Hierarchies of Foreignness: The Writing of Man in the New World

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Through transatlantic contact and subsequent debates, the "humanity" of Amerindians was first established for Europeans according to the dictates of philosophical anthropology and theology. This hierarchical and colonial anthropology is problematic precisely because it normalizes a singular, indigenous way of "being human" as the only correct and universal formulation of the "human being," i.e., Man. Consequently, people that live outside this constructed definition are exposed to dispossession, dehumanization, and genocide because they are deemed outside the bounds of Mankind. Through a three-part analysis, this work will examine Bartolomé de Las Casas' categorization of Amerindians though his formulation of "barbarianism," compare this taxonomy with Orson Scott Card's "Hierarchy of Foreignness," and finally argue that Indigenous traditions of thought—as seen in "grounded normativity" and "place-thought"—allow not only for the dissolution of colonial anthropologies but also permit for a teleological suspension of Man.

Key words: philosophical anthropology; colonialism; hierarchies; barbarians; Amerindians; teleological suspensions

The passage of the New Laws of the Indies for the Good Treatment and Preservation of the Indians (1542) along with the Sublimis Deus (1537), a papal bull declaring that Indigenous peoples of the Americas had souls and thus were not enslavable, were direct consequences of the anthropological investigations made by Spanish missionaries, explorers, and scholars. Through transatlantic contact and subsequent debates, the "humanity" of Amerindians was first established for Europeans according to the dictates of philosophical anthropology and theology. This process of categorizing Amerindians was necessary insofar as the previous division of Judeo-Christian Man against the Islamic-Barbarian Other did not exactly map out onto the New World. In the process, European Man was reified as a universal representation of humanity, albeit through the production of an anthropology premised on a tiered conception of human life and communities, in which European Man stood as apex and all others lacked "humanity." Hence, this hierarchical and colonial anthropology is problematic because it normalizes a singular, indigenous way of "being human" as the only correct and universal formulation of the "human being," i.e., Man. Consequently, people who live outside this constructed definition of Mankind are exposed to dispossession, dehumanization, and genocide. This hierarchical and Eurocentric categorization ironically holds that human beings can be more or less human.

But how did philosophical anthropology come to write *genres* of human beings in colonial encounters? Moreover, what reasoning was used to delimit ways of being human into an imposed hierarchy of the Human Being? Within these considerations, this paper will trace the development of colonial, philosophical anthropologies around the division of savagery, illiteracy, and teratology—the study of abnormalities. The main aim of this work is thus to illuminate the role of hierarchization in defining humans and non-humans, as well as the need to move beyond such delimiting structures.

This will be accomplished through a three-part analysis. First, this work will examine Bartolomé de Las Casas' categorization of Amerindians though his formulation of "barbarianism" to explicate the coloniality of anthropology. Second, it will compare the frameworks of the science fiction writer Orson Scott Card's "Hierarchy of Foreignness" alongside Las Casas' historical accounts to uncover how hierarchical taxonomies have past, present, and future ramifications. Third, through elucidating anthropological formulations in Indigenous traditions of thought, as seen in "grounded normativity"—an ethical framework that allows for place-based and relational practices between humans and nonhumans—and "place-thought"—an embodied way of thinking that consists of interactions between multiple worlds—one can be exposed to living practices that move beyond *Man* and establish other-than-human relationships.

1 Categorizing Humanity

It was contact within the New World which forced Europeans, particularly the Spanish, to explore the question of Amerindian humanity, alongside the greater debate of deciding the specific characteristics that would come to define a universalized Human Being. These European debates, however, devoid of analysis and opinions from Amerindians over their own specific ways of "being human," prompted a hierarchy to develop, placing European *Man* as the very expression of "humanity." Consequently, this ordering and categorization of human beings also came to judge and rank other cultures according to these standards.

In order to understand processes of Amerindian colonization, it is crucial to investigate the manner in which alphabetic writing, as opposed to pictograms; civilization, as opposed to barbarianism; and normality, as opposed to teras—monstrosity—were used in generating conceptions of "being human." In fact, these categories were instrumental in constructing and elevating an indigenous and particular way of "being human" as universalistic. This genre would in time be universally called "humanity," even as it was historically formulated and extended as a European concept. This is not to say that there were not fraught engagements over how "humanity" was and is defined, but the particular conception of "humanity" that concerns us is one constructed in processes of colonization. In fact, it is in the back-and-forth engagements over defining the "human being" that philosophical anthropology plays such a critical role.

This early classification system, much like the work done by "the father of modern taxonomy" Carl Linnaeus, sought to subdivide the human species according to certain strict characterizations. For instance, in the second edition of *Systema Naturae* published in 1740, Linnaeus subdivides *Homo sapiens* according to continent and skin color. These taxonomical distinctions are done in order to articulate the dissimilarities human beings have across the world. Thus, Amerindians are classified as "Amerianus rubescens" based on their "copper-colored" skin and their "obstinate" nature that is "only content when free." Similarly, Europeans are classified as "Europæus albus" based on their "fair" skin and, even more approvingly, their "gentle, acute, [and] inventive" dispositions (Popkin 1999: 510). In addition, this classification system stipulated two other distinct races, the Asiatic and the African, along with other more undetermined species of men, "Homo ferus" (wild men) and "Homo monstrosus" (monsters). As such, Linnaeus' taxonomic system was used to describe and "prove" the existence of distinct races of human beings based on a European scientific method. However, previous to even this racialized attempt to classify human beings was the colonial project of defining "humanity" philosophically and theologically. Before there was an actual reign of science

in biologically proving or disproving race, there was an anthropological system that defined and structured colonial thinking.

This colonial anthropology led to classifying all human beings around the European conception of *Man* by beginning with debating the status of Amerindians. It would be remiss, however, not to point out that it was the cruel treatment of Indigenous people that prompted such rigorous questioning around the justification of Spanish colonization. As Bartolomé de Las Casas argued, "[We] are sure that our Spaniards, with their cruel and abominable acts, have devastated the land and exterminated the rational people who fully inhabited it. We can estimate very surely and truthfully that in the forty years that have passed, with the infernal actions of the Christians, there have been unjustly slain more than twelve million men, women, and children" (Las Casas 1974: 1).³ The depopulation occurring within Spanish colonies and the gruesome stories of torture, rape, mutilation, and murder traveled across the Atlantic with such an impact that the Spanish Crown could no longer avert their eyes from the treatment of Amerindians.

Here, philosophical and theological debates surrounding the humanity of Amerindians became crucial in justifying colonialism. From the first year of contact in 1492—massacre, conquest, cooperation, trade, and warfare—questions began to be asked surrounding the "just" treatment of Amerindians. These debates culminated in 1542 with the passing of *The New Laws for the Government of the Indies and the Preservation of the Indians*, which officially outlawed Amerindian enslavement and further strengthened the previous religious forbidding of enslavement declared in 1537 by the *Sublimis Deus*. Consequently, between 1492, when Columbus "discovered" the New World, and the twenty years that passed before the signing of the *Laws of Burgos*—the first codified set of laws governing the treatment of Amerindians by European powers—anthropology became a tool for justifying the unequal treatment of people *based* on their status as humans. Through these laws Spaniards could thus disavow Amerindian enslavement and affirm the humanity of Indigenous people while still condoning colonialism.

Yet, the official sanctioning of Amerindian humanity did not give Indigenous communities in the Caribbean and Americas the same status as Europeans; in fact, it simply delineated the "proper" relationship Europeans were to have with Amerindians. In this manner, *The New Laws* (1542) were ordinances that covered the problematic legal and anthropological status of Amerindians. This collection of ordinances covered a variety of topics related to legal and practical issues in the Indies. These laws gave *audiencias*, royal courts in Spanish colonies, the responsibility of assuring that Amerindians were not treated maliciously in their labor; gave them the responsibility of assuring Indigenous people were not treated harshly or maliciously; outlawed enslaving Amerindians; and declared that all enslaved Indigenous people were to be freed (*The New Laws* 1971: xiii).⁴ Moreover, *The New Laws* freed all enslaved Amerindians along with ending the perpetuity of *encomiendas*, the land grant entrusted to Spanish subjects in the colonies (*The New Laws* 1971: xvi).⁵

Within the *long durée* of Amerindian contact and codified law, the Valladolid Debate (1550–1551) between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and Bartolomé de Las Casas represents two opposing conceptions of Indigenous personhood. Sepúlveda argued vehemently that Spaniards were justified in having dominion over Amerindian land and Amerindians themselves due to their barbarous and slavish nature. As Sepúlveda argued in the *Democrates Secundus* (1544), "It is with perfect right that the Spaniards exercise their dominion over those barbarians of the New World and its adjacent islands. For prudence, talent, and every kind of virtue and human sentiment they are as inferior to the Spaniards as children are to adults, or women to men, [etc.]" (Sepúlveda 2002: 278). The lack of "human" sentiments, namely those abilities venerated by European traditions themselves, became the basis for a justified war against Amerindians. Inspired by Aristotle, Sepúlveda argues that Amerindians

were "natural slaves," due in part to their nature but also because they lacked a written language, which to Europeans also meant a lack of history. Spanish colonization thus represented a benevolent paternalism, which saw Indigenous rule being rightly replaced with that of Christian masters. Here, the work of philosophical anthropology is crucial insofar as it classified people based on their level of "humanness."

For the Jamaican cultural theorist Sylvia Wynter, European *Man* has historically stood in as the standard of humanity through a process known as *over-representation*. For Wynter, New World engagements with philosophical anthropology and colonization resulted in a medieval sociogenic order, called the Judeo-Christian Origin Narrative. This narrative becomes the proving ground for formulating ways of being human into the category Man₁. As Wynter argues, "It was therefore to be the peoples of the Americas and the Caribbean who—after being conquered, Christianized, and enserfed in the imposed *encomienda* labor system, with their lands and sovereignty forcibly expropriated—were now to be made discursively and institutionally into [...] the Human Other to *Man*" (Wynter 2005: 124).⁷ This process of colonization ushered in Man₁, a subject based in the theocentric notions of Christian civilization, political ability, and philosophical discourses on rationality. Eurocentric anthropologies thus worked to uproot, replace, and subordinate Indigenous genres of being while instituting Man₁ as the true way of being human.

Within western Europe's classificatory terminology, Amerindians became representatives of a "savage and irrational humanity" (Wynter 2005: 125). Thus, similarly to Las Casas' iterations, Amerindians would no longer be enslaved, but nor would they embody different genres of "being human." Rather Amerindians would represent a foil to the "true" humanness of Europeans. This over-representation of Man would alter as racialization became influenced by earlier European scientific methods. For instance, Wynter argues that anthropological hierarchies altered significantly, resulting in the formulation of Man₂, a universalistic conception of humanity based upon biological dysselection and economic mastery.⁸ Post-1492, a system of categorization rapidly and violently took place over the exact ordering of Amerindians into a European anthropology. Thus, Wynter argues, "Man as a new (and ostensibly universal because supracultural) conception of the human had in fact been invented by a specific culture, that of Western Europe, during the sixteenth century" (Wynter 2005: 124). This invention of Man, as it were, was constructed by turning real-life referent categories, i.e., Indigenous peoples of the New World, and classifying them discursively and institutionally as the invented Human Others to Man. Under this reading, Wynter maintains that the Judeo-Christian matrix was the governing logic in classifying Amerindians as Human Others, or rather, less then Man. Here, I must quote Wynter at length:

Now while in Christian theological terms such 'justly' expropriated peoples had been classified as *Enemies of Christ*, and their lands, as such, legitimately classified as expropriable by Christian kings, this as a legitimation that had been used by the expanding European states in the first state of their global expansion, as the Spanish state sought, in the wake of 1492, and of its invasion and conquest of the New World peoples, to legitimate its expropriation *outside* the theological terms that would have forced it to continue accepting the Papacy's claim to temporal as well as spiritual sovereignty, it set out to transform the ground on which the premise, adapted from Aristotle's *Politics*, that the New World's peoples, having been intended by nature, because of their extreme irrationality, to be *natural slaves*, in the same way that the Spaniards and other Europeans had been intended by nature to be, because of their ostensible high degrees of rationality, natural masters, had been legitimately expropriated by the latter, given that it was fitting that the more rational should govern the less rational, in effect, that

Man, the Spaniards, should govern its Human Others, the 'Indians,' until they had been taught to become more human, as the Spanish humanist ideologue, Gines de Sepulveda, argued. (Wynter 2005: 138)

Within this passage, I would argue that Wynter is correct in sussing out the rationale of philosophical debates surrounding anthropology during the sixteenth century. The debates between Sepúlveda and Las Casas testify to an ambiguity surrounding barbarianism that does not follow the strict theocentric logics of Christianity. In fact, for Las Casas, Amerindian nonbelievers do not function in his anthropological framework in the same manner as heretics, infidels, and "Enemies of Christ" do within the Abrahamic religions. It is a mistake to read Islamic-Christian categories of Otherness in the Old World as the same classificatory system operating within the New World. However, although rationality and natural slaves did play a significant anthropological role in the arguments of Sepúlveda and the political justification of Spanish dominion, it was in fact Las Casas' arguments that would continue the argumentation found within the Laws of Burgos (1512) and The New Laws (1542). Las Casas argued that Amerindians were neither irrational nor natural slaves, but rather barbarians worthy of compassion. Due to the constant efforts to reconcile the practices of colonialism with the legitimate categorization of Amerindians, a shift occurred in the anthropological logic governing New World relations. In fact, the advent of the barbarian would serve as the foundation for the modern world-system.

2 The Fourth Manner of Barbarian

This anthropological shift can be best understood within Las Casas' formulation of barbarianism. Within this framework, Las Casas argued in contradistinction to Sepúlveda that conceptualizing Amerindians as slavish was improper. Instead, the New World was filled with people whose accomplishments were comparable to the Romans and Greeks. Interestingly enough, Las Casas did not begin with such expressions, only adopting these sentiments twelve years after being an encomendero and going through a conversion process wherein he realized that Amerindians were also "men" with souls.¹⁰ For instance, Las Casas argued that Spaniards were willing to murder such an "infinite number" of souls for the sole purpose of acquiring wealth. In the process, Spaniards were shown to have "[n]o more consideration for them than beasts." Las Casas continued his admonishment, stating, "I should not say 'than beasts' for, thanks be to God, they have treated beasts with some respect; I should say instead like excrement on the public squares. And thus they have deprived the Indians of their lives and souls" (Las Casas 1974: 2). The extermination of Amerindians, however, is of secondary importance to the lost chance of salvation for Indigenous "souls." But to paraphrase Frantz Fanon, this Indigenous soul is itself a construction of White civilization and Christian European culture (Fanon 1986: 14). 11 In essence, the religious desire of Las Casas reflects the words of Brigadier General Richard Henry Pratt, the founder of the first residential school for Native Americans: "Kill the Indian, and Save the Man." In arguing for the worldly and heavenly salvation of Amerindians, Las Casas formulates a "beneficent" anthropology which is nothing more than the very construction of "Indian" as a category below Man.

Thus, although pressure from Las Casas and other missionaries forced the Spanish monarchy to justify the egregious treatments of Amerindians on *encomiendas* and helped to codify a more stringent philosophical justification of the *Requerimiento*, which were written declarations read by Spanish military forces to assert their sovereignty over territories, its effects were still damaging. These justifications

were oftentimes substantiated on the status of Amerindians themselves. Ironically, it was the work of Bartolomé de Las Casas, who gained the official title Protector of the Indians, that would help to categorize Amerindians under a hierarchical human taxonomy.

For instance, in the "Apologetic History of the Indies," Las Casas argued that there were four types of barbarians as opposed to Sepulveda's strict reading of Aristotle. At the pinnacle of Las Casas' theological hierarchy stood Christians as the highest representatives of Man. The first type of barbarian exhibits cruel behaviors because they are naturally bereft of reason (Barbarian₁), the second type lacks a written language (Barbarian₂), the third has no understanding of justice because they are not governed by reason (Barbarian₃), and the fourth are simply non-Christians (Barbarian₄). Las Casas argues that Amerindians could only be considered as primarily the fourth type of barbarian, although the second type was at times apparent. Under these considerations, it was only the third type of barbarian which could rightly be called "barbarian" under an Aristotelian reading. Moreover, it is only this third type, due to their perverse natures and lack of culture, that permit a "just war" to be waged. In this respect, being categorized as the fourth type of barbarian was a "protective" measure. Thus, Las Casas argued that lack of access to the Word meant that natives had "a purely negative faithlessness," which the success of conversion showed could be eliminated (Las Casas 1960: 539). Instead of eliminating people, the Spanish crown could instead eliminate unbelief. Amerindians were not so barbaric as to justify wholesale genocide. For Las Casas, illiteracy was just a secondary impediment.

In contradistinction to binary models that hold paganism to be the absolute other of Christian Man, Las Casas held that being non-Christian was preferable to barbarianism simpliciter. In hierarchical terms, Las Casas' taxonomy follows a line of descent from Christians to non-Christians to Barbarians Simpliciter. Amerindians were located squarely below the pale of *Christian European Man*. Thus, as Lewis Gordon argues, "Whites as the standard live as originality, as *the original*, as Adam. What this means is that [Amerindians] can at best hope to be *like* whites, to be their *imitation*, since to be [Indigenous] here means to be that which seeks typicality, seeks being, from the prototype" (Gordon 2006: 241). Amerindians as the fourth type of barbarian may have been bereft of true barbarianism, according to Las Casas, but at the same time they were without full humanity. Outside of the category of Christianity, Amerindians could be nothing but "red imitations" of Spanish Christians. Thus, although Las Casas displayed remarkable philosophical originality in his writings and protests against Spanish cruelty, there is still a hierarchy constructed within Las Casas' systematizing of a *True Christian* anthropology maintained on barbarianism.

3 The Second Manner of Barbarian

Although Las Casas argued that Amerindians primarily exhibited traits from Barbarian4, he does note that a lack of a writing system was also a characteristic of Amerindian barbarianism. The ramifications of western literacy on Amerindian cultures during transatlantic colonization resulted in the influence of the alphabet upon anthropology itself. In particular, Spanish encounters with Indigenous populations highlight how the processes of speech, writing, and illiteracy were entangled together with the colonial process of defining what it means to be "human" in the New World. Las Casas writes, "The second manner or species of barbarian [are] those who lack a form of literal expression which is to their language as Latin is to ours and, finally, they do not practice or study letters, and these people are known as barbarians secundum quid" (Las Casas 1960: 534–5). Las Casas even argues that the written language prompted the Venerable Bede, a Benedictine monk, to translate works into English so that Englishmen would not be considered barbarians.

Thus, the ways in which Amerindians were also Barbarian₂ is critical to understanding the continuous process of dehumanization wrought by the over-representation of *Man*. Walter Mignolo writes that, "The lack of alphabetic writing was one of the most significant trademarks, next to lack of clothing and the eating of human flesh, in the construction of the image of the Amerindians during the sixteenth and seventeenth century" (Mignolo 1992a: 312).¹⁴ However, it was not that Amerindians lacked writing; rather they lacked the Latin alphabet, which soon became characterized as superior. Thus, concomitant to the anthropological question was the primacy of language in defining Indigenous personhood.

In examining Mesoamerican writing systems, missionaries and scholars made prompt comparisons between the number of letters in the Latin alphabet and that in Amerindian languages. In particular, it was noted that Nahuatl seemed to *lack* seven letters necessary in the Latin alphabet. This presumed of course that the Latin alphabet was universalistic and capable of representing and systematizing all linguistic sounds or that hieroglyphs represented through oral transmission could be reduced to a letter of the Latin alphabet (Mignolo 1992b: 305).¹⁵ It was in the process of writing grammars for Amerindian languages and destroying Mesoamerican books, such as the Popol Vuh, written supposedly by the devil, that dominion over the New World had as one of its active projects the colonization of language. Within this project, pre-Columbian writing systems were weighed and measured against alphabetic writing that was synonymous with enlightenment. Mignolo notes, "Consequently, in the chain of writing that the Renaissance men of letters fabricated for themselves, alphabetical writing was, on the one hand, the most perfect of them all and superior [...] and, on the other, it was related to the construction of the other as barbarian. On this picture, the lack of letters was a condition sufficient to equate the illiterate with the uncivilized or barbarian" (Mignolo 1992b: 326). The placement of picto-ideographic below the status of European writing systems became yet another reason why Amerindians failed to be recognized as full humans. The illiterate Amerindian does not disappear within "hierarchies of humanness" but remains a key feature to the colonization of anthropology.

Thus, in many ways, the ability of Europeans to constantly "measure" Amerindian writing systems allowed for the reification of barbarianism to characterize Amerindians. Further, by emphasizing more and more the inferiority of Indigenous writing systems, "hierarchies" developed which further reified the stigma of Barbarian₂ on Indigenous people. In this manner, the Bishop of Avila's assertion to Queen Isabella that "Indios" were in need of both new laws and languages demonstrates how significant writing systems were in justifying programs of conquering, colonizing, and civilizing: "Soon Your Majesty will have placed her yoke upon many barbarians who speak outlandish tongues. By this, your victory, these people shall stand in a new need; the need for the laws the victor owes to the vanquished, and the need for the language we shall bring with us" (Mignolo 1992b: 306–7). To justify the Requerimiento meant not only yoking Indigenous forms of writing, but also placing them within a legitimate and lawful framework. If barbarians spoke outlandish tongues, then the need for the Spanish civilized language becomes a necessity. Yet, does the over-representation of universal *Man* only rely on this form of barbarianism?

4 The First Manner of Barbarian

Las Casas adamantly argues that the gentle and docile nature of Amerindians, which allowed them to so easily be butchered and conquered, at the same time validated their humanness, as opposed to revealing their supposed "monstrosity." Las Casas argues, "These peoples of the Indies are not of the

first category, because [...] such defects cannot by nature befall a whole nation; for it would be a great monstrosity of human lineage if nature were to err to the extent of making men of one nation furious and foppish, foolish or blind with passion" (Las Casas 1960: 539). For Las Casas, national defect remains impossible due to the kind nature of God. It is for this reason that Las Casas argues that even reports about cannibalism were due to the man-made famine by Spaniards, which caused mass starvation (Las Casas 1974: 9). However, Barbarian₁ plays a crucial role in maintaining the hegemonic dominance of Man, as the Caribs for instance became representative of the "great monstrosity of human lineage," cannibals. Thus, within colonial anthropologies, teratology became a means to express how Amerindians could be defined as Barbarian₁ or naturally defective. As Michael Palencia-Roth states, "Cultural practices like cannibalism are considered to be deformations of human nature, contra naturam, or monstrous; they will be condemned, controlled, corrected, or eliminated by any means necessary. This is symbolized in the first example by verbally defining New World Indians as pagan and monstrous" (Palencia-Roth 1996: 44). As a normative standard, Christian European Man functions through exclusion. Any person categorized beyond its scope becomes abnormal and nonhuman. Thus, although Las Casas does not characterize Amerindians as monstrous, the practice of cannibalism would "prove" the unnaturalness of such peoples, such that Amerindians would be humanoid, thought to only resemble Man.

In fact, it was Christopher Columbus who first brought depictions of cannibalism to Europe. In a letter written in 1493 to Lord Raphael Sanchez, treasurer to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, Columbus states that not only did he discover new islands but also, "He 'did not find [...] as many had expected, any monsters among [New World people], but rather men of great deference and kindness [...]. Thus [he] saw no monsters, nor did [he] hear of any, except those [...] people who are considered by the [other] islanders as most ferocious: and these feed on human flesh" (Palencia-Roth 1996: 23). For many of the conquistadors and missionaries, the lack of cannibalism would prompt instead the attributing of monstrous features and behaviors to Amerindians in order to justify the colonialism of the Americas. Thus, in asking if Amerindians were even human, Palencia-Roth writes, "In effect, the New World barbarian was defined in the sixteenth century as morally so monstrous—as teras—that for some Europeans he was not human" (Palencia-Roth 1996: 37). As the process of colonization continued, genteel depictions of Amerindians were replaced with portrayals of Amerindians as Barbarian₁. Although Las Casas' formulations operate against teratology, his classification still asserts a "hierarchy of foreignness" that justifies dominance and conquest. Moreover, in asserting Amerindians as humans who were only accidentally barbarous, insofar as they could acquire a written language or convert to Christianity, Las Casas still maintains a clear line of division invoked by the propter nos of Man. If Amerindians remain outside the pale of Man, then their status can fall below humane behavior.

5 The Third Manner of Barbarian

As such, Barbarian₃ presents an underside to the anthropological hierarchy developed by Las Casas, namely the antipode of *Man*, the barbarian simpliciter. Las Casas argues that the third species of barbarians are those comprised by evil customs and perverse inclinations, rather than natural defects. These barbarians remain outside all forms of civilized society because they are incapable of administrating states or providing justice to their populace. He writes: "Nor do [Barbarian₃] maintain the communication necessary to mankind, such as buying, selling, trading, renting, directing and having gatherings among neighbors [...]. For the most part they live scattered through the wilderness,

fleeing human contact, contenting themselves with only the company of their women, in the fashion of such animals as monkeys" (Las Casas 1960: 535–6). While Las Casas believed it to be impossible for human beings to be naturally devoid of reason, he did think it possible for a people to not be governed by reason. Thus, a lack of communication and laws—the absence of "everything essential to the state of man" (Las Casas 1960: 536)—characterize Barbarian₃. In addition, this deficiency is for Las Casas the only justifiable reason that would allow for warfare and the possible decimation of Amerindians. On this point, the works of the science fiction writer Orson Scott Card are quite helpful in detailing the justifications used in subjugating and exterminating in-human populations.

Within science fiction, the issue of philosophical anthropology is not simply the remnant of past, colonial imaginaries. Depictions of modernity as well as forecasts about the future are frequently implicated in utilizing hierarchization to classify beings. One of the most well-known classification systems can be found in Card's "Hierarchy of Foreignness," which was developed by the character Valentine Wiggin, under the pseudonym Demosthenes. Using this taxonomic framework, humans within this fictional universe are capable of classifying living beings under four distinct orders. Card writes that, "Utlannings are strangers from our own world. Framlings are strangers of our own species, but from another world. Raman are strangers of another species, but capable of communication with us, capable of co-existence with humanity. Last are varelse" (Card 1991: 21). Much like Las Casas, Card organizes an anthropological hierarchy in order to categorize and understand intersubjective relations. Under his model, Amerindians might be conceptualized as utlannings, or if one wants to take the term "New World" seriously, framlings. However, anthropological depictions of Amerindians within a Judeo-Christian Origin Narrative or barbarianism structure maintain that the *possibility* of communication with *un-Christian* men might allow Indigenous people to be categorized as raman. However, what if no meaningful communication is possible between such groups?

If Amerindians are re-categorized under differing conceptions of barbarity, then "just war" remains a possibility. In fact, the debate between Sepúlveda and Las Casas amounts to a frank discussion over whether Amerindians are "varelse" for whom treatments of genocide would be applicable, nay, appropriate. Card states, "Others were varelse, 'wise beasts,' clearly intelligent and yet completely unable to reach a common ground with humankind. Only with varelse would war ever be justified; with raman, humans could make peace and share the habitable worlds. It was an open way of thinking, full of hope that strangers might still be friends" (Card 1991: 130). However, even as the "hierarchy of foreignness" remains open to communicating with alien populations, it still has a strict demarcation or anthropological border. Thus, although Las Casas' justification of Amerindian treatment is similar to how framlings are treated, while Sepúlveda actively advocates for categorizing Amerindians in manners similar to raman, there remains a larger philosophical issue. For both thinkers, concerns over Spanish dominion in the New World or with missionary conversions reveal a deeper debate about just how far down the scale of humanity Indigenous people were located. Or more frighteningly, just how far they could go.

Thus, much like the historical Amerindian genocide, hierarchical formulations of *Man* also allow for the justified mistreatment or elimination of sub- or non-humans. In the *Ender's Game* series, Card highlights the link between communicability and anthropology by focusing on misunderstanding between alien species, namely human beings, Formics, and Pequeninos. With each alien species, the question of justified war and xenocide ("xeno-" meaning alien and "-cide" referring to killing) results not only from miscommunication but also an overreliance on hierarchies of foreignness. By placing limits on "being human" at the outset, closed anthropologies foreclose the possibility of comprehension. Thus, the exploration of hierarchical formulations would remain incomplete without also questioning where universal *Man* falls under a "hierarchy of foreignness." As Card argues when

speaking of humanity, "The question is whether I am capable of comprehending and tolerating [...]. Maybe we're the varelse. Maybe xenocide is built into the human psyche as into no other species" (Card 1991: 111). Without delving too far into human nature, the question of whether the over-representation of *Man* is also a formulation of "varelse" remains poignant. For if universal *Man* forecloses the possibility of communication and is "unable to reach a common ground with humankind," does this not mean that war is justified against such a hierarchical construction?

6 All The World is Human!

It is the elimination of anthropological hierarchies that is of chief importance. Although this paper has focused primarily on the use of philosophical anthropology in shaping the discourse around Amerindian "humanity" in the sixteenth century, this analysis and refutation can be extended to all anthropological hierarchies. Philosophical anthropologies can capture multiple, indigenous genres or ways of being human within their frameworks. For Las Casas, this meant that all humans could be grouped under the same category as *Men*, even though they had quite distinct statuses. He writes: "All the races of the world are men, and of all men and of each individual there is but one definition [...] the entire human race is one" (Carrozza 2003: 293). However, categorizing a group's humanity is not set in stone nor completely doomed by anthropological hierarchies. Domination and dehumanization need not be entangled together in projects of defining *Man*, which means that mature human relations are still quite possible.

For example, in *Speaker for the Dead*, the main protagonist Andrew "Ender" Wiggin composes "The Life of Human," a story about the lifespan of the alien Human, revealing the extensive work done by a human to mature to the level where he is in a reciprocal, rather than hierarchical, relationship with alien beings. Within this work, Ender describes the multiple stages of life that Human, like all other chosen male Pequeninos, endures; from that of his first life as a larva, to his second life as a porcine anthropoid, and finally his third life as a tree. Human, in fact, states, "Tell them how on the last day of my second life, my true brother came from above the sky, and together we made this covenant so that humans and piggies would be one tribe, not a human tribe or a piggy tribe, but a tribe of raman. And then my friend gave me passage to the third life, to the full light, so that I could rise into the sky and give life to ten thousand children before I die" (Card 1986: 290–1).¹⁹ This ability to join as raman was predicated on a form of understanding. In order for male Pequeninos to reach their third life and become Fathertrees they are cut open in a process known as "planting."

Much of the book thus deals with clearing up the misunderstanding over the third life when the process of vivisection was replicated with human beings. Yet, when Ender offers to "murder" Human so he may enjoy his third life, he does this without dehumanization. This ability to understand the Pequeninos' indigenous genre of being is due in part to Ender's occupation. As a speaker for the dead, he maintains interrogative skills such that he can take as a thematic focus the entire life of a another being. Limited knowledge of the other thus does not foreclose experiencing the subjectivity of another but rather serves as the groundwork for understanding subjects through their intersubjective relationships. In contradistinction, "hierarchies of foreignness" rely on the overrepresentation of *Man* as a universal. However, in delimiting "humanity," one not only denigrates other indigenous genres of being human but also allows for the disastrous consequences of hierarchies to be imposed on social relations. For instance, Card details the ways in which Ender Wiggin deals with understanding the sentient life-form on the planet Lusitania, the Pequeninos, in opposition to

the "Hierarchy of Foreignness." The book begins by quoting the creator of the aforementioned anthropological tool:

Since we are not yet fully comfortable with the idea that people from the next village are as human as ourselves, it is presumptuous in the extreme to suppose we could ever look at sociable, tool-making creatures who arose from other evolutionary paths and see not beasts but brothers, not rivals but fellow pilgrims journeying to the shrine of intelligence. Yet that is what I see, or yearn to see. The difference between raman and varelse is not in the creature judged, but in the creature judging. When we declare an alien species to be raman, it does not mean that they have passed a threshold of moral maturity. It means that we have. (Card 1986: 1–2)

This invitation to pass a certain threshold of moral and philosophical maturity is gained in the process of examining oneself. Under this hierarchy, categorization exposes itself as uncritical insofar as participants fail to understand that the model itself was to judge human maturity. But why is this ability to judge already self-justified? What right do individuals have in judging the humanity of other aliens or other men? A radical reading of the "Hierarchy of Foreignness" would be: it, like any tool, may malfunction, but it may also serve as indication to enact a phenomenological reduction, or *epoché*, allowing one to suspend preconceived notions of anthropology. This would allow one to judge one's humanity through the apperception of evidence or "that performance on the part of intentionality which consists in the giving of something-itself" (Husserl 1960: 157).²⁰

Admittedly, both of the "hierarchies of foreignness" above construct inhuman relationships of dominance, dispossession, and genocide. Through formulations of savagery, illiteracy, and teratology, Amerindians became categorized below the status of Man₁. Thus, although Las Casas initiated the "first anti-discourse of Modernity" by arguing that the Roman Pope and Spanish Kings failed to receive the consent of Indigenous people and therefore had to restore the sovereignty of kingdoms, such as the Inca in Peru, his methods were flawed (Dussel 2014: 35).²¹ Bartolomé de Las Casas, in characterizing Indigenous people utilizing his four categories of barbarianism, reifies a "hierarchy of foreignness" which legitimates dehumanization and dispossession, even as it seeks native salvation. But this taxonomy is not unvarying. It alters accordingly. As such, altogether new encounters can be mapped unto this anthropological order or prior relationships can be reordered such that former classifications are rearranged in order to "justify" the maintenance of a hierarchical order, even in the face of fluctuating conditions. As such, as long as anthropological hierarchies are held to be *legitimate*, there remains the possibility of categorizing and *re*-categorizing human beings into hierarchical formulations that are exclusionary and debilitating. With colonial anthropologies, xenocide remains forever a *human* possibility.

7 Teleological Suspension of *Man*

Within philosophical anthropology, human and other-than-human possibilities are always present. Moreover, since the notion of *Man* is a function of social relationships, genres can also be restructured. Barbarianism and the "hierarchy of foreignness" are both limited by anthropological normativity. Utlannings, framlings, raman, and varelse are markers that delineate an already self-justified humanness. It is this misunderstanding, this entitled clinging to normativity, that not only allows Ender Wiggin to commit xenocide, but also implicates formulations of *Man* itself as being at best

dehumanizing and at worst genocidal. As Lewis Gordon states, "A problem that emerges [in constructing a genuine Self-Other relationship] is that politics also requires the elevation of those who are 'nothings' to the level of 'people.' The *struggle* here, then, is a conflict with politics as an aim through which ethical relations can emerge" (Gordon 2007: 6).²² The teleological suspension of the ethical requires a political and material transformation of structures and institutions in order for human and humane relations to be constituted. However, this suspension also requires dismantling anthropological hierarchies or a teleological suspension of *Man* as "a necessary condition for the creative practices that could constitute the human" (Gordon 2006: 253). Thus, even with encounters with the *alien* or unfamiliar the question of suspension and *openness*—rather than of how to systematize such experiences according to epistemic and anthropological norms—becomes crucial in constituting the praxis of being human.

Within this praxis, one could utilize tools developed by European thought, such as Europhenomenology. For instance, Alfred Schütz's formulation of vacancies (*Leerstellen*) uncovers the ways in which the unknown can be transformed into knowledge. What we know of Man₁ and Man₂ may be vacated as "new systems of interpretational and motivational relevances" become prominent: "The undoing of our habitual possession of knowledge, the restarting of sedimentation, the retransforming of knowledge beyond question into questionable problems, the recurrent reinterpretations of what we know—all these lead to the fact that *once-filled vacancies may become vacant again*" (Schütz 2011: 131–2).²³ Unmapping the relevance-structures associated with colonial anthropologies, as done above, might provide an opportunity for phenomenal transformations.

However, one need not only turn to phenomenological suspensions and vacancies for an answer. One can also look to Indigenous traditions of thought, such as grounded normativity or place-thought, as providing anthropological formulations that are capable of moving beyond *Man* in even more radical ways. "Hierarchies of foreignness," as classification systems, not only subdivide humanity but also work to bifurcate the relational world into human/nonhuman and organic/nonorganic. Yet, as multispecies societies, Indigenous nations show a respect to nonhuman kinfolk (animals, plants, fungi, and microbes) and "nonorganic" entities (rivers, minerals, and the Land). As Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg) writes, "[M]y nation is not just composed of Nishnaabeg. It is a series of radiating relationships with plant nations, animal nations, insects, bodies of water, air, soil, and spiritual beings in addition to the Indigenous nations with whom we share parts of our territory" (Simpson 2017: 58).²⁴

Thus, even as Wynter articulates the presence of both provincialized and over-represented indigenous genres of being human within her corpus, the turn to Indigenous genres of being reveals living perspectives that directly disrupt the binary between human and nonhuman. Moreover, these lifeways and philosophies have the benefit of being defended in the face of settler colonialism, hierarchical classification systems, and material dispossession, including the "local loss of species and ecosystems" (Whyte 2017: 213).²⁵ Here, one can return to the teleological suspension of the ethical as practiced by Indigenous people. Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argue that "grounded normativity" is an ethical framework that allows for place-based and relational practices between both humans and nonhumans. They write: "Grounded normativity houses and reproduces the practices and procedures, based on deep reciprocity, that are inherently informed by an intimate relationship to place. Grounded normativity teaches us how to live our lives in relation to other people and nonhuman life forms in a profoundly nonauthoritarian, nondominating, nonexploitive manner" (Coulthard and Simpson 2016: 254). This ethical position does not presume a higher status between human beings or nations, nor does it prescribe a similar

hierarchy between humans and nonhumans. Instead, grounded normativity allows for a relational, philosophical anthropology. Being human can only be defined in relation to other beings.

This perspective can also be seen in the work of Vanessa Watts, who is Mohawk (Bear Clan, Six Nations) and Anishinaabe. In giving a theoretical account of "place-thought," Watts reveals how a teleological suspension of man is already evident in Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe cosmologies. According to Watts, Indigenous understandings of society are not human-centric but instead consist of interactions between multiple worlds, including the spirit world and animal world, as well as a plant and mineral world. Moreover, any understanding of these worlds is done via physical embodiment. Watts argues: "Place-Thought is the non-distinctive space where place and thought were never separated because they never could or can be separated. Place-Thought is based upon the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts" (Watts 2013: 21).²⁷ The interconnectedness between land, humans, and nonhumans is not symbolic, nor is it merely an epistemological-ontological framework in which to view the world. For the Haudenosaunee, place-thought indicates living relations. Thus, Sky Woman did fall through a hole in the sky, was carried down by birds, and landed on the back of Turtle until the two began to form the earth. For Watts, this is what happened (Watts 2013: 26). As such, there are direct connections and lines of interdependency that are central to the functioning of society: "Relations with non-human agents are approached with no sense of superiority and with a focus on establishing ethical commitments to particular agents and communities of agents" (Rosiek, Snyder, and Pratt 2020: $338).^{28}$

In addition, the importance of other-than-human kin can also be seen concretely in the Standing Rock movement begun in 2016 to protest the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, which threatened vital waterways in the region. The Oceti Sakowin and their allies, who identify as "water protectors," work not simply to secure treaty rights and environmental protections for human beings, but also seek to displace the human and non-human divide. As Kim TallBear notes, "The human beings gathered there stand with their other-than-human relations—with the water, the land, and the many other nonhuman nations who reside within Oceti Sakowin historic lands—a place with which the Oceti Sakowin is coconstituted" (TallBear 2019: 17). As such, the termination of the Dakota Access Pipeline, although desired, is only part of the work of establishing good relations.

Within a colonial anthropology, the classification of humanity depends upon a hierarchical system that is ultimately domineering and genocidal. Those who do not meet the measure of *Man* are instead cast out and derided as subhuman or nonhuman. However, Indigenous traditions of thought allow for relational anthropologies within multispecies societies. One need not travel to the planet Lusitania to find mature, human relations. One need only look around and see grounded normativity and place-thought practiced today. Our work begins by understanding and valuing these Indigenous frameworks as part of the process of rejecting "hierarchies of foreignness" and vacating colonial determinations of being human or other-than-human.

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- European projects around the classification of human beings were not originally based in early scientific methods but were instead accomplished through theological projects, philosophical anthropology, and legal judgments.
- ² Carl Linnaeus, quoted in Richard H. Popkin, *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999). Linnaeus would "improve" on his classification system in later additions of the *Systema Naturae*. For instance, in the tenth edition published in 1758, wild and monstrous men are eliminated.
- Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account,* trans. Herma Briffault (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).
- The New Laws for the Government of the Indies and the Preservation of the Indians, 1542–1543 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1971).
- In effect, the *encomienda* system, based upon exacting tribute from Muslims and Jews during the Reconquista of Muslim Spain, reveals the efforts in which Spain tried applying Old World techniques to the New World. This technique is also evident in the debates surrounding Amerindians as they became incorporated into European anthropologies.
- Juan de Ginés Sepúlveda, "Democrates Secundus, or the Treatise on the Just Causes of War Against the Indians," in *Cultural Perspectives: A Source Book, Vol. 1*, ed. Rosemary Mims Fisk and John Mayfield (Florence, KY: Thomson Learning, 2002), 277–81.
- Sylvia Wynter, "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in the Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of *Désêtre*: Black Studies Toward the Human Project," in *Not Only the Master's Tools: African American Studies in Theory and Practice*, ed. Lewis Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 107–69.
- Under the Wynterian formulation of Man₂, anthropological systems of classification are understood through European scientific methods. This shift from theology and philosophy to science is significant, but beyond the scope of this paper.
- Here I would agree with Eleanor Craig that the *Laws of Burgos* entrenched rather than mitigated colonial legitimacy. Moreover, although Las Casas admitted the humanity of Amerindians, his project was still enveloped in the soteriological framework elucidated here: "The Laws are not a record of what *was* but of what was justified. They record an instant in an intellectual process that constructed Christian morality and a spiritualized hierarchy to support, even demand, colonialist action. These hierarchies are sustained by a soteriological frame that equates Indigenous submission with salvation" (Craig 2021: 95). See Eleanor Craig, "We Have Never Been Human/e: The Laws of Burgos and the Philosophy of Coloniality in the Americas," *Beyond Man: Race, Coloniality, and Philosophy of Religion,* ed. An Yountae and Eleanor Craig (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), 86–107.
- An *encomendero* is the holder of an *encomienda*, which is a grant that allows the holder to exact monetary tribute or labor from "Indios." This grant was awarded by the Spanish crown.
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Pluto, 1986). In this quote, Fanon is referencing the alienating interactions between Europeans and people of African descent. Europeans have similarly constructed other "souls," such as with people from the West Indies, Turtle Island, and Abya Yala.
- Bartolomé de Las Casas, "Apologetic History of the Indies," *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West Vol. 1*, ed. Bernard Wishy, Marvin Harris, Sidney Morgenbesser, and Joseph Rothschild (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 521–39.
- Once again, words referring to those of African descent are replaced. I do not wish to equate the experience of Indigenous people with the racialized experiences of Blacks; however, I do think the analysis holds true. See Lewis R. Gordon, "Is the Human a Teleological Suspension of Man? Phenomenological Exploration of Sylvia Wynter's Fanonian and Biodicean Reflections," in *After Man*,

- Towards the Human: Critical Essays on Sylvia Wynter, ed. Anthony Bogues (Kingston, JA: Ian Randle, 2006), 237–57.
- Walter Mignolo, "When Speaking Was Not Good Enough: Illiterates, Barbarians, Savages, and Cannibals," in *Amerindian Images and the Legacy of Columbus*, ed. René Jara and Nicholas Spadaccini (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992a), 312–45.
- Walter Mignolo, "On the Colonization of Amerindian Languages and Memories: Renaissance Theories of Writing and the Discontinuity of the Classical Tradition," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, (1992b): 301–30.
- Michael Palencia-Roth, "Enemies of God: Monsters and the Theology of Conquest," in *Monsters, Tricksters, and Sacred Cows: Animal Tales and American Identities*, ed. A. James Arnold (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1996), 23–49.
- Orson Scott Card, *Xenocide* (New York, NY: Tor, 1991).
- Bartolomé de Las Casas, quoted in Paulo Carrozza, "From Conquest to Constitutions: Retrieving a Latin American Tradition of the Idea of Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 25, (2003): 281–313.
- Orson Scott Card, Speaker for the Dead (New York, NY: Tor, 1986).
- Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Mediations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns, (The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960). Italics original.
- Enrique Dussel, "Anti-Cartesian Meditations: On the Origin of the Philosophical Anti-Discourse of Modernity," *Journal for Culture and Religious Theory* 13, (2014): 11–53. For more on the Valladolid Debate and Las Casas, see the two-part work of Sylvia Wynter, "New Seville and the Conversion Experience of Bartolomé de Las Casas: Part One," *Jamaica Journal* 17, vol. 2 (1984a): 25–32 and "New Seville and the Conversion Experience of Bartolomé de Las Casas: Part Two," *Jamaica Journal* 17, vol. 3 (1984b): 46–55. Wynter argues that the overarching question of the debate was: "What kind of relation—hierarchical or reciprocal—was to be established between the two modes of the human, one agroartefactual, the other neolithic, that now confronted each other on the Caribbean islands and mainland territories" (Wynter 1984b: 52).
- Lewis R. Gordon, "Iris Marion Young on Political Responsibility: A Reading Through Jaspers and Fanon," *Symposia on Gender, Race and Philosophy* 3, (2007): 1–7.
- Alfred Schütz, "Reflections on the Problem of Relevance," *Collected Papers V. Phenomenology and the Social Sciences*, ed. Lester Embree (London: Springer, 2011).
- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017).
- Kyle Powys Whyte, "Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation in the Anthropocene," Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities, eds. Ursula Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann (Philadelphia: Routledge, 2017), 206–15.
- Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Grounded Normativity / Place-Based Solidarity," *American Quarterly* 68, (2016): 249–55.
- Vanessa Watts, "Indigenous Place-Thought & Agency Amongst Humans and Non-Humans (First Woman and Sky Woman Go on a European World Tour!)," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, (2013): 20–34.
- Jerry Lee Rosiek, Jimmy Snyder, and Scott Pratt, "The New Materialisms and Indigenous Theories of Non-Human Agency: Making the Case for Respectful Anti-Colonial Engagement," *Qualitative Inquiry* 26, (2020): 331–46.
- Kim TallBear, "Badass Indigenous Women Caretake Relations: #StandingRock, #IdleNoMore, #BlackLivesMatter," *Standing with Standing Rock: Voices from the #NoDAPL Movement*, ed. Nick Estes and Jaskiran Dhillon (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), 13–8.