Haunted and Held: A Christian Theology of Place

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Submitted to the Department of Theology and Religion in the College of Arts and Law

In Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Birmingham

September 2023

Word Count: 76,627

Abstract

This is a thesis about place. More specifically, it is a Christian theology of place. My argument is not simple, but it is straightforward – place is a discursive structure of intelligibility or apprehension in the Holy Spirit that enables creatures to go-on in the world. To gloss Jeff Malpas, place is that on which our subjectivity is founded, it is the 'somewhere' that is necessarily entailed in every assertion of relationship. Places hold us in some sort of relationship of intelligibility with other creaturely bodies and as Pope Francis has so eloquently put it, "the history of our friendship with God is always linked to particular places." But precisely because place holds us in relationships that are produced and sustained through communicative exchanges, place also haunts us. Indeed, as Michel de Certeau remarks, "Haunted places are the only ones people can live in." While places hold the potential for our intimate joining with one another in discourses of mutual recognition, places are also haunted by miscommunications, misrecognitions, and misinterpretations that point to histories that might have been other and hoped for futures that have not arrived. Contemporary theologies of place, while helpful, have been afflicted by a 'colonial hole' through an inattention to the role Christian theologies of place have played in the harms of colonialism. This thesis offers a critical reading against this tradition of Christian place theologies and provides a reparative and pastoral theology of place to aid in the ongoing work of reconciliation.

Dedicated to anyone who loves their place and wants to love it better.

Acknowledgements

For projects like this, we are required by university regulations to attest that what has been produced is the sole work of the student, which in this case would be myself. But anybody who has actually completed a doctorate knows that this is a tragic fiction that obscures the networks and communities that make any work of thought worth doing possible. I could not have written this work without the innumerable ways my friends, family, and broader communities have poured into me these past several years. And so, in a list that will inevitably be incomplete, allow me to offer thanks to those who have made this project a reality.

First and foremost, my wife Rachel. Thank you for everything. You have made this dream a reality in every conceivable way and I am forever in your debt.

Thanks also to the members of my extended family. To Cody and Gina and Lily, for being lights of joy and good food and friendship. To Mom and Dad for all the support you've given me over the years that allowed me to be in a position to undertake a PhD. To my other "mom and dad," Murray and Ivy - thanks for all the meals, hours in your pool to unwind and the financial support to get this off the ground. Thanks too to all the Guenther siblings, but especially Hannah and David for letting us live with you and taking care of Rachel while I was away in Birmingham. Mark, I've finally finished writing my book about bananas - I look forward to sharing it with you someday!

To all my friends. I'll admit to not always being the easiest person to get along with, but your loyalty and kindness to me these many years is literally the thing that keeps me getting up in the morning. Thanks especially to Dan Rempel for absorbing the bulk of my errant ramblings through text and DM these past few years. It's been such a blast walking in tandem into academia with you, and I'm so excited to be starting our careers in the same city! Thanks to Morgan Bell for the countless phone calls, especially during lock-down, you helped me untie so many knots in my thinking and I'm so glad we are friends. Thanks to Mark Gareau and Joel Jolly for keeping me tied to the normal world and keeping me grounded. Thanks to Tyla Betke for your expert advice on my Ste Madeleine research, who would have thought that two kids from Major Pratt School would get this far? Thanks also to the "Kidwell Cohort" - Josh, Rob, and Anto, for being a peer-support group through the grind of being a Distance Learner. Finally, thanks to the countless friends I've made online, particularly during the pandemic, I affectionately refer to you as the 'friends who live in my phone', but so many of you have become so much more than that, and that has been such a delight!

One of the best bits of advice I received early on was to find groups to read with, and I'm so grateful for the reading groups that have kept me from getting lost in my own niche obsessions these last four years. Special shout-out to the Birmingham Critical Theory reading group - I didn't get to spend as much time with you as I'd wished, but you were a God-send in my first year. Thanks too, to the Church History reading crew, and especially to Baiyu and Jon for keeping this group on track all these years. Finally, thanks to Landon and Ryan for giving up so many Tuesday evenings trying to help me understand Merleau-Ponty.

Though my time at Birmingham was cut short due to the pandemic, I am so grateful for the friends I made there and I'm especially chuffed that you've all stayed in touch. Thanks to Tom Ruston, Joe Scales, and Charlie Comerford especially for helping me feel like Birmingham could be home, even for a brief time. Thanks to Kat Gwyther for teaching me everything I know about

Utopia and disco! Thanks too, to Lisa Scarfe for being a great flat-mate and for letting me crash at your flat on all my return visits. Thanks especially to Chris and Tricia Butt for adopting me, letting me stay at your home and bringing me into the life of your church. I'll never forget your kindness.

I've benefitted more than I deserve from incredible mentors over the years that have done an excellent job of highlighting parts of the 'hidden curriculum' of academic life, and most of the success I've had has been due to their advice and intervention. Thanks to Kara Mandryk for getting me my first academic job at Thorneloe University and to John Gibaut for being the kindest and most supportive administrator I could have ever hoped to have. Thanks to Patrick Franklin, Rob Dean, and Lissa Wray Beal for the countless letters of reference, TAing opportunities, conference introductions, and publishing connections - I wouldn't have even gotten through the door without you. Thanks to Jane Barter for your advice and mentorship, and particularly for your strident reminders to keep theology tethered to material concerns. Thanks finally to David Widdicombe, pastor, mentor, role-model, and the major reason I remain a Christian today. Thank you for your wisdom, your learning, and all the time you've invested in me at so many key moments in my life.

Thanks too, to the churches that have sustained me these last years. I often find it difficult to be in church due to the nature of what I study, but your gentle welcome has made me unwilling to give you up. So, thanks to the good folks of St. Peter's Harborne, St. James the Assiniboine, St. Thomas, Weston, and especially the people of my home parish of St. Margaret's. Thanks especially to Bonnie, Graham, Kurt, Tracy, Lowell and all the other many staff for all that you do for this parish and my household in particular.

While British PhD's are notorious low on funding, particularly for over-charged international students, I have nevertheless been blessed with enough funding to get through and I am immensely grateful. Thanks first to the family of Stanley Ray for your generous scholarship through the University of Birmingham. Thanks also to the Anglican Foundation for your annual grants and the Diocese of Rupert's Land for investing in my education - I look forward to giving back in my new role as Discipleship Developer! Thanks too, to the Prayer Book Society of Canada.

Thanks to my supervisors, Jeremy Kidwell and Karen Wenell. I have learned so much from both of you, and I am really grateful for the approach you've taken in your supervision. Thanks especially to Jeremy for inviting me into his home for a couple of more extended supervision meetings, particularly near the end, to get this thing across the line. I look forward to thinking, collaborating, and debating with you for many years to come!

Finally, I must acknowledge my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Theology is hard, the Church often sucks, but through it all, "I do see Jesus," to gloss the writer to the Hebrews. It is this fleeting glimpse into the divine life, and the love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that keeps me at this task despite all the difficulties, frustrations, and despair. May You use these feeble words to show Yourself to others even as You have been revealed to me.

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Chapter 1: The Place of Intimate Joining

1.1 Introduction

1.1.I They were all together in one Place

The church began somewhere. As we read in the Book of Acts, "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place" (Acts 2:1). This is the moment they have been earnestly waiting for, the event that Jesus had promised would happen – the Spirit is come, and they are transformed. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you" Jesus had told them, "and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit has arrived, and this arrival brings forth a powerful response of speech in which the ends of the earth are recognized immediately within that place of gathering. In the glossolalic outpouring of Pentecost, people from every nation recognize the gospel being proclaimed in their native tongue and are intimately joined together in one place to form, for the very first time, the Church.

There is a more-than-utopian quality to Pentecost. For the glossolalic outpouring of Spirit-responding-speech creates a gathered place – the Church – in which all persons and all truth becomes potentially recognizable. Glossolalia is a type of speech that is, strictly speaking, meaningless speech formed primarily of neo-logisms. As Jean Bobon points out, "among French writers glossolalia (or speaking in tongues) is considered the tendency to create new languages that become richer and more stable over time."[1] Pentecost is the archetypical outpouring of such speech. In the midst of all these peoples from every nation, all pouring out a brand-new speech in response to the Spirit's arrival in their midst, the gathered people discover that they are able to recognize the truth of the gospel being proclaimed to them in their native languages. The outpouring of the new is received as that which is most intimately familiar. How can this be?

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[1] Michel De Certeau, "Vocal Utopias: Glossolalias," trans. Daniel Rosenberg, *Representations*, no. 56 (1996): 29.

It is possible because as Willie Jennings has observed, Pentecost marks "the revolution of the intimate."[2] The Spirit arrives in the most intimate space, in the breath, in the voice – not just the place where the followers of Jesus happened to be gathered. For Jennings, the outpouring of Spirit-prompted glossolalia and its familiar recognition by all in attendance is made possible because the Spirit is present and creating the conditions of joining. This Spirit-joining occurs in the "most intimate space – of voice, memory, sound, body, land, and place. It is language that runs through all these matters. It is the sinew of existence of a people."[3] With the landing of the Spirit upon the particular bodies of the gathered believers, the Word that was spoken from before the beginning of creation is taken up by many tongues and repeated as something radically new and intimately familiar. The place of these gathered believers, the place of the Church, turns out to be *in* the Spirit. It is the Spirit that brings forth new speech, and it is in the Spirit that the believers recognize themselves and each other as they are intimately joined into the people of God.

As I said above, there is a more-than-Utopian quality to Pentecost. Utopia is the good-place that is no-place and it is only made actual, as Thomas More himself reminds us, through an original act of violence and separation.[4] Utopia, in its ideal state, is a reality that exists nowhere except in the texts that bring it forth.[5] It is inaugurated through the incisive cut of the pen and must continue cutting, creating separations and borders in order to maintain the fiction of an ideal place. In the proliferation of separations, utopias inevitably give way to dystopia, sustained only by incredible amounts of totalitarian violence. But at Pentecost, we catch a glimpse of an ideal place that is, for a moment, made actual. It is made actual in the arrival of the presence of God in the person of the Holy Spirit, and this arrival does not separate, but joins. It joins people through speech, a new kind

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[2] Willie James Jennings, *Acts:* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017), 27.
[3] Jennings, 28.
[4] Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan and Robert Merrihew Adams, Rev. ed, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 42.
[5] Louis Marin, "About the Creation of the Island of Utopia," in *Utopics: Spatial Play*, ed. Louis Marin, Contemporary Studies in Philosophy and the Human Sciences (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1984), 100.

of speech to be sure, but one that is at the same time, intimately familiar. Like Utopia, Pentecost creates a place through the power of the Word, but instead of a violent separation, there is an intimate joining that incorporates the gathered people of all nations into the divine discourse that constitutes all of creation.

This is a thesis about place. More specifically, it is a Christian theology of place. My argument is not simple, but it is straightforward – place is a discursive structure of intelligibility or apprehension in the Holy Spirit that enables creatures to go-on in the world. To gloss Jeff Malpas, place is that on which our subjectivity is founded, it is the 'somewhere' that is necessarily entailed in every assertion of relationship.[6] Places hold us in some sort of relationship of intelligibility with other creaturely bodies and as Pope Francis has so eloquently put it, "the history of our friendship with God is always linked to particular places."[7] But precisely because place holds us in relationships that are produced and sustained through communicative exchanges, place also haunts us. Indeed, as Michel de Certeau remarks, "Haunted places are the only ones people can live in."[8] While places hold the potential for our intimate joining with one another in discourses of mutual recognition, places are also haunted by miscommunications, misrecognitions, and misinterpretations that point to histories that might have been other and hoped for futures that have not arrived.

A Christian theology of place should be primarily focused on the question of how place functions in the relationship between God and God's beloved creation. But theology, as its own type of discourse, and theologies of place in particular, are haunted by a history of colonialist and imperialist impulses in Christianity. In the expansion of Christianity, particularly to the so-called New World of the Americas, the proclamation of the Gospel took on a demonic form. A religion

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[6] Jeff Malpas, *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*, Second edition (New York: Routledge, 2018), 36.
[7] Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 84, accessed December 3, 2019, http://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf.
[8] Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 3rd edition (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2011), 108.

that was born in the intimate joining of Pentecost wherein everyone heard the new language of the Gospel proclaimed in their own familiar tongue became a religion that systematically exterminated other languages and the peoples who speak them. The more-than-Utopian quality of Pentecost was traded, during colonial modernity, for a mere utopia that aped a Christian geography, but refused the fundamental insight of the place of Pentecost – that *in* the Spirit, all voices, all relations, are heard, and cherished, and intimately joined. This thesis is an attempt at showing how Christian theologies of place were instrumental in the construction of colonial modernity and positively inspired its genocidal history. But this is not just an indictment of Christianity, for I also offer a positive theology of place in which we might learn to be haunted and held in our relationships with God and one another.

1.1.II Basic Assumptions/Positionality Statement

"We must begin *wherever we are,*" Derrida once wrote, and while it may be "impossible to justify a point of departure absolutely," nevertheless, a thesis on place must make some effort to name my place.[9] While it has been uncommon in theology to 'locate' oneself personally in respect to the research at hand, Indigenous theorists have increasingly stressed the importance of identifying who and where one is as constitutive of what we are contributing to any discourse. Max Liboiron, in their recent book *Pollution is Colonialism* makes a point of identifying all of their interlocutors by nation or stated positionality, and when a scholar (overwhelmingly White scholars) have neglected to do so, they mark them as 'unmarked'.[10] This starkly highlights the way Whiteness and White positionalities are normally assumed as neutral and natural in academic discourses, while only 'othered' identities are commented on. By calling attention to the regularly 'unmarked' nature of Whiteness in academic discourse, Liboiron reminds us that all knowledge comes from someone who

[9] Emphasis original, Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ Press, 1998), 162.
[10] Max Liboiron, *Pollution Is Colonialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), 3–4, fn 3.

is somewhere, embedded in webs of relations that matter epistemologically and politically. Therefore, instead of remaining unmarked, I come to this work as a White Settler Christian of German and British heritage, from Treaty One Territory, but with roots in the lands covered by Treaty Two. I am a Christian, but more specifically, I am confirmed in the Anglican Church of Canada. This has two implications for this work, first, I have tried to prioritize my engagement in this thesis primarily to the history and tradition of Anglicanism and English Protestantism more broadly. To speak of Anglicanism prior to the 17th century is, at best, anachronistic,[11] and I want to be clear that while I am situating this thesis within the concerns of contemporary Anglican theology, I am drawing broadly from an eclectic cast of early-modern English Christianities to make my argument. That means there will inevitably be some additional voices that could have been engaged that have not been, and I have undoubtedly missed much in the broad scope of historic and global Christianity that could be brought to bear in an exhaustive account of this subject.

However, it seems important to me to reckon specifically with the legacy of English Christianity, as this is not just my current confessional status but also implicates members of the Turnbull family for generations. I have sought to remain focused on the legacy of English Christianity as a way of taking responsibility for the tradition in which I find myself, to learn to speak truthfully about its strengths, and its characteristic weaknesses or blind spots, "first cast out the beam out of thine own eye" (Matthew 7:5, KJV) as our Saviour reminds us. Yet, even more importantly, as much as it is important to understand the history of ideas, and the history of colonialism especially, in a broad trans-Atlantic, indeed even global context, I am not simply a historian of ideas or a sociologist of empire, but rather a theologian. By limiting my scope to a relatively narrow tradition, I hope to show that there are particular theological pathologies involved

[11] Anthony Milton, "Introduction: Reformation, Identity, and 'Anglicanism', c. 1520-1662," in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, ed. Anthony Milton et al., Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1–27.

in the English Christian collusion with colonialism that need to be confronted on their own terms if we are to truly dismantle the colonial structures and assumptions that continue to shape our ecclesial life.

This thesis has been written in many places, in a dingy office in a dilapidated building on the edge of the University of Birmingham, in a hostel in Spain, on my family farm in Western Manitoba, but primarily in my home in the West End of Winnipeg on Treaty One Territory. Treaty One names a relationship made between Canadian Settler peoples and seven nations of the Cree and Anishinaabe peoples, signed in 1871.[12] It is a relationship that began in bad faith and has included a long history of violence, injustice, betrayal, cooperation, partnership, trust, success, and failure. Treaty One Territory has also historically been home to the Dakota people and the Dene have a long history of interactions here as well. Winnipeg, situated in the Red River Valley, is also the homeland of the Métis Nation, and without their contribution as a people, my province would not have joined Canada in the way that it did.[13]

While I now live in Treaty One Territory, I grew up in Treaty Two, a treaty signed with Anishinaabe peoples shortly after Treaty One, also in 1871. Canadian Settler society has long seen these treaties as being nothing more than mechanisms to terminate Indigenous title to land and to secure settler futurity. But in recent years, Indigenous elders and theologians have been calling upon Canadians to understand that the Treaties mark an ongoing covenant between peoples that invites us into real relationships of mutual obligation.[14] While this thesis primarily engages with the history, philosophy, and theology of my people, as an act of transparency and confession, I have informed

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[12] Government of Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada;, "Treaty Texts - Treaties No. 1 and No. 2," agreement, November 3, 2008, https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100028664/1581294165927.
[13] Norma Hall, Clifford P. Hall, and Erin Verrier, "A History of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia/ Le Conseil Du Gourvernement Provisoire" (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Manitoba Metis Federation, Government of Manitoba), accessed June 30, 2023, https://www.gov.mb.ca/inr/major-initiatives/pubs/laa%20essay%20eng.pdf.
[14] Raymond Aldred and Matthew Anderson, *Our Home and Treaty Land: Walking Our Creation Story* (Wood Lake Publishing, 2022).

this thought through engagement with Indigenous thought, and I have tried to prioritize engaging with the thought of peoples who have a shared history in the lands in which I live and wrote this work. I am not interested in "Indigeneity" as an abstract concept, I am committed here to the work of intimate joining with the peoples of this place, of this land, and this is reflected in my use of Cree,[15] Anishinaabe,[16] Dene,[17] and Métis[18] scholarship throughout.[19]

Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang have warned that true decolonization is not concerned with securing settler futurity, for this too often comes at the expense of Indigenous peoples now.[20] This is an important critique of and limit to anything I might accomplish with this thesis – if reconciliation and a decolonized Christianity in Canada is to emerge, we must first be willing to risk it all. Later on in this thesis I argue for the importance of recognition as part of the structure of what living in place

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[15] While Anderson is a White Settler originally from Saskatchewan, Ray Aldred is Cree from the Swan River Band in Treaty 8, see Aldred and Anderson, *Our Home and Treaty Land*.

[16] Patty Krawec, John Borrows, and Leanne B. Simpson are all Anishinaabe, Patty Patty Krawec, is a member of Lac Seul First Nation, John Borrows is a member of the Chippewa of the Nawash First Nation and Leanne Betasamasoke Simpson is a Mississauga Nishnaabeg and member of Alderville First Nation, see *Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future* (Minneapolis, MN: Broadleaf Books, 2022); Leanne Simpson, *Dancing On Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011); John Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2010); John Borrows, "Frozen Rights in Canada: Constitutional Interpretation and the Trickster," *American Indian Law Review* 22, no. 1 (1997): 37–64; John Borrows, "Aboriginal Title and Private Property," *Supreme Court Law Review* 71, 2015.

[17] Glen Coulthard is a member for the Yellow Knives Dene First Nation, Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minnieapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Glen S Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada," *Contemporary Political Theory* 6, no. 4 (November 2007): 437–60.

[18] Max Liboiron, Zoe Todd and George Fleury are all Red River Métis, and Fleury was a former resident of Ste Madeleine, the community I discuss as case study in chapter seven, see Liboiron, *Pollution Is Colonialism*; George M. Fleury, *Kanawayihtamaahk Li Taan Paassii: Preserving Our Past: Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba* (Winnipeg, MB: Louis Riel Institute, 2016); Zoe Todd, "An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: 'Ontology' Is Just Another Word For Colonialism," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2016): 4–22.

[19] Of course, resistance to settler colonialism has always been a work of building solidarity across different indigenous nations, and so this work is also informed by theorists from across Turtle Island and beyond, see Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (September 8, 2012); Audra Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent and the Anatomy of 'Refusal': Cases from Indigenous North America and Australia," *Postcolonial Studies*, June 6, 2017; Russell Diabo, "Russell Diabo," accessed November 26, 2021, https://www.russdiabo.com; Arthur Manuel and Grand Chief Ronald Derrickson, *The Reconciliation Manifesto: Recovering the Land, Rebuilding the Economy* (Lorimer, 2017); George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2019); Vine Deloria, *God Is Red*, 30th Anniversary Edition (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003); George E. Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2008); Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty* (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

[20] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," 14.

requires of us, but the importance of recognition is always dialectically accompanied by the potential danger of misrecognition. I write this work as a settler, primarily to settler peoples, and so learning to recognize the histories and voices of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous sovereignties is a necessary step. But this requires a deep cultivation of vulnerability and humility, for this is a task we both must engage in and will inevitably make mistakes in. The trick is to allow for this ongoing work of recognition, reconciliation, and ultimate decolonization to be open-ended in scope, to be always open to correction and rebuke from our Treaty partners who have for too long been silenced and ignored. One of the Ojibway Chiefs who was a negotiator on Treaty Three remarked that these treaties should last "as long as the sun goes round and the water flows,"[21] and this is a clue to where any future for settlers might be – in fidelity to the covenant relationships made before God and the earth, that underwrite our very existence here.

A posture of critical-self awareness in the kind of theological work I am engaged in here has been called "Aware-Settler" by Matthew Anderson and it is the posture I take up in this work.[22] While I will expand more on this methodology in chapter six, for now, let me highlight that a key part of it is recognizing who my people are, what our history is in the land, and what obligations arise as a result of that. There are two recent book-length treatments that exemplify what Anderson has named "Aware Settler" method in different ways, Elaine Enns and Ched Meyers' recent book *Healing Haunted Histories* and Chris Budden's slightly older volume *Following Jesus in Invaded Space*.[23] Enns and Meyers' book grapples with the way that the traumas that displace some groups of settlers

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[21] Ian L. Getty, *As Long as the Sun Shines and Water Flows: A Reader in Canadian Native Studies*, ed. Antoine S. Lussier (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1983), 11.

[22] Matthew R. Anderson, "'Aware-Settler' Biblical Studies: Breaking Claims of Textual Ownership," *Journal for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies* 1, no. 1 (2019): 42–68.

[23] For several other examples of the kind of posture Anderson has in mind with his concept of "Aware-Settler" see, Chris Budden, *Following Jesus in Invaded Space: Doing Theology on Aboriginal Land* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009); Elaine Enns and Ched Myers, *Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021); see also Denise M. Nadeau, *Unsettling Spirit: A Journey into Decolonization* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).

(in their case, Russian Mennonites) from their home countries can sometimes be deployed as a shield against reckoning with their complicity in the structures of settler colonialism. But these histories of trauma and displacement can also be powerful opportunities for settler communities to establish empathy and solidarity and begin the work of repair and reconciliation that such 'haunted histories' require. Budden's approach, by contrast, is to accept that being Anglo-Australian is one way of hyphenating his identity, but that this hyphen comes with an implicit sub-clause, he is "Anglo-Australian – on Indigenous invaded space."[24] Budden takes seriously, as his starting place, his status as part of an occupying group, which for him structures the types of obligations he has, and the critical lens that has to be applied to the task of theology in the Australian context.

My own way of embracing an "Aware Settler" posture has been to engage my family's history in our 'place' in this land. My great-great-grandfather James Norman Robert Turnbull homesteaded our farm in 1883 and Turnbulls have lived and worked this same land ever since. In this thesis, I grapple with the stories that animate the Turnbull presence in this place through some engagement with the writings of my great-grandfather, Norman Leslie Turnbull.[25] Molly P. Rozum has observed that it was the first generation of settlers raised in the Prairies who were instrumental in constructing the settler-normed account of this place, and by using my own ancestor's writing from that period, I can show how deeply implicated I am in this legacy.[26] I have provided a brief sketch of my own 'place' in this conversation in this section and will return to this discussion with more specificity in chapters six and seven.

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[24] Budden, *Following Jesus in Invaded Space*, 4.

[25] I have written a bit about my family legacy in this regard in a couple of other places so far, see Ryan Turnbull, "Decolonizing Anglican Identity?," *Earth and Altar*, August 17, 2020, https://earthandaltarmag.com/posts/bl3mheyspquwmkp0znmi97m8vljn24; Ryan Turnbull, "The Silent Witness of Evergreens," *Rupert's Land News*, June 2020.

[26] See specifically her discussion of this specific phenomenon in Chapter 6 "'All is so Still – So Big, I Scarce can Speak': New Literature and Settler-Society Aesthetics" in Molly P. Rozum, *Grasslands Grown: Creating Place on the U.S. Northern Plains and Canadian Prairies* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2021)219-260.

1.2 The Place of this Work

In the last fifty years there has been an absolute explosion of writing about place and space in the humanities and social sciences, and the field of theology is no exception to this trend.[27] Theological reflections on place have opened up new horizons of enquiry in ecology,[28] the built environment,[29] pilgrimage studies,[30] mysticism,[31] the nature of sacred space,[32] and the doctrine of God itself,[33] just to name a few. However, I would like to situate this thesis in response to a certain subset of contemporary Anglican theologies of place as a way of highlighting some of the key concerns I take up herein.

The terms for this approach to thinking about a theology of place were set by Oliver O'Donovan in his essay from 1989, "The Loss of a Sense of Place."[34] O'Donovan notes that in the post-war period, Christian theology had been hesitant to say much about place and particularity due to the ways Nazi theologians had leveraged such themes in justification of their monstrous project.[35] Yet, O'Donovan is concerned that the universalizing metropolitanism of the contemporary *bourgeois*

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[27] Sigurd Bergmann, "Theology in Its Spatial Turn: Space, Place and Built Environments Challenging and Changing the Images of God," *Religion Compass* 1, no. 3 (2007): 353–79; Barney Warf and Santa Arias, *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Routledge, 2008); Kim Knott, "Religion, Space, and Place: The Spatial Turn in Research on Religion," *Religion and Society: Advances in Research* 1 (2010): 29–43.

[28] Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*, Gifford Lectures 1984 (London: SCM, 1985).

[29] Timothy Gorringe, *A Theology of the Built Environment: Justice, Empowerment, Redemption* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[30] Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity*, (Baltimore, MD: Hopkins Fulfillment Service, 2001); Mark Wynn, "God, Pilgrimage, and Acknowledgement of Place," *Religious Studies* 43, no. 2 (June 2007): 145–63; M. R. Anderson, "Pilgrimage and the Challenging of a Canadian Foundational Myth.," *Pilgrimage in Practice: Narration, Reclamation and Healing*, January 2018, 148–63.

[31] Philip Sheldrake, "Unending Desire: De Certeau's 'Mystics,'" *Way Supplement* 102 (2001): 38–48; Douglas E. Christie, *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind: Notes for a Contemplative Ecology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[32] Susan B. White, "The Theology of Sacred Space," in *The Sense of the Sacrament*, ed. David Brown and Ann Loades (London: SPCK Publishing, 1995), 31–43; Belden C. Lane, "Giving Voice to Place: Three Models for Understanding American Sacred Space," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 11, no. 1 (2001): 53–81; Paulo M. Barroso, "The Semiosis of Sacred Space," *Versus* 125, no. 2 (2017): 341–58; Karen J. Wenell, "Kingdom, Not Kingly Rule: Assessing the Kingdom of God as Sacred Space," *Biblical Interpretation* 25, no. 2 (April 11, 2017): 206–33.

[33] Elizabeth Jarrell Callender, "A Theology of Spatiality: The Divine Perfection of Omnipresence in the Theology of Karl Barth" (Doctoral Thesis, Dunedin, NZ, University of Otago, 2011), https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10523/1848/CallenderElizabethJ2011PhD.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y; Sarah Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit: Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Location* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013); Matthias D. Wüthrich, *Raum Gottes: Ein systematisch-theologischer Versuch, Raum zu denken* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015).

[34] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (March 1, 1989): 39–58.

[35] O'Donovan, 42.

is completely unable to account for the attachment of people to place seen, for O'Donovan, in the examples of Indigenous peoples in Canada or patriotic young Irish lads in Northern Ireland.[36] In a more recent version of this paper, published in his volume *Bonds of Imperfection*, O'Donovan explicitly cites Vine Deloria Jr.'s indictment of Western Christianity in its alleged inability to take place seriously.[37] He also goes on to highlight that while it is Heidegger who stands behind much of the post-modern 'turn to place' in the contemporary spatial turn in theology and beyond, he notes that it would be more precise to locate this discourse as "'post-colonial,' for much of it arises from first-hand encounters with indigenous cultures marginalized in the modern world."[38]

O'Donovan sets up the problem of a 'loss of a sense of place' as being a genuine loss of something that was once operative in Western Christianity and simultaneously the result of a longstanding ambivalence to place in this tradition. He does this by identifying three key sources for his current diagnosis, Platonism, Christian Universalism, and Global Capitalism. The impulse of both Platonist philosophy and Christian universalism is to pass through the particular and the local in their affirmation of universal truths or goods, and especially universal disembodied spirit which offers the only true knowledge and worship of God.[39] O'Donovan has highlighted that this has resulted in a Christian denial of 'holy places' – a descralization of special places that occurs because by "universalizing the place of encounter with the divine," we render "all places equally special."[40] This does not rule out a theology of place, but it does resist an idolatrous theology of place that would somehow capture divine presence in one locale over against any other. According to O'Donovan, this rejection of an idolatrous theology of place renders Western Christianity somewhat ambivalent on questions of place, but it is also a crucial building block for any constructive theology

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[36] O'Donovan, 40.
[37] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," in *Bonds of Imperfection: Christian Politics, Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub, 2004), 296–320.
[38] O'Donovan, 299.
[39] O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," March 1, 1989, 43.
[40] O'Donovan, 43.

of place that this tradition can and has affirmed. Finally, O'Donovan highlights global capitalism for being corrosive of a sense of place, as the fundamental logic of capitalism is the convertibility of any place into its composite resources and from there into capital.[41]

There are several themes in O'Donovan's programmatic paper that have been taken up repeatedly since then that I now highlight. First, O'Donovan sets the assumption that 'a sense of place' is something that Western Christianity may have once had, but it is now either lost or severely threatened by dominant societal ideologies. Second O'Donovan emphasizes the tension in the biblical material itself, from a strong emphasis on place and land in the Old Testament to the more ambiguous relationship to land in the New Testament. Third, he suggests that at least part of the issue stems from the interplay between Christian theology and Greek philosophy. Finally, and most importantly, by highlighting the extractive logic of global capitalism, and by drawing examples from the Irish and Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island (North America), he gestures at the outline of colonial modernity without every fully addressing it as a root cause of the problem he is diagnosing.

O'Donovan's failure to fully articulate the connection between global colonialism and the 'loss of a sense of place' is a recurring theme in contemporary Anglican approaches to this question. For example, Craig Bartholomew's volume *Where Mortals Dwell*, spends ample time examining the biblical material, the influence of Greek philosophy, and highlights many useful theological sources for thinking theologically about place, but on the question of colonialism and its effects on the 'loss of a sense of place,' only offers a short passing reflection about the legacy of apartheid in his homeland of South Africa.[42] Similarly, Andrew Rumsey in his book *Parish: An Anglican Theology of Place* comes so close to making the connection when he observes that, at its core, the parish exists as a way of securing the wealth of the church through the conversion of lands into capital and that this

[41] O'Donovan, 44.
[42] Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 316–18.

has ancient roots in Anglo-Saxon political economy.[43] Yet instead of developing his material analysis of the parish, and particularly, the way it was deployed across the British colonies as a means of investing the Church in the success of the colonial endeavour,[44] Rumsey merely makes the point that this economic reality of the parish is one of the things that unites people, society, and church into "a threefold cord of soul, soil and society."[45] In Rumsey's more recent work, *English Grounds: A Pastoral Journal*, he reflects at times on the legacy of England's involvement in empire and the ways in which Christendom intentionally blurred those lines, but again refuses to follow these tangents out to the shadow-places of Christian theological geography, instead waxing nostalgic about how even in decline and facing their inevitable end, the stones that make up the built environment of ancient church parishes, "start looking like sheep" – the implication being that they deserve a certain amount of pastoral care too.[46]

In the last few years, a group has emerged in the Church of England calling themselves "Save the Parish."[47] While primarily being a group of more traditional Anglo-Catholic and High Church Anglicans who are skeptical of some of the innovating ecclesiology being promoted by the currently Evangelical-dominated House of Bishops, thus far the group has continued to refuse to grapple with the colonial dimensions of Anglican thinking on place. This was most vividly put on display in an open letter from the chairman of "Save the Parish", the Rev. Marcus Walker, in response to the Church Commissioners decision to earmark funds towards reparations to parts of the world impacted by global slave trade from which the Church in an earlier age earned a great deal of profit. Instead of making the connection that the disintegration of parish life and attention to placed particularity in the UK context is a result of feral colonial energies come home to roost, the

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[43] Andrew Rumsey, *Parish: An Anglican Theology of Place* (London: SCM Press, 2017), loc. 3224.
[44] Meredith Lake, "Provincialising God: Anglicanism, Place, and the Colonisation of Australian Land," *Journal of Religious History* 35, no. 1 (2011): 72–90.
[45] Rumsey, *Parish*, loc 3201.
[46] Andrew Rumsey, *English Grounds: A Pastoral Journal* (Norfolk, UK: SCM Press, 2021), 84.
[47] "Home," Save the Parish, accessed August 8, 2023, https://savetheparish.com/.

letter paints the funding of reparations as a zero-sum game with reviving the local parish.[48] Given the place of prominence given to so many colonial benefactors on the walls of English churches to this day, one would think that the cure and revival of a distinctly Anglican theology of place and parish would want to be on the vanguard of confession and reckoning with this part of our material heritage.

This 'colonial hole' in Anglican theologies of place is even more surprising considering the philosophical analysis that is regularly a part of the discussion of theologies of place. While O'Donovan points to the inherent preference for the Spirit over the body in the Platonist legacy in Western Christianity, Craig Bartholomew,[49] and John Inge,[50] both follow Ed Casey's magisterial survey of 'place' in the Western philosophical tradition, *The Fate of Place*, in locating the 'loss' of place as a category for theology in the rise of absolute space in the 17th century philosophical debates that ultimately gave rise to Newtonian physics.[51] Yet despite being drawn unerringly to the period at which English colonialism was establishing itself and transforming the world, the philosophical ideas in question are not interrogated in their trans-Atlantic and colonial contexts.

The 'colonial hole' in contemporary Anglican theologies of place might go some way in explaining the sense of 'loss' around the category of place that is a repeated refrain in this recent tradition. Place is, of course, not something that can ultimately be 'lost', but the way in which it functions as an ordering structure for our apprehension of the world can be radically reconfigured in different societal and ideological contexts. Michel Foucault has famously observed that the spatial order of modern nation states has been radically reconfigured by the extension of police power beyond the city to the edges of the modern state.[52] This 'disciplinary' power served to homogenize

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[48] See Appendix I.
[49] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 174–81.
[50] John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 1 edition (Routledge, 2003), 9.
[51] Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013).
[52] Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage, 1984), 241.

the territoriality of the modern state, monopolizing coercive power in the hands of the state alone. This transformation could be experienced as a 'loss' and indeed, O'Donovan's complaint of the ubiquitous homogenous space of late-capitalism is remarkably similar to Marc Auge's account of supermodernity wherein spatiality is not just homogenous within the disciplinary embrace of the modern state, but instead global capital has now disciplined the entire globe into a banal sameness.[53] John Milbank has reacted forcefully to the simplified space of late-capitalism, arguing that the Church should regain the 'complex space' of gothic architecture, for it alone retains the complimenting horizontal and vertical axes that, on Milbank's account, make possible the fullness of Catholic social teaching and Christian socialism.[54] Is recovering a complex gothic space the only, or even best way to do this? Perhaps, but what's more interesting about this argument for my purposes is the way that it continues to insist changes in modern experiences of place and space constitute both a loss and a threat to Christianity. Yet if, as I argue throughout this thesis, Christian theologies of place have been inextricably tied in with the place-making of colonial modernity, then there is a real sense in which the recovery of some repristinated Christian theology of place is not only quixotic, but also actively dangerous.

1.3 Terminology

Augustine once said of time, "What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to someone who asks me, I do not know."[55] I have found the same thing to be true of place. As Tim Cresswell wryly observes, "Given the ubiquity of place, it is a problem that no one quite knows what they are talking about when they are talking about place."[56] Nevertheless, this is the task before me so I will begin by issuing some clarifications about terminology. Place, in my

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[53] Marc Auge, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, (New York: Verso Books, 2009).
[54] John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language and Culture*, 1st Edition edition (Cambridge, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 1997), 268.
[55] Saint Augustine, *The Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), XI.232.
[56] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction* (Hoboken, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 6.

usage, is not an interchangeable word with space. The difficulty here is that there is semantic slippage in the history of philosophical terms used to describe and distinguish place and space. In Greek, we find the terms *khora* and *topos*. *Khora* is sometimes translated as 'space' but as Derrida points out, in Plato's usage it is perhaps better understood as a matrix that gives place for being.[57] *Topos* is the preferred term of Aristotle, and similarly has to do with being, for everything that exists presumably does so *somewhere*, thus place is necessary for Aristotle both to describe the somewhereness of being and as a necessary category for describing change in that being, particularly change in its somewhereness, or to put it in the terms of Aristotle's *Physics*, the possibility of locomotion.[58] *Topos* is often translated into English as "place" but while it is like *khora* in being part of the structure of possibility for being itself, *topos* is always tied to the location of bodies, *topos* is what bodies are always 'in' as an identifier of their locatedness, and this lends *topos* a certain sense of spatial extension that *khora* may or may not always have.

Enlightenment philosophy used several terms that shifted in sense over time. At the start of the 17th century, *spatium vel locus internus* had come to refer to the internally bounded 'place' of Aristotelian physics as deployed within scholasticism, and according to Ivor Leclerc, the Latin term *spatium* which etymologically had simply meant expanse or space, was used quite interchangeably with *locus* or place.[59] According to Leclerc, it is only in the wake of Newton and Leibniz that *spatium* as Space comes to be understood as an entity that encompasses the 'total abstract order of places'. To say of Space that it is the total abstract order of places, is to arrive at the modern understanding of space as the general and place as the more particular, picked out, or 'meaningful' bits of space within that totality. This is the moment in which 'space' eclipses 'place' as being both clearly

[57] Jacques Derrida, *On the Name*, 1st edition (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 89ff.
[58] Henry Mendell, "Topoi on Topos: The Development of Aristotle's Concept of Place," *Phronesis* 32, no. 2 (1987): 213f.
[59] Ivor Leclerc, "The Meaning of 'Space' in Kant," in *Kant's Theory of Knowledge: Selected Papers from the Third International Kant Congress*, ed. Lewis White Beck (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1974), 90.

distinguishable, and more fundamental than place.[60] Immanuel Kant inherits this sense of the term *spatium* which he renders as *raum* in German, and it becomes for him, alongside time, the two fundamental 'aspects' of being that allow for the possibility of sensible intuition of things.[61]

In the twentieth century, the Kantian legacy continues to inform the idea of *raum* in German and *espace* in French, both of which are typically translated into English as space. In theology, questions of how God relates to space, seem to be focused on something like the Leibnizian 'total abstract order of places' alongside the more Kantian emphasis on the possibility of sensibly apprehending God or God's presence in creaturely existence in some way. Elizabeth Callender argues that Karl Barth believed that not only is space a condition of creaturely existence, but God has God's own space and that indeed, God is space for us.[62] This idea of God's 'space' and God's relationship to creaturely space has been well studied in German scholarship such as in the work of Pannenbergh, Moltmann and others.[63] This way of posing the question in German scholarship as a question of 'space' has also shaped earlier English work, particularly that of T.F. Torrance in his two short volumes *Space, Time and Incarnation* and *Space, Time and Resurrection*.[64] While there has been increasing attention given to the question of 'place' in recent theology, this work at times build on this older work on 'space' and while some attempt to starkly contrast the two concepts, others are content to allow a significant degree of semantic overlap.[65]

Since the 1970s, the humanities and social sciences have undergone a 'spatial turn'. The sources for this 'spatial turn' are numerous, but for the present discussion of terminology, it is worth

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[60] For an extended analysis of the modern triumph of space over place see, Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 133–97.
[61] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan and Co.), 71.
[62] Callender, "A Theology of Spatiality: The Divine Perfection of Omnipresence in the Theology of Karl Barth."
[63] Wüthrich, *Raum Gottes*; Karsten Lehmkühler, "'But Will God Indeed Dwell on the Earth?' God and Space," *Modern Theology* 34, no. 3 (2018): 469–79; Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Eternity, Time, and Space," *Zygon* 40, no. 1 (2005): 97–106; Moltmann, *God in Creation*; Jurgen Moltmann, *Coming Of God*, 1st edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004).
[64] Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969); Thomas Forsyth Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection / Thomas F. Torrance.* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1998).
[65] Lane, "Giving Voice to Place: Three Models for Understanding American Sacred Space."

highlighting the role French theory has played in this. French intellectuals of the post-1968 generation such as Henri Lefebvre, Marc Auge, Michel de Certeau, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, among many others, contributed greatly to the theoretical foundation of the so-called spatial turn.[66] But this raises a terminological challenge, for in French, the word *espace* is used in a way that semantically overlaps with hat we in English tend to mean by both space and place, for example both de Certeau and LeFebvre list various types of 'space' that I would categorize more properly under the term 'place.'[67] However, for the sake of consistency in translation, often *espace* is simply translated into English as 'space' which in turn contributes to the prevalence of 'space' in the discourse of the so-called 'spatial turn' even if what is under discussion might better be conceptualized as 'place.'[68] This has led to a fundamental ambiguity in terms that permeates the literature, making it difficult to clearly differentiate space and place as technical terms with stable definitions. Indeed, as Jeff Malpas has observed of the discourse of the spatial turn, "Although concepts of space and place have become commonplace in recent discussions across the humanities, arts, and social sciences, there have been few attempts to provide any detailed account of what these concepts actually involve."[69] In some ways, this is probably fine, as any particular analysis of 'space' or 'place' tends to be specified adequately to at least give some sense of what is under discussion, but given the inter-disciplinary nature of the spatial turn, the ambiguity in terminology can be difficult to navigate.

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[66] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991); Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, (New York: Verso, 2014); Marc Auge, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, (New York: Verso Books, 2009); Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22–27; Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 3rd edition (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); for a helpful overview of the overall milieu of French space-thought, see Verena Andermatt Conley, *Spatial Ecologies: Urban Sites, State and World-Space in French Cultural Theory*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014).
[67] Graham Ward, "Michel de Certeau's 'Spiritual Spaces,'" *New Blackfriars* 79, no. 932 (1998): 428–42; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* 33-39.
[68] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, 24–25.
[69] Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 4.

Throughout this thesis, I seek to analytically distinguish between space and place in a way that is in some continuity with some of the etymological history of these terms, yet also somewhat idiosyncratic to my own usage. There are times when I use space and place as interchangeable terms, and when I do this, I tend to group them together in terms like, "space and place" or "spatial and placial". When deployed this way, I am seeking to emphasize that what is in focus is something to do with the constellation of ideas around place, location, geography, site, space, etc., rather than a question primarily of time or history. However, more often I seek to distinguish between place and space by assuming place is logically and metaphysically prior to space. As we saw above in both the platonic concept of *khora* and the Aristotelian concept of *topos,* there is a close association between being and place, an association we see, for example, in Heidegger's *dasein*. For my purposes, place is this coeval structure that accompanies being, and more specifically, is associated in some way with the being of particular bodies, lending intelligibility to any given body's existence. I basically agree with Kant that Space and Time are the aspects of being that allow us to intelligibly interact with phenomena, but I see space and time as primarily being matters of extension or duration. They are both logically secondary to place, as place is the seat of relations within which space and time are deployed in the work of making intelligible the world. In this distinction I am following Jeff Malpas who defines place as,

> …that within and with respect to which subjectivity is itself established. Place is not founded *on* subjectivity but is that *on which* the notion of subjectivity is founded. Thus, one does not first have a subject that apprehends certain features of the world in terms of the idea of place; rather, the structure of subjectivity is given in and through the structure of place.[70]

So, while place and space are related, and in some respects overlapping concepts, in this thesis I seek to emphasize place as that which is at the heart of what it means to be interpreting beings, while space is a kind of secondary descriptive analysis that has to do with extension, distance, and other

[70] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, 34.

physics related questions. Place is sometimes simply described shorthand as 'meaningful space', but I think it is better described as 'the space of meaning' given the way place describes our situatedness within webs of meaningful relations.

There is a secondary reason that I have chosen to distinguish in this way between place and space and to elevate place over space, which is that as I mentioned above, in the Enlightenment, *spatium* or space language came to dominate 'place' and 'place' was reduced to merely a question of simple location or site. Space was thus seen as being more fundamental because it is the substratum out of which particular places arise. Yet this is an abstract and homogenizing view of the structure of the world. Indeed, it is a 'view from nowhere.' As I argue throughout this thesis, this early-modern elevation of space over place accompanied a violently colonial *displacement* of the particular bodies of peoples and creatures that were now viewed as exploitable commodities within the flattened modern ontology that absolute spatialization allowed for. My decision to prioritize place is first a defence of these displaced bodies against the genocidal forces of colonial worldviews. Second, it is an insistence on the locatedness of interpretation, such that we come to know the world precisely from particular places, in a web of interconnected relations with the world, and not as abstract subjects from nowhere. My focus on place rather than space, is a way of emphasizing that the questions that this thesis seeks to grapple with are structured primarily by an anti-colonial and hermeneutical approach – traditions that call us to attend to the intimate connection of bodies and places and the affirmation of limits on our ability to know the world in the face of the colonial habits of mind that seek to master it abstractly.

Throughout this thesis I make rather liberal use of the term "genocide" to refer to the effects of settler colonialism and especially the legacy of the Indian Residential Schools. This usage is intentional. Since the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that the legacy of the

Indian Residential School system constituted a 'cultural genocide'[71] the use of the term has been highly contested by some people in Canadian society.[72] Yet the authors of the TRC reports felt that this term fit the criteria outlined by the United Nations for cultural genocide as defined, by Article II section (e) "Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."[73] Recently, Pope Francis has recognized that what occurred here in Canada was a genocide,[74] and this recognition by the pontiff provided support for my local MP, Leah Gazan, to get a motion passed in the House of Commons officially recognizing the Residential Schools as a genocide.[75]

While Canada has now officially acknowledged this one colonial institution as constituting a genocide, I believe it is important to understand the entire structure of settler colonialism as being structurally genocidal, not just through certain discrete actions like forced starvation,[76] sterilization,[77] re-education, and mass incarceration,[78] but as the overarching and explicit goal of the structure. Therefore, I regularly punctuate my descriptions of settler colonialism throughout this thesis as being genocidal. By doing so I am both affirming what has been officially recognized by my

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[71] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 2015, 1.

[72] While I will not dignify these voices through citation, their views have been helpfully discussed and critiqued under the rubric of 'settler denialism' here, see Daniel Heath Justice and Sean Carleton, "Truth before Reconciliation: 8 Ways to Identify and Confront Residential School Denialism," The Conversation, accessed August 2, 2022, http://theconversation.com/truth-before-reconciliation-8-ways-to-identify-and-confront-residential-school-denialism-164692. See also David B. MacDonald and Graham Hudson, "The Genocide Question and Indian Residential Schools in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 45, no. 2 (2012): 427–49.

[73] "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" (United Nations General Assembly, 1948).

[74] Ka'nhehsí:io Deer · CBC News ·, "Pope Says Genocide Took Place at Canada's Residential Schools," CBC, July 30, 2022, https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/pope-francis-residential-schools-genocide-1.6537203.

[75] Temitayo Olarewaju, "Residential School System Recognized as Genocide in Canada's House of Commons: A Harbinger of Change," *The Conversation*, January 11, 2023, http://theconversation.com/residential-school-system-recognized-as-genocide-in-canadas-house-of-commons-a-harbinger-of-change-196774.

[76] Candace Savage, *A Geography of Blood: Unearthing Memory from a Prairie Landscape*, (Vancouver, BC: Greystone Books, 2012).

[77] Chaneesa Ryan, Abrar Ali, and Christine Shawana, "Forced or Coerced Sterilization in Canada: An Overview of Recommendations for Moving Forward," *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 16, no. 1 (January 28, 2021).

[78] Olga Marques and Lisa Monchalin, "The Mass Incarceration of Indigenous Women in Canada: A Colonial Tactic of Control and Assimilation," in *Neo-Colonial Injustice and the Mass Imprisonment of Indigenous Women*, ed. Lily George et al., Palgrave Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity and Criminal Justice (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 79–102.

government and pointedly reminding Settler Christians that we cannot simply cut out one rotten institution but must instead decolonize the entire structure of our political-economy.

A final note about language concerning Indigenous peoples. In Canadian law, Indigenous peoples are referred to collectively as Aboriginals which is further divided into three classes, Indian, Inuit, and Métis.[79] Since the widespread adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), 'Indigenous' has largely replaced 'Aboriginal' as the umbrella term of choice.[80] However, while pan-Indigenous solidarity movements have been important in the global struggle for recognition,[81] it should always be remembered that Indigenous is merely an umbrella term that covers not just the three categories I mentioned in the Canadian context, but also the hundreds of discrete nations that make up the broad coalition of Indigenous peoples in these lands. When I speak generally about Indigenous peoples, I use the term 'Indigenous', but where I speak about a particular scholar or nation, I specify their national identity. It is a convention of Chicago style to italicize foreign languages, but the languages spoken by Indigenous peoples in this land are far from 'foreign', indeed a good case could be made that English is the foreign language in this land, and thus I do not italicize words from Indigenous languages in this thesis. Because my research engages primary sources from the early colonial period, there are times when outdated and offensive language is used in these sources. These terms should not be used today but I retain them in several direct quotations to draw attention to the ways in which Settler peoples othered and dehumanized Indigenous peoples in their heterological processing of the so-called New World.[82]

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[79] While "Indian" is the language used in the Charter, it should be noted that in common parlance "First Nations" is the preferred term. See Government of Canada, "Constitution Act, 1982: Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," § 35 (1982).

[80] "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | United Nations For Indigenous Peoples," accessed November 26, 2021, https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html.

[81] Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World*.

[82] For more on writing about Indigenous peoples, see Gregory Younging, *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing By and About Indigenous Peoples* (Edmonton, AB: Brush Education, 2018).

1.4 Methodology

Tim Cresswell, in his book *Place: An Introduction*, observes that place "…is a concept that travels quite freely between disciplines and the study of place benefits from an interdisciplinary approach."[83] Place-studies, as it has emerged as a distinctive field in the environmental humanities, draws widely from disciplines across the humanities and social sciences which makes articulating a particular methodology a challenging proposition. This thesis, while primarily a work of theology, is inextricably interdisciplinary, and one of the results of this is that this work of theology does not follow a classically dogmatic approach to its task. By 'dogmatic' I mean the approach to theology that obediently follows-after the content of divine revelation, interpreting the text of scripture in conversation with tradition and reason in order to continue responding to the challenges of the church today. This approach to theology tends to insist that theology is a discrete science with its own proper content and methodology and that theology should limit itself to attending to this content. This account of theology is by no means new but has been most fully articulated in recent years by John Webster in his book *The Culture of Theology*.[84] This approach is not wholly hostile to interdisciplinary engagements, but it seeks to do so from the vantage point of theology's own particular methods and sources, and such engagements will necessarily be limited and *ad hoc*.

Perhaps a theology of place could be written within the methodological constraints of a Websterian dogmatic theology, but I have not done so. This project might loosely fall under the heading of 'constructive theology' but not because of any particular hostility on my part towards the project of systematic theology.[85] Indeed, as Mary-Emily Duba has recently shown, approaching the question of 'place' by considering it through the various traditional systematic loci can be incredibly

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[83] Cresswell, *Place*, 1.
[84] John Webster, *The Culture of Theology*, ed. Ivor J. Davidson and Alden C. McCray (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2019).
[85] Mary Emily Briehl Duba, "God Is Here: A Theology of Place and Displacement" (Doctoral Thesis, The University of Chicago, n.d.), https://doi.org/10.6082/uchicago.1603.

useful as a way of showing how central a concept place is to all sorts of questions in theology. My own project can be called constructive on the twofold basis of 1) an appreciation of the constructed nature of doctrine and 2) the need to creatively reconstruct doctrine in response to legitimate critiques from interdisciplinary sources.[86]

The choice of a broadly 'constructive' theological approach is because when it comes to the question of place and theology, I am primarily motivated by two questions. First how did Christian theologies of place help underwrite global colonialism? Second, is there a way of constructing a theology of place that can be both anti-colonial, and lend support to a positive account of reconciliation that involves both spiritual healing and material reparations? While the focus of this thesis is primarily on the intersections between colonialism and theologies of place, I acknowledge that this is more than just an anthropocentric issue, so the implications of both the colonial misuse of theologies of place, and my own constructive proposal, are self-consciously ecological in nature. It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to fully articulate all the ecological implications of a theology of place, but in chapters four and six I dedicate some discussion to the more-than-human creatures that are necessarily implicated in any discussion of place.

To expand on my first guiding question, it has become almost cliché to argue that Christianity and the "West" more generally has no 'sense of place', being too preoccupied with questions of time and history. Vine Deloria Jr. is explicit, "Western European peoples have never learned to consider the nature of the world discerned from a spatial point of view. And a singular difficulty faces peoples of Western European heritage in making a transition from thinking in terms of time to thinking in terms of space."[87] While Deloria might be excused for the polemics as a necessary ground-clearing effort in establishing space for Indigenous theology in the Western

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[86] For an overview of the priorities and characteristics of constructive theology as a method and tradition, see Jason A. Wyman, *Constructing Constructive Theology: An Introductory Sketch* (Minneapolis, MN: 1517 Media, 2017).
[87] Deloria, *God Is Red*, 62.

academy, it is long past the time where we can simply repeat Deloria's assertion unproblematically. As Arjun Appadurai has observed, reserving place as a category solely for Indigenous peoples and leaving time and history to colonial societies has the unfortunate side-effect of implying that Indigenous peoples are "*incarcerated,* or confined, in those places."[88] Only the outside observers – anthropologists, missionaries, colonial administrators – have mobility and agency, Indigenous peoples are bound, static, stuck in 'place' and cut off from participation in the flow of history.

On the other hand, by denying the possibility that 'Western European peoples' have failed to consider the world from a spatial point of view, we ignore, and worse, plead the innocence of ignorance, regarding all the very real ways 'Western European peoples' have approached place-making in a way that has been explicitly weaponized against alternate ways of being in place. If 'Western European peoples' ignore questions of space and place, why is it that in Canada, so many places are named after the same few members of the British aristocracy? Why was the Canadian government willing to go to war with the Red River Métis for apprehending and subsequently executing a member of a Dominion surveying team?[89] Why were Indigenous peoples forced onto and confined to reservations and residential schools in a dystopian exercise of spatial power in an attempt to transform the "Indian" into a White Christian subject?[90]

So, to avoid either the implication that Indigenous people are uniquely 'placed' or that colonial societies have no account of place, I instead look closely at the European theological and philosophical traditions around space and place in the 16th and 17th centuries. In this examination I use the theoretical tool of 'heterology' as developed by Michel de Certeau.[91] Heterology is simply 'the

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[88] Arjun Appadurai, "Putting Hierarchy in Its Place," *Cultural Anthropology* 3, no. 1, (1988): 37.
[89] Jean Teillet, *The North-West Is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Métis Nation* (Toronto: Patrick Crean Editions, 2019), 159–230.
[90] As Captain R. H. Pratt evocatively put it, "Kill the Indian, and save the man." See R.H Pratt, "The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites," in *Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction at the Nineteenth Annual Session Held in Denver, Col., Jun 23-29, 1892.*, ed. Isabel C. Barrows (Boston: Press of George H. Ellis, 1892), 46.
[91] Michel De Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

study of the other', but for de Certeau, there is an inherent challenge when studying the 'other.' The way we often deal with difference is by subsuming it into known categories by which we then claim 'knowledge' of the 'other' even as what we are claiming as knowledge is little more than a projection. De Certeau was fascinated by early-modern travel stories as exemplars of the process by which the 'otherness' of the so-called New World was processed into the familiar categories of European Christendom, and thus domesticated on the page long before the actual subjugating power of colonial discipline had become absolute in these new territories. By considering how this heterological processing can cause profound misrecognitions and misapplications of ideas in new circumstances, I am able to show how theological and philosophical discourses around questions of space and place that were operative in Europe, and particularly in England in this period are weaponized in the colonial context against Indigenous place-relationships. A potential pitfall of this way of framing the issue is that it can present the horrors of colonial conquest and genocide as merely incidental, or accidental outworking of errant theological ideas.[92] However, the clarification that this framing does provide is that doctrine is fundamentally ambiguous. Doctrines and ideas that are developed in one context to address a particular set of problems can be disastrously misapplied to another context at another time. Sometimes this happens accidentally, sometimes it is intentional, but it is an important reminder of the contingency and provisional character of theological discourse.

I approach this twofold task of constructive theology using several nesting critical methodologies. I began this chapter with a brief discussion of Pentecost and Utopia, these will be motifs that are returned to throughout the thesis. I focus on the way Utopian discourses and logics separate and disrupt the possibility of place, while Pentecost offers a Spirit-led invitation to the

[92] This is a tendency in White Settler scholarship that has recently come under well deserved fire, see Tiffany Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).

intimate joining of place. In chapter two, I discuss the colonialist moment of the early-modern period through Michel de Certeau's idea of 'heterology' or 'the science of the other.'[93] This framing helps me explain how misrecognition and miscommunication are fundamental challenges to my account of place that must always be accounted for. In chapter three, I take a much more straightforwardly theological approach, highlighting the various ways theologians have thought about God's relationship to place and noting the emphasis that is often placed on the body of Jesus in such accounts. That in turn leads me to a critical discussion of the relationship between the trinitarian persons and particularly the role of the Holy Spirit in 'recognizing' the body of Jesus as the Son of God. It is within this Spirit-led account of recognition of bodies that I then turn to my own constructive theological account of place in chapter four.[94] In this chapter, I use Donald Davidson's concept of triangulation alongside Jason Josephson Ananda Storm's account of hylosemiotics to argue that place is best understood as a network of discursive relations between communicative bodies.[95]

After providing this positive account of place, I return to the problems of misrecognition and miscommunication in chapters 5 and 6 with particular attention given to contemporary Canadian debates in the politics of recognition. I offer a hauntological supplement to recognition theory, drawing from Indigenous readings of Derrida, arguing that settler society, and settler Christians in particular should cultivate an openness to being unsettled by the 'ghosts' of colonialism, and more importantly, realize that the Indigenous bodies that settler society sought to render 'ghostly' have in fact continued to exercise sovereign existence within all the places that we hegemonically claim as 'ours'.

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[93] Certeau, *Heterologies*.
[94] I am particularly guided here by Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*; Kevin W. Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics: God, Language, and the Spirit of Recognition*, Current Issues in Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[95] Donald Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements* 30 (September 1991): 153–66; Donald Davidson, "The Second Person," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 17 (July 1, 1992): 255–67; Jason Ananda Josephson Storm, *Metamodernism: The Future of Theory*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

To conclude the thesis in chapter 7, I turn to a case study that implicates myself and my family directly, through a discussion of the Métis settlement of Ste Madeleine. I bring together the various critical threads from utopian studies, heterology, recognition theory, and hauntology to better understand the various settler and Indigenous discourses that characterize this place and in so doing, gesture towards the risky posture of vulnerability that reconciliation will require. To live in place is to be haunted by the ghosts and fragments of that place, but by risking such a haunting, we find ourselves held together in the intimate joining union of the Spirit of Pentecost.

Finally, this is in an important sense an Anglican contribution to thinking about the theology of place. It is so, as I have already stated, partially because of my own positionality as an Anglican and my choice to situate this intervention amidst the conversation being had by contemporary Anglican theologians. But there is a more fundamental methodological move I make in this thesis that I believe makes this a work of Anglican theology. Anglicans love to claim that our theology flows from our worship, that there is something about the *lex orandi* as expressed in the Book of Common Prayer especially, that disciplines how our tradition thinks about theology. Like every story that a particular tradition likes to tell about itself, the reality is undoubtedly more complicated, but I have endeavoured to take it on board in one very specific way. In the Canadian Book of Common Prayer, the very first prayer is the Sentence for Advent, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This preface represents the first words to be uttered in the first season of the year, and immediately flows into the confession and absolution that is properly part of the liturgy of Morning Prayer. This penitential posture is the starting point of Anglican prayer, and it is the starting point of this thesis. Christian theologies of place have much to repent of, and this thesis represents my attempt to take stock of this ambiguous tradition in a posture of humility and penitence. As I will show, "there is no health in us" when it comes to the history of this doctrine, but we follow a God

who promises always to have mercy, and it is this promise that makes writing a theology of place worth venturing at all.

Chapter 2: The Place of Misrecognition

2.1 Introduction

I am convinced that if Anglicans are to have anything constructive to say at all about the theology of place, we must begin by taking seriously the challenge that colonial history poses to the Church in the woundedness of its realized history in the world. I am building on the work of Willie James Jennings who, in his celebrated book *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* argued that in the early-modern period, what he calls the 'colonialist moment,' place-based ways of relating were rejected by the imposition of racial hierarchies that related all humans on a temporal scale, with White on the 'advanced' end and 'Black' being on the primitive end, and all other peoples plotted somewhere in between.[1]

While colonialism and settler colonialism are indeed ongoing structures that continue to afflict this world, it is nevertheless helpful to turn our attention to what Jennings calls the 'colonialist moment' to fully appreciate the tragic misrecognitions that have come to characterize the structural harm of colonial forces.[2] In what follows, I outline several vignettes of colonial misrecognition as examples of a heterological process by which European colonial agents overcame the difference of their encounter with new nations and peoples and rendered them familiar through an act of ideological and literal displacement.[3] By framing this conversation in terms of Michel de Certeau's concept of heterology, I am following Jennings' insistence that the colonialist moment was a profound refusal of the Christian intimacy that is the gift of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost for all peoples.[4] At Pentecost (Acts 2), all peoples heard the gospel in the particularity of their own

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[1] Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 45–46.
[2] Jennings, 286.
[3] Certeau, *Heterologies*.
[4] Willie James Jennings, *Acts:* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017), loc 730.

language and in that particularity, were joined in intimacy with one another and with God.[5] Yet somehow in the colonialist moment, the desire for intimacy and joining overwhelmed the particularity of creaturely difference such that, Christian missionaries could, by the 19th and 20th centuries perform a radical anti-Pentecost, stripping Indigenous children of their language in an ultimate separation of body from place and people.[6] The colonialist moment inflicted wounds on both the colonized and the colonizer and it is into the heart of these wounds that Christians need to enter if we are to have anything positive to say about a theology of place.

The disruption of place by racialized colonialism brought with it both a universalizing and a temporalizing frame that, as Ed Casey has shown in his genealogy of place in Western philosophy, roughly corresponds with moves in shifting early-modern debates about the nature of space and place as such.[7] While Casey does not himself read the history of the philosophy of place in relation to colonialism, nor do many other genealogists of spatial philosophy.[8] I seek to read these two histories together. In the second half of this chapter, I trace out the shifting spatial theory of certain Cambridge Platonists and their interlocutors to further show how the heterological reception of the so-called 'New World' was brought up into abstract debates about the nature of space, spirit, and indeed God's very nature. This culminates in a series of metaphysical linguistic confusions that are exemplified in the figure of John Locke and his synthesizing of spatial theory and Christian heterological processing of racial difference, resulting in a profoundly influential, and damaging, Christian defence of colonialism.

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[5] As Hauerwas and Willimon argue, the vivifying work of the Holy Spirit is a particularizing force, it is by making creatures what they are that the work of joining, or theosis, occurs, see Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015).

[6] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools: The Legacy: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 5* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 103–38, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt19rmbqj.

[7] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 103–93.

[8] Casey's genealogy of the concept of place follows a couple of influential earlier histories, see Edward Grant, ed., *Much Ado about Nothing: Theories of Space and Vacuum from the Middle Ages to the Scientific Revolution*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Alexandre Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins, 1968).

2.2: Misrecognition

2.2.I: Heterology

Immediately upon receiving reports of Christopher Columbus' accidental acquaintance with an Occidental landmass in 1492, European imaginations began interpreting this news by embedding it in the knowledge and traditions of classical antiquity in a process Michel de Certeau has named 'heterology.'[9] 'Heterology' or the 'science of the other' is, for de Certeau, an anthropological process that occurs in the encounter between different societies as they seek to make sense of each other, not through close empirical or ethnographic research, but by casting the 'other' in a pre-existing role or category already dormant in a given society.[10] De Certeau holds up Montaigne's 'Of Cannibals'[11] as an example of this kind of process. Beginning with a loose report of alleged cannibalism among the Indigenous inhabitants of Brazil, Montaigne musters reference after reference to classical antiquity in his description of these alleged cannibals, simultaneously silencing any potential unknown Indigenous self-description and placing them firmly in the 'known' world of the European.[12] De Certeau stresses that this heterological tradition that Montaigne is here participating in has deep precedents, citing Herodotus' depiction of the Scythian in his *History* as an example, and continues long after him.[13] Yet the 16th century seems to be particularly fertile for this kind of writing, as European explorers become more and more aware of the scale of the *Novus Orbis* that occupied the far shore of the Atlantic.

2.2.II: Utopia

2.2.II.i: Humphrey Gilbert

While Montaigne's essay 'Of Cannibals' appeared in 1580, at the same time, an Englishman by the name of Humphrey Gilbert was securing the employment of the crew of the *Squirrel*.[14] This

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[9] Certeau, *Heterologies*.
[10] Luce Giard, "Epilogue: Michel de Certeau's Heterology and the New World," *Representations*, no. 33 (1991): 212–21.
[11] Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays* (Pandora's Box Classics, 2021).
[12] Certeau, *Heterologies*, 67ff.
[13] Certeau, 70.
[14] David Beers Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert: Volumes I-II* (London, UK: Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 239–40.

frigate, along with several other ships, would set out under his command in search of the mythical Norumbega, with letters patent from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I secured in 1578, to lay claim to lands for the English Crown. Gilbert is an interesting character for the archetypal role he would come to play in English colonialism. Before he turned his attention to colonial matters, Gilbert achieved a certain level of notoriety for viciousness in his military campaigns in Ireland. In 1569, Gilbert was made colonel of the English army in Munster, essentially making him a military governor of the province, and in this post acted decisively to suppress the Irish rebellion. As David Quinn notes, "his method of waging war was to devastate the country, killing every living creature encountered by his troops."[15] This brutality against the Irish arose out of a centuries-long discourse of racial discrimination and dehumanization on the part of the English, and continued to be a formative theatre in the creation of English colonial agents through to the end of the 19th century.[16] Gilbert's experience in Ireland prepared him for what would be administratively necessary for the establishment of a colony in the Americas, and by the end of the 1570s, he was actively preparing for just such an endeavour. Having received letters patent from the Crown in 1578 that guaranteed him wide powers over the proposed colony, he sought to raise capital through two utopian promises to potential investors. First, he promised "the prospect of acquiring vast estates, lightly encumbered, where they could hope to lord it over their tenants with the power of feudal nobles."[17] Second, he courted the support of various Catholic gentry with the potential for freedom of religious expression and freedom from religious persecution in the new colony. This second promise was particularly

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[15] David Beers Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert: Volume I* (Farnham, UK: Hakluyt Society, 2010), 17.

[16] For an overview of the late medieval racialization of the Irish, see Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 38ff. A fitting example for this thesis of a 19th century colonial agent who was formed through the exercise of colonial violence in Ireland is William Forbes Alloway, who would go on to serve in Wolseley's Expeditionary Force against Louis Riel in the Red River Uprising and would be a key actor in the Reign of Terror and subsequent displacement of the Métis nation through speculation in Métis scrip, see "Biography – Alloway, William Forbes – Volume XV (1921-1930) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography," accessed October 12, 2021, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?BioId=42138.

[17] Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, 2010, 55.

attractive to those recusant Catholic nobles who were finding it impossible to submit to the Elizabethan settlement.[18]

The combination of cheap, unencumbered land and the promise of religious toleration hint at the essentially utopian nature of the endeavour Gilbert had in mind. I unpack this further below, but it is striking that we see these idealistic promises at play in Gilbert's sales pitch, particularly because we also know that Gilbert was intimately familiar with More's *Utopia*, as it had become available in English in 1551. Gilbert never made it to Norumbega, nor even to the locale in which it was reported to be, for he lost most of his ships and men along the way to various disagreements, bad weather, lack of supplies, and shipwreck. Indeed, Gilbert himself would go down on the *Squirrel* somewhere off the Azores. It is reported that he had been reading More's *Utopia* aboard the ship and his last words that have come down to us are an allusion to More's socio-political vision. On September 9th, 1583, while Gilbert sat reading exclaimed, "'we are as neere to heaven by sea as by land.' The same night the lights of the *Squirrel* went out and she and Gilbert were never seen again."[19] Perhaps Gilbert knew he was doomed, or perhaps he had realized that the promise of utopia is always just out of grasp, but whatever he surmised, perhaps he recognized something of himself in the alleged words of Amerigo Vespucci included by More in his narrative, "The man who has no grave is covered by the sky', and 'Wherever you start from, the road to heaven is the same length."'[20] Yet, perhaps unbeknownst to Gilbert, More here is not quoting Vespucci at all, but in fine heterological fashion, he is citing the poets of classical antiquity, first *Pharsalia* by Seneca's nephew Lucan, and then Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations*.[21] As we have already seen in Montaigne, this genre of heterological story-telling is not primarily interested in giving ethnographic accounts of the

[18] Quinn, 61–62.
[19] Quinn, 89.
[20] More, *Utopia*, 10.
[21] More, 10, fn.10.

world and its peoples in their particularity, but rather incorporates difference into established societal narratives in order to process that difference into the realm of intimate familiarity.

2.2.II.ii: Thomas More

More's *Utopia* introduced a neologism into the lexicon of Western political philosophy by the combination of two Greek words; the negation *ou* and the word for place *topos*. *Utopia* is thus literally 'not-a-place'. Yet as Fatima Vieira reminds us, if More had sought only to describe 'not-a-place' he already had available to him the Latin word *Nusquama* (literally, nowhere).[22] *Nusquama* was originally going to be the name of the island in his book, but he ultimately opted to create the word *Utopia* for its homophonic ambiguity with *Eutopia*, 'the good place'.[23]

What's more, Thomas More begins his tale by insisting that he is doing nothing but writing down the words of one Raphael Hythloday. Hythloday literally means 'peddler of nonsense' but this surname is juxtaposed by his given name, suggesting that this peddler of nonsense is at once also the patron Archangel of travelers, St. Raphael. So, the concept of utopia, while not original to More, is given a concentrated expression by way of these series of ironic tensions whereby utopia is the ideal place that is also not a place, that is told to us by the angelically reliable peddler of nonsense.

Utopia is a terrific example of the heterological process in action. When de Certeau first proposed an investigation of the 'science of the other' he suggested that the way to get at this phenomena was through the examination of colonial-era travel stories.[24] While de Certeau focused on French stories, we can see in More's *Utopia* many of the layers of representation that de Certeau was gesturing toward in his proposal. *Utopia* presents itself as a travel story, for while More casts himself as stenographer in the book, it is ultimately Hythloday's travel story, thus mirroring the

[22] Gregory Claeys, *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4.
[23] John M. Rist, "From Dreamland 'Humanism' to Christian Political Reality or From 'Nusquama' to 'Utopia,'" *The Review of Metaphysics* 69, no. 4 (2016): 739–85.
[24] Michel De Certeau, "Travel Narratives of the French to Brazil: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *Representations*, no. 33 (1991): 221–26.

actual travel stories of 15th and 16th century explorers. Yet, as I have already noted above, even when actual historical authorities such as Amerigo Vespucci are cited, they are but puppets into whose mouth More puts the words of classical antiquity. This conceit of having explorers and foreigners report back to Europe with the purified knowledge of the European tradition, is well described by Fredric Jameson's observation that More's text proceeds through four "raw materials of its representation."[25] For Jameson, *Utopia* is a synthesis of the four representational languages of Greece, the medieval, the Incas, and Protestantism, though one wonders how Protestantism could possibly be operative in a work that was published a year before Luther's 95 theses appeared on that church door.[26]

Whether More's Christian vision is ultimately Catholic or Protestant is beyond the scope of this thesis to determine, but what I want to highlight for my purposes is the relation between the minority status of the Incan representation and the way in which this foreign 'other' is able to be woven into and subsumed by the heritage of Western Christendom by way of its interplay with the other three representational ideologemes.[27] It is telling that, as Jameson notes, the Incan representation is so fully subsumed by the other ideologemes that in the 19th and 20th century reception of *Utopia* in the Marxist tradition, the Incan other is transmuted into the Asiatic, further displacing indigenous self-determination, but also ensuring that the Incan ideologeme is coded as simply a floating 'other'.[28] In other words, the semiotic value of the Incan, Indigenous other in *Utopia* is as a sheer gesture of otherness and elsewhereness. Incan particularity does not matter except as a signifier for a fundamental difference, a difference in relation to land, to foreign relations, and to the material wealth of the land.

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[25] Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (New York: Verso, 2005), 24. For the probable Benedictine influence on More's ordering of Utopia, see Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1987), 19.
[26] Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, 24–25.
[27] Claeys, "Utopia at Five Hundred: Some Reflections," *Utopian Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 403.
[28] Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*, 31.

It is this multi-faceted difference of the Incan in *Utopia* that is of particular interest to the story of colonial misrecognition I am trying to tell. Throughout More's *Utopia* there is a repeated refrain of the ambivalence of the Utopians to money, and specifically the abundant reserves of gold, silver, and precious gems found on their island, indeed they are so common that gems are children's play-things and the chains of prisoners are made of gold.[29] This wealth is both incidental to their geography, and as a result of an ambivalence toward material possession, such that when their trading ventures are successful and their needs are met, the surplus is not locked in some tower, but used to make chamber-pots and other lowly vessels.[30] This indifference towards treasure is a trope that is found in the reports of the Indigenous peoples of the new world by Amerigo Vespucci and Peitro Martire d'Anghiera, but is also a classic marker of 'savagery' as far back as Tacitus' classical observations of the ancient Germans.[31] Yet More's use of this trope is not simply to depict the Utopians as what Anthony Pagden has called the 'savage critic',[32] for the driving foil of *Utopia* is that it is the accomplishment of "such a high level of culture and humanity."[33] The tropes of 'savagery' are held in contrast with this highest accomplishment of civilization, a synthesis that was accomplished by an originary act of conquest and ethnic erasure, such that the Utopian appears as a *tabula rasa* that somehow demonstrates all the virtues of the 'noble savage' while simultaneously denying the virtue of Indigenous life-ways by casting this achievement as the result of Utopus' bloody conquest of that place, formerly known as Abraxa.[34]

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[29] More, *Utopia*, 60–62.
[30] More, 60.
[31] Amerigo Vespucci, *The First Four Voyages of Amerigo Vespucci*, trans. Michael Kerney (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1885), 98; Cornelius Tacitus, *Tacitus, the Agricola and Germania*, trans. K. B. Townshend (London: Aberdeen University Press, 1894), 58, V; Peter Martyr D'Anghera, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghera*, trans. Francis Augustus MacNutt, vol. 1 (London: The Knickerbocker Press, 1912), 221.
[32] Anthony Pagden, "The Savage Critic: Some European Images of the Primitive," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 13 (1983): 32–45.
[33] More, *Utopia*, 42.
[34] More, 42. Abraxas itself is an intriguing name, as it is of uncertain origin, but seems to refer to the highest heaven in Basilides' gnostic system, see More, 42, fn 3.

2.2.II.iii: From Peru to Norumbega and Beyond

While More's *Utopia* may have begun as political commentary and satire, over the course of the 16th century it would come to be seen as a blue-print for an ideal society, and as we have already seen in the ill-fated venture of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, a major inspiration and motivation for the colonial project.[35] In 1551, More's *Utopia* would be translated by Ralph Robinson into English from Latin for the first time.[36] In 1553, Mary Tudor would be crowned Queen which would bring England directly into the new global empire of the Iberian Habsburgs. The Spanish had been actively engaged in the conquest of the Incan and Aztec empires for decades by this time, and in 1545, had opened a silver mine in Peru, the output of which would seemingly prove the claims of the vast wealth of the Indigenous Americans reported by Vespucci and Columbus in earlier decades.[37] While *Utopia* had been translated into French, Spanish, and German rather quickly, perhaps serving as a motivation for Habsburg colonial ambition, it was translated to English only after the Spanish had begun to oversee a massive transfer of mineral wealth from their overseas colonies back to the Spanish homeland.[38]

As early as 1534, Thomas Cromwell in his role as Henry VIII's chief minister, had begun receiving reports noting the movements of Spanish treasure ships from 'Pero' which detailed an almost implausible level of wealth available for the taking.[39] By the time More's book was translated into English, there was already a sense, at least in the mind of the Duke of Northumberland, that More's *Utopia* was in fact a description of the 'Pero' of Spanish fame, and that England had missed a chance at laying claim to a valuable territory that could have fortified England's ragged finances.[40]

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[35] Bernd Renner, "'Real versus Ideal': Utopia and the Early Modern Satirical Tradition," *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 41, no. 3 (2018): 47–66.
[36] Reed Edwin Peggram, "The First French and English Translations of Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia,'" *The Modern Language Review* 35, no. 3 (1940): 330–40.
[37] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, ed., *Entangled Empires: The Anglo-Iberian Atlantic, 1500-1830*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 88–89.
[38] Cañizares-Esguerra, 89.
[39] Cañizares-Esguerra, 89.
[40] Cañizares-Esguerra, 91.

This sense was brought into even starker relief by the amount of sterling silver being brought into the Tower of London by Mary's consort, Philip II of Spain. In fact, during Mary's brief reign, so much Spanish silver would be brought into London on one occasion that "it caused an abrupt 7 percent increase in England's available sound money"[41] which likely induced inflation and caused Richard Eden to gush triumphantly in the preface to his translation of *Decades of the New World*, "Never so much hath byn seen at once as suche as have byn owlde officers in the mynte doo affirme."[42]

It was Richard Eden's 1555 translation of *Decades* that would influence the English reception of *Utopia* in a colonial direction. During the reign of Edward, the English government, under the supervision of the Duke of Northumberland, had been meeting in secret with the French ambassador, Sebastian Cabot to hatch a plan to "lead a joint English-French fleet to Brazil, sail up the Amazon River, and steal Peru, 'to colonize the country with new inhabitants and set up a New England there.'"[43] With the premature death of Edward and the renewed Spanish influence over the nation during Mary's reign, English colonial ambition could not so flagrantly be directed at seizing Spanish territory, and thus Eden's translation, published right at the height of her reign, chooses its words carefully in regards to colonial infringement over '…landes and Ilandes in the west sea, where the [Habsburg] Eagle (yet not in every place) hath so spled his winges…"[44] Nonetheless, it is Eden who does more than anyone to confirm the connection between *Utopia* and Spain's Peruvian territory. "In one city, Eden wrote, the Spanish 'founde a house all couered with massie plates of golde,' and the very harnesses the Peruvians used at war were made of gold."[45] This is an obvious and direct allusion to More's description of the gilded buildings of the Utopians and their use of

[41] Cañizares-Esguerra, 94.
[42] Cañizares-Esguerra, 94.
[43] Cañizares-Esguerra, 91.
[44] Cañizares-Esguerra, 91.
[45] Cañizares-Esguerra, 101.

gold and silver for the chains of their slaves. The difference, however, was that Eden's work, unlike More's, was not satire. "Utopia was real, it was Peru, England had known it, and via its frictionless conquest by Spain, its excess of wealth and civilization now flowed through the Christian empire, through Spanish ships and English carts into the Tower of London, and thence into Eden's hands: Peru transmuted, via the alchemy of colonization, into the Utopia of England's dreams."[46]

In 1563, Jean Ribault's account of his expedition to Florida appeared in English, published by Thomas Hacket as *The whole and true discoverye of Terra Florida*.[47] This was one of the first detailed accounts of a visit to North America in English and it captured the imagination of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, freshly returned from military action in France. During the 1560s, English attention turned to North America has a possible site for a realization of the Peruvian Utopian dream of the previous decades. As information continued to come in and English belligerence toward Spain accelerated through the Elizabethan era, Gilbert would eventually come to identify the mythical city of Norumbega as a potential site for a new colony that would finally realize the utopian ambitions of the English.

The region of Norumbega that Gilbert set out to claim for the British Crown was first described by the French sponsored Florentine explorer, Giovanni da Verrazzano as being the abode of aesthetically perfect natives who live in harmony with one another and have wonderful agriculture. He speaks of spending time in places he calls *Paradiso, Flora*, and *Refugio*, that is, Paradise, Flower, and Refuge. The residents there were allegedly "friendly, generous and physically perfect, but their manner was 'sweet and gentle very like the manner of the ancients.'"[48] In processing the newness and strangeness of these people of *terra nuevo,* the new world, we can once again see the heterological processing of Indigenous difference producing a profound misrecognition whereby

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[46] Cañizares-Esguerra, 101.
[47] Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, 2010, 5.
[48] Kirsten A. Seaver, "Norumbega and 'Harmonia Mundi' in Sixteenth-Century Cartography," *Imago Mundi* 50 (1998): 39.

Indigenous particularity is refused and instead subsumed within the classical categories of European knowledge as some long lost Amazonian or Atlantean people come to life out of the mists of legend.

While Norumbega entered the European consciousness in part through the heterological reception of early travel narratives, it took on a Utopian hue precisely in this reception. The earliest reports of this locale do not actually name this site Norumbega, instead, the reportedly utopian '*Refugio'* was marked on the inlet *oranbego*, as recorded on the maps drawn by Giovanni's brother, Girolamo da Verrazzano.[49] However, renaissance cartography was still deeply influenced by the thought of Ptolemy, particularly his doctrine of *harmonia mundi*, which suggested that there was a fundamental harmony to the world such that elements of the Old World should be found, even embryonically, in the New.[50] With the discovery of Tenochtitlan by Cortés in 1519, it was believed that a New World counter-part of Venice had been discovered, as they both appeared as cities built upon the water. It was not a stretch, therefore, for Italian cartographers to assume that further to the north would be found embryonic versions of northern European cities. As Seaver notes,

> …no leap of imagination was needed to consider the German Nuremberg equal to Venice in meriting a duplicate in America. Their reasoning took another step: if Temistitan was an American paradigm for the city of Venice, then Refugio was a likely paradigm for a European region north of Venice. Other parallels gained from Verrazzano's letter to Francois I pointed to Nuremberg. Anybody who had seen the castle on the rock needed little persuasion to imagine a similar fortification on the American rock of 'viva pietra', for instance, or in equating the five small islands Verrazzano had found in the Refugio embayment with the four tiny islands of Nuremberg's Pegnitz River.[51]

Again, it is important to remember that the stories of European explorers returned to an interpretive context that was already primed with expectations of what the world should be. Therefore, it should

[49] Seaver, 35.
[50] Seaver, 35.
[51] Seaver, 42.

not be surprising that cartographers of the 16th century, who had been shaped by the reception of the Latin translation of Ptolemy's *Geographia* in 1407,[52] would be primed by the doctrine of *harmonia mundi* to identify *Refugio* and the region of *oranbego* as the New World equivalent of Nuremberg. Thus, Norumbega was born, a perfect utopia, generated wholly from the heterological processing of the New World and the colonial ambitions and imaginations of European dreamers. When Gilbert set sail for the New World in 1583, Norumbega was a perfect candidate for a utopian colony that could fulfill the heretofore unrealized Peruvian ambitions of the English crown. It is perhaps fitting that the colonialist moment that produced an agent like Gilbert would send him off on a quest for a place that, quite literally was a non-place, and that in this profound utopian gesture of heterological misrecognition, the modern eclipse of place as a meaningful category would commence.

2.3 From Place to Property

2.3.I: Of Maps and Clocks

There are two technologies that I use every day that, in the early-modern period, radically changed the Western relationship to place: maps and clocks. As Michel de Certeau points out, the map elevates one and "transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes."[53] In this elevated perspective, it is easy to lose track of the particular demands and gifts of our place-world and to begin to imagine that mastery and possession are fitting and achievable ways of relating to place. The elevated gaze of a map abstracts the viewer's body from its place and, in fact, homogenizes place into space that is awaiting to be defined and demarcated by the elevated gaze.

Maps, in the so-called Age of Discovery, not only provided a homogenized picture of space for the would-be colonizing powers to occupy, they also produced space according to the colonial desire. In 1494, Portugal and Spain ratified the Treaty of Tordesilla, which, along with the papal bull

[52] "Ptolemy's World Map," accessed October 19, 2021, https://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item126360.html.
[53] Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 3rd edition (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 92.

of 1493 *Inter Caetera*, divided the world of the Atlantic between Spanish and Portuguese influence. Everything West of the meridian that was described as to "be made straight and as nearly as possible the said distance of three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands,"[54] was to be under Spanish control, while everything to the East was Portuguese territory. Crucially, this description lacked the specificity of a precise degree of longitude, for while it was possible to calculate latitude at the time, there had yet to be a precise way of measuring longitude developed for use at sea. The solution to this imprecision would come quite late with the invention of the marine chronometer in the 18th century by John Harrison, though it had been anticipated since the late 17th century by several thinkers.[55]

In the meantime, this imprecision would play itself out in the cartography of the 16th century as we saw with the fundraising efforts of Humphrey Gilbert.[56] Maps of the period would show the coast of North America variously closer or further from Europe depending on whether their purpose was to persuade reluctant monarchs or to guide actual sailors.[57] Maps of the American coast-line would often extend precariously to the East, thus showing significant Northern territories on the Portuguese side of the Treaty line, outside of Spanish jurisdiction and therefore vulnerable to French and English colonization, with Portugal's centres of power so far away. The English cartographer, John Dee, in his map-making efforts in support of Gilbert's expedition for Norumbega was critically important in depicting a land that was unoccupied, outside of the Spanish sphere of influence, and free from island impediments (an ironic move, given that Gilbert's

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[54] Frances Gardiner Davenport, "Treaty between Spain and Portugal Concluded at Tordesillas; June 7, 1494" (Washington, DC : The Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917, SCHEME=ISO8601 1998), §3, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th_century/mod001.asp.

[55] For the story of John Harrison see Dava Sobel, *Longitude : The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time* (New York : Penguin, 1996); See also Wolfgang Köberer, 'On the First Use of the Term "Chronometer"', *The Mariner's Mirror* 102, no. 2 (2 April 2016): 203–6, https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.2016.1167400.

[56] Nate Probasco, "Cartography as a Tool of Colonization: Sir Humphrey Gilbert's 1583 Voyage to North America *," *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (2014): 426, https://doi.org/10.1086/677407.

[57] Probasco, 428, see also 432.

expedition would lose a number of ships on just such impediments). Dee's cartographic vision did not just describe a space for English colonization, it helped cultivate the desire for colonization by the way he chose to depict the *terra incognita* of Norumbega and its surroundings. English colonizers entered into the territory a century late after it had already been 'legally' divided, and yet, within decades would come to be the dominant power in the region.[58]

Eventually however, while the world-creating and propagandistic effects of this age of cartography had their uses, the pragmatic realities of needing to know where one was at sea began to be felt with particular urgency. In 1707, an English fleet crashed into the Scilly Islands after losing their place at sea due to fog, costing the lives of two thousand men and four ships.[59] The British government eventually responded by passing a bill that created an award of twenty thousand pounds for the invention of some means of determining longitude at sea. The solution would elude scientists for another 50 years, but eventually, Richard Harrison would create the marine chronometer, a device that determined the precise longitude by means of determining the difference in local time from that of Greenwich Mean Time. As Casey has observed, Harrison's "winning logic was this: when lost in space, turn to time. In other words, *where* one was became equivalent to *when* one was…The measure of space was taken by time."[60]

This 18th century eclipse of space by time provides a convenient end bracket to the heterological 'Age of Exploration'. Long gone is any notion of place as an intelligible relation of body and land or seascape. Unlike the seafaring Polynesian waymakers of the Pacific, European seafarers never managed to learn to inhabit seascapes as intelligible place-worlds that could be

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[58] Probasco, 464; Davenport, "Treaty between Spain and Portugal Concluded at Tordesillas; June 7, 1494." English lawyers sought to get around the Spanish claim by arguing that they had not taken possession through the building of settlements, see Nathan Probasco, "Researching North America: Sir Humphrey Gilbert's 1583 Expedition and a Reexamination of Early Modern English Colonization in the North Atlantic World," (Doctoral Thesis, University of Nebraska, 2013), 36.

[59] Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, Second edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 3.

[60] Casey, 6.

navigated by all the senses of taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight.[61] The rise of modern space-time is ultimately the endpoint of the refused invitation to intimacy that the colonialist moment engendered. The marine chronometer provided 'civilised' and 'modern' Europeans a mechanical and mathematical pretext for completing the homogenizing view of the cartographer. This allowed for complete detaching of bodies from place, that established the frictionless world of free-flowing capital that characterizes the junkspace of our current age.[62] But the hegemony of modern absolute space-time is not simply arrived at through the practices of cartographers and the tinkering of clockmakers. The philosophers and theologians had their say as well, and to appreciate the modern victory of space-time, it is important to glance back to the high Middle Ages to understand the terms of the debate.

2.2.I.i: The Condemnation of Paris and Divine Omnipotence

As I will argue in the next chapter, contemporary recoveries of a Christian theology of place are characterized by their Christocentrism. In these 20th and 21st century recoveries of place as a theological category, it has been by way of the embodied Godman, Jesus of Nazareth. This is a significant corrective, because it must be stressed that the eclipse of place by infinite space in the Western tradition was also a theological achievement, but one that had profound repercussions on the Christian ability to speak intelligibly about place at all. The late medieval and early modern period saw significant changes around the understanding of space and place.[63] As scholastic theologians worked out the reception of Aristotelian spatial categories in the late middle ages, the nature of space was conceived in relation to the divine attributes, particularly divine omnipotence and divine omnipresence, sometimes known as divine immensity.[64] As Casey observes, the

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[61] Casey, 26ff.
[62] Rem Koolhaas, "Junkspace," *October* 100, no. Obsolescence (Spring 2002): 175–90.
[63] Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, 1968; Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*; Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 75–129.
[64] Edward Grant, "The Effect of the Condemnation of 1277," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Norman Kretzmann et al., 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 537.

theological *Weltanschauung* of the period was characterized by a preoccupation with spatial infinity, for "…if God is limitless in power, then His presence in the universe at large must also be unlimited. Divine ubiquity thus entails spatial infinity."[65]

With the recovery of Aristotelian physics in medieval theology and the inclusion of newly translated texts into the curriculum at the University of Paris, there came a series of questions about place.[66] What is the place of Earth in the cosmos? What is the place of the heavens? Is a void possible? Can God move the world to a different place, and if so, what would be in the place where the world formerly was?[67] Casey ties the exploration of infinite space as a potential answer to these puzzles to the Condemnations of Paris in 1277.[68] Casey notes that Article 34 of the Condemnations reads: "That the first cause [i.e., God] could not make several worlds."[69] For, Bishop Tempier reasoned that, given God's omnipotence, there is no reason God could not make worlds other than this world. Edward Grant adds,

> Articles 34 and 49 also made it appear plausible to suppose that an infinite empty space existed beyond our world. For if God did make other worlds, empty space would intervene between them; and if God moved the world rectilinearly not only would an empty space be left behind but also the world would move into and out of other empty spaces that lay beyond.

The effect of these Condemnations led to the prioritization of God's absolute power in the following centuries and it is the legacy of this tension between the prioritization of God's absolute power and the ongoing reception and dissemination of Aristotelian categories of physics that would set the stage for the rise of theories of absolute space in the 17th century.[70] It is to this period, and particularly to the work of Henry More, Isaac Newton, and John Locke, that I now turn.

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[65] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 77.
[66] Casey, 106–7.
[67] Casey, 103.
[68] Casey, 107; Edward Grant, *A Source Book in Medieval Science* (Harvard University Press, 1974), 45ff.
[69] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 108.
[70] Grant, "The Effect of the Condemnation of 1277," 539.

2.3.II: The 'other' More

It is an oft-repeated joke that theology is nothing more than quibbling over how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, but it is equally as often forgotten where this joke originated. It was Henry More, in his treatise *The Immortality of the Soul,* that argued that it was plain that the soul has dimensions, and this plain truth should be worth

> taking notice of, that it may stop the mouths of them that, not without reason, laugh at those unconceivable and ridiculous fancies of the Schools; that first rashly take a way (sic) all *Extension* from Spirits, whether Soules or Angels, and then dispute how many of them booted and spur'd may dance on a needles point at once.[71]

While most of us grin and nod bashfully when the dancing angel joke is brought up, I think it is worth pausing to consider what point More is actually making. Early in his career, More was enthusiastic about the new Cartesian science and sought to synthesize it with Platonism as a way of bringing Christian theology into harmony with the new philosophy. Early on, he even exchanged a series of letters with Rene Descartes before ultimately concluding that "Descartes' 'mechanical pretensions' [were] basically prejudicial to religion."[72] While More's disagreements with Descartes would become quite expansive, for my purposes, I want to focus on his disagreement with Descartes over Descartes' dualism. More rejected Descartes' radical opposition of a purely spiritual soul with a purely material body. More's rejection was based on the objection that something which has no extension, a purely spiritual soul, could be joined to a purely material body, which is something that is solely extension.[73] As we saw in More's angels on a needle quip, More is quite concerned to preserve extension for spiritual entities. More worries that Descartes' insistence on extension as solely a property of bodies and his denial that spirits have any extension whatsoever leaves literally no 'place' for spirit, whether creaturely or divine, at all in the universe.[74] But instead of

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[71] Henry More, *The Immortality of the Soul, so Farre Forth as It Is Demonstrable from the Knowledge of Nature and the Light of Reason by Henry More ...* (London, England: Printed by J. Flesher, for William Morden, 1659), 342.
[72] C. Webster, 'Henry More and Descartes: Some New Sources', *The British Journal for the History of Science* 4, no. 4 (1969), 359-360.
[73] Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 96.
[74] Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, n.d., 118.

rejecting Descartes' conclusion that spatial extension is solely a property of material body outright, More ends up introducing some sort of category of spiritual body on to spiritual beings in order to show that they have extension, and thus a 'place' in the world. More writes,

> It seems, indeed, that God is an extended thing (*res*), as well as the Angel; and in general everything that subsists by itself, so that it appears that extension is enclosed by the same limits as the absolute essence of things, which however can vary according to the variety of these very essences. As for myself, I believe it to be clear that God is extended in His manner just because He is omnipresent and occupies intimately the whole machine of the world as well as its singular particles. How indeed could He communicate motion to matter, which He did once, and which, according to you, He does even now, if He did not touch the matter of the universe in practically the closest manner, or at least had not touched it at a certain time? Which certainly He would never be able to do if He were not present everywhere and did not occupy all the spaces. God, therefore, extends and expands in this manner; and is, therefore, an extended thing (*res*).[75]

More's concern is to preserve several key attributes of God. More sees a profound connection between God's omnipotence and God's omnipresence. For the movement of all bodies is, on some level, caused and directed by God's power, yet God's power is such that God's being is always and everywhere present in God's acts. Therefore, if the communication of God's goodness that sustains the universe is absolute, then God must be everywhere present in that universe, thus for More, God must be extended.

But why does More conclude that the coordination of the attributes of omnipresence and omnipotence must result in the radical extension of God's substance? As Koyré notes, More was not actually a very good physicist, rather, his doctrine of God derives from his intense study of Cabala.[76] Cabalistic mystics followed the rabbis in finding alternate names for God rather than risk using the tetragrammaton in a way that might possibly break the Third Commandment. In this tradition, alternate divine names proliferated, but a great many of them have cosmological or spatial

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[75] More, *Letter to Descartes* quoted in, Koyré, 96–97.
[76] Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*; Brian P. Copenhaver, "Jewish Theologies of Space in the Scientific Revolution: Henry More, Joseph Raphson, Isaac Newton and Their Predecessors," *Annals of Science* 37, no. 5 (September 1980): 489–548.

associations.[77] Of the most significant of these was the use of the Hebrew words *samayim* "heavens," *shekinah* "presence" and *maqom* "place" for God.[78] Place, in particular, became a favourite name for God, a tradition that actually exists in both Christian and Jewish mysticism, as both Philo and Dionysius read passages like Genesis 28:11 "he came to a certain place" and Exodus 24:10, which in the Septuagint reads "they saw the place where the God of Israel stood," to indicate a fundamental identification between place and God. The 'certain place' that Jacob comes to is simply God.[79]

This close identification of place and God would come to be interpreted through Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic spatial categories by Jewish philosophers and mystics in the Middle Ages. Four aspects of Aristotelian philosophy would be particularly helpful in this synthesis, "that place…is the inmost surface of the surrounding body; that no space or void exists; that outside the heavens nothing exists, neither place nor void nor time; and that the first heaven which moves all else is the greatest divinity."[80] According to Copenhaver, it was natural to understand this 'first heaven' with the tradition of God as the First mover, and so some "Neoplatonists came to think of God surrounding and limiting the world as if located at the outmost sphere."[81] Thus God became the place of the world, though the relation of God to the place of the world was far from settled.

Enter Henry More. More's interest in Cabalistic knowledge stemmed from an Ancient Christian tradition called *Prisca theologia* which had been a patristic invention to explain how the origins of all useful Greek ideas had Semitic and Biblical roots. The learned pagan philosophers of Hellas were cast as contemporaries of Moses, and, through the invention of stories of these sages sojourning into the east for wisdom, cast them as learning their philosophical systems from Jewish

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[77] Copenhaver, "Jewish Theologies of Space in the Scientific Revolution," 490–91.
[78] Copenhaver, 491; For a contemporary Christian reappropriation of this tradition, see Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology, Volume 2: The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Processions and Persons* (Fortress Press, 2020), 47f.
[79] Copenhaver, 'Jewish Theologies of Space in the Scientific Revolution', 496; cf. Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Mystical Theology and The Divine Names*, trans. C. E. Rolt, New edition (Mineola, N.Y: Dover Publications, 2004).
[80] Copenhaver, "Jewish Theologies of Space in the Scientific Revolution," 495.
[81] Copenhaver, 495.

teachers, although, in the hands of the Greeks, the pure teachings of Israel would be corrupted and perverted.[82] More's version of this came by way of Plutarch's *Life of Numa* wherein he found a rather curious link between Cabala, Pythagoras and the new heliocentric astronomy of his time. "Given the tradition that Numa's teacher was a barbarian greater and better than Pythagoras', it followed that the teacher must have been a Jew."[83]

More, having created for himself an idiosyncratic hermeneutic built out of the fragments of Cabalistic teaching that he had read, eventually carved out a position on God's relation to space that modified both Descartes and the Cabalistic tradition itself. In his letters to Descartes, he attacked the Cartesian identification of matter with extension, precisely because for More, all substance has extension, as we saw with the angels-on-pins quip, so therefore God, as spiritual substance, is extended and everywhere present. However, Cabala held that the world had been created in the *tzimtzum*, a space of withdrawal wherein God absences Godself to make room for the created world. Yet for More, this was intolerable, as it would violate divine omnipresence, which was the main reason he insisted on the infinite extension of spiritual substance in the first place. Thus, More makes the fateful move to identify God's infinite extension with the infinite extension of space, moving beyond Descarte's 'indefinite' extension of space and fully embracing the coincidence between Divinity's infinite extension and the infinite extension of space.[84]

2.3.III: Isaac Newton and God the Dominator

Isaac Newton, like More was deeply influenced by the Cabalistic identification of Place, *maqom*, with God. As Casey notes,

> In an 'avertissement au lecteur' that Newton intended to accompany the publication of Samuel Clarke's letters to Leibniz, we read that 'the Hebrews called God *makom* or *place* and the Apostle tells us that he is not far from any of us for in

[82] Copenhaver, 498.
[83] Copenhaver, 518.
[84] For a more positive assessment of this development by More, see Jonathan Lyonhart, "A Philosophical Reappraisal of Henry More's Theory of Divine Space," May 1, 2022, https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/325202.

> him we live and move and have our being, putting *place* by a figure for him that is in all place.' As God is a place for us, He is in all places here below.[85]

God is thus, for Newton, the 'place' of the world, but crucially, not in the same way as for More.[86] Opponents of Newton seized on comments in the *Opticks*, first published in 1704, wherein Newton makes an analogy between the body and God's relationship to the spatial reality of the world, saying of God that God is "a powerful ever-living Agent, who being in all Places, is more able by his Will to move the Bodies within his boundless uniform Sensorium, and thereby to form and reform the Parts of the Universe, than we are by our Will to move the Parts of our own Bodies."[87] Ignoring the fact that Newton immediately follows up this quote with an insistence that we should in no way "consider the World as the Body of God, or the several Parts thereof" nevertheless, by using this particular analogy for how God relates to the absolute and infinite space of Newton's physics, it is not inconceivable that critics might see here a similar collapse between the extended spiritual 'body' of God and the infinite space of the universe as is suggested at much more strongly in More.

Clearly, this confusion among Newton's critics was of concern to him for in 1713, Newton added the *General Scholium* to his *Principia* as a theological addendum to his work and a clarification of the precise relationship between God's infinite and the infinite of space. In the *Scholium*, Newton carefully distinguishes the universe from God by way of an appeal to an argument from design. After surveying the intricacies and beauty of the fixed systems of the universe, Newton concludes that this system "could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."[88]

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[85] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 149.
[86] There is some evidence that Newtonians and Moreists were grouped together as making the same kind of error by Leibniz, see Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, 207–8. However, from Newton's own writings, it seems that he is up to something distinct.
[87] Isaac Newton, *Opticks: Or, A Treatise of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections and Colours of Light*, Fourth Edition (London: Printed for William Innys at the West End of St. Paul's, 1730), 403.
[88] Isaac Newton, *Newton's Principia: The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, trans. Andrew Motte (New York: Daniel Adee, 1845), 504.

It is helpful here to say a bit about Newton's doctrine of God. What should first be said is that Newton was a very sophisticated reader of scripture along with being an extremely astute scientific mind. However, there are two contextual issues that helpfully frame the concerns that shaped Newton's theological project that are worth outlining briefly. First, in the latter half of the 17th century, and getting particularly heated by the 1690s, Catholic polemicists were attacking Protestant Biblicism by trying to prove that Protestants were committed to an anti-Trinitarian theology because Trinity is not a biblical concept on a strict biblicist set of criteria.[89] The challenge, by these Catholic polemicists, was that if Protestants could not defend the Trinity on biblicist grounds, then they were forced to either admit that the Magisterium was needed as a source of authority for theology or that the anti-Trinitarians were correct, at which point Protestants would be forced into admitting heresy. One of the English Protestant responses to this challenge was to be found among the latitudinarian clergy who advocated for broad toleration of doctrine within the Church of England and only asked that the faithful affirm a general set of principles concerning "God's existence, the divine authority of Scripture, Jesus' Messiahship, the moral precepts delivered in the Bible, and reward and punishment in the afterlife."[90] This latitudinarian position relegated questions like the doctrine of the Trinity to a secondary status of things disagreeable, thus escaping the horns of the Roman Catholic dilemma.

The second, and perhaps more significant issue for Newton, follows from the problem I already discussed in the first half of this chapter, the heterological processing of difference. Specifically, by the late 17th century, there was a real awareness of the range of religious diversity on option in the world. Some opted to explain this by way of theories of polygenesis as was found in

[89] Diego Lucci, *John Locke's Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 16.
[90] Lucci, 17.

the work of Isaac de La Peyrere, particularly in his book *Prae-Adamitae* or 'Men before Adam.'[91] However, this was rejected by most and the dominant belief continued to be that all human beings descended from Adam.[92] In the face of this religious and ethnic pluralism, the familiar tool of *Prisca theologia* was deployed. As already noted in my discussion of Henry More, *prisca theologia* had a long tradition in Christian though as a way of 'baptizing' pagan thought by showing how it really derived from Jewish sources. However, in the context of colonial modernity, this form of reasoning was transformed and expanded beyond just the proximate influence of classical antiquity to posit an ancient 'pure' religion of the 'true God' that all contemporary religions were descended, and in some way, deviant from.[93] This kind of God is the God that Newton seeks to uncover in the Scriptures.

Newton was truly a Nicodemite, and wrote in such a way that his true theological beliefs are hard to pinpoint, but as Stephen Snobelen points out, "Newton was in fact a greater heretic than previously thought, yet by no means a deist, freethinker or anti-scripturalist."[94] As I have already pointed out, the latitudinarian mood of the time allowed for a fair degree of toleration of anti-trinitarian theologies within the structures of the Church of England, but it was still not politically expedient to publicly out oneself as a heretic. While Newton has at times been thought to be a deist, particularly since many of his students would go on to promote deism in the 18th century,[95] Snobelen points to well-worn neo-Arian and Socinian texts in Newton's library as one line of evidence that while Newton was undoubtedly an anti-trinitarian, he was not a deist.[96] This is quite visible in the

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[91] Isaac de La Peyrère, *Praeadamitae* (frommann-holzboog, 2019); Terence D. Keel, "Religion, Polygenism and the Early Science of Human Origins," *History of the Human Sciences* 26, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 3–32, https://doi.org/10.1177/0952695113482916; James E. Force, "Newton's God of Dominion: The Unity of Newton's Theological, Scientific, and Political Thought," in *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, Archives Internationales D'Histoire Des Idées/International Archives of the History of Ideas (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1990), 9, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-009-1944-0_5.
[92] Keel, "Religion, Polygenism and the Early Science of Human Origins," 7.
[93] Force, "Newton's God of Dominion," 10–13.
[94] Stephen Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Heretic: The Strategies of a Nicodemite," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 32 (December 1, 1999): 383, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007087499003751.
[95] For example, Moltmann takes Newton to represent the deist option in early modernity and Spinoza to represent pantheism, both being characterizations that lack nuance as to their actual views, see Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 98.
[96] Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Heretic," 385.

Scholium, for while I have already noted that Newton's picture of the universe suggests to him the necessity of a designer, the God that Newton envisages here is not one who simply sets things up and leaves. No, for what constitutes divinity for Newton, what the word "God" signifies, is not some question of divine essence or nature, rather "God" names an office of dominion.

> The word God usually signifies Lord; but every lord is not a God. It is the dominion of a spiritual being which constitutes a God: a true, supreme, or imaginary dominion makes a true, supreme, or imaginary God And from his true dominion it follows that the true God is a living, intelligent, and powerful Being; and, from his other perfections, that he is supreme, or most perfect.[97]

For Newton, it is the persistent exercise of dominion by God everywhere and always that holds the universe together. And it is by way of this perfect and totalizing act of dominion that the relationship between divine infinity and spatial infinity holds together – Newton escapes the collapse of God's 'body' into the spatiality of creation that More falls prey to. Newton thus modifies More's concern. Instead of needing to find a way to have a 'place' for God in the universe that ends up collapsing into an incoherent ubiquity, Newton is able to maintain a kind of ontological 'non-competitive' relation between creaturely being and divine being such that there is no risk of divinity displacing or identifying wholly with creation. But he does this in heterodox fashion by way of an insistence on a relation of domination. God's acts are identical with God's being, so for Newton, it is by way of reflecting on what he identifies as the primary mark of divinity, dominion, that he reasons that God is always and everywhere exercising dominion, and through the exercise of that dominion, is made present to the world.[98] So, Newton is able to defend the perfect transcendence of God and still make a 'place' for God in the world, but only by relating every aspect of the world to God by way of the disciplining force of divine dominion.

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[97] Newton, *Newton's Principia: The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, 504.
[98] Newton, 505–6.

This relationship of divine dominion to the world allows Newton to preserve a basically Aristotelian concept of place, which in Newton's idiom is defined, "a place is a part of space that a thing fills adequately" and "a body is that which fills a place."[99] But unlike Aristotle, the world is not filled with places that are all pressed against each other, void is a live possibility for Newton.[100] The significance of this development will be more fully developed by John Locke, but for now, we should note that while the movement of bodies from place to place can be explained by natural, empirical forces like gravity, what stands behind them is the dominating power of God. The world is no longer, as it was for Aristotle, entirely filled with bodies, nor is it strictly 'mechanistic,' in the sense that movement is determined wholly by the collision of bodies, rather, extrinsic 'forces' like gravity become the mediating creaturely mechanism by which divine dominion regulates the world. Place, while still associated with body, is becoming a mere mechanism of determining location within the matrix of the sovereign exercise of divine dominion.

I began this chapter by affirming with Willie Jennings that the colonialist moment represents a profound rejection of intimacy and now here in the thought of Isaac Newton, we discover an intimate relation between God and the physics of the universe. But this 'intimate' relationship is a relationship of domination. God is intimately involved in the world and present to it, but only and always through an exercise of logics of possession, dominance, and power. In the final section of this chapter, I turn to the work of Newton's friend and interlocutor, John Locke, to show how this theology of a divine dominator informs Locke's colonial theory of property and place. For Locke will retain a simple concept of place that functions much the same way as Newton's, as a way of locating a thing within a broader matrix of space, but Locke will jettison the connection of bodies to place – transforming 'place' into a merely convenient category for keeping track of property.

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[99] Isaac Newton, "De Gravitatione et Aequipondio Fluidorum," trans. H. Stein, 2, accessed November 9, 2021, http://strangebeautiful.com/other-texts/newton-de-grav-stein-trans.pdf.
[100] Newton, 5.

2.3.III: John Locke

The story of settler colonialism and its impact on our conceptions of place and property often begins with John Locke.[101] Yet in the story I am trying to tell, Locke is not so much the founder of this tradition, as the great synthesizer of almost two centuries of English heterological processing of the so-called New World. Locke famously disliked religious disputes, but much of his work was deeply influenced by the scriptural and theological imaginaries that he had inherited from his Puritan and Anglican forebearers.[102] Locke has been studied from many different angles, but in recent years, there has been a 'theological turn' in Locke studies, particularly in the work of Jeremy Waldron, Nathan Guy, and Diego Lucci.[103] In what follows, I take guidance from this school of interpretation as well as from critics of Locke's colonial entanglement like Barbara Arneil, and James Tully.[104]

In the *First Treatise* one can see the influence of the tradition of Christian scriptural reasoning in his discussion of the rights of Adamic dominion.[105] This tradition does not begin with John Locke but rather emerges from debates between the Franciscan order and Pope John XXII in the late Middle Ages in what has become known as the Franciscan spiritualist controversy.[106] At the heart of this controversy was the Franciscan belief that they should live in perpetual Apostolic poverty,

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[101] For example, see Yogi Hale Hendlin, "From Terra Nullius to Terra Communis: Reconsidering Wild Land in an Era of Conservation and Indigenous Rights," *Environmental Philosophy* 11, no. 2 (2014): 141–74; Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865*, 1st ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[102] Geoffrey Gorham, 'Locke on Space, Time and God', *Ergo, an Open Access Journal of Philosophy* 7, no. 20201214 (10 March 2020): 226. Though reluctant to engage in religious controversies, Locke nevertheless is a deeply theological thinker, opening his Second Treatise with an extended quotation from Hooker's Ecclesiastical Laws and borrows extensively from Puritan exegetical traditions, as I show below.

[103] Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Paul E. Sigmund, "Jeremy Waldron and the Religious Turn in Locke Scholarship," *The Review of Politics* 67, no. 3 (2005): 407–18; Lucci, *John Locke's Christianity*; Diego Lucci, "Locke and the Trinity," *Studi Lockiani. Ricerche Sull'età Moderna* 1 (December 21, 2020): 11–38; Nathan Guy, *Finding Locke's God: The Theological Basis of John Locke's Political Thought* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

[104] Barbara Arneil, "Trade, Plantations, and Property: John Locke and the Economic Defense of Colonialism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 55, no. 4 (1994): 591–609; Barbara Arneil, "John Locke, Natural Law and Colonialism," *History of Political Thought* 13, no. 4 (1992): 587–603; James Tully, *A Discourse on Property: John Locke and His Adversaries*, Revised ed. edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[105] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Ch. III, §15f.

[106] O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," 2004, 73–96.

allowing only the barest of property in the sense of a use right but not in the sense of ownership (*dominium*).[107] Pope John XXII responded with the bull *Quia vir reprobus* that insisted that humanity owns things in the same way that God owns things, absolutely.[108] This was a departure from the Augustinian teaching on property that held private property was a remedial institution inaugurated by the Fall and as such, is a creature of human law, not divine law.[109] For Pope John, property was not a post-lapsarian remedial institution, but rather something that humanity has because dominion is proper to God and by being made in God's image, a certain analogous dominion is proper to us.[110] The Augustinian tradition produced a limiting factor on the acquisition of property as no amount of property could be reserved to one person such that there would be no property available for use for the poor.[111] In Locke's first treatise on government he takes up this ancient debate on the nature of Adamic dominion against those who would restrict Adamic dominion strictly to the right of kings. Locke's opponent, Robert Filmer argued that Adamic dominion was passed down monarchically through the line of kings and that it was the king alone that had rights to property and these rights were absolute.[112] Filmer's position can actually be found in a selective reading of Augustine, for in *Tractate VI on the Gospel of John*, Augustine argues against the Donatists saying that "God has distributed these same human rights through the emperors and kings of the world."[113] Locke, however, disagrees with Filmer on this narrow reading of property rights as belonging solely to the line of Kings and points out that all of Adam's descendants share in the equal rights of dominion

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[107] Takashi Shogimen, ed., "The Poverty Controversy," in *Ockham and Political Discourse in the Late Middle Ages*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: Fourth Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 46.
[108] Melanie Brunner, "Pope John XXII and the Michaelists," *Church History and Religious Culture* 94, no. 2 (2014): 197–226.
[109] Richard J. Dougherty, "Catholicism and the Economy: Augustine and Aquinas on Property Ownership," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 6, no. 2 (2003): 481.
[110] Brunner, "Pope John XXII and the Michaelists," 199.
[111] O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," 2004, 87ff.
[112] "Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings," accessed February 6, 2023, https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/filmer-patriarcha-or-the-natural-power-of-kings; John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, vol. V, The Works of John Locke (London: Printed for Thomas Tegg; W. Sharpe and Son; G. Offor; G. and J. Robinson; J. Evans and Co., 1823), Chap. III.
[113] Dougherty, "Catholicism and the Economy," 481.

granted by God and that this right is inalienable precisely because all humans are of "Adam's line and posterity."[114] Locke's disagreement with Filmer is based on a close reading of Genesis - he denies that God gave a grant of dominion to Adam immediately upon his creation, pointing out that the original grant of government does not appear until Genesis 3:16, "…and he shall rule over you" and thus Filmer is wrong to insist that "as soon as Adam was Created he was Monarch of the World."[115] Locke goes on at length in the *First Treatise* to show that the right of property is not granted to Adam exclusively by any particular donation or acknowledgment of his unique dominion, rather, for Locke, all who share in the same nature as Adam, that being the whole of humanity, share in the same natural freedom and rights and privileges of the exercise of power and dominion, and that this is inalienable to human nature itself, not the sole prerogative of Tyrants and Absolute Monarchs.[116]

Locke's egalitarian understanding of the rights of all humans by virtue of their shared nature with Adam was likely shaped by his Puritan upbringing.[117] For the Puritans had put a version of this reasoning to good use in their colonizing of North America. In John Cotton's 1629 sermon "Gods Promise to his Plantation," Cotton had argued that God provides a place for his people in one of three ways.[118] First, God might cast out the enemies of God's people by lawful war with the inhabitants, but this use of war must be specifically commanded by God or else it was not allowed. Second, he might give favour to a foreign people in the eyes of any native people that might already live in a land. The reference given here is of Abraham obtaining the field of Machpelah in the land of Canaan during his sojourn there as well as the gift of the land of Goshen to the sons of Jacob by Pharaoh. Third and finally, when God makes a country void or empty a of inhabitants, there is

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[114] Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1988, 222.
[115] Locke, 152.
[116] Locke, 190.
[117] Wm. A. Dunning, "The Political Philosophy of John Locke," *Political Science Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1905): 229.
[118] John Cotton, 'God's Promise to His Plantation', in *The Kingdom, the Power, & the Glory: The Millenial Impulse in Early American Literature*, ed. Reiner Smolinski (Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing, 1998).

therefore liberty for the sons of Adam or Noah to come and inhabit without buying it or asking permission.[119] Therefore, we have here three principles for colonial settlement the first is right of conquest the 2nd is right by way of sale or friendship treaty and the third is by way of the legal doctrine of *terra nullius* wherein, if there is empty land, there is freedom for anyone to come and settle.

It would be a mistake to stop with these three principles. John Cotton pushes forward and articulates via scriptural reasoning what will come to characterise Locke's account of property in Chapter V of the Second Treatise. Cotton points out that while land may be vacant and that might be a place where men might go to settle, the settling in this vacant place requires some occupation, some taking possession of it in order to fulfil the original grant of dominion "given to Adam and his posterity in Paradise, Gen. 1.28 'Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.'"[120] Taking possession of this land, Cotton argues, is best understood through the biblical example again of the patriarchs digging wells in the soil of the land that they were given in the land of Canaan.[121] By mixing their labour with the soil the patriarchs bestowed culture in husbandry upon it and thus they are fulfilling the mandate to Adam to multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it so that from the common grant of land that is given to all of Adams descendants, by the mixing of labour with it as seen in the example of the Patriarchs digging wells (cf. Genesis 21 & 25), land might be transformed into private property reserved for the unmolested use of the one that mixes his labour with it. Now if another nation were to come without some special 'Commission from heaven' and to drive them off it, as the inhabitants of the land of Canaan did to Abraham in driving him forth from some of his wells, this would be a crime and would be just cause for war.[122] It is not surprising then that by

[119] Cotton, 4.
[120] Cotton, 5.
[121] Cotton, 5.
[122] Cotton, 5–6.

1636 the Puritans would be at war with the Pequot using precisely this line of argumentation for their rationale for war.[123] Even though the land had originally belonged to the indigenous peoples of that land, because they had not taken proper occupation in possession of it in the form of mixing their labour with it, the land was considered vacant, without husbandry or culture.[124] So, the Puritans settled and occupied and 'possessed' the land by cultivating it and making it more productive in a European sense. When indigenous peoples 'invaded' that property that had been removed from the Commons and made private, there was then 'justification' for war. Now, this all happened in the 1630s and John Locke would not sit down to write his *Second Treatise* until the 1670-80s, yet one can see the legacy of scriptural interpretation he is inheriting and how this had already played out in the Puritan's heterological processing of the New World. Locke is thus an inheritor of a theological understanding of how the mixing of one's labour with the land creates a 'true possession' that removes land from the common grant by God to all Adamites and establishes private dominion.

What Locke adds to this inherited discourse on the establishment of private property is two elements, a radical self-ownership that elevates the inherited scriptural discourse of property to a conclusion of 'reason,' and an empiricist frame of quantifying value for justifying the creation of private property. For Locke, one owns oneself, and because of this self-ownership one owns one's labour.[125] Thus, the mixing of one's labour with the land extends this ownership of oneself to that object of one's work and thus if someone were to come along and take it unjustly this would be to place one in a state of slavery for the period of time during which the work transpired to transform that object. Because for Locke, slavery was irrational save in the case of conquest this account of

[123] John Mason and Paul Royster, "A Brief History of the Pequot War (1736)," *IN TRODUCTION.*, n.d., 27.
[124] This way of possessing property as a key strategy of settler colonialism has been admirably articulated here, Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive*, 2015.
[125] Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1988, 286.

self-ownership became the basis for his account of property and became a rationale for invoking the use of war powers if property were infringed upon by the original indigenous inhabitants of the land. By supplementing the traditional interpretation of the origins of property as arising from the example of Adam and the Patriarchs with this appeal to the axiom of self-ownership, Locke is able to create a powerful secular argument for enclosure that rests on 'reason' and not an appeal to divine revelation.

Locke supplemented this account of self-ownership with a secondary empiricist argument that evaluated the difference between the 'waste land' of the commons and the 'productive land' of settler husbandry, by way of a calculus of utility. In Locke's accounting, 10 acres removed from the Commons by an agriculturalist when cultivated and made productive would reap 100 to 1000-fold more benefits for humanity than it had in the state of nature.[126] As a result, far from diminishing the common grant of land from God to all of Adam's children, according to Locke the creation of private property, in fact, increases the bounty available to all of human society! (This is perhaps the first articulation of trickle-down economics, albeit in a colonial frame.)

However, John Locke was not simply the colonial synthesiser of a centuries-old Christian discourse on the nature of property. Locke was also an inheritor of the tradition of spatial reasoning that had developed among the Cambridge Platonists and as I have (very sketchily) discussed above, most notably in the work of Henry More and Isaac Newton. It was likely John Locke and Isaac Newton that Leibnitz had in mind "when he inveighed in 1716 against 'real absolute space the idol of some modern Englishman.'"[127] Locke's mature thought on the nature of absolute space can be

[126] Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1823, V:294.
[127] Gorham, "Locke on Space, Time and God," 219.

found in A*n Essay Concerning Human Understanding* wherein Locke describes space or what he calls the simple idea of space as the distance between any two given points.[128]

Indeed, when he gives an account of what he calls the 'common notion of place' he describes it as a relation of distance "betwixt anything and any two or more points which are considered as keeping the same distance one with another and so considered as at rest."[129] Locke considers the example of chessmen on a chessboard. We say that the chess pieces are in the same place if they are unmoved on the board regardless of whether that board is in a ship that itself is changing places in respect of more remote bodies yet the chessmen remain in the same place due to their reference betwixt one another.[130] Thus, for John Locke place is nothing else but a relative position of anything within the larger matrix of an infinitely extended space. Notice how this 'relative position' follows the Newtonian understanding of place within the larger matrix of infinite space, but no longer requires a concept of body to fill any given place. For Locke, place is mere position. In this simple account of place, 'place' is largely a function of distance. A thing is said to have changed place if it changes position regarding some other point. It is largely a pragmatic description for communicating the distance of some point to an arbitrary referent. Hidden in this account of place is a profound logic of possession that we see at work in his concept of property. It is a correlative of the logic of utilitarian measurement found in his calculation of the good of turning commons into private property. For Locke, as Casey observes, "Place is what human beings create when (for largely utilitarian motives) they set about determining the distance between the positions of things."[131]

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[128] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke: An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Book I, Chapter XIII.
[129] Locke, II, xiii, 7.
[130] Locke, II, xiii, 8.
[131] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 165.

The reduction of place to a function of measurement echoes the empirical frame that Locke brings to his discussion of property. What is particularly striking about Locke's account of place is that it has completely abandoned the traditional connection between body and place that even Newton preserved in some fashion. 'Place' is not something occupied by body, it is rather a pragmatic description that men create to discuss the relative distance of some point or other. Place, for Locke, is a rather arbitrary and pragmatic way of navigating the homogenized absolute space that undergirds his system.

It is likely that Locke's acceptance of absolute space followed the publication of Newton's *Principia*, as we know that Locke read this book shortly after its publication in 1687.[132] Locke, writing an anonymous review for the *Bibliotheque Universelle & Historique*, wrote that this book (the *Principia*) was never enough to be admired.[133] In fact, while Locke's own physics had tended toward a more mechanistic system, in the sense of having movement explained by the mechanical action of bodies moving against each other, Newton's theory of gravity so impressed him that he later changed his mind to agree with Newton.[134]

Like Newton, Locke's position is not simply a scientific conclusion, but rather a model for physics that arises from deep theological concerns about the omnipotence of God. Locke bases his absolute view of space on three considerations. First, motion is impossible without void space.[135] Second, Locke seeks to maintain God's omnipotence by arguing that God can indeed destroy any part of the creation during which time "it is evident that the space that was filled by the annihilated body will still remain and will be a space without body" (*Essay* II, xiii, 21).[136] Finally, and this is his preferred basis of argument Locke seeks to preserve God's omnipresence. Locke reflects on Saint

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[132] Gorham, "Locke on Space, Time and God," 222.
[133] Gorham, 222.
[134] Andrew Janiak, "Isaac Newton," in *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Peter R. Anstey (Oxford University Press, 2013).
[135] Gorham, "Locke on Space, Time and God," 222.
[136] Gorham, 223.

Paul's confession that in him we live and move and have our being and he takes this to be quite a literal proclamation, as Gorham notes,

> Despite the coy tone, Locke clearly privileges the 'inspired' Pauline scripture which makes God's spatial presence a literal ground for infinite space rather than a mere relation among bodies. An important virtue of the argument from omnipresence is that it applies equally to God's immensity and eternity, as Locke emphasizes: "God, everyone allows, fills eternity, and tis hard to find a reason why anyone should doubt that he likewise fills immensity" (Essay II xv 3).[137]

Ultimately, for Locke, absolute, infinite space is again closely identified with divinity. Yet there is little evidence that Locke was as taken by the Cabalistic scriptural interpretations that motivated Newton and More's reading of Scripture on this question. Rather, his use of this scriptural reference is in service of another attempt to provide more rational supports for Christianity (note the similarity to his adaptation of the scriptural accounts of property). By emphasizing divine immensity and omnipresence, Locke is able to provide a fairly convincing argument for divine unicity. He accepts the premise that no two substances of the same kind can occupy the same place, so while there is no conflict between God's immensity and creation's creaturely integrity, God's omnipresence rules out the presence of any other gods. Hence, the oneness of God is assured.[138]

Locke does not seem to emphasize, as Newton does, the relationship of domination as being the key to divine omnipresence and the spatial infinity of the universe, but neither does he posit a univocity between God and the universe as More did. Divine immensity, for Locke, merely rules out the possibility of other gods. Yet because he ultimately comes around to Newton's account of gravity, Gorham suggests that Locke ends up committing himself to a position of persistent Divine intervention "at all points in pure space, whenever and wherever Newtonian bodies are subject to gravitational influence, that is, everywhere and always."[139] It follows that if God is acting in this way,

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[137] Gorham, 224.
[138] Gorham, 230–31.
[139] Gorham, 233.

then despite Locke's insistence on the priority of omnipresence as the essential divine attribute, it seems to be the case that both omnipresence for Locke, and the exercise of omnipotent dominion for Newton, and their relationship to the spatial infinity of the universe, ultimately rest on the premise that God is always and everywhere present with God's acts.

2.4 Conclusion

What can be seen in the changing spatial philosophy of the early modern period, and particularly in the 17th century English Protestant context is an overriding concern to preserve the omnipresence and omnipotence of God. This concern to preserve the primacy of these two attributes I have suggested draws its inspiration from the aftermath of the condemnations of Paris in the late 13th century and that the scholastic debates about God's power and what this entails for the relationship of God to the world created a situation in which metaphysical speculation caused a great deal of linguistic confusion. The driving concern for More and Locke, in particular, seems to be in articulating the way in which God in God's immensity fills and relates to and provides a cause of movement for the operations of this world. There seems to be a flattening out of causation that comes remarkably close to the univocity expressly endorsed in Spinoza's flattening out of all substance into the divine substance and the radical extension of substance being posited in a strictly pantheistic mode.[140]

There is a profound observation in the English grappling with the mystical interpretation of *maqom* yet insofar as it is driven in a strictly spatial direction *vis a vis* discussions of extension it ends up confusing the nature of god's immensity and relation to the world and opens the door to a flatly homogenised and dominated spatiality. Between Newton and Locke in particular, a radically unitary monotheism that emphasizes the divine attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence above all else leaves little room to continue to hold together bodies, place, and God in any kind of intimate unity.

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[140] Baruch Spinoza, "The Ethics," trans. Tom Sharpe, Project Gutenberg, accessed March 10, 2020, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3800/3800-h/3800-h.htm.

Instead, place is increasingly relegated to pragmatically referring to relative position in the task of determining property relations and any essential link between bodies and place comes to be severed.

I argue going forward that this mistaken embrace of a dominating monotheistic deity ultimately seems to rest on an insufficiently trinitarian account of God's being and as such God's relation to the created order. The issue is the intelligibility of God's action towards the world. Yet due to lingering categories from substance-metaphysics, it becomes very easy to slip between description of created entities like space and place and the divine attributes. This is a temptation that was deftly avoided by an earlier generation of Renaissance theologians, notably Cusanus, Bruno, and Descartes, yet their attempt to distinguish between the indeterminacy of space and God's infinity is largely abolished by the English inheritors of this tradition of spatial speculation.[141]

We might ultimately understand the collapse of place into property in the English philosophical theology of the late 17th, early 18th century as the end bracket to the period of English heterological reflection on the incomensurable difference of the New World. Thomas More's processing of the New World through the vision of Utopia carried within it the foreshadowing of this move in the exercise of dominion by Utopos, who enslaved the population of Abraxas alongside his own soldiers to produce the 'cut' that separated the island from the mainland, creating Utopia. How fitting, then, that by the time England was truly invested in building a colonial empire in the New World, the radically unitarian Lord of domination again arose in elite theology to serve as justification alongside the transformation of Indigenous places and bodies into property, that, in Utopian fashion, was to be for the 'benefit' of 'all'. I will return to considerations of Utopia, dominion, and the 'cut' in chapters six and seven, but for now, it is enough to note that ultimately, what seems to be lost in the various 17th and 18th century attempts to secure the various attributes of divinity is any connection between place and body. The eclipse of place by absolute space mirrors

[141] Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 117ff.

the eclipse of a relational Trinitarian God by a monotheistic God of the philosophers. Rather than be led by the intimate joining of the Holy Spirit into a place of reconciliation in the place of Christ's body, John Locke, at least, is given to describe place as purely an arbitrary exercise by men who need a convenient way to demarcate the location of property in the homogenized spatiality of the trans-Atlantic colonial frame.

Chapter 3: The Place of God

3.1 Introduction

Place and body are categories that have often been thought together. In Plato's *Timmaeus* place makes room for body.[1] For Aristotle, place is the "first unchangeable limit of that which surrounds"[2] the form of body. Key for both is the distinction of body from place – they are mutually dependent, but analytically separate concepts. As discussed in Chapter 2, the reception of these classical Greek accounts of space and place in the Christian Middle Ages led to a protracted set of debates around the power of God that ultimately culminated with the eclipse of place by space in the 17th century.[3] While figures like Descartes, More, and Newton all retained some concept of place as related to body, with John Locke as I argued in Chapter 2, the relationship of place to body is reduced to a mere accounting of bodies-as-property. Infinite absolute Space eclipses place in its importance and its relationship to either God or body increasingly became a secondary concern, if raised at all.[4]

In the previous chapter, I highlighted how early modern scholastic debates about God's relationship to place/space were worked out against the backdrop of the heterological processing of the so-called 'New World' in what Willie Jennings has called the 'colonialist moment.'[5] One of the striking features of these debates about God's relationship to space/place is their increasingly unitarian character. The question, philosophically, is considered abstractly as a question of how a classically perfect God can or does relate to space given characteristics like omnipotence, omnipresence, aseity, etc. In fact, the figures my previous chapter focused on most acutely, Newton

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[1] Casey, 32–35.
[2] Casey, 326.
[3] Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*.
[4] Casey has argued that Kant is an outlier here, whose recovery of place 'by way of body' sets the stage for early twentieth century phenomenological reflection on the relation of body and place. See Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 202–42.
[5] Jennings, *The Christian Imagination*, 60.

and Locke, were some form of heterodox unitarians.[6] What is lost sight of in these early modern debates parallels Jennings' observation of what is lost in the colonialist moment – the relationship between body and place. On the theo-philosophical level, a unitarian monotheism has little to say about the relationship of God to place as configured in the embodied God in Jesus of Nazareth. On the colonialist front, this was paralleled by the alienation of both land and body into property and abstracting the two from each other in such a way that bodies are forced to become a type of transportable place of being for the colonized. The reduction of place to the body-as-property disrupts the body from the network of relations that configured it in the land, in its proper place, and gives rise to the pervasive modern sense of displacement that I noted in the introduction to Chapter 2. My argument is that the exercise of colonial power upon bodies to reconfigure their relation to place in this way is paralleled by the loss in the philosophical theology of that period of a robust trinitarianism. The challenge for a contemporary theology of place is to overcome this colonial rupture of place and body, but to do so in a way that does not fetishize the body as such, but instead, resituates bodies in an understanding of place that affirms the intimate networks of bodily communication that constitutes creaturely existence.

In this chapter I provide a bit of an overview of different ways of theologizing place/space with particular attention to recent theologies of place that focus their account within the theological loci of Christology. I affirm the impulse to think about the relation of place and bodies that leads people to locate place as a Christological doctrine, but ultimately conclude that this Christological focus needs to be approached at a slant through the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. By reframing place pneumatologically, I set up possibilities for understanding the way the quality of 'in-ness' allows us

[6] Force, "Newton's God of Dominion"; Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Heretic"; Stephen Snobelen, "'God of Gods, and Lord of Lords': The Theology of Isaac Newton's General Scholium to the Principia," *Osiris* 16 (January 1, 2001): 169–208.

to make all sorts of important 'recognitions' that make possible a sort of stumbling faithfulness of 'going on' in the world.

3.2 The Christological Emphasis in Contemporary Theologies of Place

3.2.I A typology of Christian approaches to Place

The history of Christian theological reflection on place and God's relationship to place and space falls into some combination of four basic positions. 1. Place as solely a Creaturely category, 2. Place as the Creaturely point of contact with God, 3. Place as Creaturely and by analogy Divine, and 4. Place as the name and nature of God. First, place is a merely creaturely reality and cannot be applied to God at all without compromising divine aseity. Something like this worry animates a lot of the resistance in patristic theology to explicitly apply place as a category to God.[7] Second, while place may not apply to God in the immanent relations of the divine life, in the economic history of God, God relates to creatures always and necessarily in discrete places. Theologies of sacred place would tend to fall under this category, but it is also more generally a truism about the necessarily emplaced reality of creaturely existence and how we must relate to God. Thus, Pope Francis can conclude in *Laudato Si'* that "the history of our friendship with God is always tied to particular places."[8] The third position is to say that there is some kind of analogy between 'the place of God' and 'creaturely place'. This position is closely disciplined by the rules of analogical language, whatever place means for God does not import onto God the various limitations or deficiencies of the creaturely category of place, yet our ordinary concept of 'place' is still nevertheless instructive for whatever God's place might be. This modern analogical distinction between God's place and creaturely place seems to have its roots in the theology of Karl Barth and has been developed more thoroughly by recent German scholars such as Karsten Lehmkühler and Matthias D. Wüthrich.[9] The

[7] Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*.
[8] Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 84.
[9] Karsten Lehmkühler, "'But Will God Indeed Dwell on the Earth?' God and Space," *Modern Theology* 34, no. 3 (2018): 469–79;Matthias D. Wüthrich, *Raum Gottes: Ein systematisch-theologischer Versuch, Raum zu denken* (Vandenhoeck &

fourth and final position comes into Christian thought via both Christian mysticism and influences from Jewish Cabala which is to identify God with Place itself. This comes from an esoteric reading of Exodus 24:10 that goes back to at least Philo, which in the Septuagint is rendered "And they saw the place where the God of Israel stood." While our modern Bible translations rely on the Masoretic Text which reads "And they saw the God of Israel," Philo saw fit to back translate from the Greek variant to see *topos* standing in for the Hebrew word for place *maqom* and interpreted this as a mystical name for God.[10] As we saw in the thought of Henry More and Isaac Newton in the last chapter, this has at times been taken to mean that God is the "place" of the world in a way that collapses God into the world.[11] However, another possibility for thinking of God as the 'place' of the world could be developed as a way of articulating the humbler confession that everything that exists does so 'in' Christ (cf. Col. 1:16), and therefore 'in' God.

T. F. Torrance provides another helpful heuristic regarding Christian reflection on place in his book *Space, Time and Incarnation* that is somewhat different than the one I have outlined above. Reflecting on the various models of divine presence in the Eucharist from the Reformation, Torrance outlines four different Christian views on God's relationship to space/place, of which the first two can be understood as advocating a 'receptacle' spatiality, and the latter two as advocating a 'relational' spatiality.[12] Torrance uses the word space in a broader sense than I do in this thesis, and most of what he means by space in this heuristic is what I am calling 'place'.

Ruprecht, 2015); see also Elizabeth Jarrell Callender, "A Theology of Spatiality: The Divine Perfection of Omnipresence in the Theology of Karl Barth" (Doctoral, Dunedin, NZ, University of Otago, 2011).

[10] Copenhaver, "Jewish Theologies of Space in the Scientific Revolution," 496.

[11] Something akin to this cabalistic collapse of divine transcendence can also be seen in the univocity of Baruch Spinoza. Spinoza, "The Ethics." In fact, as I discuss further in the next chapter, it is against the univocity of Spinoza that Kant will eventually recover the relationship of place and body, see Michela Massimi, "Kant on the Ideality of Space and the Argument from Spinozism," in *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. James R. OShea (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 64–82.

[12] Torrance, 62-65.

The first view, Torrance identifies with the Thomist and Lutheran traditions in which space/place is a finite receptacle that God's presence can 'fill.'[13] This can be seen, according to Torrance in the Eucharistic doctrines of both transubstantiation and consubstantiation. In transubstantiation, God's essence replaces (displaces?) the essence of the bread and wine. The physical bodies of the sacramental hosts are containers, places, which one can point to as being loci of the presence of God. Luther's consubstantial understanding is slightly more awkward on Torrance's account. For Torrance, Luther tries to preserve creaturely integrity by denying that the creaturely essence of the host is displaced by the presence of God, yet he does not yet have an alternative way of thinking about place apart from the inherited scholastic/Aristotelian receptacle model that implies a conflict between the presence of God and the presence of the creature. Caught trying to affirm both creaturely integrity on the one hand and having nothing other than a receptacle notion of place, Luther is forced into the rather awkward position of asserting that the presence of God somehow comes 'with' rather than 'in' the Eucharist.[14]

The second view, according to Torrance, continues to accept a receptacle notion of space, but solves the competitive striving of creature and creator by making God-self the receptacle that everything exists 'in'. This view is associated, by Torrance, with Isaac Newton, and to a lesser extent, Spinoza. However, as I argued in the last chapter, while Newton et al. may have still been operating with an inherited scholasticism that preserved the receptacle picture of place from Aristotle, their own assertion of God as the place in which everything exists arose more from an appropriation of cabalistic reflection on the identity of God with *maqom* or place. God simply "is" the place of the world, but I think Torrance is right that this is combined with the Aristotelian receptacle view to

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[13] Torrance, 62.

[14] Torrance, 30, 62–63. However, it should be noted that Luther and Lutherans often use "in, with, and under" as a way to speak to presence of the body and blood of the resurrected Christ in the bread and wine. Luther draws upon the three-fold nominalist understandings of presence as definitive, circumscriptive and repletive to explain this in Luther's "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper (1528)" in Luther's Works : American Edition, Volume 37. See especially pp. 215-22

allow for the assertion of the universe as having infinite spatial extension as derived from God's own infinite extension. A generation earlier, Descartes had asserted that spatial extension was a category of material substance and had insisted that it was something distinct from God, but More-ists and Newtonians abandoned this distinction, thanks to their appropriation of cabalistic categories, and so were able to identify infinite spatial extension with the omnipresence of Divinity, albeit in different ways as I discussed in Chapter Two.[15]

The third view, which Torrance associates in ancient theology with Origen, and in more modern thought with E. A. Milne, regards "space and time as the rational medium through which God is revealed and through which, therefore, theological statements may be traced back objectively to their intelligible ground in the Being of God."[16] For Torrance, while Origen saw and attempted to clarify that this created a necessary relation between the rationality of nature and the transcendence of God, Milne embraces this "unitary theory of nature…Theologically it provided for Milne rational argumentation for God, but it meant the limitation of God since He is not free from a relation of necessity between His transcendent rationality and that of the material universe."[17] According to Torrance, this third view moves away from the problems of competition between Creator and creature inherent in the receptacle spatialities of the first two views, but ultimately posits too strong a relationality that undermines both divine, and ultimately creaturely freedom. Finally, Torrance arrives at the fourth view. Associating this view with various forms of Patristic theology, as well as Anselm, Duns Scotus, Pascal, Calvin, and Karl Barth, this view holds

> …that the structures of space and time are created forms of rationality to be distinguished from the eternal rationality of God. In creating and knowing them God remains free from any necessity in the relationship, although they remain grounded in the Supreme Truth of His Being. Hence the Incarnation of the Son of

[15] Alexandre Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, 206.
[16] Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation*, 64.
[17] Torrance, 64.

> God in the realm of space and time means that He assumes created truth and rationality and makes them His own although He is distinct from them.[18]

Torrance notes that there is a potential danger to this view in that, while God's freedom is maintained, it can potentially lead to the conclusion that God is ultimately inscrutable, though Torrance maintains that in Anselm's thought, at least, this is averted due to Anselm's insistence that while God may be "ineffably transcendent over all our conceiving of Him, yet our conceiving, when true arises under the compulsion of the divine Being."[19] Therefore, "created rationalities thus embody an element of necessity, i.e., their impossibility of being other than they are, in relation to the Supreme Truth of God."

For Torrance, this fourth view, which he sees as largely the patristic consensus, consists of "a notion of space as the seat of relations or the place of meeting and activity in the interaction between God and the world. It was brought to its sharpest focus in Jesus Christ as the place where God has made room for Himself in the midst of our human existence and as the place where man on earth and in history may meet and have communion with the heavenly Father."[20] I think that it is here that we see why so many contemporary theologies of place seek to situate themselves Christologically – it is in the body of Jesus that God enters fully into creaturely places as part of the economy by which God makes Godself known to the world, and by which creatures might have intelligible, i.e. placed, communion with the Father.

3.2.II Recent Views

Given the longstanding connection between bodies and place, it is fitting then that the turn to place in theology in recent decades has been largely focused on Christology. A number of theological recoveries of place have arisen by combining insights from various strands of

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[18] Torrance, 65.
[19] Torrance, 65.
[20] Torrance, 24.

contemporary spatial theory with reflection on the person and work of Jesus. I outline several of these proposals below.

3.2.II.i Incarnation

Craig Bartholomew's book *Where Mortals Dwell* provides a good starting point for this overview as the majority of the book is given over to mapping out potential resources for a Christian theology of place. The first half of the book is devoted to an overview of the Old and New Testament with particular attention given to the way 'place' has not traditionally been seen as a category in the New Testament, and therefore, not a key category in Christianity.[21] This de-emphasis on place as both a NT and Christian category is tied to the anti-semitic linkage of all things particular and placed to Judaism while the 'universal' belongs to Christianity.[22] Yet Bartholomew points out that this attitude is beginning to change, pointing specifically to the work of W. D. Davies as emphases on place and space are increasingly being emphasized in NT studies.[23] Bartholomew ultimately concludes that there is biblical warrant for locating place in the life of Jesus. Building on his exegesis, he then surveys a number of traditions in Western philosophy and theology before ultimately affirming that the Incarnation as developed in the neo-Calvinist affirmation of the goodness of material reality is a good theological loci for developing a theology of place for today.[24] In the Incarnation, Bartholomew sees a radical affirmation of material reality that allows a concern for particular places to get off the ground.[25]

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[21] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 90.
[22] Anders Gerdmar, *Roots of Theological Anti-Semitism (Paperback): German Biblical Interpretation and the Jews, from Herder and Semler to Kittel and Bultmann* (Brill, 2008), 107-108. See also Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 233ff.
[23] Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 90; W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974); See also, Karen J. Wenell, *Jesus and Land: Sacred and Social Space in Second Temple Judaism* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2007); Patrick Schreiner, *The Body of Jesus: A Spatial Analysis of the Kingdom in Matthew*, (London: T&T Clark, 2018).
[24] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 225f.
[25] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 225; 243-248.

In a similar vein to Bartholomew, John Inge, developing a sacramental account of place, sees the Incarnation as the beginning of a Christian semiotics that allows material realities to communicate divinity.[26] What Inge calls the 'sacramental worldview' is premised on the logic of the incarnation, that created matter is indeed capable of in some way 'communicating' divine grace. While the 39 Articles only explicitly endorse two sacraments, it does provide room for a number of 'sacramentals' to cover those signs that in the catholic tradition have been recognized alongside Baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments and it is under the rubric of 'sacramental' that Inge, as a bishop in the Church of England, develops his account of place as a sacrament. Ultimately, Inge follows Torrance in defining 'place' as the seat of relations that mediates between God and the world, which for Inge is precisely the work that is embodied in the person of Jesus in the Incarnation.[27] Inge's sacramental theology of place, similar to Bartholomew's neo-Calvinist approach, ultimately affirms the Incarnation as the theological foundation for being able to articulate how creaturely/material realities make place an important focal point for thinking about the communication of God's grace to us and allow for a subsequent development of an account of why particular places have a relatively steady role in mediating this grace to us in the form of shrines, cathedrals, and other particular sites.[28]

Another way of locating place in the Incarnation can be found in the work of Graham Ward and Philip Sheldrake. Following Michel de Certeau, both thinkers are interested in the instability of Christ's body. For Sheldrake in particular, Christian place-making occurs in the transgression of boundaries that arises out of the embodied practices of arrival and departure that are both modeled

[26] John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, (Routledge, 2003), 59ff.
[27] Inge, 52.
[28] As an Anglican bishop, this provides a useful theological justification for the built environment of the Church of England, see John Inge, "The Significance of Buildings in Terms of a Christian Presence in the Community," *Rural Theology* 14, no. 2 (July 2, 2016): 146–57. A similar concern can be found in the more recent work of Bishop Andrew Rumsey Rumsey, *Parish*; Rumsey, *English Grounds*.

in Christ's life and ministry and are taken up in the mystical tradition of Christian pilgrimage.[29] Ward, similarly, is intrigued by the instability of Jesus' body, though his interests are admittedly more directed towards issues of sexuality/gender, place being usually a secondary concern.[30] However, what is worth noting is the way in which, for both Ward and Sheldrake, the Incarnation demonstrates that embodiment matters and that embodiment always implies being placed, but that both bodies and the placed-ness of embodiment are inherently unstable and transgressive realities. This is a stark contrast to the Inge-Bartholomew appeal to the Incarnation as a way of securing the ongoing stability of special discrete places. Common to all, however, is an appeal to the Incarnation as a way of theologically legitimizing the spatial theories that undergird their respective accounts of place, whether that is by stressing the instability of Christ's perpetually departing body to further Certeau's insistence on embodied practices of resistance,[31] or by using the symbolic stability of Christ's material body as a way of guaranteeing the communicative nature of place.[32]

3.2.II.ii Crucifixion

Another of the various attempts to more specifically locate "place" as a Christological category, is put forward by Jon Mackenzie in an essay entitled "Luther's Topology."[33] Mackenzie notes that Luther's theology of the cross is a correlate of an underdeveloped account of place that Luther is operating out of.[34] Luther's theology of the cross is a way of knowing God that insists that:

> At its heart, then, is the cross of Christ, the place in which God reveals himself most fully to be both who he is, and who we least expect him to be. To discover who God is, according to Luther, one must be brought to this place at the feet of

[29] Philip Sheldrake, "Unending Desire: De Certeau's 'Mystics,'" *Way Supplement* 102 (2001), 41.
[30] Ward, *Cities of God*, 101ff.
[31] Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred*, 77.
[32] Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 134ff.
[33] Jon Mackenzie, "Luther's Topology: Creatio Ex Nihilo and the Cultivation of the Concept of Place in Martin Luther's Theology," *Modern Theology* 29, no. 2 (2013): 83–103.
[34] Mackenzie, "Luther's Topology," 89. Luther's failure to develop a fully articulated account of place is at least partially responsible for his doctrine of consubstantiation as he attempts to hold together receptacle and relational theories of space (typical of Renaissance philosophy, cf. Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 116ff), mediated by a threefold scholastic distinction in divine presence, see Karsten Lehmkühler, "'But Will God Indeed Dwell on the Earth?' God and Space," *Modern Theology* 34, no. 3 (2018), 474.

> the crucified Christ. Luther's theology is, therefore, indubitably "placed" from a very early point within its conception.[35]

Mackenzie sees in Luther's theology of the cross a form of knowing that arises from the spatial relationship between bodies. Luther's relational spatiality, however, does not arise from the phenomenological experience of our own bodies, but is first and foremost determined by Jesus' crucified body.[36] It is our relationship to this body, the shattered and crucified body of Jesus, that determines the relational space of Christian life, and gives rise to a general theology of the cross, as a form of 'knowing' God.

3.2.II.iii Resurrection

Keith Starkenburg's theology of place is concerned with the nature of Christian citizenship in pluralist society.[37] As such, he chooses the Resurrection as a type of eschatological grounding for a Christian concept of place.[38] Starkenburg seeks to provide a Christian account of place-making that does not require the drawing of hard borders, that does not displace others, and generally, can operate as a discrete Christian witness within a tolerant and pluralistic society. For Starkenburg, the question now is: "how do Christians make places in creation when all of creation is made of places shaped by God's action? More basically and helpfully, perhaps, what are the habits by which Christians can approach placemaking in pluralistic environments?"[39]

Starkenburg answers this question by locating the theological core of Christian place-making in the Resurrection. This enables him to affirm the goodness of creaturely existence while also acknowledging the incompleteness, the brokenness, the insufficiency of our not-yet-consummated

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[35] Mackenzie, "Luther's Topology," 89.
[36] Mackenzie is using the phenomenological approach to place found in Jeff Malpas, but importantly, is showing how in Luther's *theologia crucis*, Malpas' spatial theory can be tweaked to be understood from within the economy of divine self-revelation. Jeff Malpas, *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*, Second edition (New York: Routledge, 2018), 69
[37] Keith Starkenburg, "Inheriting the World: Heavenly Citizenship and Place," *Review & Expositor* 112, no. 3 (August 1, 2015): 390.
[38] Starkenburg, "Inheriting the World," 390.
[39] Starkenburg, 393.

existence.[40] By so locating Christian place-making eschatologically, Starkenburg is able to appropriate contemporary place studies while simultaneously insisting that place-making activities bear witness to the reality of God's place as a guarantor of contingent creaturely place.[41]

3.2.II.iv Ascension

A final inflection on the theological locus of a Christian concept of place comes from Graham MacFarlane's unpublished doctoral thesis on the heavenly session.[42] MacFarlane argues against the strong tendency in Reformed theology to read the ascension as a "real absence" of Christ's presence.[43] Picking up on Barth's repeated assertion that God has God's own "space,"[44] MacFarlane argues that, for Barth, it is in the ascension that we understand the right relationship between God's space and creaturely space. The ascension marks a moment of revelation in the life of Jesus that discloses the structure of this relationship, for it is not simply that God gives creaturely space to all creatures as part of his creative activity, but in this one man, Jesus, God gives God's "own uncreated and creative space."[45] For Barth, the general omnipresence of God in the world is centred in God's action in the man Jesus Christ, which provides a positive way of locating God both conceptually and spatially, as the One at in work "in Jesus Christ Himself." [46] MacFarlane's insistence that the Ascension does not imply the 'real absence' of Jesus from the world is thus made intelligible by understanding Barth's insistence that the omnipresence of God in and to the world is made actual in the coincidence of God's space with creaturely space in the man Jesus. Thus 'in

[40] Starkenburg, 400.
[41] Starkenburg, 401.
[42] Graham MacFarlane, "The Dogmatic Location of the Heavenly Session in Reformed Dogmatics, Ritschl, and Barth" (Doctoral, Aberdeen, UK, University of Aberdeen, 2015).
[43] MacFarlane, 108. For an example of what MacFarlane is responding to, see Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Eerdmans, 1999); Douglas Farrow, *Ascension Theology* (London ; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2011).
[44] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. T. F. Torrance and G. W. Bromiley (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), II.1§31.
[45] Barth, III.2, 487.
[46] Barth, III.2, 487.

Christ' becomes a powerful bit of coordinating grammar that allows us to speak positively at all about the relation of these qualitatively different spatialities.

3.2.III Evaluating Embodiment

The emphasis on Christology in recent theologies of place is unsurprising for a couple of reasons. As I have already pointed out, place and body are regularly thought together. All bodies must necessarily be in place so an obvious starting point for theology when considering the nature of place is to begin with the body of Jesus. Second, as Robert Jenson has so eloquently articulated, at the heart of Christian theology is the affirmation that "God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having before raised Israel from Egypt."[47] This identification of Jesus with the God of Israel is the starting place of Christian theology, "But we do see Jesus" writes the author of Hebrews (Heb. 2:9), and it is the revelation of God for us in Jesus of Nazareth that gives shape to Christian theology.

I think a basic Christocentrism for the shape of how Christian theology is reasoned out is right and proper. Nevertheless, on the question of place, I do worry that theologizing place beginning in the theological loci of Christology may ultimately be a trap if not done with an eye to developing a more holistically trinitarian theology of place. Careful Christology is determined to speak of the Son only and always in relation to Father and Spirit, but due to the way place attaches itself to the abstract notion of 'body' I worry that a Christological account of place could commit us to saying more about Christ's body than we can possibly accomplish responsibly. The body of Christ is a human body, and so we may be tempted to think we know what it is to speak of it, for after all, we both are and have human bodies, surely we know what they are! But this would be a form of begging the question, for theologically speaking, we only come by faith to know what the human body is in relation to Christ's body.[48] In fact, Christology itself resists this, as some of the above

[47] Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology: Vol. 1: The Triune God* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 63.
[48] This is a theological claim that needs some explanation. On the one hand, yes of course we have something like pragmatic immediate knowledge of human bodies as a precondition both of knowledge itself, and knowing the concept 'human body'. This is a kind of 'knowledge by acquaintance." And it is by the application of just such naïve concepts to

surveyed positions have even noted, Christ's body is weird, it appears, it transfigures, it departs, and even according to some artistic traditions, it has a wound in its side that has some womb-like characteristics, namely in birthing the church.[49]

3.3 Place and the Trinity: Against the God of the Philosophers

3.3.I Place and the Power of God: Which God? What Deity?

Before we can get to the question of the nature of place, never mind God's relationship to place, it is important that I be clear what I mean by God. The Christian God is One, the Christian God is Triune. This is a relatively uncontroversial claim in Christian theology, but it seems necessary to assert, as there are two ways that insufficient attention to a classically trinitarian doctrine of God can go wrong when applied to the question of place. First, the radical unitarian monotheism of the philosophers, as seen particularly in the neo-Arianism of Newton[50] and the Socinianism of Locke[51] can create a number of problems for conceptualizing the relationship of place and body. Second, one might attempt to ground a theology of place by appeal to a social trinity, which introduces equal but opposite problems in terms of the relationship between bodies, place, and divinity.[52]

First, as is more clearly seen in Newton's doctrine of God, a radically Arian monotheism can play out in an overemphasis on dominion, as for Newton, "the essence of God is not his substance but his domination in the act of his sovereignty."[53] For Newton, the question of the nature of God is not a question of substance, but rather of function, and it is in the exercise of dominion as the

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theological questions that we begin the theological task, yet our knowledge is incomplete, it is 'through a glass darkly' as the apostle says. For us there is a knowledge-by-faith of what it means to be human/be human bodies that can only come as a conclusion after our knowledge-by-acquaintance is taken up in the life of Jesus, and crucified with him. For a more fulsome discussion of the way our conceptual tools are taken up into God and returned to us judged and fitted to task, see Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics*.

[49] Eugene F. Rogers, *After the Spirit*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 119ff.

[50] Force, "Newton's God of Dominion"; Snobelen, "God of Gods, and Lord of Lords."

[51] Lucci, "Locke and the Trinity."

[52] In an otherwise exemplary systematic theology of place, Mary Emily Duba opts to begin with the framework of a social-trinity, citing much recent scholarship arguing for its general acceptability as a model for considering the nature of the triune life, see Duba, "God Is Here."

[53] J. E. Force and R. H. Popkin, *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology*, (New York: Springer, 2011), 5.

Sovereign that the title of "God" properly adheres. With the muddying of the creature-creator distinction in the appropriation of a quasi-cabalistic univocity by thinkers like More, Spinoza, and Newton in this period, the marking of difference between God and creature is no longer tenable along substantial lines and thus must be a question of power. Without some substantial or qualitative distinction between creature and God, it is difficult to see how there actually could be a "God" in view at all as a point of reference for the exercise of sovereign power, but such a direct atheism, while perhaps implied by Newton's theology, is nevertheless stridently refused by him – though due to the "Nicodemite" approach he took to disclosing his true opinions, it is often difficult to decipher exactly what he believed.[54] Nonetheless, it does seem that Newton retained some sort of a non-trinitarian theism that emphasized the exercise of causal power as the distinguishing characteristic of divinity. Indeed, according to Richard Popkins, what prevents Newton's doctrine of God "from reducing either to Spinozism or to pure deism is Newton's insistence on God as dominator."[55] But God as dominator has rather sinister implications for our theological geography. There is no dynamic play between God and creatures in the embodied particularity of discrete places. Rather, for the new Newtonian physics, there is a homogenized absolute space that all relates equally and univocally to the dominator deity. This spatialized dominator gaze is well emphasized in Locke's application of the new homogenized space to his colonialist doctrine of property. As I outlined in chapter two, while Locke maintains 'place' as a category, it is merely a useful way of identifying where one's property is located as the entire geography is reassessed in terms of its productive capacity. In this pragmatic productivity framing, European settlers are given the advantage in seizing dominion of Indigenous lands for their ability to make the 'waste' land become more abundantly productive for the 'good' of all humankind.

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[54] Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Heretic."
[55] Force and Popkin, *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology*, 6.

A radical monotheism that plays itself out in centring 'dominion' as the central attribute of divinity is a convenient theology for the expansion of English colonial power.[56] For English claims to lands in the Americas did not exclusively proceed under the so-called Doctrine of Discovery, but rather through claims of dominion and habitation. While some have argued that the English merely expanded the Doctrine of Discovery to include an emphasis on dominion and habitation, I think it is helpful to consider these as distinct colonial ideologies that highlight a specifically English and Protestant development in the theological justification of colonialism.[57] While Spanish and French rulers, or indeed, Indigenous nations, may have claimed sovereignty over a territory on the basis of 'discovery' on the part of the Catholic powers or use from time immemorial on the part of Indigenous nations, the English advanced a doctrine of dominion that required both longstanding use and inhabitation of a given territory AND an increase in the productive capacity of that territory through the application of dominating possessive sovereignty. Thus, the English were able to outmaneuver both rival European claimants and Indigenous claims to the land, all in the name of the exercising of and establishment of 'such a good government' for all humankind.[58] I believe it is important to highlight this English development as something analytically distinct from the Doctrine of Discovery because it clarifies where the work actually is in our contemporary era in which churches are making gestures toward reconciliation. English Protestant churches cannot simply 'repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery' and think that they have sufficiently responded to the TRC call to action that asks us to repudiate all colonial concepts.[59] Deconstructing the logics of

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[56] In fact, it has been argued that the Enlightenment collapse into a radical monotheism served to underride absolute monarchy as such in the 17th C, see Jurgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*, (San Francisco: Harper, 1981), 196.

[57] Robert J. Miller et al., *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

[58] See, Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan and Robert Merrihew Adams (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 84.

[59] See specifically Call to Action 45.1 "Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples *such as* (emphasis added) the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*," Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action" (Winnipeg, MB, 2012),

possession that English colonizers used to go beyond earlier forms of the Doctrine of Discovery thus remains an important theological challenge for traditions such as my own Anglican Church of Canada.

Yet even setting aside the political ramifications of such a doctrine, one might also challenge whether the dominionist monotheism of these 17th century English divines is satisfactory given the contextual challenges that they thought they were addressing. For as Diego Lucci points out, the anti-trinitarian theologies of Newton, Locke, and company arose in a context in which English Catholics were challenging the Protestant commitment to *sola scriptura* by challenging them to find the Trinity in the Bible, and if they could not, to either abandon the doctrine or accept that the magisterial tradition is indeed required for orthodoxy.[60] Lucci observes that there were two main English responses to this challenge. First from the latitudinarians who counselled broad toleration on doctrinal matters but unity on a few general principles which included "God's existence, the divine authority of Scripture, Jesus' Messiahship, the moral precepts delivered in the Bible, and reward and punishment in the afterlife."[61] Second, from the more Reformed Anglican divines "was the enforcement of strict doctrinal uniformity."[62] Locke's solution in *A Letter concerning Toleration*[63] was to reject both options and advocate for the toleration of a number of different churches that could determine these questions of doctrine for themselves, but he also carefully avoided weighing in on the Trinitarian controversy specifically.[64] But as rhetorically effective as the Catholic challenge may have seemed to Protestantism, it ended up creating a false choice for both Catholic and

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf.

[60] Lucci, *John Locke's Christianity*, 16.

[61] Lucci, 17.

[62] Lucci, 17.

[63] John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, (London: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983).

[64] Lucci, *John Locke's Christianity*, 17.

Protestant Trinitarian theologies, and resulted in obscuring precisely the tradition of Scriptural interpretation that issued in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the first place.

It is technically true that the word 'Trinity' does not appear in the Bible, however, as Lewis Ayres has argued, the doctrine of the Trinity as expressed in creedal form in the fourth century arises from a sustained tradition of Scriptural interpretation, the terms of which are set by Origen of Alexandria.[65] Later in the fourth century, Basil of Caesarea would reflect on both the biblical and liturgical use of prepositions like "in" "with" and "through" as applied to the Holy Spirit in a clarification and defense of the co-equal character of the Spirit with the Son and the Father.[66] It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to wholly describe the process by which the doctrine of the Trinity became central to Christian orthodoxy, but suffice it to say that to conclude either with the anti-Trinitarians that the doctrine is simply not found in Scripture, or with the 17th C Catholic polemicists that one can only hold to it by accepting the magisterial tradition, would both miss the way Trinitarian theology emerged and continues to be expounded by way of reasoning with and through the revelation of the divine economy as attested in Biblical revelation. Articulating the doctrine of the Trinity need not necessarily accept all the categories of fourth century Greek metaphysics, but it does need to grapple seriously with the way the Bible consistently affirms the Oneness of God while simultaneously positing things of the Father, Son, and Spirit that can only be proper to divinity.[67]

As I have argued, historically it has been the collapse into a strict monotheism that has proven distorting to Christian thinking on place and space, but it would not do to attempt to remedy this by way of a Social Trinity. While on first impression a Social Trinity would seem to overcome

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[65] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*, Reprinted (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[66] Basil, *On the Holy Spirit: St. Basil the Great*, trans. Stephen Hildebrand (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimirs Seminary Press, 2011).
[67] This is the approach taken by Richard Hays in identifying the way the Gospels identify Jesus with the God of Israel, see Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness*, (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016).

the political implications of a dominating monotheism,[68] and allow for important resonances with contemporary theory on the social construction of space and place, it introduces its own set of issues.[69] For as Karen Kilby has noted, the stress on the possibilities an emphasis on the 'social' aspect of the trinity raises for theology ultimately reveal that a move to embrace a social trinity runs the risk of being merely the projected prospect of these social possibilities themselves, and not any particular interest in fidelity to the revealed economy of the triune life.[70] Kilby goes on to push back on the very notion that the doctrine of the Trinity should be 'useful' at all, rather it should be seen "as grammatical, as a second order proposition, a rule, or perhaps a set of rules, for how to read Biblical stories…how to deploy the 'vocabulary' of Christianity in an appropriate way."[71] So, rather than arguing that there is something about the doctrine of the Trinity that can shed light on the nature of 'place', I argue that the way the doctrine of the Trinity functions as a principle of intelligibility for Christian 'vocabulary' more generally brings with it some insights into the way Christian theology should think about 'place.'

In what remains of this chapter I examine two structural features of a trinitarian doctrine of God that help provide 'grammatical' clarifications about what is and is not meant by place and God's relationship to it. First, I look at recent work around the so-called 'non-competitive relation' as a clarification of how God can intimately relate to place without implying distance, parts, or confusion of 'essences.' In this I follow the recent work of Kathryn Tanner, Ian McFarland, and

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[68] See, for example Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*, Gifford Lectures 1984 (London: SCM, 1985); Jurgen Moltmann, *Coming Of God*, 1st edition (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004) see also, Whitney Bauman, *Theology, Creation, and Environmental Ethics: From Creatio Ex Nihilo to Terra Nullius* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
[69] The recent emphasis on the 'social' aspect of trinitarian relations is taken as a starting premise for Mary Emily Duba's theology of place, though she does not rest her argument on a strictly 'social trinitarian' doctrine of God, see Duba, "God Is Here," 75–76; The literature on the role of social production in spatial relations is vast, but for a seminal contribution, see Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).
[70] Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," *New Blackfriars* 81, no. 956 (2000): 441; For a related critique, see also Randall E. Otto, "The Use and Abuse of Perichoresis in Recent Theology," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54, no. 3 (August 2001): 366–84.
[71] Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection," 443.

Rowan Williams, in conversation with Nicholas de Cusa.[72] The next section looks more closely at Sarah Morice-Brubaker's "theology of location" with particular attention to the way she locates 'place' as a pneumatological reality in a striking departure from the Christological models surveyed above. Morice-Brubaker focuses her constructive proposal for a "theology of location" on the grammatical structure of the Trinitarian relations – by attending to the way prepositions are used in trinitarian grammar to mark the relations of the various hypostases in triunity, she can open up room for considering the role of place as a properly theological object of study. While Morice-Brubaker's proposal is primarily a ground-clearing exercise, I think the most promising insight it offers is the way she connects the question of the structure of place as having to do with intelligibility. Morice-Brubaker's work begins to show that just as the doctrine of Trinity makes God available to us conceptually, so it is that it is disclosive of how place is the structure of intelligibility that allows us to have things, concepts, or bodies 'at hand' as it were, available for intelligible engagement. The relationship between place and the doctrine of the Trinity is thus quite modest, there is not an assertion of a particular picture of place or God at stake, but rather a consideration of how these concepts operate as structures that make possible the work of making everything else intelligible. Finally, I conclude the chapter by returning to a consideration of how to think about the way the body of Christ, as structured by these attending trinitarian 'rules' can help us think about place, and in particular, makes possible a series of 'recognitions' that constitute the stumbling-faithfulness that is the Christian life.

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[72] Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity a Brief Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis, MI: Fortress Press, 2003); Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 2010; Ian A. McFarland, *The Word Made Flesh: A Theology of the Incarnation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2019); Ian A. McFarland, "The Gift of the Non Aliud: Creation from Nothing as a Metaphysics of Abundance," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 21, no. 1 (2019): 44–58; Rowan Williams, *Christ the Heart of Creation* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2018); Nicholas and Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on God as Not-Other: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Li Non Aliud*, 3rd ed (Minneapolis: A.J. Banning Press, 1987).

3.3.II Place and the Non-Competitive Relation

A certain set of grammatical confusions tend to arise when thinking about the relationship of God and place. Often this comes from an uncritical acceptance of a philosophical concept of place or space and its unacceptability in application to God. For example, if one takes Aristotle's account of place, the anxiety might be that if place is applied to God, this implies that God is limited or bounded. If one follows Newton - as for example, Jurgen Moltmann does - it can produce the odd result of asserting that God must self-limit God's immensity to make 'space' for creation. This self-limiting then creates the problem of needing a description of how God interacts 'perichoretically' with creation in a way that does not either collapse God into the stuff of creation in a pantheist move, or displace the stuff of creation in a foreclosing of creaturely freedom.[73]

The problems that I have outlined arise out of two considerations that both have to do with the nature of God's being. First, if God can be limited or bounded, then God is in some sense finite and in continuity with creaturely being, albeit the greatest possible of those beings. Second, if God's presence can somehow displace or threaten the integrity of creaturely presence, then again, God's being must be in continuity with creaturely being in such a way that more of God necessarily implies less of something else. What all these concerns assume is that there is a fundamentally competitive relationship between God and creatures such that invoking either place or space as a conceptual tool that can be applied to mediate the relationship between the two is going to result in conflict.

A potential solution to these antinomies is to turn to contemporary discussions around the principle of non-competition.[74] As I will show, this principle is not new to Christology, but has been

[73] Jurgen Moltmann, *Coming Of God*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 296ff.
[74] This theme has been variously taken up by several leading Anglican and Reformed theologians of late, see John Webster, *Confessing God: Essays in Christian Dogmatics II* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2005); McFarland, *The Word Made Flesh*; Aaron Riches and Rowan Williams, *Ecce Homo: On the Divine Unity of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016); Williams, *Christ the Heart of Creation*; Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology: The Doctrine of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015).

revived in recent years first and foremost in the work of Kathryn Tanner.[75] In her earliest work, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, Tanner sought to clarify various 'grammatical rules' for doing theology particularly wishing to articulate rules for speaking about the Creator-creature relationship that maintains God's transcendence and creaturely freedom while still maintaining a coherent relationship between these two orders of existence.[76] To do this, Tanner prioritizes God's transcendence, but not as a contrastive reality *vis a vis* immanence/creaturely finitude. God does not stand at the top of a great chain of being, but rather relates "in the same direct fashion to every link in the chain, as the productive agent for the whole."[77] Indeed, one wonders whether the radically egalitarian relation of God to all of creation in fact shatters the very notion of a 'great chain of being'?[78] In any case, for Tanner, God's transcendence is not articulated by a comparison with creaturely lack. To emphasize this point, Tanner suggests two 'grammatical rules' for expressing this reality: 1) "avoid both a simple univocal attribution of predicates to God and world and a simple contrast of divine and non-divine predicates." And 2) "avoid in talk about God's creative agency all suggestions of limitation in scope or manner. The second rule prescribes talk of God's creative agency as immediate and universally extensive."[79] Tanner is making the point that the way our words run in regards to God and in regards to creatures operates in different linguistic registers, the predicates of divinity are not contrasted with the predicates of creatureliness, even as we use creaturely language, by way of analogy, to say anything of divinity at all. For Tanner, "divine reality is indeed distinguished from the non-divine precisely in that the latter always is what it is over and

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[75] Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity a Brief Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 2003); Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2004); Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 2010; A good deal of recent attention to this issue has come about through a renewed appreciation for the work of the early 20th century theologian, Austin Farrer, see Austin Farrer, *Finite and Infinite: A Philosophical Essay* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1943); Austin Farrer, *The Glass of Vision* (Andesite Press, 2015).
[76] Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, 1–6.
[77] Tanner, 44.
[78] For a powerful materialist critique of the ongoing Christian fascination with neo-platonic hierarchies of being see, Marika Rose, *A Theology of Failure: Žižek against Christian Innocence*, (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2019).
[79] Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, 47.

against others."[80] Divinity has self-sufficiency that does not require that it be defined or described in a negative contrast to something else.

3.3.II.i Totaliter Aliter or Non-Aliud?

While not directly taking up Nicholas de Cusa's idiom here,[81] the nature of this non-competitive relationship that Tanner articulates has been identified by her protégé, Ian McFarland,[82] as well as Rowan Williams,[83] as sharing a family resemblance with Cusanus' notion of *non aliud* or 'Not-Other.'[84] McFarland in particular follows John Webster in teasing out the implication of Kierkegaardian insistence on the infinite qualitative distinction between God and creatures.[85] As McFarland points out, this distinction is not a contrastive difference, and so it would be a mistake to translate the Latin *totaliter aliter* as 'wholly other' as is sometimes done, but rather as "wholly other*wise*." [86] For if God is wholly other, it would be difficult to articulate what relationship there is at all between God and creatures, and creatures would be rightly wary of such an over-againstness in the divine. That God is instead wholly otherwise is to discipline the notion that God's differentiation from creaturehood is not a difference of kind, for "God is not rightly conceived as any *kind* of entity at all."[87] In other words, God is differently different than the way any creaturely difference operates. Here, we might begin to see what Cusanus meant by his insistence that God is *non aliud,* 'Not-Other'. With the formula, 'Not-Other,' Cusanus is able to make a subtle point about the relation of God to creatures, he moves back and forth between the way 'Not-Other' fixes identity – i.e., things

[80] Tanner, 79.
[81] Nicholas and Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on God as Not-Other*.
[82] McFarland, *The Word Made Flesh*, loc. 572.
[83] Williams, *Christ the Heart of Creation*, xiv.
[84] Ian A. McFarland, "The Gift of the Non Aliud: Creation from Nothing as a Metaphysics of Abundance," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 21, no. 1 (2019): 44–58.
[85] John Webster, *God without Measure: Working Papers in Christian Theology* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 115ff; Soren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition For Upbuilding And Awakening*, ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 146.
[86] McFarland, "The Gift of the Non Aliud," 45–46.
[87] McFarland, 46.

are 'Not-Other' than what they are – and the way God defines Godself.[88] For Cusanus, "Creatures are 'not other than what is defined' by God and so are themselves determinate. Moreover, God is 'not other than what is defined' because God sustains in being their determinate natures and features."[89]

The key to understanding the 'Not-Other' is that it is a way of distinguishing God by means other than otherness, which implies lack or finitude, the hallmark of creaturely existence. God as 'Not-Other' is differentiated precisely as the one that is not other than the creature, allowing for a relation of intimacy that does not pit creature against creator in a competitive relation. Whether one wants to follow the Kierkegaardian 'infinite qualitative distinction' – the idea that God is of a fundamentally different quality of being than creatures are - or the Cusan '*non-aliud*', the point is that God is differently different from creatures in such a way that there could not ever be a competitive relationship between God and creatures. The benefit of the Cusan way of stating this different difference as 'not-other' over the more modern Kierkegaardian/Barthian 'wholly other' is that the former captures a linguistic sense of intimate proximity of God to creation where the other might be read to imply distance (though, admittedly the 'wholly other' distinction should not be read as implying distance either as this would once again reduce the difference to one of quantity rather than quality).[90] Yet this intimate proximity does not involve a collapse of the God/Creature distinction into some version of pantheism/panentheism, rather it highlights precisely the nature of the difference between God and creatures as being differently different such that no competitive threat remains.

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[88] Clyde Lee Miller, "God as Li Non-Aliud: Nicholas of Cusa's Unique Designation for God," *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 41, no. 1 (2015): 29.
[89] Miller, 30.
[90] On Barth's development of the Kierkegaardian distinction see Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

3.3.II Sarah Morice Brubaker's "Theology of Location"

The argument I am advancing in this thesis would be impossible without the ground-clearing work done by Sarah Morice-Brubaker in her 2013 book *The Place of the Spirit.*[91] Morice-Brubaker clearly identifies why place matters for theology, it is because "it has everything to do with conceptual intelligibility."[92] The difficulty with a theology of place, for Morice-Brubaker, is the same difficulty we have in apprehending God, "The need to put God in a place closely attends the need to have God available for thought."[93] Morice-Brubaker contrasts the approach to place and space taken by the Cappadocians and Augustine with the twentieth century approaches taken by Jean-Luc Marion and Jurgen Moltmann. Common to all is a refusal to simply locate God spatially, yet each does so in a somewhat different way.

For Augustine and the Cappadocians, this is due to a definition of 'place' that necessarily implies circumscription, limit, and particularity – creaturely attributes that are seen to infringe upon the divine perfections. Yet denying the categories of emplacement or spatial extension for God is nevertheless accompanied by what Morice-Brubaker identifies as distinctly 'placial' language, particularly in regard to the use of prepositions like 'in' and 'with' and 'through' that characterize trinitarian formulations in patristic theology. Morice-Brubaker notes that the resistance to 'placing' God in these thinkers comes from a concern with idolatry, "the danger that human knowledge may presume to mark and measure God."[94] There is an ineffability to God that must be maintained, and emplacement does seem to threaten this, yet positive knowledge of God is still affirmed by each of these theologians. The right emphasis in this tension is to affirm that it is not human intellect that fills all things rather "God must be confessed as the one who fills all things – marking off and

[91] Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*.
[92] Morice-Brubaker, 5.
[93] Morice-Brubaker, 5.
[94] Morice-Brubaker, 37.

delimiting the cosmos, creating and circumscribing and ordering all creatures."[95] Yet, Basil, and Augustine, and on Morice-Brubaker's account, to a lesser extent the Gregories, all end up performing a kind of "placial rehabilitation" in their insistence on positive knowledge of God.[96] According to Morice-Brubaker, the way these thinkers achieve this rehabilitation is not so much by locating God in a particular circumscribed site, but by showing how we are placed in God, particularly in the Spirit, and are thus incorporated into the economy of the divine life such that the dynamic self-knowing of Father, Son, and Spirit is able to be appropriated as human knowledge of God. Morice-Brubaker notes that our emplacement is characteristically a work of the Spirit, for it is in the Spirit that we have our life and being yet being 'in' the Spirit is precisely a refusal of the kind of place that can be circumscribed, delimited, or located in terms of physical extension.

Morice-Brubaker compares this sample of patristic thought with two examples from the twentieth century, Jean-Luc Marion and Jurgen Moltmann. But in terms of Morice-Brubaker's larger argument, it is Marion's approach that needs a bit more attention. For Marion, the issue with placing God is ontological, God is not a being among beings and thus cannot be plotted "according to a prior set of coordinates."[97] Marion's work seeks to respond to the Heideggerian critique of onto-theology by positing a God beyond being, locating *agape* as prior to 'being' in regards to the nature of God.[98] One strategy Marion deploys to preserve God from the idolatrous violence of metaphysics is to play with the concept of 'distance' to situate God beyond the horizons of being such that what in Kierkegaard was the 'infinite qualitative distinction' and in Cusanus was the *non-aliud*, for Marion becomes the distinction whereby "'situated' gets mapped onto 'not God' and 'unsituated' gets

[95] Morice-Brubaker, 38.
[96] Morice-Brubaker, 39.
[97] Morice-Brubaker, 105.
[98] Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte,* trans. Professor Thomas A. Carlson, 2nd edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

mapped onto 'God,' and specifically onto 'God as triune.'"[99] For Morice-Brubaker this may save God from idolatry, but it raises the strange paradox of place or 'situatedness' as arising in creation independently of God whatsoever, "as a category, place is utterly refused of the Triune God – yet is already a facet of creation. Thus there is, so to speak, no 'where' for environments or horizons to show up theologically."[100] Morice-Brubaker's tentative solution to this problem in Marion is to attend to the way 'distance' maps onto the relationship between Father and Son in his trinitarian theology and suggest that it is the Spirit that both fills that distance and constitutes the 'place' in which Father and Son relate, thus following Marion's own conceptual tools, it might be thought that created horizons are "grounded in the 'where' of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit."[101]

Ultimately, Morice-Brubaker arrives at a synthesis between the modern and patristic reflections on the relationship between God and place by attempting to balance the shared concerns with potential idolatry against the need to have God available conceptually. It is worth quoting her synthesis at length:

> The theological synthesis I am envisioning runs thus: In the economy, from the standpoint of human creatures, we encounter God in a manner which we perceive to involve navigability, roominess, locatedness, the coinherence of inner and outer, and an interplay of beholding and constructing. Place— I suggest, following Bachelard, Heidegger, and Tuan— legitimately involves all of these things. But God— as we learn from both the Cappadocians and Augustine— is not exhaustively subject to our ways of plotting and navigating. To the contrary, we are placed by God. Therefore, the reality often referred to in theological shorthand as "the economic trinity" actually grounds what creatures experience [as] place . . . of which strict extension and delimitation make up only one small aspect.[102]

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[99] Sarah Morice-Brubaker, "Re-Placing the Doctrine of the Trinity: Horizons, Violence, and Postmodern Christian Thought," in *Placing Nature on the Borders of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics*, ed. Forrest Clingerman and Mark H. Dixon (London, UK: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 197; see also Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*, 126; cf. Jean-Luc Marion, *The Idol and Distance: Five Studies*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson, 2nd edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001).

[100] Morice-Brubaker, "Re-Placing the Doctrine of the Trinity: Horizons, Violence, and Postmodern Christian Thought," 197.

[101] Morice-Brubaker, 206.

[102] Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*, 125–26.

Note the theological modesty in this synthesis, Morice-Brubaker is strictly commenting on our experience of the economic trinity, there is no analogy being established between description of the way God 'really is' and what we can see of the economic trinity. Rather, the discovery is something we knew in a naïve sense all along – we are placed. But we are placed by God. This "being placed" is the key to Morice-Brubaker's synthesis. On the one hand, Morice-Brubaker avoids the mistake of taking the doctrine as more than a grammatical set of rules and saying something of God that would inevitably be an idolatrous projection – as we saw in both the domineering monotheism of Newton or the false promises of a social trinity. On the other hand, she's able to ground creaturely experience of place in God's activity to and for us such that place does not arise independently of God nor are we bereft of knowledge of 'placeless' God in our emplaced existence.[103] Morice-Brubaker charts a way for us to apply placial language to God by attending to the way the placial prepositions that help orient us to the economic activity of the triune God to and for us by insisting that there is an important distinction between place and space, a distinction that I too want to maintain in this thesis. For as she observes, all the theologians she surveys, in their own way want to insist on a fundamental difference between divinity and creaturely reality. Yet the mistake of Marion and Moltmann on her account is to insist therefore, that God must be elsewhere. But for us to have knowledge of God, God must be near - this is a paradox that much modern theology stumbles upon. Morice-Brubaker notes that tension between the ideas that God must be 'elsewhere' or 'here' "tend to become implicitly spatial where they ought to have remained placial."[104] What I detect here is an implication that such moves tend to unwittingly smuggle back in a sense of competition between God and creaturely reality such that the spatial sense of extension or distance comes back to the fore as a defense mechanism for the integrity of the two realities, yet by insisting on a non-

[103] Morice-Brubaker, 129.
[104] Morice-Brubaker, 137.

competitive relationship as I outlined above, ultimately we can conceive of place as somewhere that is not-other to God while at the same time not collapsing God into the idolatrous implications of creaturely spatial extension.

3.4 The Place of Christ's Body: A guide to how & how not to think about Bodies and Place

In the next chapter I develop a more detailed account of the structure of place itself, but for now I want to briefly return to the question of the relationship of the economic trinity to place. As I surveyed earlier in this chapter, many theologians have seen a natural resonance between the body of Christ and a theology of place. I noted that this is, in a naïve way, a natural starting point for reflecting on place as there is a longstanding sense in the philosophical tradition that place and body are concepts that belong together, though the nature of that relationship has been hotly contested. But I also warned that it might not yet be theological to simply move from the body of Christ to an account of place, for this will inevitably be overdetermined by what we think a body is, rather than being informed on what and how and in whom bodily existence is configured by God to be.

Nevertheless, I think there is a way to think about the body of Christ and the way it, in a sense 'grounds' a theology of place for us if we consider that body as taken up in the triune relations. Contrary to the prevailing trend in recent theologies of place, we saw that Morice-Brubaker grounds her theology of place in the Holy Spirit. I think this is the right move, but it is precisely the right move for a theology of place because the characteristic of the Holy Spirit in the divine economy is its coming to 'rest' on the body of Jesus. There has been much emphasis on the intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit to bodies, and in particular, the body of Jesus in recent pneumatologies, and it is to a brief discussion of this that I now turn.[105]

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[105] Rogers, *After the Spirit*; Professor of Historical Theology Ephraim Radner, *A Profound Ignorance: Modern Pneumatology and Its Anti-Modern Redemption* (Waco: Baylor Univ Pr, 2019); Etienne Veto, *The Breath of God: An Essay on the Holy Spirit in the Trinity* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018); Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology, Volume 2*.

In the early 1990s a consensus emerged that the Barthian trinitarian revival was so focused on the figure of Jesus that it risked collapsing into binitarianism.[106] In response, Robert Jenson wrote an agenda setting article in *Pro Ecclesia* entitled "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went" that outlined the way Barth's theology tends towards binitarianism by eliding the work of the Spirit in favour of work accomplished in the life of the Son.[107] For Jenson, "the 'inner divine' fellowship of Father and Son in the Spirit is, Barth directly asserts, merely 'two-sided,' since the Spirit is the fellowship itself."[108] It can appear then, that the Spirit is relegated to a non-personal status and is perhaps incidental to the real 'work' of divinity that is being accomplished between Father and Son. Taking up Jenson's question over a decade later, Eugene Rogers asked if contemporary trinitarian theology in this post-Barthian stream thought that there was "nothing the Spirit can do that the Son can't do better?"[109] I will leave it to the Barth scholars to determine whether or not Barth is functionally binitarian,[110] but perhaps Barth's alleged binitarian reduction is merely symptomatic of a larger trend in Western trinitarian thought that has struggled to find language to express the role of the Spirit as a person within the trinity going back to at least Augustine and his theorizing of the Spirit as the bond of love between lover and beloved.[111]

Yet perhaps the relative 'invisibility' of the Spirit in relation to the Son is not accidental, but rather indicative of the very nature of the Holy Spirit itself and the way its personhood is necessarily differently different than the personhood of the Son or the Father for the Spirit to be distinguishable

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[106] Robert W (Robert William) Jenson, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," *Pro Ecclesia* 2, no. 3 (1993), 296.
[107] Jenson, 297.
[108] Robert Jenson, "Karl Barth" in *The Modern Theologians : An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA : Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 34,.
[109] Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 19–32.
[110] For a couple of recent contributions to this debate, see Bruce L. McCormack, "The Spirit of the Lord Is upon Me: Pneumatological Christology with and beyond Barth," in *The Spirit Is Moving: New Pathways in Pneumatology* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 124–37; JinHyok Kim, "Barth on the Holy Spirit," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Karl Barth* (London: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2019), 229–40.
[111] Augustine, *Augustine: On the Trinity Books 8-15*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans. Stephen McKenna (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

at all. Rogers notes that Orthodox theologian, Pavel Florensky's assessment of the Western tradition is that rather than not knowing enough about the Spirit, we have tried to know too much.[112] For if we look for a Spirit that is recognizably a 'person' in the way the Son is recognized as a 'person' we may be in danger of asserting the existence of two Sons. For what makes the Son the Son is that the Son is the Son of the Father, and it is this filial relation between the two that constitute each other as Father and Son – for it is this relation, and this relation alone, that we see in the economy of the divine life, what we do not have access to is the whatness of the Father or the Son. In Trinitarian grammar, we do not begin from a knowledge of fathers and sons as discrete identities, rather, we witness a particular type of relationship and are thus able to reason to the particular points.[113] If the Spirit were to be identifiable in the same way that the Son is, it would be because the manner of the Spirit's procession, or relation to the Father and the Son is identical to that of the Son's and as such we would be left with two Sons. So it is that in the Western theological tradition that the *filioque* clause has served as an attempt at distinguishing the manner of procession of the Spirit from that of the Son such that the Son proceeds from the Father and the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son. Thus distinguished, it is thought that the Spirit is now both recognizable and recognizably different from the Son and so this particular problem of differentiation is avoided. However, while the *filioque* may solve this particular problem, it has never been accepted by the universal church as a satisfactory solution for both political and theological reasons.[114] Nevertheless, I raise it as an example of a particular trinitarian 'rule' that needs to be observed, that the Son and Spirit must be differentiated somehow, whether that be through the *filioque*, through the idea of 'spiration' or by some other model, and that the key to our ability to do this exists not on our ability to 'know' the

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[112] Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 23–24.
[113] On the priority of relations to points in describing the triune relations see Thomas F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons*, 2 edition (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 27.
[114] For more, see A. Edward Siecienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

reality of what or who Son and Spirit are but by observing the relations of these persons in the divine economy.

But what does all this have to do with a theology of place and the role of Christ's body in helping us articulate it? To begin, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed names the Holy Spirit, the "Lord and Giver of Life" yet John's gospel tells us that it is by God's Word that creation happens (John 1:1-2). Here we can see in the economy of creation a picture of the various relations between Father, Son, and Spirit in the work of creating. The Father speaks through the Word by the Spirit in the act of creation. Etienne Veto has recently argued that the close semantic relationship between *ruach*, *pneuma*, and the Spirit makes the English concept of 'breath' a fitting metaphor for describing the Spirit, not because it describes what kind of thing the Spirit is, but because it points us to the kind of relationship that exists between the triune persons.[115] If the Spirit is considered as 'breath' then one can get a bit of a sense of how the Word spoken by the Father will necessarily require the 'breath' moving through it to empower and enliven the sound of the Word, but it is the Word that we 'hear' or otherwise see at work, though we can only 'see' this because the Spirit is also present. There is thus a characteristic self-effacement to the Spirit as the work of the Son is highlighted, but paradoxically, we could not see the Son's work nor would the Son be able to work, independently of the Son's being sent in and by the Spirit from the Father.

Stanley Hauerwas and Will Willimon have stressed that the Holy Spirit is a particularizing agent, "the Spirit does what the Trinity does in a particular way by incorporating the particular,"[116] which they see as building on Rogers' conclusion that the Spirit characteristically comes to 'rest' on or 'befriend' matter.[117] The directionality and work of the Spirit seems to be to make Jesus known to

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[115] Veto, *The Breath of God*.
[116] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Work of Theology* (Eerdmans, 2015), 42; see also Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015).
[117] Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 55; Ephraim Radner also concludes his sweeping history of modern pneumatology by insisting on the Spirit's affinity for the material and the particular, and especially, the material body of Jesus, see Radner, *A Profound Ignorance*, 230.

us, and known to us precisely in his embodied form as we encounter him bodily. But this directionality is not simply from the Father to the Son, for again, this would just leave us with a second Son, but rather the Spirit is the one that returns from the Son to the Father, bringing we who have been incorporated in the body of Christ along into the inner life of God. We can then see why Morice-Brubaker identifies the Spirit as the grounds for speaking of 'place' in God, for the characteristic 'direction' of the Spirit is its 'in'-ness, the Father breathes out the Spirit who is breathed in by the Son and breathed out by the Son and returned in the Father, and also is the very 'field' or 'matrix' in which the filial relationship between Father and Son is constituted. The Spirit is thus preserved as being differently different from Father and Son, but also does the work of incorporating us, as we receive the Spirit and live by the Spirit such that we are incorporated in Christ's body, and thus intimately joined 'in' the life of God.

3.4.I The Spirit of Recognition

So now we can return to place. Aristotle observed that the characteristic attribute of place is that bodies are 'in' it, and so determined that the question of place should be determined by the outermost immovable boundary exterior to body. Thus, a given 'body' has a great deal of work to do in determining place, but place remains exterior to body, i.e., place is not reducible to form. In theologizing place, we do right to consider the body of Jesus, for it is this body that inhabits our place-world and is the thing that we latch onto as the hermeneutical 'key' to mapping out the trinitarian relations.[118] But we must always remember that theologically, the 'in' that is crucial for a theological description of where Jesus body is, and by extension, where all bodies ultimately are, is in the Spirit. And it is the reality of this Body being in this Spirit that makes possible the intricate set of relations that constitutes the inner life of God.

[118] Tanner, *Christ the Key*.

There is a final implication of being "in" the Spirit that I want to draw attention to now in conclusion, but that I will return to more fully over the next few chapters. The parallel between the structure of the *doctrine* of the Trinity and a theology of place has to do with the question of how "in-ness" provides a hermeneutical structure for being. The key work that this hermeneutical structure does is focused on the activity of recognition. Recall from Chapter Two, Willie Jennings' observation about the intimate joining work of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is in the Spirit at Pentecost that people of all nations are intimately joined with each other and with God. This move of the Spirit, following on from the archetypal experience of Pentecost, is characteristically signalled by causing believers to receive the gift of tongues. Again, in Acts 19, people to whom Paul preaches receive the Spirit and again, this receipt is marked by speaking in tongues. But it is not just the speaking of tongues which marks people as being 'in' the Spirit, and thus incorporated into the people of God, for at the Council of Jerusalem, in Acts 15, Paul and his compatriots testify to all the various things they had accomplished in the Spirit and the ways people of all nations had been responding. The resolution of the Council at Jerusalem was that external markers of belonging, such as circumcision are not what enable the recognition of the people of God, rather in the words of St. Peter, "…God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us…" (Acts 15:8). It is God who acts by the Spirt both in the heart of the Gentile believers to evidence proof of being par to the people of God and by enabling the Apostles and the Jewish believers to recognize these Gentile believers as truly 'in' the people of God.

Now, I want to be very clear about what I am saying in terms of the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of recognition. Kathryn Tanner has noted that there has been a modern bifurcation in understandings of the work of the Holy Spirit. The dominant one, on her view, sees the Spirit

working immediately, "in exceptional events rather than in the ordinary run of human affairs,"[119] showing up in a register more akin to the more miraculous bits of the book of Acts as the normal way the Spirit works. The alternate view does not necessarily rule out the former, but insists that it is insufficient, and that greater attention should be given to the way the Spirit is at work "through the usual fully human and fully fallible, often messy and conflict-ridden public process of give-and-take in ordinary life."[120] Jennings' reading of the Council of Jerusalem exemplifies this latter view in the way that he acknowledges the messy and conflict-ridden nature of that moment. While it is true that the outcome of this Council is the 'recognition' of the Gentile body as being a site of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, Jennings notes that this recognition is made by the Jewish Christian, for the Gentile, but not with or inclusive of, the voices of the Gentile Christians who were there present. Right at the heart of a major milestone of Spirit-led recognition, Jennings identifies the roots of the original sin of Christian racism, a refusal of the true intimacy at Pentecost when bodies of all nations and races gave voice to the joy of that indwelling Holy Spirit fire.[121]

Kevin Hector, following Tanner's insight regarding the Holy Spirit's work in the normal, yet fraught, processes of human discernment has developed a robust account of the Spirit's role in the work of Christian theology.[122] Hector seeks to explain how we come to recognize various candidate concepts as being suitable for use in God-talk without smuggling in a metaphysical account of language that, according to the post-modern critics of metaphysics, involves a collusion with violence in the application of said candidate concepts to God.[123] Hector thus develops a pragmatic account of language where language is not true because of some radical correspondence to essential

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[119] Kathryn Tanner, "Workings of the Spirit: Simplicity or Complexity?," in *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 87.
[120] Tanner, 87.
[121] Jennings, *Acts*, 142.
[122] Kevin W. Hector, "The Mediation of Christ's Normative Spirit: A Constructive Reading of Schleiermacher's Pneumatology," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 1 (2008): 1–22; Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics*.
[123] Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics*, 14, 67–68.

truths, but because various uses of language are taken as adequate by language users to continue on navigating the world. I will not reiterate Hector's entire grammatical program here, but I do want to draw attention to the way Hector sees his approach as being more than just a philosophical therapy to theological language, but actually, a method that takes seriously a core Christian commitment that only God can reveal God. Hector takes his cue from Schleiermacher's account of *Gefuhl*, noting that this should not be taken to simply mean "feeling" but rather a sort of attunement.[124] Christ's own human life was characterized by a perfect attunement to God and the manner in which we participate through Christ in God is by being ourselves conformed to the same attunement that was first in Christ. This attunement occurs through a hermeneutical spiral through which one comes to internalize and imitate Christ's life in a way that is both recognizable to ourselves as imitative and recognizable to the Christian community as constitutive of 'going on' in a way that counts as imitative. As Hector puts it, "It turns out, then, that in order to count as one's own, one must be able to produce spontaneous performances that conform to Christ – and given that one's judgment about what conforms to Christ itself an activity that must be conformed to Christ, one must be able to produce these judgments for oneself, too."[125] But this capacity for producing such spontaneous performances of conformity and recognizing them as such would run into a vicious regression if this is taken to be simply a work of normal and sinful human cognition. But this is precisely the work of the Holy Spirit. For it is only by God that God is known. Likewise, it is "in" the Spirit that the life of the Christian and that of the Church is constituted. Therefore, we can see again how assigning place, theologically, to the Spirit is exactly what is required if we are to have reliable recognition of performances that constitute conformity to the life of Christ.

[124] Hector, 79–80.
[125] Hector, 88.

3.5 Conclusion

I have argued many contemporary theologies of place are christologically disciplined because of the traditional connection between the categories of body and place. However, I noted that this focus on the body of Christ must be approached at a slant through a pneumatological lens in order to first, appreciate the weirdness of bodies and especially the body of Jesus, and to not idolatrously smuggle anthropological assumptions about bodies onto the nature of God. By way of Sarah Morice-Brubaker's work on being 'in' the Spirit, I argued that being 'in' the Spirit allows for a Pentecostal series of 'recognitions' that reveal the way place is a hermeneutical structure. Our being 'in' the Spirit allows us to be taken up in the relations of the trinitarian persons by which God subsists in a differentiated unity with Godself and the world.

In the next chapter, I will develop this insight about the way the trinitarian relations structure the relationship of 'in-ness' of bodies and place to develop the concept of 'communicative bodies' and how the communicative relations of all manner of created bodies form a matrix of relationality that operates as the structure of intelligibility that is rightly named 'place'. By developing place through the relational in-ness of various communicative bodies, I am intentionally stretching the concept of 'recognition' beyond a habitual anthropocentrism to insist that the 'in-ness' that the Spirit provides does not recreate an exclusionary humanism, bur rather opens up possibility for bold and transgressive politics of reconciliation and solidarity.[126]

[126] I am sympathetic to the constructive project of solidarity building that Timothy Morton advocates and have something like this in mind as a potential political outworking of this current theological project. See Timothy Morton, *Humankind: Solidarity with Non-Human People* (New York: Verso Books, 2019).

Chapter 4: The Place of Communicative Body

4.1 Introduction

4.1.I Recap

At last, we have come to the point where a constructive definition of place might be offered. In chapter two I argued that in what Willie Jennings calls the 'colonialist moment' of the early modern period, the heterological processing of different peoples caused a profound misrecognition and refusal of intimacy on the part of European colonialists which had genocidal consequences. Furthermore, I argued that this heterological processing worked in concert with the flux in early-modern philosophies of space and place, both drawing from and influencing these debates to cause what Ed Casey calls the eclipse of place by space. I argue that we see this dynamic particularly clearly in the work of John Locke, suggesting that his empiricist concept of simple place works in concert with his colonialist doctrine of property to dispossess, kill, and enslave Black and Indigenous bodies. I situate Locke's account of place in relation to the philosophical and theological debates that date back to the Condemnation of Paris, showing that an inherited Aristotelian conception of place as the outer-skin of body, and concerns regarding the omnipotence of God had created certain antinomies that are ultimately resolved in the birth of modern physics by way of wholly identifying infinitely extended space with God's own infinite extension. As Sarah Morice-Brubaker has shown in her book *The Place of the Spirit*, the legacy of this early-modern settlement on the nature of God's relationship to space and place continues to create difficulties in modern theology, exemplified for her in the work of Moltmann and Marion.[1]

In Chapter three I turned my attention to the recent theological retrieval of place in contemporary theology. I surveyed various approaches and argued that a common move among contemporary theologies of place is to ground place Christologically. For those writers who make

[1] Morice-Brubaker, *The Place of the Spirit*.

this move, one might say that there is good biblical rationale for doing so, as the language of the New Testament often remarks of our abiding 'in' Jesus (Jn. 15; Rom. 3.24, 6.3, 11; Col. 1, etc.), and indeed Jesus promises to go and 'prepare a place' for us in His Father's house (Jn. 14:2). Given too, the close connection between place and 'embodiment' or bodies in the history of place and space, it might be considered natural to ground a Christian doctrine of place in the Incarnate God. Indeed, it might even be said that Christ is 'the place' par excellence, insofar as reflection on the person and body of Jesus opens the possibility of speaking of a vast network of both horizontal creaturely relations and the vertical divine-creature relation. John Inge summarily defines place as "*the seat of relations or the place of meeting and activity in the interaction between God and the world.*"[2] Yet, we might ask, 'relations for what?' What is the point of these relations? What is the nature of the interactions and activity in this meeting between creatures and God?

Oliver O'Donovan's account of place as a product of social communications might provide a helpful clarification of Inge's ambiguous 'seat of relations.' For O'Donovan,

> "Place is the social communication of space. A saying of Gregory the Great preserved in Bede declares, 'Things should not be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things.' Places are the precondition for social communication in material and intellectual goods.[3]

Communication is a significant category in O'Donovan's thought.[4] According to O'Donovan, following John Wyclif, all social communication is predicated on the communication of goods that God has performed in sharing "creation as a whole with mankind (sic) as a whole."[5] On the basis of the graced communications of goods from God to God's creation, O'Donovan builds up an account of social communication that provides a context and an orientation to Christian ethics. Oriented by the *telos* of seeking the good of one's neighbour, O'Donovan provides a sophisticated

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[2] Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 52.
[3] Oliver O'Donovan, *The Ways of Judgment: The Bampton Lectures, 2003* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 255.
[4] Will Bankston, "The Making Common of God: Augustine, Oliver O'Donovan, and Reading Scripture with Love," *Pro Ecclesia* 29, no. 4 (November 1, 2020): 472–87.
[5] O'Donovan, *The Ways of Judgment*, 244.

description of how our social communications create objects of common desire. O'Donovan, following Augustine's recasting of Cicero, points out that "to communicate something is to hold it as a common possession."[6] Communication, for O'Donovan, has a community building function, but it also is a way of disciplining the use of personal property. Rejecting modern liberal accounts of property, O'Donovan seeks to revive various strands of late-medieval Christian thinking on property in a way that disciplines the institution of property itself towards the universal destination of goods.[7] In other words property as an institution is not – contra-Locke – absolute, but rather is a structure that facilitates the communication of goods to neighbours such their ultimate ends of flourishing are realized. This kind of social communication requires exercise of judgment about particulars, and judgment *qua* event necessarily involves place.[8]

Thus, we can begin to see how for O'Donovan, place is a communicative reality. For the sum total of the various judgments and communications that makes up creaturely life must necessarily occur somewhere for these communications to intelligibly occur. Yet in using communication as a central metaphor for his account of place, O'Donovan makes a departure from much thinking about place, for he does not rely primarily on geophysical boundaries or political borders to determine place, rather it is relationally defined by the sum of the network of communications that constitute it.

> Place is an abstract concept, but precisely in its abstractness lies its importance. It stands for a totality of diverse communications that cannot be defined by any material description. It is posited in the reflective awareness of our participation in many communications that somehow, despite their diversity, cohere. Our place is not the space we presently occupy, where our bodies happen at this moment to displace the air; it is a function of our social communications, extending as far as they extend.[9]

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[6] O'Donovan, 244; See also, Oliver O'Donovan, *Common Objects of Love: Moral Reflection and the Shaping of Community; The 2001 Stob Lectures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002).
[7] For more on O'Donovan's valorization of various pre-Reformation strands of Christian reflection on property see his wife Joan's essay "Christian Platonism and Non-Proprietary Community," O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," 2004.
[8] Oliver O'Donovan, "2001 Natural Law Lecture: The Path," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 56 (2011): 1–16.
[9] O'Donovan, *The Ways of Judgment*, 256.

It might be suggested that we should speak, not of a singular 'network' but of plural communication 'networks' that determine the 'place' of a body. As the so-called 'ontological turn' in anthropology has highlighted well in recent years, thinking of plural networks or plural ontologies can helpfully illuminate various levels of creaturely communication that might be overlooked within one particular framing of the concept of 'social communication,' that in O'Donovan's usage does seem to be quite anthropocentric.[10] Yet, raising the difference between types of creatures to the level of ontology creates a larger problem in creating an inability to describe how it is that different peoples and creatures from different 'ontologies' in the anthropological sense of the word do seem to share a world and coordinate activity within it.[11] I think we must insist that the communicative networks of creatures in place are not 'ontologically' different, and in fact real communication across these various networks is possible within the whole economy of creaturely existence, though it can be difficult to accomplish reliable translation, recognition, and interpretation across these various networks, a problem I will return to below in my discussion of hylosemiotics.[12] So, in an important sense, there is only one 'network' of creaturely communications, although it is vast, ever developing, and poses numerous difficulties to our ability to hear and interpret them across their various registers.

4.1.II The shape of this chapter

In this chapter I begin to move towards an account of place that builds on John Inge's relational account of place and moves towards O'Donovan's communicative account of place by first laying some philosophical groundwork. I do this by first arguing that place is fundamentally a

[10] Martin Palecek and Mark Risjord, "Relativism and the Ontological Turn within Anthropology," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 43 (March 1, 2013): 3–23; John D. Kelly, "The Ontological Turn: Where Are We?," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4, no. 1 (June 2014): 357–60; Paolo Heywood, "Ontological Turn, The," *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, May 19, 2017, https://www.anthroencyclopedia.com/entry/ontological-turn; Andrew Pickering, "The Ontological Turn:: Taking Different Worlds Seriously," 2019, 134–50.

[11] Paul C Adams, "Placing the Anthropocene: A Day in the Life of an Enviro-Organism," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 41, no. 1 (2016): 54–65; Storm, *Metamodernism*.

[12] Storm, *Metamodernism*, 185.

structure of apprehension or intelligibility. I follow Jeff Malpas' development of what he calls *topology* – a combination of strands of post-Kantian philosophy that emphasizes phenomenology and hermeneutics – to conclude that what is fundamental about place is its role in structuring the intelligibility or apprehension of the world, and more importantly, is a necessary condition for knowledge of God.

Situating 'place' as a structure of intelligibility or apprehension in this philosophical tradition is deeply intertwined in a concern for the importance of bodies and embodiment that I have already highlighted in contemporary theologies of place outlined in chapter three. However, simply relating place to 'body' is insufficient, for as I argued in chapter two, consideration of place and 'body' has often been reduced to a simple account of material body as a matter of physics. Instead of retreading this route, I take a second look at Aristotle's way of relating body and place and find that there is a more hermeneutical way of relating these two categories by reconsidering the way bodies are 'in' place as a dialogical reality. I borrow the concept of 'communicative body' from John O'Neill but repurpose it by rejecting his anthropocentrism and arguing that place is structured by the communicative network of all creaturely bodies.[13] This account of 'communicative body' is helpfully supplemented by Donald Davidson's account of triangulation,[14] and Jason Ananda Josephson Storm's concept of hylosemiotics, a new elaboration on Piercean semiotics that shows how communication might occur across all manner of creaturely bodies, not just human ones.[15]

Describing place by way of the discursive relations of communicative creaturely bodies might at first appearance, seem like a bracketing out of the creator-creature relationship. But there is good reason to do so. First, recall my discussion of being 'in' the Spirit in the previous chapter and

[13] John O'Neill, *The Communicative Body: Studies in Communicative Philosophy, Politics, and Sociology*, 1st edition (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989).
[14] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge"; Davidson, "The Second Person."
[15] Jason Ananda Josephson Storm, *Metamodernism: The Future of Theory*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

the possibilities of 'recognition' that this creates. The 'Spirit of recognition' is not working at a cross purpose to our normal procedures of recognition. Therefore, taking time to articulate how it is that the coordination of communicative bodies creates the structure of intelligibility I am naming 'place' is, by extension, an exercise in naming the creaturely conditions through and in which the Spirit is at work. Secondarily, Ian McFarland has argued that Chalcedonian Christology actually affirms that what we 'see' when we see Jesus is nothing other than the human Jesus.[16] Being fully God and fully Man does not mean that there is some sort of divine extra that we must learn to see above and beyond the human life of Jesus. Rather, seeing this man, Jesus, in all of his extraordinarily normal humanness, is to see God. It is this normal human body, Jesus, that is the Word of God made flesh amongst us, a communicative creaturely body just like ours, that does not require of us to supplement a supernatural account of place in order to intelligibly recognize it.

4.2 Apprehending Intelligible Place

I asserted above that what is fundamental about place is that it is bound up in the structures of intelligibility or apprehension of the world. I am purposefully invoking both intelligibility and apprehension as proxies for 'knowledge of the world'. On the one hand, intelligibility is associated with intelligence and intellect and could be thought to be abstracted from the concrete and material realities of emplaced existence, while apprehension etymologically implies a more embodied way of knowing – a grasping or 'laying hold of' that centres the role of the body in the production and acquisition of knowledge. The former seemingly commits one to a placeless posture vis a vis the world, while the latter perhaps overcommits one to a strictly material account of place that would return us to questions of surface, boundary, or limit. But by holding both intelligibility and apprehension together, perhaps we might gesture more adequately at the sense of place I seek here to develop as a structure that is deeply implicated in our ability to know. For while embodied being

[16] See McFarland's radicalization of Chalcedon in his insistence that we know 'nothing but' the humanity of Jesus, McFarland, *The Word Made Flesh*, loc 1337.

in the world is of course important for thinking place, we must also be able to account for the intimacy of place and memory in the 'cavernous spaces of our minds' as well as in the emerging digital topographies that increasingly characterize contemporary life.[17]

The approach I am here advocating is a philosophical approach developed by Jeff Malpas that he calls topology. Malpas stresses this connection between knowledge and place by reflecting on the related structures of phenomenology and hermeneutics throughout his oeuvre.[18] As Paloma Puente-Lozano has observed,

> Malpas' topological project relies on a deep re-elaboration of a certain strand of post-Kantian thought, one that is most oriented towards *topos* (often in an implicit way though). Malpas has detected within the most diverse sources of post-Kantian thought how is (sic) deployed a certain sense of the inter-relatedness of the elements and concepts through which human experience and understanding are explained.[19]

More specifically, it is primarily through the work of Martin Heidegger and Donald Davidson that Malpas has reflected deeply on the philosophy of place as a particular way of bringing together questions of ontology and epistemology through close attention to the structure of place in a way that Malpas believes is a faithful development of Kant's critical philosophy.[20] Malpas calls his philosophy of place 'topology' which he gets from Heidegger who "does characterise his own thinking as a *topology* – specifically a 'topology of being' (*Topologie des Seyns*)."[21] While much place

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[17] Saint Augustine, *The Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Book X; on the challenges and possibilities of digital and cyber spaces and places, see Ryan Turnbull, "Clarifying the Grammar of Cyber-Eucharist: An Inquiry into 'presence' as a Condition for Online Celebrations of the Eucharist," *Didaskalia* 29, no. 1 (December 2021): 40–57; and Ananda Mitra and Rae Lynn Schwartz, "From Cyber Space to Cybernetic Space: Rethinking the Relationship between Real and Virtual Spaces," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 7, no. 1 (October 1, 2001).

[18] Paloma Puente-Lozano, "Jeff Malpas: From Hermeneutics to Topology," in *Place, Space and Hermeneutics*, ed. Bruce B. Janz, vol. 5, Contributions to Hermeneutics (New York: Springer, 2017), 301–16.

[19] Puente-Lozano, 302.

[20] Malpas explicitly outlines the way Davidson's cartographic notion of 'triangulation' complements Heidegger's notion of topology and how these are a indebted to the Kantian project in, Jeff Malpas, "Self, Other, Thing: Triangulation and Topography in Post-Kantian Philosophy," *Philosophy Today* 59, no. 1 (Winter 2015): 103–26; and Jeff Malpas, "Placing Understanding/Understanding Place," *Sophia* 56, no. 3 (September 2017): 379–91; For more on Malpas' development of topology see, Jeff Malpas, *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*, Second edition (New York: Routledge, 2018); Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006); and for the Davidsonian influence, see Jeff Malpas, *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning: Holism, Truth, Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and forthcoming, see Jeff Malpas, *The Ethics of Place*, (New York: Routledge, 2024).

[21] Malpas, "Self, Other, Thing," 105.

writing has focused on advancing the insights of Heidegger, for the purposes of this project I emphasize the work of Donald Davidson for several reasons. First, while Malpas borrows the language of topology from Heidegger, it is Davidson's account of triangulation that is most immediately relevant to the dialogical account of place that I am developing. Furthermore, the overarching goal of this thesis is to provide an anti-colonial theology of place, a project which is not best aided by the blood and soil spatial philosophy of a Nazi theorist.[22] Richard Wolin has argued that "Heidegger's evolution as a "geophilosopher" tracked the radicalization of the German ideology between the Great War and the Nazi seizure of power."[23] While much place-thinking has undoubtedly been shaped by Heidegger's thought, it is beyond the scope of this project to determine whether there is a way to repurpose this thought for anti-colonial and anti-imperial ends.[24] While I cannot fully ignore Heidegger's influence, where possible, I have opted to draw out other voices to advance this project.[25]

4.2.I Davidson

A key aspect of Donald Davidson's thought is his emphasis on dialogical exchange in the possibility of knowledge. In his essay "Three Varieties of Knowledge," Davidson writes, "What is certain is that the clarity and effectiveness of our concepts grows with the growth of our understanding of others. There are no definite limits to how far dialogue can or will take us."[26]

To understand why Davidson stresses the dialogical in the work of understanding, it is helpful to focus on the particulars of Davidsonian 'triangulation'. Davidson develops his concept of

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[22] Richard Wolin, *Heidegger in Ruins: Between Philosophy and Ideology* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023).
[23] Wolin, 297.
[24] A recent constructive use of Heidegger along lines similar to my own project, though lacking in an anti-colonial analysis can be seen in this recent doctoral thesis, see Peter Leith, "The Dwelling of the Word: On Creatures as Signs of God," (Doctoral Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2023), https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/347014.
[25] In doing so, I am adopting a strategy of citation advocated by indigenous feminist, Todd, "An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn"; see also the footnotes in Liboiron, *Pollution Is Colonialism*.
[26] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," 165.

triangulation in two important essays, "Three Varieties of Knowledge"[27] and "The Second Person."[28] The "Three Varieties of Knowledge" that Davidson seeks to understand in the paper by the same title are self-knowledge, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of other minds. He observes that, "of course all three varieties of knowledge are concerned with aspects of the same reality; where they differ is in the mode of access to reality."[29] Davidson takes these three varieties of knowledge as non-reducible – they cannot be accounted for by suggesting that one or the other of these types of knowledge may be subordinated to any of the others. To account for each discrete form of knowledge, Davidson turns to Wittgenstein and his observation in the *Philosophical Investigations* that there can be no such thing as a private language. "I believe Wittgenstein put us on the track of the only possible answer to this question. The source of the concept of objective truth is interpersonal communication. Thought depends on communication. This follows at once if we suppose that language is essential to thought, and we agree with Wittgenstein that there cannot be a private language."[30]

Wittgenstein's critique of private language was the opening assault on a dominant picture of language that understood language to be primarily representational.[31] Toril Moi has helpfully distinguished the difference between post-Wittgensteinian Ordinary Language Philosophy and Derridian Deconstruction as situating both as a response to Saussure's distinction in semiotics between sign and signified.[32] On Moi's reading, the legacy of the post-Saussurean linguistics has been a chasm between word and world that is only crossed by the arbitrary application of words to their

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[27] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge."
[28] Davidson, "The Second Person."
[29] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," 153.
[30] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," 157; See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), §241ff.
[31] Arguably, 'representation' has been the dominant picture of language since Descartes, see Robert Brandom, *Rorty and His Critics*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), 158.
[32] Toril Moi, *Revolution of the Ordinary: Literary Studies after Wittgenstein, Austin, and Cavell*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

referents. Deconstruction exasperates this 'ugly ditch' by emphasizing the arbitrary relationship between sign and signified in its examination of the way words and concepts mask power relations.[33] Wittgenstein, in his rejection of private language in the *Philosophical Investigations*, suggests a picture of language that rejects the very notion that language is a matter of referential meanings. For Wittgenstein, we determine the 'meaning' of language by attending to the way language is used, as he famously exclaimed "don't think, but look!"[34] We must attend to the actual forms of life, language games, and concrete usages of language to determine how language is 'meaning' in any given usage. It is in attending to the various 'rules of use' within these forms of life that we can learn to go on using language in a way that is meaningful. One influential way this has been developed is to suggest that we might figure out what the rules of use are within various given forms of life, and having thus established knowledge of rules, achieve some level of confidence in how language is 'meaning' in these given contexts.[35] However, this is not the option Davidson chooses to follow, and as will become clear below, assuming that we need to know rules of use prior to actually using language does not ultimately reflect the way language is normally used.

But why does this imply that a language cannot be private? For surely some given language user may have a private rule for the use of language in regard to personal sensations, such as the experience of pain. Wittgenstein discusses this problem at length, suggesting that it is perhaps a mistake to even need to "try to use language to get between pain and its expression"[36] It is this observation about the potential mistake here around private sensation and language use that Davidson picks up in his "Three Varieties." Davidson, as I have already noted, thinks that Wittgenstein is precisely right that there can be no private language. But Davidson goes even further,

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[33] For a helpful summary of the alleged violent nature of concepts according to this tradition, see Kevin W. Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics: God, Language, and the Spirit of Recognition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[34] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §66.
[35] For an influential development of this trajectory of Wittgenstein's thought, see Saul A. Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language: An Elementary Exposition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).
[36] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §245.

for he observes that there are three kinds of knowledge that both need to be kept analytically distinct – that is, they cannot be subordinated to one form or other of knowledge – and yet are deeply implicated in each other.[37] Davidson outlines these three varieties of knowledge, "I know, for the most part, what I think, want, and intend, and what my sensations are. In addition, I know a great deal about the world around me. I also sometimes know what goes on in other people's minds."[38] So the three varieties of knowledge are 1) self-knowledge, 2) knowledge of the world, and 3) knowledge of other minds. Davidson introduces his concept of triangulation as a way of explaining how it is that these three varieties of knowledge are interrelated. He notes that it is in the sharing of reactions to common stimuli that thought and speech gain meaningful content at all.

> We may think of it as a form of triangulation: each of two people is reacting differentially to sensory stimuli streaming in from a certain direction. If we project the incoming lines outward, their intersection is the common cause. If the two people now note each others' reactions (in the case of language, verbal reactions), each can correlate these observed reactions with his or her stimuli from the world. The common cause can now determine the contents of an utterance and a thought. The triangle which gives content to thought and speech is complete. But it takes two to triangulate. Two, or, of course, more.[39]

Davidson's post-Wittgensteinian insight is that, fundamentally, it is not language that means, it is people that mean things with language, and this is arrived at discursively. In fact, Davidson goes so far as to deny there is such a thing as language at all, if by language we mean the kind of thing that takes language to be a system of shared meaning governed by learned conventions.[40] Triangulation can be seen as the late development of Davidson's concept of 'radical interpretation' a dialogical act of charity by which language users are able to make sense of what others have to say, even despite

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[37] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," 153f.
[38] Davidson, 153.
[39] Davidson, 159–60.
[40] Donald Davidson, "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs" in *The Essential Davidson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 254; See also, Carlos Pereda, "Is There Such Thing as A Language?," *Crítica: Revista Hispanoamericana de Filosofía* 30, no. 88 (1998): 73–91.

various semantical or grammatical errors or the use of malapropism.[41] There are no rules or shared meanings that could possibly be had ahead of time in this kind of discursive exchange, yet insofar as the conversation is able to go on, there is nevertheless a sort of 'passing theory' at work in the acceptance of meaningful content back and forth.[42] Ultimately Davidson concludes that there is

> no such thing as a language, not if a language is anything like what many philosophers and linguists have supposed. There is therefore no such thing to be learned, mastered, or born with. We must give up the idea of a clearly defined shared structure which language-users acquire and then apply to cases. And we should try again to say how convention in any important sense is involved in language; or, as I think, we should give up the attempt to illuminate how we communicate by appeal to conventions.[43]

In Davidson's development of his 'radical interpretation' in the direction of triangulation, he is returning to the Wittgensteinian insight about the impossibility of private language and radicalizing it, but also, and this is key to the spirit of Wittgenstein's project, Davidson is continuing the rejection of the representational picture of language and gesturing toward how tightly language is bound up with the world itself.[44] Davidson thinks it was a mistake of certain strands of post-Wittgensteinian philosophy to assume that there would be conventions or rules proper to the various forms of life that could be known in advance by speakers in order for communication to occur.[45] Instead, Davidson recognizes that language can 'go on' precisely in the shared communication of at least two persons' reaction to shared stimuli, that is, the world. In fact, it is really only through this triangulation between the self, the other, and the stimuli of the world that there can be said to be anything known or communicated at all. Davidson is committed with

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[41] Malpas, *Donald Davidson and the Mirror of Meaning*, 54ff. Davidson developed 'radical interpretation' as an elaboration W.V. Quine's account of 'radical translation', see W. V. Quine, *Word and Object*, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2002).
[42] Davidson, "A Nice Derangment of Epitaphs," 261.
[43] Davidson, 265.
[44] Donald Davidson, "Radical Interpretation," *Dialectica* 27, no. 3/4 (1973): 313–28.
[45] This is precisely the mistake I made in following a certain post-liberal deployment of 'forms of life' as a mode of theological method, see Ryan Turnbull, "The Gift of the Church: A More Excellent Form of Life," *Didaskalia* 28, no. 1 (2018): 1–28.

Wittgenstein to the proposition that "language is necessarily a social affair."[46] Language does not refer abstractly to things in the world, rather, through the social use of language, language users are able to pick out features of a shared world and go on navigating that shared world together, even if they are, from time to time, mistaken.

Against Kripke, and other interpreters of Wittgenstein that sought to secure language's meaning through shared rules or conventions, Davidson concludes that it is only through the interaction of at least two language users that there can be any evidence or basis for believing that particular usages of language mean or refer in any particular way.[47] It is on the evidence of the success of the ability of two such language users to 'go on' as it were, that we have any ability to say that particular instances of language mean this or that. Indeed, for Davidson, this insight about the dialogical nature of language actually extends to the content of thought as well, as he concludes, "Belief, intention, and the other propositional attitudes are all social in that they are states a creature cannot be in without having the concept of intersubjective truth, and this is a concept one cannot have without sharing, and knowing that one shares, a world and a way of thinking about the world with someone else."[48]

Now that we have a sense of what is at stake in Davidson's account of triangulation, it is perhaps easier to understand why Malpas sees in triangulation a latent ontology of place, for the work of triangulation requires several conditions that are at least suggestive of place. First, as Bjørn Torgrim Ramberg observes, Davidson's project of radical interpretation and its refinement by way of triangulation is strikingly similar to the hermeneutical project of Gadamer's ontology of understanding in the fusing of horizons.[49] There is a shared insistence on the persistent work of

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[46] Davidson, "The Second Person," 262.
[47] Cf. Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*.
[48] Davidson, "The Second Person," 265.
[49] Bjørn Torgrim Ramberg, "Davidson and Rorty: Triangulation and Anti-Foundationalism" in Jeff Malpas and Hans-Helmuth Gander, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Hermeneutics*, Routledge Philosophy Companions (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 217.

interpretation that both refuses foundationalism and, as I discussed above, refuses a referential picture of language that would render the ongoing *doing* of interpretation superfluous to the *possessing* of some rule or theory of meaning.[50] This distinction between *doing* and *possessing* is instructive, for it situates language and the work of interpretation as actions by embodied language users who inhabit the world. This embodied inhabitation of the doers of language interpretation, while itself suggestive of place, also brings us back to the actual mechanism of triangulation; the projection of 'lines' of interpretation from two or more language users to an object or stimuli in the world. This projection of line assumes a shared space or region that, in a sense, houses the interpretative exchange.

However, while this may often occur in terms of actual spatial proximity, say, two friends watching and reacting to a dog playing, the lines of triangulation need not be thought of as primarily spatial in the sense of relative proximity or distance. Indeed, as modern technology so clearly demonstrates, this spatial sense of understanding the lines of triangulation can be radically relativized as we are able to get along as language users quite well over the radio, phone, or zoom call. The imagined lines of Davidson's triangulation, while commonly used in the determination of a shared place in a spatial sense, also serve to structure the work of understanding – creating a place of recognition – without necessarily being spatially proximate.

Most importantly, triangulation provides a way of conceiving of place as a product of conversation or dialogue. Hermeneutical approaches to place continue to see bounds as important to the notion of place, but by centering triangulation it becomes clear that the role of boundaries is not that of including or excluding.[51] Boundedness remains, but it exists as interpretive limit, rather than spatial exclusion, for as Davidson notes, "There are no definite limits to how far dialogue can

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[50] Ramberg, 221.

[51] For example, see Malpas, "Placing Understanding/Understanding Place"; and Kathleen J. Ryan and Elizabeth J. Natalle, "Fusing Horizons: Standpoint Hermeneutics and Invitational Rhetoric," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (2001): 69–90.

or will take us."[52] The deep connection between place and understanding, or interpretation, that Malpas takes to be at the heart of 'topology' is in the final analysis, a dialogical or conversational reality that makes room for us to go on in language and action. Thus, place makes room for itself through a dialogical, rather than circumscribed, "in-ness" and has, in its very boundedness, the possibility of incorporating more, rather than being a site of exclusion as borders and boundaries are so often taken to be.[53]

4.2.II Topology and God-talk

So far, I have been giving particular attention to the Davidsonian emphasis on triangulation which points to the dialogical nature of the configuration of place as an interpretive structure. A potential pitfall to developing a theology of place following the philosophical method of topology is that it is based on a materialist ontology, particularly in its reliance on the pragmatic philosophy of Davidson. I noted above that this chapter sought to develop John Inge's theology of place by further interrogating the nature of the relations he stipulated as being at the heart of his account of place. Inge sees the nature of those relations as being continuous with the kind of participatory ontology of what he calls the 'Sacramental World View.'[54] Place, for Inge, is thus a sacrament or at the very least, a sacramental, a sign that participates in what it signifies.[55] Yet as this is developed for Inge, it seems that he has in view something like Moses' experience with the burning bush – the revelation of the presence of God in that *particular place* that is previously described in the biblical narrative as generic wilderness, makes that place into a sacrament for Moses, and further, this is indicative of the sacramental potentiality of all places given the persistent presence of God to God's creation.[56]

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[52] Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," 165.
[53] Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," *Marxism Today*, June 1991, 27.
[54] Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 59.
[55] Inge, 60.
[56] Inge, 67–68.

However, it seems to me that Inge's sacramental account is unsatisfactory on several points. Inge concurs with John V. Taylor that mystical encounter with the presence of God is at the heart of a sacramental account of place and that this has been commonly testified to in the history of Christian practice.[57] Yet he casts this not as an appeal to experience but rather as the expected corollary of a God who in Scripture is depicted as a God who reveals Godself to people in place.[58] But if place is tied to divine revelation in both Scripture and experience, what is the precise character of place such that it facilitates the encounter of this revelatory encounter? On Inge's account, place is threatened to be eclipsed by event, or worse, rendered back into a mere receptacle in which such an encounter might occur – but this would be to betray his best insight that place is defined in terms of its facilitation of relations.[59] Indeed, Inge does pivot back to a relational sense to his sacramentality of place, but ends up distracted from giving a theological account of place as such, by attempting to determine what makes holy places sacred, determining that a place's association with holy persons or communities that had encountered God, and the ongoing public memory and association with this encounter, is what makes places holy such that they continue to function sacramentally as disclosive of the presence of God.[60]

Ultimately, Inge's attempt to define place sacramentally ends up bracketing out the question of what 'place' itself is and rather focuses on place's significance in terms of its performance by and for humans in relation to their God. But this raises a further problem, is place just the seat of relations between God and the world? Perhaps this is what a sacred place is, and Inge is right in pointing to the example of Moses and the burning bush that all places potentially disclose this to us. But it is very often the case that being in place does not immediately communicate the presence of

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[57] Inge, 73. Cf. John V. Taylor, *The Christlike God*, (London: SCM Press, 1992).
[58] Inge, 74; Here, Inge is following the Barthian legacy of the post-liberal 'rule' that it is Scripture that should narrate the world, see George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature Of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1984).
[59] In this, Inge follows a tendency Malpas has described in the so-called spatial turn, see Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 4–5.
[60] Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 78–90.

God to us, even if we want to affirm that God is indeed present in some way. Perhaps a return to Malpas can help to resolve this difficulty. Recall that for Malpas,

> Place is… that within and with respect to which subjectivity is itself established. Place is not founded on subjectivity but is that on which the notion of subjectivity is founded. Thus, one does not first have a subject that apprehends certain features of the world in terms of the idea of place; rather, the structure of subjectivity is given in and through the structure of place.[61]

As I have elaborated above, the interdependence of place and subjectivity can be understood as a dialogical process by which language-using subjects find ways to 'go on' in the world through a process of establishing consensus through the recognition of shared subjective interactions with various stimuli. Yet in this configuration of place according to Malpas' notion of *topology* or *topography*, how is knowledge of God accounted for? I raised the possibility above that one way of securing this would be through a focus on the body of Jesus, and indeed, this is the way Inge ultimately concludes his sacramentalist approach. But I also highlighted potential pitfalls to this and pointed to another moment in the life of Moses, the coming of Israel to Mt. Sinai. Reflection on the Sinai experience represents a trajectory in Christian theology that refuses the simple identification of knowledge of God with the immediate presence of the divine, instead pointing us to place itself as the way to arrive at knowledge of God through ongoing interpretive work embedded in the ordinary communications of creaturely existence.

Perhaps we might agree with Inge that place is a site of divine self-revelation, but to avoid eclipsing place itself with the event of revelation, allow me to supplement this account with some observations about the peculiarities of language. Rowan Williams observes that our "language behaves as if it were always 'in the wake of meaning,' rather than owning and controlling it."[62] Recall that Davidson's notion of triangulation depends on the ability of language users to dialogically

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[61] Malpas, *Place and Experience*, 34.
[62] Rowan Williams, *The Edge of Words: God and the Habits of Language* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 173.

recognize that what they are seeing or experiencing in the world is the same thing as at least one other language user. On the basis of this bond of recognition, knowledge of the world is able to 'go on.' Yet this ability to 'go on' seems to be, in Williams' idiom, 'in the wake of' something. The dialogical negotiation of subjectivity that *is* the structure of place, is suggestive of precisely the kind of surplus of meaning that Williams identifies as being the very condition of our linguistic being.

Place, as I have repeatedly stressed, is not constricted by boundaries such that a sure foundation for meaning arises, or that ambiguity is resolved in the establishment of one sure meaning. Rather, through the charitable advance of various 'passing theories' we discover that dialogue can open hinterlands of meaning and experience that could not possibly have been foreseen or prescribed in advance. This process can go wrong, of course, but quite often it does not, and various amounts of trial and error might very well be expected if our language is, in fact, following after something as we pragmatically go on making sense of the world and its own very possibility of being. The implication of our language having this kind of 'following after' type character that suggest that we are 'spoken before we speak' is fitting in the first respect because it reminds us that it is not our language or our categories that capture or define what God is or must be, but rather it is God that reveals Godself, and this revelation creates the very structures of subjective interpretation that we have seen are intimately linked with place. So it is that we come to know God, and everything that is, in the normal processes of creaturely communication and interpretation, and we do so necessarily in place as a result.

To return to Inge, we might want to put it this way: place is the dialogical structure by which we apprehend the world. But it is precisely the dialogical mechanisms of our inhabitation of place that highlight the priority of divine communication in constituting place as a creaturely reality. Our regular dialogical processes proceed 'in the wake', and it is this responsive characteristic of our dialogical recognition processes, in place, that leave open the possibility of a real recognition of

divine self-revelation. In this way, the structure of place as a hermeneutical set of processes is both made possible by God's creative activity, and as such, is the necessary condition of our apprehension of God's revelation. We can only begin in this middle position of being-in-place, but in stressing the necessity of being-in-place for knowledge of God, we are not thereby idolatrously elevating a creaturely structure to the level of divinity, but rather attuning ourselves to the accommodation of how God has already acted to make knowledge of Godself possible. Place is thus analytically distinct from God's revelatory work, while at once being founded on, and creating the conditions for, the apprehension of that revelation.

So, if place has to do with the structure of intelligibility or apprehension of the world and is not to be confused with or identified too fully with space and the spatial extension or limit of body, nevertheless it is the case that we do not inhabit the world as linguistic minds. We do well to remember the Wittgensteinian insight about language here, it is not language that means things, it is we who mean things with language, and the nature of our linguistic being is tied to the kind of embodied beings we are. Wittgenstein famously alludes to this in his observation that even "if a lion could talk, we could not understand him."[63] Although we may be free to disagree with Wittgenstein on the possibilities of trans-species communication (as indeed I do below), the more germane insight is that the possibility of our linguistic being is tied up in our particular bodily configuration in the world.[64] As place has often been believed to be a function of body it behooves me to turn to the question of embodiment in the next section. In this section I develop an account of what I call 'communicative body' that attends to the tradition of associating place with body while nevertheless

[63] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 225.
[64] For the possibilities and limits of interspecies communication see Storm, *Metamodernism*; Felice Cimatti, "Wittgenstein on Animal (Human and Non-Human) Languages" 15 (January 1, 2016): 42–59; Leonardo Barón Birchenall, "Animal Communication and Human Language: An Overview," *International Journal of Comparative Psychology* 29 (2016), https://doi.org/10.46867/ijcp.2016.29.00.07; Paco Calvo, Vaidurya Pratap Sahi, and Anthony Trewavas, "Are Plants Sentient?," *Plant, Cell & Environment* 40, no. 11 (2017): 2858–69, https://doi.org/10.1111/pce.13065.

continuing to insist that place is inextricably bound up with the dialogical structuring of the intelligibility of the world.

4.3 Communicative Bodies

> *Yet there is no voice but bodily voice: our whole body is thus presupposed by voice, required in order for voice to be voice in the first place, and voice in turn to transform the body into a word-bearer and therefore into the highest manifestation of spirit. Prior to any utterance, the apparition of a human body directly constitutes the monstrance of what is invisible because it bears speech throughout, promising us speech and promised by speech in advance.*[65]

4.3.I Aristotle

The legacy of Aristotle looms large over the history of philosophical thought on place.[66] Aristotle makes a crucial category decision about place that has had ramifications for how place has been thought about throughout much of the Western philosophical tradition. A fundamental concern for Aristotle was to account for various kinds of motion, which for him name types of change – more specifically 'motion' names the process by which what is potential is actualized.[67] The category of place, for Aristotle, is considered in relation to the question of motion – his generic category for 'change' – because for Aristotle place is bound up with the particular type of motion proper to physical bodies; locomotion. It is important to understand that 'place' for Aristotle is not being considered in itself, but rather is the answer to what he sees as the more fundamental question of how to account for the movement of material bodies.[68]

Because place, for Aristotle, is the answer to the question of how to account for the movement of material bodies it is somehow dependent on the concept of body. Aristotle outlines a number of criteria for understanding how body and place and motion relate to one another. "We assume first that place is what contains that of which it is the place, and is no part of the thing;

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[65] Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Call and the Response* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 83.
[66] Various histories of place in the Western Philosophical tradition highlight how Aristotle's basic concept of place returns over and over in different periods, see Casey, *The Fate of Place*; Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing*; Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, n.d.
[67] L. A. Kosman, "Aristotle's Definition of Motion," *Phronesis* 14, no. 1 (1969): 40.
[68] Helen S. Lang, *The Order of Nature in Aristotle's Physics: Place and the Elements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 67.

again, that the primary place of a thing is neither less nor greater than the thing; again, that place can be left behind by the thing and is separable..."[69] What is particularly significant to note among these criteria is the distinction Aristotle is pressing between place and the bodies that occupy place. Aristotle is receiving from Plato a receptacle metaphor for place, but he seems to think that Plato's receptacle-metaphor is prone to simply identify place with the form (*hyle*) of matter.[70] But to identify a body's place with the form of that material body would make it impossible to determine the answer to Aristotle's more fundamental concern about how to account for the motion of bodies. If a body's place adheres in itself, how can we speak of a body moving from one place to another? For this reason, body and place, while related, must be distinct from each other such that a body can move from being in one place to being in another.[71]

Yet while Aristotle distinguishes between place and body, he does not reject the fundamental receptacle-metaphor for place. Place is that which contains, like a vessel or a receptacle, a body. But according to Benjamin Morison, Aristotle identifies two types of containing, "one which one might call 'circumscriptive', the other 'receptive.'"[72] Receptive containing, according to Morison, is like how we refer to being in a given geographical place, like my home city of Winnipeg.[73] When I am in Winnipeg, I do not make a hole the shape of myself in the city. I do not displace anything by being here.[74] The city receives me as a sort of interval of space in which my body and indeed all the various bodies that make up a city may be in or pass through. But Aristotle argues against this receptive-containing account of place, again, because what he is fundamentally after is a way of understanding

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[69] Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. C. D. C. Reeve, Translation edition (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2018), 211a1-4.
[70] David Keyt, "Aristotle on Plato's Receptacle," *The American Journal of Philology* 82, no. 3 (1961): 29; cf. Plato *Timaeus* 52A8-B5; although it is entirely possible that Aristotle misinterpreted Plato here, see Henry Mendell, "Topoi on Topos: The Development of Aristotle's Concept of Place," *Phronesis* 32, no. 2 (1987): 216-217.
[71] Keyt, "Aristotle on Plato's Receptacle," 295.
[72] Benjamin Morison, *On Location: Aristotle's Concept of Place*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 56.
[73] His example is the country of France, see Morison, 56.
[74] While I do not physically displace anything, when seen through a political-economy lens, my being-in-place as a consumer does have a radically displacing effect globally, see Val Plumwood, "Shadow Places and the Politics of Dwelling," accessed October 27, 2022, http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2008/03/01/shadow-places-and-the-politics-of-dwelling/.

locomotion.[75] It is 'circumscriptive' containing that most interests Aristotle in the *Physics*, for this is the kind of containing whereby any body *x* is contained by its surroundings such that they are moulded to it.[76] For Aristotle, this circumscriptive-containing is the proper way to understand the distinction between place and body because he believes that the fundamental property of place is that bodies are 'in' place, *en topoi*.[77]

To understand why Aristotle insists on 'in-ness' as the fundamental property of place, it is helpful to understand a bit about a key aspect of Aristotle's philosophical method, a doctrine known as the '*pollachos legomena*' or 'things said in many ways'.[78] A characteristic rhetorical strategy Aristotle uses in his work is to consider how it is we typically say something, and then question whether that grammatical construct is illuminative of the way the world is. But this is not just a casual observance of the way words run, rather, Aristotle closely examines all the various meanings and uses of a given word or phrase and then "tries to show how they are related."[79] In this way, Aristotle believes he can sometimes show that that various usages of a word do not simply arise by chance, but are in fact systematically related to each other. If they indeed are, then Aristotle is able to suggest a sort of guiding 'meaning' of a given word that in some ways governs all the other usages of that word. So, he observes, that it is often said of something that it is *en topoi*, 'in place', but what does it mean to be 'in'? Aristotle lists a number of ways one can be 'in' something in *Physics* IV, 3.

> In one way, as a finger is in a hand, and generally a part in a whole. In another way, as a whole is in its parts; for there is no whole over and above the parts. Again, as man is in animal, and in general a species in a genus. Again, as the genus is in the species, and in general a part of the species in its definition. Again, as health is in the hot and the cold, and in general the form in the matter. Again, as the affairs of Greece are in the King, and generally events are in their primary motive agent. Again, as a thing is in its good, and generally in its end, i.e. in that

[75] Morison, *On Location*, 56–57.
[76] Morison, 56.
[77] Morison, 55, see also Aristotle, *Physics* IV, 2.
[78] Morison, 67.
[79] Morison, 67.

> for the sake of which. And most properly of all, as something is in a vessel, and generally in a place.[80]

All these ways of being 'in' name "various relations which hold between two things *x* and *y* such that *x* is said to be in *y*."[81] But for Aristotle, it is the final relation, the locative sense of being 'in' that is determinative for all the other relationships named above. Now, as Morison observes, on the one hand Aristotle does not exhaust the various ways we might say 'in', and on the other hand, it seems that with enough creativity and effort, one could suggest that every relationship is an 'in' relation given the diverse examples Aristotle deploys.[82] Yet because of the nature of Aristotle's enquiry, into the necessity of place for understanding locomotion, it is the locative sense that is highlighted as being most fundamental, and this locative sense of being-in is determined by the metaphor of being in a vessel. This ultimately privileges the circumscriptive sense of containing as being integral to the locative sense of 'in' which then, for Aristotle, governs his overarching understanding of 'in-ness' regarding all these relations.

But here we can apply Aristotle's own method against himself to challenge the strict circumscriptive account of place he ultimately arrives at. The various relations that he names do seem to have a locative function to them, if not strictly spatial, the 'in' relation does at least name how *x* phenomena relates to *y* circumstance in an intelligible manner. Indeed, 'in' here names the structure of intelligibility between two things that allows us to know what kinds of things they are at all. Yet while this 'in' relationship can sometimes be understood by metaphorically establishing a boundary *y* that contains *x*, just as easily we might draw metaphoric dialogical lines between *x* and *y*, as in Davidson's 'triangulation,' that establish the 'in' relation while still performing a locative function. Aristotle seems to privilege the circumscriptive-containing of the vessel metaphor as a way

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[80] Aristotle, *Physics*, 210a15-24.
[81] Morison, *On Location*, 73.
[82] Morison, *On Location*, 78; 75.

of securing the distinction between a body and its place as a separable relation to account for his primary interest regarding locomotion. But by structuring the enquiry in this way, Aristotle perhaps artificially limits himself to understanding 'in-ness' as being primarily a bounded reality instead of a relational, and at times even reciprocal phenomenon that can still perform a locative function even without relying exclusively on boundaries to accomplish this.

So, with Aristotle, I want to affirm that being 'in' is crucial to the idea of place, and that the locative function of 'in' is indeed useful for understanding how the in-relation works, but I diverge from Aristotle by suggesting that this is better understood within the framework of hermeneutics rather than physics. By refocusing on the hermeneutical, I think we can arrive at a more constructive account of place that affirms the relationship between bodies and places in more relational terms that can better account for the way place functions as a seat of relations that are constituted by the various divine and creaturely communications that make up the created order.

4.3.II Hylosemiotics and the Communicative Body

With a more hermeneutical sense of 'in' at hand we might be able to reconsider again the relationship between body and place. To do this, we must not consider body as simply inert physical matter that moves first here, then there. Instead of considering the relationship between place and body as one of inert physical body and its subsequent location in relation to movement, we might think of body as 'communicative body.' John O'Neill has developed this notion of 'communicative body' in conversation with the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[83] But O'Neill's deployment of this term is focused around the relationship between the human body and the embodied perception of that body and how that gives way to, or perhaps rise to, the communicative

[83] O'Neill is specifically developing trajectories laid out in, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 2nd ed., (New York: Routledge, 2002).

economy of language.[84] While I want to broadly affirm the intimate involvement of the human body in communication, my own use of the concept of 'communicative body' if it is to be fit for purpose, must move beyond the anthropocentric to include all creaturely bodies.

In fact, what I am here calling 'communicative body' is quite similar to Jason Ananda Josephson Storm's concept of 'hylosemiotics'. Deriving from the Greek roots for 'matter' and 'sign' Storm's proposal seeks to move beyond what he perceives as certain dead-ends in New Materialist and post-structural theory regarding the supposed impossibility of translation or communication, between beings, creatures, objects, etc., of different so-called 'ontologies.'[85] For Storm, translatability is not impossible, it is difficult. He reminds us that when people say that a concept or a word is 'untranslatable' what is typically meant is that there is no exact semantic overlap in another language for a particular word. This declaration of 'untranslatability' is often immediately undercut by people who then go on to explain the word using a short phrase, a sentence, or indeed a whole paragraph to express the meaning of the 'untranslatable' word. This translation by expansion *is* translation, albeit, an awkward form of it, yet it does reaffirm that translation is possible, even if it is fraught with difficulty. As Storm puts it, "here is the heart of the paradox: to give a specific example of untranslatability requires being able to communicate to readers what has been lost in translation; but if you can communicate to readers what has been lost in translation, then the language in question is not in fact untranslatable."[86] Storm insists that rather than being irrecoverably lost in difference, the world must share some basic 'minimal metaontology.'[87]

For Storm, what underwrites his insistence on a 'minimal metaontology' are two initial insights. First, "semiotics and ontology have to be done side-by-side, as it is a mistake to try to

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[84] John O'Neill, *The Communicative Body: Studies in Communicative Philosophy, Politics, and Sociology*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989); see also John O'Neill, *Five Bodies: Re-Figuring Relationships*, (London; Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications, 2004).
[85] Storm, *Metamodernism*, 160.
[86] Storm, 185.
[87] Storm, 162.

formulate a theory of language by completely bracketing off meaning from the physical world in which meaning occurs."[88] Second, "we need to naturalize any theory of language to see human semiotic behavior on a continuum with at least that of other animal species."[89] He observes that humans and other animals are actually remarkably successful at some basic things, "we navigate the world in various ways. We feed ourselves. We reproduce. We have expectations. We communicate with each other."[90] For Storm, the fact that creatures of all kinds do this in a reliable fashion, and to some degree, in coordination with one another, suggests some direct ontological implications about the reality of our shared world and the stability of various phenomena clusters that make navigating this shared world an actualizable reality. Note that this really is a 'minimal' metaontology, it is not an attempt to subordinate any other ontology to a master, or colonizing, ontology, such as was the case with, for example, the various *prisca theologia* strategies I discussed in the previous chapter. Storm's claim here is quite modest, all manner of beings, despite their differences, have a relatively high degree of success in navigating the world together in all sorts of ordinary ways.

Storm explains how this is possible by concentrating on two rival traditions of semiotics. Storm contrasts Saussure and Pierce, noting that for Saussure, a sign is made up of two parts, a sign and that which is signified, the relationship between which is arbitrary.[91] For Storm, Saussure's insight into the arbitrary nature of signs is not wrong, it is simply overblown. Following Pierce, Storm observes that there are many types of signs - Peirce ultimately identified at least 66 types of

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[88] Storm, 162.
[89] Storm, 162; L. Gilbert and D. Johnson, "Chapter Four - Plant–Plant Communication Through Common Mycorrhizal Networks," in *Advances in Botanical Research*, ed. Guillaume Becard, vol. 82, How Plants Communicate with Their Biotic Environment (Academic Press, 2017), 83–97; Calvo, Sahi, and Trewavas, "Are Plants Sentient?"; Mariko Thomas, "A Cartography of Roots: An Exploration of Plant Communication, Place, and Story," *Communication ETDs*, May 13, 2019; Helene Steiner et al., "Project Florence: A Plant to Human Experience," in *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, (New York, NY: Association for Computing Machinery, 2017), 1415–20; Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013); Peter Wohlleben, Tim Flannery, and Suzanne Simard, *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate—Discoveries from A Secret World*, trans. Jane Billinghurst, Illustrated edition (Vancouver, BC: Greystone Books, 2016).
[90] Storm, *Metamodernism*, 162.
[91] Storm, 189.

signs himself[92] - but these might generally be sorted into three basic categories of Sign; the Icon, the Index, and the Symbol.[93] On Peirce's account, an example of an Icon is a picture of an object.[94] An Index would be something like the "probable connections between the low barometer reading with moist air and coming rain."[95] An index represents another object, not by its visual similarity, or by a socially constructed rule, but because of an "association by contiguity".[96] The final type of sign is a Symbol, which is typically established through some sort of social convention or law, such as the word 'man.'[97] Arguably, symbols are the Peircean equivalent to Saussure's account of a 'sign', but Storm points out that while the Saussurean operates on the basis of a dyadic relationship between 'sign' and 'signified',[98] Peirce's system is triadic, the relationship between sign and signified is always in relation to an 'interpretant'.[99] The interpretant is an individual or a process that establishes that a sign does not simply stand for something, but instead always stands for something in relation "to somebody in some respect or capacity."[100] For Storm "it is this crucial 'to somebody' that makes the relationship between the signifier and the signified possible."[101] Storm emphasizes that this 'to somebody' dynamic allows Peirce's semiotic system to encompass a broader notion of semiotics that includes all sorts of communicative activities.[102]

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[92] Albert Atkin, "Peirce's Theory of Signs," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, Spring 2023 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2023), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2023/entries/peirce-semiotics/.
[93] Charles Sander Peirce, "Three Trichotomies of Signs," accessed June 19, 2023, https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/peirce2.htm.
[94] Charles S. Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in *Philosophy of Pierce: Selected Writings*, ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Ams Press, 1980), 105.
[95] Peirce, 109.
[96] Peirce, 108.
[97] Peirce, 112.
[98] Although, it should be noted that Saussure's model is not strictly dyadic either, as it does assume a signifier who is deploying the sign in relation to the signified, see Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Perry Meisel and Haun Saussy, trans. Wade Baskin, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 65.
[99] Storm, *Metamodernism*, 189.
[100] Storm, 189.
[101] Storm, 189.
[102] Storm, 190.

Storm's own account of hylosemiotics gains traction particularly by reflecting on Peirce's concept of Index signs. An Index is a useful category of sign for hylosemiotics because it emphasizes that "a given token is only a particular sign for a particular interpretant and for a particular purpose" which emphasizes the need for there to be some sort of discursive interpretive engagement with the sign towards some particular end – smoke is a sign of fire as relevant for any given proximate interpreting creature.[103] For Storm, this does not require 'agency' on the part of the smoke to 'communicate' that there is a fire, contrary to various weak accounts of agency among some New Materialists.[104] Different interpreters may take the smoke to indicate different things, mere presence of fire, imminent danger, or the presence of a nearby campsite. Each interpretation would open up a different sign-aspect regarding smoke's communicative potential as a 'sign', but these are all built upon the underlying indexical relationship between smoke and fire that can be reliably assumed and interpreted upon and beyond by interpretive creatures. The Index sign relationship is thus a key building block towards a broader system of hylosemiotics, which for Storm, allows him to begin to show how, at least animal creatures can coordinate amongst themselves and with humans in relation to the same basic world.

To return to my idiom of 'communicative body', by reflecting on the interpretive possibilities that hylosemiotics introduces through its elaboration on the Peircean semiotic system, we can begin to see how the basic processes of triangulation can be extended beyond the human, and can recognize all manner of 'bodies' such as smoke, fallen leaves, flotsam, etc., as 'communicative' in their status as Index signs. We are also invited to identify at least animals as other potential 'second persons' whom we might coordinate with in the triangulating process of discursively interpreting the world. A small example from my own life might help illustrate this

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[103] Storm, 190.

[104] Storm, 192; Storm seems to have something like Actor Network theory in view here, see Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

point. As a boy I raised an orphan calf named "Scooter" by hand. At first, the calf would come running to the fence when she saw me, because she knew that my presence meant food, eventually Scooter came to recognize the name by which I would address her and would come running from the bush when I called. As she got older, she even learned to differentiate between when I had a white milk pail and when I was just there to visit and would moderate her behaviour accordingly. I also learned (after having far too many pails of warm milk dumped on my school clothes as the bus pulled up the lane) that I had to hold the pail a certain way to accommodate the natural impulse of calves to head-butt the udder while feeding. Scooter and I occupied a shared world, with certain shared indexical signs (primarily, the white milk pail), and through it, learned to interpret each others behaviour in such a way that both of us learned to go on together in a real and quite emotional intimacy. This was possible because the place we occupied together was structured by all the various communicative bodies that make up a farm, and through a shared process of discursive triangulation, we created a life together for a time.[105]

4.4 Conclusion

I have argued throughout this chapter that place is a structure of intelligibility or apprehension that is structured by the dialogical relations created by the network of communicative bodies that constitute the created order. This concretizes the relational theology of place that John Inge provides and provides a thick philosophical account of the communicative account of place that O'Donovan provides – an account I will return to in more detail in the next chapter. I emphasized that the structure of place – what Malpas calls topology – can be fruitfully understood by way of Donald Davidson's account of radical interpretation and triangulation. In fact, Davidson's

[105] The ongoing development and renegotiation of my relationship with Scooter models the dynamics observed in Alvise Favotto, John Francis McKernan, and Yanru Zou, "Speculative Accountability for Animal Kinship," *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, Special Issue: Accounting, Accountability and Animals, 84 (May 1, 2022).

denial that there is any shared language at all, that we all have our own idiolects, is an exceptionally useful concept for understanding what is at stake in a dialogical and interpretive account of place. For if, as I argue, all bodies are communicative bodies, and it is the network of communications that constitutes being 'in' a place, then it is not altogether surprising that humans are able to learn to coordinate their triangulating interpretive efforts with more than human bodies. As we saw in Jason Ananda Josephson Storm's account of hylosemiotics, translating and interpreting across difference is difficult, but it is not altogether impossible, and why should it be? For as Davidson notes, if we all begin with our own idiolects in the relatively routine task of engaging with other very similar human language speakers, then the same basic triangulating process at work in the interpretive processes of Davidson's radical interpretation should, at least in principle, be able to be extended beyond human bodies and include all manner of communicative creaturely bodies.

However, having established that being 'in' place is to be engaged in the dialogical interpreting of the world of communicative bodies, we must immediately note that this is a way of being that will inevitably be structured by all manner of misrecognitions, misinterpretations, and malapropism.[106] The very possibility of place, that we might learn to go on together through dialogue, is also the tragedy of place, that this 'going on' is prone to deep woundings that can so structure our places that they become anti-places – places where the possibility of a shared dialogical 'going on' perpetually breaks down. There is, then, a fundamental ambiguity at the heart of place, and it is this ambiguity that marks place as a deeply creaturely reality, one that provides possibility for intimate reconciled relationships with creatures and God, and one that runs the very real risk that all of this will unravel.

[106] Donald Davidson, "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs," in *The Essential Davidson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 251–66.

In the next chapter, and in much of what remains of this thesis, I focus on how settler colonialism is a structure that has arisen out of the always potential risks inherent in the dialogical reality of place. These reflections help emphasize the tragic dimension of place, even as being 'in' place, being 'in' the Spirit, and being 'in' relation, are all opportunities for an intimate joining, these can and do go wrong. We might call this tragic reality sin. Sin is wily.[107] A theology of place must take seriously both the possibilities as well as the pitfalls of place, precisely because it too, as a creaturely reality, is touched by sin and its distorting effects. If, in our dialogues of place, we can come to know our place, know the bodies in this place, and even encounter the body of Jesus, we are also always vulnerable to being lead astray bout our talk, of losing our talk, and of silencing the communicative bodies who all must speak if the intimate joining of Pentecost is truly our eschatological hope.

[107] Lauren F. Winner, *The Dangers of Christian Practice: On Wayward Gifts, Characteristic Damage, and Sin*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 16.

Chapter 5: The Place of (mis)Communication

5.1 Introduction

So far, I have described place as a dialogical structure of intelligibility/apprehension wherein the communicative exchanges of bodies are recognized. Theologically, we can affirm that place names the seat of communicative relations between bodies, and that this all occurs within the Spirit by which particular creaturely bodies are brought into the relations of dialogical recognition internal to the divine life. Yet this theological affirmation of the structure of place is no guarantee against place undergoing a dialogical rupture of miscommunication. In this chapter I explore the corollary affirmation of a communicative account of place – that communication is always haunted by the risk of miscommunication. Specifically, I do this by contrasting, on the one hand, the role of conversation and dialogue in the settler agrarian account of place developed by Wendell Berry, with the profound loss of language enacted by the genocidal regime of the Indian Residential Schools on the other hand. The place-dialogue of settler agrarianism begins in the silence created by the removal of Indigenous bodies and the snatching away of the language by which Indigenous peoples have inhabited their places since time immemorial. So, we are left with a paradox. A Christian theology of place, animated by the intimate joining of Pentecost, ought to hold all bodies *in* their places, allowing for the full communication of their creaturely goodness to be recognized and received. But enthusiastic Christian collusion in the genocidal structures of settler colonialism has ruptured these communicative networks, refused the intimacy of Pentecost, and inflicted wounds that have caused precious creatures of God to 'lose their talk'.[1]

Having established an account of communicative bodies in the previous chapter, I turn again to O'Donovan's communicative account of place and expand upon it by way of reference to the work of Wendell Berry. Place as a function of communicative bodies has been hinted at by both

[1] Cf., Rita Joe, *I Lost My Talk* (Halifax, NS: Nimbus, 2019).

Oliver O'Donovan and Wendell Berry, though not explicitly named as such in the way I have so far described. However, it is useful to briefly look at how these two thinkers have laid the groundwork for the account of place I am advocating to expose some potential pitfalls and some possible solutions to those problems.

Wendell Berry is not a theologian as such but is often consulted as a Christian voice on issues of ecology, land, and place.[2] Indeed, it was my own reading of Berry while working on my family farm during my undergrad and through seminary that inspired this present project. In the next chapter, I engage some of the writings of my great-grandfather to explore the limits of Settler-agrarian memory and place-making, but it was Berry that helped me recognize myself and my ancestors as being participants in an agrarian conversation with a place – with all the limits and possibilities this entails. Wendell Berry is one of the most prominent agrarian place-writers of our time and by engaging his work a bit in this chapter through a brief look at his much larger corpus, I am able to better develop some critical tools for engaging the much more limited sample of writing from my own ancestor. Engaging Berry is a proxy for me to practice the 'aware-settler' method I described in the introduction in that he provides a familiar Agrarian and Settler way of thinking about place that offers both possibilities and limitations for a Christian theology of place that seeks to take seriously the challenge of colonialism.

Wendell Berry has explicitly located his account of place as being a product of the 'conversations' of a place, and I briefly highlight several places across his corpus where this 'conversational' account of place is emphasized. Precisely because Berry's account of place is conversational, it raises all sorts of questions about whose voices are heard, whose are remembered,

[2] See for example, Joel James Shuman and L. Roger Owens, eds., *Wendell Berry and Religion: Heaven's Earthly Life*, (Louisville, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2009); Joseph R. Wiebe, *The Place of Imagination: Wendell Berry and the Poetics of Community, Affection, and Identity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017); Jeffrey Bilbro, *Virtues of Renewal: Wendell Berry's Sustainable Forms* (Louisville, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2020).

and if the voices of more than human creatures can have a voice in this conversation. Berry does not shy away from these questions, often asking how the dead might be remembered, how the land and 'wild things' might speak, how race, class, and power interrupt these communications and how ignorance is a characteristic limit on our ability to be in these conversations well. I develop more of these themes in chapter six, but in this chapter I emphasize the way the communications or conversations of place break down.

We have already seen, in chapter two, that the colonialist moment represents a significant moment in the break-down of the communications of place and I accounted for this through the heterological processing of difference and the refusal of intimacy that the creation of race entailed. After demonstrating the limits of Berry's conversational account of place due to its position within the structures of settler colonialism, I turn, in the second half of this to a discussion of the racialized refusal of intimacy by way of a dialogue between Mi'kmaq poet, Rita Joe, and French phenomenologist Jean-Louis Chrétien. Chrétien's emphasis on the woundedness of our speech, the incompleteness of our language and its ongoing failure are simply part of the finitude of our creaturely existence. If place is to be understood through the matrices of creaturely and divine communication, we must take seriously the way this so often goes wrong, creating no-places, anti-places, lived-noplaces, shadow-places, and abetting the 'loss of talk' of those who find themselves resident therein. Vine Deloria jr. famously asserted that the problem with Western Christianity is that it did not have a sense of place and that this was disastrous for its impact on Indigenous peoples who have cultivated a deep appreciation for place.[3] Deloria is quite right in his assessment of the disastrous consequences of colonial contact, but as I have been arguing, Western Christianity has had concepts of place all along, but the point at issue is to show how and why they have gone wrong. By articulating the fundamental logic of place as being a communicative set of relations I can

[3] Deloria, *God Is Red*, 66–70.

articulate how place is always functioning, and how various miscommunications and misrecognitions can cause deep harms.

Finally, I conclude that if place is the sum of a network of communications, this has implications for how we might think of the communications of place as an ongoing critical practice of liberation. For if in the contact between Christian concepts of place and Indigenous ones, Indigenous peoples lost life, land, and language, the work of reconciliation is going to need to be able to address and make reparations for these things. Furthermore, a Christian doctrine of place that does not attend to this history of conflict is insufficiently Christian, for it denies the creaturely communications of a significant part of God's good world, and worse, grieves the Holy Spirit in the ongoing refusal of graced intimacy with all of creation that exists in and with the incorporating mission of the Spirit.

5.2 Place and Communication

5.2.I Oliver O'Donovan

In his 2001 Stobb Lectures, subsequently published as *Common Objects of Love*, Oliver O'Donovan argues that "'Community' means a sphere in which things are held in common rather than in private, as 'ours' rather than as 'yours' or 'mine.' The essence of community is 'communication,' the exercise of sharing things or transmitting them among two or more people."[4] O'Donovan is making an etymological connection between community and communication derived from the Latin rendering of *communitas* and *communication* as translations of the Greek concept of *koinonia*. The *koinonia*, is that community that is made concrete in its common sharing of goods, or, as O'Donovan puts it, "Those who are partners to communication (*koinonia* in the verbal sense) form a community (*koinonia* in the concrete sense). They become a 'we' in relation to the object,

[4] Oliver O'Donovan, *Common Objects of Love: Moral Reflection and the Shaping of Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), loc. 221–22. We can see a resonance here with Davidson's concept of triangulation as being at the heart of O'Donovan's account of community.

whatever it is, that is common to them."[5] While O'Donovan does not go on to specify what specifically this object might be in these lectures, in his subsequent volume, *The Ways of Judgment*, O'Donovan again returns to the theme of communication, but this time, he grounds it in place. O'Donovan recognizes place as the necessary "precondition for social communication in material and intellectual goods."[6] Simply put, place "stands for a totality of diverse communications that cannot be defined by any material description."[7] O'Donovan does not identify place simply as the space that our bodies occupy, it is neither container nor a simple point of location, but rather is the totality of our social communications, as far as they may extend. In more recent work, including his *Ethics as Theology* trilogy and his Gifford lectures, O'Donovan has emphasized the role of history and time as being important in the interpretation of these social communications.[8] For O'Donovan, a given geographical space such as a defined nation state will necessarily require a knowledge of the histories of that space and how they came to impact upon what is recognizable as a given place.[9]

For O'Donovan, the social communication of goods is premised on the prior communication of goods from God to creation. Our ethical duty to pursue the good of our neighbours is predicated on the prior gift of God to all creatures of the good required for their flourishing. The use of property, political organization, and the determination of ethical action all arise as the social outworking of this divine communication to creatures. O'Donovan's account of the way place is bound up in the communication of goods adds an ethical dimension to the dialogical interpretation I argued for above. O'Donovan is not totally opposed to the idea of borders

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[5] O'Donovan, 224–26.
[6] O'Donovan, *The Ways of Judgment*, 255.
[7] O'Donovan, 256.
[8] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time: Volume 1: Ethics as Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013); Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking: Ethics as Theology Volume Two* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014); Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest: Ethics as Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017); Oliver O'Donovan, *The Disappearance of Ethics: The Gifford Lectures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2024).
[9] Oliver O'Donovan, "Christianity and Territorial Right," in *States, Nations and Borders: The Ethics of Making Boundaries*, ed. Margaret Moore and Allen Buchanan, Ethikon Series in Comparative Ethics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 127–42.

as an act of political communication, but precisely because they are an act of political communication that are determined by the historical communications of a given people or community, they are always on some level, open to renegotiation.

Furthermore, if the social communication of goods is premised on a prior divine communication of goods in God's providential creation, sustenance and consummation of the world, part of the work of interpretation for ethical action necessarily is discerning the nature of these divine communications. For Christian theology, this is primarily directed by the interpretation of Scripture, but there remains an ongoing task for a type of natural theology that keeps us open to the unheard voice of all creaturely goods and an invitation to recognize all types of creaturely bodies as neighbours whose flourishing is in some respect, our duty to seek after.[10]

The gospel proclamation is that every suffering, wounded, displaced, and killed body has been taken up within the wounds of Christ redeemed. The energy for Christian ethics arises in the space opened between the 'already accomplished' nature of this objective proclamation of the gospel and the 'not yet actualized' reality of our lived experience of actually communicated goods. I have titled this thesis *Haunted and Held: A Christian Theology of Place*, and it is because I believe it is essential to situate a Christian theology of place in a place of tension. This tension exists between the affirmation that all bodies are 'held' in place by way of the Spirit's incorporation of all of creation into the wounded and raised body of the crucified Christ, and the 'haunting' realization that not only has this not always had materially effects in the world, but worse, Christian theology itself has been behind the displacement and disfiguration of the vulnerable bodies the gospel purports to redeem. To this end, I now turn to a discussion of the work of Wendell Berry, for though he writes as a settler agrarian, with the attending blind spots that this entails, his conversational account of place is

[10] I explore what this might look like in the context of rewilding practices in Ryan Turnbull, "Decolonizing Rewilding: Return and Refusal," *Scottish Episcopal Institute Journal*, January 1, 2021.

disciplined by a concern to recognize and account for bodies, both human and non-human, living, dead, and not-yet-born, that belong in a place and yet are missing or hidden.

5.2.II Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry has been engaged in the long process of thinking in place for the better part of the last sixty years. In the dedication of, *The Art of Loading Brush*, Berry provides an important clue for how to understand his large body of work. Berry writes,

> This book is indebted, as most of my books have been, to my *conversation* with my brother, John Marshall Berry, Jr. That *conversation* began in earnest half a century ago and ended just a few days before he died on October 27, 2016.
>
> Our *conversation* remained from beginning to end under the influence of our father, of his devotion to farming, of his work in behalf of the small farmers of our region, and of our *conversation* with him.
>
> That *conversation* was taken up many years ago between Tanya Berry and me. It continues between us and our children and their children.
>
> This is the *conversation* of agrarians and agrarianism, far larger, older, and longer than our family or any family can remember, involving some people we know, and many we don't know.
>
> I dedicate this book to that *conversation* and to all of its members, once, now, and to come.[11]

For Berry, this 'conversation' is not just a description of the many publications he has written and actual conversations he has participated in over the years. 'Conversation' is something bigger for Berry; it is the very work of discovering and constructing a sense of place.

This usage of 'conversation' is nothing new for Berry. In his 1967 novel, *A Place on Earth*, Berry locates Port William's sense of itself as a place in the context of the ongoing conversation of its citizens.

> It used to be asked, by strangers who would happen through, why a town named Port William should have been built so far from the river. And the townsmen would answer that when Port William was built they did not know where the river was going to run.

[11] Wendell Berry, *The Art of Loading Brush: New Agrarian Writings* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, 2017), vii (emphasis mine).

> The truth is that Port William no longer remembers why it was built where it is, or when, or how. In its conversation the town has kept the memory of two or three generations haphazardly alive. Back of that memory the town was there for a long time – there are a few buildings still standing that are surely twice as old as anybody's certain knowledge of them. But the early history has to be conjectured and assumed.[12]

Note how Berry locates Port William's own sense of where they physically are, the geographic point where the town is, in the conversation of her citizens. Port William's citizens do not and cannot know where they are apart from the ongoing conversation that holds their traditions and memories of who and where they are in the world. This communitarian self-knowledge is what provides them with an answer to the outsider's question of, "Why here?" Where that conversation falters, the place is granted a givenness that enables the conversation to go on. Yet it is important to highlight that this conversation amongst the citizenry of Port William also obscures as much as it reveals. For by losing track of the actual origins of the town, it is only the discourse of the inventive settler community that counts in determining the place of the town, and this naturalized settler memory ends up, intentionally or not, silencing any Indigenous or other marginalized perspectives that may challenge or nuance the meaning of this place.

More recently, in his book, *The Art of Loading Brush*, Berry continues his life-long reflection on being-in-place by doubling down on the theme of conversation. As I noted above, the dedication makes explicit this conversational theme that has been present in Berry's work from the beginning.[13] In one of the short-stories of this collection entitled, "The Order of Loving Care," Berry gives a rather autobiographical account of Andy Catlett's initiation into the life of an agrarian writer.[14] Berry,

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[12] Wendell Berry, *A Place on Earth: A Novel*, (Washington, D.C: Counterpoint, 2001), 26.

[13] If space permitted, more examples of this theme could be unpacked. It will suffice for now to remind the reader of Berry's frequent references to conversations with friends such as Wes Jackson in his essays (for example, see Wendell Berry, "Two Economies," in *Wendell Berry and the Cultivation of Life: A Reader's Guide*, ed. J. Matthew Bonzo and Michael R. Stevens (Brazos Press, 2008), 186–201.) over the years, as well as the way in which conversation features so prominently as a narrative device in what is perhaps Berry's greatest novel, *Jayber Crow: A Novel* (New York: Counterpoint, 2001).

[14] The autobiographical note is particularly pronounced in Berry, *The Art of Loading Brush*, 2017, 182.

through the pen of Andy, recollects the "conversations" that shaped him and allowed him to go on. There is the life-long conversation Andy shares with his brother Henry, which is itself a continuation of their father's life-long conversation. Andy discovers that others, farther afield from Port William are also in on the conversation – discovering a familiar language in the life of Gene Logsdon. "Their talk immediately had the feel and tone of a conversation far older than themselves, a language of matters long ago settled. They knew much in common, much they never had to explain."[15] Andy discovered a similar friendship in Maurice Teleen, their conversation had a fit that seemed to transcend their locality yet was deeply placed within the lives of their local situatedness. "The old conversation, again, seemed merely to resume from no beginning that either of them knew, and they were in it together until Maury died in 2011."[16] These conversation partners of Andy's are surprising, and at first glance may be difficult to see how they relate to an understanding of place, given that many of them are from other places. But this is the surprising thing about place, in conversation with others who are embedded in their places, we can discover that the places we inhabit can give more than they have. This extended conversation exhibited in the story of Andy Catlett demonstrates the way the dialogical lines of triangulation that help to interpret and establish 'place' are not reducible to spatial extension, yet it is also true that this extended meta-conversation of Catlett's is the result of the sum of many conversations had in the spatial vicinity of the various participants in this conversation. This tension in the role of spatial extension in the construction of place helps to resist a collapse of place into a function of space, yet also points us to the role that space and time, as measures of extension and duration have roles in the interpretive structuring of place. Place, thus conversationally construed in Berry's fiction here, is a non-reducible entity, as in

[15] Berry, 180.
[16] Berry, 181.

Malpas' concept of *topology* and similarly, 'makes room' for the possibility of new connections to be made and recognized in surprising sources.

For Berry, one of those surprising connections that place makes room for is a connection with the dead. For as he often notes "the membership includes the dead."[17] D. Brent Laytham has identified this account of the 'membership' as being strongly akin to the Christian notion of the *communio sanctorum*, or 'communion of saints.'[18] Laytham emphasizes that belonging to the *communio*, or the 'membership' in Berry's idiom, is not something that is earned, it is a given, belonging is a graced assumption.[19] One of the ways Laytham sees this belonging operating in Berry's work is by tracing 'belonging' in multiple different directions. In the narrative world of Port William, people belong to places, places belong to people, and people belong to each other – this belonging creates layers of demands, obligations, and complex shared histories that bind everybody together in a way that is not simply opted out of.[20]

A recurring device Berry uses in his fiction is to have his main character recall or retell the stories of the membership of Port William, remembering the saints and sinners of that community, even those who have long passed, keeping them present and invoking their witness to the ongoing life of the place by constantly re-narrating their presence in the order of the place. Yet for all this re-membering, nevertheless there are limits to the memories of all the various re-memberers in Berry's world. As noted above, Berry locates the 'place' of Port William in the context of an ongoing conversation amongst the residents of the town, yet in the process of the transmission of that conversation, there is a forgetting that occurs about why exactly the town is where it is. Berry thus acknowledges that the structure of settler-agrarian memory has limits, such that even in the attempt

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[17] Wendell Berry, *Hannah Coulter* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2005), 107.
[18] D. Brent Laytham, "'The Membership Includes the Dead': Wendell Berry's Port William Membership as Communio Sanctorum," in *Wendell Berry and Religion: Heaven's Earthly Life*, ed. Joel James Shuman and L. Roger Owens (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, n.d.), 173.
[19] Laytham, 174.
[20] Laytham, 175.

to be faithful to the dead and the long-gone, there are going to be some absences that get missed. This is a theme that will be returned to in greater detail in the next chapter, but I will say more about how this is immediately related to the role of place and communication here.

Joseph Wiebe has explored some of Berry's attempts to overcome the limits of agrarian memory, particularly in regard to the oft-cited charge that Berry's agrarianism is inextricably bound up in structures of racism by way of a close reading of *Andy Catlett* and the *Hidden Wound*.[21] Wiebe argues that Berry's cultivation of a place-based knowing with its attention to the complicity of his characters and himself in the 'hidden wounds' that Southern Slavery and Jim Crow inflict on everyone in a white-supremacist society, allows for a what Willie Jennings has called a 'radical remembering.'[22] This practice of remembering challenges what Eve Tuck has called the 'settler triad,' which is composed of "a) the Indigenous inhabitant, present only because of her erasure; b) the chattel slave, whose body is property and murderable; and c) the inventive settler, whose memory becomes history, and whose ideology becomes reason."[23] Berry's own work rarely acknowledges the presence or absence of Indigenous peoples. Where he does, it is usually to enlist Indigenous peoples as allies in a big tent agrarianism as exemplary land-users without sufficiently attending to the very real differences between settler agrarianism and in Indigenous agrarianisms.[24] Where Berry is a bit more nuanced on race is in his honest grappling with the history of chattel slavery that marks and mars southern agrarianism and in so doing, demonstrates some resistance to the third leg of the triad. Berry is, of course, 'the inventive settler whose memory becomes history' yet he attempts to

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[21] Joseph R. Wiebe, "Race, Place, and Radical Remembering in Wendell Berry's Andy Catlett: Early Travels," *Literature and Theology* 32, no. 3 (September 1, 2018): 340–56.
[22] Wiebe, 343–44; Jennings, *The Christian Imagination*, 58.
[23] Eve Tuck and C. Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting* (New York: Routledge Handbooks Online, 2013), 642, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315427812.ch33.
[24] See particularly the first two essays in Wendell Berry, *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2018); see also Wendell Berry, *The Need to Be Whole: Patriotism and the History of Prejudice* (Cincinnati, OH: Shoemaker + Company, 2022).

discipline this memory by acknowledging its limits and repeatedly acknowledging that the way to right knowledge of a place and its creatures is by the way of ignorance.[25]

Berry's radical remembering is shaped by its embrace of limits and ignorance because it is, at root, an exercise in love. As Jeff Bilbro notes,

> Memory enables *metanoia* based on understanding and loving a coherent whole. In this way, cultivating memory can be a key, counter-cultural practice that can tune our affections to the larger pattern of creation and thus prepare the way for wise action within our places and times.[26]

According to Bilbro, the love that characterizes Berry's use of memory is an Augustinian love. It is not a love that idealizes or hides faults, but is rather seeing all that is, as it is, and loving it with the love of God, the divine love that wills and works to see all things liberated and reconciled. The temptation here may be to assume that through such an exercise of loving remembering we could approach a total recall, a mastery of memory that actually does approximate the scope of the love of God. But this temptation must be resisted and is resisted by Berry sometimes in his insistence that we are overall "too stupid and violent"[27] to get this quite right.

The trouble with settler memory is that it is a master memory. The normal fragmentary and partial nature of memory is denied by the inventive settler in an attempt to naturalize and establish the legitimacy of settler presence.[28] In the North American context this has often meant clinging to a version of *terra nullius*, such as in the poetry of my great-grandfather, boldly asserting that prior to settler existence, the land was empty, or God's country, or pure nature. Alternately, Indigenous presence is acknowledged, but only as a historic reality. For example, in the infamous poetry of renowned Canadian poet, Duncan Campbell Scott, Indigenous children are depicted as already dying

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[25] Wendell Berry, *The Way of Ignorance: And Other Essays*, 1 edition (New York: Counterpoint, 2006).
[26] Jeffrey Bilbro, "The Ecology of Memory: Augustine, Eliot, and the Form of Wendell Berry's Fiction," *Christianity & Literature* 65, no. 3 (June 2016): 340.
[27] Berry, *The Way of Ignorance*, 49.
[28] Rozum, *Grasslands Grown*, 219–60.

in the wild pre-history of Canada – a poetic vision that served to legitimate the purported 'civilizing' mission of the Indian Residential Schools which he oversaw in his day job as deputy minister of Indian Affairs.[29] Patrick Brantlinger has named this phenomena an 'extinction discourse' - Indigenous peoples were here, they were noble, but they are safely gone now or have tragically died out.[30] In either of these modes, settler memory, as a hegemonic structure, solves the ongoing political problem of the very real persistence of Indigenous nations and their claims to sovereignty within settler-colonial states in favour of settler supremacy by safely assuring settler citizens that whatever the pre-contact condition of Indigenous peoples, they are gone now and prove no threat to the settler-colonial order. As Eve Tuck observed, they are present only via their insisted-upon absence.

Berry's writing scarcely mentions Indigenous presence or absence aside from two appreciative essays on certain nations' agricultural practices.[31] In most of his early work, Indigenous people simply exist as one type of exemplary practitioners of his broad agrarian project. On the one hand, it is undoubtedly a good idea to learn attentively from Indigenous land-use practices, on the other hand, by uncritically framing Indigenous peoples as being on the same side as settler agrarians against the ravages of Industrial capitalism, Berry performs a 'move to innocence' whereby the colonial role of the small-hold farmer that he so idealizes is obscured. Unfortunately, this tendency has only intensified in Berry's most recent writing on race in *The Need To Be Whole*.[32] Berry has more fully embraced the role of the 'inventive settler' by refusing to engage the broad range of scholarship in critical race studies in recent years, and ends up, in the most egregious example of the 'inventive

[29] Julia Boyd, "'Fugitive Visions': Cultural Pseudomemory and the Death of the Indigenous Child in the Indian Poems of Duncan Campbell Scott," *Studies in Canadian Literature / Études En Littérature Canadienne* 40, no. 2 (2015): 143–63; Duncan Campbell Scott, "The Forsaken," in *The Poems of Duncan Campbell Scott* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1926), 28–31.
[30] Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2003).
[31] See "An Agricultural Journey in Peru" and "Three Ways of Farming in the Southwest" in Berry, *The Gift of Good Land.*
[32] Berry, *The Need to Be Whole.*

settler,' he attempts to defend the so-called lost-cause of the American South in the civil war.[33] Instead of doing the hard work of dealing with the actual evidence, Berry takes the lazy way out, writing "They fought, *I imagine*, because of the patriotism (not nationalism) that grew from love…"[34] As Daegan Miller has observed, Berry is at his best when he identifies the ways industrial capitalism intertwine with the history of racial oppression, however his sparse citational practice has finally caught up to him in highlighting how he refuses to see how settler agrarianism has just as often been a handmaiden of the oppressive structures of industrial capitalism, even as it has been itself wounded by it.[35]

Wendell Berry's agrarian vision has some significant limits, particularly in the way that it serves to reinforce the role of the inventive settler in erasing Black and Indigenous voices and bodies from place. But does that mean that settlers like Berry are forever trapped in a posture of misrecognition? Let me suggest that perhaps Berry's attention to the role of memory in the dialogical construction of place can actually lend a self-critical tool for interrogating the ways in which the dialogical concept of place being put forth in this thesis can go wrong and how it may provide possibilities for overcoming such breakdowns. "Where *have* they gone?" is a question that keeps opening new possibilities of encounter. The answers that may come from asking such a question may point us to traces of presence that unsettle our settler myths. It might turn out that the lines of conversational dialogue that constitute place are capable of both holding us and haunting us.[36] This hauntologically inflected practice of agrarian radical remembering may be one tool of revelation in helping to apprehend that the supposed absent presence of Indigenous nations is

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[33] Berry, 201–5.
[34] Berry, 205, emphasis added.
[35] Daegan Miller, "One of Our Most Beloved Environmental Writers Has Taken a Surprising Turn," *Slate*, November 5, 2022, https://slate.com/culture/2022/11/wendell-berry-need-to-be-whole-review.html.
[36] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, (New York: Routledge, 2006); Tuck and Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting*.

actually an ongoing presence, one that persists in sovereign integrity despite repeated settler misrecognition.[37]

5.3 "I Lost My Talk": Place and Miscommunication

The way I have described place thus far, as a structure of intelligibility/apprehension produced by the dialogical relations of the communicative bodies of creatures would suggest that place is just a given fact of cognition, it is operating all the time everywhere. Nevertheless, there is broad agreement in the literature that something like our 'sense of place' can be destroyed, lost, or in the idiom I have been using throughout this chapter, misrecognized.[38] While something like this may have been operating since time immemorial, the articulation of a loss of a sense of place is a distinctly modern affair. As I noted in chapter one, Christian theologies of place since O'Donovan's pioneering essay have been preoccupied with the notion that place is something that can be lost, but it turns out that this is a concern that is shared broadly across the humanities.

To get a sense of the range of ways scholars have sought to articulate this perceived loss in recent years, consider the following examples. In the 17th century the concept of *nostalgia* was coined by a Swiss physician to describe an affliction of intense affliction experienced by those who had been long displaced from the places of their birth.[39] Simone Weil, in the early 20th century diagnosed the weakness in the French resistance to Nazi occupation as a malaise produced by 'rootlessness' and argued that our modern industrial society was causing mass rootlessness.[40] Marc Auge coined the phrase "no-place" to describe the kinds of frictionless places shaped by the flows of global capital that are not places in themselves but are places that exist only to connect to other places,

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[37] Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.
[38] Indeed, in his most explicit writing on place, O'Donovan begins with the contemporary sense that we have 'lost' place, one way or another, see O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," 1989. For a slightly revised version see O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," 2004.
[39] See Carolyn Kiser Anspach, "Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia by Johannes Hofer, 1688," *Bulletin of the Institute of the History of Medicine* 2, no. 6 (1934): 376–91.
[40] Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots: Prelude to a Declaration of Duties Towards Mankind.* (London: Routledge, 2003).

such as airports, subway stations, etc.[41] Rem Koolhaas describes a similar type of place in what he calls 'junkspace' – a trend he laments in modern architecture that prioritizes the smooth surfaces of glass and steel and is characterized by the modular and disposable, downplaying the ability of a given place to maintain the traces of history that contribute to a deep sense of memory and character in a given locale.[42] Ed Casey, in his *Getting Back into Place* describes what he calls 'place pathology' which is characterized by "disorientation, memory loss, homelessness, depression, and various modes of estrangement from self and others."[43] Glen Albrecht, building on Casey's analysis coined the term 'solastalgia' to name the increasing rise in pain and distress caused by the destruction of places while inhabitants remain therein, rendering people nostalgic for and haunted by a form of existential displacement that did not involve any movement.[44] Clearly, there are no shortage of concepts available to speak of the way place has been lost or has failed to function.

But what could this mean? For on the account of place that I have been developing, place is just simply part of the structure of subjectivity, operating as a structure that allows for the very possibility of knowledge of and action in the world. There is a sense in which place is merely part of the structure of cognition, but this would seem to diminish the status of place in that throughout this present reconstruction of 'place' I have insisted that place is deeply implicated in the structure of Being itself and that this is played out through the intimate relational matrix of the communicative bodies of creaturely being. Therefore, there must be something at stake in the dialogical bounds of place and the ongoing work of recognition and interpretation that constitutes place that can as it were 'go wrong' just as it is the process that allows us to 'go on'. If, as I have been arguing, place is made up of the network of relations between communicative bodies, then attending to the ways

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[41] Auge, *Non-Places*.
[42] Koolhaas, "Junkspace."
[43] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 38.
[44] Glenn A. Albrecht, "Solastalgia: The Homesickness You Have at Home" in *Earth Emotions: New Words for a New World*, Paperback (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 27–62.

bodies lose their ability to communicate, miscommunicate, or are simply silenced is one way to account for this experienced loss. To this end, I now turn to the work of the French phenomenologist, Jean-Louis Chrétien for his account of how our speech has a wounded character to it from its inception and how this always carries with it the possibility of the failing of place.

5.3.I Jean-Louis Chrétien

I have argued in the previous chapter that Aristotle was onto something in identifying an intimate relationship between place and body, but that this relationship is made clearer by understanding 'body' as always 'communicative body'. I also noted that the nature of our language is that it always seems to be following after something like the divine call. Jean-Louis Chrétien, a member of the so-called theological turn in French phenomenology, argues that "the Human voice speaks only to respond."[45] Even if the first man, Adam, spoke the divine language of creation, it is worth noting that Adam's job as namer of the creatures was not a matter of correlating the divine language with each creature but was a genuine response of Adam to the divine communication disclosed in the various bodies of creation.[46] The human voice, the birth of language itself *is* the creaturely response to the divine Word. The dialogical triangulating process by which meaning is arrived at in language is precisely a response to that which has already been given, the need to 'go on' is predicated on that which 'goes before.' As Chrétien puts it "God has already addressed man, has already spoken to him before man starts to speak, so that he will start to speak in his turn."[47]

With Chrétien, I affirm that which 'goes before' is the Word of the living God, and as such, it brings with it an infinite excess of meaning. This infinite excess is that which drives the response of language and allows it to perpetually go on, such that our language seems to have that infinite generative capacity for uncovering more meaning. Yet the nature of our response to this infinite

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[45] Chrétien, *The Call and the Response*, 83; Dominique Janicaud and Jean Francois Coutine, *Phenomenology and the Theological Turn: The French Debate*, 2 edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001).
[46] Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, trans. Andrew Brown (New York: Routledge, 2004), 3.
[47] Chrétien, 1.

divine excess is not something accomplished alone, for as Joseph Joubert once remarked, "There must be several voices together in one voice for it be beautiful. And several meanings in one word for it to be beautiful."[48] For a response to be beautiful, it must include plurality, indeed, as suggested by Davidson's insight from the "Three Varieties," for a response to be possible at all, it will require at least two voices together. Chrétien goes even further than either Joubert or Davidson, noting,

> 'A voice must have in it many voices in order to be beautiful,' said Joubert, but in order for it to be responsive, a voice must have *all* voices in it. In calling us the call does not call us alone, but asks of us everything that voice is capable of saying. All voices are required. Nor would they, were they all to advene at once, abolish the excess of the call over them; rather they would encounter it in its full force.[49]

For the response to be adequate to the call, it must contain, in some way, all voices. This requirement may seem unrealistic, but is in fact what is already given and promised in language. There is no such thing as a private language, and there truly is no telling how far the ongoing dialogue of our talk will go.

Yet Chrétien also warns us of a tension in the requirement for the response to contain all voices, for in our actual speaking, our words are wounded by our own finitude. For Chrétien, it is in prayer that the woundedness of our speech is made plain. For in prayer, we find a use of language that is not part of the regular pragmatic dialogical negotiation of meanings that occurs in normal speech. Chrétien observes that prayer opens the first wound in our language, for instead of having an effect on God in our prayerful address,

> The words of our speech affect and modify the addresser, and not the addressee. We affect ourselves as we stand before the other, in a movement towards him. This is the first wound of speech in prayer: the gap introduced by the addressee has broken the closed circle of speech, opened within it a fault that alters its nature. Another has silently introduced himself into my dialogue with myself and has radically transformed and broken it."[50]

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[48] Joseph Joubert, *The Notebooks of Joseph Joubert* (New York: New York Review Books, 2005).
[49] Chrétien, *The Call and the Response*, 32.
[50] Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, 21.

From this first wound, or gap, in one's prayerful speech follows a second – we discover that we do not know how to pray.

> Such is the circularity of prayer: the person praying prays so as to learn how to pray, and first and foremost to learn that he does not know and he gives thanks for his prayer as for a gift from God. One can be turned to God only by praying, and one can pray only by being turned to God. Only a leap can enable us to enter this circle.[51]

For Chrétien, "prayer appears, in its own eyes, as always forestalled and always preceded by the person it addresses. It does not begin, it responds…"[52] which leads him to the conclusion that the supposed circularity of prayer actually points to the way prayer is only made possible through an encounter with God. Prayer takes the form of the ordeal of a Jacob-like wrestling with God where our dialogue is listened to by God but insofar as it is, it is judged, and wounded in its struggles, or as the poet puts it, "words strain, crack and sometimes break, under the burden, under the tension, slip slide, perish, decay with imprecision, will not stay in place, will not stay still".[53] This is why the Christian tradition has long held that the purest and highest form of prayer is silence, but not merely a privative silence, but a silence that communicates, that points out, that invites a response that gives rise to more words.[54]

But this is the point, our speech, our bodily communications are limited, wounded by incompleteness and inadequacy. This just is the creaturely condition. And so, place is doomed to a sort of fragmentation, a dissolution as the reality of creaturely finitude and inadequacy always carries along with it the possibility of miscommunication as a condition of our ability to communicate at all. The very possibility of place as the seat of relations of the discursive network of bodily communications, while following after the prompting of the divine call, is always prone to

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[51] Chrétien, 24.
[52] Chrétien, 25.
[53] T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-62*, (London: Faber & Faber, 2002), 182.
[54] Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, 27.

dissolution in the midst of our ruinous response. This is what Pentecost reveals, for the more-than-utopian gathering we encounter in the book of Acts is the Divine intervention into our attempts to reach heaven by way of our own wounded and wounding speech. For humanity tried to attain the place of God once through the monument of Babel – a doomed project that ended in linguistic confusion and mass displacement. But at Pentecost, human speech is called forth again, this time guided by the Holy Spirit. The interplay between pneumatic prompting, glossolalic response, and the intimate joining of all peoples through words that were both proper to the disciples, yet simultaneously gifts of the Spirit, demonstrates the way our creaturely communicative economy requires divine consummation for it to perform the intimate joining of place.

I have insisted that Pentecost is a 'more-than-utopia' from the beginning of this thesis because it is an event and a place that occurs in God and is not something achieved or realized by human communication alone. This is significant for two reasons, first, it allows us to resist the temptation that we can achieve the full intimate joining of all the communications of place as a creaturely achievement – for our finitude would ensure that this would only ever recreate the hubris of Babel. Second, it is what we must conclude from the witness of Scripture itself, for while Acts 2 ends with the intimate joining of peoples of all nations in the non-proprietary community of the gospel, the story does not end there. As the narrative of the book of Acts continues, the life of intimate joining that called the church together at Pentecost is resisted and refused, most particularly in the tensions that grow between Gentile and Jewish believers. This tension in the book of Acts grew into the original sin of Christianity – supersessionism.[55] As the history of the Church unfolded within a profound denial of the place of Jewish bodies in its midst it laid the foundations for a history of colonial displacements and silencings that have made attending to the wounds of colonialism an essential theological task for us today.

[55] J. Kameron Carter, *Race: A Theological Account* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

5.3.II The Wounds of Colonialism

In the Canadian context, the Indian Residential School (IRS) system was a genocidal program in which the church and the state collaborated to "kill the Indian in the child." This program of genocide was perpetrated against Indigenous peoples for over a century and was only finally brought to an official end in 1996. It is not the entirety of the story of colonial violence in this country, but it does provide a window into the way the Christian churches actively and enthusiastically collaborated in a project that might best be described as an anti-Pentecost in the way it physically removed bodies from their place in the land, and then took away the language by which those bodies were connected to the place in that land.

In the fifth volume of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) reports which were a response to this genocidal regime, there is a chapter entitled "'I Lost My Talk': The erosion of language and culture." It opens with a quote from Elder Eli Taylor of Sioux Valley First Nation, "Embodied in Aboriginal languages is our unique relationship to the Creator, our attitudes, beliefs, values and the fundamental notion of what is truth…"[56] This chapter deals with the particular trauma of the theft of language that occurred in the IRS and the ways that this linguistic suppression caused the children who attended these schools to become "alienated from their families, their communities, and ultimately from themselves."[57]

This traditional teaching from Elder Eli Taylor about the intimate connection between language and culture also extends to the relationship of Indigenous peoples to their traditional lands. On the dialogical account of place that I have been advancing in this chapter, this connection comes as no surprise, yet as I pointed out in chapter two, the colonialist encounter was characterized by a profound misrecognition of Indigenous peoples and, in the idiom of this thesis, a refusal to engage in the charitable work of radical interpretation that would be needed to 'go on' together. Instead,

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[56] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools*, 2015, 103.
[57] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 105.

captive to a theory of place indebted to the Aristotelian preoccupation with boundaries (untriangulated to communicative bodies) and the Lockean capitulation to the needs of Capital, Canadian settler society enacted a slow genocide of Indigenous peoples that involved the separation of people from lands and the transformation of both into commodities. This separation was achieved in a variety of ways, but one of the primary mechanisms used was the IRS, particularly in the destruction of Indigenous languages in a concerted attempt to make it impossible for Indigenous children to return to their families or communities as they were disciplined into the alienated subjects of capitalist colonial society and so believed to be 'productive' (in a colonial-capitalist sense) members of society. Of course, the irony was, this 'civilizing' rationale for the schools was consistently undermined by the low quality of education delivered at these institutions. Often what children experienced was closer to a forced labour camp.[58] Children returned to their communities doubly displaced socially – unable to communicate with or perform the tasks of their Indigenous communities, and insufficiently educated for life in settler society.

Rita Joe, a survivor of the Shubenacadie Residential School, and a Mi'kmaq poet, wrote about her experience of language loss at this school and the experience of profound alienation she experienced, yet even in the midst of this intensely solastalgic elegy, Joe extends an offer of dialogue to settler society that suggests a way to go on:

"I lost my talk"
I lost my talk
The talk you took away.
When I was a little girl
At Shubenacadie school.

You snatched it away:
I speak like you
I think like you
I create like you
The scrambled ballad, about my word.

[58] Karlee Sapoznik Evans, Anne Lindsay, and Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, "'Forced to Work 'Too Hard': A Case Study of Forced Child Labour and Slavery in Manitoba's Indian Residential Schools," *At The Forks* 1, no. 1 (2021).

Two ways I talk
Both ways I say,
Your way is more powerful.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,
Let me find my talk
So I can teach you about me.[59]

As Jean-Louis Chrétien has argued, "In order to speak, I have to be able to hear myself, but in order to hear myself, someone must already have heard me and spoken to me, in a way that forestalls me – that is, comes before me, in both spatial and temporal terms. We have been listened to even before we speak."[60] At Shubenacadie, Rita Joe found that she would not be listened to. Her talk was lost because there was nobody to listen to it. Her speech was indeed forestalled, for she was physically cut off from those who had come before her spatially and temporally and placed in the heterotopia of Shubenacadie Residential School wherein the only speech that came before her was that of the colonizer. Thus, Rita Joe learned that the speech of the colonizer was 'more powerful' – for it is the only speech that can be heard.

Yet, although Rita Joe found that she had 'lost her talk,' nevertheless her poem calls us beyond that silence by taking up the powerful 'scrambled ballad' of the snatchers, she makes the silence of her lost-talk heard in a powerful way, concluding her poem with a renewed (Pentecostal?) invitation to intimate joining, "So gently I offer my hand and ask, / Let me find my talk / So I can teach you about me." A certain level of delicacy should be applied here in how to think theologically about this invitation. On the one hand, casting Rita Joe as offering a Pentecostal invitation to intimate joining runs the risk of subsuming her invitation within a Christian recognition framing that allows her invitation to be taken up on Christianity's terms instead of on hers. On the other hand, there are moments in the Scriptures themselves that depict the Spirit as being at work outside of and

[59] Rita Joe, *I Lost My Talk*, (Halifax, NS: Nimbus, 2019).
[60] Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, 9.

against the institutional life of the people of God. In Ezekiel 10, the presence of God departs from the temple. In Acts 3, the Spirit is at work through the disciples healing people in the streets of Jerusalem, again challenging the notion of a contained God who can be doled out from the temple. Later in the book of Acts, Paul returns to Jerusalem reporting on what he has seen of the Spirit's work amongst the Gentiles, even without the proper ritual observances of Jewish covenant relationship. We can perhaps think of a non-competitive relationship whereby the invitation taken by Joe is truly her initiative taken for reasons that are particular to her, but this does not rule out the possibility that from a Christian theological point of view, we can recognize the work of the Spirit in her action. For her invitation to know her as she is, is both a radical affirmation of her creaturely particularity, which is properly the work of the Holy Spirit as Lord and Giver of Life, and it is a prophetic judgment of the Church's historic inability to see her precisely on her own terms. Thus, we can theologically read the invitation in Joe's poem as a prophetic utterance that both affirms her Indigeneity and judges the Christian refusal to recognize Indigenous particularity both historically and today.

In Jean-Louis Chrétien's *Ark of Speech*, to which I have already alluded, he opens his investigation of our life in language by suggesting that our speech is directly connected to hospitality. He notes that the driving question of our linguistically determined lives is the question that hospitality demands, "How far does our hospitality go? How far can it go? What can we welcome and gather in, and how?"[61] Hospitality is a dubious category to invoke here, for it immediately raises questions of power and normativity regarding who is extending hospitality to whom.[62] Mindful of this potential pitfall, let me suggest that this question of the hospitality of our speech raised by Chrétien is the ongoing demand of our being joined together in the Spirit that Jennings highlights in

[61] Chrétien, 1.
[62] See Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

the Pentecost narrative in the book of Acts. At the Indian Residential Schools, and in the name of this great gospel of intimate joining, sits a profound silence of refusal. Children lost their talk and until quite recently, the legacy of this colonial violence was wrapped in a carefully constructed silence. Yet, for Chrétien, silence speaks, "for to be silent is to refer to that about which one is silent." In the final invitation of Rita Joe's poem, those who did the snatching are invited to hear that to which Joe's enforced silence refers. She asks, in the scrambled ballad of the colonizers' 'powerful' language, to find her talk in order that the wounded silence of her being in the world might be given to speech, and once again open a place wherein we might be joined. She asks that we give up the utopian fantasies of our 'powerful' language and instead receive her wounded speech, trembling and tentative, that knowledge, and joining, and intimacy might be realized.

5.4 Conclusion: Place and Communications of Reconciliation

I have been arguing throughout this chapter that 'place' is best understood as a dialogical structure of intelligibility/apprehension. This understanding of place invites us to consider the whole network of communicative bodies that create the triangulating 'lines' of interpretation that constitute what it means to be 'in' place. Yet this is more than just an insight about the structure of cognition, place also has a political and existential dimension. Oliver O'Donovan helps us to see that the communicative nature of place opens up the ethical task of inquiring into the good of our neighbours, a task which I suggest requires us to be open to the possibility of discovering all sorts of neighbours that we did not previously recognize. Wendell Berry reminds us that this work of discerning who the members of community are needs to include the more than human world, but also our ancestors and those yet to come. Both O'Donovan and Berry in their own way encourage a consultation of memory in order to recognize all the members and communications of a place. Yet they both highlight the ways that 'settler memory' has limits and obscuring qualities that perpetually threaten to derail this project; a challenge I continue to address in the next chapter.

However, the tragedy of the colonial misrecognition that I discussed in chapter two is such that the normal dialogical work that constitutes 'place' has a tendency to break down. This happened first through the misrecognition generated by the heterological processing of difference. Through these misrecognitions, Indigenous peoples were rendered ghostly – spectral figures in the colonialist imagination, but ultimately irrelevant for the ongoing social communication of the settler geography of the New World. As Renée Bergland notes,

> When European Americans speak of Native Americans, they always use the language of ghostliness. They call Indians demons, apparitions, shapes, specters, phantoms, or ghosts. They insist that Indians are able to appear and disappear suddenly and mysteriously, and also that they are ultimately doomed to vanish. Most often, they describe Indians as absent or dead.[63]

If Indigenous peoples are absent or dead, then they cannot speak for themselves, and so are able to be voiced solely by the settler imagination which thus 'safely' excludes Indigenous peoples from the dialogical work of interpretation that place requires. However, Indigenous peoples are not dead, nor are they absent. Their continued sovereign presence in the land performs an altogether different kind of haunting of the settler psyche – unsettling, refusing, and interrupting the settler discourses that seek to keep them ghostly.[64]

The 'turn to place' in theology has often been embarked upon under the assumption that place is something that has been lost. I want to suggest that this 'loss' is a product of the breakdown of the possibility of communication between settler and Indigenous communities and, in the Canadian context in particular, the concerted effort to create a genocidal regime under the guise of 'education' that sought to 'snatch' away the unique communications that Indigenous peoples had to offer and replace them with the 'powerful' words of European languages. In this effort, both Church and state are guilty, but the Church doubly so, for it sought to recover the promise of the

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[63] Renée L. Bergland, *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), 1.
[64] Tuck and Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting.*

Tower of Babel through the violent imposition of a language of sameness. This imposition of sameness is a serious grievance to the Pentecostal work of the Holy Spirit that brings forth all the voices in their plural languages in a fitting and fulsome response to the Divine call incarnate in Jesus Christ.

In the remainder of this thesis, I turn to work in hauntology and settler-colonialism studies to argue that if Christian theologies of 'place' are to be properly theological, they must be self-critical of their own temptations towards hegemony and contain a dialogical reflexivity that constantly seeks to recognize and be unsettled by voices and bodies that have been rendered ghostly by our ideologies. As Bergland reminds us,

> Most Native communities […] remained viable, and even New England Indians retained title to some of their lands, as they do today. By focusing almost exclusively on those who perished, early American writing enacted a literary Indian removal that reinforced and at times even helped to construct the political Indian Removal. American poems, fictional narratives, histories, philosophical and scientific essays, and public documents denied Indian survival as they mourned (or occasionally celebrated) Indian dispossession and extinction.[65]

In what remains I offer some critical tools from hauntology and memory studies to help the Church recognize that despite its own best efforts, Indigenous peoples continue to sovereignly exist in this country. In chapter six, I discuss how 'recognition' has been taken up in Canadian political theory and discuss the criticisms this has attracted. I then appeal to some insights from hauntology to unsettle the hegemonic 'recognition' regime that continues to disrupt the lines of communication needed to truly live reconciled together in a common place. For as Michel de Certeau once remarked, "Haunted places are the only ones people can live in…"[66] After establishing a hauntologically inflected 'politics of recognition' I conclude by reflecting on the case study of the Métis community of Ste. Madeleine, an Indigenous community that was destroyed in the 1930s near

[65] Bergland, *The National Uncanny*, 3.
[66] Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 108.

my home town. By bringing this reflection 'home' in such a way, I aim to show my own 'place' in the interpretive work of discerning 'place' as a way of modeling the self-critical reflexivity that a Church dedicated to the reconciling work of the Spirit calls us to.

Chapter 6: The Place of Haunted Recognition

6.1 Introduction

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."[1]
"'I have done that,' says my memory. I cannot have done that – says my pride and remains unshakeable. Finally – memory yields."[2]

In the previous chapter I argued that place is a structure of intelligibility in which networks of communicative bodies engage in an ongoing dialogical work of interpretation in order to know how to go on in the world. Place is thus not identical with space, but is in some sense prior to it, yet it must be immediately admitted that space and time provide coordinates for the ongoing interpretive work of place. Dialogical processes may (though not necessarily, as we have seen), involve spatial extension and distance and similarly will often involve a temporal extension as the dialogue extends through time. With this temporal extension of the dialogue will come tacit agreements that come to be repeatedly evoked and remembered insofar as they continue to 'work' to allow dialogue to progress. We can think of this as what Maurice Merleau-Ponty refers to as a linguistic sedimentation, particularly as the dialogue of place passes down through generations.[3] But in this sedimentation will also inevitably be preserved various tacit agreements that reinforce hierarchies, prejudices, blind spots, and various other kinds of violence and oppression. Merleau-Ponty highlights that the sediments of our dialogue provide "concepts and acquired judgements"[4] that we can rely on in our ongoing dialogue. But he also argues that these sedimentations are at least somewhat in flux, "…my acquired thoughts are not a final gain, they continually draw their sustenance from my present thought, they offer me a meaning, but I give it back to them."[5] We both

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[1] George Santayana, *The Life of Reason: Introduction and Reason in Common Sense*, ed. Marianne Sophia Wokeck and Martin A. Coleman, Critical ed, vol. VII, The Works of George Santayana (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 172.
[2] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Marion Faber, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 58, §68.
[3] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1978), 89f.
[4] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012), 149.
[5] Merleau-Ponty, 150.

rely on the sedimentations of the proximate agreements our dialogue has achieved and constantly re-perform them, which means, as I will argue, that there is always opportunity for revision and correction. If the sediments of our discourse are uncritically received, dialogue may serve to allow 'us' to go on, but the 'us' that is going on may be a narrower set than all the voices that a fitting response to the Divine call requires.

How do we ensure that a temporally extended dialogue includes *all* the voices? More radically, how do we learn to recognize not just the excluded voices but also voices that have never been heard or recognized before? In order not to allow ourselves to get stuck in the sedimentations of past discourse that is shaped by racism, colonialism, and genocide, there must be some sort of self-critical mechanism in our concept of place that allows for this kind of liberatory work to go forward. To accept the invitation of Rita Joe from last chapter, how do we ensure that each voice can "find my talk / So I can teach you about me"?

6.1.I Chapter Outline

To address the problem of concept sedimentation and the exclusion of voices that the temporal extension of the dialogical structure of place poses I turn in this chapter to the role of memory via the resources of Hauntology and Recognition theory. I first outline the basics of hauntology. Following this, I discuss the structure of settler colonialism and analyze how it produces a certain type of memory that is haunted by Indigenous peoples in various ways. Through this discussion I position myself as a settler and draw resources from other settler theologians who seek to write against the structures of settler colonialism whilst being themselves beneficiaries of those structures. From there I turn to a discussion of Recognition theory, particularly as it has played out in the Canadian political context around settler-Indigenous relations. Following the interventions of Indigenous Resurgence theorists, I argue that Recognition, under the conditions of settler colonialism, tends to perpetuate the sedimentation of hierarchies that it purports to undermine. I

finally turn from the Hegelian inspired Recognition theory of contemporary politics to a hauntological reading of Thomas More's *Utopia* which provides a theoretical foundation for examining my great-grandfather's own utopian poetry. By developing a hauntological and anti-utopian approach to recognition, I will finally turn to the case study of Ste. Madeleine in my final chapter as a way of demonstrating the possibilities and pitfalls of recognition in the dialogical construction of place.

6.2 Hauntology – a short history

Hauntology is a trend in recent critical theory and psychoanalysis that is often attributed to the work of Jacques Derrida. Indeed, Derrida coined the portmanteau 'hauntology' from the words 'haunt' and 'ontology' in his 1993 book *Spectres of Marx* as a way of articulating the absences that are present in every constructed concept. "To haunt does not mean to be present," writes Derrida, "and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept. Of every concept, beginning with the concepts of being and time. That is what we would be calling here a hauntology. Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration."[6] Derrida expands on this spectral presence of absence in a short discussion of the ghost in *Hamlet*. The appearance of Hamlet's murdered father in the figure of the 'cursed sprite' does not merely indicate the missing presence of the father, but also announces a concealed traumatic rupture in history that has now been disclosed to Hamlet 'to set it right'. Time is 'out of joint,' a future that had been previously promised has not come to pass, and Hamlet is tormented by the imperative to make right what is only now present in a spectral absence.

However, as Colin Davis notes, while the name 'hauntology' comes from Derrida, there is also indebtedness to the work of psychoanalysts Nicholas Abraham and Maria Toroks.[7] Derrida's hauntology is different, developing from Marx's use of the image of the spectre alongside Freud's

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[6] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 202.
[7] Colin Davis, "Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms," *French Studies* 59, no. 3 (July 1, 2005): 373.

concept of the *unheimlich*, inflected through an extended reflection on Hamlet's encounter with a spectre which discloses that 'time is out of joint'. Derrida develops Marxism's spectral haunting of Europe as an example of a 'time out of joint' as a response to Fukuyama's declaration of the 'end of history' with the collapse of the Soviet Union.[8] For Derrida, communism continues to 'haunt' Europe as a spectral reality, perhaps even more so in its celebrated absence than in its material history, for even as its promised political utopia failed to materialize, even still there continues to be a longing for that promised future that Marx offered. Derrida sees in the urgent proclamations of Fukuyama that history has ended with the arrival of the liberal hegemony and attempt to exorcise the spectre of communism from the idea of Europe. But it is precisely this spectre of an unrealized communism that Derrida is giving a voice after a lengthy career of distancing himself from the communist project.

Abraham and Torok, by comparison, use the concept of the 'phantom' or 'phantasm' and describe their psychoanalytical approach as '*endocryptic identification*'; a psychoanalytic approach that allows analysts to discern the ways in which a phantasm "points to the occasion of torment for the patient as well – a memory he buried *without a legal burial place,* the memory of an idyll experienced with a prestigious object that for some reason has become unspeakable, a memory thus entombed in a fast and secure place, awaiting its resurrection."[9] The ghost or phantom for Abraham and Torok marks there has been a "traumatic insertion of a 'secret'" [10] into the patient's psyche and this has resulted in a crypt which forms as an "artificial unconscious"[11] around it to protect and obscure this secret from the patient. Ultimately, this "crypt represents a specific case of suffering unspoken, and

[8] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 76–77; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Samuel Moore (Independently published, 2020), 14; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Toronto:Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992).
[9] Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, "A Poetics of Psychoanalysis: 'The Lost Object: Me,'" trans. Nicholas Rand, *SubStance* 13, no. 2 (1984): 4.
[10] Sadeq Rahimi, *The Hauntology for Everyday Life* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 71.
[11] Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis, Volume 1*, ed. Nicholas T. Rand, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 159.

a phantom guards a specific case of injustice from being spoken."[12] In which case, the task is to exorcise the phantom, open the crypt and heal the traumatic secret that has been hidden.

In the Canadian context this cryptonomic[13] approach to hauntology would seem to have much to recommend it, for this country is literally built on top of the graves of an unknown amount of unlocated children who were massacred under the genocidal regime of the Residential School system.[14] But problems abound. First, this reduces the material reality of settler colonialism to a pathology that can be treated by therapy, suggesting that once all the childrens' graves are exhumed and all the secret traumas made known then the problem of colonialism is over and what's a little mass theft and genocide between friends?[15] Second, and following on from the first, it implicitly assumes that there can be a resolution to this trauma, that it can be dealt with in a definitive way, and more insidiously, that perhaps a settler institution like the Supreme Court, the Government or the Church can perform this therapeutic healing. But as I discuss further below, this would amount to a unilateral prescription of redress that is insufficient to deal with the persistent form of the ongoing harm that settler-colonialism continues to inflict.

Sadeq Rahimi has helpfully identified that the hauntological project is animated by two opposing impulses that he identifies as being the legacy of Marx and Freud respectively.[16] The tradition in which Abraham and Torok operate is the Freudian one which is concerned "with the past: (un)dead memories and moments, and the effect held on the present of the subject by ghosts

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[12] Rahimi, *The Hauntology for Everyday Life*, 71.
[13] Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Wolf Man's Magic Word: A Cryptonymy (Theory and History of Literature)*, 1st ed. (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2005).
[14] Ryan Turnbull, "When 'good Intentions' Don't Matter: The Indian Residential School System," The Conversation, accessed September 23, 2021, http://theconversation.com/when-good-intentions-dont-matter-the-indian-residential-school-system-165045.
[15] I am deeply indebted to the hours of conversation with Jane Barter who strenuously reminded me to keep the material conditions of colonialism front and centre in theological proposals regarding this national crime, see too her multiple publications around this and similar issues Jane Barter, "When Sorry Is Not Good Enough: The Displaced Christology of Canada's 2008 Apology," *Modern Believing* 62, no. 3 (July 1, 2021): 252–61; Jane Barter, "God Keep Our Land? Unsettling Christian Theology," *Toronto Journal of Theology*, December 12, 2022; Jane Barter, "Walking Apart and Walking Together: Indigenous Public Reception of the Papal Visit," *Journal of Moral Theology* 12, no. 1 (January 2, 2023): 81–88.
[16] Rahimi, *The Hauntology for Everyday Life*, 39–40.

of the object lost to the past."[17] So the focus is on the present, and how the past continues to haunt it due to some unresolved trauma in the past. But the Marxian hauntology is different, it is oriented towards the future, "on the ghosts of things to come (as in the specter of communism, anticipation of the effects of abstracted capital and so on)."[18] Derrida's own hauntology is informed by both the Freudian and Marxian traditions, but combined to suggest a pluritemporality or 'time out of joint' wherein not just past traumas remain present with the present, but also unrealized futures continue to remain present.[19] Derrida's hauntology thus offers a political promise, "a promise deeply political and deeply concerned with the notion of justice, yet illusively free from any political allegiance or moral point of reference beyond the subversively simple idea of acknowledging the presence of the absents, and hearing the voices of the silenced."[20] It is this political promise, of a patient ongoing acknowledgment of absent and silenced voices that has made Derridean hauntology so appealing to certain currents of decolonial theory to which I now turn.

Hauntology has been increasingly taken up by decolonial theorists as a critical tool of resistance to the epistemological hegemony of settler supremacy. "A spectre is haunting Turtle Island"[21] writes Jackson 2bears, a Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk) scholar who explores the 'geopsyche,' the landscape of ancestral spirits in which Indigenous peoples reside. By combining the thought of Vine Deloria Jr. and Gregory Cajete with Derrida's concept of hauntology, 2bears powerfully articulates what he calls "the *hauntological experience of ancestry*—ancestry, that is, conceived of as a spectral landscape comprised of a multiplicity of ghosts, apparitions and revenants that haunt our

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[17] Rahimi, 40.
[18] Rahimi, 39.
[19] Michelle Harmonie Bastian, "Communities out of Joint: A Consideration of the Role of Temporality in Rethinking Community" (Doctoral Thesis, University of New South Wales Sydney, 2009), 154–99.
[20] Rahimi, *The Hauntology for Everyday Life*, 6–7.
[21] Jackson 2bears, *Mythologies of an [Un]Dead Indian* (University of Victoria: Unpublished Dissertation, 2012), 1, http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/bitstream/handle/1828/3855/Leween_Jackson_2bears_PhD_2012.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

ancestral geography."[22] By situating what 2bears calls Indigenous 'survivance' amidst this multiplicity of spectral presences, a powerful critique of settler society is developed; for the "Indian" is not safely dead and gone, as settler colonialism has worked so hard to believe – they are 'undead' and continue to haunt the settler psyche, both through their continued sovereign presence in the land and through the hauntings of ancestral presence.

Eve Tuck, an Unangax̂ scholar has developed a similar deployment of hauntology with her collaborators arguing that,

> Haunting… is the relentless remembering and reminding that will not be appeased by settler society's assurances of innocence and reconciliation. Haunting is both acute and general; individuals are haunted, but so are societies. The United States [and Canada are] permanently haunted by the slavery, genocide, and violence entwined in its first, present and future days. Haunting doesn't hope to change people's perceptions, nor does it hope for reconciliation. Haunting lies precisely in its refusal to stop.[23]

The persistent nature of haunting that Tuck emphasizes here serves as an ongoing challenge to the settler colonial nation-state. In her well-known collaboration with Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a Metaphor," Tuck and Yang outline various settler strategies of avoidance that they name "settler moves to innocence."[24] These are tactics by which settlers pronounce themselves innocent of colonial harms, such as the invocation of *terra nullius* (the land was empty prior to colonization), or by making appeal to some version of extinction discourse (there *were* Indigenous peoples here, but they are all dead and gone now).[25]

Yet despite the various tactics settlers use to banish the 'spectral Indian' and carry on in confident 'innocence' the persistent haunting of the ongoing reality of Indigenous presence fuels resentment in the settler psyche, "His resentment seems to say, "Aren't you dead already? Didn't

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[22] 2bears, 6.
[23] Tuck and Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting*, 642.
[24] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," 9.
[25] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor"; Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings*. See also discussion of how Prime Minister Stephen Harper sought to move the entire nation to a place of innocence in the his 2008 apology to Residential School Survivors in Barter, "When Sorry Is Not Good Enough,"254ff.

you die out long ago? You can't really be an Indian because all of the Indians are dead. Hell, I'm probably more Indian than you are."[26] For Tuck and Ree, this is why haunting is perpetual, the ongoing maintenance of settler colonial society and the presumption of settler innocence is at once a denial of Indigenous presence, and simultaneously, a conjuring of the spectral 'Indian' that threatens to throw into question the whole settler-colonial order. The genocidal violence that sustains the settler-colonial order is a memory that has been 'buried without a legal burial place' to invoke Abraham and Toroks and comes back to confront the settler subject as the cursed sprite that declares that history is out of joint.

6.3 The Haunted Settler Imaginary

Settler colonialism has only relatively recently been independently theorized apart from colonialism more generally. From the 1990s onward it has been useful to distinguish settler colonialism as a distinct structure of colonialism in its manner of exercising power.[27] Colonialism, considered as the traditional relationship between metropole and colony, reproduces itself perpetually. It is an extractive relationship that must postpone the freedom and equality of colonized subjects forever.[28] Settler colonialism, while no less extractive, "justifies its operation on the basis of the expectation of its future demise."[29] As settlers take control of the colony and establish a 'new' community, practices of myth-making and nation-building are embarked on that hide or relativize the originary violence that established the colony in its moment of primitive accumulation.[30]

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[26] Tuck and Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting*, 643. This has become a massive problem in Canada recently with a number of cases of race shifting coming to light, see Darryl Leroux, *Distorted Descent: White Claims to Indigenous Identity* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 2019).

[27] Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1998); Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 1, 2006): 387–409; Lorenzo Veracini, "'Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 2 (June 1, 2013): 313–33.

[28] Lorenzo Veracini, "Introducing," *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 3.

[29] Veracini, 3.

[30] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy,* trans. Ben Fowkes, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Penguin Classics, 1992), Vol 1, ch 26; Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, (New York: Vintage, 1900).

I should note that settler colonial studies have recently been criticized by Tiffany Lethabo King on several fronts. First, it is a discourse privileged by White scholars, such as myself, that tends to displace Black and Indigenous studies.[31] It is a discourse that emerged primarily in an Australian context, and has spread around the world, so King questions whether its original theoretical framing captures the nuances of the experience of colonialism in other jurisdictions.[32] In this criticism, one can hear the influence of Stuart Hall, who cautions against the abstract theorization of race and class, instead insisting that "one must start, then, from the concrete historical 'work' which racism accomplishes under specific historical conditions…"[33] There is thus a danger in uncritically applying a theoretical framework from one colonial frontier onto all frontiers as an abstract structural phenomenon that is inattentive to the particular realities of the context in question. King further argues that the insistence by Wolfe et al., that "invasion is a structure, not an event"[34] has served to obscure the horror of genocide and violence involved in the colonization and so she suggests 'conquest' as a more encompassing theoretical framework.

I want to take seriously, with King, the tendency for White scholars like myself to minimize the horror of colonialism due to our lack of proximity to its concrete expression. So, to that end, I have leaned heavily on Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang's account of settler colonialism and their concrete demand that decolonization requires land-back.[35] At the same time, I do think there are some useful insights from settler colonialism studies that are relevant to my purpose here. Primarily, the 'structure' framing of settler colonial studies is useful in my attempt help Settler Christians recognize their complicity in the ongoing structure of colonial violence through the ways our public discourse and practices of public memory reinforce this structure. It is also helpful to analytically

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[31] King, *The Black Shoals*, 65.
[32] King, 65.
[33] David Morley, ed., "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance," in *Essential Essays, Volume 1*, by Stuart Hall (Duke University Press, 2018), 202.
[34] Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 388.
[35] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor."

distinguish between "settler colonies" and colonies that serve merely as ports of extraction for the metropole.[36] While all settler colonies begin as extractive colonies, it is helpful to be able to distinguish the structures that emerge when the colony begins to transform into its own centre of power where the settler population overtakes the indigenous one, such as in the case of many former British colonies like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

A limit that remains in my methodological approach even so, a limit that has also been criticized in Tuck and Yang, is that I do not adequately develop an account of the role of anti-blackness and slavery in this project.[37] The immediate scope of this thesis has been limited to Indigenous-Settler relations because that is the primary axis of colonial conflict in the Canadian prairies, largely because slavery had been abolished in Canada prior to the major settlement of this region. The history of Canadian anti-blackness and black racism continues to be underdeveloped and a more fulsome account would need to do significant work to bring these aspects to the foreground.[38]

As I introduced above, Tuck and Yang have helpfully articulated what they call the 'settler triad' which well represents the particular structure of settler-colonialism in its ongoing existence: "a) the Indigenous inhabitant, present only because of her erasure; b) the chattel slave, whose body is property and murderable; and c) the inventive settler, whose memory becomes history, and whose ideology becomes reason."[39] In this triad one can detect the hauntological overtones that Tuck

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[36] Lyman Tower Sargent, "Colonial and Postcolonial Utopias," in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. Gregory Claeys, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 204, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521886659.009.

[37] Tapji Garba and Sara-Maria Sorentino, "Slavery Is a Metaphor: A Critical Commentary on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's 'Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,'" *Antipode* 52, no. 3 (2020): 764–82, https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12615.

[38] For some preliminary resources into this constellation of issues, see Robyn Maynard, *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* (Fernwood Publishing, 2017); *We Are the Roots: Black Settlers and Their Experiences of Discrimination on the Canadian Prairies*, 2018, https://vimeo.com/257364347. A recent dissertation from the University of Manitoba also helpfully breaks new ground around questions of slavery of both black and Indigenous peoples in the pre-Confederation fur trade that future work would do well to grapple with, see Anne Lindsay, "'Especially in This Free Country:' Webs of Empire, Slavery and the Fur Trade," n.d.

[39] Tuck and Ree, *A Glossary of Haunting*, 642.

elsewhere makes more explicit – the Indigenous person is present only in erasure, this erasure is accomplished by both the epistemic hegemony of the 'inventive settler' and through the violent separation of bodies from land and the transformation of both into property.[40]

Kevin Bruyneel has further developed the idea of the inventive settler by focusing on the practices of 'settler memory' that help maintain the settler-colonial order by obscuring the violent histories of displacement, enslavement, and genocide. For Bruyneel, it is not that settlers have 'forgotten' a history that, if remembered, would allow for reconciliation between settler and Indigenous peoples in Canadian society. Rather "the work of settler memory resonates with and helps to reproduce colonial unknowing."[41] In the next chapter, I turn to a case study about the community of Ste. Madeleine, a Métis community near where I grew up that was destroyed to create a community pasture for the settler community. I use archival and other historiographical materials to examine the way the history of Ste. Madeleine has been recorded and remembered as a way of demonstrating Bruyneel's contention that settlers have not 'forgotten' the community of Ste. Madeleine, they very intentionally worked to erase or minimize its place in historical memory at all.

6.3.I Aware-Settler

How might the limitations of settler memory be overcome? To answer this question, I am following recent efforts in Canadian theological scholarship to write as what Matthew Anderson calls an 'aware-settler.'[42] For Anderson, this means taking one's place in the land seriously, our

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[40] Cf. Jennings, *The Christian Imagination*. While slavery is not much discussed in the Canadian context, prior to confederation, British North America was very much part of the global slave network. However, perhaps even more relevant to this thesis is the long history of forced labour in Indian Residential Schools, see Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 1, Origins to 1939: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume I* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016); Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 2, 1939 to 2000: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume I* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

[41] Kevin Bruyneel, *Settler Memory: The Disavowal of Indigeneity and the Politics of Race in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

[42] Matthew R. Anderson, "'Aware-Settler' Biblical Studies: Breaking Claims of Textual Ownership," September 23, 2019, ; Denise M. Nadeau, *Unsettling Spirit: A Journey into Decolonization* (Montreal ; Kingston ; London ; Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020); For more on interrogating one's own bloodlines in the decolonization efforts by settler

theologies and scriptural interpretations should not attempt to be universally normative, but rather function as "follow the paradigm of proper Treaty relationship: Aware-Settler biblical scholars must and will acknowledge the independence and sovereignty of Indigenous scholars and their methodologies even while learning from their insights and sharing textual 'Land' with them."[43] For this project, that has the concrete implication of honestly grappling as a settler scholar with the structures of 'settler-memory' and the 'inventive-settler' as particular blindspots, or characteristic deformities[44] of settler-epistemology and correlatively, settler theologies of place. Allen Jorgenson has recently written a theology of place that seeks to work out this method from Anderson by way of comparing Indigenous and Christian theologies of place as a sort of comparative religions exercise.[45] Chris Budden has made an attempt at this sort of work in the Australian context by way of framing the question as one of being a settler in 'invaded space' and working out what kinds of ethical obligations this entails for Christians.[46] While both approaches are valuable forays into this kind of work, in my project I follow the example of Enns and Myers in their recent book *Healing Haunted Histories*.[47] While Jorgenson and Budden both admirably allow Indigenous theologians to take the lead in describing the historical and theological context into which both of them, as settler scholars, dare to write, Enns and Myers invite settlers to take another step, learning from Indigenous thinkers and theologians and then returning to one's own tradition through to do the difficult work of healing the haunted histories of settler communities/memories. As a Mennonite, Enns in particular has to contend with the real stories of the suffering and persecution that led Mennonites

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Canadians, see Elaine Enns and Ched Myers, *Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021).

[43] Anderson, "'Aware-Settler' Biblical Studies," 47.

[44] Winner, *The Dangers of Christian Practice*.

[45] Allen G. Jorgenson, *Indigenous and Christian Perspectives in Dialogue: Kairotic Place and Borders* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020); Allen G. Jorgenson, "Empire, Eschatology and Stolen Land," *Dialog* 49, no. 2 (2010): 115–22.

[46] Budden, *Following Jesus in Invaded Space*.

[47] Enns and Myers, *Healing Haunted Histories*.

to flee Russia in the early 20th century and at times, get in the way of confronting their subsequent role in the settler-colonial nation building project of the Canadian state.

Anderson, in a more recent development of his 'aware-settler' method, alludes to the story of Ste. Madeleine through a reference to Trevor Herriot's book *Towards a Prairie Atonement*[48] which is a recent account of the history of Ste. Madeleine that situates it within the broader matrices of the birth and destiny of the Métis nation.[49] Anderson suggests that 'aware-settlers' should take up the posture suggested by Herriot's title, and be working to cultivate an "intention *toward* atonement."[50] While Herriot seems to think that walking that land is itself an act of atonement, Anderson's careful rewording of Herriot's language to make this kind of activity a cultivation of an intention toward atonement is crucial for reminding us that atonement is a Christological event and not something that we achieve. While Anderson does not elaborate on this point, the most gracious reading of his position here would be to see it in the context of his work as a biblical scholar as a proposal for the kind of synergistic posture of preparation a penitent takes upon approach to the High Priest, who for Christians remains always the person of Jesus, who is the one who alone can perform atonement. Jane Barter has highlighted the slippage that often occurs whereby Settler Canadians and especially the Settler State appropriates this Christological role to perform the reconciling work of atonement and this critique should be taken seriously as a modifier of the type of limited posture that an 'intention toward atonement' entails.[51]

I have argued in an earlier chapter (chapter 4), that not only is place the seat of relations between God, people, and the world, it is as such, the structure of intelligibility within which the various embodied communications of divine and creaturely grace and goodness are discerned. Yet

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[48] Trevor Herriot, *Towards a Prairie Atonement* (Regina, SK: University of Regina, 2016).
[49] Matthew Anderson, "'Settler Aware' Pilgrimage and Reconciliation: The Treaty Four Canadian Context" in *Peace Journeys: A New Direction in Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Research* eds. Ian S. McIntosh, Nour Fara Haddad, and Dane Munro (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019)98-120.
[50] Anderson, 115.
[51] Barter, "When Sorry Is Not Good Enough," 259–60.

the history of particular places is often bound up in a persistent failure to apprehend these communications. We might call this failure 'sin' but in the interest of speaking to the particular conditions from which I write as an 'aware-settler' I am centring the structures of settler-colonialism and racial-capitalism as the concrete expressions of how the communications of place have been misapprehended.

6.4 Recognition, Reconciliation, and Resurgence

In chapter two I argued that the colonial moment represented a profound 'misrecognition' by European settlers of Indigenous forms of life. Indigenous difference was heterologically processed and inscribed within Western and Christian ontologies. This heterological processing can be understood as a refusal of intimacy, failing to allow others to remain other and so enacting the violent rupture and erasure that separated Indigenous bodies from lands and has marked the modern period as a time when place became unthinkable. For with the violent silencing of Black and Indigenous voices and the transformation of place to space came an ongoing inability to recognize the various communications of creaturely and divine interplay that constitute place.

Framing the situation in terms of recognition and misrecognition would seem to suggest that the solution to the wounded history of which I speak might be something like the 'politics of recognition' that has been much debated in recent years.[52] Growing out of the experience of the Canadian experiment with liberal multiculturalism,[53] Charles Taylor argued in the early 1990s that "a number of strands in contemporary politics turn on the need, sometimes the demand, for *recognition*."[54] For Taylor, recognition is dialogical in nature, but he sees the language implied by this dialogue in the broad late-Wittgensteinian sense as something that encompasses "not only the words

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[52] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *The Politics of Recognition* (Princeton University Press, 1994), 25–74.
[53] Legislative Services Branch, "Consolidated Federal Laws of Canada, Canadian Multiculturalism Act," April 1, 2014, https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-18.7/page-1.html; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
[54] Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," 25.

we speak, but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the "languages" of art, of gesture, of love, and the like. But we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others."[55] Taylor finds the struggle for 'recognition' to be a peculiarly 'modern' development, as he sees the shift from honour-based societies wherein strict social hierarchy determines identity for individuals to a more fluid, and perhaps plural, sense of identity that is achieved in the struggle to construct the modern self apart from these hierarchical determinants.[56] Given Taylor's agonistic construction of modern identity and his assertion that recognition is the product of a broad dialogical process, he acknowledges that it can and often does go wrong. As I explore below, there have been significant criticisms levelled against Taylor's politics of recognition in recent years, but one thing worth noting is that Taylor is working out his theory as applied to the concrete situation of the Meech Lake accords in Quebec and only secondarily applies it to issues of Indigenous peoples. Critiques that his position misses an emphasis on material reparations are important,[57] but it is helpful to understand Taylor's project in the context of his work in Quebec politics and the need to recognize Quebec's status within the new constitutional framework of 1982, and also later, his work with the Bouchard-Taylor Commission in 2008 on issues of multiculturalism/interculturalism in Quebec society.[58]

Taylor's account of recognition flows primarily from Hegel's discussion of the struggle for recognition and Taylor observes that this struggle can only find satisfactory resolution through "a regime of reciprocal recognition among equals."[59] This points to one of the potential pitfalls of a politics of recognition – if the struggle is narrowly defined as to be a struggle 'for' recognition it will

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[55] Taylor, 32.
[56] Taylor, 38.
[57] See especially Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire," 445.
[58] Gerard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, *Building the Future, a Time for Reconciliation: Abridged Report* (Quebec City, Quebec: Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accomodement religeuses aux differences culturelles, 2008), https://www.deslibris.ca/ID/213094.
[59] Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," 51.

end up reinscribing the hegemonic power of the majority power class as it sets the terms for recognition that the minoritized subjects must 'meet' in order to achieve some minimum standing. The struggle for recognition must also therefore be a struggle over what constitutes recognition.[60] Taylor acknowledges that recognition politics, as practiced within liberal multiculturalism, tends to avoid this question and as a result is tragically homogenizing.[61] Taylor worries that for some strategies of recognition, derived from the politics of multiculturalism[62] or difference,[63] the standards that are brought to the judgments of recognition are "those of North Atlantic civilization. And so, the judgments implicitly and unconsciously will cram the others into our categories."[64]

Canadian legal scholar, James Tully has pointed out that early approaches to the 'politics of recognition' tended to assume a 'monologic' posture that aimed at some sort of 'final' resolution to problems of political recognition.[65] This approach operated with a predetermined judgement about what constitutes recognition, thus bracketing out debates over what constitutes recognition in the first place. For example, in the Hegelian tradition of recognition, a process of mutual recognition is required to give rise to political subjectivity, "we cannot cultivate our own subjectivity except through recognition from the Other."[66] As Robert Pippin has observed, Hegel seems to think that true freedom cannot occur alone, but requires some sort of discursive community for its actualization.[67] Yet precisely by tying together subjectivity with recognition-in-community, a live danger for those minorities who are seeking 'recognition' is that they may 'subject' themselves to the

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[60] James Tully, "Recognition and Dialogue: The Emergence of a New Field," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 7, no. 3 (January 2004): 87.
[61] Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," 71.
[62] The kind of liberal multiculturalism that Taylor is responding to is best represented by Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*.
[63] Taylor has in view what he calls "neo-Nietzchean" theories that owe much to the analyses of Foucault and Derrida, Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," 70–71.
[64] Taylor, 71.
[65] Tully, "Recognition and Dialogue," 90.
[66] Samantha Balaton-Chrimes and Victoria Stead, "Recognition, Power and Coloniality," *Postcolonial Studies* 20, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 4.
[67] Robert B. Pippin, "What Is the Question for Which Hegel's Theory of Recognition Is the Answer?," *European Journal of Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (2000): 156.

hegemonic other to be granted recognition – a recognition that is thus on the terms of the 'master' and only reinforces the hierarchized difference that the quest for recognition sought to overcome. As I discussed in Chapter 2, the heterological processing of difference that occurred in the colonialist moment was a form of recognition that 'subjected' Indigenous peoples and lifeways to Euro-Christian categories such that a profound 'misrecognition' necessarily occurred.

Rather than a monologic model of recognition, Tully argues that recognition, if it is to be truly mutual, must be dialogical, and that this must extend to the question of what constitutes recognition itself. This requires establishing "dialogical practices of negotiation" as well as "an institutionalisation and protection of a specific kind of democratic freedom. The primary aim will be to ensure that those subject to and affected by any system of governance are always free to call its prevailing norms of recognition…into question."[68] In other words, a commitment to dialogical recognition requires a set of institutions that have built in mechanisms that can appeal and challenge the negotiated standards of recognition if they are found to be inadequate.

One of Tully's students, the Dene scholar, Glen Coulthard has more recently leveled a critique of the politics of recognition that follows Tully's assessment of the inadequacy of monological recognition projects. Yet Coulthard radicalizes this assessment of inadequacy by pointing out that not only has it been inadequate, the politics of recognition have actively deferred and derailed attempts at the material reparations necessary for reconciliation with and recognition of Indigenous peoples.[69] Coulthard follows Frantz Fanon's critique of Hegel's slave-master dialectic of recognition that Fanon believed merely inculcated a desire to perform white mastery in formerly enslaved and oppressed Black folk as they sought 'recognition' from their former masters.[70] For Coulthard, the way 'politics of recognition' has played out in Canadian politics and jurisprudence is

[68] Tully, "Recognition and Dialogue," 99.
[69] Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire"; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*.
[70] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox, (Grove Press, 2008), 211ff.

to at once increase 'recognition' of Indigenous culture and history, even limited Indigenous 'title', but simultaneously brackets out any possibility that such 'recognition' might imply a material change in the political economy of so-called Canada. Similarly, John Borrows, a leading Anishinaabe legal scholar, has interpreted the Supreme Court's record of selective 'recognitions' through the paradigm of the 'trickster' drawn from Anishinaabe tradition as a way of exposing the ways settler power continues to perform colonial misrecognition while receiving credit for the expansion of a 'politics of recognition.'[71]

While Coulthard follows Tully's critique of monologic postures of recognition, the disagreement actually runs deeper. In the Canadian context, the so-called 'politics of recognition' has been the guiding legal-philosophical ideology undergirding the discourse of 'reconciliation.' In 1996, the Canadian government finally put an end to the Indian Residential School System after over a century of its genocidal operation. Around the turn of the millennium, Canada began to change from an explicit policy of assimilation to a stated policy of 'reconciliation' driven primarily by the vehicle of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a process born out of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement,[72] which was a response to a tidal wave of legal cases against the Canadian Government and the major denominations of the Canadian Church including Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Church of Canada.

The Indian Residential Schools were a collaborative effort between the Canadian government and the Roman Catholic, Anglican, United, Presbyterian and Mennonite Churches to separate Indigenous peoples from their sovereign relationship to the land by way of education and

[71] Borrows, "Frozen Rights in Canada."
[72] Government of Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada;, "Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement," administrative page, November 3, 2008, https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100015576/1571581687074.

conversion. The goal was to 'kill the Indian, save the child' and to this end, thousands of children were taken from their homes and communities, stripped of their cultural identity and language, and in many cases, died of horrific abuse and neglect. This system was formed shortly after the passage of the Indian Act in 1876 and persisted in various forms until the last school closed in 1996. Throughout the 1990s, many court cases were brought against the Canadian government and the churches and it looked as if the pending damages would bankrupt most of the churches and tie up the court system for decades. The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement was a process to speedily resolve these cases by placing the bulk of the financial liability on the Crown and offering out a settlement payment to survivors and their families based on their experiences at the schools in exchange for waiving all future liability. This process was agreed to with the promise that a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) would take place in order to record the truth of this genocidal system and make this truth known throughout Canadian society.

'Reconciliation' was widely championed by both Indigenous and Settler communities, and 94 Calls to Action were produced by the TRC to work towards this goal.[73] As of 2022, between only 11 and 17 of the Calls have been completed, depending on whether one asks Indigenous or Government sources.[74] Increasingly Indigenous activists are rejecting 'reconciliation' as merely a smokescreen for a neo-colonialist assimilationist strategy predicated on a monologic politics of recognition. "Reconciliation is dead" is increasingly repeated by activists,[75] particularly in the aftermath of such tragedies as the Colten Boushie shooting,[76] the ongoing tragedy of Missing and

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[73] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action."
[74] "How Many of the TRC Calls to Action Are Complete? Don't Ask the Federal Government.," *Indigenous Watchdog* (blog), April 26, 2022, https://www.indigenouswatchdog.org/2022/04/26/how-many-of-the-trc-calls-to-action-are-complete-dont-ask-the-federal-government/.
[75] Margaret-Anne Murphy, "'Reconciliation Is Dead': Unist'ot'en Camp, Land Back and How the Movements Can Inform Settler Responsibilities and Indigenous-Settler Relationships Going Forward" (Masters, Treaty Six Territory, University of Alberta, 2020), https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/147ba372-9198-49ec-b3b9-924f50480c72/view/18e8b3a9-3987-4992-a7b1-7c8324f7bda9/ERA%20capstone.pdf.
[76] Doug Cuthand · CBC News, "Colten Boushie Was Killed and Everything Changed," CBC, August 18, 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/colten-boushie-killed-and-everything-changed-1.3723599.

Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG),[77] the ongoing RCMP-led invasion of Wet'suwet'en lands,[78] and the recovery of unmarked graves that reveal an even higher death-toll in the IRS than previously thought.[79]

'Reconciliation' as a neo-colonialist assimilationist discourse is perhaps best seen in recent jurisprudence. As recently as January of last year (2022), Justice Kent in a BC Supreme court decision, acknowledged that in regard to the legitimacy of the claims of Crown sovereignty over Indigenous lands, "Some argue, in my view correctly, that the whole construct is simply a legal fiction to justify the de facto seizure and control of the land and resources formerly owned by the original inhabitants of what is now Canada."[80] Despite this shocking admission, Justice Kent, finding himself bound by legal precedent goes on, "Still, regardless of any legal frailties underlying the Crown's assertion of sovereignty over British Columbia in 1846, the plaintiffs' claims **confront certain harsh realities, unpalatable though they may be to many**."[81] Kent goes on to outline these harsh realities showing that, whatever the content of Indigenous rights and title may have been they must now be reconciled with the Crown's assertion of sovereignty, as legally frail as that assertion may be. Reconciliation here is thus operating precisely in the form of monologic 'recognition' that I discussed above. Indigenous title has been 'recognized' by the Supreme Court in the Delgamuukw case and elsewhere, but this recognition is tempered by the legal necessity to reconcile Indigenous title sovereignty with the territorial integrity of Canadian sovereignty.[82] Thus,

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[77] Marion Buller et al., *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (National Enquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019), https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/.
[78] Jorge Barrera, "RCMP Arrest 14, Clear Road on Wet'suwet'en Territory in Ongoing Dispute over Land Rights, Pipeline," CBC, November 18, 2021, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/rcmp-wet-suwet-en-pipeline-resistance-1.6254245.
[79] Turnbull, "When 'good Intentions' Don't Matter."
[80] Nigel P. Kent, Thomas and Saik'uz First Nation v. Rio Tinto Alcan Inc., (BC Supreme Court January 7, 2022).
[81] Emphasis added, Kent, at §201.
[82] Delgamuukw v. British Columbia, 1997

whatever 'Indigenous title' means, or may have meant prior to colonial contact, it is now confronted by 'certain harsh realities', namely Crown supremacy.

Reconciliation, as a discourse, is losing its legitimacy among Indigenous peoples in Canada at the same time as it is being mainstreamed by settler Canadians. This loss of legitimacy is due to an increased sense that 'reconciliation' is increasingly a gestural politics and not a meaningful enactment of reparation and decolonization. This is perhaps nowhere evidenced as clearly as in the recent 'Reconciliation' initiative by the New Brunswick RCMP who covered a police cruiser with orange handprints, a symbol of the unmarked graves and MMIW, in 'honour' of this year's Day for National Truth and Reconciliation (a new federal holiday occurring every September 30th).[83]

Figure 1: Richibuctou RCMP in New Brunswich Paint Police Cruiser with orange handprints for Orange Shirt Day. https://twitter.com/MikmakiNews/status/1574442879522578433?s=20

Indigenous activists are increasingly speaking of 'Resurgence' rather than 'Reconciliation' which represents a substantial attempt to shift the undergirding recognition politics from being a struggle *for* recognition on Settler terms to a debate about what recognition must consist of. 'Resurgence' has been identified as a coherent tradition of theory and praxis that has its roots in the Indigenous Governance program at the University of Victoria.[84] Taiaiake Alfred, the founder of this school and a key theorist of 'Resurgence' notes that he was initially open to 'Reconciliation' particularly if it served to tell the truth about colonialism, "My criterion for determining whether or

[83] Mi'kma'ki News [@GilbertPaulJr], "Richibuctou @RCMPNB Are Painting Their Cars with Orange Hand Prints on Their Vehicles to Commemorate Children Lost at the Canadian Assimilation Institutions. What Do You Think about the Federal Institution Putting Orange Hand Prints on Their Vehicles? #Rcmp #nb #EveryChildMatters Https://T.Co/HMW9TV01WV," Tweet, *Twitter*, September 26, 2022, https://twitter.com/GilbertPaulJr/status/1574442879522578433.
[84] Wildcat, "Resurgence As Critique and Intellectual Tradition," *Rooted* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2022): 56–61.

not it was a good thing centered on this question: Does it allow us to reconnect?"[85] but it has become little more than an idea that serves "mainly to assuage the guilt non-indigenous people feel over the settling and dispossessing and exploiting. It is an attempt, in its best formulation, to bring Indigenous people into a situation in which they can access the benefits of capitalism…"[86] But for Alfred, gaining access to the fruits of colonial capitalism is a far cry from what it means to be fully Onkwehonwe (i.e., a Haudenosuanee person).[87]

> When we talk about being Indigenous, it is a very different conception than any kind of ethnic affiliation or religious or philosophical orientation, or ideological belief system… It is your fulfillment of your responsibilities that form the natural environment that makes you a real person. If you don't do that, you are not Onkwehonwe, you are not fulfilling your obligations.[88]

The theoretical intervention of Resurgence theorists like Alfred, Coulthard, Simpson, and others has come in conjunction with the rise of the "Land Back" movement.[89] As Alfred points out, it was the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1996 that first pointed out that the surest way to achieve all the various calls to action in that report (many of which were reiterated in the TRC Calls to Action) was to return massive amounts of land to Indigenous control. The intervention of 'Resurgence' theory thus goes much further than the procedural/institutional reforms called for by Tully in his advocacy of a dialogical approach to recognition. Recognition through the discourse of

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[85] Taiaiake Alfred, "On Reconciliation and Resurgence," *Rooted* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2022): 78.
[86] Alfred, 77.
[87] Increasingly Indigenous languages are not being discursively treated as 'foreign' languages, thus they are not italicized in the text. The emerging practice is to translate the term upon first use and then include a glossary at the end of the text, see the discussion in Tasha Beeds, "Rethinking Edward Ahenakew's Intellectual Legacy" in Tolly Bradford and Chelsea Horton, eds., *Mixed Blessings: Indigenous Encounters with Christianity in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 149. See also Simpson, *Dancing On Our Turtle's Back*.
[88] Alfred, "On Reconciliation and Resurgence," 78; Hayden King, Shiri Pasternak, and Riley Yesno, "Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper" (Yellowhead Institute, October 2019), https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/red-paper-report-final.pdf.
[89] Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*, 1st Edition (Peterborough, Ont. ; Orchard Park, N.Y: University of Toronto Press, Higher Education Division, 2005); Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*, 2 edition (Don Mills, Ont. ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Alfred, "On Reconciliation and Resurgence"; Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire"; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*; Simpson, *Dancing On Our Turtle's Back*; Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Audra Simpson, "Whither Settler Colonialism?," *Settler Colonial Studies* 6, no. 4 (October 2016): 438–45; Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent and the Anatomy of 'Refusal'"; John Borrows, *Recovering Canada: The Resurgence of Indigenous Law*, First Thus edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

'Reconciliation' has been attempted by the Canadian state without first dismantling the structures of settler colonialism. However, without first dismantling this structure, the blind-spots settler colonialism produces continues to produce profound misrecognitions and perpetuate ongoing harms against Indigenous peoples. The intervention of 'Resurgence' points to the lacuna in the institutional/procedural capacity of the settler state in being able to foster the kind of open-ended recognition processes that a dialogical posture of recognition requires. As Audra Simpson has repeatedly argued, Recognition under the structure of settler colonialism is not an even playing field and because of this actively undermines and blocks the exercise of Indigenous sovereignty.[90] Under the ongoing violent conditions of settler colonialism, Simpson calls for a posture of Refusal, a refusal to be 'recognized' by Settler states or structures.[91] Resurgence offers a way for Indigenous people to perform a Refusal of Settler Recognition and instead accomplish a sovereign self-recognition, being Indigenous on their own land and allowing the identity that flows from Indigenous people establishing wakhohtowin (right relations) in their own territories to foster a renewed sovereign status for Indigenous nations. Yet even out of this posture of Refusal and Resurgence there may yet be hope for a renewed recognition by the Canadian state of the obligations entered into with Indigenous peoples on a nation-to-nation basis in the foundational treaties that undergird Canadian constitutionalism.[92] Land-back represents a way out of the violent enclosure of settler colonialism and by disrupting colonial ownership. Furthermore, land-back allows for a hope that the dialogical processes of Recognition may yet become possible in such a way that the hierarchical structure of settler-colonial subjectivity is not re-imprinted on sovereign Indigenous peoples.

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[90] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*; Audra Simpson, "Consent's Revenge," *Cultural Anthropology* 31, no. 3 (August 9, 2016): 326–33, https://doi.org/10.14506/ca31.3.02; Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent and the Anatomy of 'Refusal.'"
[91] Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent and the Anatomy of 'Refusal.'"
[92] Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution*; Aldred and Anderson, *Our Home and Treaty Land.*

6.5 Memory, Recognition, and the Revenant

6.5.I Utopia Revisited

As I have stressed, the struggle for recognition must concern itself above all else with the question of what counts as recognition. Indigenous resurgence and refusal theorists have pushed back against the politics of recognition in favour of an exercise of sovereign self-recognition.[93] This politics of 'refusal' or colonial (mis)recognition and resurgent self-recognition is an act of resistance to a Settler politics of recognition that reinforces the enclosure of settler-colonial hegemony. I pointed out that Charles Taylor was sensitive to the potential for recognition to be captured by 'North Atlantic' ideologies, but it has been the Indigenous Resurgence and Refusal theorists who have most sharply highlighted the settler-colonial frame as the critical barrier to mutual recognition.

In chapter two, I introduced Thomas More's *Utopia* as a critical element in the heterological misrecognition of the colonial moment. In this section I return to *Utopia* as a way of highlighting how the desires of settler-colonial subjects have contributed to the structuring of colonial modernity such that mutual recognition habitually breaks down. By returning to *Utopia,* I can accomplish three things. First, I re-emphasize from chapter two the way More performs a heterological processing of early travel narratives like that of Amerigo Vespucci in ways that render mute Indigenous voices, instead turning the 'savage critic' into a spokesperson of colonial desire. Second, by attending to the construction of the geography of Utopia itself, I show that the act of partition and enclosure is the characteristic colonial act of meaning making. This violent act of enclosure disrupts the network of relations between the various communicative bodies that make a place – thus u-topia (not-a-place) is a well-deserved name, for the creation of Utopia is historically often an act of destruction.[94] Finally, I introduce a hauntological reading of Utopia. This hauntological lens provides a methodology for interrogating my great-grandfather's poetry as a way of discovering possibilities and futures for

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[93] Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 90–91.
[94] Marin, "About the Creation of the Island of Utopia," 106.

mutual recognition beyond what the hegemonic structure of settler-colonialism have so far imagined.

Karl Hardy has highlighted that there is some debate as to whether 'utopia' is a universal category across human cultures or if it is the product of a particular genealogy of the Christian West.[95] Hady notes that the proponents of a maximalist account of utopianism tends to reduce it to a type of vague sense of dreaming for a better society.[96] However, Krishan Kumar has argued that we should distinguish between the ubiquitous 'paradise' or 'Golden Age' myths found across virtually all societies and 'utopia' proper.[97] For Kumar, Utopia "appears only in societies with the classical and Christian heritage, that is, only in the West."[98] He goes on to argue that while Christianity has strong utopian impulses, Christian orthodoxy (which for him is represented by the realism found in Augustine's *City of God*), effectively suppressed these utopian impulses throughout Christian history until the sectarian forces of the Reformation fragmented Christianity as an officially unified structure in Europe.[99] For Kumar, it is no coincidence that More's *Utopia* emerges right on the eve of the Reformation, for it is the resurgence of classical humanism in the renaissance of early-modernity that, on Kumar's account, allows the utopian impulse within Christianity to win out. Thus, Thomas More's *Utopia* is both the product of this particular moment in history, and is also simultaneously created by More, creating a genuinely new idea that Kumar sees as being a structuring feature of secular modernity.[100]

Hardy concurs with Kumar's genealogy of utopia as a useful way of being specific about a particular impulse in Western culture that he sees as driving the colonial project. Not all social

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[95] Karl Hardy, "Unsettling Hope: Settler-Colonialism and Utopianism," *Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal* 2, no. 1 (2012): 123.
[96] Hardy, 123.
[97] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, 19.
[98] Kumar, 19.
[99] Kumar, 22.
[100] Kumar, 22–26.

dreaming about paradise has inspired the colonial fervour that the Western Europe inflicted upon the planet in the Modern period, and so it is important, as Hardy argues, to attend particularly to the pathologies of the More-ist tradition of utopia. In fact, Hardy agrees with my assessment from chapter 2, that More's *Utopia* played a significant role in birthing the English colonial project altogether, noting that "Jeffrey Knapp has argued that Utopia 'contains perhaps the first Tudor attempt to elaborate a theory of colonization,' and referencing the work of D.B. Quinn, has suggested More was '…the first Englishman to use the word colonia in a Roman [i.e. imperialist] meaning.'"[101]

Lyman Tower Sargent further supports this coincidence of More's utopia with the colonialism, observing, "Thomas More's *Utopia*, in which the word 'utopia was coined, is also the first utopia to raise the issue of colonies…"[102] Sargent goes on to survey the Western utopian literary tradition that More's novel inspired and finds that these utopias tend to either create dystopian situations for the indigenous peoples that 'utopia' displaces, or are in fact created by and premised upon the displacement of Indigenous peoples as the means to their founding.[103] While utopias written by colonial societies center Indigenous genocide as the focal point of their utopian desire, Sargent does note that the genre is often taken up by anti-colonial authors to write both utopian and dystopian works that imagine other futures beyond colonialism, either by re-sourcing from an imagined 'ideal' past, or by positing a future life of independence beyond colonial oppression.[104]

The colonial impulse in More's *Utopia* is often acknowledged, as I have briefly surveyed, but to emphasize the point further, let me return to Hardy's reading. For Hardy, the idea of Utopia in the More-ist tradition "was articulated in decidedly modernist terms; the Utopians and their ideas are

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[101] Hardy, "Unsettling Hope: Settler-Colonialism and Utopianism," 124. See also Jeffrey Knapp, *An Empire Nowhere: England, America, and Literature from Utopia to The Tempest*, 1992, 21.
[102] Sargent, "Colonial and Postcolonial Utopias," 204.
[103] Sargent, 204–5.
[104] Sargent, 212–15.

unambiguously representative of a notion of progressive modernity counter posed with Indigenous inhabitants (Abraxans) who are consigned to a backward 'primitive' pre-modernity…"[105] Hardy observes that the very idea of Utopia is constituted by and perpetuates this kind of modernist epistemology that has as its goal, Indigenous erasure, for the ideal society can only emerge through the elimination of those whose lifeways do not embrace a strict separation between nature and culture that allow for the proper instrumentalization "of the land on which they lived."[106] In Hardy's final analysis, Utopia, both in More's archetype and in the modern genre as a whole, proceeds on a series of tropes that both instantiate and reinforce the 'logic of elimination' that constitutes settler colonialism.[107] In addition to the 'logic of elimination' that animates the removal of Indigenous inhabitants who refuse 'proper' land instrumentalization, Hardy also highlights the foreign policy exhibited by the Utopians that ruthlessly extracts resources, both in the form of natural and human capital, from the 'exogenous Others' of their mainland colonies.[108] Taken together, these tropes serve to naturalize settler colonialism and worse, the very notion of Utopia, the good place that is not a place, assumes a blank-slate geography or *terra nullius* that is realized only through the violent imposition of a modernist, progressive epistemology that silences and erases Indigenous presence.[109]

Bruno Latour, in his early book *We have never been modern*, defines the aspiration of modernity as the forced partition of nature and culture, Nature and Society must be kept "absolutely distinct."[110] It turns out, paradoxically, that both Nature and Society are constructions, they are not givens, and there is no distinction between "rationality and obscurantism, between false ideology and true science" apart from the modern concern to maintain such a partition.[111] This forced partition

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[105] Hardy, "Unsettling Hope: Settler-Colonialism and Utopianism," 126.
[106] Hardy, 126.
[107] Hardy, 126; see also Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 387.
[108] Hardy, "Unsettling Hope: Settler-Colonialism and Utopianism," 127.
[109] Hardy, 133.
[110] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 32.
[111] Latour, 36.

gives incredible energy to modernization, as Latour concludes, "modernization, although it destroyed the near-totality of cultures and natures by force and bloodshed, had a clear objective. Modernizing finally made it possible to distinguish between the laws of external nature and the conventions of society. The conquerors undertook this partition everywhere…"[112] While Latour does not use the language of Utopia in his analysis of the construct of Modernity, the emphasis on the partition and its violent impact on Indigenous societies by 'enlightened' and 'modern' conquerors is remarkably resonant with the analysis of the colonial structure of utopianism I have just reviewed.

The notion of the 'partition' is most clearly on display in Book II of More's Utopia. According to Raphael Hythloday (More's narrator), Utopia was not always an island, nor was it always known by that name. For in the beginning, it was called Abraxa and was connected to the continent by a fifteen mile isthmus.[113] Abraxa, it turns out, is a "deformation and a shorting of Abraxas, the mystic name invented by the heresiarch Basilides."[114] Basilides was a second century gnostic who postulated 365 heavens and named the highest of them 'Abraxas', what it means exactly is unknown but it seems to symbolically imply a fantasy-land.[115] Here we have the implication of a kind of double Utopia – Utopia which is carved out of an already existent utopia in the figure of Abraxa. But already in the deformed syntax of the name Abraxa (from Abraxas) there is implied a partition or a cut, there is almost an anticipated abbreviation in the name itself that implies that its perfection and history is destined to be cut short by the 'real' Utopia. Indeed, from the description we have of the Indigenous Abraxans we are told that they are "rude, uncouth inhabitants" who are only raised to "such a high level of culture and humanity" in their conquest by Utopus.[116]

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[112] Latour, 130.
[113] More, *Utopia*, 42.
[114] Blandine Perona, "Between Erasmus and More, Abraxa(s), an Anamorphic Name," *Erasmus Studies* 39, no. 1 (March 13, 2019): 93–94.
[115] More, *Utopia*, 42, fn3.
[116] More, 42.

It is the cut or partition authored by Utopus that creates Utopia by transforming it from isthmus to island; by severing its umbilical cord from the mainland.[117] Louis Marin, in his analysis of the creation of Utopia notes that the partition, or in his words, "incision," made by Utopus at the opening of Book II also marks the precise location of Utopia as being something that is created only by the incision of writing – a place that is nowhere, exists only insofar as it is written into being.[118] For Marin, Utopia is created by writing, and the (no)-place created by this act of incision by pen to paper creates the foundational narrative of an ideal place that nowhere exists.[119] Here we can hear an echo of the Christian impulse for utopia previously mentioned,[120] for the reality of Israel as first a people, and eventually a place, is preceded by God's determination to create a Covenant with Abraham and his descendants forever, which in Hebrew is *karat berit*, literally 'cut a covenant' (Gen. 15:18). The first 'cut' in both the creation of a people and a place in both the Bible and More's *Utopia* is the cut that opens a narrative foundation upon which this new reality can emerge.[121]

As I noted in chapter 2, the translation of More's text into English in the latter half of the 16th century contributed to a potent imaginative ferment by which the English elite 'recognized' their need for colonies.[122] Indeed, it was an explicitly Utopian quest that their first colonial endeavours were directed after in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's quest for Norumbega. Given this history of the actual transmission of More's text into the creation of English colonial policy, Marin is absolutely justified in identifying More's *Utopia* as a "textual object [which] transforms itself into real history. In short, Utopia belongs to this particular class of literary objects that make up their own reality…"[123] This

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[117] Susan Bruce, "More's Utopia: Colonialists, Refugees and the Nature of Sufficiency," in *Utopian Moments: Reading Utopian Texts*, ed. Miguel A. Ramiro Avilés and J. C. Davis (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), 8, https://doi.org/10.5040/9781849666848.
[118] Marin, "About the Creation of the Island of Utopia," 99.
[119] Marin, 100.
[120] Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*; Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*.
[121] Deeply indebted to my friend Kat Gwyther for this insight. See their forthcoming doctoral thesis "Exodus 20-23 and Utopia," from the University of Leeds, 2023.
[122] Cañizares-Esguerra, *Entangled Empires*, 91.
[123] Marin, "About the Creation of the Island of Utopia," 100.

operates on two levels, within the world of the text, and as a foundational text itself of settler-colonialism. It is the cut, the partition, that creates the ideal geography of Utopia and transforms Indigenous Abraxans and Utopus' own soldiers into Utopians. Both Abraxan and soldier are united through the 'productive' work of destroying the isthmus – their labour purifies them into a homogenous Utopian subject, recognized in name now only in relation to their conquering master. Utopus' conquest and enslavement raises them all to "such a high level of culture and humanity that they now surpass almost every other people…"[124] which is accomplished through the transformation of the geography from Abraxan peninsula to Utopian island. As a textual object *Utopia* explicitly galvanized English settler colonialism in the early efforts of Sir Humphrey Gilbert. It also continued to echo through the Puritan efforts to establish 'plantations' in the new world that were well ordered within their protective hedges – acting as shining cities upon hills – as beacons of civilization and progress to a darkened world.[125]

Marin notes that the discussion of Utopias geography in Book II is bracketed by two acts by Utopus, it opens with the conquest and the partition, and it closes with Utopus establishing proper religion amongst his people. The ideally ordered spatiality of Utopian geography exists in the space opened between these two sovereign acts by Utopus, and the space in between is removed from its profane use and established as a sacred space.[126] The sacralization of Utopian space that occurs in the performance of the Utopian cut can be helpfully understood by reference to the Old Testament's establishment of Israel as a holy people in a holy land.[127] Willie Jennings has been

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[124] More, *Utopia*, 42.
[125] See Cotton, "God's Promise to His Plantation"; Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana: Or; The Ecclesiastical History of New-England, From Its First Planting in the Year 1620 unto the Year of Our Lord, 1698*. (London, UK: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheapside, 1702); "John Winthrop Dreams of a City on a Hill, 1630 | The American Yawp Reader," accessed July 4, 2023, https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/john-winthrop-dreams-of-a-city-on-a-hill-1630/.
[126] Marin, "About the Creation of the Island of Utopia," 101.
[127] See Christopher J. H. Wright, *God's People in God's Land: Family, Land, and Property in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Exeter, England: Eerdmans, 1990).

particularly attentive to the way early modern England appropriated the sacral spatiality of Israel in its own understanding of itself as the people of God in a holy land, regularly referring to England as Israel and London as Jerusalem.[128] Jennings is also attentive to the way that this establishment of a sacred geography in England and a supersessionist usurpation of Israel's 'chosen people' status is made manifest through literary production, both through official liturgical texts like the unitary Book of Common Prayer and King James Bible, and through hymnody.[129]

More's *Utopia* establishes the intelligibility of the (no)place of Utopia by an act of partition that establishes an ideal geography and an ideal people who practice an ideal religious life. It does so through a radical act of separation, of circumscription, through an imposition of a border that violently orders the 'meaning' of the place of Utopia. Utopian freedom and subjectivity are 'recognized,' paradoxically, through an act of enslavement that eliminates Abraxan identity altogether and replaces it with a people and geography that are the projections of Utopus' colonial desire. While this occurs in the world text, the text itself also births this into our world. *Utopia* was, and the utopian genre has continued to perform,[130] a creation of ideal (no)places that establish themselves first through the 'cut' of writing and then through the separation of bodies from places through the violent imposition of borders and separations. The colonial afterlife of the utopian imagination has been an ongoing attempt to create idealized (no)places born of colonial desires and settler futurity that literally have no 'place' for Indigenous presence within them. *Utopia* is ultimately, in the words of Levinas, another entry in the annals of Western philosophy wherein "the disclosure of the other, where other, in manifesting itself as a being, loses its alterity."[131] This colonial-

[128] Jennings, *The Christian Imagination*, 211–20. While Jennings focuses primarily on the hymnody of Isaac Watts, this can also be seen even in anti-establishment radicals like Gerard Winstanley, see Gerrard Winstanley, "The True Levellers Standard Advanced," 1649.
[129] Jennings, *The Christian Imagination*, 209ff.
[130] For an overview of many post *Utopia* colonial utopias, see Sargent, "Colonial and Postcolonial Utopias."
[131] Emmanuel Levinas, "The Trace of the Other," in *Deconstruction in Context: Literature and Philosophy*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 346.

utopianism underwrites the hegemonic and triadic structure of settler-colonialism to this day in which Indigenous peoples are eliminated, chattel slavery is enforced, and inventive settlers write the terms of existence resulting in a significant and ongoing barrier to the dialogical mutual recognition that a true 'place' requires.

But *Utopia*, for all its pretensions to hegemonic totality, continues to bring forward a haunting presence that offers the promise of an alternate future not taken. For though Hythloday presents Utopia on its surface as a totally realized 'place' nevertheless, its prehistory as Abraxa is confirmed by "the appearance of the place."[132] Hythloday begins his description of the physical geography of Utopia by observing that the approach to the island is dangerous and treacherous and can only be accomplished under the supervision of a Utopian pilot. Yet even these local navigators might be lured to destruction if certain key landmarks were to be moved. Presumably, then, there is a natural fluidity to the Utopian coastline that resists objective mapping, yet persisting through this fluidity there remain marks of the Abraxa of antiquity.

The evidence of Utopia's Abraxan origin is a passing reference to be sure, a trace of a long subsumed alterity that yet persists plainly enough that it is easily recognized by the foreign observer, Hythloday. However, it is not only in the physical geography that this trace of alterity remains recognizable, for Hythloday also finds a ghostly trace in the archives of Utopia, noting that these began 1760 years ago at the conquest and contain detailed records of the progression of island architecture.[133] "The first houses were low," Hythloday reports from the archives, "like cabins or peasant huts, built slapdash out of any sort of lumber, with mud-plastered walls."[134] Explaining this early architecture, Hythloday claims that Utopus had left certain matters of adornment to be finished

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[132] More, *Utopia*, 42.
[133] More, 46; Verne Harris, "Hauntology, Archivy and Banditry: An Engagement with Derrida and Zapiro," *Critical Arts* 29, no. 1 (2015): 16.
[134] More, *Utopia*, 47.

by later generations.[135] Yet earlier in the chapter, the conquest and the act of partition are depicted as being sufficient to lift the inhabitants from a rude and uncouth state to such a height of civilization that the surrounding nations looked on with "wonder and terror at its success."[136] Are these early 'slapdash' houses examples of Abraxan architecture, preserved in the 'official' record to show how far Utopians had come in civilization? Or was this architecture all that the conquering forces could manage, and it is only through an extended period of learning in and from the land and its original inhabitants that the extraordinary architectural feats of the Utopians are ultimately realized? The text is silent one way or the other, but in the ambiguity that is left, we find the absent presence of Abraxa, offering the possibility of a different kind of utopian dreaming – one that does not perpetually subsume the alterity of Abraxan existence under the colonizing hegemony of imperialist conquest.

I have already highlighted the ways in which Lyman Tower Sargent and others have emphasized the colonial context of both More's *Utopia* and the utopian genre writ large, yet Sargent has also drawn attention to the ways utopian literature has been created as an anti-colonial form of resistance literature by Indigenous peoples around the world.[137] I think this is because latent in More's *Utopia* is the primal utopia of Abraxa, a mostly absent presence in the life of Utopia proper, but one whose traces are recognizable. The absent presence of Abraxa haunts Utopia because it has not actually been truly destroyed. Abraxa has been damaged, partitioned, and circumscribed, to be sure, but it persists in some recognizable form, unsettling the idyllic image that Utopia tries (unsuccessfully) to present to the outside world.

In what remains of this chapter, I develop this insight about the way Indigenous presence, absence, and absent presence haunts settler colonialism through an examination of some of my own

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[135] More, 46.
[136] More, 42.
[137] Sargent, "Colonial and Postcolonial Utopias," 213.

great-grandfather's writing. This writing is utopian in the way it creates a written record of the 'place' of the settler community of Binscarth, but by interrogating it through the hauntological lens I have brought to bear on More's *Utopia,* I hope to show a way beyond the limits of settler memory and settler colonialism.

6.5.II My Settler Memory

When Kevin Bruyneel argues that 'settler memory' is not a forgetting but an active remembering that constitutes a practiced erasure, what is going on here is a trick of our memory to make present realities that have no actual reality. Perhaps the most quintessential anti-structure invoked by the exercise of settler memory is something like the *terra nullius* ideology that renders empty the land that Indigenous people lived in since time immemorial. As Molly P. Rozum has observed, the literary output of the first generation of settlers born in the northern Great Plains were instrumental in establishing the foundation of the alternate settler memory that Bruyneel describes.[138] In an effort to reflect on this from the 'Aware-Settler' posture I highlighted above, consider this poem from my own great-grandfather, Norman Leslie Turnbull, entitled "Gifts:"

> Give me the western prairies before the white man came
> Rolling into the sunset, God's immense domain.
> Give me the poplar wildwood, the plains astrew with flowers
> The crocus and the lilies, God's balm in leisure hours.
> Give me the creeks and rivers, winding to lake or the sea
> The darting fish and the drinking deer, God's wildlife to pleasure me.
> Give me the sunrise and sunset, the hues and colors rare,
> The lengthening shadows spreading, God's restful night from care.
> Give me the gift of vision, that is the best of all;
> That I may ever upward look ,God's strength for a growing soul.
> These are the gifts I'd ask had I to live here over again;
> Now I pass them on to the children: God, thanks for each wonderful thing.

In his image of 'the western prairies before the white man came' Grandpa Norman remembers an empty land astrew with poplars and flowers. On the one hand, as one of the early settler families in

[138] Rozum, *Grasslands Grown*, 220.

the area, he probably did have memories of a relatively 'empty' landscape that slowly filled in with arriving settlers throughout his childhood. But on the other hand, the emptiness that he remembered was an artificial emptiness, an emptiness that came as a result of 19th century massacres, wars, forced treaties, and genocidal policies of starvation and forced removal.[139] This poetic remembering naturalizes the "white man's" presence in the lands now under settler hegemony by invoking a kind of divine utopic *terra nullius*. The coming of the 'white man' in this remembering did disrupt this divine utopia of wildwood and flowers, but what is not said, what cannot be said, is the way this arrival inaugurated the emptiness itself. Grandpa Norman's memory thus remembers a forgetfulness, a positive description of a divine utopia that is disrupted by the arrival of White settlers is the 'image' that is made present in order to suppress the haunting wounds of genocide and forced removal that are being forgotten here.

Grandpa Norman's poem is a prayer, a prayer that asks God for "the gift of vision", and perhaps the only way for that vision to be granted is to recognize the image of the land remembered here as a settler remembering in need of deconstruction. As I have already alluded to, there is in this remembering already a trace of the unspoken settler violence that is intentionally excluded from the main images evoked. The divine utopia that is described is one that is disrupted by the coming of the 'White man' – why does this arrival disrupt God's domain? Is this longing for a utopic 'before' indicative of the reality that the arrival of settler colonialism has fundamentally disrupted, perhaps even ruined, the gifts of God's vast domain? If that is the case, what else might have been disrupted? Grandpa Norman does not ask, nor perhaps could he, but as his descendant, the grandson of the child to whom he prays to pass on these gifts, I am left haunted by the spectral trace of these

[139] Savage, *A Geography of Blood*.

questions that are bound up in the receipt of these gifts. My memory of my ancestors brings their absent presence to mind, but also the presences of those absented by their own rememberings.[140]

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I argued in an earlier chapter that 'place' named a structure of intelligibility in which dialogical interpretation between communicative bodies allowed for the possibility of 'going on' in the world. In this chapter I began by observing that this kind of dialogical interpretation requires a recognition of the manifest forms that divine and creaturely communications take if one is to respond in a way that allows for a 'going on' of dialogue and action. Framing the problem as a question of recognition or misrecognition brought us to a discussion of the recent history of the so-called 'politics of recognition' and the ways in which 'recognition' is insufficient, and perhaps even impossible under the unbalanced power relations that the structures of racial capitalism and settler colonialism constitute. I discussed the politics of refusal and resurgence that Indigenous activists have theorized as a response to the hegemonic rearticulation of hierarchy that settler recognition perpetuates. Finally, I suggested that there may yet be a way forward for recognition by rejecting the modern and utopian impulse to establish regimes of recognition through the act of partition. This rejection occurs by way of a deconstruction of the utopian regime of settler colonialism from within by attending to the absent presence of Indigenous alterity – symbolically rendered in *Utopia* in the figure of Abraxa – as a way of identifying unrecognized histories and yet to be realized futures. By examining one of my great-grandfather's poems as an effort to demonstrate an 'Aware-Settler' posture, I demonstrated that one can identify the traces of the absence that the constructed image-of-presence attempts to conceal. By attending to these traces of absences we can deconstruct or

[140] I further explore these questions about my family history here, Ryan Turnbull "Decolonizing Anglican Identity?," Earth and Altar, accessed January 23, 2023, https://earthandaltarmag.com/posts/bl3mheyspquwmkp0znmi97m8vljn24; here Ryan Turnbull, "A Tale of Two Fields," *Rupert's Land News*, December 27, 2019; and here Ryan Turnbull, "The Silent Witness of Evergreens," Rupert's Land News, June 26, 2020, https://rupertslandnews.ca/the-silent-witness-of-evergreens/.

interrogate the rememberings and recognitions that such rememberings make possible as a kind of praxis of self-critique within the ongoing work of dialogical recognition. As Michel de Certeau once remarked, "Haunted places are the only ones people can live in…"[141] and this may just be because the only way for us to truly abide in place is for our processes of dialogical interpretation to be open to the kind of critique that attention to the traces of spectres provides.

The Politics of Resurgence can be understood as a haunting of Settler Canada. Settler memory and settler Recognition continuously proves itself unable to break out of a posture of self-defensiveness of settler institutions and political orders, fundamental of which is the settler state of Canada itself. Land-Back is the revenant of settler constitutionalism. If, as Bergland has shown in *The National Uncanny*, settler literary production sought to render Indigenous peoples into a ghostly absence that may haunt, but cannot politically challenge settler hegemony despite the unbroken exercise of Indigenous sovereignty upon their traditional lands, then perhaps we can consider the revenant, the ghost that makes a disruptive return as paradigmatic of the challenge of Land-Back and the Politics of Resurgence. Canada, according to its own constitutional tradition (Royal Proclamation, 1763), recognizes the territorial integrity of Indigenous title holders. In settler law, it does this by the Crown implicitly asserting the Doctrine of Discovery (DoD) in the founding of its claims to territorial sovereignty on the basis of 'the late Definitive Treaty of Peace, concluded at Paris' which implies that it is receiving said territorial sovereignty by the ceding of it to them by other European powers that had made a prior claim to Discovery.[142] Upon this assertion of radical sovereignty bequeathed through DoD sleight of hand, the Crown then guarantees the lands and titles of Indigenous peoples everywhere outside of the already existent settler colonies that existed at the time of this assertion of sovereignty:

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[141] Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 108.
[142] George III, "The Royal Proclamation, 1763" (The Avalon Project, October 7, 1763), https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/proc1763.asp.

> And We do further declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure, for the present as aforesaid, to reserve under Our Sovereignty, Protection, and Dominion, for the Use of the said Indians, all the Lands and Territories not included within the Limits of Our said Three New Governments, or within the Limits of the Territory granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, as also all the Lands and Territories lying to the Westward of the Sources of the Rivers which fall into the Sea from the West and North West, as aforesaid; and We do hereby strictly forbid, on Pain of Our Displeasure, all Our loving Subjects from making any Purchases or Settlements whatever, or taking Possession of any of the Lands above reserved, without Our especial Leave and Licence for that Purpose first obtained.[143]

Because of this proclamation, all subsequent settler expansion had to be done through the securing of treaties, a process that, from an Indigenous perspective made settler and Indigenous nations into kin, but from a settler perspective was a mere legal contract to be obtained in order to officially gain access to Indigenous lands.

Yet time and time again, the treaties were negotiated coercively and in bad faith, broken, and ignored, not to mention the fact that much of Canada continues to rest on unceded territory that has no treaty basis for it at all.[144] But the Crown, in its assertion of sovereignty in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, guaranteed title to these lands for Indigenous peoples, and this guarantee is the constitutional bedrock upon which all subsequent expansions and developments of the settler state of Canada rests. The intervention of Land Back and the Politics of Resurgence can thus be read as the ghostly return of our own constitutional order which calls into question the sedimented layers of settler-supremacist structures of Indigenous displacement that have been enacted in the intervening centuries. As Tuck and Rhee remind us, those same Indigenous peoples that Settlers sought to render ghostly (per Bergland) actually abide as a profound haunting presence in the ongoing exercise of Indigenous sovereignty as a refusal of Settler supremacy. The structures of settler memory and its

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[143] Ibid., §18-19

[144] Jill St Germain, *Broken Treaties: United States and Canadian Relations with the Lakotas and the Plains Cree, 1868-1885* (U of Nebraska Press, 2009); R. E. Gaffney, Gary P. Gould, and Alan J. Semple, *Broken Promises: The Aboriginal Constitutional Conferences* (Fredericton, N.B: New Brunswick Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians, 1984).

accompanying (mis)recognitions are shown to be themselves ghostly, manifestations of absent obligations that have been covered over by the inventive fictiveness of settler colonialism.

6.6 Conclusion: Learning to Live with Spirit(s)

Settler-colonialism is a hegemonic system that has about it a certain resilience against its dismantling. Part of this resilience comes from the ways in which it is a structure that touches so many of the sedimentary layers of the dialogical history of our place in the world as Canadians. The profound misrecognitions that initiated and have perpetuated the system are constant threats to our ability to recognize rightly what to do and how to go on. There is no easy way of getting around this, but hopefully by becoming attentive to the hauntological traces left in the present absences of our inherited sediments, we can enact concrete practices of resistance and stage liberatory dismantlings of these oppressive powers such that a real recognition becomes possible. In the Canadian context, I have argued that this will require something like Land-Back, though I recognize that in saying that, there will also come a lot of negotiations about how to do this and that whatever resolution is reached in the near-term may well yet again come up for later critique. This is to be expected and welcomed, as the Elders always say, "It took seven generations for us to get here, and it will take seven generations for us to undo it."[145]

In the next chapter I turn to the case of Ste. Madeleine, a Métis community from near my family farm that was destroyed in the early twentieth century to make a community pasture for the settler community. This place can be conceptualized as what Michel Foucault calls a heterotopia, a type of realized utopia that offers a mirror back to the surrounding society and exposing its pathologies.[146] By analysing various archival and historical rememberings of St. Madeleine, I am able to apply the methodological insights developed in this chapter concerning the structure of settler memory and the 'traces' of absent presences in hauntology. By doing so I am extending my

[145] I have received this teaching from various sources, especially the Rev. Dr. Murray Still and the Rev. Vince Solomon.
[146] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces."

argument with my own great-grandfather and attempting to receive the 'gift of sight' that he prayed for so long ago. Thus, I hope to demonstrate how the theological description of place that I have been giving throughout this thesis is not only a description of what place *is*, but also how an attentiveness to everything that makes up place brings with it various ethical responsibilities. For the story that I have been telling, the construction of place as a theological concept in the West must be able to grapple with the haunted wounds of settler colonialism and provide some sort of critical mechanism for resisting this structure – especially if it is to be anything more than yet another contribution to that structure and its hostility to place and the bodies therein.

Chapter 7: The Place of Ste. Madeleine

7.1 Introduction

I grew up on a farm at SE 36-18-28 in the Rural Municipality of Ellice (now, Ellice-Archie), in western Manitoba. My great-great-grandfather homesteaded on the north-west quarter of that same section in 1883 at a time when settlers could acquire title to a quarter section of land for a $10 processing fee. For perspective, according to Farm Credit Canada, that same quarter-section (160 acres) is worth anywhere from five hundred thousand to one million dollars today.[1] Farming that land has not been easy, and each generation of Turnbulls have struggled in the farming of that land over the last 140 years. When I go 'home' I can see the traces of that struggle in the old foundations of former barns, the graves that mark my ancestors resting spots, the old light-pole in the back bush where grandpa used to winter cattle, and so-on. The agrarian writer, Wendell Berry captures my experience well in his novel *Jayber Crow*, as the protagonist Jayber observes, "I saw that, for me, this country would always be populated with presences and absences, presences of absences, the living and the dead. The world as it is would always be a reminder of the world that is to come."[2] The world I grew up in, the world of Grip-Fast Farms, of Ellice Municipality, of the Binscarth area, was a world where the presences of my settler ancestors and their neighbours was always felt, even in their absence, through the traces of their lives and the stories and place names we continued to rehearse.

But there was another absence whose presence I was not aware of, nor, were my ancestors, if my great-grandfather's poem "Gifts" is any indication:

> Give me the western prairies before the white man came
> Rolling into the sunset, God's immense domain.

[1] "2022 FCC Farmland Values Report," 2022, 13-14.
[2] Wendell Berry, *Jayber Crow* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2001), 148–49.

For Grandpa Norman, before the White man came, this land was God's, and crucially, *nobody else's*. The idea that this land had been inhabited by anybody before us was simply not part of our consciousness. Yet the reality is, that place, the place of my people, is populated with Indigenous presences and absences that are not so easily erased, even through practices of settler-unknowing.

In the case of my own family though, the problem is compounded by the prominent role my family had in the founding of Binscarth. Binscarth Manitoba, is named after Binscarth House on Orkney in Scotland. Matthew Scarth, my great-great-great-grandfather was an investor in the Scottish-Ontario and Manitoba Land Company, the company that acquired the land that established Binscarth Colony Farm (later the village of Binscarth) in western Manitoba.[3] As an investor, Matthew Scarth was able to have a say in naming this new 'place' and named it for his former home on Orkney. According to the *Binscarth Memories* history book, "Binscarth" comes from a Viking etymology meaning 'the farm in the cleft of the hills.'[4] Cecelia Scarth, a daughter of Matthew, would go on to marry my great-great-grandfather, James Norman Robert Turnbull, who homesteaded our place in 1883. The history of this homesteading has been preserved in the writings of their son, Norman, which positions him within the broader phenomenon that Molly Rozum has identified whereby first-generation settlers create a sense of place through their literary efforts.[5] According to Norman's entry in *Binscarth Memories*, the Turnbull and Widdicombe homesteads, on the NW and SE quarters of 36-18-28 respectively, were important staging grounds for the broader settlement of the area.[6] Norman lists a number of family names he recalls from the time, names that persist in the area to this day, but revealingly he does not list any Indigenous family names even though they were very much part of the fabric of the community and continue to be so to this day.[7] My own sense of place

[3] Binscarth History Committee, *Binscarth Memories* (Binscarth, MB: Binscarth History Committee, 1984), 234.
[4] Binscarth History Committee, 234.
[5] Rozum, *Grasslands Grown*, 219ff.
[6] Binscarth History Committee, *Binscarth Memories*, 253.
[7] Binscarth History Committee, *Binscarth Memories*, 252.

has been shaped by this careful retelling of family lore that places my family and my ancestors as central figures in the creation and meaning of that place, even though doing so leaves little room for the contribution of the many other people and voices that make up this place.

In this chapter I am turning the various critical theories I have been developing in this thesis back onto my own 'place' by contrasting the way my family is implicated in the construction of a settler sense of place that contains a persistent silence regarding the Indigenous peoples and places that make up that place. In particular, I focus on the story of Ste Madeleine, a local Métis community that was destroyed through the collaboration of local and provincial governments, a provincial government in which my great-grandfather was a cabinet minister. By contrasting settler and Indigenous accounts of Ste Madeleine, I provide a provisional performance of a reparative discourse of place that seeks to overcome settler misrecognition and leave room for a place-dialogue that is more inclusive of multiple voices.

As Vine Deloria Jr. put it in his classic text *God is Red*, "Western European peoples have never learned to consider the nature of the world discerned from a spatial point of view."[8] According to Deloria, European Christians have a weak account of sacred place, often subordinating the place to its historical significance, "these places are appreciated primarily for their historical significance and do not provide the sense of permanency and rootedness that the Indian sacred places represent."[9] Canadian theologians have taken this charge seriously, and accepting that Christianity is lacking in its conception of place, have engaged in admirable works of comparative theology in order to learn from Indigenous thinking about place. Incidentally, such a response also conforms to the call by the TRC to imagine a future where "when Christian theology not only

[8] Vine Deloria Jr, *God Is Red,* 30th Anniversary ed. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003), 62.
[9] Deloria, 66.

respects Aboriginal thought, but learns from it."[10] A prime example of this is Allen Jorgenson's recent book *Indigenous and Christian Perspectives in Dialogue: Kairotic Place and Borders*.[11] Jorgenson approaches the question through a method of comparative theology, guided by Vine Deloria and George E. Tinker's critiques of Euro-Christianity.[12] This work is important, for as I have argued in an earlier chapter, too often Indigenous self-expression has been ignored or denied.

However, there is a potential pitfall to wholly ceding place to Indigenous theologies, as Arjun Appadurai has noted, a too strong connection between place and the 'native' carries with it a subtle assumption of "incarceration, of imprisonment or confinement."[13] In the anthropological construction of the 'native' as being associated with 'place' what is often subtly denied is the possibility of motion in the metropolitan sense of free exchange across complex national structures.[14] But of course, Indigenous sovereignty has been worked out along complex territorial, legal, and trade networks that involved the many nations of this continent in complex movements of exchange from time immemorial. Therefore, with apologies to Vine Deloria, it may be more fruitful going forward in thinking place together to leave behind the binary antagonism that leaves Indigeneity hopelessly place-bound in Appadurai's sense and the European settler hopelessly placeless. For as Allan Greer has pointed out, "'Sense of place' was not a monopoly of aboriginal peoples in North America. Settlers too experienced the land at a local level, on the ground and as a bodily experience; they too invested topographical features with cultural meaning and historical memory."[15] The situation we are faced with today is not an Indigenous sense of place against a

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[10] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, ed., *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconcilitaion: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, vol. 6, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 110.
[11] Jorgenson, *Indigenous and Christian Perspectives in Dialogue*.
[12] Jorgenson, 1–2; Deloria, *God Is Red*; Vine Deloria Jr., and Daniel R. Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America by Vine Deloria Jr.* (Fulcrum Publishing, 2014); George E. Tinker, *Missionary Conquest*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); George E. Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2008).
[13] Appadurai, "Putting Hierarchy in Its Place," 37.
[14] Appadurai, 37.
[15] Allan Greer, *Property and Dispossession: Natives, Empires and Land in Early Modern North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 298; Vine Deloria Jr, *God Is Red,* (Golden, Colo: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003).

settler placelessness, rather there are competing 'senses of place' that, from within the frame of settler colonialism, are pitted against each other – the goal needs to be a way to have an expansive and pluralistic account of these places that are not subjected to the zero-sum logics of colonialism.[16]

I began this chapter by reflecting on the absent presences that populated the places of my childhood. Greer's reminder that both settlers and aboriginal peoples have an ongoing 'sense of place' in this country is important, because as the Rev. Vince Solomon, the Urban Indigenous Ministries coordinator in my diocese, pointed out to me in conversation once, settlers too can have 'blood memory' through their ongoing inhabitation and care for a particular place. The agrarian vision of Wendell Berry is a well-known example of this kind of settler care for place, yet for both Berry and myself, there remains some presences and absences that our place-conversations have no words for.[17] It is not that settlers have no 'sense of place', it is rather that settler place-making is haunted by the absences and presences of the Indigenous 'others' that have limited or no room in the settled imagination of place.

But how does one learn to identify the traces of an alternative 'sense of place' in the place of my upbringing? In this chapter I turn to the story of Ste. Madeleine as a study in how Indigenous and Settler memory relate in the practiced remembering and forgetting of a place just a few miles from my home. Ste. Madeleine was a Métis settlement that was destroyed between 1938 and 1942 and replaced by a community pasture. First, I recount a version of the history Ste. Madeleine, then I look at competing Métis narratives about this community and how that relates to the struggle for Métis identity. Next, I look at some examples of Settler memory of Ste. Madeleine and draw on the methodology I developed in the previous chapter by combining the critical lens of hauntology to the vexed debate around issues of 'recognition' in Canadian political philosophy. I find that the settler

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[16] For instance, see Lauren Beck, *Canada's Place Names and How to Change Them* (Concordia University Press, 2022).
[17] For the role of conversation in Berry's account of place, see Wendell Berry, *A Place on Earth*, (Washington, D.C: Counterpoint, 2001), 26; Berry, *The Art of Loading Brush*, 2019, vii.

sense of place is compromised by and exposes its own anxieties in the practices of unknowing that settlers engage in to avoid being haunted by the 'threat' of Indigenous presence. Yet as much as these two place-worlds are characterized by a history of conflict and settler violence, I want to affirm what Métis elder, Norman Fleury reminds us, that

> …when we talk about those days, sometimes it sounds like there was always bad relations between the white farmers and our people. But that isn't right. There are lots of stories about them helping one another. When the first white farmers came, they sometimes needed help, and the Métis knew how to survive and showed them things. And then they would help each other, like neighbours do. Sure, there were problems, but it wasn't all bad.[18]

Of course, affirming it 'wasn't all bad' should not be read as an attempt to let my settler relations off the hook for the very real colonial violence perpetrated. Instead, it is an attempt to articulate the more painful reality which is that our families in this place are connected through friendship, marriage, business, betrayal, exclusion, and indifference. The difficulty of engaging in the dialogue of a real place is that it has to deal with the, at times contradictory, narratives and conversations that contain and are contained by the place to which we all belong.

7.2 A Ste. Madeleine Narrative

The area around Ste. Madeleine was first settled by Métis people in the 1870s, who had lived and operated in and around the nearby Fort Ellice as employees of the Hudson Bay Company. In 1902, Fr. Decorby, a Roman Catholic priest who served the community around the old Fort Ellice often went riding and hunting with the Métis, established a Catholic mission in the area named Ste Madeleine, and this is the name that this place has come to be remembered by today.[19] Fr. Decorby, while a settler himself was remembered fondly as being a good rider and a good priest – a true friend of the community.[20] Ste. Madeleine is a site a few miles west of Binscarth, a village in south-western Manitoba, in an area on top of the west side of the Assiniboine valley often referred to as Pumpkin

[18] Herriot, *Towards a Prairie Atonement*, 46–47.
[19] Herriot, 39.
[20] Herriot, 39.

Plains by the locals. In contrast to the poor agricultural conditions of the land at Pumpkin Plains, the farmland between Binscarth and the eastern edge of the valley is referred to affectionately as the 'Banana Belt' by the locals in reference to its great fertility. Ste. Madeleine existed and, in some senses, thrived for over 50 years, being home to twenty large families.[21] Devout Catholics, the residents of Ste. Madeleine fundraised to build their own church, as the trip to St. Lazare was a bit too long to make regularly. After the time of Fr. Decorby, Roman Catholic priests were not always as willing to come up from St. Lazare to perform services, yet the residents of Ste. Madeleine nevertheless raised extra money to help cover the traveling costs to ensure that they still came up occasionally.[22]

In the 1930s, the Canadian Prairies were hit hard, both from the effects of the global depression and with a severe drought that became known as the "Dustbowl" or the "Dirty Thirties." As part of the response to this particular drought and the more regular cyclic droughts that effect the Canadian Praries, the Canadian government decided to act. In 1935, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) was created by the federal government, and work began to take control of the adverse climactic conditions of the Canadian prairies by technological means.[23] Dug-outs were dug to provide irrigation and water for livestock, education on drought-resistant agriculture was offered, shelter belt programs were developed and hedgerows began to be planted across fields to combat erosion.[24] Some lands were selected as being simply too fragile for cropping and the decision was made to convert them to community pastures, reasoning that managed grazing would reduce soil erosion on the most marginal of lands. There was much success with this policy in

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[21] Lawrence J. Barkwell, "20th Century Métis Displacement and Road Allowance Communities in Manitoba" (Winnipeg, MB: Louis Riel Institute, November 8, 2016), 7–8.
[22] Ken Zeilig and Victoria Zeilig, *Ste. Madeleine, Community without a Town: Métis Elders in Interview* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Pemmican Publications, 1987), 31–33.
[23] Gregory P. Marchildon, "The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration: Climate Crisis and Federal–Provincial Relations during the Great Depression," *The Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (June 6, 2009): 275–301.
[24] For a full overview of the various measures taken see, James H. Gray, *Men Against the Desert.*, (Western Producer Prairie Books, 1967).

Saskatchewan and by 1937 it was decided that this would be implemented in Manitoba as well. The Pumpkin Plains/Ste. Madeleine region, south-west of Binscarth, was selected as a prime candidate for this pasture program.

However, as a local paper at the time notes, the establishment of these pastures was not without cost, including the removal of ten to twenty families who lived in the townships designated for conversion to pastureland.[25] Between 1938 and 1940, Ste. Madeleine was dismantled. Those who were paid up on their taxes were remunerated with cash payouts or scrip for land elsewhere in the municipality, but given the economic conditions of the time, few qualified for the payouts and were simply forced to leave.[26] The houses were burnt, dogs were shot, the church was dismantled, and most of the community either had to disperse or ended up settling in two 'road-allowance settlements' known colloquially as Selby Town and Fouillard's Corner.[27] The destruction of the church was especially contentious, as the priest had sold it to somebody to be turned into a piggery and had made off with the bell. Members of the community confronted him about this, because they had thrown socials and fundraised to buy that bell and build that building, but the priest said the bell had already been sold and used at the St. Lazare church.[28] Ste. Madeleine was no more, but the settler residents of the RM of Ellice now had access to cheap pastureland.

7.3 Public Memory

7.3.I The Métis

Who are the Métis? This is a vexed political question that does not have a simple answer, so in lieu of a definition, I will offer an overview of this debate. The Métis are one of the three categories of Aboriginal peoples mentioned in Section 35 of the Charter. The word 'Métis' comes

[25] "Community Pasture Scheme Entails Large Amount of Work," *Russell Banner*, September 8, 1938.
[26] Lawrence J Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, *The Metis Homeland: Its Settlements and Communities*, 2016, 189.
[27] As Métis were driven from their historic homelands in the Red River Valley and beyond, many formed various *ad hoc* communities wherever they could, see Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, *The Metis Homeland*; Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 66–67.
[28] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, *The Metis Homeland*, 189.

from the French 'métissage' to describe the process of miscegenation or those of 'mixed race.' The Métis emerged as the result of European settlers, explorers, and fur traders intermarrying with Indigenous women. A wide range of local and often derogatory names have been applied to these people including but not limited to, "Bois-Brûlés… Chicots, Gens libres… Métis, Michifs, Sang-mêlés… Voyageurs, Bungees, Country Borns, Cree Halfbreeds, French Halfbreeds, French Indians, Half-Castes, Halfbreeds, Pedlars, Pork Eaters, Rupertslanders and Scots."[29] Accordingly, some scholars like Denis Gagnon, argue that the term Métis has long been an umbrella term to identify anybody who is a product of this particular racial miscegenation in Canada, arguing that there are Métis communities across Canada.[30] Most controversially are those who argue for the existence of the so-called Eastern Metis, or Acadian Metis, categories that have found some acceptance by organisations like the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP, formerly Native Council of Canada or NCC) which has long tried to represent all Aboriginal peoples, regardless of their 'recognized' status, as a stance against the politics of erasure and disenrollment that the Crown has long taken against Indigenous peoples. Canada's entire history has been dominated by assimilationist tactics toward Indigenous peoples that have been used to deny Indigenous identity to many people as part of the maintenance of settler colonialism. In this context, it is understandable that there would be advocates of a maximal definition of Métis identity as a form of resistance.

There are others, however, that are troubled by this strategy. Darryl Leroux argues that some of the so-called Eastern Métis are engaged in what he calls 'race-shifting'. Leroux insists that there are many alleged 'Métis' groups that are based on, at best, fictive ties to a distant 17th century Aboriginal ancestor and have, for centuries, lived and benefited as White settlers, only making a

[29] Denis Gagnon, "The 'Other' Métis," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed January 18, 2022, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-other-metis.
[30] Michel Bouchard et al., *Eastern Métis: Chronicling and Reclaiming a Denied Past* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021).

claim to Indigenous identity in a cynical ploy to gain further harvesting rights.[31] Adam Gaudry points out that to centre the definition on miscegenation is to reduce the Métis to an historical process. This "implies that Métis could — and did — emerge anywhere. Therefore, our creation as a people is due not to particular times, places, historical circumstances and human decisions, but as a kind of historical process that sprang to life wherever there was a mixing of Indigenous and European blood."[32] Against this definition of Métis identity as a process of miscegenation, Gaudry argues that the Métis are a distinct people, a nation, determined not by racist blood quanta, but by an act of political self-determination in the creation of a distinct national identity in the experience of the Red River settlement and the broader network of Métis people who lived and worked across the Canadian North-West prior to Confederation.

This latter approach is the one preferred by the Métis National Council (MNC), and particularly by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF). The MMF in particular, centres the Red River experience at the heart of what it means to be Métis, "Despite our many names such as *Bois Brûlés*; *flower beadwork people*; *Otipemisiwak*; *Louis Riel's people*, and, as we call ourselves in our own language - *Michif* - from the beginning we have always been the Red River Métis. The Red River Métis is the origin, root, and core of the Métis Nation. The Red River Métis is the Métis Nation."[33] The MMF narrative, which is told in more detail in Trevor Herriot's *Towards a Prairie Atonement*,[34] ties the coming together of a distinctly political nation of Métis peoples with the victory of Cuthbert Grant at the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816. The subsequent political self-organization of this nation and its resistance to Canadian imperialism in the Red River Resistance of 1869 under Louis Riel are

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[31] Darryl Leroux, "Self-Made Métis," Maisonneuve, November 1, 2018, http://maisonneuve.org/article/2018/11/1/self-made-metis/; Leroux, *Distorted Descent*.
[32] Adam Gaudry, "Métis Are a People, Not a Historical Process," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* accessed January 18, 2022, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/metis-are-a-people-not-a-historical-process.
[33] "The Red River Métis - La Nouvelle Nation," Manitoba Métis Federation, accessed January 18, 2022, https://www.mmf.mb.ca/the-red-river-metis-la-nouvelle-nation.
[34] Herriot, *Towards a Prairie Atonement*, 58-59.

determinative for what it means to be Métis. This definition is not racial, it is political, and helpfully reframes questions of Indigenous identity away from the settler category of Race to insist that being Indigenous is a set of political and kinship relations to people and place that cannot be reduced to blood quanta. Said differently, the Métis are not a race, mixed or otherwise, they are a nation.

The contested nature of Métis identity is in part, a product of the history of them as a people. After the Red River Resistance, the Reign of Terror did much to disrupt and disperse the Red River Métis as a meaningful political movement in the Northwest. After their defeat at the Battle of Batoche, the Métis were shattered as a political entity and many of the remaining communities lived in poverty or were assimilated into settler society in various ways. According to oral tradition, Louis Riel had prophesied that "My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back."[35] Sure enough, coinciding with the Red Power movement of the late 1960s and early 70s, the Métis began politically organizing once more, forming the MMF in 1967 and winning recognition in the Constitution Act 1982 as one of the three distinct Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. Yet the inclusion of the Métis in section 35 of the Charter in this way had been controversial and strongly opposed on many fronts. A paper circulated in government circles during the constitutional conferences entitled "The Case Against Metis Aboriginal Rights" that pointed to the contested definition and the possibility of radically 'increasing' the number of Aboriginal peoples in Canada by their inclusion that could prove destabilizing to settler-imagined Canada.[36] In response, by the 1990s the "idea of a separate, historically definable group of Métis, one that was limited to people descended from Red River Métis…was beginning to take hold."[37] Obviously, this did much to strengthen the claims of

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[35] "Louis Riel Quotes," Manitoba Métis Federation, accessed January 21, 2022, https://www.mmf.mb.ca/louis-riel-quotes.
[36] Thomas Flanagan, "The Case against Metis Aboriginal Rights," *Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques* 9, no. 3 (1983): 314–25.
[37] Joe Sawchuk, "Negotiating an Identity: Métis Political Organizations, the Canadian Government, and Competing Concepts of Aboriginality," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2001): 78.

organizations like MMF and MNC in their attempt to act as governments in state-to-state negotiations with the Crown, but it also further antagonized 'Métis' groups that had been part of NCC and had been part of the coalition that had won constitutional recognition for their people. In *Powley* a test for Métis identity was established that has had some success in providing clarity on who 'counts', but both sides in this debate emphasize different parts of the three criteria to bolster their case.[38] The three criteria for recognizing Métis identity according to *Powley* require that a person self-identify as Métis, can prove an ancestral connection to a historic Métis community, and is accepted by a present Métis community.[39] While this would seemingly bolster the case for the Red River Métis narrative, it has also provided a pathway for so-called Eastern and Acadian Métis to create organizations to register those who identify as Métis and claim that they are connected to an historic community.

While it remains to be seen how this debate over Métis identity will resolve, it should be said that the MMF has made meaningful strides in winning substantial rights for Red River Métis people. In 2013, they won a massive land claim case against the Government of Canada for its failure to deliver on the lands promised in the Manitoba Act of 1870, this subsequently led to the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding on Reconciliation between Canada and Manitoba Metis Federation" in 2016 which provides a framework for ongoing reconciliation between at least one definition of the Métis nation, and the Crown.[40] For the purposes of this thesis, when I discuss the Métis, I am referring to the nation of people that emerged in the North West, primarily connected to Red River. I acknowledge that the category of Métis continues to be contested within the

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[38] Sawchuk, 87.
[39] Beverley McLachlin et al., R. v. Powley, No. [2003] 2 SCR 207 (Supreme Court of Canada September 19, 2003).
[40] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Memorandum of Understanding on Reconciliation between Canada and Manitoba Metis Federation," backgrounders, May 27, 2016, https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-northern-affairs/news/2016/05/memorandum-of-understanding-on-reconciliation-between-canada-and-manitoba-metis-federation.html.

community, but as Ste Madeleine is firmly within the history and geography of the Red River Métis, it is this tradition that I am engaging for the remainder of this chapter.

7.3.II Memory in Métis texts

7.3.II.i MMF Publications

Over the years, MMF publications have made a notable shift in their recognition of the importance of Ste. Madeleine. In 1974, the Manitoba Métis Federation Press published a booklet entitled *Six Metis Communities* (note the anglicized spelling) which featured St. Lazare, which was the municipal seat of the RM of Ellice. St. Lazare is a francophone community just across the river from where the old Fort Ellice used to be. Métis have indeed lived in this community since the time when the Fort was operational, but it is notable that the profile of St. Lazare makes no mention of Ste. Madeleine, as there were kinship ties between the families of St. Lazare and Ste. Madeleine, and indeed some of the former inhabitants of Ste. Madeleine moved to St. Lazare after the community's destruction. Yet, at the time of this publication, about thirty-five years from the end of that community, there is no mention made in this account.

Pemmican Publications, an arms-length affiliate of MMF established in 1980, produced *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* (again, note the anglicized spelling), in 1983. It includes several genealogical tables including Table 6 which focuses on the relocation of the Métis. The Métis left Red River for several reasons, some were driven out by the Reign of Terror, some left to claim land that their scrip entitled them to, and others left to join kin already settled elsewhere.[41] Ste Madeleine began sometime in the early 1880s and continued to grow throughout the rest of the 19th century, yet these records only mention families who relocated to the locales of Ft. Ellice, Binscarth, and Spy Hill, all of which surround Ste Madeleine, yet Ste Madeleine itself is not mentioned. Furthermore, Ft. Ellice ceased operations in 1892, but the genealogical table suggests that people were still making

[41] Lawrence Barkwell, "The Reign of Terror Against the Métis of Red River" (Winnipeg, MB: Louis Riel Institute, 2021).

the move to the region around 1901.[42] Presumably people are settling in the region of Ft. Ellice, so St. Lazare and Ste. Madeleine may be falling under the umbrella of Ft. Ellice, yet no explicit mention of Ste. Madeleine is made in these records. The probable explanation for this silence is that prior to the founding of the Catholic Mission of Ste. Madeleine in 1902, the community that lived in that region was not identified by that name, so even though these genealogical tables are published in the 1980s, the records they are reflecting are all from before the establishment of the mission and thus would not list Ste. Madeleine as the destination of the Red River émigrés.

As I have hinted in the survey of sources above, for much of the 20th century, Ste. Madeleine just does not seem to have much of a textual presence in English language Métis-written materials. This changes radically with the 1987 Pemmican Publications publishing of *Ste. Madeleine a Community Without a Town: Metis Elders in Interview*. Ken and Victoria Zeilig interview several Métis elders including Joe Venne, Agnes Boucher, Louis Pelletier, Harry Pelletier, and Lena Fleury and also include an interview with Lazare Fouillard, the son of Ben Fouillard, one of the municipal officers who was primarily responsible for the dismantling of Ste. Madeleine. Throughout the interviews a rich and nuanced picture of what life was like at Ste. Madeleine. Times were often tough, as the land was always poor and most folks had to find work away from the community during the summer, but there was dancing and community and a feeling that this is where the Métis could truly feel at home. Diane Payment has criticized the book for some leading questions,[43] and this is especially evident in the repeated questioning about alcohol and alcoholism in the community. Generally, there is denial that alcohol was a problem in the community; Agnes Boucher notes that folks were too poor to buy it or even buy the sugar to brew their own.[44] However, Joe Venne points out that this changed in

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[42] D. N. Sprague and R. P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation: The Development and Dispersal of the Red River Settlement, 1820-1900* (Winnipeg, MB: Pemmican Publications, 1983), Table 6.
[43] "Manitoba History: Review: Ste. Madeleine: Community Without a Town; Métis Elders in Interview," accessed February 10, 2022, http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/17/stemadeleine.shtml.
[44] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 98.

1928 when the beer parlours opened in Binscarth. Before that, liquor was hard to get, one had to send away for it, but after that, alcoholism became a big problem, though he stresses that this was not unique to Ste. Madeleine, but a general problem that accompanied the arrival of the parlours.[45]

The details about the end of the community are also surprisingly nuanced. The popular narrative about Ste. Madeleine today is that the government came in, burnt everything to the ground, shot the dogs, and drove them off.[46] Both Joe Venne and Lena Fleury speak about the dogs being shot, and it is hard to tell exactly what the timeline is, but there seems to have been a bounty on stray dogs that somebody from St. Lazare was collecting on, and this got mixed in with the ending of the community as something that happened concurrently.[47] The accounts of the elders are in some tension here, Joe Venne suggested that the dogs had been left behind by the community, which is why they were shot as strays,[48] whereas Lena Fleury suggests that this was done in front of the community.[49] Whatever the case, when asked why the dogs were shot, Lena responded, "I don't know why. Just to make the people mad, I suppose." Clearly, the shooting of the dogs was experienced as added insult to injury, the gratuity of the violence in the face of the destruction of the town has made this element of the story a persistent element in many retellings of the story of Ste. Madeleine.

Regarding the ending of the community, the varied perspectives are useful in providing a nuanced narrative of the end of the community which helps contextualize the various memory-narratives that circulate today. Simply put, one's experience of the end of the community was in some respects a function of one's relative power and wealth within the community. Municipal officers began to tell people they had to leave in 1937, and allegedly there were assurances that

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[45] Zeilig and Zeilig, 42.
[46] See for example, *Ste. Madeleine Metis Days 2019*, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f83OhZxKSDE.
[47] There are regular references to stray dog problems in the council minutes of the time, see "Ellice Municipality Council Minutes" (Minutes, St. Lazare, MB, 1940 1935), RM of Ellice-Archie Municipal Archive.
[48] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 69.
[49] Zeilig and Zeilig, 172–73.

people would be moved wherever they wanted and that things were going to get better, but this did not always materialize. According to Louis Pelletier, different folks got paid out different amounts, he received $25, Joe Venne received $150, others more, some less.[50] Pelletier notes that John Selby actually built some new houses for folks on his own in Selby Town, but nothing was provided to those who ended up at Fouillard's corner.[51] Some members of the community, such as the Boucher family, owned their land and were paid up on their taxes, they operated the post office and store in the community and did not leave until around 1941.[52] Agnes Boucher's perception of events perhaps represents the view from the privileged end of the spectrum when she says, "I remember there were a lot of families who could have done better but since they couldn't prop themselves up, it seems that they were always let down in a lot of ways…Some were just squatters and didn't seem to care. That's the way I looked at it anyways."[53] Lena's husband, Joseph, contributed a brief write-up on the "St. Madeleine District" to the local history book, *Binscarth Memories*, that states the end of the community as something completely absent of the trauma indicated by many of the other families' narratives. "In 1938 the government started to make the community pastures. By 1939 a lot of people moved to other places."[54] Joe Venne recalls that Selby, Fouillard and others came in 1937, explained that the pasture was coming, offered to pay relocation, so he took the offer and went to Birtle by 1939. When asked if the municipal officials were mean about it, he responded "No, no. Oh, no, no, no. They weren't."[55] He noted that, while they were not all that sympathetic about what the place meant to the community, they were not mean about it, but many people refused to leave, and presumably the experiences of forced removal are representative of those who did not take the early offers to leave.

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[50] Zeilig and Zeilig, 115.
[51] Zeilig and Zeilig, 115.
[52] Zeilig and Zeilig, 88.
[53] Zeilig and Zeilig, 172–73.
[54] Binscarth History Committee, *Binscarth Memories*, 53.
[55] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 63.

One final curious detail to mention about the end of the community is the role of Dr. Gilbart. Gilbart was the local physician, and he is remembered fondly by the elders who were interviewed by Zeilig and Zeilig. Yet, as I will discuss below regarding the settler records, it was Dr. Gilbart's reports about the poor conditions of the community of Ste. Madeleine that provoked the Ellice Council to get higher levels of government involved in 1937-38 to remove the community.

To conclude the MMF publications on Ste. Madeleine, a 2016 volume, published by the Louis Riel Institute, profiles existing and former Métis communities across the "Métis Homeland."[56] It includes blurbs on Ste. Madeleine as well as Selby Town and Fouillard's corner, none of which exist today. This most recent Ste. Madeleine narrative suggests that the community began some time in the 1870s, and had a Catholic mission established in 1902. It is portrayed as being a refuge first for the Métis fleeing Colonel Wolseley's Expeditionary force in the '70s, and later as a refuge for Métis returning from the Northwest Resistance in the late '80s.[57] The end of the community is narrated succinctly, in 1935, the PFRA came into existence and soon designated the region as pastureland, the inhabitants were to be compensated if paid up on taxes, but due to the depression, few were (189).[58] Therefore, "the Métis were again forced to find a new home and they lost everything they had; their homes were burned, their dogs were shot, their church was to be dismantled and the logs sold to build a piggery."[59] In this telling, the destruction of Ste. Madeleine is just another instance of a generalized colonial violence against the Métis nation that went back to the time of Riel; a further humiliation to a refugee people.

7.3.II.ii Michif Account

In 2013, Olivia Sammons published "Leaving Ste. Madeleine: A Michif Account" which is a record of a conversation in Michif, the language of the Métis Nation, between Victoria Genaille and

[56] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, *The Metis Homeland*, 3.
[57] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, 189.
[58] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, 189.
[59] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, 189.

Verna De Montigny. Genaille was a toddler when Ste. Madeleine was destroyed, but De Montigny was raised at Fouillard's Corner and so only remembers her dad's stories. Genaille mentions that they were chased out in 1939, even though her father tried to fight to keep their home. De Montigny jumps in asking, "but when you guys left to go working, and when you came home, was your house burned down?"[60] Genaille clarifies, that the houses were burned after they had vacated them. But De Montigny insists that the story she received from her dad was that "When they went out working…When he came back in the fall, his house was already all burned down."[61] She also emphasizes that the dogs were shot (158). What is interesting here is that De Montigny's story is closer to the story that ends up being taken up by the Manitoba Museum, which I turn to in the next section. De Montigny is relying on her father's version of events, whereas Genaille is presumably recalling her own memories. As I noted above in regarding the Elder testimony from the Zeilig and Zeilig study, this could simply point to the reality that different families left at different times, and so experienced the destruction of the community in different ways.

7.3.II.iii Manitoba Museum

On May 24, 2019, the Manitoba Museum opened a new permanent exhibition entitled "Ni KishKishin, I Remember Ste. Madeleine."[62] In the fall of 2021, I visited the exhibition with my wife, Rachel, to experience the way one of Manitoba's official cultural institutions had determined that we should think about this part of our province's history. This exhibit is an interesting artifact in that it is the product of a Settler institution, the Manitoba Museum, but with significant endorsement and support from MMF.[63] It represents an 'official' history of Ste. Madeleine from both settler and

[60] Olivia N. Sammons, "Leaving Ste Madeleine: A Michif Account," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 33, no. 2 (2013): 157.
[61] Sammons, 157.
[62] "Métis Story Finally Being Told, in Michif, at the Manitoba Museum," accessed January 6, 2022, https://manitobamuseum.ca/metis-story-finally-being-told-in-michif-at-the-manitoba-museum/.
[63] "MMF Joins Manitoba Museum in Unveiling Exhibit to Commemorate the Tragic Story of the Métis Citizens of Ste. Madeleine," *Feathers of Hope* (blog), May 27, 2019, https://www.feathersofhope.ca/mmf-joins-manitoba-museum-in-unveiling-exhibit-to-commemorate-the-tragic-story-of-the-metis-citizens-of-ste-madeleine/.

Indigenous perspectives, yet it notably departs from other influential sources on a number of particulars and focuses primarily on the destruction and after-life of the community with no mention of its origins and very little reference to the material history of life at Ste. Madeleine. What is stressed in this official remembering is the moment of destruction, which in this telling, came all at once in 1939 with the mass burning of buildings and shooting of dogs. One of the major blocks of text reads:

> Ste. Madeleine Destroyed: In 1939, the Métis community of Ste. Madeleine, south of Binscarth, Manitoba, was destroyed to make way for the Spy Hill Ellice Community Pasture. This Pasture is one of several established by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) to rehabilitate marginal farmlands. At Ste. Madeleine, thousands of hectares of legally registered homesteads belonging to 35 Métis families were seized. The people were away gathering Seneca root when their houses, school, and store were burnt to the ground. Ste. Madeleine, a tight-knit community of 300, was gone and the people were not fairly compensated.[64]

Notice some of the key emphases here, 1) it was destroyed to make way for the community pasture, 2) the land was legally registered to Métis families and illegally seized, 3) the community was all out gathering Seneca root, 4) the population was 300 at the time of destruction, which was 1939, and 5) the people were not fairly compensated. However, in the Zeilig and Zeilig account, the population is estimated to be 250 people at its highest and less by the end.[65] In the De Montigny-Genaille conversation, the community was not away picking Seneca root, some had already left, and others were off seeking employment away from the community for the whole season. The issue of compensation is made into a concrete value judgment in the museum exhibit – it was not fair – yet in the Zeilig and Zeilig study, there seems to have been a range of compensatory actions taken, though overwhelmingly it was still felt that these were not adequate.

There are quotes and profiles included from five Métis elders with connections to Ste. Madeleine included in this exhibit, including Verna De Montigny, George Fleury, Caroline Vermette,

[64] See Appendix II for pictures of the exhibit.
[65] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, xi.

Roger Smith and Georgina Liberty. Verna De Montigny's quote focused on remembering the culture of Ste. Madeleine,[66] but has elsewhere shared the story of the community's destruction as her father had passed it on to her: "In the fall of 1939, when my father came home from working in Saskatchewan, he found his house burned to the ground. His dog was shot in front of him. He couldn't do anything, he was defenseless. They had weapons."[67] Caroline Vermette another elder, is quoted in the exhibition, "During the winter there was lots of dancing. We would go from one house one night on to another house the following night. We had no liquor but we enjoyed ourselves. Then the PFRA came in and chased everything off. They burnt the houses. We had nothing! We had twelve children but only four lived." While details differ, there are certain elements of these memories that stand out, specifically the burnt houses. Interestingly, what is missing from the Museum's summary is mention of dogs being shot, though this is a repeated theme in many tellings of Ste. Madeleine's end and is referenced in this exhibit by way of a quote from George Fleury: "I was a boy, riding on the wagon. We came over the rise and saw our house burned to the ground. All our houses still smoking. Just a chimney here and a burnt bedstead there. They even shot all the dogs. We just kept travelling. We had nowhere to stay and nowhere to go."[68]

The exhibition's focus on the destruction of Ste. Madeleine is paired with a focus on the ongoing existence of the cemetery at that site. There is a white cross with a Red River sash draped over it (fig. 2) depicting the style of grave markers used in the cemetery as Ste. Madeleine (fig. 3). In the background, a sign is depicted that reads "No entry allowed without written permission." Yet, as Roger Smith's quote suggests, this does not actually bar people from visiting the site, "I come here

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[66] "The people stuck together and you had to behave. We were all answerable to the elders of the community. And in those days we all spoke Michif. I keep it going because I believe it holds our culture. *Ni kishkishin* Ste. Madeleine, I remember Ste. Madeleine!"

[67] Maria Mazzoli, "Michif Loss and Resistance in Four Metis Communities," *Zeitschrift Für Kanada-Studien* 39 (2019): 111.

[68] See Figure 6, Appendix 2.

in the graveyard where my little granddaughter lies and I feel at home again. It is because I'm with my community."[69]

Figure 2

Figure 3

The title of this exhibit is prominently printed above the display "Ni Kish Kishin I remember/Je me souviens St. Madeleine."[70] In Michif, English, and French, the idea of remembering Ste. Madeleine is invoked, but to what end? Georgina Liberty, the last of the five Métis elders represented in the exhibit gives us a clue "We are fighting to get the land back. We will not give up. Someday soon we will come back to stay." Perhaps with the convergence in 2013 of the above-mentioned land-settlement agreement between MMF and the Crown and the devolution of PFRA pastures to Provincial control, there is hope that the lands of Ste. Madeleine be returned to the Métis Nation thus opening up a future for a community that, at least in this exhibition, has heretofore been remembered wholly in terms of death and destruction.

[69] See Figure 6, Appendix 2.
[70] See Figure 9, Appendix 2.

While the inclusion of this as a permanent exhibit in the Manitoba Museum is an admirable achievement, I was struck by jarring contrast that this exhibit made with some of the pre-existing elements of the Museum. Upon exiting the gallery room that the "Remembering Ste. Madeleine" exhibit is in, guests are confronted by a display of the various community organizations that helped build Manitoba. Prominently displayed among the various club flags is a flag for the Orange Order.[71] I was struck by the ironic juxtaposition of these two exhibits, in the first, Ste Madeleine's destruction is lamented, in the second, we celebrate the contributions of a white supremacist organization that was instrumental in providing support for Wolseley's expeditionary force against the Red River Resistance and the subsequent Reign of Terror that dispersed the Métis from the Red River settlement.

7.3.II.iv Ste. Madeleine Documentaries, 1991

Since the publishing of the Zeilig and Zeilig book, much more effort has been put into making the story of Ste. Madeleine well known amongst the public. In 1990, the Binscarth Local of the Manitoba Métis Federation began organizing an annual festival called "Ste. Madeleine Commemoration Days" (today, shortened to "Ste. Madeleine Days"),[72] and in 1991 released a documentary that had been produced at the inaugural event.[73] This documentary is divided into three segments, 1) "Ste Madeleine… They Never Did Forget," 2) "We made Our Own Fun," and 3) "I was Born Here… In Ste. Madeleine." The video begins with Yvon Dumont (President of MMF at the time) talking about hearing about Ste Madeleine for the first time about five years previously through discussions with elders from the community and noted that this history had not been recorded anywhere yet.[74] He goes on to situate Ste Madeleine within the broader history of the Métis

[71] See Figure 8, Appendix 2.
[72] "Sainte Madeleine Commemoration Days," *Russell Banner*, July 17, 1990.
[73] *Ste Madeleine* (Birtle, MB: Samtronics, 1991), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3a8WnaalBJ4.
[74] *Ste Madeleine*, 0:30-1:00.

Nation, particularly centering the nation-building work of Louis Riel and the Red River Métis.[75] The emphasis of the documentary is that while the story of Ste Madeleine is not well known, the community has kept its memory alive, its traditions alive, and this is a microcosm of the history Métis resilience. The second part of the documentary features various examples and stories of the fun parts of Métis culture, from canning jam, to dancing, to leg-wrestling and horse-shoe competitions.[76]

The final part of the documentary, "I was Born Here… In Ste Madeleine" features a Catholic Mass, wherein the Archbishop of Winnipeg, Adam Exner, commends the Métis people for preserving and remembering such a strong cultural heritage saying "Today you are strengthening your culture. Culture is like the roots of a tree. A tree that has no roots, that has no culture, is a weak tree."[77] This emphasis on 'culture' is a common refrain in Roman Catholic episcopal discourse regarding Indigenous peoples. *Gaudium et Spes* emphasized the goodness of human cultures as something to be celebrated as a way for Roman Catholicism to engage the reality of human pluralism.[78] This celebration of deeply rooted culture has also been recently taken up by Pope Francis in his apology for Residential Schools.[79] This celebration of culture, and apologies for the ways the Church have impinged upon 'culture' is good insofar as it goes, but it also serves as a way of avoiding admitting complicity in the more material harms of colonialism. The community of Ste Madeleine was constituted in part by the construction of a Catholic mission. Yet at the end of this community's existence, instead of standing in solidarity with the Métis against the government, the

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[75] In 1993, Dumont would go on to become the first Métis Lt. Governor of Manitoba, which coincided with a broad national re-appraisal of Louis Riel and his role in Canadian history. For an account of these shifting perspectives, see Kevin Bruyneel, "Exiled, Executed, Exalted: Louis Riel, 'Homo Sacer' and the Production of Canadian Sovereignty," *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 43, no. 3 (2010): 711–32.
[76] *Ste Madeleine*, 21:00.
[77] *Ste Madeleine*, 14:00.
[78] "Gaudium et Spes," accessed August 25, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.
[79] "Full Text of Pope Francis's Apology for Residential Schools," *The Globe and Mail*, April 1, 2022, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-pope-francis-apology-residential-schools-full-text/.

local cleric sold off parts of the material of the church for the benefit of St. Lazare parish.[80] This tension is not addressed in this documentary, and Abp. Exner explicitly uses a celebration of Métis cultural resilience as a way of avoiding addressing the material problem of the town that in his words, 'disappeared.'[81]

But Ste Madeleine did not just disappear, it was destroyed, and this documentary represents a profound example of the way that Indigenous, Christian, and Settler discourses about a place are not cleanly divisible, but run through each other, co-constitute each other, and make the discourse of a place incredibly difficult to bear. For at this moment in the early '90s, this Métis community is finding its voice politically. While there are heart-rending stories about the loss of this community in the documentary, there is also an emphasis on remembering Ste Madeleine as it was, a good place full of fun, dancing, and the stories of the people. There is room in this documentary for a significant role to be played by the Church, as ambiguous as that role might be. The focus is on remembering and using that memory as a source of strength for the future of the community.

It is helpful to contrast this documentary from 1991 with a more recent documentary from 2019, "No Longer Welcome."[82] Similar to the '91 documentary, this one is set during Ste Madeleine Days, but it begins with a child's voice telling the story of the destruction of the community. Throughout the rest of the film, descendants of Ste Madeleine's inhabitants talk about the community, but whereas the focus of the earlier film was a mix of grief for the loss of the community with an arcadian remembrance of the good times that were had here, this documentary is overwhelmingly focused on the injustice of the destruction. Where, in the first documentary the MMF President, Yvon Dumont, admits to a relative ignorance about the story of Ste Madeleine, in

[80] Barkwell and Louis Riel Institute, *The Metis Homeland*, 189.
[81] *Ste Madeleine*, 14:20.
[82] *No Longer Welcome - Ste. Madeleine Short Doc (Finale)*, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aldGoNgTl3g.

the 2019 film, MMF President, David Chartrand, is very forthright with his condemnation of the injustice that had been undertaken and the need for material redress.[83]

7.3.II.v Competing Narratives, Competing Utopias

The 2019 documentary coincides with the opening of the Manitoba Museum exhibit and features many of the same voices and stories. The earlier documentary is much more similar in tone to the interviews found in the Zeilig and Zeilig book. It is interesting to consider briefly the differences between these discourses about Ste Madeleine happening internal to the community between the late-80s and early nineties, compared to the contemporary discourse today. The shifting and developing narrative of the Ste Madeleine experience in Métis sources can be explained in a variety of ways. As I have noted throughout, different people experienced the end of the community differently depending on their relative positionality in the community at the time. Some accounts in existence come from survivors, others come from their children. Over the period of time represented in the publications surveyed, from 1974-2016, the relative power of the MMF has grown considerably, and there has been a resurgence of connection with Métis identity that creates clearer narratives than earlier sources provided, this can be seen in the shift in spelling from Metis to Métis in MMF documents, and in the way, for instance, Genaille and De Montigny are able to clearly articulate a distinct Métis identity in Michif, whereas some of the elders in the Zeilig and Zeilig study are unclear exactly what Métis means beyond some vague idea about 'halfbreeds.'[84] The trauma of the ending of the community undoubtedly produced fragmentary memories of events, but as time has gone on, the retelling of these fragments has created a more or less consistent contemporary narrative about the end of Ste Madeleine.

The reshaping of a fragmentary record into a unitary one could be of political use, as I suggested regarding MMF's work towards reclaiming traditional lands. It may be useful to consider

[83] *No Longer Welcome - Ste. Madeleine Short Doc (Finale)*, 14:40.
[84] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 40.

the early records through a lens of what Svetlana Boym calls 'reflective nostalgia' which is a sort of posture toward the past that acknowledges its imperfections yet wishes to learn from and recover what is good about that time. The later records, particularly insofar as they coalesce into a coherent narrative, might be better captured by Boym's category of 'restorative nostalgia' a kind of nostalgia that seeks above all else to restore a lost past.[85] Another way of thinking about the distinction is to consider how Ste Madeleine is operating as an Indigenous resistance-utopia. In the earlier records, Ste Madeleine is remembered in idyllic terms; as a happy place of refuge in the midst of the broader turbulent history of the Métis people at that time. In the more recent discourse, the ruins of Ste Madeleine stand as a heterotopic sign of condemnation against the injustice and violence of settler-colonial hegemony, and act as a political rallying symbol for imagining a sovereign Métis future.

The idea of 'heterotopia' has been used in myriad ways in recent scholarship, but Foucault defined it as a type of realized utopia that holds up a mirror of critique against the spatial order of the society that produces it.[86] Foucault thought that all societies created heterotopias and provided a list of examples and characteristics of them – in the case of Ste Madeleine, the fact that what primarily remains visible of the site is the cemetery already marks it out as a potential example of a heterotopia.[87] More significantly, however, is the way the community continues to use the space, ritually gathering annually to celebrate their culture and keep the memory of the community alive at Ste Madeleine days. This performance of the place of Ste Madeleine creates a kind of realized ideal-place, that, although it does not persist in the regular way that a lived-in place persists, nevertheless takes on a powerful political role for the community that can be deployed for diverse purposes. Unlike a pure utopia, Ste Madeleine is very much a place you can go to, but its existence, and more importantly, its significance within Métis society, is as much a product of the discourses I have just

[85] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, Illustrated edition (New York: Basic Books, 2002).
[86] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.
[87] Foucault, 26; Peter Johnson, "The Geographies of Heterotopia," *Geography Compass* 7, no. 11 (2013): 799.

reviewed as it is a product of the on-the-ground dialogical communicative triangulations that I described in chapter four. Learning to recognize all the dialogues of this place, Ste Madeleine, means learning to navigate it as a heterotopia, a place that is at once realized through the ongoing performance of its people, even as settler-colonial spatialities have sought to forestall its performance.

7.3.III Settler Memory

Settler knowledge of Ste Madeleine continues to be sparse. Increasingly people are aware of this place, but in attempts to interview residents of the area I was repeatedly rebuffed and told to interview local Métis elders, as they would know more. So, in lieu of interviews with local Settler residents, I was able to access the archives of the local newspapers the *Russell Banner* and the *Birtle Eye Witness*, as well as minutes from the RM of Ellice council minutes dating from 1936-1940 as a way of analyzing how or if there was any conversation of Ste Madeleine or Métis people in these sources.

7.3.III.i Newspapers

The earliest mention of Ste Madeleine in the local papers appears in 1987 with a review of Zeilig and Zeilig's book in the *Birtle Eye Witness* (Dec. 16, 1987). Remarkably, this book review made the first page, presumably due to its connection to local residents, Joe Venne of Birtle as well as Agnes Boucher and Lena Fleury of Binscarth. Reference is made to Ste Madeleine infrequently in the same paper up to the present day. In the *Russell Banner,* the first reference to Ste Madeleine comes about due to the activities of the Binscarth Local branch of MMF in its effort to establish the first "Sainte Madeleine Commemoration days" in 1990 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the destruction of the community. As I discussed in the previous section, the end of the community was a process that spanned several years, yet here in 1990, in the act of commemoration, a more definitive 'end' date is being inscribed by implication. Since 1990, the Ste Madeleine Days have been a regular annual event and have become an important festival in the life of the Métis Nation.

While the local newspapers are completely silent about the existence of Ste Madeleine prior to 1987, there is intense interest in the establishment of the community pastures from the period 1937-1941. The only oblique reference to Ste Madeleine in all of this reporting is a comment in the *Banner* from Sept. 8, 1938, about the large amount of work required to create community pastures. The article is speaking generally about what is required in setting up these pastures, but emphasizing the costly undertaking this involves notes, "The tremendous amount of work entailed in a project of this magnitude can best be visualized when it is realized that within every pasture area it becomes necessary to move or rehabilitate anywhere from ten to twenty families, and they have to be assisted in moving and in other ways to become re-established."[88] Relocating people to establish the community pastures was a regular part of the process, and as was mentioned in the Zeilig and Zeilig interviews, some efforts and monies were made available for this purpose in the case of Ste Madeleine, yet clearly it was not sufficient to adequately re-establish the residents.

The *Birtle Eye-Witness* commented frequently on the community pastures as a development of ongoing interest through the late thirties and into the early forties. One article from November 15, 1938 noted that the transformation of large parts of Ellice municipality into community pasture would solve some of the dire financial pressures the municipality was facing due to its geography.[89] The municipality is criss-crossed by the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle river valleys which required council to build more bridges and also diminished the amount of available land that was available for farming and therefore taxation. The debts of the municipality due to the depression, these higher infrastructure costs, and low taxation base were a serious problem that the extra revenues from the community pasture could help to ameliorate. As I discuss below in my analysis of the RM of Ellice council minutes, financial limitations were definitely front of mind for the council in relation to their

[88] "Community Pasture Scheme Entails Large Amount of Work."
[89] "Ellice Tax Sale," *The Eye-Witness*, November 15, 1938.

response to the situation at Ste Madeleine. It is unclear exactly how much financial considerations were part of the decision to dissolve the community and transform it to pasture, but it seems to have at least played a role.

The *Eye-Witness* reports that the new community pastures were a matter of some fascination for the locals, with reports that locals would go to observe the pastures on social outings as well as make the effort to attend meetings that reported on the business of the pastures.[90] Indeed, my own family had an annual tradition, dating back to at least the time of my grandparents, of going picnicking in the spring at Beaver Creek which was in the Ellice-Archie pasture, a community pasture established right around the same time further south of the community pasture that displaced Ste Madeleine.

The *Eye Witness* also reported on all manner of minutiae related to the development of the pastures at Ste Madeleine and other PFRA pastures in the area, from the number of miles of fencing built to the type of pasture grass planted – crested wheatgrass – which was, of course, not a native variety.[91] It was also noted that local residents of the municipality would be allowed to harvest firewood from the pasture lands.[92] This harvesting right was something that, at least in the lands around Ste Madeleine, had once been a chief source of income for the Métis residents, but was now being made part of the settler commons.

The frequent and detailed reporting on the development of these pastures shows an acute awareness in the broader community as to what was going on there, which only makes the profound silence regarding the displacement of the Métis residents of Ste Madeleine that much starker. There is a utopian edge to this reporting. The newspaper reports especially focus on the measurements of the land, the fences, the materials – bringing this 'native' grassland into the surveyed spatiality of

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[90] "Foxwarren, Man.," *The Eye-Witness*, June 18, 1940.
[91] "The Eye-Witness," *The Eye-Witness*, June 27, 1939, 16; "The Eye-Witness," *The Eye-Witness*, November 26, 1940, 15.
[92] "Foxwarren News," *The Eye-Witness*, December 24, 1940.

settler order. Where the 'native' grassland is deficient, it is supplemented by the introduction of new grasses like crested wheat grass. There is a sense that the creation of these pastures solves a problem, but this is articulated as a problem of taxation and prosperity, and there is only the faintest trace of the violent displacement of lives, body, and property that this new enclosure replaces.

7.3.III.ii Municipal Minutes

I was able to obtain copies of the RM of Ellice Council meeting minutes from the years 1935-1940 from the RM branch office in St. Lazare of the amalgamated municipality of Ellice-Archie. These minutes provide insight, however partial and cleaned up, of the conversations of municipal leaders in the lead up and implementation of the dissolution of Ste Madeleine. Minutes are by nature brief summaries of actual motions made that allow Council to keep track of business items, yet there are a number of times where correspondence is referred to regarding Ste Madeleine that no longer seems to exist. In the minutes from 1937, multiple letters are referred to in the minutes with indication that copies had been created, yet the municipal archivist informed me that these are no longer in the record. On January 8th, 1938, Councilors Wilson and Little made a motion,

> That the letter from (sic) Hon. I.B. Griffiths dated Sept 22nd 1937 (presumably by mistake) re: our problem with half-breeds, be filed, and that the Sec. Treas. Be instructed to reply according to the tone and nature of discussion at our council meeting, also that the reeve be requested to renew requests for some definite permanent easement of our very serious half breed problem.[93]

If these letters were filed, they no longer exist in the municipal archives and if the provincial archives have them, they are protected by PHIA and may or may not ever become available.[94] There is nothing necessarily nefarious about the failure to retain this correspondence, but it is interesting that evidence of the "tone and nature" of the discussion is no longer available, all that remains are their relatively sanitized motions recorded in the minutes.

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[93] "Ellice Municipality Council Minutes."

[94] Legislative Unit Health Manitoba, "The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) | Province of Manitoba," Province of Manitoba - Health, accessed January 17, 2024, //www.gov.mb.ca/health/phia/index.html.

For all their limitations, these minutes do help contextualize a few of the economic and social realities that some of the other sources I have analyzed hint at. The minutes speak of purchasing feed outside of the municipality to make available to farmers locally. Clearly, the dire economic and drought conditions were having an effect on the ability of settlers to feed their herds, so the creation of large community pastures would help rectify this situation.[95] Additionally, in those days welfare was handled at the municipal level, and there are discussions of very specific approvals of expenditures on relief.[96] for example a June 8th motion from 1935 was carried that gave a Mrs. Ambrose Fisher $5 in groceries for one month.[97] In 1936, Council received a communication from Dr. Gilbart, the local physician that the elders in the Zeilig and Zeilig study spoke so highly of, that comments on the condition of one A. Belhumeur. This record does not specify, but there were Belhumeurs at Ste Madeleine, and presumably this is one of the cases cited in the Wilson-Little motion of June 9th of the following year (1937).

> That whereas the half breeds settled in the Ste Madeleine District in Ellice Municipality are a constant source of expense to the Municipality and whereas they are a constant source of disease (infection and otherwise) to other parts of the Municipality and whereas owing to the fact that the wood resources are now depleted and no fur bearing animals to be trapped and whereas our Medical health officer reports that practically all the dwellings occupied will be condemned and must be destroyed, now therefore we the Council of the Rural Municipality of Ellice do earnestly request the Government of the Province of Manitoba to take immediate steps to have all these people removed and placed in a locality where there is a fair chance to earn their own living by fishing, trapping lumbering or saw mill work, said change being in the interest of the people themselves and of the other residents of the Municipality of Ellice.

This motion has a lot to unpack. First, notice the first two emphases on expense and disease. As I have noted, the municipality was in financial difficulty at this time for a variety of reasons, and a later motion actually requests that the Province assume some of their debts, as the finances had truly

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[95] "Ellice Municipality Council Minutes," April 15, 1935.
[96] John R. Graham, "Lessons For Today: Canadian Municipalities and Unemployment Relief During the 1930s Great Depression," *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, no. 35 (1995): 1–18.
[97] Fisher is a common Métis name in the area.

become untenable. However, it is important to contrast the willingness of council to go to the extraordinary measure of purchasing feed for settler farmers while simultaneously declaring that the welfare costs of Ste Madeleine were too expensive. Second, note the mention of disease. It may be reasonable to conclude that disease in the community was a real problem. Joe Venne talks about family members taking sick and Dr. Gilbart coming to care for them, as well as the traditional medicines that community members used.[98] Tuberculosis and the Spanish flu were both devastating to that community, and the record in the minutes regarding Gilbart's correspondence to Council seems to bear this out. However, while disease may have been an issue, it is important to contextualize this claim against other settler strategies for Métis displacement. In the 1950s, the media reports in Winnipeg focused on claims of 'disease', 'squalor', 'filth', etc. in their reports on the living conditions in Rooster Town, a Métis settlement on the edge of the city that is today covered by the suburb of Fort Rouge.[99] The validity of these reports is ambiguous, but the locutionary force of this rhetoric has repeatedly been borne out in the mobilization of government resources to displace Indigenous peoples in favour of settler welfare.[100]

The last half of the above motion seems to be concerned with the economic welfare of the residents of Ste Madeleine, but the last line, in an ironic twist, betrays the fact that the economic interests that are of concern are those of the settler inhabitants of the RM of Ellice. The motion notes that there are no more fur-bearing animals for trapping and the bush that had been harvested for firewood was depleted, so the Métis should be moved somewhere else where these things are in greater abundance. The implication being, the Métis should be moved somewhere further away from settled agrarian society. While it is plausible that these resources were somewhat depleted, one of the

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[98] Zeilig and Zeilig, *Ste Madeleine, Community without a Town*, 55ff.
[99] Evelyn J. Peters et al., *Rooster Town: The History of an Urban Métis Community, 1901-1961* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 2018), 124.
[100] Notions of hygiene and public health were a broadly deployed colonial tool in the British empire, see A. Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (Springer, 2003).

first things the municipality decided, as reported in the *Eye Witness*, after the transformation of these lands into community pasture, is that they would remain open to settlers to harvest firewood. With this reversal in the flow of these resources from Métis to Settler benefit, the surface level benevolence of the motion takes on a cynical edge.

The final noteworthy feature of these minutes has to do with the issue of dogs. There are regular references to licensing dogs, collecting taxes on dog owners, and occasionally payments being made to farmers for livestock that have been killed by dogs. It seems that there is a relatively widespread feral dog problem in the municipality, which probably contextualizes the discussion in Zeilig & Zeilig about the bounty that was out on dogs. While the killing of dogs is remembered in Métis sources as a particularly gratuitous act of violent humiliation against their community, it is remembered in settler sources as part of a larger municipal wide issue with the management of feral dogs. This does not remove the force of the traumatic memories of dogs being killed in conjunction with the dissolution of Métis homes, but it does perhaps suggest that it was not a specific act of racial hatred, but rather the slow violence of the assertion of power and control by the policies of the settler state.

7.4 Conclusion: A Haunted Utopia

Ste Madeleine is a place that appears and disappears through the competing discourses of its members and neighbours. It showcases well several of the elements of place I have discussed throughout this thesis. For starters, it can be though of as a series of overlapping heterotopias, which for Foucault, are a form of realized utopia. In the Métis sources I surveyed, Ste Madeleine is a place of refuge, fun, culture, and identity that is remembered and celebrated as a source of strength for the ongoing descendants of that community. Alternately, it is also a place of grief and death, a heterotopic instantiation of the hegemony of settler colonialism in its genocidal removal of the Métis nation from the Canadian prairies. Foucault explains that a heterotopia has "the curious property of

being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect."[101] The Métis discourse concerning Ste Madeleine performs these relations in several ways. First, by situating Ste Madeleine within the broader geography of the Red River Métis, for it is a community that grows out of the Métis involvement in the fur trade and subsequently existed as a refuge for Métis families fleeing persecution in the Red River settlement. Second, by so situating itself historically, it has emerged in contemporary Métis discourse as a key signifier of the various historic injustices perpetrated against the Métis nation and is a particularly poignant rallying symbol to resolve the outstanding Métis land claims. The celebration of Ste Madeleine Days annually in that place performs a source for strengthening cultural memory and pride, and in more recent years, provides a space for the exercise of Métis sovereignty as the government of the Red River Métis works to re-establish itself as a sovereign nation within Canada. Finally, paradoxically the main 'living' element of Ste Madeleine that persists as a physical place is the cemetery. Community members continue to bury and visit their dead there, maintaining the black-tipped, white crosses that have become iconic symbols of the community itself. Amidst the dead of Ste Madeleine, the living descendants invert the death-dealing displacement of settler colonialism and insist on recognition as ongoing members of that place. The prominent place that the story of the destruction of the community now plays in the discourse of Ste Madeleine actually subverts that act of destruction, showing the incompleteness and inadequacy of settler hegemony to wholly reinvent a place through violence and silence.

But it is not just for the Métis that Ste Madeleine operates as a heterotopia. Within the 'cut' of the gleaming fencelines, the region of Ste Madeleine is transformed into the utopian space of a community pasture. For in both the Ellice Council minutes and in the local papers, the creation of the community pasture that overlays Ste Madeleine is seen as a solution to existential threats to

[101] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.

Settler prosperity. It solves a budgetary and public health problem for the municipality, it solves a feed deficit problem for livestock, and provides work and opportunity for community members during a time of economic depression in the construction, maintenance, and management of the pasture. It is a triumph of settler-colonial spatiality and technological mastery over a 'wild' and 'unproductive' landscape that is at last transformed into a contributing resource for the community. But this effusive celebration of the pastures in the press nevertheless leaves one small trace that this was not achieved without some significant cost – the removal of ten to twenty families. The orderly establishing of a pasture of native grasses (supplemented with imported grasses to 'repair' where the native ones were 'lacking') establishes a kind of realized settler utopia, but even though the settler discourse keeps silence on the human cost, the displaced residents of Ste Madeleine persisted in the region in the road-allowance communities of Selby Town and Fouillards Corner for decades. What's more, the persistence of the cemetery right in the middle of the pasture haunts and challenges the extent to which the ideal spatiality of the pasture has been achieved.

Ste Madeleine might be thought of as a haunted set of overlapping utopias. It represents a potential future that was prematurely brought to an end by the world-ending event of settler conquest, yet the longing for that unrealized future has sustained the community and is increasingly becoming a pivotal symbol in a sort of 'return of history' wherein the aborted future of Ste Madeleine may yet be realized again. It also represents an exercise of settler memory – the official record created by the archives of both the local council and the local papers says very little about the details of the removal of the residents of Ste Madeleine. While the council minutes are more forthright about their role in the end of the community, the most damning documentation has been either lost or removed from the archive, again ensuring that the official record only maintains a substantially subdued version of events. By minimizing, or otherwise not remembering, their role in the dissolution of Ste Madeleine, the settler community is preserved in a kind of innocence of

ignorance, and it is within this place of 'innocence' that my great-grandfather could write poetry and histories of the area that completely exclude any Indigenous presence.

I have repeatedly invoked Michel de Certeau's quip that "Haunted places are the only ones people can live in,"[102] throughout this thesis. But this observation on de Certeau's part grows out of a discussion of the way memories tie us to a place. It is these memories that act like haunting spirits that can be invoked by rememberers, or not.[103] These spirits or memories can speak or remain silent, or can remain silent and yet hint at something that is "just between you and me."[104] As a result, for de Certeau "Places are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state, symbolizations encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body."[105] Ste Madeleine, it seems, is one of these fragmentary, haunted places. We have seen the various 'inward-turning histories' of the various parts of the broader community and how these have resulted in a kind of enigmatic status for the place of Ste Madeleine. The challenge now is for the people who live in the place of my home community to learn to recognize these different fragments.

Ste Madeleine and the surrounding settler communities have a form of life worked out amongst themselves now, but a full reconciliation is yet to be negotiated. It is likely that this reconciliation will result in some sort of 'Land-Back' gesture, but even significant material forms of redress like this must be accompanied by a dialogue of mutual recognition wherein settler and Indigenous peoples come to understand how the fragmentary and overlapping utopian discourses that have structured the place of Ste Madeleine for 75 years now continue to exclude and separate the various bodies of the community from each other. Reconciliation may come, but it will take

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[102] Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 108.
[103] Certeau, 108.
[104] Certeau, 108.
[105] Certeau, 108.

risking a sort of radical hospitality on all fronts, for it involves that intimate joining whereby the various 'pains and pleasures of the body' are able to be mutually expressed as all bodies learn to go-on together in place. For settlers, and in particular, for the settler Christians who are my kin in that area, such a process must begin in confession, repentance, and a willingness to be led by the Spirit into all truth, that we might have the humility and vulnerability to be taught about those who we have systematically refused to see, hear, or be with.

Chapter 8: The Place of Haunting and Holding

8.1 Overview

At Pentecost, the people of God were caught up in the Holy Spirit and joined together in the intimacy of breath and heart-languages. But this experience raised for those early Christians some important questions; "how can this be?" (Acts 2:7), and "what can this mean?" (Acts 2:12). In this thesis, I have sought to provide a theological account of place that can give some provisional answers to these existential questions. For, as I have argued, place is a discursive structure of intelligibility or apprehension in the Holy Spirit that enables creatures to go-on in the world. Place is the structure of intelligibility that allows for the coordinating questions of 'how' and 'what,' among many others, to be asked, and for answers to be recognized amidst the networks of communicative bodies that make up this structure.

Yet precisely because place names a seat of communicative relations that must be navigated through the ongoing work of interpretation and recognition, we are confronted with the ever-present risk of failure. This failure exists at multiple levels. First, there is the everyday possibility of miscommunicating or misunderstanding – this is a normal part of conversation and yet, as Donald Davidson reminds us, we are often able to continue going on through subtle corrections, intentional renegotiations, or the ordinary processing of malapropism.[1] Next, there is the possibility that despite our 'going on' in the dialogues of place, we often make mistakes that are neither caught nor corrected, but instead become, in the language of Merleau-Ponty, sedimented into our very perceptions of the place.[2] In chapter two, I explored how the heterological processing of the so-called New World in the early colonial period created profound misrecognitions that sedimented in hierarchies of oppression.

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[1] Davidson, "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs."
[2] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 2012.

These hierarchies of oppression constituted settler colonialism, and in chapters five and six I discussed how settler colonialism not only sediments in historic misrecognitions, but actually actively obscures our ability to recognize these mistakes. Through what Kevin Bruyneel calls 'settler memory',[3] I pointed out that inventive settlers like my own great-grandfather create historical records that become the official 'memory' of what a place is and means that simply do not include the genocidal violence that underwrites settler colonialism. Thus, the dialogue of place can be seen to break down both through both volitional acts of commission and omission. Truly the Prayer Book is correct in having us repent for having "left undone those things which we ought to have done, And… have done those things which we ought not to have done."[4]

But there is a final level of failure present in a theological articulation of place, and that is on the level of theological language as such. For as I argued in chapter one, many contemporary theologies of place continue to have a 'colonial hole' right at their heart that undermines their profound recognition that place is a seat of relations between creatures and God. It is all well and good to affirm the relationality of place, but if the role that the church and theology played in the rupturing of these relationships is left unacknowledged, then the affirmation itself ends up performing the work of upholding exclusively white-settler accounts of place. And if it is just the white settler who determines the place, then what has been created is not a place at all, but a no-place, a utopian inversion of the invitation to real relationality, to real intimacy, that the Spirit woos us all into in her role as Lord and Giver of Life.

The theological account of place I have given in this thesis argues that place is dialogical, it is the product of all the conversations of the communicative bodies that inhabit that place; past,

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[3] Bruyneel, *Settler Memory*.

[4] Anglican Church of Canada and Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: According to the Use of the Anglican Church of Canada : Together with the Psalter as It Is Appointed to Be Said or Sung in Churches, and the Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.*, 2010, 4–5.

present, and future. In this way, place is Pentecostal, for it is the Spirit that draws forth speech through the life-giving *pneuma* and it is the Spirit at work in the normal processes of human recognition that allows for those voices to be heard and received. The Spirit incorporates all bodies into the mystical body of Jesus, and in so doing, not only draws forth a response from the bodies our sinfulness and ignorance have misrecognized, silenced and destroyed, but empowers us to receive that response. Pentecost is the paradigmatic image of place because it is a divine drawing forth and drawing together in intimate union all the voices of creation to be a fitting an adequate response to the call of God.

Crucially, however, Pentecost as the paradigmatic theological image of place is not a recourse to utopia for several reasons. First, in contrast to the foundational violence in the originary act of circumscription by Utopos, Pentecost draws together and joins what had been previously confused at Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). But again, this is not a homogenizing joining as in the mixing of Utopos' army with the Abraxans, for instead each person present at Pentecost hears a common message, but they do so in the particularity of their own language. Intimate joining is thus achieved while difference is preserved. Here again lurks a failure of the Church, for in the Indian Residential Schools, Christian missionaries created a place where the particular Indigenous languages were 'snatched' from young children, severing a people from their place both physically and dialogically. Christian collusion with settler colonialism in the running of these schools did not just operate under an alternate or deficient theological account of place, it actively performed an anti-Pentecost. The anti-Pentecost of Christian colonial collaboration created a sense of malaise around the question of place in the past century that has been widely acknowledged. But instead of excavating and repenting of these deeply sedimented sins, some Christian theologians have contented themselves with attempting to revive a sense of place through appeals to sacraments, cathedrals, and

pilgrimages. Yet how can a sense of place be revived via an appeal to the sacred sites of Christianity when at least here in Canada, many of them rest on the bones of murdered Indigenous children?

So, instead of basing my analysis of place on questions of sacred Christian sites, I instead turned to the concrete example of the place I was raised. I did this to implicate myself and my relationships and obligations in the dialogue of a place as part of an 'aware settler' approach to theology. To do this, I used the case study of Ste Madeleine – a Métis settlement in my home municipality that had been destroyed in the 1930s to create a community pasture. By analyzing Métis and Settler sources, alongside some writings of my own great-grandfather, I was able to show how the dialogue of a place through time can create a series of competing utopias that must be recognized and reckoned with if all the voices of a place are to be heard. This work of recognition and reconciliation is necessarily ongoing, for it is always open to misrecognition and failure, but must be engaged in as part of the work of maintaining good relations with all the bodies that make up a place. I focused on ways to heal the rupture caused by settler-colonialism into this network of relationships, but my analysis was primarily anthropocentric. I hinted at various places about the broader ecological implications of this work, but a more fulsome account of how this theological model extends to non-human bodies is yet to be written.

8.2 Future Research

I hope that I have shown how entangled Euro-Christian thinking about place has been with the project of colonial modernity. However, to truly do justice to this genealogy would require far more work than the scope of a doctoral thesis allows for. There are several topics regarding this colonial entanglement that would benefit from treatment as their own discrete research projects. First, in chapter two I begin to show how place became property in early-modern thought through the work of the representative figures of Isaac Newton and John Locke. A more fulsome account of this transformation would be beneficial, starting with a detailed engagement with the debates

between Pope John XXII and the Franciscan Spiritualists, and tracing the way medieval and early-modern Christians engaged with the idea of Adamic Dominion.[5] This theological excavation would be a useful supplement to the work recently undertaken by Brenna Bhandar in *Colonial Lives of Property* where she examines how modern property law helped create and maintain the racial hierarchies within settler colonies.[6] Considering the doctrine of divine dominion in light of the colonial rhetoric of dominion would be both a helpful corrective to deficient accounts of divine power and sovereignty, and would provide a more complete historical picture of the way place was transformed into property as I have argued in this thesis.

Second, significantly more work should be done on the relationship between Ste Madeleine and the surrounding settler community. A recent book highlighting the fraught relationship between Rossburn, Manitoba, and the reserve of Waywayseecappo, *Valley of the Birdtail*, provides a good model for the shape this work might take.[7] Rossburn and Waywayseecappo are quite close to Ste Madeleine, and in fact, I went to high school with kids from all of those communities. My ongoing work as somebody committed to bringing an 'aware settler' posture to the work of theology will need to continue to grapple with the complex network of relations that exist in and around my family farm. I had originally wanted to do more direct ethnographic research in the form of focus groups, interviews, and site visits, but the realities of the Covid-19 pandemic made that impossible to do for this project, but would be worth re-engaging with in the future. Tyla Betke, a friend that I grew up with from Russell, MB, has recently engaged the community in a series of public talks about

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[5] For some preliminary work on this, see Stephen Martin, "In the Beginning All the World Was America: Creation, Eucharist, and the Colonial Reconstruction of Christianity in the 17th Century," in *Indigenous People and the Christian Faith: A New Way Forward*, ed. William H. U. Anderson and Charles Muskego (Wilmington, Del: Vernon Press, 2020), 19–38; William T. Cavanaugh, "The Fall of the Fall in Early Modern Political Theory," *Political Theology* 18, no. 6 (August 18, 2017): 475–94, https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2016.1214026.

[6] Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

[7] Andrew Stobo Sniderman and Douglas Sanderson, *Valley of the Birdtail: An Indian Reserve, a White Town, and the Road to Reconciliation* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2023).

the antagonism between Charles Boulton and his militia and the Métis of the area, so the time is ripe for further work in bringing these haunted histories to light in order to move forward in healing and reconciliation.[8]

A tension that I have yet to personally resolve about my approach in this thesis is particularly visible in the discussion of Rita Joe's poem. In this thesis, I received her poem as a prophetic word to the church, thus incorporating her words into the social-ontology of Christian theological discourse, which of course runs the risk of eliding the discrete particularity of Rita's demand to be known on her terms. This gets to the heart of the difficulty of the concept of recognition, for all recognitions are proximate and have the potential to perform a heterological processing of the other whereby the other is subsumed under the gaze of the master. This threat of misrecognition and epistemic domination seems to me to be an intractable problem of recognition. But it is also the case that I as a settler scholar have a particular responsibility to encourage other settler Christians to rightly recognize the harms of colonialism and the relationships and responsibilities we have and owe to Indigenous peoples. This is somewhat mitigated by understanding recognition as a process that unfolds within the discourse of a place and is always open to renegotiation, but that also means that miscommunication and misrecognition are just going to be perpetual problems to be grappled with.

A final further direction for new research from this project would be to extend this account of place in a more explicitly ecological direction. I think developing the ideas of 'communicative body' and 'hylosemiotics' would be especially fruitful for developing a doctrine of creation that leaves behind the anthropocentrism that has beset the tradition historically. This work would especially benefit from extended engagement with the emerging fields of critical animal studies and

[8] Terrie Welwood, "Riel and Russell: Privleges (Sic) Bestowed to Settlers Here at Great Cost to Indigenous," *Russell Banner*, March 14, 2023.

the broader environmental humanities more generally. I would especially like to consider what possibilities the emerging science of plant communication raises in developing this communicative account of place in multiple registers.

8.3 Conclusion

Anglican worship often concludes with a prayer from 2 Corinthians known as The Grace, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all, evermore. Amen."[9] This thesis has, at least in part, been an extended work of confession and repentance for the ways in which Christian theologies of place have colluded in the place-destroying violence of colonialism. My only hope for the reparative theology of place I have argued for herein, is by throwing myself on this promise of grace.

Places hold us. Not, as Aristotle thought, through the embrace of an external boundary, but by relational lines of dialogue that offer us an invitation into an intimate communion. It is here, in the extension of this invitation, that we encounter the risk, the fragility, the danger of being creatures, and the scandal of the risky love of God. For the invitation to intimate joining can be, has been, and will continue to be refused. The result of this refusing is that place, while being capable of holding us, also necessarily haunts us. We are haunted by the absence of presence and the presence of absence and the intentionally forgotten histories of violent refusal that underwrite them. But the grace of place is that it is not and cannot be achieved through our utopian efforts but is always and only a Pentecostal possibility. In and through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, every body is brought together in the grace-filled body of Jesus in an intimate dialogue that provides a fitting response to the radical love of God. In the place of recognition that is made possible for us in the Spirit of Pentecost, we discover that to be in place is to be both haunted and held.

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[9] Anglican Church of Canada and Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church*, 24.

Appendix I

Wednesday 11 January 2023
Open letter

Dear Archbishop,

Happy Epiphany! I am writing to you on behalf of the Save the Parish network following the release of the report into the relationship between Queen Anne's Bounty and the horrors of human slavery. Anyone involved in the practice of slavery, or who profited from it, is right to feel shame for that involvement and we must give thanks to God, and our forebears, that this evil has come to an end.

The announcement that the Church Commissioners are intent upon using £100 million of endowments of the Church of England for what has widely been reported as "reparations" comes at a time of deep crisis for the Church. For the first time since the Dark Ages a majority of those living in England would not call themselves Christian. The number of people attending acts of worship in Anglican churches has fallen to a level never before seen, and we face a demographic cliff edge as our congregations grow older. We are both aware that study after study has shown that direct drivers of congregational decline are the mergers of churches and the increasing number of parishes and churches placed under the care of fewer and fewer clergy.

Despite knowledge of this, diocese after diocese is embarking upon schemes to merge parishes into huge mega-parishes while reducing clergy numbers to unsustainable levels, and all for diocesan deficits of around one or two million pounds. Leicester, for want of £1.36 million, forcing its 234 parishes into 20 Minster Communities while reducing stipendiary clergy from 100 to 80. Truro is slashing its clergy by 15% for a £2 million deficit. A disastrous scheme forced together all the parishes of Wigan after which the congregation has walked. These could all be avoided by allowing money to go directly to the front line.

While many will point to the Strategic Development Fund as an attempt to fund congregational growth, as you know, this has been shown not to work. The report by Sir Robert Chote, former head of the OBR, revealed that the £176 million earmarked for SDF projects had gained only 13,000 'new witnessed disciples' after 6 years, rather than the 89,000 promised. It was desperately disappointing to realise that the Lowest Income Communities Funding, which resources stipendiary ministry in the poorest areas of the country, would not be increased in the next budget, while SDF funding would increase to £240 million.

The Church has shown that it has money when it wants, for matters that it cares about. Before the Church can find £100 million for this new project, it needs to show that it can sort its own house out and fund its frontline. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Yours sincerely,

The Rev'd Marcus Walker
Chairman, Save the Parish

Appendix II

Figure 5

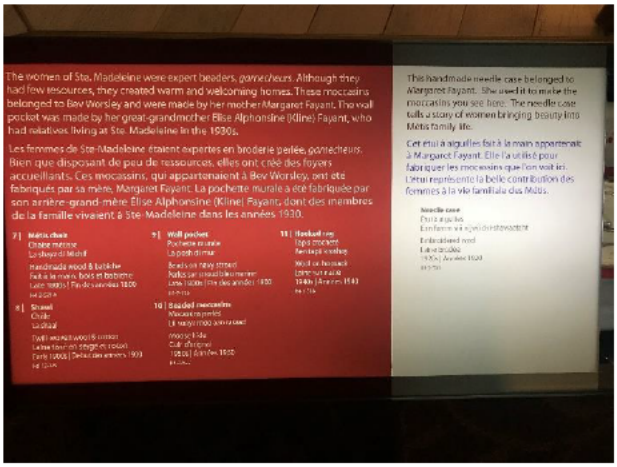

Figure 7

Figure 4

Figure 6

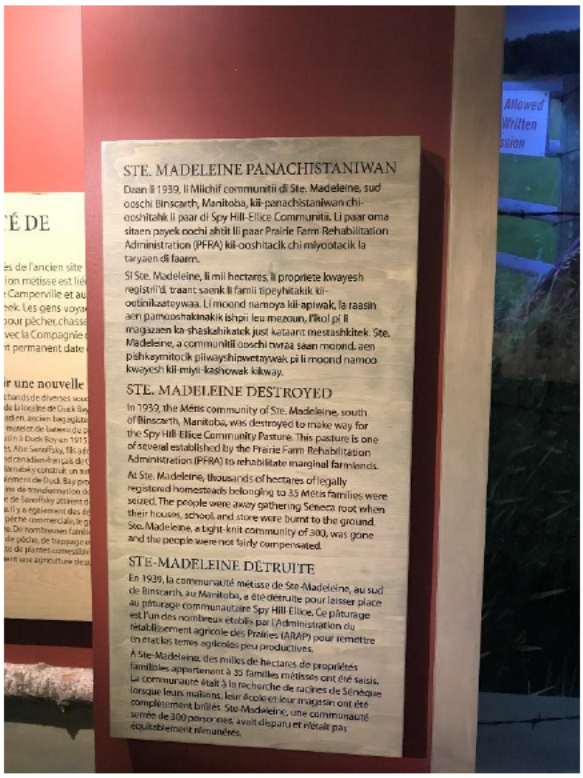

Figure 10

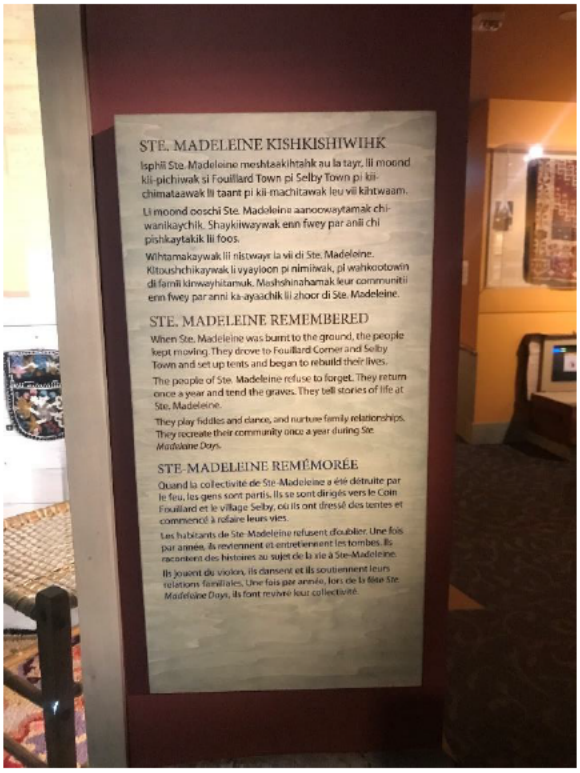

Figure 11

Figure 9

Figure 8

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