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Globalization and Privatization of Education in Honduras—Or the Need to Reconsider the Dynamics and Legacy of State Formation

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Globalization and Privatization of Education in Honduras—Or the Need to Reconsider the Dynamics and Legacy of State Formation¹

While much literature has been produced on globalization, privatization, and the State individually, it has not been common to treat them together, at least not in the field of comparative and international education. There is excellent work that has documented the ways in which globalization and privatization have influenced education reform, but extant scholarship typically has not engaged with theories of the State. In this paper, through the case of Honduras, we explore the aforementioned issues. First, we draw on the approach of Critical International Political Economy (CIPE) to understand the ways that (political-economic) globalization and privatization have affected and manifested in both policymaking and the provision of education. The second half of the paper then turns the gaze back on the Honduran State and draws on State theory literature to consider why globalization and privatization have been able to be so influential in the first place.

Keywords: education privatization; globalization; theories of the State, Honduras.

Introduction

With few exceptions, research in the field of comparative and international education regularly discusses the role of governmental or ‘State’ actors without questioning what the State is exactly.² Rather than explore State theory, recent decades have witnessed a preoccupation with defining globalization, conceptualizing the global education policy field, and, within these two, mapping the interaction and influence of various types of actors (see, e.g., contributions of Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger, 2016). In part, this is understandable, given the increasing activity and involvement of

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² Historically, there are some exceptions from those authors who, respectively, are focused on education and international development (e.g., Carnoy and Samoff, 1990) and globalization and education (e.g., Dale, 1989; Green, 1997). However, these debates seem to have garnered less attention in more recent decades, though authors are starting to underscore the need to engage once again with State theory (e.g., Carnoy, 2016; Tarlau, 2017).

international organizations in the education sector in the post-WWII period and the extent to which the work of governmental actors has been ‘rescaled’ (Lingard & Rawolle, 2011) and ‘transnationalized’ (Moutsios, 2009).³ These terms refer, in the first instance, to ‘relocation of political authority’ from the national to the international level (Lingard & Rawolle, 2011, p. 498) and, in the second instance, to the way that ‘power flows from the global sphere into nation-states’ arenas of power’ (Moutsios, 2009, p. 471).

The rescaling and transnationalization of education policy are phenomena that have intensified as economic and political globalization have advanced. However, the present article seeks to encourage scholars to once again ‘bring the state back in’ to analyses of policy change, just as did the seminal book by the same name in the 1980s (Evans, Reuschmeyer, & Skocpol, 1985). Whereas that book was part of a wave of scholarship in the field of comparative politics that sought to explain the failure of the State in the aftermath of decolonization and independence, the present article seeks to contribute to more recent analyses that not only have brought education policy and politics into conversation with State theory (e.g., Tarlau, 2017) but also have placed these dynamics into conversation with the forces of globalization and privatization (Edwards & Means, 2019). Doing so will, we argue, help to produce insights that go beyond a description of how, for example, globalization and privatization operate in policy change at the national and local levels to contribute, as well, to explaining why, exactly, these forces are able to be so influential—particularly in low-income and post-colonial country contexts.

³ While various authors in the field of comparative and international education have taken up the notion of scale, it should be noted that they have drawn on the work of critical geographers (e.g., Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 2009) who have themselves been concerned with the changing nature of the State.

For two related reasons Honduras is an ideal case for grappling with the intersection of globalization, privatization, and State theory. The first reason is that globalization and privatization have been highly impactful in recent times and historically when it comes to how the education sector operates. The second reason is, as this introduction has suggested, that we cannot truly understand why this is so without digging into the dynamics and legacy of State formation in Honduras, where the State is understood as the sum total of the administrative apparatuses and specialized staff that are, at least nominally, responsible for achieving the officially stated goals of the government (Jessop, 2016).

We take a particular approach to unravelling the globalization-privatization-State nexus in Honduras, and this approach corresponds to the previous research on which this paper builds (Edwards, Moschetti, & Caravaca, 2019, forthcoming). In 2019, the authors of this paper conducted research in Honduras to answer the following question: In what ways, for what reasons, and with what effects have domestic and international private actors and privatization trends influenced education policy and the education sector in Honduras? Answering this question necessitated that we, first, grasped the context of the education sector in Honduras and, second, that we then identified and described the processes and practices through which a range of private (i.e., non-State) actors have exercised and extended their influence in recent years (with an emphasis on the post-coup period since 2009). In accordance with this focus, the present paper is structured to share the core insights related to these two tasks. However, following from the larger purpose delineated above, this paper seeks to extend our previous research, first, by placing contemporary sector dynamics into historical perspective and, second, by viewing both the historical foundations and

contemporary functioning of the education sector in relation to literature on State theory.

As will be shown, in the context of globalization, it is not possible to understand neither the privatization of policymaking nor the privatization of educational provision without first understanding the forces which shaped the foundation of the modern State and the associated practices—or ‘biases’ in Jessop’s (2016) terminology— which have been engrained and which shape the behaviour of the State apparatus in relation to its responsibilities (such as the provision of education). And, in turn, it will be argued that, in low-income and post-colonial contexts, it is not possible to understand privatization tendencies within the State without also placing the State into the context of the historical and trans-national capitalist relations through which these States were born.

Data sources included interviews with 42 key actors from the education system, review of policy documents and existing literature, and school visits (urban and rural) to obtain a ‘vertical’ perspective on how privatization is affecting the national and local levels (see Edwards, Moschetti, & Caravaca, 2019, for more on methods). Information from these sources was then analyzed in relation to an approach rooted in political economy. Discussed further below, this approach was selected because it aligned with the focus of the underlying study (described above). Ultimately, this paper highlights the value of such an approach while also pointing to the importance of complementing it with frameworks that address its blind spot—namely, State theory.

Situating and Studying the Privatization of Education in the Context of Globalization

This section outlines some theoretical conceptualizations referring to the privatization of education and notes the most recent—and less evident—manifestations of the phenomenon. Second, it relays the theoretical orientation of the study. As

outlined above, this section does not engage extensively with State theory. Rather, we employ a particular political economy perspective in order to structure and guide the empirical sections that follow. Once these have been presented, we come back to reflect on the findings in relation to a discussion of State theory.

The privatization of education: Scope and policies

Although privatization processes are not exclusive to the educational field—since they are also carried out in various public services such as transportation, energy, or telecommunications—certain unique characteristics can be observed. Unlike with the cases of the aforementioned services, it is not typical for education privatization to be carried out through the transfer of ownership of public educational facilities to private agents (Bellei & Orellana, 2014). Rather, the privatization of education is more often carried out both at the provision level—i.e., by increasing the presence of private actors, who may or may not be linked in some way to the State—and in relation to its funding scheme—i.e., through an increase in the relative economic contribution made by private agents and, especially, families (Verger et al., 2016). Privatization of education can be said to result, then, from the transferring of *activities* and *responsibilities*—provision, funding and regulation—traditionally undertaken by public agencies to private actors (Belfield & Levin, 2002; Lubienski, 2006).

Moreover, in certain contexts, education privatization may occur spontaneously in the absence of active policies directly encouraging private sector involvement. These cases of so-called ‘default privatization’ are either common in contexts where the State has structural—often financial—constraints to meet the rising educational demand (Day Ashley et al., 2014), or where public education has difficulties to accommodate the new demands and preferences of a growing middle class (Plank, 2006). Nonetheless, in most cases, education privatization is the result of active policies incentivizing private sector

engagement. These policies usually set up new rules facilitating the participation of private agents under a multiplicity of schemes and arrangements.

In an attempt to classify the various forms of privatization policies and private sector involvement in education, Ball and Youdell (2008) developed a well-known dichotomous typology proposing two major privatization modalities: (1) privatization *of* education—or ‘exogenous’ privatization—, where governments open up public educational services to private sector participation in order to design, manage or provide aspects of public education; and (2) privatization *in* education—or ‘endogenous’ privatization—, which involves the importing of ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector to make the public sector ‘more like businesses and more business-like’ (Ball & Youdell, 2008, 8–9).

Notably, though, as Ball and Youdell also emphasize, ‘It is not simply education and education services that are subject to forms of privatization: education policy itself— through advice, consultation, research, evaluations and forms of influence—is being privatized’ (2008, 12). This has to do with the fact that, while the private sector has traditionally been thought of as a service provider (or beneficiary of State-driven privatization policies), some have recently pointed out that this characterization is becoming increasingly obsolete. In addition to the role played by some international organizations, such as the World Bank, since the 1980s (Edwards, 2012), new non-state actors have begun to gain importance in terms of promotion, diffusion and formulation of education privatization policies, thus challenging the States’ traditional central role as policy-makers (Fontdevila, Avelar, & Verger, 2019; Saltman, 2009; Scott, 2009; Verger, 2016). It is in this regard—beyond the notions of privatization *of* and *in* education—that Ball (2009, 2012) proposes a third modality of privatization *through* educational policy to account for the increasing involvement of various types of private

agents (corporations, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic organizations) in the formulation and implementation of educational policy.

A critical international political economy approach⁴

Although there are many lines of research that fall under the umbrella of the political economy approach, the theoretical orientation used here is based on works on the so-called ‘critical international political economy’ (CIPE). Given space constraints, some of the key dimensions of this approach are highlighted below. In particular, we focus on those dimensions whose interaction most clearly illustrate the dynamics that are analyzed in this manuscript with respect to education in Honduras.

From the perspective of CIPE, it is considered that the educational field is permeated and influenced by different political and economic aspects, both nationally and internationally. Unlike the perspective of political realism in international relations, CIPE emphasizes that the political space occupied by non-state actors must also be considered (Hay & Marsh, 1999). Based on our purposes in this study, this means accounting for the entire range of organizations beyond the State that participate in the processes of definition and adoption of educational policies, such as non-governmental organizations, charities, think-tanks, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and regional organizations, among others. This is important because although many actors with an international reach do participate in the processes of definition and configuration of educational policies, different local actors also develop an important role in recontextualizing such global policies (Verger, 2019). This would explain why the transfer of these ‘global’ policies to different territories is not carried out uniformly (Appadurai, 1996; Robertson & Dale, 2015).

⁴ For a thorough characterization of this approach, see Edwards (2018).

Secondly, the analytical lens of CIPE allows us to avoid an approach focused exclusively on formal political processes and to examine, additionally, the ways in which the different types of organizations mentioned above influence education within and outside the formal political sphere (Hay & Marsh, 1999). Points of interest in this regard include research produced on education, activities aimed at influencing the educational reform agenda, the implementation of educational programs, and loans for educational reform, among other (Dale, 2000; Samoff, 2009).

A third element to highlight has to do with discourse and ideational factors. By drawing attention to this dimension, CIPE illuminates certain concerns related to the distribution of power and resources, thus exploring how power and resources are used to promote certain perspectives over others when it comes to influence rhetoric and reforms dominating the education debates (Verger et al., 2016). In the words of Novelli et al. (2014), this third dimension involves the deconstruction of ‘concepts and received wisdom by drawing attention to possible relationships between arguments, ideology and group/class interests’ (p. 27). The key point here is to be attentive to the ways that actors are able to use their material resources to influence the production and dissemination of discourse around which reforms are seen as desirable.

The fourth and last aspect to be underlined concerning CIPE connects the others, highlighting the need to carefully observe the ways in which non-state actors are involved in education at multiple levels, from the local to the global. As Hay (2002) points out, this means paying attention to ‘the relationships between agents and their structured contexts at a variety of spatial scales’ (p. 385). In other words, the global education policy field—like all social, political, and economic contexts—is ‘densely structured and highly contoured’ and thus differentially facilitates ‘the ability of resource- and knowledge-rich actors to further their strategic interests’ (p. 381). The

task at hand, then, is to identify and to unpack the contours of this field at multiple levels and the processes through which involved actors exercise their influence.

In sum, the CIPE approach draws our attention, first, to the context in which national and international actors engage and, second, to the nature and processes of interaction of these actors. As will be shown in the following sections, there is an analytical synergy between the four dimensions discussed above.

The Political Economy of Contemporary Education Reform in Honduras

In the last decade, since the ousting of President Manuel Zelaya, international organizations have been intimately involved with—and have been intensely influential when it comes to—the making of education policy in Honduras. However, beyond international organizations, other private actors have likewise been increasingly influential. In particular, domestic and international philanthropists and corporations have become increasingly intertwined with the process of policy formation. In this section, before analyzing the dynamics of private sector involvement in policy-making, we first turn to a discussion of the weakness of the Honduran State, the ways that the government has poorly managed its resources, and the tepid strategies that have been implemented to improve governance. This initial discussion shows why local and international actors and private entities have perceived it necessary to encroach on the government’s territory—because the government is not fulfilling its responsibilities when it comes to setting policy and offering a quality education that is available to all children.

State failure: Underfunding, system misgovernment, and ‘inertial privatization’

One of the most evident findings reflected in the literature review and confirmed in the interviews is the weakness or ‘failure’ of the Honduran State. Drawing on Jessop

(2016), State failure here refers to a lack of ability, capacity or willingness on the part of the State to achieve ‘the collective goals specified in state projects about the nature and purposes of government’—including, in our case, when it comes to the provision of quality education (p. 40).

The failure of the Honduran State can be inferred in various ways, among which the systematic underfunding of public education and the overall system misgovernment are two key indicators. Fieldwork in schools confirmed that underfunding affects not only the availability of adequate teaching professionals, but also material resources (textbooks, photocopies, etc.) and infrastructure. Non-governmental sector representatives as well as former and current government officials agree on the inadequacy of such basic things as school buildings, let alone other inputs. As one interviewee described: ‘Honduras has a big problem: the issue of school infrastructure, a serious problem, and we need one billion dollars to rebuild it, and the State has 60 million available this year to that end’ (NGO representative 3).

This occurs essentially because the State does not invest sufficient resources in education (for reasons that will be discussed later). In this regard, officials on the National Board of Education⁵ underline that, when it comes to education, Honduras is highly and structurally dependent on international cooperation funds, loans from international organizations, and donations from national and international philanthropic organizations. Unable to alter the equation of government expenditure, the Honduran

⁵ Since 1989, the National Board of Education is the State entity in charge of designing educational policies—at least formally speaking. Specifically, the National Council of Education is made up of: the President of Honduras; the Minister of Education; the Minister of Culture, Arts and Sports; the Rector of the National Autonomous University of Honduras; the Rector of the National Pedagogical University; the Director of the Vocational Training Institute; the President of the Science and Technology Commission; and representatives of the Federation of Teacher Unions, other national trade unions, peasant organizations, the Federation of Professional Associations of Honduras, and of the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise.

Ministry of Education works in a constant search for financing in the form of donations or loans from these actors:

We believe that the plan [the Education Sector Strategic Plan, which we discuss below] is essential for [...] mapping [the needs of the education sector] so that we can tell them [donors, international organizations, etc.], ‘this part we are going to cover ourselves, this part is covered by the cooperation, this part is covered ... Who is going to cover this part? How are you going to help us?’ (National Board of Education official 1)

Along with the problem of underfunding, many actors have pointed out what they label as an overall ‘misgovernment’ of the Honduran educational system. In this respect, it is worth noting the high level of turnover of ministers of education in recent years. Specifically, after Marlon Escoto left office (February 2012 - January 2017), three ministers have been appointed—i.e. Rutilia Calderón (February 2017 - January 2018), Marcial Solís (January-December 2018) and Arnaldo Bueso (December 2018 - incumbent). Such short terms, together with the frequent lack of experience of appointed ministers in the field of education, have contributed to generating a feeling of instability and inconsistent leadership of the system among various actors. As described by one of the interviewees: ‘Each minister comes up with a different idea and implements it, so there are no defined plans, there are no long-term plans’ (Business chamber representative 2).

Moreover, during the last decade the government has created a series of different, coexisting executive structures with similar or scarcely defined responsibilities. This has been the case of the so-called Commission for the Transformation of the Educational System⁶, yet another structure with overlapping

⁶The Commission for the Transformation of the Educational System was created by means of a presidential decree in September 2018 and is made up of: Rutilia Calderón, former Minister of

functions with the Ministry of Education and the National Board of Education. The very nature of the members of this commission—which includes former ministers of education, representatives of the private sector, and of the Evangelical religious order, among others—generates conflicts of interest and contradictions of hierarchy, thus creating a scenario in which it is difficult for the actors of the system to understand the role of each structure and, especially, of the Ministry of Education. An NGO representative speaks to this by asking: ‘Who governs education? Who is in charge? Well, I’ll tell you one thing: It is not the minister’ (NGO representative 3).

In addition to the problems at the macro governmental level, the Honduran educational system faces severe challenges at the local administrative level, mainly as a consequence of a flawed decentralization reform the country initiated in the 1990s. Specifically in the context of a reform aimed at ‘modernizing’ the educational system—which was largely promoted at the time by different international organizations—the national Ministry of Education delegated management functions from the central government to ‘departmental and district units’. Similar to what happened in other countries in the region, such decentralization came without proper transfer of funding and capacity. Data reveal that, with very few (monetary and technical-pedagogical) resources, these ‘new’ decentralized administrative structures are impaired to carry out their stipulated functions aimed at increasing efficiency and responsiveness (Morales, 2013; Edwards, Moschetti, & Caravaca, 2019, forthcoming). Interviewees agree on this point and suggest that departmental and district units ‘lack personnel and only develop

Education; Jancy Carolina Fúnez, former president of the Association of Private Universities; Sandra Maribel Sánchez, executive director of the Board of Education; Alberto Solórzano, representative of the Evangelical Church of Honduras; Carlos Hernández, president of the Asociación para una Sociedad Más Justa (ASJ); Ramón Salgado, former rector of the National Pedagogical University; Gabriel Molina, manager of the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP); Jorge Galeano, executive director of World Vision; and Cristian Loui, representative of the Round Table of Education Co-operators (MERECE).

bureaucratic, non-essential tasks' (Union leader 2), and that 'the system remains highly centralized' in practice (NGO representative 2). In the context of severe underfunding, however, some highlight the fact that the system is actually 'decentralized by default' (Scholar 2) simply because technical support and resources hardly ever reach schools, with the implication that schools are left to address their problems on their own as best they can.

One consequence of the State failure described above is that, in practice, education privatization processes in Honduras have been characterized by a dynamic of 'inertial privatization' (Morales, 2013). The idea here is that privatization is increasing because the State continues to do what it has always done: provide insufficient funding for education, divert resources (e.g., through patronage and corruption, addressed further below), and focus primarily on primary education. This has led to a situation in which private actors are filling the gaps left by an 'absent State' that does not fulfill its responsibility to provide quality education for all (Graham-Brown, 1991; Paz & Morales, in press; Tinoco, 2010).

Many examples of 'inertial privatization' can be listed. Though we do not have the space to discuss them, we can mention that this form of privatization has led to (1) the provision of pre-primary education by private foundations, (2) the emergence of low-fee private schools, (3) the collection of user-fees from families in public schools, (4) the private provision in secondary schools resulting from insufficient public supply, (5) the incursion of private companies in education through corporate social responsibility (e.g., by building school structures), (6) the increasing participation of NGOs and for-profit organizations subcontracted by international cooperation agencies, and (7) the implementation of accountability policies (e.g., where parents report teacher absences by telephone—necessary because of the State's inability and unwillingness to

manage teachers itself). Each of these forms is discussed further in other publications (Edwards, Moschetti, & Caravaca, 2019, forthcoming). The salient insight here is that—in all but the last example—these forms of privatization have evolved not because of policies by the government that have stimulated them, but rather because of the gap in services or even infrastructure that has been created as a result of State failure. As the next section explains, the consequences of State failure are not restricted to privatization of service provision; they extend to the policymaking arena as well.

Intervention of non-State actors in policy-making

There is a wide range of influential non-State actors in the field of education in Honduras, including multilateral banks, international organizations, local non-governmental organizations, local and international contractors, business chambers and think-tanks. Due to the involvement of these actors, the process of education policymaking itself has been substantively privatized, particularly since the ousting of President Zelaya in 2009. As noted previously, this phenomenon reflects what Ball (2009, 2012) labels privatization ‘through’ education policy in the sense that non-State actors have been incorporated into government decision-making processes.

One of the most clear cases is that of the so-called ‘Roundtable of Education Cooperation Agencies’ or MERECE, for its acronym in Spanish. This organization intends to coordinate the actions of international cooperation agencies and multilateral banks in Honduras. The organization includes, in the words of one of its representatives, ‘the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the US Agency for International Development, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Canada, the Organization of Ibero-American States... every single one’ (International organization representative 2). Strikingly, MERECE has representation in some of the government executive structures, including the Ministry of Education. Such a privileged

position allows them to exert a direct influence in this regard, which is not limited to a formal consultation, but also includes playing an active role in shaping the educational policy decisions.

The growing role deployed by business chambers is also worth mentioning. The ‘Honduran Council of Private Businesses’ (COHEP) has recently become part of the ‘Presidential Committee for Educational Reform’, in charge of establishing the main priorities and formulating the corresponding lines of action in the education field. One of COHEP’s representatives describes their role and outreach as follows: ‘We are now part of the Presidential Committee, and we are working to restructure the country’s whole education system’—and continues—‘one of our main goals is to reform curriculum [...] so that the system is able to shape students in a business culture’ (Business chamber representative 1). The private business sector has also become increasingly involved in education policy-making by means of their philanthropic organizations, with these organizations now coordinating their activity through an entity called the ‘Honduran Foundation for Corporate Social Responsibility’ (FUNDARHSE). FUNDARHSE has recently launched yet another lobby platform called ‘Businessmen for Education and Employment’ with direct contact with the Ministry of Education and the National Board of Education.

The process of definition of the ‘Education Sector Strategic Plan’ (PESE, for its acronym in Spanish) that took place between 2018 and 2020 is an unambiguous example of the way that this network of non-State actors influences policymaking in the midst of the difficulties of the State for defining its own policy agenda. The need for a strategic plan in the educational field had been shared by various actors for years, but it was not until an opportunity of external funding appeared that the plan began to be drafted. Interestingly, the funding opportunity was brought to the Ministry of Education

by chance by a ministry official who had close contact with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).⁷ The plan was supposed to be drafted and approved in 2018 but after many setbacks the process took much more time than expected. The first versions of the plan were partially turned down and needed readjustment by the different overlapping government levels, which took almost two years.

However, when an overall consensus was finally reached and the National Congress gave its approval, it was the GPE who rejected the plan for being ‘too ambitious’ based on the evaluation of an external consulting committee (National Board of Education official 1). As it turned out, the GPE was not willing nor able to grant more than 10 million dollars for the execution of the plan. Moreover, for the plan to get approval, the GPE required that the government (1) focused exclusively on pre-primary education, (2) had at least 30 million dollars of genuine resources committed to the plan, and (3) obtained the ‘go-ahead’ from the different international cooperation agencies and multilateral banks in the MERECE. Not surprisingly, the government reached out to the World Bank to ask for a loan to meet these financial requirements and hired a World Bank consultant to produce a viability plan so that the MERECE would offer its approval, something that has not yet happened, as of early 2020. A representative from the (GIZ) described the whole process without hiding her disappointment:

This PESE thing is taking too long ... it's been four years or something already and I feel that it is not feasible both for the government and the different aid agencies [...]. We've been like 'PESE, PESE, PESE' for the last years and, in the end, the

⁷ The Global Partnership for Education is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries, especially regarding K-12.

GPE does not have the funding for the PESE, and they only want to invest in pre-primary... (German cooperation agency representative 2).

Finally, in addition to the ongoing problems related to the PESE, the Ministry of Education was recently able to take a loan from the German development bank (KFW) to build new school facilities in areas lacking public schools. Just as importantly, however, the Ministry currently faces the paradox between the need to hire teachers for the few new facilities that were built, and the strict limits imposed on current expenditure by the International Monetary Fund, which creates 'a paralysis' in the government plans to expand access (Ministry of Education official 1). Thus, it becomes evident that the dependence of the Honduran State on external funding together with the tensions arising from the different international organizations' agendas and interests become yet another obstacle for the expansion of the Honduran education system.

The Value and Limitations of Critical International Political Economy

As noted previously, the CIPE approach draws our attention, first, to the context in which national and international actors engage and, second, to the nature and processes of interaction of these actors. This framework was applied to the case of Honduras, above all, in the present paper, to map and characterize the ways that a range of non-State actors have contributed to privatization through education policymaking. The role of various entities and the dynamics of various processes were discussed, particularly as they connected with actors who represent international cooperation and the business sector (and their philanthropies).

In this exercise, the CIPE approach employed has been valuable. First, this is so in that it was an appropriate framework given the guiding research question and, second, in that it goes beyond other approaches that are more limited and which do not

facilitate an analysis of dynamics between global and national actors (e.g., approaches rooted in methodological nationalism and traditional political science frameworks, with their focus only on formal policy making processes and the role of governmental actors). CIPE, then, is appropriate for directing attention to key structural (i.e., political-economic), processual, and agentic considerations in the context of the global education policy field. Yet, at the same time that CIPE results in a description of the impacts of political-economic globalization and the evolution of privatization, we suggest that it can benefit from engagement with State theory. Put differently, while our previous research, in being attentive to the contextual dimension, pointed in the direction of State failure, the CIPE framework (like other frameworks) does not provide the conceptual grammar necessary for explaining how the weak State came to be, nor what the relationship of the State's origins is to the themes of globalization and privatization. The last section of this paper proceeds by engaging with these two issues.

State Theory, State Formation in Honduras, and Future Implications

The definition of the State provided earlier in this paper emphasized the administrative apparatus through which the State is supposed to meet its responsibilities. Drawing further on the work of State theorist Bob Jessop, we note that the nature of this apparatus cannot be taken for granted. As Jessop (2016) writes, ‘the challenge for social scientists is to demystify the state, to unmask it radically, to prove that the state does not “always already exist”’ (p. 18). More specifically, the task is not only to reveal the way that initial State origins reflect different crystallizations of forces depending on the combination of factors that came together when the State was formed, but also to illuminate the implications of such crystallizations of forces when it comes to, among other things, modes of political representation (i.e., who has access to the

State apparatus and its capacities) and the social basis of the State (i.e., the ‘uneven distribution of material ... concessions to the “population” in order to secure support for the state’ p. 58). Jessop’s (2016) analysis of such issues is, in turn, located within a consideration of the way that state power operates in capitalist countries, with the recognition that these societies are, first, organized according to ‘profit-oriented, market-mediated accumulation’ (p. 3) and, second, that these countries are embedded within the global economy. These features of Jessop’s (2016) work make it useful for our purposes for two reasons—first, because, conceptually, it aligns with CIPE’s focus on understanding the political-economic structures within which policy change occurs and, second, because, analytically, it connects and helps to engage with the issues that emerged as relevant to explaining the case of Honduras.

However, because Jessop’s (2016) work focuses on the formation of European States, it does not consider the possibility that a State (or the key components and behaviors of the State apparatus) can be founded by foreign capitalist interests. However, this is exactly what happened in Honduras, and with drastic consequences for the ‘inbuilt biases that privilege some agents and interests over others’ (p. 54). While much can be—and has been—written on the origins and evolution of the Honduras State, it is most essential to mention here that, in the late 1890s, the initial formation of the Honduran State—in the sense of the State apparatus, and following decades of political instability—was intimately intertwined with the involvement of foreign capital. Coatsworth (1994) notes that during 1898-1933 Central American countries became ‘client states’ of the United States, thanks to economic opportunities related to coffee and bananas and the willingness of the United States to advocate for, and to intervene on behalf of, U.S. business investments. In the context of Honduras, the presence and influence of transnational companies inhibited the emergence of a strong local elite and,

relatedly, an autonomous State, unlike in neighbouring countries (World Bank, 2009). Moreover, not only were the two main political parties (who continue to dominate politics today) founded with support from competing banana companies, but, and this is crucial, these companies served as the primary source of finance for the government. As Bull (2005) describes, these companies ‘ensured the loyalty of lower-level governmental officials through generous payment [of salaries] ... that [was] twice what the government paid’ (p. 132).

The implications of the above cannot be understated. The combination of factors described above created the foundation for the way that the Honduras State continues to operate today, where clientelism and dependence on foreign actors and international markets is taken for granted. Honduras has continued to operate as an economy that is dependent on both foreign aid and foreign markets—and these sources of financial capital are then used to the benefit of the party in power, which uses its political biases to regulate access to the State apparatus based on party loyalty (e.g., in the distribution of teaching positions, school buildings, etc.). It has, thus, become accepted and expected that the function of the State is to distribute privileges to those who form part of it or are somehow connected to it—to such an extent that Honduran researchers have concluded that ‘the political class resists the institutional strengthening of the State as a distributor of social well-being, because the political game operates according to the logic of personal and private benefit’ (Morales, 2013, p. 315), just as Jessop (2016) suggests.

Of course, the picture painted above presents serious challenges for policy and practice in terms of what could possibly be done to address State failure in Honduras. Terms such as ‘State failure’ itself become paradoxical in a context where the State has had neither the capacity to function independently of other actors nor the financial ability to perform its main function of public welfare. However, in concluding, the point

we wish to reiterate here is a theoretical one. Were we not to have extended our analysis beyond contemporary dynamics of policymaking, we would not have understood why, exactly, the system operates as it does. Certainly, CIPE directs attention to such things as the engagement of various political and organizational actors in and around processes of policymaking as well as to the political-economic constraints that affect those actors and the processes through which they interact. However, these issues are, in turn, structured by the way that State apparatuses are initially formed, forged as they often are at the intersection of local political rivalries; the interests of foreign capital; the logic of ‘profit-oriented, market-mediated accumulation;’ and the larger geo-political projects with which global capitalism has long been entwined (Jessop, 2016, p. 3).

While CIPE may direct the attention of scholars to some of these factors through its emphasis on political-economic structures, a more clear engagement with State theory can ensure that the factors mentioned above are brought into conversation with—and may even reveal their dialectical relationship with—current day pressures, processes, and priorities in the field of global education policy, including but beyond the recent phenomenon of privatization. Put differently, taking the dynamics and legacy of state formation seriously will enable a deeper analysis than that enabled by CIPE alone. The combination of these two will, for instance, push scholars to go beyond, first, the teleological narrative of expanding privatization, and, second, a description of those actors and processes in and through which privatization is advanced to include, additionally, an explanation of what drives those dynamics at the heart of the State that, in turn, serve as the motor for the conditions from which privatization emerges.

At the same time, the case of Honduras suggests that there is still room for State theory to go further, particularly when it comes to unpacking the initial formation of States outside of Europe and the Global North. Going forward, it will be necessary to

move beyond the acknowledgement that States, after their initial formation, operate within capitalist dynamics to address, as well, the fact and implications of the ways that capitalism prefigured the emergence of State apparatuses in many parts of the world. To that end, the combination of theories of globalization, the State, and post-colonial contexts is an important horizon in education research (see, e.g., Amin-Khan, 2012). More explicitly, sensitivity to the colonial history of globalization will challenge the notion that the intensification of globalization is only a recent phenomenon by revealing the tight colonial, transnational ties that solidified historically through international trade, or what we would recognize today as the privatization ‘of’ the State, to adapt Ball and Youdell’s (2008) terminology, and which continue to serve as the template for State-society relations in contemporary times.

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