

9. Phenomenology, dwelling and places (Szalo)

The text explores the impact of human-inflicted violence on the world of place that comprises homelands, villages, communities and ancestral realms. Kinocentrism is a view of humans and nature as part of an extended ecological family that shares ancestry and origins. Kin encompasses all elements of the ecosystem, and kinocentrism is a form of total connection to all that is relative. This form of kinship involves kinship responsibility to the world around us and sets the relational terms of engagement across all species and environments. It enforces an awareness that other agents (in this case, place) and co-present have rights and require them due to their inherent nature of order. Violence is a pervasive effect and requires context and purpose. It is historically situated, embedded in acts of power. The effects of violence are measured by the prevalence of emotional suffering, physical suffering, erasure and destruction. Destruction of place is the most immediate form of violence; it targets the physicality of place and brings harm through acts. It is annihilation, bombing, large-scale resource extraction projects and desecration of place. De-signification of place seeks to remove and deny the order of place. This is achieved either by physically changing the character of the place or by denying and erasing cultural imprints. Increasingly, we encounter violence in the form of toxicity, decay and ecological death of place.

The anthropology of being-in-relation is concerned with considerations of how people relate to each other. The Yanyuwa tribe of Australia is a society shorthand for a complex and highly sophisticated relational modality that includes humans and non-humans, kin and strangers, and weaves into the life practice of expansive connectivity. Their names are part of a highly sophisticated system of connecting people to Earth, their clan, and other relatives. Names are given by older relatives and are often names shared with an older relative and often include actual place names. First names can also be derived from names given to non-human species.

There are huge plantation companies in Indonesia for growing and harvesting oil palm. There is land grabbing that causes environmental problems, deforestation is carried out, and biodiversity is suppressed due to monocultures. Land grabbing by companies prevents democratic governance over the land grabbed, violating rights of use, reducing public space and monopolizing control over land.

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