TOWARDS AN ANTICOLONIAL PHILOSOPHY OF LAND IN THE WEST

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Despite a preoccupation with the concepts of land and rent during initial historical cycles of colonization and capital expansion, today's Western philosophers neglect the importance of land, preferring the generic ontologies offered by the ostensibly analogous affordances of space, place, earth, and world. At the same time, Native philosophers provide substantial and robust philosophies of land both as anticolonial strategies and as expressions of the self-determined legitimacy of Native worlds. This dissertation seeks to redress the failure of Western philosophers to engage in meaningful dialogue with Native philosophers by taking anticolonial criticism to the heart of settler environmental philosophies, especially ecological phenomenology and Marxism.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Like any complex concept, land cannot be boiled down to any single property or fundamental element. Furthermore, no one discipline of research can generate an exhaustive account of its significance. It is possible to think of land in a straightforward definitional manner: those portions of the earth's surface that are not concealed by water; the soil; solid parts of the earth, etc. Lakes, rivers, and other waterbodies have also been considered part of the land as is assumed by many treaties; so have lower parts of the troposphere and even plants, animals, humans, and other forms of life or energy (Leopold 1950). There are limits to the expansiveness of the concept, however. Most people probably would not consider the open ocean or upper atmospheric layers to be land. But these sorts of demarcations, though sometimes significant, do not seem to offer much in the way of a philosophy of land. The philosophical meanings of land arise only from specific social-historical relationships.

In the prestigious and voluminous 764-page *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*, land does not appear in the index. There is an entry for "World" but the word land does not appear in the text of the article. Land also goes unmentioned in the entry for "Ecology." The author concludes: "The present ecological crisis is a crisis in the relationship between human culture and nonhuman nature. What used to be only patches of human culture in a vast surrounding milieu of wild nature has become a kind of planetary crust of material and immaterial human artifacts and activities with wilderness areas within it" (Drummond 1997, 150). Indeed, this has been the summary way to thematize ecological problems in Western phenomenology: as the human domination of nature via technology. Ecological problems are conceived as a failure in "letting be," specifically in letting wild nature be, to put things in Heideggerian terms (Drummond 1997, 137). Seldom to be found in this literature is the idea that ecological crises are equally based on the domination of humans by other humans. As one group of authors has written, “The ecological rift is, at bottom, a product of a social rift: the domination of human being by human being” (Foster, Clark, York, 2010). To see this relation requires a philosophical conception not of world, not of place, not of nature, but of land and lands and the relationships specific humans have to them.

Though out of vogue today, the West does in fact have a long tradition of thinking about land in philosophical terms. There are two main camps. John Locke defined land primarily as “the chief matter of property,” being that to which labor is applied in production (Locke 1967, para 32). For Locke, land “that is left wholly to Nature, that hath no improvement of Pasturage, Tillage, or Planting, is called, as indeed it is, wast;” (Locke 1967, para 42). The moral mandates of Adam Smith to invest the maximum amount of wealth towards the “creation” of additional wealth follow directly from Locke’s ideas on property. But property not yet being capital; it is dubious whether the concept “property” or even private property truly captures the prevailing relation to land today. In practice, land is absorbed as a form of capital, which can initially be understood as wealth privately marshaled for the accumulation of more wealth.

Karl Marx on the other hand balks at Locke’s bourgeois categorization of land as private property, writing, “The view of nature attained under the dominion of private property and money is a real contempt for and practical debasement of nature...” (Marx 1975, 172). For Marx, the rightful human relation to land is one of direct associated production, or a socially managed “metabolic interaction between man and the earth” that is undisturbed by the intervention of capital accumulation (Marx 1992, 637). The general appropriation of nature for human needs is not the same as the formation of private property where the earth is possessed by individuals to the exclusion of others (Foster and Clark 2018, 3). Marx emphasizes the communal, direct relation of production as the basis of right to land. However, Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang express nervousness about this approach:

> Communal ownership of land has figured centrally in various movements for autonomous, self determined communities. "The land belongs to those who work it," disturbingly parrots Lockean justifications for seizing Native land as property, 'earned' through one's labor in clearing and cultivating 'virgin' land (Tuck and Yang 2012, 30).

In stark contrast, many Native philosophers describe their own view in terms of relations to land that are not characterized primarily by production but by personal kinship. Robert Bunge, a Lakota philosopher, writes, "To the native American, it [land] is the mother of all that lives, the Ur-source of life itself, a living, breathing entity – a person" (Bunge 1979, 2). Bunge's view is anticolonial because it indicates that the primary human relationship to land is not universalizable: specific people are integrally related to specific lands. Land should not simply belong to anyone who "works it." As a generalized relation to capital, class often falls short as a critical tool in anticolonial contexts. George Tinker emphasizes that "American Indian peoples resist categorization in terms of class structure" because the frameworks of nations and peoples are more helpful for thinking about relationships to specific lands, leaving open the question "whether indigenous peoples desire production in the modern economic sense in the first place" (Tinker 2004, 103). On this view, ownership is not a right of humans over land, but rather, as Winona LaDuke writes, "In our language the words Anishinabeg akiing describe the concept of land ownership. They translate as ‘the land of the people’ which doesn’t infer that we own our land but that we belong on it” (LaDuke 1997, 33). Oneida author Laura Kellogg laments the assimilation of Native Peoples into the general workforce, writing, “the dismemberment of the Indian domain puts the Indian out into the labor world of the white man, landless” (Kellogg 1920, 51). And yet, many Native American authors still resist seeing themselves simply as part of a global proletariat, rejecting European notions of production and labor as constituting the basic human relationship to the land, including the Marxist idea of associated production under common ownership.

The general map of worldviews above provides a context for the specific intervention sought by this dissertation. To some, land might at first seem to be a petty subject for philosophy, with place, space, world, earth and other lofty terms appearing more suited to the luminosity of its stature. But land is in a sense more immanently significant because it entails a direct conceptual bridge to issues of nationhood, displacement, colonialism, and labor. In addition to its depth as a concept in political ontology and epistemology, raising questions about where we are and where we know, land also holds ethical significance for questions about responsibility and accountability. Specific ethical responsibilities tend to remain hidden when land-like substitutes dominate discourse with their tendency to play the role of universal ontological categories. The ubiquity of this generalizing approach is perhaps not so surprising in a culture that is captivated by a sense of land as a species of fungible property, both interchangeable and for sale, caught up in a perspective that only sees the difference between “parcels” of land in terms of monetary units. Though necessarily dispersed and often invisible, the capitalization of land comprises what is perhaps a more central axis of power and control than is achieved by the institutional hegemony of prisons, factories, hospitals, courts, schools, and so on (Veblen 1997; Foucault 1995). Western schemes of land have been crafted over time to justify and incite violence, genocide, displacement, rape, murder, and white supremacy aimed at domination and accumulation on a world scale (Churchill 1993; Smith 2015; Stannard 1993; Tuck and Yang 2012). How, then, could it be denied that there is an obligation to address a matter of such metaphysical and moral gravity?

Very little has changed in the prevailing Western concept of land since John Locke. Its only evolution has been permutations of the original colonizing idea. Locke established the moral foundation of private property as a natural right for the explicit purpose of colonizing the Americas (Arneil 1996a, 1996b; Macpherson 2011). By and large, subsequent political economists (Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, etc.) extended this view to encompass new elements in economic and geographic expansion. The alternatives achieved by Karl Marx, who proposes control of land by the associated producers, are sounder according to democratic and ecological principles, but still need much additional discussion and critical examination from an anticolonial perspective (Foster 2000; Coulthard 2014).

Because of the bloodstained history of Western expansionism, my dissertation begins from the premise that there is no good philosophical account of land within the West. A good conception would provide parameters for the material transformation (or dissolution) of Western nations from societies founded on the violence of colonialism and imperialism to societies that establish peace, justice, and equality along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality. The most basic question to be asked of any theory or aspect of a theory of land is the following: Does this achieve justice for the oppressed? If the answer is unclear or negative, then more critical work needs to be done and the theory revised.

In particular, the concept of nationhood needs to be re-examined critically. Popular discourse typically understands discrimination based on nationality to be directed at immigrant populations. However, a proper understanding of colonialism recognizes that modern nation-states such as the U.S. are in fact filled with thousands of Native nations that are actively denied the possibility of self-determination under conditions of totalitarian rule. Thus, the worst aspects of international injustice, including perpetual genocide and separation from homelands, are issues that stand to be addressed by concepts of land and nationhood. The extensive literature addressing Indigenous sovereignty must be engaged with earnest by Western philosophers who should especially focus on the challenges of self-critique and allyship in this context, both of which are necessary parts of the process to fight colonialism at every possible juncture and to take anticolonial criticism to every corner of research. In that process, Westerners cannot simply adopt Native attitudes to land. Changes must be made from within and through dialogue with those who are in position to make the most meaningful criticism.

This dissertation argues that prevailing Western attitudes towards land are crystalized in the content of a range of foundational philosophical methodologies. In particular the content of phenomenology and political economy are significant because they propose experiential and material approaches to radical philosophy and should engage in rich intercultural dialogue in order to root out where they have failed to become anticolonial projects. This does not mean that these philosophical methods themselves should be thrown out. To the contrary, they are indispensable opportunities for intercultural dialogue, self-reflection, and transformation; the incorporation of decolonizing methodology should shift the basic concepts in focus to better alternatives. Specifically, this means addressing land in so far as it stabilizes violence in lived meanings and material realities.

Via the phenomenological tradition, Western philosophers have challenged the metaphysical position that presumes nature to be strictly "natural" entity or object of the natural sciences (Foltz 1995; Abram 1996; James 2009; Toadvine 2009). This has been a fruitful discussion in many ways, illuminating human experience both in its kinships and its discontinuities with the rest of nature. Concepts like dwelling and intercorporeality complicate the absolute gap in meaning between human and non-human worlds. The concept of place has turned focus to the ways human identity is formed by a proximal nexus of meanings. However, until very recently the concept of land has received minimal attention from the phenomenologists of the West.

Todd Mei's 2017 book, *Land and the Given Economy*, acknowledges the phenomenological uniqueness of land in comparison with other concepts that have been more commonly studied (2017, 9). He argues that land accesses ontologically primary structures of being-in-the-world because it connects our possibilities of experience directly to economic realities. He writes,

> The studies of Casey and Malpas make significant progress in rethinking our relation to land, yet they do so without seeing the deeply ontological and economic implications of what this relation means (2017, 110).

Mei's work contributes a way to conceptually link phenomenological descriptions of experience to normative aspects of political economy by using land as a proxy or bridging concept. He identifies his work as additive to other endeavors in phenomenology, writing “it is precisely an understanding of land as we experience it that is lacking” (2017, 11). Edward Casey, Edward Relph, Yi-Fu Tuan, Jeff Malpas, and other phenomenologists have taken up the concept of place with earnest but neglect a serious philosophical engagement with political economy and mislay the material ontology afforded by the concept of land.

However, Mei’s re-opening of the question of land suffers from a lack of engagement with Native authors and thus overlooks many fundamental philosophical problems. He fails to ask who the “we” of experience is, missing the colonial context of land entirely, omitting what are perhaps the most important critiques and needs for radical transformation. As a result, he falls back on an economic account developed in the early 1800s by David Ricardo and a phenomenological account offered by Martin Heidegger, boiling the ontology of land down to a general sort of *hupokeimenon* or a “ground upon which we dwell.” It is not clear that Mei makes any positive contributions to a phenomenology of land at all. Rather his book re-presents old thinking that is anchored by colonial experiences.

The main issue here is not with phenomenology’s core method, but rather with descriptions that normalize settler experience without interrogating it as such. Hence, what needs to be added to phenomenological method is a decolonizing methodology that centers the rich descriptions of experience expressed by colonized peoples. A main premise of the dissertation is that phenomenology hitherto has by-and-large produced colonial phenomenologies.

This dissertation develops a critical analysis of Western philosophies of land by way of two distinct methodologies which will also form the outline of the second and third chapters. These will be phenomenology and political economy. As is outlined in the chapter descriptions at the end of this introduction, the dissertation will focus on certain key authors who have wide-ranging influence for thinking about land or its affiliated concepts within each tradition.

Decolonizing Methodology

In order to critically examine the normalization of settler experience and material relations, this dissertation adopts philosophical dialogue between Western and Native people as a core methodological principal with the intention of transforming Western conceptions of land in ways that offer some useful tools for exiting the settler colonial landscape. In such a dialogue, it is important to center Native critiques that talk back to colonialism as well as Native worldviews that both predate and stand independently of colonialism. Reasons for this are at least fourfold: 1) to destabilize the univocal aspects of settler philosophy and open space for self-criticism, 2) to combat the process of erasure by a confirmation of Native contributions to philosophical thinking, 3) to acknowledge the intellectual sovereignty and significance of Native thinkers, and 4) to be philosophically rigorous by considering radically different points of view. In many cases, questions that have only just appeared at the so-called "forefront" of settler colonial research have a rich history of discussion in Native cultures. Philosophical questions about land are one example of this.

Western environmental thinking has often interpreted itself as a groundbreaking enterprise. Aldo Leopold wrote in the 1940s, “There is as yet no ethic dealing with man’s relation to the land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it” (Leopold 1950, 203). To put the absurdity of this claim into perspective, Charles Alexander Eastman, who graduated from medical school at Boston University, just a two-hour drive from Yale where Leopold studied forestry, published an interpretation of his Dakota culture in 1911. He wrote, “We believed that…every creature possesses a soul in some degree, though not necessarily a soul conscious of itself. The tree, the waterfall, the grizzly bear, each is an embodied Force, and as such an object of reverence” (Eastman 1911, 14-15). This written history references a living history extending from time immemorial. Leopold’s self-aggrandizement and discounting of Native American thinking is not merely incidental or explainable by a lack of exposure. Leopold was fully aware of the environmental views of Native groups but did not regard them as a mature ethical stage in his so-called “ethical sequence.” In an essay ironically titled “Aldo Leopold listens to the Southwest,” Dan Schilling writes, “It is no exaggeration to suggest that the compelling culmination of Leopold’s intellectual wanderings, the celebrated ‘Land Ethic,’ had its genesis in the Southwest” (Schilling 2009, 326). Schilling pulls a few sentences from a letter written by a 17-year-old Leopold who had just listened to a tribal elder’s speech. This letter originally appears in the scholarship of Curt Meine: “He said after speaking of the Indian’s knowledge of nature, ‘Nature is the gate to the Great Mystery.’ The words are simple enough but the meaning unfathomable” (Meine 1988, 35). From a young age, Leopold lived in a world framed by disputes over land between tribes and colonial governments. He was also directly exposed to the thinking of Native people on the subject of land and nature.

Government officials who followed in Leopold's footsteps and generated federal policy also trivialized Native cultures. In an examination of national parks and their relation to Native Americans, Philip Burnham commented on those drafting the so-called Leopold Report of 1963, "Leopold et al., more progressive in spirit, still dismissed native people as passive onlookers, with no more claim of an active presence than the mummified Esther in the Mesa Verde museum" (Burnham 2000, 149).

Kyle Whyte's essay appearing in a 2013 APA newsletter evaluates Callicott's book, *Earth's Insights*. Callicott claims that Leopold's achievement should be considered "a universal environmental ethic, with globally acceptable credentials, underwriting and reinforcing each of the others. Further, it is also intended to serve as a standard for evaluating others" (Callicott 1994, 188). Whyte responds, "For Callicott, only the land ethic can interpret and validate all Indigenous ethics…Leopold's land ethic ought to colonize the other ethics" (Whyte 2013, 2). Touting the universality of Western ethics strikes an eerie harmonization with the history of religious, linguistic, and cultural assimilation in boarding schools. Whyte warns, "Those who see Leopold as a powerful connector between tribal and non-tribal people must realize that we live in a colonial world, not a post-colonial one. Our histories are not shared and they do conflict; similarities are only on the surface" (Whyte 2013, 4).

The content as well as the methods of Western philosophy are at stake in this dialogue. A philosophical method opposed to Cartesian skepticism about the spatial context of thinking starts from the premise that it *is someplace*. I am quite certain that I am here in Eugene, Oregon, a city carrying the name of a prominent colonist. The proper name of the area, Chifin, reminds me that my city continues to live a linguistic lie, pretending as though we are not in fact occupying the homeland of the Kalapuya. I am quite certain that the laptop on which I write is powered by hydroelectric dams constructed on the rivers with which several local nations have ancient and dynamic relationships. I am quite certain that the house in which I dwell is built from the old growth trees that at one point lived in abundance, but now only stand in special reserved areas.

These thoughts are philosophically significant because they imply that authorship on this land caries specific moral responsibilities. There is a direct connection between my living here and my duties as a scholar. There is an obligation not just to utter certain words or to acknowledge certain truths, but to take pauses and develop a constant vigilance and awareness of my research in terms of its possibilities for usefulness as well as its potential for harm in my colonial context (thoughts inspired by Ilarion and Roderick, 2013). Linda Tuhiwai Smith presses the researcher to consider their work from the perspective of people to whom they have a moral responsibility. "Are they useful to us…Can they actually do anything?" (2012, 10). Most academic research is considered to be worth-while simply as part of a pool of ever-growing knowledge. Whether this could represent an ever-growing pool of ignorance is typically not considered. Researchers are tasked with identifying gaps in the literature and filling them. Rarely are they asked to stop and consider how the body of research they engage might reinscribe forms of social violence. Smith writes, "…belief in the idea that benefiting mankind is indeed a primary outcome of scientific research is as much a reflection of ideology as it is of academic training" (2012, 2). Decolonizing research must remain vigilant about the ways in which it at risk of becoming just another fragment of settler colonial power.

Such a cross-cultural dialogue is complex and fraught with internal tensions, risk, and unequal power dynamics. The fact that mainstream philosophical research in the university setting is risky for Native People should come as no surprise. Universities are settler institutions that generate the knowledge and conceptual tools necessary for the reproduction and deepening of settler power. As Smith writes, "Western disciplines are as much implicated in each other as they are in imperialism" (Smith 2012, 11). With its conceptual and logical equipment, Western philosophy has legitimized the production of settler nations. Research conducted in the academy should be scrutinized in terms of how it achieves the settler project of, as Eve Tuck suspects, "securing private property" (Patel xiii, 2016). New research may challenge or criticize old views in certain ways, but often recapitulates or re-inscribes violent forms of social power in both content and methodology.

Who am I, then, a nonNative white settler, to write my version of an anticolonial philosophy of land? As an author on this soil, it is a responsibility implied by my social context to resist colonial projects by any means possible. The dangers of engagement with an ethical problem, which are many, are far outweighed by the dangers of living in denial. To implement alternative strategies to normalized research, this dissertation will seek to challenge white entitlement to land, identify colonial structures in the subterranean philosophical literature, and do the work it takes to relay Native arguments to corners of the academy that would otherwise remain embalmed in their own disciplines. It is part of my task to navigate, as Patel writes, "the complexities of communicating Native epistemologies to nonNatives," but it is not my task to speak for Native Peoples (Patel 2016, 7). I find a profound methodological sense of direction in Leigh Patel's work when she so eloquently writes,

> Coloniality, because of its pervasiveness, implicates everyone through its ongoing structure of people, land, and well-being. These implications do not mean that anyone's structural location relative to colonization is fixed by virtue of birthplace or social identity, but rather at every juncture there is constant opportunity and responsibility to identify and counter the genealogies of coloniality that continue to demand oppression (Patel 2016, 6).

There are two important methods available for Western philosophical research: 1) What Smith calls "systems or methods of self-critique" that constitute internal criticisms and visions of emancipation within the Western tradition and 2) Dialogue with Native authors about the shortcomings of these modes of self-critique and engagement in cross-cultural communication and the centering of Native voices (Smith 2012, 166).

As authorship attempting to do work at the border of two worlds, it is necessary for this dissertation to challenge the long history of Native Peoples being left out, erased, or treated as an object of study (Tuck and Yang 2012, 22). Rather, Native voices should appear on the scene of research as what they really are: agents in the conversation. They should appear as critics, teachers, philosophers, friends, contributors, and so on. In a culture so obsessed with white liberal versions of cultural blending, it is easy to forget that in many conversations, some people have privileged knowledge of certain aspects of life, and their voices must be taken to heart ahead of others. "Stop talking," the title of one Indigenous methods book reads (Merculieff and Roderick, 2013). Silence and listening should emerge in the written text as active achievements equal to the words themselves. As a dialogue, the ways in which this dissertation proposes to change the world are necessarily insufficient: It will not return lands to Native People or make an end of colonizing worldviews. However, it can do work to move closer to these outcomes and to make a small intervention in the forceful repetition of colonial logics within some pockets of intellectual life.

The methodological importance of dialogical philosophical inquiry is matched by the significance of the historical contexts of Western philosophies of land that constitute protracted cycles of imperialist conquest. A decolonizing historical analysis should be equally dialogical and framed by an attitude of listening, considering radically different descriptions of events as keystones for self-criticism. If settler colonialism is at bottom a "logic of owning land" then Western history and philosophy should be reinterpreted from that vantage point (Patel 2016, 30). Hence, an in-depth genealogy of the philosophy of land is of vital importance in service of Smith's call to investigate "conceptual tools, the ones which makes us feel uncomfortable, which we avoid, for which we have no easy response" (Patel 2016, 30; Smith 2012, 41).

Western concepts of land have acted as the equivalent of the atomic bomb, erasing entire populations of human beings (and other beings) from view and from the realm of value, rendering them eliminable according to "scientifically" produced concepts. In fighting back against to this "logic of elimination" (Wolfe 2006), it should not be forgotten that the creation of literal atomic bombs has left heavy scars on Native nations. As I experienced firsthand while living in the Diné Nation some years ago, the atomic bomb is as devastating in its creation as it is in its deployment. The legacy of uranium mining is a cause of disease and pestilence for the Diné people and their land. Only some 300 miles northeast of my current location, the Hanford nuclear site looms over the Columbia River near its confluence with the Yakima and Snake. To be used in warfare, uranium must first be enriched, and the fulfillment of this military project created a toxic nuclear impingement on Yakima lands. This prevents cultural and spiritual practices and violates treaty rights to the harvest of roots, berries, medicines, fish, and game. As the Yakima Nation implored in comments directed at an insufficiently restorative environmental assessment, "Then, also, allow Yakimas to be Yakimas" (Yakima Indian Nation, 1985, 6-15). Kyle Whyte writes,

> "…injustice also occurs when the social institutions of one society systemically erase certain socioecological contexts, or horizons, that are vital for members of another society to experience themselves in the world as having responsibilities to other humans, nonhumans and the environment. Injustice, here, involves one society robbing another society of its capacities to experience the world as a place of collective life that its members feel responsible for maintaining" (2016, 158).

Conceptual erasure, or colonial ideology, synchronizes with such material and spiritual violence throughout repeating cycles of time. As many Native authors have emphasized, settler colonialism is a recurring social relation, not an historical event in the past. Hence, the conceptual genealogy of the concept of land in the West that appears in the next section provides a critical backdrop for tracing cycles of ideological mutation as they have changed or adapted the colonial enterprise of owning land. Key approaches that have served this end are dominant social relations to land as private property, capital, and a source of rent, all of which play specific roles in Western political economic ideology. Uncovering this history of philosophical description and justification establishes a baseline for critique and transformation.

An Ideological History of Land in the West

Western history is so deeply invested in the solidity of private property and the expansiveness of capital that it is in fact difficult if not impossible to develop an understanding of "the West" that is not fundamentally undermined by a radical shift away from these social relations. Whether originating in Locke, Smith, Malthus, Darwin, or others, Western theories of the human relation to land have tended be characterized as universal laws, naturalizing colonization as an inevitable process that occurs according to fundamental principles of population and economics rather than social conditions of oppression. Cycles of colonization have been treated as unique chances to study these laws in action as if observing billiard balls clap against one another. Darwin wrote,

> No country can be named in which all the native inhabitants are now so perfectly adapted to each other and to the physical conditions under which they live, that none of them could anyhow be improved; for in all countries, the natives have been so far conquered by naturalised productions, that they have allowed foreigners to take firm possession of the land. And as foreigners have thus everywhere beaten some of the natives, we may safely conclude that the natives might have been modified with advantage, so as to have better resisted such intruders (2006, 53).

This characterizes the displacement of Native Peoples as case studies in the struggle for existence. The work of untangling these "laws" that have structured the West begins with identifying the attitudes and social conditions that unify recurring cycles of ideological development. Penned in 1896 by celebrated American historian Frederick Jackson Turner, the passage below captures something essential about the Western relation to land:

> The West, at bottom, is a form of society, rather than an area. It is the term applied to the region whose social conditions result from the application of older institutions and ideas to the transforming influences of free land (Turner 1994, 61).

An unabashed colonial enthusiast, Turner nostalgically eulogized the impulse to spatial expansion as the basal spirit of Western liberty and freedom. But as he came to realize, colonial expansion is at the same time an act of political consolidation. Turner wrote at a time when, in fact, unincorporated lands had all but disappeared and the bulk of what had once been considered *terra nullius* was the public and private property of U.S. citizens. His essay, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, famously proclaimed the end of the era of geographic expansion and therefore the end of the frontier. This historic turning point presented an interesting problem: Did the disappearance of the frontier spell the end of the social conditions defining the West? Turner's answer to the question was "no." He suggested that expansion need not end with the disappearance of "free land." It could in fact persist as the organizing social principle if Americans, with their characteristic Yankee gusto, tackle new "frontiers" in technology, science, and capital increase. Of course, what he failed to think was that the slow-down in spatial expansion did not spell the end of colonialism; rather it was merely indicative of colonialism's solidification as a basis for other frontiers of accumulation.

Assuming Turner was right about the possibility for Western social forms to reinvigorate themselves in alternate modes of accumulation and expansion, a true revolution in the concept of land within the Western world would entail the absolute destruction of the form of society that can rightfully be called "the West." Such a conception would put in to question the legitimacy of the existence of many modern nations like the United States. Wherever "the West" exists as a form of society and accumulation, a reciprocal and respectful relation to land cannot also exist.

Carolyn Merchant famously argues in *The Death of Nature* that dominating relationships to nature did not simply inhere in Europe's trajectory, but rather had to be created philosophically, politically, and culturally by violent force (1989). Even in works of late Christian origin, the spiritual unity of humans and the communal distribution of resources appear as core values. Acts 4:32-35 reads,

> [32]All believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had… [33]And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all [34] that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales [35] and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need (NIV).

That passage is typically dated to around 80 AD. The first Christians were mostly Jewish, and a glance deeper into the Jewish prophetic tradition reveals an even more sweeping edict coming from Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem suggesting the communal ownership of land. Psalm 115:15-16 reads, "[15]Blessed be ye of the LORD, who made heaven and earth. [16]The heavens are the heavens of the LORD; But the earth hath He given to the children of men" (JPS). The godhead of the Hebraic tradition gives the surface of the earth to human kind in common.

Working to overcome the *prima facie* implications of biblical scriptures, John Locke opened Chapter V of the *Second Treatise*, "Of Property," with the passage from Psalms above. This set for Locke an interesting task: to reconcile private property in land with biblical descriptions of land as common human inheritance. He wrote, "But this being supposed, it seems to some a very great difficulty, how any one should ever come to have a Property in any thing…" (Locke 2003, 111.).

Locke raised this concern with good reason. Anticolonial sentiment in England was a force to be reckoned with. In her meticulous scholarship on Locke, Barbara Arneil notes, "The opponents of colonialism either argued that settlements would ruin England or that England had no right to claim land already occupied by another people" (Arneil, "The Wild Indian's Venison," 62). Locke's biblical reference established a shared starting point with those who were doubtful about the English right to colonize America.

The *Second Treatise* is a landmark because it transformed political ideas of property in land to justify the British colonization of the Americas. Locke's position as secretary and financial dependent to Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury,[1] shaped the focus of his writings profoundly. In his classic biography on Locke, Maurice Cranston writes, "Locke was easily infected with Ashley's zeal for commercial imperialism, seeing as clearly as his patron saw the possibilities it offered for personal and national enrichment" (1957, 119). In 1663 the Earl was given title as one of eight Lords Proprietors (landlords) to a then-new British expansion known as Carolina. A few years later Locke drafted the organizing documents for the settlement; these are known as the *Grand Model*. Arneil writes, "John Locke saw America as the second Garden of Eden; a new beginning for England should it manage to defend its claims in the American continent against those of the Indians and other European powers" (Arneil, *John Locke and America,* 1). Hence, Locke had two primary targets in Chapter V: 1) to argue against Native claims to the land based on continued occupation, and 2) "to distinguish the English, Protestant approach to colonization, as one based on trade and industry, from that of the Catholic Spaniards, which he perceived as one of violence and conquest" (ibid*.*, 9). For these reasons, Locke's treatise is one of the only early modern volumes to dwell at length on the origin of title and the individual right to exclusive ownership, offering moral justifications and procedural rules for acquisitions of private property in land. Most subsequent political economists took this point of view for granted and did not address these fundamental philosophical issues.

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[1] Shaftesbury was later to become the Lord High Chancellor of England.

Famously, Locke's starting point is a "state of nature" in which men have little or no property except that which they have in their own person (Locke 2003, 101, 111-12). He contrasts the original property in one's person with the original status of "Nature" or the "Earth" as common to all. Scholars have often written off the state of nature as a completely invented "conjectural history" based on little but Locke's own imagination. Although this might be true in some sense, it is essential to realize that, as Arneil argues, Locke himself felt there was an empirical basis for the state of nature in the accounts he read of European contact with Native Americans. She found that in Locke's personal library there were no fewer than "195 titles under the category of voyages and travels. Most of these describe trips to the Americas by European explorers" (Arneil, *John Locke and America*, 24). Locke's logical starting point was therefore intended to be the state of affairs in the Americas and other colonies as perceived by Europeans.

The truth of his treatise is in its description of the European sense of entitlement, which involves the conversion of nature into private property. He wrote, the "spontaneous hand of Nature" supplies men with provisions to which "nobody has originally a private Dominion" (2003, 111). However, through "The *Labour* of his Body and the *Work* of his Hands," individuals may claim private dominion over the fruits of the earth (ibid.). "The labour that was mine, removing them out of that common state they were in, hath fixed my Property in them" (2003, 112). According to Locke, this clearly granted ownership of things like "Acorns" and "Deer" to the "Indian" if he gathered or killed them (ibid.). However, given his connection to the Earl, Locke was hunting bigger game, so to speak:

> But the *chief matter of Property* being now not the Fruits of the Earth, and the Beasts that subsist on it, but the *Earth it self*; as that which takes in and carries with it all the rest: I think it is plain, that *Property* in that too is acquired as the former. *As much Land* as a man Tills, Plants, Improves, Cultivates, and can use the product of, so much is his *Property* (2003, 113).

This provided the justification of property accumulation needed by settlers practicing European agriculture. The continuous occupation of land was not enough to grant title. Private ownership in land required that it be developed in a certain way, with an intense focus on the human wants produced by industry and agriculture. The management techniques practiced by Native nations resulted in landscapes that appeared undeveloped to European eyes looking for excuses to claim land. Locke argued that land not developed in the European manner was "wast" because it was human labor, not "nature," that provided the preponderance of what is useful in any landscape:

> I think it will be but a very modest Computation to say, that of the *Products* of the Earth useful to the Life of Man 9/10 are the *effects of labour*: nay, if we will rightly estimate things as they come to our use, and cast up the several Expences about them, what in them is purely owning to *Nature*, and what to *labour*, we shall find, that in most of them 99/100 are wholly to be put on the account of *labour* (2003, 117).
>
> Land that is left wholly to Nature, that hath no improvement of Pasturage, Tillage, or Planting, is called, as indeed it is, *wast* (2003, 118).

The morally charged category of "wast" justified settler claims to as much and as good of land as one could possibly cultivate or otherwise improve. To validate the Earl's title in Carolina, however, Locke needed to establish the right not merely to property, which he justified by cultivation for human needs, but to justify land used as capital for profit accumulation and the collection of rent. The difference between private property and capital is not always well understood in this context. For example, Patrick Wolfe writes of the *terra nullius* policies in Australia that the “key concept is that of private property…the doctrine held that private property in land resulted from the mixing of one’s labor with it…” (2001, 869). However, in Australia as in the United States, the initial motivations of the British empire were not to provide small farmers with land for growing subsistence crops but rather for the establishment of plantations and extractive export economies. Locke’s patron would not and could not cultivate all of Carolina personally. Hence, Locke’s account reaches its climax when he argues for what C. B. Macpherson calls “a natural right of *unlimited* appropriation” including the capitalization of land (1962, 231). For Locke, this excess of land beyond what one needs may be rightfully possessed “by receiving in exchange for the overplus [of land], Gold and Silver, which may be hoarded up without injury to any one” (2003, 121). In a strange twist of logic, the Landlords must atone for failing to apply their own labor to the land by collecting rent from those who do. Whether or not Locke’s argument makes any sense at all, the conclusion is clear: land should be treated as capital in the quest to hoard wealth. Macpherson offers textual evidence that the views expressed by Locke at this juncture are more than self-interested and utilitarian; they represent a genuine philosophical belief about the essence of rationality itself as accumulative (1962, 236). He writes, for Locke, “rational conduct…is private appropriation of the land and the materials it yields…” (1962, 233).

Locke’s arguments imply the following significant results for control of land: 1) Native claims to land based on continued occupation are illegitimate, 2) Labor’s right to land is supplanted by the Landlord’s right to acquire capital and demand rent, especially in the form of currency (though in-kind rent is possible, especially in the form of commodity crops as in many metayer systems). Locke's primary achievement was not to turn property right into natural law, but to turn property right into the right to expropriate land for the creation of capital. Subsequent capitalist economists each made significant contributions to the historical meanings of capital, labor, and value, all of which affect the status of land.

The innovations in capitalist philosophy achieved by Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* were clearly influenced by Locke's writings. Smith penned,

> The property which every man has in his own labour, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolable (1937, 121).
>
> But this original state of things, in which the labourer enjoyed the whole produce of his own labour, could not last beyond the first introduction of the appropriation of land and the accumulation of stock (1937, 65).

Smith saw capital as a sort of ordinary, natural occurrence. It arose when someone had more stock than was needed for their own immediate consumption, the surplus portion being set forth with the expectation that it "yield a revenue or profit to its employer" (1937, 262). According to Smith, capital was accumulated not by the exploitation of labor and land but rather by exercising the virtue of parsimony. He wrote, "Parsimony, and not industry, is the immediate cause of the increase of capital. Industry, indeed, provides the subject which parsimony accumulates" (1937, 321).

Smith argued that markets should be deregulated to enhance the capitalization of both manufacture and agriculture. He focused moral derision at limitations to the expansion of capital: "The absurdity of these regulations [to international commerce] will appear on the least reflection. All commerce that is carried on betwixt any two countries must necessarily be advantageous to both" (1896, 204). Smith wrote this knowing full well that the export of capital from wealthy nations, especially under relations of imperialism, consistently resulted in greater return on investment (see Hilferding, 1981, 311-337). Further pressing for deregulation, Smith wrote of the Corn Laws in Britain, which, among other things, placed a "bounty" on any wheat imports, "It obstructed not only that division in the employment of stock which is so advantageous to every society, but it obstructed likewise the improvement and cultivation of the land" (1937, 497). He accused governments of using a feeble protectionist "political arithmetic" that could never match the robust adaptability of free markets (1937, 501). To Smith, such thinking needlessly limited countries to operating within the boundaries of their regional capacities:

> To prohibit by a perpetual law the importation of foreign corn and cattle, is in reality to enact, that the population and industry of the country shall at no time exceed what the rude produce of its own soil can maintain (1937, 429)

To enhance the wealth of nations it was necessary to maximize the amount of stock employed as capital. Smith argued that real wealth cannot be measured in the static amount of money or metals lying about, but only in the "the annual produce of the land and labour of society" (1937, 652). Hence, capital should be applied to land and labor in order to increase productivity and achieve "that universal opulence which extends itself to the lowest ranks of the people" (1937, 11). To illustrate the inefficiency of the old agricultural regime, Smith caricatured the "country weaver, who cultivates a small farm" (1937, 8). Where capital had not accomplished the division of labor, Smith saw a sort of wastefulness:

> The habit of sauntering and of indolent careless application, which is naturally, or rather necessarily acquired by every country workman who is obliged to change

> his work and his tools every half hour, and to apply his hand in twenty different ways almost every day of his life; renders him almost always slothful and lazy, and incapable of any vigorous application… (1937, 8).

The “wast” criticized by Locke is taken to its logical conclusion by Smith: Waste is land or labor that is not subjected to the strict standards demanded by the intense application of capital to produce profits. The triumph of colonialism is to turn Native lands into a form of capital. In Locke as in Smith, there was a moral edict to appropriate land in this way, capitalizing land for maximal productivity. Land was considered “fertile” to the extent to which it produced profits. Smith equates profitability with fertility in many instances, as in the following:

> They [tenant farmers] are thus both encouraged and enabled to increase this surplus produce by a further improvement and better cultivation of the land; and as the fertility of the land had given birth to the manufacture, so the progress of the manufacture reacts upon the land, and increases still further its fertility (1937, 383).

For Smith, the “surplus produce” of well-cultivated lands constituted the origin of rent, and hence made the social position of the landlord possible:

> As soon as land becomes private property, the landlord demands a share of almost all the produce which the labourer can either raise, or collect from it. His rent makes the first deduction from the produce of the labour which is employed upon land (1937, 65).

Tenant farmers pressed to produce a surplus beyond their immediate needs are forced to enhance their cash productivity (which Smith confuses with fertility).[2] Rent in this instance, Smith argued, came from the ability of the land to produce more than was necessary for the subsistence of the farmer, continued production, and normal profits of labor (1937, 146). Any “surplus” above this amount Smith called the “natural rent of land," or, put another way, anything more than "the smallest share with which the tenant can content himself without being a loser" (1937, 144). Hence, it is a basic capitalist tenet that rents are extracted directly from the fertility produced by the relation of land and labor.

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[2] Quite the opposite is probably true, as W.E.B. Du Bois demonstrates in *Souls of Black Folk*. The rack-rents placed on tenant farmers resulted in cotton monocrops and the degradation of the soil (2005, 100-119)

Smith applied the categories of waste and capital to human activity also, writing extensively on "unproductive" versus "productive" labor. His version of the "labor theory of value" (the origination of which is so often misattributed to Marx) held that the "toil and trouble" of acquiring some object establishes the baseline for the most important sort of value to free markets: price.[3] "Labour, therefore, is the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities" (1937, 30). Unproductive labor was labor that did not generate any enduring exchangeable value, i.e. labor that was "unproductive of any value, and does not fix or realize itself in any permanent subject, or vendible commodity" (1937, 315). Teachers, lawyers, servants, public employees, and soldiers all fell into this category. Mothering and reproductive labor were not discussed by Smith, but it is obvious that he excludes them from productive labor. According to Smith, expending stocks on such services is sometimes necessary but often indulgent, foregoing the chance to produce more wealth (an "opportunity cost"). "A man grows rich by employing a multitude of manufacturers: he grows poor by employing a multitude of menial servants" (1937, 314). It follows from this theory that the tyrannical strategies of mercantilism and expenditures on warfare are at odds with capital accumulation. Smith criticized "expensive and unnecessary wars" for inhibiting free trade and funneling resources away from economic expansion (1937, 327).[4] He is perhaps the foremost representative of the liberal capitalism that prevails today despite constant threats from countervailing cycles of fascism.

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[3] Variants of the labor theory of value date back at least a hundred years before Smith. Sir William Petty wrote in a manuscript published in 1662, "But that which I would say upon this matter is, that all things ought to be valued by two natural denominations, which is land and labour; that is, we ought to say, a ship or garment is worth such a measure of land, which such another measure of labour; forasmuch as both ships and garments were the creatures of lands and mens labours thereupon: this being true, we should be glad to find out a natural par between land and labour, so as we might express the value by either of them alone, as well or better by both, and reduce one into the other, as easily and certainly, as we reduce pence into pounds" (Petty 1769, 61).

David Ricardo published new capitalist views on land and rent in 1817, titling his seminal work *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*. He expanded upon Smith's theory of the division of labor to account for schemes of globalized economic production, arguing that land and labor should be mobilized by capital according to the relative advantages inherent to each region to maximize global production,

> …our enjoyments should be increased by the better distribution of labour, by each country producing those commodities for which by its situation, its climate, and its other natural or artificial advantages, it is adapted, and by their exchanging them for the commodities of other countries, as they should be augmented by a rise in the rate of profits (1821, 136).
>
> Under a system of perfectly free commerce, each country naturally devotes its capital and labour to such employments as are most beneficial to each…It is this principle which determines that wine shall be made in France and Portugal, that corn shall be grown in America and Poland, and that hardware and other goods shall be manufactured in England. (1821, 139).

Like Smith, Ricardo understood capital to be both ordinary and natural. He wrote that a corollary to the stock marshaled by modern capitalists could be found in the hunter's weapon: it is "the hunter's capital…in that early state to which Adam Smith refers" (1821, 16). He also adopted a version of the labor theory of value: "the quantity of labour realized in commodities…regulate their exchange value…" (1821, 4). The natural riches of the earth, he wrote, have no value "for value depends not on abundance, but on the difficulty or facility of production" (1821, 320).

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[4] For a thorough explanation of the modern relationship between military spending and capital accumulation, see Baran and Sweezy's *Monopoly Capital*.

Ricardo developed a position on rent that opposed itself to Smith's in significant ways. Rent for Ricardo arises only when land becomes scarce and landlords hold a monopoly. This enables them to charge a fee for "the gifts of nature which exist in boundless quantity [air, water] ... the original indestructible powers of the soil" (1821, 53-56). Ricardo wrote that in a different world,

> If air, water, the elasticity of steam, and the pressure of the atmosphere, were of various qualities, if they could be appropriated, and each quality existed only in moderate abundance they as well as land would afford rent… (1821, 64)

However, for Ricardo, rent could not be summed up in simple Smithian terms as the absolute ability of the soil to produce a "surplus" beyond the farmer's needs. Rather, he saw it as a layered spatial-temporal phenomenon that depended on differential advantages or what Ricardo called "relative fertility" (1821, 393). He developed the idea that rents depend on the "difference between the produce obtained by the employment of two equal quantities of capital and labour" on different plots of land (1821, 59). Smith argued that rent varied according to

> …the supposed extent of those powers [of nature], or in other words, according to the supposed natural or improved fertility of the land. It is the work of nature which remains, after deducting or compensating every thing which can be regarded as the work of man" (Smith 1937, 345).

Smith's theory could not explain why in many cases rents go up when overall soil fertility goes down, as is often the case when population increases. He also could not very well explain how rents are placed upon enterprises of manufacture, in which, Smith claimed, "nature does nothing, man does all" (ibid.). To Ricardo, rents on land occupied with urban manufacturing made sense because, on the one hand, "There is not a manufacture which can be mentioned, in which nature does not give her assistance to man, and give it too, generously and gratuitously" (1821, 66). On the other hand, according to the rule of relative fertility, manufacture enterprises could be more productive than agriculture on the same plot of land. Hence, it made sense for the highest rents to arise in land areas of concentrated human activity. Ricardo's theory of relative fertility was important as a precursor to the empirical theories of value developed by Karl Marx and Henry George that were based on social conditions rather than absolute laws.

Ricardo also applied his theory of relative advantage to the idea of machinery. If owned as a monopoly, it offered a sort of additional rent to the owner. He wrote,

> He, indeed, who made the discovery of the machine, or who first usefully applied it, would enjoy an additional advantage, by making great profits for a time; but in proportion as the machine came into general use, the price of the commodity produced, would, from the effects of competition, sink to its cost of production, when the capitalist would get the same money profits as before…(1821, 447)

In contrast with many capitalists who argued that machinery generally benefited the poor working classes by enhancing the availability of commodities, Ricardo argued that the popular hatred of machinery was in accord with the principles of political economy. Machinery, he argued, was very good at boosting the net profits of capital but did not necessarily increase the pool of money from which the wages of labor were drawn. Hence, he saw a tension between the interests of labor on the one hand, and capital and landlords on the other, writing,

> I now, however, see reason to be satisfied that the one fund, from which landlords and capitalists derive their revenue, may increase, while the other, that upon which the laboring classes mainly depend, may diminish, and therefore it follows, if I am right, that the same cause which may increase the net revenue of the country, may at the same time render the population redundant, and deteriorate the condition of the labourer (1821, 469).

It was Ricardo's stance on land as a common form of wealth that served to migrate his ideas into the mainstream left in the United states via the incredibly popular work of Henry George. Unlike some capitalist economists who absorbed land entirely into the category of fungible capital, Ricardo proposed a sharp distinction. He argued that land was distinct from capital because it was not originally created by labor. Therefore, the rent or surplus of land should not rightfully belong to anyone because it was not created by anyone. Landlords contribute nothing to society because they do not in fact produce anything. They only accrued money due to monopoly. As an unproduced yet universal ingredient in production, Ricardo recommended a universal tax on all land that was equal to its rent. He and Henry George believed this would essentially nationalize rents for the public benefit. Ricardo wrote, "A land-tax, levied in proportion to the rent of land…will fall wholly on the landlords" (1821, 300). This move would shift more of the wealth produced by land into the realm of social production, in other words, create more capital.

Despite giving some credence to the views of the poor and arguing for a common wealth in land, Ricardo was far from generally sympathetic to the working class. This meant that in practice the value captured by common ownership in land would be accrued to the owners of capital and not to laborers. He famously insisted upon the law of wages developed in its general form by Smith, writing "The natural price of labour is that price which is necessary to enable the labourers, one with another, to subsist and to perpetuate their race, without ever increase or diminution" (1821, 86). For Ricardo, it was natural for wages to tend towards a bare subsistence level. This is related to the law of rent: Wages tend to be just above what one could produce by working the most fertile land where no rent would be charged. As population increases and land becomes scarce, the relative advantage of working the remaining land of low fertility becomes non-existent; hence, wages naturally tend toward a bare subsistence level, or the level of working lands which bore no rent. Ricardo's theory was central to debates surrounding the infamous Poor Laws Amendment Bill of 1834 which dramatically reduced social welfare in England because it was found to decrease the subsistence level wage by allowing a portion of the workforce to accept wages that were lower than what they actually needed to survive.

It was Thomas Malthus who argued that propping up the lowest earners in society would drive down the general level of subsistence by increasing population and pushing farmers on to less and less desirable lands. His view was that "misery, since it was a vital check on an overcharged population, was both necessary and inevitable" (Foster 2000, 97). For Malthus, misery was not produced by social conditions of inequality, but rather by the "law" that the natural growth rate of population tended to outstrip the natural growth rate of subsistence (Foster 2000, 93). It was just three years after the appearance of Ricardo's seminal book that Malthus expressed these views in his own magnum opus: *Principles of Political Economy: Considered with a View to Their Practical Application* (published 1820). Although more often remembered for his 1798 *Essay on Population* which he revised several times up through the mid-1820s, Malthus' *Principles* situates his infamous views on population and subsistence within a broader context. He, like Ricardo, was a Smithian through and through, accepting most of Smith's core principles regarding private property and value, and emphatically reiterating the centrality of capital in producing wealth by exerting its influence on land and labor:

> …material capital is the specific source of that great department of the national revenue, peculiarly called profits, and is further absolutely necessary to that division of labour, and extended use of machinery, which so wonderfully increases the productive powers of human industry, its vast influence on the progress of national wealth must be considered as incontrovertibly established (1936, 36).

He noted the significant ability of peasant agriculture to feed the poor, however discounted it as productive labor because "revenues" directly consumed do not create profit:

> By this definition of wealth [as exchanged goods], a very large and most important portion of material commodities is excluded from the denomination. In the business of agriculture, a considerable share of produce is always destined to be consumed on the spot without being exchanged (1936, 26).

On the subject of rent, Malthus sided more with Smith, arguing that Ricardo's theory "under-rates" the contribution of absolute fertility to the rate of rent. He warned that Ricardo's theory aligned with the likes of Mr. David Buchanan of Edinburgh who wrote, "it [rent] can form no general addition to the stock of the community, as the neat surplus in question is nothing more than a revenue transferred from one class to another…" (1936, 139). To Malthus, the ability of the soil to produce beyond the cost of production was a "gift of nature to man" (1936, 140). In other places, he referred to this capacity as a gift of Providence or of God, as in the following,

> Must we not, on the contrary, allow that rent is the natural result of a most inestimable quality in the soil, which God has bestowed on man – the quality of being able to maintain more persons than are necessary to work it? Is it not a part, and we shall see farther on that it is an absolutely necessary part, of that general surplus produce from the land, which has been justly stated to be the source of all power and enjoyment; and without which, in fact, there would be no cities, no military or naval force, no arts, no learning, none of the finer manufactures, none of the conveniences and luxuries of foreign countries, and none of that cultivated and polished society, which not only elevates and dignifies individuals, but which extends is beneficial influence through the whole mass of the people (1936, 147-8)?

To Malthus, the rent paid to landlords represented a portion of the God-given earthly "excess" that constituted the ability to accumulate capital rapidly, "The fertility of the land, either natural or acquired, may be said to be the only source of permanently high national returns for capital" (1936, 213).

Malthus' focus on absolute rather than relative fertility was no accident; the issue was intimately related to his work on population. Malthus characterized this relationship in the following manner,

> It is therefore strictly true, that land produces the necessaries of life – produces the means by which, and by which alone, an increase of people may be brought into being and supported. In this respect it is fundamentally different from every other kind of machine known to man; and it is natural to suppose that the use of it should be attended with some peculiar effects (1936, 142).

Whatever machinery might be developed to work the land more efficiently, you cannot squeeze blood from a turnip, so to speak. Malthus theorized that rising populations increase the demand for more food products, thus putting more strain on the fertility of agricultural lands. This in turn reduces the fertility of marginal lands in use, driving down the accepted level of subsistence, resulting in destitution, vice, misery, and poverty, all of which are natural and necessary checks on population. Malthus argued that if such hard limits did not exist, the number of humans descended since the Christian era,

> …would have been sufficient, not only to fill the earth quite full of people, so that four should stand in every square yard, but to fill all the planets of our solar system in the same way, and not only them, but all the planets revolving round the stars which are visible to the naked eye… (1936, 208).

The basic theory is that population tends to push upon the limits of subsistence and force farmers onto more marginal lands, resulting in natural cycles of poverty according to a natural law. Malthus wrote off the obvious counterexample of the many Native nations in the Americas whose populations were stable for thousands of years. He noted that the banana and other subtropical plants were extraordinarily productive with little work, however,

> It appears then, that the extreme fertility of these countries, instead of affording an adequate stimulus to a rapid increase of wealth and population, has produced, under the actual circumstances in which they have been placed, a degree of indolence which has kept them poor and thinly peopled after the lapse of ages (1936, 337).

Ricardo concurred with the Malthusian view on population, writing “With population pressing against the means of subsistence, the only remedies are either a reduction of people, or a more rapid accumulation of capital” (1821, 94). Neither thinker paused to consider whether it was the accumulation of capital by the wealthy that was pressing on the means of subsistence and creating poverty rather than the populations of poor people.

In accordance with this philosophy about the relation of human population to land, significant changes were made to the Poor Laws of England in 1834. At the core of these changes were the theories of Malthus, Ricardo, and Bentham in particular. The Bishop of Chichester wrote in his memoir of Malthus, “The Essay on Population and the Poor Laws Amendment Bill, will stand or fall together” (Malthus 1936, xiv). As a result, relief to the poor was only offered within workhouses which intentionally implemented conditions of squalor to act as a deterrent. Malthus’ theory suggested that providing relief to the poor removed the natural checks against population increase and artificially resulted in an increased population and more pressure on land fertility, thus creating a positive feedback loop with poverty while also threatening to degrade the lives of the wealthy. Ricardo wrote that the workhouses could function as a way of reforming the poor, who he blamed for their poverty. Harkening back to Smith’s claim that capital and wealth are accumulated by parsimony alone, he penned,

> …by impressing on the poor the value of independence, by teaching them that they must look not to systemic or casual charity, but to their own exertions for support, that prudence and forethought are neither unnecessary nor unprofitable virtues, we shall by degrees approach a sound and more healthful state (1821, 104).

It is difficult to overestimate the influence of the Malthusian doctrine as a pseudo-scientific account of population and land fertility. Despite a lack of empirical evidence supporting its main theoretical positions, it impacted the core ideological components of European science, technology, and capitalism. Sixty-one years after the publication of the *Essay on Population*, Darwin wrote of his central principle in *On the Origin of Species*,

> It is the doctrine of Malthus applied with manifold force to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms; for in this case there can be no artificial increase of food, and no prudential restraint from marriage. Although some species may be now increasing, more or less rapidly, in numbers, all cannot do so, for the world would not hold them (2006, 41).

Darwin theorized that the limits on subsistence resulted in a struggle for existence; this in turn drove natural selection. It can be argued that Darwin intended the struggle for existence to be understood in a "large and metaphorical sense," including the benefit of co-adaptations as well as the dependence of organisms on the environment in ways that were not limited by the existence of other organisms (Darwin, 2006, 40). However, his theory of population largely aligns with that of Malthus and paved the way for scientific racism. A full-blown expression can be found in the writing American conservationist and wildlife scientist Madison Grant. The themes of his 1916 book, *The Passing of the Great Race; or, the Racial basis of European history*, eerily coincide with Darwin's comments at the beginning of this section that naturalize white supremacy and the course of colonization. For Malthus, as in Locke, colonization offered a sort of fresh start for the scientific observation of such economic developments,

> So much of violence, and unjust monopoly has attended the appropriation of land in the early times of all long settled states, that in order to see the natural foundation and natural progress of rents, it is necessary to direct our attention to the establishment and progressive cultivation of new colonies (Malthus 1821, 148).

Unlike the critical view developed by Karl Marx, Malthus viewed expropriation, violence, and poverty as external to the natural laws of capital. In his system they presented challenges that only more liberal capitalism could alleviate.

Tracing the intense, rapid, and zealous development of Western concepts of land leaves us with a glaring question: Why have such dialogues ceased? Where is land in modern Western philosophical debates? The degree of neglect by Western philosophers has been inversely matched by the insistence of Native authors on land's importance. Whatever philosophical motivations undergird this disproportion are suspicious given that the robbery of land is the source of settler privilege and Native oppression. The rules of a decolonizing philosophical methodology demand an immediate engagement on the topic of land and its role in Western philosophy.

Chapter Outlines

The first chapter presents some Native American conceptions of land, arguing that they constitute self-determined and philosophically sound worldviews. This approach resists the limiting tendency of Westerners to hear Native voices only against or within the context of colonialism, which makes the listening process all about white people. It is possible to see some Native accounts of land as providing central ideas applicable in a pan-Amerindian context. This is not to suggest that elements of Native philosophy must be widespread to be legitimate, but rather that certain shared philosophies contribute to the remarkable capacity of thousands of diverse nations to live sustainably alongside each other.   Specifically, the chapter argues that views of land as a relative, maternal and material provider, person, and origin of identity, ethics, and spiritual practice stand as significant Native contributions to experience and material relations. If land is not a "natural object" and is rather a real person or agent with whom humans should have an intimate familial relationship, then it follows that peoples and lands are not incidentally but integrally related. This contrasts with Western view that universalizes the human-land relationship into generic categories for the benefit of colonizing power which does not want to recognize the full richness and specificity of human cultures based on the occupation of lands since time immemorial. The next two chapters seek to unravel the universalizing tendencies of Western conceptions of land in contexts where radicalization has been attempted but without sufficiently listening to colonized peoples.

The second chapter begins by uncovering the deep colonial character of phenomenology as it was developed in Europe in the 20th century. As a primary mode of engagement for settler environmental thinkers, it is important to investigate how the critical developments within this tradition remain problematic on the subject of land. Just as the articulation of land as capital and property can be traced to Locke and other European thinkers, I will argue that the phenomenology developed in 19th and 20th century Europe has similar tendencies towards worldviews that conceive of land as a sort of fungible ground for the development of settler cultures with a special attention to Martin Heidegger (whom Todd Mei prefers) and Emmanuel Levinas. Heidegger's descriptions of mortals clearing and cultivating space for dwelling are proto-colonial experiences of land, implementing many of the fundamental concepts developed by Locke, including the idea that uncultivated areas are a “wasteland” and that (Semitic) “nomads” have no homeland or claim to the soil (Heidegger 2013a, 55-56; 2013b; Faye 2009, 143). Furthermore, Heidegger’s thinking is tied to the fascist movement in Germany which makes his philosophical deployments of concepts like Earth and rootedness, which have been so popular in environmental philosophy, imminently suspect. Levinas criticizes Heidegger’s insistence on historical rootedness and sacred elements, emphasizing instead the individual efforts of labor required for humans to draw life from an amorphous background of elements to form a domicile (Levinas 1990, 2000). I argue that Levinas’s phenomenology is also problematic because it thinks of the land as lacking any specific character of its own.

It follows from these critiques that decolonizing phenomenologies of land must take precedence in any radical reformation of phenomenological praxis. If phenomenology is to consider itself more than just specific philosophical claims made by certain philosophers (mostly white men) of European descent, and to embrace its better nature as a method for the critical examination of experience, it must start this process by listening to descriptions of experience that have been marginalized or not considered phenomenology at all. It is here that Native narratives of land suggest more peaceful phenomenological approaches. Robert Bunge emphasizes in his essay, “Land is a Feeling (Two Views),” that for Native people land does not belong to humans as some neutral space or ground for development to be cleared or assimilated, but rather that humans belong to land, which is manifest in Native life as a sort of feeling about one’s surroundings as the mother of all that lives (Bunge 1979). His detailed contrast of experiences of land for American Indians and whites not only offers a brilliant phenomenology of land but also a broader demonstration of how the experience of land relates to economic structures and race. Understanding the colonization and racialization of land is important for seeing the limitations of more recent phenomenological accounts of place, as made popular by the work of Edward Casey (1993, 1998), and others, which stand in need of supplementary material analyses and decolonizing elements. These elements have been highlighted by many authors. Tiffany King, for example, writes about the enslaved black female body that it served the "production of Settler space, the clearing of Native land and the accumulation of property" (King 2013, 22-23). Here we see what Tuck and Yang call the "settler-native-slave triad" which outlines three perspectival axes regarding land that all demand attention and recognition (Tuck and Yang 2012).

A phenomenology of land, then, should incorporate not just the non-mechanistic experiential meaning that is born out of phenomenology's resistance to naturalism, but, considering the violence of colonization and slavery, must also recognize the meaning of land as more than a ground for the privileged experience of certain white humans. Land must be interpreted as full of personality and a life of its own and already in relationship to specific peoples; these meanings standing over and against colonial aspirations for the complete appropriation of resources and the elimination of Native Peoples. It follows that land must be interpreted as a non-universalizable general relation, in other words as a relation that all humans have but that is always interpreted via the specificity of the actual lands people inhabit which contain this and that character defined by particular geography, plants, animals, and humans. This does not foreclose the possibility of philosophies of land that are of intercultural significance containing shared principles, but it does imply that any "philosophy of land" is necessarily incomplete, non-universal, and fallible. The Heideggerian insistence that land must be "cleared" implies that these specific relations are experientially "plowed under" in favor of the blank slate of ontological structures recognized by settler phenomenology. As Herbert Dreyfus notes, the verbal sense of "clearing" is a central movement of Dasein's existentiality (Dreyfus 1991, 164-165). Heidegger writes in *Being and Time*, "*Ecstatic temporality clears the there primordially*" (Heidegger 2010, 334, italics in original). The experiential activity of clearing is adjacent to colonial acts of clearing away the history of Native people according to the fantasy of discovery and the clearing (clear cutting) of physical areas for development. A decolonizing phenomenology of land will recognize ontologies of particular lands as unique and indispensable, not requiring "clearing" to become meaningful.

A de-universalized ontological understanding of the relationships between peoples and lands suggests the need for a third chapter analyzing the history of land in its function within political economies, the material requirements of life, and the specific meanings those carry. In particular Marx's critique of capital contains the switch from thinking of land as private property to thinking of land as a metabolic partner with human life. On Mei's reading of Marx and Marxists (especially John Bellamy Foster), he claims that "Marx neglects the concept of land" and reduces the meaning of land to its relationship with labor (Mei 2017, 7, 10). But Marx's focus on the exploitation of labor in the first half of *Capital 1* should not be read as reductionist. Other parts of his corpus provide crucial focus on the expropriation and exploitation of land, theorizing a reciprocal and direct relationship between humans and soil. There is much potential here for thinking of land as something other than the object of imperialist expansion and domination, namely as the spiritual and material link between humans to the earth.

In his groundbreaking book, *Red Skins, White Masks*, Glen Coulthard argues that Marxist theory has many useful applications but needs critical examination by a robust discourse that does not focus on relations of domination from the perspective of the "waged male proletariat" but rather from the perspective of the colonized (Coulthard 2014, 11). In an effort to unite the immiserated masses of the underclass, foundational aspects of Marxist theory convey a lack of differentiation between the proletariat and colonized, missing the central principle of white supremacy that unites all strata of white imperialist nations and underpins colonizing social structures. The third chapter expands upon Coulthard's view, arguing that capitalist imperialism functions not as a general metabolic interruption into a universal labor-relation with the earth, but rather as a national collaboration by specific people into the relationships formed between the colonized and their land. This suggests that material justice and emancipatory futures require not just the cessation of capital exploitation and the return of the means of production to workers, but also the return of land to specific people. Tuck and Yang write:

> The pursuit of worker rights (and rights to work) and minoritized people's rights in a settler colonial context can appear to be anti-capitalist, but this pursuit is nonetheless largely pro-colonial. That is, the ideal of "redistribution of wealth" camouflages how much of that wealth is *land*, Native land (2012, 23).

What is missing from the political economy of Karl Marx, Henry George, and other critics of private land ownership is a decolonizing feature to the “equal right” to communal control that highlights the justice of repatriating land to specific nations. This condemns any blindness towards the participation of the white settler proletariat in imperialist projects of national domination. Marxist thinking must examine its basic visions of the future, putting the idea of ownership by the associated producers in critical dialogue with a concept of ownership by the associated peoples.

II. NATIVE PHILOSOPHIES OF LAND

> "…fully developed, if unwritten, philosophy – or, rather, philosophies – flourished on American soil long ages before the European came here, and continues to exert influence even today over the minds and hearts of thousands of American aborigines" (Bunge 1984, 1).

This chapter argues that sustainable[5] and robust Native philosophies of land predate colonial impact and are characterized by active regard for land *as a relative, as a material or maternal provider, as a person, and as an origin of identity, ethics, and spiritual practice.* Conceptual and experiential linkages in Native philosophies convey strong intercultural values characterized by dovetailing yet self-determined eco-social nexuses, explaining the ability of Native nations to live prosperously alongside each other and unite against the common threat of colonialism. This chapter comes first because recognizing the independence and legitimacy of Native worlds is the initial step to meaningful listening within a philosophical context (Norton Smith 2010, 14). Coming to an understanding about the sophisticated nature of Native philosophies and the centrality of land in them is the only path to an anticolonial critique of Western philosophical research that is penetrating enough to make serious changes and engage in tangible self-criticism with a concomitant understanding of moral responsibilities.

In contrast with the foregoing discussion of Western ideology, Massasoit, a Wampanoag chief, said the following, "What is this you call property? It cannot be the earth. For the land is our mother, nourishing all her children, beasts, birds, fish and all men" (Grinde and Johansen 1995, 30). He expresses a fundamental antagonism between

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[5] Sustainable is meant both in the sense of tenability, soundness, and validity, and in the sense of ecological integrity.

Native spiritual practice and the concept of property. But if the concept of property is off the table, what other ideas can express an idea of ownership sufficient for self-determination and sovereignty of Native nations on Native lands?

Deloria offers some terminology that might more fittingly describe the sort of ownership Native nations take in a relationship to their lands. He writes,

> Before any final solution to American history can occur, a reconciliation must be effected between the spiritual owner of the land – the American Indian – and the political owner of the land – the American white man. Guilt and accusations cannot continue to revolve in a vacuum without some effort at solution (1973, 89).

The idea of *spiritual ownership* is interesting because it does not connote a relationship of simple use, productivity, or profit. Rather it is more like "taking ownership of something" in the sense of taking responsibility out of a feeling of reverence. For example, water protectors have taken ethical and spiritual ownership of the land in pipeline disputes like Dakota Access at Standing Rock (Worland 2016). Spiritual ownership is not something that can result from a transaction or a purchase. It cannot be bought. Rather it is the result of cultural history built upon a sense of mutual obligation. For example, "In the Cherokee language, the word that means 'land' (eloheh) also denotes culture, history, and religion" (Grinde and Johansen 1995, 43). The spiritual owners of the land are the ones who have developed a relationship with it as a relative and have established systems of respect and reciprocity. This does not preclude use. Grinde and Johansen write, "although Native Americans did not have land deeds or trade in real estate, they did use the land" (1995, 37). Such a recognition is important in the face of the Lockean misconception that Natives "wast" the land. However, use in this case is not framed by systems of property, but systems of kinship, which need not be associated with or compared to the concept of property to be understood and recognized as legitimate. The Iroquois issued the following statement at a UN Convention, “Our culture is among the most ancient continuously existing cultures in the world. We are the spiritual guardians of this place” (*Akwesasne Notes* 1978). They are talking about the idea of spiritual ownership.

Careful conceptual analysis would discourage the grouping of Native land tenure systems among forms of collective property ownership. Grinde and Johansen make what I believe is a bit of a categorical leap and speak of “Native American property systems” (1995, 37), citing Cronon’s *Changes in the Land*. They suggest that Native notions of individual property extended primarily to things such as clothing and tools, while “Land…was usually held collectively” (ibid.). However, reordering what counts as individual and collective property probably is not enough to capture the distinction here. European ideas of property, even collective property, entail unilateral human control and little or no ethical obligation to the intrinsic qualities of the property itself beyond its productive capacities for humans. In other words, it is not a kinship relation. Hence, speaking of Native American property systems is probably a poor analogy or malapropism. To make things more tangible, Massasoit’s language points us to an illuminating ethical question: How is collective property ownership of one’s Mother any more ethically intelligible than individual property ownership of one’s Mother? The categories are at odds. Hence, though arguably more complex and geographically nuanced than European property schemes, Native American land-use and tenure systems differ in a fundamental way from “systems of property,” whether private or collective.

It is on account of this difference in how land shapes and forms Native identity that Westerners have most dramatically misunderstood the meaning of being Native in colonial America. While race and the concept of white supremacy are foundational for accounting for the oppression of Native people, Patrick Wolfe writes that treating race as a "master category" is insufficient for explaining "various regimes of difference that have served to distinguish dominant groups from groups whom they initially encountered in colonial contexts" (2001, 867). Specifically, in accounting for Native identities, race does not capture the importance of national identities based on geographically delimited boundaries and sacred places. Thus, Wolfe asks after another sort of way for naming the oppression of Native Peoples that is "centered on land" (867). It is only within the context of colonial aspirations for land that racial formations of "the Indian" make any sense at all, where policies of assimilation and elimination are strategies for reducing Native populations and therefore Native land claims.

One such policy is the ascription of tribal membership based on blood quantum; this practice undermines Native sovereignty by attacking the basic social ability for self-definition. Kyle Whyte argues,

> Indeed, many of the indigenous peoples in North America have rich systems of membership based on family, clan, or other kinship identities; culturally specific processes for being recognized as a community member; and processes appropriate for the ongoing reality that there has been constant intermingling across different peoples and communities. Thus blood seems like so much US colonial baggage (2017, 91).

The reduction of tribal identity to demonstrable ancestry based on colonial documents or strands of DNA reduces Native identity to a static and gradually dissipating racial category rather than a much richer category based on a broad spectrum of dynamic factors including family ties to land. For these reasons, Vine Deloria warns against evaluating Native identities "within the same conceptual framework" that is used to evaluate Western identities (1998, 205). Hence, spending time to consider how Native identities contrast with Western ones on the subject of land casts light on the violence done in the creation of colonial "regimes of difference" based on how both identities are formed in and through land in very specific ways.

In beginning such a discussion, the basic fact prevails that there is no single philosophy of land for all Native Americans. As Deloria makes explicit, tribal practices and religions, though containing certain general accords, are never a universalizable relation, but always "the relationship of a particular people with a particular land" (Deloria 1973, 269). However, as Deloria also expressed, there are many shared principles where aspects of existence converge in significant ways. Black Elk famously envisioned the spiritual lives of Native people coming together in a sacred circle. The significance of this cannot be overstated as it was not simply a minor vision, but rather the culmination of his greatest revelation. He said,

> And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center grew one mighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one mother and one father. And I saw that it was holy (2007, 33).

Black Elk's vision appears to recognize that bordering nations are mutually dependent both socially and ecologically. Shared experiences exist not only in solidarity over and against colonialism, but also in the independent lives of Native nations. As Viola Cordova writes, "We see our ideas and concepts as rational, viable, and alternative means of interpreting the world. This fact is one of the reasons that Native Americans have managed to maintain a unique identity despite attempts to eradicate that identity" (2007, 4).

Robust conceptions of land are either explicitly formulated or at play in almost every book, documentary film, artwork, and ceremony of Native authorship. This prevalence is explained by a two-fold significance land has for Native lives:

> the theory and practice of Indigenous anticolonialism, including Indigenous anticapitalism, is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around the question of land – a struggle not only for land in the material sense but also deeply informed by what the land as a system of reciprocal relations and obligations can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world … (Coulthard 2014, 13).

Hence, philosophies of land are important both as an act of resistance to land theft and as a locus of ethical and spiritual life. These are interrelated but distinct modes of perception and action. On the one hand, there is a time and place to focus on, "the resurgence of cultural practices that are attentive to the subjective and structural composition of settler-colonial power" (Coulthard 2014, 24). These discourses fight back and defend against colonization. On the other hand, there is a time and place to focus on "the free and independent existence of indigenous nations…as the baseline for all further discussions about American Indian existence" (Newcomb 2008, 110). These two possible approaches to land have their critical difference in that one is always a response to colonialism while the other carves out a real space apart from it, establishing what Shawnee philosopher Thomas Norton-Smith calls "an actual American Indian world" (2010, 14). It is imperative to maintain a distinction between the ways in which Native peoples respond to colonialism (often in English, in situations of coercion, under threat of death, etc.) and the worldviews that make such responses possible. Dale Turner writes, "The discourses of rights, sovereignty, and nationhood have been and continue to be used to marginalize, distort, and delegitimate American Indian understandings of their political identity" (Turner 2007, 198). Hence, straightforward interpretations of resistant discourses can fall short of understanding Native worldviews about land.

Critical modes directed at Europeans are nothing new in Native life. Baron Lahontan, a French military man of the late 1600s, complained of his experiences with Huron and Algonquin peoples in eastern Canada,

> They brand us for Slaves, and call us miserable Souls, whose Life is not worth having…They pretend that their contented Way of Living far surpasses our Riches: That all our Sciences are not so valuable as the Art of leading a peaceful calm Life….I wish I had Time to recount the innumerable Absurdities they are guilty of relating to our Customs; but to be particular upon that Head, would be a Work of Ten or Twelve Days (1735, 10-11).

This chapter is going to specifically deemphasize the "ten or twelve days" of critique and instead focuses on the Native North American philosophies of land existing both independently of and alongside colonizing forces. There is nothing pure or perfect about such a project. It is just a matter of attention, somewhat akin to Lakota philosopher Robert Bunge in his attempt to outline what he called "an American Urphilosophie" before pragmatism (Bunge 1984). Another benefit of this approach is that it actively combats the view identified by Grinde and Johansen supposing

> Native Americans possessed little or no environmental philosophy, and that any attempt to assemble evidence to sustain a Native American ecological paradigm is doomed to failure because the entire argument is an exercise in wishful thinking by environmental activists seeking support for their own views (Grinde and Johansen 1995, 30).

Centering Native philosophies in the discussion combats the tendency for them to be treated as a supplement to Euro-environmentalism, simply appropriating critical Native views to European ends. Subsequent chapters will make ample space for critical Native voices to undermine the colonial logics at play in the experiential and material schemes of land developed by European societies.

Land as a Relative and Mother

Black Elk's vision above speaks to the diversity of Native cultures while also establishing a sacred continuity or circle that is spiritual, philosophical, ecological, and terrestrial in nature.[6] The hoop of the world represents the many lives of Natives peoples participating dynamically with a fluid landscape that is characterized as deeply by the divisions of rivers, mountains, and territories as it is by the confluence of skies, valleys, and migrations. Each particular people relates to a particular land, and there are private aspects of that, but there is nothing especially isolating about tribal nationhood or religious practices. In the common parlance resulting from problematic anthropology, the word "tribalism" has come to refer to a distinct set of meanings associated with a group that is antagonistic to other worldviews. But in the practice of actual tribal religions, nothing could be farther from the truth. As Deloria explains, although ceremony and ritual are often carried out in isolated sanctuaries, the intention is to establish a deeper harmony with, as he says, "the whole web of cosmic life" (1998, 203). This interaction defines a scope of awareness and responsibility that is, as Norton-Smith says, expansive rather than restrictive (2010, 77-94). The innermost circle of awareness, however, tends to be directed towards relatives.

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[6] There is some controversy about how Black Elk's Catholicism should affect the interpretation of his vision. Some "traditionalists" have wanted to maintain that he was "fully native" and that his Catholicism was merely an act while staunch Catholics have championed him as a "conversion success story" (Thomas 2017, 449). The question arises, should his vision be interpreted as a Lakota vision or a Catholic vision? I would maintain that such concerns are misguided because they are rest on an essentialization of Lakota culture. This is a mistake because 1) it suggests that Lakota culture is somehow pure, non-dynamic, and "contaminated" by any admixture of other religious practice, and 2) it precludes the possibility of successful and genuine intercultural accessibility and participation between Native and nonNative people. Clyde Holler describes Black Elk as a practitioner of "dual participation" (1995, xix). In addition, participation in Christian religion does not preclude an anticolonial interpretation of it. Damian Costello writes, "Western Christianity had domesticated the Messiah to accommodate colonialism. Through his vision Black Elk called Western Christianity back to central claims of the gospel – nonviolence, the rejection of greed, and the equality of all human persons – and the rejection of colonialism" (2005, 180).

It is natural to start by talking about *land as a relative* first because in one sense it is the narrowest concept to be discussed in this chapter. All relatives are people but not all people are relatives. While this might seem obvious, it is an important distinction in a philosophical context rife with misunderstanding. Norton-Smith writes, "We are not making a silly claim that what Westerners understand is the natural world is viewed by Indians as 'one big family.' Kinship groups are fairly small, and relationships within them are close, concrete and directly experienced" (2010, 91). Although a small category from a quantitative perspective, kinship groups are of the utmost significant in forming what Eastman calls the "active principles" of life, or the deepest parts of identity, daily perception, and revelation (1978, 193). Deloria likewise cautions that the idea of land as a relative does not imply that, in Native experience, all parts of land are equally associated. Rather, the relationships are specific and proximal. He writes in *For This Land*, "They do not embrace all trees or love all rivers and mountains. What is important is the relationship you have with a particular tree or a particular mountain" (Deloria 1998, 223). Imbedded in the specific characters and histories of land are also a multitude of other relatives and personalities. To relate well to land means respecting the significance of these specific relationships and how they impact life in a direct way, just like honoring the relationship one has with human relatives.

It is worthwhile to note that there are some philosophical reasons to begin with the term "relatives" rather than the more general term "relations." In Native philosophies the term relation typically carries the implication of a reciprocal ethical obligation. In fact, it typically carries the meaning of a "relative," as in *a relation* (in the sense that my uncle Ken is a relation). When LaDuke titles her book *All Our Relations*, she intends it in the latter sense, implying concentric rings of family kinship extending out from a center or homeland. In English the term "relation" can be voided of its ethical content in general ontologies. A "relational world-view" can be quickly co-opted by or conflated with the Euro-centric schemes of, for example, Leibniz, Whitehead, Heidegger, etc. But, as will be fleshed out in the next chapter, there is no good reason to see an obvious analogy. There is a *unique* sort of relationality that is central to Native worldviews. In her posthumously published volume, *How It Is*, Viola Cordova writes, "Philosophical method … should be … a search for concepts that serve as foundational notions for other ideas and practices observed within a specific cultural group. We have, for example, the Native American concept of the relatedness of all beings, and also, the concept of Earth as a Mother" (2007, 67). These two fundamental concepts are intertwined, but the concept of relative provides a less ambiguous starting point than relation in the context of land. To offer a brief contrast, in English the category of relative typically suggests direct ethical obligations. But if we think of the real dualism generated by the categories of property and wilderness, it is apparent that one can stand "in relation" to land as its owner or as its conqueror. It is ethically problematic, however, to own or conquer one's relative in a straightforward sense, especially if that relative is one's own mother.[7] Likewise, there is a moral injunction against separating families against their will, making the pan-Amerindian view of earth as mother an injunction against conquering or otherwise disrupting the familial life of your neighbor as well.

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[7] The ideology of American slavery challenges this. As Du Bois notes, the fact of enslaving one's own children was "written on the foreheads of two millions of mulattoes, and written in ineffaceable blood" (Du Bois 2005, 79). In addition, patriarchal rule of the family is akin to a relation of private property (Pateman 1988).

The Western tendency to mystify and idealize Native culture belies the somewhat straightforward sense in which land is considered to be a relative in a dynamic relationship of material and ethical reciprocity. In Bunge's essay, "Land is a Feeling," he describes a Native view of land as a relative, or more specifically as a mother. This kinship relation between specific peoples and specific lands is born in an interlocking and dynamic affiliation that also extends to the earth as a whole. Bunge explains,

> What does one call a living breathing person who is the source of one's own life but mother? In the white view this extends only to a mother of the flesh. The Indian view extends the concept to the mother of earth – the source of all flesh. Nor is it merely fanciful, poetic, mystical or mythical in the sense of false or untrue. The Indian view can be established as factual by criteria acceptable to the most scientifically minded white man. Any soil engineer knows the earth breathes. And any scientist will acknowledge that the earth is the condition and source of life as we know it (1979, 2).

Eastman provides a similar view,

> The Sun and the Earth, by an obvious parable, holding scarcely more of poetic metaphor than of scientific truth, were in his [the Native's] view the parents of all organic life. From the Sun, as the universal father, proceeds the quickening principle in nature, and in the patient and fruitful womb of our mother, the Earth, are hidden embryos of plants and men. Therefore our reverence and love for them was really an *imaginative extension* of our love for our immediate parents, and with this sentiment of filial piety was joined a willingness to appeal to them, as to a father, for such good gifts as we may desire. This is the material or physical prayer (1911, 13-14, emphasis mine).

These authors do a good job of demystifying what is meant by experiencing land as a relative in the sense of a maternal provider of life. What Bunge calls the "imaginative comprehensive view" of Native life reveals land as rich in both literal and ethical meaning. Cordova concurs with this interpretation of the idea, arguing that the expression “Mother Earth” contains meaning that is both symbolic and literal (2007, 113).

Associations between land and motherhood have a problematic history in European traditions. As Merchant writes, the pastoral tradition was founded on “a masculine perception of nature as a mother and bride whose primary function was to comfort, nurture, and provide for the well-being of the male…nature and women are subordinate and essentially passive” (1989, 9). Catherine Roach warns that heavy-handed gendering of the earth has a problematic effect on popular perception of environmental problems and women, arguing that “we should uncouple nature imagery from any too-exclusive female gendering” (2003, 172). Indeed, Native feminists have documented many ways the earth has been gendered to justify colonial violence. Native feminist Chris Finley adds to this gender analysis the significance of colonialism assigning sexual identities to land, arguing that the biopolitical strategy of settler colonialism is to heterosexualize land. Finley writes, “The conflation of Native women’s bodies with racialized and sexualized narratives of the land constructs it as penetrable and open to ownership through heteropatriarchal domination” (Driskill et al. 2011, 35). It is specifically heteropatriarchal settler family structures based on property rights that construe land as rape-able for its resources (Driskill et al. 2011, 35; Smith 2005).

To combat these colonial norms enforcing violent sex and gender relations, Finley suggests a recovery of the Native bull-dyke. Re-queering Native bodies allows for the mothering figure in Native worldviews to be something other than the passive, submissive, heterosexual, married (to a white man), cisgendered mother of white settler narratives. Specifically, “With a queer Native mother, the sex with the white settler may not have been consensual… Colonialism naturalizes the heterosexual Native woman's desire for a white man to make conquest a universal love story" (Driskill et al. 2011, 36). Overall the kinship relations to mothers in Native societies resist such a heteropatriarchal story. Queer Indigenous scholars have clarified that the category of mother is neither sexualized nor tied to female genitals. Mothering is the social role of creation that forms, grows, and sustains life. It is a process of becoming, not a fixed biological state. Cordova writes, "the Earth becomes 'parent' not only because of her act of creation but because of her continued sustenance of her creations. In this latter sense the Earth exists as a literal mother" (2007, 114). This fluidity of human and non-human genders is a fact of existence and based on the concrete relations different beings take to one another. Qwo-Li Driskill cites a Cherokee traditionalist saying, "There is historical documentation… that found two men married, one living as a woman, the other a man, and it was considered normal. Gender roles seemed to be more important than sexual identity" (Driskill et al. 2011, 105). Furthermore, most Native societies do not contain the sort of dominant male subjectivity identified by feminists (for example, see Adams 2010, 58). Luther Standing Bear saw a supportive and fluid gender role for men in relation to their partners. For example, he wrote, "The first thing a dutiful husband did in the morning, after breakfasting, was to arrange his wife's hair and to paint her face" (Standing Bear 2006, 94). Seen in the right light, such customs imply more than a simple lack of mirrors. They imply flexible gender roles enacted in social norms based on reciprocity and mutual support. Finley writes, "Native gender norms and family structures, which vary from tribe to tribe, do not conform to Native men having control of the public space and the nuclear family or to caring for the land correctly" (Driskill et al.

2011, 37). The Mother of Native land-based philosophies is not subjected to the rule of any man or human. They are an independent force fulfilling but not limited to the specific social role of forming and sustaining life.

Native American experiences of land as a maternal provider offer a literal and ethical orientation to particular lands as a relative or part of a family group and extend to the broader intercultural idea of the earth as the mother of all life involving *All Our Relations* (LaDuke 1999). Because of its grounding in proximal familial kinship, this extension comes without the perils associated with white views of mother earth and humanity that are too abstract or universal and fail to recognize culturally specific differences and responsibilities. The fluidity between experiences of a particular land as the mother of a nation or people and the earth in general as the mother of all is anchored by common rudiments of experience such as the stars, the moon, the sun, and the continuity of the earth's surface and elements, waters, winds, and so on. Although not all of these are part of the earth proper, they all provide for life on earth as contributing forces that create a shared experience of, as Eastman writes, "the love of the Great Mystery and a sense of brotherhood with all creation" (1911, 28). The Great Mystery is the mystery of life itself and the reverence for and communion with all things in that mystery. While the Great Mystery and the relation to the earth as a whole includes land, it is not reducible to land and is a broader concept. Likewise, land is not reducible to the broader concept of earth because it contains more specific meanings. The broader spiritual orientation that provides the "motive power" of existence is carried over and exercised as a concrete moral principle in the realm of the homeland and family (1911, 8). But, as is implied by title of the Theresa May's play, *Salmon is Everything*, so are the broader principles only conceivable through the cyclical connections with relatives that likewise contain all aspects of the relation to earth and provide specific openings to the greater mystery (May 2014). Such principles are not only spiritual but also legal and expressed in Native law. LaDuke documents the Mohawk Nation's "*Kaienarakowa* (the Great Law of Peace and the Good Mind)," which "upholds principles of kinship, women's leadership, and the value of the widest possible community consensus" (LaDuke 1999, 13).

Attempts have been made to stir up doubts about the authenticity of Native views of mother earth. Sam Gill's *Mother Earth: An American Myth* argues that there are only two references to the earth as a mother in available historical literature, supporting the possibility that such sentiments were the invention of white scholars and not the real content of tribal religion. To this, Deloria responds with his characteristic wit, "I would like to point out that Gill's contention that these quotations are the only references to Mother Earth by Indians supports the possibility that he is not the best scholar of this generation" (Deloria 1992, 406). Deloria goes on to offer evidence he found in commonplace recordings of council minutes and treaty negotiations. Grinde and Johansen concur, writing "To the contrary, anyone who believes that American Indians only recently began using the metaphor of earth as mother knows precious little history" (1995, 30). Despite white attempts to obscure or downplay the importance of Native environmental philosophy, there is nothing odd or particularly mysterious or unimaginable about experiencing land as a mother, especially when contrasted with the dubious origins of the God-given and inalienable right to property prevalent in colonial societies. From what real emotional experience of land does the idea of property come?

The origins remain mysterious despite the efforts of Locke and others to clarify them. But perhaps this enigmatic character is only due to a purposive denial of the obvious emotional content, that of domination (Grinde and Johansen 1995, 17).

Land as a Person

Native theorists further elaborate their views of land based on broader ideas: *notions of the person, personhood, and personality*.[8] In contrast to the concept of a wilderness, which conveys a void of meaning and personality, land according to most Native authors is itself a person or congregation of personalities. As Deloria notes in his essay, "American Indian Metaphysics," this rather simple idea causes most whites to balk and assume that Native peoples are "combining aspects of things that, at first glance, could not and should not be together" (Deloria and Wildcat 2001, 2). Specifically, this is the incorporation of the "natural" world with the world of "persons." A commonsense Western point of view typically conflates the category of person with the category of human (or depending on the who, when, and where in Western history, white male humans only). Norton-Smith developed an experiment to reveal this restrictive view. He has his audience write down two lists, one containing types of animals and another containing types of people. Invariably the list of people is populated by humans and the list of animals does not contain the human animal (Norton-Smith 2010, 10). But why should the category of person be so limited? There are good reasons to consider this preconception of Western experience to be based in the desire to dominate entire categories of beings (whether human or non-human).

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[8] See Norton-Smith 2010; Bunge 1979, 1984; Deloria 1998, 1999; Eastman 1911.

In his book *The Dance of Person and Place* Norton-Smith does an excellent job of untangling the categories of human and person to make his Shawnee worldview intelligible to white readers. He starts by showing that even in the Western cannon, philosophers have not argued for categorical equivalency. Rather than humanness being what makes a person, European philosophers have accounted for personhood with criteria such as rationality, language, and self-reflection. In this way, personhood is abstracted from human existence (Norton-Smith 2010, 81). Norton-Smith demonstrates that even this Western view can and has been construed to be consistent with the notion of non-human persons (2010, 82).

Although inclusive of non-human persons, Norton-Smith's Shawnee perspective contains stricter requirements for personhood than Western schemes. On his view, personhood is not implied by a singular capacity like rationality that is merely possessed or not possessed. His criteria are socially embedded and dynamic. One becomes a person by participation in an organic social and moral nexus. For him, such beings achieve an "animate" status, that is the actual power (*manitou*) something has as a significant component of social reality. This does not require that a person be alive in a biological sense. Rather,

> In American Indian traditions an animate being is a person by virtue of its membership and participation in an actual network of social and moral relationships and practices with other persons, so moral agency is at the core of a Native conception of persons, just as…. the Western conception of personhood (2010, 90).

This is very close to Deloria's account of personhood,

> Power and place produce personality. This equation simply means that the universe is alive, but it also contains within it the very important suggestion that the universe is personal and, therefore, must be approached in a personal manner. And this insight holds true because Indians are interested in the particular, which

> of necessity must be personal and incapable of expansion and projection to hold true universally (Deloria and Wildcat 2001, 23).

By these descriptions, Native views of personhood tend to be *expansive* in the sense that they are open to the recognition of personal relationships with beings of all kinds. In his essay published in the APA newsletter following Vine Deloria's death, Scott Pratt defends Deloria's agent ontology against common Western misconceptions. He writes,

> It is more difficult to see how one might treat a mountain or a stone or a river as an agent in moral relation with human beings or other persons, but from the perspective of Deloria's agent ontology, they also count as real agents. If this is so, then human interactions with ecosystems and other large systems as well as so-called inorganic things would also be fundamentally moral relationships and actions can be evaluated in terms of the ways in which they foster or undermine aspects of personhood on the part of these other agents (2006, 7).

Deloria's simple formula, power plus place equal personality, offers a concise way to conceive of animism in a straightforward sense that does away with the mysticism attributed by Western readers. The idea of power here is a translation of terms that have shared meaning in different Native traditions. Some examples are *manitou* from Algonquin, *orenda* from the Iroquoian, and *wakán* from the Siouan language groups.

The idea that these concepts entail a fundamentally flawed combination of realms misunderstands what they mean by imposing Western categories on to Native worldviews. Typically, Western minds will assume these concepts ascribe a supernatural power to natural objects. On a common Western understanding, "supernatural" implies a metaphysical realm that is completely separate or dualistic relation to the "natural" or "physical" realms. The idea of the supernatural is not alien to Native religious practices, but it often takes on a different meaning. For example, Eastman writes, "In every religion there is an element of the supernatural…" (1911, 16). However, on his view this does not entail a total separation form the bodily or material world. He writes of "the miracle of life in seed and egg, the miracle of death in lightning flash and the swelling deep…We have still to face the ultimate miracle, - the origin and principle of life!" (1911, 16-18). Some Native authors have rejected the concept of the supernatural altogether. Citing Hallowell, Norton-Smith writes "… if the concept of the natural is absent, so must be the concept of the supernatural" (Norton-Smith 2010, 84; Hallowell 1960, 28). However, it is unlikely that Norton-Smith and Eastman are in radical disagreement here. The difference is probably semantic. They both reject the idea that the realm of spirit or the supernatural are in absolute opposition to the material world. The manitou of a tree is not an alien force from another realm rousing its activity. The idea is that the tree is itself this force in the world (which can be seen as miraculous); it has a specific kind of influence and agency of its own. Bunge writes of the Lakota concept *wakán* that it represents the word power in the sense of a power so great that it could be considered "supernatural." But as Bunge is well aware, his use of this word does not imply its usual meaning. He gives the example of a gun, mazáwakán, which just means "holy iron." This object is labeled with the term wakán, indicating "in Lakota language that a gun has extraordinary powers; once used, once fired, something important and irrevocable happens. The universe is forever changed and cannot be the same again. All this is contained in the concept of wakán" (1984, 74). In the wake of school shootings, who can deny that guns are a thing of unique moral importance in this sense, having a kind of power within the moral realm? In contrast, one is reminded of the classic Western film, *Shane*, when the male lead "mansplains" guns to his female counterpart after teaching her son how to use one without her permission, "A gun is a tool, Miriam. No better or no worse than any other tool; an axe, shovel, or anything. A gun is as good or as bad as the man using it. Remember that" (Stevens 1953). Thinking of guns as a neutral technology that can be used for good or evil ignores the powerful influence they have on human life. Such conceptions of agency explain Deloria's affinity for Marshall McLuhan who insists that technologies themselves shape our culture much more profoundly than the basic ways in which they are "used" (Deloria 1979). Norton-Smith describes the concept of *manitou* as the power an entity has to be animate or morally significant in a social reality. There is no suggestion that some otherworldly entity informs the actions of stones, animals, or trees like some sort of spirit-homunculus.

The second variable of Deloria's formula, the idea of place, points towards geographical specificity as constitutive of personality. Coulthard gives some insight into how Native conceptions of personhood relate specifically to land:

> In the Weledeh dialect of Dogrib (which is my community's language), for example, "land" (or *dé*) is translated in relational terms as that which encompasses not only the land (understood here as material), but also people and animals, rocks and trees, lakes and rivers, and so on. Seen in this light, we are as much a part of the land as any other element. Furthermore, within this system of relations human beings are not the only constituent believed to embody spirit or agency ... Ethically this meant that humans held certain obligations to the land, animals, plants and lakes as much the same way that we hold obligations to other people (2014, 61).

Coulthard's formulation meshes well with Norton-Smith's when he says, "The Native conception of persons is *expansive,* for all sorts of nonhuman spirit beings – ancestors and animals, plants and places, physical forces and cardinal directions, the Sun, Earth, and other powerful spirit beings" (2010, 93). On this view land is a very special kind of person (a Mother) because it gives birth and life (literally and symbolically) to people in a specific place. All lands are unique and have special characteristics and powers that make them what they are, composing the origin and possibility for the emergence of specific personalities and relationships between those personalities. In that sense land is an ontological origin of personhood, existing both in unique forms that constitute the origin of specific peoples as well the intercultural sense of the earth as the Mother of all. Pratt offers of summary of this central role of place:

> “Place” is also an important term in that it implies the importance of land among the others who form the context of a person. From one angle, land and sustaining environments are simply a necessary condition for the existence of any particular beings on earth. From another angle, land, rivers, ecosystems, even farm fields, hills, and mountain ranges are also persons in their own right in interaction with other persons, human and otherwise. In a universe of interaction, a particular land is understood to be another characteristic expression of power, different from the expressions of animals or plants, so an agent in its own right (2006, 7).

Acknowledging that land is a person in its own right opens the profound possibility for human identities to be understood in terms of a personal kinship with it. This is not just a closeness or intimacy with land but rather a reciprocal moral relationship that makes up the core of human individuals and nations.

Land as a source of identity, ethics, and spirituality

An expansive conception of persons implies seeing *land as part of expansive forms of identity, ethics, and spirituality* that include more-than-human concerns. Tribal spiritual practices tend to seek a continuity of experience between humans and land rather than creating disparate categories of owner and the owned. In this way distinct cultural forms can develop that are fitting to geographically defined origins and boundaries. Georges Sioui writes,

> Put simply, the Amerindian genius, acknowledging as it does the universal interdependence of all beings, physical and spiritual, tries by every available means to establish intellectual and emotional contact between them, so as to guarantee them – for they are all “relatives” – abundance, quality, and therefore, peace (1995, xxi).

In Black Elk's vision, a cardinal direction, the South, speaks to him: "Behold a good nation walking in a sacred manner in a good land" (2007, 28). Kyle Whyte describes this process as the mutual inscription of cultural content both on land and in the emotional responsivity of human bodies (Whyte 2017, 96). He writes, "bodies express moral terrains through affective responses" (Whyte 2016, 161; Figueroa and Waitt 2008, 328). In this way, continuity and contact with land also establishes the differentiation of cultures. Black Elk's vision expresses the possible unification of identity, ethics, and spirituality through the emotional and practical connection of a particular group of people to a particular land. There is nothing guaranteed about the quality of this connection. Rather it is a vision of possible life, something that must be achieved and cyclically renewed. There is no fixed state of harmony between people and land. The fact that this sacred connection does not merely "exist" but is "walked" expresses an ethical or practical relationship. It expresses an awareness that must be tended to carefully and never taken for granted. Walking means always looking where one is going.

Native conceptions of *identity* incorporate land as an integral aspect rather than an incidental aspect. In their book *Indian from the Inside*, McPherson and Rabb write, "In the previous chapter on the phenomenology of the vision quest we noted that one of the things discovered during the vision quest is that we are not really *apart from* the earth and other people. We are rather a *part* of the earth and other people" (2011, 100). The expansive view of personhood is matched by an expansive view of personal identity. Native views of identity are grounded by an orientation to one's land as a center of meaning, containing the relationships that make one's person unique and significant. For example, LaDuke describes the Oglala Lakota's efforts to restore prairie-buffalo relations on their lands as the mutual revival of buffalo people and buffalo nations. She writes, "grass will once again call the names of the buffalo, and the buffalo people will remember their relations and rejoice" (1999, 162).

In the Pacific Northwest where I live, similar efforts are being made by tribal organizations to restore the lives of the salmon people. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, a multinational organization formed by the Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce nations, seeks the revival of salmon culture through a restorative relationship with salmon in the Columbia Basin ("Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission," n.d.) It would be a misunderstanding to reduce the sense of identity Columbia Basin tribes feel with salmon as a simple closeness or intimacy. A biologist or sport fisherman can become well-acquainted with salmon. However, for Columbia River Basin tribes, salmon are part of their creation story. In preparation for the first humans, Creator asked the plants and animals who among them would give themselves for the nourishment of these new people. Salmon offered his body for food and Water offered herself as a home for the salmon. The sacred name for salmon is Wy-Kan-Ush, making the Columbia River Basin tribes Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum, or Salmon People (ibid.). This creation story conveys the beginnings Wy-Kan-Ush-Pum as nations. The Land of what is called the Columbia River Basin cooperates with Water to make a home for the Salmon, and together with the human nations they all actively contribute to making the Wy-Kan-Ush the place that it is. This is the literal and ontological framing of what it means to be Indigenous in the Columbia River Basin. The spirit of the salmon expressed by Wy-Kan-Ush outstrips the capacity of everyday human understanding and expresses the miraculous aspect of the sacred relationship and mutual responsibility between humans, Land, Water, and Salmon.

It follows that Indigeneity is more complex than the idea of living in the land where you were born. Indigeneity does not simply ensue after building a society grounded in a specific geographical area. All humans and societies are from somewhere and build their life in some place. Indigeneity is defined by the founding of a people or a nation in relation to land as a person. The Columbia Basin tribes are Indigenous because of their creation as nations in relation to Wy-Kan-Ush,Water, and their Lands as people. This precludes expansion or imperial conquest because the national identity cannot be exported to other lands. Indigeneity is and always has been anticolonial (or perhaps noncolonial) even before it came to be formed in and through its contrast with colonialism.

Philosophically speaking, the emphasis of identities built around the particular non-human elders and relatives of a particular land mean a view of identity that is "polycentric" according to McPherson and Rabb (2011, 20). This is a different idea from pluralism or multiculturalism because it implies a relation to land. It is the idea of diversity based on bounded geographical relationships. Deloria speaks of Native cultures as holding "non-homogenous pockets of identity" that represent "different arrangements of emotional energy" (1973, 78). By "pockets" Deloria literally means different pockets of land. Coulthard remarks on Deloria's assertions that he

> does not simply intend to reiterate the rather obvious observation that most Indigenous societies hold a strong attachment to their homelands, but is instead attempting to explicate the position that land occupies as an ontological framework for understanding *relationships* (2014, 60).

From a polycentric view of the world, the earth is populated by different centers of meaning. To each Native group, these centers are not simply the location of lifestyles and memories, but the place that creates a people as a people. Cordova writes, "The viewer…is…positioned at the 'center of the universe.' This is not, however, an egocentric interpretation: the viewer is only a small aspect of the entire directional system" (2007, 186). Spatiality, or a personal relationship to a bounded area of land, to be more specific, is at the center of identity. In his essay on Blackhawk's conception of place, Pratt writes, "Here, land is not merely something valued, but rather the ground that organizes the meaning of things and events" (Pratt 2001, 110).

It follows from this sense of identity that from Native viewpoints, ethical principles are not mere beliefs or cultural values, but are active principles of meaning in daily perception and action based around a direct personal relationship with land as a relative. LaDuke writes,

> Understanding the complexity of these belief systems is central to understanding the societies built on those spiritual foundations – the relationship of peoples to their sacred lands, to relatives with fins or hooves, to the plant and animal foods that anchor a way of life (2005, 12).

These principles are revealed in the obligations that form a diversity of personal relationships according to the specific relatives that make up material and spiritual life. Black Elk recites Fox Belly's song in which "walking," or what could perhaps be interpreted as daily ethical action, is connected to deeper sacred relationships,

Revealing this, they walk.
A sacred herb – revealing it, they walk.
Revealing this, they walk.
The sacred life of bison – revealing it, they walk.
Revealing this, they walk
A sacred eagle feather – revealing it, they walk.
Revealing them, they walk.

The eagle and the bison – like relatives they walk (159).

Fox Belly's song magnifies a Lakota worldview in specific ways. The performance of daily ethical obligations to particular relatives reveals the sacred or spiritual relationships that underpin this continuous relation in the mutual creation of life. Fox Belly expresses a direct and sacred kinship with specific non-human relatives: herbs, bison, and eagles. His song also expresses the moral agency and personhood of these relatives. It is not just the human nation that walks in a sacred manner, but also the eagles and bison, and perhaps the herbs as well as these powers reveal each other as what they are. Deloria elaborates on this view,

> Behind the apparent kinship between animals, reptiles, birds, and human beings in the Indian way stands a great conception shared by a great majority of tribes. Other living things are not regarded as insensitive species. Rather they are 'peoples' in the same manner as the various tribes of men are peoples (1973, 103).

The lives of these relatives are powerful, independent, and influential. They participate actively in the moral nexus of concern for the Lakota people and shape its identity and its ideas of right and wrong.

If readers wish to call this an ethic, or more specifically an environmental ethic, the label would not be entirely wrong. However, caution is needed to avoid creating false equivalencies to mainstream environmental practices that are often ardently secular or obsessed with science and technology. Richard Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion* is one example of the total condemnation of anything resembling religion to the Western scientific mind. The book is replete with problematic examples of "aboriginal" or "native" cultures that, according to Dawkins, on the one hand have an intimate knowledge of their "biological environment" but on the other hand are possessed of destructive "fantasies of religion" (Dawkins 2008, 193-94). E.O. Wilson's vision of an environmental future does not include a religious aspect either. He said in an interview pertaining to his new book, *The Meaning of Human Existence*,

> All the ideologies and religions have their own answers for the big questions, but these are usually bound as a dogma to some kind of tribe. Religions in particular feature supernatural elements that other tribes – other faiths – cannot accept ... And every tribe, no matter how generous, benign, loving and charitable, nonetheless looks down on all other tribes. What's dragging us down is religious faith (Sarchet 2015; Wilson 2015).

Native scholars take a different approach, acknowledging the ways in which broader spiritual orientations at the core of ontological awareness shape the daily ethical life of humans. It is important to recognize the role of tribal spirituality for Native environmentalisms. Michelle Jacob of theYakama Nation writes, “Indigenous spirituality is tied to place; it is tied to Indigenous homeland, and we see this cultural value throughout Indian Country. Thus an Indigenous environmentalism will be spiritual at its core” (Jacob 2016, 49).

Bunge explains a Lakota concept of spiritual moral direction in terms of a life-changing “vision, induced or otherwise, or a revelation of some kind” (1984, 148). Such visions are rare and significant in terms of how they shape life according to new realizations. A frequent misconstruction of the experience of land having a personality assumes that there is a superstitious attribution of supernatural powers to natural forces that are otherwise explainable in terms of physical laws. This is a Western projection based on what Irving Hallowell calls the “natural-supernatural dichotomy” that is “so persistently invoked… in describing the outlook of peoples in cultures other than our own” (Hallowell 1960, 28).

However, for Bunge the range of practical and spiritual experience with land is seen as containing basic sorts of emotional and perceptual continuity. This is not an anti-scientific manner of perceiving the world or a simple conflation of realms. Rather it is a manner of perceiving the significance of events as rich and multi-faceted in their implications for human emotions and knowledge. Standing Bear famously wrote, “Everything was possessed of personality, only differing with us in form. Knowledge was inherent in all things. The world was a library and its books were the stones, leaves, grass, brooks, and the birds and animals that shared, alike with us, the storms and blessings of earth” (2006, 194).[9] This awareness of a continuity between personality and materiality, the spiritual and the practical, is what brings Cordova to state quite simply “the mundane is actually the sacred” (2007, 232). Hence it is through a respect to the distinctness of personalities (rather than the blanket category of the “natural”) that a continuity of knowledge and spiritual practice regarding the “natural” environment is achieved.

Native spiritualities seek to establish experiential continuity in everyday perceptions. Deloria writes, “In almost every instance in which other religions were considered as invalid, it was because the categories of explanation were those derived primarily from temporal considerations of how the world ought to be” (1973, 88). Deloria is talking about messianism and other universalizing temporal claims in mainstream religions that do not synchronize well with any practical forms of experience and do not apply to any place in particular. In contrast, “Indian tribal religions could be said to consider creation as an ecosystem present in a definable place” (1973, 91). Hence, rather than telling a universal creation story, tribal spirituality tends to focus on the creation of specific peoples in specific places and the sacred sorts of relationships that make those relationships what they are within the specified bounds. This polycentric spiritual outlook is what allows Black Elk to say, for example, "the spirits took me there to the center of the world" (2007, 62). He is referencing the Black Hills specifically, not a scientifically located "center" of the entire universe or the earth. The Black Hills are the center of the world to Lakota traditions specifically. There is no claim to universality. The Black Hills are the place that makes the Lakota people what they are and give spiritual and ethical guidance to their world.

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[9] Although many Native authors refer to traditions in the past tense, most recent scholarship does not see Native life as past. Hence Bunge’s comment cited above that Native philosophy “continues to exert influence even today over the minds and hearts of thousands of American aborigines” (Bunge 1984, 1).

The geographical orientation of tribal religions creates an egalitarian spiritual environment in which there is room for a multiplicity of ethical and spiritual practices because the experiential basis for each worldview is based on a connection to a particular place. The "tribalism" that "always looks down on other tribes" is part of the make-believe world cooked up by characters like Wilson and Dawkins. Deloria writes,

> No tribe, however, asserted its history as having primacy over the accounts of any other tribe...the recitation of stories by different peoples was regarded as a social event embodying civility. Differing tribal accounts were believed, since it was not a matter of trying to establish power over others (1973, 114).

Deloria notes that Christianity in particular lacks this quality because of its a-spatial character. References in the Bible to specific places like the Garden of Eden or Mt. Sinai are most commonly interpreted as universal messages about all mankind rather than geographically bounded revelations. He says, "Without the particularity of land on which it was intended that a particular people live, creation had to become an event of the beginnings of the world" (1973, 162). The continuities and differences of spiritual and practical life established by an awareness of geographical origins are key components contributing to the identities capable of spiritual ownership and environmental concern.

Conclusions

Recognizing the agencies and personalities of land suggest a need to discuss not only the sovereignty of Native nations on those lands but also the sovereignty of the land itself. The assertion of treaty rights has been an increasingly prominent way for Native nations to manifest their spiritual ownership of homelands and reclaim relationships to the regions that give them life (Bilke 2017).[10] They have also been an important way to assert the right for the land to express agency of its own. This contributes to Indigenous liberation because it opens the possibility for tribes to re-enter relationships not just with a physical homeland but with their land as the person or persons that constitute their creation as a people. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, the fish-ins and multiple arrests of legendary Billy Frank Jr. prompted legislation that finally recognized the rights of the Nisqually to fish in their sacred river (Wilkinson 2000). The Chippewa have had similar legal struggles with the state of Minnesota, where they have been embroiled in an on-going battle over the right to fish for their walleye since 1990 (Minnesota Legislative Reference Library 2015).[11] However, it is important not to confuse the assertion of usufruct rights with a desire or intention to enforce a Western framework of property ownership or the right to exploitation. For the most part, Native forms of identity, ethics, and spirituality find the concept of property ownership in land to be alien and unwanted, perhaps occasionally useful in rebutting colonial land grabs. This can be seen in how treaty rights have been asserted for the benefit of land and its many eco-social communities, both human and non-human. Fundamentally speaking (as in Locke), the right to ongoing property ownership is established based on the extent to which land is exploited for human use and capital gain; the right to spiritual ownership is established based on the extent to which land and people have reached a reciprocal continuity of understanding and emotion. For that reason, the personhood, sovereignty, agency, and self-determination of Indigenous nations and their lands are inextricably linked. Spiritual ownership of the land can be seen in the words of Billy Frank, who said the following,

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[10] Strategic assertion of treaty rights has become more common throughout the Native world despite ongoing concerns about whether sovereignty is an effective political concept for decolonization. On this debate see Alfred 2004, Deloria 2007, and Turner 2007.

[11] In reality this struggle has been ongoing since 1837 when their treaty was first signed.

> We talk about state sovereignty and tribal sovereignty, but those ant communities under the big fir trees are sovereign, too. We've got to find a way to protect their sovereignty … I don't believe in magic. I believe in the sun and the stars, the water, the tides, the floods, the owls, the hawks flying, the river running, the wind talking. They're measurements. They tell us how healthy things are. How healthy we are. Because we and they are the same. That's what I believe in (Wilkinson 2000, 101).

It is apparent that Native nations have developed robust and refined concepts of land in an effort to live peacefully and sustainably with neighboring nations both human and non-human. This ongoing process long predates the threat of European colonialism. Kyle Whyte warns that "settler societies seek to inscribe their own homelands over indigenous homelands, thereby erasing the history, lived experiences, social reality and possibilities of a future of indigenous peoples" (2016, 159). Resistance to this process can be found in anticolonial spiritual practices seeking peace and reciprocity that recognize the multitudinous sovereignties whose right to life are written in to the landscapes of a polycentric world. The subtlety of Native environmental principles that "walk" according to a dynamic and specific "natural order" fight to maintain a connection to ecological moral terrains of the body in connection to land (LaDuke 1989, iix; Whyte 2016). The limits of race as a master or summary concept are clear when land is thought of as an integral component of identity that sets the parameters of oppressive regimes (not just for Native identity but for all identities). Native views of land as a person and a Mother contradict the objectifying and heterosexualizing aspects of colonization that attempt to fix Native bodies and lands as the property of white men.

All these recognitions and more are needed to begin a thoroughgoing critique of the ways in which the concept of land has been ignored, misappropriated, manipulated, and otherwise made operational as part of oppressive theoretical formulations by Western philosophy. What follows argues that many settler inscriptions on land can be found deep within avenues of Western philosophical literature that have specifically attempted to radicalize attitudes towards nature or the earth. If these radical philosophies represent some of the best efforts so far on behalf of Western people to transform their worldview for the better, then it is imperative that they be thoroughly reformed according to anticolonial principles. This includes an examination of how they still lack a critical distance from the settler worldview from which they are written. Critical experiential and material aspects of this worldview are to be found in their expression in Western phenomenology and political economy, especially where they have concerned themselves with questions about nature and the earth.

III. (DE)COLONIZING PHENOMENOLOGIES

As a philosophical method, phenomenology has been an influential form of resistance against discourses that are reductive with regards to human experience, the natural world, and the earth. However, this chapter argues that thus far, even in its quest to develop ecological onto-ethical narratives through diverse and often opposing conceptual frameworks, Western phenomenology has normalized settler experience in ways that span much of its core. In particular, Heidegger's concept of earth has been prominent as an expression of the living connectedness of humans to the place of their dwelling and inhabitation (Maly 2009, 52). This intimate relationality transmutes into a moral call to save (*retten*) the earth in its powers of self-concealing and regeneration. Heidegger's "paganism" is often associated with the spiritual content of Native religions. However, anticolonial analysis reveals a disconcerting harmony between Heideggerian narratives, colonial ideology in general, and the fascist history of Germany in particular. Interpreters have often been hasty in their application of Heidegger to ecological problems without fully addressing these concerns. For example, Bruce V. Foltz's authoritative book, *Inhabiting the Earth*, spends only three pages discussing the threat of national socialism and suggests that Heidegger's silence on the Holocaust was a mere "personal failing" (Foltz 1995, 110-113). Such explanations regarding Heidegger's involvement in Nazism as a "human weakness" are common (Gessmann 2017, 116). But even if Heidegger's thinking can be redeemed from Nazism, it cannot be so easily abstracted from the colonial history of the West. When interpreted within this context, the self-concealing song of the earth destines a colonial cycle of clearing and settlement that can be found buried in essential aspects of Heidegger's thinking and that of his interpreters.

A rival dialogue has been formulated by those attracted to Levinas' description of the elements or the *il y a* as expressing the menacing alienness of nature rather than our connectedness or participation with it. This approach resists the forfeiture of human identity in a fusion with the earth and, contrary to Levinas' own beliefs, posits the radical alterity of nature in its nonhuman gaze as a "face" that places demands on us. But attempts to extend Levinas' notion of the face to nature are troubled by the fact that the moment of the *il y a* and the anonymity of nature are the essential prehistory to what Levinas calls the discovery of "man in the nudity of his face" (Toadvine 2012, 178; Levinas 1990, 234). In resisting the fascist insinuations and racial particularism of Heidegger's earth, soil, and enrootedness, Levinas narrates the flip side of colonial perception, seeing the earth as utterly lacking in agency, personality, organization, and meaning, while enthusiastically embracing the ability of technology to obliterate all local character and particularity. The tension of these two views is however unified in their heterosexualization of nature (which is also linked to male supremacy and sex-right), only differing in the adoption of either an "Orphic" or a "Promethean" attitude to this essentially conquerable version of the feminine, whether it be the target of poetry or technology (Hadot 2006, 150-51).

It is not surprising that colonial meanings can be found in phenomenology given that most of what is traditionally considered to be amongst its corpus has been written under the umbrella of European culture. But these prominent descriptions of lived experience posited as structures of prereflective intentionality, existentiality, perception, or desire, although often resonant for Western readers, do not appear so universally binding when evaluated from vantages that are incongruent with the history of Europe and its settlements. The normality of the settler ego or settler perceptivity can be confronted by considering land and as a pivotal structure of experience. Land appears in most Western phenomenology at the fringes of analysis. Its analogues such as earth, nature, place, soil, the elements, etc. receive far more attention, but are too far abstracted from the framing of Western perception by colonial expansion, which inflects each of these other concepts with settler meanings and intentions. If Western phenomenology is to approach its own stated goals of analysis, it must confront the colonial aspect of its Europeanness. This can be achieved in no other way than a dialogue about the categories of experience that bracket or enclose European perceptions about the human relation to land.

Therefore, this chapter also argues that Western phenomenology must adopt a decolonizing element among its first methodological principles if it is to challenge the colonial inheritance of its European origins. The process of reconsidering concepts that are basic to the discipline from a decolonizing perspective is in accord with phenomenological method as a radical examination of experience. Phenomenologists can and should ask how colonialism structures perception and phenomenological description. Merleau-Ponty wrote that “the presuppositions of every thought… pass by unnoticed” unless we “abstain from them for a moment in order to awaken them and to make them appear” (Merleau-Ponty 2012, xxvii). Indeed, the “serviceability” of Husserl’s *epoché* of *Ideas I* only accrues when the phenomenologist brackets the natural attitude of everyday life to access the formative moments of lived experience “taken in an extremely wide sense" including perceptions, memories, fancies, judgments, feelings, desires, etc. (Husserl 1952, 112-15). For Husserl the relation of the perceiving to the perceived is not limited to neo-Kantian conceptions of transcendental consciousness as the "objective ground" of the laws which pervade "all appearances" but also includes the content of the "life-world" (Kant 2007, 160; Moran 2013, 124). Husserl argues towards the end of *Ideas 1,*

> Such are types of *objects bearing a value*, all *practical* objects, all concrete cultural organizations which as hard realities determine our actual life, *the State, for instance, the Church, custom, the law*, and so forth… The shaping of these entities leads back quite naturally to that of psychical subjects and of things or their analogues in space: they are grounded indeed in such realities. Material reality as the lowest formation remains in the last resort the foundation of all other realities, and therefore undoubtedly *the phenomenology of material nature holds a pre-eminent position* (444).

Although Husserl's interpretation of this project in *Ideas II* is concentrated on the regions of the "material inanimate object of the outer world," I would propose that this statement also implies an analysis of power and colonization in the relation of material nature to the body of the perceiving subject (Schuetz 1953, 396). Western phenomenology should be reformed according to what appears by bracketing, to use a phrase coined by Scott Pratt, the "colonial attitude" which reduces all meanings to "part of the history of European progress" (2002, 39, 51).

One way to bracket the colonial attitude is by listening to descriptions of experience outside the scope of colonial culture (whether they are intended specifically to be phenomenology or not). The momentary "abstention" of listening functions by opening a window into another world. This does not imply a reduction of anti or non-Western narratives to phenomenology but rather indicates the possibility of collaboration through the transformation of phenomenology from a praxis of description into a praxis of listening. The individual and cultural isolation of the "I" in phenomenological reflection is shattered when the "I" listens. This is not without challenge and dissonance. Merleau-Ponty asks, "can we understand someone else without sacrificing him to our logic or it to him?" (1964, 115). Merleau-Ponty suggests that this problem can be partially overcome by anthropology, writing, "What interests the philosopher in anthropology is just that it takes man as he is, in his actual situation of life and understanding" (123). Another approach to intersubjective and intercultural dialogue is to listen *directly* to voices that challenge the core assumptions of Western phenomenology *as phenomenology*, that is, as descriptions of lived experience that are heard and attended to immediately as such.

One reason for this suggestion is to combat the narrative of a "founding moment" of Western phenomenology that proclaims culturally exclusive access to the kind of knowledge it creates. On the one hand, Husserl also resisted the "racist particularism" of National Socialism with an appeal to a universal humanity (Levinas and Hand 1990, 64). He writes,

> Only [through the disclosure of this a priori] can there be an a priori science extending beyond all historical facticities, all historical surrounding worlds, peoples, times, civilizations…Do we not stand here before the great and profound problem-horizon of reason, the same reason that functions in every man, the *animal rationale*, no matter how primitive he is?" (1970, 377-78).

However, if we look deeper into this apparent sense of universal humanity, it is clear that Husserl's original conception of the natural attitude structurally presupposes the colonial attitude. In fact, the "natural attitude" is epitomized in Husserl's philosophy by what he calls "primitive culture." What makes societies "primitive" on his view is their supposed lack of distance from their own lifeworld or an inability to see their world as one possible world-representation rather than the world itself. Husserl writes that all societies have such a given world,

> …right back to those of the 'primitive' tribes…Every people, large or small, has its world in which, for that people, everything fits well together, whether in mythical-magical or in European-rational terms, and in which everything can be explained perfectly (1970, 373).

He extends a rudimentary humanness to all people in so far as they have a culture, basic sorts of practical reason, sensibility, feeling, and need. However, he posits a hierarchy of worlds where European supremacy is marked by its ascension to a truly universal scientific consciousness. Accordingly, he writes that it was the Greeks who made "the first breakthrough to what is essential to humanity as such, its *entelechy*…the historical movement through which universal reason, 'inborn' in humanity as such, is revealed" (Husserl 1970, 15). Technically this developmental stage of humanity is accessible to all, but so far only achieved by Europe. Husserl's own understanding of non-Western societies is mediated through the anthropology of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl to whom he sent a personal letter of admiration. In that correspondence, Husserl writes that we must, "understand this [primitive] humankind as having, in and through its socially unified life, the world, which for it is not a 'world representation' but rather the world that actually exists for it" (Husserl 2008, 86). These "empirical anthropological types" as Husserl calls them, have yet to start down the path of true human greatness that has already taken hold as the soul of Europe (Husserl 1970, 16).

Criticizing Husserl's Eurocentrism is not new (Lau 2011; Tava and Meachum 2016). However, the critique has not been taken seriously enough or followed to its full implications in much prominent literature. For example, Dermot Moran notes that it has become “commonplace to accuse Husserl of a certain ‘Eurocentrism,’” (2011, 465). However, he closes the same essay with apologetics (as foreshadowed by his scare-quotes around Eurocentrism), writing “there is no evidence that Husserl thinks that Indian or Chinese civilizations are essentially incapable of making the breakthrough from myth to the theoretical attitude, originally performed by ‘a few Greek eccentrics’” (Moran 2011, 494). This comment puts Moran’s position on European culture more-or-less unchanged from Husserl’s own.

European supremacy presents a contradiction in Western phenomenology at its outset. The presumption of supremacy commits the exact failure that the suspension of the natural attitude is supposed to avoid. It confuses the world of “universal science” with “the world.” This understanding of phenomenology is in lockstep with colonial epistemologies that assume European science has special or privileged access to knowledge and thereby a special right of access to land. The settler ego is disclosed by bracketing the colonial attitude, pushing phenomenology to see the subject in terms of the desire for and perceptual structure of the normality of settler colonial power. Land is the existential site where colonization manifests itself and forms a circuit with the moral terrains of the body as they are called forth in the horizon of perceptual entitlement. Land represents a culmination of judgment, of value, of right, of desire, of logic (as in “logics of elimination”) and so on. Land “opens the space of perception by calling for a response of our bodies” but is not exhausted by those perceptions (Toadvine 2003, 149). The content of the perceiving “I” as it exists in relation to land can be modified in phenomenological imagination to illuminate different aspects of experience, including the sense of the “I” as the settler on this land. Hence, land is the structural link that connects meaning and matter in a way that discloses colonial perception.

Phenomenology is useful as a method of revealing this link in ways that naturalistic methods cannot. Land conceived merely as an object of the natural sciences will necessarily be insufficient for analyzing a dynamic cultural phenomenon inflected by power and politics. The importance of developing such linkages is stressed by anticolonial thinkers such as Leigh Patel who asks us “to contend directly with the material consequences of how identities are necessarily essentially ascribed by a settler state” (Patel and Tuck 2016). Phenomenology can play an important role in this process because it invites the meanings of everyday life to be related to broader social-ontological structures, situating the meaning of bodily identities within an experiential background, place, or lifeworld rather than reducing them to mere statistical or physical objects. A sense of this strength of phenomenology should also be tempered by an awareness of potential shortcomings. David Wood writes, “Phenomenology was born out of resistance to the threat of naturalism” (Wood 2003, 211). This original struggle with naturalism is most meaningfully traced back to Husserl, whose work circled the problem up until his death. He warns of the “positivistic concept of science” that seeks “the universe of mere facts” but forgets “its meaning for life” (Husserl 1970, 5, 9). Because Western phenomenology is fashioned specifically for the task of combatting the loss of meaning in modern sciences, certain theories are assumed to explain the degradation of the earth and its objectification in terms of property and resources. In particular, the mainstream tends to see this as an extension of naturalism rather than colonialism. Although Native philosophies of land resist similar objectifications of nature, they do so from an anticolonial position and are therefore inclined to take Western naturalistic views of nature to be bound to colonialism in an essential manner. The origins of Western phenomenology in their identification of naturalism as *the* fundamental spiritual and ideological danger of modernity can have a problematic tendency to smudge or sideline colonialism as a mere aftereffect. Thinking intersectionally about land in terms of colonialism, naturalism, race, class, gender, sexuality, materiality, ideology, etc., avoids privileging one mode of critique over others.

My personal experience with the social gatherings of professional phenomenologists have proven to mirror an approach that privileges European perspectives. In 2013, The Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) held its main conference in Eugene, Oregon, the town where I live. The first night featured a plenary given by Rudolf Bernet of the Husserl Archives on "Decentered Thinking." This talk was followed by a panel on Husserl and nature the following day. There was a panel on the concept of resistance in Deleuze and Foucault. In the book exhibit, I came across a book called *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place*. The final plenary talk was given by Catherine Malabou of the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy at Kingston University in London. At one point in her talk she resolutely tasked the audience with a moral calling, "We must create an ecological philosophy." What are the historical implications of this moral destiny? Who are "we"? Who is being left out? Whose history is at stake? Do ecological philosophies already exist? If so, has Malabou simply failed to read them or has she committed them to the unmodern and irrelevant prehistory of "Stone Age man" to which it is impossible to return (Callicott 19, 334)? Given that any culture can offer descriptions of their lived experience, it is problematic that the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy designates “a professional organization devoted to supporting philosophy inspired by continental European traditions” (SPEP, n.d.). Such a totalizing approach to phenomenology is exclusionary and stifles the much-needed rigor found only in multi-perspectival forums. This should be a major concern given the conference prides itself on a pluralist approach and broad base of participation, positions which are also expressed in its ties to the Pluralist’s Guide for graduate programs.[12]

Despite the themes of the conference that, on the face of them, are immediately relevant to the lives of Native people and explicitly thematize nature, the environment, and so on, no speaker at the conference acknowledged the Kalapuya people upon whose land we were gathered. The conference did not invite any tribal members to speak on philosophical questions relevant to the region or its people. Most of the principal speakers were invited from Europe. The conference was a very cosmopolitan and international affair, but the only nations represented were European and settler nations.

The International Association for Environmental Philosophy met the day directly following SPEP. A total of zero papers were delivered on Native philosophy of any kind. There were six or so papers concerning Euro-American philosophers (my paper on John Dewey, titled “Post-Humanist Pragmatism,” was one of these). Other papers were delivered on William James and Aldo Leopold. Exercising the privilege to participate in such a colonial occasion left me *unsettled*; not, however, in the Heideggerian sense of an underlying anxiety or uncanniness (*Unheimlichkeit*) that is founded in the encroachment upon the everyday of the indefiniteness of the nothing and nowhere (Heidegger 2010, 182). This feeling was very much of the more definite sort described by Tuck and Yang, the unsettling awareness of the moral need to recognize and repatriate land to those whose home I occupy, and the troubling sorts of tensions this unearths from an otherwise hidden colonial context (Tuck and Yang 2012, 7). Unsettledness is a feeling related to the somewhere of your own existence, to your own settler reality. It puts an immediate stop to romantic feelings of oneness, unity, wholeness, or fluidity that come from covering over the truth.

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[12] This report was created in response to the cultural dominance of The Philosophical Gourmet Report, which only bases its rankings on prestige of faculty and does not consider the strength of programs for groups that have been marginalized within the academic philosophical community.

This phenomenological event pointed me to the realization that phenomenology is more than just a set of useful devices for critical analysis. Western phenomenology is itself a cultural expression of settler experience. Therefore, it is important to scrutinize how exactly the philosophical languages of this practice arrive heavily laden with the broader colonial context. They do not always stand over and against this context as a mode of resistance so easily or so readily. This chapter makes the argument that phenomenology has served to express the normalization of colonial experience. The *operational presence* and *conceptual absence* of land in Western phenomenology can be read as both a result and a cause of settler ideology in contemporary phenomenological research. Because European phenomenology has minimalized the concept of land as a subcategory of some presumably broader ontological category (place, earth, elements, etc.), it currently lacks the ontological categories necessary to challenge colonialism.

Settler Phenomenology

Heidegger’s concept of earth constitutes an influential pole of phenomenological thinking in general and environmental phenomenology in particular. Jeff Malpas writes that the “spatialized character” of Heidegger’s later thinking expressed by the strife of earth and world, the there, the clearing, the open, etc., make him “one of the principal founders of such a mode of place-oriented thinking” (Malpas 2012, 1, 132-133). Michel Haar identifies four senses of earth that have been variously appropriated: the concealedness that comes forth in unconcealment (the *lethe* of *aletheia*), the dense force of withdrawal that comes in to strife with world, the material in the work of art, and the native soil that is understood and preserved (Haar 1993, 57-64). Of these meanings it is arguable that the second is most primary. Haar writes,

> might *Physis* be the illuminated part of the Earth, the disclosure of a totality of which the Earth would be the nocturnal aspect… does not Earth coincide, as we will see, with the dimension of withdrawal, obscurity… (48).

Foltz describes a similar if slightly different role,

> The earth is precisely that from which *phusis* arises, into which it continually withdraws, and which withholds and preserves the possibility of both…. the earth is what bears and gives rise to what comes to light only by remaining intrinsically dark itself (1995, 14).

Whether nature and the earth form a totality or are ontologically distinct does not matter for the current argument. These descriptions bear the marking of a heterosexualized femininity, as is further expressed by Haar’s descriptions of earth as that which “possesses a secret ground that resists… the violence of ex-plication or ex-position” (57). This ground should be carefully preserved and “one must acquiesce to its unopenable dimension if one does not want to destroy it. *It must show itself as what holds itself in reserve*” (57). But for those who show realeasement (*Gelassenheit*) in their approach, there awaits the unfolding of “inexhaustible richness” (Heidegger 2002, 25). All this calls forth an image of earth as a modest heterosexual woman who resists "giving up" her carefully protected virginity. Heidegger expresses his appreciation for Hannah Arendt's womanhood in similar terms. He muses that, "Woman's effect and being – are much closer to the origins for us – less transparent, hence providence – but all the more fundamental" (Arendt and Heidegger 2004, 25). It is the "breadth" of the "original unity of womanly Being" that provides the basis of "unending womanly giving" (5). The role of poetry becomes a tool for opening up that which is withheld by earth and womanhood, for revealing their giving aspects, the *es gibt*. He writes,

> What poetry, as clearing projection, unfolds of unconcealment and projects into the rift within the figure is the open; poetry allows this open to happen in such a way, indeed, that now, for the first time, in the midst of beings, it brings them to shine and sound (Heidegger 2002, 45).

We can add to these images "the possibility of saving the earth and dwelling upon it… 'to save' (retten) means not only to rescue or to set aside and store but also to preserve and to protect intact" (Foltz 1995, 15). This heteronormative narrative describes a "damsel in distress" that must be rescued or protected, supplying what Kathy Miriam calls "the connection between heteronormativity and male supremacy" which creates meanings that preserve the presumption of male sexual access to women and girls (Miriam 2007, 211, 225).

The association of access to women's bodies and the earth is a significant part of colonial perceptivity. Settler fictions about Pocahontas are cemented into the collective imagination of the United States, where a "love story" with John Smith legitimizes the takeover of her ancestral lands (Driskill et al. 2011, 35-36). As a symbol Pocahontas explains the motivation for settler states to enforce heteronormativity that is linked not only to male supremacy but also white supremacy. The "love" for the bodies of Native women connects white men to their “love” for the earth. More specifically it extends the right of access to the Native female body to the right of access to the lands with which those bodies are associated. Rethinking this “love” or “care” of the land as a more general “love” of the earth conceals the specific connections to the settler experience of entitlement. The moment at which land enters Haar’s discourse makes this intention clear. He writes,

> Heideggerian dwelling is not founded on a mysticism or a magic of the factually native place. The native is neither patriotic nor political, nor purely geographic nor linked to the singular charm of a place: it is the “home” which, though being completely spontaneously given, keeps asking to be chosen, adopted. Every true father land is adopted (Haar 1993, 63).

It is convenient for settlers to not be bound to the actual place or nation where they are born. This would be far too limiting. Haar warns that such a literal or “biological” interpretation of one’s native land leads to Nazism and the impulse to the ideology of “*Blut und Boden*” (62, 63). According to Haar the true place of belonging is adopted, or rather, it adopts you and calls you to it. Such fantasies of adoption or “settler nativism” have been thoroughly outlined by Tuck and Yang as structural settler strategies for shirking the guilt of colonial violence and legitimizing settler states. This adoption “bequeaths a new inheritance of Native-ness and claims to land (which is a reaffirmation of what the settler project has been all along)” (Tuck and Yang 2012, 13-17).

Heidegger’s refusal of the Promethean attitude and his adoption of a more poetic or Orphic attitude towards the earth can be linked to the resistance to naturalism found in Husserl. Heidegger’s famous “Memorial Address,” eloquently denounces the “atomic age” of calculative thinking and its obsession with advancement, research, and so on. These overbearing and incessant realities share one thing in common: they only think from “conditions that are given” in a “flight from thinking” spurred on by the demand for economic advancement (Heidegger 1966, 45-46). Technological domination of life prearranges the human relation to nature and to homelands as one of a subject to an object. The proliferation of technology presses in on human life from all sides, establishing courses for human action that, just like the fixed course of electricity through lines, overpowers everyday possibilities for experience and meaning. It appears that the spirit of technology dictates human history and the human relationship to the earth rather than the human spirit itself. The technological en-framing of nature as standing reserve overtakes the self-revealing capacity of *physis*: Nature is only disclosed as a resource or utility. But this can be overcome by the creative spirit of Dasein, *poiesis* (Heidegger 1977, 30).

For Heidegger, an uncanniness always remains at the core of technological calculative thinking. This is the possibility of releasement towards technology. Humans have the capacity to adopt meditative principles by establishing a connection to their homelands as rooted, *autochthonous* beings who dwell in a specific spatial-historical place that calls them to their destiny. This relationship to one’s homeland or rather the tension between the original homeland and the chosen homeland destines our lives and calls us forth to resolute action based on non-technical principles. But what does the ontological overcoming of the essence of technology and the rebuilding of poetic dwelling on the earth really mean for Heidegger? What is the tension between the “biological” native ground that Haar calls “the maternal abode and its ‘source’” and the “necessity of leaving ‘for foreign lands?’” to prove oneself in the crucible of the foreign? (Haar 1993, 144).

Towards the end of *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger's rhetorical mode switches from contrasting technology and self-emergence to a focus on historical destining and the "destining of revealing" (1977, 32). The self-revealing of *physis* does not simply happen on its own as some function of nature. Rather it must be summoned forth out of the earth by *poiesis* as a historical development of the spiritual life a people, a *Volk*. Heidegger's closing example is indicative and harkens back to the heavily emotional content of his work in the 1930s,

> In Greece, at the outset of the *destining of the West*, the arts soared to the supreme height of the revealing granted them. They brought the presence of the gods, brought the dialogue of divine and human destinings, to radiance (1977, 34, my emphasis).

Similar to Husserl, Heidegger often reflected on an original spirit of the West that was being forgotten or overrun. If we recall the pro-colonial work of Frederick Jackson Turner, we see elements that can be tied to Heidegger's descriptions of this spirit. In a later essay published in 1918 titled "Middle Western Pioneer Democracy," Turner wrote,

> As they *wrested their clearing from the woods* and from the *savages* who surrounded them, as they *expanded* that *clearing* and saw the beginnings of commonwealths, where only little communities had been, and as they saw these commonwealthers touch hands with each other along the great course of the Mississippi River, they became enthusiastically optimistic and confident of the continued *expansion* of this democracy. They had faith in themselves and their *destiny* (Turner 1994, 167, emphasis mine).

Turner identified the basis of Western spirit as the expansion into a frontier of free land, developing a theory about the destiny of a people is both formed and fulfilled by clearing away a wilderness in order to build the common life of a people (Turner 1994, 61). Philosophically, the connection to settler phenomenology comes in the way of a conceptual "four-fold" regarding land: *Wilderness, clearing, settlement, expansion*. The order in which I arrange them here is somewhat arbitrary. Each concept implies the other and they appear historically and experientially in an unfolding process of development.

The general meaning of *poiesis* for Heidegger expresses an existential category of Dasein. Specifically, it is linked to *cultural* achievement of the arts. The Latin *cultus* has a relation to the word cultivation; for Heidegger cultivation can be thought of as a sort of existential manifestation of “care” (*Sorge*). Care in this sense as an ontological structure is what opens the relation of Dasein to the world. Hence Heidegger, “being-in-the-world is essentially care” (2010, 186). In relation to mortal (human) dwelling on the land the existential category of cultivation structures everyday concern (*Fürsorge*). Cultivation as a sort of care has a precise meaning. Robert Bunge gives us this, “the white man’s love – a love that wastes the land by ‘working’ it; plowing, tilling, digging, blasting, mining it…” (1979, 3). Heideggerian objections to blasting and mining as the technological domination of nature do not do much in the way of changing the general trajectory of the argument because they do not address the underlying meaning of cultivation in general which Heidegger is quite clear about. Heidegger writes, “The old word *bauen* however also means at the same time to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine” (Heidegger 1971, 147). In relation to land, *poiesis* is precisely bringing forth the fertility of the soil in the *techne* of settled farming. This is what is meant by rootedness. Key recordings from the 1933-1944 lectures, *Nature, History, State*, delivered during Heidegger’s rectorship in the Third Reich corroborate this meaning,

> …people and space mutually belong to each other…From the specific knowledge of a people about the nature of its space, we first experience how nature is revealed in this people. For a Slavic people, the nature of our German space

> would definitely be revealed different from the way it is revealed to us; to Semitic nomads, it will perhaps never be revealed at all (Heidegger 2013a, 56).
>
> History teaches us that nomads have not only been made nomadic by the desolation of wastelands and steppes, but have also left wastelands behind them where they found fruitful and cultivated land – and that human beings who are rooted in the soil have known how to make a home for themselves even in the wilderness… (Heidegger 2013a, 55).

We have here in Heidegger's phenomenology the first of the above terms, the idea of wilderness as it is contrasted with cultivated space. This establishes a clear anti-Semitic trope crafted around the idea of landless or nomadic Jews who will never achieve the rooted nature of those who have sunk down into the soil and come to know themselves as autochthonous beings. Wilderness is opposed to that which is cultivated in poetic relation with the earth by Dasein. It is the concealed earth, the dense forest, the ceaseless winds, all that which resists Dasein in primal conflict in the establishment of a world (Heidegger 2013b). To be cultivated, this wilderness must first be cleared (*gelichtet*). This *clearing* activity of Dasein is the ground of the world, of history, of destiny. Heidegger writes in *Being and Time*, "*Ecstatic temporality clears the there primordially*. It is the primary regulator of the possible unity of all the essential existential structure of Dasein" (Heidegger 2010, 334, italics in original). Clearing the there makes room. This room is the ground of Dasein's poetic dwelling. Thus Heidegger,

> Only things that are locations in this manner allow for spaces. What the word for space, *Raum*, *Rum*, designates is said by its ancient meaning. *Raum* means a place cleared or freed for *settlement* and lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that is *cleared* and *free*, namely within a boundary, Greek *peras*" (2013b, 154, my emphasis)

It does not seem so strange now to associate Heidegger with Turner's description of pioneers who "wrested their clearing from the woods" to create a "commonwealth." This cleared room, cleared land, is the area of settlement, the site where rootedness can take place. Rootedness happens through the *work* (*Arbeit*) of cultivation. Dasein sets the earth forth through *poiesis* and *techne*, "fighting of the battle in which the unconcealedness of beings as a whole, or truth, is won" (2013b, 55). In a speech given in November 1933 titled "The German Student as Worker" Heidegger cautions the newly matriculated that the double-meaning of work as both an undertaking and a result is not sufficient for understanding the essence of the concept. It was only two years later that he began writing *The Origin of the Work of Art* where the more essential meaning can be found. The essence of work is only properly understood when Dasein posits itself

> *as a worker* in the struggle with beings as a whole. In this struggle is the authorization, the enforcement, the providence (*Fügung*), the taming (*Bändigung*) of these earth-shaping powers [Nature, History, Art, Technology]. The essence of work thusly understood determines the existence of humans from the ground up (2000, 204).

In its work Dasein settles and this process of *settlement* creates boundaries. These boundaries mark not just an area of residence but the space of a people. In clearing the wilderness and settling, Dasein creates a state:

> Thus, for example, *nature* becomes manifest as the space of a people, as countryside and homeland, as soil and ground…By being tied to nature, supported and overarched by her, at once fueled and limited by her, the *history* of the people is realized (Heidegger 2000, 200-201).

A *Volk* wills the state into existence by building it in their work. This is not the same as the work of bees and termites in building a hive but is the resolute projection of Dasein in the mode of being-with-others in a shared destiny, for "in communication and in struggle the power of destiny first becomes free" (Heidegger 2010, 366). Hence, the settlement of a people at once roots and destines. In binding together the state, nature and history, the truth and the destiny of a people is revealed. The projection of a destiny implies a people undertaking something beyond themselves, the achievement of something greater. Thus, rootedness in the home soil is not sufficient. There is need for *expansion*. Heidegger said to his students,

> …it is not right to see the sole ideal for a people in rootedness in the soil, in attachment, in settledness, which find their cultivation and realization in farming…So the state…is grasped in terms of the will to work out into the expanse, in terms of interaction, in terms of power. This space we call land…we can speak of the state only when rootedness in the soil is combined with the will to expansion, or generally speaking, interaction…For this reason, peoples or their subgroups who do not step out beyond their connection to the homeland into their authentic way of Being – into the state – are in constant danger of losing their peoplehood and perishing" (Heidegger 2013a, 55).

Here we have the final term of the colonial four-fold: Wilderness, clearing, settlement, expansion. The implication of this expansion is that the imperial process will be repeated in an unending cycle (back into the wilderness to be cleared and settled). Deployment of the term "interaction" functions as an ontology of imperialism.

For Heidegger, the greatness of the state in its expansion at once both achieves and justifies the superiority of its people. This superiority is both physical and spiritual. Heidegger says, "Then spiritual superiority and freedom develop as a deep dedication of all forces to the people, the state, as the most rigorous breeding, as engagement, endurance, solitude, and love" (2013a, 49). The superiority of a people establishes a rule against which other cultures are measured. Those humans living in the wilderness are savages, beasts, primitive, and so on, and have no rightful claim to that land because they have wasted its potential as a ground for the building of a great civilization. Thus, the settlement of wilderness is categorically justified. The power of superiority comes with the right to appropriate all other cultures, lands, and peoples into the work, the spirit, and the state of the dominant power. Or if these will not be assimilated, they must be eliminated to make room, or cleared, that is, so that the land can be set free in the undertakings of the superior group. Those who are assimilated are asked to appreciate the essence of their new life as members of the state, as participants in a common vision, no matter their station, status, or level of servitude. Heidegger's appraisals of fascist authoritarianism suggest an approval towards the use of force in such eliminations and assimilations.

> For if we ask, "What is rule? What is it based on?" then if we give a true and essential answer, we experience no power, enslavement, oppression, or compulsion. Instead what we experience is that rule and authority together with service and subordination are grounded in a common task (2013a, 49).

The place of Jewish people relative to this rule, especially in light of the *Black Notebooks*, is subordination to the common task by violent coercion. Heidegger's critiques of calculative thinking are suspect in light of his antisemitism. One scholar writes, "wherever Heidegger philosophized in a minor key about the modern age and the 'abandonment of being' he was also thinking of the Jews as a symptom of this misfortune" (Gordon 2017, 138). Hence, his resolution to return to an autochthonous human existence can only be read as containing similar problematics.

Persecuted by the very antisemitism Heidegger sustained, Levinas is a natural critic of this "pagan" attachment to rootedness and soil, promising instead a universal humanism. This forms a clear lineage to Husserl, whose normative position Moran characterizes as "a cry from the heart for the recognition of the universal rational humanity of all peoples" (Moran 2011, 477). In a confrontation with racial hierarchies based on blood and soil, Levinas develops an interpretation of the ethical content of

Judaism. He offers a three-part account of ethical structure: the *il y a*, the separation of the ego, and the arrival of the face. At the outset, the directionality of human existence for Levinas is opposite to Heidegger. Identity is not forged through an association with the earth but rather in the distinction of human life from the anonymous forces of nature, the *il y a*. Whereas Dasein is a thrown projection in to the openness of being, for Levinas humanity is defined by the interiority of the subject and its separation from the homogeneity of the elements. As Jean-Michel Salanskis writes, "In contrast with Heidegger, Levinas reads the human subject as a position, as the arousal of some *here* out of the unframed *there is*" (2010, 53). This original separation is the endogenous desire for enjoyment. Because enjoyment is constantly under threat of being swallowed up by the menace of the *il y a*, the *here* of the human subject is stabilized by making a home. Levinas writes,

> …the separated being breaks with natural existence…The primordial function of the home does not consist in orienting being by the architecture of the building and in discovering a site, but in breaking the plenum of the element (2000, 156).

Dwelling is not a communion with the earth. Rather it is "conceived as an extension of my 'I'" (Mensch 2015, 98). The earth is a source of unspecified material from which the home is constructed. The subject works to stockpile goods to ensure its enjoyment. "Labor conforms with the elements from which it draws the things. It grasps matter as raw material" (Levinas 2000, 159). Spatiality is not grounded in an ecstatic involvement with the world, but in experiencing the here of enjoyment in contrast to *il y a*. It is in this core desire of enjoyment, in "bathing" in the elements, that the subject first appears or crystalizes (144). The comfort of enjoyment is further destabilized by arrival of the face. The face does not reach us in its familiarity. It does not belong to the same homeland. It is not rooted in the same soil. The face does not appear from any particular nation or region. The spatiality of the face is not horizontal or geographical. It comes from a height and placing demands on us to share our home, to be hospitable.

Despite these contrasts, Levinas' explicit confrontation with Nazism through an appeal to a universal humanity does not establish an unqualified phenomenological break from Heidegger. If we again bracket the content of his descriptions with an eye to the way they normalize settler experience, they appear as another side or aspect of colonial projection. One hint is Levinas' treatment of heteronormative femininity as a structural component of masculine subject formation and its link to nature. His account situates the role of the feminine and the role of nature as components parts to masculine enjoyment. Simone de Beauvoir's famous evaluation of *Time and the Other* labels it "the most explicit" expression of absolute masculine subjectivity to which woman is the appended and derived in body, sex, and consciousness (2011, 6). The content of the feminine is described throughout Levinas' corpus with extraordinary force. In *Totality and Infinity,* the "gentleness of the feminine face" belongs to the "interiority of the Home" (2000, 150, 155). As "one of the cardinal points of the horizon in which the inner life takes place," the feminine softens the masculine focus on the labor of "acquisition," preparing him for the arrival of the other (157, 159). The feminine is a point on the horizon of "inner life," raising the question as to whether it has an inner life of its own. Indeed, if the task of the feminine is to prepare men for the arrival of the face, then how is it that the feminine face could appear at all? This "effacement of woman," as Sonia Sikka calls it, is also hinted at in "Judaism and the Feminine" (Sikka 2001, 102). There Levinas praises the comforting domestic services provided by the feminine, "the peace and ease of being at home," and adds a telling contrast between the feminine and the human (1990, 33). He writes, "the femininity of woman can neither deform nor absorb her human essence" (34). A woman can be human, but not in and through her femininity. She is only human in so far as she is not her sex.

One common reply to Beauvoir's evaluation has been to argue that there is nothing essentially female about Levinas' feminine. James Mensch writes that a "mother and a father" can provide the nourishing environment of the home (2015, 96). The problem with this basic approach is that it fails to address the structural lack of autonomy and effacement of the nurturing role itself in Levinas. Diane Perpich suggests a subtler rapprochement between Levinas' philosophy and the feminine. On the one hand she acknowledges that Levinas' feminine

> … is problematic not just because it is gendered according to a set of stereotypes widely questioned by feminists at least since Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, but because it is a narrative device, a figure employed to do work required by the argument but likewise prohibited within its own terms…the feminine face is a mechanism meant to serve as an interface between incommensurable orders" (2008, 104).

However, she attempts to salvage Levinas basic ethical structure of radical alterity by looking past its sexism, arguing that "the problem is not with the feminine *per se*, but with the task for which it is so neatly suited but which neither it nor any figure could rightfully or legitimately accomplish" (108). Perpich is perhaps both right and wrong here. She is correct that the role of the feminine in Levinas entails an ontological contradiction. The feminine must be both a subject and not a subject, human yet inhuman, possess a face yet be effaced. However, she is mistaken to think that the impossibility of a task negates either the possibility of assigning it or attempting it. Contra Perpich, it is precisely the assignment of this impossible task that *is* the feminine *per se* in Levinas: Its heterosexualization, effacement, association with nature as an object of masculine enjoyment, etc., are all structural parts of this task securing the male right to access. Levinas' treatment of the feminine approximates the ambiguity at the heart of the sexual contract identified by Carole Pateman, where she recognizes the patriarchal strategy to secure male sex-right as twofold:

> Women are property, but also persons; women are held both to possess and to lack the capacities required for contract – and contract demands that their womanhood be both denied and affirmed (1988, 60).

This contradiction is, yes, a potential problem for patriarchy but is also a structural form of oppression where women are treated as property that has paradoxically elected its own status as such. Stauncher critics of Levinas like Sikka do not see much flexibility in Levinas' gendered ontology, writing "for Levinas the ethical relation, for which the feminine is a preparation, is a fundamentally masculine one" (2001, 103).

Because the feminine is contained within the domicile as the horizon of masculine interiority, it falls within the same realm as property. At the same time the sex-right is linked by masculine enjoyment to the right to nature and the earth. For Levinas the building of the domicile is a described in violent terms; material is "wrenched from nature" (1990, 32). Mensch writes, "The point that Levinas is making is subtly different from that of John Locke, who sees the origin of property in our action of withdrawing goods from the common store of nature" (2015, 97). Levinas assures his reader that such labor does not constitute any actual violence because the elements are faceless (2000, 160). He enthusiastically embraces the expedient nature of technology to convert the elements into usable resources. Technology has a lightening effect on humanity, "eroding the heavy dullness of the past, fading local colour with the fissures that crack all these cumbersome and obtuse things that burden human particularisms" (1990, 231). Like Husserl, Levinas associates this "heaviness" of culture with an inability to break with the natural attitude and to see one's own world as just one possible world-representation amongst a universal humanity. Technical progress forces a

> break with spontaneous life, to the ending of instinctive life buried in the immediacy of nature as given. They mark the beginning of what one can accurately call the life of spirit (1990, 32).

This is a version of European supremacy very similar to Husserl's. Levinas' now infamous comment below, which he is recorded expressing on several different occasions, is explicit:

> I often say, although it is a dangerous thing to say publicly, that humanity consists of the Bible and the Greeks. All the rest can be translated: all the rest – all the exotic – is dance (Mortley 1991, 18).

Technology is a path for cultures around the world to find this humanity, to be "translated" into a universal language. Levinas writes,

> One's implementation in a landscape, one's attachment to Place, without which the universe would become insignificant and would scarcely exist, is the very splitting of humanity into natives and strangers. And in this light technology is less dangerous than the spirits of the Place. Technology does away with the privileges of this enrootedness and related sense of exile. It goes beyond this alternative…Technology wrenches us out of the Heideggerian world and the superstitions surrounding Place. From this point on, an opportunity appears to us: to perceive men outside the situation in which they are placed, and let the human face shine in all its nudity (1990, 232-33).

The radical alterity of the face presupposes the total erasure of indigeneity. National identities integrally bound to land are automatically barbaric and pre-ethical. It is not surprising that Sikka sees in Levinas "the same old patriarchal monotheism, the same old imperialism, the same old absence of hospitality towards the foreigner…" (2011, 114). Additionally for Levinas, nature, the earth, and land have no character, interiority, agency, or personhood of their own. They are only understandable “on the plane of the human world of property” (Levinas 1998, 29). It is precisely their ontological position as a mere pre-objectified source of matter that prepares the way for the arrival of the face. Attempts to extend Levinas’ ethics of the face to the natural world often sidestep this deeper issue. Toadvine writes,

> Levinas’s failure to consider ethical obligations toward nature on its own terns, consequently, is not merely an ungrounded prejudice but is foundational to his thought. If it is true that the relations with infinity by which Levinas understands this source of all genuine ethical obligation presupposes this relationship with nature, then efforts to appropriate Levinas’s work by extending moral standing to nature, seeking in it a genuine source of alterity, will already assume what they set out to contest (Toadvine 2012, 178).

Despite their differences, many influential phenomenological treatments of spatial relations normalize settler experience. The heterosexualization of land and its link to male access and supremacy is a key common factor. The Levinasian break from Nazism still posits the supremacy of European civilization and glorifies its ability to nullify cultural difference “under the fiery breath of the spirit of technology” (Bunge 1979, 13). The depth of the colonial nature of Western phenomenology has yet to be fully appreciated by many. In an essay titled “Postcolonial Though and Levinas’ Double Vision,” for example, Robert Eaglestone cites Levinas saying in an interview “…it is Europe which, alongside its numerous atrocities, invented the idea of ‘de-Europeanization.’ This represents a victory of European generosity” (Robbins 2001, 164). An anticolonial perspective puts these comments solidly within the history of European supremacy: Even resistance to Europe is an act of European creation. But somehow Eaglestone manages to find the merit in these remarks, writing, “This generosity and hospitality seem to be rather at odds” with colonial behavior (2010, 59).

Such repetitions of the same old colonial attitude, or “circling the same old rock,” as Vine Deloria might put it, calls for a radical decolonizing element within phenomenology applied at every juncture (Deloria 1989, 113). It calls for an effort to listen to the other without an intention to make them an addendum to European history. Most importantly it calls for the end of colonial behavior, the end of the colonial attitude, and the reunion of lands with their spiritual relatives.

Going Places

Given the insinuation of racial and national superiority in the terms earth and interaction, an insinuation that also runs through each term of the colonial four-fold, it is prudent to give a quick look at more recent variations on these themes. The concept of place is frequently utilized with insufficient awareness of how its elucidation might relate to colonialism. If we turn to Edward Casey’s popular work of the 90s, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, there is a clear reiteration of a Heideggerian framework. He speaks of wilderness as “insouciant” (1993, 185). To be cultured means to be settled, to cultivate, to plough (1993, 230). “Indeed the land or the sea in its wildness actively resists our efforts to colonize it with cultural means” (1993, 237). The title of the book implies that something about modern existence has left people dis-placed. To be re-implaced, Casey claims, requires a journey across the land that results in a homecoming especially in the sense of homesteading (1993, 291). This new “settled co-existence between humans and the land” should also be paired with a new awareness of the importance of wild spaces and the opportunity to preserve the fusion of the state with the wilderness in some sort of compromise or “middle ground.”

He lauds “Thoreau’s idea of ‘national preserves’” which “combines the cultural entity of the ‘nation’ with the natural region of the ‘preserve’” (1993, 241). He expresses no awareness of what these “preserves” have meant for Native Peoples. All this reiterates the core aspects of settler perceptivity in the opposition of wilderness and cultivation, the resolution of this in settlement and the work of the homestead, the binding together of nature and history in the state, and the need to go beyond the boundaries of your home to reach the culmination of some sort of destiny (journey).

Casey draws copiously on the lives of various Native groups to show support for his own view. Despite this, he never addresses the problem of colonialism at any length. Brundige and Rabb offer an interesting critique of David Abram’s use of Native cultures, which is arguably similar to Casey’s. Although they recognize the effort to create a more respectful relationship with the earth, the authors notice that he “loses sight of Native Americans once he shows how closely they are connected to the land” (Brundige and Rabb 1997, 84). Because Abram uses Native cultures primarily for his own purposes without recognizing the concerns of those Native Peoples themselves, this sort of authorship is a form of appropriation. It is not uncommon for Western phenomenologists to cite Native people seamlessly alongside their own narrative without pausing to consider the differences in history and perspective (for example, see Maly 2009). To avoid appropriation, Brundige and Rabb suggest that eco-phenomenological thinking must recognize the “essential link between land and person” in a manner that is decolonizing (1997, 85). This goes beyond general descriptions of the human relation to place or nature and recognizing tribal sovereignty on ancestral lands. Phenomenology as an anticolonial project should *not* engage Native authors primarily in the mode of showing support for or making comparisons to its own argumentation. Rather it should show how Native ethical principles and ways of viewing the world, when properly understood and respected by Westerners, *achieve justice for Native Peoples* at the same time as they confront the interests or beliefs of settlers. It is not as though there is a lack of space in the literature for anti-colonial moments. In fact, there are opportunities at every turn. Casey writes,

> Not only a person but land also has rights…. even our responsibility to humans is ultimately to *people in places*, not to unplaced persons existing in a void. When it comes to being ethical, there is no escaping the imperative of place (1993, 265).

This would have been a perfect opportunity to address colonialism. But instead, the next move of the text is to join in on the Leopoldian hymn, "Aldo Leopold was perhaps the first person to argue explicitly for a land-based ethics" (ibid.). Once again, Native Peoples are relegated to what Casey himself describes as an "era of prehistory when human beings were hunters and gatherers" (188).

To avoid such reiterations of colonial experience, phenomenology cannot and should not remain "neutral" about colonialism (is this even possible?) and must engage in rigorous anticolonial self-criticism if it is to "bracket" or "confront" the structures of colonial perception as such. Whether or not one thinks phenomenology is an ethical project need not decide the approach here. Re-inscribing and normalizing settler experiences does the work of colonialism on the one hand and obstructs good phenomenology on the other. There is no phenomenological need to remain satisfied by vague concepts like "interaction." Looking at the history of phenomenology from an anticolonial perspective reveals the trace or mark of coloniality throughout many of its reoccurring descriptive tropes. While it is impossible to cover all of those here, one thing is clear: it takes much more than writing environmental phenomenology and "demonstrating" how one's philosophy is superficially similar to that of Native Peoples. Wilderness, clearing, settlement, and expansion capture specific colonial experiences of land and this cycle of experience tends to play out in present-day treatments of related themes of description.

From phenomenology to political economy

Of those who have begun to recognize land's significance for phenomenology, recent scholarship by Todd Mei agrees in some ways with the current argument for a need to develop a meaningful ontology of land in the West. In his book, *Land and the Given Economy*, Mei argues that this gap in thinking blinds phenomenology to the "economic correlate" of its ontological categories, arguing that Heidegger develops a way "to think being in terms of an intimate participation with our surroundings" (2017 Mei, 178, 106). Regarding this generalized relation to space, Heidegger gives a fantastic summary statement in his Nazi lectures *Nature, History, State,*

> The position of a body in space is fundamentally non-arbitrary; it stands in a completely definite reciprocal relation to its surroundings…the relation between living being and space the "environment." This [biological] word is meant to indicate that the limit between space and living being is not the surface of the living body, that the living being does not simply take up a section of indifferent space… (Heidegger 2013a, 54).

For Heidegger, experience comes only in terms of a *hupokeimenon* or something which makes it possible. This always-already meaningful background or "ground" grounds the revealing and concealing of both being and beings. In contrast with Casey, Mei's interpretation of Heidegger brings the analysis to an ontology of land. Casey classifies land as a sort of "liminal" or transitional concept in the relation between humans and their place: Land mediates our relationship to a place. Mei is correct to doubt Casey's ontology here. He writes, "But land is not reducible to place; it allows place to manifest" (112). In a way, Mei reverses the ontological priority of the concepts. The meaning of a place is always already grounded by the material relation to land in the way that it fundamentally provides for the existence of life. It is the surrounding land that serves as the basic ground of experience.

Mei interprets this grounding to be precisely the fact that "the land makes itself available for something like building and cultivation" (2017, 113). Land, then, is seen precisely as a sort of fundamental ontological backdrop or stage for human development. He continues, "Earth is therefore ever-present as the subject of human activity" (2017, 121). Though a subject is an original source, that which is predicated, Mei's use of the word also suggests it to be a primordial room for the world-building capacities of human beings. It is "the subject of revealing – that is…the basis upon which we relate to other entities and allows us to construct a world" (2017, 125). This is not a "subject" in the sense of a person having its own life and agency (subjectivity as the *cogito*). This is a subject in the sense of what is "thrown under" or "underlying," treated as a "subject" to be studied, examined, or all in all, subjected. In this sense land becomes "the subject (*hupokeimenon*) of economic activity" (2017, 157).

Mei credits land and the earth as a "ground" and ur-source of human life but much in the same way as Locke and others who obsess with its role in capitalist production. There is perhaps some difference in how much "credit" these philosophers think is due to land. Locke recognizes land as the "chief matter of property," and the source of the fruits of the earth, but nonetheless he maintains that the larger portion of useful things are a product of human labor (only 1/100 of these are a provision of nature, to be exact). In contrast, Mei cites Heidegger,

> Only a minute fraction of what lies before us in this way has been laid down by man, and even then only with the aid of what is lying there before. The stones from which the house is built come from natural rock (Mei, 121; Heidegger 1976, 200).

But this acknowledgment by Heidegger and Mei is overshadowed by an uncomfortable result. It follows that the earth and the land in its giving forth, in its generosity, in its depth and self-concealment, in its position as a primordial source, secretes a sort of "excess" (Mei 133-54). The sense of this "excess" is both ontological and economic, and it is with this dual concept that Mei makes the textual transition from phenomenology to political economy. The word has a history in both traditions.

In phenomenology the idea of excess conveys something about the nature of things, that they have a certain depth that lies beyond our experience of them. Things always hold something in reserve. Nothing is ever fully manifest. Because of their situatedness in a complex shifting environment, there is always "excess" over what is present. Mei argues that this "excess" originates in the land as the material background of complex relations. Land gives things a quality that cannot be captured in any one encounter, any one season, or any one year. For Mei, "land's excess resides in providing for opportunities to actualize potentialities-for-being…the donation of the possibility-to-be…the excess of possibility" (2013, 144-45). This ontology of land suggests land's primary role as offering a "free gift" of possibilities for human growth and development. The economic correlate of the term "excess" is found in capitalist thinkers. As previously discussed, it is correlated with the God-given right of capitalists and landowners to accumulate this "excess" in the form of profits or rent. In its Smithian form, the argument goes that the interaction between farmer and the soil produces a sort of natural “excess” or “surplus” beyond what is needed for the laborers’ immediate needs of survival. This becomes the basis of profit, the ability to draw rent, taxes, and so on. This “excess” is precisely the value slated to become the profits of capital.

Hence it turns out that the ability of the land to produce “excess” is the very grounds of its exploitation and the exploitation of the worker. Mei’s attachment to Ricardo as an economic expression of his ontology makes it difficult for him to grasp the problematic implications of “excess” as an economic category. Because Mei dismisses Marx as a reductionist when it comes to thinking about land, he overlooks Marx’s critique of surplus-value (“excess”) entirely. For Marx, this “excess” is an ideological invention of capitalists, an economic myth formulated to justify interference in the direct metabolic relationship of the laborer and the soil. Although Mei develops proxy concepts that allow him to move fluidly between ontological and economic categories, a potentially exciting (or devastating?) achievement, his fully Western family of phenomenologists and capitalists do little to challenge colonial presuppositions. In fact, he writes an entire book on land without once mentioning colonialism.

Conclusions

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, analysis of spatial ontologies can become an anticolonial practice if land is emphasized as a key component of intersectional criticism. Neglect of this dimension has normalized what can only be called the colonial attitude within Western phenomenology. This blindness should be confronted with a commitment to decolonizing methodology that centers non-Western criticism and participation. As Mei demonstrates, phenomenology is fully capable of forming ontologies of land, but this is a fruitless exercise without anticolonial critique. The connection between phenomenology and political economy is based on the simple fact that experience and matter are correlated. The economic correlates of experience are equally critical for formulating an anticolonial approach to land. Although the colonial dimensions of capitalist political economy have been thoroughly explored in literature of all kinds, not enough attention has been granted to improving the anticolonial of capacities of Marxist theory by a thoroughgoing reappraisal of its central concepts and interpretive tools. Hence a similar treatment of the material correlates to colonial ontology must be carried out in the radical literature.

IV. THE SETTLER PROLETARIAT AND IMPERIALISM

The ways in which humans experience land have rich implications for how it is treated economically and materially. However, such an exploration is not the goal of this chapter. Land plays a much more prominent role in modern political economy than in most other forms of Western philosophy. Yet the nature of land has not been sufficiently reconsidered within Western political economy itself. This chapter argues that Marxist theory can and should be meaningfully re-radicalized in light of anticolonial criticism. It will do this by way of three sub-goals: First, it articulates a Marxist theory of land in contrast to the (im)possibility of capitalist reformism. Marx's theory of the degradation of soils uncovers the contradictions contained in the Ricardian philosophy adopted by Mei. The theory of exploitation, which is often only considered in relation to labor, can be extended to land and the supposed "excess" or "surplus value" it creates. Second, this chapter argues that although Marx and Marxists have been outspoken critics of European expansionism and colonialism, there are deep theoretical aspects of Marxist theory that need to be reevaluated from an anticolonial lens. One of these is the overstated insistence on ultimate contradictory forces represented by the capitalist class and the white settler proletariat, whose interests tend to be unified in the project of colonialism. Third, this chapter argues that visions of the future in terms of direct control by the associated producers tends to overshadow the importance of the associated nations or peoples, making this relation less visible within Marxist theory.

The path to a re-radicalization of Marxist thinking can be pursued in multiple ways. In the introduction to their landmark book, *Monopoly Capital*, Baran and Sweezy lament the "stagnation of Marxian social science" and the exhausting repetition of "familiar formulations, as though nothing really new had happened since the days of Marx" (1966, 3). If Marxian sociology was indeed stagnated, it may have been due to a lack of attention to new developments as the authors claim. However, it is equally likely that stagnation came from a failure to re-evaluate the fundamental attitudes and ideas that have formed the basis of Marxist analysis since the beginning. The current chapter is aimed more closely at the latter approach for revision and self-critique. Many kernels of insight needed for such an analysis are contained in *Marxism and Native Americans*, a collection of essays and speeches by Native leaders who outline ways in which Marxists have failed or committed outright violence against Native Peoples by aligning themselves with ideals and modes of action that are more generally Western than either capitalism or communism. In addition to much-needed critique, this volume also indicates potential bridges for alliance. As LaDuke asks in the preface,

> Within such a [political] movement Marxism, or aspects of Marxism, may well have a role and function. What and how remains to be seen. What better direction to turn for clarification than to those who have no particular question as to their relationship to the land [Native Peoples] … Let Marxism explain its utility to its hosts" (Churchill 1989, iix).

There is something to Marxism that is potentially better than the prevailing norms perpetuated by capitalism. But a mere potential for limited allyship is not yet an alliance in reality. So, the first question that should be asked here is the following: How can Marxism still be useful for radicalizing settlers around issues of land and achieving justice for Native Peoples? This can only be answered as a response to LaDuke's most pressing question for Marxists: "What is Marxism's understanding of the land?" (Churchill 1989, vi).

In formulating an answer to this question, the goal should not be the self-serving end of convincing Native Peoples that Marxists are right about everything, but rather to offer some insights about how the theory and praxis of Marxism might be useful for making positive change. As an initial step, the first part of this chapter will make a Marxist case against those like Mei who believe that capitalism can reconcile its relationship with land.

Marx vs Ricardo

Ricardians like Henry George and Mei propose a philosophical and material shift harkening back to a "classical" era of capitalist philosophy that maintains a strict distinction between capital and land. At stake centrally for Ricardian capitalists is whether the nationalization of rents would accomplish the material outcome correlating with the conceptual distinctness of land and capital. As the theory goes, nationalizing land would redirect the rents accumulated by landlords towards those who are active in production: labor and capital. Ricardians like Mei argue that because land is not produced by humans, the landlord does not in fact produce anything. Rent is only possible because of a monopoly on land held by landlords. Hence, on this theory, landlords unjustly take the "surplus" that rightfully belongs to laborers and capitalists. This recognition, according to Mei, would correlate with the proper manner of thinking of land as a *hupokeimenon*, or original source of value for human existence.

But this so-called "trinitarian" view that insists upon land, labor, and capital as distinct elements of production is an entirely ideological conception. On the one hand it is correct in the obviousness of the case that these things are not the same, but a mere insistence upon their distinctness misses the fact that *capital is a relation and not an entity*. Therefore, it cannot simply be grouped alongside land and labor as if these things are three peas in a pod. Marx writes, "Capital, land, labour! But capital is not a thing, it is a definite social relation of production pertaining to a particular historical social formation, which simply takes the form of a thing and gives this thing a specific social character" (1991, 953). Hence, their conceptual uniqueness does nothing to guarantee their material separation, so to speak. In accord with capitalist methodology which tends to de-historicizing social relations, Mei writes, "Capital is thus like a capacity; it lies in wait in order to be used in production" (2017, 85). But capital is not an imaginary stock waiting about in a warehouse, as Mei would have it. Marx shows that the material relation of capital to land and labor is acquisitive in nature. The cycle of capital is a specific process for extracting material value from land and labor in an unending quest for accumulation. Hence, regardless of whether land and labor are in theory "different" than capital (in the sense that one cannot be totally reduced to the other), both are appropriated within the valorization process. As Marx explains, "Land, so long as it is not exploited as a means of production, is not capital. Land as capital can be increased just as much as all the other instruments of production" (1976, 205). Land is not originally capital, it *becomes* capital.

Marx certainly does not disagree that the extraction of value from the labor-land relationship by a landlord is unjust, but there is a fundamental problem with the wishful economic theory that believes taking rents away from landlords would benefit either land or laborers. That's just not how capitalism works. Ricardo himself believed that wages rightfully tended towards a minimum subsistence level. Hence, if rents paid to landlords disappear for the working classes, wages would simply drop to the newly lowered level of subsistence. The value represented by rents would be captured by non-landed capital investments rather than by landlords. Marx writes that "land is personified in the landowner, he is the land similarly standing up on its hind legs and demanding its share… of the products produced with its aid; so that it is not the land that receives the portion of the product needed to replace and increase its productivity, but instead the landowner who receives a share of this product to be sold off and frittered away" (1991, 963). The nationalization of rent means massive amounts of investment capital redirected from landowners into new paths to valorization, resulting in the exploitation of land and workers in other ways. Nationalization coupled with the continuation of capital does not do away with the social conditions in which material is stripped from people and soil. As a capture of a portion of the "surplus" value demanded by capital, rents do not represent any fundamental form of exploitation.

This is one way in which Marxist theory can be useful for analyzing capital in its root material functions because it details the concrete movement of values away from land and people to capitalists. Landlordism is only one way in which land is forced into yielding profits. If it were eliminated, what would be left of land for capital to exploit? The answer is everything. Land is turned into capital every-which-way. Land can also be farmed, mined, logged, developed, etc. As Marx writes, "They conquered the field for capitalistic agriculture, incorporated the soil into capital…" (1990, 895). The end of rents does not mean the end of land as capital; it only means the end of landlordism. Human beings, soils, plants, animals, minerals, and the land in general are all appropriated as capital. Marx writes, "they have ceased to belong to themselves...they are incorporated into capital. As co-operators, as members of a working organism, they merely form a particular mode of existence of capital" (1992, 451). These insights are lost on Mei who complains that it is not fair to accuse all capitalists of conceiving land as merely a form of capital. While he is nominally correct in that assertion, he is incorrect in his assessment of the arguments laid out against Ricardo by Marx regarding the pervasive and elastic nature of capital and its ability to invade all aspects of existence.

It is here that a Marxist theory of the relation between human needs and land can play a critical role in understanding how capitalism functions. In order to understand this relation, it is fruitful to look at how Marx's theory of land is often misread by his critics. Ricardian economists accept that it is morally justifiable for capitalists to exploit laborers as well as land. The nationalization of rents is intended to free up more material value for capital investment. Hence, it is ironic that Mei and many others accuse Marx of neglecting the value of land in favor of a theory of values that prioritizes labor. The assumption is that Marx's thorough analysis of the exploitation of labor in *Capital 1* means he reduces all value to generic units of socially necessary labor time, i.e. the labor theory of value. Mei writes, "His system of economics becomes a way of marginalizing the more classical distinctions in the production of value in favor of the laborer who is the sole producer of value," calling those who think otherwise "apologists," referencing especially the work of John Bellamy Foster (2017, 16, 48). This is a common reading of Marx even by those who appreciate his work. Coulthard writes that "Indigenous peoples, deep ecologists, defenders of animal rights, and other advocates of environmental sustainability" all accuse Marx of "anti-ecological" tendencies (2014, 13). This is an uncomfortable grouping of worldviews for many reasons (see Reid 2009, Guha 1989, Sagoff 1984), but the net critique of Marx is one that is worth addressing at length to see where it has validity and where it does not.

There are different arguments at work here and two ways in which this critique has been formulated: *First*, that Marx was *anthropocentric* because of his focus on human labor, and *second*, that Marx was an industrial *developmentalist* obsessed with productivism and technical social progress.

These two ideas are related but not the same. The idea that Marx held the so-called “labor theory of value” is so common that refuting this allegation became one focus in David Harvey’s 2017 book, *Marx, Capital and the Madness of Economic Reason*. Readers of Marx often assume that Marx’s placement of labor at the center of value makes sense as an antithesis to the idea that capital produces value. But as a good dialectician, Marx knew that the answer was not in the antithesis but the conception of a new synthesis. The labor theory of value is in fact capitalist in origin, first developed by Petty, Smith, Ricardo, and others to explain market prices. It was capitalists who have argued that market price is in fact a good overall reflection of value writ large. John Bellamy Foster and Paul Burkett write, “Socialism has as its specific goal overcoming the narrow value form so as to allow for the development of a rich world of needs, while rationally regulating the metabolism between humanity and nature” (2018, 2). The value produced by labor, as a social relation, is never spoken of by Marx as if it originates from a single source or is opposed to other forms of value. Rather, values for Marx originate only in and through eco-social relationships and are polymorphic.

Mei accuses Marx of “reducing” land to a mere use-value in contrast to some imagined “real” value produced by labor. On one hand, he is not wrong that Marx conceives of land as having an original sort of use-value as the basis of life activity (Marx 1976, 276). But what does this "reduction" mean coming from a standpoint of capitalist theory? Mei argues that on the capitalist trinitarian view, land is conceived as an originary source of wealth, or original subject of economic activity. But all this means is that as the subject of economic activity, there is a moral obligation to maximally capitalize land. For Marx, land is "reduced" to a use-value in the sense that he argues against its commodification, privatization, and subjection to capital. Marx writes, "The view of nature attained under the domination of private property and money is a real contempt for and practical debasement of nature…" (1976, 172). Marx distinguishes land as a use-value from more common use-values in that it is not produced by human effort, though the distinction is not absolute. Its existence is mostly independent of human efforts. So, in the first instance, Marx's apparent "reduction" of land to use-value can be more properly said to be the condemnation of land's relation to capital as an exchange value to be bought and sold on the market. What is left after the elimination of land as capital is a theory of values as emergent in the direct relationship between humans and land.

Marx writes, "Value is represented in use-value; and use-value is a prerequisite for the creation of value; but it is folly to create an antithesis by placing a use-value, like land, on one side and on the other side value" (1991, 956). This fluidity of value can be interpreted quite literally. As ecological Marxists like John Bellamy Foster have now made famous, Marx writes that capitalist production "disturbs the metabolic interaction [*Stoffwechsel*] between man and the earth; i.e. prevents the return to the soil of its constituent elements" (1990, 637). What these so-called "apologists" have noticed as the kernel of Marxist theory is the degree to which human life is conceived as a part of nature and as such "bound to the soil" in a metabolic interchange (Marx 1990, 875). It is the direct relationship between land and humans that is important because there is in fact no "surplus" created in this exchange that can be sustainably expropriated as capitalists would have it. The nature of use-values is that they satisfy material social needs, i.e. the material necessary for life, and the creation of use-values in this interchange does not entail the creation of surpluses above and beyond the ecological requirements of either humans or lands. Capital does not take directly from the worker or from the soil, but rather from the values generated in their interchange. A key passage from Marx identifies the essence of this relationship and its basis in the soil science of his time,

> … it produces conditions that provoke an irreparable rift in the interdependent process of social metabolism, a metabolism prescribed by the natural laws of life itself. The result of this is a squandering of the vitality of soil, which is carried by trade far beyond the bounds of a single country (Liebig, *Die Chemie in ihrer Anwendung auf Agricultur und Physiologie*)" (1991, 949).

Hence for Marxists, the only solution to re-establishing sustainable social relationships is a reconciliation between humans and lands. This can never be achieved under the social conditions of capital because capital *ex vi termini* expropriates the values produced in that relationship.

The abolition of private property does not appear to be a necessary step to ending the degradation of land for Ricardian theorists. Mei writes, "One might be tempted to think that prohibiting private ownership of land and its finite features is the only option. This is not necessarily the case. Because excess commutes into value form, one need only prohibit the private consumption of this value" (2017, 182). The capitalist belief that land creates a mysterious and transmutable "excess" provides a justification for expropriating values from the direct human-land relation into exchangeable forms for the general coffers of "society" (i.e. capital). This continuation of private property alongside the supposed "usufruct" conditions of nationalized land under capitalism still rests on the ability to pay within a hierarchical economic system. Mei continues, "Does the professional trading in derivatives market not wish to buy property, perhaps in exclusive areas? Seek an increase to his or her standard of living? In short, seek new possibilities for dwelling in land?" (2017, 191). Mei's deployment of the Heideggerian turn of phrase grants a sort of philosophical luster to capitalism, giving a new life to the supposed "dignified role of the commodity…" in shaping social experience (Mei 2017, 166). Whether the aspirations of day traders to acquire private property and commodities deserves such high praise is a question for posterity.

Land: Exploitation or Expropriation?

One of Coulthard's main concerns is that Marx focuses disproportionately on the value produced by human beings. If human-created value holds primary significance in material social relations, then the source of this value, namely labor, is what can rightfully be said to suffer under the thumb of capital. This would be problematic from a Native environmental point of view concerned with land as more than a resource for human appropriation. Coulthard writes, "From the vantage point of the capital relationship — which, I have argued, tends to concern itself most with the adverse structural and ideological effects stemming from expropriated labor, *land is not exploitable, people are*" (2014, 14). There are two possible responses to Coulthard's criticism here.

First, it has been argued that the Marxist theory of exploitation need not apply to land or nature because nature is expropriated by capital, not exploited. Foster and Clark develop this view specifically to address ecological degradation,

> …it is no longer realistic to treat—even by way of abstraction—the crucial political-economic struggles of our day as if they were confined primarily to the exploitation of labor within production. Instead, social conflicts are increasingly being fought over capitalism's expropriation and spoliation of its wider social and natural environment…The inner dynamic of the system is governed by the process of exploitation of labor power, under the guise of equal exchange, while its primary relation to its external environment is one of expropriation ("appropriation...without exchange" or "without equivalent") (2018, 1).

> …given the specific form in which this expropriation occurs within the value circuit in capitalist production, under the guise of equal exchange, Marx distinguishes the exploitation of labor power in developed capitalist industry as a specific type, sui generis, not to be confused with expropriation in its more general historical sense as robbery or theft outside the process of production and valorization (2018, 5).

On this theory, exploitation is a subset or a mode of expropriation. The laborer is compensated with a wage, that is, an "equivalent" of the value produced for the capitalist. It is the illusion of the fair exchange of labor for wages that gives exploitation its specific character. There is a clear difference between the exploitation of labor and the condition of slavery, which is a bare form of expropriation. Nancy Fraser writes, "'Race' emerges, accordingly, as the mark that distinguishes free subjects of exploitation from dependent subjects of expropriation" (2016, 172). So is it with the oil field, mine, or dammed river: in the relation of expropriation, humans and nature are treated as mere stock by capital with no act of exchange. Foster and Clark write,

> In his overall analysis, Marx designated numerous forms of appropriation without exchange (or without reciprocity), some general, others more specific, encompassing widely differing levels of analysis and spheres of operation. These included such broad terms as robbery, plunder, theft, looting, tribute, cheating,

> swindling, usurpation, parasitism, spoliation, dissolution, confiscation, enslavement, colonialism, patriarchal domination, squandering, blood-letting, and "vampire-like" relations—along with more specific concepts such as rent, usury, monopoly profits, "free gifts of Nature to capital," impoverishment (in the formal sense of undermining "conditions of reproduction"), profit upon alienation/expropriation, profit by deduction, "secondary exploitation," "odious exploitation," the metabolic rift, and the alienation of land/labor (6).

A second possible response to Coulthard identifies locations in the circulation of capital where land is put to task in ways analogous to the exploitation of wage labor. In such circumstances, capital must exchange with land a portion of the value produced in order to maintain land's productive capacities in a process entirely internal to the valorization of capital. Agriculture is the paradigmatic example. The amount of this value is analogous to the wage equaling the socially necessary cost of the reproduction of the labor force. While there is no doubt that the bulk of *Capital 1* is focused on the exploitation of the worker, there is evidence that Marx developed a theory of the exploitation of land, most notably in *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *Capital 3*.

Even in *Capital 1*, which focuses on labor, the expropriation of land is at work as a foundational background theory. Especially in the second half, it is always the removal of people from the soil that is pivotal for capital because this makes both humans and soil vulnerable to exploitation. Marx's vague yet rhetorically powerful laments of capital robbing the soil at the end of Chapter 15 are expanded into an explicit theory of the exploitation of land elsewhere in his corpus. A common capitalist theory during his time was that the pressure of rent provided motivation for the small farmer to improve the fertility of land and hence also its productivity. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's iteration of the idea went so far as to claim that the farmers in fact *owed* rent to the rest of society for the use of the soil because they were able to capitalize on its mysterious ability to produce more abundance than was needed to restore its fertility (analogous to the worker's ability to produce more value than is necessary for the reproduction of life). Marx systematically dismantled Proudhon's view, replying:

> Rent, instead of *binding man to nature*, has merely bound the exploitation of the land to competition… Rent, has so completely divorced the landed proprietor from the soil, from nature, that he has no need even to know his estates, as is to be seen in England. As for the farmer, the industrial capitalist and the agricultural worker, they are no more bound to the land they exploit than are the employer and the worker in the factories… they feel an attachment only for the price of their production, the monetary product (1976, 201-202).

Social relations based on exploitation give birth to rents, not some imagined indestructible power of the soil to produce "excess." Marx writes, these are the "... social relations in which the exploitation of the land takes place… Rent is a product of society not of the soil" (1976, 205). The separation of people from the soil not only opens the human-land relationship to exploitation, it also atrophies human spiritual life in connection to land, as outlined by Marx in the *Manuscripts of 1844,* reducing it to a mere statistical and monetary nature (1976, 276). This twofold death, being both material and spiritual, induces a moral detachment from environmental responsibilities to future generations. Marx writes,

> … instead of a conscious and rational treatment of the land as permanent communal property, as the inalienable condition for the existence and reproduction of the chain of human generations, we have the exploitation and the squandering of the powers of the earth (1991, 949).

It does seem that Marx offers well-developed theories of the expropriation and even the exploitation of land and nature by capital. In addition, it does not seem accurate to ascribe a theory of values to Marx that privileges humans over nature in any radical sense (based on a supposed "labor theory of value"). However, Coulthard's worries cannot be brushed aside so easily.

Anticolonial concerns

Still hanging in the balance is the treatment of colonialism. As is typical of Western worldviews, Marx's theories of exploitation stuffer from a sort of universalism. The grand view of oppression at work focuses on the concept of class as the primary tool for explaining economic and historic conditions rather than a more robust intersectional analysis. Deloria writes, "Reduction of the human being to an interchangeable unit within a larger political, social or economic theory or theology simply restricts analysis to that concept" (Churchill 1989, 126). An overemphasis on class struggle projects a Euro-universalist conception of history that exalts the progress-based industrial trajectory of Europe to the history of all human beings and all nations, twisting the violence of colonialism into a form of world-historical progress. The ability to see exploitation as multi-layered requires a much subtler approach. Hence, Coulthard's assertion that to make Marxism useful we must begin by stripping it of this "historical metanarrative" and "*contextually shifting* our investigation from an emphasis on the *capital relation* to the *colonial relation*" (2014, 10).

It is a basic tenet of Marxism that class defines historical struggle in the age of capitalism. This needs to be revisited from an anticolonial lens that sees struggle as diversely distributed by identity and geography. Colonial oppression is not merely or even primarily based on class, although it produces classes. Different from a class relation, colonialism is an unfinished nation-to-nation relationship. Imperialist nations do not invade a *class of people*. They invade a *nation of people* that is already full of the varying social positions that become the target of exploitation. In the case of settler colonialism, the national concept is probably more relevant for understanding how the exploitation of land works than is the class concept. The focus of Marxist theory on imperialism as a necessary aspect of capitalism often fails to understand its own implication that national identities (often misunderstood as wholly racial) are a central component of anti-imperialist and therefore anti-capitalist struggle. This neglect is a fundamental contradiction in socialist theory. Imperialism expands and conquers new territory, nations, etc. It does not conquer classes of people. Although capitalism has various techniques for infecting cultures with its preferred set of social distinctions, attempting to distort the existing social relations into versions more useful to capital accumulation, it can make do with a variety of outcomes. The result of capitalist imperialism is not always the conversion of the conquered population into workers. As has been argued by Wolfe, Coulthard, and others, it often means either extermination and/or marginalization within economic systems.

When viewed as part of the intercourse between nations, colonialism yields more than class differentiation as the violent founding moment of a landless proletariat. Rather than being purely *divisive*, imperialism also *unifies* the patriotic bonds of a nation, including the unification of the ruling class with the underclass. The unification of these classes in the identity of the *ruling nation* has been massively understated in Marxist literature that assumes an absolute and universal opposition between capitalists and a globalized proletariat. Usually Marxists chalk up any apparent complicity of the working class with ruling class to propaganda. Rarely is it acknowledged that the working class of a capitalist nation experiences real material gain from national conquest. The most obvious examples of this are certainly in the acquisition of “free land” in the manner described by Frederick Turner. In the United States this reality is expressed by the law and spirit of the Marshall Trilogy, which, couched in resolute white-supremacy, grants the federal government right to acquisition of Native lands and denies the self-determining capacity of Native nations. Judge Marshall writes,

> Though the Indians are acknowledged to have an unquestionable and heretofore unquestioned right to the lands they occupy, until that right shall be extinguished by a voluntary cession to our government; yet it may well be doubted whether those tribes which reside within the acknowledged boundaries of the United States can with strict accuracy be denominated foreign nations. They may more correctly perhaps be denominated domestic dependent nations" (*Cherokee Nation vs Georgia*, 1831).

The spirit of these decisions was further enhanced by the Homestead Acts that empowered settlers to occupy millions of acres. It should not be ignored that by these policies the white *settler proletariat* gained extraordinary material wealth in the form of free land. The history of Marxist thought is replete with failures to grasp this clearly. In his classic chapter on imperialism published in *Finance Capital*, Rudolf Hilferding dwells at length on the expansive tendencies of capitalism:

> Capital becomes the conqueror of the world, and with every new country that it conquers there are new frontiers to be crossed. These efforts become an economic necessity, because every failure to advance reduces the profit and the competitiveness of finance capital, and may finally turn the smaller economic territory into a mere tributary of the larger one. They have an economic basis, but are then justified ideologically by an extraordinary perversion of the national idea, which no longer recognizes the right of every nation to political self-determination and independence, and ceases to express, with regards to nations, the democratic creed of the equality of all members of the human race" (1981, 335).

There are some worthy recognitions here, specifically that the advance of capital violates the right to self-determination of subjugated nations. However, placing total blame on capital and failing to see the participation of the settler proletariat makes imperialism faceless as if it were the actions of a machine, absolving most of the people, personalities, and attitudes who actually carry out its undertakings. A mechanistic view of an organic, historical, and social relation accomplishes little analytically. Capitalism reifies, objectifies, and mechanizes people, and it does no good to use an equivalent metric to derive what constitutes its basis of power. Capitalism is the creed of living people, of nations, and is their identity down to the marrow; as a human identity is not a mere ideology but also a material, bodily occupation.

A central problem that results from underestimating the material force of national identity and colonialism is the inability for Marxist theory to meaningfully distinguish between expropriated populations. The central theory here has been that expropriation is always carried out in order to create a mass of wage-laborers. Hilferding calls this method the "essence of colonial policy" (1981, 319). But settler colonialism has as its primary operative methods human extermination and the theft of land with the forced labor of Natives as a real but more often secondary result. In short, as Coulthard writes, it is characterized predominantly by "the history and experience of dispossession, not proletarianization" (2014, 13). In his article, "White-Settler Colonialism and the Myth of Investment Imperialism," Arghiri Emmanuel identifies the "deficiencies of revolutionary Marxism" and "the inadequacy of the old concepts" in terms of "their failure to recognize a third factor that intervenes between imperialist capitalism and the peoples of the exploited countries, i.e. the colonialists themselves" (1972, 36).[13] This historical and, I would argue, ongoing failure to properly theorize the function of expropriation in capitalist expansion falsely imagines a generalized capitalist class in fundamental opposition to a generalized proletariat. But history has shown that the methods of settler colonial expropriation often create a bonded interest between capitalists and the white proletariat, shattering this opposition. Hilferding writes, "The policy of expansion unites all strata of the propertied class…" (1981, 365). This statement fails to see that the policy of expansion also unites wealthy capitalists with the poor precisely because it is *private property* that the white settler proletariat stand to gain by participating in expansionist policy. Emmauel writes,

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[13] Emmanuel's essay predates the work of Patrick Wolfe, Eve Tuck, and other modern theorists of settler colonialism. However, the development of this specific concept outside the realm of Marxist analysis has had more of a resonance with many Native scholars because of the problematic assumptions underlying Marxist theory that are outlined in this chapter and in the volume *Marxism and Native Americans*. Of course, Native people have spoken (and later written) critically about white settler colonialism since its inception, so there is nothing new in Emmanuel's analysis. However, it was and still is a necessary intervention into the Marxist literature that is worth reemphasizing and examining in terms of its implications.

> For these people, the colonial adventure was neither a 'hindrance', a 'contradiction' nor a 'distortion', but the mainspring of their existence and their supreme justification. They benefited from colonialism and therefore promoted it, without reserve or contradiction – and for this very reason they were basically anti-imperialistic, however paradoxical this may seem (1972, 39).

The formation of "White States" in the colonies as a response to the imperialism of parent countries unified white settlers of all classes (43). At the same time it unified settlers against Native populations. From a Marxist perspective, the proposed counteragent to the imperial aspect of capitalism has been the international solidarity of the proletariat. Hilferding writes that the proletariat is the "most decisive enemy of imperialism" (1981, 368). But this makes little sense as a singular strategy given that imperialism is aimed at nations rather than classes. There are many examples that contradict his claim. The anti-imperialist resistance of Water Protectors at Standing Rock was most clearly spearheaded by the Sioux Nation standing its ground against Energy Transfer Partners; this was not resistance by the proletariat. If anything, the settler proletariat has been the most vicious advocate for the elimination of Native land rights.

Historically speaking the white settler proletariat has functioned simultaneously as an anti-imperialist and an imperialist force. And yet many Marxists, Baran and Sweezy for example, claim that the primary function of the U.S. military within its national boundary is to "control the domestic labor force" (1966, 179). They write that these "domestic disturbances" are of "negligible importance and can be abstracted from… We can concentrate on the international uses of armed force" (ibid.). But the use of armed forces "domestically" in this case must in fact be seen as an international struggle and an international use of armed forces. Otherwise there is no recognition that the United States violates the self-determination of thousands of nations within its claimed territory. Any radical form of anti-imperialism must acknowledge this fact as fundamental to shaping resistance. It is questionable when Marxists persist, as Deloria puts it, in an "aggressively missionary-minded" manner, to propose communism as a universal form of resistance to imperialist capitalism (Churchill 1989, 132). How does an a-national strategy make more sense than a pluralistic approach that includes a struggle for the self-determination of Native nations? Coulthard writes,

> the colonial relation should not be understood as a primary locus or 'base' from which these other forms of oppression flow, but rather as the inherited background field within which market, racist, patriarchal, and state relations converge to facilitate a certain power effect – in our case the reproduction of hierarchical social relations that facilitate the dispossession of our lands and self-determining capacities (2014, 14).

The long-standing narrative of Marxism has been that the proletariat is a landless, propertyless, etc., mass of workers. But from the point of view of the colonized, it is obvious that property in land is precisely what the white proletariat gains as settlers. The military, the nation, and the capitalist economy are sources of white privilege in land. Baran and Sweezy generalize the proletariat as a "propertyless majority" in contrast to a "property-owning minority" (1966, 157-158). This description has little bearing in real social conditions. The settler land rushes enabled by an imperialist military and written into American law are mirrored by modern day home ownership. It is important not to confuse capital and property in this instance. While it may be true that the settler proletariat is defined by lacking control over any significant capital, it is not the case that they are propertyless. In 1966, the publication year of *Monopoly Capital*, it was by no means a minority of Americans who owned land. In fact, home ownership was at around 63%. This number is approximately the same today, with white people at about 73% homeownership and more than ⅓ of these owning their property outright (American Community Survey 2016; U.S. Census Bureau 2018). In addition, approximately 66% of all farmland is owned by small to medium-sized operators, the legacy of what Veblen called the needlessly expansive "colonial pedigree" of American pioneer-farmers (USDA 2013; Veblen 1997, 138-40). Data clearly indicates that the settler proletariat is not landless.

This inability to see the proletariat as colonists or as the e*xpropriating rather than the expropriated population* has caused Marxist philosophy to misinterpret the state of colonialism worldwide. Expropriation does not only produce classes; in the case of settler colonialism it also produces landless nations — nations that have been separated from their homeland. Pointing out this shortfall, Sandy Grande writes, "The failure to problematize the issue of (colonized) land is perhaps the major deficiency of Marxist and other Western-centric politics — traditional or revolutionary" (2004, 49). Playing the exact tune identified by Grande, Baran and Sweezy write in a footnote, "Largely because of its own history as an ex-colony which had had to struggle for independence, United

States expansionism has rarely taken the form of colonialism" (1966, 183). This blindness to the current colonial status of the United States (and presumably other nations) cannot be good for the future of Marxism. Morally speaking, the white settler proletariat cannot simply excuse itself by pointing a finger at capitalism. This matter is complicated further by the fact that the white settler proletariat is often motivated to establish its hold on land by conditions of misery and desperation induced by enclosures in their home country. For example, the first British to colonize Ireland were yeoman farmers driven from their farms by the British military. Marx writes,

> If of any property it ever was true that it was *robbery*, it is literally true of the property of the British aristocracy. Robbery of Church property, robbery of commons, fraudulent transformation, accompanied by murder, of feudal and patriarchal property into private property — these are the titles of British aristocrats to their possessions (1853).

However, as Tuck and Yang emphasize, this movement does not necessitate colonization. There is a difference between settlers and immigrants. "Immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 6). What characterizes the white settler proletariat is that its expropriation is generative of an imperialist conquest resulting in settler colonization of Native lands.

Hence, it is critical for any theory of anti-capitalism to understand the colonial basis of exploitation in the present day. The expropriation Native nations should not be characterized as the removal of the worker from the land, but the removal of a people, a nation, from its homeland. Thus far, most Marxist theories of the international relations of exploitation have centered on the idea of uneven development. For example, Baran and Sweezy theorize that exploitation works as the layered effect of a complex hierarchy of "exploitative relations" where the less powerful empires are subordinated to the more powerful. They call those at the top of the hierarchy "metropolises" and those at the bottom "colonies" (1966, 179). The problem with this vision of exploitation is that, in the case of the United States and many other nations, the metropolis *is* the colony. To rethink exploitation, it should not only be seen as the external relation of a metropolis gathering wealth from its colonies, but as an internal relation of the metropolis to the stolen land it occupies continuously as a colonial force. Emmanuel identifies this need for a shift in emphasis,

> International antagonisms cannot always be automatically reduced to the terms of class struggle. We must pass from factory antagonisms to national antagonisms. On this level, there is no common measure between on the one hand the contradictions of great international capital and the under-developed peoples, and on the other hand the total enslavement and even physical extermination with which some of these peoples are threatened by true colonialism, which is that of the white settlers and their States, where these exist (1972, 57).

Incomplete theories of class conflict and colonialism lead to poorly formulated visions of future justice. A Marxist understanding of land sees humans as part of nature, inextricably bound to the earth for their social, material and spiritual needs. Self-determined human existence means a rationally governed, undisturbed, and direct metabolic relationship between humans and land, between the soil and the associated producers. But this vision of a rational and equal society misses the point that land divided proportionally amongst a settler proletariat still constitutes violent and unjust colonialism. Tuck and Yang have criticized the Occupy movement for suggesting that land, like other forms of wealth, should be "distributed democratically" (2012, 24). Echoing their concerns, Coulthard writes

> what must be recognized by those inclined to advocate a blanket "return of the commons" as a redistributive counterstrategy to the neoliberal state's new round of enclosures, is that, in liberal settler states such as Canada, the "commons" not

> only belong to somebody – *the First Peoples of this land* – they also deeply inform and sustain Indigenous modes of thought and behavior that harbor profound insights into the maintenance of relationships within and between human beings and the natural world built on principles of reciprocity, nonexploitation and respectful coexistence (2014, 12).

Coulthard's insights here can carry the conversation to its final phase: How can a better understanding of colonialism re-radicalize Marxist thinking? How should it alter theories of production, exploitation, value, and other affiliated concepts?

Marxist futures?

A better understanding of colonialism should fundamentally alter visions of production, that is, what it means for humans to interact with land in a way that provides for their material needs. Harkening back to that common critique of Marx, that he was an industrialist, there is clear enough evidence that at the very least Marx held a view of history that was progressivist in nature. Specifically, this means a belief that human history is characterized by progress throughout distinct developmental stages characterized by evolving technical modes of production. Exactly what sort of future relationship to technology Marx imagined is unclear, but what is clear was the view of Native livelihoods. For example, Engels wrote in *The Origin of the Family,*

> However impressive the people of this epoch appear to us, they are completely undifferentiated from one another; as Marx says, they are still attached to the navel string of the primitive community. The power of this primitive community had to be broken, and it was broken. But it was broken by influences which from the very start appear as a degradation, a fall from the simple moral greatness of the old gentile society (Engels 2010, 130).

This confirms the concerns of those like Russell Means who said that Marxists regard Native Americans as "primitive" and "economically retarded" (Churchill 1989, 26). The baseline Eurocentric theory at work is that Native Peoples must go through specific social-dialectical transformations in order to emerge from the supposed womb-like state of the tribe into various forms of exploitation to finally emerge at a state of human liberation. But this projects the dialectical upheavals specific to European history into a universal plane where they have no legitimacy. As Sandy Grande writes, "Indeed Marx and Engels perceived the fate of the tribes as 'doomed,' destined to be absorbed by the more powerful organization of class-based societies" (Grande 2004, 49). It is a violent proposition to suppose that self-determined nations who have provide for their own needs on terms they have elaborated over thousands of years must first be conquered and modernized to become free.

The concept of production and the basic life-sustaining activities of humans are wrapped up in a violent universal idea about progress and the eventual messianic culmination in the state of communism. This overly simplistic theory of the resolution of human alienation from nature in the return to a direct relationship between the land and the associated producers is complicated by an anticolonial point of view. As Deloria writes, Native People have not generally experienced an alienation from nature, but rather removal from a homeland (Churchill 1989, 131). Hence, there is need for a very different resolution in their history. Communism as a vision of human liberation is only appropriate to those who have experienced the specific historical conditions of alienation it takes as a starting premise; these are by no means universal.

Most fundamentally, Marxists should adopt the following principle when formulating visions of future justice: The life activities that produce the mutually interdependent needs of humans and lands are not characterized by a general relation, but a specific, personal and proximal one. Who indeed are the "associated producers"? Are they merely an uncharacterized group of workers who just-so-happen to make their living in such-and-such a place? Or rather are they more properly a specific group of humans who have developed personal understandings with a homeland? The latter definition demands us to think of the production and reproduction of life in terms of personal rather than generic terms. Accordingly, a settler liberated from capitalism living uninvited on Native lands is by no means an associated producer. Rather they still fall under the definition of an exploiter of those lands because their existence is disruptive of the relationship of those who have fine-tuned their life activity since time immemorial to align with the material and spiritual requirements of that land. It is equally important to think of exploitation not in its simple form of removing material and chemical values from soils, but rather as the overall intervention into living relationships for the benefit of colonial power.

An emphasis on the colonial relationship broadens the scope of analysis beyond capitalism, recognizing forms of exploitation that are not due to the monotonous hum of capital as value-in-motion. It recognizes the relationships between peoples and lands as produced in mutual interaction over time rather than taking this relationship for granted, as if all peoples and all lands were more or less compatible and interchangeable. The idea of the *associated producers*, a concept so significant for communist visions of the future, must be put in conversation with a concept of the *associated peoples*. The associated producers have participated actively in the extirpation of the associated peoples from their lands. The importance of envisioning Native futures as the associated peoples also has ecological implications. Any generic "producer" can work a given "parcel" of land, but it is only the associated people, those who are the nation born of that land, who can direct human activity according to the needs of the whole community of life.

The concept of nationhood is often maligned by a liberal politics obsessed with privileged, empty, narcissistic fantasies of world-citizenship and cosmopolitanism. Nationhood on this view is irredeemably myopic and blindly patriotic. As the iconic line goes, "Imagine there's no countries." In addition to the rampant cultural appropriation of its era, there is a familiar racial undertone to this sentiment that was recently expressed in the title of Amy Chua's popular book, *Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations*. The pejorative conception of "tribalism" based on racist anthropology belies an eerie accord between "color-blind racism" and a refusal to recognize legitimate national differences and therefore the right to national boundaries and self-determination. Granted, the tendency of Western nations to exist mostly as engines of imperialism might elicit a desire to do away with all nations. As can be found in Veblen, "In the last analysis the nation remains a predatory organism, in practical effect an association of persons moved by a community interest in getting something for nothing by force and fraud" (1997, 442). But it is unjust for members of imperialist nations to project the demons they have conjured as a universal reality. Indigenous national identities also form real bastions of resistance to imperialism, colonialism, and expropriation. Without nations as a possibility for alternative organizational principles, what is left to guide the fate of the world but the demands of capital?

The possibility of redefining nationhood as both an anticolonial strategy and revitalization of culture is already being pursued in Native theory and practice. The recent volume *Native American Nationalism and Nation Re-Building* gathers together the theoretical distinctions necessary for clarity in such projects, emphasizing the root "peoplehood" of tribal nationalism in contrast to the assimilative liberal models built on judicial processes (Poliandri 2016, 2; Alfred 2009, 12). This peoplehood is based on social identities in relation to a homeland that is both the ancestral birthplace and rightful future of the nation.

To become radicals again, it is imperative for Marxists to learn lessons of humility and historical fact to temper their worldview, ceasing to proselytize communism as universal truth. As Peter Mclaren and Ramin Farahmandpur have written, it is far more productive to understand Marxism as a "weapon of interpretation...for analyzing and challenging capitalist production" (2001, 148). Emmanuel writes that the failure to recognize the power of the "uncomfortable 'third element' of the white settler "makes for grave misunderstandings and prevents any true dialogue between revolutionary Marxism and decolonized peoples" (1972, 40). Taking the anticolonial aspects of Marxism one a step further requires asking how the concept of production itself is challenged by reconceiving land as an agent. What happens if the human relation to land is no longer thought of in terms of production but rather in terms of kinship? Production as a fundamental ontology of land is insufficient for recognizing the unique character of Indigenous national identities. An ontology of land as an agent makes these identities visible. There is a need to supplant Marx's conception of land as a use-value in a relation of dialectical productivity with human-created values. The ethical reciprocity implied by kinship cannot play a secondary role in an anticolonial worldview. Kinship can indeed be productive. However, anticolonial Marxism frames the productivity and use of the land within contexts that cannot be universalized. The worker and the proletariat are not universal categories. They are specific to the history of the West. Anticolonial Marxism relinquishes the absolute right of the proletariat to seize the means of production in any and all cases where this conflicts with the sovereignty of Native nations and where the means of production are not a means at all, but a living, breathing person.

V. CONCLUSIONS

As a site of social revolution, land must also be a site of philosophical revolution. The major philosophical traditions of the West have not yet taken seriously the implications of land as a person. Native philosophies of liberation are mocked, stolen, belittled, eliminated, ignored, patronized, objectified ("studied"), etc., and the reason for this could not be more clear: The cognition of land as a person plants the seeds that unravel colonization. The end of oppression requires a land where people can be free: Liberty needs a space of liberation. But the land itself must also be free and these two forces of liberation are integrally linked. If it is seen that land is a person, then it cannot be private property, communal property, or capital. If it is seen that land is a person, then it cannot be the grounds of possibility for human poetic and cultural achievement. If it is seen that land is a person, then it cannot be an anonymous plenum of elements from which humans wrench their needs. If it is seen that land is a person, then our first relation to it cannot be one of generalized production or as a worker.

The goal of anticolonial critique is to achieve the justice of reuniting Native peoples with their lands. Given the pervasive nature of colonialism, no single project, political movement, or philosophical idea can be sufficient for this task. Hence, the temporality of anticolonial philosophy is an ongoing and cyclical process. Old colonial ideas go dormant or fade from focus only to resurface again. They must be challenged again and again. No critical process can ever be "completed" in the sense that Marx describes the critique of religion. So often, land is partially decolonized only to be recolonized (for example, the participation of Native tribes in the creation of Bear Ears National Monument and its subsequent diminishment). Decolonization is not a linear progression directed at a fixed state of affairs in the future. Decolonization is a praxis that requires repetition, response, and attention to reoccurring oppression. In Native ritual practices of the Pacific Northwest, processes of healing and reflection match the temporal rhythms of land itself. Seasonality, the cycling of energy and matter, and the migrations of living beings all offer opportunities for renewed thinking and action at the appropriate times and in the appropriate places. When spring melts the snow in the mountains to call the first salmon home, this is the time to receive instruction from these ancestors and pay respect. When camas blooms to adorn the fields with purple crowns, this is the time to ask what these sacred flowers express about the invisible richness beneath. When the first huckleberries ripen in July, this is the time to ask how their bodily nourishment can be reciprocated. When the acorns drop in the fall, this is the time to ask of the white oak what must be done to honor its gift. Settlers must ask themselves additional questions at these times. What do the First Foods ask of those who have forcibly disrupted the kinship of the land and its people? Given proper time and attention, anticolonial philosophies in the West that are formed in and through decolonizing methodologies can begin to answer this question. And answers to this question will focus around land.

No healing is possible from a colonizing attitude that sees no personality in land and reduces everything to its role in the history of European development. Western anticolonial critique must stop to listen at the appropriate times and respond with care, respect, and gratitude for what has been learned. It must propose real actions and changes in the culture and praxis of philosophy itself and society at large. One place to begin is to identify chances for decolonizing praxis at every juncture in the academy. For example, editorial practices of journals, protocols and topics at conferences, invitations for contributions, hiring processes, and the relation of universities in general to the nations whose lands they occupy can all be reevaluated through anticolonial critique. All these situations offer theoretical and practical space for decolonizing interventions on a quarterly, annual, or reoccurring basis. Journal editors need to recognize the epistemological sovereignty of Native worldviews. Conferences need to verbally acknowledge the Native people upon whose land they meet and whenever possible center Native voices and topics of concern. Hiring committees need to stop using the excuse that "no Native person applied" and take it upon themselves to advertise and design jobs that attract Native scholars. University administrators, faculty, employees, and students need to develop and deepen relationships with local tribes and regularly ask what specific steps can be taken to move towards decolonization not only in terms of research and teaching but in terms of the physical presence of the university campus on Native lands. Finally, anticolonial critique should ask questions about the university system in general as a colonial institution and whether its continued existence is compatible with decolonization.

Western philosophy will flounder and struggle to find meaningful emancipatory discourses through internal critique. If there is one methodological lesson proposed by this dissertation, it is that inter-cultural dialogue centered on Native voices is the only path towards anticolonial philosophies in the West. Although reconceiving land as a person is a foundational aspect of anticolonial philosophy, an emotional and practical dedication to the process of decolonization is perhaps more important than any argument, theoretical development, or conceptual focus. In the long run decolonization is a moral problem, not merely conceptual one.

As I sit and write these concluding sentences, I acknowledge that I am still occupying lands from which the Kalapuya people were forcibly removed and from which they remain separated. This fact engenders a feeling of unsettledness in the sense that Tuck and Yang use it: A feeling related to my own life as a settler. It is not an uncomfortable feeling from which I or any Western scholar should shy away. This dissertation has been an attempt to unsettle Western philosophical discourses that contain on the one hand great possibility for dialogue and material change, but on the other hand still have much work to do in developing anticolonial philosophies of land.

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