Kenarchy as a counterpolitical resource: re-imagining our understanding of land and nature.

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Abstract: This paper seeks to address what the author perceives to be a common misinterpretation of the commandment to subdue the Earth in Genesis 1, using Kenarchy as a means of critiquing sovereignty and re-imaging what a Kenarchic approach to land and the environment might look like. Beginning with an overview of the politics of sovereignty and the development of the nation state, it moves on to consider the impact of this with respect to land, its use, ownership, power, control and borders. It proposes a wider understanding of biopower to include land, its use and the displacement of peoples from their lands, particularly that which has arisen since the industrial revolution, up to modern-day industrialised agriculture. Drawing on contemporary nature writing alongside academic theological texts, this paper aims to open a wider discussion around the 'othering' of land and nature, and how this leads to the exploitation of people, land and resources. Disconnection from land and nature has broken a deep-rooted human need for nature-connectedness and encouraged the myth of state soteriology. The paper calls for humanity to rediscover our place within creation with a life-laid-down loving approach, where we work for the well-being of the natural world rather than dominance over it. Citing practical examples, the paper concludes with a challenge to reconsider the command to dominate the Earth, rather hold a new kenarchic perspective to undo the long-held emphasis on subduing nature and rediscover the Earth as a shared resource.

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth'."[1]

[1] Genesis 1:26-28, *New American Standard Bible*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2000): p. 3.

In this essay, I seek to address what I perceive to be a common misinterpretation of the commandment to subdue the Earth, using Kenarchy[2] as a means of critiquing sovereignty and re-imaging what a Kenarchic approach to land and the environment might look like. The recently devised word, kenarchy, is formed from the Greek words *keno* (to empty) and *arche* (power) and signifies the emptying out of power on behalf of others, in contrast with exercising power over others.[2] In essence, Kenarchy and its praxis are about emptying out sovereign power and replacing it with a love measured by a readiness to die for the other, even one's enemy.

I also want to investigate how our understanding of land, state and border might be re-evaluated. Cavanaugh asks:

> *"How does a provincial farm boy become persuaded to sign up to the Army and travel and kill people he knows nothing about? He must become convinced of the reality of borders and imagine himself deeply, mystically, united to a wider national community that stops abruptly at those borders."*[3]

I will endeavour to unravel that perspective and take another look at how we might understand otherness.

I also wish to interrogate how Foucault's concept of Biopower[4], the controlled insertion of human bodies into the means of production as an essential element in the development of capitalism, effectively the commodification of life itself[5], extends beyond human commodification and into how we have come to utilise land in our modern consumerism-driven society.

A number of theologians have pointed to various moments in history which indicate a failure of the Church to live up to its expected purpose. Mitchell describes the fall of the church happening earlier than most, seeing the 4th century as the foundational moment in time for the democracy we live under today (albeit still a sovereignty model) to have become the dominant model of exercising power.[6] The genealogy of sovereign power begins with Eusebius' soteriology (doctrine of salvation) with God as an offended sovereign who must be appeased with blood sacrifice.[7] This theological

[2] Mitchell, *The Fall of the Church* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2013): p. 7.
[3] Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination* (London: T&T Clark Ltd, 2002): p. 1.
[4] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* Vol. 1 (London: Penguin, 1998): pp. 140-141.
[5] Mitchell, *Church, Gospel & Empire* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2011): p. 134.
[6] *Ibid*., pp. 34-39.
[7] Mitchell, *The Fall of the Church* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2013): pp. 24-28.

view was validated by the political sovereignty of Imperial Rome, Christianised by the conversion of Constantine. The life-laid-down enemy-loving Christ of the gospels was subsumed by a doctrine of a vengeful, all-powerful and domineering God who demands payment and blood sacrifice in order to be appeased.[8]

What became the Holy Roman Empire emerged from this period. Over the following centuries, as its influence was challenged and began to crumble, the former overarching political sovereignty of the Holy Roman Empire became multiplied across the newly forming European states. The initial territorial sovereignty was agreed through the treaties of Westphalia in 1648.[9] These mirrored *Pax Romana*, aiming to keep peace with borders, military force and the rule of law. Conquest within the continent of Europe was difficult because of the treaties, but these nations expanded into the rest of the world, profiting from colonial plunder.[9] As new states developed, they additionally funded their expanding empires using the innovation of debt-based capitalism.[10] Modern politics and the Nation State was imagined as an alternative soteriology to the church, to keep peace between contentious religious factions. As Cavanaugh argues, the wars of religion were the birth pangs of the modern state, fought largely over the aggrandisement of the state over the diminishing ecclesiastical order.[11] This in turn led to a secularisation of public discourse to minimise the effect of religious disagreement and the development of personal, private religion, existing separately from one's loyalty to the state.[12] This leads Cavanaugh to conclude that the dominance of state soteriology has made it perfectly reasonable to drop cluster bombs on 'foreign' villages, yet perfectly unreasonable to dispute 'religious' matters in public.[13] Importantly for the context of this essay, he goes on to argue that instead of understanding societal participation in one another through our creation in the image of God, the state *mythos* assumes we are essentially individuals who enter into relationship with one another by contract as bearers of individual rights and only when it is in our interests to do so.[13] Milbank suggests that to develop the secular space, Adam's *dominium* needed to be redefined as power, property, active right, and sovereignty, culminating in his view that humans best exemplify the image of God when exercising absolute sovereignty and unrestricted property rights.[14] Effectively, this proposes that God's command in Genesis, Adam's *dominium*, boils down to

[8] *Ibid.,* pp. 27-28.
[9] Dasgupta, *The Demise of the Nation State* (London: The Guardian, 2018, April 5th).
[10] Mitchell*,* 2011 pp. 108-125.
[11] Cavanaugh, 2002: pp. 20-22.
[12] *Ibid.* p. 30
[13] *Ibid.* p. 44
[14] Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006): pp. 12-16.

individuals being compelled into a social contract by need to defend one's property and person from the encroachment of others. If absolute sovereignty and dominating power is the key feature of God's nature, then this assertion may perhaps be true. However if the nature of God is, in fact, one which gives away power then these ideas of societal interaction and the state constructs they are based upon need to be re-visited. A sovereignty-based view of land is obsessed with ownership and control of the space. In contrast, ancient hunter-gather societies have no concept of owning land, rather they see themselves belonging to the land and know it intimately.[15]

The rise of the nation state, based on the ideas of contractual relationships led to development and enforcement of hard land borders. It is no coincidence that advancement in map-making coincides with a period of expansionism and empire building. The problem with maps is that they are by nature two-dimensional. They can provide an outline or define a territory, but they tell you nothing about people and place, the stories and the heritage, the memories and the culture that already exist. Macfarlane describes the concept of '*isolarion*', where map-makers define areas in detail but without an overview of how places relate to one another.[16] Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the West Africa (Berlin-Congo) conference of 1884/5, where the European powers, assisted by the United States, agreed rules of engagement within and subdivision of the continent of Africa to try and avoid war in Europe. The map of Africa and borders within were drawn (sometimes literally with a ruler, hence the unusually straight borders for some nations) by the fourteen states present, without reference to or involvement of a single African person. No thought was given to prior culture, heritage, tribal lands or other pre-existing agreements amongst the indigenous populations, these were purely land-grab transactions for wealth and aggrandisement of European Empire states, under the guise of commerce, Christianity and civilisation.[17]

A century or so earlier, as nation states were busy developing new kinds of economy and the industrial revolution was gaining pace, the landscape of Britain was undergoing rapid change. Prior to the industrial revolution, change had been much slower and has sometimes been described as the 'centuries-long conversation between man and nature'.[18] The slow alteration of the natural environment in England and Wales, was begun by Neolithic peoples but accelerated by their Iron

[15] Irving, *The Forager Handbook* (London: Ebury Press, 2009) pp. 3-5.
[16] Macfarlane, *The Wild Places* (London: Granta, 2007): p. 88.
[17] Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (London: Abacus, 2006): pp. 239-255.
[18] Blunden & Turner, *Critical Countryside* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1985): p.12

Age successors, whose use of metal tools facilitated tree removal and the conversion of wooded lands for agricultural use. The Anglo-Saxons introduced improved plough technology which allowed cultivation of heavier soils in lowland valleys, leading to establishment of villages surrounded by open fields divided into arable strips and common pasture. Many of the villages in existence today are mentioned in the Domesday book.[18] Up to around 1500 CE, the process of man-made change had been slow. As industrialisation developed, cottage industries such as textiles and glass-making became factory industries and by the mid-17th century, deforestation was happening apace. Exploitation of coal reserves began and, by 1660, Britain was producing five-times more coal than the rest of the world.[19] The industrial revolution didn't happen overnight but gained pace as the economy changed from mainly agrarian to one more dependent upon manufacturing.

With this came both the demand for labour in the new industries, but also the need to industrialise the agricultural system to feed the increasing population in urban conurbations. Coupled with the shift to debt-based capitalism from the 17th Century, the disconnection between people and the natural environment began in earnest. Industrialised agriculture required fewer labourers, so more left the land seeking employment in cities. People who had for generations lived on, wholly connected to and dependent upon land suddenly found themselves in hellish urban environments, disconnected from nature. John Britton, writing in 1850, says of a journey through the Midlands:

> *"From Birmingham to Wolverhampton, a distance of thirteen miles, the country was curious and amusing though not very pleasing to eyes, ears or taste. For part of it seemed a sort of pandemonium on earth – a region of smoke and fire filling the whole area between earth and heaven amongst which certain figures of human shape – if shape they had – were seen occasionally to glide from one cauldron of curling flame to another. The eye could not descry any form of colour indicative of country, or of the hues or aspect of nature, or anything human or divine. Although nearly mid-day in summer, the sun and sky were obscure and discoloured. Something like horses, men, women and children occasionally seemed to move in the midst of the black and yellow smoke and flashes of fire, but were again lost in obscurity… The surface of the earth is covered and loaded with its own entrails, which afford employment and livelihood for thousands of the human race."*[20]

[19] *Ibid.* p. 16.
[20] Britton with Brayley, *The Beauties of England & Wales* (London: Vernor & Hood, 1801-15): Quoted by Blunden & Turner, 1985: pp. 21-22.

The disconnection from nature dehumanised people and broke the relationship they had with the natural environment. This movement of people from rural to city was exacerbated by the passing of the Inclosure Act in 1773. One of the ultimate examples of a dominant Sovereignty model enabled a very small number of people to land-grab at the expense of the poor. This one act of parliament made way for parliament to then pass several thousand similar acts, each one transferring a single piece of land out of common ownership and into the ownership of farmers and landowners,[21] each one effectively another multiplication of sovereign power. Recent estimates suggest 70 percent of Britain's land is owned by 1 percent of the population.[21] Folk who had relied upon the old system of strip farming to eek out a living, or the peasantry who had been dependent upon common land to raise the odd animal or two, found themselves dispossessed. The legalised theft of land by the enclosures acts (some 5,200 acts were passed in total between 1604 & 1914 covering approximately 6.8 million acres)[22] and subsequent displacement of large swathes of the population helped to feed the industrial machine and its consequences. Cowen powerfully describes this in his extraordinary book, Common Ground, where a character happens across a boundary stone marking the territory from the Enclosure Act for Harrogate, carved with the initial of the new landowner and the date of enclosure, 1778:

> *"With such markers they had broken up, divided and enclosed our beautiful world, turning fields, springs, trees and beasts into commodities for mankind to claim, buy, sell and kill for. Global enclosure, exploitation, industrialisation, climate change, I saw all of it radiating out from that capstone, leaching out its poisonous darkness over the land."*[23]

Similar events took place in Scotland, where from 1746 to the early 20th Century, over half a million Scottish Highlanders were forcibly removed from their lands, to be replaced by intensive sheep farming.[24] Former Clan leaders, who had valued land for the number of people it could support, were replaced by owners whose interest was in economic production over people. This led to other consequential losses; biodiversity, especially woodland, but crucially Gaelic culture and language.[25]

Capitalism relied upon the 'controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production' or biopower.[4] Driving the poor off the land provided the machine with the bodies it thirsted for.

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[21] Lazenby, *Remember Kinder Scout – give back Britain's common land* (London: The Guardian, 2012, 30th April).
[22] www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/towncountry/landscape/overview/enclosingland/ (Accessed April 2018)
[23] Cowen, *Common Ground* (London: Windmill, 2015): p. 116.
[24] McIntosh, *Soil and Soul* (London: Aurum, 2002): p. 89.
[25] *Ibid.* p. 90.

Mitchell describes biopower as the commodification of life itself[5] and this well illustrates the sense of many who feel they have to work harder and harder or keep running on the wheel faster and faster just to make ends meet. This dehumanisation now encompasses much of how we relate to one another too, our biopower founded consumerism has moved beyond consumption of things to reflect the commodification of all of life including our relationships and societal engagement. Sacks writes:

> *"Increasingly, what we buy are not only goods but personal services. This too has a narrowing effect on action by turning the things we once did personally or together into commodities we purchase for a price. In the course of the 19th and 20th centuries much of this took place in the form of transfer of responsibility – for education, welfare, health and law enforcement – from families and communities to the state. Today it has moved beyond the state to the market. Vast swathes of personal relationship have been commodified and offered for sale in a seemingly endless proliferation of new services: counsellors, spiritual guides, personal trainers, style advisors, shopping consultants, massage therapists, aromatherapists, aerobics instructors, exercise class leaders – the whole spectrum of what Robert Reich calls 'Paying for attention'. What once made relationships constitutive of personal identity and self-respect is precisely the fact they stood outside the world of contracts and market exchange. Family, friends, neighbours, mentors, were people to whom you were bound by moral reciprocity. What was important is that they were there in bad times as well as good; when you needed them, not when you could pay for them.'*[26]

Sacks talks of being bound by moral reciprocity, but I believe this reciprocity is wider than just with one another. McGinnis suggests we are (along with other animals) boundary creatures which inhabit more than one world, linked by distinct but interdependent systems of relationships.[27] Our disconnection from nature has impacted upon our humanity. We have forgotten who we are and from where we have come. The sovereignty model revealed in the nation state pushes and violently enforces other (imagined) boundaries and borders which separate us from one another and from nature. Even when states have not been fighting to hold their territories, national borders have led the development of 'National Pride', immigration controls which promote 'othering' those from outside of the nation or with different citizenship, hatred of difference, distrust and fear that 'outsiders' have come to steal from us. In the same way, nature is seen as 'other', a resource to be controlled, exploited and sometimes feared, not understood as something we are part of and

[26] Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference* (London: Continuum, 2003): p. 77.
[27] McGinnis, *Boundary Creatures and Bounded Spaces,* in McGinnis (ed.) *Bioregionalism* (London : Routledge, 1999) pp. 61.

dependent upon. The power of national border and nationhood has become so engrained that we even see wild nature in terms of our own national identities. In Britain in particular, despite much of the wildlife we are fortunate to have amongst us being truly internationalist, we seem to have a need to identify it as 'native' or 'foreign'.[28] We appear determined to create false boundaries, either national ones to keep us separated from 'foreign' people, or between nature and ourselves to try and maintain a sense of human superiority. Sovereignty promotes nationalism and speciesism.

Whilst the enlightenment encouraged the study of science, even those who studied natural history did so from an external and objective perspective. Gilbert White, considered by many the father of nature writing, published a series of letters in 1789 as 'The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne'. Although beautifully written, it is as a passive observer separate from rather than an integrated part of the natural world he described.[29] Pickstock describes the notion of mapping or spatialising knowledge as *mathēsis*; she goes on to declare *mathēsis* as really an arbitrary ordering of nothing, a project merely interested in control itself where, once located within an undying space, the objects or subjects are paradoxically robbed of life.[30] Whilst this is perhaps a bit harsh on White, it reveals the deep-seated nature of sovereignty at play in enlightenment thinking.

By submitting to sovereign power, we have allowed ourselves to become controlled. McGinnis argues that human lives have become mechanical and that nature is seen as a 'static' resource to be exploited. He cites four endemic values to mechanical life - bureaucratic organisation, economic rationality, modern technology and resource management.[31] The Nation State offers these in abundance. Furthermore, McGinnis startlingly suggests human dependence on machines means we have, in effect, become cyborgs; we enter our machines (e.g. cars) and become passengers in a world we no longer care to understand.[31]

> *We view wilderness through the car window or attempt to catch it on film, but the unique smells, dangers and complexity of the ecosystem cannot be captured on film or video. People search for the perfect machine while the loss of place permeates modern society… Children*

[28] Smyth, *How British is it?* (London: Times Literary Supplement, 2017, 17th May).
[29] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Natural_History_and_Antiquities_of_Selborne (Accessed April 2018, Wikipedia page last edited 13 January 2018). This book has been continuously in print for over 200 years in over 300 editions.
[30] Pickstock, *After writing: On the Liturgical consummation of philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000): pp. xiii-xiv.
[31] *McGinnis, 1999.* p. 62.

> *are more familiar with a bulldozer or earthmover than the oak and chaparral that were once part of the landscape.*[32]

The loss of place and connection to nature is clear in the loss of nature language in use today, especially by the young. Children are using some nature words so infrequently that the Oxford Junior Dictionary sought to remove fifty from their recent new edition.[33] In an attempt to combat this and reintroduce these dying words, MacFarlane and Morris wrote *The Lost Words*.[34] That responses like theirs are needed was highlighted by a teacher in Blackpool who, in January of this year, reported that upon introducing the book to her class of ten-year olds, only 3 of her 30 children knew what an acorn was.[35]

The sovereign power structures in the guise of the modern nation state have led us to this point. The enclosures and land clearances combined with the industrial revolution created a perfect storm, two concurrent events, alongside debt-based capitalism and the rise of biopower, whereby not only human life became commodified but, I contend, land too became subject to biopower. The industrialisation of agriculture commodified land use. Just as human life itself became commodified and life became coupled with production, so too did land. Today, people find they have to work harder and longer, so land has more demanded of it. Land ownership has been transferred into the hands of a now wealthy few, who benefit enormously from their acquisitions.[21] Economic rationality looks to make land as productive and profitable as possible; traditional ways of husbanding (loving or caring for) land were dropped to make way for modern industrialised means of production. For over a thousand years in England, plough Monday, the first Monday after Twelfth Night, was considered the day to begin ploughing for the coming year's harvest.[36] Modern industrialised farming has no time to allow the land to rest before it is expected to produce again. Land is ploughed immediately following the Autumn harvest and sown with next year's crop. No rest, no time to recover, no fallow time to allow wildlife to feed or gain shelter.[37] The result is soil erosion from Winter rains, considered up to 90% higher compared with Spring ploughing - in the past forty years it is estimated that the Earth has lost one third of its arable land as a direct result of soil

[32] *Ibid.* p. 63.
[33] Flood, *Oxford Junior Dictionary's replacement of 'natural' words with 21st-century terms sparks outcry* (London: The Guardian, 2015, 13th January).
[34] Macfarlane & Morris, *The Lost Words* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2017).
[35] @OliviaDomics via Twitter, https://twitter.com/OliviaDomics/status/958442376044916736 (30th January 2018).
[36] Lewis-Stemple, *The Running Hare.* (London: Black Swan, 2017): pp. 30-32.
[37] *Ibid.* p. 247.

erosion, and even in the UK, unless we begin to take better care of our soil we only have around one hundred harvests left.[38] The loss of biodiversity from sudden changes in practice is immeasurable. Lewis-Stemple, observing the view from the Malvern hills writes:

> *"I looked again at the view, at the immense spread of fields, a water-colour paintbox of solid blocks of green and gold. There is a pleasant land before me, but I know when I descend into those fields they are silent, sterile, open-roofed factories for agribusiness. Units of production."*[39]

How can we begin to address these issues? How can we challenge these deeply ingrained views of land, ownership, boundaries and sense of place? Disconnected from land and nature, we fall prey to the myth of state soteriology, we fight for state borders and an imaginary society that stops at the border. We look to Government to protect us from 'foreign' invaders and our media reflects this with a well-developed spirit of poverty, promoting the belief that there is not enough to go around and undeserving outsiders are seeking to take what little we already possess.

Mitchell asserts that Foucault's 'Society of Control', the postmodern biopolitical world where the primacy of profit in everything is assumed, is hard to comprehend even when we are directly experiencing it, because we are on the inside of the system.[40] I hope that in the outline above, I have begun to expose how the influence of the politics of sovereignty has also impacted the call in Genesis for humanity to 'rule' over the creation in the likeness of God. Mitchell proposes 'Caring for the Creation' as one of his seven suggested specific foci for a Jesus-based politics.[41] I would like to go further and suggest that we are called to not just care for creation, but to re-discover our place within it. The key to this is understanding which image of God we are to undertake this re-connection. If we do this in the image of God as ultimate power through sovereignty, then we have already well fulfilled the call to 'subdue' the earth. However, if the nature of God is a love based on essential kenosis, then God works by empowering and inspiring creation toward well-being.[42] Kenarchy attempts to develop the practice of giftedness and kenosis, recognising that mainstream

[38] *Ibid.* pp. 40-41.
[39] *Ibid.* p. 16.
[40] Mitchell, 2013: p. 63.
[41] Mitchell, *Resources of Love for Politics of Peace*. In Mitchell, & Arram (eds.), *Discovering Kenarchy* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2014): p. 11.
[42] Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 2015): pp. 94-95.

western political systems need to be deconstructed and replaced by the choice to donate one's own naked-life, subverting biopower by emptying out potential power in love.[43]

I would like to explore some examples where I believe this has happened, at least in part, with respect to land. As one component of its independence negotiations, Zimbabwe was offered financial support from the British Government to help with the equitable redistribution of land between black subsistence farmers and white farmers of European heritage.[44] The objective of providing land and thereby a means of a living to the poor was a noble one. The intention of lining up willing sellers with willing buyers (who were given financial support to acquire the land) didn't release as much land as was hoped. Also, corruption in the system meant that ownership of over half the land transferred to officials who became absentee landlords.[44] By the 1990's, the Zimbabwean Government began to look at ways of compulsorily acquiring land, initially with payment, but once the British funding expired in 1997, moves began to enable the confiscation of land from white farmers.[44] In a mirroring of colonial land-grabs, land was invaded by former war veterans and white farmers were driven from their land and homes.

Amongst these white farmers, two stand out. Brian Oldreive had been a tobacco farmer in the 1970's until conversion to Christianity led him to no longer feel morally able to continue tobacco production. Having been foreclosed by the banks for ceasing tobacco production and losing his farm, he moved to another arable farm. Concerned about soil erosion from conventional farming methods of deep-ploughing and burning, Oldreive trialled a system of mechanised no-till cultivation combined with mulching to retain soil and moisture. Sceptical at first, he tried a few small areas, but found the results so outstanding he expanded to 50 then eventually the entire 1,000 hectares. His productivity (and profits) were such that he was able to buy up surrounding farms, eventually owning over 3,500 hectares, the second largest privately-owned farm in Africa.[45] Oldreive set up Foundations for Farming (FfF)[46] a training organisation to spread the practice of no-till agriculture, farming in sympathy with and caring for the earth. Craig Deall, FfF's CEO, recounts that following the constitutional referendum in 2,000,[44] they were faced with losing everything. Not willing to bog their

[43] Mitchell, 2013: pp. 82-85.
[44] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_reform_in_Zimbabwe (Wikipedia page last edited 2nd April 2018).
[45] https://horizons.team.org/stories/zimbabwe-if-a-man-steals-your-farm-teach-him-how-to-farm/ (Accessed April 2018)
[46] http://www.foundationsforfarming.co.za/images/fff_summary_english.pdf (Accessed April 2018)

lives down in bitterness, Deall and his family decided to put Matthew 5:38-40 into practice, choosing to turn the other cheek;

> *"We could flee, we could fight, or we could forgive. Forgiveness was the hardest option. One verse says if a man steals your tunic, you must give him your coat as well, so if a man steals your farm, you must teach him how to farm."*[45]

I have yet to come across a more Kenarchic response to loss of land or property. If Kenarchy is about life-laid-down enemy love, then this is what it looks like. In Oldreive's case this is particularly significant as his farm was not illegitimately derived from a colonial past but had been purchased and built up by him over a period of years. Their love of land and a desire to see it properly stewarded led them to choose enemy love. Oldreive and Deall continue to teach others how to farm across the African continent, including many who gained farms through the land reforms in Zimbabwe.[46]

Another example of taking a different approach to land is found in Todmorden in Yorkshire. In 2007, a small group began planting vegetables in public spaces for use by anyone who had need of them. One of the founder members, Pam Warhurst said;

> "We asked, c*an we find a unifying language that cuts across age, income and culture, that will help people themselves find a new way of living, see the space around them and the resources they use differently? Can we then replicate this? The answer appears to be 'Yes' and the language appears to be food."*[47]

Taking spaces all over the town, not seeking permission, but with agreement of the community they grow food for all to share. With a goal of building the community, they also recognise that knowledge is relational and take time to teach about which plants are which, how to grow and cook them. No-one is excluded. Their motto is "If you eat, you're in." The key principal is being at the heart of community for the whole community and not 'how can we make the most profit out of this space?'. Instead they look for ways to support the local economy, develop locally-focussed businesses and help the rising generation be part of a better and kinder future.[47]

Their example has spawned numerous spin-offs, over 100 in the UK, but internationally too. In my locality, a small number of us approached the council to request space for us to plant a community

[47] https://www.ted.com/talks/pam_warhurst_how_we_can_eat_our_landscapes (Accessed April 2018).

orchard within our local park. We now have two, one for the local primary school to enable the children to engage with the environment better and one for the wider community. Come this Autumn, we will have fruit to share. These localised initiatives help people connect across boundaries of age, wealth and background. They help to break us free from our overly mechanised (cyborg) lives and discover one another and our environment afresh. It is at the edges, where we cross over boundaries, meet difference, experience diversity that we begin to discover something of who we are.

Stories such as these are vital, because they bring hope and awaken the possibility that things can be different. Mohammed asks:

> *"If we are asking people to change their behaviour, shouldn't the messages be beautiful and work on an emotional and spiritual level?"*[48]

There is hope too in other areas. Nature writing has moved on from the objective descriptions of White,[29] shifting from *mathēsis* to relational knowledge; a recognition of our connectedness to nature and land, sometimes at an intimate level. Macfarlane suggests two questions we should ask of any strong landscape:

> *"What do I know when I am in this place that I can know nowhere else?"*
>
> and,
>
> *"what does this place know of me that I cannot know of myself?"*[49]

Edge-lands, on the urban fringes, may be the only truly wild wilderness places left in Britain.[50] Writing of these, Cowen declares:

> *"Humans are creatures of habit: we all still go to edges to get perspective, to be sustained and reborn. Recreation is still re-creation after a fashion, only now it occurs in largely virtual worlds... Ours is a world growing yet shrinking, connected yet isolated, all-knowing but without knowledge... Digging down into an overlooked patch of ground felt like the antithesis to all this. Lying just beyond our doors and fences, the enmeshed borders where human and nature collide are microcosms of our world at large… These spaces reassert a*

[48] Mohammed, *A Citizen's Right to Shape the Public Imagination*, in Singleton (ed.) *Faith with its Sleeves Rolled Up* (Dagenham: Faith Action, 2013): p. 99.
[49] Macfarlane, *The Old Ways* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2012): p. 27.
[50] Smyth, *Man-made Wilderness* (London: Times Literary Supplement, 2016, Wednesday August 17th).

vital truth: nature isn't just some remote mountain or protected park. It is all around us. It is in us. It is us."[51]

Returning to Genesis, if we understand the call to 'rule' in the image of God as one who's reigning attribute is essential kenosis[52], one whom Jesus reveals as self-giving enemy love who gives away power rather than seeks it, we can begin the much-needed work to undo the emphasis on 'subduing' the earth and exploiting creation through dominant sovereign power. By re-imaging how we can approach land, nature and our place in it, Kenarchy reaffirms the recognition that God empties himself out for us, bestows all of himself on us individually and collectively, without prejudice, without separation into race, culture, gender or background and with no regard for Nation State borders. It awakens in us the knowledge that our good Earth is a shared resource and that we all share in the same humanity.

[51] Cowen, 2016: p. 12.
[52] Oord, 2015: pp. 151-186.

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