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Beyond the Papuan Rebel: Land as First Ontology

A West Papuan Philosophical Perspective

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Abstract

Land is not one value to be weighed against others; it is the irreducible ground of being itself, prior to any metaphysical claim built upon it. Drawing on Kogoya's wider Psycho-Cosmocide project, this paper develops that claim into four theses: an ontological thesis that land precedes and grounds every cosmology; a formal instrument — the *Canvas Principle* — anchored in an embodiment argument (thinking presupposes embodiment, embodiment presupposes ecology, ecology presupposes land) explaining why every cosmology requires a canvas before it can become a picture; a diagnostic thesis that civilisation operates as a symbolic apparatus — the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus, together with the Eight Atlases and Seven Cages of existence — converting shared land into hierarchies of the sacred and the profane; and a political thesis about what follows for a colonised people. The ontology is built in dialogue with Vine Deloria Jr., Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, and Robin Wall Kimmerer, and extended through land as a canvas on which every civilisational worldview is painted, so that colonisation becomes the systematic repainting of reality itself. The Lani NATAKA triad bridges this account of being to jurisdiction, continuous with recognised international indigenous-rights instruments. The paper's most contested claim, a qualified defence of TPNPB armed resistance, receives the most sustained scrutiny: Fanon's account of anticolonial violence is placed alongside Arendt's critique of violence as incapable of founding legitimacy, and the resulting ambivalence is left unresolved. Wonesis, Kogoya's constructive antidote to Psycho-Cosmocide, is then read alongside Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson as a resurgence rather than merely a resistance project. The Canvas Principle synthesises Indigenous land-as-identity philosophy, phenomenology, and critical theories of ideology and coloniality into a single concept none of these literatures produces alone; the conception of existence and diagnosis stand as independently defensible contributions, while the political programme of armed resistance remains a separable, open question.

Keywords: Land as First Ontology; Psycho-Cosmocide; Canvas Principle; Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV); Indigenous Philosophy; West Papua; Decolonisation; Lani Customary Law; Political Ontology; Cosmology; Colonialism; Ontology.

I. Introduction

Land, not God, not spirit, not any imagined dimension of metaphysics, is the irreducible foundation of existence, and every civilisational story—religion, empire, ideology—is ultimately a story about the possession, loss, or defence of land. It is the central philosophical proposition of this essay. It is a metaphysical wager: ontology precedes theology; the material fact of standing on ground precedes and produces every subsequent claim about heaven, hell, chosenness, progress, or civilisation. I take that wager seriously here, restructure it according to its own internal logic and categories, and place it in explicit dialogue with the wider body of Psycho-Cosmocide theory I have developed across the Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, as well as with the decolonial, phenomenological, and comparative-religion literatures with which that theory is already in conversation.

Four arguments run through what follows, and I let their own structure organise the essay instead of imposing a foreign one on it. The first is ontological: land is the first and only uncontested ground of being, prior to and more fundamental than any metaphysical or theological claim built upon it. The second is the Canvas Principle: the claim, formalised in Section III, that every worldview presupposes a material and ecological canvas upon which language, memory, and metaphysics are painted, so that colonisation is never merely territorial seizure but the repainting of reality itself. The third is explanatory: civilisational project is a symbolic apparatus — what I call the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus, or CPCV — that converts this shared, unranked ground into a hierarchy of the sacred and the profane, the chosen and the discarded, the developed and the primitive, in order to justify the seizure of other peoples' land.¹ The fourth is political: given this diagnosis, what follows for a colonised people, and specifically for the Papuans from which my own cosmological vocabulary is drawn? Here the argument moves from philosophy to advocacy: I offer a qualified defence of the West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, TPNPB) as the last custodian of what I call cosmobian existence. Diagnosis and armed resistance are not, however, this project's last word: Section X turns to Wonesis, my rebuilding antidote to Psycho-Cosmocide, and readers who want that horizon in view from the outset should hold it alongside the diagnosis that occupies most of what follows. This fourth movement is the most contested, and I treat it with the most explicit care, because it asks philosophy to authorise killing. I take up that question directly in Section IX, setting the argument's own internal logic alongside the countervailing frameworks — international humanitarian law, due-process ethics, and my own earlier, more ambivalent treatment of the same question — that any serious philosophical treatment must place beside it. Section IV introduces the customary-legal vocabulary — the NATAKA triad of *Name Ta Kabulok*, *Ap Kuru*, and *Ap Inaorak* — through which Papuans articulate who may rightfully claim Papuan land, and which bridges the ontology of Sections II and III to the analytical and political sections that follow.

¹ The CPCV concept is first systematised in Yamin Kogoya, "Psycho-Cosmocide: A Theoretical Framework for the Systematic Destruction of Indigenous Cosmologies, Consciousness, and Metaphysical Order," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 1 (2025), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGPAT>.

II. Land as Identity and Thrownness

We don't live on land, we are land. This is a statement about identity, not location. It refuses the subject/environment split that underwrites most Western metaphysics since Descartes, in which a thinking self is housed in, but distinct from, an external material world it can survey, measure, and eventually own.² Land-as-identity has a well-established place in Indigenous philosophy. Vine Deloria Jr. argued that the fundamental division between Indigenous American religious traditions and the Christianity that displaced them was not doctrinal but spatial: Indigenous traditions are structured around land, ceremony, and place, while Christianity is structured around history, chosenness, and time.³ I make a structurally identical move for the Lani highlands of West Papua: land (Inawi) is not a possession but the condition of “verified cosmological belonging” (Inaorak), a term I derive directly from Lani root words and treat as roughly equivalent to, but philosophically prior to, the cosmobian mode of existence itself.⁴

This claim also carries real teeth in contemporary decolonial theory. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue that decolonisation is too often used as a metaphor for social-justice projects in general, when its literal referent — the repatriation of Indigenous land and life — is what distinguishes it from other forms of justice-seeking.⁵ Robin Wall Kimmerer, writing from Potawatomi botanical and ceremonial knowledge, develops a parallel argument in a different indigenous tradition: reciprocity with land, and not extraction from it, is the ethical baseline from which all other obligations are derived.⁶ Deloria, Tuck and Yang, and Kimmerer converge, from very different starting points, on the claim I make here: land is not one value among others to be weighed against development, progress, or security, but the ground on which the very possibility of weighing values rests.

The philosophical stakes sharpen when this paper turns from land-as-identity to the condition of having been “thrown” into existence without consent. What I am restating, in cosmobian vocabulary, is what Martin Heidegger called *Geworfenheit*, “*thrownness*”: the fact that Dasein always already finds itself in a world and a situation it did not choose, and must nonetheless take up as its own.⁷ Where Heidegger treats thrownness as an existential structure of the individual, I

² For the classical statement of this dualism and its consequences for the human relation to nature, see René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996 [1641]).

³ Vine Deloria Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*, 3rd ed. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2003).

⁴ Yamin Kogoya, “Remaking the Settler World from Inside the Papuan World: Colonial Consciousness and the Struggle for Reality in West Papua,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, no. 13 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGRTS>

⁵ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40.

⁶ Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013).

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962 [1927]), §29, §38.

universalise it as the “*first cage*” — the baseline, species-wide, pre-civilisational condition of unchosen birth, unavoidable suffering, and certain death that every organism shares regardless of culture, wealth, or belief.⁸ This distinction — between an inescapable existential cage shared by all beings and a historically constructed second cage imposed by some upon others — is the hinge on which my entire diagnostic apparatus turns, and I return to it before moving to the second cage itself.

III. The Canvas Principle

The land-as-identity claim just made deepens into something more than an analogy once it is stated as an image in its own right:

Every human struggle eventually returns to land because land is not merely property; it is the canvas upon which existence itself is painted. Every civilisation, culture, religion, philosophy, ideology, nation, and community paints its own reality onto the land it inhabits. Language becomes the brush. Symbols, images, rituals, architecture, and institutions become the strokes. Metaphysics provides the colours. Myths, legends, histories, memories, laws, dreams, and beliefs become the painting itself. Together they form a people’s worldview — the picture through which they understand themselves, one another, and the universe. Nothing exists outside this canvas. When one people colonises another’s land, they do not simply occupy territory or seize resources. They begin repainting the canvas. Ancient names are erased and replaced with new ones. Sacred sites become churches, mosques, temples, mines, plantations, military bases, or cities. New flags rise where old symbols once stood. Foreign languages replace ancestral speech. New myths displace ancient memories. New histories rewrite older histories. New heroes replace old ancestors. New gods occupy old sacred spaces. New laws redefine what is true, legitimate, civilised, and possible. Colonisation is not simply the theft of land. It is the sustained repainting of reality itself. To make a people landless is not only to remove them from geography. It is to separate them from the very canvas upon which their cosmology, identity, memory, morality, imagination, and future were painted. Once the original canvas has been repainted, later generations often inherit the new picture without ever realising another one existed before it. The greatest victory of colonisation is thus not military conquest but the successful replacement of one civilisation’s painting with another, until the new image comes to appear natural, inevitable, and eternal. This is why land is first ontology. Every worldview requires a canvas before it can become a picture. Every civilisation paints a different image, but every image depends upon the prior existence of land. Whoever possesses the canvas possesses the greatest power of all: the power to determine which reality future generations will inherit.

The significance of the canvas metaphor lies in the distinction it establishes between land and the realities constructed upon it. A painting may be erased and replaced countless times, yet the canvas

⁸ Yamin Kogoya, “West Papua: Ontological Cages and Colonial Consent: Myth, Power, and the Colonial Structuring of Reality,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 4 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGWPO>.

remains the condition that makes every painting possible. Colonisation does not create a new world from nothing; it repaints an existing one. The land remains, but the names change. The sacred becomes secular or foreign. One language replaces another. New laws displace customary law, imported histories overwrite ancestral memory, and foreign cosmologies gradually become accepted as common sense. The physical landscape may appear unchanged, yet the human reality inhabiting that landscape has been fundamentally transformed. Seen from this perspective, the CPCV is better understood as the mechanism of repainting. It does not destroy the canvas itself; rather, it gradually replaces the symbolic, moral, historical, and metaphysical worlds painted upon it. The movement is cumulative, not instantaneous. Each new institution, language, map, religion, educational system, and political order adds another layer of paint until later generations inherit the new image without recognising that another civilisation once occupied the same ground. The deepest achievement of Psycho-Cosmocide is accordingly not conquest alone but civilisational amnesia: the disappearance of the memory that another human reality was ever painted upon the same land. This understanding also casts Plato's cave in a different light. The problem is no longer simply that human beings mistake shadows for reality. Rather, they inherit a reality whose earlier layers have already been painted over. The shadows themselves carry this history: they are the accumulated products of historical repainting, not simple epistemological illusions. The greatest danger is for this reason not only losing the land itself, but forgetting that another world once stood upon it. Colonisation succeeds most completely when the new painting comes to appear natural, inevitable, and eternal, while the older painting disappears not only from sight but from memory. The canvas metaphor also clarifies why land must be first ontology. Every act of thought presupposes a thinking being. Every thinking being presupposes embodiment. Every embodied existence presupposes an ecological world within which it lives. Ecology, in turn, presupposes land. Land is therefore the transcendental condition of possibility for every human reality, not one object among others within it. Gods, metaphysics, civilisations, nations, sciences, philosophies, and religions may differ radically in the pictures they paint, but none can exist without first standing somewhere. The argument thus reaches its central conclusion: land, not God, is the irreducible foundation of human existence because every metaphysical imagination already presupposes the ecological world from which it arises.

Definition 1. The Canvas Principle

Canvas Principle. *Every worldview presupposes a material and ecological canvas upon which language, memory, symbols, institutions, and metaphysical systems are constructed. Colonisation transforms reality not only by occupying land but by over time repainting the civilisational canvas upon which human consciousness, memory, and identity develop.*

The Canvas Principle brings together two philosophical insights that have largely remained separate. Indigenous philosophies have long seen land as the source of identity, belonging, and relational existence, while phenomenological traditions have demonstrated that consciousness is inseparable from embodied life in the world. The Canvas Principle unites these insights by arguing

that every cosmology, civilisation, and system of meaning presupposes a material and ecological ground upon which it is symbolically constructed. Land is accordingly not simply one object within reality but the condition that makes every human reality possible.

Understood in this way, colonisation becomes more than territorial occupation or political domination. It is the organised repainting of the symbolic world through which later generations come to perceive, remember, and inhabit reality. The Canvas Principle for this reason provides a conceptual bridge between land as first account of being and the Psycho-Cosmocide diagnosis developed throughout this paper.

IV. The NATAKA Triad: Lani Customary Law as Cosmological Jurisdiction

The land conception of existence developed in Section II acquires customary-legal expression through the Lani concepts of Name Ta Kabulok, Ap Kuru, Ap Inaorak, and Wam'ndanak'me, which together define who may rightfully belong to, occupy, use, and protect a given territory.⁹

The first term, *Name Ta Kabulok* (NATAKA), is a foundational customary speech-act in Lani law. *Name* refers to a bounded home-world—a house, forest, river, hunting ground, garden, ancestral territory, and the wider ecological and cosmological relationships that constitute it. *Ta* is the customary challenge, "Who are you?", directed towards those entering that space, while *Kabulok* denotes the sound, movement, or disturbance created by their presence. Together, the phrase asks more than a question of identity. It requires anyone entering, using, or extracting resources from another's customary territory to account for who they are, why they are there, and by what authority they claim access. Name Ta Kabulok so functions simultaneously as a greeting, a legal inquiry, and an assertion of customary jurisdiction. This understanding resonates with a broader anthropological insight. Fredrik Barth argued that ethnic and territorial groups are constituted less by the cultural content they contain than by the social boundaries they maintain. Name Ta Kabulok exemplifies such a boundary, not as an abstract line on a map but as a living customary practice through which territorial authority, responsibility, and belonging are continually affirmed. The boundary exists because it is enacted whenever an unfamiliar presence is required to answer the question: "Who are you?".¹⁰

The second and third concepts distinguish between two customary relationships to land. *Ap Kuru* refers to a person whose ancestral memory, genealogy, and customary attachment belong to

⁹ The Name Ta Kabulok / Ap Kuru / Ap Inaorak vocabulary is developed within the published Psycho-Cosmocide corpus rather than in a single standalone note: see Yamin Kogoya, "Remaking the Settler World from Inside the Papuan World: Colonial Consciousness and the Struggle for Reality in West Papua," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 13 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGRTS>, on Inaorak; and Yamin Kogoya, "Wonesis: Framework, Belonging, and the Antidote to Psycho-Cosmocide," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 16 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGWFB>, §4, on the Inaorak/Kuru distinction as a theory of belonging.

¹⁰ Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), 9–38.

another geographical place but who now resides within the customary territory of another community. In this sense, an Ap Kuru lives on another people's land while remaining ancestrally connected to a different home.

By contrast, *Ap Inaorak* denotes those whose belonging is customarily and ontologically recognised. Derived from *Inawi* (home, land) and *Orak* (to exist, to be valid, verified, or legitimate), the term refers not to legitimacy conferred by written law, state recognition, or economic ownership, but to legitimacy established through ancestral memory, origin stories, myths, genealogies, language, ceremonial life, and enduring ecological relationships with a particular place. An Ap Inaorak thus belongs because the land itself remembers that relationship through the continuity of community, memory, and customary life.

This distinction is well attested across the ethnographic literature. Throughout Melanesia and the New Guinea Highlands, customary title is typically established through genealogy, origin narratives, and ancestral memory instead of documentary title.¹¹ The same principle also finds recognition in international law. Both ILO Convention 169 and Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) affirm Indigenous peoples' rights to traditionally occupied lands, recognising customary relationships established through long-standing occupation, ancestry, and traditional use over documentary title alone.¹² Taken together, these concepts constitute a coherent customary-legal system in which land, belonging, authority, and responsibility are viewed as inseparable. While rooted in Lani customary law, they also resonate with broader anthropological scholarship and international legal recognition of Indigenous customary tenure.

One clarification is necessary. Throughout my earlier work, *Ap Inaorak* refers, in its broader customary and fundamental sense, to any Papuan whose belonging is recognised through genuine ancestral connection to land.¹³

Here, however, *Ap Inaorak* is used in a deliberately narrower sense. It refers specifically to those Papuan guardians, protectors, advocates, and resistance fighters who undertake the defence of Papuan land and sovereignty. Belonging is therefore no longer read solely as an inherited ancestral relationship with land but as a political responsibility actively assumed in its defence. This narrower definition should not be confused with the broader customary and existential meaning of *Ap Inaorak*, which remains grounded in ancestry, memory, and enduring relationships with place.

¹¹ James F. Weiner, *The Empty Place: Poetry, Space, and Being among the Foi of Papua New Guinea* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Ron Crocombe, ed., *Land Tenure in the Pacific*, 3rd ed. (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1987).

¹² International Labour Organization, Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989), Arts. 13–19; United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Art. 26.

¹³ Kogoya, “Remaking the Settler World from Inside the Papuan World,” No. 13, <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGRTS>; the narrower, combatant-coextensive redefinition of *Ap Inaorak* used here departs from the broader anthropological usage set out in Kogoya, “Wonesis,” No. 16, <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGWFB>, §4.

The fourth concept, *Wam'ndanak'me*—literally, a pig released onto an unfenced farm—describes a territory whose customary protections have been deliberately dismantled, leaving it open to unrestricted entry, occupation, and exploitation. Anyone may enter, let their pigs roam, harvest what they find, and leave without permission or obligation because no family or clan can any longer stand at the boundary and ask, "Who are you?" The territory has already been transformed into a space where anyone, and even every wandering pig, is free to feed. The metaphor accordingly signifies far more than physical openness. It marks the collapse of customary jurisdiction, the disappearance of recognised custodianship, and the dissolution of the boundary separating home from trespass.

Present-day West Papua under external administration can be understood through this metaphor. Like Garrett Hardin's account of the unmanaged commons, the issue is the dismantling of the customary institutions that once governed land use, not unrestricted access as such. The comparison, however, is normative, not descriptive: the concern here is not resource depletion alone but the erosion of customary jurisdiction and responsibility.¹⁴ Within this interpretation of Lani customary law, a trespasser without recognised customary standing may be "expelled either by verbal warning, force, pursuit, or war." This raises an important philosophical distinction. A customary right to defend land is not identical to a doctrine authorising lethal force against everyone lacking ancestral connection. The former concerns the defence of customary jurisdiction; the latter concerns the moral justification of taking human life. These are not equivalent claims. Any justification for lethal force—whether advanced by a state, a liberation movement, or a customary authority—must satisfy the same evidentiary and ethical standards governing every judgment involving life and death.

The customary vocabulary developed at the scale of the household is then extended, through TPNPB's own political self-understanding, to the imagined scale of a sovereign Papuan nation. On this reading, TPNPB becomes the collective voice of the *Name Ta Kabulok* challenge, assuming the role of *Ap Inaorak* not as the custodian of a household or clan territory alone, but at an expanded scale: guardian of a homeland encompassing the lands, memories, and cosmological worlds of Papuan societies. By the same logic, those whose recognised ancestral belonging lies elsewhere occupy the position of *Ap Kuru*: persons residing within, but not ancestrally constituted by, that customary world. Read in this way, TPNPB presents itself as the defender of a customary order grounded in land, memory, and ancestral responsibility — a claim that exceeds what an armed movement alone would need to make. The political claim for this reason rests upon a prior ontological claim: that those recognised as customary custodians possess not only a relationship to land but also responsibilities arising from that relationship. Defence of the homeland is presented as an extension of customary guardianship — a claim about inherited responsibility, distinct from a bare assertion of military power. Extending this customary logic from the scale of the household or clan to that of an entire sovereign state, however, raises questions that customary

¹⁴ Cf. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243–1248, cited here only for the structural image, not for Hardin's own contested policy conclusions.

law alone cannot resolve. Once an entire population is distinguished according to ancestral belonging, difficult ethical and legal questions inevitably emerge concerning citizenship, residence, rights, and the legitimate use of force. A customary right to defend land cannot by itself determine the moral status of every political action undertaken in its name. For that reason, any future sovereign Papuan state must remain subject to the same standards of evidence, accountability, due process, and human rights that this paper applies to every claim involving the taking of human life.

The movement from Lani customary law to the wider civilisational argument is not a change of subject but a change of scale. The NATAKA triad describes how one Indigenous society understands land, belonging, custodianship, and responsibility within its own cosmological world. The question that follows is whether the same structural logic works beyond Lani society, wherever one civilisation encounters another.

I suggest that the same logic extends beyond Lani society. Every civilisation develops its own account of belonging through stories of origin, sacred places, law, memory, and political authority. The language differs, but the underlying structure is remarkably similar. These narratives do more than explain the world; they establish who belongs, who governs, whose history matters, and whose claims to land appear legitimate. In this sense, the distinction between *Ap Inaorak* and *Ap Kuru* is not unique to Lani customary law. Every civilisation develops its own categories of belonging and non-belonging, although they are expressed through different languages, institutions, and cosmologies.

The difference emerges when one cosmological order acquires the power to overwrite another. Colonisation is not simply the encounter between two peoples but the encounter between two competing realities, each seeking to establish itself as the legitimate painting upon the same canvas. The question so shifts from customary law to civilisation itself: by what mechanisms does one human reality come to replace another? It is this broader development that the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm seeks to explain through the concept of the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV).

V. Civilisational Myth as Second Cage: The CPCV Diagnosis

If land is the canvas upon which every civilisation paints its human reality, the next philosophical question is how one civilisational painting comes to replace another. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm answers this through the concept of the CPCV: the processes by which one cosmological order increasingly displaces another until the new world comes to appear natural, inevitable, and original. Colonisation thus begins not with military occupation alone but with stories capable of legitimising a new moral order. One of the most enduring forms of this transformation appears in narratives of chosenness. Across many civilisations, origin stories that identify a particular people as divinely chosen, uniquely destined, or historically favoured have accompanied territorial expansion, political authority, and the reorganisation of conquered worlds. The argument

developed here is accordingly structural, not polemical. It concerns the social and political function of such narratives, not the inherent character of any particular religion, people, or civilisation. The Abrahamic traditions provide one historically influential example of a much broader phenomenon examined throughout comparative religion, anthropology, and social theory.

The CPCV begins by transforming ordinary distinctions into sacred ones. Here, the insight of Émile Durkheim becomes significant. Durkheim argued that the distinction between the sacred and the profane is not a property of the world itself but a social achievement through which communities create moral boundaries. By declaring particular lands, peoples, objects, or histories sacred, societies generate the collective solidarity that binds members together while simultaneously legitimising exclusion, hierarchy, and claims against those who stand outside the sacred order. Within the Psycho-Cosmocide framework, such distinctions become one of the principal mechanisms through which a civilisational reality establishes itself as natural, legitimate, and morally authoritative.¹⁵ The same pattern extends beyond any single religious tradition. Mircea Eliade showed that narratives of chosen lands, sacred centres, and divinely ordered worlds recur throughout the history of civilisation. Whether expressed through the *axis mundi*, the Promised Land, the Holy City, Rome's myth of divine destiny, the Inca Empire's solar ancestry, or imperial China's Mandate of Heaven, these narratives establish more than sacred geography. They locate political authority, territorial legitimacy, and collective identity within a cosmological order that presents itself as natural, eternal, and divinely sanctioned.¹⁶ Once such a cosmological order has been established, the question becomes how it is defended when challenged. René Girard argued that societies often resolve internal rivalries by redirecting them towards a scapegoat or outsider. Violence thereby acquires a sacred justification. It is no longer experienced as violence but as the defence of divine order, moral purity, or historical destiny. Within the Psycho-Cosmocide framework, this marks a further stage in the repainting of human reality: violence itself becomes absorbed into the cosmology and ceases to appear as violence at all.¹⁷

The argument developed here is accordingly structural, not tied to any single civilisation. The CPCV does not describe the pathology of one religion, one civilisation, one ethnicity, or one historical period. It describes a recurring process through which civilisational narratives establish moral legitimacy, organise belonging and exclusion, and little by little replace one human reality with another. The Abrahamic traditions provide one historically influential illustration of this broader pattern, not its exclusive expression. In this sense, Psycho-Cosmocide is not the monopoly of any civilisation, religion, ethnicity, race, ideology, or political doctrine. It is a recurrent possibility wherever one cosmological order acquires the power to overwrite another. The argument analyses the recurring structure of *chosenness* narratives, not the moral character of any

¹⁵ Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995 [1912]).

¹⁶ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959).

¹⁷ René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

particular people or tradition. To read it as an indictment of a people would reproduce the very essentialism that the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm seeks to overcome.

The Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV) refers not simply to myth but to the means through which civilisational myths become embodied as lived reality. It describes a self-reproducing symbolic and psychological movement that gradually reshapes perception, memory, identity, and moral imagination until the imposed order comes to appear natural, legitimate, and inevitable. Under such conditions, colonised populations may come to defend and reproduce the very structures contributing to the erosion of their own cosmological continuity. The CPCV describes more than cultural influence or ideological persuasion. It proposes that civilisational worlds reproduce themselves by reshaping how people perceive themselves, their place, and their possibilities. In this respect, the concept shares important affinities with Louis Althusser's theory of ideological interpellation. Althusser argued that ideology "hails" individuals into social positions that appear freely chosen while being structurally produced. The CPCV develops this insight beyond ideology alone to the level of civilisation itself, where entire cosmological worlds become internalised as natural, legitimate, and self-evident.¹⁸ The CPCV also shares important affinities with Frantz Fanon's analysis of colonial consciousness. Fanon showed how colonial domination becomes internalised long before it is consciously accepted, producing forms of self-perception in which the colonised come to see themselves through the values, categories, and judgments of the coloniser. The CPCV builds on this insight beyond individual psychology to the level of civilisation itself. It asks how entire cosmological worlds become internalised until an imposed order is experienced not as foreign but as natural, desirable, and worthy of defence.¹⁹ The CPCV also resonates with Sylvia Wynter's critique of the modern Western "genre of Man." Wynter argues that the figure of the fully human is not a universal category but a historically constructed ideal produced through colonial modernity and defined against those designated as its human Others. The CPCV carries further this insight beyond the politics of racial classification to the broader construction of civilisational reality itself. It asks how entire cosmological orders come to define not only who counts as fully human, but also whose histories, lands, memories, and futures are recognised as legitimate.²⁰ Taken together, these perspectives illuminate how ideology, colonial consciousness, and racial classification become internalised. The CPCV extends this analysis to the wider structure of human reality itself. It asks how space, time, memory, meaning, morality, and identity are over time reorganised until an imposed civilisational world is experienced as the only world that has ever existed.

The central claim of this paper finds an unexpected point of convergence within biblical scholarship itself. Walter Brueggemann argued that land, rather than abstract theology alone, provides the organising principle of Israel's covenant tradition. Possession, exile, and promised

¹⁸ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–186.

¹⁹ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967 [1952]).

²⁰ Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337.

return are not peripheral motifs but the narrative structure through which covenant, identity, judgment, and restoration acquire their meaning. In this respect, the Hebrew Bible itself reinforces the broader argument advanced here: human realities remain inseparable from the land upon which they are lived.²¹ The transition from Judaism to Christianity did not dissolve the significance of land. W. D. Davies argued that Israel's territorial theology was inherited, contested, and partially spiritualised within the early Christian movement, yet never fully severed from its geographical foundations. Even where theological emphasis shifted towards universal salvation, Jerusalem and the Holy Land continued to occupy a privileged place within Christian memory, pilgrimage, and sacred imagination. Land for this reason remained central to the formation of religious identity, even as its meaning expanded beyond ethnic Israel.²² Taken together, these traditions suggest that the centrality of land is not an exceptional feature of any single civilisation but a recurring structure of human reality. My contribution here is to identify this shared underlying principle and to explain its implications for colonisation, civilisational transformation, and Psycho-Cosmocide.

The same civilisational structure appears repeatedly throughout history: communities imagine themselves as uniquely chosen, identify a particular territory as their rightful homeland, and understand historical fulfilment through its possession or restoration. Anthony D. Smith analysed this recurring pattern under the heading of "*chosen peoples*," showing that it belongs to a much broader history of nation formation than the biblical tradition alone.²³ The same civilisational structure is evident in settler-colonial societies. In the United States, westward expansion was frequently seen through the language of a "New Israel" entering a providentially granted land. The doctrine of Manifest Destiny drew much of its moral force from this theological imagination, presenting territorial expansion not merely as political ambition but as the fulfilment of a divinely sanctioned historical mission. Within that narrative, the displacement of Indigenous nations could be represented not as conquest but as the unfolding of providential destiny.²⁴ A comparable civil religion appears in Afrikaner nationalism under apartheid, where the Boer trek and later land seizure were interpreted as a covenantal journey towards a promised land. This narrative did more than remember history; it transformed territorial possession into sacred destiny and rendered African claims to the same land morally and politically illegitimate.²⁵ Taken together, these cases demonstrate that the chosen-people/promised-land narrative is not confined to one religious tradition but functions as a recurring civilisational structure. Within the Psycho-Cosmocide framework, it functions as a dynamic through which territorial possession acquires moral

²¹ Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002 [1977]).

²² W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

²³ Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

²⁴ Conrad Cherry, ed., *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny*, rev. ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998 [1971]).

²⁵ T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

legitimacy while the dispossession of others comes to appear historically necessary, divinely sanctioned, or ethically justified. Although historically inherited from the Abrahamic traditions, the pattern has become portable across diverse national and imperial projects.

The contemporary Israeli–Palestinian conflict provides a further illustration of the argument advanced throughout this paper. While historians and political theorists disagree sharply over competing historical, legal, and moral claims, they largely agree that land remains the central object of dispute. The conflict so reinforces the broader proposition that struggles over land are simultaneously struggles over history, identity, memory, belonging, and political legitimacy.²⁶ The purpose of these comparisons is not to determine which territorial claims are historically or politically justified. It is to demonstrate a broader philosophical pattern. Across civilisational history, territory and eschatology repeatedly appear together as mutually reinforcing elements of human reality. Read comparatively, instead of through the lens of any single tradition, the evidence consistently points towards the same conclusion: land is not a peripheral object of religious imagination but one of its organising conditions.

This portability claim invites an obvious methodological worry: a framework capable of explaining the fall of Rome, the Spanish conquest, Manifest Destiny, apartheid, and the incorporation of West Papua by an identical underlying pattern risks explaining too much to explain anything in particular. Vivek Chibber has pressed a structurally similar charge against subaltern-studies historiography, arguing that culturalist accounts of colonial difference tend to flatten sharply different political economies and historical sequences into a single recurring narrative, trading explanatory precision for narrative unity.²⁷ The reply owed to any structural theory of this kind is the same one owed here: The CPCV is not offered as a sufficient causal explanation of any particular conquest—the specific economic, military, and administrative history of each case still requires its own account—but as a claim about the symbolic-legitimizing layer that recurs across otherwise disparate material histories. Whether that layer does independent explanatory work, or simply redescribes what political economy already explains, is a fair question this paper does not claim to settle, and one to which later papers in this series will need to return.

VI. The Architecture of Capture: Eight Atlases, Seven Cages

The Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV) acts across the entire arrangement of human existence, not any single cultural, political, or religious domain. This paper maps that pattern using two working taxonomies developed at length in companion papers in this series: the Eight Atlases of Human Existence—spanning the Physical/Material, Biological/Organism,

²⁶ For contrasting historiographical perspectives that nonetheless converge on the centrality of territory, see Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020); and Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012).

²⁷ Vivek Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London: Verso, 2013).

Cultural/Mythological, Metaphysical/Transcendental, Particle/Energy, Space/Time, Memory/Consciousness, and the Ultimate Unknown—which identify the principal dimensions through which human beings inhabit and interpret reality.²⁸ The relationship between these dimensions is better viewed as ecological than mechanical, in the sense in which Escobar treats developmental worlds as an interdependent ecology rather than a single hierarchy: damage to any one aspect of existence tends to propagate through the others instead of remaining locally contained.²⁹ The corresponding mechanisms through which those dimensions become increasingly reorganised under CPCV are mapped by the Seven Existential Cages: the Physical, Symbolic, Metaphysical, and Technological Cages, the Corridor of the Dead, the Cage of Absolute Unknowing, and the Cage of the Irreducible Other.³⁰ Nothing here depends on the specific number of atlases or cages, which function here as a working inventory rather than a closed system; what matters for the case developed below is a narrower and more load-bearing distinction within that architecture, between a first cage that is universal and a second cage that is historically constructed.

The first cage is universal. Every living being enters existence without consent, inhabits a mortal body, and remains subject to the limits imposed by birth, embodiment, suffering, and death. The second cage is historically constructed. Unlike the first, it is not imposed by existence itself but by human beings upon one another through language, myth, law, religion, ideology, education, and political institutions. Psycho-Cosmocide begins not in the first cage but in the second, where symbolic worlds acquire the power to reshape the conditions under which human reality is experienced.³¹ A comparable distinction appears in Giorgio Agamben's analysis of *zoē* (bare biological life) and *bios* (politically qualified life). Agamben argues that sovereign power operates by determining the threshold at which biological existence is admitted into, or excluded from, political community—a threshold he describes as the state of exception. I develop this insight beyond

²⁸ Yamin Kogoya, “The Ecosystem of Papuan Extinction: A Five-Hundred-Year Civilisational Architecture of Ecosystemic Replacement, Structural Containment, and Manufactured Extinction,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 6 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGTEO>; elaborated further in Yamin Kogoya, “From the Wreckage: Eight Atlases of Human Existence Under Total Colonial Domination,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 11 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGFTW>.

²⁹ Compare Arturo Escobar’s account of the “pluriverse” as an ecology of worlds rather than a single developmental hierarchy: Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). For a fuller account of this ecological interdependence, including the mechanism by which relational rupture in one atlas cascades into the others, see Yamin Kogoya, “From the Wreckage: Eight Atlases of Human Existence Under Colonial Domination,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 11 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGFTW>, esp. “The Cascade of Relational Collapse.”

³⁰ Yamin Kogoya, “The Seven Existential Cages: A Speculative Decolonial Ontology,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 3 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGTSE>.

³¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). The same distinction is developed at length, through the myths of Sisyphus, the Procrustean bed, and Gilgamesh, as the Given and the Constructed in Yamin Kogoya, “The Given and the Constructed: Seven Existential Cages of Psycho-Cosmocide Theory,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 29 (2026).

political sovereignty. The second cage concerns not only the governance of life but the symbolic and cosmological worlds through which life itself comes to be read. The crucial difference concerns the location of power itself. Giorgio Agamben locates it primarily within sovereignty, law, and the political organisation of life. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm locates it earlier, within the symbolic, mythological, and cosmological worlds through which reality is first experienced. The argument thus moves from the analysis of political power towards the analysis of reality-making itself—a trajectory that places it in closer dialogue with Plato than with the governmental analyses associated with Michel Foucault.

Plato's allegory of the cave provides one of the central philosophical images for the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm. The prisoners mistake shadows for reality because the symbolic world into which they are born determines the limits of perception itself. I build on this insight beyond the individual prisoner to entire civilisations. The question is no longer simply how one person mistakes appearance for reality, but how whole societies inherit symbolic worlds that little by little replace earlier realities without recognising that the replacement has occurred.³²

In Plato's allegory, the prisoners mistake shadows projected onto a cave wall for reality because the symbolic world they inherit defines the limits of what can be perceived, questioned, and imagined. Their understanding of truth, value, and possibility is organised around an illusion they neither created nor recognise as such. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm adopts this philosophical image but relocates it within the history of civilisation. The claim that "civilisation did not break the first cage but convinced people that it had" expresses the same structure in historical rather than purely epistemological terms. The promise of progress—from "primitive" to "modern", from "savage" to "civilised"—becomes the shadow-play through which one civilisational order persuades another to mistake symbolic reconstruction for liberation. The point of departure from Plato concerns the historical status of the cave itself. Rather than treating it as a permanent feature of the human condition, I understand it as a historically constructed civilisational apparatus capable of being reproduced and extended across societies. Colonialism accordingly becomes not only the occupation of land but the construction of new symbolic worlds within which colonised peoples gradually inherit an imposed reality as though it were their own. Contemporary West Papua provides the principal case through which this paper explores that unfolding.

VII. Cosmopolitan Existence and the Ap-ap: Modes of Being Under Capture

The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm distinguishes four broad modes of human being. These do not represent successive stages of historical progress but fundamentally different ways of organising reality, belonging, memory, and existence itself. The first is civilisational, structured through states, institutions, writing, and large-scale systems of political and symbolic authority. The second is cosmopolitan, structured through reciprocal relationships among land, kinship, ancestral memory, language, and the living ecological world. The third comprises the largely vanished pre-literate

³² Plato, *Republic*, Book VII, 514a–520a, trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992).

worlds whose cosmological orders survive only in fragmentary archaeological, oral, and ethnographic traces. The fourth remains intentionally open, recognising the possibility that future—or presently unimagined—forms of human existence may emerge beyond both contemporary civilisation and surviving cosmobian societies.³³

The term *Cosmobian*, together with its Lani counterpart *Inaorak*, functions here as a fundamental category rather than merely an ethnographic description. It refers to a mode of human being organised through continuous, reciprocal relationships with land, kinship, ancestral memory, language, and the wider structure of the Eight Atlases. A cosmobian world is accordingly not defined by ethnicity alone but by the way reality itself is inhabited, organised, and reproduced before it becomes fundamentally reordered by foreign civilisational institutional projects.

Against this stands my most provocative coinage: the *Ap-ap*, the counterfeit human, which I theorise as the terminal product of complete parasitological incapacitation.³⁴ I develop this through structural homology with six biological parasite-host relationships — *Toxoplasma gondii*'s manipulation of rodent fear-behaviour, *Ophiocordyceps unilateralis*'s control of ant locomotion, and four further cases — arguing that colonial ideology achieves an analogous capture of colonised behaviour and self-perception without requiring continuous physical coercion. This is, again, continuous with an existing critical lineage: Fanon's account of the "colonised intellectual" who reproduces the coloniser's categories of value even after independence is a direct ancestor,³⁵ as is Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's argument that colonial language instruction produces a "cultural bomb" that annihilates a people's belief in their own names, languages, and heritage from within.³⁶ What the *Ap-ap* concept contributes is naming the endpoint of that development as a stable existential category in its own right — not a colonised subject still capable of resurgence, but a "*terminal product*" — a considerably darker verdict than either Fanon or Ngũgĩ offers, and one that sits in some tension with my later, more hopeful turn to Wonesis (Section X below).

VIII. West Papua as Case Study: Coloniality, Development, and the Erasure of the Atlases

³³ Yamin Kogoya, "Four Worlds, One Dying Earth: The Four Modes of Existence and the War on the Cosmobian World," Kurumbi Wone Working Paper, No. 17 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGFWO>.

³⁴ Yamin Kogoya, "Colonial Parasites and Colonised Hosts: The Psycho-Cosmocide of Cosmobian Existence in West Papua," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 18 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGCPA>. The concrete phenomenology of this capture — its expression in the Papuan vernacular *dia sudah jadi manusia*, "he or she has become human," and its embodiment in the figure of the colonised elite — is developed in Yamin Kogoya, "*Plato's Cave and the Architecture of Psycho-Cosmocide in West Papua*," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 8 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGPCA>.

³⁵ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004 [1961]), esp. ch. 1, "On Violence."

³⁶ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey, 1986).

The theoretical account developed throughout this paper finds its principal application in the modern history of West Papua. The incorporation of West Papua into Indonesian administration—beginning with the contested 1969 "Act of Free Choice" and continuing through decades of resource extraction, transmigration, and militarised governance—provides the historical setting through which the operation of the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV) can be examined.³⁷ The West Papuan case also illustrates the wider structures analysed by Aníbal Quijano under the concept of the "coloniality of power." Quijano demonstrated how colonial hierarchies of race, labour, knowledge, and political authority persisted beyond formal decolonisation within the institutions of the modern nation-state. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm accepts this diagnosis but carries it further. Its concern is not only the persistence of colonial power but the progressive reorganisation of the cosmological worlds through which colonised peoples understand land, memory, identity, and reality itself.³⁸ Walter Mignolo likewise argues that modernity and coloniality constitute two inseparable dimensions of the same historical transformation. Modernity's image of itself as universal reason, civilisation, and progress depended upon the simultaneous production of colonial worlds against which that universality could be defined. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm extends this insight from the organisation of knowledge to the organisation of reality itself. Coloniality is understood not only as the hidden condition of modernity but as the progressive repainting of the civilisational canvas upon which human beings come to inhabit the world.³⁹

These generalities acquire concrete weight once named. Indonesia's 1969 Act of Free Choice permitted only 1,025 hand-picked delegates, drawn from a Papuan population of roughly 800,000, to vote—unanimously and under documented military supervision—for continued Indonesian administration, a result the United Nations General Assembly formally "took note of" rather than endorsed.⁴⁰ Three months before that vote had even taken place, Jakarta had already granted Freeport-McMoRan mining rights over the Grasberg copper and gold deposits in the Amungme highlands; the Amungme were subsequently relocated to malarial lowlands, where an epidemic killed 216 children in a single outbreak, while the mine went on to generate hundreds of billions of dollars in revenue over the following half-century.⁴¹ From the 1970s, the transmigration

³⁷ Yamin Kogoya, "Re-thinking 64 Years of Papuan Resistance: From the Psychopathology of a Moral Spectacle to a Sovereign State-Building Strategy," Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 9 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGRYO>. On the 1969 Act of Free Choice itself, independent documentation is extensive; see, e.g., the UN Secretary-General's 1969 report to the General Assembly (A/7723) and subsequent historical treatments of West Papua's incorporation.

³⁸ Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533–580.

³⁹ Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

⁴⁰ T. D. Musgrave, "An Analysis of the 1969 Act of Free Choice in West Papua," in *Sovereignty, Statehood and State Responsibility: Essays in Honour of James Crawford*, ed. Christine Chinkin and Freya Baetens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 209–228.

⁴¹ Elizabeth Brundige, Winter King, Priyeha Vahali, Stephen Vladeck, and Xiang Yuan, *Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the Law of Genocide to the History of Indonesian Control* (New Haven: Yale

programme relocated hundreds of thousands of Javanese and Balinese settlers onto land the Indonesian state classified as empty—a doctrine of terra nullius in Indonesian idiom—under a policy its own Minister for Transmigration described in 1985 as a means of achieving “ethnic integration.”⁴² The most recent phase, the Merauke food-estate project, allocates three million hectares of rainforest, wetland, and savanna to industrial agriculture without the free, prior, and informed consent international law requires.⁴³ By conservative estimate, more than one hundred thousand West Papuans have died under Indonesian administration since 1963, and a further hundred thousand were displaced by military operations and agribusiness expansion in the twelve months preceding this paper’s submission alone.⁴⁴ None of these figures is offered as evidence for the paper’s ontological claims, which depend on no particular casualty count; they are offered as the material referent of the theoretical apparatus developed above—what “the erasure of the atlases” and “the repainting of the canvas” mean in the register of bodies, land, and demography rather than metaphor.⁴⁵

The racial hierarchy through which this occupation is locally justified and lived has its own genealogy, one the CPCV mechanism developed in Section V predicts but does not itself trace. Contemporary Indonesian anti-Papuan racism—dark skin and hair invoked as markers of inferiority, slurs circulating in public and official discourse, the 2019 Surabaya dormitory raid that gave rise to the #PapuanLivesMatter movement—does not originate within modern Indonesia alone. It reproduces a symbolic vocabulary assembled across centuries of European travel writing, racial taxonomy, missionary discourse, and physical anthropology, later absorbed into Indonesian nationalist, developmental, and security institutions.⁴⁶ Read alongside the chosen-peoples material developed in Section V, this genealogy supplies what a purely comparative method cannot: not a general pattern that West Papua merely illustrates alongside other cases, but the specific historical

Law School Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, 2004); Gary Baines, “Resource Extraction as a Tool of Racism in West Papua,” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 26, no. 5 (2022): 824–843.

⁴² Jason MacLeod, “The West Papuan Liberation Movement, Indonesian Settler Colonialism and Western Imperialism from an International Solidarity Perspective,” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 27, no. 6 (2023): 1123–1149.

⁴³ Rainforest Rescue, *Indonesia: The Future of Papua Hangs in the Balance* (2025), <https://www.rainforest-rescue.org/updates/14119/indonesia-the-future-of-papua-hangs-in-the-balance>; “The World’s Largest Deforestation Project,” *London Review of Books*, 18 August 2025; “Deforestation in West Papua Is Out of Control: Global MPs Warn at COP30,” *Pacific Islands News Association*, 14 November 2025.

⁴⁴ Jim Elmslie, *West Papuan Demographic Transition and the 2010 Indonesian Census: “Slow Motion Genocide” or Not?*, CPACS Working Paper No. 11/1 (Sydney: University of Sydney, 2010); Brundige et al., *Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua*; “Deforestation in West Papua Is Out of Control: Global MPs Warn at COP30,” *Pacific Islands News Association*, 14 November 2025.

⁴⁵ A fuller historical and empirical account of this architecture of occupation is developed in Yamin Kogoya, “*The Papuans: A Cosmobian Society Stranded on the Highway of Civilisation*,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 14 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGTPA>.

⁴⁶ Yamin Kogoya, “*The Making of Papuaphobia: Colonial Genealogy, Racial Formation, and Psycho-Cosmocide*,” *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 28 (2026).

route by which that pattern arrived in West Papua's own vocabulary of *monyet* and *manusia*—the same vocabulary, and the same logic, that reappears in Section VII's account of the Ap-ap.

The West Papuan case differs in one important respect from many of the postcolonial societies examined by Aníbal Quijano and Walter Dignolo. Coloniality in West Papua did not survive a completed process of political decolonisation because no comparable moment of formal independence occurred. Dutch administration was replaced directly by Indonesian administration in 1963, a transition later legitimised through the widely contested 1969 "Act of Free Choice."

The significance of this distinction is philosophical as well as historical. In many postcolonial contexts, Quijano and Dignolo analyse the persistence of colonial structures after political sovereignty has formally been restored. In West Papua, the problem takes a different form. The coloniality under examination is not the survival of an earlier order following independence but the uninterrupted continuation and transformation of colonial domination under a new settler state structure.

The same analytical approach applies to the language of Indonesian state development. Within the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm, concepts such as *agama* (religiosity), *pembangunan* (development), *kemajuan* (progress), and *sukses* (success) are seen not simply as administrative or policy terms but as elements of a wider symbolic arrangement. Together they reorient how land, identity, memory, aspiration, and the future are imagined, encouraging colonised populations to inhabit an imposed civilisational horizon as though it were their own.

The vocabulary of development analysed here also belongs to a wider post-development critique. Arturo Escobar demonstrated that "development" functioned not simply as an economic programme but as a discourse that constructed the Third World as historically deficient and for this reason in need of continual intervention. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm accepts this diagnosis but shifts the level of analysis. Its concern is not only how development legitimises intervention, but how developmental language over time reorders memory, aspiration, identity, and cosmological orientation until domination itself comes to be experienced as improvement.⁴⁷

Arturo Escobar and Boaventura de Sousa Santos extend this critique by arguing that decolonisation requires more than exposing the limits of development. It also requires making visible the plurality of already existing worlds that developmental modernity has rendered invisible. Their concept of the *pluriverse* rejects the assumption that humanity moves towards a single universal model of civilisation, insisting instead upon the coexistence of multiple legitimate ways of inhabiting reality.

The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm converges with this insight while shifting the question further. Its concern is not only the recovery of multiple worlds but the diagnosis of the mechanisms through

⁴⁷ Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 21–54.

which those worlds become increasingly erased, repainted, and inherited as though they had never existed.⁴⁸

The concept of *Wonesis* develops this pluriversal orientation from critique to reconstruction. If the pluriverse affirms the coexistence of multiple worlds, Wonesis asks how worlds damaged by Psycho-Cosmocide may recover, renew, and sustain the ontological conditions of their continued existence. In this sense, Wonesis is concerned not simply with recognising alternative realities but with restoring the living relationships among land, memory, language, kinship, and cosmology upon which those realities depend.

If development discourse functions as the symbolic mechanism through which civilisational capture is reproduced—*agama*, *pembangunan*, *kemajuan*, and *sukses* little by little reordering Papuan self-understanding from within—then diagnosis alone cannot be the final task. A philosophy that explains how worlds are captured without asking how they may be restored remains incomplete. Once the mechanisms of Psycho-Cosmocide have been recognised, the central question shifts from diagnosis to response: what responsibilities, forms of recovery, and possibilities of reconstruction remain available to a people seeking to restore the underlying conditions of its own existence?

IX. Violence, Legitimacy, and Resistance: The Limits of Political Justification

The question of political violence requires a distinction that cannot be avoided. Armed resistance directed against military force and the deliberate killing of unarmed persons are not morally or legally equivalent, and any philosophy of resistance that refuses to distinguish between them abandons the standards of justice it seeks to defend. Public reports concerning the West Papuan conflict include allegations that the TPNPB has, on some occasions, captured, interrogated, or killed individuals who were unarmed, out of uniform, or accused of collaboration without having been convicted through any recognised judicial process. Whatever the factual circumstances of individual cases, such allegations raise a philosophical question that cannot be ignored. Even where resistance to colonial domination is regarded as morally or politically justified, the deliberate taking of human life on the basis of accusation, suspicion, or rumour alone cannot be defended by that justification. Without publicly accountable standards of evidence, judgement, and responsibility, resistance risks reproducing the very forms of arbitrary violence it seeks to overcome. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm rejects both colonial violence and unaccountable resistance by the same ethical principle: the legitimacy of any use of force depends not only upon the justice of its cause but also upon the justice of the standards governing its exercise.

If TPNPB claims to stand as *Ap Inaorak*—the custodian and guardian of the cosmopolitan world—its legitimacy cannot rest upon the same forms of accusation-based violence that the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm identifies as characteristic of colonial domination. A movement claiming to

⁴⁸ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2014).

restore moral order cannot reproduce the moral disorder it seeks to overcome. Its legitimacy thus depends upon standards that exist independently of accusation itself: publicly accountable evidence, testimony, deliberation, restraint, and procedures that remain visible and answerable to the people in whose name force is exercised. Authority cannot consist merely in the assertions of those who carry out the act. This is neither a novel demand nor one unique to the West Papuan struggle. Liberation movements that have claimed moral legitimacy have repeatedly confronted the same ethical question. The later reckoning of the African National Congress with killings committed by its internal security structures illustrates the moral cost of abandoning public accountability, while the internal tribunals of the National Liberation Front remain contested for similar reasons. Even international humanitarian law, despite the criticisms developed elsewhere in this paper, preserves an important distinction between combatants and protected civilians that does not depend upon the legitimacy of the states that codified it. As a result, this argument does not prescribe a particular legal or institutional model for TPNPB. It advances a more fundamental ethical requirement. Any movement claiming to defend the cosmopolitan world must subject its own use of force to standards at least as demanding as those it requires of the power it resists. The legitimacy of resistance depends not only on what it resists but on what it refuses to become. Whatever procedures ultimately govern the use of lethal force, they must be public, evidence-based, accountable, and capable of independent scrutiny. Otherwise resistance ceases to restore moral order and instead reproduces the arbitrary violence characteristic of the colonial system it opposes.

The central normative question of this paper concerns the ethical claims made by organised resistance. If civilisation is viewed as an unfolding capable of systematically remaking the fundamental conditions of human existence, and if land constitutes the primary ground of belonging, then the question becomes how a movement claiming to defend that ground should itself be judged. I now examine TPNPB—the armed wing of the broader Free Papua Movement (OPM)—as a movement that presents itself as the custodian and defender of the Papuan homeland against what it understands to be a long historical development of colonial domination, not a conventional political dispute. The philosophical question is accordingly not whether that claim should simply be accepted, but what standards of legitimacy such a claim must satisfy. Throughout this paper, I argue that any use of lethal force must remain subject to publicly accountable evidence, transparent judgement, and independent moral scrutiny. Those standards are not displaced by existing legal frameworks, but neither are they exhausted by them. The argument for this reason asks whether resistance may be evaluated according to ethical principles that remain binding even where the legitimacy of prevailing political and legal institutions is itself disputed.

The ethical relationship between violence and liberation has long occupied political philosophy. Among its most influential formulations is Frantz Fanon's account in *The Wretched of the Earth*, where anticolonial violence is read not merely as a tool of political struggle but as a transformation through which the colonised recover historical agency after being reduced to objects of colonial domination. Violence functions, in Fanon's well-known formulation, as "a cleansing force" because it restores the colonised as historical subjects rather than passive recipients of imperial

power. This argument shares Fanon's concern with the recovery of agency but departs from him on a crucial point. The restoration of political subjectivity does not remove the ethical obligations governing the use of force. A liberation movement must therefore be judged not only by the justice of its cause but also by the standards of evidence, accountability, and restraint through which it pursues that cause.⁴⁹

The argument cannot remain within the theory of Psycho-Cosmocide alone. Its ethical implications must also be tested against the alternative traditions of political legitimacy it seeks to challenge. The question is thus not simply whether existing legal and political frameworks are inadequate, but what moral constraints must continue to govern resistance even where those frameworks are themselves regarded as compromised.

The first countervailing consideration concerns international humanitarian law. Whatever its historical entanglement with unequal structures of political power, it preserves an ethical distinction that remains independently significant: the protection of civilians and the requirement that the use of force be proportionate, publicly accountable, and directed against legitimate military objectives. These principles express the same concern developed throughout this paper—that arbitrary violence must be restrained by standards extending beyond the will of those who exercise it.⁵⁰ A related challenge comes from Hannah Arendt's distinction between power and violence. In *On Violence*, Arendt argues that violence is inherently instrumental. It may destroy an existing political order, but it cannot by itself establish legitimate political authority, because legitimacy depends upon public recognition, collective judgement, and shared responsibility, not force alone. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm accepts this distinction while directing attention to a prior question. If a people's public world has itself been systematically reorganised through colonial domination, by what process can the conditions of legitimate political authority be recovered? The issue, therefore, is not whether violence creates legitimacy, but whether resistance can help restore the existential and political conditions under which legitimacy again becomes possible.⁵¹ Measured against Hannah Arendt, the requirement that every act of lethal force be governed by publicly accountable evidence, open deliberation, and transparent judgement introduces an important tension within this argument. Pursued consistently, these requirements move closer to the principles of law and due process than to their wholesale rejection. The standards demanded of legitimate resistance begin to reconstruct the very forms of public accountability that earlier sections criticised as historically entangled with civilisational domination. This tension is not accidental but constitutive of the framework itself. The central question is accordingly not whether law should exist, but what kind of law can remain legitimate after colonial domination. Earlier discussions of the detention of a foreign pilot by TPNPB deliberately refused to resolve the event through predetermined categories of heroism or criminality, insisting instead that moral judgement depends upon publicly available evidence, accountable deliberation, and standards capable of

⁴⁹ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1–62.

⁵⁰ See the foundational statement of the distinction principle in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their 1977 Additional Protocols, particularly Protocol I, Article 48.

⁵¹ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1970), esp. 79–87.

independent scrutiny. The legitimacy of resistance for this reason rests not upon exemption from judgement but upon willingness to submit its own actions to the same standards it demands of others.

This tension is not a weakness to be resolved but a condition to be preserved. Any philosophy of liberation that exempts resistance from ethical self-scrutiny risks reproducing the very structures of domination it seeks to overcome. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm accordingly requires resistance to remain accountable to the same standards of justice it demands of the order it opposes.

A second tension concerns the status of the international order itself. If international institutions are treated simply as extensions of the same civilisational processes criticised throughout this paper, important distinctions risk being obscured. The coercive practices of particular states are not identical to the normative principles articulated within international law, even when both belong to the same historical order. This distinction is especially important in the West Papuan context. For more than six decades, Papuan political advocacy has appealed to international norms recognising Indigenous peoples' rights and the principle of self-determination. Instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations' International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights have provided an important normative language through which Papuan claims have been documented and communicated internationally. This argument thus distinguishes between historically contingent institutions and ethical principles that may retain independent force even where those institutions remain imperfect. Armed resistance and international advocacy should thus be understood not as mutually exclusive alternatives but as distinct forms of political action responding to the same historical condition.⁵² The documentary record itself introduces a further ethical qualification. Human rights organisations have consistently documented grave abuses committed by Indonesian security forces against Papuan civilians while also reporting harm to civilians arising from certain TPNPB operations, including the 2023 seizure of a New Zealand pilot discussed earlier. The cumulative record therefore resists any straightforward moral asymmetry. It neither legitimises state violence nor exempts armed resistance from ethical scrutiny. The justice of a political cause does not remove the obligation to judge the justice of particular actions undertaken in its name. Instead, the record reinforces the central normative claim advanced throughout this paper: every exercise of force remains subject to the same standards of evidence, accountability, proportionality, and protection of civilian life.⁵³

⁵² United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN General Assembly Resolution 61/295 (13 September 2007).

⁵³ Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia," in *World Report 2025* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2025), documenting both the TPNPB's 594-day hostage-taking of New Zealand pilot Philip Mehrkens (February 2023–September 2024) and continuing abuses by Indonesian security forces against Papuan civilians; see also Amnesty International's longstanding documentation of security-force impunity in the region. As of this paper's submission in July 2026, the conflict remains active; readers should consult these organisations' most recent reporting for developments after that date.

A closely related tension appears in the *Wam'ndanak'me* doctrine discussed in Section IV. If extended without qualification, the doctrine risks converting a customary principle of territorial protection into a general licence to expel, punish, or even kill persons lacking recognised ancestral connection to land. That is a stronger and more categorical claim than the defence of any particular act of resistance, because it attaches suspicion not to conduct but to an entire class of persons defined by lineage, origin, or belonging.

This distinction is decisive. A customary jurisdiction may possess legitimate authority over land tenure, access, custodianship, and responsibility, but that authority is not equivalent to a right to take human life on the basis of ancestry alone. Universal protections—the right to life, the protection of civilians, and the prohibition of discrimination on grounds such as national or ethnic origin—apply regardless of whether a person's presence is customarily verified. The same public, evidentiary, and deliberative standards demanded of any act of killing must accordingly apply with equal, if not greater, force here.

None of these considerations settles the political question, nor can philosophy settle it by argument alone. Their purpose is more limited but no less important: to ensure that claims concerning the legitimate use of lethal force remain subject to public reasoning, critical examination, and standards of evidence rather than deriving their authority solely from the cosmological, political, or legal systems that produce them.

Viewed in this light, the defence of armed resistance advanced here is best seen as a serious position within the tradition of anticolonial political thought, standing in dialogue with thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, and not as a conclusion deduced directly from the ontology of Psycho-Cosmocide itself. The account of being explains the conditions under which colonisation remakes human reality; it does not, by itself, determine the legitimacy of every political response to that condition.

The distinction is for this reason fundamental. The diagnosis of civilisational capture developed in Sections II–VIII and the normative defence of armed resistance considered in this section remain analytically separable. One may accept the conception of existence, the Canvas Principle, the Eight Atlases, and the diagnosis of Psycho-Cosmocide while reaching different conclusions about the moral or political justification of armed struggle. That separation is not a weakness of the account but one of its philosophical strengths, because it preserves the distinction between explanatory theory and normative judgement.

Resistance may be necessary for survival, but it cannot become the final horizon of a people's existence. A political philosophy organised solely around opposition risks allowing the very forces it resists to determine its identity, its priorities, and its future. Resistance may protect the possibility of a future, but it cannot by itself create one. The deeper philosophical question so begins where resistance reaches its limit: how a people restores the living relationships among land, memory, language, kinship, and cosmology through which a civilisation renews itself and becomes capable of sustaining future generations.

The argument thus arrives at its decisive transition. If Psycho-Cosmocide explains how worlds are gradually dismantled, the remaining question is how they may be consciously restored. Resistance may create the conditions for survival, but it cannot by itself regenerate a civilisation. Any philosophy concerned only with destruction remains incomplete unless it can also explain the conditions under which life, memory, and belonging become possible again.

X. Wonesis and the Recovery of the Cosmobian World

Wonesis represents the regenerative horizon of the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm. If Psycho-Cosmocide diagnoses the processes through which cosmobian worlds are over time dismantled, Wonesis asks how those worlds may recover the conditions necessary for their continued existence. Drawing upon the Lani cosmological concept of *Wone*—the primordial principle of order—Wonesis is presented as an antidote to the Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus (CPCV). It is neither a new religion, nor an ideology, nor a utopian political programme. Rather, it is an approach for restoring the relationships among land, memory, language, kinship, and cosmology through which communities separated from their ancestral worlds may begin rebuilding life from what remains.⁵⁴

The restorative orientation of Wonesis also stands within a broader tradition of Indigenous resurgence and decolonial thought. Situating it within that conversation helps clarify both its affinities and its distinctive contribution. Among its closest interlocutors is Glen Coulthard's concept of *grounded normativity*, which argues that Indigenous ethical and political life emerges from enduring relationships with land and place rather than from the liberal rights discourse or the colonial institutions that Indigenous peoples have historically been compelled to confront.⁵⁵

Wonesis shares this land-centred orientation but addresses a different philosophical problem. Whereas grounded normativity explains how ethical life arises from an ongoing relationship with land, Wonesis asks how those relationships may be consciously restored after they have been fragmented by the processes of Psycho-Cosmocide. Its concern is therefore not only the grounding of Indigenous normativity but the recovery of the ecological, cultural, linguistic, and cosmological conditions upon which that normativity depends.

A closely related argument appears in Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's account of Indigenous resurgence. Simpson argues that the primary task of a colonised Indigenous nation is not to organise its future around recognition by, or perpetual opposition to, the settler state, but to regenerate Indigenous relationships to land, governance, kinship, and everyday life according to its own intellectual and cultural traditions. A politics defined solely by resistance remains

⁵⁴ Yamin Kogoya, "Wonesis: Framework, Belonging, and the Antidote to Psycho-Cosmocide," *Psycho-Cosmocide Studies*, Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series, No. 16 (2026), <https://philpapers.org/rec/KOGWFB>.

⁵⁵ Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

structurally centred on the colonial order it seeks to overcome because its horizons continue to be determined by that order rather than by Indigenous modes of existence themselves.⁵⁶

Wonesis converges strongly with this resurgence tradition while extending its philosophical scope. Its concern is not only the renewal of Indigenous political life but the restoration of the broader ontological conditions through which a cosmopolitan world becomes possible. Rebuilding accordingly begins not with resistance alone but with the recovery of the relationships with land, memory, language, kinship, and cosmology from which political life itself emerges.

Read alongside Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Wonesis is best viewed as a project of resurgence, not resistance in the narrower political sense. Resistance may create the conditions for survival, but resurgence concerns the restoration of the relationships through which a people once again becomes capable of living according to its own cosmological order. In this respect, rebuilding life "from what remains" stands closer to Simpson's constructive vision of Indigenous nationhood than to Frantz Fanon's emphasis on the transformative function of revolutionary violence. The distinction is deliberate. The Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm recognises resistance and resurgence as related but analytically distinct moments within the wider unfolding of decolonisation.

The same distinction emerges in my reading of the *Gilgamesh* tradition. Interpreting Enkidu's domestication as a form of participatory extinction shifts the focus from conquest imposed by force to displacement accepted through seduction and gradual reorientation. Wonesis for this reason provides not only a programme of recovery but also an explanatory warning: resurgence cannot consist in a symbolic return to origins while leaving intact the psychological, cultural, and cosmological structures through which capture continues to operate. Recovery becomes genuine only when the conditions that produced the original displacement are themselves transformed.

The practical meaning of Wonesis can now be stated more directly. If colonisation is read as the repainting of the civilisational canvas, Wonesis is neither a demand that the repainting simply cease nor an attempt to restore an earlier image unchanged. Origins are not museum artefacts preserved outside history. They are living traditions capable of renewal. Wonesis begins from the claim that a cosmopolitan people retains, even after profound civilisational disruption, the authority to paint again—to re-establish land, memory, language, kinship, ceremony, and ecological responsibility as the foundations upon which a new future is composed, rather than accepting the colonial canvas as the only possible horizon and merely negotiating a more favourable place within it.

This places Wonesis between two opposing but equally inadequate responses to colonisation. The first is assimilation: accepting the coloniser's world as the only available reality and seeking recognition within it. The second is nostalgic restoration: imagining that decolonisation consists simply in reproducing a pre-contact world exactly as it once existed, despite the irreversible

⁵⁶ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017).

transformations produced by history. The first abandons the cosmopolitan world; the second mistakes memory for renewal. Neither confronts the deeper work of reconstruction.

Wonesis thus proposes a different path. It is neither the preservation of the past nor the imitation of the present, but the creative regeneration of a living cosmopolitan future from the relationships, memories, languages, ecological knowledge, and cultural practices that have survived Psycho-Cosmocide. Recovery is understood not as returning to what once was, but as rebuilding the conditions through which a distinct world may continue to grow, adapt, and renew itself without surrendering its own underlying foundations.

For this reason, Wonesis should be seen as a philosophical orientation, not a completed political programme. It establishes the principles that should guide reconstruction while leaving their concrete expression to the practical work of future generations. The rebuilding of education, health, language, land governance, ecological stewardship, and community life is therefore not external to Wonesis but the unfolding of its central philosophical commitment: that a people possesses both the responsibility and the capacity to become the authors of its own world again.

Wonesis becomes visible not through abstract principles but through everyday practices that restore the relationships colonisation sought first to disrupt. In Glen Coulthard's language, grounded normativity is renewed not by adopting a theory but by inhabiting a way of life. For the Lani world, this means maintaining *Inawi* as lived and cultivated homeland rather than merely mapped territory; sustaining ceremony as a living rhythm of communal life rather than preserving it as cultural artefact; and transmitting Lani concepts such as *Ta Kabulok*, *Inaorak*, and *Wone* to new generations as practical languages of existence rather than inherited museum pieces. These practices do not reverse Psycho-Cosmocide through any single act. One ceremony, one word, or one generation cannot erase centuries of civilisational reprogramming and destruction. Their significance lies elsewhere. Each act reaffirms that the original canvas has not disappeared but remains capable of renewal. Taken together, they constitute cumulative acts of fundamental restoration—quiet but publicly visible refusals of the claim that the cosmopolitan world has been permanently overwritten. Wonesis accordingly proceeds less through protest than through continuation, less through symbolic resistance than through the patient reconstruction of a living world.

At its deepest level, Wonesis reveals a simple truth. Every civilisation begins not with ideology but with existence itself: land, water, food, air, home, family, fire, memory, and the institutions that protect them. Everything else is secondary.

Wonesis for this reason cannot be reduced to a single policy, institution, or programme. Like the traditions of grounded normativity and Indigenous resurgence developed by Glen Coulthard **and** Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, it is realised through countless ordinary acts by which a people inhabits its world: caring for land, speaking ancestral languages, practising ceremony, renewing kinship, transmitting memory, and raising children within a living cosmology. No document, policy, or philosophical essay can substitute for these practices, just as no written account of ceremony can become the ceremony itself.

The task of philosophy is more modest but no less important. It cannot rebuild a civilisation on behalf of a people. What it can do is clarify the existential grounds upon which rebuilding becomes possible. Throughout this essay I have argued that the standing of *Ap Inaorak*—verified belonging grounded in land, memory, ancestry, and lived relationship—survives even where the visible world has been profoundly repainted. Colonisation may alter the surface of the canvas, but it cannot extinguish the deeper conditions of belonging from which a people continually renews itself.

Wonesis is thus not primarily a programme but a philosophical affirmation. It is the claim that the authority to create, renew, and inhabit a cosmopolitan world was never extinguished by Psycho-Cosmocide. It was obscured, interrupted, and displaced, but never revoked. The task of rebuilding is therefore not to recover permission from the coloniser or recognition from the modern state. It is to recognise that the right to paint the canvas again has always remained with those to whom the canvas belongs.

XI. The Canvas Principle as Ontological Synthesis

The Canvas Principle synthesises three philosophical traditions that have rarely been brought into sustained dialogue: Indigenous philosophy, phenomenology, and critical theories of ideology and coloniality. Each contributes an essential part of the argument, yet none, taken alone, reaches the ontological conclusion developed here.

Indigenous philosophers—including Vine Deloria Jr., Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Glen Coulthard, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson—demonstrate that land is constitutive of identity and the source of ethical and political responsibility. Their work establishes the underlying centrality of land within Indigenous worlds but generally leaves that claim within the horizon of Indigenous philosophy itself.

Phenomenology, especially in the work of Martin Heidegger, likewise rejects the image of consciousness as detached from the world by showing that human existence is always embodied and situated. Yet phenomenology largely remains at the level of individual existence and does not extend this insight to the construction, transformation, or colonisation of entire civilisational worlds.

Critical theories of ideology and coloniality—including Louis Althusser, Frantz Fanon, Sylvia Wynter, Aníbal Quijano, Walter Dignolo, and Arturo Escobar—explain how domination transforms consciousness, knowledge, and political subjectivity. Their analyses illuminate the mechanisms of colonial capture but generally describe that capture in ideological, epistemic, or political terms rather than as a transformation of the material and ecological canvas upon which every symbolic world depends.

The Canvas Principle brings these three traditions into a single fundamental theory. It accepts the Indigenous insight that land grounds existence, the phenomenological insight that existence is always situated, and the decolonial insight that symbolic worlds can be reorganised through power.

It then advances a further claim: every worldview, regardless of its cultural origin or philosophical content, presupposes a material and ecological canvas upon which it is painted. Colonisation is accordingly not simply the domination of peoples or ideas but the progressive repainting of the existential conditions from which every human reality emerges.

The Canvas Principle, developed in Section III and restated here only in summary, brings these three philosophical traditions into a single ontological framework without reducing any one of them to the others. It gives Indigenous philosophy a more explicit phenomenological foundation by explaining why land is not only culturally significant but the material condition upon which every worldview becomes possible. At the same time, it provides the literature on ideology and coloniality with a unifying image. What political theory often analyses as the capture of subjectivity, what decolonial theory describes as epistemic domination, and what the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm identifies as cosmological reorganisation are viewed here as different dimensions of a single development: the progressive repainting of the material and ecological canvas upon which human reality is constructed.

Seen in this way, acts commonly treated as symbolic—the renaming of a sacred place, the replacement of an origin story, the transformation of a ceremony, or the imposition of a new language—cannot be confined to the level of culture or belief alone. They simultaneously reshape personal identity, collective memory, systems of knowledge, and the cosmological order through which a people understands its existence. The Canvas Principle explains this interdependence by treating each transformation as a new stroke upon the same underlying canvas. Damage occurring in one feature for this reason reverberates throughout the others because all are rooted in a shared underlying ground.

The contribution of the Canvas Principle is accordingly neither a new political programme nor a claim limited to the historical experience of West Papua. It is a fundamental principle for understanding why civilisational capture works across multiple dimensions of human existence at once. Stated in its most general form, its claim is simple: before human beings dispute the truth of a worldview, they already stand upon a material and ecological world that makes every worldview possible. Every ontology is thus, at its deepest level, an argument over who possesses the canvas before anyone argues about the painting. Questions concerning whose religion, philosophy, civilisation, or ideology is true already presuppose a prior and more fundamental question: who inhabits, cares for, and possesses the ground upon which those realities are painted? It is that prior existential question that the Canvas Principle seeks to make visible.

XII. Conclusion: Land, Diagnosis, and the Open Political Question

This paper has argued that land is not simply one object among many within reality but the ontological condition from which every human reality emerges. Before there can be religion, philosophy, law, economics, politics, civilisation, or even metaphysics, there must first be a place from which they arise. The Canvas Principle gives this claim its simplest expression: every

civilisation paints its own reality, but every painting presupposes a canvas. The struggle for land is therefore never merely a struggle over territory. It is a struggle over the material and ecological conditions through which memory, identity, belonging, and entire worlds become possible. From this underlying starting point, the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm offers a diagnosis of how worlds are increasingly dismantled and replaced. The CPCV, the Eight Atlases of Human Existence, the Seven Existential Cages, the NATAKA triad, and the Canvas Principle describe different dimensions of the same civilisational transformation: the recurring reorganisation of the relationships through which human beings inhabit reality. Colonisation is accordingly more than military conquest, political domination, or economic extraction. It is a systematic repainting of the civilisational canvas itself, until later generations inherit the new painting without recognising that another world once stood beneath it.

The discussion of TPNPB builds on this diagnosis into the domain of political philosophy. It asks what follows when a customary account of being of land, guardianship, and belonging is translated from the scale of the household and clan to that of an imagined sovereign nation. The argument developed here is intentionally limited. Ontology may explain why land matters and why colonised peoples seek its recovery, but it does not by itself determine the legitimacy of every political response undertaken in its defence. Questions concerning armed resistance, sovereignty, and the use of force for this reason remain open to ethical judgement. Throughout this paper I have argued that such questions must remain subject to publicly accountable standards of evidence, deliberation, proportionality, and respect for human life. The diagnosis of Psycho-Cosmocide and the justification of particular political actions are so analytically distinct. One does not automatically entail the other. For that reason, resistance cannot become the final horizon of the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm. Resistance may prevent extinction, but it cannot by itself regenerate a civilisation. The rebuilding horizon of this project is Wonesis. If Psycho-Cosmocide explains how worlds disappear, Wonesis asks how worlds become possible again. It shifts attention from opposing domination to rebuilding the conditions of existence themselves: restoring relationships with land, memory, language, kinship, customary law, ecological responsibility, and the institutions through which a people once again becomes capable of authoring its own future. Reconstruction, not resistance alone, ultimately determines what survives after the struggle has ended.

The broader philosophical contribution of this paper lies in bringing into conversation three traditions that have largely developed independently of one another: Indigenous philosophies of land and belonging, phenomenological accounts of situated existence, and critical theories of ideology and coloniality. The Canvas Principle proposes a fundamental synthesis of these traditions by arguing that every worldview—religious, philosophical, scientific, political, or cultural—presupposes a material and ecological canvas upon which it is constructed. It is this prior condition, rather than the symbolic content painted upon it, that has remained largely invisible within each tradition when considered on its own.

Ultimately, this paper has been less about the rebel than about the canvas upon which every rebellion, civilisation, religion, philosophy, nation, and future is painted. Civilisations will continue to argue over whose painting is true, sacred, beautiful, or superior. The Canvas Principle asks a prior question. Before anyone argues over the painting, who possesses the canvas? Before any civilisation can claim universal truth, who inhabits, cares for, and belongs to the ground upon which that truth is painted?

Before there can be religion, science, philosophy, politics, or civilisation, there must first be a world upon which they are lived. It is that prior world that this essay has sought to recover.

No matter how human beings frame, disguise, decorate, colour, moralise, or sanctify their conflicts, the deepest reality remains the same: every war, conquest, empire, revolution, occupation, liberation struggle, and border dispute ultimately turns upon one irreducible foundation—land. Human beings have always fought because of land, over land, and for land.

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Glossary of Key Terms

The terms below are specific to Kogoya's Psycho-Cosmocide corpus and the Lani cosmological vocabulary this paper draws on. Each is defined here as it is used within this essay; fuller treatment of each concept appears in the working papers cited alongside it in the footnotes above.

Ap-ap. The “counterfeit human”: Kogoya's term for the terminal product of complete parasitological incapacitation under CPCV — a person whose behaviour and self-perception have been captured so completely that they reproduce, rather than resist, the conditions of their own destruction. Developed through structural comparison with biological parasite-host relationships (Section VII).

Ap Inaorak. Within the NATAKA triad, a person whose belonging to a given customary territory is “verified” by ancestry, language, memory, and ecological relationship rather than by law or money. In this paper the term is narrowed further to denote specifically those who take up arms in defence of Papuan land and sovereignty (Section IV).

Ap Kuru. Within the NATAKA triad, a person whose own ancestral memory and land-connection lie elsewhere but who currently resides within another group's customary territory — “living temporarily on Papuan space and land” (Section IV).

Canvas Principle. The paper's formal instrument (Definition 1, Section III): every worldview presupposes a material and ecological canvas — land — upon which language, memory, symbols, institutions, and metaphysical systems are constructed. Colonisation is therefore not only territorial seizure but the repainting of that underlying canvas.

Cosmobian. An ontological category, not an ethnographic description: to be cosmobian is to exist in unbroken, reciprocal relation with the Eight Atlases of existence, prior to and outside of civilisational capture. Its Lani equivalent is Inaorak (Section VII).

CPCV (Civilisational Psycho-Cosmocide Virus). Kogoya's central diagnostic concept: a self-propagating, symbolic-psychological infection that reorganises a colonised population's perception of reality so thoroughly that the population comes to desire, defend, and reproduce the conditions of its own destruction. Treated as portable across traditions, geographies, and centuries rather than unique to any one civilisation (Section V).

Eight Atlases. Kogoya's systematic map of human existence: Physical/Material, Biological/Organism, Cultural/Mythological, Metaphysical/Transcendental, Particle/Energy, Space/Time, Memory/Consciousness, and the Ultimate Unknown — presented as a single interdependent ecosystem rather than eight separate faculties (Section VI).

Inaorak. “Verified cosmological belonging”: a term derived from Lani root words denoting the condition of legitimate, ancestrally and ecologically grounded connection to land, treated in this paper as philosophically prior to, and roughly equivalent to, cosmobian existence (Section II).

Inawi. The Lani word for home or land, used throughout the paper to mean land as lived and inhabited relation rather than as property or mapped territory (Section II).

Name Ta Kabulok (NATAKA). A foundational customary speech-act in Lani law, composed of three interconnected terms. *Name* refers to *my own world*: my land, home, house, territory, forest, mountain, river, hunting ground, garden, and the wider ecosystem, together with the memories, ancestors, stories, language, songs, dances, sacred places, and cosmological relationships that constitute one's inherited reality. It signifies the totality of the physical, ecological, social, and cosmological world to which a person or clan rightfully belongs. *Ta* is an interrogative challenge meaning "*Who are you?*" It is directed towards an unfamiliar person or group entering that customary space and demands that they identify themselves, explain their presence, and establish the legitimacy of their relationship to the territory and its custodians. *Kabulok* literally refers to noise, sound, movement, or disturbance. Within the customary context, it signifies the presence or actions of those who enter, trespass upon, occupy, exploit, extract resources from, or otherwise disturb the territory without the knowledge, invitation, or consent of its recognised customary custodians. Taken together, Name Ta Kabulok is more than a question. It is a customary declaration of territorial jurisdiction. It asserts that every land has recognised custodians and that anyone entering, using, or benefiting from that land must first account for who they are, why they are there, and by what authority they claim access. The expression therefore functions simultaneously as a greeting, a challenge, a legal inquiry, and an affirmation of the inseparable relationship between land, ancestry, memory, and responsibility. NATAKA also names the broader customary-legal triad of Name Ta Kabulok, Ap Kuru, and Ap Inaorak, from which the NATAKA Research Institute takes its name (see Section IV).

Orak. Within the compound Inaorak, the element meaning “verified” or “legitimate” — verified not by law or documentary title but by memory, ancestry, and ecological relationship (Section II).

Seven Existential Cages. Kogoya’s companion architecture to the Eight Atlases: Physical, Symbolic, Metaphysical, Technological, the Corridor of the Dead, the Cage of Absolute Unknowing, and the Cage of the Irreducible Other. The paper’s key move is the distinction between the first cage — birth, mortality, embodiment, shared by all life — and the second, symbolic cage historically imposed by some humans upon others (Section VI).

Wam’ndanak’me. Literally, “a pig let loose on an unfenced farm”: a metaphor for a territory whose customary protections have been dismantled, leaving it open to unrestricted entry and exploitation once no one can any longer stand at the boundary and demand accountability (Section IV).

Wone. The primordial ordering principle in Lani cosmology, and the root of Wonesis, Wone Press, and the Kurumbi Wone Working Paper Series. Used throughout the corpus as the positive, generative counterpart to the destructive logic of CPCV.

Wonesis. Kogoya’s constructive antidote to Psycho-Cosmocide: a framework for how communities exiled from cosmobian belonging can halt the process of civilisational capture and rebuild life “from what remains,” without becoming a religion, ideology, or utopian programme. Read in this paper as a resurgence project in dialogue with Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Section X).

About the Author

Yamin Kogoya is a Papuan philosopher, writer, and independent researcher from the Central Highlands of New Guinea (West Papua), currently based in Australia.

His work investigates one of the most enduring questions of human existence: how worlds are created, transformed, and destroyed. He is the originator of the Psycho-Cosmocide paradigm, an interdisciplinary philosophical framework that examines the destruction of human worlds not only through physical violence, occupation, or ecological devastation, but through the systematic reorganisation of perception, memory, meaning, and reality itself. Within this framework, he argues that words, images, symbols, signs, colours, institutions, and technologies do not merely represent the world—they participate in creating, reorganising, and erasing the conditions through which human beings inhabit it.

Kogoya introduced the concepts of the Cosmobian World and the Synthobian World to distinguish two fundamentally different modes of human existence. The Cosmobian World refers to forms of life constituted through reciprocal relationships with land, ancestry, kinship, memory, ecology, language, and the cosmos. The Synthobian World refers to synthetic, engineered systems of existence organised through abstraction, institutions, technology, production, and civilisational processes. The relationship between these two worlds forms the central philosophical architecture of his research.

Drawing upon Indigenous cosmologies together with philosophy, anthropology, history, religion, mythology, and civilisation studies, Kogoya develops original conceptual frameworks for interpreting the contemporary human condition. His work re-examines humanity's foundational myths, epics, tragedies, religions, and philosophical traditions as enduring civilisational architectures through which societies organise reality, negotiate meaning, confront mortality, remember the past, imagine the future, and participate in their own survival or extinction. Although grounded in the historical experience of West Papua, his research addresses broader philosophical questions concerning civilisation, consciousness, memory, belonging, power, and the future of human worlds.

He holds a Master of Applied Anthropology and Participatory Development from the Australian National University. His academic background also includes Religious Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Asia-Pacific Studies, and he undertook advanced study in epistemology at the University of Oxford. His research and commentary have appeared in *SBS News*, *RNZ Pacific*, *Asia Pacific Report*, *The Fiji Times*, and *The Jakarta Post*.

Kogoya is the founder of the NATAKA Research Institute, an independent research institute dedicated to the philosophical and historical study of human worlds and the conditions under which societies survive, transform, or become extinct.

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