Decolonizing the Rhetoric of Church-Settlers[1]

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Abstract: Settler archives are situated across the U.S. and housed within institutions such as university campuses. They were invented and placed strategically to help attune the world both to ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity and to their promises of salvation, progress, and development. In this essay, I argue settler archives importantly provide a window into the Western imaginary and the epistemic experiments that have had the structural and material consequences of *devaluing* and *eliminating* the co-existence of histories, memories, and knowledge and understanding; of *inventing* and then *rendering* the *other* absent or excessively visible; and of *couching* the possibility of the *other's* humanization only by their conversion to Christianity, civilization, and/or modernization. I claim they can both help us establish a connection between past and present epistemic rhetorical activities and issues and be used as important mediums for decolonial thinking and doing.

I am not a historian nor a philosopher. I need not be to know words and ideas matter. They make arguments. Words and ideas have the potential to have effect beyond their mere utterance. The work of a rhetorician, attending to coloniality and literacy, is to investigate how people have used language to disseminate and sell ideas rhetorically, explore what or whom have and continue to be its affective channels of rhetorical transmission, and determine its effects. *Ideas*,[2] Emmanuel Kant claimed, "are architectonic" (2012, p. 446), by which he meant "art of systems" (1998, p. 691) that depend "upon an idea of the whole" (1819, p. 101) interconnected by laws, rules, and *ends*. That he advanced this claim with the analogy of architecting a house is not coincidental.[3] Ideas, like a house, require a foundation or infrastructure (or an institution), to *appear* and *become* consequential (see Gordon, 2007, p. 123). "Ideas," Lewis Gordon (2007) observed, "dwell across the ages in the concepts and institutions human beings have built" (p. 137). What I am prepared to talk about at length in this essay is both a system of *Ideas* and *ends* and its institutions (e.g., economic, authorial, political, and knowledge, among others) that hold it together which appear exclusively as church-settler productions but are part and parcel of *Americanity* and *coloniality*, original impulses and structural logics of management, control, and distribution of land, "resources," people, and knowledges—the foundations or infrastructures that Western Civilization (and its system of *Ideas* and *ends*) would build itself upon.[4] The racist Arthur de Gobineau (1854) understood the significance of institutions, both as architected and left behind. His passage below exemplifies how I understand coloniality largely and intend to frame the *Idea of the Mormon* and the *Idea of Utah as Zion* in Utah in this essay, as haunting institutions architected, sowed deeply into the soil, and left behind; today, the trafficking of these church-settler ideas in the normative remain examples of coloniality (as both a logic of management and control and system of *Ideas* and *ends*) persevering. Gobineau (1854) wrote:

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> The institutions which the dead master had invented, the laws he had prescribed, the customs he had initiated—all these live after him….so long as even their shadows remain, the building stands, the body seems to have a soul, the pale ghost walks. (p. 33)

The *Idea of the Mormon* and the Idea of Utah as Zion endure in the posterity who by way of carrying out these haunted/ing literacies ensure the pale ghost walks. Both as a reflection of my profession and an exercise of my *epistemic right* to confront and decolonize the inhumanity and irrationality of church-settler *Ideas* and *ends*,[5] today I write from a subject-position that will rhetoricize words and *Ideas* from a decolonial perspective, a perspective meant to unsettle (and disentangle) ideas, ends, and institutions constituted as legible and beneficial for all.[6] I set out to read the *Journal of Discourses* (*JoD*), a 26-volume archive of sermons and doctrinal instruction transcribed and published between 1851 and 1886, which contain the haunted/ing literacies of coloniality that traffic in the normative today.[7] Now, it is important to acknowledge that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not recognize the *JoD* as an official publication even though it was supported by Brigham Young and other important church-settlers. If only to recognize and acknowledge, that is, the postulation by the Church. Because be that as it may, the words and *Ideas* I will archive in this essay are used consistently, sold rhetorically over space and time, and tied to an epistemic racism that is the devaluing, ignoring, and/or erasure of *other* forms of knowledge and understanding by ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity (Mignolo, 2011, p. 199). These words and *Ideas* produced the hauntings we bear witness to and experience today in Utah. *JoD* remains a premier site of the *epistemological experiment* (Stoler, 2002, p. 87) to advance an *epistemology of provenance* (Kruks, 1995, p. 17). I approach it as an *archive of knowledge, understanding, and feeling*—texts as "repositories of feelings and emotions," which are encoded "not only in the content of the texts themselves but in the practice that surround their production and reception" (Cvetkovich, 2003, p. 7). If, as I will contend, coloniality and literacy emerge together, *JoD* allows us to see just how this happens at a local-regional level, as well as to understand how communities form themselves around this union. By taking *JoD* and its haunted/ing literacies seriously—the *Idea of the Mormon*, the *Idea of Utah as Zion*, and the *Idea* of the *Other*—we can both recognize and acknowledge the limits in thinking coloniality as belonging to the past and work towards not having coloniality as our future.

Today, settler archives are situated across the U.S. and the Americas, housed within institutions such as university campuses. They were invented and placed strategically to help attune the world both to ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity and to the promises of salvation, progress, and development. Settler archives provide a window into the Western imaginary and the epistemic experiments that have had the structural and material consequences of *devaluing* and *eliminating* the co-existence of histories, memories, and knowledges and understandings; of *inventing* and then *rendering* the *other* absent or excessively visible; and of *couching* the possibility of the *others* humanization only by their conversion to Christianity, civilization, and/or modernization (see Castro-Gomez, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2007). Though coloniality does not unfold evenly, the threads that bind settlers is a logic of management and control, ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity, a rhetoric of modernity, and epistemic racism.[8] All this situates us squarely on epistemic issues rather than simple geography and on coloniality as a logical structure rather than a mere event (see Wolfe, 2006; Mignolo 2011). In this essay, I investigate how church-settlers of Utah used language to sell ideas rhetorically to actors who were its affective channels of rhetorical transmission and reflect on what its immediate and long-term effects were.[9] To do this, I work as much to produce a decolonized archive as to read a settler archive. The utility of a decolonial perspective for which I am advancing here importantly focuses on *who* the knowing subject is, *what* they are saying/doing (and how are they reflecting about it), and *how* institutions architected were left behind to promote and reproduce ideals and support and defend posterity (see Mignolo, 2011, p. 188; Veracini, 2010, p. 15). As coloniality, literacy, and epistemic racism remain on the move, hiding behind a rhetoric of modernity, I argue settler archives can both help us establish a connection between past and present epistemological experiments of grounding and promoting an epistemology of

provenance and become powerful mediums for the mobilization of decolonial thinking, doing, and literacies.

This essay has two goals. The first goal is to both make visible coloniality, literacy, and epistemic racism in the words and *Ideas* of church-settlers and to short-circuit the grid from which a logic of coloniality that traffics in the normative hides behind a rhetoric of modernity/rationality. This has epistemic implications. *How will we choose in the now to constitute ourselves otherwise once we recognize and acknowledge our entanglements and complicities with a system of Ideas and ends tied to language and sold rhetorically*? The second goal is to nuance conversations of and about coloniality. This has implications for the research of coloniality. In recent years, coloniality as a category of analysis has been called into question, rightfully so, because it is painted with such a wide brush (see Acosta, 2019). Settler archival research, I contend here, allows us to address this critique by situating the questions of *where* is coloniality and *how* does it work. A decolonial perspective, importantly, takes up the *who*, *what*, and *how* in relation to these questions. The *JoD* contains traces of a rhetoric of management and control, epistemic provenance, epistemic racism and modernity, which as I intend to argue evidences how church-settlers of Utah were sharing in and disputing coloniality via the haunted/ing literacies they (re)-produced and epistemic projects they endeavored to carry out.[10] It also illustrates the role settler histories of states such as Utah have played in strengthening the U.S. as one model of hegemony vying for power on the modern/colonial world stage. This has implications, beyond research, because the grounding of coloniality could mean the potential development of specific decolonial actions tethered to the *everyday* of the students we teach. The students I teach at the University of Utah, as an example and matter of transparency, drove me to do settler archival research and to make this decolonial archive; a micro-action that potentially has meso and macro implications. So, while decoloniality can be understood as an option called to intervene in a system of *Ideas* and *ends*, it also importantly about establishing relational frameworks of being with others *wherever* they may be in their sets of stories-so-far.[11] Together, these two goals strengthen a decolonial perspective and decolonial thinking and doing, and its capacity to unsettle, disentangle, and haunt back the haunted/ing literacies of church-settlers that traffic in the normative today.

Today, I write from the traditional and ancestral homeland of the Shoshone, Paiute, Goshute, and Ute Tribes. I mention this not as another academic exercise in performing responsibility. Rather, it is to call attention to how the places and institutions such as the university many of us speak and write from are *wounded/ing places*, by which Karen Till (2012) meant "settled locales that have been harmed and structured by particular histories of physical destruction, displacement, and individual and social trauma resulting from state-perpetrated violence" (p. 6; see also Brasher et al., 2017). It is to recognize and acknowledge land acknowledgements, near and far, as hauntings and haunted/ing literacies trafficking in the normative both unable to deliver more than consolatory words and resulting in more university accounting and administration. Today, I utilize a modern/colonial framework to write about a church-settler imaginary and a logic of settlement that produced absences and silences—*death-spaces* in "the land of the living" (Taussig, 1991, p. 133) where the *half-dead* (Anzaldua, 1999) or *people near death* (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) are relegated—which continues to endure in the public memory of Utahans presently by way of the *Idea of the Mormon* and the *Idea of Utah as Zion*. This essay joins ongoing efforts to decolonize institutions such as the university (see Bhambra et al., 2018; Grosfoguel et al., 2016; de Sousa Santos, 2017) and archives (see Adams-Campbell et al., 2014; Ghaddar & Caswell, 2019). The thread that binds here is a decolonial option, which is a call to intervene in the "hegemonic architecture of knowledge and the principles, assumptions, and rules of knowing" (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 212). Overall, I attempt to intervene in the haunted/ing literacies of church-settlers, which traffics in the normative today. They are experienced and embodied in ways that continues to wound and haunt Utah. I invoke hauntings as a framing device, which is less about hauntings as a rhetorical trope and more about hauntings as an inheritance, as personal and collective memory, and as generations of selves and others—hauntings as an epistemological framework of and for careful reckonings and epistemic decolonization.[12]

A Reflection

Church-settlers *arrived* and *stayed* in Utah on July 24, 1847. They sought to gather the Saints in a commonplace and to architect and institute a "[s]ystem called Mormonism" ("Persecution," Cannon, vol. 14, p. 164), which they saw not an epistemic project of coercion, but of *persuasion*, *instruction*, and *enlightenment* (see "Opposition," Snow, vol. 6, p. 92). They understood both the act of gathering the Saints and Mormonism as something that is to *take* place (see "Gathering," Hyde, vol. 2). Coloniality and literacy, I argue, both *takes* place and *makes* a place such as Utah, built in the image, narrative, and rhetoric of the church-settler, possible.[13] Under the banner of theological and secular designs of conversion, civilizing, progress, and development they exercised their *invented* divine and natural epistemic *privilege* to appropriate the land, exploit its "resources," and manage and control. The haunted/ing literacies and epistemic projects of the *Idea of the Mormon* and the *Idea of Utah as Zion* were deeply sowed into the soil:

> We came here and planted our garden seeds ("The Pioneers," Young, vol. 1, p. 144)[14]
> We should watch and see that the seed is sown in good ("Intelligence," Woodruff, vol. 4, p. 228).[15]

By seeding church-settlers meant the process of tilling the earth, cultivating the soil, planting seeds, and increasing the seed (1 Nephi 18:20-19:14, see Kimball "Shedding Blood," vol. 6; Book of Nephi I, Chapter XIX, p. 47). But they also meant seeding institutions. Church-settlers understood that *posterity* could be "looked after" if institutions were left behind ("The Trusteeship," Taylor, vol. 19, p. 126). Church-settlers architected their institutions on the institution we know today as Americanity, a five-hundred-year-old epistemic and violent project (see Mignolo, 2005). Today, 174 years later, the institutions left behind in Utah support and defend their posterity and promote and reproduce ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity. "Place," Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook (2011) argue, is "imbued with meaning and consequences" and "acts rhetorical" (p. 260). Since moving to Utah in 2017, I have been interested not in this entity called Utah, but rather, how the *Idea* of Utah came about and how the rhetoric of this place imbued with meaning and consequences is circulated, experienced, and embodied.[16] There are haunted/ing literacies on the move here. I believe that an investigation of it, of how a community forms itself around these haunted/ing literacies, can tell us about how coloniality, literacy, and communities have historically emerged together.

In as minuscule of an activity as driving to work, which includes for me a drive through Temple Square, I am *forced* to bear witness to and carefully reckon with church-settler *Ideas* and *ends* personified in the institution that is Utah.[17] In such moments, which demand a decolonial perspective, I can hear my Grandma ask, "¿qué ves?" | "¿qué oyes?" (Such questions inform how I understand and undertake both a decolonial perspective and *shadow work* today).[18] This microcosm of an experience with colonial situations *forces* all into a didactic relation between sender (e.g., church-settler) and receiver (e.g., inhabitants),[19] with symbols and signs (re)producing meaning about epistemological provenance along the lines of commencement and commandment.[20] As a non-Mormon and professor of color, I see and hear from this everyday of an experience an original impulse to manage and control and pursuit to sow and harvest a civil, social, racial, and political design that has not worked itself out. The pale ghost walks. It has a body, soul, and voice, both in this institution that is Utah and in its posterity who continue to uphold these haunted/ing literacies. The settler archival research I would come to undertake stemmed again from my first semester teaching at the University of Utah, a Predominately White Institution (PWI). There, I encountered an *archive of knowledge, understanding, and feelings.* I could hear my Grandma ask, "¿qué ves?" | "¿qué oyes?" I saw and heard in students inherited and lived sets of stories that allowed the haunted/ing literacies of the past to traffic in the normative.[21] That year, I familiarized myself with *The Book of Mormon* (*BoM*) and *Doctrine and Covenants* (*D&C*), to try to understand, as an outsider, such sets of stories and the ways in which literacy is a powerful medium and vehicle for a system of *Ideas* and *ends.* I encountered *JoD* along the way. I incorporated it into

my classes to address *where* coloniality is at and *how* it works. I introduced *JoD* as an *archive of knowledge, understanding, and feeling*, which then allowed me to situate *JoD*, home ("I am where I do and think"), and hauntings as powerful mediums for decolonial thinking, doing, and literacies.

The Inhumanity and Irrationality of Church-Settler Ideas and Ends

Joseph Smith is considered the founder of Mormonism and the Church of Latter-day Saints. Smith, and other prophets and members, claimed Mormonism was the "restoration by new revelation" of "ancient principles" ("Mormonism," Pratt, vol. 1, p. 308). Smith was revered for ushering in a unique "spiritual philosophy" into the modern world ("Spiritual Communication," Pratt, vol. 2, p. 44). According to accounts, he was guided by the angel Moroni to the hill of Cumorah to the original golden plates (see "Joseph Smith," Smith, vol. 5; "Discernment," Kimball, vol. 6) on which "the inspired writers themselves wrote" ("Evidence," Pratt, vol. 7, p. 29). With the assistance of Angel Moroni, Smith translated the plates into *The Book of Mormon*. It supposedly depicts the ancient Americas (*Nephite America*), relations between the Nephites and Lamanites,[22] and the endeavor to "restore the Lamanites unto the true faith" (2 Nephi 5:1-14). Joseph Smith, and other prophets and members, would subscribe to such doctrine, which operated from a *logic of exceptionalism* already congruous with a *logic of management and control*. A doctrine of discovery and rights-to-land, divine and natural designs and the epistemic and ontological difference of *others*, and the projects of salvation and civilizing are all ideas that *The Book of Mormon* advances. Such can also be encountered in *JoD*, which evidences a theologically- and secularly-structured epistemology of the zero point or a "non-situated, universal, God-eyed view" (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 214).[23]

From the epistemology of the zero-point, space as empty and/or uncivilized is an entity to be *discovered*. Embodying the epistemic privileges of *humanitas*, or the *knowing subject*, church settlers stated, "[T]his land had to be discovered" ("The Gospel," Cannon, vol. 14, p. 55).[24] From the epistemology of the zero point, relations were mapped out according to invented epistemic and ontological differences (less knowing: less human). Speaking from the side of humanitas, church-settlers depicted "fair-skinned Christian[s]" as "enlightened by the Spirit of the truth" and "dark-skinned savage[s]" as "natural man" ("Salvation," Young, vol. 1, p. 1-2). Such differences were translated on a continuum of time too, "So distant from each other in point of time" ("Spiritual," Pratt, vol. 1, p. 11). From the epistemology of the zero-point, divine designs or *works of God* and natural designs or *works of Reason* were grafted onto these relations. Exhibiting the epistemic privilege of *humanitas*, church-settlers argued a divine curse had been "placed" upon "the Indian/Lamanite" who could not "take care of themselves" ("President," Young, vol. 1, p. 105), and reasoned they were of "superior intelligences" placed by design "to teach, to rule, and preside among other intelligences" ("Heirship and Priesthood," Pratt, vol. 1, p. 257). They saw it as their "duty" to "save" the lives of "the Indians," as well as *others* ("Our Indian," Young, vol. 11, p. 264). And violence could be justified against them, as said their earliest prophet Joseph Smith: "They have either got to bow down to the Gospel or be slain" ("Indian Hostilities," Young, vol. 1, p. 171). The observer observing was but the epistemic practice that both centered church-settlers alike as the center of space and present of time and sustained their doctrines of discovery, inventions of epistemic and ontological differences, narrativizations of modernity, and disputes of Western hegemony.

The Persecuted Emigrant Saints and a Doctrine of Discovery

Smith was said to have had revelations. One of those revelations was to *gather the Saints* of the East and settle them in the West or Kirtland, Ohio (1831). In the same year, he had another revelation. The Saints would move further West to Independence, Missouri, which Smith believed to be the *center place* of Zion (see "The Gospel," Young, vol. 2). From Missouri they settled in Nauvoo, Illinois. With each move there was conflict, and with each exodus Mormons began to claim they were being persecuted. Within their rhetoric of exile, they claimed their history of persecution was "unparalleled in the history of past ages"

("Liberty and Persecution," Smith, vol. 1, p. 43; see also "Blessings of the Saints," Young, vol. 1). In Illinois, Smith would be incarcerated and eventually killed by a mob, which confirmed to Mormons that they were oppressed, persecuted, and being forced further and further into the wilderness of the West.[25] They compared their exodus to the journeys undertaken in *The Book of Mormon*: "we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise" (1 Nephi 5:12-6:3). Guided by Brigham Young, they would arrive in, *discover*, and settle the Great Salt Lake Valley (see "Persecutions," Wells, vol. 2; "The Constitution," Smith, vol. 2; "Universality," Cannon, vol. 15). Church-settlers were seeking "an asylum" ("Persecutions," Wells, vol. 2, p. 25). A doctrine of discovery and right-to-land played a significant role in the *gathering* of the Saints.

19th century church-settlers who contributed to *JoD* saw themselves in the image of Christopher Columbus ("the discoverer of America") and the pilgrim pioneers ("exiles from liberty"), whom they believed had an uncontested blessing of *providence* to "comprehend, to contemplate, to investigate" ("Declaration," Pratt, vol. 1, p. 143; also see "Persecutions," Wells, vol. 2). The same "angel" that was with Columbus and the pioneers, they proclaimed, was with Joseph Smith (see "Celebration," Hyde, vol. 7; "Importance," Hyde, vol. 10). All the land before them (e.g., North and South America) was observed as their *possession* or *native inheritance*, *choice land* and the *land of Zion* (see "Faithfulness," Young, vol. 2; "The Improved," Young, vol. 11; "The Signs," Woodruff, vol. 15).[26] It was to be discovered and settled so that the seed of the word and the seed of their institutions could increase, spread, and hold dominion. Utah became the place. It was a place that had not been "beheld" by a "man upon the face of the earth" ("The Pioneers," Young, vol. 1, p. 144) and that "scientific men and other travelers had declared worthless" ("Reminiscences," Smith, vol. 2, p. 24; see also "The Gospel," Cannon, vol. 14). Church-settlers observed:

> nothing but a few bunches of dead grass" ("Liberty and Persecution George Smith, vol. 1, p. 44) barren valleys […] sterile mountains [… and] desolate waste ("Practical Religion," Young, vol. 4) parched and barren desert ("The Signs," Woodruff, vol. 15, p. 270) a little place that nobody else would live upon ("The Rights," Taylor, vol. 5)[27]

Utah, by all of their accounts, was "vacated" ("Blessings," Kimball, vol. 8, p. 220), that was, until church-settlers reflected that "We are here in the mountains with these Lamanites" ("President," Young, vol. 1, p. 106). Faced with having to recognize and acknowledge their presence, they resorted to doubling down on how they understood themselves and their situation, they were "asylum[s] among the red savages" ("Visit," Taylor, vol. 26, p. 150). And then relied upon the epistemic practice of reducing and preserving the image of both the land and its original inhabitants to wilderness and uncivilization. This becomes most apparent in their reflections, whereby church-settlers emphasized that no "civilized people" ("Faithfulness," Young, vol. 2, p. 253) or "class of people" ("Practical Religion," Young, vol. 4, p. 344), by which they meant "white men," had inhabited Utah (see "Difficulties," Young, vol. 3). The haunted/ing literacies of what constituted a human being, and who humanity was extended to, promoted the idea of non-beings, and hence, produced absences—a coloniality of being (see Mignolo, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

A doctrine of discovery and rights-to-land are two institutions architected and left behind. Lest we forget the role papal bulls played in the 15th and 16th centuries, which belonged to an epistemic practice of institutionalizing the epistemic rights of Westerners to "discover" and manage and control land. *The Bull Romanus Pontifex* (1455) granted rights to "invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue," to *acquire* from and possess lands for "profit," and to "reduce" the *other* "to perpetual slavery" (p. 23-24). The *Bull Inter Caetera* (1493) granted rights "with fully and free power, authority, and jurisdiction of every kind" to overthrow and bring into the faith "the barbarians" and to possess and use their lands "freely and legally" (p. 77). The "discovery" of Utah, like the "discovery" of the Americas, tells us more about settler invention than what was discovered (see Mignolo, 2018). And in this self-serving narrative, narrating empty landscapes, as the Spanish did with the Americas and church-settlers did with Utah, had more to do with an invention of "the Indian" and their reduction to animal propensities such as crickets, rattlesnakes, and lizards than with their actual ways of seeing, being, and doing. "Why are these Lamanites," church-settlers

asked, "living upon reptiles of the earth" ("The Church," Woodruff, vol. 2, p. 198)? Answering this question, the observer observed that "The Indian" was *so close to nature*, in their eyes, that they would vanish or disappear. Empty landscapes allowed church-settlers to proclaim Utah as the "central place of gathering" ("Privileges," Pratt, vol. 7, p. 312) and the "center stake of Zion" ("Source," Young, vol. 6, p. 46). A doctrine of discovery and rights-to-land appeals, to be sure, were the affective channels of rhetorical transmission for the *Ideas* and *ends* of coloniality. From here, a rhetoric of propriety would emerge.

Propriety, Divine and Natural Differences, and the Seed of a Promise

A "great chain" of existence or genealogy was advanced amongst church-settlers ("Men," Taylor, vol. 1; "Distinguishing," Pratt, vol. 16).[28] This was constituted by pre-existence, "We had a pre-existence" ("Purpose," Wells, vol. 16, p. 124). As tethered to *works of God*, pre-existence explained why some had epistemic privileges while others were cursed and carried a mark of that curse.[29] In posing and answering the question, "what is our nature" ("Men Eternal," Taylor, vol. p. 366), it was determined that Mormonism and Mormons, on all truths and every principle of true philosophy (see "The Gospel," Young, vol. 2), were "right in principle, in doctrine, and in precepts" ("Exposing," Grant, vol. 3, p. 233). Church-settlers understood that some inherited rights and privileges while *others* were deprived of them. And they held only intelligent beings were endowed with such rights and privileges (see "Providence," Young, vol. 6). Not coincidentally, they believed God had endowed them with these rights and privileges, which they claimed as a propriety (see "Elders Called," Kimball, vol. 3):

> We have the privilege of coming to understanding ("Providence," Young, vol. 6, p. 145)
> God has given to some men greater ability to manage and control ("Consecration," Pratt, vol. 2, p. 100)
> we have the privilege of walking in the light ("Blessings," Woodruff, vol. 8, p. 267)

God, according to church-settlers, *organized* intelligent and unintelligent beings in places of thought and non-thought ("Providence," Young, vol. 6, p. 146). In this arrangement, they stated, God favored them "above any other class" and "people upon the earth" ("Extensive," Young, vol. 6, p. 288; 293). In addition to laws and rules dictated by God, there were laws and rules dictated by nature: "Look around upon all the ranks of mankind, and we see different races, some of a high order of intellect, and some low and groveling, among all the different grades and classes of the human family" ("Common Salvation," Hyde, vol. 2, p. 116). This passage is an example of propriety linked to *works of reason*. Church-settlers participated in observing *higher* and *lower* orders of *being* in a *Chain of Being*.[30] This took place in the context of language, "where the language is different from ours, the spirit of the people is different" ("Elder John," Taylor, vol. 1, p. 22); in the context of observed hebetude, whereas church-settlers were civilized and intelligent, "the Indian/Lamanite" were uncivilized, unintelligent, *naked*,[31] and living in a natural state as "beasts of the field" (see "Language," Pratt, vol. 3; "Oneness," Kimball, vol. 7; "The Gifts of God," Young, vol. 9); and in the context of religious and secular civilizing designs, which state that

> This, then, should be our aim and object…to be saviors ("Improvement," Snow, vol. 9, p. 22)
> If anybody can enlighten mankind, this people can ("Men Eternal," Taylor, vol. 1, p. 373).

Together, these divine and natural differences or epistemic and ontological differences sedimented a propriety of and for Mormonism and Mormons. A propriety, once more, which church-settlers and their posterity believed ordained them with the rights and privileges to give laws, instruct, and control (see "The Power," Grant, vol. 2). The haunted/ing literacies of propriety promoted a model of universalized being and

chain of being, and hence, reproduced a colonial binary of being and nonbeing that sustained a *coloniality of being*.

Mormons believed they were fulfilling a prophecy upon *arriving*, *discovering*, and *settling* Utah. This prophecy included a place to settle: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains" (2 Nephi 11:8-12:12). They found that in Utah. Their prophecy also involved an encounter: "The Lamanites will blossom as the rose on the mountains" ("The Signs," Woodruff, vol. 15, p. 282). They found the fulfillment of this prophecy in "the Indian," who were believed to have inhabited the mountains for thousands of years (see "In Spiritual," Pratt, vol. 1). "The Indian" carried the "seed of promise" ("Remarks," Young, vol. 9, p. 230). To contextualize this, I return briefly to *The Book of Mormon*. In the Mormons' own origin story of the Americas, after Nephi landed in the western coast of South America, two colonies formed, the Nephites (e.g., Nephi descendants) and Lamanites (Laman descendants). As the aborigines of the Americas, they were at odds with one another. In addition to their own transgressions and wickedness (see Book of Jacob, Chapter II; Book of Helaman, Chapter III-VI; Book of Mormon, Chapter III), the fall of the Nephites would come at the hands of the *wicked* Lamanites:

> And now it came to pass that after the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward, were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed. (*BoM*, Chapter VIII, p. 563; see also Chapter VI, 560-561)

Moroni was the only survivor and last keeper of the Nephite records. Before his death, he hid or buried them "in the earth" (Moroni 8:1-12). Recall, this is the same Moroni that would appear to Smith as an angel and guide him to the hill of Cumorah. In the translation of the golden plates, Mormonism and the propriety of Mormons would hinge upon the Nephite/Lamanite binary and the unfinished *work* of restoring Lamanites (see Book of Enos, Chapter I, p. 151). When Mormons *arrived* in Utah, they would make an observation: "We are here in the mountains, with these Lamanites" ("President B. Young," Young, vol. 1, p. 106). And "the Indians," hence, would be considered a cursed people. By divine design, their bodies inherited and bared the curse of "scales of darkness" ("The Church," Nicholson, vol. 22, p. 20). By divine design, church-settlers were convinced that not only were they "not intruders," but were also in Utah by the "providence of God" to manage and control land, resources, and people ("Our Indian," Young, vol. 11, p. 264).

According to church-settlers, the Lord made Lamanites (see "Union of the Saints," Kimball, vol. 2). In Utah, such were the "poor Utahs, and Piedes, and other degraded tribes" in the mountains ("The Church," Woodruff, vol. 2, p. 200). They observed them as *wild*, *savage*, *degraded*, *uncivilized*, and *wicked* ("The Gospel," Young, vol. 3; "Movements," Young, vol. 5; "Proper," Young, vol. 6; "Oneness," Kimball, vol. 7). Per divine design "The Indian" bore the "marks of the curse of God" ("The Priesthood," Woodruff, vol. 11, p. 248), while per natural designs they were marked by unintelligence, and thus, were unequal ("Peculiarity," Young, vol. 7; "Counsel," Young, vol. 8; "Our Indian," Young, vol. 11). Still, they were regarded as the *seed of promise*. This translated, as church-settlers noted, to the idea that while it was important to "Treat them kindly," it was equally important to "treat them as Indians…not as…equals" ("Proper," Young, vol. 6, p. 329). While they observed an epistemic and ontological difference in "The Indian," they saw an opportunity to save and humanize them:

> Do we want to save the Lamanites? Yes, we do, and they are here by thousands and hundreds of thousands, right upon this continent; we have them all around us and they want saving…let them [missionaries] go down and build a nice schoolhouse in their settlement, and there teach them the principles of civilization…In this way you will gradually bring them into civilization. ("Preaching, Woodruff, vol. 9, p. 226, 227)

Church-settlers called into question the human nature of "The Indian," which reassured them of their role to save, *clean*, and humanize "The Indian" (see "Common Salvation," Hyde, vol. 2; "Preaching," Woodruff, vol. 9). It also encouraged church-settlers to call into question why "the Indian" had rights to the land (see "Liberty," Smith, vol. 1; "The Rights," Taylor, vol. 5).[32] The projects of salvation and civilizing via proselytizing, which later included programs such as Indian Placement Program (or Lamanite Placement Program) and Indian Relief Society, always meant both the stamping out of "the Indian" and the deferment of their *rights* (see "Times," Benson, vol. 3). And even when conversion was deemed successful, and church-settlers could observe *scales of darkness* shedding and "the Indian" becoming *a White and delightsome people*,[33] they still framed them as *Lamanite-Nephite*.

A rhetoric of propriety and epistemic/ontological difference are also two institutions architected and left behind. Lest we forget the role of Spanish Friars in the 16th and 17th centuries who yes would come to the defense of "the Indian," but also stressed how their *police*—that which constituted the *other*— was contrary to and different than "the Spanish." In his account of the *discovery* of the Indies ("los Españoles hallaron las Indias"), Bernardo Aldrete (1674) described the *police* of the *other* as lacking science, histories, and letters ("gentes carecian de toda suerte de letras") and framed them as naked ("vinian a guise e fieras desnudos") in the context of their *police* (Book 1, Chapter XXII, p. 34). When Aldrete coordinated "aquella gente" and "la policia que las acompańa," he was invoking the word police to talk about what constituted "those people." Aldrete confirms this correlation when he yokes the absence of letters and their naked beastly state—"fieras desnudos" (p. 34). Other Spanish friars referred to them as those who do not even deserve the name of human being, "tales que apenas merecían el nombre de seres humanos" (Ginés de Sepúlveda, 1987, p. 133). But "the Indian" carried a seed of promise for some. Here, Bernardino de Sahagún's parallel between medical and spiritual doctors is hauntingly striking. He claimed medical preachers of the spirit ("los predicadores y confesores médicos son de las ánimas") diagnose and apply medicine to their patients to cure their spiritual sickness (p. 5). The *police* of "the Indians," which was argued to be "elementary" (Acosta, 1604, p. 304) and childlike (Mendieta, 1870, p. 454) was the diagnoses. For Diego de Landa (1937), the "coming of the Spaniards" was the "remedy" or medicine for "the Indian" insofar that they would be "raised" and "taught" like children on how to be proper beings (p. 111-112).[34] A rhetoric of propriety and the epistemic and ontological difference of the *other*, which established the police policing police apparatus, were the affective channels of rhetorical transmission for the *Ideas* and *ends* of coloniality. From here, a rhetoric of salvation, progress, and development positioned the *knowing subject* as the center of space and present of time in an evolutionary and dualistic continuum: savage-rational; primitive-civilized; tradition-modern; particularistic-universal.[35]

A Rhetoric of Salvation, Progress, and Development

Work, which *takes* and *makes* place, is significant in *The Book of Mormon*. There is the *work* of *tilling* the earth, planting seeds, and making the land fertile, *gathering* the dispersed, *bringing forth* Zion, and *enlarging thy tent* and *strengthening thy stakes* (1 Nephi 18:18-19:2; 2 Nephi 10:23-11:7; 3 Nephi 21:21-22:3). Church-settlers believed they too were "appointed to labor" (*D&C*, p. 251) or "fields of labor" ("Spiritual Gifts," Young, vol. 2, p. 141), spiritually and physically (see "Common Salvation," Hyde, vol. 2; "Blessings," Kimball, vol. 8; "The Signs," Woodruff, vol. 15). They had similar objectives for their work: develop the resources of the land, gather the Saints and the dispersed, and bring forth and spread a civil, social, racial, and political design (see "Gathering the Saints," Hyde, vol. 2; "The Constitution," Young, vol. 4; "Summary," Young, vol. 11). This *work* plays out in the rhetoric and narratives of salvation, progress, and development.

Mormons had spiritual work as spoken about by ancient Prophets. They had, once more, encountered (and observed) a *wicked* and *naked* people before them per divine design: "The Lord has placed us in a position through which we are brought in contact with them" ("The Leaven," Smith, vol. 3, p. 287). It was their "aim and object," church-settlers presumed, to be "saviors" of "The Indian" race ("Improvement," Snow, vol. 9,

p. 22). They sought to bring "the Indian" to "the light" ("Remarks," Young, vol. 9, p. 231) and into salvation so "the Indian" could "blossom as the rose on the mountains" ("The Signs," Woodruff, vol. 15, p. 282). And per divine design, if "the Indian" resisted and refused to do "just as they have been told," violence could be justified in the name of salvation ("Union of the Saints," Kimball, vol. 2, p. 107-108; also see "President," Young, vol. 1). This had biblical standing, as church-settlers understood that "the Indian" would "wither in due time" ("Union," Kimball, vol. 2, p. 106), be "destroyed root and branch" ("Idolatry," Young, vol. 6, p. 199), and/or that "the earth will be emptied" of them ("Increase," Kimball, vol. 6, p. 185). Humanizing "the Indian" and teaching "them how to live" always already involved the haunted/ing literacies of violence ("Sacrament," Smith, vol. 15, p. 84).

Church-settlers celebrated that they were a civilized and industrious people who knew how to build up a city, incorporate it, and enforce laws even in the face of destruction (see "Common Salvation," Hyde, vol. 2; "Communism," Taylor, vol. 5; "Sanctification," Kimball, vol. 7). Their feats, they celebrated, were "unparalleled on the page of history" ("Necessity of Building," Young, vol. 2, p. 33). This is because they *reclaimed* and *settled* a "portion of the earth," church-settlers reflected, that had "been considered uninhabitable" ("Difficulties," Smith, vol. 9, p. 109; also see "Debts," Young, vol. 14). "None dare," they proclaimed, "come to live" in Utah ("Instruction," Young, vol. 10, p. 223). Mormons rejoiced in how they developed the "resources of the earth" ("Blessings," Cannon, vol. 11, p. 34), and in the process, made the desert yield to them and "blossom as the rose" ("The Gospel," Wells, vol. 9, p. 47). They sowed seeds deeply in the earth, Mormons observed, that now were appearing in abundance (see "Intelligence," Woodruff, vol. 4). Church-settlers touted their accomplishments:

> The first founders of this Territory, those who dug their way through the mountains, cut the sage brush, killed the snakes, made the roads, built bridges and houses, opened farms, laid out and built cities where no white man ever thought that civilized people could subsist, unless they brought provisions from a distant country, can now assemble together surrounded with the comforts and many of the luxuries of this life. No white man whoever passed through this country believed that a settlement could be made in these mountains, and prosper in cultivating the earth. ("Faithfulness," Young, vol. 2, p. 253)

Mormons claimed they brought civilization, by which they meant both the "correct application of useful knowledge" ("The Salvation," Pratt, vol. 3, p. 296) and the "spirit of improvement" ("Temporal," Young, vol. 10, p. 359). They reveled in how they alone were able to remove "the curtain" or the veil of darkness that covered the desert, comparing themselves to a "lighthouse in the ocean" ("Privileges," Young, vol. 8, p. 129; also see "Nebuchadnezzar's Dream," Young, vol. 5). The "dark valley," Mormons declared, "will be lighted up by us" ("Indian Hostilities," Young, vol. 1, p. 165). They had fulfilled a prophecy ancient Prophets predicted ("The Ancient," Pratt, vol. 2). This land, which was their "native inheritance" was now fully in the "possession of the Saints" ("The Order," Young, vol. 3, p. 361; "The Building," Cannon, vol. 14, p. 129). Per divine and natural designs, Mormons announced that they were in "possession of the valleys in the mountains" too ("How," Young, vol. 10, p. 176). As they took "up the land" ("Going South," Kimball, vol. 1, p. 296), they worked to rear a superstructure, the haunted/ing literacies of hegemony that promoted a logic of management and control, and hence, produced the hauntings we know today in Utah and beyond.

A rhetoric of salvation, progress, and development is an institution architected and left behind that cloaks violence. Lest we forget the papal bull, *Intra Arcana* (1529), which granted rights to bring "the barbarians" into the "knowledge of God," either by proselytizing or force (see Hanke, 1937, p. 77). From here, there was the kind of violence that Acosta (1670) justified, which was to capture, tame, and instruct "the Indians" like children against their will (p. 40). Then, there was the violence that stemmed from Sahagún's (1938) argument that God sent the Christians ("dios contra ellos a sus siervos los cristianos") to destroy "the Indians" and their gods (p. 64-65). Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1987) asserted that "the Indian" either obey ("deben obedecer") or have war justifiably waged against them (p. 95, 115). In both kinds of violence, the

thread that binds is the idea that the *perfect* should dominate the *imperfect* or weak and that the weak should admit their domination (Ginés de Sepúlveda, 1987, p. 83, 153). A rhetoric of salvation, progress, and development were the affective channels of rhetorical transmission for the *Ideas* and *ends* of coloniality. Church-settlers understood this as part of their epistemic endeavor to rear a superstructure.

Rearing A Superstructure

The Saints would be gathered in Utah, and Utah would become the center stake of Zion. The Kingdom of God, church-settlers believed, could not have been established anywhere else but Utah (see "The Gospel," Cannon, vol. 14). They assumed a managerial position over land, resources, and people in Utah: the observers observing, those who "stand upon the watchtower of Zion" ("The Present Crisis," Young, vol. 5, p. 375). This assumption motivated church-settlers to claim that like their forefathers who were "native" to "America," they were native to Utah ("Unpopularity," Young, vol. 6; "The Advantages," Pratt, vol. 3). Here, they worked to "rear a superstructure" ("Persecutions," Hunter, vol. 2, p. 38) that could "spread," "increase," and "hold" dominion near and far ("Wisdom," Snow, vol. 5, p. 326). Church-settlers sought to make it both "permanent, lasting, and enduring" ("Men Eternal," Taylor, vol. 1, p. 366) and a "law" that shall go forth ("Prayer," Hyde, vol. 2, p. 48) to "rule every nation" ("Divine," Hyde, vol. 7, p. 53). Mormonism was that superstructure or system (see "The Salvation," Pratt, vol. 3; "Persecution," Cannon, vol. 14). It advanced theological designs of conversion, secular designs of civilizing, and modern designs of progress and development that situated church-settlers as those who could "aid in the enlightenment of the world" ("The Gospel," Wells, vol. 9, p. 48). "We are not coping with a few people here and there," church-settlers claimed, "but with the world…That is Mormonism" ("Uniformity," Grant, vol. 1, p. 348). So, they sent their missions abroad, both to "build up states and kingdoms and temples" ("Spiritual Communication," Pratt, vol. 1, p. 15) and "save" people "wrapt [sic] up in the superstitions and false traditions" ("Weaknesses of Man," Young, vol. p. 359). Church-settlers all agreed that they were bringing forward a superstructure to be recognized and acknowledged by other nations (see "Duty," Wells, vol. 7).

Rearing a superstructure is an institution architected and left behind. Over the centuries, we have a whole cacophony of voices leading this charge. The thread that binds such voices is an epistemology of the zero point—the epistemic privilege assumed by humanitas. Speaking from the side of humanitas and the imperial center, let us not forget the haunted/ing literacies of Emmanuel Kant (2012), who wrote that the "world is the foundation and stage" on which "our ingenious play is performed" (p. 446). He enlisted a series of consequential questions, *what can I know, what should I do, what may I hope, what is man* (1998, p. 677). Kant would set out to map national characteristics and human beings ranked on a *Chain of Being* hierarchically linked as he partitioned geography. Contrary to his belief that "discovery" extended "knowledge of man" and promoted "commonality" (2012, p. 506), his actions and words attributed the lowest degrees of humanity to the *other* based on their contrariness and contradiction to the White race who he understood as the "highest degree of perfection" (p. 576). Let us not forget the haunted/ing literacies of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel either, who translated Kant's partitioning of geography into a chronologizing of a proper History represented by a proper Spirit. In the passage below, the Americas and its inhabitants become an object under his *knowing subjects'* eyes.

> Of America and its grade of civilization, especially in Mexico and Peru, we have information, but it imports nothing more than that this culture was an entirely national one, which must expire as soon as Spirit approached it...The original nation having vanished or nearly so, the *effective* population comes for the most part from Europe; and what takes place in America is but an emanation from Europe. (Hegel, 1902, p. 136-137; emphasis mine)

The Americas, Hegel (1977) writes, will be approached by Spirit, by which he meant the proper *knowing subject*. Such a subject, on the stage of development and improvement, has gone forth from a state of nature

or *merely being* (e.g., consciousness, particularity) to becoming an object to themselves (e.g., self-consciousness) to returning as a unification (e.g., subject and object, sensuous and rational, and substance and universal) in universal consciousness. Hegel described Spirit as a system which has its "objective existence as world history" (p. 178). The meaning of this is illustrated in his arguments that Europe "is absolutely the end of History" (Hegel, 1902, p. 163) and "the last stage in History" (p. 552). From here, Hegel (1896) will argue that both *othered* histories no longer count "in the history of the world" and the "spirits" of those histories are now "void of rights" (p. 344). Kant and Hegel contributed to the institutions that are the epistemology of the zero point, which situates us again squarely on matters of epistemology. I say this only to reiterate that race alone does not produce racism. It was the epistemic racism—the devaluing, ignoring, and/or erasure of *other* forms of knowledges and understandings—of the *knowing subject*, which first invented and produced the idea of the *other* and race, that did.

Over space and time, the thread that binds this palimpsest of identity that is the *knowing subject* is an image, narrative, and rhetoric that unfolds as haunted/ing literacies. Such unfolds in the celebration of Spirit as the center of space and present of time: "By the intelligence of man the animals have been subdued, tamed, and reduced to slavery; by his labours…the earth cultivated. By his reflection, time has been computed, space measured, the celestial motions recognized and represented, the heavens and the earth compared" (Lawrence, 1848, p. 159). (It is no coincidence, it is important to note, that the *other* is reduced to animal propensities; animals are assumed to have no rights, and thus, can be managed and controlled). The world, it was argued, is indebted to the "Caucasian race" for all the "great and important discoveries, inventions, and improvements" (Caldwell, 1830, p. 136-137). Who stands to benefit by such words and ideas? This question is a decolonial one. Who stands to benefit from the idea of pre-existence and pre-eminence (see Caldwell, p. 1830), the idea "some are born to rule, and others to be ruled" (Nott & Gliddon, 1854, p. 79), or the idea "strong and weak races exist" (Gobineau, 1915, p. xiv)? Mind you, it is the *other* who is cast as "beings out of place," who bare the "stamp of inferiority" as they pursue "the same time-beaten track" (Caldwell, 1830, p. 135-137). It is the *knowing subject's* laws and rules, which already benefit them, which determine that no human race can "leave the path that has been marked out for it by God" or "be unfaithful to its instincts" (Gobineau, 1915, p. 53). Here, Gobineau is illustrating the relation between theo-politics and ego-politics. Who stands to benefit from the idea some have "apathy" to possessing "the house" or "land" (Morton, 1839, p. 79)?[36] Mind you, it is the *other* who had been extracted of their rights. And the *knowing subject's* laws and rules long advanced the idea that a "real nation" could "assume rights of ownership not only over the inhabitants, but also over their land" (Gobineau, 1915, p. 28). For centuries, it is the *knowing subject* who has benefited from such institutions architected and left behind.

The *Idea of the Mormon* cannot be separated from the *Idea* of ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and humanity; a logic of management and control; a rhetoric of modernity, nor from epistemic racism encountered in the Americas and sustained as a system of *Ideas* and *ends* writ large. Similarly, the *discovery* and *Idea of Utah as Zion* cannot be separated from the *discovery* and *Idea of the Americas*. Church-settlers of Utah were sharing in, importing, expanding, and disputing coloniality as a system of *Ideas* and *ends*.[37] They became the affective channels of rhetorical transmission for it, tied to language and sold rhetorically. And in so doing, Utah's local-regional settler history played a role in strengthening the U.S. as one model of hegemony vying for power on the modern/colonial world stage. For the past 174 years, a wound has remained open in Utah. For five hundred years, the *other* has been *thrown* into a world of colonial legacies and colonial difference and *forced* to mitigate a precarious subject position between being subjects of and becoming subjects in hauntings (see García, 2019; Holland, 2000; Mignolo, 2018). The above words and ideas can and should be gathered into an *archive of knowledge, understanding, and feeling*. In doing so, we can better grasp how words and ideas have always mattered. We might even better understand that we cannot come to terms with coloniality without coming to terms with its haunted/ing literacies, nor can we develop concrete decolonial actions without attending to how

communities formed themselves around this union. A careful reckoning with both just might help all realize that the haunt lives within all our bones and not just some.

Institutions in Need of Decolonization

Whatever legible and beneficial-for-all institutions—human/ity/ies, democracy, inclusion—that emerged out of "the Americas" are already tethered to the institution of Americanity. It was architected in the destruction of indigenous populations (the Americas is a grave site, and hence, a *wounded/ing* and *haunted/ing* place); appropriation of lands; ideas of race, the racial distribution and exploitation of labor; and epistemic racism of settlers. "Americanity," Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein (1992) argue, "has always been, and remains to this day, an essential element in what we mean by 'modernity'" (p. 449). To take this claim seriously is to recognize and acknowledge that Americanity—the institutionalization of a people with and *without* proper police or proper writing, history, development, and rights (see Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 214; Mignolo, 2011, p. 227; 237)—remains today within our colonial frameworks of education. Coloniality and a modern/colonial world system, to be sure, would not have been able to *appear* and become *consequential* without "the Americas."[38] At this moment, I would like to fast-forward to January 10th, 2021, several days after the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, where the idea and institution of democracy remained constituted as legible. On this day, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi stated to reporters that rioters had "chosen their whiteness over democracy" (Dzhanova, 2021). Her statement was compelling, because it virtuized and moralized democracy.[39] But Pelosi's words on and ideas about Whiteness and democracy were misleading. I could hear my Grandma ask, "¿qué ves? ¿qué oyes?" To attend to such question, I must return to January 6th, the day of the insurrection; the day it was possible to see the pale ghost walk in the institution that has come to personify democracy.

Figure 1: Saul Loeb/AFP/Getty Images

Figure 2: Jim Lo Scalzo/EPA/Shutterstock

"¿Qué ves?" I see shadow of John Calhoun in the very institution Pelosi cherishes. "¿Qué oyes?" I hear the epistemic racism of Calhoun, who one month before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 was signed, expressed a fear the U.S. as an *institution* was in great danger.[40] The very institution Pelosi cherishes was what Calhoun (1848) argued then was the "Government of the white man" (p. 9). He would go on to claim that in the "whole history of man" there had been no instance in which "any civilized colored race" was to be "found equal" to the White race of "high state of moral and intellectual excellence" (Calhoun, 1848, p. 9-12). "¿Qué ves?" I see that the pale ghost has a body in the White man with a confederate flag walking the hallways of democracy. It is in the man sitting down with a shield that bares the words "POLICE." "¿Qué oyes?" I hear the pale ghost, walking in the form of democracy as it has always done, policing its Anglo-American institutions in the hallways of democracy, and enforcing its worldviews. I can see and hear

Calhoun (1848) asking, "Are we to associate ourselves as equals…I should consider such a thing as fatal to our institutions" (p. 10). A decolonial perspective, as I am trying to advance here, is not just for unsettling and disentangling words and ideas from historical texts or speeches. Rather, once we take Calhoun's words seriously, we can begin to recognize and acknowledge that words and *Ideas* matter beyond there mere utterance. They make an argument over space and time. And what a decolonial perspective calls our attention to, as we all were forced to witness that day—no one could claim to be merely a spectator—is a fraught democracy that evolved from words and ideas never uttered or intended to be in the name of all.

A decolonial perspective takes an idea such as democracy, an idea constituted as legible, and works to unsettle (and disentangle) it. Annie Fukushima (2019) might call this an unsettled witnessing, "a commitment to witnessing without being settled with what is constituted as legible" (p. 14). Whiteness and democracy were formed in the crucible of epistemic racism and the historical nexus of an original impulse to manage and control land, resources, people, and knowledge. The *idea of democracy*, like the *Idea of the Americas* or the *Idea of Utah*, are institutions left behind with haunted/ing literacies in need of decolonization. They continue to be experienced and embodied in haunted/ing ways. To celebrate these ideas is to dwell in the institution of a system of *Ideas* and *ends* that justified violence in the name of modernity and is responsible for the devaluing, ignoring, and/or erasure of *other* forms of knowledge and understanding. A decolonial option, to be clear, does not abandon the idea of democracy, but rather, works to unsettle it, both as an institution and part of an institution architected on the idea that one civilization was destined to save the world. It takes democracy seriously by disentangling it from modern/colonial modes of knowledge production, opening it up as belonging to all. In Utah, the ideas that "the Indian" needs to be saved to become a white and delightsome people, that the black community inherits an eternal curse and mark of Cain ("The History," Smith, vol. 3), and/or that women do not have a "particle of power" do not belong to the past ("Faith," Kimball, vol. 6). They are ideas and institutions that traffic in the normative today and are maintained in and by the police policing police apparatus. In addition to the *Idea of the Mormon* and the *Idea of Utah as Zion*, these are the haunted/ing literacies of coloniality in need of unsettling (and disentangling). Such work could be the steppingstones towards both taking democracy seriously and not having this system of *Ideas* and *ends* as the future.

For five hundred years, a logic of coloniality has been cloaked by a rhetoric of modernity. A "nation," Aime Césaire (1972) wrote, "which justifies colonization…is already a sick civilization, a civilization which is morally diseased" (p. 39). Frederick Douglas understood this sickness and disease when on July 5th, 1852 he told his audience, "This Fourth of July is yours, not mine" (as quoted in Foner, 2000, p. 194). His speech named the egregious corruption of ideal representations and democratic institutions (Douglass, 1852/2000, p. 196-197; p. 202). Today, the pale ghost continues to walk and police the hallways of our everyday lives in the form of democracy, diversity and anti-racist statements, and land acknowledgements. The "settler" is still vibrantly embraced in settler states such as Utah. Uncoincidentally, thus, the "fate of problem people," as Lewis Gordon (2007) would put it, remains "unfortunately grim" (p. 124). This hauntingly draws our attention to, I contend, how ideas tethered to coloniality, literacy, and epistemic racism remain on the move, tied to language and sold rhetorically; everyday people remain its affective channels of rhetorical transmission today. Past to present, this makes the unsettling and decolonizing of archives of knowledge, understanding, and feelings, whether in public, the classroom, or settler archives such as *JoD*, a matter of grave exigence. But to be frank, a decolonial option is not about making folks feel guilty about their sets of stories and stories-so-far, or about making them hate themselves for being white. Rather, it is about recognizing, acknowledging, and carefully reckoning with how history continues to unfold in the haunted/ing literacies carried out in the everyday projects of being, seeing, and doing. A decolonial option, thus, importantly asks is, *how will one choose in the now to constitute themselves otherwise in the face of another set of choices, options, and responsibilities*? This question foregrounds the decolonial tenets of epistemic delinking and epistemic disobedience.

Today, Mormons continue to reckon with their racial doctrine and racist past.[41] They grapple with the question, *how to move forward as an institution that did and continues to wound and haunt people and places*? And, they have contemplated as of recent the place of anti-racism. I would like to lay out an impasse. The *Idea of the Mormon* cannot be the solution for the problem it created.[42] Anti-racist rhetoric, in this case, would merely change the content of the conversation, but not the terms or logic of management and control underwriting it. A decolonial option is a much different project than anti-racism in this way. The preservation of a *wounded/ing* and *haunted/ing* institution, which is the condition of possibility of and for the invention of decolonial institutions, would not be under consideration. The goal of a decolonial option is to build and advance a *pluriversal* world and future not wedded to such institutions, where the doors can be open to the co-existence of knowledge and understanding (see Mignolo, 2007/2011; Quijano, 2007). To change the content and terms, Mormons would have to abandon their system of *Ideas* and *ends* and relinquish authority over the projects of territorial and epistemological expropriation; they would have to undergo a process of learning how to unlearn. Their impasse, however, occurs in the question of how to remain within an institution without being entangled and complicit in the daily violence it carries out. My classroom has definitely become a site to work through such impasses, where settler archives stand at the nexus of *home* ("I am where I do and think") and *hauntings*, helping to situate an epistemological framework of and for careful reckonings and epistemic decolonization. Here, we approach settler archives as technological and inventional sites of rhetorical pasts and memory work (see Morris, 2006). Our inquiries into such shift the intention from merely *reading* settler archives for information to investigating and situating them as both part of our stories-so-far and as powerful mediums for decolonial thinking, doing, and literacies. If such work, which I refer to as *shadow work*, will have an impact on the ways students chose to constitute themselves *otherwise* is left to be seen. Only time will tell if they or their communities will change both the content and terms of conversations. Ultimately, what makes a decolonial option in this context potentially dangerous, possibly radical, and practical is the understanding that our stories-so-far and literacies are not fixed but are always already in the process of becoming.

Pierce Lewis (1979) once wrote that unlike books, landscapes are "not meant to be read" (p. 14). He was calling for such a critical practice of listening to and reading the rhetoric of place. As I listen to the rhetoric of Utah, I know the original impulse of church-settlers remains visible and audible in Utah. Its haunted/ing literacies circulate, and are experienced and embodied. Though experienced and embodied differently, it communicates to all that a civil, social, racial, and political design sowed in the soil 174 years ago has not worked itself out. Will it ever? Words and ideas matter. They make arguments. A foundation, infrastructure, or institution allows them to *appear* and *become* consequential. This implicates everyday people—and how their communities are entangled in the union between coloniality and literacy and remain affective channels of rhetorical transmission of and for a system of ideas and ends—as much as it is a critique of institutions. But between what is hoped for and what can be, while the decolonization of institutions such as the "Church" seems impossible, we can begin the work of working on ourselves, and the ways in which we want to walk and see the world and interact and exchange meaning with others *otherwise*. Hauntings, in this case, could be more than a rhetorical trope. It could become a powerful medium for engaging in a process of learning how to unlearn: "to forget what we have been taught, to break free from the thinking programs imposes on us by education, culture, and social environment, always marked by the Western imperial reason" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 7). Will there ever have been a time, in the past or the present, for *an-other* set of choices, options, and responsibilities? Will it have been possible, in the face of hauntings, to think a decolonial option as *an-other* option for doing *community* otherwise? Will it have been thinkable to conceive of *community* not on the basis of identification but in the "non-Name of all"?[43]

Perhaps.

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Notes

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[2] Though it is not the citation convention of APA or *ATD*'s policy to italicize words for emphasis, I have made this rhetorical choice to do so. Words and ideas matter. They make an argument. A foundation, infrastructure, or

institution allows them to *appear* and *become* consequential. The italicizing of words for emphasis here is meant to depict this logistical structure.

[3] Etymologically, *architect* derives from the Greek arkhitekton, which translates to "master builder."

[4] Coloniality is held together by these domains (see Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2007). Institutions, Mignolo (2011) tells us, are architected to *manage* epistemic obedience and *control* "who enters and what knowledge-making is allowed, disavowed, devalued, or celebrated" (p. 141).

[5] In "Mormons and Native Americans," David Whittaker (1985) distinguished between theologists and pioneers (p. 33). While not synonyms, they are part of a similar historical complex. In this chapter, *church-settler* reflects a contention that theo-politics or *works of God* and ego-politics or *works of reason* reflect a *displacement* rather than a *replacement* of *Ideas* and *ends*, a system theologically and secularly structured (see Mignolo, 2011; Dussel, 1995).

[6] My understanding of subject-position draws upon Stuart Hall (1997), who writes, "All discourses…construct subject-positions" (p. 52). For rhetoricizing, I turn to Michel Foucault who frames discourse as that which can be studied (see Davidson, 1997, p. 5).

[7] I understand archives as a collection of accumulated information about place, subjects, and/or events. With regard to JoD, I am sourcing from Mormonism Research Ministry, with BYU's Digital Collection on JoD functioning as verification.

[8] See Dussel (2019) for his tracing of European Christianity in the Americas and the colonial structure of management and control in the 15th and 16th centuries.

[9] Victor Villanueva (2006) claims racism both has "always been tied to language" and "always had to be sold rhetorically" (p. 11).

[10] Quijano (2007) will come to describe Western Imperialism, similar to coloniality, as an "association" of shared "social interests" (p. 168).

[11] In my own research and pedagogy, I am drawn to the idea of stories-so-far and the possibilities of new stories. The former is adapted from Doreen Massey. When she spoke of liberating spaces—as the "product of interrelations" and "coexisting heterogeneity" (p. 9)—the "simultaneity of stories-so-far" always already stood at the nexus of a process of becoming and possibility (p. 9; p. 12). The latter is adapted from Judy Rohrer, who writes: "We are the set of stories we tell ourselves, the stories that tell us, the stories others tell about us, and the possibilities of new stories" (p. 189). I situate myself and the work I do with students at the intermediary of these two ideas, because they foreground openings and possibilities otherwise.

[12] See Derrida (1994).

[13] By the former (e.g., takes place), I mean the act of enunciation, while by the latter (e.g., makes place), I mean the ecological effects words can have beyond their mere utterance.

[14] References to the *Journal of Discourses* are denoted by their citation format, consisting of passage name, author name, volume number, and page number. This distinguishes them from references to the *Book of Mormon*, which are cited by book, chapter, and verse.

[15] I am reminded of Anthony Giddens (1981), who writes, "History is not retrievable as a human project; but neither is it comprehensible except as the outcome of human projects" (p. 171).

[16] Walter Mignolo (2005) writes, "this book…will not be about an entity called 'Latin America', but on how the 'idea' of Latin America came about" (p. x).

[17] See Mignolo (2018) for his distinction between "dwelling" and being thrown or forced into colonial situations (p. 377).

[18] I define shadow work as the work carried out for another, whoever they may be and wherever they may be, which stands at the nexus of another's stories-so-far and possibilities of new stories. Also see Arellano, Cortez, and Garcia (2021, p. 31).

[19] See Mignolo (1992; 1994; 2009).

[20] Commencement, as in where things commence, and commandment, as in the principle of things according to the law (Derrida, 1995, p. 9).

[21] Judy Rohrer (2016) writes, "We are the set of stories we tell ourselves, the stories that tell us, the stories others tell about us" (p. 189).

[22] See also *JoD* ("The Ancient," Pratt, vol. 2; "The Training," Young, vol. 14; "The Gathering," Pratt, vol. 14; "Nephite America," Pratt, vol. 14; "The Indians," Snow, vol. 23).

[23] Mignolo (2011) offers an etymological breakdown of *theo*: *theatron* or a place of view; *theoria* or contemplation; *theorein* or to consider; *theoros* or spectator; and *theorem* or proposition to be proved (p. 186/262).

[24] Nishitani Osamu (2006) describes the anthropos as those who cannot "escape the status of being the object" and humanitas as those "who possess 'civilization'" (p. 260).

[25] Veracini (2010) contests such narratives that seemingly absolve "settlers" of guilt (p. 14).

[26] See also *JoD* ("The Blessings," Pratt, vol. 14) and *BoM* (II Nephi, Chapter XXX, p. 121).

[27] See also *JoD* ("His Testimony," Woodruff, vol. 15).

[28] See also *JoD* ("Self-Government, Hyde, vol. 6).

[29] See also *JoD* ("Celestial," Pratt, vol. 1; "The Faith," Pratt, vol. 3; "Pre-Existence," Pratt, vol. 15).

[30] See Lovejoy (1933).

[31] See also *BoM* (Book of Enos, Chapter I, p. 151; Book of Mosiah, Chapter X, p. 184; Book of Alma, Chapter XLIV, p. 366).

[32] See also Mignolo (2011) and Dussel (1995).

[33] See also "Spiritual Gifts," Young, vol. 2; "Reorganization," Young, vol. 7; "Remarks," Young, vol. 9; "Parable," Woodruff, vol. 18; "The Church," Nicholson, vol. 22.

[34] See Bartolomé de las Casas (1566), whose usage of police, as a state of being or civility (2805), is further evidenced when he yokes good police with the institutions of good ingenuity and prudence (929; 3257), rules of the good, order, and justice and law (1913; 2711; 2883).

[35] See Castro-Gomez (2007); Quijano (2007).

[36] Ginés de Sepúlveda argued "the Indian" has apathy to individual possessions (e.g., land or house), inheritances, and even individuality, which made them *contrary* to, *different* from, and indeed *inferior* in their own humanity to the Spanish (p. 101; 109).

[37] Quijano (2007) will come to describe Western Imperialism, similar to coloniality, as an "association" of shared "social interests" (p. 168).

[38] Coloniality and a modern/colonial world are part of the same historical complex but are not synonyms (Mignolo, 2007). Coloniality, Mignolo (2005) notes, "is the logic of domination in the modern/colonial world" (p. 7).

[39] For an insightful analyses and critique of democracy, see Ralph Cintron (2010).

[40] The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War, and forced Mexico to cede claims to its territory to the U.S. Present-day, these are the states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah.

[41] Though church-settlers attempted to distant themselves from "whiteness" (see "The Persecution," Young, vol. 10; "Preaching," Woodruff, vol. 18), they indeed were entangled and complicit in it: "be white folks. We are white folks" ("Obedience," Kimball, vol. 2, p. 224).

[42] In an article published in *The Salt Lake Tribune*, Jana Riess (2020) asks, "What does an LDS Pioneer Day look like in the context of Black Lives Matter?" She makes good points about racial hierarchies, whiteness, and the institution that is the LDS Church.

[43] See Acosta (2012).

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