



# Nicaragua: Sovereignty of higher education

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Higher education in Nicaragua is going through a period of consolidation and strengthening as a subsystem, in the face of the backwardness of the neocolonialism and neoliberalism processes that kept it at the service of the national elite and its foreign sponsors, leaving the most impoverished sectors of the Nicaraguan people on the sidelines. In the same vein, Nicaragua in the 1980s – after 40 years of Somoza dictatorship – and then – with 16 years of neoliberal governments – before 2007, inherited a higher education system, linked, among other things, to the idea of privatization, individualism, selfishness, and social exclusion (a few privilege). It is also conditioned by the transnational banks through their structural adjustment measures.

That said, there should be no talk of nationalization or nationalization of higher education in Nicaragua, much less of expropriation or confiscation – especially coming from those characters, double standards, who sought to undermine the country's institutionality and the destruction of public education and its infrastructure. The Royal Spanish Academy defines the term nationalize as "causing foreign-owned properties or services to pass into the hands of nationals of a country [the State]." However, education in general, and higher education in particular, are not a private or foreign asset that should be nationalized, since they have always belonged -or should have belonged- to the nation, which is why we speak of sovereignty, in the sense of "imputing to the State the goods and attributions that *by nature correspond to it*". as is the education of its people.

This process of sovereignty of higher education in Nicaragua implies the decolonization of collective memory, the recovery of symbolic space, and the strengthening of emancipatory education. In Freire's sense, education cannot be banking, it cannot be limited to the accumulation of factual, mechanical knowledge, with imported recipes; Above all, it must develop indigenous critical thinking, from the vision of its contextual reality and not of the

imposed and imported reality. At the same time, it requires the creation, acquisition, or recovery of the material conditions necessary for its development, since it is one of the most important factors in guaranteeing access to public, free, and quality tertiary education, which eradicates the capitalist and discriminatory practices promoted by the national or global elitist class.

Torreón Universitario magazine, as an element of dissemination of the new knowledge that is being developed in higher education in Nicaragua and the global south, makes its constant contribution to the construction of new approaches to this nascent multipolar world, and this issue is no exception; presents articles and essays that, due to their quality and originality, contribute to this process of sovereignty of higher education, which is led by our good Government of National Reconciliation and Unity and the National Council of Universities.