history: migration and massacre. Migrations were desirable to the Honduran State if they included European immigrants who could teach agriculture to *olanchanos*. They were not so welcome if they were comprised of impoverished Hondurans and Salvadorans who clamored for rights to land, contesting the 450-year hegemony of cattle space. I sketch the Horcones and Santa Clara massacres of 1975 in particular detail because they are remembered today as among the most notable event in Olancho's twentieth-century history.

Section 3.11 summarizes the main themes of this chapter by providing a list of "rhizomes" that have kept Olancho autochthonous and anarchistic, and in effect foiled not only the State but also development and conservation in many ways.

Scholars within and outside Olancho have scarcely addressed the history of Olancho, and those few who have done so were focused on the nineteenth century (e.g. Ramos et al. 1947; Sarmiento 1990) or on indigenous groups (e.g. Sampson 1997). This has made my task here

more difficult than it might have been in the presence of comparative studies; it means that this chapter is an exploratory essay but by no means a definitive statement of “The history of Olancho.” Reinterpretation of cited sources and the reading of a multitude more can no doubt serve to refine, expand, and contest many of my themes and assertions. For the purposes of this dissertation, however, I feel that this spatial history as it stands is an adequate counterpoint to histories imposed or invented to justify conservation and development. As part of a work that joins the scholarly literature, I hope that it can become a source for *olanchanos* and outsiders interested in specific historical topics that have in the past been either unknown or sketchily interpreted.

3.1 Gold, Violence, and the Vast

Olancho and *olanchanos* are distinct from Honduras and *hondureños*. Hondurans often comment that being Honduran carries a stigma in Latin America. They are frequently reminded that theirs is a poor country with many problems, ranked near the bottom in categories of Latin American human development. Not only do they not measure up to the wealthy and developed Northern countries, but also they feel inferior to the rest of Central America, with the occasional exception of Nicaragua. It is commonly believed that Salvadorans work harder; Nicaraguans are more revolutionary; Guatemalans are more educated; Costa Ricans are wealthier and more peaceful. Mexicans, who exert a strong cultural influence on Honduras, are seen as far advanced in development, fine arts, entertainment.

Honduran self-awareness of marginalization and extreme poverty stretches back to the very beginning of colonization—Honduras was chaotic, backward, corrupt: an embarrassment to colonial officials, an undesirable place to settle.¹ During the nineteenth century, Honduras was riven by war after war, though Hondurans were not yet seen by outsiders as any more

¹ Chamberlain captures this well in *The conquest and colonization of Honduras, 1502-1550* (1953:1).

impoverished than inhabitants of many European countries.² Then Honduras became the “Banana Republic” and the gap between rich North and poor South yawned. Recent disasters such as Hurricane Mitch continue to embarrass Hondurans, who watched the world watching their country washed away by mud: “poor, poor people.” “They/we destroyed our environment, and this is what they/we get.” Almost every day, Honduran newspapers report a combination of local kidnappings, homicides, child stealing, deforestation, corruption, street gangs, drug trafficking, and other modern ills, reinforcing the common opinion that the country is “worse than ever,” undergoing rapid social and environmental decay in a “downward spiral” toward chaos. There are bright spots, such as the internationally famous Ruinas de Copán and the Bay Islands; international wins by Honduran soccer teams; Hondurans who are recognized on Univisión for their artistic and scientific excellency. However, though many Hondurans remain patriotic, most seem depressed and even cynical about their country and its future. Olanchanos, however, are another matter.

The Olanchano identity is adopted not only by native-born Olanchanos but by Honduran outsiders who reside there, and sometimes by non-Hondurans as well: aid workers, Catholic priests, me. Utterances such as “I came to Olancho 25 years ago, but I consider myself almost Olanchano” and “Olancho is my adoptive land” are heard. Pride in being Olanchano is part of the fabric of everyday life among privileged townspeople as well as impoverished rural dwellers.

Olanchanos are thought of by other Hondurans as a breed apart—a passionate, violent breed. Olancho, at least since the mid-1800s, has had a reputation as extremely violent. “The Olanchano solves problems with a gun.” “Even the women pack guns.” (Today, by all indications, it is no more violent than other areas of the country.) This is a mythos that Olancho

² See, for example, Charles, *Honduras: the land of great depths* (1890) or Lester (“Maria Soltera”), *A lady's ride across Spanish Honduras* (1884). The former work, perhaps surprisingly given the date, is one of the most culturally sensitive and detailed accounts of aspects of everyday life in Honduras.

both rejects and embraces. Being an Olanchano is an empowering identity that hides or refuses to accept the embarrassments signified by “Honduran.”

Olancho constructs itself, and has been constructed by outsiders, for at least five centuries, as wealthy beyond imagining (see Dios ha dado enormes riquezas a Olancho 1999) . Everywhere are gold, forests, wildlife, cattle: bigger, wilder, more fecund. There is more of everything in Olancho, except people. Olancho is frequently mentioned as “larger than El Salvador” but “virtually empty.” Travel guides tout it as the “Wild West” or “Wild East,” a miniature Texas where the frontier is still alive. In some stereotypes, the guns are for enemies of the family, not for outsiders, whom such larger-than-life Olanchanos see as irrelevant in their legendary disputes.³

Olancho is also vast.⁴ Though only slightly larger than New Hampshire, most Hondurans and many foreigners think of it as enormous. I have never heard of Olancho referred to as “tiny” even though it fits inside Honduras, which is almost always mentioned as a small country. Olancho’s phenomenological vastness is due to its wide open central *valles* rimmed by “towering” mountains, and the seemingly endless outlying hills and mountains tracked by poorly-maintained roads. Vehicular journeys to villages that are only a few kilometers “*como vuela el pájaro*” (as the bird flies) can take several hours. Olancho has no roads at all east into the Moskitia, but rather a forest barrier crossable in several days or weeks on foot or in motorized *pipante* (dugout).

Olancho is constructed as fabulously wealthy in cattle, agricultural potential, timber, gold, and natural resources in general. According to conservationists (including me), it is also richer in flora and fauna than most other North and Central American regions of similar size. It has as

³ See, for example, Gollin and Mader, *Honduras, adventures in nature* (1998), chapter 11: “The Wild East: Olancho” (235-51).

⁴ Inspiration for my selection of a “subjective,” phenomenological “vastness” comes from chapter 8 of Bachelard’s *Poetics of space* (1994), where he ponders Baudelaire’s fondness for the word.

many bird species as the state of Texas. Olancho is mysterious, dotted by undiscovered ruins like the “Ciudad Blanca” somewhere out in the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve. The gateway to the downstream world of the Río Patuca is the Portal del Infierno,⁵ while the Montaña de Babilonia (Sierra de Agalta) is said to hold a lost city. Olanchanos, however, according to them and to other Hondurans, have never known how to take advantage of all their mysterious wealth and power. This is because Olanchanos are “lazy”: “Lazy like an Olanchano” is an expression that even Olanchanos use. In this land of milk and honey (literally, according to Wells 1857), life has been easy throughout history because *la Madre Naturaleza* has produced an overabundance of gifts. At least in the old days, plantains, the staff of life, grew bigger and more abundantly, hardly needing to be tended. Cattle multiplied exponentially across the landscape with little need for attention. The Olanchano has just sat back and enjoyed—such are the characterizations of nineteenth-century Manifest Destiny and the memories of today’s nostalgic citizens.

Today, Olanchanos are as quick as other Hondurans in citing the destruction of their forests, the extreme violence, the poverty, the oppression, the backwardness...but somehow, this does not add up to rejection of the Olanchano identity. People who feel themselves to be “true Olanchanos” (*verdaderos olanchanos*) are not embarrassed by these negative traits and their frequent citation in the press, but rather revel, obstinately, in what makes Olancho unique. Olancho, I have been told more than once, is bigger and better in history and destiny than its “development” statistics can ever show.

“Olanchano” is a *spatial* identity reinforced by everyday life—by gazing at, sniffing, or burning the landscape, by the never-ending conversations between people and their spaces. But

⁵ The “Gates of Hell” are a modest set of rapids the importance of which Olanchanos and outsiders, at least those who have not seen them, tend to exaggerate. Under his pseudonym “Samuel Bard,” E. G. Squier (1965[1855]:307-10) described a fictional trip (with an accompanying landscape sketch) through an imagined Portal del Infierno resembling Hell’s Canyon in the US or the Colca Canyon in Peru. Squier, a diplomat who avidly supported US imperialism in Central America, was probably exaggerating it for the benefit of British readers: the English and the Mosquito King, ascending the Río Patuca, had

to *be* Olanchano, one has to continually repeat that one is Olanchano, and that “This is Olancha.” The newcomer is told, over and over from the very first day, “Aquí es Olancha,” as if that explained everything. It is understood that one is not really in Honduras any more. Olancha has its glorious, tragic past and its modern, felicitous future (say some development proponents).

Everyday life in Olancha is not necessarily about being (or of striving to be) Olanchano. It is also belonging to a family, a village, and a *municipio*; simultaneously being a campesino, and/or a *ganadero*, and/or a *cafetalero*--and all the other spatial identities that vie for one's affections. For example, in the case of the Gualaqueños belonging to the anti-Project coalition (chapter 2.1), they didn't quite seem to measure up to the standards of “Olanchano” set by residents of Juticalpa. There is something about being from one of those Pueblos del Norte that sets one apart as more violent and less respectful of authority. Some see them as more “truly” Olanchano, others as anachronistic in a “new Olancha” that would still be vast and wealthy, but more cooperative, more developed.

“Olanchano” has a core and periphery, meaning that wherever one dwells one does so in relation to more and less important places and people. Juticalpa, the capital, is at the center in most ways--administrative, educational, physical, cultural. But Juticalpa erodes its authentic Olanchano quality because it is where the often unwanted outside filters or stomps in--national and international governmental ministry and aid offices as well as the military command center for eastern Honduras are clustered there. Catacamas (equally developed) vies with Juticalpa as authentic cultural center of a “true Olancha.” Together, they are two “poles of development” sharing the undisputed heart of Olancha, the Valle de Olancha (“Valle de Guayape”). The surrounding hills and mountains, and the remoter *valles*, are the hinterland--more rustic but

recently made an attempt to conquer Juticalpa and claim Olancha for England.

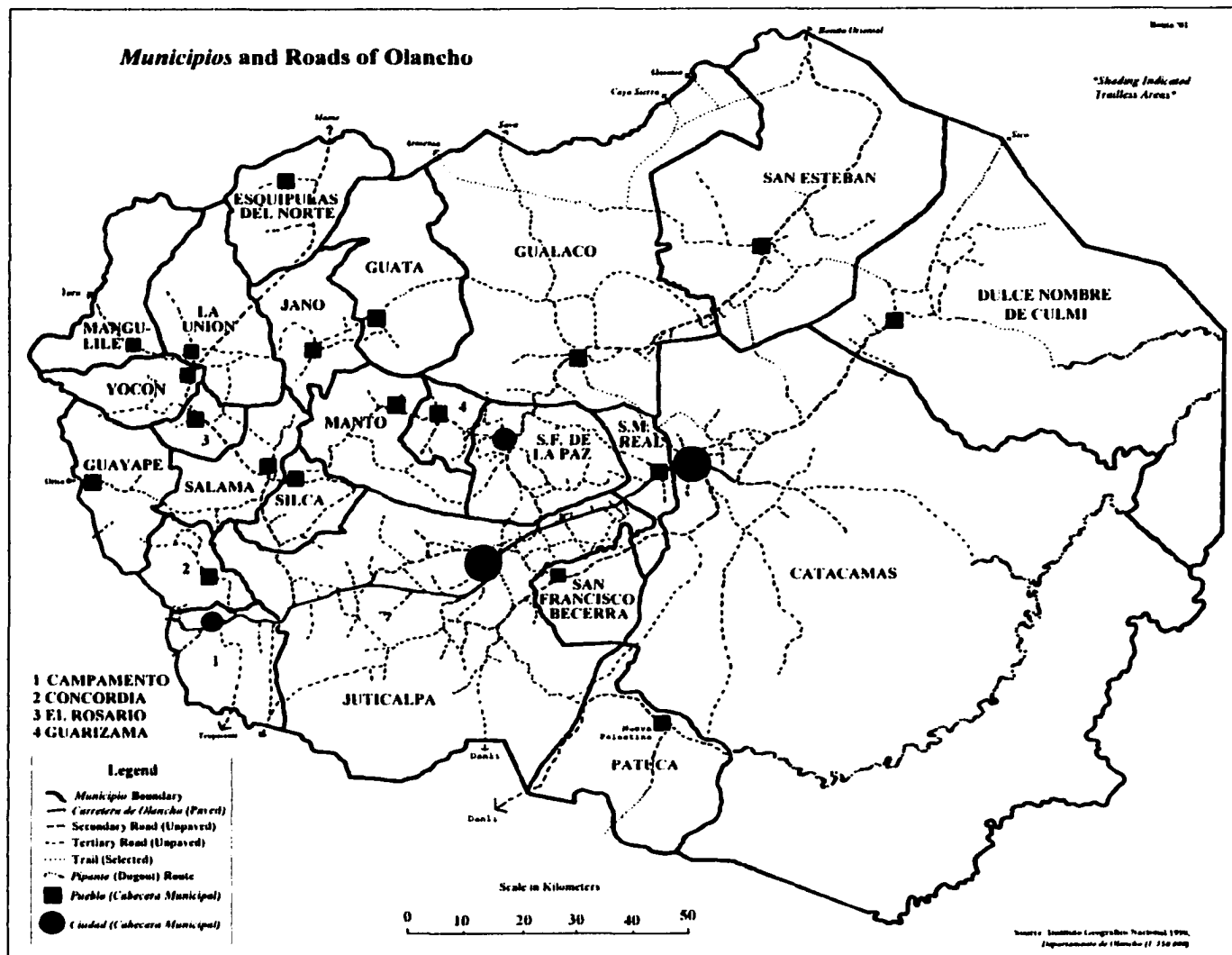


Fig. 3.2. *Municipios and Roads of Olancho.*

perhaps felt locally to be more authentically Olancho, as the center becomes saturated by “progressive” outsiders.

Each of the remaining 21 *municipios* is a step down the State’s hierarchy from Juticalpa and Catacamas. Each is also a world of its own, with a specific cultural history, *patrimonio*,⁶ center, and hinterland. The scale of the vast does not stop at Olancho, either: many residents of Catacamas and Gualaco refer to their *municipios* as “vast.” Catacamas, they say, is the largest *municipio* in Central America. Gualaqueños are amazed that it can take three to four days by the best available transport (in vehicle, mounted, or on foot, depending on the infrastructure) to cross their *municipio* from the Sierra de Agalta to the Montaña de Botaderos. Farther down the spatial hierarchy, *aldeas* measure their distances to their municipal *cabecera*, while hamlets measure their distances to their jurisdictional *aldea*. *Aldeas*, as *comarcas*, are also their own worlds. In the striated space of the State, these are all “subdivisions” of a greater unity, Honduras. Lived from “within,” however, each local spatial “unit” is synergistically greater than the sum of its parts, sharing traits with neighbors but standing apart from them.

At the fringes of Olancho, spatial identities turn away toward other departments. Olanchanos sometimes express the feeling that the peripheral *municipios* (e.g. Patuca, Guayape, Esquipulas del Norte) are traitors to Olancho. Nevertheless, while there is an outward gaze and allegiance at the periphery of Olancho, a clear frontier between inside and outside still exists in many areas. In the space of a few kilometers, one hears about “los olanchanos” (spoken sometimes with dread) on the other side of the hill, *Adentro*. On crossing the *guardarrayas*, we meet the dreaded ones who purse their lips, pointing back to the outside: “Aquellos no son olanchanos.”⁷

⁶ *Patrimonio* is the specific heritage of a place, both cultural and natural.

⁷ See also AEC Juzgado Eclesiástico n.d.[later colonial period] on the jurisdictional problems of one’s inhabiting both the Outside (e.g. Orica) and Olancho.

Entering Olancho from the west, from Tegucigalpa, the most heavily-travelled route and the only way to get in on a paved road, the Olancho who has been away may have cause for exclamation and feel a sense of relief, even if she was only away for the day in nearby Tegucigalpa. The border between the department of Francisco Morazán (specifically, the *municipio* of Guaimaca) and Olancho's *municipio* of Campamento is at a water divide in the piney hills, and the difference between inside and outside is not immediately apparent. From the point of view of Tegucigalpa, Guaimaca is a frontier *municipio*, with wide open spaces and clan violence just like Olancho. But though Guaimaca is in the headwaters of a river that drains into Olancho, it is considerably drier than Campamento because of rainshadow effects. Its vegetation is poor in comparison to Campamento's, owing to the inferior quality of its clayey *llano* soils. One ascends through Guaimaca's pine-forested *ejidos*, almost devoid of dwellings, past outsider-owned sawmills that Olanchanos like to comment contain "Olancho" or "Gualaco." When a loaded logging truck is seen exiting Olancho, one remarks "Allí va Olancho." One knows that only Olancho could provide so much wood: Francisco Morazán has long been decimated.

At the top of the hill in the middle of the woods, there can be five to ten signs welcoming one to Olancho in the name of various private clubs and government agencies. Leaving Olancho, several signs wish you a "Feliz Viaje," while only one, the official government sign seen entering all departments, welcomes you to Francisco Morazán. It is said that in previous years a whimsical sign welcomed you to the República Libre de Olancho.⁸

⁸ Two travellers' accounts draw the striking difference between the outside and Olancho along this route. In *Explorations and adventures in Honduras, comprising sketches of travel in the gold regions of Olancho* (1857), William Wells commented repeatedly on his trip in 1854 how harsh, empty, and impoverished were the landscapes on the road from Tegucigalpa to Olancho: Talanga, and particularly Guaimaca are unfriendly, inhospitable, and almost starving: "these mountain villages present pictures of extreme poverty... The villagers seem to have nothing to eat, or, if they have, it is so little that they are loth to share or sell it." (254) A few pages later: "We were now in Olancho...[a host in Campamento proffered immediately] an abundance of *tortillas* and other eatables." (260-1) Glowing descriptions of gold, hospitality, and vast, rich plains soon follow. A century later, naturalist Archie Carr, in *High jungles and low* (1953), remarked on the difference between arid Guaimaca and humid Campamento, felt soon after crossing the pass, and attributed it to the influence of the northeast trades. The glimpse of

In the blink of an eye, Olanchano passengers no longer measure the journey by distance from Tegucigalpa but in how far it will take them to get home, after in most cases passing through Juticalpa. At once, one is on the inside, if still at the very edge.⁹ Inexperienced outsiders may become uneasy or even terrified, expecting their car or bus to be held up at any moment. The women out there are probably packing sidearms, like in the stories told by Tegucigalpa taxi drivers. See them leer, the Olanchanos? Don't trust them: they are looking for trouble. Don't even glance at them: they can kill you for "looking at them wrong" (as in, "Lo mató porque le miró mal").

Within half an hour, the bus crosses the legendary Río Guayape, and one thinks of all that gold, still waiting, buried deeper by Mitch. Above and beyond the great river, a pause at Limones, the *desvío* where a dirt highway turns off to the north: "El Corredor de la Muerte" as the papers call it. Continuing on the paved road east, one crosses the Valle de Lepaguare, observing cowboys and cattle (and watermelon plantations), and sublime landscapes about which the nineteenth-century traveller William Wells remarked:

The scenery...exceeded anything I had ever seen....All around me a blue horizon of mountains, embracing a wide landscape...with the richest verdure....An ocean of gold and green undulating in the purple tints of sunset! (Wells 1857:267-8)

Travelling from the west, one notices that Lepaguare's vegetation contains more big *higueras*, *ceibas*, *guanacastes*, *tempisques*, and other trees with large, spreading crowns. Beloved pines spill down from the mountains onto the *valle* edges. But all the views and trees that to Olanchanos define "Olancho" cannot hide the dread many feel on passing the site of the 1975 Horcones massacre—right over there, in that patch of scrub on the north side of the road, where the priests and the other martyrs were tortured, burned, and buried at the bottom of a deep well to punctuate the end of grassroots land reform. Olanchanos: sensorily awash in their

Olancho afforded to him at this point was of a machete fight seen from a safe distance.

⁹ Ryden (1993) captures this type of move well.

pinos and prairies, but guilty or outraged too, reading that landscape of death, again and again, every time they go by.

A few minutes after leaving Lepaguare, the bus winds down into “el corazón de Olancho,” the Valle de Olancho, stretching away east to the horizon, 80 kilometers away. Here are luxuriant watercourses, cattle ranches and prosperous ranchers in late-model \$40,000 sport utility vehicles, corn and sorghum fields. These are the “pampas olanchanas” (according to Olanchanos, a miniature Argentina) that “look like Montana, Big Sky Country” (according to people from the US whom I have overheard). Many of the pickups have tinted windows, a hedge against identification by *los enemigos*—and what Olanchano doesn’t have at least a few?

Spatial clichés come fast and thick in the Valle de Olancho—it is Texas, Argentina, Montana, and east Africa rolled together. These connections to areas many times its size and geopolitical importance are not to be taken lightly, because they help define what Olancho means to its people, or what they wish it were. Olancho’s spatial identity is never trivial, even though it can certainly be employed to belittle “lesser,” local spatial identities like “Gualaco.” Olancho’s uneasy relationship with “Honduras” helps to stave off, in imagination if not in experience, the embarrassment or frustration of being Honduran. Belief in vastness, palliative or not, is how to be in Olancho, how to remain *olanchano* when you are told you’re backward and insignificant.

Beyond vastness, reinforced by the journey and the sweeping gaze, the complexity of Olancho’s identity, of “what it takes to be *olanchano*,” has been quite a production starting well before the first days of Spanish contact. Olancho, within but apart from Honduras, might seem to be primarily a Spanish colonial construction, since its remaining distinct indigenous groups inhabit the margins of its margins. However, Olancho as an expanse of anarchistic, rhizomatic Ladino and “indio” *comarcas* is still heavily imprinted with Precolumbian geographies. The following sections show how these have endured and how they have been transmuted through

rhizomatic Iberoamerican (and probably African) geographies to produce what we encounter today.

3.2 Beyond the Southeast Maya Periphery

Precolumbian Olancho, with the rest of eastern Honduras,¹⁰ is identified by archaeologists as outside the Mesoamerican world. With the exception of the still legendary White City of the Moskitia, eastern Honduras does not contain ruin sites the size of those built by the Classic Maya, such as Copán in western Honduras. Nevertheless, Olancho does contain many Precolumbian ruins, some ranked as among the largest in southern Central America, with evidence for the most highly organized society between Mesoamerica and South America (Begley 1999). Olancho's landscapes, like those of most of the rest of Central America, contain archaeological evidence for dense Precolumbian populations that crashed precipitously after Conquest, leaving only a few thousand indigenous people.

Little substantial archaeological excavation has been done in eastern Honduras. Though archaeologists and ethnohistorians alike have cited the lack of data on eastern Honduras since at least the 1940s (e.g. Strong 1948), there are still far from enough basic data to be able to say much about patterns of culture in the Precolumbian period. Only Selín Farm and nearby sites in the Valle de Aguán (Healy 1978; 1983), the Cuevas de Talgua (c. 1000 BC) and the Talgua village site near Catacamas (Brady 1995), and the area of Culmí (Begley 1999; Dixon et al. 1998) have been systematically excavated, while a scattering of places have been lightly surveyed and mapped, and most areas (e.g. northwestern Olancho) have not been touched by archaeology. This inadequate base has favored not only popular speculation on the presence and even dominance of Aztec and Maya, but scholarly support for these hypotheses as well. Researchers have sometimes wanted Precolumbian eastern Honduras to be Maya (Euraque

¹⁰ Eastern Atlántida, Colón, eastern El Paraíso, eastern Francisco Morazán, Gracias a Dios, Islas de la Bahía, and central/eastern Yoro.

1996; 1998; Lunardi 1948: Olancho era región de los Mayas, 259-60) or ruled by Mexicans (Lara Pinto and Hasemann 1988; Lara Pinto 1991).

Vague references by conquistadors and chroniclers such as Hernán Cortés and Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa bolster hypotheses of state-level polities at Conquest in eastern Honduras ruled not by local people but by outsiders. Sites such as those near Dulce Nombre de Culmí and in the area of the Río Aner, which contain large stone constructions and elaborate ceremonial *metates* (grinding stones), cannot have been left by the ancestors of the historical inhabitants, “primitive” Pech (“Paya”), say the proponents of a State-level presence. They point toward a central, yet undiscovered administrative site.¹¹ Interestingly, the location of this mythic “Ciudad Blanca” has moved eastward ahead of the forest frontier since 1948, when it was thought to be in the Montaña de Babilonia not far from Catacamas. Recently, it has been “located” in the mountainous headwaters of the Río Aner or Río Plátano, which are still covered by thick, forest.¹²

Despite the distinct possibility that the presence of “state-level” ruins in Olancho and neighboring Colón departments calls for a state, Begley (1999), in an exhaustive search of the region, found nothing indicating a Mexican or Maya presence. In an analysis of ethnohistorical sources, Davidson (1991) shows that Contact-period eastern Honduras was largely under the influence of ancestors of those who inhabited it historically, the Pech people. The less than 2000 Pech remaining today speak a Chibcha language closely allied with those spoken to the south. Linguistic evidence points to a common origin for the Chibcha language in the area of present-day Costa Rica, with subsequent migrations northward to Honduras (Pech is the

¹¹ The late archaeologist George Hasemann from the Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia championed this idea, and explained it in a talk to my Peace Corps trainee class in 1991 in Tegucigalpa. “Paya” is considered by the Pech to be a racial slur, but it is acceptable usage in reference to ethnohistorical accounts.

¹² See Figueroa, *Vaso sagrado de la Ciudad Blanca* (1940); Anonymous, *Excursion a Olancho* (1960); Aguilar Paz, *Tlapal-lan, Huehuetlapal-lan, ruinas de Ciudad Blanca* (1969); Lara Pinto and Hasemann, *La sociedad indígena del noreste de Honduras en el siglo XVI: ¿son la etnohistoria y la arqueología contradictorias?* (1988).

northernmost outpost of Chibcha) and southward to northern South America (Constenla 1981). In this dissertation, I employ “proto-Pech” to refer to ancestors of the historic Pech before 1600, since ethnographic accounts (see section 3.5) and the pottery record indicate that they once covered an area considerably larger than they did by the 1600s.



Fig. 3.3. Array of Precolumbian artifacts from the Valle de Arriba (Río Telica drainage).

What little is known of the Precolumbian cultures of eastern Honduras between 500 AD and 1500 AD (not only proto-Pech but “Misumalpan”¹³ as well) puts them not at the “state level” but rather on par with other “chiefdoms” in lower Central America, northern South America, and the Greater Antilles, as Steward (1948) demonstrated. And even though some pottery at central Olancho sites like Talgua and especially Chichicaste (Begley 1999) seems to be stylistically more related to Mesoamerica than to lower Central America (Gómez 1995), this could be explained through the influence of “Mexican” cultures like the Chorotega or Nicarao on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. But until detailed excavations are carried out at places like Los Encuentros (the largest known site in proto-Pech northeastern Olancho) and Dos Quebradas (largest site in central Olancho [Strong 1948], little can be established with certainty.

¹³ “Misumalpan” is the linguistic term for a language family of southern Central America with only tenuous ties to Chibchan: Miskito (and “proto-Miskito”), Sumu (or Mayangna, including Tawahka and Ulwa), and Matagalpan. The Dept. of Linguistics at MIT maintains several Internet websites on Misumalpan languages, including exhaustive dictionaries. See <http://web.mit.edu/ling-phil>.

Existing archaeological and ethnohistorical data indicate that the region contained by modern-day Olancho, though southern Central American in character, had considerable contact with the Mesoamerican world, especially before the time around the collapse of Copán. After 1000 AD, South American influences increased (Begley 1999). Viewed from Mesoamerica, Olancho, like southern Central America in general (see Lange 1996; Lange and Stone 1984) cannot “measure up” to areas to the west, because it did not become as “advanced” or “complex.” Olancho was probably never striated by states, Ciudad Blanca aside. Eastern Honduran societies did not “reach” the “state level” until the Spanish arrived.¹⁴

However, Mesoamerican states may have been unpleasant and largely unnecessary alternatives to local-scale spatial control, rather than bringers of societal complexity and cultural maturity. There was cultural exchange, to be sure: the proto-Pech “Taycones” of northeastern Olancho in the 1500s flailed themselves with *ceiba* spines (AGCA Probanza de Corella 1561: see below), but was this a Mesoamerican imposition (“overcoding”) or a “block” of Mesoamerican/southern Central American becoming? The State, in the minds of people in eastern Honduras, might have been a spatial entity better fended off or at most borrowed from rather than submitted to (see Daviss 1997): indeed, the societies of eastern Honduras continued to fend off the State in any form right up to the twentieth century, one of the central themes of this chapter.

Olancho’s Contact-period mosaic of *comarcas* and “provincias” (“chiefdoms?”), depicted in sixteenth-century documents, after the pattern of southern Central America in general, need not be seen as “less advanced,” a “disorganized” region that never “reached the level” of Mesoamerica. According to Pierre Clastres (1987), society did not “need” the State at all. In Latin America, Clastres argues, states, for example the Aztec and Inca Empires, were not

¹⁴ Newson (1986) denies that Olancho even reached the “chiefdom level” such as that “attained” by the Lenca, of central and western Honduras, though strong evidence for the existence of chiefdoms throughout most of Olancho and mountainous eastern Honduras exists in the sixteenth-century ethnohistorical record.

“necessary” and certainly were not more “enlightened” than forms of human organization that enshrined local independence. States, to accrue power, striated the preexisting *comarcas* of local space, siphoning off “excess” energy and wealth from them through massive public works projects, taxes, and other “advances.” The State was a threat to *comarcas* that contained within their fluid boundaries almost everything they needed and obtained the rest through trade.

A patchwork of unconquered, unstriated “chiefdoms” and “tribes”—a world of *comarcas* independent of any State above and behind—cannot be judged as “less important” than Mesoamerica, especially since it may have been able to better weather collapses of Mayan city-states that so affected more dependent areas of western and central Honduras (see Urban and Schortman 1986; also Abrams et al. 1996). Most intriguing to me are rhizomatic becomings-eastern of the west and becomings-western of the east: was there really a line separating Mesoamerica from southern Central America, or did *comarcas* border each other in “continuous variation” across the landscape? What did the east “give” to Mesoamerica? As yet, too little archaeological work has been done to address these intriguing questions.

A world of autonomous villages necessitates intense knowledge of and pride in the landscape. Whatever Olancho “was” before the Spanish arrived, people who lived there could hardly have perceived themselves as “less important” than somewhere else, as on the margins of “civilization,” even with the very likely presence of Mexican traders to tell them of the glories of Tenochtitlán. But from the moment Columbus claimed the Caribbean (“Mar del Norte”) coast of Honduras for Spain in 1502, a blueprint was drawn for forced dependence and marginalization by the State in what would quickly become a remote corner of Empire.

3.3 Briefly at the Center: Olancho in the 1520s

It is shocking to me how fast the two-stage transmogrification of a Precolumbian smooth space to a Spanish State space occurred in Olancho. The conquistadors were spurred not only by gold but also by what they thought of as ideal environmental conditions for settlement: an

Iberia-like dry and open landscape perfect for cattle ranching. They were aided not by the presence of indigenous State rulers who could in a limited sense “understand” Spain’s and Rome’s spatial objectives (as seems to have occurred in areas such as Mexico and Peru), but rather by the happenstance of almost all the indigenous population dying of disease, and (before 1540) thousands taken away as slaves (Newson 1986). In Olancho, as across Honduras, the conquistadors were hampered, by the anarchistic tendencies of the *comarcas*’ caciques, and these was exacerbated by cultures that were not land-dependent but rather plied the many navigable rivers of eastern Honduras with large watercraft, while the Spaniards had to wait for the rainy seasons to abate before being able to cross with their horses. Despite these and other obstacles, the Spanish were able to establish tenuously the King’s presence in 1526 at the very center of a world rapidly becoming hostile to him. (God, however, had to wait until the 1540s). This section shows how a new striated geography was inserted into a smooth space, but how it failed because of the spatial conflicts within a far from united State. Described in section 3.4, successful (if fragile) overcoding of “Olancho” finally occurred in the 1540s with the inscription of a spatial hierarchy both locally and at the level of Central America. Through all this, however, it should be kept in mind that smooth space was pushed back but a few kilometers to the east in the Taguzgalpa that continually threatened Olancho’s unity and submission.

Hernán Cortés, on his ill-fated 1525-6 trip to Honduras, was the first Spaniard to unequivocally mention Olancho:

Vinieron a mí ciertos naturales de la provincia de Huilacho [Olancho], que es sesenta y cinco leguas de aquella villa de Trujillo...y se habían ofrecido por vasallos de vuestra majestad, y me hicieron saber cómo a su tierra habían llegado veinte de caballo y cuarenta peones, con muchos indios de otras provincias, que traían por amigos; de los cuales habían recibido y recibían mucho agravio y daños, tomándoles sus mujeres e hijos y haciendas, y que me rogaban que remediase... (*Quinta Carta-Relación*, Sept. 3, 1526. Cortés 1992:271).

In newly-founded Trujillo on the north coast, a four days’ ride from “Huilacho,” Cortés found out that his covetous gaze over Central America was obscured by conquistadors from the

south. Though eager to return to Mexico, he moved quickly to expel them and to establish his own presence inland. He related how his cousin Sa(y)avedra captured two of the conquistadors referred to above in Papayeca ("Papaica," a *provincia* in the Valle de Aguán near Trujillo) who had come looking for Cortés and Trujillo. They had been sent through an effort by Pedrarias Davila, lord and master of all southern Central America, to find a port on the Mar del Norte for León, Nicaragua, the new *ciudad* to the south near the Pacific. Cortés sent the two "Nicaraguans" back to their master with letters ordering the Pedrarias government to vacate "Huilacho" and to free the Indians they had enslaved. López de Gómara (1966[1552]) paralleled Cortés' original account, and added:

Considerando, pues, estas disensiones y bullicios entre los españoles, y que aquella provincia de Nicaragua era muy rica y estaba cerca, quería ir allá Hernan Cortés, y comenzó a prepararse y a preparar el camino por una sierra muy aspera. (341)

Y como tenía muchos indios trabajadores para preparar el camino de Nicaragua....Envio mensajeros por todas las ciudades que están en el camino, haciéndoles saber que iba, y rogándoles tuviesen qué comer y abiertos los caminos....le tenían [Cortés] en grandísima estimación por haber ganado a Méjico Tenuchtitlan; y así, prepararon los caminos hasta el valle de Ulancho¹⁵ y las sierras de Chindon [probably Cordillera de Agalta], que son muy frágiles, y todos los caciques estaban preparados y provistos para hospedarle y festejarle en su pueblos y tierras.

If Mexico hadn't been slipping from his grasp, Cortés would have gone south himself to succor his new vassals in "Huilacho" and to physically contest the claims of Pedrarias. Instead,

¹⁵ López de Gómara wrote several decades after the fact [as Díaz del Castillo did], when "Huilacho/Huilancho" had become "Ulancho/Olancho." I have encountered two unsatisfying translations of Huilanchō (Vilanchō, "V" and "U" interchangeable). Both are Nahuatl. The first is in Membreño (*Toponimias indígenas de Centroamérica* 1994[1901]), who derives it from "Vlli," meaning *hule*, chicle rubber; "-cho" would have been a variant of the locative -co, "land of" (see Davidson 1991 for use of "-co"). The second is from Reyes Mazzoni (*El nombre de Olancho y los grupos de habla Nahuatl en Honduras* [1974]:31-9), who derives "Huilancho" from "Vllamani," the Mesoamerican ballgame. Using the 1571 Nahuatl-Spanish, Spanish-Nahuatl *Vocabulario* by Fray Alonso de Molina and Antonio de Spínosa, we can get closer to "Vilanchō" than the two definitions above, if we assume that the first outsiders to hear the word, including Hernando Cortés ("Huilacho") and Diego López de Salcedo, were trying to reproduce it exactly as they heard it: "Vilanchō." According to Molina and Spínosa (617), "Vilana" means "to drag oneself on the soil." "Vilanona" means "vassal." Perhaps Olancho, as Cortés was told by his Mexican translators and informants in Trujillo, was the "land of the vassals." They did, indeed, travel 65 *leguas* to Trujillo specifically to ask for Cortés' protection against the conquistadors sent by Pedrarias. If there were already Mexican (Pipil?) traders living in Olancho, the term may have signified vassals of Moctezuma. The witnesses in López de Salcedo (1954[1527]) called the land "viylancho," "Vilanchi," "Viylancho," "Vlanchi," and "Vlancho." López de Salcedo, in his 1526 letter

he left the job for Saavedra who remained in Trujillo.¹⁶ All three Spanish accounts (Cortés, López de Gómara, and Díaz del Castillo)¹⁷ stressed how much Cortés liked Honduras, especially the rich valley that would later be known as the Valle de Aguán, in the 1520s still filled with towns of several thousand houses each (Pedraza 1544). Cortés admitted to seeking a land not far from Trujillo, that he had been told about in Mexico, called “Xucutaco” or “Hueitapalan,” rich in gold and civilized people, and only eight to ten days away (50 to 60 *leguas*). Vázquez de Espinosa (1969[1629]:168), in the early 1600s, says that *mexicanos* living in *la Tegusgalpa* (eastern Honduras, not Tegucigalpa the silver-mining town) maintained the tradition that Moctezuma had collected tribute in gold from eastern Honduras. Cortés, it appears, had been in pursuit of an El Dorado of which Pedrarias was aware as well.

Díaz del Castillo (1992: chapter 214) tells of his own return visit to Trujillo in 1551 and how reminiscences of the brief “good old days” under Cortés brought tears to the eyes of two caciques, who had seen their lands and peoples reduced to almost nothing in the intervening decades. After Cortés left, a succession of inept and corrupt governors in Trujillo helped shift the locus of Spanish power in Honduras westward (e.g. Cereceda moving to Naco after 1530), and so it was only during a brief period between 1525 and 1530 that Trujillo¹⁸ was the undisputed headquarters of “Honduras e Higueras” government. Throughout this brief period, León in Nicaragua contested the Cortesian legacy and Trujillo’s hegemony. Olancho, roughly

(1954[1526]), called it “Vilancho.”

¹⁶ Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1992), footsoldier of Cortés, visited Olancho. In chapter 193 (512), Díaz del Castillo writes: “fuimos por la tierra adentro, de guerra, hasta llegar a Olancho, que ahora llaman Guayape....escribimos a Sayavedra con indios de aquel pueblo de Olancho, que estaba de paz.” Díaz del Castillo commented that he and other conquistadors were very glad to be leaving the rebellious “tierra mala” of Honduras to get back to glorious Mexico.

¹⁷ A less-detailed, indigenous version by Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl (1969:109-12) judges Cortés’ actions in Honduras harshly, through the eyes of Ixtlilxochitl, Prince of Texcoco. This account, like López de Gómara’s, lists “Papayca” (and “Chiapaxina”).

¹⁸ Mack (1997) provides a detailed account of this town’s history. See also CDI 1870[1525] for Trujillo’s *Testimonio de la posesión y fundación....*

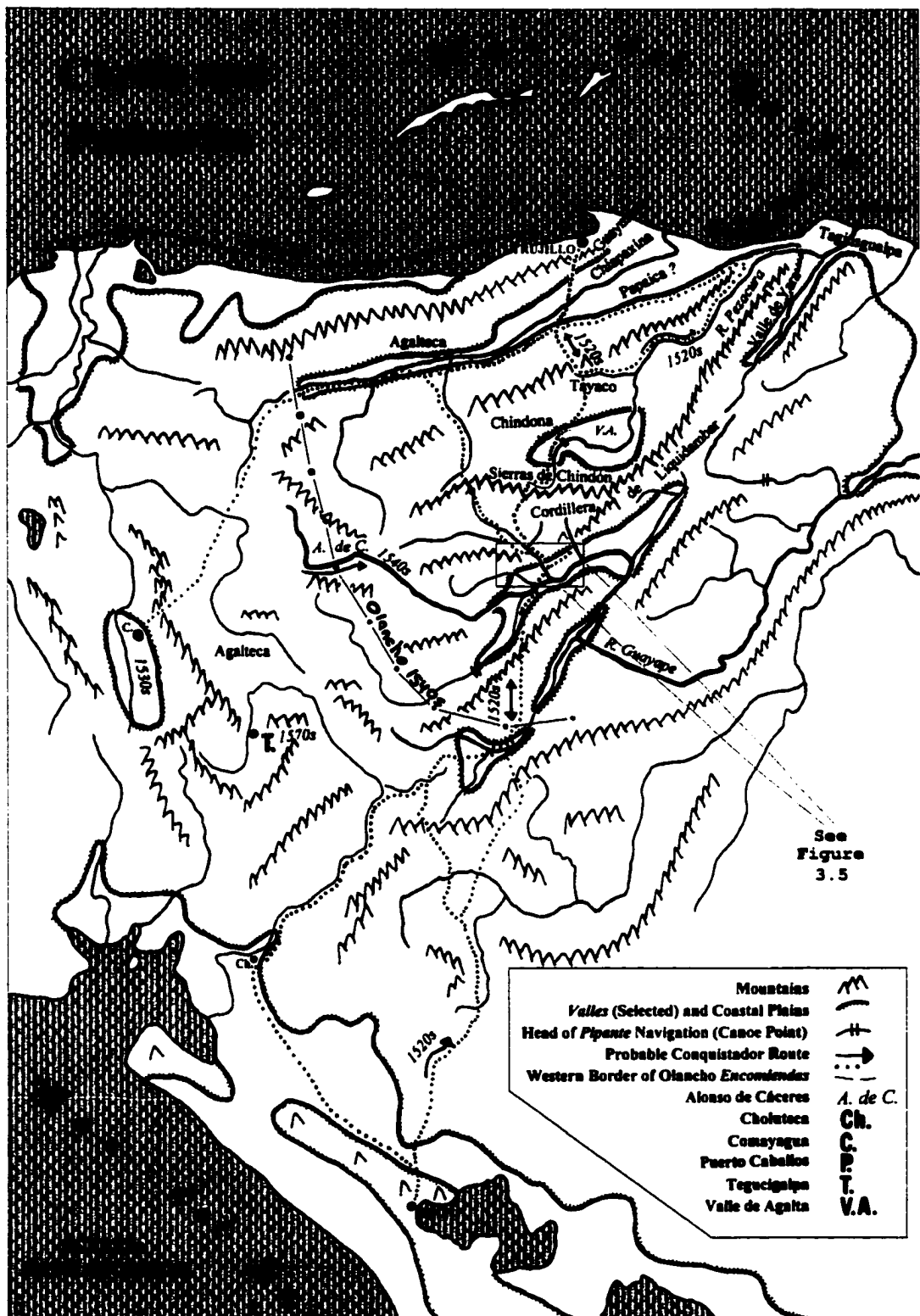


Fig. 3.4 Selected conquistador routes and indigenous *comarcas* before 1550.

halfway between Trujillo and León, was at the center of the conflict. Two Spanish *ciudades* were founded there to back up these territorial claims, with both sides trying to be the first and last to striate eastern Honduras through reducing its indigenous peoples to slaves or peons of the King.

After departing Trujillo in early 1526, Cortés left orders for Saavedra to establish a town in “Huilaicho” called Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres, and its geographically explicit 1526 *Testimonio de la fundación...* (CDI 1870a) speaks volumes about the striation of Olancho, particularly through the imprinting of a Spanish town plan similar to that which was later applied in the 1540s and endures to this day. Cáceres was the first Spanish *ciudad* established in the interior of Honduras in what was for the Spanish an ideal type of place for a settlement, “a Spanish town built along the upper piedmont of an upland valley” (Davidson 1991: 214) with geographic conditions that seemed similar to what they knew in Spain: not too cold, not too hot; not too wet, not too dry; just right, for cattle, crops, administration of tribute Indians, and control of trade routes. Ordered Saavedra:

Vais á la dicha provincia de Huylancho é á las otras provincias á ella comarcas, é mirais é veais todas las partes é sitios é asientos pertenescientes para pueblos de españoles, mirando todas las cosas nescasarias, especialmente que esté vistoso, airoso, y el sitio dél para seca é mojado, donde en saliendo el sol reverbere, é las aguas corrientes é claras, apartado de cénegas é lapachares, é ayan parte hexido de todos ganados, é tierras, árboles é labranzas, é do se pueda hedificar casas de piedra, la qual intitulareis del nombre de la villa de Frontera de Cáceres.

On May 12, 1526, a group of conquistadors from Trujillo set out from their local base at “Escamilpa, pueblo de indios, provincia de Huylancho” to fulfill these exact conditions. Eight days later they were “en Agalta, pueblo de indios” where they took possession “paseándose por el dicho pueblo, cortando de los árboles e ramas é arrancando de las yerbas, cavando de la tierra con sus propias manos, é faciendo otros mucho abtos [sic] de posesion, la qual tomó pacíficamente.” The striation was often effected by such symbolically charged acts. Even though this “Agalta” (which by documents produced slightly later would appear to refer to a settlement, perhaps Chindona, in what became known as the Valle de Agalta) was closer to the

command post of Trujillo, Saavedra's men returned to more distant Escamilpa where on June 2, 1526, they founded Cáceres back where they had started:

En la dicha provincia de Huylancho, en una sábana [sic] cerca de unos pueblos de indios que se dicen Telicachequita y Escamilpachequita, poco más de una legua de Escamilpa la Grande, el valle arriba

They wrote that they had looked everywhere in this "provincia é sus comarcas" but couldn't find anywhere else as good. On June sixth, they laid out the ill-fated Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres, assigning lots for church, plaza, hospital, prison, *cabildo*, and private houses. They intended to striate eastern Honduras from a command center close to where a longer-lasting capital was established in the 1540s, in the Valle de Olancho that even today is the undisputed political core of the department.¹⁹

¹⁹ Thanks to the exactitude of the *Testimonio* and the endurance of several toponyms, we can pinpoint the location of this first settlement attempt. In this interpretation of the exact location of Cáceres, I am at variance with Davidson (1991) and Sampson (1997), who situate it on the southeast side of the Valle de Olancho near present-day San Francisco de Becerra. "Huylancho," which became "Olancho," is a unique toponym, not occurring anywhere else and referring primordially to the Valle de Olancho. "Telica" in this context refers to a place along the southwestern edge of the Valle de Olancho where the Río Telica has carved the lowest gap (in the entire Cordillera de Agalta) south into the Valle de Olancho. This was probably the entrance point to "Huylancho" of a principal indigenous route from the north that the Spanish would have followed as well, coming and going from the west as well as the north. "Escamilpa" may be related to "Excamil" (or "Yscamil" in ANTO 202 Santa Rosa 1724; ANTO 203 Santa Rosa [Yscamil] 1668-1774), a colonial *sitio* in the central Valle de Olancho south of the Río Guayape. It is related to "*milpa*," presumably fields, possibly of corn; "excan" in Nahuatl means "in three parts" (Molina and Spínosa 1966[1571]). Though the toponyms mentioned are all Nahuatl, this was possibly due to the Mexican translators (*naguatatos*) who accompanied the Cortesians, and do not necessarily imply that Huylancho was Mexican. One could assume that the Spanish sought an area of high population density (Escamilpa la Grande) because of greater tribute possibilities and for a sufficient number of Indians to help defend against inevitable attacks orchestrated by Pedrarias. Saavedra's orders were carried out to the letter: "seca é mojado" would mean neither on seasonally-inundated bottomlands nor on arid mountain slopes or arid terraces of *valle* interiors, but rather at the piedmont edge of a *valle*, on a savanna but adjacent to the *montaña*—the Spanish, just like their indigenous predecessors and counterparts (see Begley 1999; Dixon et al. 1998) favored those key spots above a stream or river between mountain and plain. "Donde en saliendo el sol reverbera," "Where, upon rising, the sun hits (the town)" situates Cáceres on the southwest side of the Valle. Given that the indigenous peoples of eastern Honduras were adept at river travel, whereas the Spanish were a horse culture, it is unlikely that the latter would have wanted the Río Guayape to separate them from their tribute towns, since the river is an impassable barrier to horses during weeks at a time in the June to November rainy season. Combining all this puts Villa de Cáceres somewhere a few *leguas* west or east of the Río Telica—most likely, in the vicinity of present-day Jutiquile near the extensive ruin site at San Marcos de Jutiquile, among the largest in eastern Honduras (Escamilpa la Grande?)

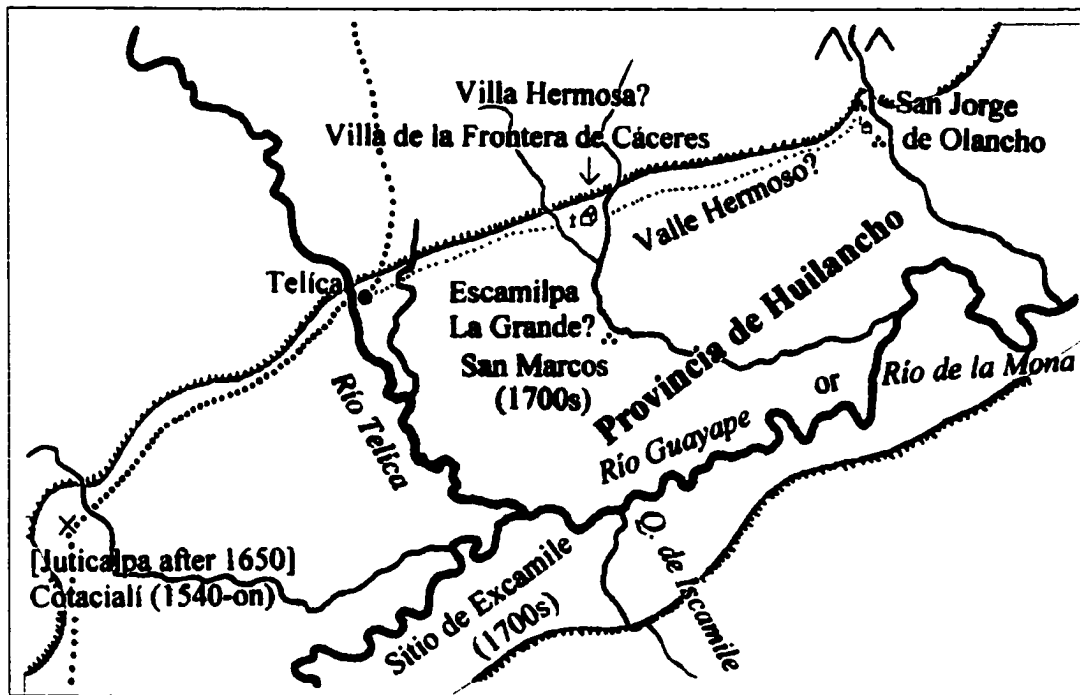


Fig. 3.5 Provincia de Huilancho in the 1500s (close-up of figure 3.4).

Meanwhile, the Spaniards in León:

Tuvieron muchos debates e contiendas con los vezinos queran en la Villa de Truxillo, questá fundada en la Mar del Norte, e a la sazón so la Gobernación de Don Fernando Cortes; las quales diferencias quentre el uno e los otros ay, *es sobre la partycion de los términos de la Tierra e aplycación de los yndios della*" (italics mine) (Albitez 1954[1527]:277).

To counter the Villa de Cáceres, Pedrarias ordered "Villa Hermosa" to be founded "en medio de la Tierra entre la Mar del Norte e la del Sur" (Albitez 1954[1527]:277). The first *Carta del Gobernador de las Provincias de Higueras y Cabo de Honduras*, by Diego López de Salcedo (1954[1526]) in Trujillo, gives a history privileging the point of view of Pedrarias, who saw the Cortesian activity as outrageous. Salcedo, who replaced Saavedra in Trujillo and became Honduras' first governor, was interested in currying favor with Pedrarias, and represents the latter as having primordial claim to "Vilancho." Salcedo writes how Pedrarias, infuriated by Cortés' banning of "Nicaraguans" from Olancho, sent a new group of conquistadors under a Benito Hurtado in later 1526 to expel the settlers of the Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres and

establish a Nicaraguan town in the same Valle, which they achieved with little ado. Saavedra's men were forced to return to Trujillo, and the Valle and "Minas" de "Ulancho," with the "Cordillera de Liquidambar" (presumably Cordillera de Agalta: see Herrera 1947:142), became part of Nicaragua. Hurtado and his men, once settled in the Valle de Olancho, made a foray to the north into the Valle de Agalta "abajo hasta la mar del norte, diz que a buscar puerto" (López de Salcedo 1954[1526]:182). In other words, they followed the Río Sico/Grande downstream to find a port on the Caribbean east of Trujillo. Saavedra heard about this, sent out a patrol, and discovered the "Nicaraguans" 25 *leguas* east of Trujillo. Each party agreed to go back the way they had come, but Hurtado's men waited and then sneaked back along the route that would take them to the sea. Saavedra's men, suspecting this, returned as well, and there was a battle in which both sides suffered casualties. Witnessing this conflict for spatial hegemony over northeastern Honduras, we are told in a later document (López de Salcedo 1954b[1527]), were the Indians of "Peiçacura."

From Rodrigo de Castillo, an anti-Pedrarias Spaniard in León, we learn how Nicaragua thought of Honduras in 1527:

la provincia de Nicaragua y valle de Vlancho y cabo de Honduras ques toda vna governacion...es la mejor tierra del mundo...porque se an descubierto minas" [of gold] (Castillo 1954[1527]:221).²⁰

It is clear from this that not only did Pedrarias desire Honduras, but also that this was the accepted spatial projection of Nicaraguan settlers in general, that their land should extend all the way to the Mar del Norte. Honduras won the fight for hegemony in eastern Honduras largely owing to the events described below, but the discovery of gold placers, what lured the Spanish back to Olancho in the 1540s, is attributable to the Nicaraguans.

In 1527, Salcedo undertook a trip south through "Vilanco" to León ("la tierra adentro el camino de León") to meet with Pedrarias and work out a solution to the conflict. From the

²⁰ Herrera (1947:141) also mentions the "Minas del Valle."

Indian town of Chequila (unknown location, probably in the Valle de Aguán) he wrote that he had news of the undoing of Nicaraguan territorial pretensions in Olancho: “tenía nueva cierta de que la gente de aquella Villa de Huilanco e provincia de Nicaragua estava repartida en tres partes tomados todos los caminos” (López de Salcedo 1954a[1527]:192; see also 1883[1527]). Salcedo learned that an uprising has occurred in “Vilanco” involving Hurtado and his men in Villa Hermosa:

el Cacique Venito [=Huenito] Señor de Comayagua ques en el mismo pueblo donde estan los Cristianos del Valle de Huilanco, convoco e traxo mucho Caciques comarcanos de que se junto mucha gente, e que una noche al quarto de alva dieron en el pueblo de Cristianos i mataron quinze cristianos [=Spanish] e veinte cavallos. (López de Salcedo 1954[1527]:194)

He was scared by this news, and noticed that all the Indian settlements they are passing that were once pacific are now in an uproar, with many people in hiding. To avenge this disrespect of Spanish authority, which could set a bad precedent, Salcedo continued southward, laying waste to the land in an apocalyptic revenge with sinister parallels to what the State did in Olancho in 1865, also to put down a systemic rebellion(see 3.9 below). Salcedo proceeded along his route, burning all the towns and hanging many agitators (Herrera 1947:140). His men enslaved Indians in every settlement, who eventually managed to break their chains and briefly escape; the Spaniards set on them and killed every last one, over 2,000 people (Pedraza 1898[1544]:417-8).²¹

Salcedo had been after gold and slaves, and the rebellion was a fine justification for his actions, according to a certain logic of this period prior to the New Laws. A 1529 *Testimonio* (CDI 1870[1529](14):70-7) from Trujillo of slaves and indentured servants (*indios naborios*) lists the places where they were taken along Salcedo’s route to León and back to Trujillo.²² It

²¹ This, said Pedraza, he found out through the lengthy investigation his job demanded (as *protector y defensor de los indios*, in Trujillo). Pedraza’s accounts are notable for their righteous hostility toward the Spanish conquistadors and other settlers—he is one of the very few Spaniards in sixteenth-century Honduras to be outspoken and unequivocally in support of the Indians. He says that Salcedo got his due (1898[1544]:418), dying in Trujillo a short time after returning from his ultimately unprofitable trip south.

²² Slaves for the Spaniards were taken from among free indigenous people as well as from the ranks of

establishes that Salcedo's route ran through the Valle de Aguán, Valle de Agalta, Valle de Olanchó, then south over the mountains, I would assume in the area of present-day El Paraíso.²³

Back in Trujillo, Salcedo put together a document (López de Salcedo 1954b[1528]) to defend himself against his Spanish enemies, and his pro-Salcedo witnesses unanimously justified his actions against the Olanchano Indios. Several witnesses in Salcedo's defense blame the night massacre of the Spaniards at Villa Hermosa on the weaknesses that the Indians perceived among the conquistadors. No sooner had they become vassals of Cortés and tribute payers to the Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres, then the Indians saw conquistador against conquistador. They learned quickly that the Spaniards were not united, and took advantage. This, indeed, was occurring all over Honduras.²⁴

Francisco Medina's testimony (López de Salcedo 1954[1528]:356-60) is particularly detailed because he was with Hurtado and present at the massacre (several others based their testimonies on hearsay). He states that in the "valle e pueblo que se dezia villa hermosa" the

slaves already existing in Indian polities. The Spanish branded them on the face and sold them abroad, for example to Peru and the Antilles. Slaving was outlawed by the New Laws of 1542, but continued clandestinely. See Newson, *Cost of Conquest* (1986); Sherman, *Forced native labor in sixteenth century Central America* (1979).

²³ CDI 1870(14):70-7, Testimonio de los esclavos y naborias que trajeron de la Ciudad de Leon á la Villa de Trujillo en Honduras, de órden de Pedrarias Dávila, los españoles que fueron á ella con el Gobernador Pedro Lopez de Salcedo.-(Año de 1529.)" It lists "naburias" and *esclavos* who had been procured in what is today Nicaragua and Costa Rica, as well as those procured from near Trujillo, Valle de Agalta, and Valle de Huylancho, on either Salcedo's trip down or trip back, or perhaps on previous occasions. For example: "Francisco Cepero declaró que traxo...una naburia, ques del valle de Huylancho" (71); "Diego Díaz de Herrera declaró que traxo...una, que llevó de acá, del valle de Agalta [sic]" (72); "Agustin de Cadia declaró que traxo dos piezas, que son naburias, la una dixo que de Anaguaca é la otra del valle de Agalta" (73); "Antonio de la Torre declaró que traxo...indio que llevó de acá, ques de Coabita, término desta villa de Trujillo" (73-4); "Alonso Ortiz declaró que traxo...una india esclava, herrada, que llevó deste villa de Trujillo quando fué á Leon, la qual dixo ques de Xuticalpa [a settlement in the Valle de Aguán]" (75); "Diego de Beleña, criado del dicho señor gobernador Diego Lopez de Salcedo, declaró é dixo quel dicho señor Gobernador traxo treinta é una piezas, indios é indias, de los quales dixo que son, los diez é seis esclavos, los once herrados é los cinco por herrar, porque no ovo tiempo para podellos herrar...é siete chontales que se tomaron entre Guaguatega é Huylancho" (76).

²⁴ A witness also testified that when Hurtado went in search of a port for Pedrarias on the Caribbean, "se topo con un pueblo que se dize pezicura" (338) where the first and second encounters with Saavedra's men took place. Another witness testified that Saavedra had sent out a group to pacify "apeca, a Cura" and had run into Hurtado trying to do the same (342). Other witnesses call the town "pezicura" or mention the same events taking place in "vna provincia que se dize al valle de Gasta" [=Galta, Agalta] (346).

“yndios naturales del dicho valle e otros comarcanos” attacked by night, killing 33 Spaniards and more than 30 horses, as well as many Indian servants and slaves. They let the rest go, after burning the town and all their belongings, and the Spaniards returned to León (358). The Indians of Olancho probably imagined that they had gotten rid of the unwanted outside presence for good.

Through the destruction of Villa Hermosa, which was probably on or near the site of Cáceres (neither had last more than a few months), Nicaragua lost its claim to Olancho and was never able to regain control. Salcedo’s ghastly revenge didn’t help, and Cereceda, the next effective governor in Trujillo, never even attempted to go south from the Valle de Aguán except to get the gold out of Tayaco, at the very northern edge of what later became Olancho (see 3.5 below).

Olancho slipped from the hands but not the minds of the Spanish who were consolidating power in western Honduras and Guatemala. The 1520s adventures established a feared name—Olancho—and the knowledge of abundant gold. The late 1520s and 1530s allowed time for Olancho’s *comarcas* to weaken as diseases like *sarampion* (Herrera 1947:187-8) decimated the land.

3.4 The State Triumphant: San Jorge de Olancho and Its Domain, 1540-1612

Olancho, meaning not only the “Provincia de Huylancho” but also a large section of interior eastern Honduras, was conquered from the west in the 1540s. It was during this and the following four decades that several spatial identities came to be imposed on the landscape and have endured ever since, entangling with indigenous spaces, becoming-Iberian, becoming-African. It was also during this time that a spatial hierarchy of Spanish central administrative place and outlying tribute towns was solidified—Olancho became a striated subsection of Honduras, itself a striated subsection of the Reino de Guatemala.

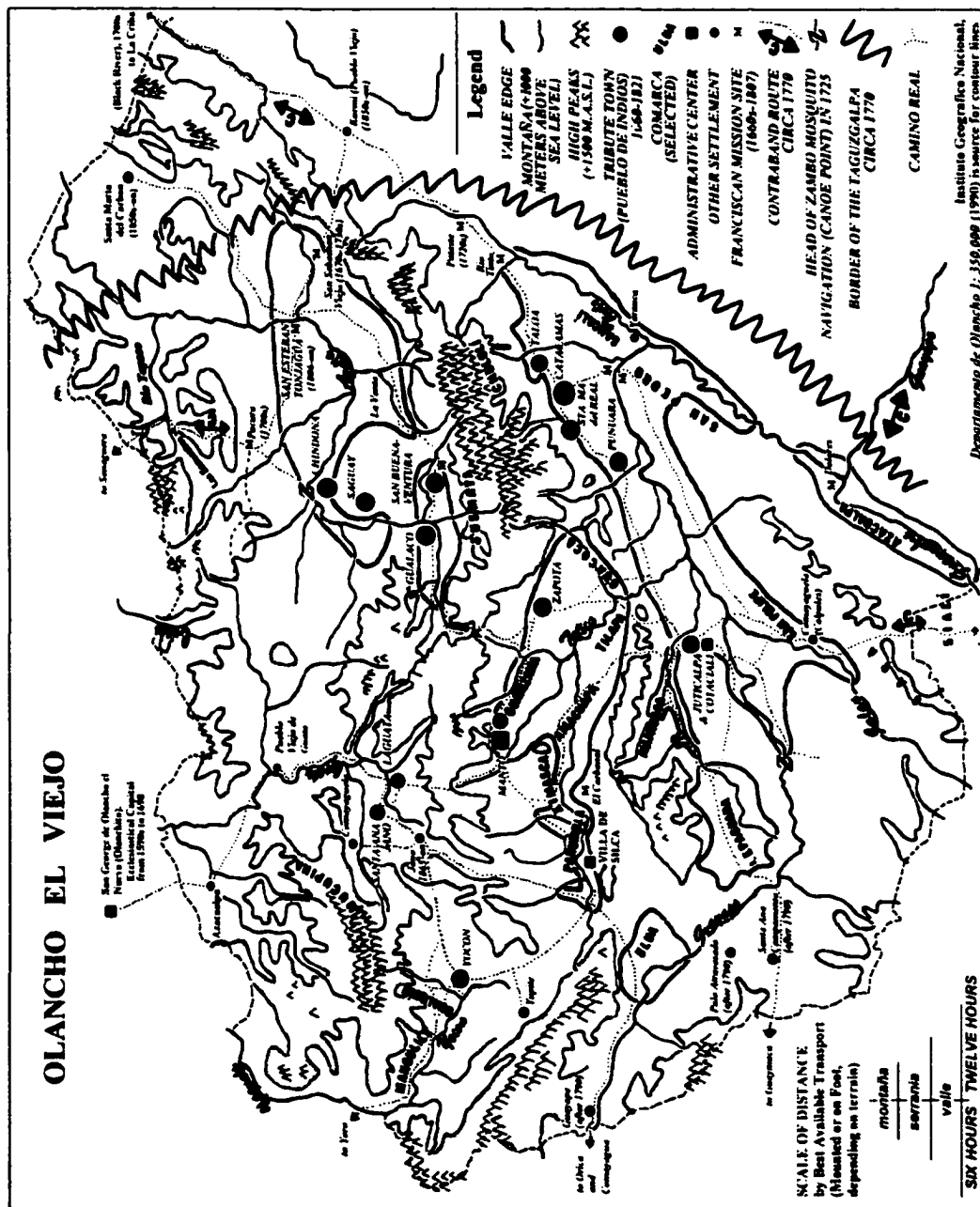


Fig. 3.6. Olancho el Viejo.

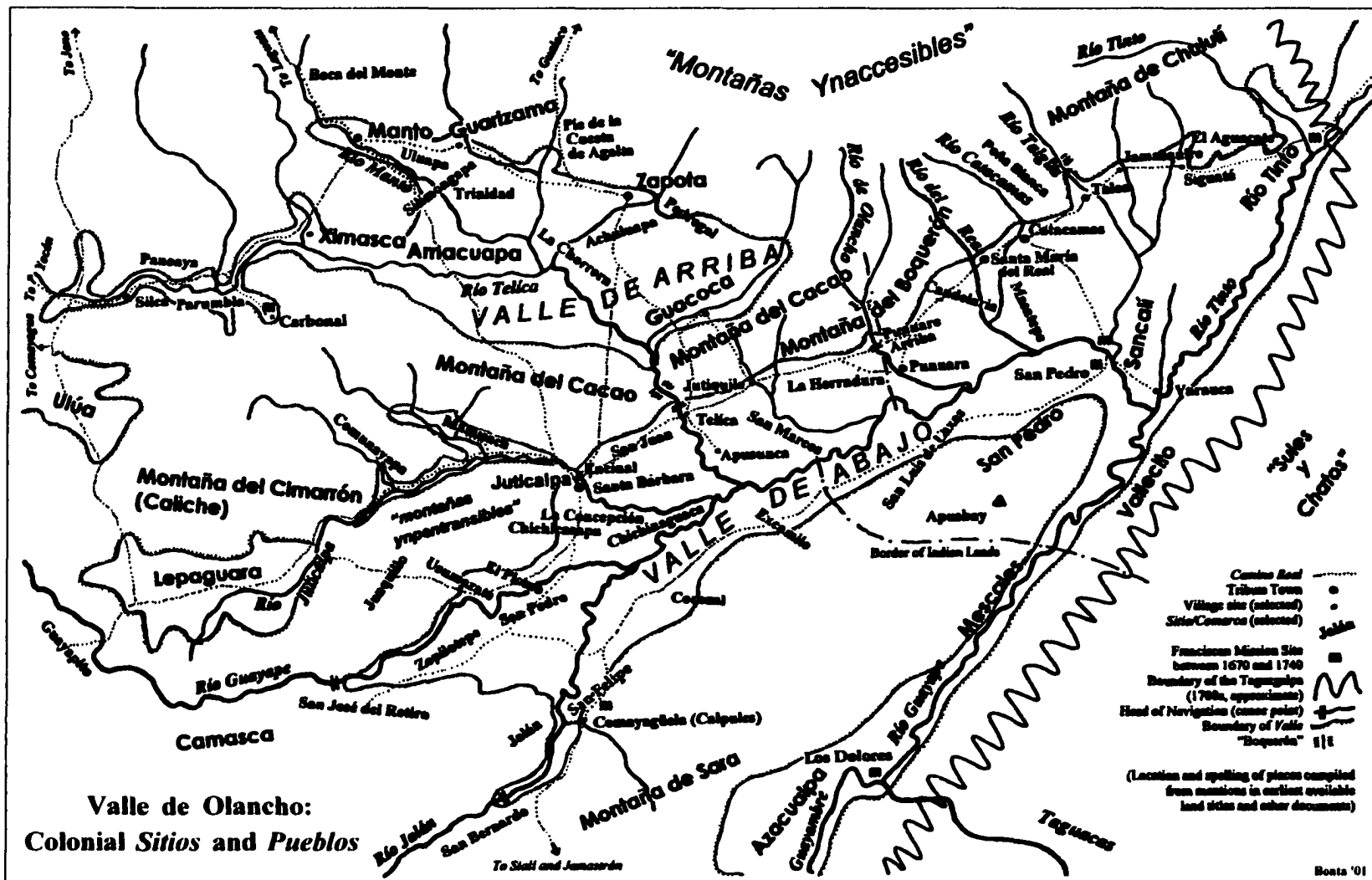


Fig. 3.7. Valle de Olancho Colonial Sitios and Pueblos.

In the 1500s, centers of Spanish power lay overland to the west, while the threat from indigenous invasion was to the east down the big rivers. At the center of Olancho sat San Jorge, which in contemporary local stories often figures as a magnificent city paved with gold, but appears in the following account to have been somewhat more modest:

Then we enter into the beautiful and delightful, but already destroyed valley of Olanchio, where the Spaniards erected a town called St. Jacobo [sic], consisting of about twenty houses, covered with straw and ill-inhabited.....we reached a small Indian population, and entreated them to furnish us with something to eat, but there was no means, either by prayers or for love or money, to induce them to give us anything whatever. On the contrary, they cursed us, and spitting on the ground in contempt, desired us to go away. That same night we reached the town, and there being no inn, we put up in an empty house near the entrance, but supperless went to sleep. (Benzoni 1857:144-5)²⁵

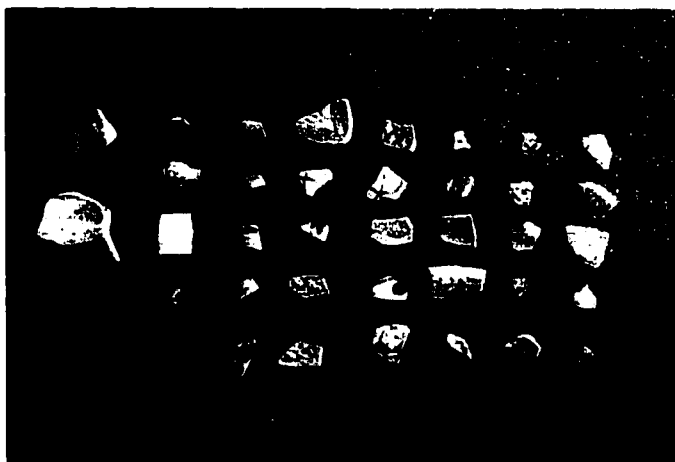


Fig. 3.8. Colonial pottery collection belonging to Profesora Ramona Figueroa, El Boquerón, Olancho. Recovered from a dwelling site of sixteenth-century San Jorge de Olancho; her collection also includes Precolumbian relics from the same spot (not shown).

Physical appearances notwithstanding, San Jorge played an important role in the striation of sixteenth-century eastern Honduras. Its location on a piedmont savanna above the west bank of the Río de Olancho underneath the present-day village of El Boquerón has been confirmed

²⁵ Girolamo Benzoni "of Milan," a soldier, penned this first-hand physical description of San Jorge de Olancho in Italian after he passed through Honduras in the 1540s. His may be the only extant description of Olancho from the colonial period not written by a subject of the Spanish crown. For a Spanish translation, see Benzoni (1967)

thanks to the presence of sixteenth-century Spanish pottery sherds on the site; ruined stone and mortar walls and enclosures may also date from this period, or from a later ranch.²⁶

Until Olancho faded into provincial obscurity in the 1580s, it attracted the attention of several outsiders, who though they did not visit it became unwittingly its best geographic chroniclers until Bishop Cadiñanos and Ramón de Anguiano around 1800 and William Wells in 1857. Tying together the sixteenth-century writers' brief descriptions was a construction of Olancho that has endured in large part: passages about Olancho's wealth, particularly its gold, sound eerily similar in the 1540s and the 1850s.

In 1539, "Adelantado" Francisco Montejo in Gracias a Dios, western Honduras, wrote of his many plans to subjugate and striate Honduras (see Chamberlain 1953 for a detailed study), in which conquistador Alonso de Cáceres would play a decisive role. First, indigenous towns would have to be reconquered in the west and center; then, he planned to march east to regain the Valle de Olancho:

Valle de Ulancho...era cosa tan rrica; y que de estar aquello poblado se ganaba la Cibdad de Truxillo...y con aquel aparexo de poblar a Ulancho, que era menester algunas armas y bastimentos. (Montejo 1875[1539]:260)

En biniendo la seca, que será de aqui a tres meses, hiré a poblar el Valle de Ulancho, questá cuarenta leguas de la Cibdad de Truxillo; y abrir el camino que se trate por alli que será muy gran bien para aquella Cibdad, e para la Villa de Ulancho. (Montejo 1875a[1539a]:309)

Montejo apparently never went to Olancho personally, but sent his henchman Alonso de Cáceres, who achieved Montejo's three objectives of pacifying it, establishing a Villa, and opening the trail to Trujillo between 1540 and 1542.²⁷ First, Cáceres' force moved eastward

²⁶ See Deagan, *Artifacts of the Spanish colonies*, Vol. 1 (1987). LSU archaeologist Paul Farnsworth, on examination of photos such as Figure X, believed most of the sherds are Ligurian Blue on Blue, 1550-1600 or Sevilla Blue on Blue, 1550-1630. One is a Sevilla Blue on White 1530-1650; some sherds might be Yayal Blue on White, 1490-1625 and/or Santo Domingo Blue on White 1550-1630. The doll head is from a later century (Davidson pers. comm.). Profesora Ramona Figueroa of El Boquerón holds the collection of sherds. Precolumbian and colonial ruins are found along a two-kilometer stretch west of and paralleling the Río de Olancho, at the foot of the bluff, on the bluff slope, and at the top edge of the bluff.

²⁷ First-hand accounts of the conquest of Olancho are in the *probanza* of Rodrigo Ruiz (reproduced in Martínez Castillo 1999), a conquistador who while in Honduras helped to defeat Lempira ("el enpira")

from Comayagua and set up a camp at Guarabuquí near the headwaters of the Río Guayape slightly west of the present-day border of Olancho and Francisco Morazán (see Fig. 3.4).²⁸

From there, Cáceres and his men descended along the Río Guayape and then crossed to the Río Telica drainage in what would later become known as the Valle de Arriba. They fought at several *peñoles* (hill fortresses that Indians across Honduras used for defense) and finally reached the Valle de Olancho, establishing San Jorge de Olancho and not long thereafter beginning the extraction of gold in the nearby Río Guayape. African slaves were soon brought to facilitate their endeavour. *Encomiendas* were given out for towns in the Valle de Olancho, Valle de Agalta, most of the rest of what is today northwest Olancho, and the upper Valle de Aguán.

Cáceres left soon after founding San Jorge and distributing the *encomiendas*. Forty men stayed on, of whom 29 promptly departed because they were dying of hunger. The eleven that remained ate wild plants and fruit, having neither meat nor bread. Five months after Cáceres had departed back westward, he sent another captain to help, with around 15 men, and with this small force the trail to Trujillo was finally reopened. Eastern Honduras continued at war against the State, but the Spaniards maintained a tenuous presence at San Jorge and in the surrounding *valles* for several decades despite numerous rebellions among Indians as well as African slaves.

and consolidate Spanish power in Lenca areas under Cáceres and Montejo. Another source (AGCA A3.16 2072 31508 ff. 1-4 1662), by conquistador Alvaro Perez, gives a slightly different account of the conquest; both are *probanzas*, so they reflect the varying specific needs to prove the valor of two conquistadors later in life. The latter source is extremely complex. *Expediente* 31508 is a list of *encomienda* tributes for Honduras from 1662, and contains a lengthy plea by an Alonso de Oseguera from Comayagua who wants an *encomienda*. He has to prove that he has noble blood and is the descendant of conquistadors. To do this, he gives information on his grandfather, Alonso de Oseguera, who conquered “Xicaques” in Olancho around 1600. But his best proof of blue blood comes from the 1549 *probanza* of Alonso de Perez, Oseguera’s paternal great-grandfather, of which the relevant parts are reproduced in the 1662 *expediente*.

²⁸ Interestingly, the Honduran tribute list of governor Alonso de Contrera Guevara from 1582 (see Davidson 1991; Leyva 1991), which reflected *encomiendas* given by Alonso de Cáceres and a few others before or in 1542, and the State thereafter (Pedro de Alvarado’s earlier distribution having been overridden: see Newson 1986), shows a divide of tribute towns west and east of Guarabuquí. Guarabuquí fell to Valladolid de Comayagua, while all areas east fell to San Jorge de Olancho. This leads me to wonder whether an indigenous cultural boundary or margin existed in this area. The same area has

In 1545, Alonso de Maldonado, president of the Audiencia de los Confines in Gracias a Dios during the 1540s, with jurisdiction over present-day Central America and southern Mexico, wrote:

Las minas de Ulancho an afloxado algo, pero todavía se saca mucha cantidad de oro. Saca cada esclavo medio peso por día, y a ducado. Ay mucha cantidad de negros ya en ellas, que serán hasta mil e quinientos, con los que allá hay, y estan en este Puerto para ir.²⁹ Es toda aquella tierra muy rica de oro, y aunque faltase aquel río de Guayape, donde agora lo sacan, ay ya descubierto otros ríos; y como entra cantidad de negros, cada día an de descorbir [sic] mas....Por relacion que tengo de Francisco del Vasco, que es el que tiene poblada la Villa de San Jorge en aquel valle de Ulancho; aquella tierra es muy buena y muy rica de oro; y muy apacible y muy sana; hay mucha caza en ella de venados, conexos en mucha cantidad. Este valle es el mas apacible, según me escriben, que se ha visto en estas partes. Tiene este valle diez o doce leguas de largo, y en ancho tendrá cinco [he is describing just the Valle de Abajo, the modern-day Valle de Olancho or Valle de Guayape]; entran cinco ríos en él [the largest today, in descending order, are Guayape, Jalán, Telica, Tinto, and Olancho], todos grandes, y todos cinco en el mismo valle se xuntan en uno [Río Guayape]. Ay muchas frutas y caçaba, tales el que yo he estado algunas veces para ello a ver... (Maldonado 1875[1545]:349-50).

Maldonado highlights some of the geographical themes that were to become so dear to Olancho's identity and history. The big *valle* with its rivers is at the center of Olancho's world, filled with game and fruits of the land, one of the best places in Central America for conquistadors and other outsiders to settle. Gold is not only in the Guayape but in other streams as well.

In describing his visit to Honduras as *protector de indios*, Cristobal Pedraza (1898[1544]) had not yet visited San Jorge, but gives us a hearsay description based on conversations with enthusiastic conquistadors:

Ay desta dicha villa [Trujillo] al valle de Vlancho que es agora nueuamente pasificado y fundado en el como dicho es vna cibdad dicha sanct Jorge 15 leguas | Este valle de *Vlancho* es el mas rico de oro que ay en toda la provincia de honduras y ygueras y en toda las demas circuitantes así como guatemala y nicaragua y yucatan. Asi como ha parecido en las grandes minas que en el se han descubierto de mucho oro...este valle es muy *deleitoso* y

remained the border between Olancho and political divisions to the west up to the present-day.

²⁹ If that many African slaves were brought to the Valle during the heyday of gold exploitation in the 1540s, they may have outnumbered the tribute Indians, counted as 726 families in 1582 (Contreras Guevara 1991[1582]71-3). This helps to explain the "mulatos" (mix of Spanish and African) who dominated many areas in the censuses from the late 1700s on, and who are mentioned as a racial category by the mid-1600s.

apto para todas las cosas que en el se quisieron plantar y criar | las quales ya han comencado a plantar en el y *an llegado todo ganado | y se da muy bien y yeguas y asi de las otras cosas que ay en toda la provincia se daran por que la tierra es muy aparejada para ello* que como nueuamente se ha poblado de españoles no hay asi las cosas como en las otras poblaciones excepto las cosas de la tierra asi animales como otros mantenimientos que de antes tenian los indios muy abundantemente la qual esta muy bien poblada de pueblos de indios y abra en la dicha cibdad de sanct Jorge casi 50 vezinos. (italics in 1898 CDIU version) (401-2)

Here is proof that cattle were introduced at a very early date. Olancho's gold was the finest and most abundant in all the Reino de Guatemala. Olancho, Pedraza, was told, was filled with tribute Indian villages.

Juan López de Velasco, the geographer, wrote a description of Olancho in his early 1570s "Descripción de la gobernación y provincia de Honduras," part of the *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias* (1894[1571-4]) he compiled from many sources.

La villa de San Jorge de Olancho, pueblo de españoles, cuarenta leguas de Comayagua, pueblo de cuarenta vecinos españoles del obispado y de la dicha gobernación de Honduras; en la jurisdicción y comarca de este pueblo hay como diez mil indios tributariospueblos;³⁰ hay teniente de gobernador y alcaldes ordinarios...la tierra en que está es mas fria que la de otros pueblos de la provincia, y aunque es tierra muy montañosa, en algunos valles que tiene se coge mucho trigo y maiz, y en algunos río della oro alguno, especialmente en el que se dice de Guayape, que está doce leguas de la villa, y antiguamente se sacó dél en gran cantidad mas que de otros ningunos; y así solamente han quedado en él como cinquenta negros que andan á sacarlo de Comayagua y Olancho. (313)

The 10,000 tribute Indians is probably a mistake (Davidson 1991), because the Contreras Guevara 1582 tribute list for Olancho has only 726 families. It is important to note that as early as the 1560s, when the Velasco information was probably obtained, the most easily accessible gold had already largely run out in the Guayape.

The only other description known to me of San Jorge in its Valle de Olancho location comes from the *Relación* (1875) of Fray Alonso Ponce, penned by two friars accompanying this Comisario General of the Franciscan order who travelled extensively in Mexico and Central America after 1584. Though they do not appear to have visited Olancho, they provide a description probably compiled around 1586 from sources in Comayagua, where they did stay.

³⁰ Ellipsis in original.

La cibdad de Olancho está diez y ocho leguas de Agalteca [mining town east of Comayagua], junto á la cual hay un río llamado de Guayape y por otro nombre rio de la Mona, en el cual antiguamente se sacó mucha suma de oro, tanto que se dice que dos extranjeros que tenían compañía en la saca del oro, lo midieron con media hanega para partillo, porque era mucho: halláronse entónces en la furia de aquella cobdicia sacando oro veinticinco mil esclavos indios y negros, lo cual fue causa de acabarse los naturales, de los cuales hay muy pocos el día de hoy. Con todo esto podria estar allí un convento nuestro si hobiese frailes, y si le diesen alguna visita de indios. Las vertientes de aquel rio van al mar del Norte, y más de cuarenta leguas antes que entre en el mar, es tierra de guerra y llámase la Tacuzigalpa, la cual no ha sido conquistada, porque aunque han entrado españoles tres veces en ella, todos se han perdido por ser tierra muy aspera y fragosa. (348-9)

“25,000” slaves, probably an exaggeration, points to the larger-than-life quality of Olancho’s glory days, already a memory. The end was at hand for the “cobdicia” of San Jorge, suffering from labor scarcity and from the everpresent threat of the east. Honduran bishop Gaspar de Andrada wrote of its abandonment:

Los vezinos de la Villa de Olancho, sin orden ni bicarios, desanpararon algunos años ha el pueblo donde vivían y poblaron en un sitio muchas leguas distante de él... echaron a ver que el sitio era malsano. Y viendo que se han muerto muchos vezinos, otros se fueron avezindar en Trujillo y han quedado solo cinco o seis. (Andrada 1991a[1598]:95)

Tribute lists from the 1500s allow us to pin down the date of San Jorge’s abandonment and the flight of its residents to around 1590.³¹ Alvaro Perez, who had taken part in the 1540s conquest, is “poblador de la ciudad de Olancho el nuevo” around 1590 with his son, Alonso de Oseguera (AGCA A3.16 2072 31508). Throughout the rest of the colonial period, most of the realm encompassed by the tribute towns that were awarded by Cáceres in 1542 bore the name “Olancho el Viejo”; “San Jorge de Olancho el Nuevo” was a settlement in the Valle de Aguán with at first political, and later only ecclesiastical authority over Olancho el Viejo. Today, near “Ciudad Vieja,” presumably the spot of Alvaro Perez’s new Olancho, is “Olanchito” as it came

³¹ Using Davidson’s Table 9-3 (1991:220), which compares Olancho tribute populations for 1582, 1590, and 1592; and Contreras Guevara’s 1582 list for Trujillo (in Leyva 1991:67). Agalteca appears under Trujillo in 1582 with 58 *tributarios*, but not under Olancho in either 1582 or 1590; in 1592, it is under Olancho, with 69 *tributarios*. Maloa appears under Trujillo in 1582 with 8 *tributarios*; not under Olancho in either 1582 or 1590; under Olancho in 1592, with 4 *tributarios*. Evidently, tribute jurisdiction in the upper Valle de Aguán switched from Trujillo to Olancho when Olancho’s center of power shifted there before 1592: Olanchito “picked up” towns in this area.

to be known in the 1800s.³² The Olancho el Nuevo part of the Valle de Aguán was where a *camino real* from Comayagua through Yoro and a *camino real* from Olancho (through Laguata, an Indian tribute town) joined and continued as one to Trujillo.

San Jorge de Olancho el Viejo's demise is told somewhat differently in local space than in historical documents. San Jorge's fall from divine grace, punctuating the end of Olancho's "golden age," became and remains a central article of faith for many patriotic *olanchanos*. The story is highly important in an understanding of how *olanchanos* see the land they inhabit. Unwittingly luring treasure hunters from various countries to El Boquerón ever since, Wells (1857) begins on page 376 an account culled from local stories of the destruction of San Jorge and the burying of its gold. The residents of San Jorge were wealthy beyond imagining (even their stirrups were of solid gold), but, "niggardly," they would not give any of their wealth to crown the church's statue of the virgin. She had to wear a leather crown, and the townspeople laughed at the priest as he called down the wrath of God upon them for this disgrace. God had his vengeance rapidly, as the mountain parted and "in an hour the whole town was destroyed with showers of rocks, stones, and ashes." (380). The survivors fled to the north and founded Olanchito, taking the "corona de cuero" with them. This happened in 1612. Versions of the story are repeated by twentieth-century Honduran folklorists.³³

Most modern researchers, including Honduran geographer Jesús Aguilar Paz (1972), have doubted the possibility of a volcano because there is no Quaternary igneous rock in the vicinity. That it was a massive landslide and/or flood have seemed more likely, especially after the destruction wreaked by Mitch. The ruins of San Jorge, however, lie high and dry on a terrace

³² Olanchito lies in a *valle* similar to the Valle de Olancho, but drier to the west, good for *pita* (agave hemp) production: see the confused description in Vázquez de Espinosa (1969[1629]:165, section 695;166, section 699) where San Jorge de Olancho el Viejo and San Jorge de Olancho el Nuevo are not distinguished from each other. Authors such as Sarmiento (1990), believing Olancho el Viejo to have been destroyed around 1612, have assumed that this account refers entirely to Olancho el Viejo.

³³ See, for example, Aguilar Paz, "Olancho el Viejo 'El Dorado'" in *Tradiciones y leyendas* 1989[1930]:48-50.

some 10 meters or more above the river. Neither could the Boquerón gorge have been formed by a historical catastrophe, because it is pictured on the *escudo* (coat of arms) of San Jorge, made in the 1570s. This earliest of Olancho iconographic landscapes pictures the distinctive twin peaks behind San Jorge, with Saint George riding a fire-breathing dragon.³⁴

Despite the lack of a volcano and the 20-year discrepancy of dates, there is more historical accuracy in the popular accounts than scholars have hitherto recognized. Vázquez (1944[1714]) writes of the signs foretelling sweet and glorious martyrdom for friars Esteban Verdelete and Juan de Monteagudo, who accompanied by a Capitán Daza and other Olanchanos were martyred by Tawahkas on the Río Patuca (then known as the Guayape) in January 1612:

Sea lo segundo [sign], el haber aparecido en aquellos años, que los Padres peregrinaban por aquellos montes y valles, repetidos globos de fuego que salían de entre dos volcanes o cerros, que estaban fronteros de Olancho; cuya materia sulfúrea, como llovida en fuego, cenizas, asoló la ciudad de Olancho y otras poblaciones de aquellas tierras. (125)

“Fronteros de Olancho” could have meant Nicaragua, the closest site of active and dormant volcanos (see McBirney and Williams 1965). Effects of a major eruption to the south could easily have been felt in Olancho el Viejo and even in Olancho el Nuevo.³⁵

After the flight north and the abandonment of San Jorge, a few Spaniards apparently stayed behind in Olancho el Viejo, at least enough of the year to maintain their ranches.³⁶ Vázquez (1944[1714]:122), writing about events in 1612, speaks of the soldiers of Capitán Daza, a Spaniard who guided two Franciscan friars, Verdelete and Monteagudo: “algunos soldados de los de Daza andaban por los valles de Olancho, en sus estancias.” From the 1630s has survived a land title fragment (ANH AC 1 20 1638) for La Chorrera, an *estancia* in the Valle de Arriba

³⁴ Juticalpa’s Club Rotario procured San Jorge’s coat of arms from Spain by in the 1990s. It apparently had never been sent to the New World. The Club Rotario holds it at time of writing.

³⁵ For example, Coseglina’s massive 1835 eruption, according to Juticalpa oral history, caused the “Año del Polvo” in Olancho (see also Incer 1988; Johannessen 1963; Williams 1952).

³⁶ Documentation of Olancho el Viejo after 1590 and before 1662 is sorely lacking. Volume 4 of Francisco Vázquez, *Crónica de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Guatemala* (1944[1714]) is the only major source, and it focuses on the exploits of Franciscan friars in the unconquered Taguzgalpa to the east. As yet, I have found little other than the briefest mentions in AGCA documents,

next to two others, Guacoca and Guariçama. No other land titles or fragments from before the 1670s seem to have survived, but this may be due in part to the 1865 destruction of Manto (Sarmiento 1990), where titles were kept (according to Wells, 1857). Thanks to this documentation, it appears that cattle *estancias* (along with Indian tribute towns) weathered the abandonment.

San Jorge de Olancho el Nuevo remained the ecclesiastical capital of Olancho el Viejo until 1698, when priests and tribute Indians convinced the King to reestablish the Church's power "on the inside" at a place in central Olancho called Manto (AGCA A1.24 1570 10214 Registro de Chancillería 1698 f. 254). This town, once solely an Indian tribute village ("Mantocanola" in Contreras Guevara 1582), at some point after 1590 and before the 1660s had become the government's new seat in Olancho el Viejo. Manto, deep in a montane valley, was easily defensible and at the junction of the southbound *camino real* from Trujillo and the eastbound *camino real* from Comayagua that joined into one route at this point to continue over the Montaña de Cacao to the Valle de Abajo.³⁷

San Jorge de Olancho el Viejo had been much less defensible than Manto, and this more than anything might have made it untenable as a site for central administration at a time when the very existence of "Olancho" as a striated space was seriously challenged by marauders from the east. San Jorge was probably abandoned as much owing to constant attacks from "Taguacas" coming up the Río Guayape (Vázquez 1944[1714]) as to a lack of gold or the means to extract it (or the ravages of a volcanic cataclysm).

while published AGI documents (e.g. in Leyva 1991) contain only scant data on Olancho.

³⁷ My reconstruction of *caminos reales* comes from mentions in numerous eighteenth-century land titles, since these routes were prominent features of the landscape. In many cases the *caminos reales* endured into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries in roadless areas, and with the help of local residents can be found and followed even today. In 1999, I walked a "*camino real*" dating from at least the 1800s over the Sierra de Agalta from Vallecito, Catacamas, to Los Dos Ríos, San Esteban (in the Valle de Agalta). In 2000 I walked another across the Montaña de Botaderos from Tayaco, Gualaco to Cayo Sierra, Tocoa, Colón. In both areas, trails have disappeared in open landscapes, particularly cattle pastures, through erosion. Under thick, tall evergreen forest canopy, however, *caminos reales* endure, incised in some places over ten feet deep by mule trains.

Olancho el Viejo after 1590 straggled along with its *estancias* and tiny Indian villages, the latter continuing to render tribute to *encomenderos* in Olancho el Nuevo, Trujillo, and Comayagua (AGCA A1 39 1751 1591-1616). Olancho in the early colonial period was an Imperial margin overlapping with an East of *tierras de guerra*, a smooth space of “nomads” that threatened to engulf it. To the “Taguzgalpa” I now turn in order to stress the possibility that the nomadic Other, while “officially” opposed to all that Olancho stood for, may have been entangled in a rhizome, becoming-*olanchano*, becoming-Taguzgalpa.

3.5 Constructing Olancho’s Other: Nueva Salamanca, Taguzgalpa, Taycones, and Xicaques

“La Taguzgalpa,” in the many Franciscan missionary accounts and Olancho land titles after 1660, was the name for eastern Honduras outside the control of the State. It bordered to the west on the Valle de Aguán, Valle de Agalta, and Valle de Olancho (Vázquez 1944[1714]). Taguzgalpa, officially, was anti-God, anti-State, anti-order, anti-authority: it was the negative of Olancho’s official image during the colonial period. Through this line of reasoning the Taguzgalpa can be considered Olancho’s Other, remaining so for centuries to come. (Even today, as the roadless and primarily indigenous Moskitia, far eastern Honduras stands apart from the norm and is barely striated by the State.) If, on the other hand, the Taguzgalpa was comprised of indigenous groups that in pre-Conquest days had also occupied Olancho, and was even, as authors such as Vázquez claimed, a harbor for those who fled from Spain’s dominance, then there is reason to believe that local space in many ways was continuous from west to east. One thing is for certain: the construction and attempted dismantling of the Taguzgalpa occupied Olancho and the State behind it for much of its history, and through the continuing conversion of forest space to cattle pastures this trajectory is still followed today.

“Wild” Taguzgalpa, at least in the written record, made Olancho and presumably many *olanchanos* look and feel “normal” and “civilized,” if somewhat rustic in comparison to the citizens of Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, and the Ciudad de Guatemala. The construction of

“Taguzgalpa” as a smooth space threatening the State (but perhaps sustaining a rhizome with local space) is a crucial theme in the formation of “Olancho” and the *olanchano*, but its sixteenth-century origins have been notoriously difficult to establish. In missionary accounts from the 1660s onward, the Taguzgalpa springs from the page fully formed, a chaotic mess of refuse to be organized by Church and State. A major problem in understanding the real spaces intertwining in the Taguzgalpa is the documentary presence of two overlapping perspectives and narratives vis-à-vis the East: one of Olancho and the interior, the other of Trujillo and the coast.

From Trujillo, conquistadors in the 1500s attempted to move eastward to the Cabo Camarón area and beyond, by land and sea (see Fig. 3.4 for places and movements discussed in this section). Sea movement eastward against the prevailing currents was quite difficult, while land movement was hampered by the low, swampy terrain. From Olancho, conquistadors and Franciscans friars penetrated the east by descending broad, navigable rivers such as the Sico, Wampú, Paulaya, Guayape, and Coco, but this water travel was made extremely risky due to Indian attacks.³⁸ Eastward overland travel from Olancho was also possible, but the tropical wet climate and difficult terrain made it treacherous for horses.

Perhaps surprisingly, the Taguzgalpa was known to the Spanish at an earlier date than interior Honduras. This is thanks to the literature concerning Columbus’ Fourth Voyage. Accounts of this 1502 sea voyage provide intriguing details about the Bay Islands and the land between modern-day Trujillo and Cabo Camarón, suggesting that they were inhabited in part by proto-Pech peoples speaking a Chibcha language. The Honduran coast was called “Quirequetana,” divided into “Maia” and “Taia.” There was an “Ebuya” east of Trujillo ruled

³⁸ Each of these rivers has possessed several names in Spanish accounts, making paleogeographic reconstruction a confusing task. The Sico was known in the 1500s and 1600s as the Río Pezacura (with variants) or the Río de Agalta, and in later centuries as the Río Negro, Río Tinto, and Río Grande. Yara was an earlier name for the Paulaya. The Guayape below its confluence with the Guayambre became known in the 1800s as the Patuca, while the Coco received a bewildering number of names, including Río Wanks and Río Segovia.

by a “Cacique Camarona,” and east of this the “Río de la Posesión,” believed to be the Río Sico, or Río Tinto as it is known on the coastal plain.³⁹ Cabo Camarón became a crucial point along the Honduran mainland because it was where vessels from Spain through the Antilles first reached the Honduran coast before following the currents west to Trujillo and Puerto Caballos (Puerto Cortés).⁴⁰ The Camarón/Ebuya area in the 1500s possessed notoriously warlike residents who attacked ships and valiantly resisted Spanish attempts to conquer them.

In the 1520s, conquistadors Cortés and Pedrarias, like many others, logically gazed to the East with ideas of conquering everything, but they were stymied for various reasons. The next substantial descriptions of the East beyond Olancho and Trujillo came from the early 1540s, after the western two-thirds of what is today Honduras had been “pacified” and the rest seemed sure to follow. Protector de Indios Cristobal Pedraza seems to have been the first Spaniard to gaze over eastern Honduras east of the Cordillera de Agalta. His intriguing account, of a golden “Tagiusgualpa,” was to be fateful for the East, helping make it desirable as the “next” El Dorado after Olancho, the State struggling all the more to striate it.

estan 40 leguas y mas a la man [=mano] izquierda de trugillo al leste vnas grandes sierras y andando yo visitando la tierra con 5 ó 6 de caualllo trabajamos de subir las dichas sierras que eran muy altas y agras porque me hazian entender otros que estauan antes que yo en la tierra que detras de las dichas sierras auia mar y que no auia tierra ninguna y pareciendome a mi que no acertauan en lo que dezian...determinamos de subir lo alto de la sierra sin tener por alli camino ni vereda...yo tome por el medio della con casi 60 indios de paz amigos | los quales y yo con ellos camine cortando ramas y arboles con machetes y con hachas yo todos los otror españoles cada uno por su parte de la sierra con indios...andando en este trabajo tres dias continuos caminando á pie...y subidos y llegados todos en lo alto de la sierra vimos vna muy parte de tierra...della al leste de muy grandes poblaciones y la tierra que nos parecia con muchos rios como vn alba hacia de verdores con muchos rios y tierra llana...y viamos alla muy lexos despues destas sierras y llanos otras de aquel cabo. (Pedraza 1898[1544]:406-7)

³⁹ See Table 9-1 in Davidson (1991). The only time I have encountered “Taia” and “Quirequetana” is in Martyr d’Anghiera (1964[1524]): “En aquel gran trayecto hay dos regiones llamadas Taia y Maia...halló una vasta comarca llamada por los indígenas Quiriquetana” (318). “Maia” and “Maiaim,” however, are mentioned numerous times by witnesses brought forward by Diego Colón between 1512 and 1515 (*Pleitos de Colón I and II* in CDIU, 1892-4), trying to establish that Cristobal Colón had indeed discovered the mainland of the continent. “Ebuya” and “Camarona” are mentioned here as well.

⁴⁰ See *Demarcación y división de Indias* (1871)[n.d.]:470: “con la punta de Truxillo...desde donde al Cabo del Camaron, en cuya demanda se va desde Xamayca.”

Instead of the sea he had been led to expect, he saw a vast mosaic of settlements apparently unsuspected by conquistadors in Trujillo. This, perhaps, was what Cortés had been looking for. He sent down Indians to the nearest settlement, and they brought back three men and two women:

y ciertos de nuestros indios los entendian porque habla la lengua media maxqueda como portugueses y castellanos y preguntandoles...que tierra era aquella respondieron que tagiusgualpa | que quiere dezir en su lengua casa donde se funde el oro. (407)

“La haga,” a woman to whom they talked, was the daughter of a “señor principal” in the town where the rulers ate from plates of gold, and the gold foundry was located. Though placer gold is abundant in eastern Honduras (not just in the Guayape), gold plates seem unlikely, since no indigenous gold ornaments have ever been discovered in the region (see Begley 1999). The reference was probably to copper, which *was* used and seems to have confused the Spanish on several occasions.

Later, the Spaniards and more residents of “Tagiusgualpa” had a meeting at the watershed of the unnamed range, and though Pedraza assured them that his intentions were peaceful, the Indians already knew enough about the Spaniards to fear and mistrust their intentions. Pedraza decided not to continue to Tagiusgualpa.⁴¹ Pedraza (409) ends the account with “era por el mes de setiembre y en la sierra auya aire fresco.”

Where was Tagiusgualpa? Forty *leguas* or more east (“mano izquierda”) of Trujillo the only mountains high enough to fit Pedraza’s description (e.g. noticeably cool in September) are the part of the Cordillera de Agalta known today as the Montañas del Carbón, which reach 1900 meters above sea level.⁴² Below Pedraza, to his east, the Río Paulaya wound seaward through a

⁴¹ Curiously, in his 1547 bishop’s letter (see below), Pedraza does not mention the region, though he had to have gone through it or near it on his way from Salamanca to Trujillo.

⁴² My location for Pedraza’s gaze is at variance with Davidson (1991) and Lara Pinto (1991). Closer mountains to Trujillo are much lower (what are known today as “Sierra de Poyas” not reaching 1000 meters) and their far side, the valley of the Río Sico, would already have been known to people in Trujillo familiar with Cortés’ and Saavedra’s effort to expel the Nicaraguans in the 1520s. Furthermore, it took Pedraza four days with hundreds of Indians chopping to get to the top, a feat only necessary if one is scaling high peaks.

fertile *valle*, joining with the Río Sico and forming the coastal plain just east of Cabo Camarón. This area had dense Precolumbian populations, as Begley (1999) describes, but their ruins were sacked during banana company occupation in the early 1900s, and what is left has barely been excavated.

Due to Pedraza's well-meaning effort, Trujillo found out about this "Valle de Yara" (see 1555 Jimenez *probanza*, below) and claimed it. Pedraza (1991[1547]) later mentions that the Valle de Yara was the site of a Spanish gold strike in 1546. Despite Pedraza's promises, the indigenous people of "Tagiusgualpa" began to feel the pressure of Spanish rule.⁴³

Presumably, rumor of Pedraza's gaze over a golden landscape quickly reached the ears of Montejo and Cáceres, and they made the decision to establish Spanish control eastward from Olancho after that area was subjugated, around 1542. In 1544, a Capitán Alonso de Rreynoso (AGCA A1.29 4670 40107 1550 Probanza de Aguilar) took a force eastward from the Valle de Olancho to establish Spanish control over what is today Honduras north of the Río Coco and east of Olancho and Trujillo:

un Capitan [Rreynoso], proveido por el Adelantado Montexo, andava entendiendo en la conquista e pacificacion de una tierra que es entre Ulancho y Truxillo, y corre hasta el desaguadero de la laguna de León [Río San Juan, border of present-day Costa Rica and Nicaragua], que va a la Mar del Norte. A poblado una Villa que se dize la Nueva Salamanca; tienese noticia que es tierra rrica. (Maldonado 1875[1545a]:438)⁴⁴

⁴³ The question of "Tagiusgualpa's" ethnic identity is wrapped up in its etymology. The meaning of "Tagiusgualpa" is obscure. Conzemius (1928:23, note 1) writes that "Tawisti" in Pech means "iron"; "según Oviedo el oro se llamaba 'taguizte' en el idioma de Nicarao (Costa pacifica de Nicaragua)." There are hints throughout the documentary record of a "Mexican" (Pipil/Chorotega/Nicarao) presence in eastern Honduras: Pedraza (1898[1544]:409-10), as a prologue to his history of Cortés' effort, whom he admired greatly, says that Indians native to the Trujillo region told Cortés that "della auia salido la gente mexicana y lo qual se supo por indios antiguos de mexico y que era muy rica de oro y de otras muchas cosas." The reference to Mexican origin in the East may have been confusion between a myth of the rising sun and the probable presence of peoples of Mexican descent in eastern Honduras intent on obtaining gold. Vázquez (1944[1714]) describes "mexicanos" along the coast east from Cabo Camaron in the 1620s. Whatever the case, the later documentary record locates only proto-Pech groups in the "Tagiusgualpa" that Pedraza saw. I suspect that, like Papayeca/Papaica and Chapagua/Chiapaxina, the chiefdoms Cortés encountered near Trujillo, Tagiusgualpa contained both Mexicans and proto-Pech.

⁴⁴ The land referred to was the east coast and tropical wet interior of eastern Honduras and eastern Nicaragua. Though this entire area was later referred to at times as the Taguzgalpa, in more detailed accounts Taguzgalpa applies to what is today Honduras' domain, north of the Río Coco; "Tologalpa" to the south was modern-day eastern Nicaragua (see Vázquez 1944[1714]).

The *ciudad*, Olancho's neighbor to the east, was called "Villa de la Nueva Salamanca," and it lasted until at least 1561 (AGCA A1.29.1 4672 40137 Probanza de Jerónimo de Corella 1561). Its exact location is unknown, but it appears to have been within proto-Pech domain, perhaps somewhere near modern-day Dulce Nombre de Culmí, or along the Patuca or Coco rivers. Rreynoso awarded the villages of the Tagiugualpa/Yara area, and others in far eastern Honduras, as *encomiendas* (AGCA Probanza de Jimenez 1555).

Nueva Salamanca was plunged in the sort of landscape of which Spaniards were little fond, as an account by Pedraza demonstrates. In August 1545, Cristobal Pedraza, now Bishop of Honduras, set out from his seat in Trujillo heading west (counterclockwise) to visit his *obispado*; he did not return until mid-December 1547 (1991[1547]). His glowing phrases on Honduran geography (the Olancho part of which he hadn't personally glimpsed), written but three years before (Pedraza 1898[1544]), gave way to an apocalyptic vision of a destroyed and deserted land. Twenty years of plagues, slavery, and flight had done the job.

En la qual visitación [Honduras] pasé muy grandes trabajos, porque...esta tierra es muy doblada y montosa, y ay grandes montañas y sierras, y rrios y quebradas en ella....acontecía tenerme los rrios ocho y quinze días con las aguas que no se podían pasar ni vadear...algunos de los rrios cuajados de lagartos [probably crocodiles] de a XX y XXV pies de largo y más, con las bocas de más de media vara y los dientes mayores que colmillos de jabalí....como la tierra está tan destruyda y despoblada de indios, de los grandes destruymentos que de los gobernadores pasados hizieron en ella, en más de XXX leguas, por algunas partes, no ay pueblo ninguno (13-14)...De la Villa de Cumuyagua a la Villa de San Jorge del valle de Vlancho, abrá...XX o XXX leguas...sin ningún pueblo./En el camino de la Villa del valle de Vlancho a la Nueva Salamanca, abrá otras XXX leguas y más que no ay pueblo en el camino ninguno, sino muy grandes mosquiteros. (Pedraza 1991[1547]:14)

The final legs of his round trip, from San Jorge de Olancho through Nueva Salamanca and back to Trujillo, 70 infernal *leguas*, were much worse than the rest of Honduras because of the mosquitos and the waste-deep mud. Pedraza likened this part of his journey to a visit to purgatory and hell. He shows us several reasons why tropical wet eastern Honduras, east of the tropical dry Valle de Olancho, was physically hard to conquer and virtually impossible to hold: swollen, crocodile-infested rivers, swamps, and impassable trails. Geographically, lands east of

Olancho and Trujillo were difficult for anyone who did not use canoes as their main mode of transport.

In the 1540s, then, three Spanish territories striated the future Taguzgalpa: its northwest belonged to Trujillo (Cabo Camaron and briefly the Valle de Yara/Tagiusgualpa) and Olancho (Tayaco/Taycones, see below), and the rest to Nueva Salamanca. Successful resistance to the State in all three areas by the end of the century, and the definitive construction of a “greater” Taguzgalpa, was tied to the persistence of a priestly class called the “miangules,” or “papas” as they were also known. These characteristically southern Central American religious figures were key in keeping the Spaniards at bay. Details in documents from 1526, 1555, and 1561 are crucially important for constructing the profile of a people that in many ways were probably characteristic of southern Central American cultures across Olancho and the Taguzgalpa in 1500.

In the heart of the rugged Montaña de Botaderos directly south of Trujillo across the Valle de Aguán, along the deeply incised Tayaco and Naranjal rivers (today at a northeastern extremity of Olancho), were the first of Honduras’ Spanish gold mines, worked fast and furious in the early 1530s under the governorship of Andrés de Cereceda (Cereceda 1954[1530]). In 1531:

Descubriéronse en esa sazón buenas minas de oro....en la provincia de un cacique el más principal de la tierra en cuanto servían, que se llamaba Peicacura, mataron tres españoles....se alzaron la mayor parte de los indios que servían en toda la tierra. (Fernández de Oviedo 1959[1535-57]:371)

Siguióse que junto a las minas que llaman de Tayaco, donde se sacaba oro, se habían alzado dos caciques, viendo que los otros que se habían alzado se quedaban sin castigo, y estos últimos alzados sacaban oro...e para castigar otros caciques alzados días había en un valle que se dice Agalta, que fueron en la muerte de los cristianos de Huilanco. (374)

According to López de Salcedo (1954[1526]), “papas” (from Nahuatl “papatli”; see also Molina and Spinoso 1966[1571]) were long-haired indigenous priests in the Trujillo and Aguán



Fig. 3.9. Tayaco. Rugged terrain of the Montaña de Botaderos in northeastern Gualaco on the border of Olancho and Colón. Looking north from an old-growth *serranía* across the valley of the Río Naranjal west of Los Encuentros. The *camino real* from Trujillo to Tayaco crossed the range slightly to the right of this photo.

region who stirred up trouble, and are presumably synonymous with or closely linked to the “caciques” mentioned above. Pedraza (1898[1544];1991[1547]) mentions in several places how the Indians around Trujillo and in the Valle de Aguán in the 1520s and 1530s sought refuge from initial Spanish persecution in the high mountains. It appears that the proto-Pech groups in the more easily conquerable lowlands fled south to join others in the Montaña de Botaderos, which was easier for them to defend. Spaniards overseeing goldmining operations suffered losses in Tayaco at the hands of an adamantly anti-Spanish and anti-Christian culture. The above quote from Oviedo also links Tayaco, “Peicacura,” the Valle de Agalta, and the Valle de Huilanchó together through his implication of a concentrated effort by Indians in these areas to expel the Spaniards from Villa Hermosa.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Lara Pinto (1991) asserts that Mexicans ruled the Valle de Aguán and Valle de Agalta at the time of conquest, and that the “Taycones” of the AGCA 1561 Corella *probanza* were also Mexicans. However, most of the information about the indigenous residents of northeastern Honduras in sixteenth-century documents describes polities well within the cultural parameters of (non-Mesoamerican) southern Central American groups as described in Steward (1948). López de Salcedo’s (1954[1526]) use of “papa” for the indigenous priests in northeastern Honduras is a Mexican borrowing (see Molina and Spinosa 1966[1571]), and the synonymous use of “papa” and “miangul” (not a Nahuatl word) in 1555 and 1561 (AGCA Probanza de Jimenez; AGCA Probanza de Corella) indicate that “miangul” was their “true” name in a local language. The idea that Hernando Cortés encountered Mexican-dominated polities near Trujillo has been inspired predominantly by a few intriguing references in his *Quinta Carta-Relación* (1992) where he makes clear that local people had already heard about his Mexican exploits through traders who had contacts with Mexico. He then states that local people were brought to him who spoke a

The rebellious *papas* resurface in the documentary record linked to Nueva Salamanca and Olanchó in the 1550s. The 1555 Probanza de Juan Jimenez (AGCA A1.29.-1 4671 40116) is a detailed account of the problems Nueva Salamanca and its eight or nine remaining Spanish *vecinos* were having with the *miangules*, whom they said were also called “*papas*.” Witnesses testified that the *miangules* were *sodomos* and did not have sexual relations with women. They were found in all the towns of the land, and were particularly entangled with “un pueblo que se dize xicaque”; “mataron a sus encomenderos”; and “salen en sus canoas y piraguas de armada la buelta de truxillo” “para saquear a truxillo.” The “xicaques,” ruled by *miangules*, inhabited the coast “desde el Río de Pezacura donde estan poblados hasta la punta de Camaron y truxillo.” The town of “xicaque” was 16 *leguas* from Truxillo and 12 *leguas* from Salamanca. Between the two Spanish towns was a “cordillera do ellos estan rica en oro.” Even though the *miangules* had incited several uprisings and were homosexual, the Spanish authorities had done nothing to suppress them and thus to reopen Salamanca’s connection with Trujillo.

The rebel towns, at one time having rendered tribute to Salamanca, included Paya, Gualaguyrri, Guyriguyri, Guyro, Auca, Xab, Tajao, Guava, “los pueblos de Xicaque,” Cumay, Yahu, and Taguaca. One 1555 witness says that the Indians of Yahu, Auca, and Guiro came to kill the tribute Indians in towns nearer to Nueva Salamanca. The document mentions the *miangules/papas* both in the context of all these towns, indicating that they were present across most of eastern Honduras (except perhaps Taguaca and the possibly proto-Miskito Auca), and specifically in the context of Xicaque, a group of rebel towns along the coast east of Trujillo,

language closely related to the Mexican with which he was familiar; *he does not say at any point that Mexican speakers numerically dominated the local chiefdoms, however.* While it is possible to infer that the leaders and places he later mentions, most of whom he gives Nahuatl/Pipil names (though see Alva Ixtlilxochitl’s [1969] different spellings), were indeed Mexican, it is equally plausible to assume that local non-Mexican-dominated polities would have sent him exactly and only the people who could communicate with him. One of the two rebellious chiefdoms, “Papayeca” (López de Gomara 1966[1552] writes “Papaica”) might mean simply “place of Papas”; one of its leaders was called “Pizacura,” etymologically almost identical to the “Pezacura”/“Peicacura” mentioned by later sources. Cortés’ account suggests to me that Pipiles or other “Mexican” traders lived within or alongside the local chiefdoms, and played a mediating role between the conqueror of Mexico and non-Mexican (proto-Pech) chiefdoms.

concentrated at the confluence of the rivers Paulaya and Sico (Río Pezacura) just east of Cabo Camarón.⁴⁶

Fifteen fifty-five seems to be a watershed date for much of eastern Honduras. Nueva Salamanca disappeared mysteriously (probably abandoned and/or sacked) within the following five to ten years, and much of the Taguzgalpa escaped Spain's grasp for good.⁴⁷ Only the Tayaco region remained striated space until the end of the century.

The 1561 Corella *probanza* (AGCA A1.29.1 4672 40137) focused on what should be done with the residents of the Tayaco area, who were still under the Spanish yoke. It is one of the more intriguing documents in Honduran cultural history, giving more details on the *miangules* who ruled over the "Taycones"⁴⁸: "los rritos y cerimonias que los yndios de la Provincia de los

⁴⁶ This is the first use of "xicaque," a Mexican term applied to unsubjugated "barbarians" (see Newson 1986). This coastal group appears to have been different from inland, upriver groups such as those in Tayaco, but presumably "Xicaque" and "Tagiusgualpa" were synonymous. "Paya" and "Taguaca" represent the first mentions of these groups, as far as I am aware. Several of the toponyms appear to be Chibcha-related.

⁴⁷ In any case, the tribute villages under Salamanca in the 1540s, according to another Salamanca *probanza* (AGCA A1.29 4670 40100 Provanza de méritos y servicios de Miguel de Casanos 1548) had only 20 tribute payers ("Xicaque") up to 40 tribute payers (an unreadable name) (This document also lists a "Buga"). Another document from Salamanca (AGCA A1.29 4670 40107 Probanza de méritos del Capitán Luis de Aguilar 1550) lists two towns, Paraqueri (Paragri) and Xaguiya ("jagüilla" means the white-lipped peccary in Olancho) with four or five men in each town. This is few even for Honduras (Chindona, Olancho, in 1582 [Contreras Guevara 1991], was tied for the highest tribute population in the province: 80).

⁴⁸ "Tayaco" and "Taycones" were synonymous. Davidson (1991) links "Tayaco," first mentioned by the Spanish in the 1520s, to Martyr d'Anghiera's (1964[1524]) Columbian "Taia" with "co" as a Nahuatl locative. He equates "Taia" and "Maia" to Pech words for "mine" and "theirs" from the point of view of proto-Pech cacique Yumbé, whom Columbus captured in the Bay Islands and employed as guide as far east as Cabo Camarón. "Taia" becomes "Tayaco" and the "Taycones," and is picked up today in the Río Tayaco of northeastern Olancho as well as a "Montaña de Tayaco" in the Cordillera de Agalta southwest of Gualaco. Were "Taia" and "Paya" the same word? Newson (1986:39) says "'Taia'... is likely to have been a corruption of Paia or Paya." Paya, first mentioned as a Salamanca tribute town in 1555, had become the standard term for the Pech at least by the 1660s, and is today considered by the Pech themselves to be a racial slur. "Pezacura/Peicacura/Pizacura," I submit, is related to "peischa" (Conzemius 1928:111), which means "gente" ("the people") in Pech. This has simply remained their own term for themselves. "Pezacura" and its variants also likely meant "leader of the people" or something similar, though the Spanish applied it both to places and caciques. "Kuk-ká" (Conzemius 1928:149) means "tierra" ("land"); "-cura" and "-cora" (and -ura/-ora) are common toponymic suffixes in northeastern Honduras, but nowhere else in the country. As for "paya," it could come from the 1555 tribute town's name, or indeed be a corruption of "taia." However, "Pai-há" (Conzemius 1928:86) means "plant," "tree," or "wood" in Pech; "paiyá" means "bijao" (90), a member of the Musaceae family with leaves used to thatch dwellings; "paiá" is "cuñada (cuando la cuñada habla)" (101).

Taycones y Çavano hazen” (part of title). In “la villa de Sanct Jorge del valle de Olancho,” at the behest of the Bishop of Honduras, witnesses were queried on various issues, including:

los papas, casas y lugares secretos que para el dicho efecto tienen y de el pecado nefando contra natura de sodomya que husan y tienen y como en los dichos sacrificios husan matar y sacrificar mucho nyños y muchachos y todos en el sacrificio se sacan mucha sangre...en la dicha provincia de Çabanaco.⁴⁹

Witnesses, many of whom had been conquistadors or other settlers in Olancho since the 1540s, and several of whom had been among the Taycones, reply:

a bisto en algunos pueblos de Taicones viendo por ellos sacrificios hechos de los dichos yndios de honbres e muchachos muertos...que husan hazer en cada un año por su salud y sementeras y lo hazen por mandado de un myangul que es entre ellos como sacerdote y lo tienen para su hechizos e ydolatrias y en el adoran y les dize que el es el que les da salud y buenos temporales....le an dado thener casa apartada fuera de el pueblo con servicio de muchachos...es huso y costumbre entre ellos y que no se abía de servir de mugeres syno de honbres y muchachos....Y más a oido decir que al tiempo que el tal papa muere entierran de más de los que consygo tiene de muchachos otros muchachos que los pueblos más cercanos...y a esta causa dizen que ay más yndias que yndios porque no sacrifican yndias.

The *miangules* not only could not have sexual relations with women, but were not allowed to even look at them. The Church was equally preoccupied by the increasingly skewed sex ratio and the sacrifices of children, with the threat of the Taycones’ (yet un-Christianized) extinction looming. Another witness had seen:

en la mayor parte de los...pueblos de Taicones hazer grandes borracheras y en muchas partes hallar y hallado escondidamente grandes sacrificios de sangre y plumas e papagayos sacrificados....algunos de los dichos yndios nonbrados entre ellos miangules y papas...les da a entender que el sólo sube al cielo y que habla con el demonyo....el pueblo de Zaqir que es en los Taicones y estaba en una casa grande y de ella salían grandes calzadas de losa por do salía alavanse...muchos papagayos y animales sacrificados...dicho yndio tenya los cabellos tan largos que le llegaban a la rodilla.⁵⁰

The Taycones inhabited towns with stone causeways and large houses for sacrifices. The *miangules* guaranteed productivity of crops, and were able, shaman-like, to climb to the sky and

⁴⁹ W. V. Davidson (pers. comm.) comments that this toponym could be a combination of “savana” and the “-co” locative. A land of savannas near the Tayaco region would mean either the Valle de Agalta or the Valle de Aguán. Though the former is a more likely possibility, “Savá” is a town in the Aguán.

⁵⁰ The witness Pedro Rodriguez de Escobar who tells the above-excerpted story of a sacrifice at Zaqir in 1561 is listed as the *encomendero* of “Zaquire” (his only *encomienda*) in Contreras Guevara’s 1582 list (1991), when it still has 12 tribute Indians.

negotiate with “el demonyo.” Another witness in 1561 said that the Taycones did sacrifices of blood “cortándose y sacándose sangre de las orejas y lenguas y narizes y ofrescellas al pie de un árbol de una higuera [*Ficus* sp.?] en la qual thenyan un ydolo de piedra con muchas navajas...” He mentioned the town of Çacaram, very likely the Pech word for “river beach.”⁵¹ The knowledgeable Miguel de Molero said that the houses of sacrifice he had seen held offerings of cacao, *ocote* (pine) sticks, feathers, and blood. He claimed that the Indians in Çabanaco pierced their noses and genitals with “aguja de raya” after sufficient intoxication, while also flailing their backs with “una pala do tienen puestos muchas puya de ceyva [ceiba].” In Cotunga, recounted Juan de Rojas of Nueva Salamanca, he was told that a Spanish priest had actually baptized several boys, but that the Taycones killed them all.⁵²

From all this we can infer that though the Taycones rendered tribute to the Spanish, the grip of Church and State was tenuous. Olancho clearly desired to make the Taycones, which may have previously belonged to Salamanca, an integral part of their own domain: the Olanchanos had obviously already spent a fair amount of time in the region. The Taycones and their more hostile downriver neighbors the Xicaques were what Olancho el Viejo was up against, at least in official accounts: organized southern Central American polities desperately trying to maintain their Precolumbian identities under the onslaught of a State more determined than any enemy they had known previously. The 1561 *probanza* witnesses describe a people very similar to others in southern Central American, northern South American, and Antillean areas (“Circum-Caribbean Tribes”) that the Spanish encountered and inevitably destroyed. Steward (1948:2) wrote:

A comparison of data from the modern tribes [e.g. Pech] with those from the earlier chroniclers and from archaeology shows that all but the very backward and isolated tribes

⁵¹ Conzemius 1928:136, “sakarà.”

⁵² Juan de Rojas, the only witness from Nueva Salamanca, made the sole mention of a town of “Cotunga”; he also said “provincia de los dichos yndios Taicones térmynos de la dicha villa,” meaning in the jurisdiction of (near-extinct) Nueva Salamanca.

have suffered drastic changes. Gone are the intensive horticulture, the dense population, the large villages, the class-structure society, the mounds, temples, idols, and priests, the warfare, cannibalism and human trophies, the elaborate death rites, and even the technological and esthetic refinements evidenced in the early metallurgy, weaving, ceramics, and stone sculpture. The modern tribes who retain a predominantly aboriginal culture have come to resemble the Tropical Forest tribes...rather than their own ancestors. They carry on small-scale slash-and-burn farming...live in small villages, weave simple cloth, and make only plain pots. Their society is unstratified, their religious cults are scarcely remembered, and the principal survival of former days is the shaman.

In other words, the Spanish destroyed what they could not understand—not gatherer-hunters whose threat would have been minimal, but organized and internally stratified village societies whose main sin was the rejection of overcoding from the outside.

What ultimately became of the Taycones? The witnesses in 1561 unanimously echoed Bishop Corella in stating that yes, indeed, a priest was necessary for the Taycones Sodomites. One was provided at an unknown later date: a list of towns under San Jorge's jurisdiction in 1590 included "Taycones" "que están todos en una congregación debajo de un cura" (Valverde *informe*, in Bonilla 1955). There were only three "Taycones" tribute towns (no other names given) as well as "Zaquire," in 1582 (Contreras Guevara 1991). No reference to "Taycones" after 1590 have come to light. By the 1660s, the Valle de Agalta was the eastern edge of Olancho, so in the interim the Taycones to its northeast had faded back into the sheltering *montaña* of Taguzgalpa. The *miangules* were enshrined in toponyms along the ancient *camino real* from Tayaco to Trujillo. In the heart of the Montaña de Botaderos on the Colón side of the range is a Río Miangul, a Cerro Miangul, and a village of Miangul, bearing witness to a people who resisted the State for centuries.⁵³ Faint echoes of the Taycones can be heard even today in Los Encuentros (Río Dulce de Tayaco), the modern Ladino village on top of perhaps the largest

⁵³ "Mangulile," (a *municipio* in northwestern Olancho), may stem from the same root. The word "miangul," or anything similar, is surprisingly enough identifiable neither in the Pech dictionary of Conzemius (1928) nor in various sources I have examined on Misumalpan languages. There is a "Cerro Meangul" in El Paraíso department, and other similar sounding toponyms in southern and eastern Honduras, leading me to wonder whether areas inhabited by "Lenca" and "Matagalpa" were also somehow connected to this phenomenon. Given the sketchy nature of sixteenth-century ethnohistoric data across Honduras, it is altogether possible that such connections existed even though they have been little suspected: the divisions between ethnic groups may be more apparent than real; "miangul" could have been a pan-Honduran term.

ruins in northeastern Olancho, replete with plazas and stone causeways like most ruins in the area. An elderly man regarded as the local authority on the “antigües” (ancient inhabitants) remembers that “se decía que aquí se sacrificaba un niño.”

In 1578, Governor of Honduras Alonso de Contreras Guevara replied to the King, who had asked for information about the “Taguzgalpa” (Contreras Guevara 1992[1578]).⁵⁴ He said that though the land was good, six captains had already been lost there, referring to previous colonization efforts launched by sea from Trujillo to get around the menacing Xicaques. The theme of planning to conquer Taguzgalpa through the placing of Spanish *ciudades* there continues through the 1580s (Conzemius 1928:24, note 2). Nothing became of this until in the early 1600s the King finally turned to the Franciscans to get the job done (which they were never able to do effectively, either: see 3.8). Since at least 1550 and perhaps earlier, the Xicaques had continually blocked Spanish landward expansion east from Trujillo into the Taguzgalpa. The Xicaques, who had in the 1550s attacked Spanish ships, taken Spanish women, and even invaded Trujillo (Probanza de Jimenez 1555), were subjugated by Alonso de

⁵⁴ Separate colonization efforts of the East launched by sea from Trujillo in the 1500s seem to be tied to the ineffectiveness of Nueva Salamanca, San Jorge, and Trujillo among the Taycones and Xicaques, but are rarely mentioned in the same context. In 1547, King Carlos V ordered the Audiencia de los Confines in Gracias a Dios to prohibit the conquest of “Teguzgalpa” by a Captain from Nueva Segovia (Nicaragua) (see Conzemius 1928:24, note 1) because the Captain might be harming the Indians who were protected under the New Laws. He issued this decree apparently in ignorance of the role of Nueva Salamanca (leading me to wonder whether the King was being kept in the dark for some reason). But King Felipe II, in a Real Cédula of 1562 (reproduced in *Paraninfo* 1[1]:135-6, misprinted as “1572”), ordered that settlers, under Governor of Honduras Hortiz Delgueta, should go to the “Provincias del Cabo de Camarón y Tagusgalpa” to people and pacify the lands. Intriguing is his separation of western (Camarón) and eastern (Tagusgalpa) areas. As Conzemius (1928:24) details, Ortiz de Elgueta in 1564 founded a settlement near the huge brackish Laguna de Cartago (Caratasca), then moved it 30 *leguas* south to an area abundant in gold, naming it “Ciudad Elgueta.” This town lasted two years. The effort to launch a conquest of Taguzgalpa from Trujillo was renewed in the 1570s. A certain López in Trujillo is cited by Newson (1986:36) in a letter of 1579 where he complains of the attacks on Trujillo and its nearby Indian tribute towns by the “Xicaques.” Newson mistakenly calls this the earliest use of “Xicaque” and, I believe in error, interprets these “Xicaques” as the Tolupan in the headwaters of the Río Aguán (the term was used much later, in the late 1700s, to refer to this group). As I suspect following the 1555 Jimenez *probanza*, López’ Xicaques were the same Xicaques of the region around Camarón and Yara. The same Diego López of Trujillo (see Conzemius 1928:24, note 2) had received orders in 1576 to “conquistar y poblar de españoles la provincia de Taguzgalpa que se llama el Nuevo Cartago.”

Oseguera.⁵⁵ He was responsible for the “conquista y pasificación de los Yndios Xicaques y que saco de las montañas quinientas personas los mas ynfielos y los pobló en Olancho el Viejo.” A more detailed account given by Alonso Criado de Castilla, President of the Audiencia de Guatemala, refers to this event which occurred in the 1590s:

reducción de yndios...asta cantidad de quinientos, en la Provincia de Honduras junto al pueblo Olancho El Viejo, y llámanse Xicoaques, yndios de guerra que por aquellas partes hacían muchos daños. (Criado de Castilla 1991[1598]:106)

Criado de Castilla relates how Oseguera and a company of soldiers and Indian archers went into the middle of the Xicaque zone and took them without a fight. The President ordered they be settled somewhere else, apparently within Olancho el Viejo (see also Sherman 1979:427, note 63). He records a culture that mummified their dead “como lo hazen la gente maumetana” and buried them in underground vaults with their food. Criado de Castilla says that the land of the Xicaques *borders* the “Teguzgalpa,” so that their subjugation (and forced removal) could be a great aid for conquering that difficult land to the east. It is hard to know why the Xicaques gave up so easily, (if we are to believe Criado de Castilla). Rhizomatic and as difficult to eliminate as the Taycones, they did not disappear altogether. Thanks largely to England’s support of pirates and the Zambos Mosquitos in the 1600s and 1700s (see Newson 1986), the Taguzgalpa, which by 1700 came to include everything east of the Río de Aguán (Cabo Camarón was no longer safe for the Spanish), was never conquered decisively, and the remnants of the Xicaque and Taycones were able to subsist between two empires.

The eastern Honduran frontier shrank during the 1500s as *ciudades* failed and tribute towns, which defined Spanish jurisdictions, disappeared into the ever-growing rhizome of Taguzgalpa. By the Franciscan missionary period, beginning with Fray Esteban slightly before 1610, Olancho el Viejo extended only as far east as the Valle de Agalta and Valle de Olancho—the eastern limit of tropical dry forest and of good land for cattle.

⁵⁵ His grandson of the same name writes of the elder’s exploits in 1662 (AGCA A3.16 2072 31508).

Proto-Pech groups seem to be the villains of sixteenth-century accounts out of Trujillo, Olancho, and Salamanca, but by the 1600s they are (re)constructed as the “docile” Paya (and probably Yara). Though they were flighty, they preferred to be safe in the missions within State space instead of helpless within smooth space, terrorized by both the anarchistic Tawahka and the fearless and heavily armed Zambos Mosquitos. The Tawahkas, before the rise of the Zambos, became the villains of seventeenth-century Olancho El Viejo, ravaging the settlements of the Valles and eventually killing a substantial force of Spanish and Ladino soldiers and two Franciscan missionaries on the Río Guayape/Patuca in 1612 (Vázquez’ 1944[1714]).⁵⁶ A decade later, Tawahkas murdered three more Franciscan friars who had gone into the Taguzgalpa by sea from Trujillo and had ministered among “Payas,” “Mexicanos,” “Xicaques” and other groups for over a year. In those years, the coastal peoples were deathly afraid of the Tawahka “Albaguinas” (AGCA A1.11 4056 31441 1624) who came down the rivers from the interior to ravage the coasts.⁵⁷ Here we can gain some idea of the internal complexity of the Taguzgalpa, where groups warred against each other in conflicts that no doubt well predated the Spanish, and indeed may have had little to do with the “outside” at all.

After five Franciscans in a decade were martyred in the Taguzgalpa, Church and State officially forbade further intrusions, a prohibition which held until the 1660s. The line, finally, had been drawn between smooth and striated. Olancho and Trujillo were anointed as fragile outposts of civilization. But all this, I suspect, was only one narrow version of reality, and can mislead by its dichotomization: the documents are quiet about any rhizomatic tendencies

⁵⁶ For the background of the Verdelete and Monteagudo missionary effort, see also BAGG 1939[1607] and 1939a[1610].

⁵⁷ Vázquez (1944[1714]), the main source for this missionization effort, had access to documents concerning the lives and deaths of Cristobal de Martínez and company, but at some point an error occurred and published versions of his *Crónica* refer to the Albaguinas as “Albatuinas,” while also calling them “Tawahkas.” This misled researchers who sought a connection to “Albaguina,” a proto-Miskito word for the Tawahka (W. V. Davidson, pers. comm.). AGCA A1.11 4056 31441 contains, in its first folios, fragments of an original set of *testimonios* from witnesses regarding the Martínez episode, paralleling Vázquez’ account except for the clear, repeated writing of “albaguina.”

entangling Taguzgalpa and Olancho, particularly among Olancho's tribute towns, which are barely ever mentioned before 1670. Did the "Indios Olanchanos" remain in meaningful contact with those in the Taguzgalpa, and did they share certain aspects of their spatial identities despite the radical bifurcation of their trajectories in the mid-1500s? Did, for example, the tribute Indios of Laguata also retain elements of the religions practiced by the nearby Taycones? These are the types of questions which warrant more investigation because they might show that, although more subtly than in the Pech or Tawahka, indigenous geographies in Olancho signify more for its spatial complexity than a tiny remaining *indio* population and a few toponyms.

3.6 Olancho's Tribute Indians

The Indian tribute towns within Olancho el Viejo maintained indigenous spatial identities that became entangled with Iberian and African/*mulato* spaces while simultaneously overcoded by Spanish civil and ecclesiastical hierarchies. Not having been spectacularly unconquerable, unconvertible, and defiant like their anti-State neighbors (and possibly relatives) in the Taguzgalpa, they are almost invisible in the colonial record except as payers of tribute and builders of missions. No one in any document I have examined thought to write down their vocabularies or even mention what languages they spoke. Twentieth-century scholars have remained almost completely ignorant of the "Indios de Guata" and "Indios de Catacamas," though they are still well recognized in popular Olancho history and culture (for a rare exception, see Adams 1957). Unlike the Pech, Tawahka, and Miskito of the former Taguzgalpa, the tribute Indian descendants who inhabit remote villages throughout the department of Olancho have never to my knowledge been considered in special, focused conservation or development schemes; not even the Honduran government has yet recognized the present-day existence of the Indios de Gualaco in Chindona. Given that the Lenca (though they too lost their language long ago) have been the subject of much scholarly and popular activity (e.g. Chapman 1985), it seems fair to highlight Olancho's tribute Indians on the way

toward giving them a historical voice and suggesting the present-day validity of their nascent struggles for rights. This said, it should also become obvious that almost all of what was Indian Olancho has become part of Ladino Olancho, so that the contributions of the tribute Indians have far greater significance than the geography of a few remote areas. Whole *municipios* like Gualaco, it can be argued, inherited at least echoes of the indigenous when they usurped indigenous lands.



Fig. 3. 10. Family and friend of Pedro Avila (with rifle), Catacamas. His wife, at far left, is the daughter of a leader of the Tribu Jamaska ("Indios de Catacamas"). The Tribu has begun to make *sotto voce* claims to parts of their colonial domain.

Though the first lasting distribution of *encomiendas* for tribute towns in Olancho was in 1542, there is no extant list of Alonso de Cáceres' assignments.⁵⁸ One can piece together the *encomiendas* that were given out through reading the *probanzas* of conquistadors (such as

⁵⁸ The Indian places mentioned before 1542 in most cases did not reappear generally as tribute towns, due probably to their destruction or abandonment. Some survived as toponyms. In the Ruíz *probanza* (Martínez Castillo 1999:42), Ruíz mentions the three *peñoles* in Olancho where the Indians put up the strongest resistance in the early 1540s: Peñol de las canelas, peñol de papalota, peñol de guarizama. The first name, canelas, strongly resembles "canola," which is an untranslated toponym from an unknown language, possibly Nahuatl, appearing in several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Olancho tribute towns: Mantocanola, Hueycanola, and Canola (Davidson 1991; AGCA A1.11 4056 31441 1632 f. 171). Papalota ("butterfly" in Nahuatl: Molina and Spínosa 1966[1571]) seems to appear again (under Trujillo) as "Papaloteca" (Contreras Guevara 1991[1582], and Guarizama never became a tribute town, though it reappears in 1638 as an *estancia* and is a *municipio* today. Places in the Valle de Olancho mentioned during the 1520s do not reappear as tribute towns either, but Escamilpachequita, Escamilpa la Grande, and Telicachequita are still alive in local toponyms.

Alonso de Fúnes, AGCA A1.29 1723 11513 Probanza... 1548) or on the death of an *encomendero* (e.g. AGCA A1.39 1751 Nombramientos... [1519-1616]). In the period up to 1662, only two detailed lists have been discovered, one from 1582 and the other from 1592 (both are partially reproduced in Davidson 1991:220, Table 9-3). It is important to stress that, especially after 1590, many *encomenderos* did not necessarily live in Olancho el Viejo, but rather in Olancho el Nuevo, Trujillo, Comayagua, or elsewhere. Indians not only had to deliver tribute at least once a year in Comayagua, but also had to perform various legal and illegal tasks for their *patrones* within and outside Olancho el Viejo.⁵⁹ Among other activities, they had to perform as *tamemes* (carriers), *naborias* (household servants), laborers in the silver mines near Tegucigalpa (Newson 1984; 1986), archers for conquistadors like Oseguera (see above) and the later missionary effort in the Taguzgalpa, *mozos* (peons) on local *estancias* and haciendas (see numerous colonial titles in the ANTO), and guardians of the *vigías* (watches) put up by the State against the *enemigos* coming out of the Taguzgalpa. Organized tribute Indians could also obtain legal *ejido* titles to the lands on which their settlements sat and other more distant parcels as early as the 1500s.⁶⁰ Though no titles for Olancho before 1662 have survived, we can surmise that some tribute Indians gained *ejidos* in that period, since towns such as Catacamas already possessed vast holdings by the 1670s (AGCA A1.45 368 3412). To judge by later documents, the tribute Indians of Olancho overwhelmingly became cattle ranchers.

Appendix A contains a detailed list of the more than 30 Olancho tribute towns based on the 1582 and 1592 summaries (Contreras Guevara 1991[1582]; Davidson 1991). From 1662, two documents list the 15 remaining towns within the jurisdiction of Olancho El Viejo, and the yearly tributes they paid (AGCA A.3 511 5313 1662; AGCA A3.16 2072 31508 1662). The

⁵⁹ In 1698, for example, the Indios de Catacamas complained bitterly because they had to spend months of the year in Olancho el Nuevo, leaving their families back home defenseless (AGCA A1.11.4 46 416 San George 1698; AGCA A1.24 1570 10214 Registro de Chancillería 1698).

⁶⁰ For tribute Indian concerns elsewhere in Honduras, see especially De los Angeles Chaverri (1994: 1996).

towns were Catacamas, Chindona, Cotacialí, Gualaco, Jano, Juticalpa, Laguata, Manto, Punuara, (Santa María del) Real, Saguay, Silca, Tal(g)ua (elsewhere “Taloa” and “Talva”), Yocón, and Zapota. All towns, based on their recorded population of tribute-paying Indians (primarily adult males) had to pay the Crown (in the case of Real, Catacamas, Talgua, and Chindona) or their encomenderos (in the case of the other towns) in cotton cloth (*manta*, measured in *piernas*), maize (*maiz*, in *fanegas*), and chickens (*gallinas*, *pollas*). Quantities were small, indicating small populations, in comparison to the large tribute exacted, for example, on Talgua of Gracias a Dios, and Lejamaní and Ajuterique, of Comayagua.



Fig. 3.11. Valle de Arriba. View toward the lower Valle de Guacoca with the (former) Montaña del Cacao in the background. Area of colonial *sitios* and *comarcas* Guacoca, Tilapa, Amacoapa, and La Chorrera.

Despite the uniformity imposed by the Spanish State, the spatial identities of tribute towns remained quite distinct one from the next, reflecting different local and regional Precolumbian and colonial spatial characteristics in everything from microclimate, topography, and vegetation, to preexisting cultural traits such as distinct languages. (The documentary record is largely silent on the acceptance of the Church among Olancho’s tribute Indians, but I surmise, given latter-day Ladino Catholicism, that they practiced a highly syncretic faith—see chapter 5)

Within the new, post-1492 becomings there also lingered older landscapes and spatial identities, and these became entangled in the ever-changing identities that helped keep Olancho as much a world of villages as a peon of the State. But tribute records, though they are detailed, tell little but what the State demanded of its vassals. The vassals, however, spent most of their existences living in local space, producing not only for the State but for “subsistence”: hunting, gathering, fishing, ranching, telling stories, visiting.... Each town territory was its own world, and each deserves a brief description here in order to situate it within the accounts of later chapters, and to contrast with the ahistorical biases of present-day development and conservation.

In 1582, Chindona’s 80 *tributarios* (=families and single heads of households) comprised one of the largest Indian tribute settlements in Honduras of the time, though owing to its vulnerability it was decimated by attacks from the Taguzgalpa and eventually abandoned altogether by 1730. Chindona’s location, as recorded during the mission period (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6), was at the head of *pipante* navigation on the Río Sico in the Valle de Agalta, at the point where marauding Zambos Mosquitos from downriver had to disembark and continue into the interior on foot, when they were much less of a threat. Chindona is a good example of the delicacy involved in being located at a spot where the world of the Taguzgalpa and the world of the King were knotted together—a knot that during Precolumbian times had been a favored place for trade and cultural exchange. Davidson (1991:212) asserts that the “canoe point” on rivers in eastern Honduras, created by a physical barrier such as rapids, often marked cultural or political divisions between downstream, river peoples with deep water craft that could also ply coastal waters (e.g. the Xicaques in 1555), and upstream, light craft and terrestrial-oriented peoples.⁶¹

⁶¹ A canoe point, viewed by the Trujillo-based 1520s conquistadors and their Mexican translators, would have been a market town such as “Agalta” or “Acalteca” featuring many large (up to forty-foot-long) dugout canoes pulled up on shore. The roots of “Agalta” in Nahuatl are “canoe” and “reeds,” related concepts (explaining Membreño’s [1897] etymology; see Molina and Spinosa 1966[1571]). Chindona was probably the same “pueblo de Agalta” mentioned during the 1526 founding of Villa de Cáceres; the Valle de Agalta was in general a meeting ground of the interior and the coastal. “Chindona” is related to

The canoe point on the Valle de Aguán was probably Agalteca, which by 1592 had a larger population, 69 tribute Indians, than diminishing Chindona. This canoe point gathered not only indigenous but Spanish spatial identities in an *enredo* that reveals one of the ways that distinct space could overlap and become rhizomatic. Agalteca was located quite near to the first and second sites for Olanchito, and close as well as to “Juticalpa,” an Indian town never effectively inhabited by Spanish in the 1530s and 1540s as a gold mining administrative site inland from Trujillo (Cereceda 1954[1530]; Herrera 1991[1601-15]; Pedraza 1991[1547]). The cluster of Spanish and Indian settlements around the canoe point of the Valle de Aguán (what up to the early 1600s was part of Olancho) demonstrates an interesting convergence of geographies: for Pedraza in Trujillo, one of the key elements of “Juticalpa” that favored it for the site of a *ciudad* was that it lay at the confluence of land routes from Comayagua and Olancho. Being at or slightly above the canoe point, the Agalteca area would have been theoretically more defensible than a downstream town from the marauding Xicaques in the 1500s, and in later centuries the Zambos Mosquitos. In terms of contraband, throughout the colonial period the Agalteca/Olanchito area was the point where produce from the mountain hinterland of Yoro could be gathered and embarked (AGCA A1.4 390 3662 c. 1771), then sneaked out without the notice of Spanish authorities. For the Indians of Agalteca both before and after Conquest, the canoe point meant market (and no doubt many other) opportunities, but for the upstream peoples (probably Lenca and Tolupan) there was always a threat from downstream.

Below the canoe point at Chindona lay the lands of the Taycones and other ancestors of the Pech, where tribute towns didn’t last (the lower Valle de Agalta, one of the largest *valles* in Honduras, never contained one after 1600). Around the defensible headwaters of the Río Sico, a cluster of three tribute villages—Saguay, Chindona, and Gualaco—subsisted, and though their Indians all but disappeared by the early 1700s, they left an imprint on the emerging *mulato*

López de Gómara’s (1966[1552]) “Sierras de Chindon,” the Cordillera de Agalta that Cortés would have had to cross before reaching the Valle de Olancho from Trujillo. “Chindona” may stem from

culture of Gualaco. Like in tribute towns to the northwest, the Saguay area was a center for local harvesting and trade of the *teocinte* tree cycad's fruit, a starchy staple during the famine-prone months of the dry season. This practice continues strong today (see descriptions in chapters four and six).⁶²

Since the Valle de Olancho did not have a single canoe point as clearly defined as Chindona, throughout the colonial period Tawahkas and Zambos Mosquitos could penetrate as far upstream as the Valle Lepaguare, well within striated space (ANTO 112 Lepaguare 1769). Catacamas and four other tribute towns in the northeastern Valle de Olancho⁶³ straddled an almost indefensible area where the State's *enemigo* could freely enter Olancho. Like today, the Catacamas area was a trade entrepot of East and West because of its position near the confluence of water and land routes coming from the Paulaya and Wampú drainage to the northeast and the Guayape/Patuca drainage to the southeast. The trade-off for the tribute Indians was that the Zambos Mosquitos sacked and burned Catacamas on several occasions even though it was "protected" by the King. Despite this fragility, Catacamas traded through the Pech to the Zambos Mosquitos and the English, while the Pech also worked as *mozos* (peons) on its haciendas. Thanks in part to the marginality of their domain, the Indios de Catacamas came to possess legally more land than the richest *hacendados*, but could still be given lashes in the public square for not thatching their roofs adequately (AGCA A1.4 390 3662

Nahuatl words "tzin-ti", "to begin," and "tona" signifying "sun," "east," or "heat" (see Andrews 1975).

⁶²These upstream villages at the headwaters of the Río Sico under the high peaks of the Sierra de Agalta may also have spoken a proto-Pech (Chibcha-related) language. As indicated by mission documents, they seemed to think of the Pech from the Taguzgalpa as their "wild" cousins, intermarrying with them and even settling with them in missions such as San Sebastián in the Valle de Agalta (Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681]; AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). Toponyms in the Valle de Gualaco indicate a Pech relationship (Cerro de Amaisara, Quebrada de Lucasire) though Pech brought to local missions after 1660 may have left them, and hence they would not indicate non-Pech tribute town languages. The dominant toponym for nearby Sierra de Agalta in colonial times was "Susmaia," today Susmay. This appears to be a Misumalpan word.

⁶³ Santa María del Real, possibly the "Guanapo" of 1582; Punuara, under or near the site of today's Punuare or Boquerón; Taloa, near or under today's Talgua; Yaroca, listed only in 1592, probably the later and present-day Yarauca near the confluence of the (navigable) Río Tinto and the Río Guayape.

c.1771). Catacamas and the other four nearby towns were caught between State and anti-State, both becoming-Honduran and becoming-Taguzgalpa.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ The ethnic derivation of the Indios de Catacamas, who subsist today in the villages of Jamasquire and Siguaté, and comprise the Tribu Jamaska of self-proclaimed Nahua identity ("jama" refers in eastern Honduras to the iguana), is one of the more intriguing and frustrating questions in Olancho's history. Ethnologist Rafael Girard (RABNH 1938[2/3]:132-40), without offering any substantiation, said they were Lenca—the identity, he claimed, of tribute Indians across the *valles* and pine forests of central and western Olancho: "Debo...aclarar que los indígenas de Catacamas que han sufrido frecuentes raptos de parte de los zambos, no son sumos, ni payas....Son lencas emparentados con los de Guata, Jano y parte central y norte de Olancho, según aparece del estudio comparativo de éstos, habiéndose desnaturalizado el elemento indígena de la parte occidental de ese departamento, por la fuerte inoculación de sangre negra" (139). While there *are* Lenca toponyms in Olancho (e.g. Caingala, Camasca, Gualquín, Lepaguara, Parumbra (?), Ximasca (?), and Yupitelencia) these are all from its western third. No Lenca toponyms have surfaced in the Valle de Olancho. The only evidence that indirectly supports Girard (but which he does not mention): the old term for an indigenous official of Catacamas was *t'atoque* (see mentions in title documents within ANTO 36 Catacamas 1713-78), a moniker otherwise recorded only from Lenca villages in central Honduras (Vargas de Abarca *Información sobre las lenguas* 1682, in Leyva 1991: e.g. "tacttoques" of Guajiquiro, 182). "*T'atoque*" is from the Nahuatl *tlatoaca*: see Molina and Spinosa, *Vocabulario*, 1966[1571]. The surviving Indios de Catacamas say they are Nahuas, and have been officially accepted as such by the Honduran government. They claim allegiance to the *indígenas* of Guata, Jano, and Esquipulas del Norte, who may be descendants of proto-Pech or perhaps Tolupan groups. Evidence for the Nahua affiliation of Olancho's "Indios" has not been ethnographically explored, but seems to be linked in part to Nahua words in common usage which, however, are also current among Ladino campesinos: see Griffin, "Honduran Nahuatl Indians alive and well in Olancho" (2000). It is possible, however, that the *indios* of the northeastern Valle de Olancho tribute towns were in part descended from Mexicans who might have lived in San Jorge de Olancho, which directly bordered the area (across the Río de Olancho) (W. V. Davidson, pers. comm.). It was not uncommon for Mexicans to live in their own *barrios* in Spanish towns (e.g. Mexicapa in Gracias and in Comayagua). Eduard Conzemius, an early authority on the Pech, tried to establish the identity of the Indios de Catacamas when he was there in 1919 (Conzemius 1928:2, note 2), by which point the language had died out long before (not even a few words remained). One non-Indian remembered that in the 1800s the greeting "parastá" was used, which is a Tawahka word; however, this could have been part of a trading lingua franca, since Catacamas was still a trading entrepot for the Moskitia as late as the 1950s. Conzemius recorded an important fact that logic would seem to controvert: Catacamas denied its affiliation with the Pech, despite their proximity: "los Payas niegan toda afinidad con los moradores de Catacamas y varios ancianos me han dicho que son Sumus" (1928:2). This agrees with post-1662 mission descriptions known to me, which never draw a cultural connection between the Paya (Pech) and Catacamas, and in fact say that while the Zambos were given orders to not harm the Pech in the missions (which were often on Catacamas' land), they could do what they liked with the Indios de Catacamas (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). Furthermore, Pech proximity is more apparent than real: the settlement of Pech in Catacamas *comarcas* such as Siguaté and Río Tinto came about in the mission period when they were fleeing westward from the Zambo Mosquitos. At the beginning, in the 1670s (Ovalle and Guevara 1681[1991]), friar Pedro de Ovalle had to walk four days from Catacamas to get to the Pech domain, placing it in the Wampú and/or Paulaya drainage. Nevertheless, logic points to the Pech as relatives of the Indios de Catacamas (Davidson 1991 and Sampson 1997), perhaps in mixture with Mexican overlords. 120 years between the founding of San Jorge and the first mentions of the differences between Catacamas and the Payas may have been enough time to convince the tribute-paying, Christianized, ranching Indios de Catacamas that they were different from and superior to the *indios de la montaña* (Davidson, pers. comm.)

Two key toponyms, Sancalí and Chululí, support the possibility that the Indios de Catacamas were allied to the "Matagalpas," who are known to have lived in the Nueva Segovia of northern Nicaragua, and in southeastern Honduras. The "-lí" locative has been linked definitively to this extinct language

Tribute towns engulfed by striated space followed a different type of trajectory characterized by rapid extirpation under the onslaught of Spanish and *mulato estancia* expansion. For example, Juticalpa and Cotacialí were tribute towns side by side in the southwestern Valle de Olancho in the late 1600s (AGCA A.3 192 1955 1740). By 1740, Juticalpa, while having become the center of non-indigenous Olancho, had only a handful of tribute Indians left, and Cotacialí had disappeared altogether.⁶⁵ Comayagüela, a tribute town not far away across the Valle to the south, marked the entrance of the Río Jalán into the Valle de Olancho, as well as a spot that the *camino real* toward Nicaragua would have passed. Though Comayagüela died out as a tribute town by the early 1600s, the name of its *comarca* remained. Today, the *aldea* of Calpules, once known as Comayagüela (as the local oral history goes), sits above the Quebrada de Comayagüela, and its soccer field is a Precolumbian plaza with low stone temple mounds around it.

The “Valle de Arriba,” as it was called during colonial times, was defined by the watershed of the Río Telica, and is a collection of local *valles* punctuated by rugged hills and embraced by two arms of the “Cordillera de Agalta” (a modern geographers’ label). Here were not only the sixteenth-century tribute towns of Mantocanola, Cilimongapa, Silcacomayagua (Silca, Cilca),

(Davidson pers. comm.; Herranz in Membreño 1994[1901]), and is abundant in Nueva Segovia and El Paraíso (e.g. Danlí, Oropoli, Orealí, and many others in Honduras). (The other important Valle de Olancho Indian tribute town before 1700, Cotacialí, may be related to this, or may have a Nahuatl root. [Davidson, pers. comm.]) The term for the Sierra de Agalta, still in use today by the Ladinos and Indios who were born in the villages east of Catacamas at the foot of the mountains before 1950, is “Montaña de Chululí.” (This is not picked up in any old land title document nor on recent topographical maps.) One of the largest and most frequently mentioned landholdings of Catacamas in colonial times was the *sitio* of Sancalí, which is likely an indigenous term, since there is no “Saint Chalice” in the Catholic pantheon. This name appears to have confused outside observers (e.g. Franciscans) who often spelled it “San Calis” or “San Calix.” Other toponymic evidence for Precolumbian “Misumalpan” (Matagalpa, Ulwa, or Tawahka) influences across Olancho include Apusbay, Apuzunca (today’s La Puzunca), Lacagüina, Mucupina, Sara, and Susmay/Susmaia, all important *comarcas* or landmarks, especially in the colonial period, in diverse locations across the center, west, and north.

⁶⁵ The details of the transfer of the “Juticalpa” near Olancho el Nuevo (Valverde [Bonilla 1955] lists it as three *leguas* from the new capital in 1590) to the Valle de Olancho are unknown. Unless there were two Juticalpas, which seems unlikely given that the toponym appears to be unique (in Nahuatl it means “place” or “house” of *jutes*, which were river snails important in culture), the movement of the Indian tribute town some time after 1600 and before 1660 may have been a way that Spaniards were able to reestablish or bolster their own control in the Valle de Olancho.

and Zapota by the seventeenth century, but also a host of tiny indigenous and *mulato caseríos* (hamlets), picked up first in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century land titles, and then in the late 1700s when detailed *padrones* (a type of census) were elaborated for the area. Though non-indigenous *estancias* were also present in the Valle de Arriba in the early 1600s (Vázquez 1944[1714]; ANH AC I 20 1638), Indian territories gave way completely only in the nineteenth century (to my knowledge none survive today).

The *camino real* from Manto to Olancho el Nuevo crossed the Cordillera de Agalta into a tribute town cluster--Jano, Laguata (today's Guata), and (another) Comayagüela--at the headwaters of the Río Guata, a tributary of the Aguán.⁶⁶ Like the Gualaco cluster to the east, these were not accessible to watercraft. Several groves of the *teocinte* cycad are scattered about the landscape. Jano and Laguata remained Indian into the 1800s, and the descendants of their tribute Indians today inhabit remote *aldeas* such as Mocanquire and Tezapa. Jano and Laguata contested lands for cattle and agriculture with each other as well as with *mulato* outsiders, and became the most prominent indigenous settlements in Olancho after Catacamas. The language they once spoke is extinct, but it may have been a Chibchan dialect as well, since they were in an area probably dominated by proto-Pech. Aguilar Paz (1972) and Lunardi (1948) mention interesting cultural details about the "Indios de Guata," including the fact that both men and women wore long hair up to the late 1800s. They also held the tradition that their ancestors the Payas had abandoned Pueblo Viejo (downriver) after a great flood. And at midnight of every December 31st, the change of municipal administration in the early 1900s included a symbolic

⁶⁶ The last tribute town area included Yupiteyocón (in 1582; later Yocón) and Yupitelencia or Yupite, both of which were on or near the *camino real* from the Valle de Arriba to Yoro in the headwaters of the Río Yaguala. Yocón was the central gathering point for an Indian hinterland to the north that may have included Tolupanes in an area that is all but absent from the documentary record. It became a minor administrative spot and a *mulato* settlement by the 1700s. Yupitelencia died out as a tribute village by 1740 (AGCA A3 192 1955) but the name "Yupite" remains attached to the largest (Ladino) settlement in

washing of the mayor's staff (*vara de mando*) in a stream pool to cleanse it of the sins of the outgoing administration.⁶⁷

The few details we possess on (disappearing) cultural practices specific to Olancho's tribute Indians are not nearly enough by themselves to stand next to the detailed accounts of Taguzgalpa groups. But we know more about them if we include many of the landscape details in chapters five and six, which though they refer to Ladinos can clearly be ascribed to Indian spatial identities: otherworldly caves, for example, and a host of medicinal plants. Going the other way, we can also understand the tribute Indians if we understand their thirst for legal titles, their emphasis on cattle ranching, and other "non-Indian" practices. In essence, we end up describing not only the surviving Indios Olanchanos but also many "old-style" non-Indio Olanchanos. Implicated in the rhizome of Indio and non-Indio *olanchanos* is the continuance of what I call "local space," which preserves the jumbled codes of many eras—by definition, it is never entirely overcoded by any one identity, but instead remains the realm of possibility for the becomings of multiple identities.

3.7 The Landscape Mosaic, 1525-1662

What landscapes looked and felt like, largely tied to the vegetation they contained, was affected in 1524 and in 1662 (and even still, in 2001) by several conditions on which humans could have little effect (discussed in more detail in chapter 4).⁶⁸ But as this section shows, this did not ever signify a uniform forest cover such as that implicit in the discussions of local and outsider conservationists, for whom change in the land is a recent occurrence. In the old days,

the *municipio* of Yocón.

⁶⁷ The cultures of northern Olancho, like almost everything about that region, are almost completely uninvestigated. Aguilar Paz (1972) mentions a few details: Los Indios de Comayagüela (24-5); Caini o Lluvia de Peces (54: the rain of fishes, among Indian populations near Silca, was known as "caini" in an unidentified local language); El Baño de las Varas (169-70); Puñado de Leyendas (245). Lunardi (1948) writes about caves and *sahurines* of northern Olancho (316-8).

⁶⁸ For parallels to this section see, for example, Bennett 1968 and Sauer 1992 on southern Central America; Butzer and Butzer (1993) on Mexico.

everything was tropical rain forest--as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I believed this about Olancho. However (as a geographer reading Denevan 1992), if Olancho el Viejo was not the thick blanket of "original" rainforest with a few scattered clearings for which my conservationist identity had yearned, then what was it?

Topography and the rainshadow effect created aridity in the *valles* of Olancho el Viejo, and the resulting arid vegetation, leafless and parched between February and June, favored Iberian-style ranching, as it did in similar climate zones across Latin America (see Johannessen 1963). The *valles*, to judge from documents like the *testimonio* to the founding of Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres in 1526, possessed "sabanas" at Contact. The densely populated indigenous *comarcas* practiced swidden agriculture (including probably maize) on those *sabanas*, and probably burned them annually for agriculture, hunting and other purposes. They grew tubers on the *vegas* (bottomlands). Dense populations at Contact would have meant that Olancho's *valle* landscapes were shaped and tended at the microscale: as yet, there were no large domestic ungulates trampling their vegetable plots.

The introduction of cattle by the early 1540s, and the indigenous population crash, led to untended but well-trampled landscapes. Burning may have initially decreased after the Conquest, but it increased as ranches grew in size and number.⁶⁹ The appetites of a fast-growing domestic and feral cattle population (and horses and mules as well), in a type of rhizome, "selected for" dense, dry thickets, which became dominated by thorny plants in response to the livestock's "selecting out" palatable and defenseless species. In 1677, the Hacienda de San Pedro, of the Indios de Catacamas, *alone* had 16,000 head of cattle (AGCA A1.45 368 3412 1677). Land titles from the 1680s onward in the *valles* always mention both grassy *sabanas* and thorny *espinales* together (and pine woods in the hills). Most areas of the

⁶⁹ The "unfortunate" English mariner John Cockburn, in his clandestine barefoot walk across Honduras in the 1730s, recorded vast conflagrations as the rule in the dry ranching *valles* of western Honduras. (Cockburn, *The unfortunate Englishmen*, 1745) with climates analogous to those of Olancho.

Valle de Olancho and Valle de Agalta were *espinales* by the late 1700s. Despite Olancho's popular history, which constructs it as a once-limitless prairie (see Johannessen 1963), only certain areas in the title record, notably San Pedro de Catacamas and the Valle de Lepaguare, were more prairie-like than thicket-like. The norm was what today is known as a "*sabana*": a becoming mosaic of thickets and grassy swards.

As has been the case throughout the last 500 years, large areas of the Honduras (and Nicaraguan) mountains, probably including much of Olancho, contained pine and oak forests in the early 1500s. Pedrarias (1525:130) wrote:

Por medio de esta tierra [Nicaragua], fué otro capitán con gente 80 leguas y halló la tierra muy poblada, e hay muy grandes arboles de sandalo, cetrino e de cedros y pinos e de robles e quexigos e alcornoques en grande cantidad y de los pinos se ha hecho y hace mucha pez [pitch, valuable in ship-building].⁷⁰

In the early 1600s, Vázquez de Espinosa wrote:

Hácese en este distrito de la Tegusigalpa [the mining town in southcentral Honduras] en sus pinares cantidad de brea[tar]...hay entre los pinares en los márgenes de los ríos y arroyos cantidad de árboles de liquidambar. (169[1629]:168)

Descriptions of pines and pine forests before 1670 in Olancho are lacking, but accounts from adjacent regions can be considered analogues, because necessary conditions for their existence--human burning regimes, geology, climate--were similar. It was the *liquidambar* (sweetgum, *Liquidambar styraciflua*), however, that made Olancho in particular, and Honduras in general, stand out. Fernández de Oviedo (1959[1537-57]), still a leading authority on Contact-period landscapes in Latin America, commented that the *liquidambar* trees of Honduras were the largest and most abundant known at the time. *Liquidambar* sap was used primarily for staunching livestock wounds, and as such was invaluable. Fray Alonso Ponce's 1580s observations (*Relación breve* 1875[1586]:545) stress the abundant *liquidambares* in the

⁷⁰ The captain had to have gone into what is today northern Nicaragua or southern Honduras to be in pine forests (see Denevan 1961). 80 *leguas* seems sufficient to place him in Honduras, and the captain referred to might have been Hernando de Soto, who some think reached Olancho (see Sarmiento 1990 on "Toreba"). More likely, Pedrarias meant Gabriel de Rojas, the *capitán* about whom the *indios* of Huylancho complained to Cortés in Trujillo (see above).

Montaña de Comayagua. Herrera (1947:141-2) indicated that the “Nicaraguan” conquistadors in the 1520s desired not only the Valle de Olancho with its gold mines, but also “La Montaña que llamaban de Liquidambar, adonde havia pasados de setecientos mil Arboles, que todo el çumo era de perfecto liquidambar.” Given Nicaragua’s territorial pretensions northward, the Cordillera de Agalta seems the correct candidate for this “Montaña.” Today, Agalta is with little doubt the epicenter of the *liquidambar* in Honduras, if not Central America.

Liquidambares grow to great girths and heights along rivers deep in the Cordillera de Agalta’s old-growth forest, while also populating humid outer slopes of the range as “secondary” woods. Several hundred thousand *liquidambares* in the 1520s signify a heavily-altered landscape, since these deciduous trees are successional species. Herrera points to the Precolumbian indigenous imprint on mountains that, two centuries later, became “montañas fragosas,” trackless forests.

The natural drop in temperature with increased elevation, concentration of clouds favoring horizontal precipitation, and prevailing winds, helped create the *montaña* cloud forests scattered throughout Olancho. The unblocked exposure to the northeast trades, combined with altitude, geology, and topography, favored lowland rainforest growth in the Taguzgalpa. The 95 to 99 percent post-Contact drop in indigenous population (see Newson 1986) in eastern Honduras in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries favored regrowth of this potential vegetation. Large areas in the mountains of both Olancho el Viejo and Taguzgalpa grew back to dense rainforests and cloud forests.⁷¹

The conservationist imagination, through believing in an “original” forest, would suggest that Olancho in the 1400s was a thick forest with a few indigenous settlements, but this is

⁷¹ This is not to suggest that every last square meter of Olancho and the Taguzgalpa were within swidden territories during the 1400s: even after the twentieth-century’s effects old-growth forest remains in many areas. But since archaeological sites are so often encountered deep within “virgin” forest, the best course is to be cautious about limiting human influence. Sixteenth-century accounts of opening trails and sites for towns should not be interpreted necessarily as the clearing of old-growth forest, and were probably instead the removal of swidden “jungles” that can grow up within a few years.

clearly incorrect given so much evidence to the contrary. Even after the population crash—say, in the early 1600s—a vast forest could never have come to “reclaim” all landscapes. While there was doubtless far more forest than today, with tiny settlements few and far between, it seems safer to imagine that at least near any Indian tribute towns and on the *estancias* there was significant variation from thick forest. Even one cow can use more than a hectare of ground, and by all accounts feral cattle had multiplied quickly across all but the most inhospitable terrain. Thanks to burning and cattle together, high populations were not necessary to create “openness” in the landscape.

Neither was there ever any absolute line separating areas of “civilization” and “wilderness” within Olancho el Viejo (nor between Olancho and the Taguzgalpa). Even old-growth forest in ranges like Agalta would have been within the extensive *comarca* domains of *olanchanos*. Like today or at any period in history, the wealth and endurance of a *comarca* were linked to the diversity of options and niches that were available to it, and so all of local space was probably exploited in some way or another. Tribute Indians and other local people, much like campesinos today, ranged far and wide across their landscapes in search of game, wild plants, and other resources. They also raised crops such as cotton and corn for tribute, as well as their staples of *yuca*, *plátano*, probably beans, and certainly cacao. They would have had to move their cattle from the *valles* to the *serranías* in search of grass and browse during the dry season.

While a history of becoming mosaics denies hegemony to the concept of “original virgin forest,” it does not in many ways preclude the necessity of conservation actions, which can and should be addressed to saving blocks of the mosaic itself, now under onslaught from the univocal spaces of export agriculture and modernized cattle ranching.

3.8 Spatial Identities in the Franciscan Mission Period, 1660-1807

This lengthy section draws from the wealth of material on Olancho available from the later colonial period, always with a view toward tracing the trajectories and rhizomes of spatial

identities. Though documentation is at least a hundredfold greater than that from before 1660, two points should be kept in mind: in the earlier period, most spatial identities began or continued their trajectories even if the written evidence has been lost; in the later period, there are many silences in the record despite the voluminous documentation.

“Medidas de las tierras realengas nombradas el sitio de la Cofradía de Nra. Sra. de la Asunción de Gualaco a pdmto [=pedimento] del C[a]p[ita]n ant[oni]o Duarte mayordomo y demas cofrades” (ANTO 41) is a 1778 land measurement solicited by “este pueblo que habitamos nosotros los mulatos.” “We the *mulatos*”: who were they and why did their struggles become the struggles of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ladino campesinos?⁷² The question haunts the remainder of this chapter. In the document cited above, *mulatos gualaqueños* intended to solidify their usufruct rights to a piece of *valle* land for cattle and agriculture, at a time when *valle* land was being snatched up rapidly by private interests. It contained “sabanas limpias con abundancia de agua, y un hermoso río que corre por alguna parte de el con sus buenos montes para trabajar.” These were some of the basic parameters for agropastoral endeavours in local space. Their land was surrounded not by other similar properties, but by quite different spaces: private lands; lands belonging to the King (today’s Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta); lands of the former Pech mission San Buenaventura, which had become a tribute town; lands belonging to the all-but-extinct Indios de Gualaco. This contiguity of different land ownership categories, each overcoded by a different spatial identity, typified the *valles* of Olancho in the later colonial period.

⁷² Numerous terms were used to denote racial distinctions during the colony. See “Copia del memorial” from Lorenzana, a citizen of Guatemala (1991[c. 1650]) for an opinion on the value of *mulatos*, the mixture of Spanish/Criollo and *negro* (see also Díaz Navarro in Valle 1947). Though *mulato* may have been widely employed in Honduras to refer to any racial mixture (W. V. Davidson, pers. comm.), synonymous with *mestizo*, it is remembered today as a term for Olanchanos with noticeably African, rather than Indian, features—such as the Juticalpa native Manuel Bonilla, a former president. “Ladino” in colonial times referred to a non-Spaniard of any “race” who adopted Western culture (e.g. dress). Hence one reads references to “indio ladino” and “negro ladino.” “Pardo” was a term seemingly synonymous with “negro.” “Zambo” referred originally to a mixture of Indian and African, but came to refer to a specific ethnic group called the Zambos Mosquitos.

Though the everyday life of “subsistence” largely independent of the State (except as supreme authority on questions like land tenure) concerned most *olanchanos* most of the time, it was the renewed attention of the Franciscans that helped bring Olancho within the State’s fold, as a foil to the Taguzgalpa. The Franciscan missionary documents (mostly in AGCA and AGI), for all their eloquent length, say virtually nothing about the *olanchanos* on whose lands and by whose hands the missions were built. Despite the fact that *indios olanchanos* built the missions for the “*indios de la montaña*” (see Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681] and AGCA 134 1504 1721-6), they hardly figure in missionary accounts. Neither does anyone seem overly concerned about the *estancieros* (*mulatos* and others) who were required to go into the Taguzgalpa for long and brutal months to extract “Payas” and “Xicaques” and herd them back to the missions, which were usually located on the far edges of the Valle de Agalta, Valle de Gualaco, and Valle de Abajo.⁷³

Olancho el Viejo is portrayed in the mission documents vis-à-vis its relation to the *montañas* of the Taguzgalpa, but rarely are its own identities the subject of discussion. Missionaries were intent on the Taguzgalpa, and though most of their wattle-and-daub missions were located within Olancho, they saw it as part and parcel of Spanish domain: dry *valles*, cattle *estancias*, tribute towns, and small Spanish and “Criollo” settlements (Manto, Juticalpa, and Silca), a landscape virtually indistinguishable from the rest of interior Honduras. Olancho el Viejo was a “*frontera de los bárbaros de la montaña*” but was also a collection of quite normal landscapes for the predominantly Spanish Franciscan friars who walked from Guatemala or Comayagua to get there. To extract the local spaces of Olancho from the dominant Franciscan

⁷³ There were also missions (e.g. Santa María and the first San Buenaventura) in what is today eastern El Paraíso and extreme southwestern Olancho on or near the Río Guayambre, but these came to be administered through Cantarranas (near Tegucigalpa) rather than through Olancho el Viejo. Missions of the “Paracas y Pantasma” were located along the northern Nicaragua-Tologalpa frontier in the Río Coco drainage. Other Franciscan missions were located in Yoro and were for the Tolupan Jicaques (see Davidson 1985a; there are numerous documents relating to these in the BAGG). For the Mercedarian

discourse that dwells primarily on the peoples outside civilization, I have highlighted the barely detectable “normal” voices of the *olanchanos* throughout this section.

Olanchanos can also be studied through their several hundred extant land titles and associated documents from 1682 on.⁷⁴ The corpus of documents relating to lands of the Indios de Catacamas (ANTO 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 172, 173) is by far the most extensive record of colonial Olancho. It details the strategies that a downtrodden tribute town used to become probably the largest single landholder in Honduras, with over 900 *caballerías* (around 40,000 hectares) of ranch land by the 1790s, in addition to usufruct rights over a large part of the Montaña de Chululí (Sierra de Agalta). Catacamas was a fulcrum for Olancho through their wealth and power, so I will continue with a story that closely involves them.

At some point between 1607 and 1677, Catacamas’ *encomienda* reverted to the crown. The Indios de Catacamas took advantage of their right to complain to the King at several important junctures, giving us frank assessments of the politics of the day from the point of view of the tribute Indians. They were the only *olanchanos* daring enough to criticize the Escotos and the Herreras, two Spanish families who dominated Olancho in the late 1600s.

Bartolomé de Escoto, a Tegucigalpa silver miner (among other things) with lands in the Valle de Siria west of Olancho, bought two large ranches, one in the Valle de Agalta (“Sitio de la Trinidad”) and one southeast of Catacamas (“Hacienda de Sancalí”). He is responsible for capturing the attention and imagination of the Franciscans in Guatemala when he travelled there

missions among the Lenca of central and western Honduras, see Black (1995).

⁷⁴ These are not by any means “pure” and honest recordings of what people knew and thought about the land, however. Most titles contain standardized measurements and opinions filtered through government officials in Olancho, seemingly written to sound humble and nice in front of those who had the final say: the elite officials in Guatemala. Most colonial title pleas describe how bad the land is, worthless for everything other than large livestock. This was in part, I suspect, a ploy to pay less, a game that people who asked for titles played, often in complicity with officials in Olancho. Not infrequently, these same officials were verbally reprimanded in Guatemala (reprimands often appear in title documents). In most cases, the final price for land decided on in Juticalpa or Manto was rebid in Guatemala (through the *pregón* bidding system) after being doubled by officials there, who then claimed that the base price they were asking was a bargain, half of what the land was really worth.

in the mid-1660s with three “Xicaques” as graphic proof of the need for missionization in the Taguzgalpa.⁷⁵ He claimed that the Indians of the Taguzgalpa were causing great damage to his haciendas and those of other landowners in the eastern *valles*. Escoto was awarded the governorship of a new Conquista of Taguzgalpa, which had been officially off-limits to Hondurans for 50 years. Escoto and his sons became *patrones* of the mission Pech until the 1720s or later (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). It appears that the *payas montañoses* (Pech who refused to live in the missions) came to respect and obey the Escotos to some extent, because the family probably protected them against the greater evils of Zambo Mosquito exploitation.

After Escoto was stripped of his conquistador title due to a corruption scandal, *Conquista* governorships went to members of the Herrera family, Spaniards (or Criollos) who lived in Manto and were unpopular among all *olanchano* groups. Both the Escotos and the Herreras used their close relationships with the missions and Honduran government officials to procure the largest land-grant haciendas that would go up for sale from time to time. This generated deep resentment.

Both families had uneasy relationships with the Franciscans, who tended to side with the *indios olanchanos*. Bartolomé de Escoto apparently used the mission Indians, who in Olancho were mostly “Paya y Yara,” for many different pastoral, agricultural, hunting, and gathering activities both in Olancho and in the Taguzgalpa.⁷⁶ He seems to have seen the Taguzgalpa as a labour source and the missions as a means to exact tribute. For example, on the settlement of “wild” Pech in *valle* missions:

no salió tan varato a los paías porque, desde que se poblaron, han mantenido las estancias de Agalta y San Cali, sembrando milpas, haziendo corrales y aviando la vaquería. (Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681])

⁷⁵ See Fray Fernando Espino's 1674 account (1968); Ovalle and Guevara also cover this in detail in 1991[1681] as does Vázquez in 1714[1944]. See also BAGG 1939b[1674].

⁷⁶ Newson (1986), following Stone, writes that the Yaras were probably Lencas, but this is controverted by various evidence I have discovered. For example, in AGCA A1.24 1566 10210 f. 154 1681 we find mention of “jicaques de la nacion paya, yara.” (See also *Testimonio de Autos...* 1739, in Leyva 1991.)

The writer, Fray Pedro de Ovalle, was the main force for missionization in Olancho in its first decades, and was quite cynical about Escoto, who tried to take all the credit for founding the missions. Escoto discredited valle and other barefoot friars among the sedentary religious and civil authorities in Manto and Comayagua who would not permit them to say mass in the *estancias* along their routes between missions.⁷⁷ I suspect that ecclesiastical authorities were jealous of the Franciscans' religious fervor, their vows of poverty, and their acceptance among the poorer *olanchanos* (the parish priests often became large landowners and apparently rarely visited their flocks).⁷⁸

In 1677 (AGCA A1.45 368 3412 1677), the Indios de Catacamas, “grandemente damnificados,” begged the King, their protector, to punish Escoto, as well as a Marcos de Herrera, for usurping their lands and stealing their cattle, which the Spaniards had achieved in part by having their own brands put on the calves of *cimarrón* (feral) cattle belonging to Catacamas. Escoto was well connected in Manto, and instead of justice being done against him, when he found out what the Indios had done he had their *alcalde* and other *principales* locked up for a week, then judged in a kangaroo court. The Indios de Catacamas were fined in cattle and stripped of some of their lands: the local authorities ruled that Indios could not possess such vast haciendas. The Indios de Catacamas were quite succinct about all this in a second letter to the King, in which they called Escoto a flagrant violator of the law, showing how he and the maximum civil authority, Theniente de Olancho Luis de Zerbellón, tried to run Olancho el Viejo as their own fiefdom. In the *enredos* of this period are a confluence of positions

⁷⁷ Ovalle did much of the legwork in the 1670s to establish and/or maintain the first missions of San Felipe, San Sebastián, San Pedro, San Miguel, and others in the Valle de Agalta and Valle de Abajo. See Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681]; BAGG 1940[1676].

⁷⁸ Scandals involving parish priests in Olancho and across Honduras plagued the Church up through the 1800s. For example, the Archivo Eclesiástico de Comayagua's “Casos contra Sacerdotes” files includes several cases of sexual misconduct among priests in Juticalpa in the 1800s.

against the elite—the first clear indications of what was to become the dominant spatial conflict in the 1800s.

Not all Franciscans lived up to the often Utopian ideals of friars like Ovalle. Though no Franciscans are known to have been murdered in the Taguzgalpa after 1660, several took sick and either died or fled back to civilization and the relative comforts of Tegucigalpa. Some never made it out to the missions, but preferred to perform their service to Church and State at a safe distance:

aunque salgan de España con buen espíritu y fin, despues los reparten por los conventos [e.g. in Tegucigalpa and Comayagua], donde hai mucha opulencia y comodidades, y no quieren ir a vivir entre bárbaros, ni aprender nueva lengua y pasar necesidades.” (Vargas y Abarca 1991[1696]).

The three to ten missions waxed and waned, with periods of strength between 1670 and 1680, and again around 1700. All but a few lasted a brief time, moving from place to place, abandoned, sacked. Those that endured the longest were the Paya settlements of San Sebastián at the far northeastern edge of the Valle de Agalta, and a group of missions near Gualaco: [San Francisco de] Santa María de Payas, San Buenaventura, and San Joseph (AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 223 1711).⁷⁹ In one form or another these lasted as missions from the 1670s until the 1730s or later.

The “Xicaque” missions (meaning by this time all “wild” Indians in general, but often exclusive of “Paya”), such as San Miguel, San Pedro, and San Felipe in the Valle de Olancho, were abandoned by 1700. The missionaries were enamoured of the Paya because they learned Spanish quickly, were docile, and could be trusted (Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681]). The missionaries stressed, however, that like the rest of the residents of the Taguzgalpa, the Paya were involved in vendettas among themselves, as well as warfare with the Tawahkas (probably including “Chatos” and “Sules”/“Zules”) and the Zambo Mosquitos:

tienen estos Yndios entre sí esta malditissima costumbre de que en matando a alguno no paran, hasta acavar con toda la familia de aquel, y asi los pueblos [missions] se están

⁷⁹ Newson (1986) describes in detail the day-to-day life of Franciscan missions in Honduras.

acavando....la maldad executada por los Yndios, que aunque fuera de aquí ha veinte años, que...había de vengar. (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6)

This chilling passage could easily have been written in the 1990s, not in reference to the Pech but as an honest assessment of Olanchanos, some of whom, true to stereotypes, engage in unforgiving vendettas that stretch for decades and may result in the near-complete extinction of families and villages. The above comments are perhaps manifestation of a cultural rhizome between the Taguzgalpa and Olancho, or one that predated Conquest.

Fray Rodrigo Betancur had this to say about the Paya in 1698:

Ya dije que en estas montañas viven en una confución, sin ley ni rey, y por esto no se sujetan a justicia...A que, añado, se hallan tan perseguidos de yngleses, de negros, de taguacas y comajaes, quienes les han quitado a sus mugeres y muerto a muchos de ellos, que sólo con una vos que salga diziendo Vuestra Señoría embía soldados, no ha de quedar uno en las montañas....esta nación [in the missions] a la orilla del monte es como el pez a la orilla del agua...ymaginan algunos que sacándolos se han de morir de tristesa....Háganlos trabajar y sembrar para que lansen la osiedad y tristeza, y tomen amor a la posada; dénles tierras montuosas, sean frías o calientes-que de todo tienen por acá-donde ayga un buen río. (Betancur 1991[1698]:208-9)

Franciscans were fond of characterizing the Indians of the Taguzgalpa as nomads without law or king (“sin ley ni rey”). The Church and State’s main justifications for extricating the “Bárbaros” from smooth space were to teach them to be civilized, to live in villages under central administration, to have sedentary agriculture—to striate them, in other words. The State’s characterization of the Indians as lawless nomads justified their often bloody extraction from the rainforest landscapes that sheltered them out to the flat, open, dry *valles*, where ranching and farming could be practiced under the gaze of the Church and the State in the form of *mulato* soldiers and barefoot friars.

Belying the love of civilization with which the Pech were supposed to become imbued after being dragged from their rainforest perdition, many preferred flee back to the *montaña* after a short time in a mission,. To combat this, the technique of Conquista governor Antonio Herrera around 1700 was to have them dragged out farther than where they had been before, to a palisaded ranch near Silca called El Carbonal, where he had them kept under heavy guard. This

massive extraction of hundreds of Pech became known as the “Saca al Carbonal” (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). Since Carbonal was well within Olancho’s domain, it was thought that, deprived of any spatial ties to their homes, the Pech would turn civilized and forget their wandering ways. However, the Indians tried to escape en masse, killing several of their captors, who slaughtered more than 100 of them in return. Missionaries recalled this traumatizing “Fuga del Carbonal” several decades later (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6), and it obviously was a watershed with several ramifications for the history of the missions and Olancho: where, when, how, and by whom was missionization to be accomplished? The Pech had a clear idea: when the El Carbonal escapees returned to the *montaña*, their newly burning hatred for the Outside resulted in truces with the Zambo Mosquitos and the English, who in return for tribute and espionage provided the Pech with enough weapons to arm them to the teeth, presumably in preparation for an eventual takeover of Honduras by the British (according to AGCA 134 1504 1721-6).

After the Fuga del Carbonal, what was to be the role of the *olanchanos*, who had been the weapon of a cowardly State for 40 years? A key document is the 1699-1700 plea from *estancieros* to the King, demonstrating not only that the *olanchano* identity was strong but that it was sympathetic to the Paya and resentful against the Spanish (AGCA A1 161 1689 1699-1700). By comparison with land title documents and other material, it appears that those who wrote the plea were *mulatos*.

el serbicio que hemos echo a suma gasto...[durante] mas de 40 años...en la reducción de los yndios payas....todos nosotros pobres estancieros....ysimos dos entradas a las montañas y estandonos mas de cuatro meses sacamos todos los yndios en distrito de 50 leg[u]as....tenemos osprimentado [=experienced] no conbiene el despoblar las tierras de sus moradas pues por cuyo razón sean muerto mas de sien yndios [in the Fuga]– y por lo que tenemos reconosido se moriran todos de afligidos y ser la parte donde estan muy esteril para ellos y los demas que ay en las montañas nose podran coger con las notisias que tienen de lo mal que a sus compañeros les aydo –con su gran conprension mande bolberlos a sus pueblos y a nosotros y a todos los moradores deste Partido [Olancho] nos suspenda d[ic]ha asistencia de gicaques por allarnos pobres....[signed]los vesinos y moradores ttodos juntos a vos [=voz] de ttodos deste partido de Olancho el biejo.

The *estancieros*, foot soldiers of the Conquest, had to leave their wives and children for months at a time as they penetrated to the far reaches of the *montañas* in search of Payas. Their

job was dangerous but went little rewarded. Their pay was minimal, and they often had to bring the provisions themselves, since supplies sent from Comayagua mysteriously disappeared before reaching Manto (they make allegations of *fraude* against officials). They had been ordered, for example, to drag out Indians to El Carbonal before the harvest, so that the bloody flight was largely provoked by the fact that the Pech were starving to death and had no choice. Notable in the *olanchanos*' tone is a pragmatism and lack of idealism, the opposite of the Franciscan missionaries, who were fed up because of lack of central support (they wanted more funding and soldiers). The *estancieros* suggested that the missions be disbanded and the Payas left to return to the Taguzgalpa, where they would be happy. If the missions were to continue, the *olanchanos* should be paid better and their provisions not stolen. They should also be allowed to appoint their own Joseph de Moya as Capitán, because Herrera was not "one of them" (Herrera did not even bother to accompany them on the *entradas*).

No statement of the mission effort's effects on Olancho could be more frank. Nevertheless, the *mulatos* were also playing their own game: judging by the fact that almost all landholders (some with the same surnames as the signers of the above document) appearing in titles from 1682 through the late 1700s held military titles, it seems likely that cooperating *olanchanos* received payment in land.

The El Carbonal "mission" was a mistake of the State: it wasn't far enough away from the Taguzgalpa. Eighteenth-century efforts, particularly after 1750, saw Pech dragged as far as Comayagua and even far western Honduras, with sometimes disastrous results (see BAGG 1941[1785]). A few missionaries wanted to minister to the Pech and others on their own lands, "Adentro" (on the inside: see De la Concepción 1991[1699]). This, they thought, would erase the need for "escapes." Fray Pedro de la Concepción even talked of establishing a Spanish *ciudad* in the Taguzgalpa, reviving the old idea of striation that had all but died with Nueva Salamanca. Such "inside" settlement efforts, however, suffered frequent attacks from the *enemigos*, and were unsustainable.

The mission settlement model that had the most lasting effect on the *valles* of Olancho el Viejo was adapted from Escoto's original efforts in the 1660s. Missions were located on the narrow margin between the Taguzgalpa and Honduras, in or adjacent to the *serranías* where the Paya and others could have one foot in the *valle* and one in the *montaña*. This favored complex trade and social relationships along the frontier in an *enredo* of intricate spatial complexity involving land use and rights, religion, capital, power, and probably contraband. Involved with the mission Indians in one way or another were tribute *indios olanchanos*, poor *mulato estancieros*, rich Spanish and *mulato hacendados*, itinerant tradespeople, *payas montañeses*, Tawahkas, Zambos Mosquitos, and the English, in addition to the hierarchy of Franciscans. All documents from this *enredo* are partisan, since all arise from spatial identities jockeying for power and influence.

The Zambos Mosquitos were the face of evil for the State from 1700 onward, replacing the eclipsed Tawahkas. The Zambos were a coastal and riverine people inhabiting far northeastern Honduras and Nicaragua, believed to be descendants of indigenous ("proto-Miskito") peoples mixed with escaped African slaves (Garret y Arlon 1991[1711]). They began their ascent to dominance in the mid-1660s, and with the help of the English in Jamaica, soon exerted a powerful influence on Olancho and on the entire Caribbean slope of Central America (e.g. Musset 1995). The "*enemigo zambo*," as Olanchanos called them in title documents, provided an endless supply of guns, gunpowder, and other necessities to the "wild" Indians of the Taguzgalpa, who in turn maintained a trade with their relatives the mission Indians, and presumably with some Olanchanos well as, since Olancho was said to be an open-air contraband market (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6; Mack 1998). The Payas, it seems, had to become rhizomatic with the Zambos and the English as well as with the Spanish in order to maintain a semblance of power over their lands.

The Zambos' complete disdain for the Spanish Church and State was evident at every turn. They were able to penetrate easily by river into the interior as far as Catacamas, sacking it at

least four times between the 1690s and the 1740s, burning it at least once, desecrating its church, and enslaving its residents. The Zambos were given specific orders by their King (the “Rey de Moskitos,” whom the missionaries called a “reyezuelo”) and by the English to leave the *indios de la montaña* and the *indios mansos* (“tame,” i.e. mission, Indians) alone, but to infiltrate, attack, and destroy the tribute towns, and to get information about Spanish military presence including the location and vulnerability of Manto and Comayagua (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). The Zambos apparently had little concept of land distances in the Spanish domain: they believed the tribute Indians of Chindona who told them in the 1720s that Manto was at least two weeks’ land journey away (it was two days’), while Comayagua was a couple months’ (it was ten days’) (AGCA 134 1504 1721-6). Here we see evidence of the spatial conceptions of a river people below the canoe point, for whom the interior of the Central American isthmus was a vast space. On the other hand, Church and State frequently painted the Taguzgalpa as vast beyond imagining, taking weeks or even months to cross.⁸⁰

The Zambos terrorized the Valle de Abajo, Valle de Lepaguare, and Valle de Agalta up through the 1790s and even later (see, for example, ANH AC 138 4847(4839) 1819, *Huellas de Zambos en Olancho*). But they unwittingly helped the spatial strategies of Catacamas and a few private landowners, and this effect has rippled through Olancho’s spaces to the present day. The threat the Zambos posed to Olancho el Viejo was the most common excuse Olanchanos used in almost all eighteenth-century title documents when asking for low land prices from Guatemala officials. Lands along the frontier were often much cheaper and more easily available than those to the west, but were not inferior quality for range purposes. For example, the Herreras in 1715 sold their hacienda of San Luis de Laxas (with accompanying *platanar*) to Catacamas. The Herreras made money from the yearly instalments until the Indians could pay

⁸⁰ By river from Olancho to the Caribbean, without an outboard motor, takes only a week or two depending on the season. Jesús Aguilar Paz (“Talapal-lan, Huehuetlapal-lan, ruinas de Ciudad Blanca,” 1969) recounts sarcastically how a foreign adventurer once lied to him of having “discovered” the Ciudad Blanca somewhere down the Río Wampú, after many weeks boat travel from Olancho.

it off (ANTO 36 Catacamas 1713-78); Catacamas expanded its own empire. Catacamas, through mechanisms such as its *cofradías* and *caja de comunidad*, expanded its neighboring hacienda of San Pedro to around 500 *caballerías* (an almost unheard-of size) and paid a very low price for it, both because no one else wanted the land and because the surveyors were unwilling to traverse the whole area, thus drastically underestimating its size (ANTO 37 Catacamas). Every time the Zambos burned Catacamas and titles were lost, the tribute Indians attempted to expand their domain, and when the Zambo threat and “Taguzgalpa” finally disappeared, they extended their gaze all the way to the Río Coco. In this way (despite the nineteenth-century loss of Dulce Nombre de Culmí) Catacamas became the largest *municipio* in Honduras.

Despite the gains Catacamas realized as it straddled smooth and striated spaces, its Indians remained marginalized by the State. A Honduran governor’s report on his visit to Olancho in 1770 (AGCA A1.4 390 3662 c.1771) provides a bird’s-eye view of marginalization in eighteenth-century Olancho.

The governor began with an official visit to Catacamas, to which a governor had not been since 1752, according to the town’s Libros de Comunidad. Catacamas possessed 3,300 pesos in cash, which he ordered they invest partially in more livestock: at that time they had (only) 425 mature steers, 93 half-grown steers, 27 tame horses, and three mules (it is probable that only tame animals were counted, since Catacamas’ feral livestock was virtually impossible to count). The town also had its (required) “milpa de siembra de fanega,” the communal plot for producing tribute crops (usually maize).⁸¹ Each year, as per the rules of tribute and subsistence,

⁸¹ Tribute records in the AGCA for Olancho increase in the 1700s. Tributes exacted were minuscule compared to those collected in western Honduras. Between 1751 and 1754 (AGCA 43 438 8956), totals for towns in Olancho el Viejo were valued as much as 233 pesos (Jano) and as little as 10 pesos (Zapota). Catacamas apparently was exempt in those years. At the same time, Ocotepeque rendered 467 pesos and Gualcinca 433. Indians (who had to travel to Comayagua to render tribute) paid in cotton *mantas*, chickens, and maize in those years. Eighteenth-century tribute lists in AGCA (known to me) are: AGCA A3 190 1938 (1710-14); AGCA A3 498 10209 (1733); AGCA A3.16 2325 34320 (1741 and 1757-1763); AGCA 43 438 8956 (1751-4).

the mayor was in charge of the 200-odd Indian families' sowing of a "fanega de maíz, media de frijoles, y media de algodón." Election of new officials was to be on the first of every January.

The governor found Catacamas' physical state, after almost 20 years without a governor's visit, to be a shambles, and he gave out numerous orders: the run-down houses had to be repaired; they had to be clean, well-thatched, and protected from the elements; each had to have *tapescos* (beds—"civilized" Indians didn't sleep on the floor), a cross, and an "herramienta"; a family could have no more than 12 chickens and a rooster. The mayor and his officials had to take one day of every month to visit all the (200-plus) houses to ensure that these standards were kept. Any *indio* who did not obey would receive 25 lashes in public. The governor also decreed that all the Indios de Catacamas must attend Mass. The "Yndio Doctrinero" must teach church doctrine to the children in the Spanish language. Blasphemers, drunks, idolaters and witches would be severely punished (a rare mention of religious practices among tribute Indians). Through this barrage of strictures, the striation of space by Church and State could be achieved physically and mentally—chaos was kept at bay.

The governor was concerned about the state of fear in which Catacamas lived because of the Zambo threat, made worse because every year the Indios had to go to Manto for holy celebrations (Semana Santa, Corpus Christi, and Asunción) to clean it, put up decorations, and do other chores. During those times Catacamas was abandoned, left open to sack by the Zambos. He wanted this stopped, and the Indians given firearms to protect themselves. The governor moved on to Santa María del Real, putting that tribute town in order as well.⁸²

⁸² El Real always was (and continues to be) a small and "insignificant" place in comparison to Catacamas; nevertheless, its less than 100 families possessed abundant lands and were as insistent about titling them and keeping them as Catacamas, with whom they often disputed (and continue to dispute). ANTO 120 Masatepe, a collection of eighteenth-century documents concerning Real's lands, begins with what is presumably a fragment of their Libro de Comunidad, discussing their various earnings and expenditures. Maize was paid to the *albañil*, and a "Manuel" was given a *carga de plátanos*; the teacher was paid in maize as well. Beans were given away as well as sold for a variety of reasons. Maize was used on the Saint's day, "Nuestra Señora de Candelaria," when the *mozos* were treated to *tamales* and *pinol*. More maize was used to feed the Padre when he came to do confessions, given out as payment or sustenance for unlucky families, and given to soldiers when they were present. The mutual aid aspect of local space, entangled with hierarchical necessities, is evident here. ANH AC 43 1401 is a 1762 Padrón

The rest of the governor's (1771) report was given over to his plan for keeping the Zambos and contrabandists at bay. In effect, his trip resulted in the fortification of Olancho against the Taguzgalpa. He wrote that the Valle de Agalta and the Valle de Abajo were saturated by "trato ilícito" (contraband). He was very worried for the Valle de Abajo because it was populated by "copiosas haciendas de ganado," and its several churches had valuable silver ornaments. These were strong incentives for Zambo attack. He decreed several military posts to guard against contraband entry from the Valle de Jamastrán. He also ordered that each month, Catacamas had to send a patrol down the Río Guayape as far as where it meets the Guayambre (in the Valle de Azacualpa, forming the Patuca); another patrol must go east (through Jamasquire, Ziguete [sic], Caliche, and El Aguacate) to look for tracks or other evidence that enemies had made local contact. The governor continued his trip with an inspection of the Valle de Agalta. He described the main contraband route as crossing south over the "Montaña de San Sebastián" (part of the Cordillera de Agalta) to the coast.⁸³ The governor ordered that this (apparently well-travelled) trail be closed completely. The military company stationed in the Valle de Agalta was ordered to dispatch a "cavo y tres hombres" (as a horseback patrol) on a complete, circular inspection of the Valle de Agalta every fifteen days, paying special attention to the "Camino de Pacura, que pasa a Sonaguera" meaning the trail through Tayaco toward Trujillo, which was officially a *camino real* as well as a contraband route (so he couldn't order it closed off). He forbid any "vecinos" of the Valle de Agalta from leaving, not even with the motive of going "a Silca a las Funciones." Neither could they let any trader come into the Valle if they didn't know him; all traders had to carry passports.

of Real which lists 136 people. Several Indian women were married to *mulatos*; two Indian men were from Nicaragua.

⁸³ "camino a Guampoa [Wampú]...de allí a La Criva." This was an old missionary route, part of which Fray Pedro de Ovalle reported having opened around 1681 to connect the Río Tinto mission with San Sebastián (Ovalle and Guevara 1991[1681]). On the role of the Black River, see, for example, Cruz

The governor was attempting to draw the line that had to separate Olancho from the Taguzgalpa, civilization from chaos. It appears that it had blurred considerably in the 1700s. He wanted more than anything an armed populace, and finishes his report by an enumeration of existent weapons in Olancho.⁸⁴ (Arming the populace, however, proved in official retrospect to be a rather bad idea in the years following independence.)

Not by any means did all events in eighteenth-century Olancho directly involve the missions and the frontier. Other currents as well led to solidification of spaces and spatial identities across the Partido.

Settled land in Olancho el Viejo during the late colonial period comprised about half the area of the present-day Departamento de Olancho, or approximately 12,000 square kilometers. Anguiano's census (1991[1801]) reveals a total population of around 7700. This is a population density of perhaps one family for every ten square kilometers, though densities were skewed by large, exclusive landholdings as well as by the tendency of populations near the frontier to cluster in defense against the Zambos.

Hierarchical organization of space became more marked. In 1698, the church in Olancho el Viejo was severed from Olancho el Nuevo's domain.⁸⁵ Between 1730 and 1736, Olancho's church space (of Beneficio de Yocón and Beneficio de Manto) was reallocate in two *curatos*: Silca, which administered northern and western Olancho, and became its central place; Manto, which administered the Valle de Arriba and Valle de Abajo (BAGG 1941-2[1733-6]). Juticalpa, however, became Olancho's undisputed central place, because it was where

Reyes 1998.

⁸⁴ "Noticia individual de armamentos y municiones....78 fusiles buenos, 56 medianos componibles, 101 inutilis, 166 bayonetes, 24 cartuchas inservibles, 11 machetes, 70 lanzas, 3 pedreros, 1809 balas, ninguna piedra, 145 libras de polvora."

⁸⁵ AGCA A1.24 1570 10214. The missions remained under separate administration. For ecclesiastical non-mission history of Olancho from 1700 onward, see local church archives (e.g. Juticalpa, Catacamas, Gualaco) and the AEC. See especially AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. One of the most intriguing is AEC Documentos... 1817, about a "cuero de mapachin" (raccoon pelt) used to prepare a sexual potion that a "sinner" confessed to have been effective in finding and keeping a wife.

Spanish/Criollo and *mulato* families (tradespeople as well as *hacendados*) clustered. Though Manto remained political capital of Olancho el Viejo, Juticalpa seemed to be the center of power and authority in many issues: all land titles in the Valle de Abajo, for example, were solicited, and announced by a town crier, in Juticalpa rather than Manto.

Outside the few viable towns, there were a growing number of small settlements on or bordering ranches, comprising *mulato* and Indian *mozos* and *estancieros*. Juticalpa, Silca, and Manto, and to a lesser extent Yocón, were places that most Olanchanos visited a few times a year during church festivities (such as each town's *feria*, or patron saint celebration).⁸⁶ Certain Olanchanos regularly visited the North Coast: these included *contrabandistas* as well as tribute Indians from the northern towns who had to help in the building of military fortifications (see Comisión... 1938[1792]. Tegucigalpa and Comayagua were far away for most, and few went there. Some Olanchanos never left the *valles* in which they were born.⁸⁷ The wealthy families, who split their time between their haciendas and their houses in Juticalpa, Manto, and Silca, sent their children to be educated in Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, and Guatemala. Missions, while they lasted, had schools for the Payas; Catacamas already had a school run by the parish priest in 1713 (ANTO 36 Catacamas). Schools in the non-Indian towns apparently did not come about until the 1800s. (For general information on the above issues, see also BAGG 1942[1765].)

In the 1700s, usufruct ownership gave way to land titling of all *valles* and surrounding hills in Olancho el Viejo even to its remotest corners. Land parcels were small close to concentrated

⁸⁶ See Wells' elaborate description of Juticalpa's December 1854 celebration of the Virgen de la Concepción (1857).

⁸⁷ In 1734, the Church's Capellán, in Silca, wrote regarding the ecclesiastical hierarchy's suggestion that the Curato de Olancho be divided because the distances were too great for it to be under one administration: "digo: en lo que toca a estos dos Beneficios de Llocón y Manto, tan solamente de oída sé que hay grave distancia del Pueblo de Manto a los que ressiden, assi, en los Pueblos del Valle... como mejor sabe V. Ssa. Ylma. por experiencia personal, a la cual me remito, *por no haber haber nunca bajado al Valle*, sino tan solamente hasta el Pueblo de Zapota" (italics mine) (BAGG 1941-2[1733-6]:56). The linear distance from Silca to the Valle de Abajo where he had never been is 35 kilometers, and even today takes only two days by mule (or two hours by car).

populations such as Juticalpa and Manto, but were much larger farther away, and largest of all on the border with the Taguzgalpa. But titles often did little better than customary rights because feral livestock--consummate nomads--tended to disobey land borders.⁸⁸ Long and bitter disputes over trespassing and stolen livestock could result (see ANTO 178 San Felipe c. 1774).

Olanchanos, both individually and in common, whether Spanish/Criollo, *mulato* (including “pardo”), or Indio, could accumulate land through bidding the most for it in Juticalpa or Manto, or later in Comayagua or Guatemala. Most landowners, even when they didn’t live on their land, rarely resided outside Olancho. The land record shows that most titles were awarded without competition, but several glaring exceptions point to a growing conflict between the *pobres estancieros* and the rich *hacendados*. Even the accumulated capital of a *mancomún* (group of *estancieros* ranching the same land, still a common practice today) was sometimes not enough to obtain a choice piece of *valle* land. A document from 1741 (ANTO 58 “Chichinaquez” [=Chichinaguaca]) details the eloquent pleas of a group of ex-mission soldiers who contested the hegemony of Gregorio Canelas, wealthiest *hacendado* in the land. Canelas, a *mulato* from the Gualaco area, and his children and grandchildren after him, used their money and various ruthless tactics to establish their rights over entire *valles* (such as the Valle de Azacualpa), grabbing the undesirable places along the Taguzgalpa border that Catacamas didn’t already own.⁸⁹ But the case of Chichinaguaca was different: Canelas’ only justification for retaining the tiny piece of land near Juticalpa as part of his already vast ranching empire was that it was his oldest hacienda. In other words, it had sentimental value for him. Despite the

⁸⁸ Land borders, when they were inscribed into the landscape at all, were live fences and water boundaries. Stone walls as land boundaries, common throughout central, southern, and western Honduras, are barely perceptible in Olancho. Only a few have survived in the immediate vicinity of Juticalpa. Their noticeable lack in Olancho may have been due to a combination of larger holdings, lower population density, or to difficulty of maintenance.

⁸⁹ Or that was in the Valle de Lepaguare, which had become the nearly exclusive domain of the Criollo Zelaya family by the early 1700s.

strong case made by the *mancomún*, in which the ex-soldiers proved their bravery and loyalty, the State listened only to money. The disputed title was awarded to Gregorio Canelas when he showed up at the very last minute in Guatemala to offer almost three times what the *estancieros* could pay.

Given the fact that the Canelas family seemed to relish lands bordering the Taguzgalpa,⁹⁰ it seems probable that they benefited, like many Olanchanos, from the thriving contraband trade. This meant that they could sell their cattle skins down the rivers, through the Zambo Mosquitos, to the English, if they weren't amassing enough capital through the tightly-controlled Spanish system of live markets in places as far away as San Miguel in El Salvador (Johannessen 1963; Newson 1986). For that matter, judging by Juticalpa's *cofradía* balance sheets from the 1700s,⁹¹ it is also unlikely that communal ventures made much profit through the long cattle drives and controlled prices. But aside from the irregular government inspections, there is understandably little printed evidence for specific landowner involvement in contraband (though see Mack 1998).

The need for legal recognition of usufruct rights among all parties extended by the late 1700s into the *serranías* of pine and oak that flank the *valles*. These areas are somewhat wetter and cooler than the *valles*, and are commonly used as *retiros* (retreats) for cattle during times such as the dry season (March-May) when the *valles* are parched, or in November when cattle are taken briefly out of the savannas to let the grass regrow. Burning in the *valles* and *serranía* remained widespread and in tandem with cattle continued to be the major way that landscapes were shaped. It is a reasonable guess that in most areas impact of human population and livestock on the higher mountains and their cloud forest *montañas* remained minimal.

⁹⁰ Particularly Azacualpa (for which a title is lacking, but see ANTO Mescales 1791-1873) at the confluence of the Guayape and Guayambre rivers. The theme of Olanchanos and contraband continued in the 1800s: see ANH Uncatalogued material 1848.

⁹¹ AOO Elecciones y cuentas de la Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de Concepción 1748-1757; AOO Elecciones y cuentas de Cofradía de San Juan de Juticalpa 1765-1780.

Judging by land title evidence and by present-day inventories in areas of low human population density like northern Gualaco, wildlife was abundant during the later colonial period (and up to the 1950s), though it was rarely mentioned except when it threatened the productivity of ranches. *Tigres* (jaguars) were the major cattle predators, and actually drove down land values “por los muchos tigres que hay,” as titles across Olancho repeated. They were followed in importance by *lobos* (coyotes), *leones* (mountain lions), and *tigrillos* (ocelots), all considered to be “*fieras*.” *Venados* (white-tailed deer) were an important source of protein for all ethnic groups, and ranged throughout the *valles* (Wells 1857).⁹² Retrodicting from Wells’ 1857 account to the previous century, other abundant larger mammals, all hunted, were the *danto* (tapir), *jagüilla* (white-lipped peccary), *quequeo* (collared peccary), and *tilopo* (red brocket deer). Small game animals were abundant. Bird populations in Olancho were overwhelming, most noticeably parrots, parakeets, and macaws, but including hundreds of other species. The rivers contained abundant fish (notably the coveted *cuyamel*), large turtles, and *lagartos* (crocodiles and caimans). Iguanas, an important protein source, abounded in the drier *valles*.

Olancho’s cornucopia was dear to the heart of increasingly anarchistic *olanchano* identities, when they thought of all they had and all the outside lacked. And while outsiders were beginning to recognize Olancho in terms of its potential for wealth, their accounts are best left for the next section.

The damning words of a polymath Franciscan missionary are appropriate to bring this section to its conclusion, in a brutally frank statement of just what “real” civilization thought of Olancho, when it thought of such regions at all. The last gasp of Franciscan missionary effort⁹³

⁹² One of the reasons the Indios de Catacamas complained against Escoto in 1677 (AGCA A1.45 368 3412) was that he and his friends spent several days hunting deer on their land.

⁹³ The missions had lost importance as the 1700s advanced: see, for example, *Relación de los religiosos franciscanos...* 1991[1748]. The San Buenaventura cluster in the Valle de Gualaco was an exception in that San Buenaventura eventually became a town in its own right, though by 1820 only a few Pech were left (ANTO 66 Los Encuentros 1820). San Buenaventura received *ejidos* through the help of a missionary in the time around 1734 (ANTO Santa María de Payas 1735). Another long-lasting mission, San Sebastián along the Río Aguaquire (present-day Río Tonjagua) in the Valle de Agalta, was occupied

was the visit of the erudite Guatemala-based Costa Rican friar Antonio de Liendo y Goicoechea, who penned a detailed description of his failed effort to convert the “Indios Agaltas,” the Pech east and north of the Valle de Agalta, around 1806. Goicoechea established two missions called San Esteban Tonjagua and Nombre de Jesús Pacura, the latter near a preexisting *mulato* or mestizo settlement. Both were on or near the *serranía* edges of the Valle de Agalta, following a long-established pattern.



Fig. 3.12. Outskirts of San Esteban “Tonjagua” in the Valle de Agalta (1999).

Goicoechea’s contribution to the history of Olancho, an 1806 letter and 1807 *Relación*, are best known for the latter’s description of a secret Paya celebration in a longhouse (on the ruins of a Taycones center) at Los Encuentros, the confluence of the Tayaco and Naranjal rivers,⁹⁴ but they also provide valuable insights on the geography of Olancho:

from the 1670s (Ovalle and Guevara 1681[1991]) until at least the 1720s. The Río Tinto area northeast of Catacamas, site of relatively long-lasting Paya missions, ended up as a *sitio* owned by *mulato ganaderos* of Catacamas by the late 1800s, and even became a *municipio* in 1874 (ANTO 89 Icoteas 1875; ANTO 163 Río Tinto 1789-1837; it is an *aldea* of Catacamas today). Several other mission sites disappeared without a trace.

⁹⁴ Goicoechea does not witness the event, but is told of it by an acolyte whom he sent along with the Pech. Contrary to Goicoechea’s painting of the Tayaco region as a remote *montaña* known only to the Pech, the Governor of Honduras’ 1770 report, summarized above, shows that not only was Pacura a preexisting Ladino settlement, but also that Tayaco was crossed by a *camino real* to Sonaguera and the coast. This was a heavily used contraband route according to the governor, so it is likely that not only the Pech but the Olanchanos as well were keeping the Padre in the dark about “pre-Christianity” in the region. How much of a “secret” from local *estancieros* could such ceremonies have been, considering that the *camino real* went right by the site?

Me encuentro el las honduras de Agalta, y jusgo que por ello, se han llamado así estos países...Es un valle grande, hermoso, y ameno; pero cercado por todas partes de montes altísimos, cruzados de río profundos, y barrancos peligrosos. El primero que los penetró, estaba ciertamente aburrido de su existencia. (Goicoechea 1935[1806]:247)
 [The mission Pech] En lo general no son tan perversos como la gente comun de ese pueblo. Ofrecen con franqueza lo que tienen: no se burlan de persona alguna: no beven sino por sus fiestas. (249)

Goicoechea insinuated that the common people of Olancho drank a lot, did *not* offer with frankness everything they had, and were mocking of him and/or each other. The northeastern *olanchanos* were depraved inhabitants of a cruel landscape. The “uncivilized” Pech of the Taguzgalpa, on the other hand, were unsullied (if conflictive) inhabitants in a virtual Garden of Eden:

Cada parcialidad [i.e. Pech family] procura de intento colocarse en los parajes mas ocultos, fragosos e inaccesibles. El empeño de encubrirse los hace ingeniosos, para encontrar guaridas seguras. Unos de otros se recelan y se temen en tanto extremo, que cuando alguna de las poblacioncillas se hace conocida la trasladan a otra parte....Jamás salen de sus chozas por un solo punto, temiendo abrir huellas por donde pueda algun curioso rastrear sus habitaciones...para que sus gallos con el canto no los descubran en el silencio de la noche los encierran de suerte que no pueden pararse, ni batir las alas, por que saben que no cantan sin estos dos requisitos....Es pues, la montaña de Agalta mas benigna y sana que los países conocidos....*Es indecible el amor con que los indios miran su adorada montaña.* La desnudez, hambres y trabajos les son preferibles a la comodidad mayor que les ofrezcan por otra parte....Su país mantiene el temperamento mas dulce y suave, libre de mosquitos, zancudos, niguas, y otras sabandijas. Las aguas que reciben de muchas cristalinas fuentes son saludabilisimas: el terreno fecundo y que sabe rendir ciento por uno a sus cultivadores. Allí se encuentran libres de las epidemias, y males que en todas partes afligen a los miseros mortales, no se conoce la lue, venera, viruelas, sarampión, catarros, ni calenturas periódicas. (Goicoechea 1937[1807]; italics mine)

He saw the Pech as inseparable from their native landscape: a poignant statement of becoming-forest as the felicitous alternative to the plagues of Civilization. But parallel to his Utopic forest is a narrative of Pech duplicity—taking the proffered gifts at the missions and patting the old friar’s ego, but ultimately treacherous in their faked (or highly syncretic) Christianity. The rites that they practiced at Los Encuentros resemble those recorded among the Pech in 1698 (Betancur 1991[1698]) and the Taycones even earlier (AGCA Probanza de Corella 1561). Turning pragmatic in response to these barriers to civilization, Goicoechea laid

plans for the better organization of northeastern Olancho, in which the Pech would become peons to the ranches:

Son incalculables los bienes que resultan a los hacendados y ganaderos de aquel distrito y aún a todo Olancho, con tener por amigos y compadres a los que hasta allí habían experimentado por sus enemigos mortales [meaning the Pech]....La asistencia de este Pueblo [Pacura], y la de San Esteban Tonjagua es de increíble consuelo a unas 20 haciendas de ganado establecidas en el Valle. En todas partes carecen de hombres y brazos para las siembras, las correrías de Ganado, las quezerías, y para conductores de los productos....Desde el pueblo de Gualaco (que es una ayuda pequeña de Parroquia) hasta Pacura, y hasta Tonjagua, hay un terreno como de treinta leguas, y en que apenas hay seiscientas almas...En suma a tanta necesidad, que en día ignoro como puede pasarse sin ayuda de los indios....Gualaco...es tan miserable que no puede mantener un coadjutor....Si toda la provincia de Comayagua se queja por la falta de misioneros, *es preciso que la penuria llegue al extremo en los Valles de Gualaco y de Agalta, que son los términos mas distantes y miserables del infortunado país de Honduras.* (Goicoechea 1937[1807]; italics mine).⁹⁵

Northeastern Olancho was the most distant and despicable corner of unfortunate Honduras. A more arrogant statement could scarcely be imagined, and his attitude shows the bitterness and lack of control that Goicoechea felt in a land whose complex identities Church and State could barely comprehend.⁹⁶

The Franciscan missions from 1660 to 1807, in retrospect, achieved few to none of their stated objectives: neither the Pech nor the Tawahka nor any other inhabitants of the Taguzgalpa gave up their roving, anarchistic ways, and few who were extracted formed other than

⁹⁵ Perhaps a different geography of northeastern Olancho would have resulted if Church and State had heeded 90-year-old *Sargento* Pedro de Tejada, *vecino* of Olancho, who had seen it all by 1737. He had gone to the *montañas* to extract Payas in the late 1600s, and believed there were still thousands more Indians out there. "Siéndole preguntado qué medio se puede dar para que esta gente se redusgan a vivir en nuestra santa fee, dijo: que para el descargo de su consciencia no hallava otro medio que hera darles todo el Valle de Agalta" (Testimonio de Autos... 1991[1739]). Tejada claimed to be echoing the territorial pretensions of the Pech themselves, who would be satisfied only when they got back the Valle de Agalta: the Pech, it appears, still thought of the Spanish as usurpers of their ancestral domain.

⁹⁶ A collection of documents in the Archivo de la Casa Cural de Gualaco show that Franciscan effort continued in northeastern Olancho but that most Pech eventually returned to the *montaña*. It was a Jesuit priest, Manuel de Jesús Subirana, who finally procured them land titles in 1862 (ANTO 64 El Carbón), doing the same for the Pech on the south side of the Cordillera de Agalta in Dulce Nombre de Culmí (see Sampson 1997 for a detailed account and many references). The wave of Ladino settlement crested over them in the later 1800s, and today their lands are imbedded in a mosaic of *olanchano* spaces. For a priest's geography of Gualaco/San Esteban in 1900, with echoes of Goicoechea, see the fascinating AEC Documentos... (1900). For a Ladino ethnography of the Pech, see Urbina Ordoñez (1971).

unfavorable views of civilization. The missionaries were derailed by numerous forces beyond their control, ranging from the polytheistic strength of native religions, through the shield of the forests and rivers, to the precipitous ascent of the Zambos Mosquitos and the territorial pretensions of the English. What they did succeed in achieving or at least sustaining was a geography of spatial *enredos* that in many ways aided Olancho's rhizome with the Taguzgalpa, while at the same time deepening its rift with Honduras. Olanchanos and a few interested outsiders seemed to be concerned primarily about their private interests while doing the minimum to satisfy the State. Even though resources were plentiful, the all-important livestock economy led to a scramble for validity of land claims in which more and more land became concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. This boded ill for a future in which, on one hand, Olancho recovered its sixteenth-century El Dorado persona in the minds of outsiders, while on the other hand Olancho attempted to extricate itself from the independent State altogether.

3.9 Destiny Manifests Itself: Olancho from 1790 to 1870

This section begins by reassessing Olancho's "potential" through the first detailed censuses of the late 1700s. It then considers two intertwined trajectories, one that led toward "development" and the other toward social and spatial implosion. On the eve of Liberal reforms in the 1870s and after, local space and State space were cloven more deeply than at any time since the first 20 years after Contact, and being-*olanchano* coalesced into the prideful sin that it remains today.⁹⁷

The first set of detailed censuses for Olancho, with accompanying geographic descriptions (the first since the 1500s), come from the last 20 years of the 1700s, due to the efforts of Spanish governor Ramón de Anguiano as well as to the Catholic church (AEC Padrones; AGI Indif. Gen.1525 c. 1800; Cadiñanos 1997[1791]).

In 1801 (AGI Indif. Gen. 1525 1800), Olancho's total Spanish (including Criollo) and

⁹⁷ For general interpretations of nineteenth-century Honduras and Olancho, see Barahona (1995) and Sarmiento (1990).

Ladino (*mestizo*, *mulato*, and *pardo*) population was 6,180, and there were 1,523 tribute Indians. Olancho had 32 Spanish families: 22 in Juticalpa, three in Manto, six in Silca, and one in Zapota. Juticalpa, Silca, and Gualaco (see also ACCG documents covering 1817-52) were comprised solely of Ladino and/or Spanish. Laguata, Jano, and Catacamas were inhabited solely by tribute Indians. Manto, El Real, Yocón, and Zapota⁹⁸ contained tribute Indians and Ladinos. San Buenaventura, omitted by Anguiano but included in church censuses (e.g. AEC Padrón del Partido de Silca... 1796), was a mixed settlement of Ladinos and tribute Indians.

Juticalpa and Manto, the two largest mixed settlements, contained many villages and isolated ranch populations; Indians who were supposed to inhabit tribute towns lived dispersed across the countryside as well.⁹⁹ In 1796, Manto had 22 *aldeas*, while Juticalpa had 14. Official settlements contained anywhere from 1 house to as many as 50 houses in the “Valle de Lepaguara,”¹⁰⁰ while the towns Manto and Juticalpa had over 150 houses each. The Indian town of Catacamas was larger than either, with over 200 houses.¹⁰¹

Because so many Olanchanos (and people across Honduras) lived scattered about the landscape around the end of the 1700s, Honduran authorities made a concerted effort to round up both Ladinos and tribute Indians and settle them in concentrated “towns” called *reducciones* (this was to “reducir al poblado”) where they could be better administered (taxed) and live in a

⁹⁸ The Olancho list shows “Sapota” and then “Sacapa” but the latter is clearly an error.

⁹⁹ See “AEC Padrones” entries in Bibliography. See also AOO Libros Bautismales 1810-1901 (ethnic affiliation listed before 1821). The Anguiano census summaries that have been published (e.g. in Leyva 1991) mask the demographic details evident in the *padrones* produced by local churches between 1796 and 1798. For a late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century history, see ADJ “Historia de Juticalpa” written by José María Martínez (Juticalpa native and one-time Honduran bishop) in 1905. See also AEC Fábricas... (1803-7) for early economic history of Juticalpa; ANH AC 95 3120 (1805) Escases de granos, for famines; ANH AC 91 2982 (1802) Visita a todo el partido de Olancho, for geographical data.

¹⁰⁰ “Valle” in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could signify a dispersed settlement, what would today be called an *aldea* or a *comarca*.

¹⁰¹ See AEC Padrón de la feligrecía del Beneficio de Manto 1796; AEC Padrón de la Feligresia del Curato de Manto y anexos 1797. In 1888, Manto and Guarizama, the area covered by the 1796-7 padrones, had 118 *aldeas* and *caseríos* (IGN 1990).

“civilized” way. El Real, for example, had a “reducción de pardos,”³⁴ families, added to its 25 families of tribute Indians (AEC Padrón... 1797). Several new *reducciones* were created in western Olancho: Guayape, Santa Ana Campamento, and Palo Atravesado (Concordia) were comprised solely of Ladino families (AGI Indif. Gen. 1525 c. 1800).

Bishop Cadiñanos’ 1791 (1998) church census of Honduras contains geographic descriptions of both the Curato de Silca, covering all northern Olancho, and the Curato de Manto, of central Olancho. Maize, sugar, beans, many wild cacao trees, and fine quality tobacco were notable in both areas.

Es tan pródiga esta tierra que es muy comun cosechar ciento y treinta por uno; motivo por el que viven la mayor parte de sus havitantes abandonados á la osiosidad sin poderlos reducir á servir de jornaleros con los que medianamente tienen Haciendas. (1998[1791]:108).

In other words, Olancho was so fertile that it wasn’t necessary for its inhabitants to work hard. Lazy by nature, they even refused to help out on the haciendas. This was to become a dominant theme in the environmental determinism of nineteenth-century writings by outsiders as well as by *olanchanos* themselves. Cadiñanos also mentioned the abundant, fine quality gold that Olanchanos were too lazy to extract systematically from their rivers. The theme of gold that the Olanchanos couldn’t be bothered about would also become dominant in the nineteenth century.

For Honduran governor Ramón de Anguiano (AGI Indif. Gen. 1525 c. 1800; see also BAGG 1942a; 1942b; 1942c [1813-8]), a Spaniard writing around the turn of the nineteenth century, his adopted country had vast potential, but had been run into the ground by its controlled economy, corrupt officials, and lazy Spanish and Ladino inhabitants. Anguiano’s words glowed with the promise of development and progress. Aside from the *reducciones*, Anguiano had many other visionary projects to reorganize Honduran space, several of which involved (more) mining and better exploitation of domestic (e.g. tobacco) and wild plant products. For Anguiano, as for most later geographic writers, Honduras produced everything in good quality, or at least had the potential to do so. Its coffee, which was just beginning to expand production, was as good as that of “Moka.” *Grana silvestre* (cochinilla), wild

beeswaxes, ginger, vanilla, medicinals, maize, beans, wheat, rice: all produced abundantly throughout the year. Honduras had at least 500,000 head of cattle, 50,000 horses and mules, and many pigs. Most importantly, as almost every geographic writer before and since has pointed out, Honduras was bursting with metallic seams and placer deposits, just waiting to be exploited. In Anguiano, we find Development and Progress writ large across a landscape breathlessly awaiting proper government administration to realize its glorious destiny.

Anguiano describes Olancho as the largest Partido in Honduras: at that time it had come to include in theory the “grandes indiadas” of Zambos Mosquitos and Payas of the Taguzgalpa. Olancho had more cattle than anywhere else in Honduras, and was responsible for sustaining the rest of the province in this resource. Manto, though its inhabitants were wealthy, had but a modest church and small houses, because of envy among its residents and also due to the fact that Olanchanos did not care about their own comfort. Both these themes are taken up by Olanchanos even today when they describe their own society. Olancho was among the more fertile regions of Honduras. The lazy Olanchanos sustained themselves with maize and plantains, and the latter grew wild in great abundance. Their only other sources of sustenance were milk and wild foods. The Río Guayape and others that flowed into the Caribbean could become navigable if it weren’t for the Zambo threat. This navigability, key for trade in a land whose terrestrial routes were often close to impassable, was to become an obsession of concessionaires, influential Olanchanos, and Honduran governors throughout the 1800s. But the greatest feature of Anguiano’s Olancho was that the Guayape and other rivers and streams contained gold “I aunque pudiera sacarse en abundancia, su desidia y pereza no les permite aprovecharse de esta riqueza.”

The *reducción* program of the Anguiano years was followed throughout the 1800s by the establishment of more and more *municipios* in Olancho that split off from the primordial political jurisdictions of Yocón, Silca, Manto, and Juticalpa. After independence, all former tribute towns other than San Buenaventura became full-fledged *municipios* equal in power to

Ladino towns, while Ladino spaces that had calved from colonial territorialities also clamored for recognition.¹⁰² Throughout the 1800s, the formation of new and ever smaller *municipios* indicated the supremely local nature of life in Olancho (and throughout Honduras).¹⁰³

Though the independent State of Honduras after 1821 often emphasized local *patrimonio* and self-determination, at the same time it demonized local spatial identities and by the end of the century the State became more than anything a tool of wealthy capitalists both foreign and domestic. Though Olancho's spaces were never deeply inscribed and overcoded by foreign interests as became the cases on both coasts, the *olanchanos* still felt pressure to yield their spaces to manifest destiny.¹⁰⁴ The most ardent proponent of this American dream who visited Olancho became its most eloquent spokesperson, and even today William Wells and his *Explorations and adventures in Honduras, comprising sketches of travel in the gold regions of Olancho* (1857) remains the single most detailed source for Olancho's cultural history.

¹⁰² Strict racial distinctions were in part erased after independence, and to reflect this I have chosen to refer to those who in Olancho's colonial times were called "mulatos" and "pardos" by the catch-all "Ladino," which is the official and polite term used today for all Hondurans not recognizably parts of ethnic minorities.

¹⁰³ For dates of *municipio* formation see Figueroa, *Monografía de Olancho* (1935:29). Santa Ana Campamento, Palo Atravesado (Concordia), and Guayape seem to have comprised a fuzzy boundary region between Olancho and Tegucigalpa in the colonial period, and are first mentioned as settlements in the late 1700s. Yocón, formerly covering all of northwestern Olancho, was split into Mangulile (1882), El Rosario (1878; a former *cofradía* of Yocón), and La Unión (1877), leaving Yocón itself with little land. Salamá split from Silca in 1831 after the latter town was burned during a war in 1829 (ANTO 168 Salamá 1842). Guarizama, a populous village, split off from Manto (1901). In eastern Olancho, San Esteban separated from Gualaco (1836). Dulce Nombre de Culmí (1859) was a Pech community eventually taken over by *mulato* migrants by the end of the 1800s. Esquipulas del Norte (1896) was the new name for Azacualpa, a town in a small, deep valley on the *camino real* between Laguata (which became "Guata") and Olanchito. San Francisco de Becerra (1917) was a creation from villages and *sitios* on the south side of the Valle de Olancho that had belonged to Catacamas and Juticalpa. After 1917, *municipio* formation stopped until the 1990s, when Patuca was calved from southeastern Juticalpa.

The AEC is one of the few repositories of pre-1900 documents concerning small towns in central, western, and northern Olancho. For Concordia, see AEC Construcciones... 1821. For Jano, AEC Documentos... 1800. For Manto, AEC Documentos... 1856. For San Esteban, AEC Capellanías 1770. For Silca and Salamá, see AEC Construcciones 1834; 1836; AEC Documentos... 1843 (also ANH AC 59 1902 Certificación... Silca 1777). For the northeast in general, see AEC Inventarios Iglesias Curato de Silca 1796. The ACCG's documents contain a few references to Guata and Jano, as well as Gualaco and San Esteban.

¹⁰⁴ All Honduran regions felt this pressure. Nor was it only from the US and England; other nations crowded in as well. See, for example, *América Central* (1858) for a French opinion.

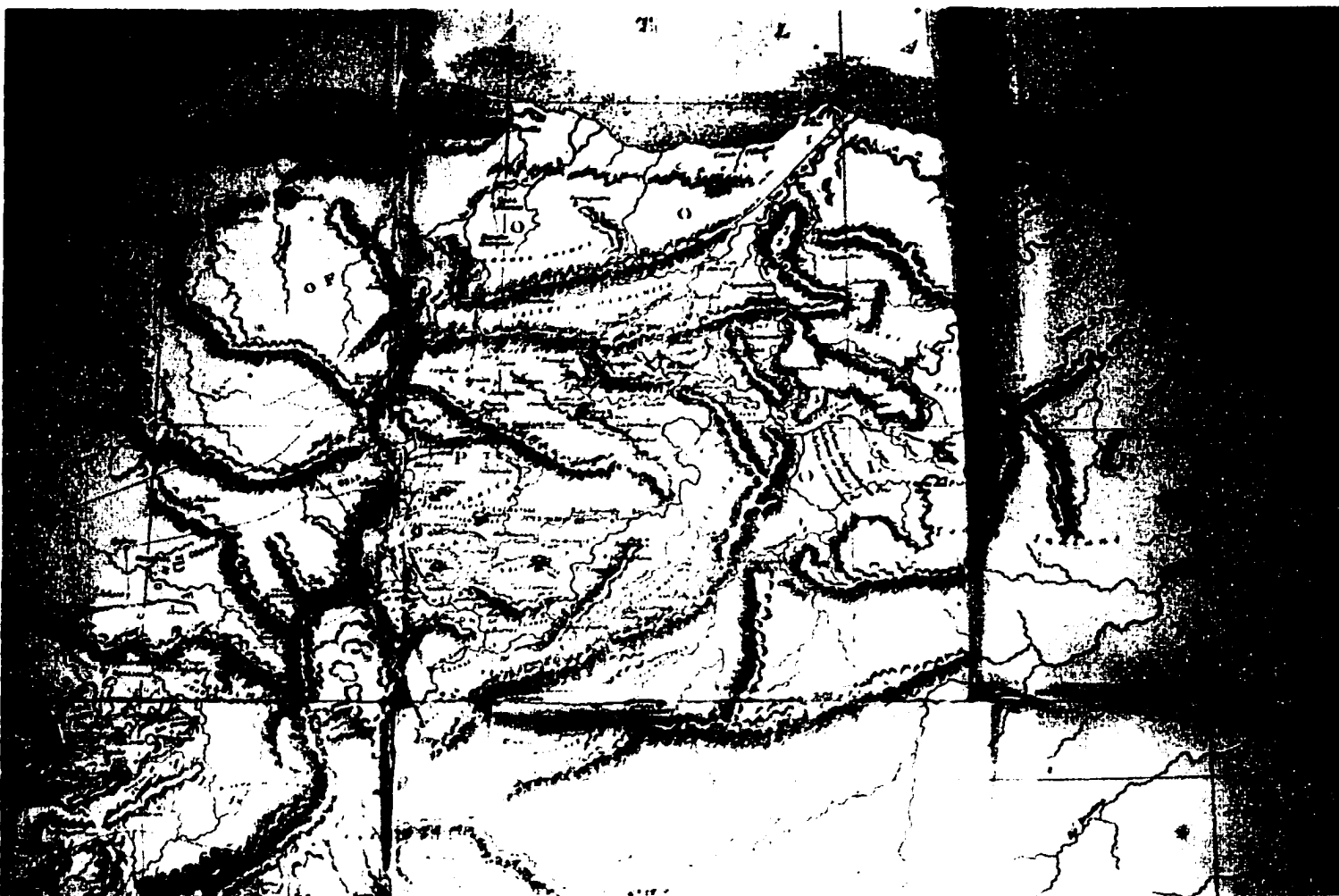


Fig. 3.13. "The Valle of the Guayape." Part of the first detailed map of eastern Honduras, by Wells (1857). Gold spaces labeled prominently on this map encouraged many later adventures and companies to visit Olancho.

Wells, who had been a forty-niner, hatched grand schemes for a California in Olancho, using African slaves to extract gold on lands conceded to his company by the powerful Zelaya clan, who claimed to possess ancient titles not only to the Valle de Lepaguare but also to most of southwestern Olancho.¹⁰⁵ Wells, trying to attract investors to the New York-based company who employed him, sang the praises of Olancho at every step, contrasting its peace, wealth, generosity, and almost infinite promise to the violence, poverty and tight-fistedness of most other rural Central American regions he visited. His 150-odd pages on Olancho (1857:259-421) are in most cases factually accurate. He left for posterity not only exact descriptions of placer gold mining, but also numerous details on Ladino, Spanish/Criollo, and Indian culture, as well as flora and fauna. Fine pen drawings by an unnamed Honduran artist who accompanied him grace the original 1857 edition, and an earlier article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (Wells 1856) include other line drawings, some mislabelled, but one unmistakably of Juticalpa. Together these form Olancho's earliest known corpus of landscape iconography, and as such are invaluable.¹⁰⁶ His map (Fig. 3.14), though highly inaccurate, is the oldest extant large-scale representation of eastern Honduras by someone who had actually been there.¹⁰⁷

While in Tegucigalpa preparing for his trip to northeastern Honduras, William Wells was warned away from Olancho on more than one occasion. Olanchanos had a reputation for insubordination to central authorities, due in large part to several wars since independence. For example, there had been a civil war that ended in 1829 with the visit of the military hero

¹⁰⁵ The Zelayas had legal claim over the Valle de Lepaguare and the present-day Campamento region, according to ANTO records (83 Guayapito 1746; 86 Horcones 1720). Wells writes that the Zelayas told him their titles dated from the 1500s, giving them land throughout southwestern Olancho; these were stored in Manto, which Wells did not have time to visit. Manto was burned in 1865, and any records stored there that could prove this have been lost. Wells painted the Zelayas as lords and masters of Olancho, but it is clear through existing title records that they did not possess as much land as the Canelas and the Herreras during the colonial period. The Zelayas, however, were quite active politically in the 1800s, becoming the representatives of State interests in Olancho as well as leading figures at the national level. Respected on the outside, they were often hated or resented locally.

¹⁰⁶ Earlier land titles from Olancho often included maps with certain iconographic qualities, but most of these were drawn by *ingenieros* such as Díaz Navarro in Guatemala.

Francisco Morazán. At the Vueltas del Ocote on the trail from Telica to Zapota, he worked out a peaceful settlement with Olancho rebel factions who had been fighting, among other things, for greater local autonomy. Morazán moved the departmental capital back to Manto (Juticalpa had been rewarded that honor at independence in 1821 because it was the bastion of wealthy landowners who supported self-declared Central American independence.)¹⁰⁸ Morazán's Vueltas del Ocote was one of the few bright spots in an otherwise bloody 40 years from the mid-1820s until 1865 when the fighting came to a decisive end.

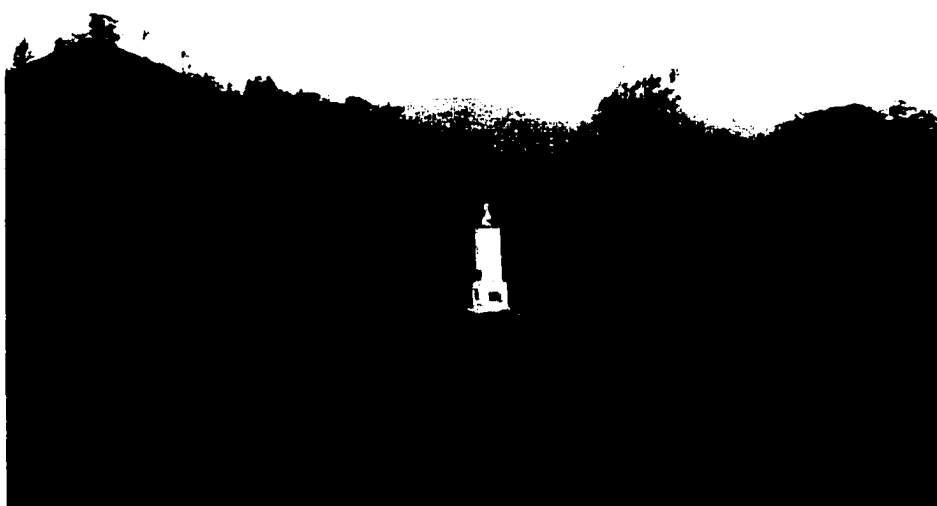


Fig. 3.14. Las Vueltas del Ocote. Monument erected in 1942 on the centennial of Francisco Morazán's death (Ramos et al. 1947:55). In 1829 near this spot above the Río Telica on the *camino real* from the Valle de Abajo to the Valle de Arriba, Morazán reached a peace accord with the Olancho rebel factions. In the background is the (former) Montaña del Cacao; the *serranía* in the foreground is owned by cattle ranchers who favor relatively dense shade cover. Vegetative cover has changed little since the 1930s, as pictured in Figueroa (1935:45).

Wells' 1854 visit to Olancho came during a lull in the fighting, when the land seemed peaceful and thus attractive for foreign concessionaires (see Decreto No. 50... 1850). Indicative of this, Wells visited the "Señor Ocampo" at the Corte Sara, a mahogany *benque* (logging operation) south of Juticalpa in the Montaña de Sara. Ocampo was a Costa Rican married to the

¹⁰⁷ For a history of Honduran maps, see Pineda Portillo (1998).

¹⁰⁸ Despite Morazán's gesture, the capital reverted to Juticalpa after Manto was burned in 1865.

daughter of a wealthy Olanchano, getting wealthy himself from the mahogany that “lazy” Olanchanos had “ignored.” His is the first large resource concession recorded in Olancho, and demonstrates the State’s willingness to pin its hope for economic development on outsiders.

William Wells approved of central Olancho’s landholding system that, typified by the Zelayas with whom he became close, involved a few dominant families with seemingly limitless land, cattle, and peons. The Zelayas’ lands, both by title and by tradition, stretched across *valle*, *serranía*, and *montaña*, encompassing many streams with some of the finest quality gold in the world (the comparative quality of 22-karat “Guayape gold,” according to goldminers of my acquaintance, was never hyperbole). Wells struck a deal with the Zelayas for a land concession, but he never returned. Probably, the unrest that characterized the late 1850s and 1860s in Olancho scared off any investors.

Though he could hardly have imagined it, Wells’ pages on Olancho inspired gold miners (many came, and continue to come, but few leave satisfied, say Olanchanos) but also colonizers with schemes even more grand than his own. Reading *Explorations and adventures* in light of the ghastly events described in Sarmiento’s history of nineteenth-century Olancho (1990), one might be tempted to chalk Wells’ dead-calm narrative up to cruel outsider hyperbole, ignorance, or prevarication in an era when Olancho suffered from massive social unrest. But neither Wells nor those who followed him fabricated the central theme of Olanchanos who desired to become progressive and developed.

According to earlier and thoroughly Honduran sources, wealthy and literate Olanchanos believed in their own glorious destiny as much as other Hondurans believed that Olanchanos were defined by their fratricidal tendencies. In 1841, Francisco Valdes, the Jefe Político of Olancho, gave the following speech at the first meeting of the Junta de Prosperidad de Olancho. Olancho was not the only Department in the República de Honduras to establish a Prosperity Committee, but it was, at least as publicized by the government’s Comayagua newspaper *El Redactor*, the most eloquent and ambitious.

Infaliblemente aunque no en el curso de pocos años, se verán que en el hermoso Olancho se ven soberbios torres en su Capital, que de ellas saldrán hombres á ocupar las magistraturas y empleos, que por sus relaciones y comercio, la feracidad de sus tierras será aprovechada, viendose sus campo cultivados con preciosos mieles, fructificar y liquidarse el jugo de la hermosa vid, cosecharse los demas frutos de Europa que se cultivan, y recogerse con facilidad industriosa el polvo riquísimo que indistintamente ha regado la Providencia, ya en nuestros grandes raudales.....Qué olanchano no inflamará su pecho con estas ideas, las cuales *no son sugeridas por la lectura de geografías extranjeras sino por la vista y presencia de los objetos de riqueza de que estamos rodeados*, y de que no sabemos gozar por pura inercia? (Valdes 1841; italics mine)

The Political Chief's speech tells volumes about the reinforcement of Olancho's spatial identity through each and every Olanchano gazing at the landscape every day—a theme important to this dissertation (see chapter 5.7). He conveys the dreamlike and absolute quality of Olancho's geography, where in the not-too-distant future Juticalpa will be a city of tall buildings and bustling commerce. Valdes' speech was followed by the somewhat more practical words of the “Señor Presidente de la Junta,” Francisco Ayala:

Señores: Hoy felizmente nos hallamos reunidos á dar principio á la prosperidad de un Departamento que ha sido privilegiado por la misma Naturaleza....los asuntos que nos designa la ley, son sin duda los que pueden desarrollar su inmensa riqueza, engrandecer é ilustrar sus pueblos...ojalá...que nuestro Departamento llegase al pináculo de felicidad de que es susceptible!....Nos congratulamos con todo el pueblo Olanchano por tal acontecimiento...pedimos la cooperación de todas las personas que puedan prestarnos sus luces.

Nature and the people of Olancho work together to illuminate the land with their talents. Here at last is that all-important word, “desarrollar”: who could have guessed that Development was a dream for some Olanchanos more than a century before it is commonly recognized to have come into its own (post-1945)? One of the Junta's first substantial acts, decided at its sixth meeting, was to send two local boys, one who knew a little math and the other a blacksmith, to learn modern methods of gold extraction in San Andrés, Gracias (Junta... 1841; see Alocución... 1841 for context on Gracias). The wealthy Olanchanos present at that meeting complained that Olancho's gold potential had not been developed because (poorly paid women) gold panners were “mezquinas y miserables.” Once one or two machines were brought in, Olancho would

become the happiest country in America: “indisputablemente se hará el país más feliz de toda la América.”



Fig. 3.15. Juticalpa in 1854. Reproduced from Wells, *Adventures in the gold fields of Central America* (1856). The oldest landscape representation of the town known to this author, this faithful sketch shows a recently completed cathedral, a plaza instead of parque central, and a grove of palms and other trees to the left of the cathedral, mentioned in other historical sources (in AHJ) as a “*fajina*” or greenbelt/commons for the public extraction of resources; hidden behind it is the Río Juticalpa, protected from contamination by municipal law in those years.

Wells, 13 years later, did not have to invent an Olanchano eagerness to become developed and to fulfill their own manifest destiny. Many in Olanchito as early as the 1840s already believed that their land was poised to become wealthier—and thus more developed—than anywhere else in the New World. Then, as today in similar circumstances (e.g. the Babilonia *enredo* in chapter 2), Olanchanos made scant mention of Honduras’ role in their space’s destiny.

In 1860, six years after Wells’ visit, President Santos Guardiola granted a generous concession to Raymond Weed and William Burchard of the New York Navigation and Colonization Company, giving extravagant benefits to outsider capitalists and the colonists they

would bring to Olancho. To my knowledge, little if nothing came of the concession, whose lands, though not specified exactly in the Charter, seem to have been located east of Dulce Nombre de Culmi in the area known subsequently as La Colonia.¹⁰⁹ The concession awarded the Company exclusive navigational rights for 40 years to any or all of the Aguán, Tinto, and Patuca rivers, as long as they were made navigable. The colony received 50,000 acres of free land (almost as much as the Indios of Catacamas had been able to accumulate in the three previous centuries), and a low price on up to 80,000 acres more. In an even more generous gesture, each married man who was brought from Europe would receive from the “public domain” 160 free acres for cultivation; unmarried men were to receive 80 acres.

Burchard and Weed described Olancho (“Olancho. Its climate productions, trade, etc.” in Charter... 1860) in magnificent terms, playing on the interested North American public’s awareness of the land from recently published accounts found in E. G. Squier (1855) and Wells (1857).

The Department of Olancho is the most extensive, and by far the richest and most beautiful, in Honduras....It is composed of heavily timbered woodland and luxuriant Savannahs, affording pasturage at all seasons of the year to vast herds of cattle and horses.... We believe that the Valley of Olancho [here they refer apparently to the entire watershed of the Guayape/Patuca River] is excelled by no part of the earth in the mildness and salubrity of its climate and the purity of its atmosphere....Olancho is the sportsman’s paradise....Olancho might remain as it is, a green and beautiful garden spot, with all the natural elements of wealth and greatness. But isolated from the world of commerce and civilization, its immense resources undeveloped, its fertile lands uncultivated....But nature has been lavish in its favors to this magnificent region....The lazy Olanchano enjoying his “siesta” on the banks of this beautiful river, beneath the shade of his own orange and fig tree, has never dreamed, or at least, has never realized that the waters which roll majestically at his feet were designed by the Great Architect of nature to carry the rich and varied products of his valley to the mighty ocean of the North. (Charter... 1860)

Burchard and Weed intended to bring steamers up the rivers, and represent Olanchanos as desperate for profitable commerce. They painted the land as fantastically fecund, suggesting

¹⁰⁹ The description that they give of their land grant places it between Juticalpa and the Valle de Paulaya, and a title given to Olanchanos in 1895 (ANTO 43) to “La Colonia” is in this area, though no mention is made of the earlier colonization scheme. Burchard stayed in Juticalpa and married locally: his descendants became (and remain) part of Olancho “society.”

that with only a few hundred dollars the colonist could live comfortably after first planting a grove of plantains. Eventually, they wrote, colonists should turn to coffee, which was the true destiny of Olancho. They claimed that in the year previous to the granting of their concession, inspired Olanchanos had already planted at least 500,000 bushes, hoping for the new commercial river connection Burchard and Weed would bring.

Burchard and Weed represented the Olanchanos as gracious and welcoming to a tee, and said that foreign investment and colonization, despite all the conflicts, had never been threatened in Honduras in the 1800s. They purposely downplayed mineral wealth, particularly gold. They explicitly stated that the future of Olancho was not metals but agriculture. Burchard and Weed planned to export dry hides, deer skins, Brazil wood, sarsaparilla, Indian rubber, silver, gold, and cocoa nuts—despite their glowing descriptions of agricultural potential, most of these are non-agricultural resources. They concluded with excerpts from Wells and Squier (“How to obtain information”), demonstrating the intertextuality of such Manifest Destiny narratives. From Wells:

Imagine the vegetable and mineral wealth of New England and Virginia intensified tenfold; the same genera of plants and trees, American in tint and physiognomy; our own Northern June greens and September browns, alternating with the same familiar evergreen tints, but closer, firmer, softer, richer, and more varied and expanded in every way, it is the New World at its best—its summit of beauty and utility...It is the intensity with which nature works—producing in close groups every form of vegetable life—that gives its peculiar beauty to this region....The traveler is bewildered with the richness and splendor of all that meets the sense. Here is no African desolation, no horrors of an Italian campagna....The wealth and power of an empire lies here asleep, like night upon the hills, and needs only those heralds of civilization, the Northern miners and farmers [to] awaken it into a brilliant life....The rude Olanchano...appreciates the wonderful beauty of the nature which surrounds him. His native land appears to him, as well as to the traveler, an earthly paradise. Without labor he is rich, without art he is free from disease. To live, to love, to enjoy, to dream away hours in the tinted shadows...to not know the number of his herds, or the antiquity of his family; the extent of his lands, or the hidden riches they contain. (Charter... 1860)

Given the events that followed this concession by a few years, it is clear that Burchard and Weed described the wishes of but a small group of landed elites, not Olanchanos in general. The poorer classes were concerned with local issues of land tenure: tiny corners of Olancho

were all they had. The elites, who wanted Olancho and more, obviously looked eagerly to the outside in hopes that economic development would ease the mounting pressures. Development, of the “Manifest Destiny” stripe, it must be stated, is an amazingly tenacious but forgiving machine: despite the periods of repression and the massacres that have occurred at regular intervals ever since Burchard and Weed’s time—indicating that Olanchanos most greatly desire their own spatial justice to come before anything else—development goes on half-blindly, ignorant of the histories of local space or convinced that the slate can be wiped clean (again and again).

At a tangent to the dream world of manifest destiny ran the trajectory of local space, for which independence from Spain was a mixed blessing (see, for example, Sierra Fonseca 1999). Eager to destroy the hegemony of the Church, an early instar of the Honduran State apparently went too far in the eyes of Olanchanos when it not only expelled most priests but dissolved the *cofradías* and other all-important mechanisms whereby local people could control their own spaces. Dissolving the *cofradías* meant that large areas of land went up for grabs, and quickly were taken over by cronies of the State. Later State administrations tried to remedy these injustices by tilting in favor of the Church and its many allies, but these efforts were undermined as well. Olancho rebel groups known as “*facciones*,” at times favoring the Honduran State, at times foreign interests, and at times primarily local concerns, fought among themselves and against outsiders in a bewildering *enredo* of interests that Sarmiento (1990) captures well. But many or most of these post-Independence issues were present before 1821: as shown in section 3.8 above, the eighteenth century had already seen accelerating concentration of land in fewer hands.

By the mid-1800s, the reigning land barons in Olancho were the Catalanian Güell-Vilardebó, who minted their own money in Manto and according to present-day oral history were the richest people in Honduras. Much of their government-sanctioned land-grabbing had come at the expense of ill-defined *ejidos* and former *cofradías*. Pushed out of large sections of

the *valles*, *municipios* and private citizens began a concentrated move upslope, at times obtaining title to the *montañas* (cloud forests) whenever political conditions were right (see Decreto... 1846). These relatively undesirable lands were the last unclaimed areas of Olancho— before 1850, those few that had been titled lay along *caminos reales*. Evidently such steep and chilly forests were insufficient to the needs of small-scale cattle ranchers, who in the designs of the State began to perceive a threat to their very existence. There were also military service, taxes, passports, and other burdens and hassles for people who were not considered citizens eligible to vote because they were not literate and didn't possess enough land (a bias that continued even through the Liberal reforms of the 1870s and after).¹¹⁰

The civil wars of the 1860s in Olancho were fought primarily by poor Ladino and Indian *estancieros*, whom today would be called “campesinos.” These, according to my examination of surnames mentioned in Sarmiento and in the primary sources,¹¹¹ were the same *mulato* and tribute Indian families--the great mass of Olanchanos--who had been so important to the missions' functioning in the 1600s and 1700s, yet so overlooked or downplayed by the elites. Given that the continuity of families in Olancho is generally cemented by one or two centuries

¹¹⁰ Romulo Durón's important two-volume collection *Honduras literaria* (1996[1896]) includes geographically oriented essays by Honduran intellectuals such as Francisco Cruz, Marco Aurelio Soto, and Ramón Rosa, who guided the country from the dark years of José María Medina in the 1860s into the progressive 1880s. But throughout the volumes the bias toward wealthy, literate, and foreign is manifest in questions of geographic destiny and local control. The “original” 1800s geographic writer and thinker was José Cecilio del Valle: see R. H. Valle (1934). Perhaps the most fascinating geographical mix of local sensitivity and Manifest Destiny was embodied by Francisco Cruz (see all citations in Bibliography), whose illustrious career as editor of *Redactor* and *Gaceta*, and advisor to many governments spanned much of the independent 1800s. He wrote on agricultural modernization, medicinal plants, La Paz, health in Comayagua. But see also Aviso... 1859, detailing a substantial mahogany concession on the North Coast. Nevertheless, Cruz, in the final analysis, was a major influence on geographer-type personalities of the twentieth century, especially Jesús Aguilar Paz.

¹¹¹ Nineteenth-century archives include the Archivo Histórico de Juticalpa and the Archivo Nacional de Honduras. Several revealing documents are found in the latter's “Impresos Siglo XIX” (IS) section, e.g.: ANH IS B Legajo I-17 331 ¡La causa del orden triunfa! 1863; ANH IS B Legajo I-17 338 Decreto de José María Medina 1864; ANH IS B Legajo I-17 340 Fracaso de los Insurrectos de Olancho 1864; ANH IS B Legajo I-09 333 1862; ANH IS B Legajo I-17 320 1862; ANH IS B Legajo I-17 330 1863. See also AEC Documentos... 1864 (two letters). Sarmiento (1991) carried out a far more extensive study on the subject from numerous sources, so most of my details for this section come from his account, which includes extensive quotations from original material.

of oral history, what happened in the 1860s appears to have been the response of direct descendants of the *pobres estancieros* caught in situations such as those mentioned earlier in this chapter: the *estancieros* versus Gregorio Canelas in Chichinaguaca in the 1730s; the *estancieros* versus Antonio Herrera's version of missionizing around 1700; the Indios de Catacamas mocked and punished by Bartolomé Escoto in 1677. Insults were everpresent memories: the Indios de Laguata wrote in the 1840s (ANTO 68 69 La Estancia) that in the 1700s an official, jamming their *ejido* title into his pocket, commented cynically that the Indios would never see "el título y la cara de Dios."

Back-to-back anti-State Olancho uprisings of 1864 and 1865 (and wars a couple years before that) tested the patience of Honduras' dictator José María Medina, "Medinón," to the breaking point. Though the guerrilla *facciones* demanded nothing less than a free Honduras starting in Olancho, their allegiance to or dependence on outside destabilizing forces was unclear. Juticalpa, the headquarters of government troops, tended to support Medinón. The rebels are not known to have issued any coherent plan of government other than that they rejected Medinón's oppression. They had a wide base of support in Olancho, even among priests and some wealthy landowners, which scared the government in Comayagua even more.

The rebels never arrayed themselves for battle in the *valles*, as the government troops were trained to do. Rather, they struck in small groups when the troops were moving single file along the trails through thickly-forested mountain passes, ambushing and then dispersing along hidden routes into the *montaña*. Though they were never able to win pitched battles in towns or *valles*, they seem to have retaken communities such as San Francisco de la Paz (former Zapota), Manto, Jano, and Laguata with little effort as soon as government forces left.

Quoted in Sarmiento (1991:271-2) is an official account of the rebel culture from 1865, intended to cause alarm and provoke distaste among the peace-loving citizens of Honduras:

su obediencia depende de la voluntad, donde quieren y hasta donde les conviene andar con los cabecillas....se han encontrado partidas de niños facciosos, parodiando una tropa....También han comenzado a verse en los bosques, facciosos cubiertos con una

capucha de piel cruda de ganado vacuno. El instrumento de toques y órdenes que usan es un cuerno, cuyo sonido bárbaro y monótono, sólo indica dos cosas: ataque, rara vez, y retirada o fuga con frecuencia. El comunismo de hecho, es en ellos la doctrina corriente, sostenida por el puñal, el fusil y la alevosía. Odian profundamente al Gobierno, sus empleados y todas las gentes de orden.

Sarmiento, I think with just cause, calls this the most important known document on the rebel Factions, due to its mention of a de facto communism that rejected the State in any form.

He writes:

Los jefes de la rebelión, Antúñez y Zavala, no eran proletarios, sino pequeños hacendados que, para movilizar tras de ellos las masas campesinas, tenían que ofrecerles algunas esperanzas de mejoramiento económico....La rebelión olanchana era el preludio de una reforma liberal con matices agrarios de socialismo utópico. (273)

Diverging from Sarmiento, I would assert that what the “communist” rebels wanted was simply the absolute domain of local space and mutual aid, no longer overcoded by any Outside. The State, it appeared, was afraid that anarchistic Olancho didn’t need it at all.

Medinón devised a final solution to the Olancho problem that ranks as one of the most grotesque and brutal acts ever committed by a Honduran head of state, and is eerily similar to the genocide in Olancho carried out by López de Salcedo in 1527--as if the two events were the beginning and completion of a circle. Medinón’s henchmen first devised ways to assassinate rebel leaders Antúñez and Zavala, after which their heads were placed on public display on a hill overlooking Juticalpa. When the resistance was thus literally decapitated, Medinón’s forces swept through northern Olancho, burning Jano, San Francisco de la Paz, Manto, and many *aldeas*. In Manto, they spared only the church and the house of Güell-Vilardebó, who were government supporters.¹¹² All men identified as or suspected to be guerrillas were hung from the limbs of trees on the outskirts of the smouldering settlements—500 to 1000 rebels are estimated to have been sacrificed in this way, and the event was dubbed “La Ahorcancina,” “The Hanging.” It is still a part of oral history in the northern towns today, and trees where men

¹¹² The Güell-Vilardebó benefited greatly from the sudden drop in population: ANTO titles show their acquisition of several hundred *caballerías* in local *valles* over the next few years.

were hung can be pointed out. To end the resistance once and for all, Medinón sent the rebels' families into exile outside Olancho.¹¹³



Fig. 3.16. Front of the Casa Güell in Manto, across from the new (2000) Parque Central. The Cerro de la Cruz rises behind. House was owned by wealthy Catalan *terratiente* family in the 1800s, spared during the burning of Manto in 1865.

But the Ahorcancina was far from the State's last laugh—to maintain striation intact, it had to keep suppressing rebellions and assassinating the charismatic leaders whom many Olanchanos revered. Solitary, tragic figures, often with mythic attributes, who gathered the diverse identities of local people and incurred the wrath of the State, pepper a popular history of local space that counters official versions.¹¹⁴ Padre Ivan Betancur (see below; see Meza and Ramírez 1982) was a radical Franciscan pushing land reform in Olancho in the 1970s, and was martyred in 1975. Padre Guadalupe Carney was a member of an anti-Contra guerrilla group in

¹¹³ Aside from Sarmiento's (1990) account using primary sources, other Olanchano writers, including Medardo Mejía, Fernando Figueroa, and Froylán Turcios, all considered "radicals" (i.e. Marxists, and/or anti-US) attempted to reinterpret such events in conscious reaction to the standard Honduran view of the event: that those pesky Olanchanos got their due. During the same time frame of the 1860s, it was a Cuban teacher, Francisco de Paula Flores, who is said to have "educated Juticalpa" and is the subject of several works: see, for example, Durón (1935) and Figueroa (1939). In Olancho, Flores is viewed widely as a bringer of "civilization" to Olancho, through educating a generation of teachers.

¹¹⁴ The Spanish priest, Padre Subirana, "El Misionero," struggled peacefully for the land rights of Indios across Honduras in the 1850s and 1860s, and is regarded as a vernacular saint among Ladinos and indigenous peoples alike (he did not meet a violent death). He is perhaps the one figure most revered in Honduran traditional culture, and his imprint is everywhere. See Davidson (1985) for his routes and Sierra Fonseca (1998) for his meanings; Aguilar Paz (1989:280-99) for his folklore and geographic prophecies; AOO Casamentos 1857 for his visit to Juticalpa.

the early 1980s when he is said to have been captured near the Río Patuca and terminated at the Aguacate military base near Catacamas. Canuto, a *gualaqueño*, was a Robin Hood-type bandit in eastern Honduras in the 1980s, robbing and killing wealthy landowners and distributing the spoils among Gualaco's poor. In official accounts, he was ambushed and put to death by the Honduran military; in local space, he is believed to be alive and well ("Canuto Vive!" is a common phrase in Gualaco). The Olanchanos' belief in such anti-State heroes can be attributed in general to the systematic abuses committed throughout history, but specifically to the Ahorcancina. Cinchonero was the first who tried to avenge Olancho.

"Cinchonero" was the nickname of Serapio Romero, who not long after his 1868 death became a cherished hero not only among the poor but also in a community of left-wing Olanchano intelligentsia who partly because of their radical views preferred to live in Tegucigalpa or abroad.¹¹⁵ His family was from Guarizama, one of the towns that has made Olancho famous for vendettas (in Honduras, "guarizama" has become a slang word for "machete" the non-firearm weapon of choice). They settled in a working-class neighborhood of Juticalpa just across the river, their trade the making of *cinchos* (belts for pack animal cargo). When he was a teenager, Romero worked for a time as a manservant in the house of one of Juticalpa's richest families, and it is said that there he learned to hate the wealthy. He was involved in the wars of the 1860s, and presumably became so bitter about the Ahorcancina that he hatched a foolhardy plan to relive the rebellion. One morning in 1868, with a well-armed ragtag band, Cinchonero took the plaza in Juticalpa, symbolic center of Honduran military control over Olancho. It is said that his first act was to cut down the cages on the hill where the

¹¹⁵ Accounts of Cinchonero are found in Sarmiento (1990) and Figueroa (1939a). "Expatriate" intellectuals included Clementina Suárez (see Gold, *Clementina Suarez: her life and poetry*, 1995), daughter of rich Juticalpa *hacendados*, whose free, "immoral" ideas and actions were more acceptable in Tegucigalpa and abroad than at home. Another was Froylán Turcios, a Juticalpa poet also from a monied family, who was outspoken about North American interventionism in Latin America around the turn of the twentieth century and later. Medardo Mejía, from a campesino background in Jimasque, Manto, became a leading Honduran Marxist, and was persecuted like many leftists during the 1930s and 1940s Carías dictatorship. Mejía's works dramatized the Ahorcancina, and proposed a Utopian socialism for Olancho (e.g. *Discurso del Dorado*, 1995).

skulls of Antúnez and Zavala were still kept as a reminder. He forced the town council into an emergency session, and they pronounced Juticalpa neutral in the affair. Cinchonero's free Olancho lasted only three days before he was decisively defeated by new troops. He fled over the Montaña de Cacao to the Valle Arriba, but was quickly found and murdered.

Not long after Cinchonero's death, the Liberal reform period of Honduras in the 1870s ushered in significant changes in human rights and also an ever-intensifying push to attract foreign capital and turn the country around. Nevertheless, land conflicts in Olancho continued apace, and the Honduran military never relinquished its hold over the hill above Juticalpa, foiling *juticalpenses* who claim that "La Colina" is part of their town's *ejidos*, not the domain of the State.¹¹⁶

3.10 Abject Migrants: Selections from Twentieth-Century Olancho

Juticalpa native President Manuel Bonilla started as a rebel against the State, and ending up triumphant, formed the Nacionalista party at the turn of the twentieth century. Though he made great strides in human rights and other local issues, he also led Honduras to even greater dependence on foreign capital and expertise. Development, as it does today, entailed both populist appeals to the integrity of local space, and concessions through which local space was ceded to outside interests (not just foreign, either: wealthy Honduran capitalists also played their parts). In its trajectory as anarchistic domain, Olancho continued to diverge from Honduras in the twentieth century, helped along at each step by systematic terror in the 1930s and 1940s (the Tiburcio Carias Andino dictatorship, which attempted to exterminate Liberales), the 1960s and 1970s (countering land reform), and the 1980s (Cold War). In its trajectory as developing region, Olancho saw great advances in education, health care, and infrastructure as the twentieth-century advanced. The State, particularly when it was not under the control of

¹¹⁶ The military cherish La Colina because it contains their command center over eastern Honduras. They and their many supporters claim that Juticalpa never had any *ejidos*. Though title to Juticalpa's *ejidos* may have been lost, a document that has recently come to light (ANTO Calona 1840) shows clearly that a Colina and the rest of the land on which the town sits is part of an *ejido*.

dictatorships, increasingly found itself in the position of having to negotiate between outside and local interests. Not by any means were all the State's designs sinister—as the next example shows, enlightened and sensitive Hondurans sometimes used it to further their aims of a development founded in the local (geographer Jesús Aguilar Paz's work is also characteristic of this).

In 1909, Minister of Agriculture Fiallos (Fiallos 1909) told the Honduran Congress that the capitalists were not the ones who knew best how to exploit the land. Rather, it was the small landowners who could obtain the best results even despite their “rudimentary” techniques. Honduras, he said, was a country of small landowners with potential not only for diversifying subsistence needs and exports, but also guaranteeing a built-in peace (if their needs were met). The national government was not the entity that should be in charge of agriculture: rather, it was the *municipios* that should do so, using the (nineteenth-century) Ley de Patrimonio. He also called for conservation of forests, irrigation systems, and agricultural schools, all for the benefit of local space. But the best intent of such Hondurans could do little to disentangle the spatial *enredos* of regions like Olancho, and though some of the State's efforts favored the local, others almost completely disregarded local space, and indeed tried to pretend that it hardly existed. The twentieth century in Olancho, more than anything, saw the failure of attempts by the outside to striate completely the local, foiled not only by centuries of *enredos* but by a growing infant survival rate and a massive influx of landless migrants. When these migrants sought to insert new spaces into the preexisting spaces, and especially when State land reform in the 1960s explicitly supported them, land conflicts erupted in which the Franciscans took the role as champions of the poor. Though between 1975 and 1990 land reform virtually disappeared from view, the more open 1990s (the spaces of which occupy the rest of this dissertation) brought into sharp focus the needs of the now over 400,000 Olanchanos with diverse, conflicting spatial identities.

The State, in the early decades of the twentieth century, envisioned another type of migrant, the European yeoman-farmer, as the saviour of local space. The year 1930 found the Honduran government attempting to attract settlers from abroad to work the land and teach the (ranching) *olanchanos* how to farm. Hugo F. Komor, professional colonizing agent, visited in the late 1920s and his report is included in a 1930 volume, “La tierra del nuevo hogar” which also includes pro-Honduras testimony from noted citizens and expatriates. For example, from the German doctor E. A. Gross in Salamá, Olancho:

Honduras es por naturaleza unos de los países más ricos del mundo, y el departamento de Olancho, del cual mi pluma se ocupa, el más bendito y favorecido de los 17 departamentos que componen este país....Aquí el clima y la tierra son propios para el cultivo del trigo, maíz, frijoles, garbanzos, cacao, café, arroz, caña y toda la clase de verduras, etc. y con cuidado daría cosechas como en ninguna otra parte del mundo...*Los habitantes de este departamento son sumamente pacíficos*, se dedican en pequeña escala a la agricultura y la ganadería, pero de lo que más tenemos necesidad en este departamento es de brazos que trabajan independientemente, brazos que están acostumbrados a trabajar la tierra y que a nosotros enseñen cómo conseguir la mejor ganancia de estos fértiles terrenos. (Komor 1930; italics mine)

Gross went on to say how immigrants from the Old World would be welcomed with open arms, soon forgetting their native lands and becoming enamoured of local women.¹¹⁷ He wrote that conditions in Olancho were idyllic, with firewood free for the taking, good water, and healthy tropical air. Komor himself, on his trip through eastern Honduras (“Apuntes de Viaje” in El Paraíso, Olancho, Yoro, and northern Francisco Morazán) was impressed by the wide-open landscapes begging for settlement. His favorite landscape was the series of seemingly empty small *valles* between Manto and Salamá:

El trayecto entre Manto y Salamá tiene la misma topografía que este primer pueblo, pero sus tierras en los alrededores sobrepasan en calidad y desarrollo de cultivos a las demás que pude ver en mi recorrido por el Departamento de Olancho, dando a ellas un magnífico aspecto. (*Tierra del nuevo hogar* 1930:47)

Komor wrote how good the nearby and accessible Montaña de Pacaya could be for wheat, without mentioning that the land belonged to the town of Silca, *ejidos* they had obtained in the

¹¹⁷ According to oral history, the doctor was “famoso” in all Olancho for his medical talents. He was also the victim of unrequited love for an *olanchana*.

1910s (ANTO 40 Cilca [Silca] 1918). This and other contemporary colonization texts (e.g. Saavedra, *Bananas, gold and silver oro y plata*, 1935) were attempts during the Vicente Mejía Colindres and Tiburcio Carias Andino years to bring the kind of progress to the interior as had come to the North Coast through banana plantations and other foreign investment.¹¹⁸ The texts uniformly stress how underpopulated and empty was eastern Honduras: a land that in the post-1945 Age of Development (and Conservation) would be (re)constructed as hopelessly overpopulated.

Pre-World War II efforts to colonize Olancho and thus bring it into the “modern world” met obscure ends, no doubt because the “empty” land was already claimed by intransigent ranchers and farmers both rich and poor. Other attempts to open up Olancho to the outside met with greater success. The first road, from Tegucigalpa, reached the Valle de Olancho in the 1930s, and this is remembered by Juticalpa’s older residents as the single event that most radically changed Olancho in their lifetimes, by bringing in the outside at an exponentially greater rate than ever before. Vehicular roads supplanted railroads across Honduras: in 1909, a concession to James P. Henderson for a railroad from Trujillo to Juticalpa would have signified central Olancho’s connection with the North Coast by the early 1930s, but nothing resulted from this venture (Decreto no. 26, 1909).¹¹⁹

Lumber concessions functioned magnificently. They grew in size and frequency during the early twentieth century, awarded both to outside interests (e.g. Contrato...1920, 1938) and to Olanchanos. In 1928, the Unión Obrera of Juticalpa received a 10-year concession to cut 10,000 mahogany and tropical cedar trees on the left bank of the Río Patuca, with the stipulation that they not come into conflict with a preexisting concession to a Byron Brown (Decreto No.

¹¹⁸ See Euraque (1996), *Reinterpreting the Banana Republic, region & state in Honduras, 1870-1972*.

¹¹⁹ Telegraph lines reached central Olancho from Tegucigalpa in the 1880s; printing presses showed up around the same time. For a taste of what “fruits of nature” were being sold around mid-century, see Bazar Olanchano (1949).

114, 1927). (The trajectory of Olancho's "timber space" is traced in greater detail in chapter six.) One of the interesting clauses in this concession was that the concessionaires were required to plant two seedlings of mahogany or cedar for each tree cut, and to see to it that the trees became saplings. The State's concern for forests was later codified in President Carías' 1939 Ley de Bosques (Decreto no. 28) and has proceeded unbroken ever since, but such environmental protection measures had been a hallmark of Honduran State since at least 1836.¹²⁰ Official government newspapers from the 1830s onward regularly published State laws and municipal decrees (e.g. Reglamentos de Propios y Arbitrios and the Ley de Patrimonio) in which land use was often circumscribed by certain strict environmental measures, particularly protection of water sources.¹²¹

Coffee, which had been favored in Honduran legislation since at least 1846 (Decreto... 1846), became a profitable and widespread crop in Olancho, as in much of humid montane Honduras, in the second half of the twentieth century (see Jansen 1998). Coffee, among other things, provided a means whereby small landowners could obtain capital—it is recognized as the *patrimonio* of all classes across the country, and has never been successfully overcoded by any "coffee elite." "Coffee space" is discussed in local context in chapter six.

Cattle ranching in Olancho, another route to power over space, continued to expand at the expense of mountain forests and by the 1970s was spreading into the lowland rainforests east of the Valle de Olancho. *Terrateniente* (large landowner) cattle space threatened to overcode almost all local space in the department to the logical conclusion of its trajectory since the 1540s. Despite modernization efforts, it was brought up short by low productivity, and since the 1950s many landowners have switched to export crops and agribusiness in general (often

¹²⁰ In 1850, the new Ley de Maderas (Decreto no. 60 1850) mentions an earlier 1836 law.

¹²¹ Nearly complete runs of government newspapers are held in the Archivo Nacional de Honduras. Regional newspapers sprouted up in the 1900s, and Olancho had several by the 1950s, though there is not one today. These are invaluable but little used sources for researchers in many fields.

unsuccessfully). Nevertheless, striating/smoothing cattle space is so deeply entangled with *olanchano* culture that it remains the rhizome at the heart of Olancho. This is taken up at greater length in chapter six.

The human geographic phenomenon that most affected Olancho in the twentieth century was migration both into and out of the Department. Many *olanchanos* in times of need became migrant workers on plantations up on the North Coast, and others moved to burgeoning Tegucigalpa. After 1950, *olanchanos* moved eastward in force into the rainforests of the former Taguzgalpa, now unthreatening, that ranchers and farmers had for centuries ignored or been prohibited to enter. Olanchanos also moved higher into the Cordillera de Agalta and other ranges, founding villages in the 1960s and 1970s, like Las Delicias del Murmullo (“The Delights of the Murmuring Water”), in places that would not have been considered possible for settlement in earlier times.

Outsiders came to form an increasing percentage of the Olanchano population after 1950, but they were not the downtrodden European immigrants for whom central authorities and perhaps some wealthy Olanchanos had hoped. Rather, they were landless campesinos from the environmentally- and socially- inhospitable Honduran Sur (see DeWalt and Stonich 1996; Stonich 1992; Stonich and DeWalt 1996) and Occidente and from El Salvador. Compared to their places of origin, land was abundant in northeastern Honduras, and the toponyms (e.g. Nueva Esperanza, La Nueva Era, Nueva Palestina) with which the outsiders anchored their new spaces told volumes about their aspirations.¹²²

A rift widened rapidly between the spatial identities of Olanchanos and those of outsiders. According to Olanchanos, the outsiders saw the landscape in different ways: Salvadorans stressed intensive agricultural production; “Sureños” preferred to clear away all existing

¹²² Some moves were part of sanctioned government and/or church colonization efforts (e.g. Nueva Palestina in the 1970s), but most were, and continue to be, private affairs planned by family networks. Far from a homogeneous mass of landless peasants, the outsiders came from all social classes—some were even members of the landed elite in their towns of origin.

vegetation in their versions of farming and ranching; people from Santa Bárbara, consummate *cafetaleros*, eradicated forests and planted new ones for coffee. Many Olanchanos place blame on outsiders not only for the wholesale environmental destruction that they recall as becoming evident by the 1960s, but also for the massacres of the 1970s.

Because of political and social conflicts between Honduras and El Salvador leading up to the 1969 War,¹²³ the many thousands of Salvadorans were expelled from Olancho in the late 1960s. But the other migrants stayed, supported by State policy that legalized campesinos' rights to occupy and gain title to apparently "empty" land: for agricultural purposes, this meant old-growth forest and large cattle ranches. The State backed off from land reform in the 1970s under the sway of large landowners and the military—a spatial alliance of frightening potential. An increasingly radical Franciscan component of the Catholic Church allied solidly with campesinos—both outsiders and *olanchanos*—in the struggle over space.

Many poorer *olanchanos* seemed comfortable with a centuries-old rhizome within cattle space, the type of system that Wells (1857) described for the Zelayas of Lepaguare: the interdependence of *patrones* (overlords), *mozos* (peons), and a symbolic number of small farmers who "borrowed" *terratiente* cattle space (through gift or rent) for short-term agropastoral ventures. But there were also many discontents within this rhizome and in the wider *olanchano* culture: the possibility that *terratiente* space could be overcoded by villages, and the "lords and masters of all they surveyed" could be hemmed in or banished, seemed to tilt the balance of opinion to local space.

The military's massacre of Sureño campesinos at Talanquera in 1972 marked the beginning of the end: they and the large landowners (often one and the same) would have nothing to do with the overcoding of cattle space. The Franciscans labored on with the full knowledge that the end was at hand for the redemption of Olancho through social justice. Ivan Betancur, a

¹²³ Hondurans universally remember this event as "La Guerra." The term "Soccer War" appears to be an exclusively foreign moniker.

Colombian priest, was most closely identified with land reform, he was hated by the *terratenientes* and the State, revered by campesinos and a growing number of middle-class *olanchanos* as well.

By 1975, campesinos all over Honduras were held illegally in jails under charges of “subversion” and other crimes. June 25th was to be a solidarity march from the regional capitals to Tegucigalpa, a peaceful event that would draw attention to the political prisoners. Betancur mentioned to a friend that the last days were approaching, probably knowing that the *terratenientes* had formed a clandestine group in Juticalpa to do something about their problem once and for all.

Olancho’s march (in which the priests did not plan to participate) was to begin early in the morning at Santa Clara, the church-owned campesino training center in Juticalpa. Unexpectedly, the superintendent of schools ordered teachers to the center with their students; it is said that the children were intended to create the impression of normalcy at the Center during the events that followed. When the marchers were all assembled and the students were milling about, the military cordoned off Santa Clara and gunned down the would-be marchers; the students fled in chaos. Ten campesinos dead and dozens more wounded caused an uproar in the Honduran population—this was the single largest State-sanctioned massacre in Olancho since the Carias dictatorship or before. The *terratenientes* who had funded the event acted innocent and the military took the fall, for the time being. But the inexplicable simultaneous disappearance of Ivan Betancur continued to be front page news.

Almost two months passed. Ivan Betancur and Casimiro Cypher, a fellow priest, along with a university student and another person, did not appear. They had been driving to Juticalpa from Tegucigalpa on June 25th on an errand entirely unconnected to the march. The State’s official version was that they had escaped to the mountains and were planning to lead a guerrilla resistance. But university students, after being tipped off by local people, dressed up as campesinos and began to sniff about the Valle de Lepaguare where the four people had been

seen last. They learned quickly through the local gossip network that the four were long dead and buried on the Horcones ranch. Massive protests in Tegucigalpa forced the government to have the indicated spot dug out by heavy machinery, and four badly-burned corpses were soon revealed at the bottom of a filled-in deep well.



Fig. 3.17. Cerro de Horcones in Lepaguare. Dense *carbonal* in center of photo at base of hill is said to mark the spot of the deep well where victims of the 1975 massacre were buried.

Because the Horcones massacre took place on the ranch of Manuel “Mel” Zelaya, in the popular press and Honduran imagination he received most of the credit for planning both massacres in cahoots with the military. The broad-based coalition of *terratenientes* who were ultimately responsible for Horcones and Santa Clara were never brought to justice, but only whispered about in the privacy of Juticalpa homes. To this day, the town remains divided, the identities of those who are thought to have given money and ideas to the effort a well-known secret. Zelaya went to prison, vilified as the source of all evil, associated in the Honduran imagination with the stereotypical ruthless Olanchano *terrateniente* (exacerbated by his lucrative logging business that was opening roads into the east like never before seen). The military personnel who were assigned blame, though not serving long or at all in prison, suffered violent deaths, and tragic misfortunes also befell subsequently the Zelaya family. A popular belief in God’s punishment of evildoers remains strong in Olanchano—even Medinón himself had met his end in front of a firing squad in the 1870s (Ramos et al. 1947).

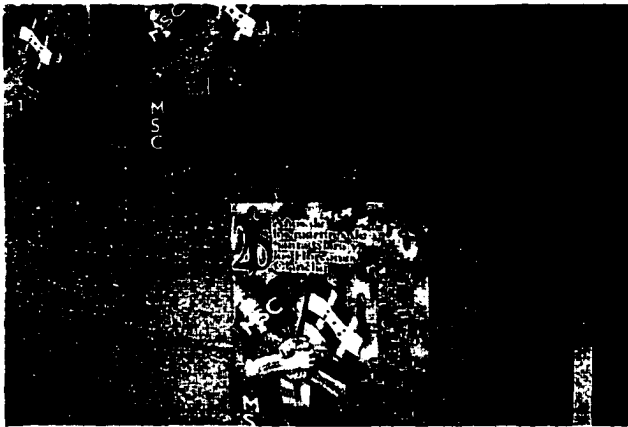


Fig. 3.18. Posters marking the 25-year anniversary of the Horcones/Santa Clara massacre.



Fig. 3.19. Walking the Stations of the Cross. June 24, 2000 commemoration inside the Santa Clara campesino center, Juticalpa. Attendees followed a priest to 14 shrines for 1975 massacre victims.

The Church all but abandoned Olancho and did not return for several years, during which time unscrupulous people gutted the Cathedral in Juticalpa: not all *olanchanos* regarded the massacre as unjust and unnecessary. Indeed, many were pleased: Horcones/Santa Clara spelled the end of confrontational land reform in Honduras, and the systematic repression of any local organization in Olancho in the Cold War 1980s can be linked definitively to the agendas of the *terratenientes*. Even while the military moved on to “bigger” concerns, the *terratenientes*, thanks to the almost unbelievable accessibility of arms in the 1980s and 1990s, built ever-more-powerful goon squads to terrorize campesinos. In what has become a sort of arms race, the

campesinos pool their resources and spend vast amounts on weapons, particularly AK-47s, to protect the rhizomatic practices of their family networks.



Fig. 3.20. Station of the Cross in Santa Clara shrine. Victim Maximo Aguilera is marked as “*presente*,” his death symbolically tied to “*¡Estación | Jesús es condenado a muerte.*” Each Station also was also linked to a modern ill such as alcoholism or drugs.

The Church learned a valued lesson from allowing confrontational Liberation Theology-type movements to be protected by its umbrella. Bishop “Mauro” Muldoon arrived in the early 1980s and remained through 2000, taking a reconciliatory stance toward one and all, and gradually building the Church back to a development-oriented institution. Today the Olancho Catholic Church is stronger than it ever was, and is one of the few development organizations widely respected by the populace. Issues of land rights, however, are now in most cases addressed by all-powerful groups like the World Bank and their Honduran symbionts.

I was privileged to witness the twenty-fifth anniversary commemoration of Horcones/Santa Clara, in which several radical Franciscans spoke openly about many events I mentioned above, clarifying in local peoples’ minds the truth of what had happened. They, along with campesino organizers, drew direct connections from 1975 to the nadir of Olancho’s history, the 1980s. They insinuated that the excuse of a Cold War (in which most locally-absorbed *olanchanos* had

had little interest) justified continued repression of campesinos by *terratenientes*. But Olancho has never united in its condemnation of the elite: the morning after the 25-year commemoration, anti-State graffiti, which had not been seen since the 1980s, appeared on several prominent buildings in Juticalpa. Many condemned this as an attempt by radicals from Tegucigalpa to disturb Olancho's law and order.

The Honduran military, for the first time, publicly admitted their guilt in the massacres at the 2000 commemoration. These days, their voluntary conscription policy, and their overcoding by a new Ministry of Defense, has humbled them and left them grasping for ideas of new ways to attract soldiers. In the old days, it was simple: even into the early 1990s, trucks rumbled through the streets of Juticalpa rounding up unwilling young men for whom conscription was a duty, not an alternative. The 1980s saw the military in its heyday, awash with Cold War dollars, at the forefront of a possible invasion by the Soviet Union through Cuba and Nicaragua. While Honduras in the early 1980s was becoming an armed fortress, Olancho and its famously anarchistic residents were the focus of intense scrutiny: they shared a common border with Nicaragua in a virtually trackless forest space that could hide an invading army. El Aguacate, east of Catacamas—in the 1700s a colonial lookout post on the edge of the Taguzgalpa—became the epicenter of Olancho's entirely hostile takeover by the State, probably achieved more decisively in the early 1980s than at any time in the past.

At El Aguacate, all but a few people now agree, Contras were trained by the CIA, Sandinistas were terminated, and radical Hondurans, including not a few *olanchanos*, were tortured and often terminated as well. Throughout the majority of my Honduran experience this was still largely a taboo subject for casual conversation in Honduras, but since the late 1990s mass graves and campesino and military witnesses have testified to the abuses perpetrated at El Aguacate. Under the regime of Gustavo Alvarez Martínez in the early 1980s, State terror was justified by the communist threat, and a death squad called the Batallón 3-16 weeded out likely subversive candidates among residents of Olancho. Military presence and mind control went

hand-in-hand: for example, teachers were told what to teach their students, with soldiers standing by. Soldiers patrolled the streets, parks, buses, and rural areas: some people today claim that those were the good old days when the land was safe, but most speak about it in horror, or have shut it out of their memories. Amazingly, development organizations like the US Peace Corps and USAID continued to act as if nothing was the matter—even though *olanchanos* verbally attacked *gringo*-looking foreigners and sprayed anti-US graffiti all over the walls of Juticalpa and Catacamas.

The systematic abuses of the early 1980s were committed with the implicit consent of a government run by Liberales, who had been, in the 1960s, champions of land reform (and were associated with the Liberal reforms of the late 1800s). Though oppression eased considerably in the later 1980s, it was during the administration of underdog Nacionalista Rafael Leonardo Callejas in the early 1990s that the societal forces which had been restrained since the 1960s were unleashed. After the Cold War, the US government eased up on its overcoding of Central America, allowing numerous other international State and private organizations to squabble over the rights to develop and preserve every last bit of space in regions like Olancho. The outside became entangled with a local spatial complexity in the 1990s where every spatial identity clamored for a voice. In effect, with local space all but evacuated by the hated military, the State ceded considerable power to the *municipios* and development organizations. Hurricane Mitch in 1998 seemed to be a unifying force (by appearing to wipe the country clean), but it turned out quickly to result in yet more complexity, more organizations, and less State control over local space. The Babilonia *enredo* of chapters two and seven are a perfect example of the opportunity for local space in Olancho: will it continue to regain its strength, or will the State be forced, once again, to exert its will? Unfortunately, given the last 475 years, the conclusion may be foregone.

3.11 Conclusion: Rhizomes against the State

I have illustrated how the “Olancho” of section 3.1 came to be. In many important ways, I have also mapped the becoming spatial complexity of Olancho’s “parts,” through five centuries of *enredos*. Fine-tuning many *enredos* presented in this chapter remains a task of the following chapters: in chapter four, through the all-important contribution of the non-human; in the remaining chapters, through the contribution of ethnographic details from my field research. Olancho, after the State encountered it, always remained local space in continuous variation from place to place, even while striation hierarchized the bodies of Olanchanos. How was this “smoothing” possible? Can’t a State, Stalin-like, striate the minutest actions and passions of its citizens, drawing its world about it like a cloak? Not with the internally “chaotic” conditions of Olancho and the ever-present margin of smooth space never conquerable by the State. But the Taguzgalpa was not by any means the only rhizomatic “saviour” of Olancho, and indeed the former’s impending chaos (1550s to late 1800s) seems to have been an invitation for the State to striate Olancho more intensely. I turn here to other forces that traversed historical Olancho and that kept it a rhizome. This is by no means a complete list, but rather only a suggestive one.

1. Family. An only slightly hierarchized rhizome, the family is incapable of being striated: kinship itself is a space of myriad combinatorial possibilities, and therein lies its power and subversion. Family networks are the weave of Olancho, and can in some ways be seen as its culture, almost atemporal. The Zelayas are commonly recognized to be an ever-present family in Olancho—they are there no matter what century or what context one is discussing. But they may not be even that typical of the Olancho family—rather it may be the unspectacular surnames of those closer to the land who maintain the historical and spatial continuity of Olancho.

2. Culture. Geertz (1973) presented it as a web of becoming meanings: in Olancho, culture seems to be “Family + 1,” in that its networks are families to which, individually and collectively, friends and acquaintances can only ever be added.

3. Blood. Obviously this corporeal substance is the glue of family networks, and is spoken of in exactly those terms. “Sangre llama sangre,” bloods calls for blood, points to the ease at which local conflicts are settled by shedding it, but alliances are also forged by the joining of different bloodlines, and this is similarly explicitly understood.

4. Gold and Water. Gold in Olancho always began in streams; water and gold traversed Olancho’s image and imagination in tandem, even though in practice they had to be separated. Gold was everywhere, and Olancho was golden: since Precolumbian groups may not have held it in as high esteem (greenstone may have played the part of gold: see Begley 1999), gold is part of an Old World rhizome, the contribution of a transplanted Old World local space. Gold, however, never creates wealth, but only ever created wealth, in the past tense. Gold, everywhere, is universal temptation—it is perdition, distributing humility as well as fascination. Gold, where it held only local fascination, was panned only by women (see chapter 5). Water, on the other hand, is the rhizome that distributes wealth but can never be controlled, and is therefore gold without temptation and perdition. Water is humbling: in Olancho, to dream of a muddy river is to foretell disaster. Water can be neither held back nor striated—Babilonia shows this; Mitch showed this. In many ways, it is the judgment of God distributed in the landscape. But it never weakened local space.

5. *Cimarrón* and Fire. The escaped African slave; the escaped Iberian livestock. I spent few words on what happened to the multitudes of Africans who escaped San Jorge’s mines, because the record is silent. Perhaps they became *mulatos*. But it was the escaping of cattle that can be *proven* to have both shaped Olancho and kept it intact, despite the barbed-wire fence (a major setback for nomads). As I hope to have shown, and will stress again in chapter six, livestock and fire are forces for internal “smoothing,” for many types of self-sufficient wealth

(in terms of “basic needs”), and made the State largely unnecessary. When turned into capital, they became something else.

6. *Plátanos*. I only mentioned them briefly, but that was due to the documentary record: they were never tribute crops, and had little monetary value. But they were always there, the staff of life, of which bananas are but a weak parody (rows of banana trees striated the Republic—see Acker 1988). Interested foreigners like Wells (1857) learned enough of them to sing their praises; Burchard and Weed (1860) went right back to Alexander von Humboldt for the last word on plantains. Their very ease of growth and high yield made them a rhizome of unsurpassed power; *yuca* and *teocinte*, more limited, played similar roles.

7. Franciscans. Seven martyrs—five before 1625; two in 1975. It is hardly a happenstance that Franciscans were present virtually throughout. They are a rhizomatic hierarchy. Perhaps they were capable of understanding local space, even if they ultimately failed in smooth space. Even though One God over all Space is a drastic simplification of local god spaces, Franciscans performed surprisingly unlike the shoe-wearing members of other orders. Explicating all their becomings is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is clear to me that, particularly in their twentieth-century instar, they were smoothing as much as striating forces.

8. Guns and Words. An easy one: their ownership serves to arm a populace against striation even if in doing so it turns its weapons inward. The Taguzgalpa was never peacefully silent, nor was Olancho; in times that the latter threatened, the State may have seen fit to arm the populace or to take away all arms: both alternatives were tested. Guns speak words wherever they are positioned, and what they say is taken up in chapter five.

9. Laziness. A construction of the condition of plenty, an observer’s error, a built-in condition of cattle ranching, a societal reaction to exploitation (see Casco 1985)? Opinions vary, but the lack of application to Work is not a fault if it is true: Work is a striation of the State in Deleuzian thought.

10. Martyrs and Massacres. The former gathered spatial identities into alliances and were phallic in their symbolic power: they led *olanchanos* away from the Body of the State. The latter served as constant reminders that the State did not mean well, and that *olanchano* families needed to remain vigilant.

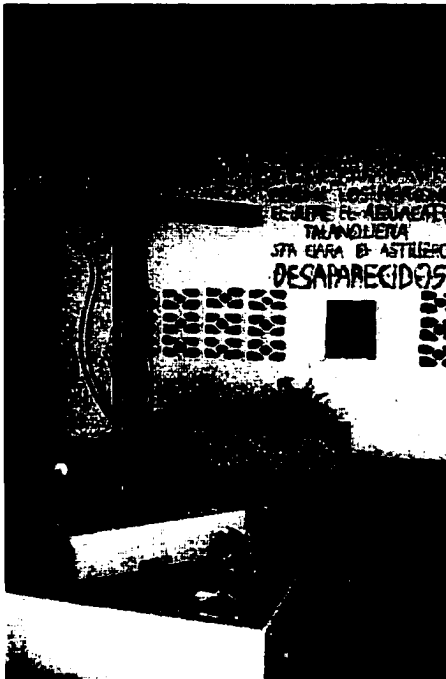


Fig. 3.21. “Jubileo de los Mártires,” Juticalpa. Sculpture erected in 2000 (Jubilee Year of the Catholic Church) at the side of the cathedral. Places listed are where various massacres were perpetrated during the 1970s and 1980s, including Talanquera (1972) and El Aguacate (1980s). The plaque lists victims of 1975.

There is no way to reduce these ten themes—and more will appear in later chapters—to a single code, whether moral or spatial. No one abstract machine—neither development, nor conservation, nor the State—can be successful in overcoding n -dimensional local space “for itself,” and three working to their own ends entangle matters more. Whether, and in what conditions, development, conservation, and the State become mutually entangled while also forming rhizomes with local space will become clearer in subsequent chapters. For now, it is important to stress that development, conservation, and the State have needed to create their own histories in order to create their own spaces, or more accurately, to refashion local space

and its spatial identities to their own ends. Does this mean that this chapter is “beside the point” for them, if they insist on remaining apart, enamored of their own regimes of signs? I hope to have shown some tentative convergence—the Fiallos speech from 1909, for example—that is indicative of a becoming-local of development, conservation, and the State. Not all is imposition and striation, as I hope to show in chapters seven and eight. Before then, in the next three chapters I map in greater detail local space itself: is local space a “machine,” or can it better be characterized as ground, or even as a Plane of Consistency, a virtual realm of probabilities?

Chapter Four

Natural Histories

Histories of “Nature” (as everything that humans define themselves by not being) are timed and spaced at scales distinct from those sketched in chapters one and two. Humans are not central nodes in the rhizomes (never hierarchies) created by the entangled machines we call “climate,” “geology,” “biology,” and so forth. Rather, we centralize ourselves and our endeavors, and by so doing create “the environment”: Nature surrounding *us*. Culture becomes *our* realm; Nature everything else; Nature/Culture a dichotomy. “Nature” was perhaps our origin and essence, but we defined ourselves, our *Dasein* or being-human, by standing out from it, by drawing a line (encasing ourselves inside an osmotic barrier, like a cell). Primarily, we have done this through semiotic systems, fashioning meanings out of “chaos.”

To make sense of Nature surrounding us, we map its *n*-dimensional spaces and times into a coordinate system that allows us to situate each and every phenomenon according to a code. No univocal Code transcends human spatialities and temporalities; codes are immanent to them: each State has its code, each *municipio* has its lingo, each family the special meanings of its raised eyebrows. To belong, you must speak the patois so that you know what is going on, and can shape things around you. Codes are often grouped rhizomatically or hierarchically into larger domains: each and every spatial identity is “ruled” by what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call a “regime of signs.” “Everything” can thus hang together in a (historically bounded) framework—Christianity, tropical rain forest conservation, Grand Unifying Theory—that leads us to be able to understand and to some extent control complex phenomena.

Nature—for example, the hurricane and the bird migration—“deterritorializes” the signs and symbols by which we understand it, “taking them back” into its incomprehensibility, trespassing across our “human” spaces. In shocking and soothing ways, Nature intrudes into our consciousness as the Other—but really, it was always a multitude of others. “It” claims

“us”: the tides in our saltwater blood; lark song, refashioned by Olivier Messiaen, transmuted by mockingbirds. Lark song is lark “territory”: Messiaen “deterritorializes” it by fashioning it into art (our territory): mockingbirds riff four hundred variations¹ on what they hear emanating from human speaker systems, “reterritorializing” it. There never was, it turns out, a dichotomy of Nature and Culture—rather, through our regimes of signs we had striated complex reality to keep it in order, and ourselves at the center. But bird song got inside us, working to subvert our apartheid from Nature.

Some of us cannot allow waterfalls—and who they gather—to speak freely, because what they say (unlike bird song)² is subversive of our notions of control. Luckily for some of us, waterfalls are locally constricted *enredos*—not like hurricanes. We close ourselves off from the types of people whose “milieux” call to them with toponyms like “The Delights of the Murmuring Water.”

We keep “La Naturaleza” out there, thinking it is chained and heeled. Nevertheless, our spaces are also and always not only carved out domains for people, but also infiltrating rhizomes with “everything else.” We deterritorialize; we are deterritorialized. We are populated by tiny organisms with which we are symbiotic; we live under the sun. We never wholly submit, nor wholly subjugate. Our States are unsteady, metastable. The rhizome is a study in geography—not people as figure and ground as ground; not people as unimportant and Nature as original—but beyond any such dichotomy.

All human spaces are actually or potentially rhizomatic with everything else, but some are more rhizomatic than others (to subvert an Orwellian phrase). This is true because some human spaces are more localized, more concentrated, more “smooth.” When one lives in close quarters with other/other becomings that may seem indifferent or even hostile to humans (forest space,

¹ “Cinzontle” is the mockingbird in Honduras. It is a Nahuatl word signifying “owner of four hundred phrases” (Andrews 1975:427).

² See the comment that “the birds will have their trees” in the Babilonia *enredo* of chapter two.

with its peccaries and fer-de-lances, is the extreme example in Honduras), one forms more rhizomes even if one desires to striate all the more. There is no steady state of human and non-human, because nothing is stable, and everything is in movement. Realization of this is an important feature of local space in Olancho—no matter how much Olanchanos striate “their” land, it still eludes them and overpowers them (the collapsing slope and the rising water). Nor are many Olanchanos narrowly and vocally intent on “subduing” Nature—there is still too much of it, too close, too unpredictable.

I demonstrate in this chapter that the cornucopia of Olancho is not in large part a human construction. The entangling of machines has created a great complexity and diversity of non-human-coded rhizomes, though their manifestations are sometimes dissonant music to conservationists’ ears. This chapter situates the local space that is highlighted in chapters three, five, and six within the greater weave. In later chapters, thanks to the evidence presented below, I can present *all* identities of local space and of other spaces in some way rhizomatic with “Nature.” The “enchanted landscape” (chapter 5) will murmur not only because we or our forebears bade it speak, but also because it already and always whispered in its own polysemous codes.

The following sections outline machines in which humans may seem but small and relatively unimportant nodes, given our scalar constraints. The spaces created—whether mountain ranges or rivers, forests or foraging guild territories—are never controllable by humans, even if in our hubris we may hope we can. What is more, though we are not deterministically controlled by the “environment,” we do indeed fit within the constraints imposed by machines: settlements in *valles* are a clear example of this. Having said all this, I don’t mean to imply that humans have no effect on everything else. Just the opposite: humans, through so many of our spatial endeavors (particularly those tending toward pure striation), have synergistic effects that ripple across worlds, at scales we may yet only suspect. For example, in the second half of the twentieth century in Olancho the striation of Nature was

effected with greater consequences than at any time in the previous four centuries. Bird song, say local people in reference to the Valle de Olancho, has given way to silence almost everywhere; scarlet macaw flocks have passed into history; white-tailed deer no longer congregate with cattle.

In the first five sections of this chapter, I look at what machines that are considered to be predominantly non-living (i.e. non-organic) have produced in Olancho. Section 4.1 gazes briefly at geologic spaces and times, outlining a few phenomena that have set Olancho apart from Honduras, “preconditioning” the human aspects of its local spaces in several ways. Section 4.2 outlines Olancho’s rumpled, non-hierarchical fractal shape that in many ways has been both guide and foil to humans. In section 4.3, I consider the polyvalent qualities of Olancho’s soils and earths, stressing their extreme diversity of composition. Section 4.4 considers the domain of water flowing downhill, forming in Olancho no single hierarchical river valley, but rather the spaces of distinct watersheds with only their Caribbean drainage in common. Section 4.5 looks at climates in terms of the preceding four sections: how local “microclimates” come about through myriad entangled rhizomes.

In the next six sections, I describe the spaces of “biodiversity” (the rhizomes in which organic life is foregrounded). Two themes crucial to an understanding of Olancho entwine in these sections: its non-rain forest forest biodiversity, and its non-forest biodiversity. In Section 4.6, I rethink biogeographic constructions that have applied in Honduras, suggesting that much is hidden or lost when Olancho is shrunk to a small-scale biogeographic pinpoint, or situated within an inflexible coordinate system, rather than expanded into a vast realm of complex spaces. Section 4.7 decentralizes a hegemonic tropical rain forest discourse through showing how the spaces that make Honduras/Olancho unique and irreplaceable (e.g. through containing high endemism rates) are the montane cloud forests and the *valle* thorn forests. In 4.8, I examine the pine woods, a rhizome of tremendous importance. In 4.9, I turn to rain forests, showing why those in Olancho can be locally differentiated from areas to the north and west.

Section 4.10 decentralizes “forest” altogether, by showing that Olancho is not, has never been, and will never be a uniform forested landscape. This is due not only to human influence (e.g. *sabanas*), but also to non-human conditions. Section 4.11 gives proof of how Olancho’s cornucopia, beyond human constructions, is richer than other regions of similar size. Section 4.12 concludes with a list of rhizomatic probabilities, much like in chapter three.

4.1 Geology in Disorder

Honduras and Nicaragua encompass the Chortís Block, the largest land-positive section of the Caribbean Plate. Its dynamics are directly entangled with the movements of the North American Plate to the north (including much of Guatemala) and the Cocos Plate to the southwest (the subduction of which spur local manifestations of the “Ring of Fire”) in a triad of forces that make Honduras a geologist’s unsolvable equation. The Chortís Block is scarcely understood by geologists, who remain baffled by its complexity.³ Honduras, according to Robert Rogers, one of the geologists who knows it best, may well be among the most difficult regions in the world left to explain--analogous to California, which took teams of geologists decades to decipher. A small-scale relief map of the country reveals its bewildering complexity: there is no “central” feature or “Code,” no unifying mountain range or river basin (for example), but rather a hodge-podge of ranges trending in all directions, and river drainage systems following similarly tortuous paths. What seems to apply for eastern Honduras makes little sense in the center, the west, the south. The physics of the movements of three tectonic

³ This is exacerbated in large part by the relatively limited state of geologic knowledge about Honduras, and especially about its eastern half, which lacks almost entirely the fine-grained detail of the 1:50,000 geological maps (topo overlays) that have been compiled mostly for other parts of the country. Olancho covers sixty-one 1:50,000 topo sheets completely or partially. Of these, geological maps complement only five: Guaimaca (1987), Orica-Guayape (1996), Salamá (1998), San Francisco de Becerra (1989), Santa María del Real (1993) (See Section II in Bibliography). Kozuch’s (1991) *Mapa geológico de Honduras* is sketchy for much of the East, containing several “geología desconocida” labels that stretch over sizeable areas. Gordon’s “Strike-slip faulting and basin formation at the Guayape Fault-Valle de Catacamas intersection, Honduras, Central America” (1990) is the only major geological work on Olancho (though see also Kozuch 1989a). The German geologist/geographer Karl Sapper (e.g. Sapper 1937) contributed key knowledge to Olancho’s geology at the turn of the twentieth century after two walking trips across eastern Honduras (West 1990). Robert Rogers, at the University of Texas-Austin at time of writing, is the first to do systematic and detailed geological fieldwork in northern Olancho.

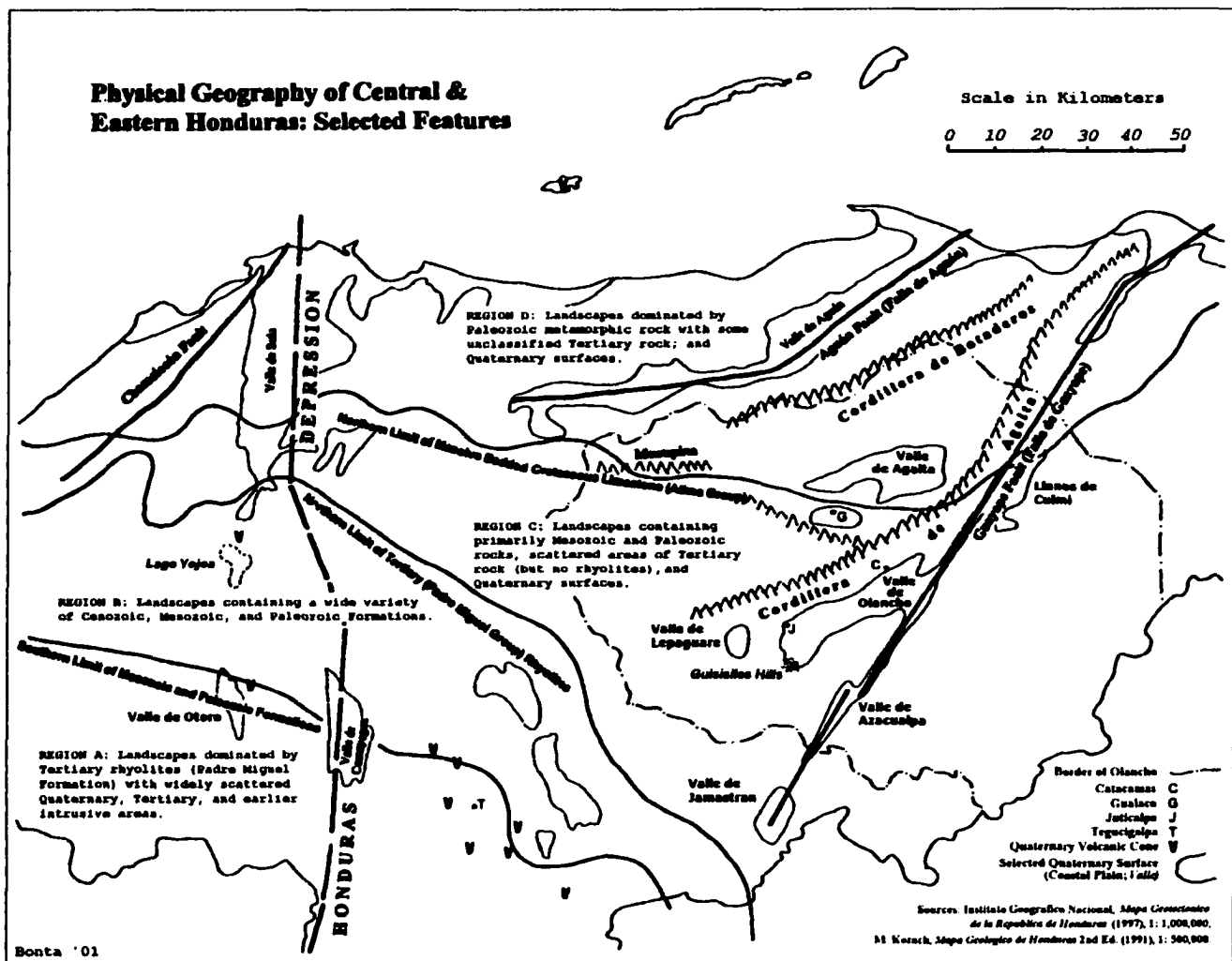


Fig. 4.1. Physical geography of central and eastern Honduras: selected features.

plates and two oceans have been those of extreme distortion and cataclysmic punctuations like the Tertiary “ignimbrites,” still largely mysterious to geoscientists. The following themes, in no particular order, I have selected because they best illustrate and support certain spaces and spatial identities that I feature in this dissertation.



Fig. 4.2. Cap of Tertiary rhyolite in the Valle de Ilamapa, Distrito Central, Francisco Morazán. Note the lack of soil formation; the Valle de Ilamapa, at the head of the Río Choluteca's drainage, is one of the most desertic natural landscapes in Honduras. Tertiary rock of this type does not occur in Olancho.

The sterile cap of “ignimbrite” from massive Tertiary volcanic eruptions that blankets much of Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador does not reach east to Olancho (Kozuch 1991; Weyl 1980). This single fact has huge importance for Olancho. Honduras' central, southern, and western highlands contain the remnants of a 15- to 19-million-year-old series of cataclysms (with an epicenter possibly in western Honduras) that left an approximately 50,000-square-kilometer viscous ash blanket up to 1000 meters deep (Weyl 1980:183-4). The resulting rocks favor a sterile, unworkable “soil” only agriculturally useful in areas of recent deposition (for example, on cloud forest mountaintops where evapotranspiration rates are low and organic matter has been able to build up). Generally, the rhyolite/andesite “ignimbrite” landscapes contain thin pine woods and savannas supporting sparse cattle and lumbering. The west-east difference remarked upon in section 3.1—between Guaimaca, in Francisco Morazán, and

Campamento, in Olancho—is in large part the result of the ignimbrites’ reaching their eastern limit at Guaimaca. Fecund Olancho is the lithically non-hegemonic—because non-rhyolitic—landscape to the east. The great array of rock types formed previous to these catastrophic events are exposed at the surface in “older” Olancho, without any one dominant over another. Other “unclassified” Tertiary formations do occur in Olancho, but only as part of a mixture that includes areas of fertility as well as of sterility.

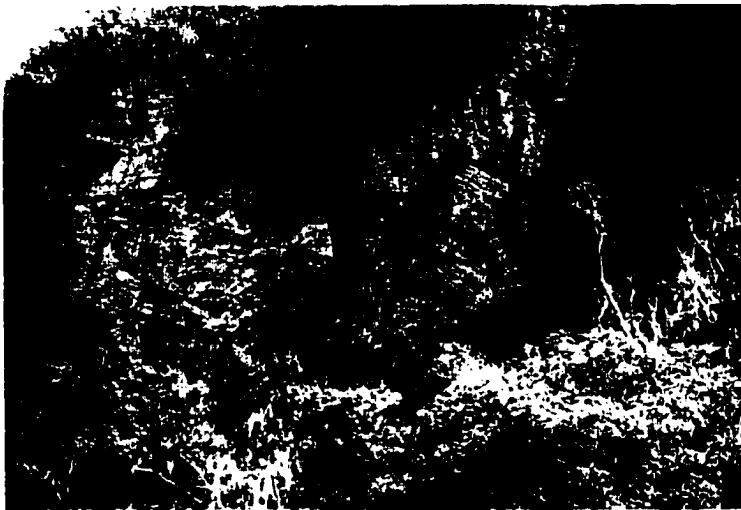


Fig. 4.3. Atima limestone, El Boquerón.

A visually striking and geographically highly significant geologic formation in Olancho is the belt of massive, bedded Cretaceous limestone (Yojoa Group: Cantarranas Formation, Atima Formation; see Kozuch 1991) that trends west-east across Honduras in a band north of the more recent Tertiary volcanics; it is interwoven with other sedimentary formations, as well as (older) metamorphic formations. Olancho’s limestone is horizontally bedded, so it does not produce the abrupt vertical topography of other tropical karsts (R. Rogers, pers. comm.). It is highly porous and thus responsible for the great cave systems of the Montañas de Colón, the Cordillera de Agalta, and other areas. I have observed that limestone bedrock in the Cordillera de Agalta tends to “control” slope, soil, and potential vegetation more predictively than other sedimentary

and metamorphic formations, though not as unilaterally as the ignimbrites. Limestone invites agriculture, rather than marginalizing it.

Two strike-slip faults are highly important for Olancho's spaces both historically and in the present. The Aguán Fault, which has created the long and narrow Valle de Aguán with great significance as a corridor for biotic movement into the interior (though see 4. 9 for its probable role as a water barrier). The Aguán appears to be the most easterly of a series of parallel southwest-northeast trending faults associated with the boundary between the North American and Caribbean plates (Donnelly et al. 1990:57). Though the boundary area itself (Polochic, Jocotán, and Motagua faults) is highly geologically active, the faults in northcentral and particularly northeastern Honduras are virtually inactive. Earthquakes are almost unknown in eastern Honduras.⁴ Olancho's "central" geological feature, at least vis-à-vis its importance to post-Conquest striation, is the Guayape Fault, which runs 260 kilometers from the mouth of the Río Sico southwest to the Valle de Jamastrán (Gordon 1990; Kozuch 1991). The Cordillera de Agalta follows this fault in its northeastern part, but the range is deflected west and northwestward around the Valle de Olancho.

The Cordillera de Agalta itself is only beginning to be studied geologically. Like most of Olancho's ranges it contains a distorted mixture of sedimentary and metamorphic rock with radical differences in bedrock and soil type over small distances. There are also local areas of Tertiary volcanics not directly associated with the ignimbrite explosions and inadequately understood and classified. The heterogeneous Mesozoic groups called "Valle de Angeles" and "Honduras," physically adjacent to the massive bedded Atima limestones mentioned above, contain a wide variety of shales, sandstones, and other rocks. Some of these are highly prone to landsliding after extreme weather events such as Hurricane Mitch. Other rock types from these

⁴ Though see Anonymous 1856. The active and dormant volcanoes of the "Ring of Fire" in Nicaragua are 80 kilometers distant from southern Olancho. The nearest Quaternary volcanic landscapes are 70 kilometers away in the Tegucigalpa area.

“groups” still lack published descriptions and separate classifications. An example is the rotted granite batholith in northern Olancho, favored by the endangered relict tree cycad *Dioon mejiae* (see 4.10).

Olancho’s placer gold originated in the Paleozoic Cacaguapa Schist formation, weathered from mountains no higher than 1500 meters above sea level. Gold veins have not been reported, leading to the possibility that eastern Honduras’ “gold surface,” the Chimera of miners, has weathered away entirely (R. Rogers, pers. comm.).

The Quaternary surfaces are discussed below, and contribute chiefly to the *valle* structural basins.

4.2 Land Shapes

Geomorphology has long been the “territory” of geographers, and it is thanks to a few of these that we possess systematic descriptions helping to explain some of Olancho’s topography.⁵

Olancho’s northern boundary is a 150-kilometer-long mountain chain that parallels the Aguán Fault. Its highest, most remote reaches (1500 to 1724 meters above sea level, henceforth “masl”) are called the “Montaña de Botaderos;” its northeastern part is the “Sierra de la Esperanza.” The geology of this chain is largely unknown, but it contains mostly metamorphic

⁵ Karl Sapper was the first (West 1990), making two trips around the turn of the twentieth century, one north to south from the Valle de Aguán up the Río Mame/Río Guata and over the Cordillera de Agalta to Juticalpa, and the other west to east through Dulce Nombre de Culmí. Jesús Aguilar Paz, Honduran geographer, travelled through Olancho in the 1920s gathering material for his outstanding 1933 *Mapa General de la República de Honduras*. Detailed geographical descriptions from Sapper’s and Aguilar Paz’s trips to Olancho have not become available. (Aguilar Paz’s large-scale sketch maps of Honduras, which would include Olancho, are held by his children in a private collection.) Nels Bengtson wrote “Notes on the physiography of Honduras” in 1926, as well as a dissertation on the subject, and appears to have visited parts of Olancho. Karl Helbig spent several weeks in 1953 traveling through Olancho, entering from El Paraíso and departing through San Esteban. His work includes *Áreas y paisajes del noreste de Honduras* (1953), with almost 50 pages of dense description of Olancho’s landscapes. The third major published geographical work including Olancho, Carl Johannessen’s *Savannas of interior Honduras*, is based on his fieldwork in the mid-1950s, and provides significant details on the *valles* of Lepaguare, Olancho, and Agalta. He also produced a preliminary field report (1954). In the works mentioned above, no descriptions can be found of numerous areas of the department, most notably the northwestern quarter, which was difficult to reach until recently.

rock. Its topography is similar to the Cordillera de Agalta, and local relief, stream bottom to ridge top, is around 1000 meters.



Fig. 4.4. La Picucha from the Valle de Gualaco. Telephoto lens shot captures the bare look of the high peaks of the Montaña de Babilonia (2354 meters above sea level), covered by windswept heath. Seventeen hundred meters of vertical relief accentuate the “montañas ynaccessibles” of Gualaqueno discourse throughout the centuries. La Picucha was reached by a trail in the 1980s, when the mountains became the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta.



Fig. 4.5. *Pura montaña* (old-growth rain forest and cloud forest) on the high peaks of the Montañas del Carbón. Taken from near the mixed Pech/Ladino village of Santa María del Carbón, San Esteban. Hill in foreground at 500 meters above sea level; peaks in back from 1700 to 1900 meters above sea level, called Los Alpes on maps, Cerro del Diablo by Ladinos; Cerro Amaisara by Pech.

The Cordillera de Agalta, the highlighted mountain range in this dissertation, runs 190 kilometers from the Caribbean coast southwestward to central Olancho, where it divides into a

northwest-trending branch that ends east of the Río Guata (Río Mame), and a southwest-trending branch that curves back northwest above Juticalpa, splitting into several ranges that terminate east of the Río Guayape and east of the town of Salamá. (Ranges to its west are generally considered part of the Cordillera de Misoco.) The central Cordillera de Agalta is called the Sierra de Agalta, north of Catacamas, and is one of the most rugged massifs in Honduras, with local relief of 2000 meters on the south (Valle de Olancho) side and 1550 meters on the north side (Valle de Gualaco and Valle de Agalta). La Picucha, the highest peak at 2354 meters, is also the highest point between eastern Honduras and central Costa Rica. The Sierra de Agalta⁶ has no foothills where it borders the central *valles*. The range can be crossed by trail on a long, steep day's hike at almost any point other than the high peaks area.

Montane valleys in the Cordillera de Agalta (and Montaña de Botaderos) contain few slopes under 30 degrees: most range between 30 and 60 degrees, angles that favor frequent landsliding (exacerbated by a combination of factors including bedrock type, dip, and strike). Their drainage systems are usually dendritic and often extremely steep. For example, the Quebrada de Agua of the Río Talgua in the Sierra de Agalta rises at 2200 masl and reaches 500 masl, the elevation of the Valle de Olancho's floor, in only seven kilometers.

Enmeshed in a web of connecting hills and mountains without any deep gorges to divide them, the Cordillera de Agalta connects continuously through hill country with the Montaña de Botaderos of northern Olancho and the Misoco and Mucupina (La Muralla) regions of western Olancho.

The geographers' monikers I apply above are often not employed in local space: mountain ranges are known as "montañas," which includes both forest cover and terrain. Long mountain chains like Agalta are rarely recognized as unified phenomena, being rather a collection of local *montañas*.

⁶ The Cordillera de Agalta reaches above 1500 masl in other massifs throughout the chain: Montaña de Jacaleapa; Montaña de Malacate; Montañas del Carbón.

The land southeast of the Guayape Fault is quite distinct from that to the northwest. There are no towering peaks to block the trade winds from the east, but rather a complex system of rugged hills that once formed the western margin of the Taguzgalpa and are still a roadless transition zone to the Moskitia lowlands of Gracias A Dios department. In southeastern Olancho there are no wide *valles*, but only narrow bottomlands along the river corridors of the Patuca, Coco, Wampú, and others.

The *valles* are Olancho's most benign features for human settlement. While structural and not erosional in origin, they are dominated by the rivers that flow through them. Each *valle* is quite distinct both physically and culturally. Slight changes in elevation create radical changes in vegetation. Most *valles* are covered by Quaternary alluvial deposits, but there are also local outcrops of metamorphic, sedimentary, and igneous rocks. The edges of the *valles* are gently-sloping alluvial fans (piedmont) deeply dissected by the montane streams that have created them. Older Pleistocene terrace surfaces are found toward the centers of the *valles*. Generally, higher-lying areas in the *valles* are known as *sabanas*, while bottomlands are called *vegas*.

The largest as well as lowest-lying (300-450 masl) *valle* in the department is the southwest to northeast trending Valle de Olancho, measuring 10 to 15 kilometers wide by 80 kilometers long. It is defined by the confluence of the Jalán and Guayape Rivers in its southwestern portion, and then by the Juticalpa, Telica, Olancho, and other rivers northeastward. At its northeastern edge the Valle de Olancho is separated by Tertiary outcrops from the narrow corridor of valley and hill country that follows the Guayape Fault.⁷

The kidney-shaped Valle de Agalta, 40 by 20 kilometers, Olancho's "second" *valle*, is dominated by one river, the Río Grande (a local name for the Río Sico). Most of its water comes from rivers flowing north out of the Sierra de Agalta. The Valle de Agalta ranges from

⁷ In cultural history, the Valle de Olancho has included the Río Tinto drainage as well as a strip of *valle* from the confluence of the Río Tinto and Río Guayape southwest toward the confluence of the Guayape and the Guayambre.

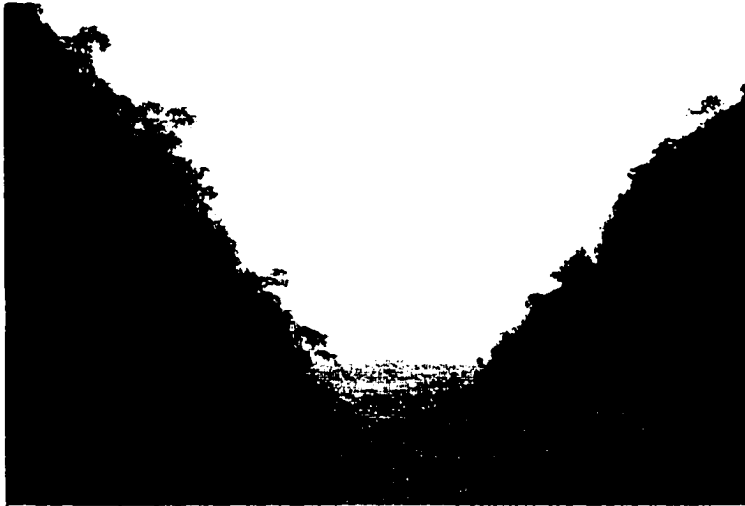


Fig. 4.6. Valle de Olancho from the Boquerón gorge.



Fig. 4.7. Valle de Agalta, southwest edge. Photo taken from the *serranía* above La Venta, facing east. Strips of vegetation in middle ground are pine savannas, fingers of *serranía* reaching into the heart of the Valle on well-drained soil. A group of ponds at lower left marks the conversion of cattle space to non-traditional exports, in this case fish. A forty-kilometer stretch of the Cordillera de Agalta includes (left to right) the Cerro de Amaisara and other peaks of the Montaña del Carbón; Montaña de Malacate (*Tikosa* in Pech); Montaña del Coronado.

440 to 700 masl, and is more isolated from the trade winds, and thus drier, than the Valle de Olancho. The oval Valle de Gualaco, measuring eight by 20 kilometers, lies upstream of the Valle de Agalta, near the headwaters of the Río Grande, and is 200 meters higher. It has an erosion surface at about 650 masl, comprised of equal measure *sabana*, *vega*, and narrow pine

ridge. The Valle de Gualaco is cooler and wetter than the Valle de Agalta, due seemingly to its elevation and proximity to the highest peaks of Agalta.⁸

The area formerly known as the “Valle de Arriba,” between the northern and southern arms of the westernmost Cordillera de Agalta, has no current blanket designation, and is comprised instead of a series of separate *valles* occupied by the Río Telica and several of its tributaries. This *valle* region is equal part hills and flatlands, and there are none of the wide Pampan plains that dominate the Valle de Olancho and the Valle de Agalta. Villages and towns here are often tucked into *valles* and *vallecitos* only a kilometer or two in length and breadth. The arid and highly fertile Valle de Guacoca, which contains the largest known Precolumbian ruin in central Olancho, measures a mere ten by three kms.

The *valle* sometimes considered to be the most “true” to Olanchano landscape ideals is the Valle de Lepaguare, where *sabanas* in the headwaters of the Río Juticalpa meet terraces above the middle course of the Río Guayape. Lepaguare, ten by 17 kilometers, is bordered to the north by the Cordillera de Agalta, known here by a variety of local names such as the Montaña de Caliche, with 1000 meters of relief.

The Valle de Azacualpa, on the Guayape Fault, where the Guayape is joined by the Guayambre to form the Patuca, is a classic Honduran *valle*: wide and flat, striped by pine savannas, lush pastures, and tobacco plantations, ringed by mountains with 1000 meters of local relief. Azacualpa, like Lepaguare, once contained only one *sitio*, and is therefore known today as a single rural *comarca* without an administrative *pueblo* center, even though it is 50 kilometers long and three to eight wide. For centuries Azacualpa marked the very edge of “barbaric” Taguzgalpa, and even today has a highly unsavory reputation among residents of more “civilized” areas. A gorge of the Patuca and a radical change of vegetation separates the

⁸ During the colonial period and later, the Valle de Gualaco was rarely distinguished from the “Valle de Agalta,” which signified the entire Olancho part of the “Río de Agalta” drainage basin. However, the two *valles* are structurally separated by a narrow gorge.

Valle de Azacualpa, which looks like much of the rest of montane interior Olancho, from the Valle de Poncaya and Valle de Patuca, recent designations for two rolling basins on the rain forest frontier that have been colonized only in the last 50 years. Though the Poncaya and Patuca do not classify as “true” *valles*, they are rapidly taking on the look of the central *valles* through the expanding cattle ranching in the area.

The numerous *valles* of western and northern Olancho never stretch more than 10 kilometers in any direction. The largest are: those along the Río Guayape corridor northwest of Lepaguare; the Valle de Ulúa; the Valle de Salamá. The category of “*valle*” is lost at the scale of the myriad local Quaternary surfaces known as *vallecitos*, *llanos*, and *planes* interspersed among the hills and mountains of the north and west.

Though certainly not all *olanchano* spatial identities are linked to or dependent on *valles* (for example, whole *municipios* such as Jano and Guata have little to do with *valles*), in general these structural features, in the past and at the present, have been powerful forces of attraction—they gather humans and other biota together for myriad reasons discussed later in this chapter, and throughout the dissertation.

There are several hill regions of Olancho only describable based on their lack of *valles* of any kind: these have been the most difficult areas of all to striate, and to the present day remain in general beyond the “reach” of outside law-and-order enforcement in any form. The hill regions of southwestern Olancho are such areas: youthful erosion surfaces draining into the Jalán, the Guayape, and their tributaries. Traveling across them in a car is a dizzying and disorienting experience of seemingly endless vertical hours (ups and downs and arounds) with hardly a flat place in sight. Northern Olancho outside the above-mentioned *valles* has few flat surfaces either, and is a seemingly endless maze of pine forested hills and broadleaf gullies. In both regions, settlement has been extremely sparse and access by vehicle highly tenuous; they remain among the least-known regions of Central America among all outsiders other than goldminers and loggers.

The most notable lithic-controlled geomorphological feature of Olancho is the karst landscape, where horizontally-bedded limestone forms not only lengthy cave systems but also surface features such as sinkholes (*resumideros*) and vents (*respiraderos*), seasonally or semi-permanently dry streams (“Quebrada Seca,” “Río Seco”), chimneys (*mogotes*), and massive reef-like cliff formations with sheer faces (*peñas blancas*) of sometimes over 800 meters in height.

The Spanish terms are part of a local geomorphological language unique to the karst landscape. Other geomorphologies are marked by their own landscape vocabularies as well. For example, in the highly unique Güisisiles hill region above where the Río Jalán empties into the Valle de Olancho there are *tinajas* (potholes, likened to large earthen jars), *güisisiles* (domes, likened to red brocket [mazama] deer), and other features carved through erosion from a soft, horizontally bedded igneous flow of unknown origin.



Fig. 4.8. Los Güisisiles, viewed from Paya, San Felipe, Juticalpa. The Río Jalán is hidden by the orchards in the middleground. Los Güisisiles are composed of the same horizontally-bedded Tertiary volcanic rock as nearby Las Tinajas (Fig. 4.9). They cover about ten square kilometers of a *terratiente* landholding and are naturally devoid of thick vegetation.

An important lesson in understanding Olancho’s shapes (and Honduran geomorphology in general) is that there is no central upland or central lowland, only local collections of mountains and valleys. Perspective shifts from place to place, not ever drawn to any central

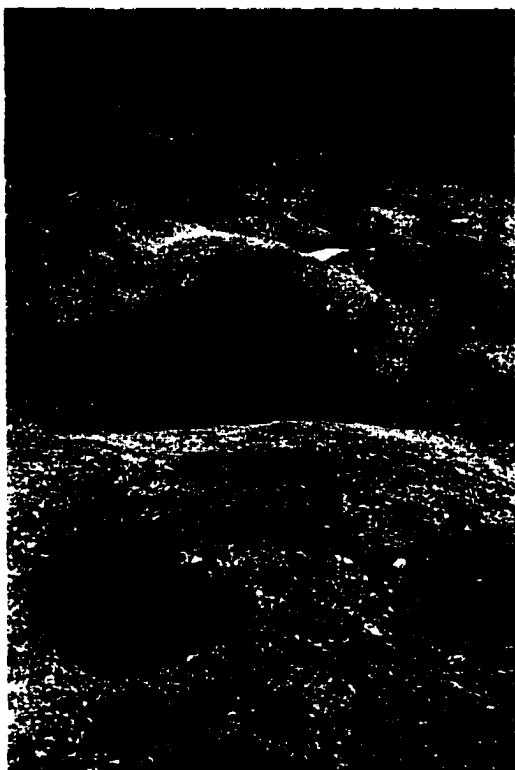


Fig. 4.9. Las Tinajas, San Felipe, Juticalpa. Potholes in an unnamed Tertiary volcanic formation, horizontally-bedded, above the Río Jalán. An intriguing natural aquatic habitat.

feature. On a Honduran scale, even the “*tierra caliente*”/“*tierra templada*” distinction of coast and interior fails to capture the reality of many *tierras calientes* and *tierras templadas* interdigitating in continuous variation across the land.

4.3 *Tierras y Suelos*

Locally, “*suelo*” means soil for agriculture while “*tierra*” includes “earth” for a wide variety of other purposes (see chapter 5). The complexity and diversity of Olancho’s soils and earths, as in most of Central America, belies any attempt to classify them as uniformly “rain forest” or “tropical.” The soils are as complex as the combinations of parent material, climate, slope, vegetation, and anthropogenic factors implicated in their formation.⁹

⁹ For a good descriptive guide to Honduran soils see Pineda Portillo, *Geografía de Honduras* (1997). I do not discuss the full array of Olancho’s pedological rhizomes here, for the same reasons I do not in later sections provide “superfluous” species lists for plants and animals: local variation is so overwhelming that adequate description could fill many volumes; globalized “simplified” categories are useful principally as guides in maps of specific situations, but should not in my opinion replace localized soil

A few soil types are “easy” to explain because they form from one dominant “code”: the most notable example is the black *tierra calichosa* weathered from limestone. It is the only montane soil in Olancho that reaches the fertility of the alluvial soils, and is highly supportive of sustained human agricultural endeavor in the few spots it occurs in *valles*.¹⁰ In the mountains, where it is most common, *caliche* is often found among massive limestone boulders on steep tallus slopes, but is nevertheless highly coveted for maize and especially for beans. Farmers “lust after” this soil and plant at dizzying angles—the joke is that they seem to have “sembrado con una escopeta” (sown seeds with a shotgun, from a facing slope). Outsiders frequently fail to understand why people would plant in such situations.

The preferred soils for coffee, other than small humus-rich montane alluvial deposits, are those that weather from the crumbly shales, “redbeds,” and other Mesozoic sedimentary rocks mentioned above—those that are highly susceptible to landsliding.

Soils of the (unclassified, non-ignimbrite) Tertiary landscapes, such as in the hill country directly west of Juticalpa, tend to support grass and pine, and thus cattle space and timber space. Soils on metamorphic rock (e.g. gneisses and schists), for example those that favor *liquidambar* across much of the Cordillera de Agalta, are extremely variable and seem no more “globally” determined by their weathered bedrock components than by organic accumulation; locally, they are often strikingly controlled by subtle vegetation, slope, exposure, and microclimatic differences.

The “One True Soil” of agriculture in Olancho’s post-1945 Age of Development is that of the *valles*, plowable by modern machinery and less prone to massive (gully and sheet) erosion especially when burning regimes are eliminated. As Johannessen (1963) pointed out, however,

understanding. The local soils described here all relate directly to important themes of this dissertation.

¹⁰ *Tierra calichosa* supports intensive agriculture in the Colonia Agrícola at the base of the Sierra de Agalta east of Catacamas, and in San Marcos de Jutiquile in association with an important Precolumbian ruin.

many *valle* soils are “savanna” soils thanks to geology and geomorphology, and putting them into intensive agricultural use (e.g. irrigated rice) can be disastrous. Quaternary *valle* soil is richest on the well-drained piedmonts formed by the alluvial fans of streams depositing nutrients from the mountains, and in the *vegas*, where deep sandy loam, periodically renewed by flooding, has been the source of Olancho’s self-sustainable wealth in the staples *yuca* and *plátanos*. Quaternary *valle* soil is poorest on the older, flat *sabana* surfaces, so waterlogged in the *invierno* (rainy season) that they are clayey morasses for livestock; in the *verano* (dry season), they become leg-breaking hardpans.

There are no dominant “rain forest” soils in the Patuca Basin southeast of the Guayape Fault in the sense of a uniform bedrock or slope condition: the landscape’s only uniform feature, what most favors thick evergreen broadleaf forest growth, is climatic: more precipitation, lack of marked dry season, warmer temperatures, lack of rain shadow. The establishment of a nutrient-poor “rain forest” soil that lures settlers to believe in the earth’s fertility has to do in large part with a much higher rate of forest space’s “reterritorializing” what falls to the ground, compared for example to the dry *valles*, where arid conditions favor nutrient accumulation on the ground, especially during the March-May period. But stripping rain forests off the land in “Patuca” does not necessarily result in agricultural disaster, even if a long-fallow swidden is not practiced. In addition to local Quaternary alluvial surfaces, there are also large swaths of rich *tierra calichosa*.¹¹

The “moral” of soils is that their complexity is locally produced, and a locally-specific rhizome is always possible between humans and earths—a preexisting “wisdom” that development projects too often overlook. Humans make soils—like all biota do—but we do not necessarily follow the “best” wisdom, because we are overcoded by spatial identities that lead us, for example, to favor cows where maize “should” be grown, and vice versa.

¹¹ Note that the terms “calichosa” and “caliche” have different application in Olancho (compared to elsewhere in Middle America).

4.4 Waters

Though all Olancho's waters flow toward the Caribbean, thanks to the disordered topography and "arbitrary" lines of political jurisdiction they leave the department heading north (Yaguala, Mame, Cuaca rivers), northeast (Paulaya, Sico, Patuca, and Coco rivers), southeast (Río Wampú) and southwest (in a few *comarcas*). Water enters Olancho from the northwest (Río Guayape) and southwest (Jalán, Guayambre, Guineo/Huaquisahuas rivers). Geological machines have created structural *valles* distributed across the department in part independent of river systems, but also made flat and alluvial through their captures of rivers. The structural rather than erosional conditions for the occurrence of *valles* have deterritorialized their rhizomes with rivers—what has resulted is a fluvial landscape with "accidents" such as the "Z" of the Guayape/Patuca and the "V" of the Wampú. In these non-dendritic unique occurrences (defying, for example, the straightest meander between interior and coast), parts of rivers were captured and displaced by faults, synclines, and other structural domains, took advantage of *valles* and trenches, then escaped in seemingly random directions.

The Río Guayape/Patuca is the longest river (500 kms.) entirely in Honduras, and also contains its largest drainage basin (24,694 square kms) (Pineda Portillo 1997).¹² The amount of water gathered in the Patuca's watershed was graphically illustrated during Hurricane Mitch, when the river rose over forty feet downstream of the "*encuentros*" of the Guayambre and Guayape, scraping accumulated soil, vegetation, and human presence away in a few days.

Though the Guayape rises in northeastern Francisco Morazán department, all its major tributaries join it in the Valle de Olancho. One is the Río Juticalpa which, as a rare case, connects two *valles* along a flat corridor wide enough to have served as a *camino real*. In most cases, such river corridors (*boquerones*) from one *valle* to the next¹³ were too narrow and

¹² The Río Coco is longer (550 kms.), but has little drainage area in Honduras.

¹³ The Boquerón connecting the Valle de Olancho with the *vallecito* of La Avispa (featured in this dissertation) was not occupied by a main trail until quite recently. Other examples of range-cutting river

treacherous to double as transportation routes, so *caminos reales* (and probably Precolumbian routes) tended to wind along resistant ridges (*filos* and *cuchillas*) and over mountain passes (*portillos*) instead. This made transportation infrastructure in Olancho (and Honduras in general) difficult to solidify from the point of view of a striating centralized State—as the example of the first highway to Olancho in chapter three demonstrated, the outside comes flooding in largely in direct proportion to “accessibility.” Nevertheless, Olancho’s topographical “inconveniences” are still highly insuperable in a country with limited capital for works of engineering. Hurricane Mitch in the extreme, and every rainy season to lesser extent, demonstrate the tenuous nature of Olancho’s State road network: a crucial striation solidified over decades, upset through the combination of slope collapse and rising water.¹⁴

Rivers gather people to them, and though land titles often use watercourses as boundaries, local spaces like *comarcas* tend to sprawl over drainage basins. Given other factors mentioned above, there is a marked tendency for *rincones* to arise, “corners” of Olancho gathered around parts of drainage basins. These corners, “naturally” remote from the Valle de Olancho, have aided the construction of a larger-than-life Río Guayape. To explain: for example, the Río Juticalpa, what in other countries would be regarded as no more than a stream, has great cultural and historical significance, analogous to other streams its size in Olancho. The reason for its importance is one of scale. Its drainage basin covers no more than 375 square kms. (Secretaría de Recursos Naturales 1996:8). It is joined by two other *ríos*, the Río Mamisaca and Río Comunayaca, each a prominent Olancho stream in its own right; their drainage basins, once Spanish *sitios*, are now Ladino *comarcas*. These two “third-tier” streams are formed from

corridors too narrow for trails are the Río Cuaca and Río Mame through the Montaña de Botaderos, and the Río Telica from the Valle de Arriba to the Valle de Abajo. No river cuts completely through the Cordillera de Agalta.

¹⁴ Olancho transport networks have historically been a rhizome of land and water. Canoes and rafts plied local rivers in many areas, not only the edge of the Taguzgalpa. With the rise to supremacy of the State’s road network, the rhizome has withered (particularly in the Valle de Olancho). Nevertheless, the Nueva Palestina area of Patuca *municipio* still has a strong orientation to river life, and much local traffic (even cattle), is moved up and down the Patuca on *pipantes*.

numerous fourth-tier *quebradas* and *riachuelos*, which drain the surrounding peaks. The fourth-tier watercourses are those most commonly associated with local montane geography at the most intimate scale. The Río Mamisaca contains five *aldeas* and 41 *caseríos* (hamlets) in its drainage basin. Many local people may only occasionally “come down from the hills” as “far” as the Río Juticalpa and the town of Juticalpa. At these scales of “intimate immensity” (Bachelard 1994), the Río Guayape is a stream that is “vast” almost beyond comprehension from the point of view of a villager in its “remote” headwaters. Olanchanos have been laughed at for their mythologization of the Guayape as deserving to be ranked among the “great rivers of the world” (see Guifarro Mercadel 1979).¹⁵

Northeastern Olancho is dominated by the Río Grande (Sico), with a few lengthy tributaries coming from the Montaña de Botaderos, and many short but high-volume mountain streams plunging from the Cordillera Agalta to its south (e.g. the Río Babilonia). The Río Grande, in cultural history, has been analogous to the Guayape/Patuca as a centralized, gathering waterway for the northeast.¹⁶ Indeed, the Cordillera de Agalta as divide between two worlds gathered by two rivers is a local dichotomy that may make sense in cultural history. This suggests the difficult question of whether rivers striate—even though I have insinuated above that only humans striate space. Indeed, the word “dendritic,” signifying a (ideal?) tree-like drainage machine gathering disparate threads one by one (often in pairs, in any “los encuentros”) and finally uniting them into a central, single One River, points to the presence of a hierarchical

¹⁵ This text, *Tierra del oro y del talento cuna*, is an ironic rant against Olanchano hubris and exaggeration, but is in no way light or humorous. The author belittles Olanchano pretensions to justify (historic, immediate past, and future) State oppression. His sinister phrases go far beyond what other writers have done to Olanchano and dared to publish in book form: most outside writers look somewhat askance at Olanchano; most Olanchano writers praise their land to the skies, while always condemning its culture of violence (and “laziness,” and other embarrassments).

¹⁶ Northwestern Olancho has no dominating drainage basin, but is at the intersection of streams that drain west and north, eventually reaching the Valle de Aguán. The Río Guata/Río Mame basin drains north and forms the lowest passage to the “Costa,” as the Valle de Aguán and everything else north of Olancho is called. The Río Mangulile drains northwest and flows into the deep canyon of the Río Yaguale. *Caminos reales* and more recent main roads have tended to wind through the mountains high above these rivers on several routes from the coast to the interior.

“tree” of Deleuzian striation. This is true on a paper map, perhaps; but in the landscape, a river, while helping to gather and control, also favors evacuation, flight, invasion from the East, and strength in numbers. Its very fluidity and lack of sameness, the type you can’t ever step into twice, subverts all striation—the very opposite of the dendritic road “network,” which tends to remain the same on repeated visits.

4.5 Climatic Pluralism¹⁷

Olancho’s “tropical” macroclimate, like most of Central America’s, is as much dominated by temperate zone as by tropical phenomena. Nevertheless, if one unifying feature were to be proposed, it would be the movement of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) creating a rainy season (*invierno*) from June to November, with a drier few weeks (*canícula, veranillo*) around August. Within this framework, however, the beginning, ending, and fluctuating intensities of each *invierno* depend on local conditions as much as local conditions depend on them. Resulting weather is a “feedback mechanism” between local conditions and global conditions. Generally speaking, the *invierno* reaches southern Honduras first, and northeastern Honduras last. There is a striking difference even between the Valle de Olancho and the Valle de Agalta, caused in large part by the intervening Cordillera de Agalta. “Famine” foods such as mangos, which ripen at the very beginning of *invierno*, are ready up to a month earlier in the Valle de Olancho. *Invierno* in the Valle de Agalta may start as late as late July, while it usually commences by early to mid-June in the Valle de Olancho.

The period from November to February, in most local spaces, does not classify as either *invierno* or *verano*.¹⁸ By November, tropical lows recede (marking the end of the Hurricane season, for example), opening the way for the cool air masses that move across the Gulf of

¹⁷ Zuñiga Andrade, *Las modalidades de la lluvia en Honduras* (1990) has provided much of the factual background for this section, augmented by Portig’s “Central American rainfall” (1965).

¹⁸ Local people sometimes strive to define four seasons (following North American influence) or to discover a Mediterranean climate from which the “*invierno*” and “*verano*” designations originally derived during the early colonial period.

Mexico and penetrate Central America from the north. Their effects are most notable in the mountains, during the December to February Cosecha (coffee harvest) and *postrera* or *mat'ambre* (second, "hunger killing" grain harvest), when *nortes* can cause days and even weeks of chilly temperatures, drizzle, and mud sloughs. During these months, few flood-causing downpours occur (these are associated mostly with the "true" *invierno*).

The third season, *verano*, is defined by lack of northern and southern rainfall events, or precipitation of any kind, except horizontal (cloud droplet) precipitation on the highest peaks, and infrequent local showers. March and April are the hottest, driest months, with daytime shade temperature maximums in the *valles* between 30 and 40 degrees Celsius, rarely higher or lower. The hottest places are the open plains toward the geographic centers of the Valle de Agalta and Valle de Olancho.

At the "meso scale" in Olancho is the Cordillera de Agalta, high enough to produce its own local weather, and also to create a pressure divide between wetter East (blocking northeast trade winds across the Moskitia) and drier West (interior Honduras; partially blocking northern cold fronts).

Microclimates in Olancho arise from myriad combinations of slope, exposure, rainshadow, altitude, and vegetation factors. The most noticeable is the effect of altitude—temperature decreases with an increase in altitude, and in most conditions the evapotranspiration rate decreases. (A counter-example would be the slopes where cattle pastures reach above nearby *montaña*.) When combined with local rainshadow effects across central and western Olancho, dry, hot *valles* and cool, wet mountains result.¹⁹

¹⁹ Daily maximums in the *valles* range from 25 to 40 degrees Celsius throughout the year; total precipitation (horizontal and vertical) ranges from 1000 to 1500 mm. Montane maximums range from 15 to 25 degrees; total precipitation from 1500 to 3000 mm. Absolute minimum temperatures are reached in January and February; temperatures often dip below 10 degrees in the high mountains, and occasionally this low even around Juticalpa (400 meters above sea level). Frost may occasionally form above 2000masl.

Local winds such as upslope flow during heating and downslope flow during cooling (e.g. a crepuscular cold-air drain into certain *valles*, such as the Valle de Gualaco, followed by thick fogs around dawn) work in tandem with vegetation cover and vegetative physiognomy. Open, windswept *sabanas* heat and cool quicker than sheltered, tangled *vegas*. Pine forests under short-cycle burning regimes (disallowing understory density) are breezier and drier, heating and cooling more quickly than pine forests burned less intensively. Pine forests in general can be compared in the same way to dense rain forests, even if the latter are found only a few meters away from the former. It is widely believed not only by conservationists but also by local people in general that the massive loss of tall canopy vegetation in Olancho's mountains during the second half of the twentieth century has favored overall heating, a phenomenon apparently undocumented at the few local meteorological stations but widely supported by oral histories in many areas. In other words, local deforestation may be linked to local warming. Other climatic phenomena cited as worsening in recent years include ever more common inversion layers from smoke during the *verano* burning season, which seem to keep daytime maximums down (and, in some years, require headlights at noon).

Microclimatic complexity in a region like Olancho remains beyond the descriptive powers of climatology, which to me seems to have focused primarily on global explanations of macroscale phenomena like El Niño/La Niña, and the ITCZ. Why is microclimate so hard to understand and predict? Because microclimatic complexity—differences in “the weather” at all places and times—is produced by a bewildering *enredo* of machines acting at diverse scales: even the butterfly flapping its wings, a classic example of chaos dynamics, ripples across landscapes and ensures unpredictability through the fractal, rhizomatic eddying of air currents. Circadian and annual cycles (local people also assign lunar cycles an important role); longer “irregular” cycles like La Niña/El Niño and sunspots; and a host of non-cyclical processes like human effects on vegetation cover and air composition intertwine, ensuring that Olancho's Climate is climates; its “The Weather” weathers.

I think it is fair to say that the easiest way to understand a local climate is to live it. Local climates are critical components of local space: local quotidian conversations about “the weather today” are crucial to a knowledge of how to inhabit the landscape.

4.6 Rethinking Diversities

Sections 4.7 through 4.10 provide a brief overview of certain biogeographic machines that, in tandem with the non-organic living machines of 4.1 through 4.5, combine to create the diversity and complexity that I “measure up” in 4.11. Section 4.6, then, situates my assertions in later sections through a consideration of discourses affecting the understanding of Olancho’s “biodiversity” (the “total” diversity of organic life in all its variations.) My intent is to provide clear evidence that certain discursively-strengthened identities, chief among them “Tropical Rainforest,” like all Deleuzian “molar” categories, obscure not only local complexity but any accurate assessment of Olancho’s real biodiversity, by erasing even such prerequisites as exploratory fieldwork.

The “Tropical Rainforest” needs a human regime of signs to keep it whole, to convince us that “it” “is” an entity, a solid identity, something we can go out and encounter, here but not there, virgin and not ravaged. Why do all those ecotourists and even scientists flock single-mindedly to the rain forest? What are “rain forest” species doing in “tropical dry forest” or in a “degraded landscape”? Are they suffering there, feeling out of place? How do we come up with those solid boundary lines on forest-cover maps—“primary,” “secondary,” “deforested”? Why is Rain forest, in effect, extracted from heterogeneous “landscape,” made the measure of “everything else”? At times it can even appear that all of Honduras “should be” rain forest. If it’s not, then it must be “degraded” or “en recuperación.” Errors in the too-liberal overcoding of landscape by rain forest should be recognized, addressed, and refuted if necessary. Why? Two reasons are paramount. First, because through the construction of rain forest protected areas most local people (except for some “indigenous” or “aboriginal” inhabitants) are excluded

wholesale from spaces with which they have been entangled for centuries. Second, the vast array of non-rain forest biodiversity is marginalized, and in many cases excluded from any possible beneficial effects of conservation.

Rain forest discourses (e.g. Kramer et al. 1997; Primack et al. 1998), especially when filtered through conservation programs, freeze flows of biotic populations, making an error akin to that of assuming a river basin is striated. Life eddies and flows across the Earth, and cannot be hemmed in. But at a shallow temporal scale duped by our gaze of the landscape from satellite, we zero in on the coalescing nuclei of “megadiversity” concentrations, trying to “save what we can before it’s too late.” To some extent I sympathize, but not through the drawing and enforcement of polygons on rain forest entities, especially where no margin of becoming is permissible with the non-rain forest.²⁰ Rain forests are porous rhizomes never wholly dissipated in non-rain forest and non-forest landscapes adjacent to them, but rather with a substantial margin of becoming-rain forest and becoming-forest on the so-called Outside—among humans and among many other biota. The toucan does not stop at the rain forest’s edge in Olancho, but rather forages nomadically across the landscape. This is not due necessarily to its desperation (“the rain forest’s all gone!”), but rather its opportunism. Many, perhaps most forest interior biota, are incapable of leaving forest space, but the example of the many that do needs to be strengthened in order (for conservationists) to address the biodiversity of rhizomatic landscapes.

Olancho is a “tropical rain forest” on far too many small-scale maps. Central America in general loses out because it is relatively small on the intercontinental scale, and rules of mapmaking demand clarity of presentation. Even though almost every *valle* possesses quite different variations of forest types, one may even strain to find “tropical dry forest” mapped on the Caribbean slope of Honduras. If differentiation is made, it is usually between “rain forest”

²⁰ The Honduran conservation movement, to give it due credit, has been proactive in the establishment of “buffer zones” since the 1980s, and both the potential and drawback of these sometime-rhizomes are addressed in chapters seven and eight.

and “pine forest” or “lowland rain forest” and “mixed highland forest.” This may be adequate and necessary within the constraints of a small-scale map, but error concatenates when small-scale maps are used to produce large-scale ones. This, however, is what has too often happened, and is tied to a dearth of fieldwork and too much mapmaking on the part of conservationist planners who decades ago, in Honduras and across Latin America, encountered an easy algorithm to help them predict what was out in the landscape without or before having to go and see for themselves. This “Holdridge System” is discussed below. It is key to realize that an alternate biodiversity classification system predated Holdridge in Honduras, and was devised by Archie Carr: *Outline for a classification of animal habitats in Honduras* (1950; unfortunately and perhaps fatefully never translated into Spanish to my knowledge). Carr, unlike Holdridge, did not extrapolate from the global to predict, and in effect produce, the local; he spent years traversing the landscapes of Honduras, and his descriptive framework is as a result a map of exceeding importance for understanding the real complexity of biodiversity in places like Olancho.²¹

Holdridge (1957; 1962) devised an easy tool to use. Wilson (1982), for example, employs the scheme to define just nine “ecological formations” for Honduras.²² All are “forest,”

²¹ Archie Carr was a field naturalist who spent several years in Honduras (at the Escuela Agrícola Panamericana) during the 1940s, rejoicing in the extraordinary range of habitat types within small areas, characteristic of tropical mountainous countries. His *Outline* describes over thirty different types of natural and anthropogenic landscapes, including non-forest categories such as “savanna” and non-rain forest categories such as “thorn forest,” and breaking each into several distinct varieties. One can go practically anywhere in Honduras with Carr’s monograph and discover its power as a descriptive tool. Carr’s is the sort of work that should be used as inspiration for local scale mapping of rhizomes (“habitats,” “ecosystems,” etc.) that could serve as tools for local and localized *municipios*, conservationists, developmentalists, educators, and so forth. In the half-century since Carr wrote, knowledge about specialized habitats, at least in North America, has expanded greatly, and natural scientists could probably distinguish many more distinct landscapes than Carr did. For example, a more sophisticated approach to categorizing human landscapes could break down the “cultural situations” (Carr 1950:592) into far more types than “guamil” and “field crops”: e.g., hedgerows and live fences, varieties of coffee forests, different plantation types, burned fields, dooryard gardens, village assemblages, urban environments.

²² Wilson frames his work on herpetological diversity with Holdridge, but other than assuming all landscapes should be forests, his resulting analysis is sound. More recent documents produced by conservationists and developmentalists often use Holdridge terms uncritically and with little room for local variation.

indicating the supposed potential that all (tropical) landscapes have to recuperate, in the ideal condition of human absence or bare presence. Nothing but forest, in effect, is “natural.”

Holdridge, an influential pioneer of modern Central American conservation, devised a system whereby each location on a three-dimensional Cartesian grid (each point at the intersection of lines of longitude, latitude, and altitude) can be specified as potentially containing a certain type of forest. For Honduras, small enough that latitude and longitude can be reduced to one coordinate rather than a set, one need know (or guess at) only mean annual temperature, mean annual precipitation, and altitude. For example, in the altitudinal zone below 600 meters above sea level there are three possibilities: tropical moist forest, tropical dry forest, and tropical arid forest. All have mean annual temperatures over 24 degrees Celsius (anything less would be an aberration). Arid forest receives less than 1000 millimeters of annual precipitation, dry forest between 1000 and 2000, and moist forest over 2000. To me these are useful as parameters to convey meaning in loose descriptions, as in a “tropical dry forest landscape.” But what happens when they are taken too literally—not only when one encloses the bounded polygons known as protected areas based on the intersections of three lines, but also when one already knows what one expects to find “out there,” and upon not encountering it, laments what has been lost? What happens, in effect, when complex human history and local conditions are removed from the equation? “Most of the areas theoretically supporting the Tropical Dry Forest formation appear to have suffered greatly at the hands of man and his livestock, and it is difficult to find natural forest....Consequently, in this formation are found savannas” (Wilson 1982:13). And what of non-forest in such a scheme? Either it simply is not natural, or it is inexplicable, like the Moskitia pine savannas (Wilson 1982:12).

Protected areas in interior Honduras in the 1980s and 1990s have been established based largely on Holdridge definitions and other similar ideal/potential schemes--rarely on real conditions. The ramifications of this—for example, that cloud forests exist only above 1800 masl--will become clear in chapters seven and eight. My intent in the following sections is to

describe, following the footsteps of Carr, an alternate “system” that privileges neither rain forest nor even forest, while still attempting to map the eddies and currents of biota with a view toward “saving” it (under the real onslaught of increasingly homogenized spaces).

There is an extensive broader scientific literature on “Neotropical” biodiversity and the machines that create and sustain it, and much of it recognizes that complexity does not draw lines in the ways that conservationists have. The problem is that this literature is not being interpreted adequately or even employed at all by conservation projects that overcode local spaces, whose “expert consultants” often plan and delegate from urban offices without even being familiar with local complexity. Nevertheless, while lacking any systematic and detailed survey of Honduran landscapes, biodiversity conservation moves forward rapidly, in my opinion reworking the same Holdridge categories with little awareness of real conditions. The “tropical rainforest” remains the center of attention, while unique habitats such as thorn forests, containing endemics, are all but ignored.²³

4.7 Cloud Forests and Thorn Forests

This section discusses some of the mechanisms through which Olancho’s cloud forest and thorn forest machines have become nuclei of biotic endemism as well as shelters of relict

²³ This is in no way intended to slight the work of my Honduran and foreign colleagues in the field of conservation. Many are well aware of local difference—for example, Jorge Betancourt’s guidance of Peace Corps Volunteers and COHDEFOR toward the cloud forests, and his intimate knowledge of and love for every aspect of Olancho (and Honduras), people and non-people, from thorn forests to cycad groves, is exemplary. But a counter-example is Koenen et al., “Map 1. Ecoregions of Honduras” in “Distribution of Nearctic migratory birds in Honduras, with a preliminary evaluation of the resident avifauna of conservation concern” (1999), a report to Wings of the Americas/Nature Conservancy. The map’s six “ecoregions” are large-scale extrapolations from a small-scale classification scheme developed by the World Bank and the World Wildlife Fund. On this map, almost all Caribbean Slope cloud forests, including those covering the Cordillera de Agalta, are absent, their places usurped by a homogeneous “Central American Atlantic Moist Forests” (i.e. lowland rain forests, in this context). Despite the report’s inclusion of Carr (1950) in its bibliography, the map inexplicably excludes all Caribbean slope dry forests, and the authors only note “according to the current classification dry forests only occur along the Pacific coast when in fact various authors have described dry and arid thorn forest on Honduras’ Caribbean slope.” In my opinion these are serious errors because such reports inform conservation schemes that cannot help but be misled and ineffective. For example, the Honduran emerald (*Amazilia luciae*), Honduras’ only recognized endemic avian species, inhabits exclusively the unmapped thorn forest (see below): it is invisible.

populations. In effect, cloud forests and thorn forests are two island extremes of a transect from wet to dry, cold to hot, and high to low: what they are and how they came to be “islands” is necessary to know to visualize a “background” biogeography that predated the two overcoding forces described in subsequent sections (pine forest from Mexico and lowland rain forest from South America).

In terms of Latin American avian endemism rates, what Stotz et al. (1996) call the “Central American Highlands” (mountains east and south of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec) and the “Madrean Highlands” in general (including all arms of the Sierra Madre as well as highland Central America) are extraordinary, though they do not approach the global endemism “spike” of the Plethodontid salamanders in the same area (Wake and Lynch 1976). The former authors’ singling out of the Central American Highlands as a “hotspot” for avian biodiversity (thus providing strong impetus to conservation) mirrors most earlier authors. In general, it has been established that while the lowland rain forests, such as those of Honduras’ Caribbean Slope, have much higher overall diversity (i.e. higher species numbers), they have very low endemism rates in Central America.

Carr (1950) and Monroe (1968) showed that what is most distinctive about Honduran biota is neither the “tropical Atlantic lowland, with a rain forest fauna strikingly homogenous from Mexico into South America” (Carr 1950:578) nor the “dry *ocotal* [pine woods], being a more or less unbroken highway from the north...a wedge of xerophilous Mexican life” (Carr 1950:579). Carr singles out the dry interior *valles*, particularly their Caribbean slope thorn forest landscapes, and the montane cloud forest landscapes, as what make Honduras most biotically unique.

“Cloud forest” denotes a high-altitude, evergreen, mixed broadleaf and needleleaf woods draping a ridge or mountain peak. Moisture is available to plants not only through rain but through cloud droplets; total precipitation in some cloud forests is as dependent on this “horizontal” absorption as on the “vertical.” Topography and local climatic variables favor



Fig. 4.10. Tall-canopy cloud forest, Sierra de Agalta. Elevation 1900 meters above sea level.

frequent cloud cover, while higher elevation fixes lower average temperatures than adjacent hills and lowlands. A low evapotranspiration rate and the almost ever-present availability of moisture in the air help create the “cloud forest look” epitomized in tourist brochures, and associated, for example, with “mystical” resplendent quetzals. Trees—a preponderance of oaks, pines, wild avocados, and magnolias in the Sierra de Agalta—are heavily draped by epiphytic mosses, ferns, orchids, bromeliads, cacti, and even small trees. The forest floor is cluttered by fallen bromeliads taken root, by bamboos, and by logs slowly decomposing, decked in phosphorescent fungi. Overall biodiversity is low in comparison to lower altitude mixed forests, but percentage of endemism at the northern Central American scale is much higher. Despite Honduras’ 1987 protected areas law (“Ley de Bosques Nublados”: see Cruz 1993) that defines “cloud forest” as commencing at 1800 masl, “cloud forest” as a physiognomically-

determined landscape category can be found as low as 600 masl on the slopes of ranges directly south of the Caribbean (Monroe 1968).

Of the approximately forty cloud forests above 1500 masl in Honduras, most remained unvisited by natural scientists until the 1990s, and even today very few have received more than superficial attention.²⁴ The only significant State-supported research project to focus on high altitude mixed forests has been CONSEFORH, a British-Honduran forestry and botanical effort at the Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Forestales (ESNACIFOR) in Siguatepeque. In the early 1990s, CONSEFORH sponsored an in-depth floral inventory of Celaque, which contains Honduras' highest peak (Cerro de las Minas, 2849 masl), and a series of expeditions to gather comparative data from other ranges (see citations under "Mejía and Hawkins" in Bibliography). As part of this effort, Mejía and Hawkins (1992; 1992a) produced reports on their trips to the Sierra de Agalta, and data from these expeditions were also incorporated into a regionwide Flora Mesoamericana inventory project.²⁵ Since the trail to La Picucha, Agalta's highest peak, was constructed in the late 1980s, a few zoologists and herpetologists have visited it.²⁶

Despite the existence of about 40 disjunct cloud forest "islands" rising above a sea of grassy pine woods across interior Honduras (and also above rain forests in the northern and eastern

²⁴ The few US naturalists who visited Honduran cloud forests became enamored of them: for example, Carr's "La montaña llorona" (1949: "the weeping forest") and *High jungles and low* (1953) are unsurpassed in their poetic descriptions. Other cloud forest descriptions are Allen (1955) on the Montaña de Santa Bárbara; Rehn (1930) on La Tigra; Schmidt (1926; 1942) on Merendón; Stadelman (1931) on Pico Pijol; Von Hagen (1940) on peaks in Yoro. E. G. Squier (1855 and 1870) makes laudatory references to Honduran cloud forests in general. The twentieth-century naturalists visited peaks that earlier floral and faunal collectors were unable to reach—only La Tigra north of Tegucigalpa, cut over by the Rosario Mining Company in the late 1800s, had been easily accessible. Before 1950, floral and faunal collectors concentrated along the central corridor of Honduras from Amapala on the South Coast north through Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, Siguatepeque, and Lago Yojoa, to the banana companies' lands across the North Coast, and the Bay Islands. Cecil Underwood in the 1930s, who bagged thousands of birds and mammals, was one of the few collectors who travelled widely throughout Honduras before 1950, but he published no accounts of his trips (Monroe 1968).

²⁵ "Flora Mesoamericana" data can be accessed through the Missouri Botanical Garden in Saint Louis, most easily through the Internet. Bryologist Bruce H. Allen made several important moss discoveries on La Picucha in 1992, published in Reese (1993) and Allen (1994).

²⁶ Valid mammal data from Agalta are summarized within Marineros and Martínez Gallegos (1998). Herpetofauna data include McCranie and Cruz (1996).

mountains), there is not the degree of biological island endemism one might suspect, especially given that so many species of the cloud forest interior are incapable of crossing hostile open and xerophytic landscapes from one forest island to another. Anthropogenic deforestation, while it aids to maintain separation, is not the cause for the disjunct distribution of Honduras' cloud forests. Climate and terrain, instead, are the culprits. Pleistocene climates probably favored a widespread cloud forest landscape across the country at an elevation sufficiently low (around 600 masl, perhaps) that all mountainous terrain would have been dominated by it (Carr 1950). Only interior low-lying rainshadow areas (principally *valles*), and possibly coasts, would have been exempt from cloud forest, but these would have contained diverse dry forests and savanna-forest mosaics grazed and browsed by large, extinct herbivores such as ground sloths (see Janzen 1983; Janzen and Martin 1982). At some point in the not-too-distant past, cloud forests in the mountains were the rule rather than the special cases, and their biota moved relatively freely across Central America. Certain eddies of speciation did form, and their imprints can be encountered today among slower-moving species such as the shrews, plethodontid salamanders, and frogs, which are sometimes endemic to a single range or to a local group of cloud forests. Among all birds and larger mammals, however, there is little difference even at the subspecies level from one cloud forest to the rest.



Fig. 4.11. Interior of mossy forest on La Picucha. 2300 masl; canopy height six meters.



Fig. 4.12. Windswept heath covering La Picucha. The highest point in Olancho at 2354 meters above sea level. Dwarfism is most evident in the pine (*P. ayacahuite* or *P. hartwegii*); other plants include magnolias, terrestrial bromeliads, ferns, and Ericaceae.

Cloud forests such as those draping the Sierra de Agalta are contiguous with lowland rain forest, but only in a limited sense are the former derivative of the latter. Cloud forests can better be understood as the last outposts of a Pleistocene biogeography overwhelmed by invasive lowland rain forest and pine forest biota. While most cloud forests also contain heavy pine forest (northern) and rain forest (southern) elements, their high biotic endemism rates (at the Central American Highlands scale) point to their uniqueness as relicts—"outdated" rhizomes of an earlier domain whose codes are now fragmented, pushed into corners. Their highest points illustrate this most closely. As a landscape and not a "forest type," Honduran "cloud forest" also includes "mossy forest" as well as elfin wind scrubs on the high peaks of Sierra de Agalta and other ranges. The scrubs of Agalta are dominated by terrestrial bromeliads and their endemic (symbiotic?) frog (*Hyla picuchae*), Ericaceae, sphagnum moss, dwarf high altitude pines (e.g. *Pinus hartwegii*, *Pinus ayacahuite*), *Podocarpus*. This is a biotic assemblage largely distinct in Honduras, even from the tall-canopy cloud forests directly below them. La Picucha above 2200 masl also contains a relict moss species found elsewhere only in the northern Andes, and botanists have detected numerous floral endemics after only a few hours'



Fig. 4.13. La Picucha. Mossy forest canopy in foreground; windswept heath on ridges approaching summit; Volkswagen bus body visible, where COHDEFOR radio was housed. Note landslide scars in parallel strips at right of photo.



Fig. 4.14. Thick thorn forest or *espinal*, Sabana de La Lima, San Esteban. Prime habitat for endemic Honduran emerald (*Amazilia luciae*) entirely contained on land owned by *terratenientes*. Ten-meter-high cactus is *Cephalocereus yunckeri* or related species; in lower left is *nopal* (prickly pear), often visited by the hummingbird.

collecting. In part, this points to the subsistence of boreal-type and high Andean type-species such as those that would have dominated in cooler Pleistocene times.

At the far end of an altitudinal transect in the Cordillera de Agalta (and many other places in Honduras), there is another landscape of relicts, the thorn forests and savannas. Unlike the Agalta cloud forests, which are conservationist specialties but little known to local people other than experienced hunters, the thorn landscapes are so “normal” as to be invisible to local people and international conservationists alike. These are the *espinales* that plagued Olanchano cattle ranchers from earliest times, and are held in equally low esteem today. They thrive in the most arid rainshadow conditions in *valles* such as the Valle de Agalta and upper Valle de Aguán, though except on top of clayey *sabana* hardpan they are subject to invasion by pines. The woods of arborescent cacti and thorn trees of the Valle de Comayagua had long been remarked upon by the likes of E. G. Squier (1855; 1870) for their desertic attractiveness, even though they hardly fit the “lush” “tropical” mould (see also Molina R. 1974). T. G. Yuncker’s (1939; 1940; 1945) inventory in the *espinales* of the upper Valle de Aguán established their floral uniqueness, especially of the arborescent cacti (*longaniza* and *tuna*, for example). But decisive evidence for the thorn spaces’ biotic uniqueness was not published until 1989. The reason has to do with their underestimation as “worthless” not only in local knowledge but in scientific opinion as well: not being rain forest, only Yuncker and Carr saw much in them.

Carr (1950), drawing off Yuncker and off his own observations, decided that the thorn forests and to a lesser extent the entire mixed deciduous mosaic of the Caribbean Slope *valles* (an archipelago in a sea of pines) was highly unique, comprising a biogeographic domain stretching from eastern Guatemala’s Valle de Motagua to the headwaters of the Río Coco in northwestern Nicaragua. He distinguished the constellation of disjunct *valle* thorn forests from the much better known Pacific Slope tropical arid landscapes, which stretch largely unbroken from southwest Mexico (their center of diversity and dispersion: see Bullock et al. 1995) south to Guanacaste, Costa Rica (see Allen 1988). There had been long-term contact between the

Pacific and Caribbean areas in Honduras along the Honduras Depression (a north-south trending structural feature containing *valles* and low hills that connect Pacific and Caribbean drainages). Carr claimed that the Valle de Comayagua, lying on the Depression, contained a mixture of Pacific and Caribbean biota, without either having become dominant. In more remote, isolated *valles*, particularly the Agalta and the Aguán, mixture of species would be far less, and thus local Caribbean Slope endemism much higher. Going out on a limb, Carr even suggested that the younger Pacific Slope biota were in large part derivative on an older Caribbean Slope biota—like the cloud forests, the arid deciduous landscapes of the Honduran interior were a relict of Pleistocene times.

Carr's conclusions were bolstered by a group of herpetological articles (Duellmann 1966; Savage 1966; Stuart 1966) that explained the origin of Caribbean Slope arid deciduous landscapes in a separate dispersion corridor from southwest Mexico east across the Gulf and Caribbean slopes of Mexico and Guatemala and into Honduras and Nicaragua, long overcoded and marginalized by more recent flows of pine and rain forest. But in 1968, Monroe's seminal *A distributional survey of the birds of Honduras* described Honduras' Caribbean Slope xeric habitats as primarily derivative of the Pacific Slope Mexico-Costa Rica flow (Monroe 1968:404-5), consigning them to the status they still hold in many circles: abnormal and unimportant (meaning if you want to study the "true" Tropical Dry Forest, you have to go to the Pacific Lowlands). The Valle de Agalta, containing the most far-flung thorn forests in the country, was consigned to the status of an impoverished cousin to the Pacific Slope in terms of avifauna (and by extension everything else), even though its birds were only "known" from the collections of a single three-week trip in 1948. Furthermore, Monroe characterized the only Honduran avian endemic, the Honduran Emerald (*Amazilia luciae*, a hummingbird), as a rain forest endemic, without ever having observed a living specimen in its (unknown) habitat. At the time all that ornithologists knew of the emerald, other than its collection locations on a map, was what could be learned from museum specimens (collectors had left no indications of what

exactly the bird's habitat was). In a country with over 700 bird species but only one endemic, something about the habitat had to have been highly unusual.

This unusual factor surfaced finally in 1988 when Howell and Webb (1989), following the recorded coordinates for collecting locations of old museum specimens, rediscovered the Honduran emerald in the field. They were startled that its historical collecting locations had not been the expected rain forest but rather the arid thorn forest of the upper Valle de Aguán, the Valle de Naco, and near the town of Santa Bárbara. They could not detect the bird in the latter two sites, which were dominated by pasture, most *espinal* components having been removed. The Aguán site, however, contained abundant emeralds, associated especially with arborescent cacti. They also found that the thorn forest was the sole habitat of an endemic and isolated race of the white-bellied wren (*Uropsila leucogaster hawkinsi*), more evidence for the thorn

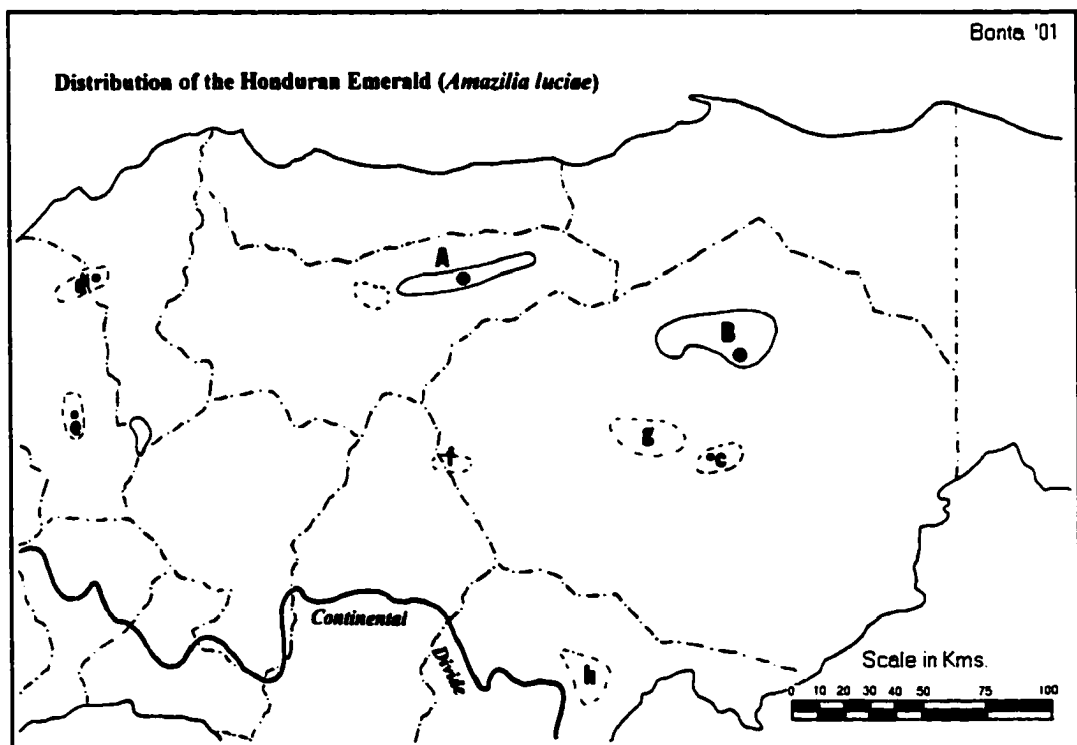


Fig. 4.15. Distribution of the Honduran Emerald.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE HONDURAN EMERALD: MAP KEY

Current Known Distribution:

A. Valle de Aguán, Yoro. Extant Populations in *espinales*. Thorn forests of upper Aguán also harbor endemic races *Arremonops chloronotus twomeyi* (with Valle de Agalta and Valle de Guinalaco) and *Uropsila leucogaster hawkinsi* (range isolate).

B. Valle de Agalta, Olancho. Extant Population at dot (Sabana La Lima); area indicated contains extensive, unmonitored *espinales*.

Historical Collecting Sites:

c. Valle de Olancho. Two collected near El Boquerón in 1937. Virtually no *espinales* left in area.

d. Cofradía, Cortés. One collected in 1933. Virtually no *espinales* left in area.

e. Santa Bárbara, Santa Bárbara. One collected in 1935. Virtually no *espinales* left in area.

Possible Emerald Sites Containing Unsurveyed Thorn Forest Remnants:

f. Terraces above Río Guayape, *municipios* of Guayape, Olancho and Orica, Francisco Morazán.

g. Valley of the Río Telica and tributaries, especially in the *municipios* of Guarizama and San Francisco de la Paz.

h. Valle de Jamastrán, El Paraíso.

[Further possible sites include *valles* in the headwaters of the Río Coco, Department of Madriz, Nicaragua, particularly near El Espino.]

Fig. 4.16. Distribution of the Honduran Emerald: Map Key.

landscapes' uniqueness.²⁷ In their three publications mentioning this discovery (Howell and Webb 1989;1991; 1995), they did not tie in Yuncker's floral inventories, but nevertheless in the avian literature Carr (1950) had been vindicated (see Collar et al. 1992). What was "worthless" "scrub" to many turned out to have avian and perhaps even floral endemicity rates higher than the most biodiverse lowland Honduran rain forests. In the mid-1990s, we looked in the thorn forests of the Valle de Agalta and found the Honduran emerald to be common there (Anderson et al. 1998), a first record for that "impoverished" region.

How did the thorn space come about? Janzen and Martin's 1982 "Neotropical anachronisms: the fruits the gomphotheres ate" provides clues. They claim that cattle ranchers after 1524 did Central American arid landscape biodiversity a favor by reintroducing large herbivores to an area deprived of them since climate change and/or Ice Age hunters helped

²⁷ *Arremonops chloronotus twomeyi*, an endemic race of the green-backed sparrow, is shared by the Valle de Aguán, Valle de Agalta, and Valle de Agalta, but is not so narrowly restricted to thorn forest interiors

extinguish the Central American megafauna ten millennia or more previous. The dry forest mosaics that today dominate across much of low-lying Central America have been restored thanks to the mouths and hooves of millions of livestock, shaping the opening/closing mosaic, and not only (re)selecting for thorny species such as cacti, agaves, and acacias, but distributing the seeds of hard-shelled fruits like the *morro* tree gourds (*Crescentia*) that needed the powerful molars, digestive systems, and motility of large herbivores to release and spread them widely (again) across the landscape. The arid landscapes, at least of the colonial period, were restored from pre-human days by the release of rhizomes that had been bottled up and subjugated by Precolumbian geographies in which large herbivores had played no role. Fossil evidence also establishes that Pleistocene and Pliocene Honduras contained savanna landscapes (e.g. Olson and McGrew 1941). Fossils of megafauna have been discovered across the country—including the edge of the Valle de Agalta in 2000, where we identified *Eremotherium* ground sloth remains.²⁸

That savanna-forest *enredos* have been in Honduras for so long, and are not recent creations of deforestation, is still not orthodoxy among many conservationists. However, the most curious part of this issue is not the “natural” existence of savannas in the first place, but rather their persistence in the face of Carr’s pernicious “wedge” of Mexican life. Pines, as described in the next section, have tended to invade every available niche in Honduras, and their present-day dominance would appear to be supported on well-drained surfaces in the interior almost exclusively by human burning regimes, which judging by historical accounts (e.g. Cockburn 1745; Johannessen 1963; Wells 1857) have dominated throughout most of the country at least in Postcolumbian times, and presumably before. (Soils, exposure, and other factors are decidedly

as the other two birds are.

²⁸ Wallace, (1997), *The monkey’s bridge, mysteries of evolution in Central America*, perhaps the only adequate synoptic popular account of Central American biogeography, gives special treatment to the megafauna; see also Wallace (1995).

secondary determinants.) However, a unique condition *inhibits* pine growth from extinguishing the Honduran emerald's holobiont relict. In the *valles*, pines must have well-drained surfaces to proliferate, and this in large part explains why non-pine deciduous forest still covers many *sabanas*. Thorn forest is most diverse, and most divergent even from the dry (non-emerald) landscape in which it is embedded, on top of the clay hardpans of the *valles*—where the pines can't reach it.

The Honduran emerald has a relict distribution across a 240-kilometer expanse of at least six *valles*, from northwest to northeast (including places it is no longer present).²⁹ Specimens show no significant morphological variation from *valle* to *valle*--indicating recent fragmentation into relicts. How did this disjunct distribution happen? Presumably, since this hummingbird is not known to migrate but rather seems to be inextricably tied to the very specific places of its endemic holobiont, Caribbean Slope thorn forests would have to have been continuous in the not-too-distant past, just like the cloud forests. This works if in our minds we remove the Mexican wedge and the South American invasion. What we are left with is what came before: a Pleistocene landscape in continuous biotic variation between cloud forest and thorn forest (one becoming the other, with distance).

Endemicity rates, and biotic specialization rates (e.g. percentage of plants that possess thorns; percentage of succulents; percentage of “cloud-catching” plants) appear to increase at the two altitudinal extremes of cloud forest and cactus-thorn forest, but the extremes point to a Pleistocene “middle ground” that was probably the most common landscape across Honduras at times: a becoming-thorn, becoming-cloud mixture of forests and savannas, the echoes of which are the “tropical dry forests.”

²⁹ From Monroe (1968:182-3), *Amazilia luciae* records. Cofradia 1993=Valle de Naco. Coyoles 1948, 1950=Valle de Aguán. Santa Bárbara 1935=along the Río Ulúa. El Boquerón and Catacamas 1937=Valle de Olancho. Sabana La Lima, San Esteban, Valle de Agalta, in Anderson et al. 1998. The species has not been rediscovered in the Valle de Olancho, Valle de Naco, or Santa Bárbara, leaving only two known populations in the Valle de Agalta and Valle de Aguán. Not all possible sites have been surveyed, however; thorn forests persist in parts of the Valle de Olancho and in the small *valles* along the

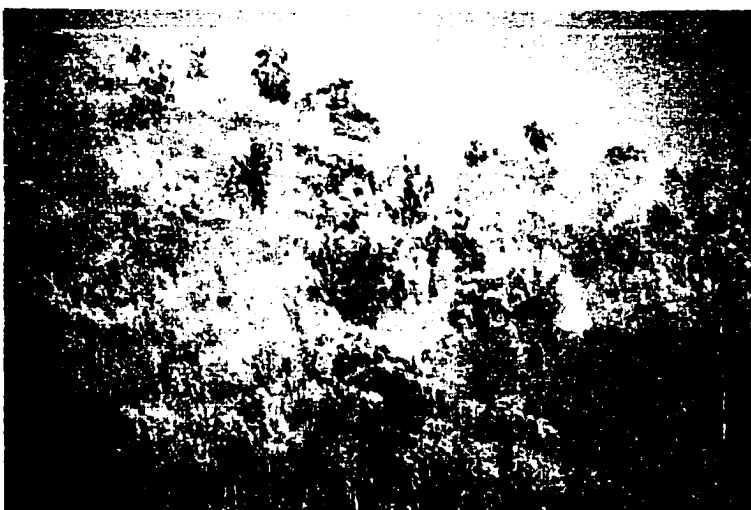


Fig. 4.17. Tropical dry forest in *verano* on slope approaching El Boquerón, within the Monumento Natural. Former cattle space is regenerating rapidly as conservation space.

In that domain, the motmot family arose.³⁰ Among all the world's bird families, the only one that reaches its center of species abundance in Honduras is this small Neotropical group of racket-tailed relatives of the kingfisher (see Monroe 1968:401). Its most subspecifically diverse member, the Turquoise-browed Motmot, is a generalist with a marked preference for tropical dry forest; most other motmot species are monotypic and have centers of diversity in montane rain forest (+500 masl).³¹

Río Telica and the upper course of the Río Guayape.

³⁰ Coraciiformes: Momotidae, 9-10 species (Stotz 1996:190 and 325).

³¹ Seven motmot species are known from Honduras. An eighth species, *Momotus mexicanus* of Mexico and Guatemala, ranges into the drainage basin of the Río Motagua from sea level to 1900 masl (Stotz et al. 1996) so it might also be found along the river's tributaries in extreme western Honduras (e.g. Río Copán, Río Morja). Four are restricted to thick broadleaf evergreen rain forest on the Caribbean slope, but three of these (Broad-billed, Keel-billed, Tody) appear to have their centers of abundance in low montane "mid-level" rain forest (a rhizome of lowland rain forest and highland cloud forest); only one (Rufous) is found exclusively in lowland rain forest. Another species, the Blue-throated Motmot, is a northern Central American endemic, found only in high cloud forests from Chiapas to western Honduras. Of these five species, four have only one race throughout their ranges, while the Broad-billed Motmot has but two. Of the other two species, the forest generalist Blue-crowned Motmot is found across Honduras and widely throughout Latin America, though with only one race in Central America. The remaining species, the Turquoise-browed Motmot, is the only one in Honduras known to frequent dry forests, while marginal in rain forest and pine forest landscapes. This Central American/Mexican endemic is the only motmot to have numerous races; Monroe (1968:202) restricted it to two races for Honduras, but without any examined specimens from the east; adding the east, it seems to me that Honduras may contain four Turquoise-browed Motmot races, making it one of the most locally variable avian species in any Honduran habitat. This points not only to the diversity and long-term resilience of dry landscapes, but to

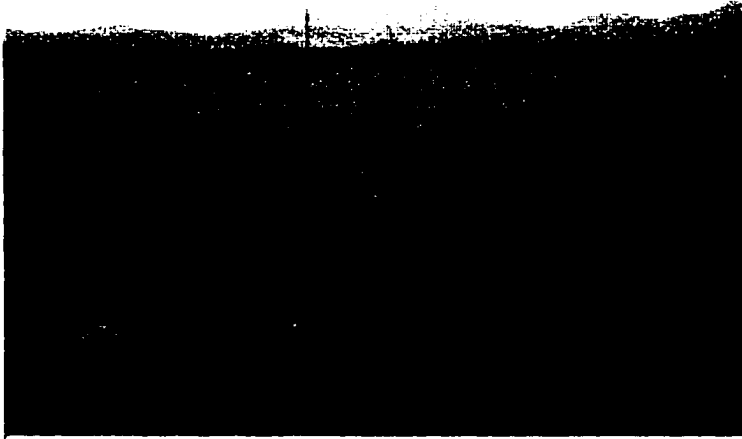


Fig. 4.18. Native short-grass savanna in the Valle de Lepaguare.

4.8 Himno al Pino: El Arbol Nacional

Newcomers to Honduras are often amazed by the areal extent of pine forests in this “tropical rainforest country.” In the interior, even if one goes as far east as possible by vehicle, to get to the rain forests beyond Dulce Nombre de Culmí in Olancho, one is still flanked by pines. At least seven species occupy every place in Honduras where they can get a “foothold”: excluding poorly-drained and waterlogged conditions, most soils weathered from limestone, and high precipitation areas when burning is suppressed.³² Pines are the subject of a never-ending Honduran rhapsody: Honduran culture is rhizomatic with pines, more than with any other trees.

Pines “themselves” form an irrepressible rhizomatic “mat” that, in tandem with burning, are ever-present even where they are absent: a seeming absurdity, but not an exaggeration. Even rain forests and cloud forests can harbor pines, at or below the surface. In cloud forests, for example, pines often make up a significant portion of the biomass, especially on exposed ridges subject to lightning burns. As for rain forest, Ladino settlers east of Culmí use the all-important

a possible evolutionary origin of motmots in the northern Central American savanna mosaic with subsequent dispersion into cloud forests and rain forests, long enough ago for subspeciation but not for subspeciation to occur in these latter habitats.

³² Many of these issues are covered in detail by Denevan (1961), in a study of pines in northern Nicaragua.

ocote tinder provided by pine trunks submerged under organic material deep inside old-growth *montaña cruda*. These same “virgin” rain forests also contain abundant Precolumbian ruins, and may have been extensively occupied after Conquest as well. Rain forests in mountainous areas of eastern Honduras seem to be a result of human abandonment, while submerged pines are relicts of human burning regimes. Even Trujillo, a lowland rain forest landscape today, was known as “Trujillo del Pinar” in the 1500s (Fernández de Oviedo 1959[1535-57]). (The pine savannas of the Moskitia lowlands are a somewhat different issue.)³³ Pines in Olancho, which contains all the species known in Honduras,³⁴ form humid, high-altitude forests adjacent to

³³ The *Pinus caribea* savannas of the Honduran and Nicaraguan Moskitia were the subjects of a study by Parsons (1955). Their subsistence in an area of high precipitation with no marked dry season is linked to the dominant Quaternary marine sediments so alkaline and leached of nutrients that only pines can thrive on well-drained “ridges” and “hummocks,” similar to those found in Belize and south Florida. Adjacent river bottomlands contain thick broadleaf rain forest, but burning regimes, primarily of Miskitos, retard the gradual spread of rain forest through the savannas by disallowing buildup of organic material. Monroe (1968:405-6) describes Howell’s startling discovery that the avifauna of the Moskitia pine savannas is identical at the subspecies level to that of Belize despite a 450-kilometer gap along the North Coast of Honduras, where pines do not presently grow. One could imagine that sixteenth century references to Trujillo “del Pinar” signified widespread pine growth along the North Coast until relatively recently, allowing the exchange of genes along this corridor. The difficulty is that this corridor had to have been separate from the highlands, because Howell’s avian subspecies are distinct from those found in pines of the interior. (There are, however, patches of *Pinus caribea* in the interior, such as around San Esteban, which have been insufficiently studied, and may contain avian intergrades between coast and mountains.) The only apparent way that a separate corridor could have existed along the North Coast, connecting Belize and the Moskitia, is through a continuous coastal pine savanna, which would have been possible with only a slightly lower sea level, exposing the same type of marine gravels on which they thrive in the Moskitia. This would also indicate that such savannas, to allow subspeciation to occur, would probably have predated human occupancy, and thus would not be directly linked to human burning regimes.

³⁴ Honduran foresters, and the ESNACIFOR, accept seven species, though pines are notoriously difficult to identify and hybridize frequently (Perry 1990). The center of world pine diversity are the Madrean Highlands of Mexico (Perry 1990:41), and comparatively few species have trickled southward; Nicaragua, the southern limit of New World pines (Denevan 1961), has but three species (Incer 1998) in the highlands and a fourth, *Pinus caribea*, in the Moskitia. In Honduras, the most widespread pine is *P. oocarpa* (“ocote”), which can be found growing at the same elevation as *P. patula tecunumanii*, locally dominant in Olancho (Styles and McCarter 1988). *P. caribea* is found at the edges of the lower *valles* closer to the North Coast (e.g. Aguán, Agalta). These three are displaced altitudinally by higher pines: *P. maximinoi* and to a lesser extent *P. pseudostrobus* are found in Agalta, and are known as *pinabetes*. They are found above about 1000 masl and are generally the only pine species above 1500 masl. Above 1800 masl, to the tops of the highest peaks, are found two cloud forest pines, *P. hartwegii* and *P. ayacahuite*. The former grows in dwarf form on the high peaks of Agalta, and the latter grows to massive size within tall-canopy cloud forest. Western and to a lesser extent central Honduras contain needleleaf conifers such as yews, firs, and cedars at altitudes above 1500 meters, as is common in Guatemala and Chiapas. Agalta, other than pines, contains only the broadleaf conifers of the genus *Podocarpus* (of South American origin); the Montaña de Botaderos inexplicably contains at least one group of *Abies* firs

“mid-level” rain forest and cloud forest, as well as parched, open pine and grass woods.³⁵

Northern Olancho’s pine forests are part of a 220 by 50 kilometer belt of pines stretching east from Yoro (COHDEFOR 1995). Though heavily exploited by lumber companies, this swath is probably still the largest and most commercially-valuable pine forest left in Central America. Most trees being cut in 2000 were under a half-meter in diameter, but trees of two-meter diameters and 40 to 60 meters in height are still encountered. Remaining “old-growth” stands are highly sought after by loggers, but are increasingly being protected by local communities. In northern Gualaco, the old-growth *serranías*, though their understories are burned for hunting and cattle on the order of every three to ten years, seem to harbor relatively high numbers of “special concern” species such as ocellated quail, scarlet macaw, white-tailed deer, coyote, and red-throated caracara, extirpated from or drastically reduced in other pine forests. This fauna may be relatively more common in such old-growth areas due to extremely low human population densities and lack of roads.

The southern rim of this multi-million-hectare pine forest is the Cordillera de Agalta, where it grades into rain forest and cloud forest. South of the range, loggers and ranchers have decimated *serranías* to a great degree since 1940.³⁶ Pine forests, useless for agriculture, become cultural “overburden” of expanding cattle spaces, burned so often that seedlings cannot survive and *jaraguá* (an African grass) takes over. The resulting landscapes are no longer suitable for commercial logging, sparking serious conflicts of spatial identities.

at a low elevation (c. 1200 masl).

³⁵ As “pine/oak forests,” they are often found in mixture with narrow-leaved (*encino*) and wide-leaved (*roble*) *Quercus* oaks, which often grow in pure stands in the *serranías*. Other fire-resistant species such as *nance* and *chaparro* exist in the *serranías* as well.

³⁶ Two other factors have contributed to the destruction of pinewoods across large parts of Honduras: pine-bark beetle infestation, and canopy fires during certain drought periods. Perry (1990:210) calls the 1963-66 beetle infestation probably the worst infestation ever recorded in America, with up to 70,000 trees killed per day, and a net tree loss of 25-70% (differentially) across Honduras. Environmentalists tend to be ignorant of this history, and pin blame for Honduras’ spindly pines on loggers, ranchers, and campesinos. For example, the latter group are targeted for their “firewood gathering,” but I have not observed this to be a problem, since *ocote* is used for tinder but hardly ever for fuel.



Fig. 4.19. Sharp divide of *serranía* pine forest and *montaña* rain forest, Sierra de Agalta. Vegetation shift occurs in narrow ecotone on 60-degree slope, possibly marking the encounter of two geological formations.



Fig. 4.20. Forest characteristic of the Montaña de Botaderos. Mid-level montane rain forest with strong pine element, in Colón along the old *camino real* from Tayaco to Sonaguera and Trujillo. Ridge at upper right is the Cerro Miangul (1265 meters above sea level), rising from the Río Miangul (280 meters above sea level); in far left background are high (unnamed) peaks (1635-1724 meters above sea level) on the border with Olancho.

Pine forests have the lowest biodiversity of any landscape in Honduras, and their typical species are usually identical at the subspecific stratum to the species in Mexican pine forests. However, the pine forests also contain an avian species, the Golden-cheeked Warbler, a migrant that breeds only in the Edwards Plateau area of Texas and is globally endangered (see Howell

and Webb 1995; Rappole 1996; Thompson 1995). The majority of “wintering” Golden-Cheeked Warbler records come from Honduras. This means that even a pine forest that appears but a poor cousin of the Sierra Madre, with an everyday biotic make-up that warrants little “conservation attention,” may actually contain a “piece” of irreplaceable biodiversity as unique as the Honduran emerald. The lesson here is that “impoverishment” and “uniformity” of biodiversity rhizomes hide local difference and subtle variation.

4.9 Rain Forests

The formation of the land bridge during the Pleistocene, (re)uniting South America and North America, is the best known and most well-publicized event in Central American biogeographic history (see Coates 1997; Janzen 1983; Wallace 1997). Lowland rain forest biota, and to a lesser extent montane rain forest biota, have moved rapidly northward toward Mexico during the last three million years, radiating into all available niches but with only a small margin of speciation. Due to macroclimatic regimes, they have been most “successful” on the Caribbean slope of Honduras in areas where prevailing moisture-laden trades are not blocked by mountain ranges. Elsewhere, South American rain forest elements are found as a smaller percentage of biota in all spaces.

Lowland rain forest biota penetrated and invaded the *valles* of interior Honduras on the Caribbean Slope, Zambo Mosquito-like, in large part by traversing the humid bottomlands (*vegas*) of rivers such as the Aguán, Sico, Ulúa, Chamelecón, and Patuca. *Vega* corridors, as “fingers” or “highways” of mesophytic growth (Carr 1950; Monroe 1968), resist the encroachment of pines and xeric savanna species. When the *verano* is at its height and the *sabana* is gray and sere, semi-evergreen *vegas* are still relatively lush. River corridors in this way helped achieve the current juxtaposition of the Central American dry forest mosaic with the South American tropical rain forest. The *vega-sabana* “ecotone” is a complex becoming-rain forest of the dry forest and becoming-dry forest of the rain forest. This leads to certain

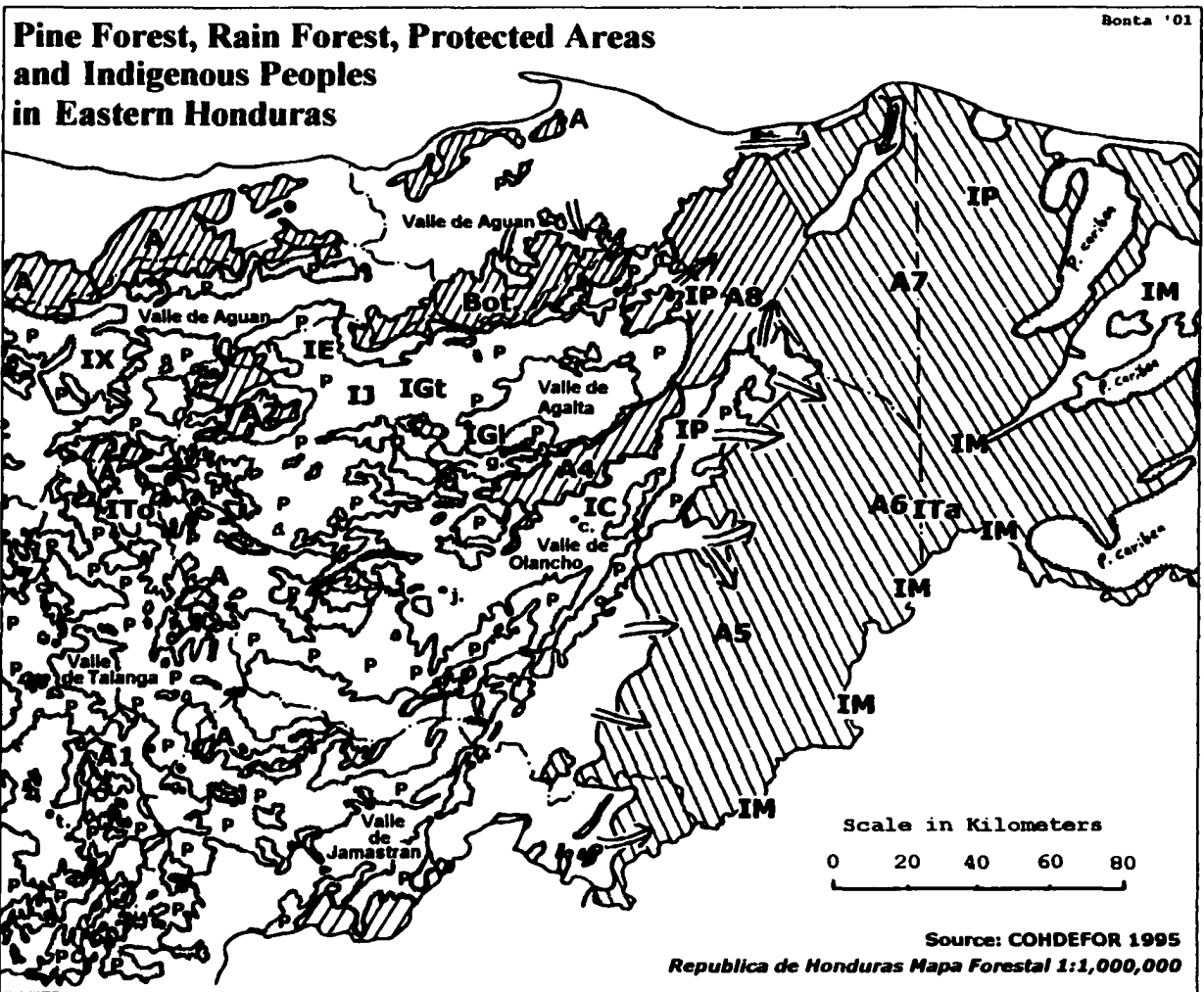


Fig. 4.21. Pine Forest, Rain Forest, Protected Areas, and Indigenous Peoples in Eastern Honduras.

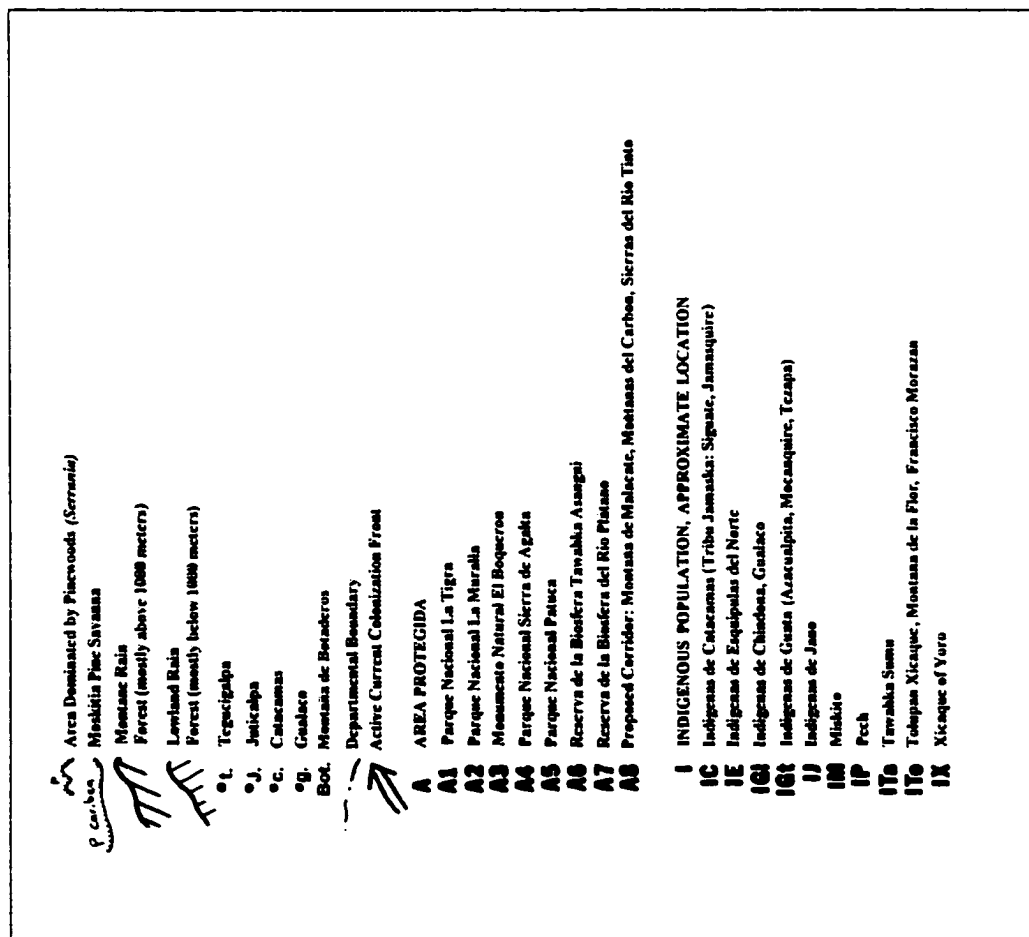


Fig. 4.22. Key to Figure 4.21.

“strange” encounters: in the Valle de Agalta, I have been startled by keel-billed toucans flying through cactus woods.

The rain forests of eastern Honduras grade into cloud forests on interior mountain slopes, and it is this “mid-level” broad transition zone between lowland and highland (500-1500 masl) that occupies the majority of the Cordillera de Agalta, interdigitating with pine/oak forests and deciduous arid forests on outer slopes, and punctuated by cloud forest islands.

Rain forests, while surprisingly homogeneous across Central America, vary substantially not only by altitude and at their becoming-pine forest and becoming-dry forest margins, but also by certain abrupt lines slashed across the landscape. The lowland and mid-level rain forests of eastern Honduras, by lying to the southeast side of such a line, are quite a bit higher in biodiversity than those that lie to the west. It was formerly thought that the Cordillera de Agalta was a highland boundary or “filter barrier” for northward-moving lowland rain forest biota (Monroe 1968), because there is a notable drop in biodiversity (at least 54 bird species, for example: see Anderson 2000) from southeast of the Aguán Fault to west of it. Our inventory efforts in the Cordillera de Agalta have shown, however, that rain forest avian species easily move over and around the range, occurring near Gualaco and El Carbón on its north side.³⁷ A more likely scenario is that, during the Pleistocene, the Valle de Aguán was the filter barrier, as a marine embayment. The biota that comprised the rain forest interior, flowing up from South America, could not in many cases cross water, and would also have been unable to go inland around an embayment, because of increasing dominance of the “hostile” thorn forest/*sabana* mosaic, among other factors.³⁸ As a result, Olancho, lying entirely southeast of the Valle de

³⁷ Bird inventories of El Carbón, San Esteban, were done by Richard Albers in the mid-1990s, and are in PCH-NR archives. A team coordinated by the author and by Francisco Urbina of Gualaco since 1991 did the rest of the avian inventories. A few results have been published in Anderson et al. (1998) but the majority of data are in unpublished volumes and lists in Urbina’s files and my files (see Bonta 1994; Bonta 1996; Bonta and Urbina 1999).

³⁸ There was likely another marine embayment in the lower Ulúa-Chamelecón valley (today’s “Valle de Sula”), which is marked by a less spectacular but still quite noticeable drop in avian species from east and west: see Monroe (1968).

Aguán, has substantially higher diversity rain forests than any to its northwest (central and western Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico), while containing species numbers similar to Nicaragua's rain forests (the Río San Juan being the next significant biogeographical lowland divide to the south).

Rain forest, as "*montaña*," is an important "forest space" as discussed in chapter six. Nevertheless, in the areas of central and northern Olancho focused upon in this dissertation, the rain forest is part of a mosaic of mosaics, one among many forest/non-forest landscape rhizomes. To the best of our knowledge, it was never dominant, thanks to all the factors discussed in previous sections.

4.10 Biodiversities of Minorities

Other than *pura montaña*/old-growth rain forest, all Olancho's "natural" spaces are highly rhizomatic with cultural practices: ranching, agriculture, forestry, agroforestry, silvopastoralism, "sistemas agrosilvopastorales".... "Human influence" favors both instances of increased and decreased biodiversity in comparison to "undisturbed" versions of the same space—if, indeed, it is even possible to have, for example, a dry forest mosaic without large ungulates and burning.³⁹ The two landscapes of central Olancho with the highest presently recorded local endemism are the elfin forest of the high peaks, with zero human "disturbance," and the thorn forests, which survive only on certain cattle ranches. For not becoming extinct, the Honduran Emerald can "thank" *terratenientes* rather than conservationists. This is not to speak of the thorn forests as *created* by humans, but rather as maintained by them thanks in part to an "arms race" between ranching and thorns. Meanwhile, the rancher/"scrub" rhizome is

³⁹ For a cultural/human ecological approach to understanding forest use in Ladino Honduras, see Tucker (1999). Anderson (1998) shows a clear relationship between increased landscape heterogeneity (anthropogenically-induced) and increased avian diversity (principally diurnal raptors) in the lower drainage basin of the Río Plátano in Gracias a Dios Department northeast of Olancho. Total species diversity was lowest in open landscapes, increased to a maximum in areas of forest patches, and decreased again within thick evergreen broadleaf rain forest. Stotz et al. (1996) do not tend to support such anthropogenically-friendly findings, since they classify most birds of open and patchwork landscapes as habitat generalists less sensitive to change—the "trash" avifauna.

ignored in discourses of virginity by those searching for tropical rain forests.⁴⁰ For those searching for pasture grass, the thorn forest is also an aberration, an intrusion.⁴¹ But these are not by any means the only examples that subvert attempts at generalization. Indeed, as the following examples show, not even the categories used in the preceding sections are adequate to understanding Olancho's "tropical" diversity.



Fig. 4.23. Diversities of a human landscape. *Vegas* and *sabanas* of the Río Mataderos (Río Babilonia) at La Venta, Gualaco, a landscape controlled by smallholders. Photo taken in January shows a dense *platanar* and a *mango* in the foreground, a *coyolar* in the background. Around 200 bird species have been recorded at this *sabana-vega* ecotone, including Neotropical migrants as well as altitudinal migrants from the nearby Montaña de Babilonia (e.g. emerald toucanets). Poverty of local smallholders and natural resistance of traditional crops favor a nearly agrochemical-free landscape

In Olancho, there are numerous "minor" environments, often relicts of former widespread spaces, with unique biodiversity that can easily be overlooked in the search for a mythic

⁴⁰ Sundberg (1998; 1999) provides an in-depth analysis of conservationists' privileging of virgin tropical rain forests in the Petén, an area analogous to eastern Honduras. Pro-rain forest tracts on Central America are numerous: Primack et al. (1998), on the Petén, is indicative.

⁴¹ Curiously, Johannessen (1963), contributing to an answer to the tropical "savanna question" (after Beard 1953; Budowski 1956) in a lengthy study of those in Honduras, appears to have been unaware of Carr (1950) and therefore missed the unique biological qualities of "thorn scrub." Geographers of the "Berkeley School," under the tutelage of Carl Sauer, were concerned in the 1950s with explaining how tropical savannas could persist in areas that quickly regrew to forest. Were they "natural" or "cultural" or both? Johannessen's dissertation and subsequent (1963) *Ibero-Americana* monograph is a substantial contribution to this literature.

“climax” which ones find, not unsurprisingly, only in those areas that modern humans are not inhabiting (the “untouched”). It is not an easy thing, as a rain forest/cloud forest conservationist, to encounter “important” biodiversity outside the rain forest, and especially outside forest completely. Nor is there much literature to guide one—the best clues are in biodiversity studies in temperate zone countries where “barrens” and other categories are accepted and sought out. But why look for non-forest areas in Olancho, except out of curiosity? Because, applied to Honduras, “saving the (lowland) rain forests” is scarcely as important in terms of global biodiversity as “saving” other spaces, simply because the *bosque lluvioso* contains comparatively few species not found elsewhere. But even after we recognize the importance of other forests, another problem surfaces, involving the false idea that all of interior Honduras’ landscapes are or should be forest in the first place. False, because tiny relicts, fragments of near-extinct spaces, contain by their very nature concentrations of holdovers in holobionts of great uniqueness.

After I recovered from my misconception that all Honduran landscapes should be forest and all forest should be virgin (around 1996), I began to notice and search out unique, isolated non-forest environments that might harbor undocumented biodiversity at a fine-grained scale. For example, several limestone caves in the Sierra de Agalta stretch several kilometers and contain stream systems with their attendant (undescribed, probably endemic) biota. In addition, cave-forming limestone is exposed throughout Olancho in imposing cliff faces with xeric vegetation such as succulents, even where the rocks are flanked by rain forest or cloud forest. Steep rock faces with stick-tight biota also occur extensively in other geological formations, for example on the rugged escarpment over which tumble the Chorros de Babilonia. Rock-loving organisms also proliferate in the Güisisiles hill region. None of the above examples, however, can be “proven” to contain endemism because no studies have been carried out yet.

While the most notable endemism of the savanna mosaic is in its dense thorn “forest” component, there are also native short-, medium-, and tall-grass prairies, in most places



Fig. 4.24. Peña Blanca, Catacamas, northeast side. Buffer zone of Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta above village of La Florida. Limestone cliffs harbor xerophytic non-forest vegetation. Large talus in middle of figure is known as a *pecho del cerro*.



Fig. 4.25. Riverine environment: non-forest space for biodiversity. Río Jalán at left, within the *comarca* of San Felipe. Antonio Ramos walks out of a thicket of *saucos* (*Salix chilensis*).

threatened by the twentieth century's wholesale invasion by introduced African grasses (Johannessen 1963). The African rhizome (with African cattle egret symbionts) has largely supplanted the native one, so that the native prairies are currently in the same spot as the thorn forest itself: succumbing to alien codes.

Fluvial spaces in Olancho are only partially forest-related. It can be said fairly that they change too fast to have any deep roots. Sandbars, willow brakes, backswamps, sand and gravel

beaches, mudflats, flooded prairies, bluffs, and underwater habitats--all are common along rivers in the *valles*. In the mountains, inside forests, most fluvial spaces are densely entangled with surrounding biota, but maintain margins of difference through their commonalities with non-forest fluvial spaces. Lacustrine and palustrine spaces, though uncommon in well-drained interior Honduras, contain significant biota. Local people create ponds for fish, cattle, sewage, and scenic value, but since these are “artificial” and usually privately or municipally owned, they do not figure into many prevailing conservation frameworks. There are also a small number of natural ponds and lakes in Olancho which would qualify for “conservation attention.” They invariably hold significance in local space far beyond their diminutive sizes, perhaps because interior Honduras is virtually bereft of lacustrine space. The Laguna del Quebracho (300 by 200 meters) in the Valle de Olancho has a rich folklore, a complex aquatic fauna, and may contain an important pollen record (see accounts in Figueroa 1935 and Wells 1857). But official conservation wisdom has established that Honduras has only one natural inland freshwater lake, the Lago de Yojoa....

The elfin wind scrubs of Agalta’s high peaks are as “natural” and are more inaccessible to humans than anywhere else in Olancho. They are strikingly interesting and important from the standpoint of biodiversity conservation (see Stotz et al. 1996 on those of the eastern Andes), but they are not forests.

Perhaps the most spectacular non-rain forest space in Olancho that has escaped “conservation attention” altogether is the *teocintal*, the grove of *Dioon mejiae*, an endemic tree cycad with a range restricted to a few disjunct patches growing under specific geographic conditions in three drainage basins of northern Olancho; one grove nearby in Colón, and a handful in northern Nicaragua. Even though conservation projects have focused on the town of Gualaco vis-à-vis the Sierra de Agalta for over ten years, a nearby *teocintal*, crucial element of Gualaco’s *patrimonio*, has gained virtually no conservation publicity. These tree cycads, which reach forty feet in height, are closely related to *Dioon* species in Mexico that, at ten feet high,



Fig. 4.26. *Teocinte* (*Dioon mejiae*) tree cycad grove, Quebrada de los Hornos, Saguay, Gualaco. Tree in center is almost ten meters high and possibly several thousand years old.

are already several thousand years old (Vovides 1990). An apt comparison would be to bristlecone pine forest relicts in the western United States. The *Dioon* cycads, all globally endangered, survive only within extremely narrow environmental limits, surrounded by an array of pollinators and other symbionts, forming a holobiont that in the case of *D. mejiae* is entirely unstudied.⁴²

The *teocintal* is a type of “forest” that does not fit into any prevalent category. Cycad groves disappear into the Holdridge grid, for example, where they could be classified as either “bosque seco tropical” or “bosque húmedo subtropical,” depending on elevation. You wouldn’t find them on any forest cover map, and could never guess they were there. The only way to find cycad groves, I have discovered, is to forget everything one thinks one knows about where things should be and what landscapes should look like. The quickest shortcut to cycads is through local space. *Teocintes* are as prominent there as they are invisible everywhere else.

⁴² See Jones (1993). The World Wide Web has many pages dedicated to cycads, for collectors as well as for scientists and conservationists. Gualaco’s *teocintes* are the most accessible of the relicts, and the only grove known (vaguely) to botanists. According to Jones and bolstered by numerous Internet suggestions in the “Cycad Pages,” it is unwise to divulge the exact locations of *Dioon* relicts in Mexico, because their value as seedlings on the black market is roughly equivalent to cocaine, and cycad busts are not uncommon at the Texas-Mexico border. *Teocintes* in local space are discussed in chapter five below.

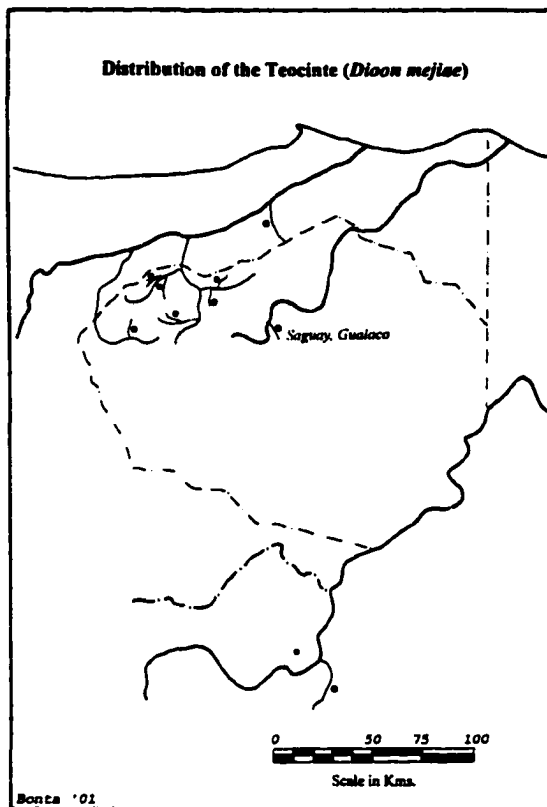


Fig. 4.27. Distribution of the *Teocinte*.

4.11 Meditations from La Picucha

After all is said and done, does heterogeneous biodiversity, some sprawling, some compressed, entangled with non-organic living machines, measure up to the way Olanchanos have constructed their land? Is their hyperbole (and that of many outsiders) produced solely by social machines, or is it also a production of their own rhizome with the land? Below, I argue that there is indeed a cornucopia.

With knowledge of what is out there, it is now possible to gaze across Olancho from its highest point to conceive of its phenomenological vastness but remain aware of its intimate local differences. What makes Olancho unique should soon surface if we gaze at it intently. The most striking feature of La Picucha, Olancho's highest peak at 2354 meters above sea level,

is the view, sometimes 365 degrees.⁴³ When there is no view, which is most of the time, the soggy elfin heath and mossy forest mosaic seems a world unconnected to anywhere else, since there are no sensory hints of a tall forest not far below. But if clouds part, most of eastern and central Honduras is opened to one's gaze. Surrounding *valles* are laid bare, and the Cordillera de Agalta can be seen stretching northeastward, a ribbon of *montaña*, all the way to the upper Paulaya basin, where rain forest vegetation, no longer impeded by pine space or thorn space, hopscotches with agriculture and pasture east into the Río Plátano basin. Northward are visible the high peaks of the Cordillera Nombre de Dios, which hides the Caribbean. Westward, peaks in Francisco Morazán department are visible, while southeastward the Cordillera Entre Ríos blocks any glimpse of Nicaragua.

Despite the 130-kilometer visual radius,⁴⁴ and the undeniable power of a landscape gaze over all Olancho and beyond, the world below does not seem any smaller and more ordered than when one is "inside" it. Olancho still appears vast, perhaps because its linear distances are cluttered by seemingly infinite ridges and depressions. The land—Olancho blurring into Honduras fading into Central America—is rumpled and fractalized. The striations of the State

⁴³ Foresters who oversaw the construction of a radio relay station in the 1980s gave it the name "La Picucha" ("ugly" or "formidable" peak). Even after a trail was opened to its highest point, the peak remained a grueling two-day trek from Gualaco; high winds and sudden downdrafts around the summit made lowering a Volkswagen bus body (to house the radio) by helicopter an extremely dangerous undertaking. That specific peak to my knowledge has no other Ladino name, but its massif is called the Montaña de Babilonia. Many current maps, not reflecting existent topographic information (Instituto Geográfico Nacional 1986: Catacamas), still show an older, incorrect height of 2590 masl for an undefined peak in the range. Even the current official (small-scale) map of Honduras (IGN 1996) shows an unnamed peak near La Picucha as the highest, at 2304 masl. As for the bus, it was broken into before 1990 and the radio stolen: COHDEFOR employees blamed the crime on the Honduran military and/or the Nicaraguan Contras, who occupied the airbase just 17 kilometers to the southeast in El Aguacate. In any case, COHDEFOR was dissatisfied with the Picucha station because of the difficult terrestrial access, and the trail was left for other uses, becoming the only "easily" accessible route to an elfin wind scrub in Honduras. Ironically, the Catacamas topo sheet that maps La Picucha was produced together with the US Defense Mapping Agency, so for our ability to navigate the high peaks region of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta we thank a once-classified "red-light readable" geographic text originally produced for reasons quite distinct from biodiversity inventories.

⁴⁴ A circle containing 53,000 square kilometers, or just under half of Honduras' 112,492 square kilometers (Pineda Portillo 1997:17). Such a view can be had from other peaks in the Cordillera, and as I propose in chapter two Cristobal de Pedraza's (1898[1544]) gaze to the East, over the "Tagiusgualpa," was from one of the peaks, almost as high as La Picucha, in the Carbón region.

appear tenuous at best. Nowhere is there a central place, an order, a hierarchy; no superiority of high over low, low over high, coast over interior, interior over coast. Every point is a place, every movement a way—the landscape flows, its spaces contracting and expanding, coming to dominance and fading away, leaving rhizomes of ways and places, becoming-static, becoming-fluid. The gaze, were it to be recorded by time-lapse photography, would never have perceived unity or more than transient states in the Olancho that has existed up to now: it would see only the marks of populations traversing the land and overcoding each other, pine forests washing up the slopes, Pleistocene landscapes ebbing into the corners, thick rain forests penetrating up the rivers from the coast. The Sierra itself would have no permanent forest, but only strips of vegetation recovering from but then succumbing again to landslides. Human populations would ripple across the landscape in waves of conquest and rhizome, simplifying and ordering but also being subdued and even erased, their imprints hidden in the palimpsest.

Myriad fluid spaces; myriad codes. Olancho's biogeography has come not from one homogeneous tropical rain forest, but rather from heterogeneous cascading rocks and soils combined with topography linked to fluvial spaces flanking palustrine and terrestrial forest containing semi-forest and/or non-forest habitats/ecosystems--in part, depending on context, favored by and favoring microclimatic as well as macroclimatic regimes over against but also intertwined with human influence and spatiotemporal positioning.... In other words, Olancho's biodiversity is due to a becoming heterogeneity of infinite combinatorial probabilities at diverse spatial and temporal scales. This is true to greater or lesser extent of all landscapes everywhere: landscape, the manifestation and imprint of complex spaces, cannot "help" but be decentered, de- and reterritorializing, ever-changing. Undoubtedly there is more biodiversity as one moves south toward the Equator: so is Olancho just another slice of the Tropics, unique like everywhere else, diverse like everywhere else? Is what Olanchanos have been saying for centuries applicable everywhere else, or...? Hubris sewn with golden threads?

Olancho straddles a transition zone between the Central American Highlands with their attendant endemic-rich cloud forest and thorn forest landscapes, and Caribbean Slope southern Central America with its South America-derived rain forests. The South American component of Olancho's rain forests is stronger than in rain forests to the west and north. The cloud forests contain a dilute biota derived from their center of diversity and dispersion to the west (highland Guatemala and Chiapas). This is countered, however, by a strong southern Central American highland element (Three-wattled Bellbirds, *Procnias tricarunculata*, for example) for which Olancho is their northernmost outpost. Added to this is the relict diversity of the elfin scrub and mossy forests. The arid landscape weave in which the thorn forest is embedded is as great in areal extent as anywhere else in Central America, and contains many forest and non-forest habitats in addition to the *espinal* (see Carr 1950). Pine woods are among the richest and most extensive of Central America, and contain a sizeable margin of old-growth forest. Aquatic spaces are, in terms of well-drained interior (non-Quaternary volcanic) Central America, an important aspect of the land. Combining these factors in different ways tends to centralize Olancho as, if not a global "megadiversity hotspot," at least worthy of its local hyperbole in terms of Central America. Even though biodiversity inventories are sorely lacking, the examples below serve to back up this assertion.

A transect running south from the confluence of the Río Babilonia (Mataderos) and the Río Grande (Sico) at a low point in the Valle de Agalta, up and over La Picucha, and down the other side to the Río Guayape in the Valle de Olancho—40 kilometers and 2000 meters of altitudinal displacement—would demonstrate that local biodiversity is higher than along most transects of similar length in North and Central America (there is no contest with South America suggested here). This local transect is intersected by all major natural spaces in Olancho except lowland tropical rain forest below 1000 meters—which can be found in great extent only a few kilometers to the northeast. But don't mountain transects increase in biodiversity as one moves south through the Isthmus? They do, among South America-derived biota—but this increase is

offset by a decrease in northern elements. Mountains on the Caribbean Slope southeastward as far as northwestern Costa Rica are not as high as Agalta (thus containing less “altitudinal diversity”). When they do reach greater heights in the Talamancas and other ranges of Costa Rica and Panama, they no longer contain pine forests, nor are they found in juxtaposition with arid *valle* thorn forests. Going the other direction, on the far side of the Aguán Fault is a significant drop in biodiversity associated with southern elements.

Further evidence that Olancho, by virtue of its position and altitudinal diversity, is relatively more biodiverse than most similar-sized areas? Any one forest or landscape “type” in the Sierra de Agalta or the *valles* contains no more than 200 resident and migrant bird species (much less than forests in Amazonia or even in Panama, for example). The entire *valle*-peak-*valle* transect, however, as revealed by the regional inventory for the Sierra de Agalta and surrounding *valles* that we compiled during the 1990s (Bonta and Urbina 1999), is intersected by over 500 species: the greatest recorded bird diversity in Honduras or anywhere to the North. Olancho contains at least 600 bird species, roughly as many as Texas (Honduras contains approximately as many bird species as all North America north of Mexico).

Biodiversity in general exhibits a “spike” at this “crossroads” (*enredo*) of South and North America, highland and interior (as well as in the anthropogenic realm of “agrodiversity”: where Mesoamerican maize meets southern Central American *yuca*). The concept of “meeting ground” (*enredo*) can pertain to anywhere, but is particularly powerful when applied to the contact zone of two continents that were separated until quite recently in geologic time, and are still “getting to know each other.”

The “biotic highway” between North and South is made even richer by its crosscutting Neotropical-Nearctic migration phenomena, particularly among the avifauna (see Hagan and Johnston 1992). Northern Central America is crowded “wintering” ground as well as “bottleneck” transient corridor for hundreds of bird species occupying almost all available niches.

However, the “meeting ground” is far more than the becoming-North of South and the becoming-South of North. Within each becoming-North/South are entangled encounters of east and west, pines and thorns, *vegas* and *sabanas*, lowland and highland, fluvial-lacustrine-palustrine, “human and nature.” Agalta specifically, and Olancho in general, complexify these types of *n*-dimensional *enredos* of becomings through “packing together” of landscape: more spaces, closer together, signify higher combinatorial outcomes and every place and every time.



Fig. 4.28. Magnolia Warbler in coffee bush. The species is an abundant “winter” (non-breeding) Neotropical migrant, resident in Olancho between October and March.

The final example of diversity through complex encounter is in the “mid-level” rain forest, that which predominates in the Cordillera de Agalta between 750 and 1500 meters above sea level. The mid-level rain forest landscape along the Cordillera is adjacent to more types of landscapes than any other in Olancho. Above it is the cloud forest and lateral to it is pine/oak forest. Below it is either tropical dry to arid forest, or lowland rain forest, depending on place and time. The mid-level rain forest contains a dilute cloud forest biota and an impoverished lowland rain forest biota, as well as certain elements of dry forest and pine/oak forest. It sits astride the anthropogenic altitudinal frontier, and as such is usually encountered these days as a patchwork of shade coffee, swidden agriculture, and deep forest, rather than as a uniform *pura montaña*. In itself, this multidimensional transition zone does not seem to have an identity or a

core, but rather to be comprised of margins, overlaps or “sloshings-over” of other landscapes: a cobbled-together fragment of other spaces’ codes. Look at it one way, and it’s a cloud forest; look at it another way, and it’s a rain forest—what, then, are the *liquidambares* doing there, with their leaves changing color and their foliage bare for months at a time? Lacking a clear identity, the “mid-level” rain forest can be seen as subsisting only vicariously through other landscapes that have “clear” identities--and discourses--to back them up.



Fig. 4.29. *Montaña cruda*, old-growth montane rain forest at 1100 meters above sea level in the Montaña de Babilonia, Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta.

But rather than seeing the mid-level rain forest landscape as a jumble of “not quites,” why not see it as a rhizome that grows by addition and multiplication? It typifies the Deleuzian chain of “...and...and...and...” replacing “if...then” and “either...or...” Which is it—rain forest or cloud forest; pine forest or dry forest; natural or cultural? All of the above: making it greater than the sum of its parts. Its diversity is achieved through reterritorializing all its margins, becoming-multiple. Proof of higher biodiversity? The 1000-meter altitudinal quotient in the Cordillera de Agalta, according to our inventory numbers, is the pinnacle of bird diversity in Honduras, and a local space containing relatively equal parts *pura montaña* and anthropogenic forest/non-forest situation will harbor higher species numbers than anywhere else. Monroe (1968:23) indicates this in part when he comments:

In this [Honduran] low montane rain forest, a definite mixing of rain and cloud forest avifaunas produces one of the richest regions for bird study in the country. This mixing ranges from about 750 to almost 1,500 meters elevation but occurs most characteristically from 900 to 1,350 meters.

The richest region, if becomings-pine forest and becomings-dry forest are taken into consideration. Even lowland tropical rain forest is not as rich.⁴⁵

4.12 La Pródiga Tierra

Olanchanos are fond of repeating Froylan Turcios' line, "Bendiga Dios la Pródiga Tierra en que Nací." Turcios, born in late nineteenth-century Juticalpa, wrote much of his poetry both as a paean to Olancho and as a hedge against US imperialism. Like Jesús Aguilar Paz the geographer and Constantino Fiallos the Minister of Agriculture, he never stopped believing in the strength and richness of Honduras, refusing to buy the deterministic equations that condemned it to impoverishment and weakness (and that necessitated foreign "intervention"). Fecundity, to many Hondurans and particularly to Olanchanos, is an empowering condition—the *plátano* rhizome (*platanares* in every *vega*) that feeds the people when the State fails them

⁴⁵For example, Anderson (1998) gives avian species numbers for the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, which occupies part of the old-growth lowland rain forest of eastern Honduras, including also anthropogenic landscapes as well as fluvial and coastal habitats. The *Biosfera* is at least ten times the size of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, yet through greater altitudinal and climatic uniformity (meaning no dry forest, little to no pine forest, and no cloud forest) contains fewer species. Anderson, who has logged more time in the eastern lowland rain forests than any other bird expert (but see also Marcus 1983), estimates (1998:86) that the Río Plátano contains 351 nonvagrant species, and of these he has recorded 248. Of the between 500 to 600 nonvagrant bird species Francisco Urbina and I estimate that the Sierra de Agalta and flanking *valles* contain (Bonta and Urbina 1999), we have recorded approximately 470. Anderson shows that of the 351 species in the Plátano, 251 are "core [rain]forest species." In the Agalta region probably no more than 200 birds could be considered core rain forest species. A situation similar to Agalta's occurs in the Parque Nacional Pico Bonito section of the Cordillera Nombre de Dios along the North Coast south of La Ceiba. The range's north side is an unbroken corridor from sea level wetlands through lowland rain forest to cloud forest, mossy forest, and elfin scrub. On the rain shadow south side, the range contains cloud forest giving way to lower pine forest, and finally to thorn forest in the Valle de Aguán. Pico Bonito, a slightly higher and much more rugged range than Agalta, and also flanking rich coastal wetlands, suffers in comparison to Agalta only because it is on the "wrong" side of the Aguán Fault, and hence its lowland rain forest is less biodiverse. This is exacerbated by the anthropogenic island effect: unlike Agalta, which is (still) physically connected to the vast rain forest gene pool to its southeast, Pico Bonito has been severed through the extensive plantation agriculture (e.g. bananas and oil palms) of the middle and lower Aguán. Nevertheless, as butterfly and bird expert Robert Gallardo is showing (pers. comm.), Pico Bonito is indeed another "local megadiversity hotspot" (my term).

is a fine example of empowerment, especially in Olancho. Unripe *plátanos*, intact after Mitch, fended off starvation in many a *comarca*.

In chapter three, I concluded with a list of ten rhizomes that seem to have kept Olancho “independent” throughout its cultural histories. It is only fair to do the same for its natural histories. Why? Because rhizomes that are integral to the sustenance of local space are not only difficult or impossible to eliminate (hence the foiling of dam projects), but also can provide clear markers around which any and all non-hegemonic, non-homogenizing, non-oppressive identities can coalesce in spatial alliances.

1. Mangos. The famine food par excellence—see chapter five. Mangos came about in India, spread around the world, and reach particular fecundity in places like Olancho. In Olancho, there are in most years too many mangos for people to eat, and this helps multiply another rhizome—the pig.

2. Birds. Though rarely utilized for material needs, wild birds are among the richest non-human beings in terms of their sustenance of human non-material needs (symbolic wealth). Caged parrots are perhaps a counterproductive example here; a better one are the flocks of scarlet macaws that once darkened the sky, and the best is the ever-present chorus—the proclamation of localized territories that in its human listeners produces wholly unintended emotions.

3. Cycads. *Patrimonio* par excellence—an extraordinary tree and holobiont. Olancho is almost all it has.

4. Remoteness. Nothing is “absolutely” remote except in terms of its striation by a nucleus. However, produced remoteness, as discussed at length in chapter five, can work to the benefit of fecund local space (“archaic” practices, relict survival) as well as against it (the Babilonia waterfalls). Remoteness, as the earlier sections of this chapter showed, is sustained by rumpled physical geography.

5. Vastness. This also works for and against local space. It leads to heady tales of limitless resources, but also buoys up local identities even to the point of arrogance. Vastness is produced rather than real, and is an effect of physical geography combined with human transportation possibilities combined with closely-juxtaposed biogeographic spaces.

6. Pines and oaks. They are present everywhere, not only in their own forests, but as important elements of cloud forests, mid-level rain forests, and even some arid forests. They usually invite not permanent striation but only short-term intervention. As a rhizome, they provide a wide variety of human needs (especially the non-pine element for firewood and pines for tinder) without interfering with agriculture.

7. Cloud forests. As conservationists are fond of pointing out, they are sponges that capture moisture year round, releasing it slowly to the *valles*. Olanchanos, with adequate water management tools, never go dry in many areas.

8. Native grasses. *Patrimonio* under siege. They sustained cattle space for centuries, back before barbed wire, agrochemicals, and “better” breeds.

9. White-tailed deer and *tepescuintles*. See chapter six. The foremost wild protein sources.

10. White-lipped peccaries (*jagüillas*) and fer-de-lances (*barbas amarillas*). The two who counter hubris with caution: Olanchanos know them to be the only truly fearless elements of *La Naturaleza*. *Jagüillas* run in packs of hundreds across vast forest spaces, with nomadic lack of “regard” for anything and everything in their way, shredding dogs and treeless humans. *Barbas amarillas* guard their territories aggressively; their bites usually cause massive hemorrhaging (bleeding from the eyes, ear, nose, and mouth, for example) and exquisitely painful death.

Together, their threat calls both for respect of *pura montaña* and for its elimination.

Rhizomes—like the family after Hurricane Mitch—are far better than hierarchies at distributing energy and connecting spatial identities. Their cultural/natural diversity should be fomented, so that hegemonic, homogenizing, striating, centralized organisms like the State can be “kept at bay”: perhaps not banished, but danced with only when the occasion arises.

“Sustainable” Development, as chapter eight underscores, seeks to be a rhizome using the land as a base and “connectivity” as its algorithm (see Annis 1992). Protected Areas Conservation, as chapters eight and nine demonstrate, tries to identify and preserve “natural” landscapes under what it understands as immanent threat of permanent disappearance. Both machines are flawed in many ways that I will explain in later chapters. Here, I mention them to illustrate the (actual and potential) convergence of conservation, development, and Olancho in the alliances of a *pródiga tierra*. Chapter three showed, in effect, that conservation and development, to become-local (if this becoming proves conceptually possible within their regimes of signs), have to relearn cultural history. This chapter has shown that conservation and development have to relearn natural history. Chapters five and six show what conservation and development could learn about local space-the mixture.



Fig. 4.30. *Barba amarilla*. Fer-de-lance (*Bothrops asper*). One-meter-long specimen procured at 1100 meters above sea level inside old-growth rain forest, though it is rare at this high altitude. By far the most feared wild animal in Honduras, it is highly aggressive and claims several deaths every year, mostly on the North Coast and in the Moskitia.

**MAPPING ENREDOS OF COMPLEX SPACES
A REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF OLANCHO, HONDURAS**

VOLUME II

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by

**Mark Andrew Bonta
B.A., Pennsylvania State University, 1990
M.A., University of Texas, 1997
May 2001**

Chapter Five

Local Space

In this chapter, I explore a world of exceeding complexity, one that welds “Nature” and “Culture,” State and anti-State, smooth and striated, local and global. I build upon the preceding chapters, but for the first time draw exclusively from the views of local people, using ethnographic description as a way to make visible and relevant a space that so often escapes from sight and hearing under the raucous onslaught of more flamboyant spaces. Why does local space escape from human perception even though we inhabit it? Because it obeys no single code, but is rather a jumbled “Plane of Consistency” for the possibilities of all human spatial identities. Exactly because its combinatorial possibilities for rhizomatic complexity and hierarchical striation are endless, the danger of too many “mixed signals” not making sense leads spatial identities to cordon themselves off one from the other, in part I suspect for fear of losing face (spatial identities are the subject of chapter six). Spatial identities display varying degrees of localization, but are themselves never a 1:1 fit with local space.

Local space, through appearing to be “just there” and “original,” foils many attempts to understand it. Some may misinterpret it as “ground” or even “homeland”—they may see it as authentic, situated at the center of the world, exclusive territory of a sedentary or nomadic Identity being eroded by “degradation” of irreplaceable resources thanks to the ravages of an Outside. This means that a Whole System of Law, Ethics, Morals, Beliefs, etc., etc., can easily be ascribed to local space, with what I believe are usually disastrous results. Others may go to the opposite extreme, citing local space’s chaotic apparel, its “irrationality,” “backwardness,” and altogether contradictory “mess” of meanings that add up to weakness and call for Progress. Machines such as the State, Conservation, and Development go to both extremes in attempts to provide explanations for chaos, as will become more apparent in chapters seven and eight.

Obviously, local space, though the source of possibilities for dichotomies, is not a dichotomous space; indeed, it has no “inherent” organization external to the machines that “use” it. There is a serious dichotomous issue, however, in the real opposition of local and global—what I shall henceforth refer to as the “chiasm.”¹ The chiasm is the endless deterritorializing process that orders and disorders flows—of energy, particles, ideas, air, water, stories—both taking away and giving to every place, ceaselessly and uncontrollably. The local “gives” to the global—for example in a case study or a “really good idea”—and thus such “local conditions” are (re) coded in terms of global significance: discourses, systems, frameworks, regimes of signs that operate at the international scale. The “global” refers to a “level” that is all-encompassing on our planet, the framework of frameworks, a realm not bounded by any horizon or a set of codes, because it (constantly and forever) meets itself in its spherical domain. In this line of thinking, the global ceaselessly traverses the local (as in the climate machine) but without local conditions, such as the butterfly flapping its wings, the global has no existence. The chiasm speaks of their inseparable intertwining—an immense intimacy of specific situations and general rules. At some level, for example, I can extract myself from my local space and relate in many ways to people and places operating under quite distinct sets of codes. The problem arises when a simple dichotomy or a hierarchically dichotomizing process freezes the chiasm. Two conditions result. Either local space is seen as a subset of a single global regime (One World, the mind of God, Development) and thus necessarily striatable and “of less importance”; or local space is seen as absolutely different and unique, an Inside opposed to the Outside, an island. When conditions tend toward either of these extremes, fluidity is denied, and becoming is suppressed (though it is ultimately irrepressible).

¹ The term is employed by Merleau-Ponty (1968); my intent is somewhat different here. There should be no confusion here with Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) “molar” and “molecular,” either.

At the conclusion of this chapter I list certain qualities of local space—a chiasm of local and global—that favor both its resilience and its irrepressiveness in the face of homogenizing, hegemonic, and oppressive machines operating at the local scale and at the global scale.

In section 5.1, I begin my ethnography of local space in Olancho with *aldeas* and *comarcas*, what to many are the phenomenological containers of their everyday lives. Section 5.2 expands this to the scale of *pueblos* and *municipios*, which are the outer membranes harboring worlds of interwoven *comarcas*. In 5.3, I consider the deterritorialization of local containers through their connections with several outsides. The three most commonly invoked landscapes—*valle*, *serranía*, and *montaña*—occupy section 5.4. In 5.5, I look at how *olanchanos* and landscapes become entangled through a “secret” language. Section 5.6 addresses the spatial components inherent to the obsessions of everyday life in Olancho—particularly soccer and politics. How *olanchanos* gaze at bodies and at landscapes concerns 5.7. Section 5.8 is a brief meditation on *olanchanos*’ senses of places, and why these are always also “senses of ways.” Sections 5.9 through 5.11 take up the enchantment of landscape, the theme through which I pay homage to my principal inspiration for such matters, geographer Jesús Aguilar Paz. Enchantment involves the presence of “superstition” and other fragments of “lost” spatial identities that are mixed together with the modern and the rational, but that also help to refute it: in folklore about haunted Precolumbian ruins, enchanted caves, and many other landscape features.

Section 5.12 returns to the deterritorialization of the local through the ever-present possibility of flights to the outsides—and how the flight to “gringolandia” is crucial to any basic understanding of local space as it is encountered today in Olancho. In 5.13, I discuss briefly the “timing” of Olancho: its phenomenological experiences of pasts, presents, and futures.

Section 14 concludes with a meditation on the resilience of local space.

5.1 *Aldeas and Comarcas*

A striation that is a sort of “collaboration” between the State and local identities is the dichotomy of town and country, *pueblo* and *campo*—what makes townspeople (*gente del pueblo*) more “civilized” than “campesinos.” And yet in Olancho the distinction loses strict validity in local space, since there are State-designated “pueblos” such as El Rosario so small as to be closely linked to the surrounding countryside—their residents, just like in the *aldeas*, are as likely to be farmers as to be shopkeepers, to leave the *pueblo* on foot or mounted, practice agropastoral activities in the morning, and return by noon. Indeed, even in *ciudades* like Juticalpa the now firm break between city and country has solidified largely since 1950, except among the wealthy landholding class (who drive back and forth from their country estates) and the itinerant merchants (who go where the sale is). Nevertheless, today the “advanced” residents of the larger towns refer to the campesinos as “montunos” (from the *monte*, bush) or “aldeanos,” both disparaging terms. As the towns become increasingly wealthy and modern, the gulf between service-rich *ciudad* and infrastructure-poor *campo* widens (the striation achieves its end).

The *campo* is a highly heterogeneous human space with a striation separating *terrateniente* and campesino—the dichotomy of large landholdings and everything else. Large landholders, *terratenientes*, are often absent from my consideration of local space because they are frequently not integrated into its social networks, appearing instead to float above local concerns, or positioning themselves at the top of pyramids of power relations. Their territories are exclusive lairs for a privileged lifestyle not shared with impoverished rural neighbors. With their access to capital and influence in the State apparatus they are able to transform landscapes into homogeneous expanses through highly mechanized export-oriented agriculture as well as through modernized cattle ranching (see chapter six). They cordon off their landholdings from their neighbors, sometimes enforcing the spirit of a “shoot trespassers” land ethic. Most are

seen, and see themselves, at a distinctly higher level than campesinos, not “part” of the *campo* except in an aesthetic sense or out of political necessity. Nevertheless, where there is a becoming-campesino of the large landholder, typical among certain Olanchano families who prefer to live on their ranches and oversee day-to-day operations, then local space does indeed seep into their identities.

The *campo* is far from a uniform, striated space of *aldeas* (villages) dependent on their local *pueblos* within the world of the *municipio*. In striated space, the *aldeas* are indeed directly “below” the *pueblo*; underneath each *aldea*, in turn, is a constellation of *caseríos* (hamlets). Each hierarchized unit is dependent on the one above and those below, with “altitudinal” movement taking precedent over lateral communication through the *comarca*. It is the “*comarca*” which is better seen as a “basic unit” of local space becoming-smooth. The *comarca* is both (pre) historical relict and vibrant present-day local territory. It has, as far as I am aware, no validity in government statistics and projects except when synonymous with “*aldea*,” but politicians ignore its rhizomatic power at their peril. Below, I consider first the *comarca* and then the *aldea*: the latter can be seen as the former turned more closely to the vertical.

The *comarca* is at first glance simply a collection of *aldeas* and *caseríos*, and yet it is not “higher” than them in any hierarchical sense. The *comarca*, unlike many individual *aldeas*, is by definition not squeezed into marginality by physically dominant *teratenientes* or by other hegemonic spaces—when it is, it ceases to exist (for a while, at least). The *comarca* is a wide expanse often marked by a watercourse, *montaña*, and *valle* bearing its name. Local people refer to *comarcas* more often than to individual *aldeas* per se, a distinction that can confuse outsiders. When someone says they are from San Felipe, they are referring to a *comarca* holding several villages. The outsider, on visiting San Felipe, searches in vain for that name, since it is not a political unit and is therefore not present on the many signs marking the *logros* of development projects. Government employees, developmentalists, and conservationists speak largely in the language of the political jurisdictions they see on maps and in laws; in local

space, it is the *comarcas* that dominate consciousness. In some cases, entire *valles* are *comarcas*, such as Azacualpa and Lepaguare. Outsiders, perplexed, remark on their lack of central administrative sites—these ample and fertile *valles* do not have control posts.² As rhizomes, *comarcas* are not centralized.

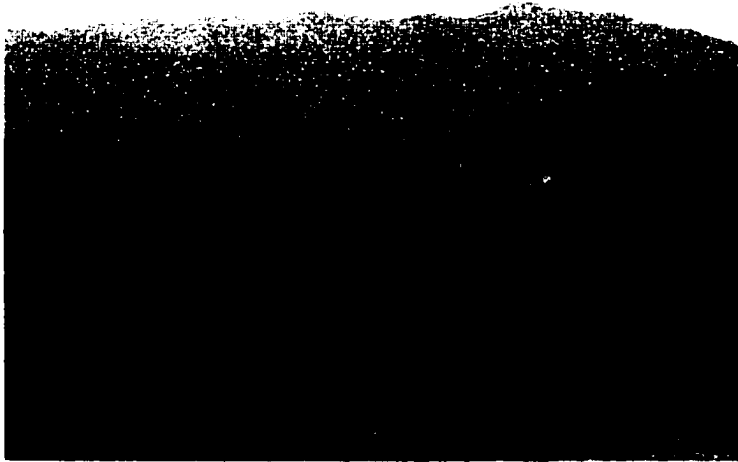


Fig. 5.1. The *comarca* of Lepaguare.

The *comarca*, as alluded to in chapter three, has resulted in many instances from the deterritorialization of colonial land titling striations—probably almost all *comarcas* were, and some still are, simultaneously *sitios*. These land grants, in turn, overcoded local geographies, with a margin of becoming, through for example the “lifting” of indigenous *comarca* toponyms and their placement after saints’ names or other sacred concepts (e.g. San Antonio de Pacura, Dulce Nombre de Culmí, San Jorge de “Huilancho”). The *comarca* become *sitio* become *comarca* flows through the generations and retains much of its “personality,” in part because the people who continue to inhabit it are descendents of old title holders and/or of the *mozos* (peons) whose tiny settlements grew to overwhelm the large landholdings themselves. *Sitio* titles like that of San Jerónimo de Guacoca (see chapter 8), once individually owned, have

² See an RABNH editor’s comments on the failure of a Decreto in 1851 to striate the Valle de Azacualpa (Decreto... 1935).

become the common domains of rhizomatic multitudes. *Comarcas* like Guacoca, Pacura, and San Felipe (note the dropping of the double name) consist jurisdictionally of several *aldeas* and *caseríos*, but overarching this they have a unity of ownership through the hundreds or thousands of people with rights to old titles. This gives some *comarcas* considerable power to control use of and access to land, for example—a empowering weapon against *terratenientes* and *invasores* in any form (including State titling programs).

The *comarca*, through what I believe to be its roots both in the needs of indigenous *comarcas* and in the strictures of *sitios*—frequently contains a cross-section of the landscape, not only a watercourse and at least part of a *valle* or *vallecito* but also *serranía* and even *montaña*. The term “*comarca*,” when applied by local people to usufruct lands never titled, such as La Avispa (chapter 8), carry this expansive significance with them: *comarcas* have to supply the agropastoral necessities of many families in diverse manners.

There are echoes of the indigenous in today’s *comarcas*, particularly in their tendencies to straddle watercourses that in Precolumbian times would not likely have been seen or employed as barriers, like they were in many colonial *sitios*. Indigenous *comarcas* in the *valles* of Precolumbian times (see Dixon et al. 1998) would have been centered on streams, with easy access to *montaña* and *serranía* as well as *valle*, one *comarca* separated from the next by a half-day’s walk. The Valle de Olancho, by these measures, might have been comprised of 15 to 20 such *comarcas*, each clustered around its local stream, and most with doors to the translocal Guayape as well.

The *comarca* weaves together many of the features outlined below that are characteristic of its constituent *aldeas* and *caseríos*, providing an “extra-village” rhizomatic identity bolstering pride in (extended) family and control over *patrimonio*. It remains an adequate space, though under constant invasion from outsiders. The *aldea*, as a striated subject of *pueblo/municipio*, receives more support from the State and from other machines that, perhaps perceiving it on some level as more controllable, respond to its needs with greater urgency.

The *aldea* is a politically- and jurisdictionally-supported geographic unit of the State (in the mind of the State, in any case) often squeezed between large landholdings, and not infrequently beholden to them. Some *aldeas*, referred to as “*chorizos*” (sausages), have no room to expand thanks to encircling large landholdings, and so fill in almost as densely as *pueblos*. The *aldea* of this type, common along the northern rim of the Valle de Olancho, has only limited fields for cultivation, within or directly beside it. *Aldeas* of this type that are close to the *montaña* extend their dominion upward, often disjunctly, hopscotching over intervening cattle space to reach the margins of human settlement. *Chorizos* like El Boquerón, Punuare, and San Marcos de Jutiquile are also characterized by high rates of outward flight, usually to Los Estados. By contrast, any sprawling *aldea* containing sufficient and still productive *valle*, *serranía* and *montaña*--an ideal and idyll of many rural *olanchanos*--is simultaneously a *comarca*. Such *aldeas*, for example San Antonio in northern Gualaco, are fortunate in that they occupy sparsely populated areas, and may even be marked by low outward flight (a feature of northern Gualaco in general).

Large *aldeas* closely resemble *pueblos*, and some have grown larger than the *pueblos* that administer them. Jutiquile, for example, has a street grid (*trazo*), a *parque central* flanked by a Catholic church, and with over five thousand inhabitants is actually larger in physical extension and population than many *pueblos*. In local space, *aldeas* such as Jutiquile are the centers of their own areas of capture. They remain “but” *aldeas* in State space because they do not have the concentration of services they would receive as *pueblo* central places. (State space allows but one *pueblo* per *municipio*.)

All campesino houses, inhabited full-time or seasonally, belong to *aldeas* or their subset, *caseríos*; even a single house can be a *caserío*. Most *aldeas* contain a central village and outlying *caseríos*. In the *aldea* political power is usually concentrated in an *alcalde auxiliar*, a *patronato* (governing body), and *juntas rurales* (groups addressing issues such as coffee growing, education, healthcare, water).



Fig. 5.2. Part of El Encino, Esquipulas del Norte. This *aldea* once lay on the *camino real* from Olanchito to Olanchito by way of Laguata; now it is an hour off the main road. Four visible house clusters mark four *barrios*; note the concentration of vegetation in the *huertas*, while immediate surrounding fields are “denuded”; they give way to higher-lying and less fertile *serranía*. In the 1990s the village was a center for contraband mahogany traffic out of the “back side”(northern half) of the Parque Nacional La Muralla.

The *aldea* is part and parcel of Honduras—voting urns reach the most remote spots, and nowhere is a pariah for the State and its services, nor for development groups. “*Las aldeas*” when invoked in local space are being afforded their due importance as sources of the “strength of the people,” the traditions of the country, the origins of many large and powerful families. Politicians draw off this recognition when they address *las aldeas* with what appears to be respect. They might also be comforted by saying that “*La gente en las aldeas me apoya*” (“The people in the *aldeas* back me up”) when the towns go against them. But on the other hand, *las aldeas* encapsulate everything negative and embarrassing about “underdeveloped” Honduras. *Las aldeas* need to move forward, to be better connected to the State. They need to be cleaner, smarter, more responsible, more orderly, more *gestoras* (see chapter 2).

Most *aldeas*, unlike Jutiquire, have no grid, but are dispersed “randomly,” often over several kilometers in local groups of *barrios* (neighborhoods), following trails, ridges, streams, and other rhizomatic meandering lines. The dispersed village comes closer to many Olanchanos’ ideal landscape—there is safety in a proximity to neighbors, but also a safe distance, especially

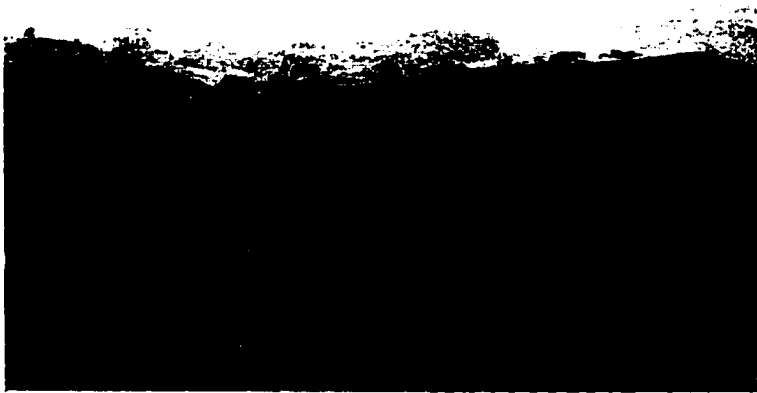


Fig. 5.3. Part of Pacura, Gualaco, a prosperous village of *ganaderos* and *campesinos*. The *aldea* of Pacura is spread over three linear kilometers but has no center; the *comarca* of Pacura covers the *sitio* of Pacura, a much more extensive area encompassing *valle*, *serranía*, and *montaña*. Residents are much closer to San Esteban (30 minutes by truck) than Gualaco (two hours) and gravitate toward the nearby *aldea* of Toro Muerto, San Esteban. The town of Gualaco, to avoid losing Pacura, hopes to have a well-surfaced road directly connecting it to Pacura.

between distinct families. In most *aldeas*, as Olanchanos are fond of repeating, “*todos son familia*” (“everyone is family”), but nevertheless there are *barrios* of “unknown” non-local families, becoming-local but still looked at askance, or with pity (if they are “dirt-poor” migrants). Intense, long-lasting inter- and intra-family blood feuds in and among many *comarcas* in Olancho favor the disunity of *aldeas*, creating pariah *barrios* and a tendency for opposing networks to cordon themselves into separate jurisdictions (a popular history, for example, explaining why Guarizama calved from Manto).

The *aldea* of La Venta in Gualaco is one of northern Olancho’s larger and more prosperous villages, yet it is considered much poorer than the nearby towns of Gualaco and San Esteban where the local wealthy upper class and educated middle classes live. To live in La Venta is not necessarily to be materially “impoverished,” however, but rather to be looked down upon from above in a sociopolitical hierarchy, and in turn to impose a sociospatial hierarchy on one’s own space. La Venta, with over 300 houses, has a clearly defined core and periphery: a “wealthy,” densely-populated central *barrio*, with soccer field, two evangelical churches (local non-

Catholic people emphasize the “two” with pride), a middle school, a post office, a health clinic, stores, electricity. On the outskirts is its constellation of *caseríos*, for example El Ocotal across the Río Mataderos toward the *montaña*, not accessible by road.³ Not all people in Ocotal send their kids to the *escuela* in La Venta, whose residents (mostly more “urbane” relatives) regard them as more backward, dirtier, more traditional.

La Venta lies on the main road from Tocoa (on “La Costa”) to Juticalpa. People in La Venta travel regularly to Juticalpa and to Tegucigalpa, but as often to the boomtown of Tocoa as well. They are *modernos*, they feel, and wonder if maybe they should not belong to Gualaco, a town in a different *valle* with a distinct history. They want to move a step up the hierarchy and dream of becoming a *municipio*, capturing at least the southwestern edge of the Valle de Agalta and possibly other *aldeas* of Gualaco as well. They feel that they have proven their dedication to *desarrollo* through *pueblo*-like efforts such as establishment of a middle school.

Not only does La Venta look up and out for inspiration and sustenance. Its *comarca* facet catches the light of its *montaña*, a territory at the edge of the *montaña cruda* defined by several small drainage basins in the Montaña de Babilonia, where for centuries it has gone to obtain plots of usufruct land. La Venta and its “hinterland” are a patchwork of small landholdings, with each landowner owning or sharing rights to disjunct parcels. Why do landowners not gaze toward the interior of the Valle as well? Because in the other direction, holding the center of the Valle de Agalta, are the *terratenientes* of San Esteban, emphatically not part of La Venta’s domain, patrolling dangerous ground with goon squads, cutting off the village’s expansion (not all are so sinister, but they are regarded this way by most campesinos who have learned to harbor a healthy measure of caution). The Valle holds in its main road an escape route (line of flight), but because of the *terratenientes* it is not a comfortable and safe space. La Venta, like

³ Not the “dinámico” El Ocotal opposing the Babilonia hydroelectric project. People in the La Venta *caserío* El Ocotal, say residents of La Venta, are too “arriscos” or “tímidos” or “rústicos” or “humildes” to be able to understand the ramifications of an industrial venture. (“Esa gente no sale”: “They don’t go out” (to see what the world is about).

other *valle*-edge *aldeas*, feels safer and more powerful facing the *montaña*, while engulfing an acceptable part of *valle* (*vega* and *sabana* and *serranía*) as well.

El Boquerón, like La Venta, lives in a squeezed *valle* space between *terratenientes* and mountains. Split by the main paved road through the Valle de Olancho, El Boquerón, with several *barrios* and over 50 houses, has no electric light, and is dominated by a handful of *terrateniente* families, one of which resides in the village and is an accepted part of its space and its family networks. Boquerón's residents, especially the youth, pin their hopes on the outside: on Punuare, on Jutiquile, on Juticalpa, on Teguz, on La Costa, and especially on Los Estados. El Boquerón is looked down on from all angles, and abhors its *chorizo* existence. But it has an escape hatch: *la montaña*, and La Avispa ("La 'vi'pa").

Many residents of El Boquerón own small, independent coffee farms in a roadless tract of *montaña* called Agua Buena, four hours hike above. The *montaña* is a safe zone, free of intimidation, containing productive rather than exhausted land. On the other side of the *montaña* is La Avispa, a village beyond the far end of a rugged and treacherous gorge, at the terminus of a road from Guacoca, in another *municipio*—but still closely tied to Boquerón. Most non-*terrateniente* families in Boquerón are united with those in La Avispa through a kinship network centered in Guacoca. La Avispa, in its cul-de-sac *vallecito*, has a wetter climate than Guacoca or Boquerón, and is thus seen to be more productive than either. La Avispa was formerly extremely violent—indeed it was among the most infamous of local villages, and speaking its name aloud turned heads in Juticalpa. Today it is calmer and “more developed,” with a school and health clinic; cars can get in and sometimes a bus. It is also the gathering point for an important development project (see chapters 2 and 8). La Avispa's hinterland is the entire middle drainage basin of the Río de Olancho.

La Avispa's *barrios* are quite distinct one from the next. La Ranchería is the undisputed central place. La Avispa Peña Blanca, half-obliterated by a Mitch-caused mudslide (see the Preface), is the only *barrio* regarded as completely *sana* (healthy and clean, in terms of social

factors). Peña Blanca's handful of houses belongs to an extended family with a reputation for being *sana*; it is not *contaminada* by outsiders, unlike La Ranchería. No AK-toting youth gangs (*maras*, a phenomenon coming to characterize most larger villages in Olancho), hang out in La Avispa Peña Blanca. Peña Blanca is set in tall *vega* forest a fifteen-minute walk from "la parte fuerte" ("the strong [central] part") of La Ranchería, which regards it as backward. Peña Blanca thinks of itself not as backward but as primordial. La Avispa Peña Blanca occupies the site of the original house ("la caha de lo' mero' primitivo' de La 'vihpa")⁴ in the *comarca* of La Avispa close to a century ago, when the *vallecito* and surrounding mountains were still known as the Montaña de La Avispa, a thick, wet frontier zone for arid Guacoca (see chapter 8).

Boquerón, La Avispa, and La Venta typify "developing" villages whose residents often seem embarrassed and/or resentful to be reminded of their poverty, and ply outsiders with questions of access to development services—"Con qué Proyecto trabaja?"; "Qué anda haciendo aquí?"; "Qué tipo de ayuda nos trae?"⁵ Some speak of money earned, kilometers travelled, projects to come; others feel that they must look quite poor, and why would an outsider come *here*? They are used to being at the bottom, in a backward space.

Aldeas in sparsely-populated areas like northern Gualaco can be extraordinarily different than the places described above. "Remote" Gualaco *comarcas* like Tayaco Río Dulce (also known as Los Encuentros) and San Antonio serve as regional market centers for "even more remote" roadless hinterlands. They are widely characterized as "*sanas*" and safe by people living in "contaminated" developed *aldeas* like La Venta. In the remote *aldeas*, wide dispersion of houses over several square kilometers points to availability of land, and indeed many families

⁴ Local speech in *las aldeas* is spoken largely without the "s", marking a "backward" (presumably archaic) "speech defect" from the point of view of the *pueblos*. A marker of restlessness in Boquerón: "Me voy pa' la 'vihpa." For series of essays and studies on Honduran speech, see Herranz, ed. (1990).

⁵ With what Project are you working?; What (good work) are you doing here?; What kind of help do you offer us? The second query is somewhat rude, and might be elided with "ehe gringo": What is that *gringo* doing here?

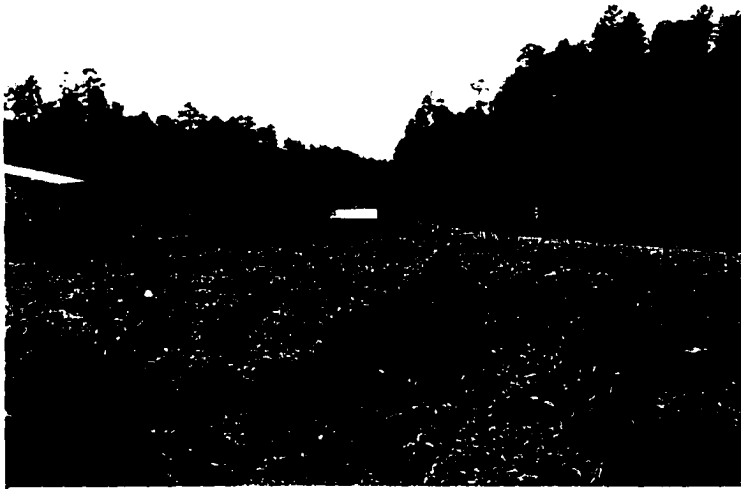


Fig. 5.4. “Developed” part of the farflung *aldea* of Vargas, Gualaco. Road leads to a large sawmill. Health clinic at left is prime marker of development space, yet Vargueños say it has stood empty since its inception, for lack of medicine and nurse. House at center has a wood shingle roof, a marker of traditional local space because shingles are usually made from highly valuable tropical hardwoods that should not be cut in conservation space nor “illogically” wasted in development space.



Fig. 5.5. House in Los Encuentros, Gualaco. Both cow and pig are of the old-style “criollo” races. Roofs types are found now only in “remote” areas. Women and girls do painting in earth tones. In local space, Los Encuentros is “almost” La Costa (see below) because of the predominance of *corozos* (cohune palms), which are extremely uncommon in central Olancho.

are surrounded by their array of coffee plots, firewood lots, agricultural fields, and lands for domestic animals (a paddock for horses and mules, a cattle pasture, a watering hole). Also striking in such villages is their stay-at-home nature—one hears little to no talk about “Lo’

Ehtado',” and people confess to visiting even the municipal *cabecera*, Gualaco, infrequently. Many have never been to Juticalpa or Tegucigalpa. Such villages are not yet reached by buses, and some have gotten an access road only in the last year or decade, or do not (yet) have one. People still think little about walking or riding three or four hours to pay a social call. Local people in central Olancho see the villages of northern Gualaco, and of other “remote” regions, as analogous in many ways to “the old days.” They may comment that La Venta or Boquerón was like this twenty or fifty years ago. This is not necessarily disparaging or looking down on such “less developed” places, however, since the past is often thought of as a time when there was far greater availability of resources, more forests, less *chorizos*.

Few “old-style” villages remain in the *valles*. In some cases, however, villages retain the spread-out and stay-at-home characteristics of the past even while the ranchers become relatively wealthy. Pueblo Viejo of Gualaco, in the Valle de Agalta, is such a place: each house (barely visible from its neighbor) is a cattle ranch on the terrace above the Río Grande. Ranchers hire bulldozer operators to clear the *espinales* though they themselves may not even own cars. Residents rarely go to visit relatives in Gualaco because the road is so bad (15 linear kilometers take two hours, if a vehicle can get through at all). If even Gualaco is a once-every-three-month journey for some, then the phenomenological distance to Juticalpa and Tegucigalpa can be surmised. They still measure their spaces on horseback, like in the “old days” across Olancho.

5.2 Pueblos and Municipios⁶

Traditionally, each *municipio* in Honduras contains but one *pueblo*, of the same name. The 23 *pueblos* in Olancho range in size from “*ciudades*” of 5,000 to 25,000 people (Juticalpa,

⁶ Some idea of the importance of towns in Olancho can be gained from Ramos et al., *Conociendo Olancho* (1947) and Figueroa, *Monografía de Olancho* (1935). More recent town-oriented paeans include Pagoaga, *Paisaje y cultura olanchana* (n.d.) and Rubí Zapata, *Mi Juticalpa y yo* (1986). Froylán Turcios, *Tierra maternal, Olancho* (1990[1911]) includes poems entitled “Catacamas,” “El Real,” “Manto,” “Campamento,” “A Juticalpa.”

Catacamas, Campamento, and San Francisco de la Paz), to what are thought of by some as glorified *aldeas* (e.g. Jano with only a few hundred residents)—which are actually smaller and less developed than many actual *aldeas*. But regardless of their sizes, *pueblos* are always the municipal points of entry for the outside. *Pueblos*, because of their “pull” with the State, usually get electricity installed before their *aldeas*, have better schools, better health clinics, bigger stores, and local offices of government as well as private groups.

Most *pueblos* are distinct from *aldeas* in that they have a *trazo* (rectangular grid) and a *parque central* rather than an irregular sprawl around one or more well-grazed commons (which in villages double as the *campo de futbol*). In Nueva Palestina, the 1970s-founded *cabecera* of the new Patuca *municipio*, local people lament their town’s lack of a *parque central*. They say that tourists who visit don’t know where to go. What is a *pueblo* without a *parque central*? All we have is a crossroads with stores.

People rarely play *futbol* on the center green of a “real” *pueblo*—that’s something they do in *las aldeas*. The Parque Central in larger towns was formerly an open plaza, for military and civilian spectacles, implant from the Old World, rented to private interests during the *feria* (to “vender la plaza” during the annual fair of the patron saint/virgin). Now, as Parque Central, a big tree in the middle and a canopy of smaller trees (often shaggy *Ficus*) shading a shoeshine kiosk (*el kiosko*), ice cream, watch, and cassette vendors, fruitsellers with baskets and tarps covered by the fruits of the moment, white benches, bandstand facing outward, and the all-important *napoleón* (bougainvillea) tree shored up with poles, congregating spot for uniformed school students, obscenity-slinging youth gangs, a *bolo* (drunkard) or two.... The trees overhead clang and sometimes drip with the rude emanations of a thousand *zanates* (great-tailed grackles) drowning out the roaring engines circling around the outside.

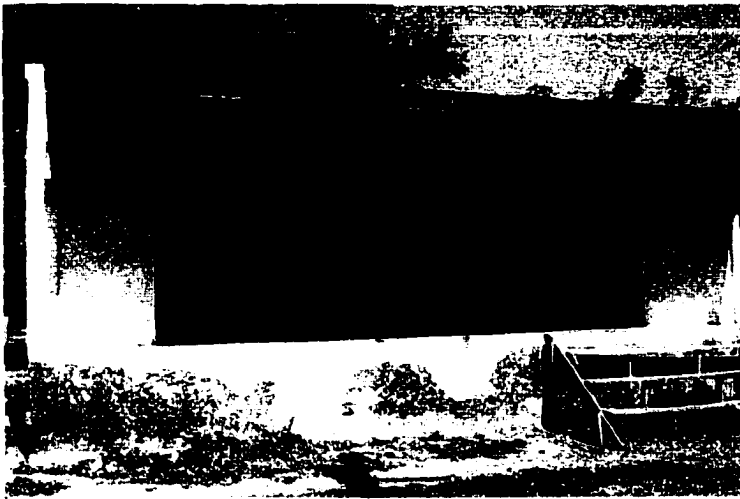


Fig. 5.6. The *caseta* in the Parque Central, Gualaco. Facing the *municipalidad*, it is a stage for public events such as speeches, plays, and concerts. All the more advanced towns in Olancho have them. The paintings depict, from left to right: an idealized street in a Gualaco-like town; a Honduran map with national symbols scarlet macaw, pine tree, José Cecilio del Valle, white-tailed deer; Gualaco's most famous landmark, the Catholic church (which is directly behind the camera).

Gualaco's Parque Central, a wholly more modest affair, has gone from a *campo de futbol*, when I first saw it in 1991, to a wooded, fenced expanse with paved sidewalks, a bandstand, and a romping gym (the "safe" kind popular in US daycare centers), shiny new in 2000 when it was donated by an ecumenical Georgia-based development group entrenched in the Valle de Agalta. Gualaco's yearning toward the popular Honduran landscape model for *parques centrales* shows how townspeople spatially manifest their ideas of what human space in general should look like: orderly, intersected by paved paths (=highways?), and most important to many these days, wooded.⁷ Older people often react negatively to this new landscape ideal. The *aldeas* and *pueblos* today are *sucias*, dirty, they say; they remember when the villages and towns were *sabanas limpias*.⁸

⁷ Gade, "The Latin American central plaza as a functional space" (*Latin America: search for geographical explanations* 16-23[1974]) is an excellent analysis of the plaza's spatiality. Two works by Richardson (*San Pedro, Colombia: small town in a developing society* [1970]; "Being-in-the-market versus being-in-the-plaza: material culture and the construction of social reality in Spanish America," *American Ethnologist* [1982]) help to unravel the everyday spatiality of small-town urban life in Ladino communities.

⁸ Towns across Olancho now also construct *parquecitos ecológicos*. Gualaco rescued "El Triangulo," the



Fig. 5.7. La Catedral in Juticalpa, from a corner of the Parque Central. It was built from the 1820s to 1840s (AEC Expediente... 1826). In lower left is a Monument to the Honduran Woman; gang graffiti marking a boundary of the “Mara 18” has been painted over because the *Municipalidad* finds it unattractive.

In most towns the Parque Central is surrounded by the *cabildo municipal* (*la municipalidad*), the leading stores, a bank or three, the police garrison, and the Catholic church. The *iglesia* was until recently the tallest building in most towns, but it has now given way to a few three-story *supermercados* and hotels in the *ciudades*. In Juticalpa, the “skyline” is now dominated by a massive yellow-and-black eyestalk of an Elektra department store sign—in what I imagine is the first time the Catedral has been eclipsed (by what many consider to be a travesty and an eyesore).⁹

turn-off (*desvío*) from the main highway, from the *bolos*, by turning this dangerous crossroads with three *cantinas* into a fenced green area that town leaders thought would promote a much better image of what Gualaco was all about. Before, people would give El Triángulo a wide berth, but after the *cantinas* were shut down and the park’s turf took root, its edges became a safe and slightly shady gathering spot for bus-awaited passengers. The interior of the fenced triangle is still off limits, reserved for *la naturaleza*.

⁹ The opening of the Elektra store on Juticalpa’s main thoroughfare in 1999 was marked, like that of many new businesses, by a day-long commercial blast from a massive stereo system and live “local radio personality” host positioned on the sidewalk. Unfortunately, the Elektra “concert” became a daily thing, with mind-numbing tunes throbbing the length and breadth of the block (a difficult task to achieve on Olancho’s central “bulevar” where normal decibel levels reach astounding heights) for over a month. Local protests and pressure by the municipal government first provoked resentment by the non-*olanchano* manager (we’ll play what we want because we help the economy, he said in essence) but finally he yielded, I guess in the interests of maintaining customers.

Towns ranked as *ciudades* are filled with cars and their sounds and smells, and people jumping out of the way of cars, a measure of forward progress. There are shining banks and gang graffiti, a municipal garbage dump, a Casa de la Cultura, a slaughterhouse, a bus station or at least gathering area to wait for rides. Businesses are often painted in gaudy colors: Juticalpa has a bright orange department store on the Parque Central, offsetting what is otherwise a rather coordinated and conservative “colonial-style” look. Town natives decry the “trashing” of their beloved worlds by monied “aldeanos” whom they see as having no sense of aesthetics—summarily ripping down handsome old buildings to put up gas stations, for example. In most towns, there is distinct stratification between “original” families and those “who are not from here” (no matter how much they may pretend or try to be *juticalpenses*). This functions even (and especially) at the scale of the *barrio*—true and original *barrio* families often trace their roots back centuries, though they may not now or ever have been part of the so-called *hilife*, a middle class’ term for the rich. There is also a stratification of *barrios*—in Juticalpa, each of the six or so central *barrios* has a distinct reputation (as do the many more peripheral *colonias* and *barrios* on the outskirts), politics, family network—some are noticeably looked down upon, known to be populated by “léperos” (thugs) and “gente mal encarada”, or by people (e.g. family networks) known for their cheapness, or lack of sincerity, or thievery. The slang names that become standard usage also speak of the local striation of *pueblos*: in Juticalpa, “La Call’el Chicle” (“Gum Street”) is a deprecating reference to a neighborhood whose streets turn to gummy mud during the rainy season, signifying to the rest of the town that even though someone “es del Chicle” and may have cars and a nice house (having gotten them by going to the States and working), they are still stuck in their slough.

Given the chaos, fumes, dust, gunfire, *bolos*, ever thickening traffic and other escalating terrors of *la calle* these days, many in the bigger towns are turning more and more toward their inner sancta, the space of *la casa*. There is a strict dichotomy in worlds like Juticalpa, maintaining *calle* and *casa* as separate domains. “Le gusta la calle” and “Desde chiquito cogió

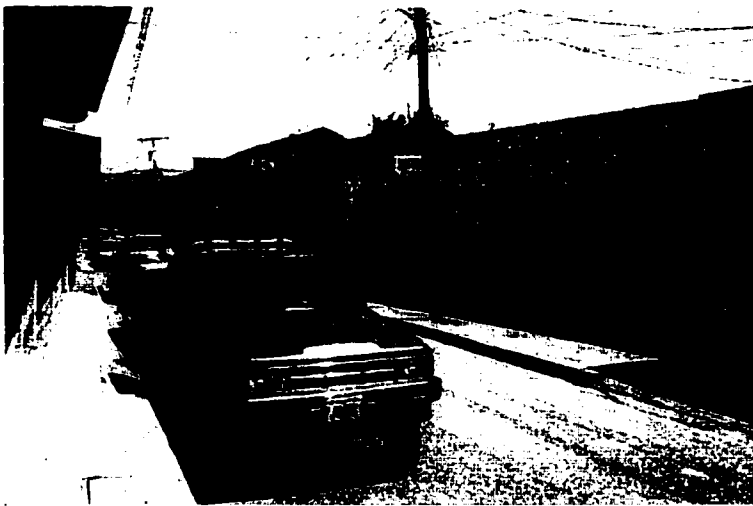


Fig. 5.8. Street in Barrio Las Flores, Juticalpa. One of the proud central *barrios*; more marginal neighborhoods, whether wealthy or poor, are known usually as *colonias*. Three hotels and a florist's shop are visible, as well as the birthplace of Honduran president Manuel Bonilla, founder of the Partido Nacional around the turn of the twentieth century. Most buildings do not have front porches or gardens, but their modest facades may hide extensive, often luxurious inner courtyards with large, wooded gardens (*patios*).

(para) la calle” describe the marginality of street life among urchins, in the minds of the house-
 ensconced population. One looks out at the street, hangs over the fence into the street,
 occasionally pulls a chair out into the street—but does not inhabit the street. Being inside is
 what's proper and respectable.



Fig. 5.9. Luz Bonta traverses a thoroughly modern space. Brightly-painted facades, a stop sign, pavement and sidewalks, electric and telephone lines. Nearby is a computer school.



Fig. 5.10. “Jumbled” urban landscape in Juticalpa. The cross on the Cerrito de la Cruz was constructed in the 1990s; an earlier cross was erected there on December 31, 1899 (Ramos et al. 1947:55). It is said that the Cerrito covers the head of a giant subterranean serpent whose tail is under the Cathedral. The crosses have been erected historically to suppress the beast. Meanwhile, the two *letrinas* in the middle distance stand above the site of the Saturday Mayoreo (farmers’ market), originally a development project, that has become integral to local space. At the middle right is a sign sponsored by Coca Cola marking the Sabor Latino nightclub featuring nude female dancers.

The interior space of a house may continue a set of furniture with the plastic slip-covers on keep off the dust, a TV in a prominent position, and in many cases (as the population comments on its own dislike of ostentatious luxury) only one other piece of furniture in view of visitors—the *división*. A *división* functions as a tall multi-story shelf apparatus (for lack of a better term) to form the screen between the *sala* and the *comedor* in a small house, but it has accrued an astoundingly large and powerful semantic domain with myriad ramifications for one’s status in the socioeconomic hierarchy. The *división* is made from exquisite woods, or only from metal; it holds a Bose stereo system, or only a few framed pictures and “recuerdos de mis quince años.” Most important, you just have to have one these days, in *aldeas* as well as towns—without, the

dissenters suspect, even knowing why you need one. A popular spot of gossip is that engaged couples are ready to get married when, in anticipation of their new domestic life together, “*ya compraron su división*.” A tickled minority, non-conformist, doesn’t see the point of having a *división* in the first place.

The rest of the house may contain a parrot addicted to coffee “to make it more talkative,” or a scarlet macaw if status demands it. Furniture in most houses appears Spartan, agree *olanchanos*, whose tastes run to few but extremely high quality mahogany and tropical cedar constructions, often made locally, termite-proof, but months of salary to pay off in installments. The poor get by with pine furniture, attractive, cheap, but quickly turned to dust by termites.

The most private domain is the *patio*, the enclosed backyard that is often bursting with vegetation and bird life, lizards and tarantulas, useful plants of 50 types and up (the term “dooryard garden” was coined in reference to Honduran gardens: in E. Anderson 1954). *Patios* are the quietest spots in the big towns these days.

A Pueblo del Norte may have only one or two salient features, other than government offices and better stores, to separate it from *las aldeas*. It is said in central Olancho that Yocón has the only paved street in the North, and in 2000 a local political candidate from that town was running on the platform of more pavement, improved quality of life. This is no trivial concern: pavement is an important step up for a street and a *pueblo*, marking a choice for clean and healthy living, rather than submersion in *verano*’s clouds of choking dust and *invierno*’s disease-ridden mud sloughs.

The bustling *desvío* in many towns across Olancho has become a second *parque central*, cluttered by businesses and activity. *Desvío* booms are in part the result of modern road construction. *La carretera nueva*, in most cases, goes around towns, whereas the *carretera vieja* went directly to the Parque Central. In Juticalpa’s case, the construction of the new paved Olancho highway out in the Valle a kilometer from the Parque Central spurred the construction of the “Bulevar de las Poetas” to connect the two. During the 1980s and 1990s not only the

desvío area but the entire Bulevar became filled with businesses, an open-air produce market, bus stations. This changed the town's orientation by challenging the symbolic and material hegemony of the Parque Central. While older Juticalpa natives may think of the Bulevar, filled with outsiders, as alien and distant from the downtown, visitors to Juticalpa now need not even pay homage to the once-indispensable Centro. The decentering of the town, however, in no way indicates the renewed possibility of a becoming-*campo*. Indeed, with the release of the *pueblo* from its omphaloskeptic gaze, it is unleashed with ever greater force into the surrounding *campo*—in Juticalpa and Catacamas, especially, creating town space out of the *campo* at a fast clip.

The *municipio*, with its center of administration (*la municipalidad; el cabildo*) in its one-and-only *pueblo*, is a rhizomatic hierarchical domain weaving together town and country, *aldea* and *comarca*, *terratiente* and campesino, into a local identity more durable and comforting than being-Olancho or being-Honduran.¹⁰ Each *municipio* is an *enredo* of distinct geographic flavors, *patrimonios*, histories, family networks, *montañas*. None is interchangeable with another. A *municipio* is the most-often mentioned place one says that one is from. It is where the “Outside” seen as an imposition is negotiated with and made acceptable as “development for us” (e.g. Gualaco: see chapter two) so as not to be resented wholesale as a generic imposition of homogeneity. “El municipio es el espacio geográfico y social en el que se desarrolla la vida diaria de las poblaciones.” (Decreto no. 134-90 1998:13). *Municipios* are the “basic unit” of Honduran space, following the influential *Ley de Municipios* from 1990, but building on centuries of spatial tradition. They are the mediators between local space and its outsides. Municipal identity, in the *pueblo* and its *aldeas*, can be extremely strong and proud, and this is

¹⁰ The tasks of departmental administration are carried out in Juticalpa. This means that many region-wide aid projects cluster there; the Olancho Catholic Church's center is there; regional command centers of government agencies (e.g. COHDEFOR). In the twentieth century, the power of Honduras' departmental Gobernadores Políticos became largely symbolic, and receded under the power of the autonomous *municipios* (for a precedent, see Decreto... 1840). When power from above needed to be reasserted, it was effected through direct State control. The governor of Olancho (unlike in the 1800s),

recognized through their legally autonomous status. The following example attests to the long-term resilience of *municipios* even through their becoming-Ladino.



Fig. 5.11. “La Paz de Olancho Comienza en Gualaco.” Peace monument adjacent to the church, erected in the mid-1990s during the tenure of a highly-respected Franciscan priest. The monument comments on the preoccupation of the time, a nationally famous vendetta in neighboring San Esteban *municipio* that claimed scores of lives. In northeastern Olancho in the early 1990s, one had to align oneself in discourse and frequently in practice with one family or the other: the “*guerra*” typified the anarchy and violence that Hondurans associated with Olancho. The Catholic Church played a central role in a signed peace accord between the warring families, and by 2000 San Esteban had calmed down considerably, while Gualaco saw a wave of violence perpetrated against motorists by armed gangs.

Of the 23 (all Ladino-controlled) *municipios* in Olancho in 2000 (see Appendix B), ten bear the names of tribute towns from the 1500s and contain roughly the same nuclei of colonial settlement, four were indigenous *comarcas* in the colonial period, and most of the rest were

has become, and remains little more than a figurehead.

formed from “reduced” *indios* and/or Ladinos during the 1800s.¹¹ Only one, Patuca, has been created recently through in-migrants.¹² No *municipios* are still under indigenous rule, though places like Guata are considered to retain heavy “*indio*” characteristics. Ladinos have dominated even the most “Indian” pueblos such as Guata and Culmí since at least 1950. The few people who still consider themselves *indios* or *indígenas* live in *las aldeas* (see chapter 3).

In 1988, Olancho contained 282,018 people in 24,351 square kilometers, with 243 *aldeas* and 2026 *caseríos* (Instituto Geográfico Nacional 1990).¹³ Juticalpa (before it lost Patuca) contained 61 *aldeas* and 368 *caseríos*, with 74,163 inhabitants spread over 3285 square kilometers of *valle*, *serranía*, and *montaña*. Catacamas had 13 *aldeas* and 246 *caseríos*, 52,520 people, and 7,261 square kilometers (at least half of which was lowland rain forest virtually uninhabited except along the Patuca and Coco rivers). Gualaco had 11 *aldeas* and 174 *caseríos*, with 11,737 people, spread over 2,392 square kilometers: Olancho’s lowest population density, at five people per square kilometer. At the other end of the scale, Yocón had 9 *aldeas* and 84 *caseríos*, containing 7,567 residents in only 246 square kilometers. Yocón’s population density, highest in Olancho, was 31 per square kilometer, and like most of the “crowded” *municipios* had no more “empty” land, hence exporting numerous coffee pickers and other laborers (*mozos*, *jornaleros*) to the more sparsely populated zones in the East (the Sierra de Agalta, for example).

Municipal territories range in size from El Rosario’s 145 square kilometers to Catacamas’ more than 7,000 square kilometers. Several *municipios* still possess *ejidos*, town lands leased to

¹¹ Tribute towns were: Catacamas, Gualaco, Guata (Laguata), Jano, Juticalpa, Manto, San Francisco de la Paz/Zapota (the latter toponym is no longer applied), Santa María del Real, Silca, Yocón. Indigenous *comarcas* were: Esquipulas del Norte (as “Azacualpa” between Guata and Olanchito), Guarizama, Mangulile; and Dulce Nombre de Culmí (from Pech “Kurmi”) in a more limited sense.

¹² Patuca’s capital, Nueva Palestina, was formed by a concentrated migration of Roman Catholics from southern Honduras in the 1970s, augmented by other emigrants from the Sur. Their allegiance to Olancho is slim, and most of their commerce is with El Paraíso. To many of them, *olanchanos* are the rich *terratientes* who seek to striate Patuca’s domain. They deeply resented that “Nueva Palestina” was officially renamed “Froylán Turcios” (the famous Juticalpa dead poet) when Patuca was legalized; they don’t refer to the toponym now.

¹³ See Appendix B for recent unofficial estimates.

private individuals or collectives, but in most case these are shadows of their colonial size. During the 1980s, administrations in places like Gualaco gutted their *ejidos*, selling most of them off without the consent of the majority (who are now trying to regain them in several instances). In most *municipios*, land that is not held under private or communal title—up to 90% in those with few *valles* and a lot of *montañas*, for example—belongs to El Estado (The State), and may be under concession to capitalist ventures, “locked up” in protected areas, but in most cases simply occupied as usufruct—bought and sold locally with little recognition that the State even “owns” it. Land titles have been regarded as few and far between in Olancho, and restricted to the *valles*, but with the increasing recognition and validation of old titles, it is being discovered that families and *comarcas* already owned what the State was striating in the twentieth century. This is beginning to become an issue in Catacamas, as people are realizing that they own communally most of the northeastern part of the Valle de Olancho, thanks to the efforts of the colonial Indios de Catacamas.

Generally, but not in all cases, the *pueblo* is lodged in a *valle* or at least along a river, its *aldeas* and *caseríos* distributed in the surrounding flatlands, hills, and mountains. Almost all *municipios* (in the year 2000) are reached by electric lines, a few by telephone, all by dirt road, and four by paved road. The difference in number of basic services helps define, in Olancho, each *municipio*'s relative development or backwardness, and hence rank in the social and spatial hierarchy.

Municipios are administered from the *municipalidad* by the *alcalde* (and increasingly, *alcaldesa*),¹⁴ a central and usually powerful figure surrounded by *regidores*. S/he is supposed to pay heed to the interests of all the *aldeas*, which are in turn supposed to look out for the citizens of all their *caseríos*. But most *municipios* are simply too large and/or too strapped for cash to administer their hinterlands, and so it is the “*aldea dinámica*,” the “*gestora*” (whose

¹⁴ “Mayoress.” In the 1990s, *alcaldesas* were elected twice in Juticalpa, and once in Gualaco, for example.

representatives, particularly the *alcalde auxiliar*, can often be seen hanging about the *municipalidad* and the *proyectos*) that receives favors beyond the “normal” political ones granted by the higher-ups for bringing them the vote or for other reasons. Beyond the favoritism of political and family alliances, *aldeas* that are “truly progressive” are expected to go directly to the ministries in Juticalpa, or even in Tegucigalpa, to get things done, bypassing the *municipio* bureaucracy altogether.

In all cases, individual *municipios* do not possess tax bases or physical infrastructures sufficient to administer even their *pueblos* effectively. The 300-odd *municipios* in Honduras, to aggravate their fiscal problems and increase their dependence on the outside, together receive at most five percent of the national budget. (The Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras receives approximately the same amount as all *municipios* put together.) Juticalpa, for example, whose many *millonarios* are notoriously difficult to tax,¹⁵ relies on matching-fund donations from USAID, the World Bank, and other groups to pave streets, install sewer systems, build bridges, and so forth. Nevertheless, there is not (yet) the taken-for-granted dependence on the State (and all its levels) that characterizes many “developed” countries. For example, with the promise of matching international funds, the mayor’s office is often able to squeeze out the necessary additional amount from *vecinos* (local residents) for infrastructural improvements. The impetus for paving each single block in Juticalpa rests on the voluntary donations of the inhabitants of that street. People have cause to distrust the municipality because large percentages of funds, if not carefully monitored, are siphoned off through graft, and often used to finance political campaigns: with more and more money flowing in after Mitch, citizens—as

¹⁵ The poor and middle class in Juticalpa in overwhelming percentage pay their taxes (or may lose their land, cattle, or other properties)—they seem easy to cow. At the Honduran level, the lack of an adequate tax base plagues the State—not because the poor won’t or can’t pay, but because the elite (and numerous tax-free or quasi-tax-free corporations both public and private) won’t pay. San Pedro Sula, says a knowledgeable friend of mine in Juticalpa, has been able to do so much because its (highly paid) administration sees to it that rich and poor alike pay taxes.

individuals, as families, and as neighborhood organizations—are tending to keep a close eye on what the “muni” is up to.

Municipios are not entirely unable to fulfill the promise of the Ley de Municipios, however. For example, they now have Unidades Ambientales (Environmental Offices) that are supposed to oversee and regulate environmental uses, and punish infractors, throughout their jurisdictions, with the help of corresponding government extension agencies and regulatory bodies such as the Fiscalía del Ambiente (Public Prosecutor for the Environment: a 1990s creation). In other legal and regulatory issues the *municipio* is coming increasingly to play an important role outside the bounds of its *pueblo*, especially in questions of land tenure and spatial conflict in general. The *municipio*, thanks in large part to the international and national recognition of the 1990 Ley de Municipios, is coming to be an important player in all local spatial *enredos*, whereas in the past (particularly in the 1980s) it might have been brushed aside in the “interests” of a State acting at the behest of Ideas such as the “Free World.” Hopefully, the above paragraphs help to put the situation of the idealistic Alcalde de Gualaco from chapter 2 in context—revealing why his opposition to a powerful corporation, through the support of a *municipio* and its *aldeas* buoyed by centuries of identity-building, is such an important test for local space.

5.3 Outsides: Teguz, La Costa, Los Estados

Local space in much of Olancho is characterized by the high mobility of its younger residents, due in large part to their restless need for gainful employment. Back-and-forth movements between insides and outsides are felt and talked about every day, over and over, so much that even those who haven’t yet gone share and utter with poignancy the emotions one is subject to in “el mundo allí afuera” (“the world out there”). Three regions pull the strongest, and are ever-present in daily life—they are crucial, I believe to the resilience of local space. The closest for many is Teguz, to which buses leave daily from almost every *pueblo*. Buses to

Teguz from “Juty” leave hourly, and some are “*expres*”¹⁶ and even “*de lujo*” making the trip with no stops in just over two hours.¹⁷

Olanchanos have their own settlement areas, their own hotels, even their own street gangs, in Teguz. Olanchanos stand out at the universities simply by the fact that people know them to be from that “remote” and dreaded land. Olanchanos often take pleasure in their effect on frightened Hondurans from elsewhere. They sport bumper stickers that say “Soy olanchano...y qué?” (I’m Olanchano—wanna make something of it?) and “Yo ♥ Olancho.” But when the Olanchano umbrella springs leaks, what they experience as local people from the provinces in the big city is a sense of inadequacy mixed with pride. Teguz has *movimiento* (“movement”: bright lights, big city), action, wealth, jobs, good schools, an international airport. Teguz is to Juti as Juti is to *las aldeas*. Teguz contains the Virgen de Suyapa, a draw for Catholics but unimportant to *evangelios*. It contains four-star hotels, Malls, the National Congress, the Supreme Court, the Presidential Palace, landscapes of power and awe for some, places of pride where one feels the pulse of being Honduran and even becoming-global. To others, they are ridiculous objects of pity or scorn, or unattainable and thereby unimportant. And Teguz has no forests, no animals, is crime-ridden, loud, polluted, often confrontational. There is a terrible anonymity and aversion of the gaze. People come and go from Teguz largely because they have to: it is the center, and you get things done there if and when Juti won’t do. Most relationships between Olanchanos and Teguz seem to be of the love-hate variety.

Almost all local space in Olancho except for the rain forest frontier (where most people seem too busy going farther *adentro* to worry too much about the outsides) maintain La Costa as part of their everyday geography, through thought and dreams, gossip and “serious

¹⁶ “Ek-pre” —the leading one is “Discovery”, with space shuttles painted on its luxurious flanks.

¹⁷ Public transportation is highly State controlled; routes are bidded for by private companies in a system that allows limited competition and is often subject to hegemonic control by owners who create several companies that “compete” with each other. The result, say many Olanchanos, is awful treatment of passengers—but the offending bus companies counter that a free-for-all on the few drivable highways by

discussion,” and going there if they get the chance. While Teguz is the inevitable pilgrimage site in the back of most people’s minds throughout their everyday lives, it is not the only big and bright city nor is it considered the most developed part of the country. La Costa, including San Pedro Sula (half as large as Teguz but wealthier), is better administered, more progressive, freer. “La Costa” conjures up images of *corozo* palms and lush vegetation year-round,¹⁸ oil palm and banana plantations, *maquiladoras*. (In local space it rarely signifies the beaches of tourist brochures.) La Costa has been the place that Olanchanos have for centuries gone to work (under duress or voluntarily) and to develop new lives and communities.¹⁹ La Costa is also a land whither criminals flee, unmarried pregnant *olanchanas* disappear, and many go to die, or to become wage slaves, numbers in the factories and plantations of an overwhelmingly striated space.

“Voy pa’ Tegucigalpa” is for most well-travelled *olanchanos* a humdrum declaration, a predictable and necessary coming and going.²⁰ “Voy pa’ la Costa” has a certain ring to it, and might mean one is going there to try a new life, to get work, to leave one’s *enemigos* and overlords behind. For a lot of Olanchanos, La Costa is perdition, sin, women in too-short skirts, homosexuals, and everything else out in the open, in-your-face, what in Olancho is kept quieter. In the old days, recounts *don* Antonio Ramos of San Felipe, young men would go as a rite of passage in famine years, and it took them several weeks of walking through bandit-ridden countryside along the old *caminos reales*. In difficult times for farmers there was always work

(truly) competing lines has proven to result in suicidal races to get the next passengers along the route.

¹⁸ The northernmost parts of Olancho (e.g. Esquipulas del Norte, Cuaca, northeastern Gualaco) “look like” La Costa by virtue of their coast-like vegetation, and “act like” La Costa through the inhabitants’ frequent contact with the Valle de Aguán.

¹⁹ “Olanchito” is a distant echo of this flight. Las Islas (The Bay Islands) are a more exotic appendage of the coastal realm. There is a “Juticalpa” on Roatán, founded by Olanchanos (see Davidson 1974).

²⁰ Though highly “provincial” people may live most or all of their lives without ever seeing it.

to be had on the plantations near Olanchito, though the risks were great. Now, you can get to La Costa in a few hours, and it doesn't sound much like high adventure any more.

The outside that now looms larger than any other is "Lo' Ehtado'" (Los United, El Norte, Gringolandia, Aquel País del Norte), what most Olanchanos can only enter as illegal aliens (*mojados*) through Mexico, at least at first. Los Estados is unimaginably huge and wealthy, exploitative and cruel, generous and dangerous. It is what "completes" local space these days-- everyday life in many areas would be unthinkable without this chiasm, that drains the mothers and fathers and grown children from whole neighborhoods, *aldeas*, *municipios*. There are Olanchano extended family networks in most large cities in the United States, and some legal residents come and go monthly by plane, buying and selling goods back and forth (bringing olanchano *queso* to Miami, for example). Los Estados is on everyone's minds in most areas. In some stay-at-home *comarcas*, however, it is rarely mentioned, but nevertheless is still a place to aspire to visit, to just *see* during one's life. Los Estados is the stuff of dreams for many village children, not yet embittered like their older siblings who have been and seen and suffered. The journey north is the modern rite of passage, its illegality a technicality.

The rest of the world, for most people, is a neutral, objective collection of lands that only wealthy people and a few *becados* (local people of any class who possess "scholarships") will ever be privileged to visit. Foreign lands rarely have the urgency of Los Estados, and there is far too little money around for people to have the luxury of dreaming about "seeing the world." (Increasingly, however, the world comes in through cable TV even to *las aldeas*, a privilege that extends the spatial identities of the curious much farther than before.)

5.4 Valle, Serranía, Montaña

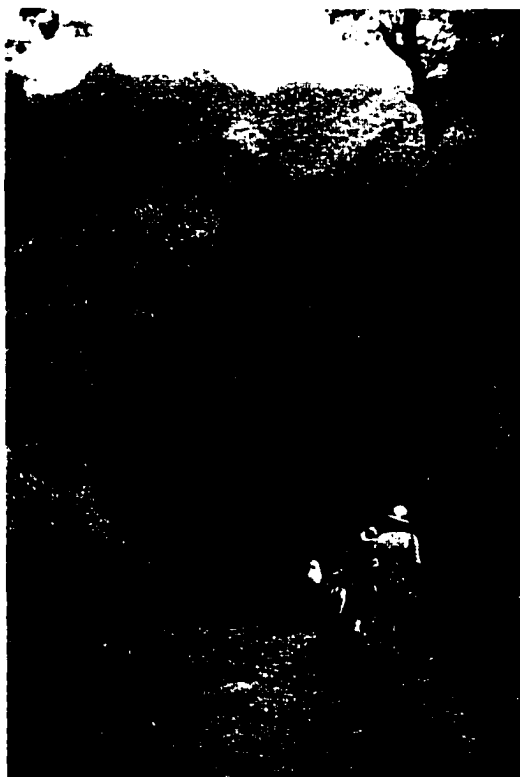
These form the triumvirate of "basic" landscapes in local space. They are frequently given other names in State, development, and conservation spaces (*montaña* as "tropical rainforest," for example). *Valle* is flat, open, traversed by roads and buses, utility lines; bounded by

mountains. In Gualaco, they say that animals grow fatter in the *valle* than in the mountains. From this, “Es de valle” can refer, in semi-jest, to anything, even a person, who is noticeably large or tall. Some *valles* are threatening landscapes to poor people because they are dominated by *terratenientes* who do not allow trespassing and may shoot on sight. Most Olanchanos, nevertheless, see the *valle* as a spectacular visual landscape, but also “all used up”: no more room is available, and for agriculture the soils usually require substantial chemical inputs to produce under the short- or no-fallow rotation that now dominates.

Olancho is administered from its *valles*; hence its non-*valle* landscapes are measured against *valle*. Potential quality of soil and aptness for (non-coffee) production, according to government wisdom, is based on slope: the flatter, the better. The ideal landscape of the *valle* is an agropastoral tapestry, while surrounding slopes are considered to be only appropriate (*aptos*) for forest cover. Government and non-government agricultural programs and manifestos, following official global (Green Revolution) wisdom, have long considered *valle* to be the standard landscape for production. Honduras has located its agricultural schools in fertile *valles*—Escuela Nacional Agraria in Catacamas; Escuela Agrícola Panamericana in El Zamorano (Valle de Yeguaré). The Canadian International Development Agency’s (CIDA or ACDI) Proyecto del Desarrollo Agrícola del Valle de Guayape spent over a decade focused exclusively on the Valle de Olancho with hardly a glance to the hills (but I give it credit for its almost mystical fascination with “valle”; the Valle de Agalta has a similar hold on the Honduras Outreach NGO: see chapter 7).

The *serranía* is an extensive and overwhelmingly sterile middle ground between the two poles of agricultural production, *valle* and *montaña*. In geographical descriptions and historical accounts, “*serranía*” and “*montaña*” may be used interchangeably, but in local space the two are highly distinct. *Serranía* means specifically broken hill country coated by pine/oak forest, though vegetative cover can vary from scattered scraggly pines to a dense, old-growth forest. *Serranía* is valued for its grass, for its firewood, for its pine logging potential, for its hunting,

but not for its agricultural potential. In local space, *serranía* may be dominated by small farmer-rancher territories, by the *retiros* of large ranches, or by municipal *ejidos*. Most often in Olancho, however, the *serranías* are *tierra nacional*, State-“controlled” spaces theoretically free for leasing to lumber companies. *Serranías*, unlike *montañas*, don’t lose their landscape classification after being transformed, since pines regenerate quickly. From a rancher’s point of view, they are nearly impossible to eradicate.



5.12. Within the Montaña de Las Delicias, Sierra de Agalta (buffer zone of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta). Forest in the foreground is coffee *finca*; in the background are the two limestone peaks known as “Los Pechos.” Hikers are reaching the terminus of a road constructed in the 1980s to help transport coffee to Catacamas.

“*Montaña*,” to some townspeople, signifies any wild, wooded area up in the mountains or out in the *campo* in general.²¹ To rural people, *montaña* is landscape dominated by mixed forest, continuous or in patches. *Montaña* comes in many different forms, and does not

²¹ I have even been pointed to maize fields as “montaña.”

necessarily have to be in the mountains. Sometimes, “*una montaña*,” *montañita*, or *montañuela* can be found in the *valle*, a discrete patch of thick woods standing out against the open lands. “*La montaña*” refers to a more extensive landscape covered by vegetation that is not dominated by pine. *Espinales* are not usually considered *montañas*, but the thick tropical dry forests of higher canopy that also used to be common in *valles* were called *montaña*: “Aquí era montaña, nada más que era seca” recalls a native of the arid Valle de Guacoca.

La montaña often contains “*centros*” of untransformed “*pura montaña*,” usually referred to as *montaña cruda* (raw), and also as *montaña virgen* (virgin), *montaña espesa* (thick), and *agria* or *fragosa* (rough or dense: archaic terms). *Montaña* that is “just” *montaña*, in other words containing a noticeable human presence, is a mosaic of *monte alto* (high growth), *monte bajo* (low growth), *guamil* (high or low growth recognized to be in swidden rotation), *cafetal* (coffee plot), *frijolar* (bean field), *milpa* (corn field), and so on. If the wooded component disappears altogether, it is no longer considered *montaña*. The former *montaña* can be referred to as “como valle” or “valle según los sureños,” a joke on Southerners who are thought to transform spaces on purpose (rather than because they “have to”) to look like *valle*, even on 60-degree slopes. The standard designation for a former *montaña* is “*pelón*,” bald, as in “Fijese en aquel cerro pelón.” Such spaces, which foreign conservationists call “degraded” or “trashed,” are coming to be known widely as “*desiertos*” in local parlance.

Montañas crudas are regarded as the most remote, rugged, difficult, and even naturally dangerous landscapes in a given *municipio*. Nevertheless, most are perceived as “*limpias*” and “*sanas*” (clean and healthy) because of their lack of people. The “*grandes montañas*” of present-day Olancho are those in the East: Patuca and Plátano, beyond the ends of the roads. Those of Mucupina (La Muralla), Botaderos, and Babilonia no longer qualify in some people’s minds as rich, vast *montañas*. They are only “*montañas pobres*” gnawed away at by colonists and lumbermen. Other *montañas* are gone altogether—people still refer to the “*Montaña*” de Sara, but qualify it as not “really” containing any more *montaña*.

Some *valle* dwellers, particularly urbanites, have never been in a *montaña*, and may even believe that all Olancho (according to what they hear in the news) is a desert, that the *montañas* and attendant fauna are long gone. Knowledgeable campesinos are sometime scoffed at in towns when “lying” about the present-day abundance of fauna in certain roadless *montañas* not far from Juticalpa.²²

5.5 Naming Landscapes²³

Olanchanos have hundreds of words and phrases for landscape features (thousands, if plants are included) in a “secret” language of the land that is rarely understood in spatial identities such as Development and Conservation (which have their own “scientific” languages). Giving voice to the landscape through liberal “unconscious” use of its local vocabulary identifies one as part of local space: a stigma in some identities, a badge for others. Some rural families are characterized by their neighbors as “speaking differently” with a lilt to their voices and a generous scattering of *hondureñismos*. For example, the altitudinal distribution of a cycad can be expressed by “*trepapar*” (to clamber up): “El teocinte trepa para la quebrada arriba” (the cycad clambers up the ravine). “*Circula*” denotes its “moving about” or latitudinal distribution: “El teocinte circula por Los Hornos” (the cycad circulates around to Los Hornos). In another example, “*brincar*” denotes a trail or its pedestrian who “jumps” from one spot to another in rugged terrain, often from the *cabecera* (head) of one *quebrada* or *hondonada* (gully) up and

²² This urbanite ignorance has to do not only with exaggeration in the news, but to the fact that most reporters don’t make the effort to hike to and film *pura montaña*. By definition, *pura montaña* is not approached or dissected by roads, and one is usually faced with a four-hour to two-day hike to get from the terminus to the *montaña cruda*. Visually, many *montañas* are hidden from the view of the *valles*—all one sees from Juticalpa is *cerros pelones*, for example. How awful!, remark Honduran and foreign outsiders on taking in the view from Juticalpa’s bus station. How sublime!, they comment, on being in Catacamas, at the brow of the thick Agalta forests.

²³ The leading sources for landscape terms are the hundreds of 1:50,000-scale IGN topo sheets, which cover the entire country. Even these, however, only scrape the surface of toponymic density. Alberto Membreño (1895; 1994[1901]) and Aguilar Paz (1970; 1989[1930]) should be the first sources one consults for understanding landscape terms, but even they are limited. Since so many terms are related to plants, Hardy Nelson (1986) is quite useful. The numerous indigenous landscape terms across central and western Olancho are often related to Nahuatl, a lingua franca during the early colonial period.

over a *cuchilla* (knife-edge) and down into another *cabecera*. A trail that is *tendido* is “strung” like a necklace around the head of a ravine.

The generous employment of the locative suffixes “-al” and “-ar” mark one’s “submersion” in local space. Spanish allows the speaker to add these to the name of any type of plant to denote an area where it is encountered as a group: *frijolar*, *platanar*, *zacatal*, *pinar*, *ocotal*, *robleal* (beanfield, plantain grove, tallgrass prairie, stand of pines, pine forest, oak grove). Olanchanos, extending the locative “license,” named concentration of animals in the same way: “*dantales*” are places with many tapirs; “*pajarales*” are landscapes filled with birds. “*Venadales*” (concentrations of deer) is used commonly in reference to the past: “Aquí eran venadales.” One also hears “Aquí eran olingadas,” denoting that here, there used to be many howler monkeys (“-ada” in this case denotes abundance). The expressions do not signify large groups or herds of animals per se, but rather their present or former (relative) abundance in the landscape.



Fig. 5.13. Cabeza de Gorila. Head of animal faces toward upper left. Limestone promontory high in the Sierra de Agalta above Talgua.

There are often “alternative” local words for the standard dictionary Spanish that outsiders tend to use. “Arbol”—the outsider’s “tree”—is rarely heard. “Palo” is the preferred term. Instead of “Arbol grande,” one says “palancón.” A Peace Corps Volunteer conservationist might ask “¿Antes habían muchos monos aulladores en los árboles muy grandes?” (Did there used to be many howler monkeys in those big trees?) and would be answered in local speech (if the question is understood) “Eran olingadas en aquellos palanconones” (Those great huge trees used to be filled with *olingos*).



Fig. 5.14. Los Tetones, Esquipulas del Norte. The sharp peaks in the background are represented on the wall of the house in lower left corner. House construction (*bajareque* with *techo de manaca*) mark the owners as inhabiting a poor substratum of local space.

A key generator of mixed signals is “el bosque” which has a specific meaning in local space, quite distinct from that used by outsiders, who employ it to mean “woods” or “forest” (of the kind that “needs” to be saved). *Bosques* in local rural parlance are small patches of woods of mixed, dry nature. *Montañas* and *serranías* have not until recently been called *bosques* by campesinos. “Cuidemos el bosque!” (“Let’s take care of the forest,” a popular slogan) didn’t use to make sense in local space.²⁴

²⁴ COHDEFOR, widely recognized in local space as the “true” enemy of trees (hence sometimes it is called “JODEFOR,” from “joder,” to fuck up), buoys its fading self-confidence through such gimmicks as Bugs Bunny on signs for forest protection, and in what provoked hilarity even within the Institution itself,

Speaking toponyms with an almost unconscious weight (and often reverence) situates one squarely in local space. I often think I hear a poetic savoring of place names as they roll off tongues, especially the ones that are “*verdaderos*,” names that do not in many cases even appear on detailed maps. I once listened to an elderly woman in Naranjal, Gualaco reel off the ten to fifteen places I would encounter on my walk across the Montaña de Botaderos on the old *camino real* to Colón. She had walked the trail regularly a half-century before when there were still people living along its upper reaches. Not noting down the places as she spoke them, I lost a great opportunity, as my friends from San Esteban lamented, because I couldn’t remember most of them later--and it turned out that none were on the topo map. When we hiked the trail, we found that though the places had been swallowed by forest, we were able to detect where, for example, “Las Manzanas” had been located through the survival of a few *manzanas rosas* (a non-native fruit) deep within the *montaña*, marking an old settlement.

Jesús Aguilar Paz and Alberto Membreño (see all respective works in the bibliography) noted and deciphered thousands of landscape terms and toponyms between the 1890s and the 1930s. That language is still encountered in the *campo* and is still current, but grows ever more distant from the scientific languages of outsiders crowding in from all sides. Scientific terms, by their very precision, clip the semantic domain of local words and thus erase local landscapes, as necessary precursor to more drastic overcoding. I believe, however, that scientific and transplanted popular terms for biota, forest types, and agricultural practices are far insufficient for local purposes—that the heterogeneity of the land continues to call for heterogeneity of signs, and that outside terms tend to be deterritorialized eventually, especially in the “holding-sway” of the campesino spatial identity (see chapter 6).

caps that proud foresters and other employees and supporters would wear, emblazoned with the logo “Yo Cuido El Bosque... Y Tú?” (I protect the forest...what about you?). The very use of “tu” is considered pretentious and citified in a land of “vos” and “usted”: no local person could ever use “tu” in Olancho without provoking comment and creating a barrier between the speaker and the spoken to.

5.6 Everyday Obsessions

El futbol (soccer) and *la política* are twin obsessions of local space, taken deadly seriously by some; ridiculed and even ignored by others. They are part of everyday life to such an extent that they may go all but unnoted in many a geographical text focusing on “more important things” like land use. Other events of the day-to-day that sustain local space include churchgoing and religious activities in general; visiting and exchanging gossip; family gatherings, particularly birthday parties; watching TV and listening to the radio; hanging out on the corner; going to work; going to school. This section considers a few of these “background” activities because even though they do not stand front and center in the *enredos* of this dissertation, their brief explication is necessary to give a fuller flavor to local space—and what, in many cases, outsiders may miss.

Futbol entails local alliances that may cut across “serious” spatial identities such as coffee farming, cattle ranching, and agriculture at odd-seeming angles. The *campo de futbol* (the *estadio* in *ciudades*) is the premier public gathering place, where non-team allegiances are often temporarily masked, even in highly conflictive *municipios*. A comment of Juan Barrera serves to illustrate the importance of *futbol* in everyday life. I asked him whether he preferred to live in the *montaña* of Agua Buena, where his father has a coffee farm (see chapter 8), or in El Boquerón, where they live most of the year. Without hesitation, he said he would rather live in the *montaña*, that it was safer, cooler, had more fruits, more birds, more things to do. But he then changed his mind abruptly --the *valle* was preferable because you couldn’t play *futbol* in the *montaña*—there are no flat places on Agua Buena, so during the coffee harvest no one is able to play.²⁵

La política physically dichotomizes the landscape: *Liberales* paint their houses red, in town and *campo*; *Nacionalistas* paint theirs blue. Even the casual mistake of wearing a blue shirt, if

²⁵ On the sociology of *futbol* in Honduras, see Santana (1998), “La futbolización del mundo.”



Fig. 5.15. Nacionalista house in Lepaguar: blue and white.

one is remotely associated with Liberales, may not go unremarked upon. Politics is a way of life, a culture, and a deadly serious game for many who seek power, recognition, free food, and/or jobs as reward for being involved in campaigns that run from election to election. People who live their lives in and through politics are called “enfermos” (sick people, as in “Liberales enfermos”) even by less-rabid members of their own party who like to think they take things a little more calmly. Liberales and “Cachurecos” *enfermos* are prone to publicly insulting members of the opposing party in no uncertain terms (a public insult can be a serious and sometimes deadly offense in Olancho), hanging on every word and action of candidates, living and breathing politics. Some say that such people would have no idea what to do with their lives if it weren’t for *politica*.

Churchgoing is paramount for many Olanchanos. God is the prime mover and first principle of local space, in local consciousness, at any and all moments, and is frequently invoked in public and private discourse. Avowed atheism or agnosticism is extremely rare. Churches usually are sacred spaces, pure spaces, safe spaces undefiled by the world outside. There is, nevertheless, a stark dichotomy that strengthens as “evangelios” (non-Catholics) gain in strength. Catholic churches, according to non-Catholics, who identify with each other as *cristianos*, and deny that Catholics fit this category, are filled with wooden images, fancy

needless garb, and other varieties of sin. Catholics retaliate that *evangelio* places of worship are but unsanctified houses, profane meeting places. *Evangelios* may spend almost every evening, and entire weekends, in church-related activities called *cultos*. Their houses of worship are found in virtually every *pueblo* neighborhood and *aldea*. Many of the more fervent “sectas” (the term that Catholics use in recognition of *evangelios* as not just a homogeneous mass), knowing they are looked upon with scorn by Catholics and even “main-line” *cristianos*, project their messages throughout their neighborhoods using megaphones and sound systems. In Juticalpa, an “Iglesia Misionero” next door to our house met every night of the week for up to two hours, and their location on a street corner house allowed them to broadcast their meetings in four directions using sound systems. Devout Catholics such as my wife and mother-in-law felt distinctly uncomfortable with the *evangelios*’ nightly speaking in tongues and other acts of “posesión.”²⁶

Though Catholics have limited (but more central) choices of official worship spots, their religious lives also include gatherings in private homes, particularly for the purpose of the “*rezo*,” a prayer to honor certain anniversaries of deceased loved ones. *Rezos* include not only the saying of prayers but also the consumption of certain foods and beverages and the exchange

²⁶ Olanchano Catholicism is rapidly becoming less “staid,” apparently in a becoming-*evangelio*. Masses often break into *evangelio*-like rhythmic clapping and foot stomping—which many Catholics despise, but more seem to relish (the *carismáticas* are said to be the culprits). Nevertheless, older residents all recall the days before Vatican II, when masses were in Latin, and thus they can put things in perspective. There is also an ancient Catholic practice in the *campo* called “levantando el espíritu” (“raising” and carrying the spirit of the deceased from where the death happened to where the burial takes place) that to Olanchanos smacks of Sureño (even indigenous) infiltration (see Aguilar Paz 1989). The Church frowns upon such syncretism, but it is bursting at the seams of Honduras nevertheless (particularly among the Lenca: see Chapman 1985). Olanchano, as everywhere in Honduras, reveres the “Saint” Subirana (see chapter 3.9), and an important pilgrimage spot is Dulce Nombre de Culmí, where a statue of Christ that he blessed and possibly donated is said to be miraculous. The other formerly very important Olanchano pilgrimage spot is tiny church of San Buenaventura (the eighteenth-century Pech mission in the Valle de Gualaco, where among its collection of colonial-era saints, manuscripts, and a cherished *calavera del misionero* (“the missionary’s skull” of unknown origin) is the “milagrosísima” Virgen de la Luz (Virgin of the Light), associated with a long-disappeared lake that turned into or was swallowed by a giant *lagarto* (crocodile) which the “Payas” banished through the intercession of the Virgin (in what to me was an overcoding of the indigenous with Christianity). Crocodiles, often golden, rise up regularly in stories of Catholic intercession in Olanchano (and across Honduras: see Aguilar Paz 1989 for example). Both Culmí and San Buenaventura are fading rapidly in local space, apparently in part because they are so dangerous to visit now.

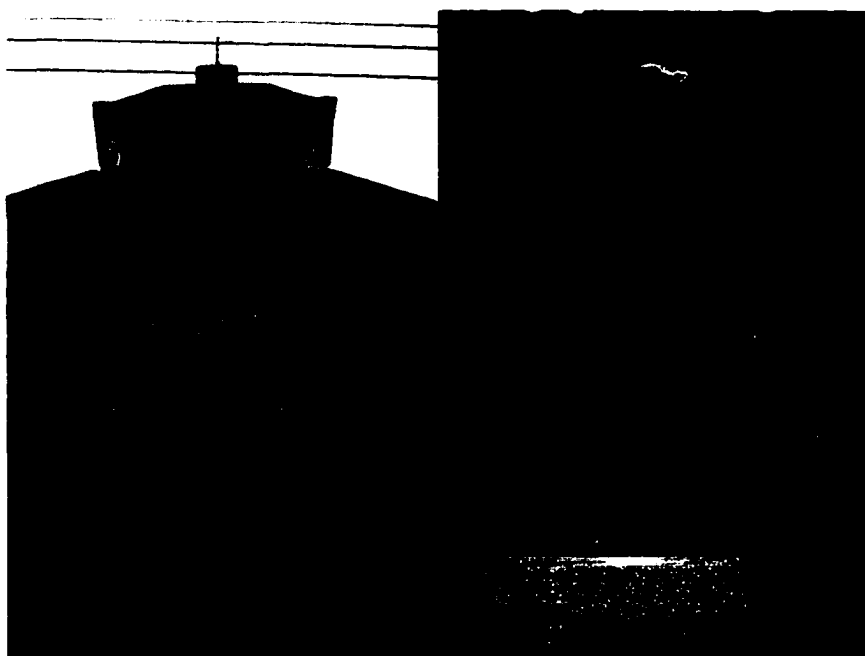


Fig. 5.16. Exterior and interior of Gualaco's *iglesia*. Local tradition establishes its construction in the 1700s. Plant on façade is said to be tobacco. Patron saint is San Jerónimo.

of gossip—they are, for neighborhood Catholics, *de rigueur* to attend, and at least in Juticalpa are among the most important social and religious events, especially for people over fifty.

Pan-municipio festivales are held throughout the year (often associated with important holidays such as Semana Santa, Día del Arbol, 15 de Septiembre), but the central event is almost always the *feria*, inspired by the town's patron saint and/or virgin (and therefore rejected in principle if not in practice by many *evangelios*).²⁷ Towns go as far as to publicize their *ferias* in the national newspapers, because it is thought that a place is at its best then, at least for one week out of the year. Such *ferias* call back the town's children and even attract tourism, as well as serving as regional commerce bazaars. Traditionally, the mayor has had the privilege of selling the Plaza (to *vender la Plaza*), leasing out plots in the Parque Central to private businesses. The chaos engendered by 24-hour drinking establishments, gambling, and the

²⁷ Towns often have two or more patron saints and virgins, apparently a result of centuries of *cofradía* and even *sitio* shrine accumulation that in the twentieth century became hyphenated and concentrated in the (now somewhat bemused) local Catholic churches (largely but not by any means entirely shorn of land). These days, one virgin or saint is usually at the center of *la feria*.

influx of “shady characters” took a sinister turn in Olancho in the 1990s, as violence thought to be due to the abundance of firearms and growth of street gangs claimed many deaths in almost every town’s *feria*.

Juticalpa, in 1999, opted to not sell the Plaza but to have a “cultural” and educational Feria instead. The mayor and the Feria planning committee banned alcohol and took other “drastic” measures that turned the event into an affair enjoyable for families—meanwhile, the *cantinas* relocated in *las aldeas*, where “chaos” continued to reign. In the town, the Virgen de la Concepción was toted symbolically from *barrio* to *barrio*, housed a night in each one to knit the Catholic community even closer. Other events included fireworks, poetry contests, the Coronación de la Reina (Crowning of the Queen), *mojigangas* (mummers, including costumed urchins who took great liberty in their prank playing), sporting events, *el toro juego* (a bull made of papier-maché and firecrackers that is carried pell-mell through the streets), a livestock show at the cattle arena, high school skits, gift drives for poor children, La Coronación del Rey Feo (the “crowning” of an “ugly” anti-King), mayoral speeches, and even the Show de Barney (put on by a traveling Barney and his Friends theater group).²⁸ Most of the sedentary events took place in the Parque Central. Firecrackers, as always, provided the orchestral music for this astounding manifestation of the fragments of New World and Old World spaces and codes entangled in a single “modern” place.

The rest of the year, urban Olanchanos dwell in the moving images of TV, videos, and the *Cine*. Evenings at home are taken up more by watching TV than by lengthy conversation (see Menza Cabezas 1998 on the sociology of *novelas* in Honduras). In the *campo*, on the other hand, people tend to spend more time listening to the radio, but most families spend what to urbanites seems like an inordinate amount of time in discussions. They say that campesinos

²⁸ It should be noted that by 1999 Barney and his Friends were no longer the most popular figures featured in other events such as birthday parties (as “themes”: *piñatas*, napkins, cups, plates, etc.). This honor went to the Teletubbies, but by 2000 most children were demanding Pokémon figures. This serves to demonstrate the power of international media in the towns; in the TV-less *aldeas*, celebrations are

spend all their time talking rather than working. One thing in common is dancing, which in some form or another--the Charleston among 90-year-olds in my Juticalpa neighborhood; the Garífuna-inspired *punta*, a unique Honduran concoction, in the discos; subversive *rancheros* in las *aldeas*-- "rocks" the staidness of everyday spaces except among the most devout non-Catholics.

Everyday life in Olancho is lived as family, and one reflects one's two surnames (and even the maternal surnames of one's parents, grandparents, and more remote ancestors) in every action, belief, and utterance. One talks endlessly of family--where they are going, when they're coming back, who got married, who died. A friendly encounter of two Olanchanos who do not know each other often starts with establishing whether and how they may be related (even cousins to the sixth degree, sharing a common ancestor in the late 1700s, regard each other as family). "Somos familia" is one of the most forceful declarations of shared identity within the rhizome of local space.

5.7 Bodies and Gazing

The socially constructed human body, aged and gendered, lives a sensory existence traversing and intersected by spaces that reject and incorporate it.²⁹ Society inscribes itself on each body, but the body extends itself in turn into the landscape. One's perception of everyday life in local space is more than "mental" and is better seen as an ongoing performance by one's body, striated by gender, age, church, "class." In local space reside the scripts for wandering spitting lying crouching leaping sitting bodies. Space without the expected bodily performances--without the gestures and faces of certain people, repeated with slight variation from day to day, and punctuated by absences, deaths, and arrivals--would be all but empty. The stuff of space is knowing too much about some bodies, wanting to know more of others,

much more "traditional."

²⁹ See Butler, *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex"* (1993); Pile and Thrift, *Places through the body* (1998).

entwined in “secret” all-too-public histories unreadable from the Outside. The abject body, the drunkard, weaving up the street, not to be touched but perhaps to be pitied, knifed by gang members for his pocket change and fun, a celebrity in retrospect, part of who we are even in his misery.³⁰ The circulation of paramours, carefully scripted; the groups of high school students eyeing each other, and strangers. Heterosexual exchanges of mutual admiration in the market, or the trespassing of obscene words across the bodies of frozen women, feeling themselves to be in danger. Children tortilla-sellers melting into the sidewalk; men becoming-women, made-up, in dresses, flouting machismo.

The human body defines the sizes of things like a mole in tunnels, measuring spaces by its “human scale.” The “average” adult body has to fit in fields, along trails, in houses, on streets. Measurements are based on the hand, the stride, the gaze. Local spaces also sometimes appear to reproduce the body: blatantly, when landscape features are named after body parts such as female breasts.³¹ More subtly in the contemplation of *montaña virgen*, the removal of vegetation, the sowing of fields.

Certain bodies are permitted certain actions in specific locales that would not be permitted elsewhere. For example, it is permissible in the *campo* for womens’ breasts to be in public view only down at the river washing spot, an almost exclusively female gathering place. Female legs are rarely on open display in the day-to-day *campo* as they are in the “more” progressive towns. Female and male bodies in towns are carefully observed and measured to fit the ideals of gazes from *la sociedad* (see Benjamin 1987 on *campesina* bodies).

The gaze, in geographical language, denotes a physical and mental effort of looking out across, of seeing to understand.³² The gaze selects often the most obvious visual features from

³⁰ Froylán Turcios, *Mendigos de Juticalpa* (1941[1938]) is a wonderful short essay on the roles of mendicants in Olancho.

³¹ *Pechos or tetones*.

³² Rose (1992), from whom I draw here, provides a critique of the “masculinist” landscape gaze.

the landscape and generalizes from them to assign identities, feelings, influences, and often to impose theoretical structures based on dominant regimes of signs coded to a “landscape of.” The gaze can indeed get a researcher interested and out into the landscape, but should probably not be employed to make broad generalizations (a “trashed landscape” being perhaps the extreme case for this dissertation) without careful research on the expanse being considered. But the gaze is not only a privilege or bias of outside researchers—it is equally employed by local people, and is integral to local space.

The gaze in Olancho is important because ocularity is important: landscape can be seen as paintings, aesthetically as “*bonito*” or “*feo*,” good for grass or good for trees, on fire for renewal and fertility—or in a flaming apocalypse, the desertic end of a sylvan existence.

The local gaze can be permissive and forgiving, though the local person’s knowledge is far superior to that of a generalizing, aesthetically inclined outsider. Even with all the spatial conflicts in the *valles*, local gazes take in the open landscape, the watermelons and cattle, the horizons, the big sky, and embrace its potential despite blinking in abject fear, or forgetting to laugh. Campesinos gaze upward, at the *montaña*, and feel hope, or gaze at the *valle* from the *montaña*’s safe haven, calmed by the lighted nocturnal world spread out in miniature below “como un Nacimiento” (like a Nativity scene). Local space is gazed at, has to be gazed at, has to be looked at again and again, and commented upon, for it to become indelibly engraved in human spatiality.

Serranía, gazed at out of bus windows, is a pleasant landscape to most Olanchanos—some admit that the sight and smell of pines, breeze-whipped grass, and munching cows soothes them and makes the world seem peaceful, idyllic. Nevertheless, the picture of an ideal existence is more soothing the less one knows about its local circumstances, about the specific meanings and histories attached to places already fading in the distance.

There is a landscape idyll in local space shared to a greater or lesser degree by most Olanchanos (and I think the majority of Sureños and other Honduran outsiders as well) even



Fig. 5.17. Midriff of the Valle de Olancho from the porch of Benito Barrera on Cerro Agua Buena, campesino space (without telephoto). Paved Carretera de Olancho in extreme bottom of photo. *Aldea (chorizo)* of Arimis in middle left; note thick vegetation of its dooryard gardens. Most of remaining *valle* area taken up by *terrateniendo* space and a few campesino *comunidades*. Río Guayape, main “artery” of central Olancho, flows from southwest (right) to northeast (left). In the background are the mountains of San Luis de Lajas (right) and San Pedro de Catacamas (left), and behind them, invisible, the Río Guayape flowing southwest again.



Fig. 5.18. Shrine to the Virgen de Fátima in Catacamas’ Catholic church. This landscape includes Honduran ideals of tile-roofed whitewashed homes, placid streams, scattered pines, flocks, and pastures, with intriguingly biblical *cerros pelones*.

regardless of the logic their productive schemes “demand.” The “perfect gaze” (see also quotes in chapter 3) includes neatly cultivated fields interspersed with pastures and copses of woods,

with *serranía* in the background, *nubes* of raucous parrots or macaws darkening the sky, and a line of *montaña* near the upper edge of the frame, where, one knows, the coffee *finca* is doing well and the hunting is good (though see fig. 5.18, above). Near at hand winds a river cushioned by rich *vegas* thick with *plátanos*. All this takes place not necessarily in a wide *valle* but in at least a *vallecito* set in the rumpled land. Such an Olanchano land of the imagination is not only gazed at but also smelled and tasted, and as a composite it could be sketched in far greater, even infinite detail to indicate the types of comforts that comprise home. There are, of course, discontents in this picture of civilization becoming-Olanchano: in many ways, conflicting landscape idylls at odds with each other are implicated in the conflicts between the spatial identities sketched in chapters 6 through 8.

I see local people staring at landscapes intently, and commenting on them endlessly, out of bus windows, from horseback, from their porches. Who they are, and what they see, intersect, and they become their gazes. The view and other senses (still) reign supreme in feelings of belonging to the *comarca*, the *municipio*, Olanchito.

5.8 Sensing Places

Local space is experienced as a network of places connected by ways. Places are concentrations of meaning, unique events in space and time, heavily charged with significance in different ways to different people. Some places are ephemeral and personal, where something happened as mundane as a sneeze, and was remembered. Other places mark enduringly significant events and some become parts of landscape's iconography.³³

³³ Lefebvre (1991) weaves places and paths into his descriptions of structured space: see particularly pages 117-8. Bachelard (1994[1958]) remains for me the most eloquent philosopher of place; phenomenological approaches in general have been successful in characterizing the intimate nature of the experience of place, and the role of the (felicitous) body. Casey (1993; 1997) has written the most detailed philosophical history of "place." The contributions to *Senses of place* (Feld and Basso, eds., 1996) are more specifically ethnographical in nature. Among geographers, Tuan (e.g. 1974; 1977; 1991) has written many works on the structures of place. See also Relph (1976); Seamon and Nordin (1980); Seamon and Mugerauer (1985); Weiner (1991). Cresswell (1996; 1997) has written about "displacements." I feel "place" to be a supple concept that should never be authenticated nor pinned down, but rather allowed to be fleeting or permanent, oppressive or liberating, as the circumstances

Places that endure in particular or collective lives are those that accrue meaning, that can be revisited, dreamed about, participated in, described in detail. They can be enumerated, one next to another, like stopping-points on a trail through a *montaña*, or as the *rincones* (corners) of a *comarca*, special places that are only here, never somewhere else. Places can be dangerous and thrilling, marked and haunted by a massacre or a peaceful death. Each individual life and each family has its certain special places; each spatial identity, in reading landscapes differently, makes and experiences places in distinct ways.

Places of local experience can be those of gathering, like the church or *parque central*; of exclusion, like the hacienda for the campesino; of submission, like the bank or government office to many. The polyvalent meanings of myriad local places that comprise local space are in most cases invisible to outsiders, who only learn about them in any detail through long-term residence, if at all. The outsider is likely to exaggerate the importance of unimportant places, go to the wrong places, and even be disrespectful of place traditions. Not knowing enough details, the outsider experiences a landscape of type specimens, general categories, but shorn of the special memories and lacy smooth knowledges attached to every specific location.

Local senses of place are silent poetic languages of collusion, of belonging to and participating in local space. They are as much “unconsciously” produced, performed, and understood as consciously thought about and discussed. Local space always contains both felicitous and unhappy places, tragic spots, fearful locales, perplexing sites—but for all their complex conflicting emotions, they still engender a sense of home and a feeling of power, an anchoring in “the world”; and in their discontents, the gypsy urge to cough or vomit. Their fine-textured multiplicity is what makes local space inhabitable and distinct from any one homogenizing spatial identity, relatively safe from the lasting boot print of hegemony. (How

permit. I pin my hopes on the interlocking of place and way, Deleuzian stopping and moving, flux and coagulation, break and flow, being and becoming. As far as descriptive technique goes, and for many other considerations, I have been most influenced by a graduate seminar entitled “Poetics of Place” led by Miles Richardson, LSU anthropologist-geographer.

else to explain the rewriting of felicity over the charred landscape of 1865, over time?). If the entangled textures of the rhizome of ways (lines of flight) and places (nodes of convergence) were not so slippery, indefinable, and powerful, the job of spatial obliteration practiced by hierarchical regimes would be made far easier. The endurance of the indigenous in the Ladino is an amazing example of the way textured landscape endures through time—given that Olancho’s tribute Indians were all but extinguished as identities.

A seemingly simple way to “become local” is to become engaged in local meanings of places—as local space looms significantly, its hierarchized, “remote” position in a gridded sphere becomes untenable. “These people” (*fulano, zutano, mengano*,) take on distinct personalities, and stop appearing as statistical outcomes, interchangeable units, *doña* So-and-So (*fulana de tal*). Local space, through ways and places that grab at one’s conscious and subconscious mind-body, surrounds one and engulfs one as the “outside” world recedes below the horizon.

5.9 Enchanted Waters, Winds, Fires, Earths

This and the following two sections, which speak of possession, honor the poetic and extraordinarily knowledgeable Honduran geographer/chemist Jesús Aguilar Paz, who revealed the “supernatural” enchanted qualities of “everyday” landscapes in his 1930 (1989) *Tradiciones y leyendas de Honduras* (see *Alquimista de Gualala*, his biography by Aguilar-Paz Cerrato 1995; see also Bonta 1998a).³⁴ Aguilar Paz (who made many trips to Olancho) believed that modern citified Hondurans needed to (re) turn to the traditions of the land to become possessed by it as campesinos were, rather than become enamored of everything foreign. His agriculture, for example, was one of local solutions to local variations, rather than global solutions that steamrolled the local into submission. Having walked and ridden over large parts of the country

³⁴ Other folklorists include Ortega (1946; 1951) and Ramos and Valenzuela (1996; 1997; 1997a).

in the 1910s and 1920s, he was, more than anyone, aware of the subtle distinctions from *comarca* to *comarca*.

Far from being outdated, the traditions and legends Aguilar Paz wrote down in 1930 are often still current today, though they mark an older or “more traditional” speaker—whom others call “superstitious” in that s/he believes in “unscientific” explanations for phenomena. Commonly, the Devil (“El Mero Mero”: the top dog, the real thing; also “Satanás”) is seen to be at work in the enchantment of places, though one might be just as tempted to pin “irrational” beliefs on shreds of the polytheistic indigenous. I attribute any and all folklore, a priori, to mixtures of indigenous, Iberian, and African beliefs intertwining for centuries, an inseparable triad. *Me encantan....*

The local landscape is (still) enchanted, *encantado*: it has inexplicable, mysterious qualities that require one’s initiation into them, as a child. Local space is enchanted because it is impregnated by the spirits of the dead, by manifestations of Satanás, and by appearances of the sacred, particularly of the Virgin Mary. Local space and its enchanted beings have powers that are called “*misterios*” or “*secretos*” (A “charmed” animal—one acting curiously or differently, individually or as a type—“*tiene un secreto*” or “*es misterioso*”; this can be applied to everything from mice to deer). “Enchantment” fills the land with hidden corners, alternate realities, “*la cuarta dimensión*” (in reference to caves). The enchantment of landscape is its “magical” quality, what makes it, to its spellbound inhabitants, always valuable and never “degraded.” Local space under these conditions is something at which to marvel, making places extraordinary. Enchantment is marked by the murmurings and whisperings of toponyms, the “irrational” beliefs of the “uneducated,” the frightened mute wonder of any outsider--“might this be true, and if so...?”--who listens to stories about places.

In a broader sense, local space is “enchanted” in that it carries many shades of meaning, each slightly different, conjuring up inexplicably complex memories and knowledges, always with more possibilities, never able to be circumscribed. This could be referred as an

(*olanchano*) “spatial imagination.” Enchanted images appear to shape “logical” decisions and perceptions regarding space.

Local space is nothing without waters, preoccupations of everyday life. The flows of waters are highly regulated in the local imagination—there should be so much water, in certain places, at the right times, and everything else is excess or lack, out of place, at the wrong time. In local space, water (“el recurso agua” of development space) is rarely uniform, but rather is site-specific and distinguished by variations in color, taste, depth, ichthyofauna, presence of *lagartos*, and other qualities. Streams and rivers are often named by qualities such as *bermejo*, *zarca*, *chela*, *amarilla*, *tinto*, *verde*, *hondo*, *dulce*, *buena*, *fria* (vermilion, clear, white, yellow, black, green, deep, sweet, good, cold) and all local waters take on special identities swirled together from their combinations.

Subterranean rivers, like the Río Seco de Talgua in Catacamas, are said to have gone dry when cursed by a priest who was drowned in it. Dreaming of a muddy river (“soñar con agua chocolate”) presages disaster. *Ojos de agua* (springs: “fuentes de agua” in development and conservation spaces) have always been highly significant, as old land titles indicate abundantly. The upwelling “eye of water” is the purest spot in the landscape, location of protected zones in the imaginations of many otherwise conflictive spatial identities. Farther downstream, landowners have had their traditionally recognized “tomas de agua.” In days long before the Age of Development, watercourses had locally controlled spots where cattle could enter (downstream), people could wash clothes (midstream), and drinking water could be taken (upstream). These days, despite lapsed regulations and consequent dangerous contamination, many Olanchanos spend as much of their free time as possible near or in water, especially during the *verano*. A swimming hole might be the secret of a few families, or the provenance of hundreds of weekenders, like the nearest crossings of the Río Guayape from Juticalpa. “La playa” in Olancho means the river beach for swimming—only a privileged few partake of the beaches on La Costa.



Fig. 5.19. Río Seco above Talgua, Catacamas.

Vientos (winds) in this part of the world are often thought to be rather dangerous, and in general the movement of air is considered to be harmful to the human body, especially in combination with exposure to water. But there are also favorable *brisas*, the breezes that whistle through the *serranía* idyll, that take away flying insects, that dispel the chill morning fogs and the blankets of haze in the burning season.

Fire is a living rhizome by whose varying interpretations spatial identities mark each other in a land saturated by conservation and development, by the strength and “wisdom” of outside ideas trying to become-local. “Irresponsible” Fire (El Fuego, La Quema, La Llama, El Incendio), deterritorialized from its myriad specific incendiary manifestations, overcodes and condemns the formerly rich semantic domain of *olanchano* fires. Consequently, it is fast disappearing as a rhizome integral to local space. It is often said that every group sets fires for different reasons: “El ganadero quema para el ganado, el cazador quema para el venado, y el campesino quema por gusto” (i.e., ranchers burn for their cattle, hunters burn to favor tender

growth for deer, and campesinos burn for the hell of it). But the groups themselves are so embarrassed or defiant that they are silent about their use, or proclaim that they “burn because they have to.”³⁵ The landscape on fire, the hills alight, the prairies ablaze, are as much a feature of local space today as centuries ago, but feelings are hidden, buried under a landslide of negative press—even though, for example, COHDEFOR foresters believe in prescribed burns to create “healthy” pine forests. In the popular press, fire simply doesn’t fit into acceptable local space any more. It just happens, always thanks to other people with other spatial identities, and most of the human landscape (other than coffee farms) burns between February and June, sometimes earlier, sometimes later. In silence.

Soils (*suelos*) in local space carry their own complex classificatory schemes based largely on specific farmer experience and “quirkiness,” rather than potential use.³⁶ Local people who farm often know of the extreme variation of soil from place to place, and the facts that one cannot predict a yield until practicing agriculture, while ashes as well as certain plants increase soil fertility. Soils are “for” certain spatial practices—coffee for example, or cabbages—or “good for nothing”; or good for grass. They also work in tandem with wild plants that point to their fertility and specific qualities. For example, *pacaya* palm growing on soils in the *pura montaña* indicates that they will favor coffee as well. To become understood, soil, just like water, has to be engaged with: tasted on the tip of the tongue, crumbled between the finger, judged as to color and smelt for essences.

Soils, as earths (*tierras*), have uses besides agriculture. They are also mixed to make paint, and the careful employment of earth tones in *campo* houses is at once artistic, aesthetic grace as well as marker of backwardness. Painting houses in Olancho is women’s’ and girls’ work, and

³⁵ Jansen (1998) breaks through the barrier to provide ethnographic detail on perceptions of fire among local people in Santa Bárbara, Honduras. See Pyne (1997) on the lives of fires. For a typical statement against fire, see Mejía (2000).

³⁶ “Uso actual del suelo” and “Uso potencial del suelo” are categories employed in development space.

they create stylized landscape representations as well as flowers, animals, and religious sayings. The *campo* house can be kept immaculate through the process of *blanqueando*, creating a two-tone scheme with *cal* (white above, gray below, for example). In some *montañas*, over ten colored *tierras* occur and are used, among them *tierra roja*, *tierra amarilla*, *tierra ocre*, *tierra gris*, *tierra azul gris*, *tierra prieta*, *tierra blanca*, and *tierra anaranjada*. These techniques only apply if one has a *bajareque* (wattle-and-daub) or adobe dwelling, and are replaced, with one's rise in social status, by more "modern," vermin-proof houses of concrete block that admit little decoration. (Nevertheless, the house type considered most durable in local space is *bajareque* made of hardwood timbers, which can endure "forever").

Despite the complexity and artistic *patrimonio* of earth tones, development space and conservation space appear to have little use for them. Only occasional tourist brochures find these womens' landscape paintings attractive. Other than to sell a space to outsiders, what are floral and bird designs *good for*, anyway?

5.10 Enchanted Caves, Hills, Ruins, Trails, Markers, Treasures...³⁷

Waters, winds, fires, and earths—*aguas*, *vientos*, *fuegos*, *tierras*—shimmering raw materials through which local space can hold sway in its becomings.³⁸ The convergences of these forces, the nodes that make local space especially enchanted, are certain discrete features, the shiver-when-you-hear-about-them places, like La Cueva de la Vaca Chinga, La Poza de la Sirena, La Sabana del Mandingo (The Cave of the Tailless Cow, in Guata; The Pool of the Mermaid, in the Río Juticalpa; the Savanna of the "Mandingo" [a type of goblin] in Gualaco). For many, local space is unthinkable without such types of places.

³⁷ Aguilar Paz (1989[1930], particularly in "Geografía y leyenda") documents phenomena similar to those described below. Other sources for folklore include Lunardi (1948); Ortega (1946; 1951); Ramos and Valenzuela (1996; 1997; 1997a). Most of the literature and geography published by Olanchanos on Olanchos includes a substantial folkloric element.

³⁸ These are not categories that I have imposed for simplification purposes—they really do appear to comprise the fragments of a fourfold scheme: echoes, perhaps, of Mediterranean geographies becoming-indigenous.



Fig. 5.20. Cave mouth within *pura montaña*, Montaña de Chululí.

Caves are distributed generously across Olancho's limestone terrain, supporting a rhizomatic and possibly subversive "holey space" neither striatable nor smooth.³⁹ For example, caves connect with other caves: it was formerly said that a cave in the Cerro Nahual was passage for *brujos* from San Francisco de Becerra to Danlí, El Paraíso (Figueroa 1935:62). Aguilar Paz (1989:243-8) gives details of all local terrestrial space in Honduras subverted by a mole rhizome where indigenous *brujos* in the old days could enter at one point and reappear across the country in the blink of an eye—the Indios de Catacamas popped out in Comayagua; the Indios de Teupacenti, El Paraíso tunneled back and forth from Campamento, Olancho (A sinister "photo negative" of the Guancasco, perhaps). In local space, the most common belief about caves in Olancho is that they are connected across vast distances—similar to the tunnels that are believed to underlie towns like Juticalpa, connecting Catholic churches, Cerros de la Cruz, and other points. Caves, as in Aguilar Paz's days, are the entry and exit points for witches and spirits who these days sometimes drive cars and leave tracks. At other times, they hang

³⁹ Lunardi (1948:317-8) includes some interesting anecdotes on caves in western Olancho. "Holey space" is borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari, whose European miner rhizomes "turn the earth into swiss cheese" (413). "Holey space" is a third space, neither striatable nor smooth, in a wholly different dimension: the theme pops up constantly in Hollywood horror flicks ("...deep under New York, beneath even the subways...") and has particularly intriguing implications for Honduras, a country with abundant caves, a Mesoamerican religious "underworld" or "afterlife" equating caves with portals, and a historical



Fig. 5.21. Cerro El Encantado. Hill rises 500 meters above the Río Juticalpa (Río Lepaguare, Río Horcones) directly behind the photographer. Road was once the main route from Tegucigalpa to Juticalpa, and marks a *camino real*. *Serranía* in background is *terratendiente* and cattle space, but also inscribed with hunters' routes.

their laundry across the entrance. The phantom rooster crows nearby, as he does at other enchanted spots ("Aseguran que allí canta un gallo...").⁴⁰

Cerro Encantado and Cerro Brujo near Juticalpa, said to be hollow (neither are limestone), are prime examples of local epicenters, axes of enchantment. They harbor *venados* (white-tailed deer) and *estiquirines* (great-horned owls) with special powers to disorient and cause ill fortune, losing luckless hunters in the *serranías*. On hills of this type, people comment "dicen que azoran" (they say that they're haunted). Some, like Cerro El Boquerón, generate *diamantes* (balls of fire, in this case) that rise up and plunge down their slopes.

Precolumbian ceramic scatters and mound complexes are almost invariably familiar to local residents, who usually collect the more intriguing pieces of ceramic and other artifacts until, laying about the house, they get lost or broken (or sold). *Lomas* (temple mounds) have an

silver-mining regime that dominated the economy.

⁴⁰ Roosters and chickens are without a doubt the "most bewitched" fauna in Olancho, surpassing even crocodiles, white-tailed deer, and barn owls (*lechuzas*) in the frequency with which they are connected to enchanted places. This seems to demonstrate the importance of a becoming-Iberian, becoming-indigenous in colonial times, given that the chicken was introduced from the Old World, while the other three are native.



Fig. 5.22. *Frijolar* and *loma* in Dos Quebradas de Guacoca. Highly fertile soil on the site of a large Precolumbian ruin; the *loma* is a temple mound (once covered with paving stones); *espinal* covers areas too rocky to farm.



Fig. 5.23. Largest Precolumbian mound in El Boquerón, a half-kilometer south of the main village. In the background is the edge of the *barranco* (bluff) above the Río de Olancho, where substantial colonial stone constructions are found, possibly dating from San Jorge de Olancho.

intense enchantment associated with phantom “indios” and roosters, *diamantes*, voices, sudden breezes, and other phenomena. The original inhabitants are known as “Los Antigües” and are usually thought to be either Maya or Paya. Where Precolumbian and colonial ruin sites occupy the same space--San Buenaventura/Calpules of Gualaco; Dos Quebradas, Guacoca; San Felipe of Juticalpa--odd events happen on a regular basis, even during the daytime. Many stories have supporting material evidence in the form of ancient rusting weapons stashes washed out from

stream banks; stone sculptures and spheres dug out of the field; *lomas* that are hollow; burials; petroglyphs.⁴¹ In San Felipe, almost everyone has a story to tell, and though most of the “viejos de antes” (the Olanchanos who originally inhabited the area), died out or left several decades ago, they passed on their lore to the Sureños who supplanted them in the 1940s and 1950s.

A highly believable history that leaves its listeners questioning their own version of “reality” is told in San Felipe’s Plan de Turcios by an elderly man who, when young and under the influence of *guaro* (hard liquor), went out to dig along the old *camino real* from San Felipe over Sara to Seale and Danlí. It is said that in the old days, throughout Olancho, the *antiguos* had placed squat, well-carved stone figures along certain points of the *caminos reales*. The one above Plan de Turcios pointed down with one hand, a scowl on its face. The young man went out in the dead of night to dig up the gold that was surely buried there.

He heard a tap-tap-tapping coming from up the trail, and a tall Indian man, extremely old, came into sight. He was tapping the rocks with his cane so hard that sparks flew. The Indian, who must have been Maya (his wife breaks in: “Paya, she says, the Paya were here”) spoke in an unknown language, but he understood that the Indian admonished him, wagging his finger and grimacing. Then he turned and was gone in a flash.

The young man paid no heed. He continued to drink, taking large swigs from the *guaro* bottle, becoming strengthened for his task, anticipating “el tesoro.” A black chicken scratched nearby. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a monstrous winged beast with red eyes and long wings swooped down and began to fight him, letting out earth-rending shrieks, clawing, and slashing with its beak. It was, he thought as he fled, some sort of manifestation of the Mero Mero, in the

⁴¹ People also keep Precolumbian artifacts in their houses as curios; greenstone trinkets are worn around the neck and called in some places *pesadillas*, nightmares, because they prevent them; in other areas they cure sleepwalking. In Dos Quebradas, site of a “*ciudad perdida*” (lost city), farmers encounter large stone balls in their fields and roll them back to their houses for conversation pieces. They hang carved stones with round holes from trees in their yards. There is one large boulder in a nearby stream that local people say has been marked by the machetes of the *gigantes* (race of giants) who used to live in Dos Quebradas—it is scored with dozens of parallel furrows running the same direction, all about two inches long and a half-inch deep.

form of “una águila que le dicen” (what he thinks is called an “eagle”). He didn’t go back, and the treasure is still there.

Old trails (*caminos reales* and possibly Precolumbian routes “underneath”) like the one featured in the above account are sometimes mentioned as conduits: for the dead, for phantom processions, for headless horsemen, for *carretas sin bueyes* (carts without oxen). *Caminos reales*⁴² have often not been obscured by modern roads (which usually require different grades), and in areas such as the Valle de Gualaco, ancient stone *mojones* (markers) called *leguas* (because they mark the leagues), can still be found.⁴³

In some cases, the use of stones for marking important points grew not out of a measuring State’s need to know, but for wholly different purposes. Near the town of Gualaco along an old *camino real* in a *serranía* are two piles of stones that mark the spots where a gruesome double murder took place long ago. The crosses that were erected had “prayer” stones placed on them through the years as passersby paid them homage.⁴⁴

The most common markers near roads are simple crosses (without stone piles), shrines to victims of accidental death as well as to those succumbing in vendettas. They are places of dread, remembrance, and retaliatory inspiration: parts of an *olanchano* “landscape of death.” Not a few Olanchanos, if given the right opportunity, read off the victims of chance and *pleito* from local space as if they were reciting a rosary. For example, a friend from Guacoca, in the

⁴² “Camino real” refers to royal roads, a striating force of the colonial period; their name later became synonymous not only with real colonial remnants, but also with any main road or trail.

⁴³ The endurance of stone markers as records of a submerged space is an important theme. In some areas of Olanchito, particularly in the east and often on the large rivers, are *piedras de cara*, “face rocks.” Such Precolumbian petroglyphs (highly elaborate in many areas of Honduras) reverberate with the phenomenon of La Pintada, outside Catacamas, covered with the brands of cattle ranchers from centuries past. The rock itself has in effect resulted a better record keeper than the oft-burned municipal *cabildo* in Catacamas (the all-important cattle brand was registered and kept on file in the *municipalidad*). Lunardi (1948:327) comments on and pictures the similar phenomenon of “La Piedra Herrada.”

⁴⁴ Wrote former Honduran president Marco Aurelio Soto, regarding such a stone pile near Santa Lucía, Francisco Morazán: “Siempre sucede que al ver en nuestros caminos un rimero de piedras y una cruz nos sentimos sobrecogidas de terror, porque esa es la señal con que se designan los fatídicos lugares que han sido teatro de criminales escenas, de horribles asesinatos” (1996[1881]:446).

mute safety of my car, once murmured to the passengers in general, seemingly by rote, the names and gruesome details of natural deaths and murders that had occurred throughout local history along several kilometers of a road in that *comarca*. My speeding up, urged by a troubled-looking fellow passenger, only quickened what began to seem more like an incantation, with overtones of a “songline.”⁴⁵

One of the peculiar features of local space in Olancho is the amount of hidden treasures it contains. Many local people across Olancho can remember instances of someone digging a bag of coins out of the ground on their ranch, or of a servant discovering a cache in an old wall of her master’s house. A few families in Juticalpa who became wealthy overnight are said to have discovered *botijas*; one was said to have come across them through their occupation as house remodelers. It is believed that during the internecine armed conflicts of the 1800s, people buried their silver coins and didn’t live to tell; others had secret “bank accounts” under their floors, and never told anyone else. Not too long ago, a man who bought a bit of ranch land in the Valle de Agalta near San Esteban unearthed a bag of coins worth several thousand dollars, as much as he had paid for his land. This story is currently being repeated with amazement all over the Valle de Agalta. Precolumbian ruins are usually thought to cover golden hordes, and there are numerous stories about people who struck it rich, like the bulldozer operator cutting the main road through El Boquerón in the 1970s, who vanished and left his bulldozer sitting—he had found, it is said, a virgin of *puro oro*. Solid gold artifacts are said to be encountered from time to time in Olancho, though where these artifacts have gone is “un misterio.” Tales sometimes tell of the ruin and perdition of the finders, who squandered it all away or were avaricious (Wells 1857 and 1856 are good sources for this type of lore).

Boquerón, on the site of San Jorge de Olancho, is one of the most *tesoro*- and *misterio*-saturated places in local space, and has been visited repeatedly by foreign gold-seekers. Since

⁴⁵ The allusion is to Bruce Chatwin’s (1987) experience of driving an indigenous Australian along his songline, which resulted in an almost incomprehensible flow of song. Like a 33 RPM record played at 45



Fig. 5.24. Cerro del Boquerón rises 800 meters above the Río de Olancho. Photo taken in *invierno*. One of the more enchanted places in local space.

the popular belief is that anyone who finds a treasure there will remain close-mouthed in fear for their life, no one can tell or has seen exactly what the *gringos* or anyone else dig up over the years.⁴⁶

Just about any place can be haunted: “Dicen que azora.” Houses, hills, swamps, and river crossings, for example, are well known for giving frights, but the cemetery is probably the most universally feared place. In the *campo*, cemeteries are kept well away from the towns. The cemetery for Las Flores, an *aldea* on the south side of Lepaguare, is a 20-minute walk from the nearest house, blocked from view by a ring of *colinas* covered by thin *serranía* and lush *sabana*. When I visited, a *guaco* (laughing falcon), the foremost herald of death in Olancho, called from

RPM, the man-landscape rhizome had to speak rapidly to keep up with an alien machine.

⁴⁶ Other stories in Boquerón involve the appearance of the Virgin Mary in the canyon, as well as the strange attraction that it has for airplanes. In the old days (before roads) the local TACA flights in this area of Honduras couldn't get too close, it is said, for fear of being sucked down in the vortex. There have also been appearances of “balls of fire” that appear to refer to ball lightning.



Fig. 5.25. Cemetery of the *aldea* of Tapiquil, Colón, in Botaderos. Tapiquil is comprised in part of people with *olanchano* ancestry. Cemetery in the *serranía* is located a half-hour uphill climb from the *aldea*, which is situated in *montaña*.

an exposed snag.⁴⁷ The cemetery sprawled over about a *manzana* (1.75 *acres*); each family's hallowed ground was punctuated by wooden or concrete crosses with scant or no inscriptions. People in a virtually non-literate *comarca* know who is buried where. The oldest part of the cemetery, where the dead of over thirty years ago lay, had been swallowed by a dense *espinal*. A succulent plant with poisonous sap (known as *palito sobre palito* among other things) grew thickly around the fresher graves, and I asked whether it had some particular significance for cemeteries, since I had seen it only rarely elsewhere. People said they hated the plant: it was very dangerous, and they eliminated it wherever they could.

"Even" in towns, cemeteries have bad names. Juticalpa's is populated by *zopilotes* (black vultures) that are roosting in the nearest spot to the "zopes'" beloved municipal slaughterhouse, but to local people they seem to blend in well. Graves are packed close together, and folks shy away even in broad daylight from the patches of fresh earth where bodies were buried

⁴⁷ Nocturnal *lechuzas* (La Lechuza: witch in owl form) are said to presage and even to cause death, especially when perching on rooftops. Diurnal *guacos* are believed to follow funeral processions and "laugh" at us mortals. *Lechuzas* are "bad luck"; *guacos*, symbols of power, are associated with the *guaco*, a forest vine that is believed to be the most efficacious remedy against snakebite (*guaco* falcons are known in local space to prey on poisonous snakes).

yesterday. (Making people especially nervous is the rare and largely anonymous practice of disinterring and “profaning” of corpses in the dead of night.) This has an array of meanings: that the deceased was a member of an enemy family; that the deceased is thought to be of the restless type, and had a life history of revenge seeking; that dead bodies in general, even of *la gente buena*, give off dangerous *humores*. In the tight confines of Juticalpa’s cemetery, the possibly drastic intermingling of enemy bodies after a shoot-out calls for a logistical and ethical solution in local space. Spacing and timing in the event of two mutual enemies buried on the same day is paramount. Enemy families quickly reach implicit careful agreements to a wide margin of space and time between burials, and between church services, so that family members can continue to pretend that the other side exists in a type of alternate dimension.

An *olanchano* obsession with the choreographing of vengeful death has been hinted at throughout this section. Its importance cannot be understated—the ramifications of multiple intricate family conflicts entangled in a gathering place like Juticalpa is chilling to local people and outsiders alike. There is an element of distrust and vagueness in public conversation, because someone could overhear and misconstrue a meaning, catch a name wrong, pass it along to the wrong person: in this way, the rhizome of gossip has been one of the quicker routes to (more) death. Since very rarely are even single deaths forgiven, the concatenation of body counts and accumulation of Sin and points on both sides has no solution: as is said of many venerable families, “siempre han estado en pleito” (they’ve always been fighting). In the case of a Honduras-wide vendetta in San Esteban, an arms race and a “guerra” erupted across the Valle de Agalta in the 1980s, and cousins of cousins of cousins were killed in far corners of Honduras, sometimes for as little as “looking wrong” at a person they hadn’t even known was supposed to be their enemy.

At a personal level, the very geographies of conflictive families are circumscribed by the rules set down by their “caciques” (family leaders): some people can only go out at night, others only at day, and it is a very bad thing to be caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Never going anywhere without a firearm is an obvious stricture; never going past certain houses, down certain streets, into certain towns and *comarcas*, and indeed avoiding certain *municipios* altogether, are other techniques. Since such conflicts are rarely or never explicated to outsiders without a generous margin of *confianza* (which by my estimates appears to be permissible only after several years of close friendship, in many cases), visitors to Olancho are often perplexed (as I was for many years) by the inexplicable changes of itinerary, no-shows at crucial meetings, embarrassed silences and abrupt switching of the subject of a conversation.

All this is not meant to imply that “olanchanos are conflictive” or any similar absurdity. Many, perhaps most, families have no “real” enemies beyond the type that people have everywhere. Nevertheless, the rhizome of violence claims innocent victims as well, and can in this way drag “new” families into the fray. To avoid any possibility of inhabiting the same realities as the conflictive families, the rest of Olancho tiptoes carefully down the streets and whispers damaging information in the privacy of thick-walled darkened interior rooms of the house. What one hears in public, most of the time, though it can sound like a raucous and unplanned “noise,” is carefully filtered and spoken with quiet deliberation, if anything more than “small talk” is attempted. Breaches of this ethic are sure to turn heads.

Writing about a few of the multitudinous spatial aspects of murder in Olancho is perhaps a sad way to end this section, but it speaks nevertheless to the multifaceted meanings of enchantment, fascination, and obsession when applied to the landscape: in this way I don’t encourage any blanket approach of authentication or “save it before it’s lost” in reference to “traditions” and “local knowledge.” To many *olanchanos*, the outsides and their law-and-order striations are welcome if they can help resolve the seemingly never-ending vendettas that they say threaten to rip their land apart at the seams.

5.11 Enchanted Plants and Animals

What often starkly disentangle local space from the overcoding of outsider-compelled spaces (particularly development space) are the local knowledges maintained about flora and fauna.⁴⁸ Many families have lived for generations in proximity to a profusion of biota, and have relied on them to fulfill almost all needs of sustenance. This local knowledge is not inherently “indigenous” or “older” since independent blocks of it can form within the life span of a single person, through trial and error. Indigenous people often maintain more detailed knowledges, but not, I maintain, because they have any specific cultural “advantage” over Ladinos. For example, in the article “Paya plants prove potent” (Blaney 1996; see also Lentz 1993), all plants listed as part of the Pech’ indigenous “rain forest” pharmacy are well known and frequently used by many Ladino Olanchanos. The discourse reproduced in this type of article rarely fails to provoke chuckles in Olancho, since it places the Pech under the burden of protecting “authentic” *patrimonio* that in reality forms rhizomes with many a Ladino *comarca*.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ For floral knowledge compiled by a geographer, see Aguilar Paz, *Flora tradicional de Honduras* (1999[c. 1936]). Aguilar Paz, and Hardy Nelson (1986), give brief histories and bibliographic references of Honduran written sources for local plant knowledge. Most writers on indigenous groups (e.g. Conzemius 1928 on the Pech and 1932 on the Sumu and Miskito) give sections on plant and animal lore, as well as bibliographic references. Published lore on animals is scant in comparison to plants, but Marineros and Martínez Gallegos (1998) give generous ethnological detail on mammal species. My own work on the human geography of birds includes “Shared worlds: people and birds in central Olancho, Honduras” (1997)

⁴⁹ This stirs up a wasps’ nest of difficult and dangerous ethical issues, however. Plant knowledge, particularly of medicinals, exists as a smooth space in continuous variation from household to household, *comarca* to *comarca*, across Olancho, Honduras, Latin America. Traditional botanical experts in Honduras are as likely to be Ladino as indigenous, but their territories are distinct. The indigenous group has a solid, singular identity, and a clear line of difference drawing it as figure on a Ladino background. Indigenous groups are not only seen as “more authentic,” but can be (legally) negotiated with—as bounded entities with one-to-one control over their (bounded) space (e.g. Honduras’ Reserva de la Biosfera Tawahka Asangni, where all the Tawahka and their knowledge are located). Any question of patents on plant knowledges, however, is highly problematic to local space in general because it is entails some measure of control over a diffusing, ever-flowing knowledge. In the case of Olancho, even the appearance of imposition of exclusive rights over medicinals is overshadowed by the type of dangerous situation related to me by a Ladino healer in one town. He said that on trying to set up a botanical clinic (he is called a “médico botánico”) he received death threats from doctors and pharmacists, who are well aware not only of the efficacy local people attribute to “traditional” cures, but their infinitesimally cheaper costs.

Ethnozoology and ethnobotany have attempted to understand, even explain, local knowledge about biota in Central America,⁵⁰ but rarely have outsiders made systematic attempts to *place* the biota before ranking it.⁵¹ By this I mean that local animals and plants are not rooted in alphabetical lists or hierarchical rankings, as they sometimes appear to be, but rather have to first be extracted from their rhizomes, their holobionts. Their primordial contexts in local space are those of experience (visceral as well as vicarious) in places—positioned at points in a breathless hunting story, for example. All animals and plants are associated with certain places and with certain routes—they have (lateral) “folk geographies” before they have (vertical) “folk taxonomies.”

Individual trees accrue and are ascribed meanings as members of a type, as living things standing there holding sway in that place, and as integral members of a local grove or wood. Trees like *ceibas* may resound with Precolumbian echoes, even if felt as the faintest of pulses, so that people plant or protect them without seeming to know why they do so.⁵² Reverberating with such Mesoamerican “world-tree” echoes, a particular *ceiba* or other big tree can often be a fulcrum of local culture, of stories, of happenings: like the ancient trees near Manto from which it is said that the 1865 revolutionaries were hanged in the Ahorcancina. The massive tree in Catacamas’ Parque Central, one of Olancho’s “reigning” *palos*, is a *ceiba* that gathers great robes of poetic significance about itself.⁵³ Juticalpa possessed a similarly imposing central *palo verde* that toppled in the mid-1990s because the municipal government was having its roots

⁵⁰ Hunn (1977) employs a structuralist approach to the ethnozoology of Chiapas’ Tzeltal, for example.

⁵¹ Geographers, however, almost always tend to “place” biota. Jesús Aguilar Paz (geographer and pharmacist), for example, maintained a delicate balance between local senses of place and scientific reductionism (“true” explanations) in his writings on flora and fauna.

⁵² W. V. Davidson suggested to me the strong possibility that the distribution of *ceibas* even in supposedly non-Mesoamerican Olancho may be related to a special human affinity, rather than purely to “natural” biogeographic factors. See also reference to “ceyva” among the Taycones in 1561 (chapter 3.5).

⁵³ See Anderson (1997) on the significance of big trees, specifically *ceibas*, in contemporary Guatemalan culture.

partially excised to put in a bandstand. The death of the great tree affected many Juticalpenses deeply, but they were even more disturbed by the callous way that the municipality disposed of it, giving its central trunk to the *militares* and selling the rest for firewood. Few missed the symbolism in the age of a weakened military.

The cultural value of individual trees in Juticalpa is most poignantly illustrated by the, enormous, gnarled *tamarindo* inside a school that used to be the residence of Froylán Turcios, the radical poet from Juticalpa's upper class who became internationally famous in the early decades of the twentieth century. It is said that, as a boy, he would sit in this *tamarindo* to think and read and search for inspiration. During World War II, the military ordered all trees in Juticalpa cut down for obscure reasons to do with national defense; the heroic director of the school that now enclosed the tree hugged it in desperation, daring the soldiers to gun him down first if they wanted to cut it. They didn't.⁵⁴



Fig. 5.26. *Ceiba* in the Parque Central, Catacamas.

⁵⁴ Rubí Zapata (1986) penned an account that local oral history seems to support.

Large trees are often left in landscapes where the rest of the forest is removed, especially along watercourses and out in fields, as shade for cattle and for resting workers. Their bark attests to the histories of the spots. Myriad machete scores indicate the way and pronounce that one has been there; you can run your finger nostalgically over your mark many years later. The semideciduous *ceiba* is nowhere as commonly used for shade and rest as, for example, it is in Guatemala (Anderson 1997).⁵⁵ The beloved big trees of Olancho's open country include *tempisque*, *higuera*, *guanacaste*, *cedro*, and *nogal*, and there are dozens of others. Each tree gathers its own world of significance-- the special ways it should be treated, its relations to cattle, its value as shade for coffee, its fruit and their properties, the fauna and flora that inhabit it, the stories behind it. Trees are anchors of local space in many ways, always experienced both emotionally and "practically."

The realm of useful plants includes almost all types (except those of the remotest *montañas*) in one way or another, in all habitats, at all times of the year.⁵⁶ Local space is a space of usage, of exploitation of hundreds (on an individual knowledge basis) and thousands (at the cultural scale) of species, most of which have several names, their utility often varying from family to family, place to place. Places where an especially valued plant occurs or used to occur, connected by the ways to get to them, sustain a punctate landscape. People are not only continuously aware, but talk endlessly about what plants are in season, and who is harvesting what where. They talk of their cures, how they feel, what keeps the evil eye away: *ruda* (rue, an Old World species) appears to be the best-selling non-food plant at Juticalpa's weekly

⁵⁵ Not because it does not grow well, however; most likely because Olancho was halfway outside Mesoamerica. There is, nevertheless, an *aldea* of San Francisco de Becerra called "Tres Ceibas."

⁵⁶ Cyril Hardy Nelson Sutherland, a Honduran botanist, produced the seminal *Plantas comunes de Honduras* (2 vols.) in 1986. He lists over 2500 species. Most have more than one local name and more than one use among Ladino and indigenous communities. Nevertheless, it appears that the work only scrapes the surface of Honduran plant knowledge in many areas, to judge both from the numerous new species discovered on botanical collecting expeditions to "unknown" areas, and from the many uses that he does not record of plants in regions like Olancho.

Mayoreo (farmers' market). It is said to have "superstitious" value only, for luck and against the *mal de ojo* (evil eye).⁵⁷

Plátanos are the most highly regarded food in local space, as they have probably been for centuries. A gift of *plátanos* is far superior to one of *chatas* (a "poor" relation), the giving of which may even be taken as an insult. "Real" Olanchano *plátanos* grow in places such as the *vegas* of "True" Olanchano rivers like the Telica.⁵⁸ These are better for *tapado olanchano* (a stew which is the "national dish" of Olanchano) than the *plátanos mejorados* (high-yielding "Green Revolution" plantains) brought from La Costa.

People talk incessantly about what fruits are in season where, what they taste like this year, who will get to eat them. It can fairly be said that an obsession with fruit (as compared, for example, to green leafy vegetables) saturates local space. A prime indicator of this is the gift of fruit as an indispensable exchange in local culture. Fruiting trees are highly special occasions, and most people tend to know whose trees are fruiting (hence, who should be giving away fruit, if they are known as the generous type). Mangos, for example, show up at one's house in bushels, from the houses of people "who have too many," as a token of friendship. There is a seasonal circulation of the mango through local space that keeps the signs of wealth, humility, recognition, and respect forever on the move (people's memories of who tended to give what bridge the mango-less months): The more mangos one gives away, the more one's node in the

⁵⁷ The Mayoreo was a highly successful development project in that it became imbedded and accepted in local space. The *ruda*, through ignoring enlightened progress, is a marker of the event of development's crossing a threshold of becoming local.

⁵⁸ The association of "the biggest *plátanos* of all" with the *vegas* of the Río Telica bears close examination. The Telica often emerges in local space as the "most Olanchano" river, I imagine because its drainage basin is by far the largest for any river wholly within Olanchano; by comparison, the "great" Guayape/Patuca is treacherous and deterritorializing, while most other rivers either are born outside the department, or flee quickly from it. The Telica gathers all or most of the water of five *municipios* at the heart of Olanchano—but that heart is the unnavigable Valle de Arriba, a closed-in world quite different from the Guayape's. The Guayape is the golden river; the Telica (Figuerola 1935) was the Río Viejo, named for the large quantity of Precolumbian artifacts it carried in its currents. Like the *criollo* (old variety) *plátano* in development space, the Río Telica is surprisingly invisible in non-local accounts. I suspect its lack of exoticism and "outdatedness" are the prime culprits—that make it (leave it?) such a local river.

rhizome is strengthened; how many mangos one receives is neither counted nor significant.

Despite the social traffic in mangos, there are always more: They rot under their trees by the millions in Olancho, even after all the frugivorous fauna (from clay-colored robins to pigs) have had their fill. It is said that nobody can actually starve in Olancho's local space, because (in the leanest months) they can always eat mangos in private times of need and public times of famine. Despite this connection with extreme poverty, mangos never come to bear the negative tinge that other famine foods do. They are, say many local people, simply the best food in the world, and could not possibly (unlike *chatas*) ever be insulting.

The exchange of fruits is for most people living proof of the fecundity of the land. The extensive "feral" orchards of *guayabos* and citrus, as well as individual forest *zapotes*, *urracos*, *naracos*, *jocomicos*, and others, bearing so many that they rot like mangos and you can stuff yourself until you get sick, proves to Olanchanos that their local space is still superior to *tierras esteriles* (sterile lands, meaning lands to the west and "south" (El Sur, not Nicaragua).

The plant that best says what it means to be an Olanchano is the *coyol* palm, which grows abundantly in cattle pastures across the *valles* and up into the lower hills. Olanchano historian José Sarmiento writes:

No se sabe cómo se descubrió la bebida sacada de la palmera llamada coyol; pero el primero que la probó puede llamarse, con toda propiedad, el primer olanchano. (1990:9)⁵⁹

In Olancho, unlike across much of the rest of its ample Middle American range, the *coyol* is most highly valued for its wine, which seeps from downed trunks dragged to backyards and highway edges during the *verano*. (*Coyol* has other local uses, but none come close to alcohol in their importance.) Semana Santa (Holy Week) in Olancho would be unthinkable without wine tasting, sucking the fermented sap out of rectangular gashes up through bamboo straws

⁵⁹ Writers on Olancho rarely fail to mention *coyol*. Wells (1857) is highly complementary; Carr (1954) is especially eloquent. See also Turcios (1990[1911]) and Lépidus (133-4) in Valle (1947). A *coyol* appears to grace the 1808 Medalla del Batallón de Olancho (see Durón 1939). For more general work on the *coyol*, see especially Balick (1990) and Lentz (1989).

with horsehide filters. Palm wine is not recognized by Olanchanos as a feature of any other part of Honduras, and it is believed that where people do drink it, they must either be Olanchanos or have been taught by them. *Vino de coyol* has a long tradition that is as strong now as it ever was—among *católicos* but not among strict *evangelios*.



Fig. 5.27. *Coyoles* in La Venta, Gualaco.

In the 1950s, a local newspaper exhorted people from outside Olancho to come to the *Paseras de Coyol* (as the whole visceral experience of wine-tasting is called)—this was Olancho's prime tourist attraction at the time.⁶⁰ *Paseras* can only take place in local space, because to be true to the experience one has to sample the wine from different places, and no one *palo*, nor village, has the same taste. Campesinos and urbanites, rich and poor alike intermingle at the *paseras*, and seem equally obsessed with getting enough *coyol* while it lasts. Drinking *coyol*, like eating *tapado olanchano*, is “what it means to be olanCHAno” (emphasis on the third syllable denotes the pride of the *olanchano* speaker).

⁶⁰ *Avance* 1954 (72): “Vengan a tomar coyol.” The newspaper can be encountered in the ANH.



Fig. 5.28. *Huesos de gigantes*. Generic term for fossilized bones kept as curiosities; believed to be either from extinct races of people or of large fauna. In this case, owner of the fossils solicited scientific identification of what turned out to be a giant ground sloth (*Eremotherium*).

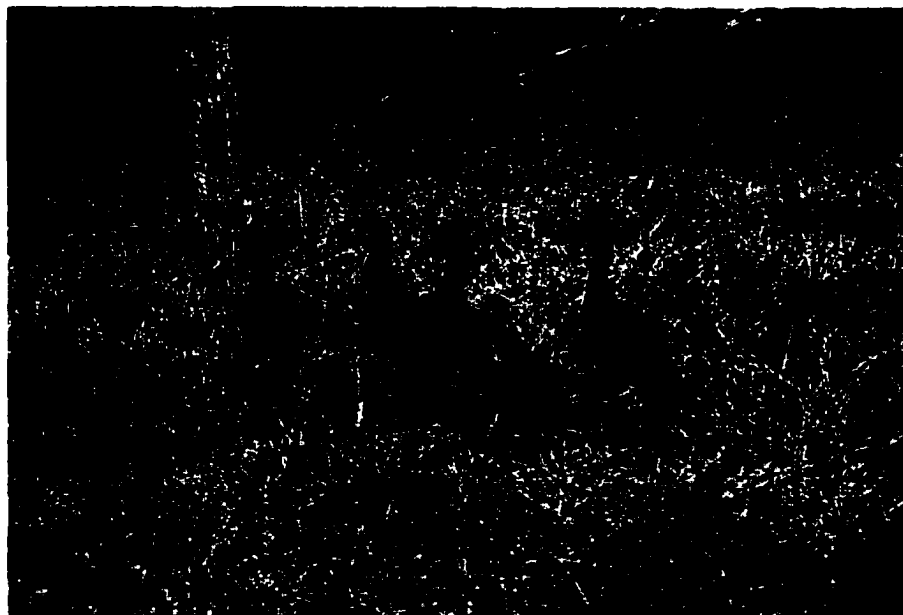


Fig. 5.29. *Pichiches* (black-bellied whistling-ducks) in Pueblo Viejo, Gualaco. Wild ducks are captured as ducklings and their wings are clipped; they serve as “*adornos*” and are usually called “*preciosos*.” They are most often kept by women and girls.

Like plants, animals have numerous uses, and all the well-known ones have their associated lore. Several of these are sketched in the section on hunting in chapter 6; by no means are most animals hunted, however. Most are left alone, or suffer indirectly through what conservationists term “habitat loss.” Habitat loss is due more to striating spaces of modernity, growth, and progress, I suspect, than to any possible innate local “dislike” of biota. Local space permits a vast array of feelings about fauna; going against the grain of conservation space (see Bonta 2001), I detect no systematized anti-faunal bias in Olancho, and instead have encountered a deep sense of loss among most local people for the receding of the biota in second half of the twentieth century. People often do what they can in their private realms, and in a limited extent through cooperative ventures, to favor and protect fauna. The dooryard garden, for example, is an attractor for birds, and the visiting avifauna do not go unnoticed by the owners. Indeed, *olanchanos* go as far as to plant certain flowers and fruits in hopes that cherished species will visit again and again, and perhaps even take up nesting. Children, vilified in conservationist accounts as solely the wielders of slingshots, display a wide range of opinions that often mix together within a single body (see Bonta 1997). I have come across more than one local conservationist who as a child would eat the still-beating hearts of hummingbirds in the belief that this would improve his *punteria* (aim).

Birds and people form an intimate rhizome of intense power through song, nest, show, and stare. Song is a becoming-bird (not to marginalize song’s becoming-insect) that goes beyond territory per se and, among other things, reaches, in its human tendrils, toward categories of “inspiration,” “sublimity,” and “joy.” (What the bird “feels” is best left to a spatial ethology.) Nest is home, rounded, “perfect” (Bachelard 1994). Show is not only plumage but small movements, territorial display, mating rituals, fleshy wattles, “acting like a forlorn child.” Stare is being looked at, locked into a gaze, aware of being regarded.⁶¹ This works as a rhizome with

⁶¹ Ortega (1951) captures this nicely in his becoming-*zorzal* (clay-colored robin).

wild birds, because it moves one from their watcher (gazing at birds, then listing them) to a *comprometido* (someone with a commitment). Being stared at means becoming entangled, and the millisecond that the robin or the jaguar glances at you is enough to make you feel important and slightly different than before. Being stared at is not by accident a key juncture of local hunters' stories: it is the crystal-clear point at which they "bond" with their prey, and whether killing it or not, recognize its otherness recognizing them.



Fig. 5.30. *Coa* in El Boquerón. The "violaceous trogon" is a treasure for ecotourists (who may think of it as a rain forest species) but an everyday sight in *vegas* next to cattle pasture. Its breeding displays are often performed in full view of passersby.

In local space, birds at the cultural scale are not so much generic types as they are individuals concatenated into identities in continuous variation from one domain to the next. "The Three-wattled Bellbird, *Procnias tricarunculata*" is a prime example of "a bird" that only ever exists in local space through its multiple meanings from family to family, *comarca* to *comarca*—marked by myriad names, the Río Sico of local birds. In La Avispa, it is the *cafetero* or coffee-bird, and on its previously more frequent appearances was believed to herald a good

crop. It is *pimentero* in El Carbón, signaling the ripening of allspice. It is *calandria* in La Venta, after its call, like the way a lark might sound. Larks don't occur in Honduras, and the name speaks of an archaic becoming-Iberian of avifaunal taxonomy. As *jagüiyero* it is known to hunters in the *montañas crudas* where the white-lipped peccary still occurs: the bellbird signals the presence of the most dangerous, but so succulent mammal.

5.12 Taking Flight

So much intricate knowledge about so many places in which to dwell, and ways to get around, suffocates one in traditions, enmeshes one in seemingly inescapable truths that might just be wrong. Speaking “Me voy pa’...” is an engagement in movement, the signal that even the best local space cannot retain me. I am called and have to get out, flee, trudge, out of necessity or caprice, threat or poverty, to a neighbor's house, to the pasture to find the *bestia*, or on secret routes to the *montaña* and Los Estados. The journey reinforces local space through its very probability—many Olanchanos seem restless to me, constantly on the move, coming and going with and without money, walking and talking and knitting together the village, the *comarca*, Olancho, the world. “Me voy pa’ la montaña” and “Me voy pa’ Lo’ Ehtado” are powerful pronouncements charged with sentiments almost unguessable to the outsider.

Distance is not measurable solely by kilometers within local space: local space is measured by elapsed time, and kilometers/*leguas* (new/old) are moved to secondary status. Kilometers are not often encountered in local space, but when they are, it is in association with modernity, with El Estado, and with other striations. Local distances include the *vara* and the *legua*, but people prefer to talk in *ratitos* and “ahí abajito.” The distance between two places depends on the difficulty of the intervening terrain—*camino bueno*, *camino malo*, *camino feo*, *camino triste*. Inside the *montaña*, distances become densely packed as a result of extraordinarily thick foliage and steep slopes, losing their relationships to linear and especially kilometer distances altogether. A kilometer, if such a thing were to exist within the *montaña cruda*, would take four

or five hours to cross. In comparison, La Costa, like everywhere that is connected by well-traversed roads, is nearer and easier to get to than many local *montañas*. To many Gualaqueños, Teguz is far closer than La Picucha.

The journey to Los Estados is said to be the highlight of many young peoples' lives. Many seek to go, as they say, just to see what it's like, maybe work a little, and then come back. Most people seem curious when they are not possessed, though not by any means is everybody eager to go and work without legal protection. Talking about going to the States, planning routes, weighing pros and cons, and wondering how to scrape together, often communally, the 40,000 lempiras (two- to three-years' wages) to pay a *coyote* (trafficker in migrants), occupy many long afternoons. The journey to Los Estados, while of unquestionable benefit to local economies in that many adolescents and adults do quite well, is also a rite of passage--long and fraught with dangers, taking one well away from family, friends, and local space in general.

5.13 Pasts, Present, Futures

The dominant account of the local past is one of great natural wealth, coming to an end anywhere from ten to fifty years ago (the timing and details vary widely by *comarca*). Today is the *desierto* with no animals. Villages in the *valle* used to have *fajinas* around them and firewood was close, *plátanos* were longer, rivers ran clear and were much deeper, their banks better wooded. The Río Guayape “era enorme.” Distances were greater then—it took an entire day to get to Teguz from Juticalpa on the old road and the old *baronesa* transports. People didn't go to the States. Things were much cheaper then—whether the 1980s or the 1920s are being discussed. The past didn't have as many barbed-wire fences, there was more *tierra suelta* (land “free” for the taking), less outsiders, and the soil was richer. You didn't used to have to fertilize it artificially. The climate was cooler too, back when the hills above town were *montaña*, not *pelón* like today. “No era un desierto como ahora.” “Había más de todo.” “Eran miiiiiles los venados--se mezclaban con el ganado.” “Eran nubes las guaras que volaban para

aquellos ocotales.” (It wasn’t a desert like it is now; there was more of everything; there were thousands and thousands of deer, which grazed with the cattle; clouds of macaws alit in those pinewoods).

Some elderly people remember the old days as desperate times of food shortages and famine, times they wouldn’t want to return to, when if you got sick or hurt bad, you died—there were no doctors, no immunizations. They remember living through or being told of the Año del Gripe (1919), when the piles of dead were hauled away through the streets by oxcart.

The land issue is up in the air—in the old days, there may have been fewer land laws favoring the poor, but on the other hand there was more untaken land than today, even in the *valles*. Then the Sureños came and got everyone riled up, goes some popular wisdom.

In 2000, the old, old days were those beyond the memories of people in their eighties and ninties—the time before the 1920s, generally. There is, however, considerable oral historical continuity, so that people talk about what the grandparents of their grandparents knew, though this is not necessary knowledge if one prefers to be thought of as “moderno.” Many families have reasonably detailed conceptions of certain notable events that took place in their *municipio* during the 1800s. According to a friend of mine in Gualaco, “una viejita de Uluapa (Manto), de las más viejitas, cuenta como a ella le contaron sus abuelos, que les habían contado los abuelos de ellos, de como era cuando estaban los misioneros.”

The present is viewed almost unanimously in a strongly negative light by all but those who are actively transforming the *montaña* frontier. In a country where younger people remember nothing but economic recession and an eroding quality of life, there are few bright spots. Events like Hurricane Mitch only serve as proof in many minds that “estamos jodidos” (“we are screwed”). We have less flora and fauna, less respect for human life, more noise and dust, and money that means less and that doesn’t go as far as it used to.

The future, as viewed from local space, is often something to dread. The problems considered to be underlying—corruption, poor education, exploitation by rich countries—are

not believed to have quick and easy solutions. Most people know that there are far too many conflicting identities and that the problems are imbedded in historical strata. One finds more honest optimism about the future in spatial identities dominated by naive idealism, embodied in certain local educators; some conservationists; some developmentalists. These are the groups that see (simple unified univocal) space as on a trajectory “evolving” to a higher state, or devolving to one of primitive splendor. Local space, however, is developing/enveloping--it does not “unfold” absolutely, but rather always conceals at the same time it is revealing: a chiasm. Those who inhabit local space understand its multitemporal personalities as much as they understand its multispatial ones. By their very allegiance to spatial identities, they realize that spaces come and go in different directions over time, growing and shrinking, appearing and fading.

5.14 Resilience of Local Space

No one dwells *only* in local space, being solely a “local person.” Rather, local space, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, is more a “Plane of Consistency” or “Earth” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) from which spatial identities and the spaces with which they are symbiotic can arise in complex combinations. Before moving to these, in chapter 6, it is important to list some of the principal characteristics of local space that seem to have aided its resilience and presence even under the onslaught of overcoding machines like the State and haecceities such as hurricanes. Instances of machines held at bay successfully, and others that can either become-local (symbiont) and/or take over the local (mimesis then parasite), are themes that dominate the remaining chapters.

1. Local space is an n -dimensional web of webs of ways and places. In other words, it is experienced by its inhabitants as significant (and thus powerful) in its stoppings (places) and movements (ways).

2. Local space is a chiasm of global and local. It is always traversed by flows that circle the earth (e.g. weather, capital) or are extraterrestrial in origin (e.g. the sun, moon, and stars.)
3. Local space is multitemporal. Each space has its own time; there is no overcoding “Time Arrow” but rather simultaneous arrows of becoming that point in myriad directions.
4. Local space is symbiotic with all its outsides, has no one Outside, and is resilient as it maintains a skepticism about its own absolute phenomenological position at the center of the world. It remains faithful to its “origins” in flows of materials and ideas from elsewhere.
5. Local space is multispatial. It “is” only through the becomings of its spaces. “The landscape” is a record or testament to all these spaces in mixture, and can be read through any or all combinations of its jumbled codes.
6. Local space is neither wholly striated nor wholly smooth, but rather both. While overcoding machines striate it, subversive rhizomes smooth it; as invasive rhizomes smooth it, it is submitted to the centralized order of the striation.
7. Local space has multiple centers and peripheries. It is striated from within from all directions, in all dimensions, and is thus difficult to overcode from any one outside.
8. Local space contains homes but no original Ground or Homeland per se. This is because it is part of intertwined flows, not an eternal stasis: it has no long-term permanence other than that achieved or lied about by regimes of signs.
9. Local space is enchanted. It contains echoes of relict spaces and codes that still reverberate in local imaginations.
10. Local space is lived-in space. It is never empty, never unowned.
11. Local space is jumbled and uncontrollable. It is subversive and powerful precisely to the extent that it is not homogeneous.
12. In the case of Olancho, to continue a list from earlier chapters, local space is resilient and empowering through its specific *enredos* such as the *paseras de coyol*, “Mayas and Payas,” *tapado olanchano*, mangos, and indeed all the phenomena of this chapter, as long as their “real”

significance remains somewhat of a mystery to *olanchanos*, and even more difficult to explain among outsiders.

Chapter Six Spatial Identities

Jesús Aguilar Paz, el famoso cartógrafo autodidacta, que levantó uno de los mejores mapas en todo el continente americano, pero que simultáneamente incursionó en amplios y diversos campos. Historia, Geografía, Arqueología, Química, Atomismo, Antropología, Etnología, Lingüística, Demografía, Literatura, Agricultura, Educación, Filosofía, Política, Botánica, Mineralogía....el hombre arquitecto de nuestra identidad nacional.

Aguilar Paz-Cerrato, *El alquimista de Gualala*, 164

By its very complexity local space is resilient and supple, but at the same time its myriad striating and smoothing forces leave it weak as a “whole” resistor of repulsion. For example: a rhizomatic population of rodents seems capable of resisting any and all human attempts to eliminate it (nor are there projects to “Save the Rats”). But this extrahuman strength may be insufficient if cornered--a boot (like a flyswatter) is an effective tool for eradication of an individual; setting traps can wipe out families (like a roach hotel); a systemic rodenticide (like an *agroquímica*) can do serious damage to a population. For any machine that thinks it cannot afford to have pests, there are always ways to do them damage, even if the multitude eventually resprouts. In this dissertation I isolate three such machines--the State, Development, Conservation--that may sometimes work to stamp out the local and replace it with something else. This, of course, never works, but for those who suffer through the attempt it can be slight consolation (Salcedo’s destruction of Olancho in 1527 comes to mind: see chapter 3.3).

Machines with globalizing pretensions are difficult to stop in their local manifestation, because they striate not only through hierarchical simplification but also through rhizomatic replacement. By this I mean a type of mimesis, a “popping up inside” local space, drawing off its very complexity to summon forth their own haecceities from the virtual to the actual, “spies” of a sort that mime the local to effect striation (through “local outbreaks” and the multiplier effect). This is far more effective than invading wholesale, because it works almost invisibly in many cases, until a situation is reached such as that of Honduras today--e.g. *el desarrollo* is a

universal good for any and all spaces; El Estado has to underlie all reality everywhere; there is a dichotomy of Nature and Culture.

Throughout this dissertation I have asserted that local people in Olancho, though dwelling in shared spaces like the *municipio* container, also inhabit radically different spaces. In this chapter I describe the dominant spaces of “land use” that have resulted from centuries and in some cases millennia of activity. These spaces seem to interact laterally (e.g. haciendas vs. smallholdings) but in reality tend to pop up inside each others’ domains: campesinos becoming-*ganadero*; *ganaderos* becoming-campesino. At times they are largely separated by other machines working at different scales: for example, the *serrania* as “ideal” for timber space (“de vocación forestal”)--hence useless for agriculture. Such “natural” divisions are not the rule and do not solve conflicts, however. Though there are many “built-in” mechanisms for “bajando la presión” (lowering the pressure: e.g. *coyol*, *ferias*, meetings) that may favor working out solutions to spatial conflicts, more often these are overwhelmed by partisan spatial politics. The problem is intensified by certain currents of the State, of Development, and of Conservation that “divide and conquer” by privileging one space over another.

All the spaces that I discuss have coalesced around certain different times--none are “always and forever.” None are static. Each are bound together internally by a holobiont, a collection of symbionts that may form a rock-hard identity or “core” (or think they do) This identity is the “spatial identity” to which people adhere in various ways--for example, *ser ganadero*, *ser mozo*, *ser olanchano*, *ser promotor*. The last term of each section denotes the identity most closely associated with the space--e.g., the *ganadero* is cattle space, and thus is responsible for maintaining that space’s holding-sway, its fight to remain valid, and if possible, to “take over” other spaces when conditions allow. Each space has its sycophants or parasites, identities that exist vicariously through their dependence on the “core” identity. There are also mimes, such as development workers, who “get close” but whose spatial allegiances may be to

other machines. These mimes I term “nomads,” apparently free agents who carry spatial codes around the world and make them intelligible anywhere and everywhere.

This chapter leaves conservationist/conservation space, and forest space, aside for special treatment in chapter seven. For the rest, I try to be faithful to the semantic domain of each space by shoring up its identity so that the reader can taste the flavor of “what it means to be a....” In other words, I sketch the feelings from within as well as the views from without. The first two sections describe the only two spaces that attempt to overcode all of local space in all of Olancho. I begin (6.1) with Church/State in terms of the characteristics mentioned above. I then consider (6.2) the domain of development space and its practitioners. In reality, Church, State, and Development interweave and become each other (as well as becoming-local). Section 6.3 looks at the nomads “without a space,” who don’t profess spatial allegiance but are far from neutral—acting as “agents” for other spaces, even if they are hardly aware of the fact.

Sections 6.4 through 6.7 describe the four spatial “land use” identities most often put at odds with each other; I underscore that each of these has chiasms with outsides—in the case of coffee space, for example, a chiasm with global space is obsessive. Each identity also has schisms and even “split personalities.” Section 6.4 describes cattle space. Section 6.5 discusses campesino space, the campesino identity, and its manifestations as farmer, hunter, and gatherer, as well as its conflicts with cattle space. Timber space and the *maderero* are the subject of 6.6. Section 6.7 looks at coffee space and its dual *terrateniente*/campesino identities.

Each spatial identity and the space it overcodes has margins of becoming, of deterritorialization effected both by other spaces and by misfits and outlaws who are capable of “subsisting” liminally within and across spaces. The comments they offer—*oreros* in gold space, for example—speak volumes about the marginalization of each space by another, and the marginalization of Olancho itself through history (6.8).

6.1 Church Space and State Space: La Iglesia y El Estado

Church and State share a History in Olancho, and still possess many features in common as striating machines. One God and One State are still everywhere. Church and State both are extraordinarily hierarchical but rhizomatic as well. They both “do development.” They provide strength to local space and at the same time they “taketh away.”

Olanchanos in overwhelming majority think of God as “up there,” the prime mover around which all signs whirl. Even in the most complex and entangled of *enredos* God is invoked, indicating that at least in the mind of Christianity Olancho is one united space. Nevertheless, like across Central America, there is an undeclared war for the souls of Olanchanos, growing from the increasing “threat” that *evangelios* present to Catholic hegemony. Non-Catholic “sectas” range from Southern Baptist, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Jehova’s Witnesses to Pentecostals, Church of Christ, Church of God, and numerous others.

The Catholic Church, still representing a majority of the population, carries out most effectively land- and poverty- based development agendas in Olancho. Among *evangelios*, those who are more “primitiva” seem less concerned with “sustainable development” or “social justice” and more with their souls’ salvation through fervent and constant celebration of the Word.

Despite the homogenizing view from the Catholic, each non-Catholic church is distinct: the Jehovas’ Witnesses, whose magazines are widely disseminated in Spanish in the towns (many Catholics read *Despertad!* and *Atalaya* avidly), carry radical environmental messages (see *Awake!...* 1997). Other churches ignore social or environmental justice altogether. The Catholic Church, however, though the standard for social justice movements in Olancho, downplays environmental justice since alliance with conservation spaces that exclude people is viewed unfavorably.

The fight for souls is a pervasive theme in everyday life everywhere in Olancho. The *sectas* have gained huge numbers of converts in the last decades partly because they provide a faith without intermediaries (no saints or virgins), a fervent worship of God/Jesus that can take place every evening, in someone's house: you don't have to wait for the priest to come, or feel yourself a tiny insignificant part of the great hierarchy of a Church. This has universal attractions, it seems: Catholics have attended the Escuela Evangélica Helen Luce in Juticalpa for decades, for example. Among Catholics there is wide-margin of becoming-*evangelio* these days.

The Catholic diocese of Olancho is within the archbishopric of Honduras; the archbishop during the years of my dissertation research, Oscar Andres Rodríguez Maradiaga, became a Cardinal in 2001, perhaps the most noted position ever held by a Honduran in modern global space, and a rallying identity for all Hondurans. Rodríguez has been widely lauded and rarely criticized by Hondurans, regardless of whether or not they are Catholic. Many say he is "papable."

From Juticalpa, the Catholics' Pastoral Social (affiliated with CARITAS) and other groups plan and disseminate "Christian" development throughout Olancho. The church's many efforts include water projects, a university, basketball courts, and Olancho's first *silo de ancianos* (rest home). Whatever the Church does gains much wider and faster acceptance in many areas than other development projects done by governments and NGOS. The Catholic Church is usually presumed to be acting selflessly, and even incorrigibly.¹

Non-Catholic development efforts are also considerable in Olancho, but can be more controversial in local space because of their hegemonic tendencies and even a certain guerrilla-like infiltration of Catholic Space. For example, the Rancho El Paraíso in San Martín, San Esteban, owned by Honduras Outreach of Georgia, is a several-thousand-hectare hacienda in the

¹ Though among Catholics and non-Catholics alike there is a fair margin of doubt about the integrity of certain individual Catholic development practitioners.

Valle de Agalta. According to COHDEFOR extensionists working for the competing development project PAAR, El Rancho “de los Gringos” saturates villages with gifts to such an extent that local people no longer desire development to come from anywhere else. The Rancho’s striations are effected brigade-style, bringing down groups of Christians from the United States of America to “do God’s work” building houses, digging pit latrines, and planting gardens for the Poor.² Competing groups see this as the most crass way to create dependence, and offer proof that villagers learn to sit back with arms folded, waiting for more handouts. Honduras Outreach, which purports in Olancho to be *the* development group for the Valle de Agalta, duplicates and replaces any and all social services, even opening a US-quality school with its own school bus and textbooks—a type of institution common in the larger *ciudades* (e.g. Catacamas, Juticalpa), but quite rare in the *campo*. Meanwhile, there is local resentment over their *terrateniente* status, since they “lock up” some of the best farming and ranching land in the Valle de Agalta.

The State is often regarded in Olancho these days as receding from local space, leaving the “pieces” in an arena for competing versions of Christianity/Development. In the next section, I look at Development Space per se, but it is useful to show both how the State has “receded” and how it remains ever-present at a deeper level in everything that Development does.

The receding of the State is a direct result of the end of the Cold War and the measures taken by successive Honduran governments in the 1990s--first that of Rafael Leonardo Callejas, then Carlos Roberto Reina, and finally Carlos Roberto Flores. All three presidents gained popular support by marginalizing the Honduran Military, a formerly largely autonomous body of the State. Since the Military did their job of overcoding all local space well, the vacuum created when they were stripped of such features as the police was quickly filled by “anarchy” in margins like Olancho.

² Honduras Outreach has an informative Internet site: <http://www.hoi.org>.

How is space policed in Olancho these days? As of 2000, the new civilian police force had extremely limited power and presence in Olancho, and restricted itself to carefully orchestrated enforcement activities, not arresting the “wrong” people or treading on the wrong toes. In post-militarized Olancho, everyone who is able uses their own extra-judicial methods of policing and punishment. The police are seen as inefficient and corrupt, with only limited success in areas such as carjacking and gang violence. The judicial system is weak but functional in towns, while lawyers are useful for certain disputes but certainly not all. For almost every type of legal violation an out-of-court solution can be negotiated: even a traffic ticket may remain unwritten upon the offer of “cinco lempiras para un fresco.” This does not mean that the laws, lawyers, and courts are held in total contempt, however. One of the most common laments by Hondurans, and Olanchanos are no exception to this (despite the stereotypes), is that Honduras is not a country under the rule of State Law. Olanchanos do not brag about the “traditional” ways they solve conflicts and punish criminals, but do say that such a way has to prevail if the “system” (El Sistema) refuses to function.

The dense network of laws that in “more developed” regions affect all practices has limited effect in rural Olancho primarily because the laws are usually designed to favor one space over another even as they purport to be “universal.” Laws are inevitably used as support for the special claims of one or a combination of spatial identities. There are laws to support coffee-growing as the Nation’s number one priority (most recently, Decreto... 1996), laws that create conservation spaces, laws that privilege pine forests, laws that privilege ranching, laws that “modernize” agriculture (from at least 1843 [Decreto... 1843] to 1992 [Decreto... 1995]; see especially Vallejo 1997). However, a “code of laws,” I argue, can hardly be made by combining all these laws, because they represent the needs of conflicting spaces that do not and probably never will yield to one code.

What is less often remembered about El Estado is that it has always already striated local space and local minds. While also a Player in Development (“Que nos trae El Estado?”), underneath the table it is already holding the winning deck.



Fig. 6.1. State space. A message from the Honduran Presidency in support of the *La Tribuna Enciclopedia Honduras* series (n.d.). Though Honduras is purported here to be a space of “science,” “education,” and “culture,” we see only urban activities; Copán defines roots.

State space has the power to become invisible in everyday life “within” the State. The pervasiveness of State space, of its “naturally” overlaying and underpinning all other spaces, so that one is always in one State or another, is made evident at border crossings, but it is otherwise so “natural” that you forget it is there, here, everywhere. If you don’t ponder its artifice, it disappears “naturally” into the landscape. *Of course* you are in Honduras; this can’t possibly be any other country. You can’t have two nation-states occupying the same ground (for very long, anyway). Nevertheless, as chapter three showed, State space was historically produced. It has become-local to a great extent over the centuries, but is far from dissipating

into local space--two-thirds of Honduras stopped being a smooth space of *comarcas* in continuous variation in the 1540s.

6.2 Development Space

Development saturates all space and presents itself in some form or another as a universal good for all humanity (for a “classic” statement, see Bruntland Commission 1987, *Our common future*). In Olancho, it has been doing this in certain explicit form since at least the 1800s. Development in its modern guise has taken place after 1945, and is marked by such sweeping programs as the “Alianza por Progreso.” Development has overcoded local space densely, and its overcoding is effected by most, if not all, spatial identities. Anything else, it seems, is unthinkable--Development has come to possess “all the answers.”

Development is an unveiling, an uncovering, a throwing open of the blinds to cast light on “irrational” old traditions practiced under cover of gloom. Each and every space can (some day) Be Developed--as the etymology of development/*desarrollo* suggests, space can be advanced, unfolded, made, thought into a State of Development. An “imperfect” (underdeveloped, *sub desarrollado*) space is said to be “developing” or “on the road to development” (*en vías de desarrollo*)--unfolding, realizing its potential, still half-formed, trying hard to get it right. Things can go wrong, however, and the forward march can be deflected by “intereses”: in this way, space can become “misdeveloped” (*mal desarrollado*). Space can even be “undeveloped”--a “virgin forest,” for example, is such a space. It has not yet been guided on the road to its fulfillment. Its fruits have not yet been enjoyed.

Development is an abstract machine, one of the most pervasive and powerful the world has ever experienced, because it has flowered from Western notions of origin, forward movement, expansion, evolution, and maturation, which seem to abide by the Laws of the Universe themselves.³ Development is Progress, and a developing/developed space is a progressive

³ Inspiration here has come primarily from my own fieldwork (and from Bonta 1998), and from Sachs, ed., *Development dictionary* (1992); Escobar, *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of*

space, whether because it has more highways and subdivisions, is more profitable, has more outhouses, or simply allows greater connectivity, greater free flow of communication.⁴

El desarrollo in Honduras is change for the better, catching up with wealthier countries, becoming less of an international embarrassment. Honduras is an underdeveloped space and a developing space; one day, it hopes to be a developed space. Olancho is a developing space; Gualaco is a developing space; La Avispa is a developing space. Campesino space is sorely underdeveloped space. Cattle space, according to *ganaderos*, has not reached its fulfillment, either--cattle ranchers need to develop, to modernize, to progress. Coffee space is a developing space as well--according to some, *cafetaleros* need to modernize by increasing production, using more chemicals, and creating more coffee space; others say that the ideal "sustainably" developed space would be organic certified coffee space becoming-*montaña*.

The facets of local space that remain inaccessible or unintelligible to development remain undeveloped space, by definition. Local space contains much of what development is fighting against: the wrong traditions, slash-and-burn, sense of place, history. But the spaces sketched in this chapter are almost all developing within *la lógica del Desarrollo*. What isn't developing, by this logic, is either "set aside for Nature"--conservation space--or unintelligible (*irracional*). It is quite rare to encounter anyone in Olancho who questions the destiny-driven perfectionism and idealism of *el desarrollo*--as rare as finding someone who questions God. People carry ideal spaces in their heads, and measure landscapes accordingly. Almost everyone agrees--*el desarrollo* is a universal good. What they squabble over is "Development for whom?" What are the right model/s, who should benefit and who shouldn't, what is the role of El Estado, where should development go and what are its limits. In the case of Olancho, which I suspect is far from unique, Development creates an obsession among its sycophants: How much Money

the Third World (1995).

⁴ For "connectivity," see Annis (1992). This seems to indicate its rhizomatic qualities and even a becoming-local.

will be spent? Decent Projects that will bring Change, or at least jobs, are measured in *millones* (dollars or lempiras, depending on the scale nad the speaker).

Development's answers (the development solution) come from an international pool of development equations: one is always available to solve a local problem. Thus, figuring out how to electrify a mountain village is solving the rural electrification (*la electrificación rural*) equation for x , and x =the village in question. One "plugs in" and strings together decontextualized (deterritorialized) "solutions" from wherever in the world they happen to have first been applied. Development equates local space to localized conditions of the universal human equation. The local is a level and a subset of the global. What works here works there, because geography can be "leveled" and cultural differences ironed out. The Development machine supplies solutions to all problems, and thus ultimately thinks it "works." Its regime of signs (with attendant language) admits of no other "real" solutions: could there even be an "alternative development" that has not "sold out" or become "counter-productive"?

Development space declares its localization and suggests power to transform space at every coordinate through the erection of certain physical markers, symbols that "stand for" development: Development was here, is here, will hold sway here. Being able to read these markers is key to detecting the presence of concentrated forms of development, and thereby the pushing away of "everything else." In rural Honduras, development symbols can be material constructions like *letrinas* (outhouses). Where they don't quite coincide with local cultural constructions, *letrinas* are always markers of development. If they did coincide, they would belong not to development but to preexisting local space, part of the abject background that would have to be improved. In a local space in which *letrinas* already prevail, development would have to mark its passage through the "zone" by installing the "next level": flush toilets (in the *ciudades*). In most of rural Olancho, as well as in the poorer urban neighborhoods, *letrinas* are prominent symbols of development space. If you see them, then development, via

letrización, is holding sway. In an “outhouse landscape,” if you don’t have a *letrina* then you’re underdeveloped.

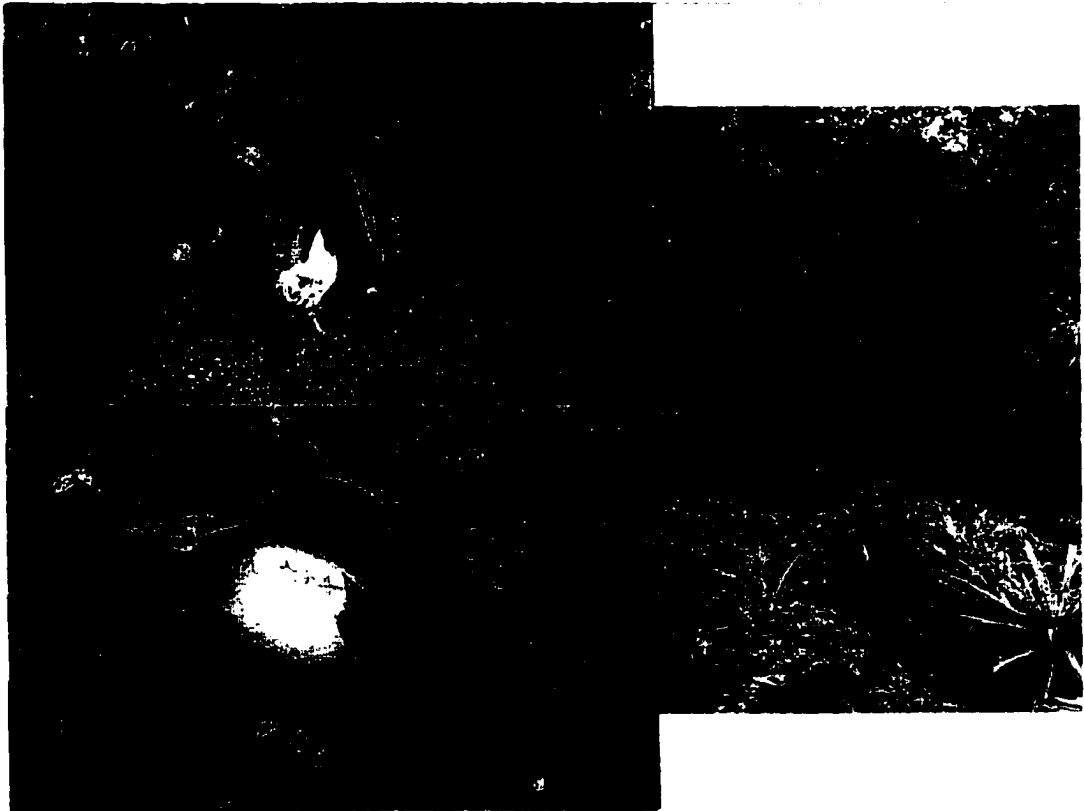


Fig. 6.2. “Undevelopment” space in San Felipe, Juticalpa. The absence of development leaves cryptic signs only decipherable in local space of Ramos family. Woman’s space: chicken house is built with available materials, needing neither “presupuesto” nor “apoyo.” Young girl has carved her own accounting into a *calabasa* to be sold to “Raverta.” Man’s space: growing mixture of *calabasas*, pineapple (*patrimonio* of San Felipe), *yuca*, *achiote*; without need for technical assistance; pest resistant through diversity; famine resistance through number of different crops and temporal staggering.

Letrinas announce loudly the advent of Development; even so more signs may be needed to point to what has been left here. Projects such as FHIS (Fondo Hondureño de Inversión Social) paint their slogans on the sides of the outhouses, so there will be no doubt. Development signs achieve the definitive break from the “traditional background” (he built that outhouse from know-how and wattle-and-daub) that does not need to erect physical signs but rather takes meanings directly from phenomena in the (invisible to outsiders) “pre-literate” landscape.

Wood-and-paint signs are two-faced (like “Jano”), pointing two ways: forward to the work of development (what’s been done here) and backward to the responsible agencies who donated funds and got the job done. Building in front, builders behind. Signs are usually coated by cryptic acronyms (from the point of view of local space) and the sum of money spent is stated prominently. If El Estado is directly involved, then a political administration will be listed as well. Similar information is displayed on all the cars (usually new four-wheel drive vehicles) without which Projects couldn’t function.

Signs of development and the signs that point to them, and indeed the whole sign system eventually fades back into local space as development flows on, and they themselves, if “unsustainable,” rot, rust, and come tumbling down.⁵ As often, however, the plaque and the work remain even after the development solution changed. But whether they lasted or not doesn’t matter: Development space barely has any memory, being but the film on an expanding bubble. By the time the works of development cease to be shiny and new, the Projects have ended and the personnel have migrated. Might it be that development space is a temporary condition, successful according to its own algorithms not as it blares its presence, but as its absence allows the local to reclaim its “good works”? This was the example of the *mayoreo* in Juticalpa (from chapter five) that was such a “good fit” with local space that it appears to have become-local. The becoming-local of development is addressed contextually in chapters seven and eight.

Where and when development becomes concentrated, its practitioners modeling the latest development fashions from around the world, local space can appear to spin around a signifier such as the Proyecto of chapter two. Such “model spaces” in which Development Projects

⁵ Most back lots of Honduran government agencies’ regional offices in Juticalpa contain a plethora of abandoned vehicles—leftovers from development projects as many as two decades before. One such lot that I came across is “hidden,” seemingly, in a little-visited corner of town. It contains over thirty purportedly “useless” “carros del Estado” (donations from developed countries), but I found out that some, when originally abandoned, had as little wrong as a dead battery.

operate, their destiny charged with “hope,” seem at times to breathe different air than “vernacular” areas nearby. Such spaces are yet rare in Olancho, but given precedents across the planet they will presumably multiply as conditions allow. Meanwhile, the conditions for their coalitions grow more favorable as certain nomadic packs swarm across local space, working for themselves but also for States, like the cobbled-together crusading armies of medieval Europe.

6.3 Nomads

Development gets its work of overcoding local space done not only through the “will of the people” (who if left to themselves are usually “too lazy”) but also through siphoning off energy from an elite pack of nomadic “experts.” *Los expertos* don’t have to be local—they can be from anywhere, because what they do is solve the reigning fashionable equations of development “for” the local. In this section I consider the Peace Corps Volunteer, the Honduran *técnico*, the teacher, the *periodista* (journalist), and the politician as different manifestations of problem-solving nomads. In each case, they have their own spatial allegiances but, willingly or unwillingly, advance the overcoding specific to Development (even if they think they failed, or that Olanchanos “don’t want to become developed”).

The Peace Corps Volunteer (henceforth “PCV”) sent to Honduras has to perform satisfactorily in three months of “Pre-Service Training” “in country” before being “sworn in” for a two-year “service.” PCVs are assigned to one or more government and/or private “counterpart” agencies, and most work directly with one or more “Host Country National” (Honduran) counterparts. “Sectors” in Honduras during the 1990s included Education, Hillside Agriculture, Health, Municipal Development, Water Sanitation, and Natural Resources, to the Wildlands division of which I belonged as a PCV in Juticalpa from 1991 to 1993. The Wildlands division focused on the protection of biodiversity, buffer zone management, and other ways of extending and consolidating conservation space; during my tenure, PCVs in Wildlands received less training in “sustainable development” than those in other sectors; some

had even signed up for Peace Corps specifically to do wildlife inventories and had little interest in local culture: campesino space was a “trashed” landscape you had to trudge through on your way to the rain forest. It could be made better, as “buffer zone,” the more closely it approached Nature. Sectors such as Health and “Hillside Ag,” on the other hand, put more emphasis on interacting with campesinos, trying to steer them and their space toward sustainable development. The following comments are a pastiche of impressions gathered from my own interaction with people-oriented PCVs and the institution of Peace Corps during the 1990s in Honduras.⁷

In the US, future PCVs are aware that the Peace Corps maintains a venerable tradition of “doing something” to change the world, that their service will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, with better benefits than other volunteering experiences overseas. “The toughest job you’ll ever love” as the slogans have it, and one that will get you closer to the Earth, away from the faceless suburbs, crass commercialism, and superhighways of “America,” back to the way it used to be, where people still live in villages and everyone knows each other, while they raise food at home, trying their hardest to eke out a living in a world that is unfair to them. The future PCV has a carefully-guarded dream of proving that it is indeed possible to help these people up, to “teach them to fish,” though the idealism of future PCVs is more often than not damaged by the disheartened PCVs they meet during training. The jaded PCVs are said to be “along for the ride,” lost after college and looking for a free vacation, taking drugs, drinking heavily, acting “culturally insensitive,” and joking that Peace Corps is “the easiest job you’ll ever hate” and that (as I was told) one’s future site is a “hole.” Peace Corps Volunteers in

⁷ Peace Corps presence in Honduras averaged at least 200 PCVs in the country at any one given time during the 1990s (one of the largest “presences” of any Peace Corps country), though strategies for “placement” in “sites” varied with each frequent change in administration at both the country level and the Washington level. Before the early 1990s, PCVs were assigned frequently to large cities; today, there are many living in regional towns like Juticalpa who may have minimal to no meaningful contact with the *campo*. In my own job, assigned to a government agency, I worked with professional foresters and biologists and only rarely was able to form friendships with campesinos until I distanced myself from the government.

Honduras experience violent crime such as rape and armed robbery, contract AIDS occasionally, contract commonly diseases such as malaria and dengue, and in many parts of the country are target of insults on a regular basis. Knowledge of mishaps circulates rapidly through the PCV community, and a certain siege mentality can develop: Us vs. Them. Nevertheless, most stick to certain “truths” such as the important fact that whatever else they may be up to, they are also “doing development.”

The PCVs-in-training (*aspirantes*) know that they will have to go and live somewhere “remote” and learn the language and try to “do something.” They know that there will be frustrations, but believe deep down that things will turn out well, that where others are said to have failed, or to have played around for two years, they will be able to “get things done.” Many have vague ideas about the nature of Development, and start out at square one during the first week of training. Most do not want to learn theories of development in a classroom but rather get out there and start doing things—environmental education among the “locals” in halting Spanish, horticultural demonstration plots, *letrina* construction. They didn’t go into Peace Corps for another round of college, they state.

Honduran culture and landscape is presented as flawed, as underdeveloped, as incomplete, as somewhere on a trajectory behind the US, or behind an ideal tropical country that perhaps would not make the mistakes the US has. I detected the need in many PCVS, growing as their tenure progressed, for a high level of patriotism to be comforted by the fact that the US is somehow a model to follow, that its problems are secondary to its successes, that it is not languishing in underdevelopment.

Even before PCVs leave training and reach their assigned town or village, they may have qualms about Development. “What is Development?” is never answered for them, nor do they ever figure out what “it” is. They learn little about other ways of thinking and acting that might help them to question what they are doing there in the first place. There was never any time—we were too busy learning to *do* development, and it was psychologically threatening to

question the very ground of our existence. We kept asking ourselves, What is Development? and What am I doing here? We said that if you're not asking what you're doing here, then you shouldn't be here. If you think you know what development is, then you're wrong. If you're right, then it's all over. These were nonsensical intellectual games we played to maintain a healthy dose of small-scale cynicism as a hedge against the undevelopment of local space (and the inability of Development to achieve its desired spatial transformations quickly enough, or at all.)

Despite the innocent "get out there and work for change" emphasis, PCVs become cogs in the machine of Development, not the independent agents (albeit under the wing of the State) we thought we were. We learned to see local space as variations on universal patterns, on generic categories of human being, no matter how idiosyncratic and special they might appear. We learned to interact with an array of types, rather than individuals; our lives were constructed as a sequence of "development situations" (e.g. "what I do when no one shows up at my meeting"). As Trainees, we formed secret ideas, covert agendas, maps of how we could triumph, even while many jaded PCVs blared to us "It's all crap," or "It's worthless" (blaming "It," normally, on "the culture" or "the Hondos" or "the H Factor").

Peace Corps Volunteers, after three months of training, are "sworn in" and ready to go to their assigned "sites" for two years (or more, if they decide to "extend"). They have already formed a detailed geography of Honduras in their minds, and feel that they know more about the country than participants in other programs (especially more than the Americans who work at the Embassy, who are "too often ignorant of local conditions"). The shock of immersion and replacement of theory with practice is a no-looking-back threshold. They are Peace Corps Volunteers--the spatial identity has claimed them, and all the other identities they have are pushed aside. This threshold marks the beginning of a new time, their own private development time, not only within their life ("Life was never the same again after I left the Peace Corps") but

applied wholesale to local space—things that happened before they came onto the scene seem nowhere as important as what will happen while they are there.

The becoming-local of the PCV proceeds from Day One, because they, unlike most other development practitioners, have little to cushion them from local space. Peace Corps has suggested strongly that they mix with “the culture,” live with a family, make friends with “host country nationals.”⁸ Peace Corps has “thrown them out there,” and given them very few rules to follow that their PC bosses could actually enforce. They are at the mercy of their Host Country Agencies, to “work for change.”

In the case of Olancho in the early 1990s, the PCV community who was already there inducted the new PCV into the Olancho expatriate identity: a sense of superiority over “tamer” regions of Honduras. You’re in a tough and dangerous place, you could get killed at any moment: sensationalist, true adventures. You are now on the inside, and no amount of phone calls or Internet connections or even the brief visit home can sever you from the sensory reality of being inside Olancho, surrounded by Olanchos, and being constantly reminded that you are not one. “Gringo” is stared glanced at whispered spoken shouted “implied” seemingly at all hours of every day, in many tones of voice and flesh.

The PCV, within a matter of months, becomes entangled. She enters into social obligations, into the world of everyday life outside Development, and begins to speak haltingly in the day-to-day conversations of local space. Her voice and identity begin to mingle with Olancho; her perceptions become centered in Olancho and in her local community. She begins to understand the real personalities of people and the groups to which they belong. Her maps are detailed, charged with value judgments. Her criticism of local people sounds harsh, even racist, to outsiders, to novices, to tourists; yet she may be mimicking the ways local people describe each

⁸ See, for example, Storti: *Culture matters, the Peace Corps cross-cultural workbook* (n.d.).

other—as “real” people rather than as data and types. The problem for Development is how to maintain a balance between becoming-local and staying “objective.”

Her capture by local space is a phenomenological reorientation to her ever-present surroundings, and is strongest in rural areas with no possibility of sensory barricades like cable TV. It becomes very difficult to think in theories, in categories, in generic definitions like “The Tropical Rainforest” or “The Poor.” This is here, now, and I am not only on a visit but becoming caught up in everyday events, and I am being taken into account. The sun rises here, sets over there; specific roosters crow and mutts with names bark in the early morning; I hope the [poorest of the poor, illiterate] family next door accepts me. Caring about specific interactions; in too deep; *comprometida: confianza* at what has become a center of her world.

Peace Corps’ sustainable development equations entail careful and culturally sensitive imitation of local lifestyles (e.g of campesinos), getting Them to accept you so that you can work for change from the Inside. Sometimes They treat me as a tourist, a transient, a Peeping Tom—but I am here for Their good (I think). I know Their flaws yet believe in Them. I work for Change person by person, household by household. I don’t “create dependence” like USAID, or exploit them like the missionaries and the press. I only honestly, humbly, want to help. The time for one to “do good” stretches ahead, two endless years. But for local space, a brief time, a succession of *Cuerpos de Paz*, some in tears and many drunk at their *despedidas*, returning at the end to their beloved country, *Los Estados*. No long-term commitment here: but why would they want to live like us?

Mimesis can continue long after Peace Corps service ends, on return visits as friends, researchers, development professionals, tour guides. Campesino space, to many, remains as it was in Peace Corps: disordered, dirty, chaotic, illogical, degraded, but also loveable, traditional, friendly—and everyone does indeed know everyone else. They are accepted warmly as visitors, but a becoming-local was nipped in the bud. To dwell “authentically” in local space (according to many of its inhabitants), one would have to jettison privileges of language,

nationality, money, education, contacts, skin. Imagine having to go to one's own country, the United States, as an illegal immigrant. Unthinkable: it would be all the desperation of the Prince made Pauper, with no happy nutcracker ending.

Peace Corps Volunteers who do not yield to becoming-local, becoming-campesino impulses and urges embody the "*técnico*" that the institution of Peace Corps, a vanguard of the Development machine, at once desires and regrets. Desires, because the PCV gets *confianza* (the all-important "trust") faster than anyone; regrets, because the PCV gets *confianza* faster than anyone. (If you wanna get something done, you gotta get *confianza* with 'em first. But *confianza* in local space entails far, far more than Development.)

Honduran *técnicos* ("el ingeniero," "el licenciado," "el doctor") also "risk" becoming-local. *Técnicos*, in many cases, "got out" of local space, having begun their lives in campesino space (as they often remind us) and then being privileged to receive educations to come back and work for change. Even when they reject and fear being drawn "down" into campesino space in their professional lives, they can function in it extremely well, speak the language, fraternize, empathize. But never more, except in extraordinary cases, can they think of local space "as it is" as the right space.

In Olancho, the *técnico* is a college-educated expert on the land, attached to an extractive industry, a consulting firm, or a non-profit agency in the governmental or non-governmental (NGO) sectors. The *técnico* knows how to manage and control resources scientifically; his underlings are *promotores* (*extensionistas*) with "just" high school educations. The *técnico* defers only, and sometimes grudgingly, to the administrator-politician who gives her orders. The *técnico*, almost always, knows best, and is paid commensurately. But as a *técnico* she has no space to call her own.

Development constructs the *técnico* as the one who knows what's best for the space in question. This means valuing "local knowledge" exactly as it coincides with the equations through which space must be developed. *Técnicos* in development space (are supposed to)

maintain an ideal space in mind: the goal of rational development, an ordered and natural/national law-abiding landscape. The engineer (“*El Ingeniero*”) in the *Babilonia enredo* (chapter 2), for example, to justify a dam, had to believe at some level in the perfection and desirability of an industrial landscape rather than in imperfect campesino space: the landscape had to “need” the hydroelectric project. By the same token, the coffee *técnico* in Olancho believes in a perfect landscape of shaded, high-yielding, perhaps environmentally-friendly, coffee. The *ingeniero agrónomo*, when a hillside agricultural *técnico*, dreams of terraces, *labranza mínima* (minimum tillage), clever irrigation systems. The *dasónomo* (a type of *forestal*, forester) thinks of a woods without *árboles lobos* (wolf trees). These are their landscape idylls.

They dream, unless they are *tipos corruptos* who use their identities to accrue power and money, privately professing (at least through implication) to care less what happens to the land. “*Buenos técnicos*” are those who are inspired by their studies and by the frequent courses in which they are sent to see for themselves the model landscapes around Honduras, in Costa Rica, in the United States. *Técnicos* are anointed by Development because they have seen and learned about more-developed places, and hence know what’s best at the local “level.” If they continue to be “good,” they are awarded by being sent to meetings, conferences, and workshops as long as they are active. Through the multiplier effect they are supposed to transmit part of what they learn to extensionists, villagers, politicians, teachers, and others. This also favors a becoming-*técnico* of local people—and hence recruitment for Development.⁹

It can reasonably be said that without *técnicos* the practice of Development-by-Projects would fall apart. But it is not just the *técnicos* who effect change—teachers serve as both State-

⁹ A sign of becoming-*técnico* among *promotores* and other underlings is the tendency to reel off scientific names, since univocal Latin is a special, non-local language that all *técnicos* know and speak. In development space, campesino *promotores* becoming-*técnico* are prone to calling *chatas* “*Musaceas*” and *calandrias* “*Procnias tricarunculata*.” They struggle to remain in local space but also grab onto what must be better—other ways of doing things.

builders and Development agents, and I think in the long run are more effective in both positions than any other identity. *Profesores* (“la profe” or “el profe”), like *técnicos*, have advanced degrees, some from the Escuela Normal Mixta de Olancho in Juticalpa (making them *maestras* and *maestros* qualified to teach *la primaria*, grade school); others from the Universidad Pedagógica in Tegucigalpa (to teach *la secundaria*). Unlike many *técnicos*, however, they tend to be integral members of local space, and if they at all merit it are held in esteem wherever they work.

“Getting an education” is not taken for granted in Olancho, where in the *campo* few children go beyond *la sexta* (sixth grade). Though small *colegios* (any school higher than grade school) exist in some wealthier *aldeas*, it is a great sacrifice for impoverished families to finance their childrens’ high school education unless they have the aid of a *beca* (scholarship). In the towns, going through most or all levels of the high school system is usually sufficient though not *de rigueur*. Increasing numbers of students are going on to college, especially now that there are three institutions of higher learning in Olancho (Universidad Católica and Universidad Nacional Autónoma in Juticalpa; Escuela Nacional Agraria in Catacamas).

Teachers may become spokespeople for the communities in which they work, whether or not they are originally from there.¹⁰ Having a new school in a cinder block public building, rather than in someone’s *bajareque* house, is one of the first signs of “development” in a village, and it is the teacher who focuses the forces of modernity there by shaping the children into good citizens who believe what they are told. The public schoolhouse, gatherer of progress

¹⁰ By the late 1990s, even though there were too many teachers produced in Juticalpa for the available *primaria* positions of Olancho, “remote” *municipios* were begging the regional Ministerio de Educacion office in Juticalpa to be assigned better teachers. They have experienced a high absentee rate among the new breed of teachers, just out of the Escuela Normal Mixta de Olancho, who are either afraid to teach in places like Guata and Yocón, or refuse to accept “substandard” living conditions for rock-bottom salaries. The remoter *municipios* take matters in their own hands, not waiting for action from above: Yocón sends delegations to Juticalpa to negotiate with education authorities who suggest that Yocón make itself more attractive to outsiders, or else keep teachers who are native. Gualaco, to fill a shortage of teachers in its farthest-flung *comarcas* accessible only by horseback, hires its own “*maestros empiricos*,” local people with sixth-grade educations. In more negligent *municipios*, *aldeas* have to be insistent and tenacious to procure a teacher and a school building.

and nucleus of development, in most villages is a “neutral ground” for meetings between local *juntas* (organized development-oriented groups) and outside commissions. When the medical brigades come, they administer vaccines in the *escuela*; voting booths are located in the *escuela*; the Proyecto de Desarrollo has its local *concientización* (consciousness-raising) meetings in the school.

Honduran schools serve to “Honduranize” enveloped local space: keep it modern in the State’s domain, and thus keep it open to Development. The national curriculum nationalizes citizens, turning children into patriots, who in turn influence the often illiterate older generations. They learn the Himno Nacional (National Anthem); they internalize “moral y cívica”; they paint their *próceres* (founding fathers): José Cecilio del Valle, Francisco Morazán, Dionisio de Herrera, whose faces are part of Honduras’ identity; they celebrate the *15 de Septiembre* (Independence). Such indoctrination is something that in countries like the US has been a vital part of becoming “American” for a long time, the instilling of “basic truths” about the way things are. In the Honduran *campo* (and to a much lesser extent in the towns where schools have existed since the 1800s or earlier), the process of making Hondurans is a more difficult task, and the building of the school is a “way in” for the State. To become respected, even revered, the effective teacher, sometimes the sole educated literate person in a village, must negotiate carefully on the margin between State/Development Space and local space.

Periodistas, like teachers, have an enormous influence on public life and opinion. Almost all houses in Olancho have radio, and receive a variety of music-format and news-format stations. Of the six current daily newspapers in Honduras, only *La Tribuna* and *El Heraldo* (the latter Nacionalista, the former Liberal), regularly circulate in Olancho, and a few copies reach most *municipios*; most *aldeas* rarely see newspapers. The reach of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula TV stations is limited in Olancho. Many houses in Juticalpa have cable TV, which includes a cable access station with three hours of local news and opinion in the evenings

(Catacamas has a similar station). While two decades of access to cable TV in Olancho's larger towns has contributed to "expanding peoples' worlds" through travel, history, nature, and other topics, the most important TV channel in local space remains the local cable access channel.

TV *periodistas* in Olancho, usually on the payroll of national media companies, heavily emphasize either Juticalpa or Catacamas. (A long-running show on Juticalpa cable, "Así es Olancho" is almost completely about Juticalpa.) Nevertheless, they do little in-depth investigative reporting (which, in contrast, is common and crucial in the two big cities). Radio journalists, on the other hand, appeal to people in *las aldeas*, who often communicate with each other via radio messages (so-and-so should go to the hospital where his uncle is sick). Journalists in Olancho are highly opinionated even in "impartial" news broadcasts, and tend to support national policies over local initiatives. They shy away from difficult, radical issues if they have been told or paid to stay away. It is said that most are paid in money or favors to cover certain political views and to be silent about others.

In Olancho, while journalists are largely held in disdain, and teachers in respect, they have certain features in common. They are organs of the Outside (who as they see it knows best), principally the State and Development--but they are not chair-bound bureaucrats. Janus-like, they look "back" toward local space and "forward" toward Development, playing one off against the other for their rapt audiences, wavering between "tradition" and "logic." As nomads they are looked at askance by Development and the State, who have to keep them "faithful" to their causes (telling the right Truth, principally). Obviously, under these conditions a radical teacher or radical journalist--one who "switches" allegiances to local space, is as unwanted as a Peace Corps Volunteer who doesn't believe in doing Development, and sometimes as endangered as a radical priest.

In all cases, the Development machine, and more forcefully the State per se, marginalize any nomads who aren't doing their jobs right. But there is another type of nomad, *el político*, who appears to believe wholeheartedly in local space, State space, and together (he embraces all

three), and for his “slipperiness” is distrusted and adored all the more.¹¹ The *político* is a performer, and as such his “allegiance” to the State is as much a scripted performance as his “I’m a campesino just like you” routine. By trying to become everything to all people (among his constituency), in his public life (at least) he is without an identity, traversing other identities—perhaps his (her)¹² very nomadism is what unsettles those who don’t know what it’s like.

The political lifestyle is looked down upon, perhaps by the majority of people, because it signifies that the integrity of one’s actions and the truth of one’s words come in a distant second behind personal alliances.¹³ One often hears “Todos los políticos son mentirosos”: they’re all liars.

The political landscape, as discussed in chapter five, is biunivocal. The two identities, Liberal and Nacionalista, are ways of life for many families, and even among those who avow hatred of politics in general, the political actions of local elites is still cause for daily conversation. “Se lancha...” (“He’s going to run!”): Who? Where? What are her/his motives? Gossip and “serious issues” intertwine, making *la política* abhorrent but fascinating.

Campaigning goes almost non-stop for four years from election to election. During campaigns for *alcaldes*, *diputados*, and the president, major candidates reach most or all *municipios*, while municipal-level candidates and their booster groups reach the remotest *aldeas*. They “use” local space to get the vote, hobnobbing with people to whom they might otherwise pay hardly any attention (the “hand-shaking” phenomenon).

Local campaigns for *alcalde* revolve on what candidates will do for the *municipio* to develop it. Undoubtedly s/he will build more roads, more schools, and more health clinics; combat crime; protect the environment. *Diputado* campaigns are simultaneously about how the

¹¹ In my discussion of *políticos* I am employing “politics” as it is practiced and understood in local space.

¹² As mentioned in chapter 5, there are a few *alcaldesas* in Olancho—but no *diputadas*.

¹³ Some people recognize the possibility of *políticos honrados* (“honorable,” i.e. uncorruptable politicians) and so do not become entirely cynical about the government as such. As for third parties,

candidate will help his area of origin develop (“get development” for them), and how he will “fight for Olancho” in the national congress. The former issue is of more local concern: for example, *diputados* campaign on promises to bring electrification to an *aldea*, claiming that they will have the power and influence to do so once in Tegucigalpa. And people who believe (excluding the many cynics) hold their politicians accountable when the light doesn’t “arrive,” or the telephone, or the paved road. (“Cuándo va llegar la luz aquí?”) But the *político* had already moved on to other things. “Viene un Proyecto que nos trae mucho beneficios....”¹⁴

The *periodista* changed the subject to report on the latest “news”: a new Project is coming that will bring us many benefits. The PCV moved back to the US--*solo permaneció aquí un rato*,¹⁵ but another is already here. The teacher was transferred out, but once the village had the odd taste of Knowledge, it wanted another one right away. The *técnico* got a better-paying job elsewhere, and his flight was hardly noted. Development and the State continued, of course, because they are “eternal.”

Thus far I have sketched outlines of mechanisms at work in State space and Development space. These should be seen as always and everywhere present in the spaces I describe in the following sections. But they are never the “meat” (yet?) of Olancho—even though Development and the State are ever-present, they do not yet saturate local existence. The most immediate reality for most people in Olancho, except the nomads described above, is “everything else”: Development and the State are but “tools,” they think. What really matters to many is *who* one is “truly,” above and beyond one’s other “identities.” One can be simultaneously many things, but it is the next four identities that are, to my way of thinking, as powerful and bonding as families themselves. This is why they are spoken with such assurance and force: *Yo soy*

there are several, most “left wing” and garnering few votes though influencing the two centrist parties.

¹⁴ The allusions here are to a sit-and-wait version of Development, in which democracy functions to elect officials who say they will bring change, literally, through attracting development dollars.

¹⁵ “Permanecer” is to stay at a place for a time; “Vivir” is to live in local space.

ganadero. El es cafetalero. Aquí todos somos campesinos. Aquellos son los madereros. The only way to understand how Olancho “works” is by understanding the parallel universes spatial identities inhabit.

6.4 *Ganadero/Cattle Space*

Grabbing up the *tierra suelta* (“released” land that appears unclaimed) from confused and half-forgotten old jurisdictions of *ejido* and *tierra nacional*: in cattle space, land without cattle is empty space. This Iberian import was probably the single greatest force in shaping Olancho’s landscapes and peoples since early colonial times (see chapter 3). Since 1540, cattle, vegetation, fire, and people have formed a holobiont of overwhelming power in local space across Olancho and Honduras. The cattle “complex” is a “background space,” a geography of “laziness” against which the “hard-working” identities are pitted: coffee farming; intensive agriculture, either “sustainable, small-scale” or as agribusiness; industrial development; forestry; bananas. But cattle space is still the spatial norm against which in Olancho everything else is measured. “Everything else” defines itself by its margin of identification (embrace, tolerance, forbiddance) with cattle space.¹⁶

If one is a true *ganadero*, one is associated with the AGAO (Asociación de Ganaderos de Olancho). Or the AGANO: Asociación de Ganaderos del Norte de Olancho (whose president in 1999 threatened to keep space safe with 550 armed men behind him if the State wouldn’t do anything about crime: see chapter 2). Grange fairs, one in Juticalpa, one in Catacamas. Bull-teasing circus clowns. Bull-riding. *Ganaderos* truck in their best Brahmans, huge, sleek beasts, penned up on display for select audiences of admirers.

One’s bumpersticker says it all: “Es simple: no hay ganadería, no hay comida.” “It’s easy (stupid): no ranching, no food.” Correct: Olancho lives in large part through its dairy products and meat, consumed heavily by all who can afford them. The slogan is intended for anyone who dare think that the *vocación* of Olancho is coffee, or *granos básicos*, or timber....



Fig. 6.3. Before and after the advent of cattle space through *acapareamiento*. Left-hand picture taken from the school in El Naranjal, Gualaco--oak forest on hill across the river belongs to a *ganadero terrateniente* from San Esteban, which is seven hours away on horseback. He has simply left it without cattle (for now). Right-hand picture is taken not far downriver, in an area that was campesino space in swidden, but during the 1990s became cattle space--barbed wire, in a part of Olancho that as yet has very little. The conflict of gazes is stark: Naranjal's forest is a local attraction to many campesinos; the pastures are what a *ganadero* wants to see.

To be a true *ganadero*, one must see cattle ranching as the only truly necessary way of life for keeping Olancho going (the rest are peripheral). Fads come and go; *ganadería* stays. But there is no one agreed-upon way to be a *ganadero*. Old style *ganaderos* put time into breeding good, tough stock, and live their lives on their ranches. On old-style ranches, one's most valued asset is the *toro*, after that the *mula* (female cross of horse and donkey), then the *macho* (male cross). Then come the cows and steers themselves, who are interchangeable, slaughterable.

According to many local people, the old style rancher can be thought of as a "grass" rancher—all he or she wants to see in the landscape's foreground and middle ground is grass--no trees anywhere, not in the *valle*, not on the *cerros*. (The cattle space of *cerros pelones* is marked by terraces made by the cattle themselves, rings of deep trenches that encircle hills, a

¹⁶ For quantitative details on Olancho cattle space, see Ruiz et al. 1988; Sunderlin and Rodríguez 1996.



Fig. 6.4. *Ganadero* rhizome manifest in landscape. Top photos: *sabana* becoming-*espinal* in Valle de Agalta. As *terrateniente* landscape, empty of campesinos. View; barbed wire; pond. Bottom left: Protective quality. Wildfowl and aquatic flora flourish in heavily protected cattle pond in Lepaguare. Bottom right: Straight roads in cattle space/*terrateniente* space of Lepaguare. *Madreado* or *madrecacao* is all-purpose live fence once used to support cacao seedlings, now for forage, firewood, shade, property lines, and most importantly, keeping cattle flowing in the right directions.

sign of overgrazing in conservation and development space.) Grass looks good out there—some say the *jaraguá* and other African varieties; some swear by the native types. One of the reasons the slopes are *pelones* around Juticalpa, people say, is that the grass ranchers extended their reach upward in the twentieth century, and they will tolerate no other growth.

Some *ganaderos* prefer to have their watercourses protected by dappled shade (*para las vacas*, always for the cattle); a few favor dense ribbons of *vega* in *valle* and mountain alike. On the *sabana*, however, woody vegetation should occur only in copses. Cattle need a little shade. Some *ganaderos* even favor a light wooded cover on all pastures.

The *ganadero* likes to see his cows, and when one finds him out and about, he is going to look at some cows: “Voy a ver unas vacas que tengo.”

In most cattle space, thick forest does have a place: at the edge of vision, up along the ridge, where we haven't gotten to it yet, or where we should not be ("Yo cuido El Bosque").

Cattle space is peppered by ranching toponyms (a quick identifier on topo maps): La Herradura (The Horseshoe Ranch), Becerra (The Calf), Laguna Bocado de Queso (Morsel of Cheese Pond). Speaking them is voicing cattle space's claims.

Ganaderos burn. It's the easiest and quickest way to favor new grass, to keep everything non-grass at bay, and to combat the myriad ticks that seem to crawl over every square inch of Olancho (other than the *pura montaña*) between January and May. A good fire in cattle space is one that sweeps across the plains and up into the *serranía*, burning for days--removing, hopefully, the invasive pine saplings as well.

One must yield to cattle in Olancho--they rarely run. Cattle have the right-of-way except on the paved highway, where negligent owners have to pay damages for frequent accidents (this is a State "imposition"). In the *campo*, beware the *vaca brava*, *recién parida*: a cow that is fierce because she just gave birth, never polled, more dangerous than a bull. You are the intruder in her space, as I learned when a Peace Corps Volunteer, flat up against a barbed wire fence and inches from the thrusting horns of a *vaca brava*.

Barbed wire fence. The way that land is claimed and *acaparado* ("monopolized" by enclosure) both within cattle space and within invasive space in general. Fences are also erected to keep cattle out as much as they keep cattle enclosed. Cries of "Vac Caa...Vac Caa...": switching her back with a stick, slapping her flank, getting her out of the yard, the *huerta*, the *milpa*, the *frijolar*. Cows invade their owners' "off limits" places as much as they invade those of neighbors. Cattle follow all trails, even into the *montaña*, into *cafetales*, where they are completely unwelcome. This is why so many montane forest landscapes are guarded by a *puerta de la montaña*.

Pistola. Cohete ("firecracker": gun). Cattle space is unthinkable without guns. The image and the reality of the *ganadero* demand that they be on the defensive at all times. Cattle space

is under surveillance by smugglers with vehicles, who grab cattle and truck them from one *valle* to another, or out of the country. There are also *los enemigos* (family enemies) and campesino invaders (or at least the threat).

One doesn't just sidle up to *ganaderos*, walk by their houses and expect to be invited in for a spot of coffee and a chat--unless one is a *ganadero* or family member. Cattle space doesn't admit those casual visits, and I have found many *ganaderos* reticent to talk freely about their wealth or their ideals--a rarity among spatial identities in Olancho.

Self-styled *ganaderos modernos* have money, access to credit, chemicals for better diets and grasses. Unlike those *ganaderos irracionales* who are *arriscos* (wary) about the outside in general, the *modernos* welcome development-for-cattle with open arms. Some may have but a bare idea of how to ride a horse; others are scions of horse-riding families from the "good old days" when "cattle was king." Some spend minimal time on their ranches, not a few residing outside Olancho. Others live and work in town--as doctors, lawyers, mayors--and have to get up at four AM every morning to oversee day-to-day operations on their ranches. When I learned this, I wondered, Who can say "el ganadero no trabaja"? (Many disgruntled residents of coffee space and campesino space do).

The appearance of being a *ganadero* is to some as important as the number of cows. The pickup truck, the right tires, the clothes, the gun. Appearing affluent, but the Empacadora de Carnes in Catacamas may very well own your cattle, the bank may own your land. For the showier ranching lifestyle, there are the late-model Sport Utility Vehicles streaking across the plains, tinted windows, bathing trudging campesinas and trailing *chigüines* (children) in choking dust.

A little cattle is a sign of wealth, but campesinos laugh at those of their own who have ten or fifteen and claim to be "*ganaderos*." But who wouldn't say that, if it opens doors to credit and respect in Juticalpa and Tegucigalpa? Cattle on land stake claim to land.

Those whom I call the “non-*ganadero ganaderos*” are people who own haciendas and a lot of cattle, but who do not think of themselves as *ganaderos*, even if everyone else does. They like to criticize the big ranching families: that those ones, *aquella gente*, kill all the wild fauna, shoot trespassers on sight, don’t care about nature, and retain goons (*matones*) to do their dirty work, now that the military won’t get involved. Say the non-*ganadero ganaderos* about the *ganaderos malos*: They only want to talk about cattle. That’s the only thing that interests them.

The wealthiest people in Olancho are said to be those semi-legendary old-style ranchers, masters of all they survey, who live as if the centuries didn’t speak to them. Those few who remain live only in *las aldeas*, practicing that famous Spartan lifestyle the old stories tell about: a leather bed, a *división*, a chair, a plate, a glass, tortillas, *carne*, *queso*. They have large campesino-like families, live in adobe or *bajareque* houses in villages given over entirely to cattle, wooden corrals, mud, and dung. Chickens and pigs roam across their *patios* and through their living rooms. And yet, they don’t know the size of their herds that forage over scrubby hills, *espinales* and *encinales*. In the thousands at least, it is rumored. One finds out that the *aldeas* are “theirs,” that their *mozo* families are numerous and “negros”—that they are still, in many ways, like those benign and ruthless *mulato* lords of local history.

Cattle space used to be a closer fit to this variety of local space, at least in the imagination of some. But now most *ganaderos* find themselves anathematized not only by campesinos but also by “modern” identities that neither rely on them as *patrones* nor can tolerate their expansive “worthless land” assertions about other spaces. Let the ranchers, then, have the worst land, they say—but make everything else productive for agriculture, for forestry, for coffee, for water production, for protected areas. Keep cattle out, off the roads, off the slopes; turn the *sabanas* into watermelon and rice plantations, the mountains into parks.

Cattle space, nevertheless, has its margins of off-and-on peaceful coexistence with other spaces. Its primary support throughout has always been the culturally acceptable becoming-cattle space of all Olancho, so that it is rarely if ever considered a bad thing in campesino space

(for example) to own some cows and a bull. As long as you don't call yourself a *ganadero* and don't take over other spaces, you can remain a *campesino*. *Ganaderos* can, however, be *cafetaleros*, because as *terratenientes* their domains may include both coffee space and cattle space of their own overcoding. By the same token they can dabble in agribusiness--at least those who are not "puros ganaderos" (ranchers so obsessed with their cattle, exclusive of all else, that they wouldn't think of doing anything else in their lives). Cattle space and timber space also coexist to some extent in the same coordinates--as long as the trees don't get burned when the grass burns; as long as the cows are left to roam where and how they please.

The State is present in concentrated cattle space (e.g. haciendas) but to a slight extent, since as *terratenientes* many ranchers are still the law-givers of their domains. Those who are strung out on credit, however, were finding in the late 1990s (and at time of writing) that the banks had no qualms about repossessing everything they owned in the event of nonpayment. This sparked protests in Olancho (and across Honduras) in 2000, and in 2001 the government pinned responsibility for a bomb attack on two banks in Juticalpa on an (anonymous and possibly fictitious) "disgruntled" landowner who didn't want to pay back his loan. The uneasy relationship between *terratenientes* as a group (they tend to call themselves *empresarios*, or by their spatial identities, but you probably won't hear "Yo soy un terrateniente") and the State is indicative of their imbeddedness in local space--the national newspapers continually target any and all protests in Olancho--whether *campesinos* over Babilonia or rich landowners over bank debts--as indicative of the stereotypical lazy, violent *olanchano* (see the epigraph at the beginning of chapter seven). Development, by a similar token, often shies away from cattle space's remaining-*olanchano*, trying to turn it into "agropecuaria" (agropastoralism in a homogeneous development space) or at least keep it where it belongs. Sustainable development, like conservation, looks uneasily in the other direction (see chapter two on the Red de Cuencas). No Peace Corps Volunteers, to my knowledge, are assigned to work with ranches.

6.5 Campesino/Campesino Space

Campesino space remains dominant over large areas of Olancho, even though it is constantly being overcoded to some degree by other spaces (in many cases, simply packed together into *chorizo*). The most complex of spaces, it draws heavily from the possibilities of local space, but at the same time searches to validate itself through development space, which in many ways helps it forget the ways it understood itself even a generation before. Campesino space is notable for this dual quality: at once a rich and polyvalent lived experience, and at the same time remote, poor, outmoded, *un desierto*. I tend to assign much of the fault for “outmoded” to other spaces which are simpler, far more tightly controlled, and yield more easily to “lógica.” Campesino space, I argue, has never been overcoded except by complete eradication: the replacement of smallholdings by haciendas, for example. In this section I try to be faithful to campesino space as it is—in most cases, it is summarily dismissed as “degraded” and defined in terms of what it is not and/or what it should be: this occurs in conservation space, development space, and cattle space to a great extent, and coffee space to a lesser extent. I describe the campesino smallholder landscape and the family rhizome, but also address two nomadic internal rhizomes (hunting, and gathering) that agricultural campesino space “captures,” tolerates, and even in some cases foments.

“Campesino” is the bittersweet term by which many rural dwellers refer to themselves, as in “Somos los campesinos que producimos para que Honduras pueda comer, y a nosotros nos dejan botados.”¹⁷ They are distinguished not only from townspeople (*la gente del pueblo*), but from fellow inhabitants of the *campo*, such as *ganaderos*, primarily through their material impoverishment. Not all impoverished people in the *campo* consider themselves or are considered campesinos, however, since the identity presumes land ownership or management in some form (*mozo*, by comparison, is an identity that embraces the landless as well).

¹⁷ We campesinos are the ones who feed Honduras, but we are “thrown away” (by the State, society, Development...).

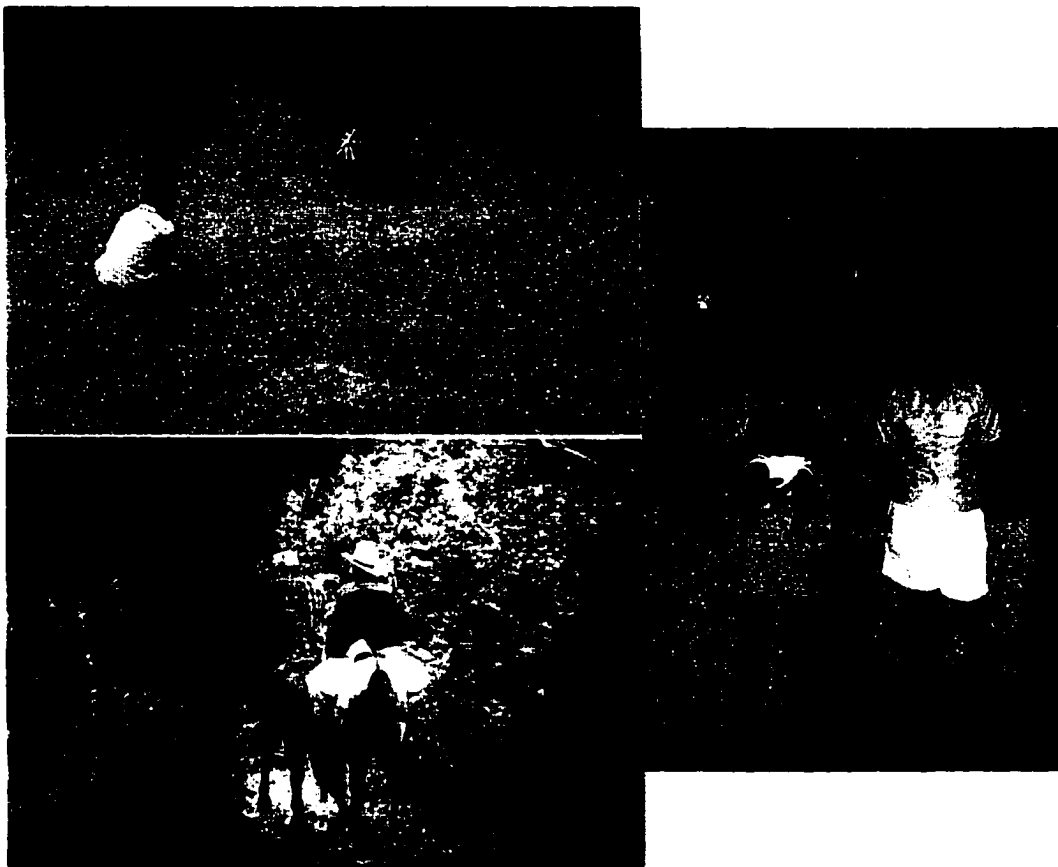


Fig. 6.5. Campesino rhizome. Upper left: playing marbles on swept expanse in front of house. Lower left: *Bestia* space in La Venta (no cars); riders arriving from *caserio* to *aldea* in early morning. Right: Kitchen of Vanesa Sarahi (at right) in Lepaguare. Spotless effect is achieved in part by frequent application of earth paints (women's work).

Nevertheless, "campesino" is the dominant spatial identity in the *campo*, and campesino landscapes, or smallholder landscapes as they could be termed,¹⁸ are highly distinct from rhizomes such as cattle space. Campesinos often own a few cattle, but most would hesitate or shudder to think of themselves as *ganaderos*.

"Campesino" is not usually an identity that one develops into, becomes, or strives to be. Campesinos may prefer to be termed "*cafetaleros*" or "*caficultores*" if they have a reasonably productive coffee plot, and it is joked that people with only ten cows want to call themselves *ganaderos* these days. "Campesino" is stigmatized: dirty, lazy, hopeless, dependent,

¹⁸ See Netting (1993).

superstitious, backward, undependable, thieving (by nature and by culture). A campesino who becomes a *cafetalero* or *ganadero* may have easier access to bank loans and land titling projects, and may even be able to gain political power. Campesino children whose parents send them to school in town are socialized rapidly, taught to abhor their rural origins in many cases, and after getting a high school degree become professionals--no longer, by definition, campesinos (except metaphorically). Nevertheless, even though "campesino" as applied to individuals is an identity of circumstances and inconvenience, there is still plenty of pride associated with its spatial holding-sway in Olancho across large areas, and much of this comes from small farm ownership and close connection to the land.

Campesino space, to outsiders, is "friendlier" than cattle space. One visits almost anyone almost anywhere, stopping by for a cup of coffee and a chat, perfect strangers. Trespassing on private land is a small consideration in campesino space.

Campesino space is not dominated by large swaths of one type of vegetation. Its most notable characteristic, heterogeneity, comes about through the myriad land management strategies employed, combined with the small size of holdings.

Campesino space is not specific to *valle*, *serranía*, or *montaña*, but rather can occur in any or all in combination, always resulting in greater heterogeneity there than in spaces dominated by large landholdings. Campesinos tend to pursue multiple livelihood strategies—a little coffee, corn and beans, large and small animals, gathering of wild plants, hunting, fruit trees, dooryard garden, fishing... The greater the altitudinal diversity available (ideally, from *valle* to *montaña cruda* across the *comarca*) the more diverse strategies can be pursued. (Unfortunate for campesinos is the "built-in" centuries-old duality of *terrateniente* and smallholder in many or most *comarcas*.)

Campesino space does not entail "free and equal" access to resources, but it is still much more permissive than other spaces in Olancho. For example, mango trees have owners, but there are many ways that non-owners can gain access to the fruit. They are first private and then

communal resources, whereas in cattle space they could be resources reserved solely for the *ganadero* and his sycophants.

In campesino space, the vegetation patchwork is characterized by different land uses that vary internally: within a plot, within a multi-plot smallholding (frequently in disjunct parcels interweaving with other smallholders), and in continuous variation across the textured landscape. A single plot may contain from one to ten or more crops growing together without the need of development space. For example, the farm of Antonio Ramos in San Felipe contains *plátano*, coffee, *yuca*, pineapple, maize, beans, squash, lemongrass, and several others. Plots are bounded by “live” and “dead” fences, usually but not always stringing together certain multiple-use species with barbed wire. Fence plants like the *dictamo* and *piñuela* grow so thickly that they may preclude the use of barbed wire. Trails for people and animals intersect plots. There are endless combinations of vegetation in fallow plots generically known as *guamiles*, which range from what conservationists would see as “second-growth forest” to what they label “scrub.” Fruit and other useful trees grow in orchards (*huertos*) and in dooryard gardens (*huertas*).

Most families employ management strategies that change with the seasons and the generations, producing a fluctuating biotic complex at all scales, an *enredo* of partially overcoded becomings, human-favored but not human-controlled. Nor are humans with preferences, fingers, and machetes the only domestic forces contributing to the biodiversity of campesino space. Domestic animals shape spaces as well: pigs live in pig space, churning up the soft sandy loams of the *vegas*, creating networks of pig trails, recycling human waste; chickens scratch in chicken space; cows in a limited domestic cattle space overcoded by campesino space. Coffee space, described in a following section, may be internal to campesino space, as a mosaic of smallholder plots, or external to it, as a *terrateniente* landscape.

Due to the internal diversity of campesino space, there are greater numbers of wild animals and plants than in most other human spaces. Heterogeneity contributes to biotic complexity,

and thus campesino space is not “anti-natural” or degraded, but rather a biotic improvement on cattle space, banana space or oil palm space (of La Costa), or any other rural spaces where one land use is dominant. Indeed, as the example at the end of chapter 4 showed, the human margin of *montaña* is the richest space for biodiversity in Honduras.

Campesino space has a local connectivity that favors its continuous variation across Honduras (and large parts of Central America) through phenomena such as radio and migration. Local connectivity is effected largely through kinship networks: the family, in the Olancho *campo*, is virtually everything, and “nohotros” refers simultaneously to the nuclear family and to the extensive nets of paternal and maternal kin. A friend says to me “Somos 82,” referring to the number of his siblings, and cousins of varying degrees of affinity who adhere to this certain identity: Los Bustamante de Guacoca. He mentions the number of his people together with the number of AK-47s in their possession, to make the point that though the Bustamantes are poor, downtrodden, marginalized campesinos, they are a rhizomatic multitude that can fight back against oppression by other families and by “El Ganadero” and “El Terrateniente.” The Bustamante rhizome has no clan leader, no cacique, no *patrón*, no centralized, concentrated power. “Somos montones”: we are legion.

Among campesinos local power can be invested in campesino or non-campesino *patrones* (“caciques”), often *ganaderos/terratenientes*. These are connected sometimes to “humildes” campesinos through *parentesco* (blood ties), but a separation exists as well. Wealth and power are two devices by which one is excluded from the campesino identity. You are *uno de ellos*, *los ricos*, but still know how to dwell in and manipulate campesino space. To maintain good relations with campesinos, you are expected to play the part of benefactor by giving them some land to farm, if needed; helping them find work; using influence to attract development projects and progress in general.

Despite the importance of *caciques* in the Olancho *campo*, campesino space also gets along “on its own” through a “mutual aid society” built into the family networks. This became quite

apparent after Hurricane Mitch. Campesinos lost their homes, members of their family, all their crops; in a society without local connectivity, many would have starved. But the mutual aid system already and always in place meant that those without went to those who had been lucky. They went to live in the houses of relatives and to ask favors of friends—the epidemics and famines predicted by the aid agencies never materialized.¹⁹

There is no such thing as a “generic” campesino who employs an “ideal” mix of livelihood strategies common to a majority in campesino space. Indeed, little that is geographically valid can be said of “each and every campesino” since it is an identity that embraces a wide spectrum of difference. In “campesino/hunter” and “campesino/gold panner” the second term of the spatial identity may be more important than the agricultural practices suggested by “campesino.” One of the “mistakes” of development agencies is their emphasis on (sedentary, always sedentary) agricultural production to the exclusion, marginalization, or even criminalization of the campesino-as-hunter, campesino-as-gatherer, campesino-as-migrant laborer, campesina-as-gold panner, campesina-as-wage laborer, campesino-as-forest service employee. Outsiders err, I believe, in thinking that agriculture is something that each and every “farmer” does or should enjoy, and thus can learn to practice “sustainably” (i.e., without “degrading the land”). For many campesinos, agriculture may be something you do in between hunting trips, or something you don’t do at all if you can get on a payroll in Juticalpa. There may be less chance of getting fired from a job than of losing one’s crop or being turned down on a pesticide loan. I have been told by campesinos that the idea of staple agricultural production as a worthwhile endeavor has faded in many parts of the *campo* through the severe economic crisis of the last several decades and the poisoning and sterilization of the landscape (and the subsequent takeover by *terrateniente* space).

¹⁹ Large numbers of people would have starved without efficient food delivery by the likes of the US military in the spaces of multinational agribusinesses on the Costa Norte.

Campesino space allows you to be a *cazador* (*tirador, monteador*) to the point where your agricultural talents are eroded, and you are criticized by other campesinos as a negligent and sloppy farmer. You don't mind as long as the hunting's good. Local hunters have their own spatial identity within campesino space.²⁰ The hunter is a teller of (tall) tales in the faunally almost empty *valles* that no longer have any large animals to hunt. He (to my knowledge, it is always a he) invokes the great numbers of animals in the *valles* of the past, and talks incessantly about those still in the *montañas*. Townspeople, who don't know much about what they call *el monte* ("the bush"), stare or chuckle in disbelief. To campesinos who hunt only casually if at all, the obsessive hunter is somewhat of a daring soul, walking the boundaries between *la gente* and *las fieras*--staring into the eyes of jaguars, becoming-other. Hunters create and maintain places of notable hunting events: where so-and-so cornered the mountain lion; La Cueva del Tigre; where so-and-so's dogs were disemboweled by an *oso hormiguero* (tamandua anteater). Esteban Urbina in La Venta recreates to willing listeners a hunters' landscape of the great *montañas* of 50 years before, and keeps it alive through certain placed events of this nature. To many, his exploits were far more spectacular and valiant deeds than the sowing and reaping of maize and beans, or even a bumper coffee harvest with good prices.

Hunters whom I have known well are fascinated by forest space, by caves, by "dangerous" flora and fauna and particularly by the nights and their moons. The hunter, more than most other local people, is more at home in the nighttime, and is famous for "trespassing" under cover of darkness, going anywhere within campesino space and even without in search of *venados* (white-tailed deer), the most important prey.

Hunters think and talk a lot about *comederos*, eating-places, usually meaning fruiting trees where prey species congregate at night. Hunter space is crisscrossed by furtive trails connecting *comadero*-places. *Comederos* are the most special places for hunters, and the talk in certain

²⁰ There are also hunting clubs from the towns and cities, but their descent on the *campo* may be seen by campesinos as threatening and unfair.

families, certain *aldeas*, about fruits such as the *zapotillo* can easily occupy large stretches of day-to-day conversation. *Zapotillos* are *montaña* trees that bear abundant, succulent fruit favored by *tepesquintles*, *quequeos*, and other highly sought-after mammals that may gather in large numbers on dark nights. An experienced hunter can measure faunal density in a *montaña* by observing what proportion of *zapotillos* are eaten, and how quickly they are consumed after they fall—or if they are left to rot. In the *comedero de zapotillo* an experienced hunter reads a microgeography of the fauna allowing him to pick the best hiding spot to sit and wait, with optimal chance of success. Each individual and each type of animal leaves a distinct spatial signature: its scent, its prints, the way it rips up, bends, or otherwise affects understory vegetation, where it enters and exits the *comedero*, what it does with the *zapotillo* fruit, the teethmarks it leaves. Quick glances suffice to know what types of animals are visiting the *comedero*, and quite often which individuals (“here’s the prints of that *tilopo renco*”: that lame red brocket deer who’s been coming around the last few nights). Scent is important: the hunter’s *comedero* may be suffused with the musk of peccaries, that to the non-hunter is just part of the “smell of the rain forest.” The phases of the moon (regardless of cloud cover) help determine the value of the night for hunting—you don’t seriously expect to bag anything on a full moon, do you?

The complexity of *comedero* knowledge among hunters and their families can begin to be grasped by considering the number of different types of *comedero* (well over 100 in the *comarcas* I have visited), and the number that are active at any point during the year (five to ten). Each has a distinct rhizome of tree-prey-hunter. The avocado *comedero* has its own hunter’s code, its own way of approach, its own fauna, very distinct from the *jocomico*, or the *guayabo*, or from scores of other types of fruit.

The *comedero* rhizome has a dual personality in campesino hunting space: as the flesh-and-blood experience, and in stories. One does not reproduce or represent the other, but rather they

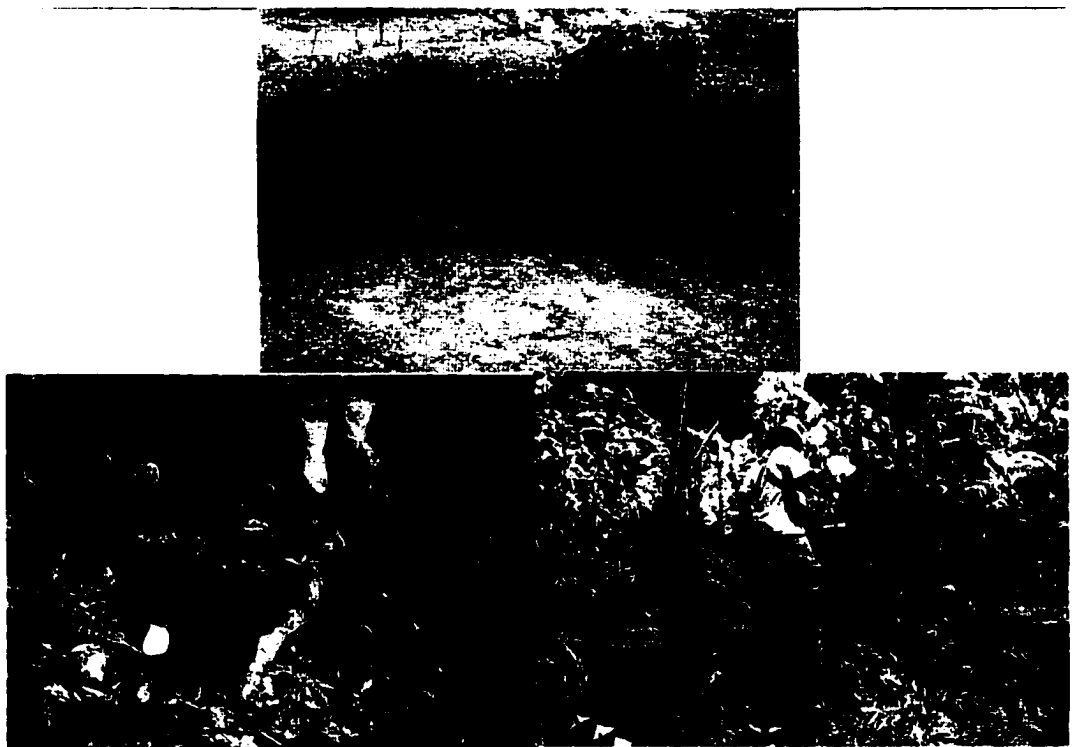


Fig. 6.6. Hunter rhizome. At top is a privately-managed deer pen in El Rodeo, Gualaco, focus of admiration among local people and astonishment among conservationists, who themselves have undertaken no such measures. Deer are kept immaculate, well fed; owner cites love of *venado* as main reason for his "project." At bottom left is pile of *danto* (Baird's tapir) manure along a human trail in the *montaña cruda*. At bottom right is a *jagüilla* (white-lipped peccary) trap in *montaña cruda*; hunters with dogs had cornered a large group inside a cave, and built the trap around its mouth as a corral so they could get the animals as they came out. Peccaries churned the inside of the large cave into a mud slough after three days, and eventually most that burst out got away. This trap is the only human-made structure within an otherwise deep forest space.

improve through each other. They nourish each other: if one fails, the other expands in vigor and poetic enchantment.

But hunting space, seen another way, is as much about flight and pursuit as it is about sit-and-wait. Hunters are not slavish to trails the way many farmers, especially with pack animals, have to be. Indeed, the engraved straight line is unnecessary to *monteadores*, since they choose extemporaneous routes through the vegetation that most closely follow meandering prey spoor or the barking of their dogs. Hunters' internally nomadic tendencies are brought up short only by "outside" spaces that detest their presence, particularly cattle space (in most cases) and

conservation space (de jure if not de facto). Hunters are criminalized in conservation space, and these days usually even hesitate to tell all but the “in” group that they are “cazadores.” Hunters in conservation space are “cazadores furtivos,” poachers.

Hunters, as long as they are careful, are allowed to hunt in all campesino space, because they are not occupying it but only traversing it. Campesino space does not have hunting reserves, areas off-limits to other activities. In general, blanket exclusivity of the hacienda- or protected area nuclear zone-type is not characteristic of campesino space. At the same time hunters are expected to tread lightly, to not damage crops, to not upset cattle. The hunter, after all, is the afternoon or nighttime identity of many farmers. Being a hunter is rarely a full-time activity in these days of dwindling fauna.²¹

The gathering of wild plant products, unlike hunting, is not restricted to men. Though there is no overarching “gathering” identity, there are strong spatialities associated with certain plants: the *teocintero* and the *liquidambero* are two examples discussed below. The *liquidamberos* live their maps of *montañas* where mature sweetgums are found; they are part of a *liquidambar* sap economy that connects them to local, national and international buyers. *Liquidambar* tappers connect individual trees in forest space through trail networks to gathering points, camps, and to the outside. The *liquidamberos*’ trails are called *picadas*, strings of faint machete marks on tree trunks that take them deeper into *montaña cruda* than most other harvesters or even hunters ever go. Though they are highly protective of rights over individual trees and *picadas* (to the point of killing each other, it is rumored), their ownership does not extend to the encircling *montaña*. The *liquidamberos* are viewed somewhat askance in campesino space, and in fact, like *oreros*, might be more appropriately placed in the section

²¹ Hunting and trapping for pelts and meat is said to have been a valid lifetime’s occupation for more than a few Olanchanos in “los tiempos de antes.” Wells (1857:559-60) records a Boston company’s shipping register for four voyages out of Trujillo in 1855 and 1856, which included deer pelts brought from the interior (today’s Colón and Olancho). The first voyage carried 2856, the second 3828, the third 1764, the last 2028, for a 15-month total of 10,476 deer. “The above hides are brought from the interior of Olancho and Yoro on mules” (Wells 1857:560).

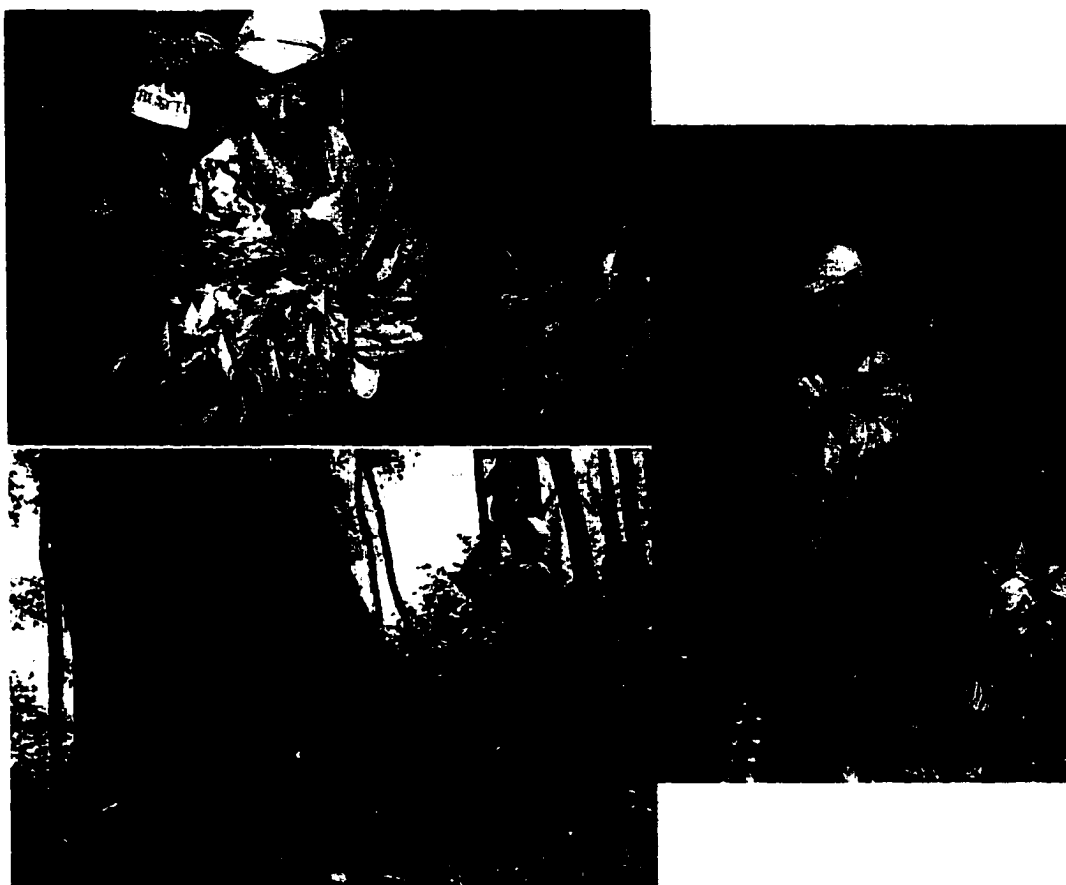


Fig. 6.7. Gatherings. Upper left is *médico botánico* Pedro Avila with *la quina* that combats malaria; at right he is holding *zarzaparrilla* (once a cure for syphilis). Lower left is conservationist Francisco Urbina standing on a *liquidambar* scored by decades of *liquidambero* markings.

“Outlaws and Misfits,” below. They seem to subvert (“even” campesino) space’s notions of “normal” human territoriality.²²

Gathering favors an attitude of fostering and tending plants wherever they are found, but it emphatically does not exclude swidden agriculture, the livelihood for most who also gather. Swidden entails the wholesale “slashing” (*roza*) and burning (*quema*) of thousands of plants, but exists side-by-side and together with gathering—in campesino space, at any rate. A partial

²² Other types of networks connecting coveted plants of forest space to collecting points and out to markets were formerly more common: the *zarzaparrilla* and the *pimienta gorda* (allspice) have largely faded in importance, for example. Medicinals are still highly popular, and Ladino healers (*médicos botánicos*) covet private geographies of tens or even hundreds of plant varieties in every space where they can safely gather for their trade—many, though not all, are campesinos themselves, and campesino space is the most permissive for their gathering activities.

explanation for this is that swidden plots often do not contain the most valuable wild plants—the *teocintales* described below, for example, are within *serranías* burnt heavily not by campesinos but by *ganaderos*. In many cases, however, it is simply not a spatial dichotomy of “protect” and “trash” as it is portrayed in conservation space. The local situation may privilege agricultural produce--and/or there may be a perception that wild plants are always available elsewhere, farther back in the *montaña*--and/or dedicated gatherers may be in conflict with a desperate need for *frijolares*, or with those who simply don’t care if a certain plant is eliminated, or with pioneers of cattle space, or with pioneers of coffee space. Extracting from this *enredo* of “contradictions,” it is possible to assert that gathering in general, like hunting, is permissible only within the contexts of the greater needs of campesino space as striated space (the influence of the market, for example, as in large part determined by State space). Gathering and hunting are in many ways “older” than agropastoralism, and it is even possible to see in the examples of this section (a la Deleuze and Guattari 1987) how they are “captured” by agropastoral space that is itself part-nomadic: all, of course, captured by the State (or, at least, in the State’s delusions).

The human practice of gathering cycad fruits in Saguay, Gualaco (and in relicts across northern Olancho) makes significant places out of individual plants (La Teocinta) and groups of plants (El Teocintal) that then draw space about them, encircling and enveloping a holobiont (*el teocintal*) that includes rhizomatic people (*teocinteros*). The case of the seasonal starchy staple *teocinte*, a tree cycad (*Dioon mejiae*; see also chaps. 3 and 4), shows how campesino space has come into conflicts with cattle space over the fate of a highly important gathered and fostered plant.

Teocintes bear large fruiting heads that are harvested between January and April, and the starch from their “*cumbitos*” provides an important supplement to diets in the form of

mascadura (a type of yeastless bread/cookie) and *tamales*, as well as *chicha* in limited quantity.²³ This is *patrimonio* found only in Gualaco and other *municipios* of northern Olancho.

Ornamental *teocintes*, which are grown widely in Honduras, are valued for their leaves, which are used as *coronas* (wreaths) in Semana Santa. The *teocinte* products bought and sold in the *municipio* of Gualaco are all from Saguay, and several families of *teocinteros* there derive income from harvesting the heads and selling bags of the *cumbitos* in Gualaco, or to those *gualaqueños* who show up in Saguay. *Teocintes*, five- to fifteen-meter tall palm-like trees, are not harmed by the *teocinteros*, who climb the trunks using notches cut long ago with machetes. Most remove only the heads, though a few Gualaco outsiders recognized to be highly ignorant actually topple the tree as one would a *coyol*. Most female trees bear new 40-pound heads every year, so the gathering of this wild staple would be considered “sustainable” in conservation and development space. “Would,” because despite several conservation and development projects covering Gualaco (and other *municipios* where the plant occurs), no attention has been paid to the *teocinte* to my knowledge.

The many hundreds of *teocintes* of Saguay grow only in special, sandy *serrania* conditions, along the *vega* and lower slopes above the Quebrada de los Hornos, between the edge of the

²³ From Jones (1993): *cumbitos* are the seeds formed from female ovules; the fruiting female head, which can measure 50 centimeters from base to tip, is called a “cone.” *Dioon mejiae* “occurs in Honduras growing in a dry, rocky canyon at an elevation of about 750 m. It has also recently been collected in north-central Nicaragua” (171). The species was not described botanically from the former location, however, but from a garden in El Paraíso. Landa (1935) writes “El Teocinte...objeto de cultivo para la belleza de sus palmas, con procedencia de Olancho y Yoro tiene muestras en el parque de la Merced [Tegucigalpa].” Aguilar Paz (1970:5) noted the name, confusingly identical to that of the Mesoamerican *teocinte*, (believed to be ancestor of maize, and called that in southern and western Honduras): “En la región nororiental de Honduras existe en los campos, la hermosa planta ornamental de la familia Zamiáceas, vulgarmente conocida con el nombre de Teocinte y científicamente *Dioon Edulis*; sus frutos son comestibles, significando su nombre azteca, Maíz de Dios o maravilloso.” Two land titles from Saguay mention the plant. ANTO 166 Saguay 1779 mentions “un paraje yamado el Tiusintillito.” ANTO 167 Saguay 1919 contains praise of the plant from Agapito Salgado, an outsider and head of the Comisión Agraria surveying the land previous to awarding a title. He writes: “en el lugar llamado ‘Teocintalito’...una mancha aislada y pequeña de este palmera que existe ahí en medio de la serranía; queda esta mancha de palmera en la margen izquierda de una pequeña quebrada....Un pequeño valle montañoso de aspecto estéril y escaso de agua fuera del Río Gualaco, pero si es digno de mencionarse su abundancia de colmenas y sus grandes manchas de la palmera ‘Teocinte’ que además de su bellísima forma utilizan el fruto aquellos vecinos en alimentación propia.”



Fig. 6.8. *Teocintero/Teocintal*. Top left shows a *teocintal* engulfed by cattle space; top right a coexistence of beasts of burden and *teocinte* near the Quebrada de los Hornos. Trees with trunks are already several hundred years old. Bottom left shows the starch in the *cumbitos*, used for making tamales. Bottom right is ethnographic note-taking (the author) as well as the negotiation for sale of a bag full of *cumbitos* that the *teocintero* had gathered at a remote spot known only to him. The meeting takes place in an interstice of cattle space in Saguay.

Valle de Agalta and the *aldea* of Los Hornos. They give way to pine on higher, more arid slopes, and to *sabana* vegetation on the flat lands. They resist burning to an extreme degree, more even than *coyol* palms, to which (like to all palms) they are thought to be closely related.²⁴ Unlike *coyoles*, however, *teocintes* are known locally to be restricted to only a few places. Indeed, even old *teocinteros* in Saguay are only faintly aware of similar *teocintales* in *municipios* to the west; to them, for all intents and purposes, theirs is the only wild population. In the town of Gualaco, as in the rest of Honduras, the plants are found only in gardens, and few

²⁴ The *teocinte*, ironically enough, in scientific botany is most closely related to the *camotillo*, a local *Zamia* cycad that campesinos fear as the most deadly plant: a veritable *barba amarilla* (fer-de-lance) that has been employed in more than one intentional poisoning.

of these have the trunks that indicate Methuselan longevity like those of the wild relict populations.

Local people say that the *serranía* where the cycads grow is *tierra nacional* (the Saguay titles in the Archivo Nacional de Tierras touch only the lower edge of the *teocintal*). *Ganadero* families from Saguay have recently speeded up the process of *acaparando* (fencing in) this *serranía* and trying to eliminate the *teocintes* in the process. They see the cycads as invasive, as harmful to cattle, and as undesirably shading out grass. Since *teocintes* are highly fire-resistant, the *ganaderos* do all they can to eliminate them through chopping off the crowns (which resprout), burning repeatedly, and even chopping down the trunks, though they may hesitate to take this drastic measure because of the importance of the trees to non-*ganaderos* (and probably their own family connections to *teocinteros*). According to Jones (1993), cycads have subterranean stems, so the plant is not killed outright this way, but certainly the fruit-bearing capacity is effectively eliminated, since decades or even centuries may pass before a *teocinte* can provide cones again.

The *teocinteros* resent the *acapareamiento* (enclosure) of the *teocintal* as if it were just any other “useless” *serranía*, treated with the same type of disrespect *ganaderos* reserve for trees in general. They are frightened and angry by the *ganaderos*’ abuse of the *teocintes* and their disregard for Saguay’s (thus Gualaco’s) *patrimonio*. This is made even more annoying by the fact that the offending *ganaderos* are also from Saguay. Not too long ago the *municipalidad* of Gualaco was charged with the protection of the *teocintal* in recognition of its importance as staple and even famine food for the pre-harvest months; COHDEFOR had a project to raise seedlings to generate income. Nothing came of these efforts, and it is widely recognized in Gualaco that the cone-bearing trees are rapidly being eliminated.

Though the *teocinte* gatherers have little power or outside support to protect their *teocintales*, they are still allowed onto “their” land to harvest their fruits. One prominent gatherer told me that the *ganaderos* couldn’t block access, because the *teocintes* don’t belong to

them. The trees are a communal resource, “patrimonio de todos.” The gatherers see their *teocintales* as part of campesino space appropriated unjustly by *ganaderos*. From the ranchers’ points of view, the *teocintes* are pests in cattle space; the *teocinteros* are trespassers, but tolerated to ease social tensions. They see little benefit or practical value in *teocintes*: weeds, as it were, in a trash landscape that needs to be turned into rich, productive pastures. Proof that they’re right? The *teocinteros* are impoverished, marginalized, ignorant: they even speak in archaic Spanish like other backwoods *gualaqueños* who rarely leave the *municipio*. The *ganaderos* are getting wealthier and more *modernos* the more *serranía* they put into production. Besides, they say, if we don’t get it, the State will lease it to the *madereros* (loggers), since *serranía* in the State’s domain always seems to end up on logging trucks.

6.6 Maderero/Timber Space

The logger looks at the landscape like a farmer gazing at a corn field; the *forestal*, his parasite, measures it like an agronomist.²⁵ There are two distinct types of timber space, that of the *bosque latifoliado* (*montaña* in local space) and that of the *bosque de pino* (*serranía* in local space). Logging of rain forest species has been criminalized in Olancho since the early 1990s, and the exploitation of mahogany these days belongs more to outlaw space. But like cattle space, much of what is hated about timber space has historical bases in local space rather than being a recent invention from the outside. As a long line of forestry laws and decrees in La Gaceta (ANH) record, logging has been an obsession in Honduras since at least the early 1800s.²⁶ In the old days, there was a specific spatiality of the mahogany *benque*, as described at Sara by Wells (1857),²⁷ and well remembered in local oral history. Its spatial pattern was one

²⁵ Foresters are commonly women in Honduras, though by a wide margin they are still outnumbered by men. All *madereros*, to my knowledge, are men. I employ “parasite” with no intent to be crass: foresters depend for their very existence on their “hosts,” who are far more powerful than they.

²⁶ Including, for example, Decreto... 1841; Decreto no. 62 1909; Decreto no. 60... 1850; Decreto no. 28... 1939; Acuerdo de Gobierno 1846.

²⁷ See also Squier 1855; 1870.

common to *montaña* extractive industries: a central depot on a river and a hinterland network of slash trails connecting individual “forest giants,” each of which could take a day or more to cut up and drag out by mule team. In a few areas logs were flown out by plane (Carr 1954 describes this in the Culmí area), but in general logs were floated northeast to the coast.

Once roads connected Olancho with the rest of the world, mahogany loggers in *pura montaña* reoriented to terrestrial space and built a network of dry season haul roads from the central *valles* to get to harvestable trees, leaving behind a “penetrated” landscape of forests with openings quickly overgrown by vines, ready for cattle space and campesino space, one following the other or both together. After World War II the eastern frontier zone of Olancho receded rapidly as settlers benefited from the ephemeral imposition of timber space on *pura montaña*.

The Cordillera de Agalta’s *montaña* was initially approached in a similar manner, but since its slopes are so steep and *caoba* and *cedro* (the “other” *madera preciosa*) are uncommon at higher altitudes, it was generally considered uneconomical to go too far in.

The spaces of the timber industries in the 1970s gave away to furtive extraction by the 1980s when the cutting of tropical hardwoods began to be criminalized nationally and internationally, and most of the *montaña* was locked up in protected areas. The *madereros* were very angry because, as they pointed out, they at least used the trees, whereas *ganaderos* and *campesinos* chopped down and burned up the landscape with little regard for *maderas de color*.²⁸ These days, hardwood logging companies must get permits and management plans through COHDEFOR or a similar government regulatory land management agency, and obtaining such permission inside a protected area has become quite difficult. The Montaña de Botaderos area of northeastern Olancho, not part of conservation space, has several hardwood

²⁸ Apart from mahogany and tropical cedar there are numerous other valuable local hardwoods that support a thriving cottage industry of wood products for local consumption. Most timber, however, has traditionally left the country as boards—value is added only in the wealthy countries. For an idea of the current criminalization of mahogany logging, see Rosenweig (2000).

mule-logging cooperatives, however. Like all concessionaires past and present, however, they are in direct conflict with preexisting local space that tends to convert trees of any and all species to ash to produce grain and grass.

The other timber space in Olancho is still strong. The *bosque de pino* needs and “wants” to be harvested. Its trees should not become overmature; they must be scientifically managed and cut on rotation. They should be counted, measured, marked, and felled, geometrically. El Hombre will create a better *bosque*. This type of attitude has been favored by US and European-influenced forestry as taught at the elite Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Forestales in Siguatepeque.



Fig. 6.9. Campesino space overcodes timber space. In Botaderos, site of a hardwood concession at the edge of the *pura montaña*; trees had already been marked by members of licensed cooperative, but farmers toppled and burned them for swidden agriculture: maize, beans, plantains.

There are *madereros*, particularly foreigners, who appear not to think beyond “getting in there and getting out the wood” with maximum profits and minimum losses. They are well connected at the national level and seem to possess rock-hard concessions; if they have to justify their activities to anti-logging coalitions (which abound in local space), they cite patriotic

benefits of timber space such as aid to the economy. They create jobs. Honduras, after all, “es de vocación forestal.”

Local lumbermen, with their accompanying local foresters, unlike many insensitive outsiders are well aware of how unpopular commercial logging is in local space. They justify their actions according to what they have been taught or what they feel. They target the *ganaderos*, who don't even care about the trees, who want grass, who burn indiscriminately. They blame the *campesinos*, who don't want progress and jobs, who want the forest only to destroy it forever, not manage it sustainably like the *madereros*. They blame the *ecologistas*, who are too dumb to know that the pine forest is a renewable resource, that with human management it will grow back better than before. These people, according to the foresters and loggers, use the *bosque de pino* for their own selfish ends, rather than for the good of the nation: and they appeal to the Himno al Pino, to the pine as national tree, to its central place in the Honduran identity. And they are correct in their logic, of course: they are making money off the pine and spreading the wealth, doing what generations of wise statesmen and scientists, Honduran and foreign, have suggested is the best course for Honduran economy and society. They are solving the equation for Honduras's development in terms of El Pino: just like others have attempted to in terms of gold, silver, coffee, grains, bananas, ecotourism.²⁹

Fortunately for the proponents of timber space, there are still “unclaimed” areas where they can be awarded concessions in *tierra nacional*. The Reserva Forestal de Olancho, created in the 1970s and covering most of the northern third of the department, became a fiction as villages and *municipios* increased efforts to reclaim timber space after the 1970s fiasco of CORFINO, a timber and forestry development project where over a hundred million dollars are said to have disappeared. But there are still large swaths of land up there that have either never been titled,

²⁹ Ecotourism is given very little space in this dissertation primarily because Olancho, except the Cuevas de Talgua, is impossible as a tourist destination in the eyes of the State and Honduran society in general. Nevertheless, as hinted in the Babilonia *enredo* (chapter 2) local people do feel the promise of ecotourism.

or for which no one has yet stepped forward with a pre-1950 title. Loggers and foresters also are lucky that *serranía*, in local space, is useless for agriculture. Neither does it rate as conservation space in most models, being of low biodiversity, so other than the cycads and the golden-cheeked warbler (chapter 4), not even conservationists should theoretically become worked up about “sustainable harvesting” of Holdridge’s Subtropical Moist Forest. The loggers don’t even have to combat such “special needs” populations as the indigenous Indios de Gualaco, who have no political existence and are absent from censuses; they hide in their houses as the lumber trucks roar by. Far from being conflictive, timber space should be seen as the correct and only space for the *serranía*: the *aserraderos* (mills) provide hundreds of jobs, supporting whole town economies like Talanga and Guaimaca, and certain villages like La Venta, Gualaco. Where would you be without us?

Why, then, does timber space have such difficulty becoming local? Why is it anathematized? One reason is that people tend to defend their spatial identities, and the identities of people in Olancho rarely run to the “greater good” of Olancho, much less Honduras. Who cares if a State/Development/Conservation alliance says that (always sustainable) logging of the *serranía* is the “best thing” for all that non-arable land? All that so-called “empty” land, every corner of it, belongs to a *comarca* and a *municipio* before it belongs to Honduras. In local space there is no such thing as empty *serranía*; everywhere has a usufruct owner or user, if only for hunting or the occasional cow. Concessions, it seems, will continue to have little success in local space. And then there are the negative effects of *la modernización*.

Logging roads bring social services and perhaps a higher standard of living, but also bring “contaminación.” In northern Olancho, people remember when the logging roads came in, sometimes only last year or in the past decade. There are still villages awaiting the arrival of the logging road, which means the outside world will be imposed on a trail-bound, walking and riding culture. Logging roads bring outsiders who sell alcohol, sex, and influence, who take over lands by fencing them in and bringing cattle, and settling their disputes with the automatic

weapon and *matones*. Cuaca, Gualaco, once an expansive *comarca*, has been reached by a logging road and by a *terrateniente* who has surrounded the houses on all sides with fences and cattle, leaving the residents terrified, squashed into a *chorizo* and forced to locate crops farther and farther away. This has occurred in one of the *comarcas* of lowest human population density in a *municipio* with the lowest density in Olancho.

Comarcas like Naranjal in northeastern Gualaco, on clear days in 2000, could hear the roar of the skidders several months away across the *serranía*, and awaited the outside world with dread and wonder, knowing that they would lose their lands not to the loggers but to those who came behind. La Ensenada, Guata is a prosperous village that depends on its sizeable trade hinterland and on coffee farms in the Montaña La Crudeza, northeast extremity of the Cordillera de Agalta. They benefited when the logging roads reached their village around 1990 because they could get their coffee out faster, and development agency vehicles began to pay them visits. The logging industry had hired a few locals as unskilled labor, but even those starvation-wage jobs disappeared when the loggers left. And what *las industrias* (“industries” in Olancho signifies logging operations) left was a hot and dry landscape that went up quickly in canopy conflagrations. Like across northern Olancho, the loggers had been after some of the last remnants of old-growth *serranía* in Central America. They had gotten out the big trees, the “overmature” ones that can’t be allowed to exist in timber space—but did have standing value in local space.

Actions and results like these begin to explain why the citizens of several *aldeas* in Jano ran out the lumber companies in the early 1990s, despite or perhaps because of the Proyecto del Desarrollo Forestal (PDF), a forty-million dollar aid project to northern Olancho run by USAID and COHDEFOR in the 1980s and 1990s. They didn’t allow the possibility that what they called “JODEFOR” would ever change its role as pawn of timber interests and oppressor of campesinos, nor that the timber-forester world would ever come clean and wash itself of the sin of corruption. In Gualaco, where at least six large sawmills were operating in 2000 (thanks to

the permission of municipal governments past), citizens began to consider rallying against the logging companies, as the “Janos” and other campesino and indigenous groups across Honduras have done. The bottom line in local space is that the *serranía* does not have a monetary value assignable to a single outside interest. It cannot be conceived as belonging to outsiders, in the virtual absence of the State. Like all local space, “we” already own it, no matter how empty it looks to the outsider’s gaze. Everywhere is someone’s *comarca*.

6.7 Cafetalero/Coffee Space/Montaña

This section looks at the internal composition of coffee space, and then moves to its (campesino space) margin of becoming-*montaña* in anticipation for the sketches of forest space and conservation space that begin chapter 7.

There are two spatial identities, that of campesino *caficultor* and that of non-campesino *caficultor*, who create coffee spaces that in Olancho are similar in appearance. Coffee *terratenientes* and small farmers alike prefer coffee shaded by a canopy, and there are few large coffee estates dominated by sun tolerant varieties (yet), as are coming to characterize the more “modernized” areas of Honduras. The differences in coffee space internal and external to campesino space are not physiognomic but cultural: one is the exclusive and often hostile space of *terratenientes*, the other is contained by the smallholder landscape of minuscule variations and trespassing hunters and gatherers.

Cattle space and coffee space are highly mutually exclusive except where internal to a large landholding, largely because they are differentiated altitudinally. Coffee occupies the wetter, cooler ridges, usually the lower edge of cloud forest, where it is part of the *montaña*. Cattle are said to do poorly in those areas. Coffee of low quality is grown in limited quantity in the *valles* (primarily in *vegas*), and it is almost never found in *serranía*. Coffee space has extraordinary power over other spaces because it appears a well-tended garden, no matter what one’s landscape gaze. The invasion of coffee space by cattle space, for example, can be effected (“by



Fig. 6.10. Coffee, *chatas*, and the holding sway of the frontier *rancho* in Babilonia. First house we encountered coming out of the deep forest; last house from civilization's point of view: three hours by foot above last *aldea*; five hours above last road; six hours from Catacamas, seven from Juticalpa, ten from Tegucigalpa.

accident'') by nomadic cattle, who wreak havoc inside *cafetales*. But actually cutting down a coffee plant or torching a *finca* is in many ways equivalent to shooting someone's cow—an almost unheard-of insult. In Olancho, coffee space has a local resilience all out of proportion to its historical “depth” (coming on the scene in a big way only after World War II) and to its fragility vis-à-vis the whims of the international market to which it is in great part beholden.

Coffee became a widespread export crop in Olancho after World War II, and it began to be heavily sown in the *montaña*. Previously, it appears to have been sown principally for family consumption and limited income generation. Now, it is expanding rapidly into *pura montaña*, creating serious conflicts with conservation space.

Seen from conservation space, coffee space is the first spatial transformation and degradation of virgin rain forest: it is better than the rest, but still not as good as virgin rain forest. In development space, “rational” coffee farms maximize profit and use of hillsides, with the right inputs of chemical and labor. To *cafetaleros* living in development space, the shaded coffee farm is an improvement on the forest.

Coffee space, especially when internal to campesino space, is not occupied entirely with *cafetales*, but also contains small orchards, wooded streams and wetlands, *guamiles*, and agricultural fields, usually beans and sometimes corn. This type of coffee space is a mosaic internal to the mosaic of campesino space, either as the top of a mountain (e.g. Cerro Agua Buena: see chapter 8) or as the interface of human-dominate space and forest space (*pura montaña*: see PNSA/Babilonia, chapter 7). Only by accident or ephemerally is campesino coffee space approachable by road, because roads bring rapid overcoding by *terratenientes*.

Campesino coffee space without roads is characterized by low chemical inputs and low production. It is a lived-in space, with seasonal coffee villages scattered throughout (Planes de Babilonia and Agua Buena are examples of these). Most families have houses in the coffee village and “permanent” dwellings in the *serranía* or *valle*. They spend late December through early March up in the *montaña*, and the rest of the year in the *valle*.

Non-campesino coffee space is normally penetrated by roads, and owned by absentee landlords from the *valles*, from the towns, from other professions who may or may not think of themselves primarily as *cafetaleros* (they may preferred to be called *ganaderos*, *madereros*, *profesores*, *ingenieros*). These landscapes tend toward greater homogeneity of “coffee forest” shade composition (generally *Inga* spp.) and a virtual absence of non-coffee crops.

Coffee space, internally, does not rely on the expansiveness and sweeping views of cattle space. One inspects one’s *finca* close up, rather than surveying it from afar (whence only canopy would be visible). Each bush is attended to and picked from. Coffee space requires careful attention to details of shade cover and biotic composition, edge effects, soils, pests. Fires for interstitial agropastoral plots have to be carefully controlled. The most well-tended *fincas* are owned by the *caficultores* who give the most individualized attention to their plants.

Coffee space is anchored by the house—not as permanent or durable as one’s house in the *valle*, but nevertheless significant as an “outpost,” since it is constructed “over against” the

montaña in a bare clearing that solidifies tenuous human existence to keep at bay an inevitable becoming-*montaña*.

Coffee space inhabits the margin on which *pura montaña* rewrites the “humanized” *montaña* of campesino space and campesino space rewrites the “virgin forest.” Thick (*espesa*) and ever-thickening vegetation, in the absence of fire has (if you let it) a strong tendency to reterritorialize intruders, while also expanding its edges wherever possible. Its only major short-term barrier is the *serranía*, and even there *montaña* may eventually take over in the absence of fire. Everywhere, in other words, has to fend off forest space, except in some special conditions (see chapter 4) where forest may be unable to grow. Fending off forest may mean denying its possibility altogether, as in the case of the grass ranchers and the stereotyped Sureños, or it may mean maintaining the forest for coffee that “needs” an overstory. Human relationships with forest run the gamut from a denial of its possibility to a desire for “complete” control (coffee space, or conservation space). In between these extremes I have detected the rhizome becoming-*montaña*. The forest’s “point of view” is taken up in chapter 7; here, I describe the rhizome from within human spatial identities.

The becoming-*montaña* of the *cafetal* is a strictly circumscribed economic necessity from the side of spatial identities, and may or may not be accepted by *cafetaleros* (though usually it is accepted through necessity by their *mozos*). Coffee space in some ways rebels against its becoming-*montaña*, in that coffee is planted in rows rather than sprouting “chaotically,” and the understory has to be kept free of other vegetation. Seen as “ersatz forest,” coffee farms mimic *pura montaña* to serve human ends, and no more. However, within campesino space one may find that some coffee farms are not so much “artificial forest” as barely-tamed forest space still traversed by quetzals and monkeys, the coffee bushes and trail networks reclaimed from enveloping vegetation only through arduous and constant effort.

Becoming-*montaña* effects a cultural/natural symbiosis whereby spatial identities become entangled with forest biota, and the very spatiality of forest space is “internalized” in “human

being.” The hunter’s becoming-*montaña* is strengthened through such practices as learning how to hide like a sit-and-wait predator, and by using the forest’s abundant opportunities to remain hidden to one’s advantage. It means abandoning open, established trails, following local clues and creating ephemeral trails as they are needed, with the slightest of markings—in distrust of those who may follow. To guerrillas such as those in Olancho in the 1860s, becoming-*montaña* was necessary to escape from the arrayed military forces who fought in open *valles* and marched single file along pre-existing forest trails. To the *médico botánico*, becoming-*montaña* can mean “thinking like” a plant so as to be able to discover it, then keeping its location secret.

Peoples’ becomings-*montaña* are predicated on their feeling comfortable next to and inside *montaña*--common across a range of spatial identities in Olancho, and notable in those who must inhabit their coffee farms for months at a time. *Montañas* are cooler, have less disease, less crime, and are quieter. The coffee crop (in good years) provides a cash income for campesinos that is hard to come by otherwise. One hears with frequency “Me encanta la montaña”: many local people in Olancho, whether campesino, urbanite, *terratendiente*, or *técnico*, openly express their enchantment with the *montaña* as integral to local space--as long as it is striated with agropastoral endeavor, which usually means coffee. The *pura montaña*, called more often *montaña cruda*, is a quite different matter, however. It takes certain qualities of persistence and endurance to extend one’s becoming-*montaña* into deep, trackless forest. Certain campesinos, similar to certain field biologists, evince and demonstrate a degree of becoming-*montaña* that sets them apart in local space as mavericks—Olancho rarely feels comfortable under the canopy of *pura montaña* for more than an afternoon.

This is not to say that the “woodspeople” surrender themselves to *pura montaña* completely. They all have their tricks that allow them to find their ways back out along the tenuous trails connecting forest space to the outside world. They may feel completely unafraid

under the many-eyed gaze of *pura montaña*, but nevertheless are rarely without flashlights, battery-powered radios, and watches.

Senses other than the visual are usually acute in woodspeople. For example, in the case of the ornithologist it is the aural that is most important. Many species are more reliably identified by sound than by sight, and the experienced bird seeker at once senses a “soundscape” within the forest. The plant gatherer uses the sense of smell to read a “smellscape.”

Ways of navigating *adentro* (inside *pura montaña*) are distinct from those useful on the outside, *afuera*. The becomings-*montaña* of campesinos entails a close relationship with the machete, with which one never becomes lost, because the diagonally-cut saplings and nicks on trees are often the only way that one can get back to where one is based, a campsite or *champa*. Machete marks become imperative in regions like the karst landscape, where topography is highly confusing. In the karst landscape, with its numerous sinkholes, finding a stream is not a guarantee of getting “down and out” of the *montaña*, since the stream may disappear within a few meters. “Up” and “down” directions in the karst within *pura montaña* are doubly confusing: the disorientation created by streams that go nowhere and downhill that end in caves add to the “annoying” blockage of sky and obscuring of view characteristic of forest space.

Pedro Avila of Catacamas, like not a few campesinos (and though a Sureño, he confesses), dreams of the *montaña*, the perfect world where the climate is just right, the land is fertile, and no one can get him. He can listen to the *jagüíeros* and *jilgueros* in peace.³⁰ Don Pedro’s *montaña* is filled with caves, and his *dominio* lies within the limits of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta’s nuclear zone, in conservation space. He is careful to conceal the routes to “his” caves in fear that they will be sacked by curious hunters, his stalactites and soda straws³¹

³⁰ The *jilguero* is the slate-colored solitaire, widely considered by local people, ecotourists, and ornithologists alike to be one of the world’s finest songsters. The *jagüíero* is the three-wattled bellbird.

³¹ Fragile calcite “straws” that can grow densely only in “untouched” caves, because they crumble at the

toted off as curios. He employs tricks to conceal the turnoffs from his faint trails to the secret ways to caves. One has to know exactly where to look to locate a slight bit of peeled bark, a machete mark, and to connect a few of these together over a fifteen-minute trajectory in thick forest to reach a cave entrance. Pointing to his own hard-to-find machete mark, *don Pedro* commented to me that “*Estos son mis mapas.*” These are my maps: forest space is inscribed by a sign system that in some ways is a diaphanous striation by the human of the body of the forest: a striation necessary to maintaining one’s humanity in the becoming-*montaña* rhizome.

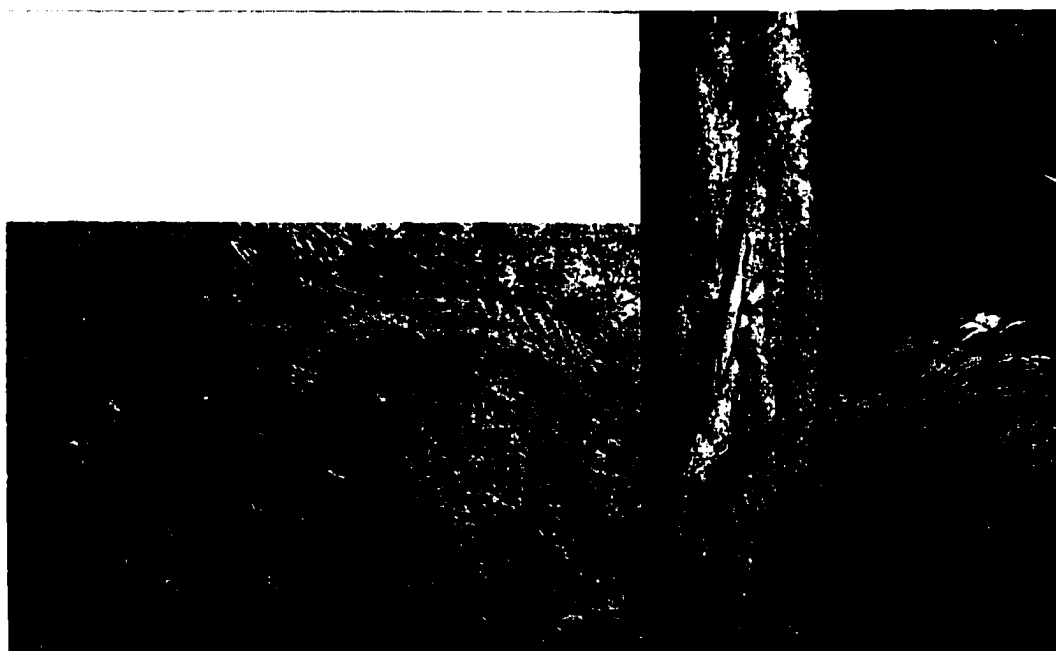


Fig. 6.11. “*Estos son mis mapas.*” From forest space (left) to maps (right). Pedro Avila’s machete marks are indicated with arrows.

People like Pedro Avila have seen, heard, and felt “many things they can’t explain” in the *pura montaña*. They are often treated to glimpses of fauna that people in the *valles* or even biologists limited to short visits to the *montaña* may not see in a lifetime: *tigres* (jaguars), *panteras negras* (black pumas), *dantos* (tapirs), *jagüillas* (white-lipped peccaries), and many strange birds for which they have to invent names. *Don Pedro’s montaña* is “muy misterioso”:

touch.

it is completely and totally enchanted, populated by a special type of fauna distinct from El Duende, La Sucia, and other beings found in the human landscape across Honduras. The *sipe* is a child-sized simian or humanoid that lives in bands in the *pura montaña*, sneaking into settler cabins and recent *descombros* to eat wood ash. The Sisimite is a yeti-like creature who similarly only inhabits *pura montaña*, and is known to have become extinct in the Cordillera de Agalta in the last fifty years. Don Pedro and other hunters believe that modern-day sightings are of the *oso caballo*, or giant anteater. The true Sisimite, common in the *grandes montañas* of Honduras past and present, has feet that point backwards, cannot cross rivers, and has a penchant for mating with women. It should be emphasized that Sisimites and *sipes* are part of the biota, and a disbelief in them characterizes one as alien to campesino space.³²

Becoming-*montaña* is important in conservation space where uneasy alliances are created between conservationists and people like Pedro Avila who don't think or act in dichotomies of virgin and trashed. Becoming-*montaña* for them also means being able to hunt and have coffee and open clearings within *pura montaña*, though they stop short of wanting to convert all *montaña cruda* to pasture or *frijolar*. Conservation space, however, is more rigid in its definition of forest space. Forests are defined by their "virginity," which entails lack of penetrating influences that leave the forest "degraded" and eventually "denuded." The only becoming-*montaña* allowed in most park nuclear zones is among scientists and ecotourists (for their becomings-forest, see, for example, Forsyth and Miyata 1984).

6.8 Outlaws and Misfits

Mavericks such as Pedro Avila have been portals in my own research to a world of "alternative" spaces that frequently challenge the very strictures of human sedentary territoriality (my land here; your land there). There exist in Olancho certain spatial identities

³² Both "sisimite" and "sipe" are Nahuatl words used across Honduras. "Sipe" means "tiny" with overtones of "weak," "spindly," and "pallid": especially in reference to malnourished-looking children ("es sipiito el cipote eso"); a type of tortilla is the "tortilla sipa." *Sipes*, then are "the little people."

that deterritorialize all the human spaces described above, in some cases achieving a pariah status--the untouchables--marginalized by all normative spatial identities. In their very threat to “society” and “civilization” they are indicative of a smooth space, but at the same time if “captured” they may serve the ends of normative spaces, as migrant laborers or solely as “the bad guys” who make law and order necessary. Needless to say, the spatial identities of the bad guys can be difficult and dangerous to decipher, so here it is sketchy at best. Running through this section is the pride and embarrassment with which Olancho harbors, protects, but also turns traitor to the types of spaces that keep “the forces of good” at bay.

Gold space, though it has been constructed as the ever-present potential of all “Olancho”, in reality is concentrated along certain widely-scattered streams, and only becomes ascendant in parts of the *municipios* of Patuca and Catacamas.³³ Gold space in Olancho over the centuries has subsisted in the identity of the transient independent (often female) miner, but it is more famous for its overcoding by mining operations with capital and concessions. Obviously, both types of gold-mining have been in tandem since the 1540s, but while the gold space of aspiring capital has seen mixed fortunes, the “traditional” space has continued with little to no need of anything but annual flooding and a small group of able and willing bodies.

In the old days, almost all local gold panners were female--gold space was a woman’s space, as described by Wells (1857) (see chapter 3). Oreras stood for hours waist deep in turbulent water with their *bateas*, doing “womens’ work” too difficult, dangerous, and tedious for men. The importance of gold space in nineteenth century Olancho cannot be overstated: an 1889 (Vallejo 1893) Honduran census records 89 *lavadores de oro* in Honduras, of which seven were in the Tegucigalpa district and the rest in Olancho. A slightly earlier census was even more graphic (Cruz 1882 in Vallejo 1893): of the 236 *lavadoras de oro* in Honduras, 1 was in El Paraíso and the rest in Olancho. Despite the probable inaccuracy of these figures, the

³³ For mining space in colonial Honduras, see West (1959).

concentration of the spatial identity “woman gold panner” in Olancho cannot in my mind be a mistake: even into the 1950s a dominant way of life for the poorest strata of *comarcas* such as Lepaguare was migrant gold-panning “down” on the Guayape. It was a living associated not with becoming wealthy but with getting by. Elderly women I have talked to who panned gold in their youth remember clearly the extreme suffering of the job, the respiratory ailments, the rachitic returns on their effort. Only the capitalist operations, as common in those days as they are today, turned profits, while the *lavadoras* wanted little more than to support their families, they have told me.

These days gold space in its various forms appears to have been taken over by men. Nevertheless, in at least one case with which I am familiar, but that may be indicative, a female head of household in San Esteban has carried gold panning forward to the present; at her urging her grown sons “go down” to northern Gualaco with her every year to pan gold; she doesn’t get in the water herself, but keeps the camp organized, the food cooked, and the gold well hidden in vials under the ground until the season is at an end.

The spatial identity of modern-day subsistence *oreros* is migratory. They sluice the same streams and rivers every dry season, defending their territories against incursions by other small-scale goldminers and by large-scale capitalist operations. An *orero* is highly mobile, needing but a handful of men to dig sediment and toss it on a *canoas* (sluice), and someone to cook meals and watch camp. These *oreros* speak in terms of “the big strike” and “Colón,” which has, they say, poorer-quality gold than Olancho, but more of it. They read the river like hunters read the *montaña*, seeing gold before they find it, alert to the presence of special stones that point to its presence. They laugh at ignorant outsiders (all who don’t pan gold) who are fooled by pyrite. *Oberos* are fascinated by rocks and by the inorganic in general, and amass curious, colorful, perhaps lucky stones. They are attuned to the flows and eddies of the streams, to a fluvial microgeography. Sluice *oreros* are secretive by profession, burying their dust and nuggets in small containers scattered about their camp sites.

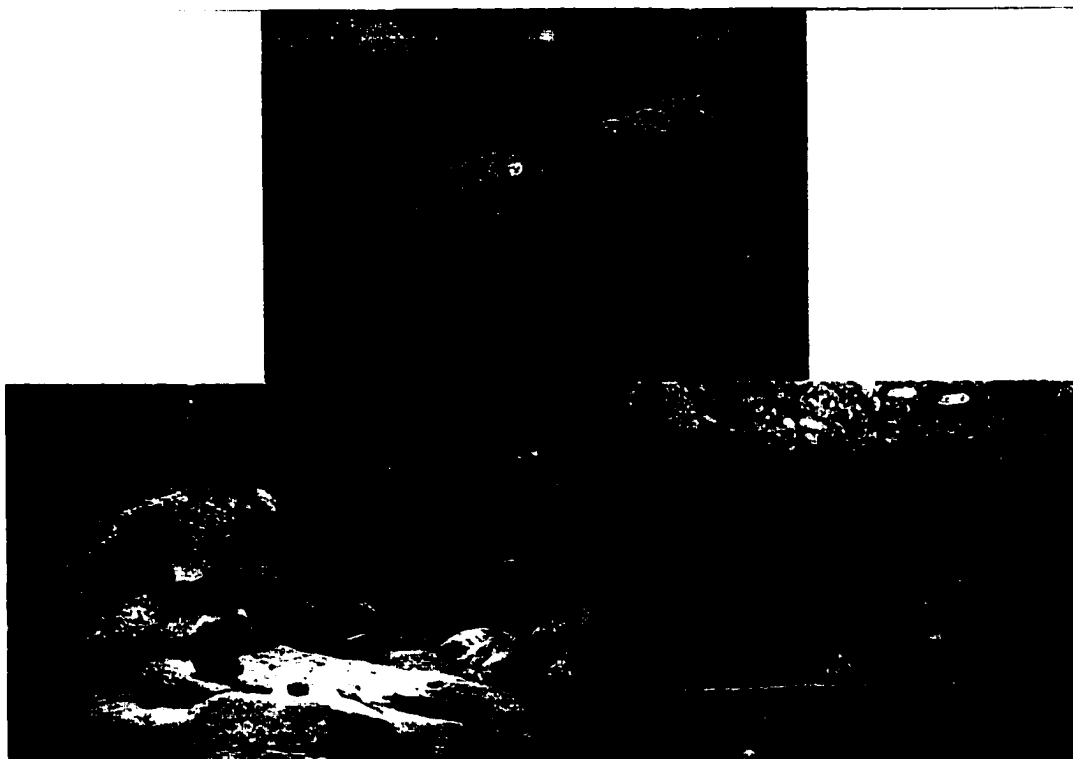


Fig. 6.12. Gold rhizome. Naranjal, Gualaco: 20-carat *pepito* (top); *caoba* and *cedro canoa* (right); diggings in the Quebrada de la Mina (left). Curiously shaped and colored stones have been arranged to point to the spot.

They are well aware of the venerability of their profession, and read a colonial geography of gold-mining sites--the large pits and the holes, they say, carved from the hills of Tayaco, Guayape, Jalán, Paulaya, Sico *cuando los españoles*.

These sluice *oreros*, though closely tied to the international market, possess little to no capital, and do not seem to mine gold because they plan on becoming rich (though the possibility lurks in the back of their minds, they have told me). When the rivers rise after the first hard rains of *invierno*, they return to their villages and to campesino space, to whatever else it is that they do. The next season presents new opportunities, the lay of the sediments having been altered by the year's floods. They go back to work the same stretches of river, their stretches, in absolute exclusion of other miners but virtually oblivious to terrestrial interests above the banks. Needless to say, the "terrestrial interests" regard them with distrust and even with fear, not only because they are "not from here" but also because they are "not like us."

Mixed with this is a certain mystique—here we are burning our fields and sweating in the hot sun of *verano*, while they are under the cool shade. They are practicing that of which every Olanchano is said to dream. More strangely, they are as free as they can possibly be (under the gaze of the State, which tends to demand that they pay for concessions) in a type of unself-conscious “revenge” against their spatial origins in the *repartimiento* of San Jorge de Olancho and Spanish striation in general.³⁴ They are liminal—Development doesn’t work with them (too my knowledge) and Conservation demonizes them (seeing each and every *orero* as using mercury, which is untrue).

The State is more comfortable with the spatial identity of the legalized industrial miner, perhaps a multi-national corporation or just a local outfit with enough money for mercury and a rockcrusher, and to hire the *mano de obra* necessary to make the venture more than a “subsistence operation.” Many think of rivers not poetically but in terms of costs and benefits, distrusting their *mozos* (often “captured” from campesino gold space), knowing that as owners they will only become richer the more rock they crush. Serendipity is unnecessary.

Smuggling is “rife” in Olancho, as it seems to have been since colonial times. The eastern and northern *montañas* to a great extent, and the rest of Olancho to a lesser extent, are home to many types of smuggling activities taking advantage of the lack of through roads, lack of law enforcement infrastructure, and often invisibility to aircraft. Smugglers are particularly favored by the *montaña* because of its capacity to hide them in this way. There is a becoming-*montaña* of the contrabandist that is somewhat akin to the guerrilla: *montañas* are sites of power, places to group and regroup, to strike from, to retreat to. Marijuana growers, in particular, seek out *montañas* not only because of favorable climate but because hiding a patch of marijuana inside

³⁴ I suspect that what occurred in colonial times was a convergence of spatial identities: of gold miners and similar nomadic mining identities “common” to Europe and to indigenous America, and presumably to West African “Guinea,” whence slaves were derived, some of whom may have possessed the knowledge of gold-mining that Spaniards lacked. Whether or not gold itself was mined in Precolumbian Olancho, other metals certainly were, though within non-State polities.

pura montaña makes it virtually undetectable even when military patrols pass by only a few meters away. *Montañas* also provide shelter for clandestine airstrips, for automatic weapons caches, for cocaine, for stolen cars, and for cattle, all of which traverse Olancho in regional and intercontinental trade routes.³⁵ The Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, though generally too rugged and hemmed in by *valles*, has a few contrabandists' havens (of which I am aware) where stolen cattle and mules are driven hours up into the *montaña* beyond the farthest village, and pastured until they give birth, or until they can be taken out without their brands being recognized. Smugglers in this case benefit from the fact that no one dares talk openly about them or identify them on pain of elimination, and so a thriving illicit trade feeds off a paranoid atmosphere in which no one really knows who knows and who doesn't know. This is particularly the case in drug growing and smuggling.

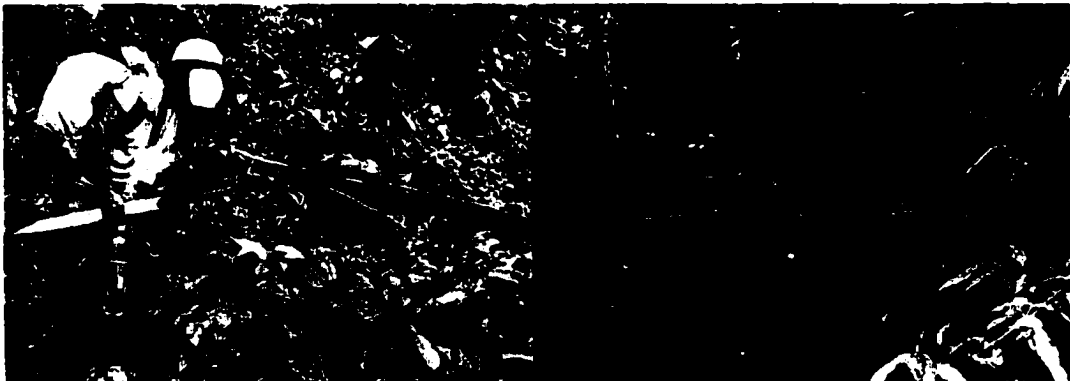


Fig. 6.13. Contraband space within deep forest. To stay away from prying eyes, “development solutions” are achieved without *apoyo*. Drinking water system (“sistema de agua”) is from split bamboo; fence tied with vines is to keep cattle up in hidden pastures.

Organized crime thrives in Olancho partly due to the land's unconquerability, its myriad rugged municipal hinterlands, *rincones* with only one entrance road that can easily be monitored. Organized crime combined with highway robbery makes entire zones off limits for

³⁵ Smuggling is common across Honduras, and is often a direct result of State monopolies on prices: beans, maize, and coffee are smuggled in huge quantities across international boundaries on a regular basis. For an interesting historical parallel to marijuana in the *montaña*, see a series of documents from the early 1800s in the AGCA (e.g. AGCA A1.1 398 4238; there are several others), that describe the destruction of highly criminal tobacco plots in Olancho, always hidden within *montaña*.

outsiders, especially *comerciantes* (itinerant traders) who don't have family in Olancho (and hence will not seek vengeance like a local family would, the logic goes). What can result are pariah zones where only churches and government officials, and sometimes not even these, dare to enter; where others, if they go in, should leave before noon; where *comarcas limpias* can be taken over by armed bands fleeing from retaliation elsewhere.

There are areas where clan violence and organized crime perpetrated by armed bands combine to create sinister reputations: "La Avispa" (in the old days), "Guata," "Bijao," "Azacualpa," should be spoken of in muted tones even within the walls of one's own home. There are certain associated surnames that should never be mentioned aloud in public, particularly in places like Juticalpa where there are too many ears. A lurking fear of certain places and families can become sheer terror if an innocent outsider mentions one of them casually to an Olanchano in hearing of a gossip. The local space of Olancho has many ears; better that the outsider remain ignorant of local conditions and steered away from danger spots altogether.

"Illegal" space in this context means far more, and also far less, than the inevitable criminalization of one space by another (the hunter transformed into poacher) which is part and parcel of everyday life. "Highly" illegal activities all have their economic or social justifications; contraband is simultaneously against the State as well as produced by the State. But it is also practiced by "normal" people in "normal" places--not only in Guata. Perhaps the *montañas* of northern Olancho are drug farms for La Costa, but this means that local campesino marijuana growers there are only part of "the problem." They, however, are the ones who must take pains to keep their space secret, since theirs is the drug landscape visible to the eye. It is convenient for the State to destroy marijuana farms; inconvenient to arrest high-level politicians. What results is a very real enveloping of local space in such liminal areas: like the "secret" psychopath next door. (Do you really expect us believe that you never suspected

anything?). The Gualaqueños and the “Guatas” know about their “rogue” *comarcas*, but in the interests of not being implicated, stay silent.

The aversion of the gaze is also practiced for less sinister reasons. Certain spaces are peopled by misfits, often the “mentally ill” who can only in a marginal sense be said to “inhabit” even campesino space, and then only because it is the most permissive for them. For long periods of time they may live in caves or under rock overhangs, which for decades after their deaths bear their names: La Cueva de Marta in San Felipe; La Cueva de Román Antúnez above La Avispa. Most are nomadic, sleeping in fields and woods and on sidewalks. They belong to no space in particular, or perhaps, through their schizophrenia, to all.³⁶



Fig. 6.14. Luis Colindres at the house he shares with his partner Ligia. They live under a large limestone boulder in the middle of a forest that is also the nuclear zone of the Monumento Natural El Boquerón (with which they have had a stormy relationship). They often attend *culto* (non-Catholic church service) in nearby La Avispa, but otherwise live as hermits, hunting, gathering, farming.

Another category of spatial misfits are the extreme or “absolute” poor. They are landless people, usually migrants and/or single mothers with no local relatives, who fit only at the edges of campesino space, and are looked down upon as “*miserables*” even by “*humildes*

³⁶ See Turcios, *Mendigos de Juticalpa* (1941).

campesinos.” They are the rural equivalent of beggars stepped over on busy Tegucigalpa streets, and they find refuge in the *campo* most often along the highways within the strips on either side that belong to the State. Observe how difficult it is for anyone “rich” or “poor” to stop by their lonely filthy tarpaper shacks, afraid even of being offered (disease-ridden) coffee. Perhaps a missionary would pay a visit. As the mentally ill roam almost anywhere, so the absolute poor can settle almost nowhere, their abject suffering a scribbled commentary, on the margin of other margins.

6.9 Summary: Margins of Spatial Identities

The absolute poor are signs of an endless marginalization: mendicants knocking on the doors of mendicants. Following this sequence of striation, we go from highway-dwellers on the outskirts of villages at the edges of the *municipio* far from Juticalpa, to Olancho itself, a margin of Honduras at the bottom of Latin America measured against the developed world. The “remoteness” of margins was and continues to be produced by hierarchies, which in turn become the only machines capable of helping them. In theory: the Church attends to any and all—everyone is equal under the eyes of God. In theory: the State counts votes; everyone is equal in the eyes of the Law. By the Constitución de la República, all Olanchanos are created equal. In theory, the State mediates all disputes, gradually reorganizing complex spaces until they become (simple, unified, univocal) Space “again.” In the case of a Honduran Cardinal in 2001, Church and State achieve hermeneutic fusion in development. The Cardinal, it is said, will work to achieve development. Development does its work through the State and Church. In theory: everywhere is developing. Everyone should have the same opportunities. Development = God.

Church/State/Development recognize very well the existence of complex spaces. They have to—the spaces clamor for attention, for special favors, always half-in and half-out of the hierarchy. The spaces and the spatial identities fight with each other for the spoils—who will get

the loans? Which is the right food to grow, how should it be grown, who should have what land to grow it on? But after even the best attempts at instilling order in spaces, complexity still erupts at all points across what never stopped being local space. Rhizomes (families, for example) defeat any attempt to striate spaces--to organize it "rationally" through solving one side of an equation "for their own good" in terms of the other. No amount of development algorithms can make an area, a landscape, a department, a *municipio*, function like a machine, like a body, like an identity guided by a will. The hunters, gatherers, and *oreros* in this chapter are especially important because by their nomadism they actually and symbolically defy the allotment of space in units or layers, the partitioning out of surface and of subsoil in hectares. But the equations of development are defeated as well by the wandering of cattle, the expanding of the forest frontier, the imperative to grow coffee over food to eat, the need to go and get out the trees--all these forces are in their own way hurricanes (haecceities). They act across "the land" selectively and are never static.

Nothing appears to function "right" because "space itself" was never meant to function univocally. Multiple spaces call for multiple identities that are themselves, if given a chance, multiple as well. Each space is produced by the interaction of hierarchy and rhizome, inside and outside, global and local: *n*-dimensional chiasm. What is possible as an "answer" is not more and more striation and thus simplification but rather complex alliances--the plugging of rhizomes into rhizomes into rhizomes, with hierarchies to provide some measure of moral support "up there" when things "down here" get too dangerous. Solutions to problems are reached not through equations but through alliances, which are local and contingent even if they get their inspiration in part from "outsiders." (There is no absolute outsider as such: only degrees of becoming-local.) But alliances are far more difficult than they are often made out to be in conservation space and development space, where they are thought to be plannable and mappable in advance. The alliance of *confianza*, as it is understood in local space, just happens-

-you grow together, you interchange bits of yourself. This can only be told about, never written into what will happen.

The next chapter looks at the conflicts in this chapter in terms of forest space and conservation space, to circle back on the Babilonia *enredo* in chapter 2 and put it in terms of the complex spaces I have mapped in the interim. Some ideas can be gained of the ways that alliances form laterally, between spatial identities, and more appear in chapter 8.

Chapter Seven

Babilonia Revisited: Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta

[Olanchanos] son buenos para manejar pistolas, pero no arados y que creen que sacándose lo “olanchano” conseguirán sus objetivos.

Microeditorial, *El Herald*, Feb. 12, 2001

DENUNCIA PUBLICA

La Junta Rural de Productores de Cafe de la comunidad de El Ocotal, y la Central de Patronatos de la aldea La Venta, Gualaco, Olancha, ante el sector cafetaleros y a la opinion Pública nacional e internacional presentamos la siguiente denuncia....queremos dejar constancia que nos oponemos al proyecto Hidroeléctrico Babilonia por las siguientes razones: - Falta de un Estudio de Impacto Ambiental confiable que garantice el equilibrio del ecosistema. - Destruccion total de la zona cafetalera de Babilonia por la construccion del embalse....-Destruccion de una Maravilla escenica como ser los chorros Rio Babilonia. -Violacion a nuestra Legislacion Nacional Decreto # 87-87 Creacion de areas protegidas y Parque Nacionales considerado Patrimonio Mundial Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, Ley Forestal del Estado Decreto 87 Art. # 61, Constitucion de la República Art. # 3. - Responsabilizamos a la empresa...y al Gobierno constitucional de la República de cualquier atentado contra la seguridad fisica de los pobladores de la zona involucrada en la defensa del corredor biologico mesoamericano. [cc. Corporación Municipal, Grupo Ecológico de Gualaco, Foro Local Forestal, AFE-COHDEFOR, Al Señor Presidente Constitucional de la República, Al señor presidente del Congreso Nacional, Al comisionado de los Derechos Humanos en Honduras...Amnistia Internacional, A GREEN PEACE...A la ministra de SERNA, A los medios de comunicacion, A la iglesia Católica.

Extracts from a public printed Accusation of Wrongdoing, Feb. 2001

This chapter is about conservation space in relation to other spaces. Specifically, it looks at the ways through which a would-be spatial hegemony was gnawed at until it became-local. The Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta in several instances went from being regarded as an enemy of local space to being an ally, especially in the case of the Babilonia *enredo*. In myriad other ways this “protected area” was cut from its moorings and set adrift among the spaces of central Olancha--now claimed for coffee, now for Olancha, for campesinos, for dams, for villages, for *municipios*. The smaller examples throughout lead up to a quandary--removal of the Chorro de Babilonia and the Planes de Babilonia in the best interests of conservation space, or protection of the Planes de Babilonia and the Chorro de Babilonia in the best interests of conservation space? What striation can achieve in this context is still up in the air at time of writing. In general, what has happened so far--alliances across lines of Church, State, *maderero*, *ganadero*, *campesino*, has potential to spread through viral contamination.

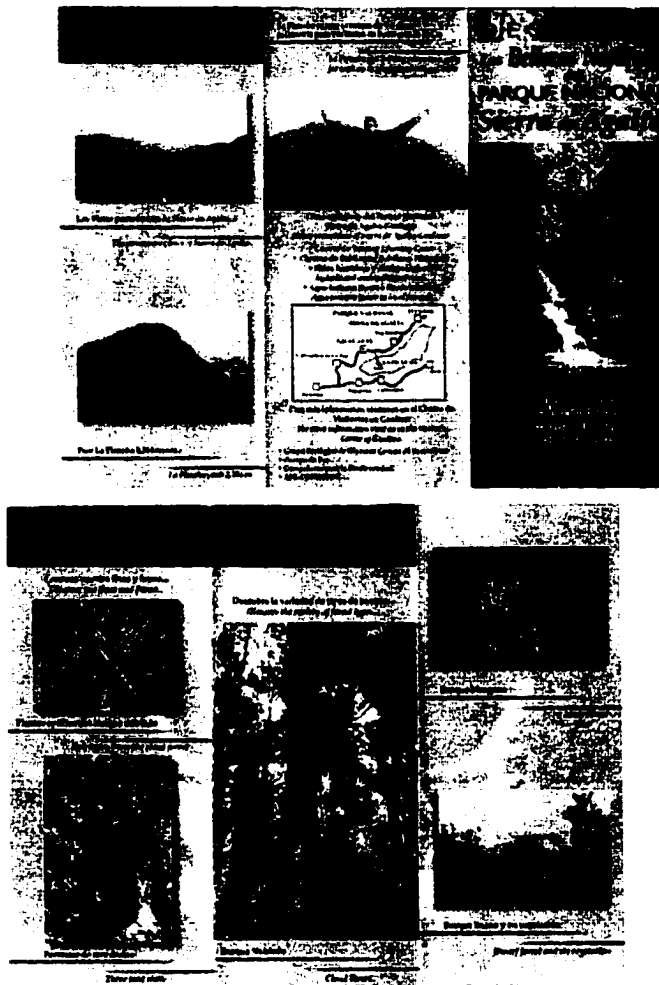


Fig. 7.1. Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta promotional pamphlet (c. 1997), targeting ecotourists.

Section 7.1 sketches the “ground” of conservation space in local manifestation: “the virgin rain forest,” but not solely in terms of conservation. Rather, it is presented “from the inside” as the only complex space in Olancho to repel human spatiality through its cluttered, ever-growing, ever-dying rhizome of rhizomes that entangles people *por fuerza*.

Section 7.2 describes becoming-forest among conservationists, through the experience of Peace Corps Volunteers such as me intent on “saving it before it’s gone.” What results is an organized body embracing and protecting forest space: the outline of what conservationists dream about is the subject of section 7.3.

Sections 7.4 describes the deterritorializing of Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta by local space (its margin of becoming-local). Section 7.5 returns to Babilonia.

7.1 Forest Space

In most cases when human “intervention” is minimized a thick, tangled vegetative cover will (re)grow, at least in patches. In many places forest composition challenges agropastoral humanity to the extent that it is regarded as something different, something “outside” of civilization, something that can only be encountered as an “interior.”¹ The outer margins of this “forest space” are active colonization fronts; what is “inside” is what has not yet been overcoded laterally by short-fallow agriculture. Forest space lacks civilization--since civilization these days is universal among peoples, only forest empty of human dwellings is *pura montaña*. In the old days, the crowded Taguzgalpa contained forest space par excellence.² Space occupied by forest challenges spatial identities: it subverts landscape ideals, fertility myths, State control.

A thick leafy forest is not an open space that one can gaze across or down upon and learn anything interesting about, because everything is happening on the inside. Rain forests are particularly good at covering themselves up because most of their trees tend to maintain most of their leaves most of the time. Laterally, one can never gaze across through thick forest space, because one’s gaze is brought up short by the forest wall. One is either on the inside, or on the outside, of Forest Space. Are not forests the antitheses of those pleasingly pastoral landscape paintings? By some definitions, would forest space be anti-landscape?

Forest space challenges the human intruder: our visual perception is truncated by the lack of a sheltering sky. The atmosphere is visible only in patches, or not at all. How under these conditions are we to lift our eyes and arms to beseech Heaven? Neither do forests leave

¹ Harrison’s *Forests: the shadow of civilization* (1992) is the source for this, and general inspiration for the section. Another is Leigh et al. (1996).

² See especially the account of Goicoechea in chapter 3.8.

hallowed ground alone for human burial in peace. How can Man and God commune if blocked by epiphytes, while decaying bodies are carted off by nutrient recyclers before one's very eyes? Nothing stays the same for long in warm and humid forests: everything is being endlessly recycled, re- and de-territorialized from one rhizome to another. Excrement is healthy and nutritious and dying gives life.

Forest space cannot be gridded by Descartes nor subjected to compass directions. We encounter only subtle variations in sign languages always pointing in all directions. Off preexisting trails, one makes one's way under, through, around, up, and over, but never straight as an arrow. Lost, one goes "in circles." Distance is measured in time elapsed: the kilometer means nothing in the *montaña cruda*.

Trees would seem like permanent features of forests, their anchors and stability, what makes them strong. The forest as a collective of upright trees? Trees have roots, like us, and branch out hierarchically to the last leaf, the picture of a State and Fatherland. Like our kings they are "mighty" and "ancient." But this idea only holds true in a snapshot, not a repeat visit. Straight and tall "forest giants" are weighted down under epiphytic loads and tugged at by lianas. They fall or are swept away by landslides and downbursts.

Their downfalls open light gaps. Forest space never comes to "climax" but remains in a flux favored by the endless opportunities in the closing openings and opening closings. Sun-loving crops give way to tree crops in the long-fallow (extinct in the Sierra de Agalta), and the forest becomes a "garden" of Amazonian territories, never an "outside" at all to those "uncivilized" ones who dwell among it entangled.

Can human being, *Dasein*, stand alone and apart from forest space while physically inside it? Sit still on a log and see what happens. Hear the nagging of spider monkeys, be struck by the sticks they throw at you. Become drenched by the pungent urine and feces they use to repel you. Flee through the "jungle" and be slashed by the grass called "*tres cuchillas*." The lack of toilet paper in the *montaña* sometimes leads novices to reach blindly for the closest leaves, even

the stinging *chichicaste*. Smell the white-lipped peccaries who smell your fear, and be afraid of snakes. One is always being uncomfortably colonized in a forest, claimed by others, watched by others, hearing but not being able to see. One's blood is drained. One's vision is obscured. One is assaulted by closeness, by logs that trip one up and by branches that snap in the face. One is always running into masses of army ants. One against many, the identity being swarmed over by the multiplicity.

Forest space has a fractal number of dimensions like a Sierpensky's sponge: a squishy solid hollowed out from within, "more than a surface, less than a volume" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:487). Forest space is so full of living/dying forces because it is a web of symbiotic webs (for example, see Reagan and Wade 1996), rhizome of rhizomes. It has no center of command, and thus no periphery. No more important or less important places. Every place at every time is in continuous variation. Nowhere is remote. Forest space has no beginning or end--one always stops in the middle. Everywhere is a middle.³

7.2 Conservationist/Conservation Space: Saving What is Left

Conservation space overcodes forest space from above and beyond--without the gaze, the protected area is nothing. But like the Kings of old, it overcodes forest space by setting it aside, "locked up" in "big chunks," a "virgin" "forever" (e.g. Hopkins 1995; Kramer et al. 1997) How is such a jealous gaze possible in the complex spaces of Olancho, vying with each other for millennia, already having claimed the *pura montaña* by word if not by deed: already having traversed forest space? Below, I describe how the machine of tropical rain forest conservation creates conservationists who see "beyond" complexity (of people) to embrace complex forest space--but are sometimes drawn back into the *enredo* that is all-too-human.

³ Forest space in Olancho and across Honduras is inevitably attributed a *corazón* or *centro*, often the site of an enchanted lake ringed by trees with fruit one must not eat on pains of never being able to leave--or leaving an amnesiac and/or *loco*.

Conservation space in Olancho encompasses nuclear zones and buffer zones of protected areas. Nuclear zones are solely for conservation, even if they provide benefits for development. Buffer zones are the meeting grounds of Nature and Culture, where limited, controlled, “sustainable” development should occur to effect a smooth transition between the Outside and the Inside. Conservation (particularly in the minds of non-Hondurans) is concerned with The Rain forest and its high altitude version, The Cloud forest. Conservation space in interior Honduras is “what hasn’t been gotten to yet.” It extends in only limited form to local space outside the *montaña*. Few conservationists can look at all landscapes and see conservation possibilities, for example in cattle space (where, for example, certain jealously protective *teratenientes* do much better jobs than the government or NGOs protecting threatened flora and fauna). Dry forests, which many conservationists know to be valuable, are “difficult to protect” because they are already overcoded by humans (“hopelessly degraded.”)

The universal space of *El Hombre/El Medio Ambiente* (Man and The Environment), shored up by environmental laws and clauses in the 1990s (especially Decreto No. 104-93 1995), is rapidly gaining local acceptance, so much so that the becoming-local of *ambientalista* (environmentalist) discourse is happening exceedingly fast in issues of waste disposal, watershed protection, and even protection of species outside conservation space. Environmentalism is not predicated on spatial ownership or on the drawing of a bounded polygon, but rather is a controlled set of practices applicable anywhere. If it faces development, at any point in space, we have the “marriage” of environment and development.⁴ What better way to work for both environment and development than the Peace Corps, I thought?

After graduating from college, I had been drawn to work in the international environmental movement, where rain forest conservation was taking off at the end of the 1980s. Where better to start than Washington, DC, where important groups lobby the US Congress? As intern in an

⁴ See, e.g., Del Cid et al. 1998; Engel and Engel 1990. For critique of this, see contributions to Peet and Watts (1996); Sundberg (1998; 1999).

NGO I helped in international campaigns, “networked” with other activists, and felt that I was doing my part to “save the rain forest,” especially in preparation for what seemed so important at the time, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Río de Janeiro. “Local people” were beginning to matter in rain forest conservation, and concepts such as “buffer zones” were “cutting edge.”

The Peace Corps acceptance letter, with job description, came during a hectic morning in the mail room doing photocopies to save the rain forest, and I literally jumped with anticipation: “wildlands promoter,” “cloud forests in Honduras,” “bring camping gear.” Here was what was lacking in DC--contact, any contact, with Nature, with the forests I was “fighting” to protect. What better way to “get experience” than to “go down there” and jump right in? Who can turn down an all-expenses-paid assignment to Save the Cloud forest? Honduras has 37, and they’re all protected areas, said the letter. But some work needed to be done to make them more sustainable. Buffer zone management would be the primary task, because if buffer zones were protected, if sustainable development happened there, then the cloud forests would be safe.

By 1991, when I became a trainee, there had already been two generations of Peace Corps Volunteers (henceforth PCVs) assigned to the “paper parks” designated by the 1987 “Cloud forest Law” (Decreto-Ley 1987-87: G. Cruz 1995), which had set aside the 37 cloud forests as *areas protegidas*. In our “Wildlands” sector, Development was something necessary to achieve Conservation—it was not an end in itself. We dreamed of virginity.

There were three types of cloud forest reserves-Parques Nacionales, Reservas Biológicas, and Refugios de Vida Silvestre. All were either isolated massifs or the highest parts of larger mountain chains. Their nuclear zones started at either 1800, 2000 or 2100 meters above sea level, depending on local levels of deforestation (see Campanella 1993). Cloud forests in western and central Honduras were usually quite “trashed,” with only tiny pieces remaining. In the north and east, cloud forests were not only still “intact” but also were often contiguous with mid-level and lowland rain forests.

We learned that most cloud forests were the “last remnants” of a prehuman forested landscape that once blanketed montane interior Honduras. Cloud forests, treasure troves of biodiversity and endemism, were even more rarified and special than lowland rain forest. But we couldn’t focus on just Nature—we had to make it applicable to Them. We had to teach people about why they should save cloud forests to guarantee water production and to foster ecotourism. The 1987 law (Cruz 1993) stipulates that all protected cloud forests be encircled by buffer zones where limited human activity is allowed. We were to work in and on those buffer zones with local people, teaching them about the environment, about how the cloud forests benefited them, about how the flora and fauna should be protected. Some of us came to believe that most local people, particularly campesinos, distrusted and disliked the cloud forest, always wanting to cut it down. We had to convince them not to do so.

Coffee growers were mostly our enemies in the early 1990s, since IHCAFE (Instituto Hondureño de Café) at that time was financing and supporting roads into the nuclear zones of national parks. Nevertheless, coffee could be an ideal buffer zone crop if it were grown “sustainably.” Cattle and lumbering, on the other hand, were completely incompatible with the cloud forest in most of our minds.

Our teachers were personal friends with influential conservationists at the Central American level. Honduran conservationist discourse in the early 1990s was “cutting edge,” we were told, because its 1987 parks legislation had incorporated buffer zones as internal management categories of protected areas. (Costa Rica’s highly-lauded parks system predated the buffer zone concept, so in that country these had to be pasted onto nuclear zones *ex post facto*: see Evans 1999) We felt that we were the pioneers of protected areas in Honduras, the co-founders of a national parks system that might one day be better than that of Costa Rica (see Swenarski de Herrera 1994; Wallace 1992).



Fig. 7.2. Conservation-with-development in the buffer zone of Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, El Murmullo, Catacamas. A local grower recycles the toxic *pulpa de café* into organic fertilizer; traditionally, coffee is washed in or near streams, and the *pulpa* contaminates water supplies. This grower has an organic shade coffee *finca* though after almost a decade of effort does not sell coffee at premium organic prices.

The heady climate of parks management in Honduras in the early 1990s was fostered by a new Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre in COHDEFOR, seen as a fresh start for protected areas and wildlife management after they languished under RENARE, a highly corrupt agency implicated in massive species traffic in the 1980s. COHDEFOR, founded as a state forestry corporation in the early 1970s, had a terrible name among local people and PCVs, but it was thought that its new parks and wildlife division would gain autonomy from the forester hierarchy and would train and keep honest and capable people. At this time there were not only Honduran conservationist biologists, but also an increasing number of foresters who were interested in parks management. International funds available to save the rain forest were

growing exponentially, and the Honduran protected areas movement pinned its hopes largely on tapping into this reservoir.

The growth of the Honduran parks and environmental movement in the 1990s occurred in a vacuum thanks to the absence of a preexisting hegemony. The Asociación Hondureña de Ecología (AHE) had been founded in the 1970s, and based in Tegucigalpa. It spawned a nationwide network of environmental chapters. AHE was *the* Honduran environmental group in the 1980s--when an important international group such as the World Wildlife Fund focused its attention on Honduras, they would contact AHE. At the end of the 1980s, its loss of popular credibility and falling apart as a viable NGO was an event that helped to trigger an explosion of independent environmental groups in towns and cities across the country. (By 2000, local environmental NGOs and public-private coalitions existed in most towns and many villages.) Peace Corps was the only development/environment agency that continually focused on the environment throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.⁵

Most Peace Corps Volunteers in our 1991 training group were assigned to COHDEFOR, and in most cases we were supposed to work closely with a counterpart in parks management and planning. I was assigned to a regional COHDEFOR office in Juticalpa to work with protected areas and wildlife for Olancho (see Bonta 1991; Subkowiak). My focus was the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta (PNSA), which, though said to be an important conservation space, possessed virtually no biodiversity data and almost no management infrastructure. Most of its "intact forest" was below 1800 meters above sea level, entailing a redefinition of its nuclear zone to encompass all "intact" forest space in the range.

Contrary to the hopes of leading Honduran conservationists like Jorge Betancourt (who was Peace Corp's Natural Resources/Wildlands sector boss), COHDEFOR, in a "policy" that continued through the 1990s, marginalized its Department of Protected Areas rather than trying

⁵ The "environmental revolution" no doubt had to do with the end of the Cold War as well. Many of the issues that local groups focus on today would have been anathema in the 1980s.

to ride the wave of “saving the rain forest.” The idea of protecting rain forests and cloud forests was too alien to foresters already trained in a highly specialized profession. Protected areas offered no stumpage fees, no lucrative contracts, no trees and tracts to be measured. “Hands-off” conservation space was largely incomprehensible, or at least unprofitable, to them. This was a common attitude among “development professionals” in general, and included not only the forester world but the agronomist world as well: what was the good of “locking up” valuable space? But Honduran public imagination went largely against this as the 1990s wore on: at least in the towns, the idea of parks and “saving” became quite popular.

The parks management structure within COHDEFOR-Olancho never had its own budget; funds were available only at the discretion of the local bosses and particularly the regional head of COHDEFOR in Juticalpa. Funds were allocated in Tegucigalpa in the central office, but since the regional head had complete control over what money was spent on what, only a few crumbs could be consumed by parks management personnel. The rest disappeared in the “creative” ways that bosses and their accountants found to spend funds--on political campaigns and house construction, for example.

COHDEFOR parks employees included PCVs (available for free), a few tenacious biologists, and foresters who were often perplexed that the Jefe Regional had assigned them to *áreas protegidas*, about which they knew little or nothing. Peace Corps, USAID, and COHDEFOR, among other groups, organized week-long parks management workshops for foresters in the early and mid-1990s, but a few days of intensive training could not in many cases replace or supersede a degree as *ingeniero forestal* or *dasónomo*. A few salaried *promotores* (extensionists) and food-for-work *guardarecursos* (“resource guards”) rounded out the small force (haecceity) that was to “save the rain forest.” With such resources, little could be accomplished toward running large and rugged wildlands areas like they did in the textbooks. Career foresters, chuckling, referred to the parks as “Áreas Desprotegidas.”



Fig. 7.3. Defending the PNSA. *Mojón* at right (with *promotor* Conrado Martínez) part of a failed delimitation campaign in 1992. At left, *descombros* (clearcuts) for beans in Babilonia, above the Rio Chiquito. These represent “incursions” into the nuclear zone. In background are Pico de Agalta and Cerro Azul.

When I was a PCV, the PNSA seemed to have a linear, developmental trajectory. It had been born in 1987, it would grow, there would be setbacks, but it would eventually become a National Park worthy of its name. Ideally, Agalta would become a hybrid of a park in the United States and something else, something better: with buffer zones that would be examples of people-friendly natural landscapes rather than breeding zones for conflicts of people and nature. But, during Peace Corps and afterward, I observed (ever more impartially) frequent changes in personnel, budgets that disappeared, talented administrators who quit in disgust, and highly-paid foreign consultants who knew little and saw less but after a single day’s visit “to the zone” could make decisions that informed policy.

Construction and destruction of PNSA management structures (“turnover”) happened so rapidly that only a few enduring personnel and returning ex-PCVs like me were able to comment on an annual to biennial “reinvention of the wheel.” PCVs lasted two to three years, government administrations four, *promotores* up to five years or more (since they were usually local people, not nomads): but *jefes* rarely lasted more than a year. Every time a new *jefe* of Areas Protegidas in Olancho would show up at the central office in Juticalpa, a new delimitation campaign would begin (e.g. Comité... 1992), new inventories would be solicited, new village surveys would be carried out, despite the filing cabinets full of inventories and surveys already compiled. At all times, one or more international project, it was rumored, would be “just about” to give *millones*. And so it remained in 2000: there was as yet no centrally-managed Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, but rather local semi-autonomous offices in Gualaco, San Esteban, and Catacamas. There were no regular staff meetings, no well-executed monthly work plans, no team of managers or efficient staff. There was no master plan or management plan. Very limited advances were made in “saving the rain forest” (e.g. Said Mejía 2000): COHDEFOR punished some infractors, but let the vast majority slide; the Honduran military got involved at one point, and threw its weight around (mostly without arresting the *enemigos del bosque*); and overall a little progress was made through a mixture of fear and wonder on the part of local people. Greatest success was measurable among becoming-*ambientalista* families who didn’t have land or interests in the affected zones.

Despite such “chaos,” the idea that PNSA is a unified, centrally-managed protected area remains in many heads. The PNSA is pictured on paper maps, and hence exists in conservation space. Drawing bounded polygons on maps “proves” that a protected area “is there.” Even without clear legislative guarantees of forest protection below the 1800-meter quotient, it has been possible to delimit (more than once) the boundaries of the PNSA’s nuclear zone to include lower-lying areas, as long as maps shore up the fiction. The Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta is a postmodern dilemma--it has generated reams of paperwork and years of sweat, inventories,

plans; it has been talked about and talked around, met about again and again; but if all the layers are peeled back, nothing will be there other than contested spaces and discourses circling about an Idea. PNSA is not a protected area like the ones in the North, where infractors are punished, where commands are sent out from a central location and executed. And yet it is a conservation space, an area reserved for certain spatial identities, while distrusting of or hostile to others.



Fig. 7.4. Marker of conservation space. Event was the 1994 placing of the first sign pointing to the PNSA ever erected in Gualaco, along main highway. Logo contains park symbol Pájaro Campana (Three-wattled Bellbird); “D.A.P. - V.S.” is Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre; “FF. A[A]” is Fuerzas Armadas, who were involved in a park protection program at the time. Conservationists from left to right are M. Bonta, J. Mendoza, R. Gallardo, D. Cardinas, F. Urbina. Sign became part of local space as a marker of the *punto* where buses stopped to let off hikers for La Picucha, a reference point on an hour’s stretch of *serranía* road with virtually no other signs. As campesino space, the sign was placed within the *aldea* of Pacayal; brush fires eventually consumed it and the pine it was anchored to was hacked down. It also served as a convenient target for automatic weapons fire on a stretch of highway in an abject space traversed by an armed band not captured until 2000. The turn-off to conservation space, which sees a steady trickle of biologists and ecotourists, remains one of the most feared areas in Olancho for banditry.

PNSA is not unique, but rather is typical of Honduran protected areas, and of conservation spaces across Latin America in the class “paper park.” Honduran protected areas, in many ways, are becoming-local precisely because there has never been the political will to have them managed “effectively” from central locations. No one group has been able to overcode the

Sierra de Agalta, and one of the reasons is because it has been impossible to extract it from local space.

No inherent order—one code, one regime of signs—underlies the confusion and “mismanagement” of “unwieldy” large protected areas like PNSA. This remained a mystery to me until 1999 when I decided that conflicting spatial identities would not, could not allow a uniform code to be imposed on a *zona de amortiguamiento* or even on the *pura montaña*. Even if legally the *montaña* is *tierra nacional* and “belongs” to the State (to everyone in general and not to anyone in particular), in practice this has little to do with the reality of complex spaces. The *enredos* of the PNSA, that become particularly evident at multipartisan meetings about the park, *are* its reality precisely because campesino space, conservation space, cattle space, timber space, Olancho, and all the others, cannot be brought into a common context or speak a *lingua franca* except in certain cases.



Fig. 7.5. What PNSA did not stop. “Degradation” by *frijolares* and *chatales* across from the trail to La Picucha. Situated at 1100 meters above sea level on the border of *serranía* and *montaña*; defining the edge of the PNSA nuclear zone. This rapidly expanding area of deforestation has been created by Olanchanos, residents of downstream village Linares, who in the 1990s opposed hostilely the PNSA. Visitors to conservation space cite this *descombro* as a prime reason why montane protected areas in eastern Honduras are unpleasant visual experiences for ecotourists.

Conservation space only pretends, deluding itself, that its “shiny new” presence will wipe away the past, reorder the landscape, and lead to all “local people” seeing the same thing. It is similar in this way to a long line of new spaces that outsiders have been foisting on local space for centuries (see chapter 3). In the case of gold space, it now subsists only liminally; cattle space, however, remains as hegemonic as ever. Conservation space, like cattle space, has considerable power to homogenize, to oppress, to impose a hegemony, and this needs to be taken seriously, particularly in light of the Babilonia *enredo* at the end of this chapter.

7.3 The Ideal Conservation Space

What is the shape of conservation space? How does it work? Most of conservation space’s plans to overcode the local have yet to be systemically applied in the PNSA, so in this section I write largely of the “perfect park” of the future (in terms of Costa Rica/United States parks management). All the following ideas have precedents elsewhere and have been proposed for Agalta; none have been applied “successfully.”

The PNSA progresses through conservation time, which began in 1987. At that time it was assigned a 3700-hectare nuclear zone of virgin cloud forest above 1800 meters, but in later practice the approximately 40,000 hectares of virgin mid-level rain forest and cloud forest in the Sierra de Agalta became part of its *núcleo intocable* (untouchable nucleus).⁶ This zone has been delimited on two-dimensional maps and is partially established on the ground through signs and tree painting. Encircling the virgin forest is the *zona de amortiguamiento* (buffer zone) which is at least one kilometer wide and includes only “degraded” *montaña* and *serranía*. All the land on which the PNSA was imposed was already *tierra nacional*, property of the State.

The PNSA contains more than 20 *microcuencas abastecedoras de agua* (drainage basins

⁶ It was hoped in the 1990s that the PNSA would be recognized as part of the “biological corridor” between interior Honduras and the Mosquitia, because of the “unbroken” connection of its rain forest to that of the Biosfera del Río Plátano. Northeast of the PNSA, two or three further protected areas have been proposed to maintain the corridor link: Malacate, El Carbón, and Sierra del Río Tinto, names imposed on polygons overlaying the Cordillera de Agalta.

providing water) for villages and towns. Their buffer zone slopes and soils are not appropriate (*no apropiadas* or *no aptas*) for non-coffee agricultural use. They should be used only for silvicultural activities, or left alone.

The PNSA is important for ecotourism, with caves, waterfalls, flora, fauna, trekking possibilities, and picturesque rural scenery. It is equally important as a site for scientific research because of its intact altitudinal corridors connecting rain forest to cloud forest, its trail access to elfin and mossy forest, and its biodiversity rate, one of the highest in Central America.



Fig. 7.6. The ideal protected area. Montaña Peña Blanca across from El Murmullo, Catacamas. The photo is taken from the buffer zone (in shade coffee) looking at the (“pristine”) nuclear zone of the PNSA. The clearing visible (at center) can be farmed only under the watchful gaze of conservationists

The *zona núcleo* is off-limits for all uses except ecotourism and scientific research. Hunting, gathering, and tree felling are strictly forbidden inside the virgin forest; sustainable subsistence hunting and gathering can only be practiced in the buffer zone, but tree felling is illegal there as well. All agriculture in the buffer zone must be practiced by sustainable, organic techniques if possible, with the use of burning gradually abandoned. Organic shaded coffee is preferable. The goal and direction of the *zona núcleo* is a “saved” thick forest where human-caused degradation will never occur. It is hoped that the buffer zone will recover as well, and sections of it will someday become part of the nucleus.

PNSA's buffer zone should be managed by government and non-government agencies together with local people from *pueblos* and *aldeas*. There should be a governmental law-enforcing body that punishes all environmental infractors regardless of social class. Crimes includes the above-mentioned hunting, gathering, or tree felling in the nuclear zone, and in the buffer zone there are many others as well. No new constructions (e.g. houses) should have been allowed in the buffer zone after 1987, nor any new roads. No mineral extraction or heavy industry should be allowed in this "natural landscape." No burning should be permitted, nor any use of chemicals for agriculture.



Fig. 7.7. Markers of a "real" National Park. At left, Visitors' Center, Parque Nacional La Muralla, northwestern Olancho: built during the Proyecto del Desarrollo Forestal (USAID-COHDEFOR) in early 1990s. Example of infrastructure that "creates" a national park in the eyes of outsiders. At right, trail sign in Parque Nacional La Muralla. Prominent marker for ecotourists, setting conservation space off from local space (where *jaguars* are called *tigres*).

The PNSA should have four visitor's centers for four separate management units, as well as a central command office in Catacamas. A team of biologists, foresters and agronomists should oversee the operations of at least 50 *promotores*. There should be a management master plan

that will spawn yearly or biennial operative plans. Park managers should supervise at least 100 guards who conduct (unannounced) patrols (*patrullas*), and hopefully there will be enough money to undertake regular overflights with the cooperation of the Fuerzas Armadas. The master plan should include a separate law for the park, approved by Congress, that lists and details all the management uses of each zone (the buffer and nuclear zones will be further divided into various zones). An extensive trail network with infrastructure such as forest camps, bridges, and outhouses, should be built to encourage ecotourism and research. Admission to the park should be charged.



Fig. 7.8. *Champa in pura montaña*. This particular shelter is in conservation space, built using local expertise and COHDEFOR funds; it is base camp for excursions to La Picucha. After its construction in 1994 it was used by hunters who came into conflict with the PNSA because their activities were too visible in an area visited often by ecologically-sensitive outsiders.

In this ideal conservation space (composite of a decade's suggestions), there will be minimal infractions because all infractors will be systematically punished (unlike today). But

resorting to the Law will some day become all but unnecessary: there will be little reason to practice “explotación irracional de los recursos naturales” because the buffer zone will become *sostenible*. All the applicable sustainable development equations will be plugged into the buffer zone, to make it work as it should—a bridge from Culture to Nature, with campesinos the mediators. The buffer zone will pay for itself and provide its own justification, with the park personnel in the background, guaranteeing the sanctity of the nucleus and setting limits on local practice—always measuring them against the yardstick of sustainability. All coffee, once growers are enlightened and weaned off chemical dependence, will be sustainable and organic. Cattle will be banished altogether except those absolutely necessary for local, small-scale consumption. There will be plots of fast-growing species for firewood and construction; all *aldeas* will have health clinics, schools, running water, and *letrinas*; each house will have a vegetable garden, tied-up pigs, disease-free domestic animals, vaccinated children, and sustainable agriculture using terraces and other soil-stabilizing techniques. Further sustainable development in the buffer zone will occur depending on the *voluntad de los vecinos de la zona* (will of the local people) and the availability of Proyectos, though ideally one Proyecto should be enough to create sustainability without dependence, working itself into the fabric of the cultural landscape and then exiting with little fanfare. Peace Corps, not bringing big money, was most often the vanguard of the Idea, but was not the Proyecto needed to achieve “National Park.”

In time, the PNSA would take its place as one of the most important protected areas in the Honduran system, generating money from ecotourism, contributing to scientific paradigms, and most importantly, remaining in perpetuity the eternal haven for numerous threatened, endangered, and endemic species, a virgin forest forever. Nevertheless, what actually goes on is a far cry from sustainability and eternity.

The receipt of “conservation attention” for the PNSA based on its comparative importance within a Honduran protected areas system became a key issue in the mid-1990s. USAID’s

environmental officer in Honduras at the time, quite supportive of protected areas and PCVs, was the impetus for a proposal that AID support the Departamento de Areas Protegidas through substantial injections of money and expertise. Based on all available inventory information, maps, management histories, and other data, a prioritization of areas resulted in a plan with a price tag of around \$3 million, the largest sum yet to be destined directly for protected areas management in Honduras. PNSA was one of USAID/COHDEFOR's ten highest priority parks, and was to receive major financial aid and institutional fortification to become a "real" park. Somehow, most of the money did not get spent, supposedly because there was no political will or aptitude in COHDEFOR. The details of this *fracaso* (failure) were never clear to parks workers on the ground. Peace Corps, as part of its end of a deal with USAID and COHDEFOR, increased PCV numbers around priority parks like Agalta, assigning them to local NGOs and cooperatives not only in the towns but in several villages as well. Since I played a small part in 1994 getting the PCVs' voices heard by the USAID-PDF hierarchy regarding decisions to prioritize and allocate funds for protected areas, I was amazed five years later when the memory of the funds and the promise of a "real parks systems" had become old news, irrelevant, or unknown to the "modern-day" conservationists. (Conservation space, when turned toward the outside and its *fondos*, has almost no memory of historical events.) The next big project was on its way.

This was PAAR, the World Bank-funded Honduras-wide Proyecto de Administración de Areas Rurales, tens of millions of dollars over several years, underway during the time of my dissertation fieldwork in 1999-2000. PAAR was administered by several land-focused Honduran agencies, including COHDEFOR. Its environmental component was protected areas-oriented, and Sierra de Agalta was one of the parks supported, the first time that it had ever been more than peripheral to Big Development and Conservation. This meant that for the first time vehicles were donated and assigned specifically to park employees. Late-model four-wheel-drive trucks and sport utility vehicles emblazoned with the Sierra de Agalta logo on their sides

became common sights in Olancho. PAAR hired a covey of new, comparatively well-paid *promotores* who knew next to nothing about protected areas, being graduates of a forestry high school outside Olancho. The PNSA continued to be administered by COHDEFOR, and the PAAR personnel were classified as “*asistencia técnica*.” The firing or quitting of regional heads of protected areas in Olancho was still a frequent occurrence; most new heads were foresters who knew next to nothing about protected areas and had to learn from the beginning.

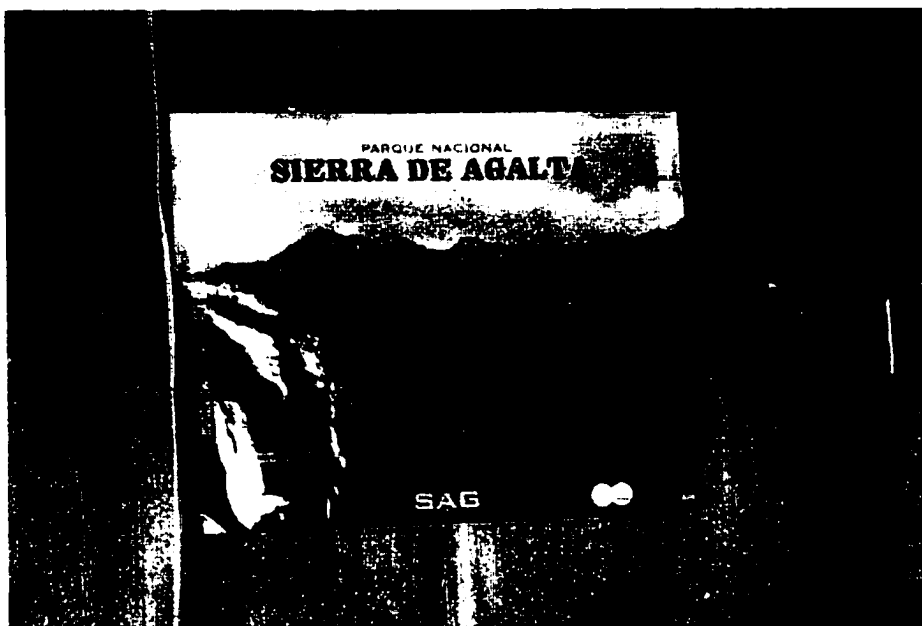


Fig. 7.9. What the PNSA looks like: a poster produced in 1999. The “Vista panorámica del Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta” shows the high peaks of the Montaña de Babilonia, including La Picucha at far left. “Un área natural que debemos conservar para proteger y aprovechar sus recursos naturales en forma sostenible”: a slogan employing the vocabulary of conservation-with-development, close to unintelligible in local space. The poster is sponsored by PAAR, the Proyecto de Administración de Areas Rurales, involving the Banco Mundial, AFE-COHDEFOR, and SAG (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería).

7.4 Conservation Space and Local Space

The PNSA conservation space, ideally abstracted from local conditions, can be mapped into a world space of protection and virginity, of Nature exclusive of Culture. Conservationists (those not from Olancho, at any rate) perceive (have to perceive?) that people have left no imprint here: its core is “pristine.” The PNSA nucleus, as global space, is lifted out of the

degrading and unsustainable surroundings and penetrations of local space, away from campesino space and cattle space and coffee space, placed in a never-never land of “climax fores,.” “The Tropical Rainforest,” hoard of golden biodiversity. The buffer zone is a landscape painting with everything in place, hung on a wall. This, however, can never work--it only sounds good to some ears.

Conservation space in Olancho is also and always State space, since its administration is ultimately the responsibility of the Honduran State (even if during the 1990s national protected areas, which number over 100 actual and proposed sites, were sometimes given to NGOs to manage.) The State is the ultimate authority over protected areas, because they are *tierras nacionales*, what once belonged to the King. This is why many (State-oriented) conservationists insist that protected areas cannot by definition encompass private lands, but can only be public.

Lines and polygons are extremely powerful, because the outline of a park, as of any area, becomes part of its personality and identity. The PNSA existed because it was on maps, and was labeled a park. A formal discourse built up the park in tourist guides, management plans, pamphlets--as if it were really there. Today, the PNSA is up there: that range of jagged peaks is the *Parque Nacional*. This is a change from 1991 when very few people had any idea what a *parque nacional* might entail. The difference came about not through policy or centralized planning or *millones*, but rather through the legwork of *promotores* and *técnicos* who gave hundreds of presentations in the six towns and 75 villages and *caseríos* that have direct impact on the PNSA. By the end of the 1990s, the PNSA became known and interpreted in many different ways throughout central Olancho. Many local people, whatever spaces they inhabited, looked up at the mountains and knew them to be a park--in addition to other things--whether they wanted it there or not. In ten years, conservation space had achieved presence in local space. Its Idea is rapidly becoming an unruly crowd of ideas, often at odds with each other. To these ideas I now turn to show how the PNSA becomes-multiple.

The PNSA, on its declaration in 1987, had no fit to local space. It didn't exist except in the minds of conservationists. It was an abstraction from local conditions--it lifted landscapes out of the local into the global, bypassing the chiasm. Nevertheless, since 1987 becomings-local have occurred, dialogues between conservation space and local space. But how far can Honduran conservation space extricate itself from globalism and become-local before a "protected area" loses viability altogether? How does the local "reterritorialize" its own, "get back" the Sierra de Agalta, albeit with a new identity, to join the multitude already here?

As I have hinted throughout this dissertation, a powerful impetus to the PNSA's becoming-local is the areal fit of *zona núcleo* to *pura montaña*. This is not a coincidental overlap, but rather a cultural convergence. As "virgin rain forest" is a Euroamerican construction, so *pura montaña* (*montaña virgen*) is primarily an Iberoamerican construction: both seem to be non-indigenous constructions of deep forest (forest space) as only possible in the absence of people, or at least of "our" people. After "civilization" came to inhabit all Olancho, *montaña cruda* came to mean *montaña* without agriculture. Yet the *montañas* of the Cordillera de Agalta were never empty lands--they were only constructed that way as a justification for successive onslaughts of overcoding: in the Catacamas area, Precolumbian peoples by the State/Church (1520s), State/Church by the tribute Indios de Catacamas (1500s-1700s), Indios de Catacamas by the *mulatos/Ladinos olanchanos* (1700s-1900s), olanchanos by *sureños* (1900s). Each rhizome added complexity, but did not remove all the pieces of the rhizome it supplanted, because each new space was entangled with the ones before it.

In local space, deep forest can be owned (without title) by local people--in direct contradiction of the PNSA. Such local ownership is not only invisible but unthinkable in conservation space: uncut rain forest cannot be owned, because all owners degrade, and degradation would be visible. Conservation space perceives trouble only upon the removal of trees. The becomings-*montaña* of people like Pedro Avila are viewed from conservation space as solely hunting and gathering trajectories, not polygonal *dominios*. But Pedro Avila's

dominio includes a swath of *pura montaña* he made his lines in the 1980s by entering it, claiming it, and spending time in it. He and his family occupied and farmed the lower edge of his *dominio* for several years, naming many landscape features and otherwise making it home. Avila's claim is recognized and usually respected by neighboring owners of *montaña cruda*. No PNSA official, to my knowledge, has ever made it to his *dominio*, a grueling seven-hour hike above the last village in the buffer zone. They can't see its real existence--virgin forest has no owners. Despite the obvious spatial conflict, *don* Pedro thinks of his land as part of the PNSA, and wonders if a road can be put in so tourists can reach his numerous caves. He has protected it as best he can, not allowing any new *descombros*, and effectively halting the local movement of the forest frontier.

As *sureño* migrant, Pedro Avila wishes the PNSA could be opened for small-scale agricultural use. He says that the State has no right to cordon it off and give it to outsiders, to *gringos*. He wishes that its plants and animals be protected as a *montaña* landscape including agriculture but excluding ranchers, rich people, and the State. He wonders, where else are the poor (we) to go?

Olanchanos like those is La Venta, Gualaco, and on the north side of the Sierra de Agalta in general, prefer a *montaña* in the background of everyday life in the *valle*, for them only, and not for outsiders (particularly not for people from San Francisco de la Paz, or *sureños*). Many think of the Montaña de Babilonia as endless-in living memory, not even hunters have penetrated the densest high-altitude cloud forests. Park *promotores* who mediate between spatial identities and look at forest-cover maps over time try to convince them that the *montaña* has limits, that Catacamas, with its *sureños* and *copanecos*, as they have in other parts of the range will one day in the near future slosh over from the far side.

Even though the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta was a "last-ditch" attempt to extricate an area from "degraded" local space, it becomes accepted locally not through its separation from the Outside, but through its connectivity--and not just through the gaze that needs to perceive



Fig. 7.10. Bumper sticker landscape with *ambientalista* declaration: an Olanchano's truck. On left bumper "O SEMBRAMOS ARBOLES O NOS LLEVA PUTA" (Either we plant trees or we're screwed). Right bumper is "Siempre con Samuel," Liberal mayoral candidate for Juticalpa. Cab window proclaims allegiance to Cruz Roja and to "OLANCHO."

thick forest on the horizon. The flow of water, for example, connects the high *montaña* with the *valles*, and an obsession with water quantity and quality marks local management practices for centuries (according to ANTO titles; see also AHJ entries in Bibliography; Catacamas Junta de Agua 1920; Fiallos 1996[1884]). Local water issues have converged with recent environmental discourses, even though conservationists and developmentalists often (have to) think of watershed awareness and protection as their own recent inventions. Like many conservationists, I assert that this convergence makes the water-producing capacity of "cloud forest reservoirs" like the PNSA more easily acceptable in local space, and less of a blanket imposition.

Another convergence is that of "medicinal plants." Useful plants provide a common conservation justification for protected areas--"the rain forests may hold plants that cure cancer," for example (I hear this mentioned frequently by conservationists in local meetings). This has a reasonably good fit with local space, because useful plants are among the most important rhizomes of culture/nature in Olanchito. The difference is that in local space, useful

plants are found in continuous variation from the backyard to the *pura montaña*, whereas in conservation space useful plants are generally restricted to rain forests.

Conservation space, unlike development space, has a use for the enchantment of local space. Conservationists like to cite local beliefs (most often in indigenous contexts) where protection of forests, of flora, of fauna, are highlighted. If a local forest is “encantado,” this may work to conservation’s benefit, especially since people across Olancho (and Honduras), Ladino and indigenous alike, believe in an inviolable *corazón de la montaña*. The difference between *encanto* in the two spaces is that in local space enchantment is spread across landscapes, part of the weave--and localized in Cerro Encantados and similar features with no preference for virgin forest. Conservation space and its ecotourist symbionts (see Burford 1996 for example) allows magic and mystery almost exclusively in untouched forest.

Birds and mammals perform acts of connection to blur human-imposed areal distinctions, denying and defying the line separating Inside from Outside. They move as they need to from *montaña* to *serranía* to *valle*, wherever sustenance is available. Birds in particular challenge almost all human notions of static spatiality through their intercontinental migrations, so it is little surprise that they have “led the way” for more fluid notions of conservation space in Central America. Conservationists have been forced to look for ways to protected birds that periodically leave the sanctuary offered by conservation space and enter “degraded” local space. A famous example is the resplendent quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*), one of the foremost symbols of wilderness in Central America among conservationists. Before the late 1980s, biologists were unaware that the quetzal left the cloud forests (where it nests) to forage downslope in search of wild avocados. (This was well known to many local people in Olancho.) Protected areas in Central American cloud forests used quetzals as virtual *raisons d’etre*, and so it was unsettling for ornithologists to learn that quetzals, like many other cloud forest nesters, lived for months at a time in small patches of woods within cattle pastures, on private land, hundreds of vertical meters below protected areas.

In the 1990s, the altitudinal migrations of key avian and mammalian species became important to conservationists across Central America who were planning protected areas and delimiting them on maps. In Honduras, where cloud forest parks were still without set and marked boundaries, local movements of vulnerable fauna were often used as justification to extend buffer zone limits as low as possible. (In countries with stricter preexisting limits, like Costa Rica, the movements of fauna through local space encouraged private-public ventures, especially when powerful landowners in cattle space had to be included.)

Movements of water and biota across space does not necessarily lead to the blurring of differences between conservation space and local space--they may do just the opposite. The most bitter rift between local space and conservation space is the Nature-Culture divide. Local people consider themselves integral parts of local space, which they know to have been partly of their own making. *Pura montaña* is inextricably interwoven with *montaña*, itself entangled with *serranía* and *valle*. One has a natural right to be inside *pura montaña*, to become-*montaña*. To think like a "pure" conservationist--to think degradation and impenetrability--one has to unbecome-local, become estranged. One might think that parks employees would be prime candidates for "unbecoming." Nevertheless, some local people who work for the PNSA find that they are successful in their jobs in direct relation to their disobedience of the absolutist conservation laws. They observe the natural condition of a *pura montaña* rent by "disasters" such as landslides that have nothing to do with human tampering. The *pura montaña*, as most Olanchano campesinos know, is in no way at an eternal climax, but rather is ever-changing. They allow local and isolated *descombros* because these are no "worse" than landslide scars and blowdowns. They may not favor the patchwork *montaña* of Pedro Avila, but neither are they bothered by a *montaña* with settlers' cabins. As for hunting, campesino park employees know that fauna such as white-tailed deer can exist in human landscapes--that what is at stake is not *where* hunting is practiced, but *how* it is practiced (compare COHDEFOR Departamento... 1996). All local space, they believe, can become as rich in fauna as it was not long ago. They

say to other local people that specific spatial practices need to be brought into line, reigned in, regulated--but that lines on maps will do little for protection of a mobile fauna.

Yet another force of becoming-local is the feeling that the PNSA is owned by local jurisdictions. The PNSA is owned by *aldeas* and by *municipios*--it becomes-local as “nuestra montaña” is recognized as simultaneously the PNSA. This process of ownership has been most evident in Gualaco. La Picucha, the highest point in the Sierra de Agalta, went from being a symbol of usurpation in 1991 to a point of pride for Gualaqueños in 2000. Hiking to La Picucha in 1991 was a strange activity practiced by outsiders for unknown reasons. “La Picucha” was not even a local toponym: it was a COHDEFOR term (applied during the arduous construction of the radio tower in the 1980s). The PNSA was obviously owned by *gringos*, a *gringo* construction for the profit of outsiders, just like the lumber mills and military presence that had come in during the 1970s and 1980s--either *gringo* bodies visible, or *gringos* back behind somewhere, an all-powerful force. The PNSA in many minds was enemy space. This made perfect sense vis-à-vis the 1980s, when militaries traversed the rain forests in search of real or imaginary rebels.

Due in no small part to the activity of dedicated local parks employees, Gualaco learned it could “use” the PNSA, claiming it so as to keep people (especially campesinos, lumbermen, *cafetaleros*) out of its key watersheds. In late 1998, the mayor of Gualaco was visiting La Picucha when Hurricane Mitch hit the coast. The fact that an influential and respected political figure (and a *ganadero/profesor* to boot) would accompany a well-liked PCV to such a place was a sign that the PNSA was becoming-local. But just as Gualaco was beginning to claim its piece of conservation space for its own (again), a hydroelectric Company used the PNSA as a justification to keep people out and to rescue Nature from Culture, from degrading local culture, in the name of State space, Development space, and Olancho.

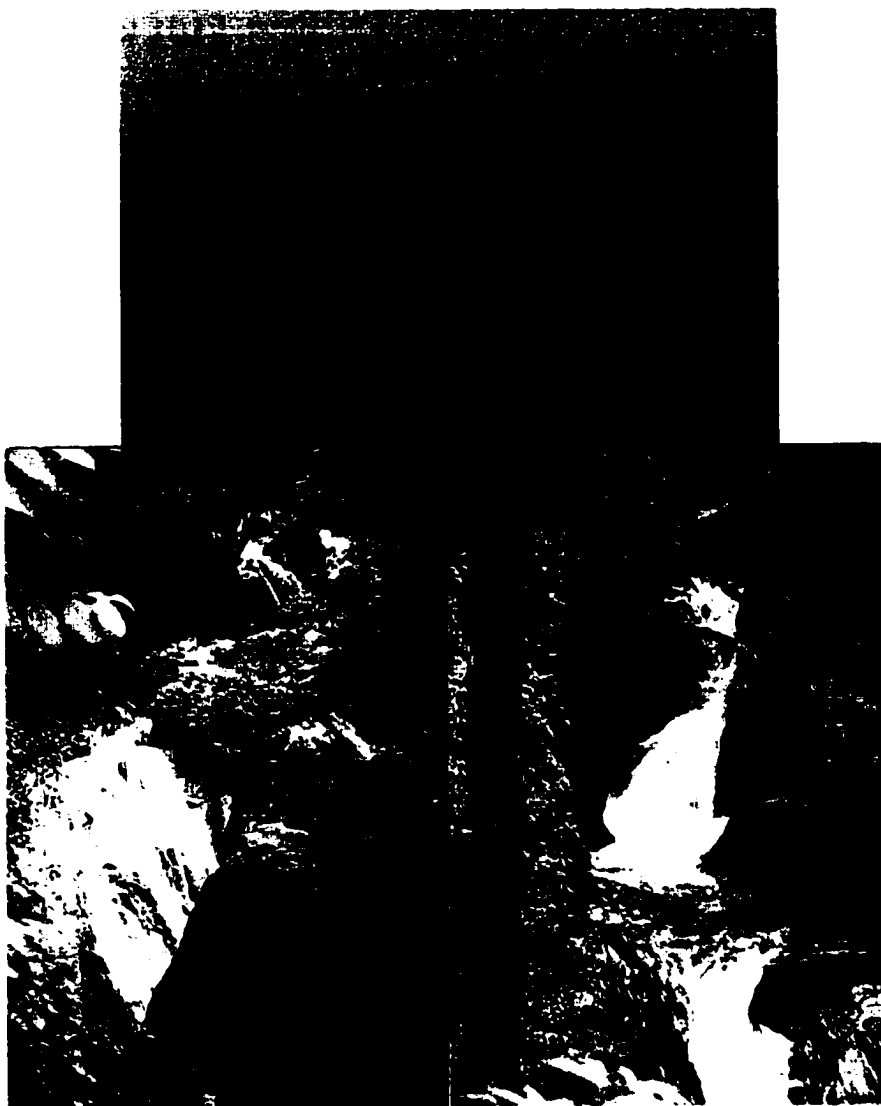


Fig. 7.11. Conflict of *Patrimonio* and *Recurso*. At bottom are some of the Chorro: visually pleasing in local space and in conservation space; displeasing in industrial space, where they represent drastic loss of energy. Above: Planes de Babilonia, mid-1990s. The southwestern edge of the Valle de Agalta is in the background, and the photo is taken by telephoto lens from the top of La Picucha six kms. southwest of the Planes. The Río Babilonia (broken line) leaves the Planes in the upper left to plunge down the Chorro. Large *descombros* were for beans; shade coffee covers the *vegas* along the river; most of the watershed is to the right of the photo. An inaccurate map in the Company's environmental impact statement shows the far slopes in shade coffee, the *vegas* (possibly to be flooded by a reservoir) in *granos básicos*, and coffee and cattle extending up the slopes to the right. Local residents say that the open areas are regenerating after Mitch, and that people from El Ocotal have caused no further *descombros*.

7.5 Babilonia Revisited

Slurs of the spatial identity assigned to Gualaco include “brutos” and “atrasados”: backward brutes, meaning more entangled with local space than their fellow *olanchanos* in the *municipios modernos*. People in Gualaco are seen as more “arriscos”: wild, untamed. These terms from the outside point toward a shame and jealousy associated with the Gualaqueños’ being “the way we were” in the past. What they indicate is a fear of the deterritorialized rhizome with allegiance only to the *municipio* shell that contains it (if that), and to family (if that). I think that conservation space, by appealing to the *municipio* and *comarca*, helped a beleaguered Gualaco lend credence to its long discredited (indeed, trampled upon) belief that the Montaña de Babilonia belonged to it. More than that, a landscape with large-scale infrastructure installed permanently was hard or impossible to accept--the Chorros, gone; the Planes, gone; El Ocotal, altered or gone. Gualaco had already lost almost all its *ejidos* and most of its old-growth pines. The PNSA in general, and the Babilonia *enredo* in particular, were about *patrimonio*: what is ours is non-negotiable. Gualaco had never been able to extract itself from its omphaloskeptic gaze. I am amazed at the tenacity of the campesino activists of El Ocotal (trained by international organizations locally, in Teguz, and abroad in sustainable development, buffer zone conservation, ecotourism, and non-violent resistance) who “seem to think that El Ocotal is the center of the world.” They refuse to accept the “objective truth” of their remoteness and marginality. Indeed, they use it to their advantage. A 90% margin of local opposition to the dam project came about despite the conflicts between spatial identities such as those discussed in chapter 6. Indeed, the PNSA was claimed by Gualaco precisely because of its unattractiveness to any one space of resource use. Its very transcendence of coffee, cattle, timber, and campesino spaces made it attractive, because everyone knows very well that “intereses” of one or all of these, helped along by Development and the State, make long-term alliances difficult or impossible. The becoming-local of the PNSA, and what that meant in

terms of Gualaco's "holding its own" against undesirable futures was achieved through an alliance of spaces and spatial identities.

This does not mean that any and all people came together--far from it. Gualaco's "fending off" the Company was achieved by the movement's reaching and maintaining a critical mass--enough coffee growers, enough campesinos, enough lumbermen, enough *diputados*, enough priests, enough PCVs--to shore up an anti-Company identity. This entangled identity of fragments of other identities, through its very slipperiness, weathered the Company's constant deterritorialization of any and all "strong points." "Fending off," by early 2001, meant the Company's sending in bulldozers under armed guard to begin construction, and later backing these up with police and military in riot gear. Each action to discredit local space and to rewrite it as something more rational and Developed was accompanied by an "abuso," whether physical or verbal. This tended to unite the cause against the Company even more, which entailed more discrediting of local space, which created more resentment, *ad infinitum*. Gualaco retreated into its shell.

The Company's real justifications for being so insistent in the face of overwhelming local opposition to its dam project remained unknown to Gualaco throughout the four years the *municipio* and its *aldeas* were pushed so hard. This was largely due to the fact that no one believed so much capital could be amassed by people from Olancho, even though the Company claimed it was comprised solely of *hijos de Olancho*. There had to be a "mano peluda" (hairy hand) behind, playing the forces of San Francisco de la Paz like chess pieces. Gualaco and San Francisco de la Paz have arrayed against each other, at the family scale and at the municipal scale, for generations. Everything that Gualaco saw as evil in the actions of the Company came from San Francisco, but they were never sure that it stopped there. If the State, they reasoned, was adamant to the point of giving permission based on seriously flawed environmental impact statements--if, as happened in the meeting sketched in chapter two, bureaucrats seemed to reach the verge of tears at the intransigence of Gualaco--who made them so desperate? This

conspiratorial identity, if there was one, remained a well-kept secret--anyone in Gualaco who suspected kept their mouths shut; anyone in the government who knew did likewise. This Unknown came to represent everything that had been going on in Gualaco in living memory--an Outside that usually came in acted with impunity.

The resistance (*enredo*, haecceity) gathered spatial identities as each came to see the dam as an intrusion. From the beginning, local Franciscan elements of the Catholic church supported any and all local efforts for self-determination, and as human rights violations continued, the "official" Church had a hard time ignoring what was going on. The Church, among all the groups involved, seemed to be the only one not believed to be corrupt at least in part--Catholic authorities might turn toward Gualaco or turn away, but it was not believed--given Horcones--that the Church would take lightly any systematic abuse in Olancho.

Development groups officially turned blind eyes to the conflict, but in private many extensionists supported Gualaco's cause. Development bifurcated--the Company and its supporters, as shown in chapter 2 above, called "Development" that which came from the Outside and rescued the local; local people called Development that which they already had and were improving upon. In their discourse, outsiders were welcome, but only in projects that worked with the ebbs and flows of local space, rather than attempting to stem them and keep them in stasis.

Coffee space was a strong ally of Gualaco, but it too bifurcated at the Babilonia juncture. In general, modernization by capital investment seemed like it couldn't fail to bring better access to markets for such a mercurial crop. Residents of Pie de la Cuesta, whether bribed (as their neighbors in Ocotal claimed) or not, had reason to desire Desarrollo if they equated it with opening to the Outside. But their actual farms would not be affected, and this is what split them with Ocotal and La Venta *caficultores* in the Planes. Again and again, the leader of the local coffee growers of the La Venta and Ocotal area was targeted by the Company's supporters--often, he was made to look like the person blocking "his" growers from realizing the error of

their views. Gualaco wondered even more at the arrogance of an Outside that wouldn't respect such men, such surnames, such accumulations of weapons in all but the humblest abodes.

Cattle space, and *terrateniendo* space in general, was equivocal on the issue. In nearby San Esteban, though part of the same Valle de Agalta, one got the idea that the Babilonia *enredo* was Gualaco's problem; few seemed to know or care what went on (San Esteban and Gualaco have uneasy relations at best). The *ganaderos* of Chindona, Gualaco, seemed not to care because they were not affected: Chindona is a world away from Ocotal. The Company's supporters showed up in every lightless *aldea* of Gualaco asking the simple question to *ganadero* and campesino alike: do you want La Luz Eléctrica? The answer, inevitably, was Yes. Well, then the Company will bring you Light. Do you support the Company? Chindona's answer, again was Yes.

Timber space, in all this, tried to stay somewhat remote, but was dragged in all the same. Logging companies have nothing to do with the *serranías* of Babilonia as such—they cannot get the necessary permission from COHDEFOR to log within a national park. They were more than aware of the dislike many in Gualaco felt for them, but also said that their sawmills sustained the economy of the *municipio*. In the late 1990s, La Venta itself had come to depend economically on the largest sawmill of them all. Many outsiders, even Olanchanos, saw the whole issue as one of manipulation by the *madereros*; the mayor of Gualaco and the villages denied this heartily.

The Company conquered by division, by finding allies among adherents to all the local spatial identities; and by appealing to the greater good of "Olancho" (and occasionally, where the need arose, "Honduras"). Gualaco undermined itself by its own lack of consensus among those who seemed to matter the most: Los Ricos and Los Alto Funcionarios, the high-ups, who gazed at Gualaco and saw it in relation to the needs and capital flows of all Olancho, all Honduras. What right, they repeated again and again, did Gualaco have to go against the will of the rest of the people? There must be sacrifices—the local has to give, not only take. But they

erred in assuming that Gualaco was desperately dependent: as previous chapters have shown, it is, as “atrasado,” still in large part a mutual aid society, a rhizome of rhizomes.

The mayor of Gualaco became the key figure: as the representative of the State, he was the insuperable barrier to all legal action taken from above, while simultaneously concentrating disparate forces and agendas from below. Seen from the inside, he was a member of a powerful Gualaco family, and knew personally every *comarca* in the *municipio*. As teacher, he was ally of teachers; as *ganadero*, he could speak to *ganaderos*. He was regarded a traitor by most other mayors in Olancho, by most *diputados*, and by most government officials in Tegucigalpa. His symbolic power grew with his bodily fragility—he said several times on Juticalpa and national radio stations that he feared for his life, and wanted the public to be very clear, if anything happened, what and who had been the cause. This, according to Gualaco, made perfect sense as a strategy of their Opposition—cut out the knot that holds their entire *enredo* together, and it would fall to pieces. At the same time, this would create a martyr, and after that, it was widely believed in Olancho, nothing could stop the Gualaqueños from settling the issue as they were said to solve all disputes after words ran out. Rumors in the *pulperías* (convenience stores) across the *municipio* of Gualaco were that “someone would pay” if anything happened—or else, said the rumors, the State would have move in to “militarizar la zona,” (e.g. martial law) as ardent supporters of the Company had once threatened the residents of Ocotal. The organizers of the resistance were adamant that their nonviolent protests were the only thing holding “chaos” at bay—they went house to house in their *comarcas*, explaining why everyone had to be peaceful, why weapons were unnecessary.

The State had mixed feelings—which version of Development was correct? COHDEFOR sided with Gualaco; SERNA (Secretaría de Recursos Naturales) with the Company; ENEE (Empresa Nacional de Energía Eléctrica, which would oversee the soundness of construction) at the top with the Company, but at lower levels with Gualaco. The State, while not in fragments, had as much interest in quelling the resistance (e.g. Honduras welcomes dams, investment, and

Development, even if we did lose Patuca II) as it did keeping out of the conflict (e.g. votes matter), or indeed even supporting Gualaco, if no amount of words sufficed (e.g. martial law looks bad). Looking for any cracks in the State's edifice, Gualaco reached its tendrils out to the best of its abilities across the Internet, and up hierarchies, trying to grab outsiders and get them to empathize with Gualaco's position. They "infiltrated" the government to a certain extent, trying to find out what the Company knew, what it was planning to do.

In all this, the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta to Gualaco was far more than excuse or convenience. The villagers idealistically, against the logic of scarcity, planned to stop cutting down forest, only protecting and growing coffee, getting organic certification, bring in ecotourists to see the waterfalls: any and all ways to provide an alternative to industry were invoked. PNSA was more than Idea or blanket space—it was "plugged into" at every one of its outlets; the 1987-87 promises of the buffer zone (in which almost all the Company's infrastructure would lie) were cited one by one. Gualaco held a mirror to Tropical Rain forest Conservation, and conservation space was forced to reply. It didn't have to speak in Gualaco's favor--SERNA, in charge of "the environment," and the Company itself, were adamantly pro-park. But the idealism of the buffer zone, pushed by conservationists local and foreign, had hopped ahead of them by 10 years--SERNA and the Company failed because Gualaco was never capable of seeing itself as degraded, and indeed by 1998 jumped at the opportunity to paint itself as the landscape idyll of Decreto-Ley 1987-87.

The PNSA, on the ground and through buffer zone legislation, had begun in multiple fragments, and had multiplied uncontrollably. By being anything other than a fenced-off forest space under heavy guard, it was inevitably subject to rapid deterritorialization in the complex spaces of Olancho. And so it was--pieces of the park were carried off in all directions, like a carcass. But this was not necessarily a "good thing" per se. Protection, in my mind, remains a valid course of action if and when villages like Ocotal do everything in their power to keep *pura montaña* in the *comarca*. All my comments on the false ideas of conservationists about the

“unnatural” degradation of non-forest space are not meant to deny the importance of *pura montaña* as “old-growth forest,” nor of biodiversity. What is needed, what is already happening, is the reclaiming of conservation space in terms of local space, what local space understands--not the shiny new, the slate wiped clean, the “big chunk,” but rather the collection of local *montañas, patrimonio*: locally administered, locally protected. The rhizome taking care of its own?

For all the cold-heartedness attributed to the Company, it is their passionate words tacked on to the addendum of their environmental impact statement that afford a glimpse of what may be the true Unknown for Gualaco: industrial engineer/industrial space. Setting aside all the corruption and threats, I remain with a cryptic block of text in my hands that clearly and honestly spells out why the Hydroelectric Project is necessary--why it has to be. Not, principally, because of either Development or Conservation per se--those are fringe benefits. The rhizome at the heart of the Company’s spatial identity is the need to build, and especially to stem the flow. They look at Olancho through alien eyes, seduced by the working projects of Italy and Costa Rica. They see Olancho as outsiders have never dared to see it: industrialized, a vision out of 1800s Dickensian England. The agropastoral idyll, to them, is worthless--the land calls out for smokestacks, for high-tension lines, for factories, for mines and mills. Coffee is no good (too much dependence on world markets); cattle are worse (no forest); campesino agriculture is unspeakable--the “basic grains” are a sham (hillsides not apt for cultivation; 40 years of intensive development making no difference). Timber space is not permanent (rape and desert). They look at the *pródiga tierra* and are ashamed of Olancho, disgusted by the *olanchanos*, themselves. A Dam, however, captures energy that is being wasted, and puts it to use, right here, right now. El Cajón Dam is by no accident Honduras’ leading landscape icon of progress--the biggest thing ever built in Honduras (see Loker 1996 for its drastic effects). The Company looks to the progressive Costa, sees *maquilas*, sees huge plantations: more inspiration.

They want nothing less than an industrial revolution in a land that still dreams in cattle and *plátanos* and *encanto*. Their space--pipes more beautiful than waterfalls--is still incomprehensible to too many Olanchanos. And yet, hydroelectric projects have been built across Honduras, though of the two that were attempted in Olancho, one failed and one was defeated by international protests. If the Company triumphs, it is a triumph of industrial space, which seeks a foothold and (as the Company states) plans to irrupt across the Valle de Agalta in other Development ventures (and presumably connect Olancho better to La Costa). Perhaps industrial space would become-local, but this seems doubtful--as doubtful as four centuries of intransigent *terratendientes*. More likely the hydro project would fail like the earlier two have, premature in an anti-industrial space, another white elephant in an impossible location.

What is at stake for Olancho is the definition of Development, which in turn affects the definition of every other machine (because it overcodes them all)--how much is too much, or is too much never enough? The power of local space remains strong, and any lasting victory for one side or the other is sure to have rippling effects across Olancho. Word travels fast.

Chapter Eight

Conservation and Development Spaces in Boquerón and La Avispa

Throughout this dissertation I have drawn a distinction between Olancho's "Pueblos del Norte" and the more "developed"/dependent "core" of the department. Gualaco is a "remote" region with an overarching identity, where local people can sort themselves out from outsiders, where there is still abundant *patrimonio* (= "natural resources"). But in the watershed of the Río de Olancho there is no such overarching identity in local space to draw spatial identities together--it contains parts of three *municipios*; *comarcas* long enemies with each other; campesinos, *terratienientes*, *cafetaleros*, *ganaderos*. Most forest is gone; streams are polluted with Gramoxone from coffee farms; *terratienientes* are moving in from all sides. Resistance against a homogenizing Outside is unthinkable in the absence of a single univocal Inside--local space "itself" has no self, no voice: it is manifest only in fragments. In Boquerón and La Avispa, furthermore, there is no univocal force (Hurricane/Company) from without but rather inside/outside forces acting under the influence of diverse spatial identities, clashing with each other--in this milieu, how do Development and Conservation act? In what instances do they "disappear" local space by overcoding and simplifying complexity; in what cases do they gather forces together in overarching spaces, and what is the result? These are some of the thematic questions that run through this chapter.

This chapter first sketches (8.1) a local "microhistory" of the flows and identities that overcoded Boquerón and La Avispa decades and centuries previous to the Canadian Project and the Monumento Natural El Boquerón (see text and map in chapter 2.2). It serves to put into perspective the recent reorientation of local life toward Development Space and Conservation Space, pointing out in detail the errors that outsiders make when transporting ideal spaces in their heads and then applying them, whole, to what they gaze at in local space.

At the beginning of the 1990s, into the complex spaces of a single drainage basin which had no dominant spatial identity/space, stepped two outside forces: a Proyecto de Desarrollo, and an Area Protegida. The latter--Monumento Natural El Boquerón--became inscribed in the landscape by 1993, but not as the coincidence of *pura montaña*/virgin forest. Conservationists drew lines around a rural landscape relatively better forested than surrounding areas, and possessing several outstanding physical and biological features. Section 8.2 looks at the becoming-local of this protected area, and in particular how it has helped save campesino coffee space at the expense of other spaces.

Section 8.3 returns to the context of the meeting in chapter two--to get behind what was going on in the Red de Cuencas encounter in terms of complex spaces. The final question is whether Development inevitably and necessarily becomes-local anyway, and if so, does local space then always “fade” or rather is it enriched by the chiasm of inside and outside?

8.1 Local Spatial History

Outsiders bent on practicing conservation and development, in my experience, usually have little understanding of the histories of local space. Gazing from above and beyond, under the principles of simplicity and against those of complexity, they project a universal history for each and every landscape feature, each and every type of human behavior. This can hardly fail to have damaging results--as the old adage goes, Conservation and Development are doomed to repeat what has gone before. Erasure of memory, through the imposition of Development Time and Conservation Time, freezes local space in a snapshot, a painting. Local space, thus simplified and “controlled,” is thought to be malleable, clay to be shaped into something comprehensible. This section looks at some of the pre-1990 history in hopes of making a specific case for local space in light of what came after 1990.

Conservation’s gaze usually follows these lines in Olancho: historical settlement in the *valles* (pre-1900); expanding populations (1900-1950); deforestation moves upslope (1950-on);

the ragged line between field and forest up on the mountain marks the edge of the frontier (present day). This line encircles the mountain marking the lower edge of what might be a protected area nuclear zone; if it's not, then it should be. I gazed at El Boquerón and Cerro Agua Buena and saw an island of taller forest at the top of the mountain, and on the steep and rocky slopes of the flanking gorges. It appeared to be "intact" if not "virgin." Deforestation had not yet degraded it entirely. There was still time: it could be a protected area.

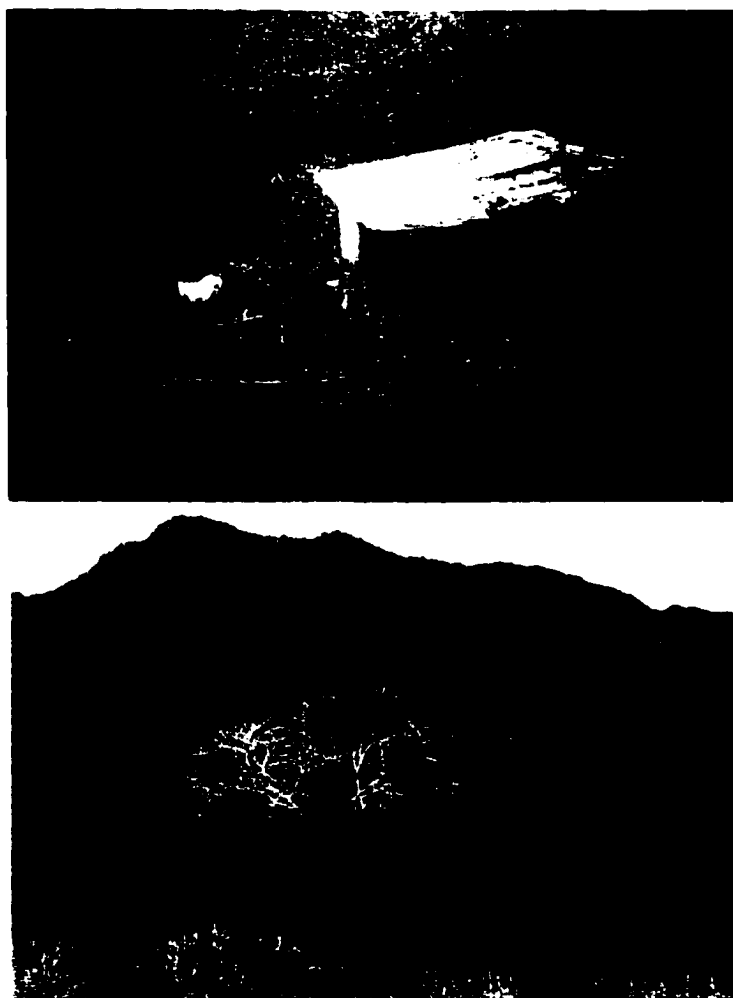


Fig. 8.1. Agua Buena. Bottom: from a *carbonal* in the Valle de Olancho. Top: from inside. Campesino smallholding within coffee forest.

Conservationists' thought is occupied by the "battle to save" an inviolate core that has to be rescued before it, too, is denuded. This is the model I carried around in my head, and is the way

I understood initially El Boquerón. I assumed that because the present is the most deforested period in Honduran (Olancho) history, then the rule must apply everywhere, and particularly on “The Frontier.” I did not know of the trajectories and cycles of removal and regrowth of forest that cut across at odd angles the most evident recent clearing. I didn’t know that standing forest could be owned privately.

As I compiled oral history from 1900 to the present, looked at the land title record from 1680 to 1950, and gazed at aerial photos from the 1950s, I learned that deforestation of Cerro Agua Buena behind El Boquerón did not “start” in the Valle de Olancho in the 1950s and sweep upward. Instead, it came in the form of migrants from the “remote” “back side,” from La Avispa, a much older settlement than El Boquerón. And this was only one of many flows: Cerro Agua Buena was not only not “virgin,” but it had seen successive waves of deforestation from all sides, and had been titled by 1854. The forest that remained had resulted from migrational ebbs and from the staying power of campesino coffee space vis-à-vis cattle space.

La Avispa is in a cul-de-sac valley along the middle course of the Río de Olancho, and by the early 1900s was “already” a seasonal *caserío* in the Montaña de La Avispa. Its settlers were families from Guacoca, an ancient village in the arid Valle de Guacoca to the west, part of the Río Telica’s “Valle de Arriba” where frequent crop failures occurred in dry years. In the early decades of the 1900s, the *guacocas*, as they are known, began to spend more and more time over the hills in the exuberant Montaña de La Avispa, where climate and vegetation were more benign for hunting, gathering, grain farming, tobacco growing, vegetables, and coffee.

But these “first” settlers (*los primitivos*) found that the La Avispa vale had been settled long before their arrival. In the 1940s, they found in the rich *vegas* domestic avocado trees of unknown ownership a century old. In later years, residents of La Avispa tilled up Spanish colonial artifacts as well as a Precolumbian ruin site near the confluence of the Quebrada de la Avispa and the Río de Olancho, while in a nearby cave in *pura montaña* treasure hunters sacked Precolumbian burials. Meanwhile, high in the mountains above La Avispa, at around 1200

meters above sea level, settlers of Quebrada de Agua found an intact archaeological site with stone temple mounds and abundant greenstone “*en medio de la montaña*” (the highest Precolumbian presence yet encountered in the Cordillera de Agalta). Around Guacoca, the square-kilometer Dos Quebradas “*ciudad perdida*” and numerous smaller sites indicate a large Precolumbian population. The *antigües* had already been everywhere, and the Spanish as well. The settlers in the early 1900s moving seasonally and then permanently to the Montaña de la Avispa were not the first group of people, nor even the second, to arrive. They were, however, the first of many who would claim the watershed of the Río de Olancho in the twentieth century. Much of what they do and think about space, and what unites them with Boquerón, stems from the spatial history of Guacoca.

Guacoca was a *comarca* mentioned as early as 1638 (ANH AC 1 20), and its first extant title, for “San Gerónimo Guacoca,” was given to the Spaniard Pedro de Aliçar in 1682 (ANTO Guacoca 1682).¹ The surveyor began his measure at two *pinos grandes* within the house cluster of his *estancia*, and enclosed six *caballerías* (c. 250 has.) of “*esteril*” land good for “*ganados mayores y menores...y caballos y sembrar algún maíz y no para otros sembrados.*” Other descriptions in the title establish firmly that the *valle* and surrounding hills had *espinal*, *serrania*, and *sabanas*—in a rain shadow area, there was never any chance for “rain forest.” Flanking Guacoca to the west and northwest in the 1600s were several other private land grants, as well as the tribute town of Zapota, which received its *ejidos* in 1713 (ANTO 1 Achuluapa).

The next extant document for Guacoca (ANTO 185 San Jerónimo) is a title from 1740 for a Juan Pacheco. The *sitio* was remeasured to include 12 *caballerías* (c. 500 has.). In 1779 (ANTO Guacoca 1843) the Alferes Juan Enrique Canelas bought the land from Pacheco. His 1776 measurement stressed the abundant *tigres* (jaguars) as well as the broken nature of the

¹ The name “Guacoca” is indigenous, probably coming from “*guaco*,” the laughing falcon (herald of death) or from a plant of the same name that is used as an efficacious remedy against snakebite. “Guacoca” could have been the indigenous name of the Dos Quebradas archaeological site.

terrain, making it worthless for anything but cattle. The thick woods in Guacoca at that time contained typical dry forest species such as *nance*. The *sitio* now composed 34 *caballerías* (c. 1350 has.) in three parcels. In 1843, Juan Antonio Mendoza bought the “*hacienda de Guacoca*.” Today, this title is kept in Tegucigalpa and owned by hundreds of descendants, including many Mendozas.

Guacoca came under the jurisdiction of San Francisco de la Paz (Zapota) in the 1800s, but the two remained distinct.² This has carried through until the present day: though Guacoca the *aldea* is beholden to San Francisco the *pueblo*, in local space they have highly distinct identities and histories and have sent out settlers to different frontier areas. Guacoca has sent its children into the middle watershed of the Río de Olancho, while families from the *aldeas* close to San Francisco, especially Pedregal (dating from at least the 1700s), moved across the hills north of Guacoca and occupied the upper watershed of the Río de Olancho by the mid-1900s or earlier.

Guacoca was one of the most highly-praised *aldeas* in *profesor* Fernando Figueroa’s *Monografía de Olancho* (1935). In describing the *municipio* of San Francisco de la Paz, he writes:

Se cultiva el tabaco, café, sobre todo en la aldea de Guacoca, teniendo los vecinos de ésta, grandes cafetales en la montaña llamada “La Avispa”, en donde se reúnen todos los vecinos en tiempo de cosechas, quedando en esta época la aldea sola y triste. (69)

En...Guacoca, se dedican las mujeres al laboreo del tabaco, fabricando puros que en el comercio se conocen con el nombre de guacocas...se dedican...a la tenería, preparando con especialidad badanas y baquetas muy apreciadas por su buena calidad, pues además de ser fuertes son suaves...*la aldea de Guacoca es próspera y se le augura un buen porvenir.* (70; italics mine)

At that time there were two haciendas within the *sitio* of Guacoca, in addition to smallholdings. An example of Guacoca’s progressiveness was its “*escuela rural mixta*.” Few were the *aldeas* in Olancho that received such praise in the eyes of Juticalpa: the *guacocas*, in the *Monografía*, are painted among Olancho’s most industrious citizens, with thriving cottage

² See Aguilar Paz (1989:304) on a famous *guacoca*, “El Cacique Gregorio Mendoza....”



Fig. 8.2. A *galapago* or woman's side saddle, showing extinct *patrimonio* of Guacoca. No longer used, but sometimes cherished as heirlooms, *galapagos* were made from local cattle through the artisans' practices known as *tenería* (tanning) and *talabartería* (leather-working).

industries in tanning, leatherworking, and cigar fabrication, and large coffee farms in La Avispa. Coffee in local space signified then, as it does today, wealth and industriousness.

After the middle of the century the *guacocas* began to abandon their legendary tobacco cultivation. One resident of Dos Quebradas told me that they were shamed out of it by the "urbane" citizens of San Francisco de la Paz who always made fun of them for being backward tobacco growers at the frequent soccer matches between the two communities. Their tanning prowess became a memory as well, and in 2000 *tenería* was mentioned as still being practiced only in the settlement of Los Charcos, that residents of the main *aldea* of Guacoca regard as backward.

Through the 1950s the vale of La Avispa, thanks to its *café indio* (old-style coffee demanding heavy shade), remained heavily forested, even while surrounding slopes gave way to

cerros pelones for agriculture and pastures. As the populations of Guacoca and La Avispa exploded after 1950 (due mostly to increased infant survival rate), several groups of families occupied Cerro Agua Buena, the highest local *montaña* still available to the *guacocas*, its cool climate excellent for cabbages, other vegetables, and coffee.³

The top of Cerro Agua Buena is a rolling karst landscape also containing quartzite and shales. It has one permanent source of *agua buena*, and this was a prime attraction for the “permanent” settlers from Guacoca (including Benito Barrera’ father, *don* Trino: see below). Thanks to their hard work, most of Agua Buena became a *cerro pelón* in the 1950s. A vast pasture of delicious thick grass favored a beast of burden population explosion (they owned but a few milk cows). After two decades of settlement, only tiny patches of *montaña cruda* remained in the gorges, while the only *monte alto* (tall forest) that Guacoca settlers left on top was that which shaded their small *fincas* of *café indio*, which they had planted in the 1940s (some of these are still productive). Year-round occupation of Agua Buena continued into the early 1970s, as long as vegetable production boomed. On Agua Buena and down in La Avispa, there was no *relajo* (disorder), no *gente mala* (criminals), no road: just a rich frontier full of promise (*porvenir*). Land was extremely cheap. Fauna was plentiful, and there was wild game for dinner several nights of the week. The middle watershed was, in effect, a campesino space not yet invaded by *terratenientes*, not yet out of productive land, still a close fit to the Olancho *montaña* idyll. But this was not to last: streams of land occupation were converging on the middle watershed from several directions. One of these was a rare effort by a village to gain *ejidos*.

³ The *boquerón* of the Río de Olancho remained untraveled except by hunters, since people preferred to hike over the high ridges to the Valle de Olancho, rather than wind through the treacherous, boulder-strewn gorge. The gorge trail came about in the 1970s through a gradual process of penetration from above and from below. “Before we knew it, there was a trail” say people from La Avispa. It has now become the most heavily-used footpath from the Valle to La Avispa, though it is still not passable by beasts of burden.

During the early 1950s, the large village of Punuare, Juticalpa, on the banks of the Río de Olancho in the Valle de Olancho, wanted *ejidos* for farming (ANTO 156 Punuare 1952). Since it had one grade school and another was being built, and possessed the requisite population, it qualified under the Honduran laws of the time. The residents of Punuare, crowded in a narrow *chorizo*, could not have *ejidos* in the Valle because it was occupied entirely by *terratienientes*. So they convinced the government to give them a polygon of 16 square kilometers in the “empty” Montaña del Boquerón (northeast side of the Boquerón gorge), and a right-of-way across the haciendas comprising the Sitio de Punuare Arriba that separated the *aldea* of Punuare from its *montaña*. They had already been farming in the *montaña* on a small scale, and wanted to expand and legalize this activity while keeping the rapidly encroaching cattle space at bay: at the same time, *ganaderos* from Guayabito, Santa María del Real were moving rapidly up the slopes as well.

Punuare’s solicited *ejidos* were granted after an arduous effort. They were bounded on the southwest by the Río de Olancho and on the northeast by town lands of the *municipio* of Santa María del Real, which had its own colonial titles to the *montaña*. Punuare and the *agrimensor* had a difficult time with the *ganadero* inheritors of the ancient *sitio* of Punuare Arriba, who possessed a title from the 1700s (ANTO 155 Punuara 1770) with which they confronted the land commission. This title only gave them rights to the Valle, but the *ganaderos* had already expanded their pastures up the outer slopes of the gorge, and felt threatened by an *ejido*. (Punuare, had it known of or had access to early colonial documents, would have been able to strengthen its own position through proof that “Punuara” existed as a viable indigenous tribute town from the 1500s through the 1700s.)

In the early and mid-1900s, protected areas such as *ejidos* were carefully marked out, and *mojones* (stone/concrete markers in those days) installed at all corner points, before the title was awarded by the State. Land measurements had to be visible and recognized on the ground, as had always been the case—a significant detail for later years, when the Monumento Natural El

Boquerón (and the PNSA as well) were to take on staying power through *delimitación*. The *agrimensor* (government surveyor), trying to create a polygonal *ejido* for Punuare of the necessary size, found to his surprise that settlers from Guacoca were living “way up in the mountains” on the “remote” far side in La Avispa well within his polygon. They agreed to be included in Punuare’s *ejidos*, apparently feeling that they would be safer from *terratiente* invasion that way. Cerro Agua Buena was not touched by all this, probably because its Valle de Olancho side was already occupied by a *sitio* that had been granted to Felipe Bustillo of Juticalpa in the 1850s (ANTO 22 Boquerón 1854), and in the 1950s belonged to the *mancomún* (agropastoral association) of his descendants and other *ganaderos*. Punuare, in the 1950s, was asking for the last parcel of officially unclaimed and largely unoccupied *montaña* land bordering the northcentral Valle de Olancho.

Punuare received its *ejidos* with a clause stipulating that *monte alto* be logged and then converted to agricultural use, except for the *vegas* along the Río de Olancho and all other watercourses, where margins of tall trees had to be left for protection. It was illegal to “descuajar” (thin out or remove) forest less than 100 meters from a *nacimiento de agua* (water source), and less than 20 meters from the edge of a watercourse. Such environmental stipulations are found in *ejido* titles, concessions for timber cutting, and other land use documents since the early 1800s, and are common in titles of this type in the Archivo Nacional de Tierras. They form part of a “de facto” conservation history and are proof that the central government has made efforts to protect forest long before the current spate of protected areas.⁴

In the 1950s, at least a decade before El Boquerón existed as a village, what was to become the Monumento Natural El Boquerón and the Microcuenca del Río de Olancho in the 1990s

⁴ For water regulation, see, for example, Catacamas Junta de Agua, *Estatutos y reglamento interior de la junta de aguas de la ciudad de Catacamas* (1992). Catacamas’ and Juticalpa’s nineteenth and twentieth century municipal archives are microfilmed and stored at the ANH and at University of Texas-Arlington (for the latter, see Arrigunaga 1991). They contain numerous local environmental protection statutes: see, for example, AHJ Bando de Buen Gobierno Feb. 23, 1874, which contains strict regulation of public hygiene and use of the Río Juticalpa. At the national level, environmental legislation can be encountered

already contained conflicting and overlapping spaces overcoded by the spatial identities of campesinos, *cafetaleros*, *ganaderos*, the State, and *municipios*. One of the background reasons for the ensuing clash of several waves of “descuaje” (“deforestation” in local space) at the top of Cerro Agua Buena, in La Avispa, and to the east of the Río de Olancho gorge was the jurisdiction of *municipios*: the division of Juticalpa and San Francisco de la Paz had “forever” run along the top of Cerro Agua Buena and down through the gorge, where it met the corner of Santa María del Real. These jurisdictions reflected eighteenth and nineteenth-century titles for *terratenientes*, *comarcas*, and *pueblos* based on their expanded visions of usufruct *dominio*: what we can see up there is ours for agriculture and cattle, even if we “only” use it for long-fallow swidden (*guamil*), hunting and gathering now. For example, when in 1854 the State awarded Felipe Bustillo everything to the top of Cerro Agua Buena, *agrimensores* never actually climbed through the *montaña cruda* to get there. His *retiro* was awarded on the gaze and the sweep of the hand: everything up to the top is yours.

In the 1960s, the *guacoca* farmers on Agua Buena began to move down the forested slopes toward the Valle de Olancho. Conflicting accounts cite soil exhaustion, *municipio* jurisdictional problems, and family issues as well as the longing for modern lifestyles closer to civilization. Like many former pioneers in Olancho, the original settlers of Agua Buena also remember the bad, particularly the lack of schooling and modern health care. To have more farmland and be closer to the new highway at the base of the mountain, they established El Bambú, a site near a water source about halfway down. They may have worked out rent or gift agreements with the owners of the old Bustillo *retiro*, or perhaps in those days it had been largely abandoned and they simply occupied the cattle-free land they saw as empty. El Bambú quickly became a sizeable *caserío* with over 20 houses, and the thick woods, an ecotone of *montaña*, *serranía*, and *montaña seca* (dry forest), gave way to short-fallow swidden agriculture (*guamiles*). By the

in government newspapers such as *La Gaceta* and *El Redactor*, from as early as the 1830s.

1980s, though Agua Buena two hours above was abandoned as a permanent village, its privately-owned campesino space held sway against cattle space thanks to the *guacocas*' coffee farms. Agua Buena remained the name of a seasonal village occupied during the coffee harvest. Today, owners of the over 25 coffee farms on Agua Buena are mostly the original settlers or their descendants.

Cattle space from the Valle de Olancho expanded upward rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s. *Ganaderos* from the Punuare Arriba *sitio* north of the Río de Olancho disregarded Punuare's campesino *ejidos* and took them over. Others, with claim to the old Bustillo *sitio* south of the Río de Olancho, moved up the slopes of Agua Buena. The situation is said to have gotten *imposible* for the *guacoca* settlers of El Bambú, and while most moved back north over the mountain to the domain of Guacoca, a few, lured by the (unpaved) Carretera de Olancho, which had become an important commercial route across the Valle de Olancho and to the outside world, dared to try their luck in *terratiente* space. Most settled at the *punto* (spot) of El Boquerón, which in the 1960s was no more than a thick *espinal* (above a vega) where Salvadorans had a vegetable stall. The Salvadorans had been brought in as workers on a nearby hacienda out in the Valle, and had reclaimed for agriculture the *vegas* and *montañas secas* right at the rugged mouth of the gorge—to them, it had been empty land free for the taking. They were ejected from Olancho around the time of La Guerra at the end of the 1960s. This left their lands up for grabs.

The 1970s saw an influx of campesino migrants from “crowded” northwestern Olancho, particularly from El Rosario, who settled in El Boquerón and took over lands that had been occupied by the Salvadorans. They intermarried with those who had moved down from El Bambú in a complex web of family connections uniting the Guacoca/La Avispa region with the Valle de Olancho and with the Pueblos del Norte. But despite the growing rhizome of campesino space, cattle space continued to expand on both sides of the Río de Olancho. Ranchers from the large and wealthy *comarca* of Guayabito, El Real, “helped” the *ganaderos* of

Punuare Arriba to take over (*acaparar*) Punuare's *ejidos*, and cattle space moved quickly into the Río de Olancho's middle watershed.

By the 1970s, La Avispa the *comarca* (no longer in any way a *montaña* in the *guacocas'* definition) had no more unsettled land; more and more campesinos ascended the mountains toward the upper watershed of the Río de Olancho, where they met the wave of settlement from San Francisco de la Paz's Pedregal-descended *aldeas* moving downslope. La Avispa the *aldea* continued to grow and land parcels became smaller as they were subdivided among campesinos, who were also being squeezed by *terratenientes*. The frontier of *pura montaña*, which had been a few minutes from La Avispa in the 1940s, by the 1980s was seven hours hiking above the village at the southwestern edge of what in theory had become the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, being overcoded as fast as possible by campesino *caficultores* from Cofradía, El Real, coming from the northeast, and settlers out of the San Francisco de la Paz area from the northwest.

In the 1970s and 1980s a family of *terratenientes* with *campesino* origins intermarried with *guacocas* in Boquerón and were able to consolidate control over the slopes and *vegas* of the Boquerón gorge. As Olanchanos (it is said in Boquerón), they preferred to leave a thick corridor of forest along the river, while removing *monte alto* from the rest of the slopes where the Salvadorans had not already done so (on top of the ruins of San Jorge de Olancho, dating from the 1500s, and even older Precolumbian sites). El Bambú and the south slope of Agua Buena were lost altogether to cattle space, as *ganaderos* from Arimís, Juticalpa, Punuare and other areas fenced and burned the *guamiles* and old *potreros* (pastures) of the *guacocas*, all the way to the top of the mountain. El Bambú was reduced to a handful of houses of non-local families, *mozos* who tended cattle. Woods of any kind disappeared almost entirely on the south slope, while on the north side the explosion of La Avispa's population due to immigrants from other parts of Olancho, and expanding local families, had by the early 1980s reduced forest cover to a few small patches. The north side remained campesino space, the south side became

cattle space, and Agua Buena became the zone of conflict between the two, its coffee farms in imminent danger of extinction.



Fig. 8.3. Juan Barrera in coffee space, Cerro Agua Buena. Despite being within the “nuclear zone” of the Monumento Natural El Boquerón, this forest is an interstice of *guamil* within a mosaic of productive coffee *fincas*.

The 1980s saw the paving of the highway to Catacamas, right through Boquerón, putting it and the other villages on the northwest side of the Valle de Olancho squarely on the trail to the outsides, particularly to Los Estados. The Valle had virtually no land for the new generations; Boquerón had a *común* that was granted during the agricultural reform, but further attempts to expand campesino space tapered off after the 1975 massacre of Horcones and Santa Clara.

Agua Buena was always too rugged to have a road built to its top, and thus its campesino coffee space was safe from invasion by non-campesino *cafetaleros*, who had taken over large areas of the middle and upper watershed, evicting campesinos or turning them into *mozos*. La

Avispa gained a reputation as one of the most violent frontier areas of Olancho even before a road finally reached it from Guacoca at the end of the 1980s. The 1980s saw many such “back corners” of Olancho opened up to roads, thanks in large part to the coffee boom. In the early 1990s, a road was built from Santa María del Real to high-lying coffee farms on the lower fringe of the Sierra de Agalta, curving west through the Río de Olancho’s upper watershed to pass through El Danto (“The Tapir”), Gorrión (“The Hummingbird”), and a string of other San Francisco de la Paz coffee villages, connecting to the new main highway between San Francisco de la Paz and Gualaco. The region opened up even more as villages off these main routes clamored for access roads to get their ever-increasing quantity of coffee out.

Suddenly, by the end of the 1980s, the villages in and near the watershed of the Río de Olancho found that there was no more *tierra suelta* (land for the taking) except on the highest and steepest slopes. The upper and middle watersheds were crisscrossed by roads; all land parcels had to be fenced in an attempt to keep out the *terratenientes* (of coffee as well as grass) who were invading (*acaparando*) wherever they could get a foothold. By the early 1990s, pressure on land was so fierce that residents of La Avispa, still in the majority descendants of *guacocas*, were occupying the 60-degree tallus slopes in the heart of the Boquerón gorge-- among the last patches of unclaimed forest within a four-hour radius.

While La Avispa calmed down as family feuds and land conflicts reached uneasy truces in the early 1990s, gangs and drugs began to enter the villages of the Valle de Olancho. Boquerón, Punuare and particularly nearby Arimís earned sinister reputations as drug- and gang-infested dead-end villages, filled with *cantinas* (Punuare, with several thousand residents, at one point had 21), *chorizos* bursting with houses and nowhere to expand, contained on all sides by the ever-more-productive lands of *terratenientes* who were turning to maize, sorghum, watermelons, and other crops. The villages had only limited land in a few small *comunidades*.

At the inception of the Monumento Natural El Boquerón, *terratenientes* from Punuare were letting their cattle invade the coffee farms on Agua Buena, while the *guacocas*, out of

farmland in or near their respective *aldeas*, were cutting down the highest non-coffee *montaña* along a new trail to a COHDEFOR radio tower at the top, converting it to “modern” coffee with planted shade trees. They were also burning the old *guamiles* that *ganaderos* hadn’t yet reached, and much of the “secondary” forests that had regrown since the 1950s and 1960s were returning rapidly to short-fallow bean plots.

The preceding gives a taste of the ebbs and flows across the landscapes, what were so integral to local space and so unknown to conservationists and developmentalists in the 1990s. We lumped it as “migratory agriculture” heading “East.” Complexity was the rule--like across Olancho, particularly in highly active frontier areas, there was no such thing as a dominant space: the production and holding-sway of any one piece of “degraded” hillside or “second-growth forest” was a complex *enredo* of spatial identities and histories--each place was overcoded by multiple identities, some in symbiosis, some at war. Since my sources for most of the twentieth-century history are campesinos or sympathizers with campesinos, the *terratenientes* were always painted as the culprits, but in reality they acted exactly within the logic of their various spatial identities. I have detected a considerable margin of symbiosis between *ganadero* and campesino, *terrateniente* and smallholder, cutting across hierarchical divides, which though it ultimately benefited cattle space and non-campesino coffee space in terms of overall land area dominated, had considerable ramifications for the 1990s, when “frozen” campesino space was favored by outsiders, and non-campesino space marginalized. There were myriad ways that the rhizomes intermeshed in the landscapes: the “capture” of individual *mozos* by cattle space, but their families’ remaining “independent” campesinos; gift and rent agreements; clearing of *monte* for campesino agriculture, with the explicit purpose of selling it to *ganaderos*. But there was also a brutal arms race between campesino rhizomes and *ganadero* rhizomes, violent takeovers of each space by the other--and a State that took all sides, giving technical assistance to each and every spatial identity. In 1992, the landscape of Agua Buena and the Río de Olancho watershed clamored in a cacophony of voices.

8.2 Inscribing an *Area Protegida*: 1992-2000

The early 1990s were a time when Honduran and Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) conservationists could “propose” a protected area by photocopying a topo map, drawing a polygon on it, attaching a brief description of a piece of forest space or other “remaining” bit of conservation space yet overlooked by previous law, and submitting the packet to an agency such as COHDEFOR’s Departamento de Areas Protegidas. This is how Honduras came to possess many of its over 100 “protected” areas, over half of which had no legal “*declaratorias*,” and would remain for years in the category “*área propuesta*.”

This was the case with El Boquerón. After eight years, the “Monumento Natural” remained (in late 2000) with no law to “protect” it. Nevertheless, it has become a recognized *área protegida*. Few have thought to reject its validity simply because it doesn’t “exist.” For Boquerón *does* exist, not through paper but through a sedimentation that has built up through two or three generations of administrators, *promotores*, and *técnicos*.

The Monumento Natural El Boquerón came about through our frustration, as employees of the Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre-Region Forestal de Olancho, with not being able to shape the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta into recognizable park form. In 1992, we needed something smaller, something closer that we could get to without relying on COHDEFOR rides so often revoked or forgotten. We needed an area not yet tainted by the dominance of COHDEFOR, that could be captured temporarily from the local (to save it) but eventually handed over to a coalition of local groups to manage “rationally” and “sustainably.”

The spectacular walls of the Río de Olancho’s *boquerón* (mouth into the Valle) are not far from the main paved road between Juticalpa and Catacamas. An enticing ribbon of *vega* gallery forest accompanies the river up into the gorge, beckoning to the curious on a scorching day in March 1992. Biologist Manuel Rey (my COHDEFOR counterpart) and I were returning to Juticalpa on the bus from Catacamas after being unable to carry out a community meeting for

delimiting the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta in Dulce Nombre de Culmí because COHDEFOR had reneged on its promise to provide us a vehicle. Manuel Rey was the head of the Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre in Olancho from 1992 to 1993. He was a controversial figure who believed in building local coalitions including but not managed by COHDEFOR; as a biologist and generator of enthusiastic save-the-rain forest ideas, he was suspect and marginalized within COHDEFOR. Foresters at the local office in Juticalpa barely veiled their ridicule of protected areas and of biologists, and there was hardly ever any budget for the PNSA even when there was supposed to be a budget. Meanwhile, town mayors, prominent lumbermen, and even the Honduran military lauded Rey's efforts to forge conservation alliances in Olancho.

We were eager to start with a blank slate in a small, manageable area, and annoyed enough to decide on the spur of the moment to get off the bus at El Boquerón village and do a little exploring of a place that "looked interesting." We thought that if any forest was left and no titles to it were in evidence, then with a little effort a protected area might be proposed. We had learned in protected areas training workshops that parks didn't have to be only large "intact" "chunks" of humid forest, but could include small, scenically attractive spots as well, just like in the US and Costa Rica.

We hiked up through the gorge and were impressed by its scenery, and especially by its remnant tropical dry forest. We knew that tropical dry forest was almost gone in Central America, and that the 1987 cloud forest law and the Honduran conservation movement's emphasis on the high and the virgin had served to steal attention from an even more endangered ecosystem.

We soon became aware, through a buffer zone management workshop we had attended in Costa Rica, that it was possible for such "degraded" forest to regenerate. We disagreed with a belief current in that country that Costa Rica contained Central America's last viable tropical

dry forests.⁵ My enthusiasm over Boquerón deepened after another trip in June when the gorge was green and humid (the first visit had been in the *verano* when the leaves were off the trees). This time we were guided by someone from El Boquerón village, and we discovered that while the forest in the heart of the gorge was dense and “untouched,” it gave way at its upper end to bleak deforestation on the approach to La Avispa. The forest in the gorge looked more and more like it was in dire need of saving.

Places take shape in the imagination through repeated visits. The experience of being able to imagine a new protected area “all our own” was heady and powerful. Few jobs have allowed so much leeway to conservationists to imagine protected areas and then to propose them with barely any legal or practical concerns. The strategy advocated by my Peace Corps supervisor Jorge Betancourt (a prominent Honduran conservationist) and his professional colleagues in the Central American conservation movement was to propose as many protected areas as possible during times that the State was willing, in the belief that come what might, each one was better than “nothing.” In many cases, this has turned out to work to the advantage of local space, as in the case of the Babilonia *enredo*; in other cases, a protected area administered by dogmatic anti-human-landscape conservationists can be as much of an imposition as *terrateniendo* space.

Manuel Rey and I had been trained to base a proposal for a protected area on special characteristics that set it apart from the local landscape, making it something worth preserving and recovering. We were not scared by Boquerón’s “degraded” state, since we had been to Costa Rica and could visualize the dry forest rapidly reclaiming pastures. The special characteristics that were necessary to propose a natural and cultural protected area such as a Monumento Nacional were abundant: tropical dry forest; easily visible fauna; spectacular

⁵ Indeed, there are bits and pieces of tropical dry forest throughout the *valles* and *serranías* of Olancho that would easily capture the attention and admiration of conservationists, were they to visit the “remote” areas in which these occur. In comparison to the mountains still covered with tropical dry forest, in parts of northern Gualaco, El Boquerón is “insignificant,” but in 1992 we thought that it might be one of the last remnants in all Honduras. Costa Rica’s claim is based on the false idea that tropical dry forest is restricted to the Caribbean slope in Central America (see my discussion in chapter 4).

scenery; importance in local culture; site of San Jorge de Olancho (cultural heritage in the buffer zone); attraction for ecotourists; easy access allowing environmental education opportunities not only for local villages but for Catacamas and Juticalpa as well. I drafted a letter to the head of Areas Protegidas in Tegucigalpa stating why I thought El Boquerón should be made an “*anteproyecto*” of *declaratoria* as a *monumento nacional* (Bonta 1992). Such an act was not unusual: PCVs had considerable power in those days, because protected areas were still relatively unknown to Honduran society at large and there were very few people, Honduran or outsider, involved in the movement. PCVs were given considerable (and controversial) power to initiate and even to manage protected areas. This sometimes resulted in the possessive “my park” phenomenon, where PCVs felt that a cloud forest was their responsibility, and would go as far as endangering their own lives to do what they thought was right—in one notorious incident in northwestern Olancho, ripping up freshly planted coffee bushes inside a nuclear zone (resulting in death threats from the slighted family).

Despite the excesses of misguided PCV zeal, Jorge Betancourt, and foreign conservationist-consultants (some of whom had been PCVs in Honduras in the 1970s and 1980s) knew well what they were doing. PCVs were the “imaginative frontier” of protected areas expansion, necessary at a time when protected areas had not yet become known to Hondurans in general. We were a workforce laying down the blueprint, sketching out the first maps of protected areas. Our individual foibles were a sacrifice for long-term gain, to be forgotten when *áreas protegidas* became a system and an “accepted part” of Honduran space. Nevertheless, for PCVs in the field, one of the quandaries of our service was the creation of dependency: “my park” abandoned after the two years were up. Local people would see something called a “Centro de Visitantes” built with outside funds, pointing to something called an “área protegida.” They might even politely become members of a PCV-initiated environmental NGO. But how could they share the PCV’s vision of a US-style park and imagine, on top of all the problems of everyday spatial complexity, yet another layer? In 1992 there was not yet a widespread public

discourse of *ambientalismo*, *conservación*, and *áreas protegidas*, as there is today. *Áreas protegidas*, especially with the taint of COHDEFOR, were highly suspect if not dismissible altogether.

The head of Protected Areas replied to my letter in an enthusiastic memo (Muñoz Galeano 1992) telling me to gather more information and submit a formal proposal. He sent my memo on to the national forestry school, ESNACIFOR, which as part of the country-wide research project CONSEFORH promised to send a botanist-forester to do a plant inventory of El Boquerón. The news of an incoming Expedition has usually been cause for celebration among conservationists in Olancho, since the exploratory aspect is one of the driving mechanisms that keep the job interesting: we will be recognized! Biodiversity will be catalogued! We will get on the Map! While making preparations for the trip, we were alerted in COHDEFOR to a garrulous campesino the foresters called “Don Bincho,” whom they said was the expert on everything to do with Boquerón. He, Benito Barrera, a “guacoca” from Boquerón, spent long hours in COHDEFOR in Juticalpa waiting for the powers-that-be to cut his paycheck, or for a *jefe* to give him something to do. At that time he was the protector of the COHDEFOR radio tower above Boquerón. *Don Bincho* became guide for our Expedition, and convinced us to spend a day or two on top of “Ahua huena” (where the radio tower was), a *montaña* filled with coffee, flora, and fauna at which we would marvel. To hear him tell it, Agua Buena was more impressive than the Sierra de Agalta. The foresters scoffed: *Binchito es mentirosísimo--allí es un desierto; no hay ni moscas* (He’s lying through his teeth--Agua Buena is a desert without even any flies).

But it happened that the Expedition was a success. The botanist was impressed, we did a bird list, collected flora, and hiked to the radio tower where, at 1433 meters above sea level, the vegetation looked like cloud forest (see Alvarado 1992; CONSEFORH 1993). Panoramic views from the isolated massif were breathtaking. A mosaic of shaded coffee farms and guava (*guayabo*) forests connected the “cloud forest” to the tropical dry forest in the gorge. Thanks to

don Bincho we later “discovered” another, smaller gorge called Tempiscapa, also containing dry forest, on the other side of Agua Buena. Manuel Rey and I imagined a “nuclear zone” taking shape, stretching from one gorge to the other across the top of Agua Buena, and we deluded ourselves into believing a corridor of untouched forest existed.

As *don* Bincho says today, we were the “*primitivos*” in late 1992. Toward the end of that year, El Boquerón as “*área protegida*” was a prize-winning project of a group of Normalistas (teacher-training school students) for their annual Science Fair. They had decided to do a project on “proposing a protected area” after Manuel Rey suggested it to them. After they won, Rey thought that their Escuela Normal Mixta de Olancho should manage El Boquerón together with “*los vecinos*” (local people such as Barrera), COHDEFOR, and other interested parties. Several teachers as well as the *director* of the school evinced interest, and it seemed an ideal situation for local management of a protected area that would make Juticalpa “cutting edge” in Honduran conservation. The project became known as “Rescatemos El Boquerón. Monumento Natural” as well as “En Búsqueda de la Esmeralda Hondureña” (the endangered hummingbird that we thought might inhabit the gorge; see chapter 4.7).

Unfortunately for us, Manuel Rey left the picture in early 1993 and went to work for an NGO outside Olancho. *Don* Bincho and I got together with a COHDEFOR *promotor* assigned to Areas Protegidas, and two teachers, to do a series of trips in the “Monumento” to provide the rest of the background information for the formal proposal (Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre 1993). The enthusiastic Normalista students dropped out of the project during vacation period. Nevertheless, we did the trips and compiled a series of technical reports, a more detailed bird list, and a set of maps of land use, forest cover, altitude, trails, and proposed limits (see entries under “Proyecto...” in Bibliography).

By early 1993, these first alliances in the name of a conservation space began to shatter through personal differences and professional agendas, but these were quickly superseded by institutional involvement. The COHDEFOR *promotor* was assigned to the now “official”

Monumento Natural El Boquerón. The State, in the form of *promotores* assigned to a proposed Monumento, overcoded local space as protected area in less than a year since our first hike. As I was finishing my Peace Corps service, I helped create a new PCV site in the village of Boquerón, with the “incoming volunteer” assigned to the Monumento. Counterparts for the volunteer included the COHDEFOR *promotor* and two Escuela Normal teachers. Peace Corps had now established “institutional presence” in a non-existent protected area as well. Peace Corps became entangled, and assigned PCVs to Boquerón and other nearby communities ever after.

The first PCV worked closely with one of the teachers to form a Juticalpa-based NGO called OBRA (Organización del Boquerón para Rescatar el Ambiente), which continued in phases of activity and inactivity throughout the 1990s (see “Organización...” Bibliography entires). Benito Barrera eventually became a full-time *guardarecursos* for the Monumento, and was sent around Honduras and to the US on workshops related to aspects of protected areas (e.g. wildlife, coffee, hillside agriculture). He became the mouthpiece of Boquerón, continuing to laud Cerro Agua Buena above all other places. Outsiders anointed him local expert because of his becoming-*montaña* through a life of hunting and medicinal plant gathering, but he was a “leader” with little real power locally. His tendency to prevaricate and exaggerate made him somewhat of a laughing stock in the villages, yet most urbanites and campesinos alike believed he was a good, nonviolent, incorrigible person who had such a way with words that he could tame or at least hold at bay fierce and dangerous *terratenientes*, a role that he appeared to relish.

Benito Barrera, from the first moment, seemed to take for granted that if outside experts were so interested in Boquerón, then it was indeed an important place in the world, as he had known all along. Primarily, he wanted what was best for his family and relatives, and he also wanted to keep alive a cultural/natural block of becoming-*montaña* no one else except the *guacocas* had seemed to be interested about or to have had the luxury of protecting. The *guacocas* needed the means to protect their coffee *fincas* from encroaching cattle space, and

their coffee *fincas* also harbored relatively abundant hunting and gathering opportunities. All this would be lost if *terratenientes* took over; the campesinos of Agua Buena would have to migrate or become *mozos*. Don Bincho often talked of himself as a *cafetalero* rather than a campesino or *mozo*; he and his wife fought arduously to educate each and every one of their eight children so that the family could get out, “salir,” from the oppression and marginality of their *valle* existence. Benito Barrera built alliances through endless conversations with campesinos and with *ganaderos* who easily could have had him eliminated at any moment (he has reflected), but paused to consider the power of his extended family rhizome. He became a boundary-crossing conservation personality (a self-proclaimed “ecologista”), focus of spatial identities, one key to the holding-sway of the Monumento Natural in local space.

By the mid-1990s, El Boquerón was written up in the ecotourism literature and foreign tourists trickled in. Locally, the Río de Olancho had been known for years as a good place to bathe, especially during Semana Santa (it runs clear in the dry season). More and more visitors, when they saw the signs that said it was an *área protegida*, took the hike up through the gorge, went into a cave, and even reached La Avispa, a “remote” village. Many urbanites had never been to a *montaña*, and were impressed by the scenery and the birds. Toucans, trogons, and even motmots were new and exotic for many Hondurans, who became convinced that the Monumento was special, hallowed ground. In many outsiders, *don* Bincho has observed the beginnings of a becoming-*montaña* and becoming-local even after only one guided hike, especially if he tells them stories, points out animal spoor and “exotic” birds, and identifies useful plants. Olanchanos are rarely heard to criticize Boquerón because it is small and so obviously a fragment. They find it a pleasant, more “natural” part of local space: who wants to walk through cattle pastures on a hot summer day? Some PCVs and other foreign conservationists have reacted differently, however. To them, Boquerón does not measure up—it is small and degraded, not their idea of a tropical paradise without people. They see through the façade, through the perforated nuclear zone where strict rules against “degradation” cannot

be enforced as long as people have coffee farms inside it. These are “big thinkers” cut out for Agalta or the Mosquitia; they often can’t think in terms of the local scale human landscape. I remember particularly the disappointment of a group of conservationists used to dealing with “big chunks” who were so thrilled to be hiking, so they thought, deeper and deeper into the “rain forest” (dry forest in *invierno*) through an attractive gorge, the mouth of a wilderness. I recall their sharp disappointment on coming out on the “trashed” far side, back into a village. I had let them down, they told me in no uncertain terms. They had thought they were penetrating the edge of the wilds, and all they were hiking through was a fragment.

During rarer hikes to Agua Buena, it is uncommon to witness disappointment even among tropical rain forest enthusiasts. The occasional “is this it?” reaction of the jaded or virginity-obsessed jars one into another conservation reality. However, most visitors, Honduran and foreign, are thrilled by the views, the cool climate, the birds and other fauna: they don’t worry about the fact that there is no virgin rain forest, just a mosaic of attractive coffee farms, some with tall, “original” trees.

Biologists’ reactions to the Monumento Natural El Boquerón are noticeably different from those of conservationists in general. They perceive quickly that the area is a “patchwork,” a landscape in fragments. Some are intrigued, as I have been, by the concentration and diversity of fauna compared to other protected areas they have visited (such as cloud forests, where fauna can be difficult to detect).

The abrupt altitudinal shift between the two gorges and Cerro Agua Buena has favored the presence of cloud forest nesters such as resplendent quetzals that during the early months of the year can be seen foraging for *aguacatillos* (wild avocados) at the edge of the Valle de Olancho, at a far lower elevation than most other areas. Cerro Agua Buena is isolated enough from nearby peaks to possess its own bird race, a possibly endemic population of the white-eared ground-sparrow, unique in Honduras (never detected even in the nearby Sierra de Agalta; see Anderson et al. 1998).

By the mid-1990s, conservation space had come to stay, and conservationists had at least one becoming-conservationist ally, Benito Barrera, to help conservation space win over *las aldeas*. But how was a Monumento Natural viewed from local space? How did it intersect the centuries-old trajectories of spatial identities that had long overcoded it in multiple overlapping ways? It turned out that the declaration of an *área protegida* was just what Agua Buena “guacocas” like Benito Barrera, had needed to keep cattle space at bay, outside the *puerta de la montaña* on lower, drier, hotter slopes where it belonged. They said that the *ganaderos* had never needed the top of Agua Buena for cattle: it was too cold and muddy. The *ganaderos* couldn’t care less, said the campesinos, that cattle and uncontrolled fire were threatening to ruin the fruit orchards that had come to characterize “second growth” Agua Buena. (Extensive *guayabales* [guava forests], thanks to the spreading of seeds by beasts of burden in the 1950s, blanket over 100 *manzanas*; throughout the *montaña*, oranges, avocados, *zapotillos*, *jocomicos*, and many other domestic and wild fruit species grow where they were planted on purpose or spread by chance.) The beleaguered domain of the Agua Buena coffee farmers, through the support of the Monumento idea as “protegido por El Estado” and bolstered throughout the 1990s by fines levied during a few COHDEFOR/police (or military) *inspecciones* and a COHDEFOR delimitation campaign, kept the *ganaderos* from what would have been easy for them: a virtually complete overcoding (trampling under) of campesino coffee space. The “Monumento Natural El Boquerón” in a largely unwitting act of piety came at an opportune moment to help the *cafetales* of Agua Buena remain a campesino space, albeit under surveillance and inspection “from above.”

In the Boquerón gorge, the remaining woods were close to disappearance as campesino space and cattle space moved in rapidly in the early 1990s. Momentum began to shift through a series of connected events after the founding of the Monumento. One was Benito Barrera’s continual conversations with two *terrateniente* brothers in El Boquerón, related to him through marriage, who through his words came to visualize and perhaps even respect the structure that

backed him, that for whatever reasons wanted the *montaña* to be protected rather than productive. The two *terrateniente* brothers decided to let go of their land in the gorge, donating a *vega* to OBRA, the NGO, for an environmental youth camp, and even removing some of their fences. The *montaña* quickly regenerated, and by 2000 substantial restitution of forest space had taken place.

By the mid-1990s, environmental issues were featured prominently on the radio and in the newspapers, and accompanied just about every Development effort in some way or another. The *ganaderos* from El Boquerón may have felt out of favor and outmoded, and may have become interested in forest protection, or just fed up. Eventually, other *terratenientes*, family by family, began to make concessions when they saw that the Monumento was not going away. One, a Juticalpa resident and inheritor of part of an old *sitio*, continued to burn until he was heavily fined and threatened with jail. Only toward the end of the 1990s did he seek a more reconciliatory approach toward the newly “uppity” residents of El Boquerón.

The *guacoca* coffee growers’ serious intent to preserve the forest on the top of Agua Buena was proven by their decision to abandon burning on the small swidden plots interspersed with their *cafetales*. They say that this is leading to increasing *guayabo* invasion and more fauna--better hunting, less agriculture, with unforeseeable consequences. Faunal populations are so low in areas neighboring Agua Buena that many people (particularly COHDEFOR *técnicos*) have taken Benito Barrera’ stories for lies, assuring him that there are no *tepescuintles* (pacas) or *quequeos* (collared peccaries) up there: these “endangered” species are long gone. Nevertheless, with abundant fruit and dense cover much of the fauna has remained common, and even bands of monkeys appear from time to time, perhaps using a tenuous forest corridor that connects Agua Buena to the Sierra de Agalta along the Quebrada de la Avispa, a tributary of the Río de Olancho.

There was more at stake in a protected area than a becoming-*montaña* above while satisfying the conservationists and ecotourists in the gorge. In the Monumento, many in the

community of El Boquerón came to see a golden opportunity for an *ejido*-like domain: but they, unlike the Gualaqueños of Babilonia, had been cowed by decades of being trampled on, and seduced by the quick way out--Los Estados and other outsides. From Development's point of view, the community of El Boquerón was typically Olanchano: anarchistic, violent, lazy, and usually incapable of forming effective groups except for short-term gain. They weren't *gestoras* (go-getters: see chapter 2.2); they didn't "cooperar." But Benito Barrera and others gained confidence bit by bit in issues that involved what they saw, increasingly, as their *patrimonio*. From the start, they wanted to have the Monumento as theirs to fend off the destruction of the gorge's forest from invaders (*aquella gente de La Avispa*), not only out of eagerness for land but also because they take their drinking water from springs that emerge from the limestone in the middle of the gorge. (They wash their clothes and bathe in the Río de Olanchó, which runs chocolate during the rains, and is saturated by Gramoxone, the chemical of choice for many coffee farmers in the middle and upper watersheds who apply it instead of the machete to clean out weeds in their *fincas*.) The inefficiency of their piped water system, which the State had installed two decades before for a much smaller village, became a major issue during the late 1990s, especially after the *presa* (concrete-reinforced catchment pool) and the pipe leading from it were obliterated by Hurricane Mitch. By 2000, after long negotiation with various development projects that offered new water systems, something adequate to the 54 houses in Boquerón was installed. The middle and upper watersheds continued to contribute their topsoil to the Valle, but the new water system in theory allowed local people to use the river less, until the time that the entire *microcuenca* is "recuperada": returned, in theory, to the *montaña* idyll.

Arimís, 10 times the size of El Boquerón, also took its water through pipes from springs in the gorge of the Río de Olanchó, and this seemed a locally acceptable form of sharing space. But Boquerón villagers protested bitterly in the early 1990s when people in Arimís began to take out truckloads of river cobbles for construction. Boquerón and El Estado managed to halt this practice soon after the identification of the river as part of a Monumento. Their justification

was simple: “Aquí es una área protegida. Es prohibido sacar piedras” (This is a protected area; taking out cobbles is forbidden). In addition, the occasional foreign treasure hunters searching for San Jorge’s riches are now usually kicked out or warned away. Boquerón residents marvel that, in the old days, local people would flock to the gold-diggers for the tiny daily wages they paid, not daring to guess how much the *gringos* took out (the *gringos* were always very secretive about what they found).⁶

Local people in Boquerón find allies wherever they can to support their coffee growing. Benito Barrera is one of the principal contacts between villagers and the outside hierarchical groups that can easily cow and belittle anyone who is “humilde” rather than “gestora.” Growers on Agua Buena tend to favor whatever help (*apoyo*) is promised as long as it allows them to maintain their profits and keep their land. Buyers in Juticalpa recognized Agua Buena’s virtually chemical-free, high altitude coffee as one of the best in Olancho. Technical assistance for coffee that reached Agua Buena by the mid-1990s was helped along by the force of an area that concentrated the attention of the State; given its status as a Monumento that demanded strict ecological protection, the assistance took the shape of environmentally-friendly measures, starting with a couple successful IHCAFE releases of a wasp that preys on a coffee pest. AHROCAFE (the national coffee producers association) and COHDEFOR have continued to provide food-for-work aid packages for growers to improve access trails to Agua Buena. Organic coffee, with the impetus of several concerned outside groups, began to make inroads by the end of the 1990s. COHDEFOR continued assigning *promotores* and *técnicos* to the Monumento, though local residents despised and mistrusted some of them. Several never even

⁶ I once examined a letter stash in Boquerón, comprised of missives (that had been left behind) from the family members of treasure hunters who had camped in the *aldea* over the years. One was written in a Cyrillic script; the other was from the US Midwest, hoping that “my daddy” would bring back enough gold to get us out of our predicaments. The Internet is a good source for treasure hunter narratives of El Boquerón: it is painted as sitting on top of hundreds of millions of dollars in bullion, with lazy surface-dwellers who have no cares that outsiders want to take it; San Jorge is a phantom city deep in the jungle, and the golden treasure is guarded by a coiled bushmaster ready to strike; the local “Indians” are sullen and treacherous, etc. Peoples’ main inspiration for all this has been Wells (1857) (see chapter 3). See also Cruickshank 1988, Lost city of gold? Yes, you’re the first today.

hiked into the gorge or up to Agua Buena: Benito Barrera called them “técnicos de oficina.”

But COHDEFOR’s presence does help in specific issues. For example, local owners of Agua Buena coffee farms have invoked the powers of the Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre to fend off outside hunting clubs who have (ironically) been drawn to the area for its now-famous faunal concentration.

Perhaps through not so much becoming-local but rather remaining-local, to whom other than campesinos does the Monumento Natural El Boquerón “make sense” as a protected area? Are the polygon and its “heat of the moment” destined eventually to the same fate as Punuare’s *ejidos*, or does Boquerón’s example have virally infectious qualities for other spaces threatened by hegemony and homogenization? Does the “added layer” of protected area contribute but superficial striation to local space, and even suffocate difference, or is its *enredo* permanent and helpful to at least some human spatial identities as well as to biodiversity protection?

Just because the Idea of a Monumento Natural in El Boquerón took possession of a village, outsiders were misled into thinking that possession would be followed by coordinated local action. But El Boquerón did not automatically become the steward of “its” area; villagers did not suddenly start obeying environmental laws that in many cases didn’t make sense. They continued to hunt--wanting outsiders to stay away, but seeing little problem in their own killing of “renewable” animals like *guatuzas* and *tepescuintles* that were abundant. They never experienced the economic gains from ecotourism that outsiders had promised at almost every step of the Monumento’s history. Conservationists blamed it all on the campesinos’ dependence, boredom, cynicism, laziness, anarchism, and so forth. Villagers, having been told this all their lives, blamed themselves as well, but also cited their own precarious situation, especially after Mitch, and the ever-present danger of retaliation from *terratenientes*. Nor do most evince much interest in the dreams of conservationists: guided nature trails, glossy

pamphlets, an untouchable nuclear zone of uniform thick forest, a buffer zone where no trees can be cut and no animals hunted.

Conservationists who hope for too much and thus ascribe excessive power of decision and action to the beleaguered residents of El Boquerón overlook the “simplest” result: A space has been hollowed out that gives them power over shrinking *patrimonio*. As an *área protegida* functioning to benefit marginalized Olanchanos, the Monumento Natural El Boquerón is considered a modest success among some local conservationists in Olancho, though the gains over what was there before might be almost imperceptible on the level of “big chunks” international conservation. At the local scale, the concession of a few *manzanas* of cattle space to a protected area is a near-miraculous event, something quite difficult to achieve because of all it implies to the rhizomes of *ganaderos* and *campesinos*: a slight change, if not a local revolution by any means, in the interests of resisting hegemony and homogenization of local space. In this light, the rapid natural reforestation of the approach to the Río de Olancho gorge is regarded as highly significant. The fact that there has been only minimal reduction of forest cover in the area during the 1990s is important, though outsiders still may see mostly trashed and degraded space. In effect, Benito Barrera tries to point out to skeptical visitors that histories are hard to perceive through the synoptic gaze and the brief visit. You have to get up close and walk on the ground, year after year, squinting squinting witness to the complex junctures of spatial identities that determine a tree’s being spared or removed, a certain pasture converted from sun to shade or shade to sun, a few more squirrels in the trees each year, monkeys coming closer to the *aldea* of El Boquerón than they have in several decades. These are the micro differences glaringly evident in local space.

Thanks to the complexity of spaces and spatial identities, no one can step into the Monumento’s *enredo* and declare absolute protection. Perhaps due to the lack of systematic force or wholesale imposition of conservation space, an almost arbitrary area of land “set aside” in 1992 is widely respected as “protected” local space, and not equated with hands-off

terratiente space/*gringo* space. Occasionally, government conservationists will comment that the Monumento is not real, that it has no virgin nucleus and thus cannot be a viable protected area. Strictly speaking, the Monumento could be struck from the list of Honduras' proposed protected areas, its boundaries dissolved. But the discourse of Protection is already too strong. It is shored up by words, histories, practices, wage positions, and a convergence of needs half-in, half-out of conservation time/space.

What does becoming-local, becoming-Olancho, mean for local space? Bounding space as a protected area, as understood by some in Olancho, attempts to preserve complexity--seeking, for example, to preserve hunting and gathering rhizomes, not only sedentary productive schemes. Indeed, in the last years of the 1990s the category "*área protegida*" began to infect local space in Olancho (as *ejido* had at different points throughout Post-Conquest history). Though not a *de jure* category in State space, it seems to mean a municipally-owned and/or NGO-managed parcel kept safe from the practices of any one particular space, whether logging, cattle, coffee, industry, or swidden agriculture. What is at stake for many Olanchanos appears to be the landscape idylls of *valle*, *serranía*, and *montaña*: the dominant discourse has now established Honduras as a *desierto*, and Olanchanos who still dream are afraid this applies to their *pródiga tierra* as well. One can now visit non-State-sanctioned "*áreas protegidas*" which are "little more" than small patches of *serranía* near towns or villages, slightly wilder and larger than the urban "*parques ecológicos*." (Both these categories have flourished partly out of the inclusion of protected areas in school curricula--school children often put up the signs, plant the trees, and other tasks of this nature.) Few people in the street would now think of *ambientalismo* and *conservación de áreas protegidas* as the exclusive domain of outsiders, creating unwanted parks by and for *gringos*.

I speculate that the main appeal of protected areas for local space in Olancho is their moderate respect for local epistemologies, their enshrining of the past as somehow better than the present, and that by "protection" they mean not only coffee, water, or even the material

benefits of gathering and hunting per se, but also all the associated “intangibles” of enchantment as well. El Boquerón village, the gorge, Agua Buena: when “protected,” they do not lose their identity of “misterioso” and “hay algo aquí que no se puede definir” (there is something indefinable here). The protected area, in this case, is a container for all the unruly rhizomes that infiltrate it and surface in infinite combinations. The misconceptions that outsider conservationists may labor under, and even do great harm in wielding--virginity, degradation, Save the Rain forest, “it’s not natural”--I think are marginalized in protected areas like Boquerón when put in the light of the harboring of complexity in a simple container. But this is not to say that an exclusive space results, the kind to which I objected at several points earlier in this dissertation. The space hollowed out is the breathing room, the allowing of becomings by “stacking the deck.” This is in many ways similar to the tactics used by marginalized spatial identities of *cofradías* and *ejidos* in Olancho since the earliest colonial period.

But this becoming-local of Conservation--local people deciding they know what it is and how to do it best--in most areas of Olancho has been quite marginal to the much “bigger” issues of Development. Indeed, Conservation is in many ways a subset of Development--the Development machine manipulates it like it manipulates Church and State into taking the words out of Development’s mouth. Development speaks and acts through Conservation. What is back behind a protected area is Development: development dollars, development expertise, buffer zone equations for sustainable living. So even if conservation space can come to harbor complexity, what happens in the development space with which it is inextricably entangled? What happens when the outside comes in as a univocal development blanket, seeking not to harbor complexity but rather to make things simpler, easier, more logical, and above all less traditional (except where the traditions are “right”)?

8.3 *El Desarrollo Comes to La Avispa*

Almost everyone in Olancho would like *el desarrollo*, however they define it, to improve their spaces. Many see *la conservación* (a more recent catch phrase), on the other hand, as appropriate and important to specific areas, but not “what will save us.” Conservation, except in certain hard-to-reach *bosques virgenes*, can easily be painted as a luxury Honduras can’t afford (“setting aside” desperately needed land), but Development is a requirement everywhere. *El desarrollo*, to many, entails the type of large-scale transformation of the landscape that has happened in the Valle de Olancho. There, since World War II, people have witnessed an increasingly “rational” use of resources (e.g. decreased burning), improved access to markets, irrigation projects, more credit, paved roads, electricity, water systems, health clinics. People cast themselves in the light of development because it has indeed brought many improvements in local quality of life. This is a crucial frame for what follows: I don’t take issue with locally perceived benefits per se; furthermore, I don’t intend to be taken as preaching against modern “basic needs” such as vaccination, literacy, higher-yielding or more resistant cropping, electricity, and greater infant survival rate; how they are achieved, nevertheless, is a thornier problem. The issue for a geography of complex spaces is not that outside benefits are needed, but rather the way that the outsides are absorbed: the way that Development suffocates, not the simplicity of local space, but rather its complexity. At issue in the final sketch below is the power of Development--does it eventually disappear into the fabric of local space, and if so, does it irreparably overcode the local so that even thinking enchantment and nomadism is impossible, or do the haecceities of complexity inevitably “screw things up” even in the absence of Hurricanes? As a final note, I then tie back Development to the State for chapter 9: what is the State’s role, if any, in the Age of Development/Conservation; especially if, as I hope, development/conservation become-local?



Fig. 8.4. A “desierto” in La Avispa: buffer zone of Monumento Natural El Boquerón. Conservation-with-development space: a “degraded” and “trashed” mountain needing protection, recuperation, and sustainable (static) agriculture. In local space: zone of overlap of Ejidos de Punuare, usufruct space of La Avispa, cattle space from Valle de Olancho (coming down over the mountain), and cattle space from San Francisco de la Paz (advancing from behind photographer).

Before La Avispa became the local administrative site of an important Development Project it was just another trashed rural landscape, marginal to the destinies of Olancho and Honduras, violent, anarchistic, and undesirable to visit. Conservation space wouldn’t have it as it was: not enough forest, and no ecotourism possibilities. In the early 1990s, La Avispa, except for its few residents with coffee farms in Agua Buena, saw little benefit from the Monumento Natural El Boquerón . Most found instead that they were labeled its destroyers, even by kin in Boquerón. They saw their crops on the north slope of Agua Buena threatened by transformation into a “zona de amortiguamiento,” declared pseudo-legally as “de vocación forestal” or as good only for coffee. On the north side, the pastures, *repolleras* (cabbage fields), and *frijolares* were still owned in large part by campesinos—it remained more campesino space than *terratiente* space, because the most powerful outsiders who were in the Río de Olancho watershed had not moved up this far yet (lack of a road up the north side helped keep them out). Even so, conservationists viewed cattle space and campesino space uniformly, seeing only the downed trees, the burning, the “denudation” and “degradation” of “migratory agriculture,” but not the

causes. La Avispa, to anyone who believed in the marriage of development and conservation, was an abject landscape.

People in La Avispa were well enough connected with the ways of *Afuera* (The Outside) by the 1980s to know that they were backward, that their coffee was poor quality, that they were ignorant to have destroyed their forests, that they lived in filth and disease. They knew they were surrounded by *pura montaña* no more, but rather backed up against other *comarcas* in other settlement streams. Averted gazes in Juticalpa told them they were little better than “indios brutos.” Gone from the conscious minds of all but the most nostalgic were the kinds of landscape idylls that had made the *guacocas* unique in the Olancho of the 1930s. La Avispa saw itself as near the end, with little time or space left. Their crops were riddled with pests, they couldn’t get credit, the soil needed massive doses of fertilizers to produce. In the old days, some said, we were poor but proud: we had bush meat, we had *montaña* to cut, and the *frijolares* didn’t have any *plaga* (pests or diseases). Now, everything is *contaminada*. One could hardly imagine a more plaintive refrain than that heard in La Avispa in the early 1990s. The feeling of helplessness and the insistence on aid from the outside saturated the air. The Monumento was a ridiculous imposition—their last hope for agricultural expansion and intensification was rudely cut off in the interests of a few *gringos* who wanted to save it for the *pajaritos*. They claimed that the State had forgotten about them.

“They” does not refer to each and every resident as an individual, but to a spatial identity of self-aware marginalization “pre-adapted” to the imposition of a concentrated form of development space. “They” are the whisperers of the conversation that runs through a populace, that we need help, that they can help because “estamos fregados aquí” (we’re helplessly screwed here). The younger generations, in particular, could not tolerate being so poor, being anathematized in the towns, never seeing things get better. They were even “backward” in the minds of cousins in Guacoca, itself a “backward” *aldea* from Juticalpa’s

point of view. And then a Development Project came along that to some seemed capable of miracles.

To the Canadian Project, the margin of their agricultural world during the early 1990s' "Fase Dos" was the edge of the Valle de "Guayape." El Boquerón was an *aldea* in which they worked, but the agronomists involved in planning and extension seemed to have little awareness that the massive deforestation occurring in the headwaters of the rivers, such as the Río de Olancho, that flow into the Valle de Olancho, mattered for the flat lands. They did not gaze upward and picture themselves on the slopes: the mountains were the territory of COHDEFOR and IHCAFE, and if shaded coffee was not being grown or forest not being protected, it was not the fault of agronomists. Hillside agriculture was not yet on the Canadian Project's agenda. Agronomists (I was told more than once) did not "do" "el medio ambiente" ("The Environment").

But the Proyecto, since it became-*olanchano* to a certain extent, could not fail to perceive the mountains. The Proyecto generally came across as patriotic toward Olancho, officially respecting and sometimes dreaming the department's magnificent dreams as they informally proposed the Valle de Guayape for "breadbasket of Central America." Cautiously, the "canadienses"⁷ began to think upward, wondering about the Guayape's headwaters, the *cuenca* and its *microcuencas*. In a dramatic shift of gaze (helped by the need for justification of a "Fase Tres"), a model watershed management project in the Río de Olancho became their new focus. The Proyecto selected the Río de Olancho partly because the Monumento was already in place, and there were data available for it. The top of the watershed was part of the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, so effectively they created a development space connecting the two conservation spaces.

⁷ The majority, but not all of the Project's foreign employees were Canadian, either government aid workers or private consultants. "Canadienses," however, referred to anyone, local or outsider, *gringo* or Honduran, who worked in a well-salaried professional capacity. On the microcuenca project, see Campaña... 2000.



Fig. 8.5. *Enredo* of complex spaces. Encounter of signs for local space and for development space at the *desvío* for Guacoca. Fenced-in crosses mark the site of an intra-family murder that spurred a series of vendetta killings in the 1990s. During certain junctures, local space in the Río de Olancho and Río Guacoca watersheds was saturated by the terror of this conflict: a “local problem,” it was carefully avoided by development. Meanwhile, a Red Cross sign and an OBRA sign point the traveller to post-Mitch reconstruction efforts in development space. The former reads “CRUZ ROJA HONDUREÑA | AMERICAN RED CROSS | OPERACIÓN MITCH | PROYECTO CONST. 20 VIVIENDAS | COMUNIDAD LA AVISPA | MUNICIPIO SAN FRANCISCO DE LA PAZ | DEPARTAMENTO DE OLANCHO | DONACION A TRAVES DE CRUZ ROJA AMERICANA.” The latter reads “ORGANIZACION DEL BOQUERÓN PARA EL RESCATE DEL AMBIENTE | APOYANDO LA RECONSTRUCCION NACIONAL | MICROCUENCA Río OLANCHO O BOQUERÓN | FONDOS RECIBIDOS EN DONACION POR OFICINA DE COOPERACION CANADIENSE C C D | PROYECTOS CONSTRUCCION DE 9 VIVIENDAS | 5 VIVIENDAS DANTO | 3 VIVIENDAS RANCHERIA | 1 VIVIENDAS BOQUERÓN | CONSTRUCCION SISTEMA AGUA POTABLE | POZOS ARRIBA | POZOS ABAJO | COORDINACION INSTITUCIONAL RED DE CUENCAS.” Logos are those of OBRA, the Canadian government, AFE-COHDEFOR, Proyecto del Desarrollo del Valle de Guayape Fase III, SANAA Región Sanitaria no. 7, “Municipalidad,” “Comunidad.” Pockmarks are bullet holes.

La Avispa entered Development Time with Year Zero as 1995. Experts came and drew up plans for the years ahead, usually with community participation. The Proyecto managers admit that this first phase for the mountains was new for them, that “everyone” was learning about hillside agriculture. I think that they were encountering for the first time a local space where

land titles are non-existent and people are not as accustomed to development projects as they are in the Valle. The Project sought ways to impose a *valle* stability on a highly fluid space.

Around 1996, the Proyecto, now environmentally-sensitive, placed their center of field operations in La Avispa in what they called the “Zona Media.” Their “Zona Baja” was the Valle de Guayape, principally the *aldeas* of Boquerón and Punuare, where the Proyecto had already worked in earlier phases. These *aldeas* found themselves marginalized within this new development space as the locus of Development attention shifted to the unplumbed Zona Media (this resentment was a major stumbling block to watershed unity in the meeting sketched in chapter 2.2). The Zona Alta, bordering the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta, remained a remote upper fringe, too hard to reach, and largely without vehicle access after Hurricane Mitch.

The particulars of what types of things happen when a Project comes along were described through the meeting in chapter 2.2; a preliminary sketch of development space and a spatial identity closely associated with development, the PCV, were presented in chapter 6. In what follows, I play development space off against the complexity of local space using the Río de Olancho watershed as a springboard for my assertions of what a Development Project does--how it functions in terms of geographic complexity.

Development space, when concentrated in an area, almost immediately removes the State space “remote” stigma, through centering it in what become “surrounding” landscapes. The implementation of a Proyecto required the use of shiny new pickups emblazoned with prominent logos, passing constantly back and forth through two hours of local space between the *microcuenca* and Juticalpa (where Proyecto headquarters were located). Development as practiced in concentrated form bypassed the intermediate Valle de Guacoca, leaving people in Dos Quebradas with the impression that La Avispa was somehow special, more important than they were. The Río de Olancho, and not the Río de Guacoca, had been selected as the model sustainable watershed development project for Honduras. Guacoca felt left out and left behind.

On the other hand, the Canadian Project, by writing itself into the abject margin and removing much of the “remote” stigma, moved La Avispa “up” in the hierarchy of State space. Becoming the focus of development attention, with all the simplification and normalization that follows, brings one “closer” to the Outside, more in tune with its needs, and thus in some ways better able to compete for all hierarchically distributed ideas, goods, and services.

Now that a Proyecto was present, development could only occur after outside *expertos* made what are called *visitas* to local people and initiated projects. To achieve this blank slate effect, de facto Development in Year Zero was given a negative valence: the existing state of affairs was undesirable, and to all intents and purposes local histories did not matter. For example, at a 2000 meeting in Boquerón between extensionists and villagers, the outsiders explained (once again) to the residents of Boquerón that local people needed to care for local *recursos naturales*, that local people had to work to protect forest in the gorge. The villagers were too polite or disinterested to remind the extensionists that, before the Fase Tres had arrived, they had already been protecting the gorge, and that one of those present, a *terrateniente*-campesino, had donated forest. This was outside the perception or interest of the Proyecto, because it wasn’t something they had been responsible for: it was as if the gorge were a *tabula rasa*. Little to nothing of the past had significant importance for positive change, not only because it was bad, but because Development needs to document quantifiable results overcoded by an Authority. Local space (henceforth “Y”) has to be solved for X, and X = Development, a process of change over time. For example, Development = how many model farms have been started through the impetus of the Proyecto + how many hectares of coffee have “become sustainable” + how many hogs have been tied (see chapter 2). In these ways, local space and local time--the very matrix of human existence--were trivialized or ignored in thick studies produced preparatory to the launching of the project, defining its parameters; this set the tone for the years ahead (Year 1, Year 2, Year 3...).

The lived time of local space, while not ignored, is pushed into the background by development. “Esperando el técnico” (waiting for the technician) creates a whole new temporal dynamic in local space, for example. This is countered in development space by “esperando los vecinos,” who according to the *técnico* are always late because they don’t have a proper concept of time. Local people have to learn to budget their time wisely. When the *técnico* is late, it is because s/he was busy elsewhere, and lacks time.

On the ground, wherever anything called “development” was practiced in the *microcuenca* was where development space became localized. Local people within the bounds of the Proyecto’s domain did not believe they breathed the air of development space if they did not receive repeat *visitas* from *promotores* or *técnicos*, if things were not being done, if meetings were not being held. Since most development personnel, local people as well as outsiders, were reluctant to do extended trips *para el desarrollo* on foot or horseback (unless reimbursement was forthcoming), development space in the *microcuenca* became structured with its own interior margins and centers closing following the road network: a mini-State-within-a-state space, a chunk of Honduras all but severed from local connections and put on a higher plane, perhaps even on a dissecting table.

This striation-from-within, which in some ways (as sketched in chapter 6; see Deleuze and Guattari 1987) happens in all spaces, created a sizeable neglected margin in the Quebrada de La Avispa, which is a stream almost the size of the Río de Olancho itself. Along the Quebrada, a wooded corridor connects Cerro Agua Buena to the Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta in the Zona Alta. In its middle and upper reaches, Development activities were not carried out there until toward the end of the Project, and Benito Barrera and I were curious as to why. When we visited the area, we found its residents saying things like “No’ tienen oluidado’; aque’ Proyecto, que le dihen, no hahe nada aquí. El Ingeniero lleo ’na veh y no’ prometió un *montooon* de

coha', ma' nunca volvió. Herá que no le pagan tanto pa' trepar hahta 'ca?'"⁸ Part of the reason seemed to be that this fringe of the watershed is inhabited and used by people from the villages of Santa María del Real, who gain access through a road network distinct from that which reaches La Avispa. The road terminus at La Avispa and the road terminus of Cofradía at Quebrada Arriba in the Quebrada de La Avispa are but three linear kilometers from each other, but are separate by four hours of rugged hiking.

Development, unlike conservation, seeks to disappear into the landscape by becoming identical to it ($X=Y$): this happens through what developmentalists call the "multiplier effect" (*efecto multiplicadora*) which is believed to spread by contamination of ideas and be reinforced by any and all proof positive that Development "works" (including serendipitous successes, like the water project of El Gorrión mentioned in chapter 2, which the Project apparently wanted to take credit for in the name of the *Red*).

Local people do not expect their own "*irracional*" (illogical) ground to disappear underneath them, but do expect the fruits of development to droop within reach. Unfortunately, in the marrow of a Development Project is a distrust for any ground that smells as old and musty as the fecal matter that (in the absence of *letrinas*) saturates local space. Local people, those undergoing development, find themselves grasping the fruit but dangling in space. They find that in the territorial jurisdiction of a Proyecto, everything they think, say, and do can be scrutinized for its correctness, for its "level of development." Just as conservation space from above measures all tropical landscapes for their degree of deforestation and worthiness, development space accepts only with difficulty the already-achieved and ongoing cultural "development" in which people themselves are active (the Babilonia *enredo* showed this plainly as well). If local people are not already embarrassed by all their old-fashioned customs and

⁸ "They've forgotten us; that so-called Project doesn't do anything here. That Agronomist came once after Mitch, and promised us loads of stuff, but never came back. They probably don't pay him enough to climb all the way up here."

beliefs, they can learn to be ashamed quite rapidly. That hill enchanted?--get real! *Lechuzas* don't cause sickness; there is no such thing as the evil eye (*mal de ojo*); dreaming of a muddy river is dreaming of a muddy river--nothing more. Thinking that the moon has some effect on your planting is an excuse born from laziness. And then there are the material constructions: *bajareque* (wattle and daub) houses, for example, are one of the first casualties of development space. *Patrimonio*, other than coffee and *granos básicos*, is quick to follow. In all the time the Proyecto had, minimal or no attempt was made to identify and build on what local people thought of as *patrimonio*, or had once thought of as such: tanning, vanilla harvesting, medicinal plants, and tobacco, for example.

Development happens at all scales and is present potentially at every site. This is how development can be spoken of as "saturating" local space in a shotgun wedding with the global. Development, to globalize local space, has to overcode and homogenize diverse spatial identities, bringing them into a context of shared abjection. Development is a measure of cleanliness, belly fullness, bank accounts, landscape appreciation. Development can be detected and measured at the scale of the kitchen table, by the state of the pig wallow, by the tree composition in the front yard, by attendance and participation at every meeting, the learning abilities of each and every child. A development practitioner can and must make snap judgments based on a mere glance at poverty, just as a conservationist reads "overgrazing" from a cattle-terraced hillside after the most superficial of glances.

In sustainable Development's eye, a landscape looks developed when it is filled with industrious people, perhaps poor but at least well nourished, working cooperatively. Hillsides are terraced or have some type of soil conservation measures in place, while burning is ideally not practiced at all. Roads may not be paved, but are in a good state—when someone sees a pothole, they go to fill it without looking for recompense or waiting for the State to take charge. People learn to volunteer for the common good, taking charge of situations, banding together to transport their own goods to market and eliminating the *coyotes* (intermediaries). Coffee

maintains high yields, thanks to managed shade, local processing, elimination of *coyotes*, and perhaps organic certification. Maize and beans tell the same story. The tobacco *patrimonio* is not rescued, however, because tobacco is not a highly favored crop in the politically-sensitive international development arena. Nor is *tenería* a viable practice, because cattle are not appropriate for La Avispa. The Proyecto talks little of cattle. It is difficult for the agronomist spatial identity, it seems, to distinguish cattle within campesino space from the nomadic hoarde of cattle space.

Those who work and live in development space judge with all their senses at every moment, to the cores of their beings. They have to believe that a future, better space can be fashioned; or they are cynical. Many developmentalists become cynical at even the first hint of development's "failure," while being light-years from guessing the complexity of the reasons. For example, a common line among PCVs: "I scheduled a meeting and no one showed up. These people aren't interested in improving their lives." But even the cynical ones, unless they are out purely for personal gain and are highly corrupt, see better landscapes in their minds' eyes. In the landscape idyll of univocal, simplified development space, soils recover and even improve through careful stewardship. The *vegas* are filled with fruit trees, with bird song, with root crops. Every house has a vegetable garden: campesinos should eat greens, not only beans and tortillas. Animals no longer roam but are tied up. Literacy rates skyrocket. And on it goes (see chapter one): as the visions of development become more seductive, the tragedies of inadequacy are felt even more poignantly, seeping into every pore of the local world.

Their landscape idyll, achievable through hard work and education (instead of through Honduras-scale issues like debt relief, credit reform, measures to combat corruption, better terms of trade, and so forth) is an interesting vision in that it coincides with many peoples' dreams (in some spatial identities, anyway). But it is also an ever-present reminder to local people of inadequacy, and entails the systematic marginalization of those who scoff and "won't cooperate." The great evil that plagues development space--unspoken in meetings and reports

but frequently voiced in private--is laziness. Olanchanos are lazy and anarchistic, hence they will continue to be exploited, and will continue to whine about being oppressed. Their laziness prohibits them from action. A mental gaze is fixed on those wonderful vegetable gardens in highland Guatemala. If only Honduran Ladinos weren't so lazy and chaotic, so backward!: what cannot be spoken in public.

Certain people, *los lideres*, step forward to take risks, to get involved in credit programs, to try to get away from chemical dependency, to extricate themselves enough from their family networks and gender positions to accept "unconditional" help from strangers. There are not many in the La Avispa area, but those who are willing to become involved in development are accepted with open arms, delegated some authority, sent to training workshops, made *promotores* to achieve the *efecto multiplicadora*. Because, as Project hirees inside and out are fond of repeating, El Proyecto Se Va Pronto. The Project is Leaving Soon—will it have left Development? Will it change the landscape to fit the equations? Will Y be transformed into X, or (as the threat implies, if you don't get your act in gear) will X be dragged down into the morass of Y?

But the equations of local space cannot be solved any more than a hurricane can be deflected from its trajectory. Development, in its concentrated form, achieves some things but does not rewrite what never "made sense" in the first place. (In my mind, the unification of a watershed made sense, and is a worthy Idea to be tossed out into local space; perhaps it will work its way into the fabric; perhaps not.) Much of the rest of what Development in such situations does seems not only ahistorical and simplistic but suspiciously devoid of structural concerns. Though this dissertation does not try to systematically or exhaustively contextualize Olancho in terms of wider scales of reference, it is obvious to almost every person one meets in Olancho that things are seriously wrong with the State's priorities, with the international debt load, with corruption, and with many other structural concerns. Development projects are held as suspect in local space not because they are allied with the State per se, but because they

increasingly *are* the State. And they do their job admirably well: though many people often find it hard to accept blame for their own actions (blaming the *gringos*, the politicians, the debt, the corrupt judicial system, and so forth), as many or more point to their own laziness, lack of cooperation. Poverty, after all is said and done, is our fault, they have been condition to believe. We must work harder, cooperate with each other, build our landscapes better.

This is a quandary, then: Development sins by omitting the real structures from the Outside acting on the local, while at the same time shoring up the local by exaggerating the importance of abject margins. This can also be stated as Development seeking to be The Rhizome, The Network, The Red de Cuencas: not a hierarchy at all, but rather a *faux*-local space without irrupting complexity, but rather held together in stasis by the glue of scientific mutual aid. At the same, The Network only functions by pretending that El Estado is a servant to be exploited at will by local people (we are here for you). In this version, Development might be on the way to complexity (*en vías de...*), but in a quite limited sense. Still, in chapter nine the possibility bears examination. A question for the last chapter is: What is to be done when Development sides with local space? What is the role of a State (in fragments), given that it in theory supports the unruly strength of local space in the form of *municipios*? W(h)ither the State in a geography of complex spaces?

Chapter Nine

W(h)ither State Space: The Orchestra without a Conductor?

Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987:500)

Development space in chapter eight had no conclusion: I left it on the page, as I did in the field, saturating local space, but on the verge of leaving. Perhaps it left; perhaps a Fase 4 came about; probably, more development groups became intrigued with La Avispa and began their own overcoding. Development turns local space inside out--not just through "creating dependence," but literally through opposing Envelopment, which is local space's tendency (thanks to complexity) to be mysterious and inexplicable--therefore irrational and illogical (it has its own haecceities, thank you very much). Local space under development is (theoretically) unfolded endlessly until every emerging point in space and time is overcoded by regimes of signs from elsewhere. This happens far faster than "normal" in areas like La Avispa: development solutions come from all around the world, ripped from their local anchors, brought to La Avispa to be floated. Suddenly any and all (pre-Development) local anchors have rusted or rotted--they don't measure up. The chiasm of local and global--a perfectly "natural" phenomenon--is topologically turned inside/out, so that instead of ∞ we have \odot . The uncontrollable and infinite flow between local and global is replaced by the global Development machine's rhizomatic swallowing of local "sections" of the world, each copyrighted with the Authors' spatial regimes, which come increasingly to resemble a best-selling novel format: read one Third World Country, read them all. "I can't keep straight the names of all those little countries down there...."

What keeps local space from being replaced by the development rhizome acting in Their best interests? Anchors: keeping the insides inside; and complexity: keeping the insides/outside in motion. Anchors, what are known collectively as *patrimonio*

(cultural/natural heritage), are what rhizomatic hierarchies--*comarca-aldeas*, *municipios*, Olancho---use to negotiate between nomadic “smoothing” tendencies (the irruption of complexity at any and all points) and striation (putting things in order, from the insides and/or the outsides). Why do we drink *coyol*? Because it is part of our *patrimonio*. You want to be Olanchino, too? Try drinking some. You want to know what it’s like to be a Gualaqueno? Try some *teocinte* tamales. Help us save our *patrimonio*--*teocinte*, Chorros, Planes. Always cultural/natural, always ever-present, never “something from the past.” Never pure rhizome; never pure hierarchy--local striations, local smoothings. Chapters three, four, and five pointed to some *patrimonio* anchors that continue to have abiding presence in local space--in the complexity of spatial identities at odds and often at war with each other in Olancho, they serve as glue for local space, keeping it “whole” in divide-and-conquer mentalities of homogenizing forces.

Outside “enlightened” ideas are often simple striations of complex unruly local space. Development, for example, replaces local language with outside languages, but its enrichment of local vocabularies pales in comparison to its erasure of local semantic fields. Polyvalence and fluidity of meanings in local space--e.g. the continuous variation of bellbird nomenclature (chap. 5)--are replaced by modular scientific names with little to no local significance. The local can hardly be seen as more than a case study if it is explained predominantly in terms of disjunct elsewhere, so in this dissertation, I have tried to map the local in terms of the local, both in its (always-spatial) identities (*ser*) and its margins of becoming (*hacerse*; *llevarse*; *confianza*). At best, complexity mapped from the outside can find emerging order in flows: in irrupting populations of birds, in the weather, in the eddies of human movement--but what is discovered about local space--about Olancho as Olancho or Gualaco as Gualaco, for example--are never more than approximations, limits, shelters from hurricanes: ports of call in forces traversing the planet. What I have tried to do in this dissertation is map complexity irrupting through haecceities in local space, using ethnography and cultural geography, which are fields

that specialize in these myriad *enredos* of the “provincial” on its own terms. Local space, in its entangled “entirety” largely incomprehensible from any one viewpoint, is a “virtual” stage, a Deleuzian Plane of Consistency for striated/smooth, human/natural spaces. No one framework or structure, no one machine, is ever enough to grasp its meanings, because the meanings are created, buoyed, and claimed by *enredos* of the machines that code them. What *can* be mapped are the becomings-local of functioning machines that, though devoid of any “purpose,” establish their territories with often little regard one for the other. Each makes sense, makes food, makes weather, makes climate, makes forests, makes rivers, makes people, within in its own realm--a challenge for the geographer is not only recognizing the resulting interwoven complex spaces, but trying to discover the *enredos* of their rhizomes and hierarchies, their “blocks of becoming” that keep spaces in movement. These *enredos*, by their slipperiness, are not a priori the clashing nonsensical counterproductive encounters anathematized by Order and Progress, but may be manifestations of alliances whereby identities stay separate (at least for now) but also become-other. The focusing power of the mayor of Gualaco was a good case for spatial alliances--not only did he gather forces from above and from below in the State hierarchy, but he was a crucial node in lateral rhizomes. Just like Deleuze and Guattari at the beginning of chapter one, he was always already multiple--*alcalde, ganadero, profesor, ambientalista*, Gualaqueño, Olanchano, Hondureño, *padre, hombre de familia*.... Even the face-to-face relationship, and *confianza* with a friend, are always already multiple. Complex spaces, then, are manifest in everything we say and do; it is not a question of seeking a smooth space, but rather recognizing my/our/their/your/his/her/its becoming/other, becoming-multiple.

On Development, then: it can and does become-local over time, but it should nevertheless be questioned and contested at all points by *patrimonio*, and its temporary holdings--sway, if I predict correctly, will always in all places be eroded by irrupting complexity. It will be deterritorialized by spatial identities while simultaneously becoming them.

As for conservation, it will be widely accepted in local space to the degree that it has connectivity with the local, and to the degree that conservation space can be plugged into and reclaimed through spatial alliances. Conservation space is always “preowned” by local spaces, and this is not trivial for protection of “biocomplexity,” the erosion of which is a real problem that looms across the planet. Biodiversity, both overall and by category, is as favored in some spaces/some moments/some places as it is eroded in others. As I hope chapter 4 showed, biodiversity needs to be seen as a production of all spaces, and its rhizomes with people need to be examined closely. As throughout this dissertation, I have not advocated solutions other than “vague” spatial alliances, for two reasons. First, problems in Olancho are solved in Olancho, and the vagaries of their *enredos* make them highly unpredictable. I have gone as far as bringing forth *teocintes* (for example) in the hopes that it can be mapped into other machines. To me, their fates rely principally on alliances between the all-powerful *ganaderos*, the *municipio*, and the *teocinteros*. How these could be achieved is as mysterious to me as I write these words, as the possibility of protecting Gualaco’s *montaña cruda* was before 1998.

What remains for me is often distasteful--the State itself, which I hope to have shown is “unnatural” in its local manifestation, neither wanted nor needed in Olancho at many junctures. What the State overcoded beginning in 1502 was not pure smooth space by any means, but rather a local space of smoothing and striating together, in continuous variation by *comarca*. The smooth space, in Deleuzian terms, that the State sustained was the Taguzgalpa, and during history Olancho was always becoming-State and becoming-Taguzgalpa. To me (according to my spatial identities), the length of time that the State has overcoded Olancho has little bearing on its current necessity of being there. After all, conservationists and developmentalists decry the burning of swidden agriculture, which has been practiced for many millennia in Latin America. In trying to write Olancho, I have written against the State because, in many ways, Olancho preserves its “society against the state” (Clastres 1987) qualities, and thus its *patrimonio*, even if under siege as a remote margin of State space. Out of all the details of

history, various watersheds have occurred, each of which punctuate the culmination of anti-State (with anti-*terraténiente*) tendencies by the reinscription of the State's will on the landscape. Thus, the first was Salcedo's 1527 holocaust, signaling that the State may have appeared fragmented, but it was there to stay. Another was the 1700 massacre at El Carbonal, Silca, where hundreds of Pech died after trying to escape back to smooth space. Yet another was the 1865 Ahorcancina, the revenge of a dictator against a fight for local rule. The last that I discussed in detail was the Horcones/Santa Clara massacre of 1975. In each of these cases, the dates and events are far more important in Olancho--as signal of what could have been, and of what the State is capable--than "progressive" events that historians mark. Independence (1821), the Liberal Reforms (1870s), the End of the Cold War (c. 1989): these mislead us by their textbook luminescence.

The State's "revenge" bodes ill for local space in contemporary Olancho, and at time of writing not only the Babilonia *enredo* "*está caliente*," but there are other serious-but-so-far-peaceful conflicts with the State as well. What seems to be desired locally is the ascendance of the *municipio*, and I support this wholeheartedly. Olancho is, more than anything, a land of towns--indeed, Honduras is a space of autonomous *municipios* in continuous cultural/natural variation. The State should be fragmented and in fragments, if it does not wither altogether--since development and conservation organizations (including many churches) are actually doing a lion's share of the State's work, and private corporations are increasingly doing the rest. This is what appeared to be happening in the 1990s--the country was allowed to "fall apart" (seek its own complexity) after the Cold War, and is attempting to fall back into its *comarcas*. What is up in the air is whether in the Information Age, the Internet Age, the Global Capitalism Age, local space can indeed ascend, or whether it will continue to be punctuated by State oppression at its "chaotic" margins.

Is State space necessary? It can be compared to an orchestra conductor for a Beethoven symphony, sheltered inside a concert hall. Each and every conductor, like each and every State,

has to perform the “model” created by Beethoven, who himself is transcendent and unquestionable, like a Prime Mover (despite many diverse types of music). What the audience (of “civilized democracies,” with geographers in a few good seats, but mostly on the second balcony) expects to see is a flawless performance--Beethoven and yet more Beethoven, never-ending, always repeatable in other concert halls. The Beethoven machine is amazingly ordered, given the stormy personality of its signifier. The conductor and the players put aside their personal differences, the audience hushes, and the players perform on the stage of local space, an event suspended in perfection, an incredible focusing and channeling of energies through the conductor, as much a séance as a symphony.

In structuralist accounts, there is no need for the conductor to enact the performance. Everybody has the same music in their heads--why should somebody be up there waving their hands? If done by electronics, no conductor is necessary. But take away the conductor in the concert hall--he fainted--and as long as Beethoven is being sought after, poststructuralist disorder will appear to result. The spell will be broken--the audience will become loud, will leave. The players, lacking their shepherd, will be unable to come together to perform such a complex work; instead, if given drinks and tips, they might stick around and perform amongst themselves, in duos and trios, making up ditties, improvising. From close up, inside the local space of the stage (now apparently overflowing the territory of what had been the audience), many complex themes can be heard, but no central music. From afar--from the global perspective--what is audible is noise, cacophony. Where before performers had been turned toward the center, each in their groups (strings, winds, percussion, brass), now they have banded together by other identities and exclusions, and instead of a single turning-inward we have myriad turnings-inward, myriad envelopments, each a separate space also linked by rhizomes like “salaried performer” and “culture.” In this society without a state, since bounded by a soundproof container, an approaching tornado is inaudible. Had everyone been in their seats, orderly, with the ushers at the emergency exits, people might have gotten out on time.

Had the concert been outside in the first place, and had people been attuned to the weather, some warning would have been had, but as it is, disaster results.

The actions of Hurricane Mitch had as much to do with the complexity of human spaces, the overcoding of one by the other, the pushing of some onto margins, as they did “unpredictability.” The State in fragments was terrified of what had happened in its post-Cold War withdrawal, and one of the results was inviting more and more development and conservation projects to save the day. Development projects, in the context of a tornado-damaged concert hall, are akin to trying to play Beethoven again, still without the physical conductor (his image guides them). The developmentalists regroup the players, separate the audience out, ask for silence (ah, but the conductor was so authoritative in that role—he only had to wave his arms), and struggle to bring forth Beethoven again. Sustainable development: gently coaxing the players to do their best—they don’t need the conductor, but they do need to play a symphony (no more of that free-form jazz they preferred to play!). “Old-style” Development akin to that advocated by the Babilonia Company: coercion if coaxing won’t work—play Beethoven, goddamit! Turn off that God-awful noise (“But Mom, that’s not noise; here, read the lyrics—it’s about social conscience and stuff.” “It’s the Devil’s music, son, now turn it off!”)

The preceding serves to show that a conductor and an orchestra are indeed necessary if one wants to play Beethoven, but the orchestra itself is not beholden to the conductor, and in his absence can get along fine. Beethoven is contextual—if the players want to do jazz riffs, don’t stop them, don’t kick them out of the hall, and most of all don’t call the cops for a “disturbance of the peace.”

Stated another way: a chorus of birds is not a “symphony of Nature.” I remain fascinated by and sympathetic with the *cenxontle* of four hundred tongues, becoming the multitude, whole through fragments of others’ territories. $X \neq Y$. $Y = \infty$.

Bibliography

I. Abbreviations

AEC	Archivo Eclesiástico de Comayagua
ACCG	Archivo de la Casa Cural de Gualaco, Olancho
ADJ	Archivo de la Diócesis de Juticalpa, Olancho
AGCA	Archivo General de Centroamérica (Ciudad de Guatemala)
AGI	Archivo General de Indias (Seville)
AGNM	Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico
AHJ	Archivo Histórico de Juticalpa, Olancho
ANH	Archivo Nacional de Honduras (Tegucigalpa)
AC	Archivo Colonial
ANT	Archivo Nacional de Tierras
IS	Impresos Siglo 19
AOO	Archivo del Obispado de Olancho (Juticalpa)
BAGG	Boletín del Archivo General de Centroamérica
CDI	Colección de Documentos Inéditos, relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organizacion de las antiguas posesiones españolas de América y Oceanía, sacados de los Archivos del Reino, y muy especialmente del de Indias. 1800s. Madrid: various printing presses.
CDIU	Colección de Documentos Inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las Antiguas posesiones españolas de ultramar. Segunda Serie publicada por la Real Academia de la Historia. 1800s. Madrid.
PCH-NR	Peace Corps-Honduras, Natural Resources sector archives. Tegucigalpa.
RABNH	Revista del Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Honduras
SMC	Serie Miscelánea de CONSEFORH. COHDEFOR-ODA-ESNACIFOR. Siguatepeque, Honduras.

II. Maps published by the Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN, Comayagüela, D.C., Francisco Morazán, Honduras)

A. Miscellaneous

Brus Laguna. 1987. ND 16-4 (Américas 1:250,000).
Departamento de Colón. 1989. 1:200,000.
Departamento de El Paraíso. 1989. 1:230,000.
Departamento de Francisco Morazán. 1995. 1:200,000.
Departamento de Gracias a Dios. 1990. 1:300,000.
Departamento de Olancho. 1990. 1:350,000.
Departamento de Yoro. 1989. 1:230,000.
Honduras, Mapa Turístico. 1995. 1:1,000,000.
Juticalpa, Honduras. 1989. ND 16-7 (Américas 1:250,000).
Mapa Geológico de Honduras. 1991, second ed. 1:500,000. Compiled by Michael Kozuch.
Mapa Geotectónico de la República de Honduras. 1997, first ed. 1:1,000,000. Compiled by Reinery Elvir Aceituno.
Mapa Oficial, República de Honduras. 1997, second ed. 1:500,000.

B. Series of Honduran topographic sheets (1:50,000) (year of printing within parentheses)

Azacualpa-Río Guayambre. 1967 (1995). E752 2959 II.
Bonito Oriental. 1986, second ed. E752 3063.
Cabeceras del Río Pao. 1985, first ed. E752 3161 I.
Campamento. 1989 (1995). E752 2859 I.

Catacamas. 1986, Ed. 1-DMA. E752 3060 IV.
Confl. Ríos Aguán-Mame. 1989, second ed. E752 2962-III.
Confl. Ríos Tayaco-Sico, Grande, Tinto o Negro. 1978, first ed. E752 3062 III.
Confluencias Ríos Wampú, Aner y Pao. 1975 (1986). E752 3161 II
Corocito. 1986, second ed. E752 3063 III.
Dulce Nombre de Culmí. 1975 (1984). E752 3061 II.
El Carbón. 1978, first ed. E752 3062 II.
El Maguelar. 1979 (1985). E752 2958 I.
El Portal del Infierno. 1976, first ed. E752 3059 III.
Esquipulas del Norte. 1970 (1987). E752 2861 I.
Guaimaca. 1990, second ed. E752 2859 IV.
Gualaco. 1975 (1985). E752 2961 II.
Guata. 1977 (1996). E752 2961 III.
Jocón. 1988. Ed. 2-DMA. E752 2861 IV.
Juticalpa. 1976, first ed. E752 2960 II.
La Bacadía. 1988, Ed. 2-DMA. E752 3060 II.
La Colonia. 1978. E752 3161 IV.
La Unión. 1988. Ed. 2-DMA. E752 2861 II.
Los Hornos. 1990. E752 2959 III.
Mangulile. 1971 (1986). E752 2861 III.
Manto. (1985). E752 2960 IV.
Montaña de Almendares. 1972 (1988). E752 2859 II.
Montaña de Botaderos. 1973, first ed. E752 2962 II.
Montaña de la Flor. 1971 (1983; 1996). E752 2860 IV.
Montaña del Incendio. 1977 (1987). E752 3059 IV.
Olancho. 1982, second ed. E752 2862 II.
Orica-Guayape. 1989, second ed. E752 2860 III.
Parumble. 1978(1992). E752 2960 II.
Pueblo Viejo. 1976 (1985). E752 2961 IV.
Río Aguán. 1978. E752 2761 I.
Río Sico Tinto o Negro. 1980. E751 3163 III.
Río Tocoa. 1977, first ed. E752 3062 IV.
Río Tonjagua. 1990, second ed. E752 3061 I.
Sabá-Tocoa. 1991. E752 2962 I.
Salamá. 1989, second ed. E752 2860 II.
San Antonio. 1977, first ed. E752 2961 I.
San Esteban. 1976 (1984). E752 3061 IV.
San Francisco de la Paz. 1985 (1998). E752 2960 I.
San José de Río Tinto. 1975 (1986). E752 3060 I.
Santa María del Real. 1975 (1993). E752 3060 III.
Sierra La Esperanza. 1987, first ed. E752 3062 I.
Sonaguera. 1989, second ed. E752 2962 IV.
Trujillo. 1987, second ed. E752 3063 IV.
Valle de Agalta-La Venta. 1975 (1984). E752 3061 III.
Valle de Lepaguare. 1990. Ed. 2-DMA. E752 2959 IV.
Yocón. 1989, second ed. E752 2860 I.
C. Series of Honduran geological maps (1:50,000 overlays of topo sheets)
Guaimaca. 1987. 2859 IV G. Compiled by Athena Andrews Rodbell.
Orica-Guayape. 1996. 2860 III G. Compiled by José María Gutierrez Sosa.
Salamá. 1998. I-IGN 2860 II. Compiled by Japan Mine and Metal Agency, JICA.

San Francisco de Becerra. 1989. 2959 I G. Compiled by Michael Kozuch.
Santa María del Real. 1993. 3060 III G. Compiled by Mark Gordon.

III. Olancho land titles consulted in the Archivo Nacional de Tierras (ANH) (cited as "ANTO" in text)¹

- 1 Achuluapa 1713. (Zapota *ejidos*.)
- 2 Agua Amarilla 1883. (In the Montaña del Cacao.)
- 7 Agua Fria 1817. Diligencias de medidas del sitio de la Agua Fria
Valle de Agalta Partido de Olancho Año de 1817.
- 16 Aguaquiritito 1861. (Dulce Nombre de Culmí *ejidos*.)
- 10 Alao 1776. (*Sitio* in Valle de Agalta.)
- 122 Almendares, Montaña de 1934. (Campamento *ejidos*.)
- 11 Amacoapa 1674-1682.
- 18 Boca de Monte 1820. (Valle de Gualaco.)
- 19 Boca de Monte o San Agustín 1896. (Valle de Agalta.)
- 22 Boquerón 1854.
- 23 Cacao 1844. (Northeast of Culmí.)
- Calona 1840. (Near Juticalpa.)
- 27 Campamento 1848. Expediente de medidas de terreno de
Campamento en la demarcación de la Concordia, a favor de
aquellos vecinos. Año de 1848.
- Candelaria 1778-1793. Medidas de sitio de Candelaria, perteneciente
a la cofradía del mismo nombre del Pueblo de S[an]ta María
del R[ea]l. (*Ejidos* of Real.)
- 64 Carbón, El 1862. (Pech *ejidos*.)
- Carbonal 1778. Medida del Sitio de Carbonal Partido de Olancho a
ped[imen]to de los cofrades de la Pura Limpia Consepsión de
N[uest]ra S[eñ]ora de Pueblo de Manto Jurisd[icció]n de
Comaiagua por el Comisionado D[o]n. Josef Romero. (Near
Juticalpa.)
- 34 Catacamas 1768-1778. Medidas de las tierras nombradas a el ejido del
Pueblo de Catacamas hechas a pedimento de los Indios de
dicho pueblo.
- 35 Catacamas 1778. Medidas de las tierras nombradas San Luis de Lajas
de pedimento de los indios del pueblo de Catacamas.
- 36 Catacamas 1713-1778. (Documents relating to lands belonging to the
Indios de Catacamas.)
- 37 Catacamas 1750-1786. Medida hacienda de San Pedro, Ag. 17, 1750.
- 38 Catacamas 1791-1812. (San José de Catacamas/Aguaquiere; Título de
San Calis).
- 39 Cerro de Fuego 1930. Doña Josefa Bonilla de Días denuncia un
terreno nacional San José ó Cerro de Fuego. Juticalpa
3 de junio de 1930. (Near Juticalpa.)
- 55 Chichicasapa c. 1720. (Near Juticalpa.)
- 58 "Chichinaquez" (Chichinaguaca) 1741. (Contains information on
Zambo sack of Catacamas in 1728.)

¹ Numbers, where available, refer to the ANT *Indice* entries under "Olancho." Single dates refer to the year that title was granted; ranges of dates indicate years that the title process began and ended.

59	Chindona 1779. (Valle de Agalta.)
40	Cilca (Silca) 1916-1918. (<i>Ejidos</i> .)
41	Cofradía Asunción Gualaco 1778-1787. Medida de las tierras realengas nombradas el sitio de la Cofradía de N[uest]ra S[eñ]ora de la Asunción de Gualaco a p[e]d[i]m[en]to del C[a]p[ita]n Ant[oni]o Duarte mayordomo y demas cofrades.
42	Colmenas Quemadas, San Joseph de 1779. (Valle de Agalta.)
43	Colonia, La 1895. (Northeast of Culmí.)
44 45 46	Concepción; 101 Jutiapa 1682-1786. (Group of four titles to lands owned by the Cofradía de Concepción, Juticalpa.)
54	Culmí 1897. Expediente de la medida de los ejidos del Pueblo de Culmí o Dulce Nombre. Dept. de Olancho Año 1897.
62	Dulce Nombre de Jesús <i>ejidos</i> 1892. (Culmí.)
65	Encinal 1682. (Near Juticalpa.)
66	Encuentros, Los 1820. (Valle de Gualaco.)
67	Escobas 1870-1883. (Campamento <i>ejidos</i> .)
68 69	Estancia 1841-1852. 11 cavs de pueblo de la Guata. (<i>Ejidos</i> .)
70	Gimasca 1674-1682. San Joan de Jimasca. (San Juan de Jimasque, Manto.)
	Guacoca. 1682-1843. (Two files containing extensive documentation of this <i>sitio</i> .)
185	San Jerónimo (Guacoca) 1740. Olancho tit. de 12 caballería[s de] tierra en el sitio llamado San Jerónimo de Gualaco [sic] a favor de Juan Pacheco, año de 1740. (Documents from 1682 to 1740.)
73	Gualaco 1741-1768. Tierras de la Cofradía de N. S. de la Concepción de Gualaco Valle de Olancho [sic] en el sitio nombrado San Pedro compuesto de 6 cav 177 cuerdas.
74	Gualiquemal 1915. (Valle de Olancho.)
77	Guampú y Pisijire 1895. (East of Culmí.)
82	Guayacán 1776. (Valle de Agalta.)
83	Guayapito 1746. (Near Lepaguare.)
63	"Higuerito Guata, El" 1844. (Title incorrect. It is a dispute between the Payas of Culmí and Tomasa Canelas of San Esteban, over "Guampú.")
86	Horcones 1720. (Valle de Lepaguare.)
87	Horcones 1900. (Valle de Lepaguare. Contains "Acta de Haber" of José María Zelaya, hijo, and of Santiago Zelaya)
89	Icoteas 1875. Información seguida para probar la nacionalidad del terreno de las Hicoteas. Año de 1875" (Río Tinto.)
92	Izotes 1921-1923. Jano. (Montaña de la Boca del Monte.)
93	Jalán 1740. (San Joseph de Jalán.)
94	Jano 1851. Del Alc[al]de 2o de campo y regidores del Pueblo de Jano Abril 14 de 1845 (Letter). (Copy of 1776 Mucupina title request for additional <i>ejidos</i> in 1851.)
95 96	Jicalapa 1820-1884. (<i>Ejidos</i> of Cofradía de San Pedro; remeasured as <i>ejidos</i> of Gualaco.)
98 99	Junquillo 1707-1724. Sitio de estancia de Santa Cruz de El Junquillo; San Joseph del Junquillo. (Two <i>sitios</i> between Juticalpa and Valle de Lepaguare.)
104	Labranza 1713. (<i>Ejidos</i> of Manto.)
112	Lepaguare c. 1769.

114	Mamisaca, Cañon de 1791-1856. (Near Juticalpa.)
115	Manacal 1779. (Valle de Agalta.)
117 118	Mangulile 1769-1837; 1769-1836. Expediente de medidas del terreno de este nombre Depto. de Olancho; Autos de medidas hechas a pedimento de Juan Texeda vecino del partido de Olancho el viexo del sitio llamado San Josseph Mangulile, en el curato de Yocón.
119	Manto 1840. (Request for <i>ejido</i> titles in 1928.)
120	Masatepe 1743-1778. (Various documents of Santa María del Real. First is a fragment of tribute list for Real, no date. Second is "Títulos de las tierras de Masatepe medidas a favor del común del pueblo de S[an]ta Maria del Real" remeasured in 1778. Following are a set of 1743-1768 documents pertaining to measures of Masatepe.)
	Mescales 1791-1873. (Borders land of Indios de Catacamas.)
123	Montaña del Cacao 1852. (Between Manto and Juticalpa.)
124	Mucupina 1776-1845. De 18 caballerías de tierras en el sitio nombre el Salitre ó Mucupina a favor de la cofradía del Sr. Cruxificado de Jano y refrendado a pedimento del mismo pueblo en 26 de Ag. de 1845 (1776 title.)
138	Parumble 1750-1869. Expediente de remedida de tierras del sitio llamado de San Isidro de Parumble, Jurisdicción de Salamá. Año de 1869.
141	Pie de la Cuesta de Agalta 1778-1784. Olancho Año de 1784 Tit. de 23 caballerías de tierra en el p[araj]e. nombrado el pie de la cuesta de Agalta. (San Francisco de la Paz.)
148	Plomo 1682. (Near Juticalpa.)
151	Potrерillos 1852. Expediente de medidas del sitio nombrado Potrerios [sic] en el Departamento de Olancho Jurisdicción de San Esteban año de 1852. (Valle de Agalta.)
153	Puente, La 1792. (Valle de Agalta.)
154 155 156	Punuare 1668-1952. (Three files containing numerous documents relating to the area of Punuara/Punuare. 154 is title from 1769 to what later became "Punuare Arriba," a <i>sitio</i> under private ownership. 155 contains "Medidas del sitio nombrado Punuara en el Partido de Olancho Jurisdicción de Comayagua perteneciente a Alexandro de Herrera," an earlier collection of documents, 1668-1770, referring to the same area. 156 is an extensive file from the 1950s on the village of Punuare [Punuare Abajo] and its process of obtaining <i>ejidos</i> in the Montaña del Boquerón.)
226	Varias Actuaciones: Quiscamote, late 1700s. (Valle de Agalta.)
162	Río Grande 1896. Expediente de la medida del sitio Río Grande medido en jurisdicción de San Esteban el año de 1896.
163	Río Tinto 1789-1837. Río Tinto 80 caballerías á favor de la finada Luparea Molina 1837.
166 167	Saguay 1779; 1918-19. (Valle de Agalta.)
168	Salamá 1838-1842. (<i>Ejid</i> os.)
216	San Agustín Zunsapotal 1823. ("Montaña ynacesible" dividing Guata y Manto.)
171	San Bernardo [de Zara] 1742. (Near Juticalpa.)

172	San Calis 1768-1784. Título de 169 caballerías en el sitio nombrado S. Caliz de los Yndios de Catacamas. Año de 1784.
173	San Calis 1768-1784. Título de las tierras de San Calis del comun de Catacamas.... (Identical to 172 San Calis.)
178	San Felipe c. 1774. (Not a title, but a land and cattle dispute between the Canelas and Calis families.)
161	San José del Retiro 1750-1760. (Near Juticalpa.)
60	San Luis de Laxas 1751. (Measurements without title).
188	San Juan del Damajao 1817. "Común de Pardos del Pueblo de Yocón." (<i>Ejidos</i> .)
103	San Juan 1660. "Título de cinco caballerías de tierra en el sitio nombrado San Juan de Telica a favor de Domingo Zelaya..."
194	San Juan de Jutiquile 1707-1768.
196	San Roque 1775. (Near Juticalpa.)
199	Santa Barbara 1776. (Santa Barbara de Calona, near Juticalpa.)
	"Santa Cruz" 1695. (First part is a title fragment for a <i>sitio</i> that neighbored Zapota. Remainder of file is a group of documents from 1750s, on Sitio La Cruz, Valle de Agalta, containing information on Franciscan missions.)
	Santa María de Payas 1735. (Valle de Gualaco. Request for <i>ejidos</i> for a Franciscan mission settlement.)
202	Santa Rosa 1725. (And Excamile. Valle de Olancho near Juticalpa.)
	Santa Rosa (Yscamile), San Marcos, Las Bolas, y Pusunca 1668-1774. Remedidas de los cuatro sitios....
207	Santos 1850-1852. Expediente de medida del sitio o montaña llamada de los Santos medido a solicitud de S[eñor] Fra[ncis]co Hernandez el... Año de 1852.
212	Talanquera de la Boca del Monte 1778. (Valle de Gualaco.)
220	Trinidad 1770. (Near Manto.)
	Vallecitto 1750-51. (Title to "Sitio de San Pedro y la San Cristobal del Vallesito." San Pedro part missing.)
230	Zapota y Caulote 1792-1838. Tierras de San Francisco de la Paz (<i>Ejidos</i> .)

IV. Unpublished Sources 1540--1900

ACCG Bautismos no. 2 libro de 1817-1856.

ACCG Elección de mayordomo de la cofradía de N[uest]ra S[eño]ra de la Luz. 1840. Fragment.

ACCG Libro de bautismos y casamientos de la administración de Gualaco, que da principio a 5o de mayo de 1842. (1842-1852).

ADJ 1905. "Historia de Juticalpa" by José María Martínez.

AEC Capellanías no. 2: Exp. 35. Santísima Trinidad de Agalta. 10-10-1770.

AEC Construcciones de Iglesias y Crematorios 1700-1850: Año de 1821. Solicitud de los vecinos de la Aldea de Palo Atrabizado, curato de Silca, y Jurisdiccion de Olancho para edificar en aquel suelo una hermita.

AEC Construcciones de Iglesias y Crematorios 1700-1850: Exp. 1834. Nuevo Silca.

AEC Construcciones de Iglesias y Crematorios 1700-1850: Felipe Bustillo, reclama para reedificar iglesia de Silca viejo. 1836.

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. 1817. Juticalpa. Contra Mariano Monzon cayo veterano de este Batallón. (On a “quero de Mapachin.”).

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. 1856. 15 Junio 1856. (Letter from “Rom vic. Ecclo del Benef. de Manto” to “Señor Secret[ari]o Episcopal de la Diocesis de Honduras.” From ‘cura revolucionario’ Miguel Angel Bustillos.)

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. 1864. Juticalpa 4 Sept. 1864. (Concerning letters that *cura* Miguel Angel Bustillos sent to the guerrilla Zavala in June and July.)

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. 1900. Agalta, enero 24. (Letter from “cura Interino García” to “Manuel Franc[isc]o Velez Obispo de Com. Siguatepeque.”)

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. Exp. 1843. En el pueblo de Salamán nuevo Silca. (on dividing the *bienes* of Salamán nueva Silca and Antigua Silca.)

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX. Exp. 1864. Carta de Paulino Rodrigues, en Salamán, 28-10-1864. Al Obispo. De este diocesis. (Another letter from Rodrigues to bishop, 28-12-1864.)

AEC Documentos Varios Siglos XVIII y XIX: Cofradías Período 1781-1876. Sta Ana de Jano. El cavildo, mayordomos, y demas naturales tributarios. 1800.

AEC Expediente para licencia de redificación de Iglesia de Juticalpa a solicitud del Cura y Municipalidad de dicho pueblo. 1826.

AEC Fábricas Años 1777 a 1888. Beneficio de Juticalpa (1803-1807) quinqueno del producto de este Curato.

AEC Inventarios Iglesias: Inventarios Eclesiásticos 1790...1849. Ynbentarios del curato de Silca. 1796.

AEC Juzgado Eclesiástico. N.d. Capitán Josef Henriquez vecino de los valles de Olancho, y Orica....

AEC [Padrón] Estado g[ene]ral que manifiesta con distincion de Clases el que tienen los moradores de este curato de Silca sus castas, y numeros de yndividuos de ambos sexos, que se comprenden en el con inclusion de Parbulos. 1796.

AEC Padrón de la feligrecía del Beneficio de Manto. 1796.

AEC Padrón de la Feligresia del Curato de Manto y anexos: Dos ríos, Plomo, Junquillo, San Francisco, Valle de San Felipe, Jutiquire, Sn. Marcos, Valle de Telica, Mamisaca. 1797.

AEC [Padrón] del Resinto desta Billa de Silca y sus anexos de este presente año de 1798.
...Padrón de la feligrecía del Palo Atravesado. ...Padrón del Pueblo de Yocón. ...Padrón
del Pueblo de Laguata. ...Padrón del Pueblo de Jano. ...Padrón del Pueblo de Gualaco.
...Padrón del Pueblo de San Buenaventura.

AEC Padrón que manifiesta el número de avitantes de la Villa de Sta Ana de Campamento con
espersión de nombres – casados –solteros y edad. Echo por el Cura y Vic[ari]o de
Veneff[ici]o de Salamán. Año de 1856. Padrón de Salamán 1855. Padrón de Silca 1856.
Padrón de Concordia. Padrón de Guata. Padrón de Jano.

AEC Padrón de la Filial de S. Francisco de la Paz (fragment). 1856.

AEC [Padrón] Estado que manifiesta los niños que á bautizado solegnemente el cura que
administra desde el 29 de Junio hasta el 30 de Agto. De 56 – Ban al fin de este, las listas de
los bienes pertenecientes a las iglesias. (Includes La Concordia, Campamento, Silca, Yocón,
Salamán, Jano, Guata.)

AEC Padrón de Manto 1856.

AEC Padrón del Partido de Silca hecho en el año del Señor de 1796. Includes Jano; Laguata;
Yocon de Ladinos; San Buenaventura; Gualaco, y Valle de Agalta; Silca.

AGCA 43 [sic, A#.16?] 438 8956 Cargo y descargo...de tributos [Honduras]. 1751-4. Partido
de Olancho el viejo.

AGCA 134 1504 (Documents on Franciscan missions). 1721-6.

AGCA A1 161 1689. (Documents relating to problems of the Olanchano *estancieros* who had
to serve in the conquest of the Payas.) 1699-1700.

AGCA A1.11 4056 31441 (Fragments of witnesses' accounts of the mission and martyrization
of Fray Cristobal Martínez de la Puerta. Comayagua, 1624.)

AGCA A1.11 4056 31441 fol. 171 (Languages and *pueblos* of Honduras, 1632.)

AGCA A1.11.4 46 416 San George. 1698. (Olanchito ecclesiastical document describing
distances to and hardships within Olancho el Viejo.)

AGCA A1.24 1566 10210 Registro de Chancillería Año 1681. Folio 149 Tributo y servicios a
los yndios y mulatos...misiones y conversiones de los indios jicaques. Folio 154
Nombramynto de Capytan, y protetor, de los yndios Jycaques recyen conbertydos,
abesindados en syete pueblos, del balle, del balle [sic] de Jamastelan, a Marcos gutyrez =
jicaques de la nacion paya, yara que (se) allan.

AGCA A1.24 1570 10214 Registro de Chancillería 1698. Folio 254 Real Provisión de
Sobrecarta, para que el Governador de comayagua cumple lo pedido por los naturales de
Catacamas. Folio 284 Autos y diligencias. (Division of *curato* San Jorge de Olancho)

AGCA A1.29 1723 11513 Probanza de los meritos y servicios de alonso de funes vecino de la
ciudad de comayagua de la provincia de honduras. 1548.

- AGCA A1.29 4670 40100 Provanza de méritos y servicios de Miguel de Casanos. 1548.
- AGCA A1.29 4670 40107 Probanza de méritos del Capitán Luis de Aguilar. 1550.
- AGCA A1.29 4677 40217 Probanza de méritos de Bernal Pérez de Medina, vecino de San Jorge. 1545.
- AGCA A1.29 4677 40220 Probanza de Juan Bardales. 1544.
- AGCA A1.29.1 4671 40116 Probanza de Juan Jiménez. 1555.
- AGCA A1.29.1 4672 40137 Probanza de Jerónimo de Corella 1561. Provanca ad perpetuum rrey memoriam fecha en esta villa de Sanct Jorge de valle de Olancho de la Provincia de Honduras ante la justicia hordinaria della a pedimento de Bartholomé de morillo en nonbre del muy illustre y reverendísimo señor don Jerónymo de corella obispo destas dichas provincias sobre los rritos y cerimonyas que los yndios de la Provincia de los Taycones y Çavano hazen.
- AGCA A1.39 1751 Nombramientos, pensiones, encomiendas y otras gracias que se despachaban a los presidentes del antiguo reino de guatemala. Fol. 21 Chapoluca, lagambe, ticla, guaymaca (1591). Fol. 22v. laguata, juticalpa, taunpan (1591). Fol. 81 catacamás (1607). Fol. 100v. circacomayagua, yupitelenca, tiaulabe, eguacao (1609). Fol. 222 jano, cacaguasuchi, maguina (1616).
- AGCA A1.4 390 3662 (Visit by Governor of Honduras to Catacamás and Valle de Agalta.) c. 1771.
- AGCA A1.4 398 4238. Ynformación sobre el destroso de 3807 pies de tabaco clandestino que hizo el cabo de ronda don antonio tagle, correspondiente a Man[ue]l Palma, contrabertor.
- AGCA A1.45 368 3412. (Quejas de los Indios de Catacamás). 1677 and 1678.
- AGCA A3 190 1938 Cuaderno de los Reales Tributtos y servizio del toston del Partido de olancho el Viejo para los años de 1712 y 1713. (Covers 1710-1714.)
- AGCA A3 192 1955. Tributos de Comayagua. Año de 1740. (Documents on extinct Indian populations).
- AGCA A3 498 10209 Tributos de los Pueblos de el partido de Theusigalpa, q. corre desde el año 1733 hasta el de 1739. (Pueblos de Partido de Olancho año de 1733.)
- AGCA A3 511 5313 (125 tribute towns in Honduras.) 1662.
- AGCA A3.16 2072 31508. Encomiendas de Honduras. 1662. (Fol. 2 on Alonso de Oseguera. Also history of Alvaro Perez, 1549, on conquest of Olancho early 1540s.)
- AGCA A3.16 2325 34320 Libro de tasaciones de los partidos de [Honduras]. 1741; 1757-1763.
- AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 223 ff. 21-39; 71-82. (*Padrones* of the Franciscan missions). 1711.

- AGI Indif. Gen. 1525 c. 1800. (Ramón de Anguiano documents.) Contiene este Quaderno diez documentos para inteligencia de la Visita de la Provincia de Honduras, que acompaña. Y al fin vá agregado el de Poblacion de la misma No. 11. Anguiano. (See also Anguiano 1991 and 1997 in Section V, below.)
- AGNM Reales Cédulas Originales Vol. 240 Exp. 34 ff. 82-89. Document 1 f. 82: Bernardo de Ovando, sin fecha. Document 2 ff. 83-86: Fr. Pedro de Estrada, 19 agosto 1677, Guatemala. Document 3 ff. 87-89: Fr. Antonio Berzian, 19 agosto 1677, Guatemala.
- AHJ Bando de buen gobierno. Feb. 23 1874. 3 folios.
- AHJ Gobernación de este Circuito. Juticalpa Octubre veintedos de mil ochocientos sesenta y ocho. 1 folio. 1868.
- ANH AC 1 20 La Chorrera 1638. Diligencias de escritura del Sitio 'La Chorrera' Olancho El Viejo, de Juana de Lozano Hernan Sanz de Astigueta, otorgada por Diego Suarez, Tegu. 12/10/1638.
- ANH AC 43 1401 Padrón del Pueblo de S[an]ta María del Real, Partido de olancho El Viejo, año de 1762.
- ANH AC 59 1902 Certificación de don Miguel Antonio Méndez, cura propio, vicario, juz eclesiástico del partido de Yocon, Olancho, de las obras pías, silca, 14 de diciembre de 1777.
- ANH AC 91 2982 1802 Visita a todo el partido de Olancho.
- ANH AC 95 3120 1805 Escases de granos.
- ANH AC 138 4847(39) 1819. Huellas de zambos en Olancho.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-09 333 Ministerio de Guerra del Supremo Gobierno de Honduras. Comayagua 4/28/1863.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-17 320 Boletín Extraordinario. Tegucigalpa 10/20/1862.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-17 330 Francisco Montes Senador Presidente de la República, a los pueblos sublevados del departamento de Olancho. Comayagua 2/6/1863.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-17 331 ¡La causa del orden triunfa! Comayagua 2/5/1863.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-17 338 Decreto de José María Medina. 12/24/1864.
- ANH IS B Legajo I-17 340. Fracaso de los Insurrectos de Olancho. Comayagua 12/21/1864.
- ANH Uncatalogued material. File with four documents. 1: "Buscar novedades en las costas respeto a la introducción de Yngleses" (Order from Comayagua to Señor Coronel Francisco Zelaya nombrado Jefe Político del Depto. de Olancho). 4/26/1848. 2: "Informe del gobernador Jefe Político Juticalpa 1 julio 1848." 3: "Carta de Pedro Caliz, comandante local de San Francisco de la Paz, a S[e]ñor comandante departamental de Olancho." 6/17/1848. 4: "Del comandante Dept. de Yoro. Yoro 28 junio 1848."

AOO Elecciones y cuentas de la Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción 1748-1757. (Fragment, 10 folios.)

AOO. Elecciones y cuentas de la Cofradía de San Juan de Juticalpa 1765-1780. (Fragment of a book.)

AOO. Casamientos. 1857. (Including “Casamientos de la Santa Misión,” the visit of Padre Subirana to Juticalpa.) (Fragment.)

AOO. Confirmaciones. 54 folios. N.d. (late 1840s).

AOO. Libros Bautismales. 1810-1824; 1824-1828; 1829-1837; 1839 frag.; 1841 frag.; 1847 frag.; 1851-1852; 1882 frag.; 1885-1901. ethnic composition included before 1821.

V. Published Sources; Unpublished Sources from 1900 to Present

Abrams, E. M.; A. Freter; D. J. Rue; and J. D. Wingard. 1996. The role of deforestation in the collapse of the late classic Copan Maya state” in Sponsel et al.

Acker, A. 1988. *Honduras, the making of a banana republic*. Boston: South End Press.

Acosta, O. and P. del Valle. 1971. *Exaltación de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras.

Acuerdo de Gobierno. 1846. *Redactor* 2(31), Oct. 15. (On wood extraction.)

Adams, R. N. 1957. *Cultural surveys of Panama – Nicaragua – Guatemala – El Salvador – Honduras*. Wash. DC: World Health Organization, Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Scientific Publications no. 33.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1933. *Mapa general de la República de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Lito-Tipo Ariston.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1954. *Mapa general de la República de Honduras*. Second ed. Rio de Janeiro.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1969. Tlapal-lan, Huehuetlapal-lan, ruinas de Ciudad Blanca. *Revista de la Academia Hondureña de Geografía e Historia* 65:Feb./March.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1970. *Toponimias y regionalismos indígenas de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1981. *El refranero hondureño*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.

Aguilar Paz, J. 1989[1930; 1972]. *Tradiciones y leyendas de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Museo del Hombre Hondureño. On Olanchó: Los indios de Comayagüela (24-6); El infiel...! (33-4; Olanchó el Viejo ‘El Dorado’ (48-50); Caini o lluvia de peces (52-5); La Cueva de Talgua en Catacamas” (73-4); Vírgenes y santos milagrosos” 84-90; El baño de las varas) 69-70; El caso del Capitán Canelas (222-4); Puñado de leyendas (243-50); Los Indios Payas de El Carbón y la Mina de la Mona (273-4); ‘La Santa Misión’ Padre Manuel de Jesús Subirana 280-99; (La sombra de los caciques, El cacique Gregorio Mendoza, El Cinchonero el bárbaro Serapio Romero) 304-5.

- Aguilar Paz, J. 1999[1936]. *Flora tradicional de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Francisco Salvador Fundación Cultural, Ediciones Kukulcán.
- Aguilar-Paz Cerrato, E. 1995. *El alquimista de Gualala; vida y obra de Jesús Aguilar Paz*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Agurcia, R. and R. Soto. 1984. La casa de don Calecho: un ejemplo de la arquitectura vernácula de Honduras. *Yaxkin* 7(1):47-59.
- Albañiles que construyen viviendas de Cruz Roja no han recibido pago. 1999. *La Tribuna* Sept. 1:15.
- Allen, B. H. 1994. *Moss flora of Central America*. St. Louis: Missouri Botanical Garden.
- Allen, P. H. 1955. The conquest of Cerro Santa Barbara Honduras. *Ceiba* 4(5):253-70.
- Allen, W. H. 1988. Biocultural restoration of a tropical forest. *Bioscience* 38(3):156-61.
- Alocución del Señor Presidente de la Diputación [de Gracias], pronunciada a los SS. Diputados. 1841. *Redactor* 10:62-3, May 30.
- Alva Ixtlilxochitl, Fernando de. 1969. *Ally of Cortes, Account 13: Of the coming of the Spaniards and the beginning of the evangelical law*. Trans. Douglass K. Ballentine. El Paso: Texas Western Press.
- Alvarado, C. G. 1992. El Boquerón: gira de exploración para observar el estado actual del bosque y sus demas componentes. SMC 14-14/92.
- Albitez, Diego de. 1954[1527]. Carta que Diego de Albitez envió al emperador, el 20 de noviembre de 1527, refiriendo los motivos por los que fué llevado preso a Santo Domingo.-(Colección de Documentos Inéditos, por Torres de Mendoza. Tomo 40, páginas 299/305.)-Archivo de Indias, Sevilla. Patronato.-Est. 2.o-Caj. 1.a-Leg. 3/22.]. *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:276-80. Editorial Andrés Vega Bolaños. Madrid.
- América Central y sus recursos comerciales, La (Del *Journal des Debats de Paris*). 1858. *Gaceta Oficial* 3(6):4, Mar. 10. (From *Gaceta del Salvador*.)
- Anderson, D. 1998. Avian diversity in the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, Honduras: the influence of indigenous agricultural practices. Unpublished Master's thesis, Boise State University.
- Anderson, D. 2001. Notes on the breeding, distribution, and taxonomy of the Ocellated Poorwill (*Nyctiphrynus ocellatus*) in Honduras. *Ornitología Neotropica* 11:233-8.
- Anderson, D.; Bonta, M.; Thorn, P. 1998. New and noteworthy bird records from Honduras. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 118(3):178-83.
- Anderson, E. 1954. Reflections on certain Honduran gardens. *Landscape* 4(1):21-3.

- Anderson, K. 1997. Nature, culture and big old trees: human relationships with ceiba (*Ceiba pentandra*) and live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) in the landscapes of Guatemala and Louisiana. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University.
- Andrada, Fray Gaspar de. 1991[1591]. Relación de los beneficios que hay en el obispado de honduras y de las personas que los sirven y de los que han sid proveídos de Su Magestad por el obispo fray Gaspar de Andrada. 20 de abril de 1591. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 164. In Leyva 1991:88-90.
- Andrada, Fray Gaspar de. 1991a[1598]. Carta a S. M. del obispo de Honduras fray Gaspar de Andrada sobre el estado de su diócesis, suficiencia de los religiosos, iglesias y beneficios que hay en él. 1598. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 164. In Leyva 1991:93-9.
- Andrews, J. R. 1975. *Introduction to classical Nahuatl*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Anguiano, Ramón de. 1991[1801]. Población de las provincias de Honduras. Matrícula del año 1801. Gobernador de Honduras Ramón de Anguiano, 1 de mayo de 1804. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 501. In Leyva 1991:276-89.
- Anguiano, Ramón de. 1997[1801]. Censo levantado en 1801, por el gobernador Intendente y Comandante General, Don Ramón de Anguiano. From AGI. In Vallejo 1997[1893]:119-35.
- Annis, S. 1992. Evolving connectedness among environmental groups and grassroots organizations in protected areas in Central America. *World Development* 20(4):587-95.
- Anonymous. 1856. Scraps from an artist's notebook: an earthquake in Honduras. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 12(72):164-73.
- Anonymous. 1960. Excursión a Olancho. *Revista de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia* 40(15-17):40-1. (Published in Tegucigalpa.)
- Arrigunaga, M. 1991. Preliminary guide to the collections microfilmed at the Honduras National Archives and at the Department of Olancho. Unpublished index, University of Texas-Arlington Library: Interlibrary Loan Department.
- Aviso (de Contrato con el Estado). 1859. *La Gaceta* 4(48):4, May 16. (León Alvarado and Francisco Cruz, a wood concession.)
- Awake!* Correspondent in Brazil. 1997. The Amazon rain forest, myths and realities. *Awake!*:3-13, March 22.
- Bachelard, G. 1994[1958]. *The poetics of space*. Trans. Maria Jolas. Boston: Beacon Press.
- BAGG Su Majestad encomienda a Fr. Esteban Verdelet (O. F. M.) la conversión de los indios jicaques de Taguzgalpa. 1939[1607]. Vol. 5(1)5-7. (From AGCA A1.23 107 1514.)
- BAGG Su Majestad faculta al Gobernador de la Provincia de Honduras, cierta expedición contra los indios infieles. 1939a[1610]. Vol. 5(1):8-9. (From AGCA A1.23 160 1514 Libro de Reales Cédulas.)

- BAGG Real Cédula dirigida a la Audiencia acerca de que informe de los servicios que don Bartolomé de Escoto ha hecho en la reducción y conservación de los indios xicaques. 1939b[1674]. Vol. 5(1)16-8. (From AGCA A1.23 137 1520 10075.)
- BAGG Razón del estado en que se hallan las reducciones de indios infieles que están a cargo de los religiosos de N. P. S. Francisco desta santa provincia del santísimo nombre de Jesús de Guatemala. 1940[1676]. Vol. 5(4):285-9. (Includes letter from Fr. Ovalle.)
- BAGG Gobierno.-Comayagua.-1785. Expediente sobre la traslación de los Yndios Payas de la ciudad de Comayagua (que hicieron fuga del pueblo de San Matías), al pueblo de Sensenti jurisdicción de Gracias a Dios, o a otra parte. 1941[1785]. Vol. 6(2):115-33. (From AGCA A1.12 50 514.)
- BAGG Autos fechos por Su Señoría Ilustrísima mi Señor en virtud de consulta del Visitador General para remediar la mala administración de algunos curatos y doctrinas de este Obispado de Honduras. 1941-1942[1733-1736]. Vol. 7(1-2):45-67. (From AGCA A1.12 50 497.)
- BAGG Autos formados sobre la Real Cédula para que esta Real Audiencia con la brevedad y reserva posible remita una relación individual de los Corregimientos y Alcaldías Mayores de este Reyno. Vol. 7(4):210-21. 1942[1765]. (From AGCA A1.17 1840 13999.) (Pages 245-6 contain Copia del Ynforme del subdelegado de Olancho.)
- BAGG Dictamen del Diputado a las Cortes de Cádiz, Florencio del Castillo acerca del informe que rindió don Ramón Anguiano, Gobernador de Comayagua, en el asunto de la reducción de los indios jicaques y payas. 1942a[1813]. Vol. 7(2):74-80.
- BAGG Informe rendido por el Gobernador Intendente de la Provincia de Honduras, don Ramón de Anguiano. 1942b[1814]. Vol. 7(3):146-57.
- BAGG El Gobernador Intendente de la provincia de Honduras, don Ramón Anguiano informe acerca de dicha provincia. 1942c[1818]. Vol. 7(3):175-9. (From AGCA A1.37 2335 17517.)
- Balick, Michael. 1990. Production of coyol wine from *Acrocomia Mexicana* (Arecaceae) in Honduras. *Economic Botany* 44:84-93.
- Barahona, M. 1995. Honduras: el Estado fragmentado (1839-1876). *Paraninfo* 4(7):1-33.
- Barborak, J. 1999. Go green. *Wildlife Conservation* 102(6):28.
- Barnes, T. J. and J. S. Duncan, eds. 1992. *Writing worlds; discourse, text and metaphor in the representation of landscape*. New York: Routledge.
- Bazar Olanchano. 1949. (Advertisement for store of Alberto Bu Castellón.) *Avance* 1(11):3, Sept. 30.
- Beard, J. S. 1953. The savanna vegetation of northern tropical America. *Ecoogical Monographs* 23:149-215.
- Begley, C. 1999. Elite power strategies and external connections in ancient eastern Honduras. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago.

- Bengston, N. 1926. Notes on the physiography of Honduras. *Geographical Review* 16:403-13.
- Benjamin, M., ed. and trans. 1987. *Don't be afraid, gringo: a Honduran woman speaks from the heart, the story of Elvia Alvarado*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Bennett, C. F. 1968. Human influences on the zoogeography of Panama. *Ibero-Americana* 51.
- Benzoni, Girolamo. 1857[1541-1556]. *History of the New world by Girolamo Benzoni, of Milan, shewing his travels in America, from A.D. 1541 to 1556: with some particulars of the Island of Canary*. Ed. and Trans. Rear-Admiral W. H. Smith. London: Hakluyt Society.
- Benzoni, Girolamo. 1967. *La historia del mundo nuevo*. Caracas: Academia Nacional de Historia.
- Betancur, Fray Rodrigo. 1991[1698]. *Relación hecha por Fray Rodrigo Betancur de las costumbres de los yndios ynfielos payas de la Provincia de Honduras Año de 1698*. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 297 Testimonio del primer cuaderno de los Autos fechos por Su Señoría el señor don Gabriel Sanches de Berrospe del Consejo de S. M. Presidente que feu de esta Real Audiencia de Guatemala sobre la conversión de los yndios payas y otras naciones en la Provincia de Comayagua 1708: Folios 26 al 30. In Leyva 1991:207-10.
- Bienvenidos al Monumento Natural El Boquerón, Sendero interpretativo El Boquerón. nd. Boquerón file, PCH-NR. (Description of self-guided trail.
- Black, N. J. 1995. *The frontier mission and social transformation in western Honduras, the Order of Our Lady of Mercy, 1525-1773*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Blaney, C. 1996. Paya plants prove potent. *Bioscience* 45:744.
- Bonilla, C. 1955. *Honduras en el pasado*. San Pedro Sula: Tipografía Imprenta "Renovación."
- Bonta, M. 1991. 3 month work plan: Mark Bonta Oct-Dec/1991. PNSA file, PCH-NR.
- Bonta, M. 1992. Memorandum to Edas Muñoz on Categorización de "El Boquerón," Aug. 5, Juticalpa. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Bonta, M. 1994. Inventory of the birds of the Cordillera de Agalta Bioregion in the Department of Olancho, eastern Honduras, Central America, including the Sierra de Agalta National Park, El Boquerón Natural Monument, and surrounding valleys. (Unpublished.)
- Bonta, M. 1996. Pájaros de Agalta: lista de campo de las aves del centro de Olancho, Honduras. (Unpublished annotated checklist.)
- Bonta, M. 1997. Shared worlds: people and birds in central Olancho, Honduras. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas-Austin.
- Bonta, M. 1998. Enveloping developing: a meditation. Paper presented at conference of Association of American Geographers, Boston.

- Bonta, M. 1998a. Jesús Aguilar Paz (1895-1974) as mystical humanist geographer. Paper presented at Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers, Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- Bonta, M. In Press (2001). Jealous conservationists: *terratlenientes* and wildlife protection in Olancho, Honduras. In *Cabeceras, bayous, and beaches: exploring the cultural and physical landscapes in the U.S. South and Middle America* (LSU Geoscience and Man 36).
- Bonta, M. and F. Urbina. 1999. "Aves de Agalta, segunda edición." Unpublished annotated checklist.
- Brady, J. E.; G. Hasemann; J. H. Fogerty. 1995. Harvest of skulls and bones. *Archaeology* 48(3):36-40.
- Briggs, C. L. 1986. *Learning how to ask, a sociolinguistic appraisal of the role of the interview in social science research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brokaw, N. V. L. 1996. Treefalls: frequency, timing, and consequences. 101-8 in Leigh et al.
- Bruntland Commission. 1987. *Our common future*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bullock, S. H.; H. A. Mooney; E. Medina, eds. 1995. *Seasonally dry tropical forests*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Burford, T. 1996. *Backpacking in Central America*. Old Saybrook CT: Globe Pequot.
- Burgos, J. 1999. Con pala y machete vecinos de La Avispa construyen viviendas. *La Tribuna*:14, July 14.
- Burgos, J. 2000. Listos productores olanchanos para nuevas medidas de presión. *La Tribuna*:20. Mar. 1.
- Butler, J. 1993. *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex."* New York: Routledge.
- Butzer, K. W. and E. K. Butzer. 1993. The sixteenth-century environment of the central Mexican Bajío: archival reconstruction from colonial land grants and the question of Spanish ecological impact, pp. 89-124 in K. Mathewson, ed., *Culture, Form, and Place: essays in cultural and historical geography* (Geoscience and Man 32).
- Cadiñanos, Fernando de. 1997[1791]. Censo levantado por Fray Fernando de Cadiñanos, obispo de esta diócesis, en 1791. From AGI. In Vallejo 1997[1893]:105-18.
- Caicedo, M. D. 1993. Wildlands conservation and community resource management: a critical analysis of the proposed Tawahka Biosphere Reserve, La Mosquitia, Honduras. Unpublished Master's thesis, San José State University.
- Campanella, R. 1993. Mapping and measuring the cloud forests of Honduras for effective delimitation as nature reserves. Unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Campaña sobre cultura ambiental cobra vigencia en microcuencas. 2000. *La Tribuna*:81, Feb. 28.

- Carr, A.. 1949. La montaña llorona. *Scientific Monthly* 68:225-34.
- Carr, A. 1950. Outline for a classification of animal habitats in Honduras. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 94(10):566-94.
- Carr, A. 1953. *High jungles and low*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press.
- Casco, J. C. 1985. *Weapons of the weak; everyday forms of peasant resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Casey, E. S. 1993. *Getting back into place, toward a renewed understanding of the place-world*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Casey, E. S. 1997. *The fate of place, a philosophical history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Castillo, Rodrigo del. 1954[1527]. Carta del Rodrigo del Castillo, a Su Magestad, sobre la mala conducta de Pedrarias, la soberbia de los gobernadores y otros motivos de administración. [León, 20 de mayo de 1527. Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla. Patronato. Legajo 26. Ramo 5.]. Brackets in original. *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:221-25. Ed. Andrés Vega Bolaños. Madrid.
- Catacamas Junta de Agua. 1920. *Estatutos y reglamento interior de la junta de aguas de la ciudad de Catacamas*. Tegucigalpa: Tipografía Nacional.
- CDI Testimonio de la posesión y fundación que hizo el Capitán Francisco de las Casas, á nombre de Hernando Cortés, del puerto, asiento y villa de Trujillo, en el Cabo de Honduras.-(18 de mayo de 1525). 1870[1525]. Vol. 14:44-7. From AGI Patronato Est. 1 Caj. 1.
- CDI Testimonio de la fundación de la Villa de la Frontera de Cáceres, en la Provincia de Honduras, y de la posesión que en ella tomó, á nombre de Su Magestad, Bartolomé de Celada.-(Año de 1526.) 1870a[1526]. Vol. 14:57-64. From AGI Patronato Est. 1 Caj. 1.
- CDI Testimonio de los esclavos y naborias que trajeron de la Ciudad de León á la villa de Trujillo en Honduras, de órden de Pedrarias Dávila, los españoles que fueron á ella con el gobernador Pedro Lopez de Salcedo.-(Año de 1529.) 1870b[1529]. Vol. 14:70-7. From AGI Patronato Est. 1 Caj. 1.
- Cembrero, Ignacio. 1999. El Mitch redibuja Honduras. *Boletín Informativo* (SOPTRAVI-IGN) 9(16):3. From *La Tribuna* Mar.13, 1999.
- Cereceda, Andrés de. 1954[1530]. Carta de Andrés de Cereceda a S. M., informándole de lo acaecido en Nicaragua durante la permanencia de Diego López de Salcedo. Villa Trujillo del Pinar, Honduras, 31 de marzo de 1530. [Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla. Audiencia de Guatemala. Leg. 49]. Brackets in original. *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 2:404-40. Ed. Andrés Vega Bolaños. Madrid.
- Chamberlain, R. S. 1953. The conquest and colonization of Honduras 1502-1550. *Carnegie Institute of Washington Publication* 598. Reprinted by Octagon Books (New York), 1966.

- Chapman, A. 1985. *Los hijos del copal y la candela, ritos agrarios y tradición oral de los lencas de Honduras*. Mexico City, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: Imprenta Universitaria.
- Chapman, A. 1992[1978]. *Masters of animals, oral traditions of the Tolupan Indians, Honduras*. Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach.
- Charles, C. 1890. *Honduras: the land of great depths*. Chicago: Rand, McNally.
- Charter from the Republic of Honduras to the New York Navigation and Colonization Company*. 1860. New York: Isaac J. Oliver, Steam Book and Job Printer. (Includes description by Raymond K. Weed and William C. Burchard) Olancho, its climate, productions, trade, etc. (10-20).
- Chatwin, B. 1987. *The songlines*. New York: Viking.
- Clark, J. 1997. The dialectical social geography of Elisee Reclus. In A. Light and J. M. Smith, eds., *Philosophy and geography I: space, place, and environmental ethics*. Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Clastres, P. 1987. *Society against the state: essays in political anthropology*. Trans. R. Hurley. New York: Zone Books.
- Clifford, J. and G. E. Marcus, eds. 1986. *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Coates, A. G. 1997. *Central America: a natural and cultural history*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.
- Cockburn, John. 1745. *The unfortunate Englishmen: or, a faithful narrative of the distresses and adventures of John Cockburn, and five other English mariners, viz. Thomas Rounge, John Holland, Richard Banister, John Balman and Thomas Robinson...containing a journey over land from the Gulph of Honduras to the Great South Sea...* (LSU Middleton Library: Microfilm 5043 reel 832, no.4.)
- COHDEFOR Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre. c. 1996. Manual de normas técnico-administrativas para el manejo y aprovechamiento de la fauna silvestre. Tegucigalpa.
- COHDEFOR. 1995. *República de Honduras Mapa Forestal*. (Scale 1:1,000,000.). Tegucigalpa.
- Collar, N. J.; L. P. Gonzaga; N. Krabbe; A. Madroño Nieto; L. G. Naranjo; T. A. Parker III; D. C. Wege. 1992. "Honduran emerald *Amazilia luciae*." In *Threatened birds of the Americas, The ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book*. Third ed., part two. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Comisión al Subdelegado de Olancho, D. Antonio Tablada para suministrar abastos á los establecimientos del Norte. 1938[1792]. In *Algunos documentos importantes sobre los límites entre Honduras y Nicaragua*. New York.

- Comite de Delimitación del Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. 1992. Aug. 24 letter of invitation to Jorge Betancourt, Peace Corps. Catacamas. PNSA file, PCH-NR.
- CONSEFORH. 1993. Gira a El Boquerón – Olancho. Siguatepeque. Report of field exped.. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Constenla, A. 1981. Comparative Chibchan phonology. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- Contrato para cortar madera en los departamento de Colón y Olancho, 1920. 1938. In *Algunos documentos sobre la soberanía y posesión ejercidas por Honduras en el territorio de La Mosquitia que le disputa Nicaragua 1894-1937, Tomo I:63-65*. Miguel Ramos, ed. Tegucigalpa: Publicaciones de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de la República de Honduras.
- Contreras Guevara, Alonso de. 1991[1582]. Relación hecha a su Majestad por el gobernador de Honduras, de todos los pueblos de dicha gobernación. Año 1582. In Leyva 1991:58-74.
- Contreras Guevara, Alonso de. 1992[1578]. Se solicita informe de la Taguzgalpa. *Paraninfo* 1(1):138-9. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala Legajo 39.
- Conzemius, E. 1928. *Los Indios Payas de Honduras, estudio geográfico, histórico, etnográfico, y lingüístico*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner. (Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris.)
- Conzemius, E. 1932. Ethnographical survey of the Miskito and Sumu Indians of Honduras and Nicaragua. *U.S.Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 106.
- Cortés, Hernán. 1992[1526]. *Cartas de relación*. Mexico D. F.:Editorial Porrúa.
- Cosgrove, D. and S. Daniels, eds. 1988. *The iconography of landscape*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cresswell, T. 1996. *In Place/Out of place: geography, ideology, and transgression*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cresswell, T. 1997. "Weeds, plagues and bodily secretions: a geographical interpretation of metaphors of displacement." *Annals of the Association of Amerocan Geograpers* 87(2):330-45.
- Criado de Castilla, Alonso. 1991[1598]. Carta a Su Magestad del Presidente de la Audiencia de Guatemala en la que da informe general del estado del reino y de las conquistas entre los indios infieles. 29 de octubre de 1598. 15 de mayo de 1600 [Sobreescrito]. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 43. In Leyva 1991:99-108.
- Cruikshank, J. 1988. Lost city of gold? Yes, you're the first today. *Vancouver Globe and Mail*, Mar. 7.
- Cruz Reyes, V. C. 1998. Recuperación territorial y colonización española a finales del siglo XVIII en la provincia de Honduras. *Paraninfo* 7(14):125-36.

- Cruz, F. 1843. Salud Pública. *Redactor* 62:317-9, July 30. (On Comayagua.)
- Cruz, F. 1855. Agricultura, capítulo comensado en el número anterior. *Gaceta Oficial* 2(34):133, March 2.
- Cruz, F. 1859. Datos estadísticos de la Villa de La Paz. *Gaceta Oficial* 3(58), Aug. 30.
- Cruz, F. 1990[1901]. *Botica del pueblo: flora medicinal de Honduras*. San Pedro Sula: Imprenta Editorial Coello.
- Cruz, F. 1996[1840s]. Centro-américa (obra escrita en francés por Mr. Larenaudiere). Pages 230-42 in Durón 1996 Vol. 1.
- Cruz, F. 1997[1881]. "Censo practicado en 1881, por el Director General de Estadística de la República de Honduras, Don Francisco Cruz." In Vallejo 1997[1893]:136-47.
- Cruz, G. 1993. El Decreto 87-87, Ley de los Bosques Nublados, base legal para la conservación de los bosques nublados de Honduras. Ed. A. Nagelhout and T. Hawkins. SMC 23-5/93.
- Cuerpo de Paz/COHDEFOR/OBRA. 1997. Sendero El Boquerón. Boquerón file, PCH-NR. (Draft of self-guided trail pamphlet, Spanish version.)
- Davidson, W. V. 1974. Historical geography of the Bay Islands, Honduras: Anglo-Hispanic conflict in the western Caribbean. Birmingham AL: Southern University Press.
- Davidson, W. V. 1984. El Padre Subirana y las tierras concedidas a los indios hondureños en el siglo XIX. *América Indígena* (Mexico) 44(3):447-59. (Reprinted 1990, Instituto Nacional Agrario, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.)
- Davidson, W. V. 1985. Etnografía histórica y la arqueología de Honduras. *Yaxkin* 8(1/2):215-26.
- Davidson, W. V. 1985a. Geografía de los indígenas toles (jicaques) de Honduras en el siglo XVIII. *Mesoamérica* 6(9):58-90.
- Davidson, W. V. 1991. Geographical perspectives on Spanish-Pech (Paya) Indian relationships, northeast Honduras, Sixteenth Century. Chap. 9, 205-26 in Thomas, *Columbian consequences*.
- Davidson, W. V. and F. Cruz S. 1988. Delimitación de la región habitada por los Sumos Taguacas de Honduras 1600-1990. *Yaxkin* 11(1):124-36.
- Daviss, B. 1997. Simple art of survival. *New Scientist* 154(2086):38-41.
- Deagan, K. A. 1987. *Artifacts of the Spanish colonies of Florida and the Caribbean, 1500-1800*. Wash. DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Decreto de noviembre 15, 1840. *Redactor* 1(3), Nov. 15. (*Municipalidades*.)
- Decreto de agosto 9, 1841. *Redactor* 1(15), Aug. 15. (*Maderas*.)

- Decreto de febrero 19, 1846. *Redactor* 2(16):87, feb. 28. (*Cultivo de café.*)
- Decreto de marzo 28, 1843. *Redactor* 1(56), April 30. (*Ordenación agrícola.*)
- Decreto de marzo 4, 1846. *Redactor* 2(17):91, March 15. (*Ejidros.*)
- Decreto No. 50. 1850. Ley de Concesiones. *Gaceta Oficial* 1(21):85, Nov. 15.
- Decreto No. 60. 1850. Ley de Maderas. *Gaceta Oficial* 1(22):88, Nov. 30.
- Decreto No. 26. 1909. Concesión para construir Ferrocarril Trujillo a Juticalpa. *Gaceta* 3267. (To James P. Henderson).
- Decreto No. 62. 1909. *Gaceta* 3206. (Ley de Maderas.)
- Decreto No. 114. 1927. Unión Obrera, Concesión para 10 mil caobas en margen izquierda de Río Patuca, desde punto Piedra Chata. Sin perjuicio a Byron Brown. *Gaceta* 7616.
- Decreto No. 28. 1939. Ley de Bosques. *Gaceta* 10727.
- Decreto No. 31-92. 1995. *Ley para la modernización y el desarrollo del sector agrícola*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Decreto No. 104-93. 1995. *Ley general del ambiente y reglamento general de la ley del ambiente*. Secretaría del Ambiente (SEDA). Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Decreto No. 199-95. 1996. Ley de la Protección a la Actividad Caficultora. *Gaceta*, Mar. 1.
- Decreto No. 134-90. 1998. *Ley de Municipalidades y su reglamento*. Congreso Nacional de la República. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Decreto por el cual se manda a crear un pueblo en las márgenes del Río Guayape y en el paraje nombrado La Azacualpa:junio 6 de 1851. 1935. RABNH 13(7/8):39192.
- De Landa, Manuel. 1991. *War in the age of intelligent machines*. New York: Zone Books.
- De Landa, Manuel. 1997. *A thousand years of nonlinear history*. New York: Zone Books.
- De la Concepción, Pedro. 1991[1699]. *Relación del viaje de Fr. Pedro de la Concepción por la Taguzgalpa y de las costumbres y creencias de los indios infieles que allí habitan. Año de 1699*. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 297 folios 50 –61 Testimonio del primer cuaderno de los Autos fechos por Su Señoría el señor don Gabriel Sanches de Berrospe del consejo de S. M. Presidente que fue de esta Real Audiencia de este Reino de Guatemala sobre la combreción de los yndios payas y otras naciones en la Provincia de Comayagua. Año de 1708. In Leyva 1991:211-8.
- De los Angeles Chaverri, M. 1994. El repartimiento de trabajo como causa de la protesta social en la Honduras colonial: el caso de Texiguat. *Paraninfo* 3(5):71-104.
- De los Angeles Chaverri, M. 1996. La protesta social en Honduras colonial. *Paraninfo* 5(10):15-34.

- Del Cid, J. R. del; I. Walker; and H. Cárdenas. 1998. *Sociedad y ambiente, los desafíos para el desarrollo sostenible de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa?: FUMANITAS, Fundación Centroamericana para el Desarrollo Humano.
- Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari. 1983[1972]. *Anti-Oedipus, capitalism and schizophrenia*. Trans. R. Hurley, M. Seem, H. R. Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari 1987[1980]. *A thousand plateaus, capitalism and schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Demarcación y división de las Indias. 1871[No date, mid-1500s]. Honduras. In CDI 15:467-70.
- Denevan, W. 1961. The upland pine forests of Nicaragua, a study in cultural plant geography. *University of California Publications in Geography* 12(4):251-320. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Denevan, W. 1992. The pristine myth: the landscape of the Americas in 1492. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82(3):369-85.
- Departamento de Areas Protegidas y Vida Silvestre. 1993. Propuesta de creación del Monumento Natural "El Boqueron." COHDEFOR, Juticalpa. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Derrida, J. 1993. *Memoirs of the blind, the self-portrait and other ruins*. Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- DeWalt, B. R. and S. C. Stonich. 1996. La política ecológica de deforestación en Honduras. *Yaxkin* 15:49-73.
- Díaz del Castillo, Bernal. 1992[1632]. *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*. 15th ed. Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa.
- Dios ha dado enormes riquezas a Olancho. 1999. *Noticia de Olancho* (Juticalpa) 3:2.
- Dixon, B.; G. Hasemann; P. Gomez; J. Brady; M. Beaudry-Corbett. 1998. Multiethnicity or multiple enigma, archaeological survey and cave exploration in the Río Talgua drainage, Honduras. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 9:327-40.
- Doel, M. 1995. Bodies without organs, schizoanalysis and deconstruction, pp. 226-40 in Pile and Thrift 1995.
- Doel, M. 1999. *Poststructuralist geographies: the diabolical art of spatial science*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Donnelly, T. W.; Horne, G. S.; Finch, R. C.; E. López-Ramos. 1990. Northern Central America: the Maya and Chortis blocks. Chapter 3, pages 37-76 in Gabriel Dengo and J. E. Case, eds., *The geology of North America Volume H, the Caribbean region*. Boulder CO: Geological Society of America.
- Duellman, W. E. 1966. The Central American herpetofauna: an ecological perspective. *Copeia* 1966(4):700-19.

- Dunbar, G. 1978. *Elisee Reclus: historian of nature*. Hamden CT: Archon Books.
- Durón, R. 1935. Francisco de Paula Flores. RABNH 13:629-32.
- Durón, R. 1938[1846]. Efemerides de Honduras. RABNH 17(2/3):95-100.
- Durón, Romulo. 1939. Recuerdo histórico, La medalla del Batallón de Olancho, Honduras, mandada a acuñar en honra del monarca español Fernando VII. Año de 1808. RABNH 18(2-3):132 facing-134.
- Durón, R. 1996[1896], ed. *Honduras literaria, colección de escritos en prosa y verso*. 2 volumes. Tegucigalpa: Tipografía Nacional.
- Emerson, R. M.; R. I. Fretz; L. L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago and London: U Chicago P.
- Engel, J. R. and J. G. Engel, eds. 1990. *Ethics of environment and development: global challenge, international response*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Escobar, A. 1995. *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Espino, Fray Fernando. 1968[1674]. *Relación verdadera de la reducción de los indios infieles de la Provincia de la Taguisgalpa, llamados Xicaques*. León: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua.
- Euraque, D. 1996. *Reinterpreting the Banana Republic, region and state in Honduras, 1870-1972*. Chapel Hill:University of North Carolina Press.
- Euraque, D. 1998. Antropólogos, arqueólogos, imperialismo y la mayanización de Honduras: 1890-1940. *Yaxkin* 17:85-101.
- Euraque, D. 1999. Federico Lunardi, mayanización e identidad. *Paraninfo* 8(16):159-72.
- Evans, S. 1999. *The green republic, a conservation history of Costa Rica*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Feld, S. and K. H. Basso, eds. 1996. *Senses of place*. Santa Fe: School of American Research.
- Fernández de Oviedo, Gonzalo. 1959[1537-57]. *Historia general y natural de las Indias*. Madrid: Ediciones Atlas.
- Fiallos, E. C. 1909. Memoria del Ministro de Agricultura presentado al Congreso Nacional de 1909. *Gaceta* 3268.
- Fiallos, E. C. 1996[1884]. La importancia del agua. Pages 777-80 in Durón 1996 Vol. 2.
- Figueroa, F. 1935. *Monografía del Departamento de Olancho*. Tegucigalpa: Biblioteca de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Honduras.

- Figueroa, F. 1939. Rasgos Biográficos de Maestros, Don Francisco de Paula Flores. RABNH 18(1):51-4.
- Figueroa, F. 1939a. Serapio Romero. RABNH 18(2-3):83-5.
- Figueroa, F. 1940. El vaso sagrado de la Ciudad Blanca. RABNH 19(4):240-2.
- Forsyth, A. and K. Miyata. 1984. *Tropical nature*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Foucault, M. 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge*. London: Tavistock.
- Gadamer, H.-G. 1994. *Truth and method*. Second, revised ed. New York: Continuum.
- Gade, D. 1974. The Latin American central plaza as functional space. Pages 16-23 in *Latin America: search for geographical explanations*. Austin: Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers.
- Garret y Arlon, fr. Benito. 1991[1711]. El Obispo de Nicaragua haze relación a Vuestra Magestad del origen de los zambos llamados mosquitos y de las bárbaras crueldades que han executado hasta oy en las provincias de Honduras, Nicaragua y Costarrica. 30 de noviembre de 1711. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 299. In Leyva 1991:219-22.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Girard, R. 1938. Conferencia sobre arqueología y etnología nacional. RABNH 17(2/3):132-40. (Speech; includes ethnic affiliation of Indios de Catacamas, Guata, Jano.)
- Goicoechea, José Antonio de Liendo y. c. 1935[1806]. Una carta de Goicoechea. In Rafael Heliodoro Valle, Bicentenario del humanista Goicoechea, RABNH n.d.:246-51.
- Goicoechea, José Antonio de Liendo y. 1937[1807]. Relación sobre los indios gentiles de Pacura. *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia* [Guatemala] 13:301-15.
- Gold, J. 1995. *Clementina Suarez: her life and poetry*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Gollin, J. and R. Mader. 1998. *Honduras, adventures in nature*. Santa Fe NM: John Muir Publications.
- Gómez, Pastor. 1995. Reflexiones sobre la iconografía de una colección cerámica del centro de Olancho. *Yaxkin* 13(1/2):71-91.
- Gordon, M. 1990. Summary of fieldwork. Unpublished report, University of Texas-Austin.
- Gordon, M. 1990. Strike-slip faulting and basin formation at the Guayape Fault-Valle de Catacamas intersection, Honduras, Central America. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Univ. of Texas, Austin.
- Griffin, W. 2000. Honduran Nahuatl Indians alive and well in Olancho. *Honduras This Week* 13(10):1/4, Mar. 4.
- Guifarro Mercadel, S. 1979. *Tierra del oro y del talento cuna*. Tegucigalpa.

- Hagan, J. M., III and D. W. Johnston, eds. 1992. *Ecology and conservation of Neotropical migrant landbirds*. Wash. DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Hardy Nelson S., C. 1986. *Plantas comunes de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitario.
- Harrison, R. P. 1992. *Forests: the shadow of civilization*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago P.
- Healy, P. F. 1983. The paleoecology of the Selin Farm Site (H-CN-5): Department of Colon, Honduras. Pages 35-54 in R. M. Leventhal and A. L. Kolata, eds., *Civilization in the ancient Americas: essays in honor of Gordon R. Wiley*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Healy, P. F. 1978. La arqueología del noreste de Honduras, informe preliminar de la investigación de 1975 y 1976. *Yaxkin* 2(3):159-73.
- Heidegger, M. 1962. *Being and time*. Trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. 1971a. *On the way to language*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. 1971b. *Poetry, language, thought*. Trans. Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper and Row.
- Helbig, K. n.d.[1953]. *Areas y paisajes del noreste de Honduras*. Trans. Guillermo Cano. Tegucigalpa: Banco Central.
- Helbig, K. 1956. *Antiguales (Altertümer) der Paya-Region un die Paya-Indianer von Nordost-Honduras*. Hamburg.
- Herranz, A., ed. 1990. *El español hablado en Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Guaymuras.
- Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de. 1947[written 1601-15; edition of 1726-30]. *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las islas y tierra firme de el Mar océano*. Volume 5. Asunción de Paraguay: Editorial Guaranía.
- Holdridge, L. R. 1957. The vegetation of mainland Middle America. *Eighth Pacific Science Congress, Proceedings* 4: 148-61.
- Holdridge, L. R. 1962. *Mapa ecológico de Honduras*. Wash. DC: Organization of American States.
- Hopkins, J. W. 1995. *Policymaking for conservation in Latin America: national parks, reserves, and the environment*. Westport CT: Praeger.
- Howell, S. N. G. and S. Webb. 1989. Notes on the Honduran emerald. *Wilson Bulletin* 101(4):642-3.
- Howell, S. N. G. and S. Webb. 1991. New and noteworthy bird records from Guatemala and Honduras. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 112:42-9.
- Howell, S. N. G. and S. Webb. 1995. *A guide to the birds of Mexico and northern Central America*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.

- Hunn, E. S. 1977. *Tzeltal folk zoology, the classification of discontinuities in nature*. New York: Academic.
- Incer, J. 1998. *Geografía dinámica de Nicaragua*. Managua: Editorial Hispamer.
- Jansen, K. 1998. *Political ecology, mountain agriculture, and knowledge in Honduras*. Amsterdam: Thela Publishers.
- Janzen, D. H. and P. S. Martin. 1982. Neotropical anachronisms: the fruits the gomphotheres ate. *Science* 215:19-27.
- Janzen, D. H., ed. 1983. *Costa Rican natural history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Johannessen, C. 1954. Preliminary report on field work in the Olancho, Honduras. Unpublished report in Bancroft Library, UC-Berkeley. Includes map, "The Olancho, Honduras" (1:500,000).
- Johannessen, C. 1963. Savannas of interior Honduras. Berkeley: University of California Press. *Ibero-Americana* 46.
- Jones, D. L. 1993. *Cycads of the world*. Wash. DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Junta de Prosperidad de Olancho. Sexta Reunión de la Junta. Juticalpa, 1 mayo 1841. *Redactor* 14:81-2, July 30.
- Koenen, M.; M. C. Wurschy; D. Kwan; with S. Thorn. 1999. Distribution of Nearctic migratory birds in Honduras, with a preliminary evaluation of the resident avifauna of conservation concern. Report to Wings of the Americas/Nature Conservancy. Arlington VA.
- Komor, H. F. 1930. *La tierra del nuevo hogar*, [including] *Apuntes de viaje por los departamentos de El Paraíso, Olancho y Yoro*. Tegucigalpa: Tipografía Nacional.
- Kozuch, M. J. 1989. Geology of the San Francisco de Becerra Quadrangle, Honduras, Central America. Unpublished report. Tegucigalpa: US Peace Corps/Instituto Geográfico Nacional.
- Kramer, R., C. van Schaik, J. Johnson. 1997. *Last stand: protected areas and the defense of tropical biodiversity*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kropotkin, P. 1989. *Mutual aid: a factor of evolution*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
- Lacan, J. 1964. *The four fundamentals of psychoanalysis*. Harmondsworth UK: Penguin.
- Lacan, J. 1977. *Ecrits: a selection*. A. Sheridan, ed. New York: Norton.
- Landa, Luis. 1935. Gimnospermas. In Botánica Sistemática series. RABNH 13(11):715-8.
- Lange, F. W. 1996. *Paths to Central American prehistory*. Niwot CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Lange, F. W. and D. Stone, eds. 1984. *The archaeology of lower Central America*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

- Lara Pinto, G. 1991. Change for survival: the case of the sixteenth-century indigenous populations of northeast and mideast Honduras. Chap. 10, pages 227-43 in Thomas, *Columbian consequences*.
- Lara Pinto, G. and G. Hasemann. 1988. La sociedad indígena del noreste de Honduras en el siglo XVI: ¿Son la etnohistoria y la arqueología contradictorias? *Yaxkin* 11(2):5-28.
- Lefebvre, H. 1991. *The production of space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford UK and Cambridge MA: Blackwell.
- Leigh, E. G., Jr.; A. S. Rand; D. M. Windsor, eds. 1996. *The ecology of a tropical forest: seasonal rhythms and long-term changes*. Wash. DC: Smithsonian Institution.
- Lentz, D. 1993. Medical and other economic plants of the Paya of Honduras. *Economic Botany* 47: 358-70.
- Lentz, D. 1989. Acrocomia Mexicana: la palma de los antiguos mesoamericanos. *Yaxkin* 12(1): 78-101.
- Lester, M. (alias Maria Soltera). 1884. *A lady's ride across Spanish Honduras*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons.
- Leyva, H. M. 1991. *Documentos Coloniales de Honduras*. Choluteca, Honduras: Centro de publicaciones Obispado de Choluteca.
- Lindlof, T. R. 1995. *Qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.
- Livingstone, D. N. 1992. *The geographical tradition, episodes in the history of a contested enterprise*. Oxford UK: Blackwell.
- Loker, W. M. 1996. El desarrollo de la represa de El Cajón: sus efectos sociales y ecológicos en Honduras. *Yaxkin* 14(1/2):55-73.
- López de Gómara, Francisco. 1966[1552]. *Historia general de las Indias "Hispania Vitrix" cuya segunda parte corresponde a la conquista de Méjico*. Barcelona: Obras Maestras.
- López de Salcedo, Diego. 1883[1527]. Carta a Su Magestad de Diego Lopez de Salcedo, refyriendo los motivos que tuvo para embiar preso á Santo Domingo á Diego-de-Albitez, Hernando de Saavedra e otros, con varias notycias interesantes. Chequila.-Hebrero 26 de 1527 (AGI Patronato-Est. 2o-Caj. 1o-Leg. 3/22.) In CDI 40:244-51.
- López de Salcedo, Diego. 1954[1526]. Carta del gobernador de las Provincias de Higueras y Cabo de Honduras, informando a S. M. de su llegada al Puerto de Trujillo, de lo que supo de los indios, del Capitán Francisco Hernández de Córdoba, de las pretensiones de Pedrarias Dávila y de otros muchos sucesos. Villa de Trujillo, postero de diciembre de 1526.-[De la colección Muñoz, Real Academia de la Historia, España. Tomo 77 Folio 368.]. *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:169-91. Madrid: Editorial Andrés Vega Bolaños.

- López de Salcedo, Diego. 1954a[1527]. Carta que Diego López de Salcedo escribió en Chequila, 26 de febrero de 1527, informando como envió al Capitán Diego Albítez, a Sebastián de Benalcázar y Juan de Espinosa, ante los oidores de la Audiencia Real de la Española.-También cuenta las muertes causadas por el Cacique Benito[sic], señor de Comayagua y sus aliados.-[Colección Muñoz. Tomo 78, pág. 52. Academia de la Historia. Madrid.] *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:191-95. Madrid: Editorial Andrés Vega Bolaños.
- López de Salcedo, Diego. 1954b[1528]. Expediente seguido a petición del Gobernador Diego López de Salcedo, contra Hernando de Saavedra: Teniente de Gobernador de Hernán Cortés; contra el Capitán Diego de Albítez: puesto por Pedrarias Dávila ante la población de la Villa de Cáceres. También se trata de la despoblación de esta villa efectuada por Benito Hurtado, Capitán del mencionado Pedrarias.-Trujillo, 6 de mayo de 1528. [Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla. Patronato. Leg. 20 n/4. Ramo 3.] *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:318-70. Madrid: Editorial Andrés Vega Bolaños.
- López de Velasco, Juan. 1894[1574]. *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias*. Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia. (Pages 306-16, Descripción de la Gobernación y Provincia de Honduras, and other sections on Honduras.)
- López G., José Antonio. n.d. Una inundación. Page 96 in R. H. Valle 1847.
- Lorenzana, Christóbal de. 1991[c.1650]. Copia del memorial del abisso que el capitán Christóbal de Lorenzana, vezino de la ciudad de Santiago de Guatemala, dió a Su Magestad para reparo de las turbaciones que los reynos de las yndias pueden tener en lo benidero, ocasionadas por los negros y mulatos que ay en ellas. From Biblioteca Nacional de España. Madrid:Mss/3047 ff 137-142. In Leyva 1991:115-25.
- Lunardi, F. 1948. *Honduras Maya, etnología y arqueología de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Imprenta Calderón.
- Mack, T. 1996. Ephemeral hinterlands and the historical geography of Trujillo, Honduras, 1525-1950. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Mack, T. 1998. Contraband trade through Trujillo, Honduras, 1720s-1782. *Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers Yearbook* 24:45-56.
- MacLeod, M. 1973. *Spanish Central America: A socio-economic history, 1520-1720*. Berkeley: U Calif. P.
- Maldonado, Alonso. 1875[1545]. Carta a S. M. del Licenciado Afonso [sic] Maldonado, acerca del estado de la Gobernación de "Guatymala." CDI 24:343-51.
- Margulis, L. and R. Fester, eds. 1991. *Symbiosis as a source of evolutionary innovation: speciation and morphogenesis*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Martin, G. J. and P. E. James. 1993. *All possible worlds, a history of geographic ideas*. Third ed. New York: Wiley.

- Martínez Castillo, M. F. 1999. *Los últimos días de Lempira, el conquistador español que venció a Lempira*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitaria. (Reproduces AGI Patronato 69 5 Probanza de Rodrigo Ruíz 1569.)
- Martyr d'Anghiera, Peter. 1964[1524]. *Decadas del Nuevo Mundo, por Pedro Martir de Angleria, Primer Cronista de Indias*. Mexico: José Porrúa e Hijos, Sucs.
- Massumi, B. 1992. *A user's guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia, deviations from Deleuze and Guattari*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press (Swerve Ed.s).
- Mathewson, K. 1985. Carl Sauer special session II: south by southwest – An antimodernist apotheosis. *Geographers on Film* 198F.2.
- McBirney, A. R. and H. Williams. 1965. Volcanic history of Nicaragua. *University of California Publications in Geological Sciences* 55:1-65.
- McCranie, J. R. and G. A. Cruz. 1996. A new species of salamander of the *Bolitoglossa dunni* group (Caudata: Plethodontidae) from the Sierra de Agalta, Honduras. *Caribbean Journal of Science* 32(2):195-200.
- Mejía, D. and T. Hawkins. 1992. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. SMC 2-2/92.
- Mejía, D. and T. Hawkins. 1992a. Informe del segundo viaje al Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. SMC 2-5/92.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1992b. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional de Santa Bárbara. SMC 4-4/92.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1992c. Informe del primer viaje a la Reserva Biológica Montecillos. SMC 5-5/92.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1992d. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional Cerro Azul. SMC 7-7/92.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1992e. Informe del primer viaje a la Reserva Biológica Güisayote. SMC 8-8/92.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1993. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional de Azul Meambar. SMC 25-7/93.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1993a. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional de Cusuco. SMC 26-8/93.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1993b. Informe del primer viaje al Parque Nacional de Pico Pijol. SMC 37-19/93.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1993c. Informe del primer viaje a la Reserva Biológica Guajiquiro. SMC 38-20/93.
- Mejía, D. A. and T. Hawkins. 1993d. Los bosques nublados de Honduras. SMC 42-24/93.

- Mejía, M. 1990. *José Antonio Domínguez y el "Himno a la Materia."* Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitaria.
- Mejía, M. 1995[1932]. *Discurso del Dorado*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitaria.
- Mejía, M. 1998. *Cuentos completos*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Iberoamericana. Includes (on Olancho) El día de la Mamisaca (11-9); La hondureña figura de don Ciriaco Tapia (21-5); Doña Apolinaria (27-30); La silla vieja (31-5); El entierro (37-8); Lolié (39-41); Aquí así es... (43-5); El pirata aéreo (47-9); En el higueral (51-5); Doña Josefa Acosta en el bello arte de mentir (57-60); Felipe Bustillo repitió la palabra de Cambronne (71-2); Documentos (137-73).
- Mejía, W. F. 2000. Impacto económico de las quemas de los bosques. *FIDES*:12-3, May 21-27.
- Membreño, A. 1895. *Hondureñismos, vocabulario de los provincialismos de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Tipografía Nacional.
- Membreño, A. 1994[1901]. *Toponimias indígenas de Centroamérica (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala y Nicaragua)*. Forward by Atanasio Herranz. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Mena Cabezas, I. R. 1998. Telenovelas y cultura: reflexiones desde la antropología de la comunicación. *Paraninfo* 7(14):183-92.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. 1994[1962]. *Phenomenology of perception*. Trans. C. Smith. London: Routledge.
- Meza, B. and R. Ramirez. 1982. *Padre Ivan Betancur martir de la iglesia latinoamericana*. Tegucigalpa.
- Molina R., A. 1974. Vegetación del Valle de Comayagua. *Ceiba* 18(1/2):47-69.
- Monroe, B. L., Jr. 1968. *A distributional survey of the birds of Honduras*. American Ornithologists' Union: Ornithological Monographs No. 7.
- Montejo, Francisco. 1875[1539]. Carta á S. M. del Adelantado Don Francisco Montejo sobre el estado y accidentes de la provincia de Guatemala. *CDI* 24:250-97.
- Montejo, Francisco. 1875a[1539]. Carta á S. M. del Adelantado Don Francisco de Montejo acerca del estado de su gobernación. *CDI* 24:298-310.
- Mugerauer, R. 1994. *Interpretations on behalf of place; environmental displacements and alternative responses*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Mugerauer, R. 1996. *Interpreting environments*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Municipalidad de Juticalpa. 1999. Ayuda memoria, reunión mensual de la Red de Cuencas del Valle de Guayape (6/11/1999). (Minutes)
- Municipalidad de San Francisco de la Paz. 1999. Memoria, reunión grupo técnico de la Red de Cuencas, 16 de julio de 1999. (Minutes.)

- Muñoz Galeano, E. 1992. Correspondence to Mark Bonta on Categorización de El Boquerón. Tegucigalpa. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Musset, A. 1995. Mosquitos, piratas y cataclismos: las transformaciones de la red urbana en América Central (Siglos XVI-XVIII). *Yaxkin* 13(1/2):5-36.
- Myers, N. 1984. *The primary source: tropical forests and our future*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Netting, R. 1993. *Smallholders, householders: farm families and the ecology of intensive, sustainable agriculture*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.
- Newson, L. A. 1984. Silver mining in colonial Honduras. *Revista de historia de América* 97:45-76.
- Newson, L. 1986. *The cost of conquest: Indian decline in Honduras under Spanish rule*. Boulder CO: Westview.
- Nicolis, G. and I. Prigogine. 1989. *Exploring complexity, an introduction*. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Nietschmann, B. 1973. *Between land and water: The subsistence ecology of the Miskito Indians, eastern Nicaragua*. London and New York: Seminar Press.
- Olivera C., C. A. 1954. Vengan a tomar vino de coyol. *Avance* 5(72).
- Olson, E. and P. McGrew. 1941. Mammalian fauna from the Pliocene of Honduras. *Bulletin of the Geographical Society of America* 52:1219-43.
- Olsson, G. 1991. *Lines of power, limits of language*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Olwig, K. 1996. Recovering the substantive nature of landscape. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86(4):630-53.
- Organización del Boqueron para Rescatar el Ambiente (OBRA). 2000. Ayudenos a proteger los recursos naturales y el ambiente. Unpublished flier.
- Organización del Boqueron para Rescatar el Ambiente (OBRA). Aug. 4, 1997. Correspondence to Jorge Betancourt. Includes program of Taller de Consolidación. Juticalpa. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Organización del Boqueron para Rescatar el Ambiente (OBRA). Feb. 1, 1994. Letter to potential members. Juticalpa. Boquerón File, PCH-NR.
- Ortega, P. 1946. *Patrio lares*. First ed. Tegucigalpa.
- Ortega, P. 1951. *Patrios lares*. Second ed. Tegucigalpa.

- Ovalle, Pedro de and Lorenzo de Guevara 1991[1681]. Breve manifiesto y relación sucinta del origen, progresos, y estado de las conversiones de los yndios xicaques, paías y haras, en que han entendido y actualmente están entendiendo, religiosos de la Seráfica Orden de Nuestro Padre San Francisco, hijos de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Guatemala, en las Governaciones de Honduras y Nicaragua. Año de 1681. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 183. In Leyva 1991:136-60.
- Pagoaga, R. A. n.d. *Paisaje y cultura olanchana*. Tegucigalpa: Imprenta Calderón.
- Parsons, J. J. 1955. The Miskito pine savanna of Nicaragua and Honduras. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 45:36-63.
- Pedrarias Dávila. 1954[1525]. Carta de Pedrarias Dávila al Emperador, refiriendo el descubrimiento de Nicaragua por su lugarteniente Francisco Hernández de Córdoba.- [Colección Muñoz: Real Academia de la Historia de España.-Tomo LXXVII, folios 140 a 149]. *Colección Somoza, Documentos para la historia de Nicaragua* 1:128-31. Editorial Andrés Vega Bolaños. Madrid.
- Pedraza, Cristobal de. 1898[1544]. Onduras e Igueras 1544. Relación de la Provincia de Honduras y Higuera por el Obispo D. Cristobal de Pedraza obispo de Honduras. CDIU 11 (*Relaciones de Yucatán*):385-434.
- Pedraza, Cristobal de. 1991[1547]. Carta a S. M. del Obispo de Honduras Cristóbal de Pedraza solicitando auxilios y reales provisiones para el mejor gobierno espiritual y protección de los naturales. 1 de mayo de 1547. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 164. In Leyva 1991:11-50.
- Peet, R. and M. Watts, eds. 1996. *Liberation ecologies, environment, development, social movements*. London: Routledge.
- Perry, J. P., Jr. 1990. *The pines of Mexico and Central America*. Portland OR:Timber Press.
- Pile, S. and N. Thrift, eds. 1995. *Mapping the subject, geographies of cultural transformation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Pineda Portillo, N. 1997. *Geografía de Honduras*. 3rd ed.. Tegucigalpa.
- Pineda Portillo, N. 1998. *Historia de la cartografía hondureña*. Tegucigalpa: Instituto Geográfico Nacional.
- Pleitos de Colón I*. 1892[1512-4]. CDIU 7.
- Pleitos de Colón II*. 1894[1515]. CDIU 8.
- Porksen, U. 1995. *Plastic words: the tyranny of a modular language*. University Park PA: Penn State University Press.
- Portig, W. H. 1965. Central American rainfall. *Geographical Review* 65(1):68-90.
- Prigogine, I. and I. Stengers. 1997. *The end of certainty; time, chaos, and the new laws of nature*. New York: The Free Press.

- Primack, R.B.; D. B. Bray; H. A. Gallei, I. Ponciano, eds. 1998. *Timber, tourists, and temples: Conservation and development in the Maya forest of Belize, Guatemala and Mexico*. Wash. DC: Island Press.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." 1993. Informe de gira 93-01. COHDEFOR-ENMO-Comunidad, Juticalpa.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." 1993. Informe de gira 93-02. COHDEFOR-ENMO-Comunidad, Juticalpa.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." 1993. Informe de gira 93-03. COHDEFOR-ENMO-Comunidad, Juticalpa.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." 1993. Qué es Proyecto "Rescatemos El Boquerón"? Juticalpa. Pamphlet. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." 1993. Resumen de trabajo. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Proyecto "Rescatemos el Boquerón; Monumento Nacional." March 17, 1993. Letter and *convenio* draft for management of El Boquerón. Juticalpa. Boquerón file, PCH-NR.
- Pyne, S. J. 1997. *Vestal fire: an environmental history, told through fire, of Europe and Europe's encounter with the world*. Seale and London: University of Washington Press.
- Ramos, K. and M. Valenzuela. 1996. *Por cuentas, aquí en Nacaome, Literatura oral de la Zona Sur, Volumen 3*. Tegucigalpa: Secretaría de Cultura y las Artes.
- Ramos, K. and M. Valenzuela. 1997. *Por cuentas, aquí en Sabanagrande, Literatura oral de la Zona Sur, Volumen 4*. Tegucigalpa: Secretaría de Cultura y las Artes.
- Ramos, K. and M. Valenzuela. 1997a. *Por cuentas, aquí en Texiguat, Literatura oral de la Zona Sur, Volumen 5*. Tegucigalpa: Secretaría de Cultura y las Artes.
- Ramos, M. A.; F. Figueroa; Z. Alvarez G. 1947. *Conociendo a Olancho*. Tegucigalpa.
- Rappole, J. H. 1996. Golden-cheeked warbler winter habitat delineation. Final report to the National Biological Service. Lafayette LA: National Biological Service, Southern Science Center.
- Reagan, D. P. and R. B. Waide, eds. 1996. *The food web of a tropical rain forest*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Reclus, Elisée. 1897. IV.-Honduras. Pages 255-70 in *The earth and its inhabitants, North America, Vol. II, Mexico, Central America, West Indies*. Ed. A. H. Keane. New York: D. Appleton and Company.
- Reese, W. D. 1993. Syrrhopodon autotomaius, a remarkable new species of Calymperaceae (Musci) from Honduras. *The Bryologist* 96(1):145-8.
- Rehn, J. A. G. 1930. A naturalist in Honduras. *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 66:390-400.

- Relación breve y verdadera de algunas cosas de las muchas que sucedieron al padre Fray Alonso Ponce en las provincias de la Nueva España, siendo Comisario General de aquellas partes.* 1875[1586]. Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Calero.
- Relación de los religiosos franciscanos que ay en la seráfica provincia del Santísimo nombre de Jesús de Guathemala, de los que tiene en las reducciones de su cargo, el número de ellas y su situación, según y en la conformidad que se ordena por Real Cédula de 21 de mayo de 1747. Año de 1748.* From Biblioteca Nacional de México: Archivo Franciscano Caja 60 Exp. 1185 no. 3. In Leyva 1991:227-43.
- Relf, E. 1976. *Place and placelessness*. London: Pion.
- Reyes Mazzoni, R. 1974. El nombre de Olancho y los grupos de habla Nahuat en Honduras. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, *Notas Antropológicas* 1(5):31-9.
- Richardson, M. 1970. *San Pedro, Colombia: small town in a developing society*. Prospect Heights IL: Waveland Press.
- Richardson, M. 1982. Being-in-the-market versus being-in-the-plaza: material culture and the construction of social reality in Spanish America. *American Ethnologist*:421-36.
- Richardson, M. 1994. Unamuno and the flesh-and-blood, celebratory critique of the postmodern play of signification. *Journal of the Steward Anthropological society* 22(2):177-94.
- Richardson, M. 1994a. Writing poetry and doing ethnography: aesthetics and observation on the page and in the field. *Anthropology and Humanism* 19(1):77-87.
- Richardson, M. 1998. The poetics of a resurrection: re-seeing 30 years of change in a Colombian community and in the anthropological enterprise. *American Anthropologist* 100(1):11-40.
- Rose, G. 1992. Geography as a science of observation: the landscape, the gaze, and masculinity. Reprinted as chap. 20 (pp. 341-50) in Agnew, J.; D. Livingstone; A. Rogers, eds. 1996. *Human geography: an essential anthology*. Cambridge MA and Oxford UK: Blackwell.
- Rosenweig, H. 2000. Shipment of mahogany seized in protected area. *Honduras This Week* 13(3):1/6, Jan. 15.
- Rubi Zapata, V. 1986. *Mi Juticalpa y yo: retazos de dos biografías en un agradable revoltijo*. Juticalpa, Honduras.
- Ruiz, O. R.; M. Vélez; and D. Kaegi. 1988. Análisis de la producción de hatos de doble propósito en Olancho, Honduras. *Ceiba* 29(1):93-114.
- Ryden, K. 1993. *Mapping the invisible landscape: folklore, writing, and the sense of place*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Saavedra, D. 1935. *Bananas, gold and silver, oro y plata*. Tegucigalpa: Talleres Tipográficos Nacionales.

- Sachs, W., ed. 1992. *The development dictionary: a guide to knowledge as power*. Atlantic Heights NJ: Zed Books.
- Said Mejía, O. 2000. Desertificación acelerada se comprueba en el extenso Parque Nacional Patuca. *La Tribuna*:18, Feb. 21.
- Sampson, J. R. 1997. Indigenous lands in a developing region: a historical ethnogeography of Pech Indians of Eastern Honduras, with emphases on recent settlement and land use changes. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Santana, A. 1998. La futbolización del mundo. *Paraninfo* 7(14):193-200.
- Sapper, K. 1937. *Mittelamerika: Handbuch der regionalen Geologie, Band 8, 4a*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung.
- Sarmiento, J. A. 1990. *Historia de Olancho*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.
- Sauer, C. O. 1992. *Early Spanish Main*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Savage, J. M. 1966. The origin and history of the Central American herpetofauna. *Copeia* 1966(4):719-66.
- Schmidt, K. P. 1926. Honduras. Section 4, pages 601-602 in Victor E. Shelford, ed., *Naturalist's guide to the Americas*. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Company.
- Schmidt, K. P. 1942. A cloud forest camp in Honduras. *Chicago Naturalist* 5(2):23-30.
- Seamon, D. and C. Nordin. 1980. Marketplace as place ballet: a Swedish example. *Landscape* 24(3): 35-41.
- Seamon, D. and R. Mugerauer, eds. 1985. *Dwelling, place and environment: towards a phenomenology of person and world*. Dordrecht, Neth.: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Secretaría de Recursos Naturales – Agencia Canadiense para el Desarrollo GOH – ACDI, Proyecto de Desarrollo Agrícola del Valle de Guayape, Componente de Recursos Naturales. 1996. Selección y priorización de microcuencas de la cuenca del Río Guayape. Juticalpa, Olancho. Unpublished report.
- Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente. 1999. Solicitud de licencia ambiental para el desarrollo del Proyecto Hidroeléctrico "Babilonia." Informe Técnico no. 179/99. Includes memorandum from Miguel Angel Arevalo C., Director/DECA, to Gilberto Flores (July 7, 1999).
- Seguridad envía equipo a investigar lo de los 550 olanchanos armados. 1999. *La Tribuna*:12, June 30.
- Serrano, A. 1998. Huracán. *Paraninfo* 7(14):1-24.
- Sherman, W. L. 1979. *Forced native labor in sixteenth century Central America*. Lincoln and London: Univ. of Nebraska Press.

- Sierra Fonseca, R. 1998. Manuel Subirana como personaje mesiánico. *Paraninfo* 7(14):115-24.
- Sierra, Fonseca, R. 1999. Liberales y la política eclesiástica durante el siglo XIX. *Paraninfo* 8(15):105-19.
- Sletto, B. 1999. Getting it on the map. *Wildlife Conservation* 102(6):24-9.
- Smith, C. 1988. *Collins Spanish-English English-Spanish Dictionary, second ed.*
- Solangi Ardila, O. 2000. San Francisco de Opalaca, la legendaria vida de los lencas. *El Herald* "Vida":8B-9B, June 24.
- Soto, M. A. 1996[1881]. Santa Lucía, Felipe II, y el Valle de Angeles. Pages 445-55 in Durón 1996, Vol. 2.
- Sponsel, L. E.; T. N. Headland; and R. C. Bailey, eds. 1996. *Tropical deforestation: the human dimension*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
- Squier, E. G. 1855. *Notes on Central America*. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Squier, E. G. (alias Samuel F. Bard). 1965[1855]. *Waikna; or, Adventures on the Mosquito Shore*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press.
- Squier, E. G. 1870. *Honduras; descriptive, historical and statistical*. London: Trübner and Co.
- Stadelman, R. E. 1931. La conquista de El Pijol, por R. E. Stadelman, superintendente del Serpentario antivenin institute of America, Tela, Honduras. Trad. Por Percy P. Buck. (Part 2.) *RABNH* 10(4/5):167-8.
- Steward, J. H., ed. 1948. *Handbook of South American Indians: volume 4, the Circum-Caribbean tribes*. Wash. DC: Government Printing Office.
- Stoller, P. 1989. *The taste of ethnographic things; the senses in anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Stonich, S. 1992. Struggling with Honduran poverty: the environmental consequences of natural resource-based development and rural transformations. *World Development* 20(3): 385-99.
- Stonich, S. and B. R. DeWalt. 1996. The political ecology of deforestation in Honduras. In Sponsel et al.
- Storti, C. and L. Bennhold-Samaan. n.d. *Culture matters, the Peace Corps cross-cultural handbook*. Wash. DC: Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange.
- Stotz, D.; J. W. Fitzpatrick; T. Parker III; and D. Moskovits. 1996. *Neotropical birds: ecology and conservation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Strong, W. D. 1948. The archaeology of Honduras. In Steward 1948.
- Stuart, L. C. 1966. The environment of the Central American cold-blooded vertebrate fauna. *Copeia* 1966(4):684-99.

- Styles, B. T. and P. S. McCarter. 1988. The botany, ecology, distribution and conservation status of *Pinus patula* ssp. *tecunumanii* in the Republic of Honduras. *Ceiba* 29(1):3-27.
- Subkowiak, M. 1991. Formulario de solicitud de voluntario. PNSA file, PCH-NR.
- Sundberg, J. 1998. Strategies for authenticity, space, and place in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Petén, Guatemala. *Yearbook, Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers* 24(85-96).
- Sundberg, J. 1999. Conservation encounters: NGOs, local people, and changing cultural landscapes. PhD dissertation, University of Texas-Austin.
- Sunderlin, W. D. and J. A. Rodriguez. 1996. Cattle, broadleaf forest and the agricultural modernization law of Honduras, the case of Olancho. Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR): *Occasional Paper No. 7*, March 1996.
- Swenarski de Herrera, L. 1994. Help for Honduras, a country at the crossroads of conservation. *Wildlife Conservation* Sept./Oct.:41-8.
- Thomas, D. H., ed. 1991. *Columbian consequences, vol. 3: the Spanish borderlands in Pan-American perspective*. Wash. DC: Smithsonian.
- Thompson, D. E. 1995. Observations of golden-cheeked warblers wintering in Guatemala and Honduras, final report. Unpublished report to United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin, TX.
- Tuan, Y.-F. 1974. *Topophilia: a study of environmental perception, attitudes and values*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Tuan, Y.-F. 1977. *Space and place: the perspective of experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tuan, Y.-F. 1991. Language and the making of place: a narrative-descriptive approach. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81(4):684-96.
- Tucker, C. M. 1999. Private versus common property forests: forest conditions and tenure in a Honduran community. *Human Ecology* 27(2):201-30.
- Turcios, F. 1941[1938]. Mendigos de Juticalpa. *RABNH* 19(8):433-4.
- Turcios, F. 1990[1911]. *Tierra maternal (Olancho)*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitaria. (Poems and stories on Olancho): Tierra maternal; Catacamas; El Real; Río Tinto; Manto; Campamento; A un campesino; Los pinares; Los venados; Selva olanchana; los alcaravanes; Río Tinto; Los coyolares; Primera cita; Flatua rústica; Muchacha campesina; Pájaros del crepúsculo; Río natal; Días preteritos; Valle de Lepaguare; Río de Guayape; Fue así como ella me amó; Viejo tronco; A Juticalpa. Episodios de mi tierra (short stories): El parricida: Un drama campestre; Las garras del tigre; Idilio roto; El valor; Soledad; El asesino.
- Urban, P. A. and E. M. Schortman, eds. 1986. *The southeast Maya periphery*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press.

- Urbina Ordoñez, E. 1971. Datos históricos de los indígenas de la aldea de El Carbón, municipio de San Esteban, departamento de Olancho, escritos por el ex-director de la Escuela Rural mixta "Manuel Bonilla" de dicho lugar. Unpublished manuscript, 61 pages. Siguatepeque, Honduras. Unique copy in collection of Esteban Urbina, La Venta, Gualaco.
- Valdes, Francisco S. 1841. El 23 de abril próximo pasado se instaló la Junta de Prosperidad de Olancho, y el Señor Gefe Político Departamental, en aquel acto, pronunció el discurso siguiente. *Redactor* 13:76-7, July 15.
- Valle, R. H., ed. c.1947. *Semblanza de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Imprenta Calderón. Selections have no references. Excerpts related to Olancho include: P. E. Meza, El misterioso Río Tinto 13-4. G. R. Perry, Los lagos de Honduras 17-8. C. Scherzer, Riquezas amortizadas [Honduras] 40-1. A. T. Byrne, Las tierras auríferas de Olancho 53-4. Bernabé Cobo, El Higüero y las Hibueras [Honduras] 59. A. G. Zelaya, El almendro del patio 73[excerpt?]. Sa. Rosales, Tierras de Olancho 102-3. Henry Lépidus, El vino de coyol 133-4. Luis Díaz Navarro, Unos mulatos 153-4.
- Valle, R. H. 1934. Estudios geográficos de don José del Valle. *RABNH* 13:104-5.
- Valle, R. H. 1938. Memorias de Honduras. *RABNH* 17(1):52-4. (1860 Flood.)
- Vallejo, A. R. 1997[1893]. *Primer anuario estadístico correspondiente al año de 1889*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Universitaria. (Includes Censo General, 1887.)
- Vargas y Abarca, Fray Alonso de. 1991[1688]. Carta a S. M. del Obispo fr. Alonso de Vargas y Abarca en la que hace relación de los clérigos de su obispado. 14 de febrero de 1688. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 164. In Leyva 1991:196-9.
- Vargas y Abarca, Fray Alonso de. 1991[1696]. Carta a S. M. del Obispo de Honduras fray Alonso de Vargas y Abarca sobre la Reducción y Misión de los Payas a cargo de la Orden de San Francisco. 27 de febrero 1696. From AGI Audiencia de Guatemala 164. In Leyva 1991:202-4.
- Vázquez de Espinosa, P. Antonio. 1969[1629]. *Compendio y descripción de las Indias Occidentales*. Ed. B. Velasco Bayón. Madrid: Ediciones Atlas.
- Vázquez, Francisco. 1944[1714]. *Crónica de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Guatemala de la Orden de N. Seráfico Padre San Francisco en el Reino de la Nueva España*. second ed. Volume 4. Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional. Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala: Vol. 17.
- Von Hagen, V. W. 1940. *Jungle in the clouds*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce.
- Vovides, A. P. 1990. Spatial distribution, survival, and fecundity of *Dioon Edule* (Zamiaceae) in a tropical deciduous forest in Veracruz, Mexico, with notes on its habitat. *American Journal of Botany* 77(12):1532-43.
- Wake, D. B. and J. F. Lynch. 1976. The distribution, ecology, and evolutionary history of plethodontid salamanders in tropical America. *Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Science Bulletin* 25, Nov. 19.

- Wallace, D. R. 1992. Unfathomed forests, potential for preservation in Honduras. *Pacific Discovery*, Fall:30-5.
- Wallace, D. R. 1995. *Adventuring in Central America*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Wallace, D. R. 1997. *The monkey's bridge, mysteries of evolution in Central America*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Weinsheimer, J. 1985. *Gadamer's hermeneutics: a reading of Truth and Method*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.
- Wells, W. V. 1856. A visit to the silver mines of Central America. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 12(72):721-33, May..
- Wells, W. V. 1856a. Adventures in the gold fields of Central America. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 12:315-36.
- Wells, W. V. 1856b. *Walker's exped. to Nicaragua; a history of the Central American war; and the Sonora and Kinney exped.s, including all the recent diplomatic correspondence, together with a new and accurate map of Central America, and a memoir and portrait of General William Walker*. New York: Stringer and Townsend. ("Guayape Gold Region," 121-2.)
- Wells, W. V. 1857. *Explorations and adventures in Honduras, comprising sketches of travel in the gold regions of Olancho, and a review of the history and general resources of Central America*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- West, R. C. 1959. The mining economy of Honduras during the colonial period. *Actas, Congreso Internacional de Americanistas* 33 (San José, Costa Rica):159-65.
- West, R. C. 1990. Pioneers of modern geography, translations pertaining to German geographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chap. 6, pages 133-88, Karl Sapper (1866-1945) in *Geoscience and Man* 28.
- Weyl, R. 1980. *Geology of Central America*, second ed. Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger.
- Williams, H. 1952. "The great eruption of Coseguina, Nicaragua, in 1835." *University of California Publications in Geological Sciences* 29:21-46.
- Wilson, L. D. 1982. *Snakes of Honduras*. Milwaukee Public Museum.
- Young, K. G. 1987. *Taleworlds and storyrealms*. Dordrecht, Neth.: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Young, T. 1842. *Narrative of a residence on the Mosquito Shore during the years 1839, 1840, 1841*. London: Smith, Edler and Co.
- Yuncker, T. G. 1939. Notes on a semi-arid region in the Aguan River Valley, Republic of Honduras. *Torrey* 1939(5):133-9.

Yuncker, T. G. 1940. Flora of the Aguán Valley and the coastal regions near La Ceiba Honduras. *Publication 466, Botanical Series Field Museum of Natural History* 9(4):245-346..

Yuncker, T. G. 1945. The vegetation of Honduras, a brief review. Pages 55-6 in Frans Verdoorn, ed, *Plantas and plant science in Latin America*. Waltham MA:Chronica Botanica.

Zuñiga Andrade, E. 1990. *Las modalidades de la lluvia en Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Guaymuras.

Appendix A

Colonial Tribute Towns in Olancho el Viejo

The two most detailed extant lists of colonial tribute towns in Olancho before 1660 are from 1582 (Contreras Guevara in Leyva 1991) and 1592 (in Davidson 1991). Data below are numbers of *tributarios*, and can be construed as number of families. Variations in *pueblo* orthography are included where they might change pronunciation or lead to other undue confusion. "Z," pronounced as "S," is interchangeable with "Ç" or "C."

<i>Pueblo</i>	1582	1592	Fate
---------------	------	------	------

Valle de Gualaco/Agalta

Chindona	80	45	Abandoned 1730; became titled <i>sitio</i> in 1779.
Gualaco	50	23	Almost all remaining tribs. died in a 1733 epidemic; G. became town of <i>mulatos</i> . "Indios de Gualaco" survive today in remote <i>caseríos</i> .
Saguay	20	19	Died out by 1700; became titled <i>sitio</i> in 1779.
San Buenaventura			Paya mission in late 1600s, became tribute town in 1700s, Indians disappeared by mid-1800s.

Río Guata (Mame) watershed

Laguata	25	54	Had 50 tribs., 175 <i>almas</i> , in 1800; no <i>mulatos</i> . Became <i>mulato</i> in late 1800s and early 1900s; "Indios de Guata" survive today in several <i>aldeas</i> .
Jano (Xano)	30	41	Had 53 tribs., 234 <i>almas</i> , in 1800; no <i>mulatos</i> . Recent situation same as Laguata. Both towns held extensive <i>ejidos</i> and <i>cofradías</i> with herds of cattle.
Comayagüilla/-güela	8/5		Despite its early disappearance from the records, it is an <i>aldea</i> and <i>comarca</i> of Jano today.

Northwestern Olancho

Yupitilencia, Yupite	10	11	Disappeared by 1700, <i>comarca</i> name carried over to largest <i>aldea</i> in present-day <i>municipio</i> of Yocón.
Yupiteyocón, Yocón	60	59	Mixed Indian/Ladino town by 1801. Ladinos predominated; both had lands, indigenous elements disappeared in 1800s.

Pueblo**1582 1592****Fate****Valle de Arriba (Río Telica watershed)**

Silcacomayagua, Silca	30	21	Tribs. disappeared by 1757 (AGCA A3.16 2325 34320), when town had become Ladino, with six Spanish families. Became head of Curato de Silca in 1736.
Mantocanola, Manto	20	32	Became capital of Olancho el Viejo before 1660, until 1821, and from 1829 to 1865. Indians present probably in <i>aldeas</i> , in 1801. Predominantly Ladino from the 1700s.
Cilimongapa	8		Though it was not recorded again, the name remained as the hacienda of the Spanish Herrera family in late 1600s onward.
Punuara	12/20		Disappeared. May have left Panuaya <i>comarca</i> name; there is one near Silca, at the <i>pano</i> (Nahuatl "ford") of Telica, and another above Juticalpa, at <i>pano</i> of Río Juticalpa.
Zapota			May have been known by a different name (Texilque/Tijilque?) in the 1500s; a "Zapota" that appears in 1582 and 1592 is a different one in or near the Valle de Aguán. The one listed here became an important tribute town by 1662; in 1801 has Ladinos and Indians (Anguiano misprint "Sacapa"), both with lands. Indians disappeared by late 1800s.

Valle de Abajo--northeast

Catacamas	30	12	Became wealthiest Indian town (in lands and cattle) in 1600s Honduras, largest Indian town in Olancho in 1801 (897 <i>almas</i>) and had no Ladinos until mid-1800s. Indians survive today, as Tribu Jamaska, in <i>aldeas</i> .
Punuara	12/20	10	Closest town to San Jorge in 1500s, at ford of Río de Olancho; Indians absorbed by Real in 1700s; part of former lands became <i>sitio</i> by 1668, expanded by 1770; Ladino <i>aldea</i> (Punuare) existed by late 1700s.
[Sta. María del] Real	25?		Important Indian town from 1660s onward; had a different name (Guanapo?), or didn't exist in 1500s. Became Ladino in 1800s.
Taloea, Talgua, Talva		16	Stopped paying tribute by 1751; remained as Indian <i>aldea</i> in late 1700s; area now Ladino but with remaining Indios de Catacamas nearby.
Yaroa		15	Did not reappear as tribute settlement. As "Yarauca," mentioned as Indian <i>aldea</i> in late 1700s; Ladino <i>aldea</i> today.

Pueblo 1582 1592 Fate

Valle de Abajo--southwest

Comayagüela/-güilla	8/5		Did not reappear as tribute town. San Felipe mission built on spot 1670s; by 1770 had long been a <i>sitio</i> .
Cotacali	10	14	Disappeared altogether by 1700, leaving not even a toponym
Juticalpa			Existed in its present spot by the 1680s; still had 4 or 5 tribute Indians in 1740. Became dominant Ladino and Spanish settlement in Olancho in 1700s, capital from 1821 to 1829, and after 1865.
Xalapa	4		Unless the name applied to the Jalapa of Nueva Segovia, disappeared as tribute town. Land titles from 1680s in the Juticalpa area mention a "Xalapa."

Valle de Aguán

Agalteca	50/58	59	Switched jurisdiction between Trujillo and Olancho el Nuevo in this period. Not part of Olancho el Viejo tributes by 1662. Appears as sizeable Indian tribute town of Olanchito in Anguiano (1801).
Juticalpa	20	8	Disappeared, possibly without leaving toponym; and/or moved to Valle de Olancho. At or near convergences of colonial trails from Olancho el Viejo and from Comayagua, that continued to Trujillo.
Maloa	8	4	Switched jurisdictions; see Agalteca. In Valle de Aguán (though there is also a "Maloa" <i>caserio</i> near Guata today).
Matapique/Metapa	30	24	Name comes from Nahuatl for agave (<i>pita</i>) which was grown in plantations west of Olancho el Nuevo since the early 1600s at least (according to Vázquez de Espinosa)

Unknown Locations--Nahuatl-derived toponyms

Cacaosuchil/Cacaguasuchi	15	11	Last mention was in 1616 (AGCA A1.39 1751 f. 222).
Cuchiapa	8		Never mentioned again.
Guapinolapa	4		Never mentioned again. Misspelled "Goapinchipa" in published versions of 1582 list.
Tepaneca		8	
Texilque/Tijilque			Possibly Zapota (see above).
Yaguale	3		Never mentioned again. There is a Río Yaguale forming the northwest border of Olancho, and an <i>aldea</i> Yaguale in west-central Olancho.
Zanoara		6	

Unknown locations--probably proto-Pech- or Misumalpan-derived

Coroora	15		Proto-Pech?
Taporoora		9	The "-ura" suffix is common only in proto-Pech areas: e.g. Guaimura, Pacura, Pezacura, Goacura.
Maguina	7		Same place as following? Misumalpan.
Maguina	7	5	Last mentioned in 1616
Yalaguina	18		Though "-guina" may be related to Pech "sorcerer" (Conzemius 1928), it appears to be Misumalpan. There is a Yalaguina in the Nueva Segovia; with "Xalapa," these may have paid tribute to Olancho el Viejo at some period including 1582 and before 1592.
Malcao	6		Possibly related to Pech for "house."
Talsina	10		Misumalpan?
Taycones	8,7,15		Certainly proto-Pech. Not mentioned after 1590, when there were 6 "barrios." With Zaire, located in northeastern Olancho and possibly the Valle de Aguán. Other names (AGCA 1561 Corella <i>probanza</i>) include Çacaram, Cotunga, and Çabanaco.
Zaire	12		Mentioned in 1561.

Unknown Locations-Unknown etymology

Coay		4	
Gualpay	15	6	Lenca or Nahuatl?
Guanapo	25		See Real, above. The long-running land dispute between Catacamas and Real centers on the location of a "Quebrada de Guanapito" mentioned in eighteenth-century titles. Possibly coincidence; could be misspelling of "Guanpao," Wampú.
Gueycanola	37		Not mentioned before or since; probably too large to have disappeared; may have changed name. May mean "old canola" and be related to Mantocanola. "Canola" is of unknown derivation, appeared in several other toponyms of the period, but disappeared by 1650.
Taupán	14	4	Did not reappear as tribute town. Verdelete, according to Vázquez (1944[1714]), encountered the "Taopanes" on the Patuca around 1610, and these were friends of the Taguacas.

Appendix B

Municipios of Olancho

<i>Municipio</i> (name the same as its central <i>pueblo</i> , unless indicated otherwise)	Area (km ²) ₁	Population 1988 ₂	Population 2000 ₃	Population density 2000 (per km ²)	Number of <i>Aldeas</i> ₄
Campamento	396	10,860	16,630	42	9
Catacamas	7,261	52,520	82,090	11.3	14
Concordia	271	5,700	8,370	30.9	10
Dulce Nombre de Culmí	2,961	14,880	24,410	8.2	26
El Rosario	145	3,010	4,910	33.9	7
Esquipulas del Norte	530	3,860	6,320	11.9	7
Gualaco	2,392	11,740	17,490	7.3	11
Guarizama	165	5,560	8,130	49.3	4
Guata	688	7,207	13,510	19.6	5
Guayape	428	11,170	17,640	41.2	14
Jano	367	2,250	3,600	9.8	7
Juticalpa ₅	(2,655)	61,100	84,010	(31.6)	51
La Unión	563	4,280	6,320	11.2	4
Mangulile	438	6,220	11,120	25.4	15
Manto	524	9,020	12,640	24.1	8
Patuca ₆	(630)	12,730	17,500	(27.8)	12
Salamá	342	6,240	9,250	27.1	7
San Esteban	1,977	14,170	21,280	10.8	21
San Francisco de Becerra	340	5,700	7,520	22.1	6
San Francisco de la Paz	540	13,500	19,780	36.6	12
Santa María del Real	234	6,320	9,000	38.5	2
Silca	259	6,090	8,690	33.6	5
Yocón	246	7,570	11,170	45.4	8
OLANCHO (23 Municipios)	24,351	282,020	421,340	17.3	265

1,2 Source: SECPLAN 1988 in Instituto Geográfico Nacional 1990, *Departamento de Olancho*.

3,4 Source: Source: CIAT-Laderas 1997

(www.interl.hn/org/ciathili/BIBLIOT/DP35/olancho/munola.htm) , based on Hond. government statistics.

5 Juticalpa lost area in 1992 due to creation of Patuca, below. Present area is my estimate based on subtraction of Patuca's area.

6 *Municipio* created in 1992. Area (not given in IGN 1990) is estimated by author. *Cabecera municipal* was former "Aldea Nueva Palestina," now known officially as "Froylan Turcios." Residents, mostly immigrants from southern Honduras, prefer the former name.

Vita

Mark Bonta, son of Marcia Myers Bonta and Bruce Bonta, was born on October eighth, 1969, in Maine. He grew up outside of Tyrone on a wooded mountaintop farm in the Ridge and Valley section of central Pennsylvania. He has two older brothers, Steven and David. His mother fostered in him a love of nature. His love of traveling and geography was supported at an early age by maps and travel accounts he obtained at Penn State, thanks to his father, a reference librarian at Penn State, and his friend Amelia Harding of the Penn State Maps Library. His dreams of traveling to “exotic” lands reached fulfillment with a four-month stay in Lima, Peru in 1985, and a one-year Rotary Exchange voyage to Cebu, Philippines, from 1986 to 1987.

Bonta attended Penn State University from 1987 to 1990, earning his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Geography, under the tutelage of Professor Peter Gould. Gould had an unforgettable impact on Bonta, especially because he always told him in no uncertain terms “You are a geographer.” Bonta’s outstanding opportunity at Penn State came in the form of a voyage to Niger and Burkina Faso, facilitated by Doctor Thomas Hale. That trip more than anything defined Bonta’s belief that science as yet had only scraped the surface of human reality.

In 1990, Bonta was introduced to the world of rain forest conservation through an internship with the National Audubon Society in Washington, DC. He then received an invitation to join the United States Peace Corps in an assignment to Honduras. From 1991 to 1993 he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer, under Honduran conservationist Jorge Betancourt, and worked on conservation and sustainable development in the department of Olancho. During that time, Bonta became inextricably entangled with the Sierra de Agalta National Park, participating in and coordinating numerous scientific expeditions to document biodiversity; he worked closely with Honduran conservationists, particularly Ana María Erazo, Manuel Rey Figueroa, and Francisco Urbina. With Urbina, he produced an inventory of the birds of the Sierra de Agalta,

and has continued until time of writing to promote birdwatching and publish avifaunal documentation on the region.

Bonta attended the University of Texas at Austin from 1994 to 1995 and 1996 to 1997. He obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Geography under the tutelage of Professor Robin Doughty, and also worked closely with Professor Ian Manners. He became a specialist in Latin Americanist cultural geography, and his thesis, entitled "Shared worlds: people and birds in central Olancho, Honduras," looked at the intimate relations between humans and avifauna as a basis for conservation. From there, he expanded the theme of people and birds into a book that is under contract at time of writing.

In 1995, Bonta married Luz Medina Rojas, a native of Juticalpa, Olancho, Honduras. At time of writing they have one daughter, five-year-old Eva Luz. Luz's love for Honduras and for history and family has spurred Mark's desire for his work to remain faithful and relevant to Honduran society.

Bonta received a Regents Fellowship for four years of study and research at the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He was a doctoral student in the Department of Geography and Anthropology, under the tutelage of Professor Miles Richardson, attending seminars and discussing ideas with Professor Kent Mathewson and Professor William V. Davidson as well. At LSU, Bonta focused on Latin American cultural geography and on Continental theory, weaving both into the fabric of the present dissertation. With his family, he spent a total of two years in Juticalpa, Honduras, based at the house of his mother-in-law *doña* Clara Luz Rojas, and undertaking field research throughout the department of Olancho. He worked closely with his wife Luz in the archives of Honduras and Guatemala; with *don* Anibal Bonilla, Francisco Urbina, and *don* José Mendoza, among many others, he delved into the realities of rural existence that permeate the present dissertation.


DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

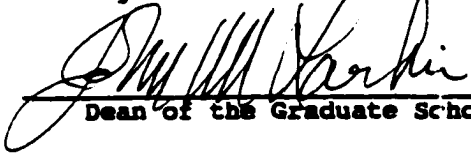
Candidate: Mark Andrew Bonta

Major Field: Geography






Title of Dissertation: Mapping Enredos of Complex Spaces, A Regional
Geography of Olancho, Honduras

Approved:


Major Professor and Chairman


Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

March 21, 2001