THE ENSO FRAMEWORK: A ZEN APPROACH TO ADDRESSING LANDSCAPE SCARS

by

MADISON ROSE SMRZ

(Under the Direction of Eric MacDonald)

ABSTRACT

This research details a philosophical framework, the Enso Framework, based on the principles of Zen Buddhism to heal sensitive sites like landscape scars. A landscape scar is a human-induced laceration or alteration of the land that changes its form or function. The Enso Framework, supported by the pillars of mind cultivation, scar investigation, and engagement, is one approach landscape architects can utilize to heal the mental and emotional wounds associated with a landscape scar, unpack layers of traumatic history on a site, and establish a compassionate atmosphere for healing through landscape design. This research investigates the use of the landscape scar metaphor as an analytical tool for understanding the layered heritage of a particular landscape, explores landscape scars across various academic fields, provides an overview of the Buddhist tradition with an emphasis on Zen, and concludes with a study case of Dried Indian Creek, a landscape scar in Newton County, Georgia.

INDEX WORDS: landscape scar, design framework, Zen Buddhism, heritage, healing, landscape architecture, environmental history

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MADISON ROSE SMRZ

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by

MADISON ROSE SMRZ

Major Professor: Eric MacDonald
Committee: Scott Nesbit
Nanette Spina
Ross Altheimer

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott
Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2024

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to individuals suffering from a severed connection to a landscape.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The landscape that surrounds us harbors the legacy of human action spanning back centuries upon centuries in the form of landscape scars. A landscape scar is a human-induced laceration or alteration of the land that changes its form or function; it is a physical manifestation of the past. Landscape scars are examples of sensitive sites that require careful design intervention on behalf of a landscape practitioner, designer, or landscape architect. It is the role of the landscape architect to foster an atmosphere of compassion, harmony, and peace when approaching the design of a landscape scar. The design process provides an opportunity for tending to the physical and emotional aspects of a landscape scar.

This thesis develops a design approach that a landscape architect might choose when responding to a site that lends itself to the landscape scar metaphor. It introduces the Enso Framework which can be used to understand the physical and metaphysical characteristics of a landscape scar and their associated healing processes. Landscape architects have both the agency and the practical tools to reinforce human and non-human community resiliency through the healing of landscape scars. Such influence must be wielded with careful intention in order to mend the wounds inflicted by destructive landscape management practices of past generations.

DISCUSSION OF PROBLEM + RESEARCH QUESTION

Background

This research stems from an interest in neglected, contaminated, and mis-used land strewn across the globe. These landscapes are often classified as brownfields, greyfields, or Superfund sites and lie derelict and abandoned with no plan for future action. They are landscape scars. In mainstream media, scarred landscapes are often presented as a result of extractive practices to fuel a materialist culture.

Figure 1. The Carajas Mine in Brazil, one of the largest iron ore mines on the planet.[1]

In 2020, the BBC shared a serious of astonishing aerial images of scarred landscapes throughout the world, stating, "The world's desire for electronics, fuel and geological riches is

[1]Richard Fisher and Javier Hirschfeld. "The Scarred Landscapes Created by Humanity's Material Thirst." BBC News, November 17, 2020. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20201117-mining-and-anthropocene-landscapes.

etched in devastating shapes and colors all over the globe." Figure 1 captures the aftereffects of the Carajas Mine in Brazil, one of largest iron ore mines on the planet and prompts the viewer to consider the market forces behind extractive frameworks complicit in the scarring of the Brazilian landscape. While the photos are visually mesmerizing, they also elicit a profound emotional response – a sense of loss for the land that once existed and for loss of the land's future value.

The excess of landscapes scars throughout the world demonstrates a strained relationship between humans and the landscape. In the field of landscape architecture, scarred landscapes are given attention primarily along the dimension of ecological health for the sake of clean-up, sale, and redevelopment. The emotional connections individuals and communities have with these landscapes tend to be overlooked or ignored.

Research Question

The question guiding this research is both philosophical and interdisciplinary in nature: how can landscape architects alleviate the suffering of human beings and the landscape through design? It ponders an approach to landscape healing that considers the past, present, and future spirit and function of the land with respect to the past, present, and future human and non-human inhabitants of that place.

Landscape architects in the modern era have a unique opportunity to engage with landscape scars, uncover and amplify alternative historical narratives, and restore a deep, spiritual connection between human beings and the landscape. There is a need for a design approach that acknowledges the broken relationship between humans and the landscape and

explores the role landscape architects can play in the healing of landscapes, ecosystems, individuals, and communities.

The Enso Framework, incorporated into field of landscape architecture, provides a solution to the problem of human and landscape suffering and disconnection through its emphasis on interconnectedness, mindfulness, and compassion. The Enso Framework aims to reconnect human beings with the landscape by means of the philosophy of Zen Buddhism. Zen inquiry into the interconnected, non-dual, temporal nature of reality promotes healing by broadening ones mind, allowing one to accept the fact that they cannot change the past nor control the future, but must exist solely in the present moment.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is conducted using interpretative and classification strategies following a line of inductive reasoning. Aspects of metaphorical conceptual frameworks used to understand the concept of a landscape scar, landscape architecture literature, and Buddhist philosophy serve as data to be synthesized in the development of a design framework intended to heal sensitive landscapes. These three components are explored through a review of existing literature.

Using Metaphor to Understand Landscape Scar Concept

In *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson define what metaphors are and how they are used to build conceptual frameworks for understanding the world around us. Lakoff and Johnson argue that metaphors are more than a figure of speech, but rather fundamentally shape one's "ordinary conceptual system."[2] The concepts that structure these

[2]George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*, (University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.

systems determine what and how we perceive ourselves, other people, and the world around us, ultimately defining our reality. Lakoff and Johnson assert these concepts are metaphorical in nature and provide numerous examples of a metaphor and associated expressions used in common vernacular to support their argument. One such example is the metaphor: theories and arguments are buildings. Common expressions illustrating this metaphor include having a *foundation* for a theory; a theory needing *support*; the need to construct a *strong* argument lest it *fall apart*; the *collapse* or *explosion* of a theory or argument.[3] A metaphorical conceptual framework allows one to understand one concept in terms of another. In this thesis, the concept of a landscape scar is understood in terms of a biological scar. Likewise, the process of healing a landscape scar is understood in terms of the biological healing process.

Once addressed through the framework of biological scars, the concept of a landscape scar is explored in the literature of human geography, environmental history, and global politics. *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars* by Anna Storm presents a perspective on landscape scars through the lens of human geography. In her work, Storm uses the scar metaphor as an analytical tool to draw attention to the mental aspects of a landscape scar, including "narratives, experiences, and memories" and to the heritage of a site in order to initiate healing in the "social, cultural, and political spheres."[4]

Storm classifies landscape scars according to three categories: reused, ruined, and undefined.[5] Reused landscape scars are repurposed and typically given a new narrative or aesthetic. For example, a former industrial site which has been developed into a mixed-use residential and commercial district. Ruined landscape scars are abandoned sites notable for their

[3] Lakoff and Johnson. *Metaphors*, 3.
[4] Anna Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1, 3.
[5] Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 5.

visual experience – an experience of decay and disgrace. An abandoned coal mine tucked in the Appalachian Mountains is an example of a ruined landscape scar. Undefined landscapes lack a coherent identity and lie outside of "contemporary heritage recognition."[6] The study case of Dried Indian Creek, presented in Chapter Seven of this thesis, is an example of an undefined landscape scar.

The environmental history perspective on landscape scars differs from that of human geography as it places more emphasis on how social, cultural, and political dynamics affected the land itself, rather than how it affects the individuals living around it. Environmental historian David Silkenat explores how the institution of slavery devastated the landscapes of the American South in his work *Scars on the Land: An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South.* Silkenat uses the bodies and emotional plight of enslaved people to illustrate the relationship between human action and landscape scarring. In doing so, he also introduced the role of power in wound infliction, arguing that those in power utilized the institution of slavery without sensitivity for the wounds inflicted upon enslaved people or the landscape.

Silkenat's work is relevant to this thesis as it explicitly describes the actions carried out by enslaved people, but enforced by powerful landowners, and how such actions decimated the Southern landscape. Many traces of decimation are still visible today; Dried Indian Creek serves as one example. The information provided by Silkenat is also crucial for understanding the historical circumstances surrounding Dried Indian Creek as it is located in the heart of the Georgia Piedmont region – a region with a complex social and environmental history of Native American land dispossession, slavery, and tenant farming.

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[6] Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 6.

Data regarding the Dried Indian Creek study case is collected from primary sources such as newspaper articles, photographs, and travel accounts, secondary sources such as journal articles, textbooks, and academic commentaries, and direct observation by means of site visits. The data gathered is classified according to four different 'eras of harm:' the era of early history spanning from the 1520s to the 1820s; the era of Native American dispossession in the Antebellum period from the 1820s to the 1850s; the era of Jim Crow from the 1860s to the 1960s; and the era of the modern south from the 1970s to the present day. The data from each of these eras is then analyzed to determine patterns and build a generalized explanation that may apply to some, but not all, cases of landscape scars. The revealed patterns and generalizations can in turn be used to influence the site design of a landscape scar.

Landscape Architecture Literature

The design of landscape scars fits into the field of landscape architecture through landscape restoration and landscape recovery frameworks. The former refers to the intersection of ecological restoration, ecological integrity, historical fidelity, and intention or design explored by environmental historian Eric Higgs and discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.[7] The latter refers to the landscape recovery narrative detailed in *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Comparative Landscape Architecture*, introduced and edited by landscape architect and theorist James Corner. In Corner's landscape recovery narrative, "the landscape is an ongoing medium of exchange" that accrues "layers with every new representation," making landscape a fluid reflection of contemporary sociocultural structures.[8] The layers of representation of a landscape

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[7]Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design: People, Natural Process, and Ecological Restoration*. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003) https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=e000xna&AN=100066&site=ehost-live&scope=site), 4-5.
[8]James Corner, "Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice." Introduction. In *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, edited by James Corner, 1–26, (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 5.

could also be interpreted as the layers of history of a landscape, or as the layers of scar tissue of a landscape scar.

Christophe Girot's essay, "Four Trace Concepts in Landscape Architecture" in *Recovering Landscape*, outlines a contemporary design approach for dealing with historically complex sites, including landscape scars. This thesis recalls his framework, supported by the four trace concepts, or methods, of landing grounding, finding, and founding to provide an example of how the design of landscape scar sites has been approached in modern landscape architecture practice. Girot asserts that the four trace concepts "enable designers to come to grips with their institutions and experiences of a place, allowing these impressions to direct the unfolding of the project."[9]

Girot, therefore, emphasizes the role of the landscape designer in the design of a complex landscape, implying that a designer must be open-minded to the experience and spirit of a site for the sake of discovery. This idea is extended in this thesis and is incorporated into the structure of the Enso Framework: a Zen approach to landscape design. In the Enso Framework, landscape designers must first cultivate their mind using the tenets of Zen Buddhism in order to open themselves up to the true nature of a landscape and incorporate that true nature into a design.

Literature on the Buddhist Tradition

The third and final main body of literature explored in this thesis relates to the Buddhist tradition. The Buddhist tradition was chosen as the basis of the Enso healing framework outlined in Chapter Six because of its emphasis on spirituality, interconnectedness, non-duality, and

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[9]Christophe Girot, "Four Trace Concepts in Landscape Architecture." Essay. In *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, edited by James Corner, 59–68, (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 65.

temporality. A general review of literature related to Buddhism begins in Chapter 5. Information is drawn from academic sources such as Peter Harvey's *Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching, Histories, and Practices* and Allen Weiss' *Zen Landscapes: Perspectives on Japanese Gardens and Ceramics; sutras*, or canonical scripture as presented in Donald Lopez' *Buddhism*; and Zen Master commentaries such as Koun Yamada's *Zen: The Authentic Gate*.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

This introduction serves to outline the importance and relevance of providing a new, philosophical framework based on the principles of Zen Buddhism to holistically heal landscape scars. Such a framework is essential for viewing the land as an entity to be mended, revered, and made stronger. In the following chapter, the discussion of metaphors of the land and body begins. Questions such as what a metaphor is, why the linguistic concept is important, and how it can apply to landscapes are answered. Chapter three furthers the discussion on landscapes scars by reviewing literature from the academic fields of human geography, environmental history, and global politics. The fourth chapter explores ways of healing landscape scars, beginning with past trends of 'landscape healing' in the field of landscape architecture, including landscape restoration and recovery. The aesthetics of landscape healing are also discussed. Chapter five provides a brief overview of the Buddhist tradition with a particular emphasis on Zen philosophy. This discussion establishes the philosophical and aesthetic conditions for the Enso Design Framework presented in the following chapter. Chapter six expands upon the idea of landscape healing by proposing an alternative theoretical framework, the Enso Framework, for mending the land. Supported by the pillars of mind cultivation, scar investigation, and engagement, the Enso Framework incorporates mindful and intentional practices from the

philosophy of Zen Buddhism into a design approach applicable to the field of landscape architecture. Chapter six delves into Dried Indian Creek as a study case. It introduces the site and provides the historical, ecological, and cultural context crucial for implementing the proposed framework discussed in the preceding chapter. Four different 'eras of harm' are defined and serve to highlight the complex relationships humans have had with the land.

CHAPTER 2

METAPHORS AND THE LANDSCAPE

WHAT IS A METAPHOR?

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the primary definition of *metaphor* is "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable."[10] A secondary definition follows, "a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, especially abstract."[11] In the case of the landscape scar metaphor, the latter of the two definitions is more apt. In truth, a 'landscape scar' could be considered a figure of speech. The word scar could be literally applicable to a landscape, particularly in the case of natural disasters, extractive practices like mining, and the destruction caused by weapons of war, or abstractly applicable in the case of mental and emotional scars that result from the devastation of a landscape. In the scope of this research, a landscape scar does indeed have a physical manifestation, but more emphasis is given to the symbolic nature of the physical scar as well as the abstract notions of mental and emotional scars.

Metaphors are pervasive in the way we conceptualize, analyze, and understand the world around us. The ways in which we structure our thoughts and categorize our perceptions using metaphors "play a central role in defining our everyday realities." [12] These realities, however, are unique to each individual. So too are they ever-changing as new information reconfigures one's frame of mind.

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[10] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "metaphor (n.), sense 1," December 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/2147136838.
[11] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "metaphor (n.), sense 2," December 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3041519890.
[12] Lakoff and Johnson. *Metaphors,* 3.

Metaphors can help explain something as profound as an unfamiliar idea or something as menial as describing the weather. For example, an idea could be understood using the frame of reference for understanding plants: an idea coming to fruition, a budding theory, planting the seeds of a concept in one's mind, reaping the rewards of an idea.[13] The weather can be personified using ontological metaphors. Ontological metaphors "allow us to comprehend a wide variety of experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human motivations, characteristics, and activities."[14] For example: the howling wind, the beaming sun, the biting cold. Ontological metaphors aid in our conceptualization of the world around us by describing that which is not immediately legible using ideas and thought processes that are more natural to the human condition.

A metaphor can also help categorize life experiences. It is natural human tendency to "impose artificial boundaries that make physical phenomena discrete just as we are: entities bounded by a surface."[15] When we encounter an unfamiliar circumstance, we knowingly or unknowingly active mental parameters that have been created based on prior comprehension activities. Such mental processing can be both positive and negative. On the one hand, it can aid in the understanding of the world which is made up of relatable human entities and complex nonhuman entities. On the other hand, it can confine one's judgment based on self-created boundaries, limiting one's capacity to approach a new idea or entity without preconceived notions. Acknowledging and understanding the inherent bias we bring when observing a new situation or phenomenon is the first step in breaking down our concrete sense of conventional

[13] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 47.
[14] Ibid, 33.
[15] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 25.

reality – a step crucial in the application of a landscape design framework rooted in Buddhist philosophy.

WHY ARE METAPHORS RELEVANT IN STUDYING LANDSCAPE?

Throughout human history, landscapes have been defined and understood through the use of metaphor. In modern Western society, a landscape is often understood by one's physical or resourceful relationship with it, whether that be through ecological, biological, agricultural, or mineral means. But how many people today recognize a spiritual connection to the land? And why does it often take an awe-inspiring landscape to illuminate humans' profound connection to the land? Are everyday landscapes incapable of inspiring similar feelings?

Human-land relationships have existed throughout the entirety of human history, whether explicitly defined or not. The dimensions by which they are defined vary greatly depending on social, political, and economic values reflected in a given culture at a given time. In prehistoric civilizations, human-land relationships were realized through religious beliefs and practices. These often included profound reverence for landscape features, the performance of rituals in and by means of the environment, and interaction with and perception of the natural elements of earth, water, and fire. Cosmological beliefs and other corresponding values were expressed symbolically in the environment and iterated through "metaphorical and mythological forms of verbal communication."[16]

Several ancient cultures have understood natural features in the environment to be sacred for their associations with the human form. Some Mongol shamanistic rituals were performed in caves "conceptualized as the mother's womb." [17] In Nepal, ancient Hindu tradition considered

[16]Timothy Insoll, ed. *Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Ritual and Religion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 25.
[17]Insoll *Oxford Handbook*, 29.

the head, the highest part of the body, to be most propitious and applied this same understanding to the highest hilltops thus implying the sacredness of verticality. The Omotic-speaking people of Ethiopia also employed a sacred vertically metaphor in their understanding of the cosmological universe which was reflected in their societal caste system and concepts of purity-pollution.[18] Those with so-called impure professions were unable to own land so as to not pollute it. These traditions offer a glimpse of the nature of human-land relationships that have existed for as long as humankind. In these examples, the landscape was an actor in everyday life. It had agency and value beyond its wealth of resources for human consumption.

In more modern cultural traditions, however, the landscape is no longer an actor, but rather a theater for human actors to play on. It is a stage upon which a homocentric and monotheistic worldview can be played out. The Garden of Eden in the Christian religious tradition serves as a prime example of a landscape theater. With the spread of Christianity to the New World came the "massive effort to reinvent the whole earth in the image of the Garden of Eden."[19] New World colonists thus worked to transform "undeveloped nature into a state of civility and order," equating the landscape to a political arena fraught with domination and duality rather than an entity fraught with spirituality and reverence.

The dichotomy of undeveloped nature and the idyllic Garden of Eden promotes dualistic thinking – good nature versus evil nature; purity versus contamination; organized versus wild – which influences an entire culture's relationship to the land. This dualism undermines a wholehearted connection to the environment as it classifies certain aspects of a landscape in concrete terms instead of presenting the landscape as an ever-changing entity with valuable

[18] Insoll *Oxford Handbook*, 30.

[19] Carolyn Merchant. "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative." Essay. In *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, edited by William Cronon, 132–59. New York, NY: Norton, 1995, 134.

qualities aside from its role in the human redemption story. Likewise, it promotes commodification and homogenization of land that falls under a negative classification or no classification scheme at all. What happens to this supposedly bad, contaminated, derelict land? The answer lies within us rather than the land itself.

Using metaphors, especially ontological metaphors, to comprehend the landscape allows human beings to interpret complex natural phenomena using a framework recognizable to their own experience. Doing so can create a sense of empathy with the landscape. In general, empathy "involves a sensitivity to others' feelings… and having an understanding of what the other person is feeling and why."[20] It is often considered a precursor to, or subsidiary of, compassion. Compassion, according to one group of authors, "is an orientation of mind that recognizes pain and the universality of pain in human experience and the capacity to meet that pain with kindness, empathy, equanimity, and patience."[21] It is the acknowledgment of suffering, and it can inform how one reacts to that acknowledgment – either with curiosity, kindness, and mindfulness or shame, blame, and delusion. The former set of reactions allows one to come to terms with the reality of suffering and is the first step towards "befriending what has previously been rejected."[22]

A landscape, understood by means of an ontological metaphorical framework, is represented in the Enso Framework as something human beings can comprehend: a body. The soil acts like layers of skin, waterways like arteries carrying a life source and nutrients, landforms like limbs extending into space, caves like a womb harboring life. Understanding the

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[20]James R. Doty et al., "The Landscape of Compassion: Definitions and Scientific Approaches." Essay. In *The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science*, edited by Emma Seppala, Emiliana Simon-Thomas, Stephanie L. Brown, Monica C. Worline, and C. Daryl Cameron, 3–16. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017, 6.

[21]Feldman, Christina, and Willem Kuyken. "Compassion in the Landscape of Suffering." *Contemporary Buddhism* 12, no. 1 (June 1, 2011): 143–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2011.564831, 145.

[22]Feldman and Kuyken, "Compassion in the Landscape of Suffering," 145.

landscape in this way prompts human beings to treat the landscape as they treat themselves – with empathy.

An empathetic and compassionate relationship with the land is crucial for understanding the abstract characteristics of a landscape scar. Being wounded, forming a scab, and harboring a scar, while not a uniquely human phenomenon, is a physical healing process that one can easily observe and comprehend. The landscape scar metaphor implies the same healing process happening in the landscape. The wound, scab, and scar are the physical manifestations of such a landscape scar while feelings of loss, grief, and nostalgia are the emotional manifestations.

The abstract notions of a landscape scar – the mental or emotional 'scar' imparted on inhabitants or neighbors of the scarred land – follow a similar healing pattern: the wounding of the landscape associated with a traumatic event which inflicts a mental or emotional wound, the scab associated with the emotional reaction to the wound like grief or loss, and the scar associated with a later stage of healing. Yet, the scar remains, reminding one of the wounds inflicted.

How can landscape architects foster compassion and empathy in the design process in order to honor the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of a landscape scar? The use of an ontological metaphor allows one to understand the landscape as an extension of oneself – an entity that experiences change, growth, and decay in a similar fashion as human beings do – furthering one's emotional bond and thus relationship with the land. It is through this relationship that a landscape architect can cultivate compassion for scarred land itself and those the scar has affected. The following chapters will elaborate on the complex notions of a landscape scar and introduce a healing framework that landscape practitioners can adhere to in the design and development of such a scarred landscape.

CHAPTER 3

LANDSCAPE SCARS

A scar is a reminder, a physical manifestation of the past. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a scar is "a mark remaining (as on the skin) after injured tissue has healed;" "a mark left where something was previously attached;" "a mark or indentation resulting from damage or wear;" "a lasting moral or emotional injury."[23] In terms of landscape, a scar is a human-induced laceration or alteration of the land, ultimately changing its form or function.

Stitched within these definitions is the implication of time. Time can be quantified in terms of the healing process of a scar by the infliction of a wound, the forming of a scab, and the emergence of a scar. In terms of the biological wound healing process, these stages are defined as inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling (Fig. 2). Inflammation occurs within hours of wound infliction and is "characterized by infiltration of immune cells… which aim to eliminate pathogens and cellular debris from the wound site."[24] During this stage, blood coagulates at the location of the wound to seal the epidermis, or outer layer of skin, as the skin works to maintain homeostasis. The next stage, proliferation, can take days to weeks as macrophages, a type of white blood cell, and fibroblasts support the closure of the outer layer of skin and the regeneration of inner skin tissue.[25] In other words, the blood coagulation of the previous stage is advanced to actual tissue regeneration and scab formation. The third and final stage of

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[23] *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary,* s.v. "scar," accessed January 25, 2024, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scar.
[24] Marija Petkovic et al., "Immunomodulatory Properties of Host Defence Peptides in Skin Wound Healing." *Biomolecules* 11, no. 7 (June 28, 2021): 952. https://doi.org/10.3390/biom11070952, 4.
[25] Petkovic, et al., "Immunomodulatory Properties of Host Defence Peptides in Skin Wound Healing.", 5.

remodeling can take weeks to years. During this time, the wound is sealed off by the regenerated tissue of the proliferation stage. The new tissue proceeds to be strengthened by collagen until the it is strong enough to form fully healed tissue.[26]

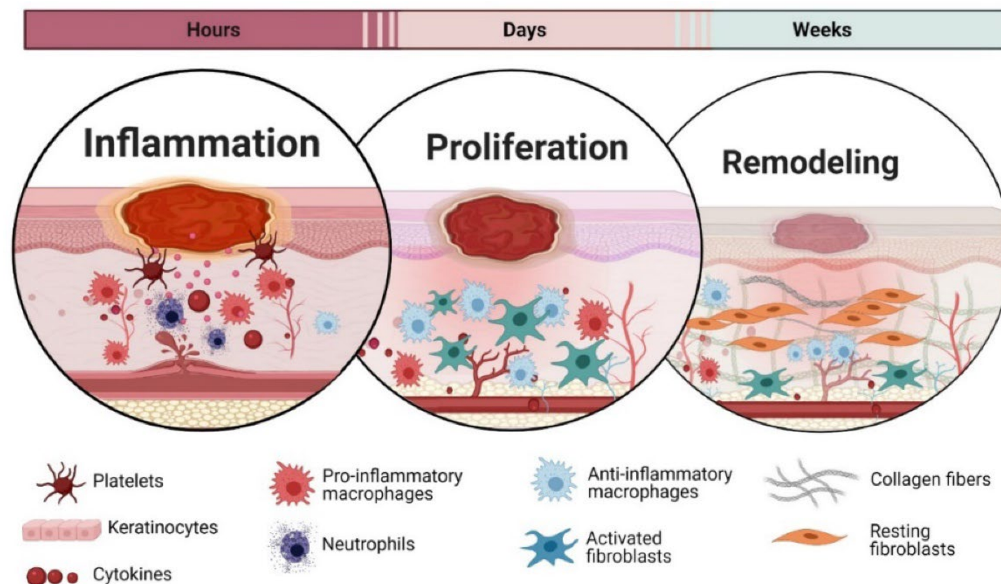

Figure 2. Biological stages of wound healing accompanied by a timeline and key cell populations during each stage.

Using metaphor as an analytical tool, the wound healing processes of the skin can be translated into wound healing processes of the landscape. While a biological wound on the skin is a universal experience that resonates with all human beings, a physical wound on the landscape may be overlooked by the untrained eye. Like a wound in the skin, a wound on the landscape goes through the healing stages of inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling.

An emotional or mental wound associated with a landscape scar coincides with the infliction of a physical wound on the landscape, but is bolstered by emotional attachments, memories, heritage, and other sociocultural connections to the land. Mental and emotional

[26]Petkovic, et al., "Immunomodulatory Properties of Host Defence Peptides in Skin Wound Healing.", 5.

wounds also go through the stages of inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling. In an emotional context, these stages can be equated to shock, grief, and growth.

Stages of a Landscape Scar

The infliction of a wound upon a landscape is a discernable harmful action carried out by human action instantaneously at a particular time, or a repeated harmful action carried out by human action over a sustained period of time. For example, dropping a bomb onto a landscape is a discernable harmful action causing immediate damage. A pit mine, however, is repeatedly torn into and expanded, so harmful action upon the land is carried out repeatedly over time – the wound continues to intensify.

The stage of landscape inflammation following wound infliction may begin immediately, as in the scattering and settling of debris resulting from a bomb explosion, or it may progress slowly as the wound slowly spreads into or across the landscape. In both cases, ecological factors act as the "immune cells" tasked with eliminating harmful substances and debris from the site of the wound. For example, a contaminated brownfield site accrues wounds over time through air, water, and soil pollution. Natural bioremediation may begin during the initial stage of inflammation, with microbes like bacteria and fungi and plant life acting as the immune cells trying to break down pollutants in the environment. Bioremediation as an example of inflammation, however, demonstrates a much slower process that that of the inflammatory stage in biological wound healing, taking months to years rather than hours.

Proliferation, in terms of a landscape wound, is a continuation of the inflammation stage as ecological and other environmental factors work to repair the outer, protective layer of the land. Again, rather than taking days to weeks, this is a multi-year process for landscapes.

Classical ecological succession is an example of a repairing phenomenon occurring during proliferation. The nutrients remaining in the soil following a devastating destruction of a landscape, or wounding, work to reignite the cycles of succession, beginning with the growth of pioneer species like grasses and perennials. Over the next one hundred years, pioneer species give way to intermediate species like shrubs and young trees, eventually maturing into a climax community.[27] In practical terms, the regeneration of layers of nutrients in the soil and plant materials on the soil's surface act like layers of new tissues generated within the skin and on the outer layer of the skin in the biological proliferation stage.

It is in the third and final stage of the wound healing process – remodeling – that landscape architects can play an impactful role. While the landscape wound heals into scar, the land topically heals. A physical scar may fade into obscurity, but the mental and emotional manifestations of the scar persist for generations. The layers of a landscape's history lie beneath the surface of the soil, much like the memories of a physical wound lie beneath the surface of the skin. Landscape architects can work to uncover the layer's of a landscape's history, gather threads of narrative, deconstruct normative assumptions made about a landscape, and reconstruct a more robust narrative of a landscape using compassionate design framework.

Part of healing a landscape scar is dissecting the multifaceted layers that comprise a landscape as it stands today. Identifying a landscape scar draws attention to its past: its story, narrative, or heritage. Heritage "consists of a multitude of parallel or successive stories and perspectives" that "discern wholeness out of complexity and divergence." It is "a highly time subjective activity, drawing on the past and affected by the traditions and customs, but

[27]Max Witynski, Ecological Succession, Explained." University of Chicago News. Accessed March 27, 2024. https://news.uchicago.edu/explainer/what-is-ecological-succession.

nevertheless firmly based in the current situation."[28] Therefore, heritage is in direct dialogue with the temporal aspects of a landscape scar. A landscape's heritage is the story begging to be told as a viewer looks upon a landscape scar wondering, *what happened*?

Human Geography Perspective

Human geographer Anna Storm has done extensive work in conceptualizing post-industrial landscape scars. She argues that in the same way a landscape scar carries heritage, it also harbors memories. According to Storm, "Memories need footholds, and the scar metaphor provides a conceptual tool to capture both the memories and the footholds in a cohesive way."[29] Storm uses a framework based in human geography to elucidate feelings of loss among those who live in close proximity to, or have a certain relationship with, a given landscape scar. The tenets of human geography – exploring spatial relationships among communities, cultures, and the environment – as the basis for interpreting a landscape scar is suitably apt. Landscape scars, understood in terms of a human geography-based framework, are markers of sorrow, betrayal, abuses of power, but also, community, dreams, achievements, and resistance.[30] They exist in physical reality, but also in a mental reality given the memories embedded within the scar's implied history.

In both the physical and mental realities, scars "highlight ideas about nature and organic growth."[31] The metaphorical understanding of a landscape scar thus allows one to relate the organic healing process human beings experience biologically on their skin and emotionally in their hearts with that of physically healing a landscape. Such organic and integrative process can

[28]Anna Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 3-4, 6.
[29]Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 8.
[30]Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 1.
[31]Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 153.

influence practice, draw attention to “the difficult and unstable places and stories” of the past, and inspire healing “in the social, cultural, and political spheres.”[32]

Figure 3. Iron ore mine in Malmberget, Sweden (Credit: Infragraphy).[33]

Where Storm’s human geography framework falls short, however, is in its practical application. Storm provides a detailed account of a mining pit consuming the town of Malmberget, Sweden (Fig. 3); the Barsebäck nuclear power plant in Sweden; the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania; the industrialized Ruhr area of Germany; and the town of Avesta in Sweden left behind by the iron and steel industry as landscape scar case studies in her work – gleaning the heritage narrative of each to explain present emotional scars persisting

[32]Storm, *Post-Industrial Landscape Scars*, 13.
[33]Infragraphy, March 22, 2019. https://blogs.aalto.fi/mediainfrastructures/2019/03/22/dirty-mining-and-clean-data-a-story-about-swedish-industry/.

among members of the community in which the scar is physically manifested. Though beyond this anthropogeographical analysis lies a series of unaddressed concepts. Is there a way to address the landscape scar from a design point of view while also healing the mental and emotional scars within community members? How can the actual landform of a landscape scar be both respected, yet tended to in a way that honors its heritage while remaining sensitive to the relationship between it and the surrounding natural and built environments?

Environmental History Perspective

Another presentation of the landscape scar metaphor in the literature is in the field of environmental history. In this subfield of the history realm, environmental histories study human impacts on nature as well as other interactions between these two actors – perhaps slightly less spatially-focused and more narrative focused than the anthropogeographical perspective. Environmental historian David Silkenat uses the scar metaphor in his analysis on slavery in the American South. Specifically, how the labor of enslaved people affected the environment and how the environment in turn impacted the lives of enslaved laborers. Enslaved labor decimated southern landscapes for the sake of profit, production, and progress.[34] It led to the erosion of once lush landscapes, the pollution of waterways, and a major decrease in biodiversity. Such devastation only furthered the institution of slavery on to new frontiers until there was little or no fertile land left.

The American Southern landscape still retains the physical scars of this extreme abuse of power – many of which can be observed even by the untrained eye. What exists in and through the physical scars are a host of mental and emotional scars lying beneath the surface of physical

[34] David Silkenat, *Scars on the Land :An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South.* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022).

reality, contributed to the haunted spirit of the land. Given such a complex and controversial history, how can life on this land move forward? Is it possible to reconcile physical healing with mental and emotional healing?

Silkenat explicitly illustrates the reciprocal harmful relationship between enslaved labor and the environment by drawing on observations from journalist and landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted. As Olmsted traveled through the southern seaboard states in the mid-nineteenth century, he observed and reflected on the turpentine forests of longleaf pine in North Carolina, seeing the "brutality in both labor that enslaved people performed and its effect upon the trees." The turpentine extraction process begins with the making of boxes, or "cavities dug in the trunk of the tree itself," by enslaved workers of the land who collect the resin of the longleaf pine during the spring months.[35] To tap the resin, the workers "hacked" into the tree along the top of the man-made box, chipping off the outer layers of bark as the resin could only flow from fresh scars. This hacking was an iterative process occurring every week or so to prevent the coagulation of resin, leaving the trees "scarified" three or four times over per month.[36] The resin collected in the boxes was then "dipped," or taken out by a spoon or ladle, and put into barrels to be locally transported to the stills located on the "turpentine orchards" of North Carolina themselves or shipped up to Northern ports.[37] In some cases, two different groups of enslaved workers were responsible for either the "hacking" or "dipping" efforts of the extraction process. More often, however, the entire process was carried out by one individual across a given number of trees.

[35]Frederick Law Olmsted, North Carolina." In *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States: With Remarks on Their Economy*. Cambridge Library Collection - North American History, 341-418. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 379.
[36]Olmsted, "North Carolina", 380.
[37]Olmsted, "North Carolina", 383-384.

Figure 4. The turpentine extraction process in North Carolina around the late nineteenth century (Credit: Library of Congress).[38]

The scarred longleaf pines of the nineteenth century turpentine orchards decayed rapidly as they were drained of life through the extractive process of procuring resin for turpentine distillation. The goal of turpentine orchard proprietors was to create as many boxes on as many pines as possible to efficiently make the most profit. A counternarrative argues that the commodification of longleaf pines during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was "never just about most efficiently coercing trees to give up their resin," but rather about "preserving and reproducing slaveholder's power over their human property" through the "carving of an individualized task system into the landscape itself."[39] Here, an ontological

[38]Cecelski, David. "North Carolina and the Turpentine Trail." Coastal Review, August 20, 2019. https://coastalreview.org/2019/08/the-turpentine-trail/.
[39]Jeremy Zallen. *American Lucifers: The Dark History of Artificial Light, 1750-1865*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 71.

metaphor is used to describe the power dynamics of slavery and the relationship between human beings and the landscape. Much like how the enslaved workers were trying to collect every drop of resin they could in their boxes, the property owners were trying to squeeze out every ounce of work they could from their "human property." The "carving of an individualized task system" by slaveowners directly alludes to the carving out of the longleaf pines during the hacking process – a uniquely human action done upon the longleaf pines that left the trees scarred in a wave of destruction.

In the dominant narrative of proprietor's profit, white human beings were entitled to full control over the natural environment and would go about extracting value from natural resources by any means necessary in order to make the most profit. Capitalistic market forces of greed and the inhumane, uncompassionate institution of slavery were the driving forces perpetuating this narrative. In the counternarrative of abuses of power explained by the ontological metaphor, the destructive power of human beings was put to question and the effects it had upon the landscape were formerly acknowledged, prompting the consideration of the relationship human beings have with the landscape.

Global Politics Perspective

In the cases of human geography and environmental history, the concept of scarred land is defined and exemplified by case studies relevant to their respective fields of research. Emphasis is placed on composing the scar's historical narrative and thus its effect on the human population that surrounds it. Research related to scars in the field of global politics takes a slightly different approach. While still defining a scar using physical and metaphysical conceptualizations, the approach taken by political scholar Brent Steele introduces the idea of

accountability in a scar's narrative. His research focused on scars of violence, including those in the anthropological domain using "body-as-resistance" such as the U.S. case of Emmett Till in 1955 and those in the architectural and landscape domain such as the absence of the World Trade Towers in New York City following 9/11.[40]

Figure 5. The 9/11 Memorial at the site of the former World Trade Center Towers in New York City, NY (Credit: Brandon Klein, Alamy Stock Photo).

Scars, in the framework of global politics, are a compelling form of accountability as "they evoke in those who feel or see the scars a reaction (*response*) to mark a presentation, which calls forth, secondly, a *story* – a representation (*account*) of "something" which has happened."[41] For example, the 9/11 Memorial erected on the World Trade Center site includes two one-acre size pools that sit in the footprints of the former towers – a design interpretation of the

[40] Brent J. Steele, Alternative *Accountabilities in Global Politics : The Scars of Violence.* Interventions. (London: Routledge, 2013), doi:10.4324/9780203308244, 19.
[41] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 4.

architectural scars left behind from the violent attack (Fig. 5). The pools can be seen as scars and one visiting can feel the presence of absence where the towers once stood. According to Steele, the observation of such a scar then prompts the viewer to consider the story of what has happened, perhaps now from varying perspectives having been emotionally triggered by the reminder of violence. When a scar of violence is acknowledged, "it is itself a struggle but also an invitation to a community for further struggle and contestation over explanation – to account for what produced it and what it may produce."[42]

Steele uses five themes to gain understanding of scars in the field of International Relations. The first he describes as a juxtaposition of "presence" and "absence." He further quantifies this juxtaposition with the notions of "the absence of presence" and the "presence of absence." The former refers to a feeling of loss, emptiness. The latter refers to the scarred object – a body, a landscape – exhibiting a presence built up around what was lost – a "haunting mark" that "is both a physical wound and a narrational arrhythmia" as it garners attention and demands conversation.[43]

In the second theme, Steele emphasizes "political action and acting over purpose and meaning."[44] Instead of focusing on the motives and intentions driving action in global politics, Steele focuses on the actions themselves. The third theme explores the uncertainty brought about by a scar and "its ability to empty the meaning of violence." Steele argues that a scar suggests things can happen "for which no reasoning is persuasive," countering the cliché that "everything happens for a reason." Because of this, Steele states that scars can help bring about the

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[42] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 8.
[43] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 8.
[44] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 9.

pluralization of accounts as the story behind the scar is continually re-presented to establish or reestablish its significance.[45]

The fourth theme deals with the "fragility of humans within political action" which is often brough to the forefront after devastation and the formation of a corresponding scar of violence.[46] The fifth theme addresses the idea of innocence in relation to scars of violence. Steele works to recognize the innocent in the wake of violence, especially when they are overshadowed in dominant discourses.

Using the two categories of scars of violence – anthrobiological and architectural and landscape – and his five defined themes as a framework, Steele's research goes on to explore various examples of scars of violence. He posits that his selected cases show "how long, how *permanent* absence can be as a result of developments taking place only in moments, hours, or days," – yet another articulation of the implied temporality of the wound, scab, and scar healing process.[47]

In Steele's arguments, however, humans are the primary actors with agency in the face of scars of violence. He does not attribute agency to non-human entities. The lack of agency given to the natural and built environments, namely landscape and architecture, leads one to believe they are merely objects upon which a scar may manifest. This suggests a dualistic thought paradigm: the human as the subject, the landscape as an object.

The duality created by focusing purely on the human interpretation and perspective of landscape scars prohibits the cultivation of a human-land relationship that fosters a sense of compassion for non-human landscape components as well. Storm, Silkenat, and Steele boast the

[45] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 11.
[46] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 11.
[47] Steele, *The Scars of Violence*, 126.

importance of acknowledging a landscape scar and its impact on the surrounding community, yet fail to connect the human healing process with the landscape healing process. Landscape architects have the opportunity to play an instrumental role in closing this gap of understanding. Instead of only writing a narrative about a place, as has been done in the fields of anthropology, environmental history, and global politics, landscape designers can translate various historical narratives into a design that honors the significance and layers of heritage embedded within the landscape scar and encourages individuals to engage in an experiential relationship with the scarred land. Landscape architects have expertise in analyzing both the natural processes and the social processes that overlap to form contemporary landscapes. Sensitive contemporary landscapes such as landscape scars are in need of attention from landscape architects – how can landscape designers approach a sensitive site in a respectful, compassionate way?

CHAPTER 4

LANDSCAPE HEALING

In the scope of this research, landscape healing is broken down into two major components: the internal, natural, organic, discrete, behind-the-scenes wound healing process that, without any external influence, is subject to time and sui generis biotic and abiotic factors; and the outward-facing, conspicuous aesthetic aspect of the wound healing process. The former includes biological or ecological healing of physical wounds, as well as mental and emotional wounds, in the hearts and minds of individuals. The latter deals with the creation or formation of something new from something existing – the literal and metaphorical scar tissue.

LANDSCAPE HEALING PROCESS

The range of landscape healing frameworks is vast. The two approaches related to landscape healing explored in this research include restoration and, to a greater extent, recovery. Both approaches prioritize the health of a landscape, especially a landscape that has been scarred. The restoration approach uses the theory of interconnected systems operating in coordination to understand the interplay of each component of a landscape, focusing particularly on ecological science, historical records, and human intervention. The recovery approach takes the physical, more tangible components of healing and applies them in a more abstract way.

Landscape Restoration

The primary avenue for restoration in landscape architecture is ecological restoration. In order for an ecological restoration paradigm to be applied to a landscape, it is understood that some event, or wounding, occurred to disrupt the land's ecological function. More often than not, this wounding is human induced. Therefore, ecologists and landscape practitioners believe it is the responsibility of human beings to restore a disrupted landscape using the methods of ecological restoration. Exact methods of restoration are not explored in this research, but the concepts driving the methods are brought to light and contribute to the proposed interdisciplinary framework of landscape healing.

The idea of landscape healing within the field of landscape architecture is often associated with ecological restoration. There are indeed components of ecological restoration that are crucial to a holistic landscape healing process, for ecological health is a major component of landscape health. A wounded ecosystem leads to landscape decline.

Eric Higgs, an environmental scholar specializing in ecological restoration, urges those engaged in restoration efforts to recognize the "reality of nature and society" as being "greater than our capacity to understand and manipulate them."[48] Landscape architects, through education and training, have the capacity to understand the patterns which govern ecological and culturally processes that work to define contemporary life. Likewise, the concepts Higgs presents as imperative in ecological restoration – *ecological integrity*, *historical fidelity*, and *intention* or *design* – are within scope of landscape architectural expertise.[49]

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[48]Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design: People, Natural Process, and Ecological Restoration*. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003) https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=e000xna&AN=100066&site=ehost-live&scope=site, 4-5).
[49]Higgs, *Nature by Design*, 4.

Ecological integrity relates to what Higgs argues should be the goal of landscape restoration: “the creation of whole, intact systems” that are elastic and resilient.[50] It is difficult to restore a disturbed ecological system to its exact prior, high-functioning state. Therefore, restoration efforts ought to focus on identifying, mitigating, and managing ecological disturbances and embracing the evolution of ecological cycles. Each component of an ecological system must be activated and engaged in order to initiate landscape healing following the infliction of a physical wound.

Historical fidelity, or *historicity*, ascertains the importance of history in ecological restoration. It can be broken down into nostalgia, narrative continuity, and time depth.[51] Higgs argues synthesizing scientific and humanist tendencies through restoration practices “will allow us to act distinctively on our longings for integrity of the past” guided by nostalgia and ensure “the stewardship of historical as well as contemporary dimensions of the world around us” using narrative continuity and time depth.[52]

Nostalgia, or the “bittersweet longing for something lost,” begs for recollection of a past time or place associated with positive thoughts or feelings.[53] One could feel nostalgia for the frosty winter days of their childhood, or for the open farm fields once lush with crops now converted into a commercial district. Sometimes, “nostalgia ignores much of the difficulty of times past,” necessitating the presentation of “countervailing historical accounts” to balance nostalgic tendencies with historical realities. Only drawing upon a one’s positive emotions and memories of a place is not enough to honor the true narrative of a landscape – so too must the

[50] Higgs, *Nature by Design,* 122.
[51] Higgs, *Nature by Design,*, 132.
[52] Ibid, 158.
[53] Ibid, 143.

painful landscape scars be uncovered and addressed in order to for the land and its surrounding communities to fully heal.

Following a strictly nostalgic paradigm for restoration also weakens the thread of a landscape's narrative continuity, or "the continuous stories that inform our understanding of a place."[54] Stories, or narratives, of a given place or landscape are passed down through various social institutions or embedded in the ecological systems that govern the functioning of that place or landscape. Any member of society is therefore subject to these landscape narratives, which weave themselves into the streams of constant knowledge transmission. As a result, landscape narratives have the potential to change how one understands previously held knowledge formulated using present values. For example, one could recall nostalgically a park that they frequented as a child, such as Taylor Square (formerly Calhoun Square) in Savannah, Georgia. Upon becoming a young adult, they hear from a neighbor that the park was built upon the graves of enslaved Africans working in Savannah in the nineteenth century.[55] This new knowledge reveals a fuller picture of the park's landscape narrative. Such interpretations of the past occur in the present based on present values and ultimately shape the future. The emotional scars harbored within the Savannah community due to the erasure of a sacred burial space has persisted through generations; it is in this generation that the emotional manifestation of the Taylor Square landscape scars were brought to light and acted upon given modern value systems of racial justice. Community activists advocating for the recognition of the burial grounds and the renaming of the square were trying to reconnect with a sense of place that had been lost in the milieu of urban growth.

[54]Ibid, 132.
[55]Will Pebbles. "Savannah Activists Seek to Rename Squares Built on Slave Burial Grounds, Named for Slave Owners." Savannah Morning News, December 21, 2020. https://www.savannahnow.com/story/news/2020/12/21/savannah-squares-built-slave-burial-grounds-were-named-after-slave-owners-social-justice-slavery/3985692001/.

According to Higgs, "place is a mélange of spatial attributes – space – combined with emotional and some argue spiritual qualities," and it "becomes significant through narrative continuity."[56] Cultural and ecological continuity contributes to a place's unique value.[57] These two facets of continuity help maintain a sense of place, especially in face of a landscape wound and subsequent scar. Therefore, in restoration or landscape healing efforts, it is of great importance that a landscape practitioner be sensitive to a place's cultural and ecological narrative in order to honor the integrity of the land and those who value it.

Implied in the notions of nostalgia, narrative continuity, and a sense of place is the aspect of time – similar to the implied temporality of the physical wound healing process. In the case of the aforementioned concepts, time is progressing in a somewhat linear direction from past to present and present to future. Higgs argues for a third dimension of *time depth*, where "depth is the reach of history, the amount of time, and… the engagements that form between people and place over that interval."[58] Time, therefore, is inextricably linked to the study and practice of history and restoration in both science and humanity.

The third and final attribute stressed in sincere ecological restoration is *intention* or *intentional design*. This attribute is primarily concerned with the future development and management of a landscape riddled with fractured ecological integrity and historical fidelity. How should the future of a landscape, especially one that is scarred, be decided? Providence Canyon, located in Stewart County, Georgia, is an example of landscape scar that has undergone immense ecological disturbance based on historical uses of the land and was intentionally designated as a Georgia State Park (Fig. 6).

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[56]Higgs ,*Nature by Design*, 148.
[57]Higgs, *Nature by Design*,, 154.
[58]Higgs, *Nature by Design*,, 154.

Figure 6. Providence Canyon State Park located in Stewart County, Georgia (Credit: Scott Flynn).[59]

Known as Georgia's "Little Grand Canyon," Providence Canyon is a unique Georgia State Park remarkable for its color-streaked gullies. Research in the geologic and soil sciences suggest the massive, 150-foot-deep gullies present at the site were "well-formed before the Civil War" by "erosion due to poor farming practices during the 1800s."[60] The beauty and splendor of this severely degraded landscape rose to high prominence in social and political conversation during the New Deal era of the 1930s, well over a century after its supposed 'formation.' Unlike other conservation landscapes – state and national parks recognized for their extraordinary and profound creation by natural forces over thousands of years of history – established during this

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[59]Scott Flynn. "Waterfalls, Tunnels and Even a Rock Garden - These Are Our Favorite Places We Visited in 2020." WSB-TV Channel 2 - Atlanta, December 16, 2020. https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/waterfalls-tunnels-even-rock-garden-these-are-our-favorite-places-we-visited-2020/X2VVYSKSAFGQJKFLIZESQVATUA/.
[60]Paul Sutter, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Gullies: Providence Canyon and the Soils of the South*. (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2015).

era, Providence Canyon is "an artifact of historical human land use which "cries out for analysis that moves from the cultural to the natural," as opposed to the dominate narrative framework of many conservation landscapes where nature came first and humans came second.[61] It is the epitome of a landscape scar.

Given its literal layers of geological history visible in the multi-colored soil along the canyon walls and the complex historical layers explaining its formation, Providence Canyon is a compelling hypothetical in addressing the role of intention in the design and management of a conserved landscape that also fits into the paradigm of a landscape scar. The practices of erosive agriculture produced the gullies, but were the social, economic, and political circumstances driving the agriculture industry during the nineteenth century?

Environmental historian Paul Sutter notes that the study of environmental history in the American South has been lackluster given the South's predominate agricultural history riddled with poverty, slavery, cash crops, deforestation, and land exhaustion and abandonment. Providence Canyon, therefore, "provides an opportunity to discuss the neglected environmental history of the tobacco and cotton South, a subregion that experience a dramatic history of soil erosion and environmental decline."[62] The study case of Dried Indian Creek in Newton County, Georgia, explored in Chapter Six, shares a comparable history with Providence Canyon and serves as another investigation into the environmental history of a Southern landscape. Delving into the history of landscape scars in the Southern landscape allows a landscape practitioner to design with an intentionality developed in accordance with the land's ecological and historical legacies.

[61]Sutter, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Gullies*.
[62]Ibid.

Landscape Recovery

The notion of design intent introduced by Higgs is further explored through both the landscape restoration and landscape recovery narratives. According to Landscape Architect and theorist James Corner, landscape architecture can serve "as a practice of reclamation, recovering memories, places, sites, ecologies, and potential futures."[63] It can marry the capacities of restoration and recovery, producing an interdisciplinary framework that allows for a more holistic and prolonged healing approach than any of these capacities working alone.

The landscape provides "an ongoing medium of exchange" on which "imaginative and material practices of different societies at different times" manifest.[64] It is more than a series of biological or ecological systems; it also operates in association with economic and cultural social structures. While a landscape's existence has been constant throughout human history, it "is not given, but made and remade," demanding "to be recovered, cultivated, and projected toward new ends."[65]

Once again, time is a key component in the landscape recovery narrative: what happened in the past on both ecological and cultural levels prompts present action and future decision making. Thus, the recovery of a landscape can be measured in three ways: "first, in terms of the retrieval of memory and the cultural enrichment of place and time; second, in terms of social program and utility as new uses and activities are developed; and third, in terms of ecological diversification and succession."[66]

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[63]James Corner, "Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice." Introduction. In *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, edited by James Corner, 1–26, (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 5.
[64]Ibid.
[65]Corner, "Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice," 12.
[66]Corner, "Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice," 13.

To take the exploration of landscape recovery a step further, landscape architect Christophe Girot presents a framework in which four trace concepts, or trace acts, are used to conduct intentional landscape design on a site with significant history or perhaps even scarring. All four concepts are clustered around issues of memory and address the question: "how can outsider designers acquire the understanding of a place that will enable them to act wisely and knowledgably?"[67]

The first trace concept identified by Girot is landing. Landing marks the passage from the unknown to the known and is based on feeling rather than thinking. It includes sensing the hidden energy of the place, or its *genus loci*. *Genus loci* is Latin for "the genius of a place" and historically referred to a dwelling god and the space in which that god was situated, thus imbued with notions of spirituality and the metaphysical. In its contemporary usage, *genus loci* often refers to the specific tangible or intangible cultural attributes of a place.[68] It is important to recognize the *genus loci* during the initial stage of landing as it is a "living manifestation of the experimental potential of a site and thus has potent spatial and psychological effects on the subsequent thinking-through of [a] design project."[69] One must approach the search for *genus loci* with an open, curious mind and recognize that this part of the process is interpretative rather than straightforward and objective.

The *genius loci* of a place can be damaged or even lost with the infliction of a wound upon a landscape, making it difficult to discover when engaging a landscape scar site. It is

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67 Girot, Christophe Girot, "Four Trace Concepts in Landscape Architecture." Essay. In *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, edited by James Corner, 59–68. (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 60.

68 Marilena Vecco, "Genius Loci as a Meta-Concept." *Journal of Cultural Heritage* 41 (2020): 225–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.culher.2019.07.001.

69 Girot, "Four Trace Concepts in Landscape Architecture," 62.

therefore important to take note of the lack of spiritual connection to a landscape and question how and when the spiritual connection was severed.

The second trace concept is grounding:

> Grounding is a process implying successive layers, both visible and invisible. Sometimes the most important aspect of a given site is almost intangible. It is not necessarily what remains visible to the eye that matters most, but those forces and events that undergird the evolution of a place. [70]

One can ground themselves in a site by repeated visits to or studies of the site to gain a more thorough understanding of it. This may include looking into the layers of successive histories of a place, as described in the earlier explanation of restoration practices. In terms of the landscape scar metaphor, probing into the layers of a landscape is like the unraveling of scar tissue. The primal spirit of a landscape is still present, but it has been bound and reinforced by layers of tough tissue to protect itself from being wounded again.

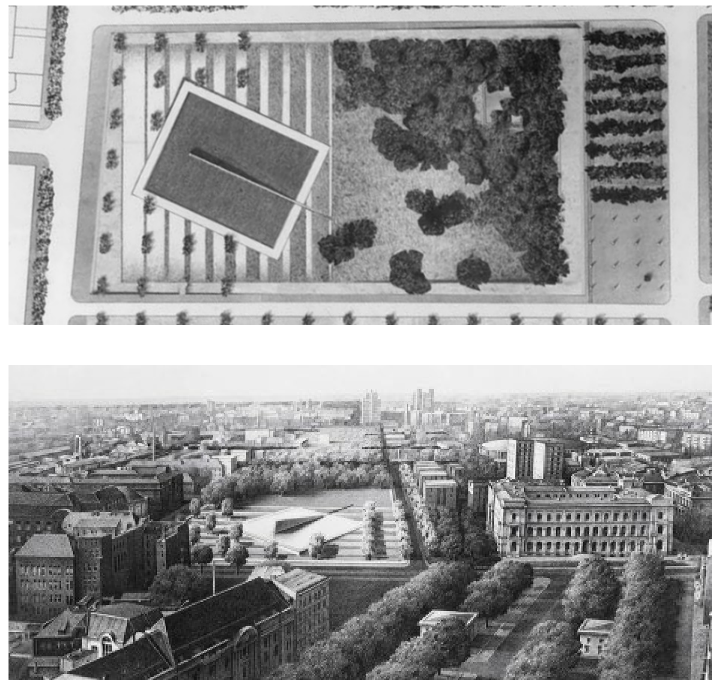
The third trace concept is finding. It is an activity that produces insight – tangible or evanescent. A finding is "something unique (though hidden) that definitely belongs to a place and contributes durability to its identity."[71] Often, it can provide evidence to support an initial intuition about a place discovered through the concepts of landing or grounding. Finding can provide explanations to previously unexplained attributes to a place, especially when coupled with the studies of a landscape conducted in the phase of grounding.

The fourth and final trace concept is founding. During founding, the previous three concepts are synthesized into a transformed understanding of the site – and understanding that can be conservative, referring to past events or circumstances, or innovative, bringing something new into a place. Regardless, founding is a calculated reaction to what was already present on a

[70] Girot, 63.
[71] Ibid.

site that can directly inform future design intent. Since it is preceded by processes emphasizing sensual and intuitive experiences, it maintains a thread of spiritual dialogue between the place itself and the outside designer who wishes to represent it in an honest and holistic fashion. The four trace concepts ultimately “enable designers to come to grips with their intuitions and experiences of place, allowing these impressions to direct the unfolding of the project”.[72]

Following the ritual of the four trace acts, the iterative and creative design process begins, introducing variables such as aesthetic considerations and how to best represent important elements extracted from a site’s layered history. Invaliden Park in Berlin is an example that follows the progression of the four trace concepts of landing, grounding, finding, and founding in landscape design. The most recent iteration of Invaliden Park was designed by Christophe Girot by means of a design competition submission (Figs. 7-8).



Figures 7-8. Top: Aerial sketch of Invaliden Park, Berlin, Germany. Bottom: Perspective sketch of Invaliden Park, Berlin, Germany.[73]

[72] Girot, 65.
[73] “Atelier Girot.” Atelier Girot | landscape architecture infrastructure. Accessed April 10, 2024. http://www.girot.ch/.

The site is located on a military park of the Prussian Invalids and included unexploded bombs, mangled trees, and structural remains of barracks and a military church and was one of the first public spaces to be designed between East and West Berlin.[74] Girot's design includes a large granite wall that appears to be sinking into a basin of water on which one can walk up or down. The wall serves as an "allegory of twentieth-century Berlin," encouraging movement to recall the memories reflected in the passage of time.[75]

Girot used a contemporary aesthetic framework based on the landing, grounding, finding, and founding of the site at Invaliden Park. But how can his methods be applied elsewhere? An alternative, transcendent aesthetic conceptualization of history (and time) would allow for the application of the basic tenets of Girot's trace concepts to landscapes throughout the globe with an additional philosophical or spiritual component. This would allow for a structured, yet intuitively intentional design approach for a landscape located in the Georgia Piedmont in the Southeastern United States, thousands of miles from Berlin, with a particular and vastly different historical narrative.

An ideological bridge between Girot's four trace concepts and a transcendent design philosophy, in the form of an alternative landscape design framework, will be explored and applied to a site in the Georgia Piedmont in chapters five and six of this research. Before the bridge can be constructed, however, an exploration of transcendental aesthetics is in order as the aesthetics of healing are key in the landscape healing narrative.

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[74]Girot, 64; "Invaliden Park, Berlin." Atelier Girot. Accessed February 11, 2024. http://www.girot.ch/?project=invaliden-park-berlin.
[75]Girot, 64.

AESTHETICS OF LANDSCAPE HEALING

The transcendental design aesthetics referred to in this research are drawn from the perspective of Zen Buddhism. This section serves to briefly introduce the aesthetic components of Zen that relate to the visual representation of the landscape healing process while the following chapter explores in detail the Buddhist philosophy underlying these other key facets of the design framework proposed in a later stage of this research. The following Zen concepts will be examined: aesthetic temporality; creating scenography; and incompleteness, imperfection, and impermanence in the landscape.

Aesthetic temporality is present throughout the artforms of Zen Buddhism. According to interdisciplinary researcher Allen Weiss, aesthetic temporality is displayed in Zen landscapes through the exposure of destruction and decay, stating that these are "appropriate markers of time in gardens."[76] Examples include leaving tree trunks to decompose slowly and become covered with lichen and moss, and embracing cracks, weathering, and lichen growth on either stones or garden walls. In this aesthetic framework, the effects of time enrich artwork, whether it be garden design, architecture, or pottery.

Similarly, the creation of a new scenography allows for the staging of time, a memorial of some past event, and a revival.[77] The idea of creating a new scenography is the hallmark of landscape design, especially concerning the design of landscape scars. It allows for the presentation of various layers of history that constitute a particular landscape. The designer has the responsibility to understand the temporal bounds of a landscape and decide what, if any, significant past event is in need of memorialization and revitalization. Such revitalization, when

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[76]Allen S. Weiss, *Zen Landscapes: Perspectives on Japanese Gardens and Ceramics*. (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 133.
[77]Weiss, *Zen Landscapes*, 137.

considered part of the landscape healing process, can serve to heal both physical and emotional or mental wounds associated with a landscape.

Prolific throughout the aesthetics of Zen Buddhism are the concepts of incompleteness, imperfection, and impermanence. So too are these ideas central to traditional Buddhist philosophy, to be discussed in the following chapter. Natural phenomena, especially concerning landscape processes, are forever on-going and therefore incomplete. A decaying tree stump, with the decaying of wood juxtaposed with the sprouting of new plant life like moss, is an example of aesthetic temporality. There is no complete state of the tree – in life or in death. Nor is there a state of perfection, in a tree's lifetime, or any being's lifetime. A tree is constantly being affected by surrounding variables that are subject to the innerworkings of the universe.

The idea of perfection is based on conventional pretenses that are subject to shifting societal values over time. Therefore, it is not static, or perfectly achievable. The concept of impermanence penetrates incompleteness, imperfection, and every other constructed notion of sentient life. Landscapes especially highlight the idea of impermanence as they are constantly evolving and are inherently incapable of remaining in a permanent state. This concept can be addressed by aesthetics in two ways: efforts to embrace impermanence and allow for a changing landscape, or intensive management efforts aimed at maintaining a certain look or experience of a landscape.

CHAPTER 5

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE BUDDHIST TRADITION

Buddhism dates back to fifth century BCE, making it one of the world's oldest religions. Its founder, Siddartha Gautama – who following his enlightenment, became known as the Shakyamuni Buddha – challenged the prevailing Hindu traditions of spiritual practice and self-realization in which only a select few were able to reach ultimate freedom and harmony. The Buddha prescribed an alternative form of spiritual practice based on his teachings, the *dharma*. Anyone who adhered to the *dharma* could attain enlightenment, or freedom from life's suffering, *i.e.* birth, death, sickness, and aging. Such suffering was present during the time of the Buddha's life and has continued and compounded into modern times.

There are two major schools in Buddhism from which numerous sub-sects emerged. The ancient and more conservative school of Buddhism is Theravada, or the 'Teaching of the Elders.' Its doctrine comes from the *sutras*, or textual records believed to be spoken by the Buddha. A prolific concept found in various *sutras* is that liberation from suffering and the attainment of enlightenment are the ends to the means of one's own effort. In the Theravada school, one must undertake monastic life to become enlightened – it is not possible for a layperson to do so in a single lifetime.[78] When a monastic attains enlightenment during the course of their lifetime, they become an *arhat* and are freed from the human realm of suffering.

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[78] "Hinayana Buddhism." Japan: Places, Images, Times & Transformations. Accessed February 25, 2024. https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/glossary/hinayana-buddhism.

Mahayana, or the 'Great Vehicle,' is the other major school of Buddhism. It developed in the first century CE and innovated upon the doctrines of Theravada. While it still maintained the foundational teachings of the Buddha, Mahayana saw enlightenment as the source of greatest value in human life and argued that every individual had the capacity to become enlightened. Thus, there is more than one way by which one can attain enlightenment, unlike in Theravada where the only path to enlightenment during one's lifetime is through the adoption of a monastic lifestyle. One of the primary concepts in Mahayana is *skillful means* which can be described as "the practice of applying awakening teaching to the diverse variety of students or practitioners."[79] According to Mahayana tradition, the Buddha himself employed *skillful means* in his teachings, understanding that each being "must be led to the path toward awakening through appropriate approaches."[80] Once an individual has attained enlightenment, they can choose to remain in *samsara*, or the cycles of rebirth, as a compassionate being, or Bodhisattva, who leads others towards enlightenment.

FOUNDATIONAL BUDDHISM: THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS, THREE MARKS OF EXISTENCE, NON-DUALISM

Besides the differing views on an individual's capacity for enlightenment, Theravada and Mahayana do adhere to similar foundational concepts of the *dharma* and the human condition. One of the most important teachings of the Buddha upon his enlightenment was that of the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths can be understood using a metaphor of disease diagnosis: identifying an illness, identifying the cause of the illness, determining if the illness is curable,

[79]"An Introduction to Skillful Means - Ancient Dragon Zen Gate." Ancient Dragon Zen Gate - Soto Zen Buddhist Meditation, March 2, 2019. https://www.ancientdragon.org/an-introduction-to-skillful-means/.
[80]"An Introduction to Skillful Means - Ancient Dragon Zen Gate."

and the course of action to cure it. In the case of Buddhism, the illness that plagues every sentient being is suffering, or *dukkha*. Therefore, the first noble truth outlines the 'illness' of *dukkha*, the second identifies the origins of *dukkha*, the third states that one can be freed from *dukkha* through enlightenment, and the fourth describes the Eight-Fold Path, or Middle Way, one can follow in order to cease *dukkha*.

The first noble truth identifies suffering as inherent in the fabric of life. It is part of birth, aging, sickness, death, and sorrow. Some aspects of suffering are biological, some are mental, and some are due to the unstable nature of life. Biological and mental aspects of *dukkha* arise from the five factors of personality, or *khandhas*. These include a beings material form of flesh, blood, and bones composed of natural elements, feeling or sensation, perception, volitions or tendencies, and consciousness. Suffering due to the nature of the world is in part due to unenlightened acceptance of conventional reality fraught with what the Buddha calls the 'three poisons:' greed, hatred, and delusion.

The second noble truth identifies the causes of suffering, or *samudaya*. *Samudaya* is caused by craving for sensual pleasures, existence, and nonexistence. According to the Buddha, craving, attachment, and ignorance about the nature of the universe, perpetuate the cycles of rebirth, or *samsara*. Interwoven with the concept of *samsara* is the Buddhist notion of rebirth. In Buddhist cosmology, there exist a plethora of rebirth realms that both sentient beings and world-systems cycle through. The human realm is considered the middle realm and the only realm that allows a being to attain enlightenment because there is enough suffering present to inspire spiritual development as well as enough freedom to act on this inspiration.

The realm into which one is reborn depends on *karma*, or the nature and quality of one's actions. All intentional actions, whether good or bad, coupled with the psychological impulse behind said action, equate to *karma*. Both *karma* and *dukkha* affect every being in *samsara.*

To understand the nature of the universe according to Buddhist cosmology, and thus work to end suffering, one must also understand the concept of "conditioned arising" as it is presented in the *dharma*. Conditioned arising is a theory of dependence and interconnectedness. Nothing in the universe is independent, and all things mental and physical arise due to a specific set of conditions and disappear when these conditions are removed. The Buddha suggests twelve conditioning links that pertain to one's past lives, present life, and next life: (1) spiritual ignorance, (2) *karma*, (3) discriminative consciousness, (4) mind and body, (5) six sense organs, (7) sensory stimulation, (8) feeling, (9) craving, (10) desires, (11) existence, (12) birth, and aging and death. Each link perpetuates *dukkha*. Through practice, self-reflection, and inquiry into the nature of the cosmos, one can break free from the twelve conditioning links and will no longer be plagued by *dukkha*.

The third noble truth holds that total nonattachment and letting go allows one to reach *nirvana*, or enlightenment – thus, it is possible to "cure" suffering. Once an individual releases themselves from *samudaya*, each of the twelve conditioning links cease. During life, *nirvana* is a specific experience of the highest bliss free from suffering. Its nature cannot be described; it is beyond conventional systems of thought. One must experience it for themselves to understand its entirety. Achieving *nirvana* is the primary goal of Buddhist practitioners. Conceptions of *nirvana,* or enlightenment, vary by Buddhist sect. For example, in the Theravada tradition, an individual attains *nirvana* through strict adherence to a systematic progression through stages outlined in monastic codes. In the Mahayana tradition, any individual can attain *nirvana* upon

recognizing the skillful means by which the Buddha or a bodhisattva is guiding the individual. In the Zen subsect of Mahayana Buddhism, there is less emphasis on *nirvana* and more emphasis on awakening, or *satori*. *Satori* is the "sudden, profound realization of our true nature and the nature of reality that transcends intellectual understanding" and "transforms one's perception of oneself and the world."[81]

The fourth and final noble truth outlines the course of action an individual can take to free themselves from suffering. The Buddha presented the Eight-Fold Path, or Middle Way, to his followers who wished to reach enlightenment. The first two categories of the path relate to wisdom and include right view and right understanding. The next three categories related to moral virtue and include right speech, right action, and right livelihood. The final three relate to the meditative cultivation of the heart and mind and include right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. The Eight-Fold Path establishes a Middle Way focused neither on the complete austerity of an ascetic way of life nor a life of excessive luxury so it can be followed by any and every individual.

The core teachings of the Four Noble Truths explain aspects of the human condition within Buddhist philosophy. Another teaching of the Buddha related to ideas presented in the Four Noble Truths is the Three Marks of Existence: *dukkha*, or suffering; *anitya*, or impermanence; and *anatman*, or the absence of self. As defined throughout the Four Noble Truths, *dukkha* is the suffering and dissatisfaction caused by craving of and attachment to aspects of conventional reality like material goods and an independent existence. *Dukkha* affects every individual – it is those who follow the Eight-Fold Path who are able to understand the true nature suffering and thus free themselves from it.

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[81] Fuyu. "What Is Satori?" Zen Buddhism, November 13, 2023. https://www.zen-buddhism.net/satori/.

The mark of *anitya* serves to remind an individual that everything in *samsara*, or the cycles of rebirth, is temporal and marked by impermanence. An individual's existence is not independent. Rather, there exists a dependent web of life in which all things are connected. Through practices like meditation, one can deconstruct their notions of a permanent reality, accept impermanence, and embrace a universe in flux.

Anatman refers to the absence of an independent self of which an individual has complete control over. While the Buddha acknowledged the five *khandhas* that give rise to a being's sense of self—namely, physical form and mental processes – he taught, through *anatman*, that one still must not get attached to any of the five factors of personality. In Buddhist philosophy, there is no self, no autonomous being. The dependent universe of *samsara* (as opposed to the enlightened state of *nirvana*) unfolds in accordance with the twelve links of conditioned arising and is thus constantly changing, as is an individual being. To become and remain attached to a sense of self, a particular set of circumstances, and/or tangible or intangible goods is to perpetuate *dukkha* and the cycle of *samsara*. Therefore, the Buddha teaches the value of non-attachment to people, beliefs, material goods, and a sense of self. Non-attachment underlies *dukkha*, *anitya*, *anatman*, the Four Noble Truths, and many other philosophical notions in Buddhism.

In the second century CE, Buddhist monk and founder of the Madhyamika School Nagarjuna further explored the idea of *anatman* in Mahayana tradition by advocating for the middle way between "the extremes of existence and nonexistence." His works articulate the concept of *shunyata*, or emptiness. Emptiness does not mean nothingness, "but rather the absence of a specific quality" that can be defined in conventional reality. For example, Nagarjuna asserts that 'the self' is empty – there is no one explicit quality that defines the self as "nothing is independent, nothing exists in and of itself." Rather, 'the self' is dependent upon

conditioned arising and the five *khandhas*. Nagarjuna thus presents the middle way of existence: "nothing exists ultimately (*i.e*., independently), but everything exists conventionally (*i.e*., dependently)."[82] His ideas of *shunyata* go on to greatly influence later developments in East Asian Buddhism, including Zen.

Another key philosophical concept of Buddhism is non-dualism. In the Zen tradition, non-dualism refers to the idea of 'not two.' Through mediative practice, one can dismantle the "dualistic thought processes and dichotomizing habits" that go unrecognized in one's day to day life and prohibit one from obtaining the knowledge of the true nature of things.[83] According to contemporary scholar of Buddhist philosophy Leesa Davis, there are "eight non-dual characteristics of meditative awareness" that coalesce to allow one to understand the non-dual nature of the universe:

1. The stillpoint of being: I am not this or that, I simply *am.*
2. All-accepting compassion: Things *are* perfect and complete just as they *are*.
3. Pure Being: Subject-object dichotomy dissolves.
4. Dissolution of spatial boundaries: Being is all-space.
5. Dissolution of categories of time: There is only Now.
6. Non-dual knowledge: Immediate knowing.
7. Non-dual action: direct action without premeditation or consequence.
8. Deconstruction of constructed conceptions of self and world.[84]

The Four Noble Truths, the Three Marks of Existence, and non-dualism are examples of foundational teachings given by the Buddha himself upon his enlightenment during the fifth century BCE. The concepts presented in his commentary on the human condition and cosmology spread throughout the Indian subcontinent era where other scholars and philosophers interpreted them. Through trade routes out of the Northern Indian provinces, the *dharma* was spread to

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[82] Lopez, Donald S. Lopez, *Buddhism*. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 367.
[83] Leesa S. Davis, *Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism: Deconstructive Modes of Spiritual Inquiry*, (New York, NY: Continuum, 2011), xiv.
[84] Davis, *Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism*, xvii-xviii.

Central Asia where it encountered diverse populations and flourished until the seventh century CE; its decline correlated with the expansion of Christianity, Islam, and other orthodox traditions.[85]

From Central Asia, Buddhism was transmitted to East Asia, likewise through trade routes, and first arrived in China during the first century CE. From China, Buddhism spread into Korea and Japan. Through its various cultural transmissions, Buddhism took on new forms in each country it was established. The rest of this research will look specifically at the Zen sub-sect of Mahayana Buddhism that began in China, spread to Korea and Japan, and eventually landed in the West.

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK INTO ZEN BUDDHISM

Zen Buddhism is the Japanese configuration of the Chinese school of Chan Buddhism. The Chinese word *chan* is derived from the Sanskrit word *chan na*, meaning "concentration." *Zen* is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese character *chan*. The Chan tradition was brought to China by the Indian monk Bodhidharma who is considered the beginning of the Chan, or Zen, lineage. Bodhidharma asserted the validity of transmission of the *dharma* through non-verbal teachings and meditation. The four tenets of Chan are: (1) *dharma* transmission outside the study of scripture (2) non-reliance on the scripture (3) a special focus on the human mind, and (4) understanding one's true nature and their innate capacity to become a buddha.[86] Because the *dharma* is transmitted outside of scripture, the lineage of Chan or Zen Masters became extremely important. Each Master, starting with Bodhidharma, transmitted their enlightened understanding

[85]Ann Heirman, and Stephan Peter Bumbacher, "Introduction: The Spread of Buddhism." In *The Spread of Buddhism*, pp. 1-14. (Brill, 2007), 6-7.
[86]Lopez, *Buddhism*, 532.

of the *dharma* with a student, thus establishing a link between contemporary Zen Masters with the tradition's founders spanning a millennia.

Bodhidharma transmitted the Chan *dharma* to Huineng, who became known as the sixth Chinese patriarch of the Chan tradition. Huineng transmitted the Chan *dharma* to the Chinese monk Linji during the Tang dynasty. Linji's teachings and commentaries were recorded by his students and went on to greatly influence the development of Chan, or Zen, in Korea and Japan. He believed that everything one needs to understand their true self, unlock their Buddha-nature, and achieve enlightenment is already within each and every individual. Individuals are led astray by looking for these things outside of their own self. The following exerpt, attributed to Linji though presumably written during the eleventh century CE, emphasizes this idea and remains relevant in contemporary times:

> If you don't have faith in yourself, then you'll be forever in a hurry trying to keep up with everything around you, you'll be twisted and turned by whatever environment you're in and you can never move freely. But if you can just stop this mind that goes rushing around moment by moment looking for something, then you'll be no different from the patriarchs and buddhas.[87]

A schism followed the era of Linji's prominence in Chan, establishing two major schools that were thus spread into Korea and Japan: Rinzai Zen and Soto Zen. The schism loosely followed geographic lines – the Northern sect became what is known today as Rinzai and the Southern sect, Soto. Ideologically, the two sects differ regarding their notions of *satori*, or achieving enlightenment or awakening. In *Rinzai*, satori is sudden, happening as quick as a flash of lightning. In Soto, *satori* is more gradual and cultivated through the practice of mindfulness. Both sects share practices, though Rinzai emphasizes the studying of *koans*, or phrases for contemplation. Soto emphasizes the practice of *zazen*, or "just sitting" meditation. During *zazen*, the practitioner enters a deep state of consciousness that allows them to transcend conventional

[87] Lopez, *Buddhism*, 542-543.

reality with enough practice. The mindfulness inherent in *zazen* is also applied to other daily, perhaps mundane tasks to further one's contemplation of the true nature of existence.

ZEN AESTHETICS AND SPIRITUALITY AS A BASIS FOR DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Enso

The enso symbol and wabi-sabi are the two primary aesthetic concepts incorporated into the Enso Framework as they represent the interconnected nature of the universe as well as acceptance of change. The enso symbol is found in Zen calligraphy and is a visual discourse for the sake of aesthetic appreciation. It also serves as an object of focus to train one's mind in order to understand the true nature of reality.[88] Enso can represent profound qualities of the universe – grandness or emptiness – or something as commonplace as a dumpling.[89] Often, it is accompanied by an inscription of a mantra, poem, or *koan.*

In its material form, the enso symbol is a circle created in one brushstroke of ink upon paper. Circle imagery in Buddhism can be traced back to the Shakyamuni Buddha and is reflected in artwork such as the eight-spoked *dharma* wheel of the Buddha's teachings or the formal portraits of Japanese Zen masters encircled in a round frame known as *enso-zo*, philosophy such as the teachings of *emptiness* or *nothingness* by the second-century Mahayana monk Nagarjuna, and practice as circumambulation is a way for Buddhist practitioners to show devotion and cultivate the mind.[90]

[88] Audrey Yoshiko Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment*, (Boston, MA: Weatherhill, 2009), xv.
[89] Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 17.
[90] Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 3-12.

Each enso reflects the circumstances under which it was created – nuances in stroke width, stroke variation, size, placement, and medium add to the meaning of each enso, yet do not take away from its profundity. Practitioners of Zen Buddhism “believed in the spontaneity of artistic creation often characterized by free… and loosely defined brushwork” as it allowed the viewer to “discover the innate beauty to be found in the exquisite random patterns left by the flows of nature.”[91] While the circle is seemingly whole and perfect, “in the hands of Zen masters, the varieties of personal expression are endless.”[92] Guided by the divine power of circle imagery and the existential implications of enso, a Zen master infuses his own spirituality through his personal expression of the symbol and accompanying notation or *koan*, ultimately “creating a visual experience and encounter for the viewer.”[93] The following are two examples of enso compositions from the eighteenth century by Japanese Zen Buddhists monks that highlight the philosophical and the allusive nature of enso, respectively.

[91] Andrew Juniper. *Wabi sabi: The Japanese art of impermanence*. (Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2011).
[92] Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 1.
[93] Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 17.

Figure 9. Enso symbol. Shunso Joshu, *Kore nan zo ("What is this?"),* 1751-1839, Ink on paper, 19.5 x 22 in, Private Collection.[94]

Shunso Joshu (1751-1893) was a reputable painter who created images for famous Zen teachers during the Edo Period in Japan. He was a member of the Rinzai Zen sect, a *dharma* descendant Hakuin and thus the so-called founder of Zen, Daruma. In his work shown in Figure 9, a large enso dominates the composition and the inscription reads "kore nan zo?" ("what is this?"). This enso is an example of open-ended "spiritual, philosophical, or mundane" contemplation expressed in modest manner.[95]

[94]Joshu, Shunso. *Kore nan zo? ("What is this?")*, 1751-1839, Private Collection. In *EnsŌ: Zen Circles of Enlightenment* by Audrey Yoshiko Seo, 84. Boston, MA: Weatherhill, 2009.
[95]Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 82.

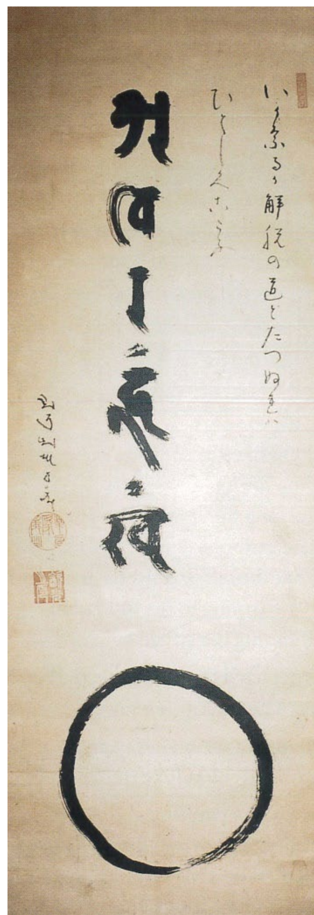

Figure 10. Enso symbol. Jiun Sonja, *Abiraunken*, 1718-1804, Ink on paper, 47 ¼ x 16 ½ in, Private Collection.[96]

Jiun Sonja, a monk of the Japanese Shingon sect of Buddhism also during the Edo Period, incorporates elements from traditional Buddhism from the Indian subcontinent with those of Zen in Figure 10. In this example, the enso symbol rests at the bottom of the composition, somewhat overshadowed by the inscription of five Sanskrit characters: *a vi ra hum kham* (J.: *a bi ra un ken*) that "mean earth, water, fire, wind, and the void" which also represent important steps in the journey towards enlightenment.[97] The earth espouses creativity as well as growth; it is the

[96]Sonja, Jiun. *Abiraunken*, 1718-1804, Private Collection. In *Ensō: Zen Circles of Enlightenment* by Audrey Yoshiko Seo, 82. Boston, MA: Weatherhill, 2009.

[97]Seo, *Enso: Zen Circles of Enlightenment,* 84.

root of all life. Water washes away that which is impure. Fire removes distractions that hinder one's path towards enlightenment. Wind, like water, carries away impurities, clearing the mind. Finally, the void symbolizes the attainment of enlightenment.[98]

Through these examples, one can understand how enso evoke reflection, contemplation, understanding, and unity. Zen artists often use metaphor to accomplish this goal – Sonja being one example as he inscribes the characters of the natural elements to represent an individual's journey towards enlightenment. Landscape practitioners are capable of cultivating a similar sense of existential pondering, albeit by different means and mediums. The design framework developed in this thesis attempts to use motifs like the enso symbol and aesthetic concepts like wabi-sabi for spiritual grounding in a design process centered on the healing of physical, mental, and emotional wounds.

Wabi-Sabi

The Japanese notion of wabi-sabi is incorporated into the Enso Framework given its aesthetic embrace of change and respect for the progression of time. Wabi-sabi reflects "an expression of the beauty that lies in the belief transition between the coming and going of life." It is both "an aesthetic ideal and philosophy that is best understood in terms of Zen philosophy."[99] Alternatively, wabi-sabi can be explained thus:

> Wabi-sabi can be called a "comprehensive" aesthetic system. Its world view, or universe, is self-referential. It provides an integrated approach to the ultimate nature of existence (metaphysics), sacred knowledge (spirituality), emotional well-being (state of mind), behavior (morality), and the look and feel of things (materiality).[100]

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[98]Ibid.

[99]Juniper, *Wabi sabi: The Japanese art of impermanence*, 1.

[100]Leonard Koren, *Wabi-sabi for artists, designers, Poets & Philosophers*, (Point Reyes, CA: Imperfect Publishing, 2008), 41.

Wabi-sabi was popularized during the Sengoku period in Japan by Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591). Rikyu worked with Japanese tea masters and introduced elements of simplicity, modesty, and naturalness into the tea ceremony.[101] In doing so, he deviated from the mainstream tendencies towards materialism and exclusivity wrapped up in the tea ceremony. His adaptations made the ceremony more accessible to common society. He upheld the spiritual sophistication of the tea ceremony using ethics and aesthetics that embraced the conduct of daily life – that which is incomplete, imperfect, and impermanent.[102]

Traditionally, the terms *wabi* and *sabi* had different meanings, although they are conjoined in contemporary times. *Wabi* can be translated as "incomplete," "imperfect," or "impoverished," and refers to an inward focus of quietness, tranquility, solitude, and harmony.[103] *Sabi* refers to an outward focus on material objects, aesthetics, and patination.[104] In terms of a landscape scar, the *genius loci*, emotional connection, and sensitive memories held by an individual or community with and for the landscape scar comprise the *wabi* elements while the physical manifestation of the existing scar and the proposed healing design contribute to *sabi*.

This research follows the example of Sen no Rikyu. The Enso Framework presents a series of adaptations to the mainstream methods of landscape design. It is a framework that can be utilized by any individual wishing to honor a scarred landscape; it is not intended only for distinguished landscape architects. So too does the Enso Framework entail a certain level of spiritual sophistication by encouraging the individual practitioner to self-reflect on their role and responsibilities within the design process. The ethics and the aesthetics of the Enso Framework

[101] Koren, *Wabi-sabi for artists, designers, Poets & Philosophers,* 33.
[102] Rumiko Handa. "Sen No Rikyū and the Japanese Way of Tea: Ethics and Aesthetics of the Everyday." *Interiors* 4, no. 3 (November 2013): 229–47. https://doi.org/10.2752/204191213x13817427789190, 232.
[103] Handa, "Sen No Rikyū" 231.
[104] Weiss, *Zen Landscapes*, 16.

likewise embrace the simple, modest, and trace remembrances of natural processes and human conduct (or misconduct).

In addition to the aesthetics of transformation and temporality, the Enso design framework addresses the existential and sensitive topics stitched within a landscape scar using spirituality. Spiritual traditions, which draw from formal religions as well as mystic lifestyles, provide a philosophical framework that addresses questions regarding the meaning of life and the role of time in our experience on earth, thus addressing the existential. Some scholars argue spirituality is part of an "individual's basic structure, facilitating optimal wellness, health, and stability."[105] Such an interpretation of spirituality ties in components of physical health with emotional wellbeing. Emotionally charged memories, histories, or topics can greatly affect emotional wellbeing and in turn physical health. Therefore, the development and subsequent use of a healing framework based on the tenets of a spiritual tradition demonstrates a concern for the individual in the scope of the universal.

Before diving into the spiritual tradition behind the Enso Framework, however, a distinction must be made between the concepts of religion and spirituality. While both are subjective and often used interchangeably, they are two different concepts.[106] In the scope of this research, religion refers to "an organized entity such as an institution with certain rituals, values, practices, and beliefs about God or a higher power" with "definable boundaries…and guidelines to which individuals adhere."[107] Spirituality "involves an individual's search for meaning in life, wholeness, peace, individuality and harmony and is a biological and integral component of being

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[105] Ruth A. Tanyi. "Towards Clarification of the Meaning of Spirituality." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 39, no. 5 (August 13, 2002): 500–509. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2002.02315.x., 502.

[106] Agnus Arrey et al., "Spirituality/Religiosity: A Cultural and Psychological Resource among Sub-Saharan African Migrant Women with HIV/AIDS in Belgium." *PLOS ONE* 11, no. 7 (July 22, 2016): 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0159488.

[107] Tanyi, "Towards Clarification of the Meaning of Spirituality", 502.

human."[108] Spiritual practices such as mediation, prayer, contemplation, and reflection, may overlap with more formalized practices of a religious institution, but they are in pursuit of a different set of goals. Religious practices such as attending an organized service, listening to or reading scripture, and prayer are often used as methods to bring an individual closer to God or some other higher power. Spiritual practices are rather focused on self-realization and individual interconnectedness with the transcendental forces of the universe.[109]

Buddhism presents a unique case as it can be classified as both a religion and a spiritual tradition. In both its traditional and contemporary manifestations, there are rituals and practices performed based on a set of principles related to a higher, universal power. The foundational teachings of Buddhism are centered on individual enlightenment which can be attained through an understanding of the interconnectedness of an individual with the greater universe, especially within the sect of Zen.

The philosophy of Zen Buddhism is applicable to landscape design as it is an experienced-based religion, much like landscape design is experienced-based practice. Zen "aims to help us perceive reality and to find peace of mind based on that reality."[110] Landscape designers are responsible for framing the reality of a given site at a given time in a given space. When the designer is able to see reality reflected back to them in the landscape, to see the oneness of the universe, they are able to design with sensitivity and respect for other humans, creatures, plant life, and landform.

[108]Ibid.
[109]Arrey et al., "Spirituality/Religiosity", 2.
[110]Koun Yamada, *Zen: The Authentic Gate* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2015), 12.

CHAPTER 6

THE ENSO FRAMEWORK: A ZEN APPROACH TO LANDSCAPE DESIGN

There are countless approaches to the landscape design process within the field of landscape architecture. In professional practice, landscape design firms tend to follow the phases of site analysis, schematic design, design development, construction documents, bidding and permitting, and project administration. Firms then develop their unique design outcomes by incorporating their core values into their design approach at various stages while simultaneously working towards the goals of their client.

In the academic field of modern landscape architecture, students and professors are encouraged to push the boundaries of traditional landscape design approaches by synthesizing their unique life experiences, values, and intellectual interests into a personal design approach and style. The Enso landscape design framework presented in this chapter was developed in such a way. It was born from an interest in exploring the potentiality of healing sensitive landscapes using a spiritual connection between humans and the landscape. A landscape scar serves as one example of a sensitive landscape as it represents a patchwork of growth and decay, harm and health in its physical manifestation and a blockage of emotional energy flow in its metaphysical manifestation.

The Enso Framework is not about adhering to an explicitly defined set of design elements, guidelines, or principles. It is about the cultivation of a landscape practitioner's state of mind – a mind that is Zen. A Zen mind is open to the impermanent fluctuations of the universe

and detached from the idea that life, a landscape, a design is static. It is also able to comprehend the connections all things have to each other, the earth, and the cosmos. In a landscape design setting, especially one concerned with sensitive land like a landscape scar, this sort of framework allows the landscape practitioner to establish and sustain a collaborative environment for change in which each actor is given agency and treated with compassion.

The Enso Framework is the overarching outcome of how a design approach is structured. It is open-ended, yet an important step towards the finalization of the design process. The design approaches or strategies are the pillars of the Enso Framework that inform the design outcome. The three pillars of the Enso Framework are mind cultivation, scar investigation, and engagement. Mind cultivation refers to preparatory self-inquiry done by the landscape designer prior to engaging with a sensitive site like a landscape scar. Such self-inquiry can be done through meditation and exposure to Zen Buddhist concepts that promote a landscape design approach of healing and compassion. Scar investigation refers to the preparatory site-inquiry done by the landscape designer as they begin interacting with a landscape scar. Scar investigation allows the designer to explore all facets of site's history and understand the trauma a particular landscape has endured. Once investigative research has been conducted, the landscape designer must engage with the community in which the landscape scar is found. It is the role of the landscape architect to understand the land, acknowledge the social, economic, and political institutions that influence the treatment of land, and communicate the needs and goals of the community through design.

Each pillar works to advance a design approach towards the goal of the Enso Framework: create a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere for landscape, personal, and communal healing. Action to heal the landscape or tend to the scars that have already formed will in turn heal those

engaging in such action. Healing the mental and emotional wounds within individuals will enable them to treat the landscape with compassion and respect, thus healing it. Healing the land and healing the human psyche is reciprocal.

PILLAR ONE: MIND CULTIVATION

In order for the Enso Framework to be carried out successfully, a landscape designer must first ground themselves spiritually to cultivate their mind in order to build self-awareness, realize their relationship to the land, and develop compassion for all things. The philosophy and practices of Zen Buddhism provide a spiritual basis for any individual looking to quiet their mind and minimize theirs and the suffering of others. In modern day Zen, there is an acknowledgement that are minds are never at rest and "under the control of the external world." Through the Zen practice of concentration, however, one can free themselves from this control and instead be guided by an interconnected internal world.[111]

Meditation, whether seated or walking, is one method to harness the power of concentration. Through mindful awareness and breathing, one can tap into one's true nature – a nature that is one with the universe. This realization can help one become self-aware. Self-awareness becomes important in design as a landscape architect must understand their role as well as their own personal biases as they approach the design of a landscape in a community different from their own. In the Enso Framework, the role of a landscape architect is to be an interpreter, or translator of values, history, landform, and ecology. Landscape architects engaging with landscape scars must approach the site with an open mind, free of preconceived notions or personal biases.

[111]Yamada, Koun. *Zen: The Authentic Gate*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2015.

By engaging in meditation practices, the landscape architect can become grounded in the present moment. The Zen focus on the present moment, and the utilization of it as a designer, is a step in the process of healing the emotional wounds associated with a landscape scar. Focusing on the present allows us to reconcile the fact that we cannot change the past nor predict the future. Much like scars are temporal and evolving, landscape is temporal and evolving. So too is human life impermanent and ever-changing.

A focus on the present moment, however, should not make one ignorant to the history that haunts a landscape scar. Through meditative practices, one can learn how to sit with the uncomfortable or unsettling layers of history that comprise a landscape scar – acknowledging the layers without seeking to diminish the hurt of the past manifesting in the present, but seeking to tend to them with mindfulness and compassion rather than anger, revenge, and retribution. Landscape architects have the ability to amplify the narratives of those who have a history of being suppressed like marginalized communities and non-human systems. In order to accurately and wholeheartedly share these alternative narratives, the landscape architect must be fully present throughout the design process, acknowledging when their biases arise and tempering them accordingly.

The design approach of the Enso Framework is non-dual: the 'outside' landscape architect is one with the community they are serving, who are all one with the earth and greater universe. The landform, spirit of the land, or *genius loci*, and sentient beings that live on the land are all of the same universal energy in different manifestations. Human beings, for example, derive form from *rupa*, one of the five factors of personality, or *khandhas*. *Rupa* is best translated as material shape or form, of which solidity coming from the earth, cohesion coming from water, energy coming from fire, and motion coming from wind interact to compose the

flesh, blood, and bones of a human being.[112] Thus, the natural elements that form the land also form the landscape designer. This non-dual view supports compassionate action – one should not treat a landscape in a way they would not treat themselves. In fact, human beings should care for the landscape while it heals as if it is an extension of themselves.

According to Zen philosophy, since all things are one, all things are also empty. They are neither with or without, they simply are. For example, consider the mind. The mind certainly exists, for without it human beings would be unable to operate cognitively. However, does the mind have form? The mind is not the brain – the brain is an organ arising from the interaction of elements described above as *rupa*. So, no, the mind does not have form. Zen Master Ikkyu writes of the mind in a fifteenth century verse:

> What is mind?
> The sound of the wind in
> The pine tree in the brush painting.[113]

In this poetic example, the wind represents the mind. It blows with certainty as it can be heard in the rustling of the tree, but it has no form or substance. Much like wind, the mind is not something that can be described or located, it just is. It is "simultaneously the complete perfection of unlimited capabilities… and yet has no form or substance," and because it has no form or substance, it is empty. The Buddhist concept of emptiness is hard to explain using an intellectual explanation; it is something to be understood through experience by an awakened mind – one that has attained *satori*.

The Zen belief that every individual is capable of achieving *satori*, or enlightenment or awakening, at any moment can be actualized while visiting, interpreting, and designing a

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[112]Peter Harvey. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
[113]Yamada, *Zen: The Authentic Gate*, 30.

landscape. According to Zen Master Koun Yamada, “awakening is the realization that the content of both subject and object is empty and one,” and that “this empty-oneness is none other than the constantly changing phenomenal world of form.”[114] The Enso Framework design approach encourages landscape practitioners to allow themselves time to reflect and meditate on their role in the healing of a landscape scar with the hope that they will come to understand what Yamada elucidates about awakening, emptiness, and oneness, or nondualism. For once “subject has been eliminated and object has been transcended,” one clarifies their heart and mind, and unbound compassion can emanate from them.[115] The expression of unbound compassion for all things promotes a harmonious atmosphere for healing.

PILLAR TWO: SCAR INVESTIGATION

Once a landscape architect’s mind is quieted and open to the possibility of awakening, scar investigation can begin. It is through this design strategy of the Enso Framework that the layers, or narrative threads of a landscape scar are brought to light. While investigating a scar, a landscape architect is more of a reader than an author or translator of the land. In some cases, there may be an initial step of “un-learning” about a landscape – a dismantling of a dominant narrative that has extinguished the power of alternate histories. In the study case included in this thesis, a landscape architect is faced with such “un-learning” at the beginning of the investigation process with the very name of the landscape scar: Dried Indian Creek.

The initial un-learning process coincides with the establishment of definitions and parameters regarding a particular landscape scar by the landscape architect. Some definitions are supported by fact, like geographic location. Others may arise from interpretations on behalf of

[114] Yamada, *Zen: The Authentic Gate*, 33.
[115] Yamada, *Zen: The Authentic Gate,* 160.

the landscape architect, as existing data may be unclear or undefined. The landscape architect is also responsible for arbitrarily setting the intangible parameters for the landscape scar investigation. The decided parameters determine what is and is not being studied. Example parameters include dimensions like time and space.

Following the establishment of definitions and parameters, the landscape architect is encouraged to establish thematic concepts around which to center data collection. The selected thematic elements should reflect the relationships between various aspects of the landscape scar. For example, one might consider the elements of between history, ecology, landscape, religion or spirituality, community, and culture; explore how they relate to each other; and infer how the development of such relationships led to the contemporary state of the scar. The existence of relationships between thematic components, however, depends upon the conditioned layers of place that form the site. If there is little to no information known about the site, it is up to the landscape architect to act as both a reader and author of the scar site – they must jump straight to observing what is present on the site to weave inferred narrative threads into a cohesive design.

The next step in scar investigation is data collection from direct observations, archival records and documents, and physical artifacts. Sources can include the land itself, oral histories, primary or secondary sources that address the site or the social, political, or economic circumstances surrounding a site, environmental research, and other design proposals. These data allow the landscape architect to dismantle normative assumptions about a site's circumstances and explore multiple aspects and eras of landscape scarring. The collected data should be organized according to the themes outlined during the previous step of this process.

Once the data has been collected it can be analyzed using methods like pattern-matching, and explanation building. Key events can be organized chronologically to "derive a descriptive

pattern and uncover causal relationships" as "presumed causal conditions must precede the presumed outcome condition."[116] One can then compare the empirical pattern suggest by the data with the one predicted by the hypothesized relationships. Explanation building allows for a further understanding of how the data fit into a given framework and how they can explain certain elements of it.

The findings of the scar investigation process culminate in a set of analytical generalizations that will in turn inform the compassionate design development of the landscape scar site. Through the analysis of the data, the landscape architect can develop a conceptual claim to show how their findings informed relationships among concepts, actors, theoretical constructs, and the sequencing of events. This investigation process and associated theoretical propositions can be extended to other landscape scar sites where similar concepts, constructs, or sequences might be relevant.

PILLAR THREE: ENGAGEMENT

The third pillar of the Enso Framework is direct engagement with the landscape scar in all its manifestations – physical, mental, and emotional. In the physical dimension, landscape architects initiate an iterative process of design development in which the hypothetical and theoretical is actualized in the landscape in a way that challenges convention and acknowledges who the future readers of the landscape will be. This part of the healing process is focused on the land itself.

[116] Yin, Robert K. "A (Very) Brief Refresher on the Case Study Method." Chapter in *Applications of Case Study Research*, 3–20. Los Angeles, CA.: SAGE, 2012, 16.

In the mental and emotional dimensions, landscape architects must draw upon the notions of compassion and understanding developed during the first pillar of mind cultivation. They must approach the potentially traumatic memories surrounding a landscape with respect and reverence for those directly affected. Landscape architects should engage with these individuals or communities with an understanding of their role as an expert in the field of landscape design while acknowledging the community as "experts" in their knowledge and experience of a landscape scar. By connecting with an individual or community from the grounds of compassion, the landscape architect develops a level of trust that ensures an honest, representative landscape design that honors the goals of the individual or community.

Initial design iterations should emerge organically based on the experiences of the first two pillars of mind cultivation and scar investigation. The cultivation of the mind of the designer establishes a mental framework rooted in the philosophy of Zen Buddhism which prompts the designer to consider elements like temporality, impermanence, and non-dualism. Designers can look to the aesthetic legacies of Zen such as wabi-sabi and the enso symbol for inspiration. The generalizations drawn from the scar investigation findings can be supported or refuted during the engagement phase as the design is shared with and critiqued by key community stakeholders. Designers should factor community dialogue into subsequent design iterations while still working to maintain the theoretical integrity of the original design intent.

The landscape architect during this stage of iterative design is also tasked with bridging interpretive work with constructing experiences. As a designer, the landscape architect is interpreting the data collected during scar investigation and must in turn translate the landscape scar's significance through the lens of the community into an experiential design program. By

designing experience within the Enso Framework, the landscape architect fosters the creation of a physical and emotional space for healing among individuals affected by the landscape scar.

In conclusion, the Enso Framework incorporates elements of landscape architecture and design with Buddhist philosophy, particularly Zen Buddhism. This framework engages the landscape practitioner, the land, the spirit of the land, and the community that interacts or has a relationship with the land. Utilizing this framework, a landscape practitioner can transform themselves and the world around them through a deepened sense of purpose and compassion.

CHAPTER 7

LANDSCAPE SCAR INVESTIGATION: DRIED INDIAN CREEK

Before delving into the chosen study case of Dried Indian Creek, a point must first be made to delineate the particular use of the study case for this research from a tradition case study. Typically, case studies in the field of landscape architecture research provide opportunities to learn about contemporary phenomena and their meanings.[117] So too can case studies provide novel or supplementary information about a given process or idea.[118] The analysis of such information can lead to new findings, enable the researcher to test theories, or even serve as a catalyst for new discoveries. In this research, Dried Indian Creek serves as a real-world landscape scar at which the theoretical Enso Framework in the previous chapter can be applied.

The purpose of this case study is to serve as an example of the second pillar of the Enso Framework: scar investigation. The design of this case study is organized as follows: case is defined, parameters are set, a web of relationships between thematic elements is weaved, data is collected and analyzed, study findings are examined for their relevancy to this research of tending to landscape scars.

Dried Indian Creek is a stream running through the towns of Covington and Oxford in Newton County, Georgia. It is a tributary to the Yellow River and part of the Ocmulgee River

[117] Yin, Robert K. "A (Very) Brief Refresher on the Case Study Method." Chapter in *Applications of Case Study Research*, 3–20. Los Angeles, CA.: SAGE, 2012, 4.
[118] Francis, Mark. "A Case Study Method for Landscape Architecture." *Landscape Journal* 20, no. 1 (2001): 15–29. https://doi.org/10.3368/lj.20.1.15, 5.

watershed. The creek and the land surrounding it are rife with significance as they withstood the ebbing tides of history. It is an example of a landscape scar as its form has been permanently altered due to human action – human action that has also left its mark on the hearts and minds of those who have a relationship to the creek.

The study area of Dried Indian Creek is bounded by two locations: the section of the creek beside Bethlehem Baptist Church and the section of the creek neighboring Covington City Hall. In terms of time, the study case is bounded by five key eras of harm, or human interaction with the land: the era of early history spanning from the 1520s to the 1820s; the era of Native American dispossession in the Antebellum period from the 1820s to the 1850s; the era of Jim Crow from the 1860s to the 1960s; and the era of the modern south from the 1970s to the present day. In each of these eras, the relationships between ecology, landscape, history, spirituality, and culture will be explored and supported by data collection from direct observations, archival records and documents, and physical artifacts.

THEMATIC RELATIONSHIPS

A landscape's heritage is understood through its layers of stories and unfolding of relationships that contribute to an overall sense of place. In terms of Dried Indian Creek, the primary relationships to consider to understand the scar's heritage are those between ecology and history, landscape and spirituality, ecology and culture, and history and culture. A series of hypotheses regarding these relationships follows.

The relationship between ecology and history is reciprocal: the ecology of a landscape influences history as a landscape's history impacts its ecology. A landscape's ecology is the interworking of environmental relationships in a given location. A landscape's history is the

summation of events that have occurred in or on a landscape over a period of time told from a specific cultural perspective. The notion of history implies the presence of human beings. The reciprocal relationship between ecology and history suggests the existence of another relationship, one between humans and the environment. In the thematic analysis between ecology and history, the existence of such relationships is introduced. In the thematic analysis between ecology and culture, the implications of various human-environment relationships are discussed.

Environmental and human factors impact both the ecology and history of a landscape. Prior to significant human contact, landscapes develop their own history unable to be read by humans until generations later. Landscape scholar William Cronon described this phenomenon through his work in environmental history:

Just as ecosystems have been changed by the historical activities of human beings, so too have they had their own less-recorded history: forests have been transformed by disease, drought, and fire, species have become extinct, and landscapes have been drastically altered by climatic change without any human intervention at all.[119]

Therefore, before observing the relationship between humans and their environment, it is important to understand the ecological conditions that defined a landscape that humans came to occupy. Newton County, where Dried Indian Creek is located, rests in the Georgia Piedmont region which is characterized by rolling hills, stream valleys, and some flat plains. The major waterways include the Alcovy (formerly known as the Ulcofauhatchee, meaning "water-mixed-river" in the Muscogee language), Yellow, and South rivers which all flush into the Ocmulgee

[119]Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1983, 11.

River at the southern end of the county. The proximity of stream valleys to more flat plains of land made human settlement along major and minor waterways desirable.

Native Americans in Early History

The earliest inhabitants of the region to become Newton County date back to 12,000 years ago. Archeological evidence associated with hunters and gatherers during the late Ice Age period has been discovered in the Ocmulgee River Valley. As the climate warmed, it is presumed that more humans settled in the region as semi-permanent hunter-gathers given the abundance of ecological diversity in game and plant life in the Piedmont region. The land allowed for the cultivation of indigenous crops such as squash, sweet potato, and Jerusalem artichoke. The early settlers of this land were likely Southern Siouan and Yuchi native groups. Muscogee, or Creek groups likely migrated into the region around the fourth century BCE and occupied the land up until the nineteenth century.[120]

The relationship between landscape and spirituality at Dried Indian Creek can be traced back to the ancient belief systems of the Creek, or Muscogee Native Americans. According to Creek cosmology, there exist three worlds: the Upper World, the Lower World, and the Middle World. The Upper World, "beyond the sky" was a realm of spiritual beings and powers such as perfection, order, and clarity. The Lower World, "below the earth and the waters, was also a realm of spiritual beings and powers, though opposite of the Upper World: chaos, creativity, and madness. The Middle World, inhabited by humans, "existed in a precarious balance between those powers that structure nature and human life and those that rupture order." Human beings

[120] "Native American History of Newton County, Georgia." Access Genealogy, July 1, 2012. https://accessgenealogy.com/georgia/native-american-history-of-newton-county-georgia.htm.

entered the Middle World by emerging from a cave in the earth after being created underground, thus establishing a profound relationship between Creeks and the land.[121]

The Creek connected to their spirituality by engaging in rituals and ceremonies carried out on the landscape. One example is the Busk, an annual ceremony that took place on a selected "Busk Ground" complex located in larger Creek towns. The Busk Ground served as an *axis mundi,* or symbolic center of the world. The Busk ceremony consisted of fasting, dancing, taking herbal medicines, sacrificing new crops to fire, and the building of a New Fire. Medicinal plants were believed to be brought to the Middle World by four beings from four corners of the earth, two of which are Yahola and Hayu'ya. Yahola and Hayu'ya are also said to watch over activities carried out on the Busk Ground and offer individuals strength and clarity. The corn crop was another plant believed to exist only in the sacred realm. By sacrificing a new crop of corn to the fire during the Busk, the Creek periodically returned corn to the sacred.[122] The igniting of the New Fire, or Sacred Fire, during the Busk ceremony connected the Creeks to the cosmic forces of the universe, allowing individuals to "communicate their wants to the Maker of Breath… the purifying power that rebalanced the cosmos."[123] The purity of the New Fire restored unity and peace among the Creek community.

The earliest record of European exploration of the area near Newton County is that of Hernando de Soto who traveled through present day Georgia in 1540. With his expedition, he and his crew brought disease and decimation to the native peoples. Between 1500 and 1700, Georgia's indigenous population is believed to have declined by 95%. Those that survived began adopting European agricultural practices and political structures to protect their agency and

[121] Grantham, Bill. *Creation Myths and Legends of the Creek Indians*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002, 21.
[122] Grantham, *Creation Myths and Legends of the Creek Indians*, 80-81.
[123] Grantham, *Creation Myths and Legends of the Creek Indians*, 82.

legitimacy. The Muscogee-Creek Confederacy arose as a result to align the Muscogee-speaking peoples in the region.[124]

Dispossession and the Antebellum Period

In the early nineteenth century, white settlers began arriving in what would be established as Newton County in 1821. The seat of the new county was to be located as close to the geographic center of the county as possible.[125] Dried Indian Creek just to happens to run through the center of the county, so the county seat was established along its course. The land of Newton County was included in the fourth Georgia Land Lottery in 1821. The Georgia land lotteries, spanning from 1805 to 1833, forced native Creeks off of their ancestral land by claiming it property of the state of Georgia, dividing it into lots, and selling it to white landowners. Native relocation was further codified into federal law in 1830 with the ratification of the Indian Removal Act. The Removal Act "established a process whereby the President could grant land west of the Mississippi River to Indian Tribes that agreed to give up their homelands."[126] As the Creek peoples were driven from their settlements in Georgia during the era of land dispossession in the 1820s, they were forced to severe their spiritual ties to the Southeastern landscape, resulting in spiritual and emotional scarring.

With native peoples forcibly removed and their settlements surrendered, a new era of ecological history in the American South commenced. White landowners viewed their newly acquired property as means for economic profit primarily through agricultural productions.

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[124] "Native American History of Newton County, Georgia."

[125] Morris, Susan. "Newton County." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last modified Jul 12, 2022. https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/newton-county/

[126] "Indian Treaties and the Removal Act of 1830." U.S. Department of State. Accessed April 5, 2024. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/indian-treaties.

Farmers would occupy a tract of land until they completely exhausted the soil, packed up, and moved on to the next empty parcel. Cotton farming in Piedmont Georgia had been ongoing since the eighteenth century. Landowners enlisted the labor of enslaved people to work their land. By 1860, there were approximately 462,000 enslaved people in Georgia, making up 44% of the state's total population.[127]

In addition to a new era of ecological history in the Antebellum period, a new form of spirituality was taking over the region – evangelical Christianity. Bethlehem Baptist Church was established along the creek in 1849 and remains the oldest historically Black church in the community.[128] The church was built on the former site of a an old mill – a mill that was referenced in an article in the Atlanta Constitution newspaper in 1893. According to the news article, a man claimed to have "the leg bone of the Indian chief who was hung in 1795 and left to dry, near the old mill…and from which incident Dried Indian creek got its name."[129]

Whether or not the site of the old mill was deliberately chosen for Bethlehem Baptist Church given the history of Dried Indian Creek is uncertain. What is certain, however, is the spatial connection between the two entities. The Bethlehem Baptist Church community utilized the Dried Indian Creek for baptism, reflection, gathering, and recreation. Deacon Forest Sawyer Jr., a civil rights activist from Newton County, reflected:

> Rivers are the life blood, the arteries, of our land here. Rivers and streams were sacred for Indians, and it was those same creeks we'd steal away to, to feel the flow of the Holy Spirit—from the day we were brought to this county in chains. Of course, white folks chose to torture and kill our people along the river bank, reminding them that nothing was sacred. Any bond of

[127]Young, Jeffrey. "Slavery in Antebellum Georgia." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last modified Sep 30, 2020. https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/slavery-in-antebellum-georgia/.

[128]Queen, Alice, ed. "Bethlehem Baptist Gets New Address - Bethlehem Way." Rockdale Citizen & Newton Citizen, March 18, 2024. https://www.rockdalenewtoncitizen.com/bethlehem-baptist-gets-new-address-bethlehem-way/article_2999f308-e2f0-11ee-b005-df8bb33177ca.html.

[129]"Interesting Relics: A Covington Man Has Enough to Start of Museum." *Atlanta Constitution*, June 4, 1893.

family, any tie of love, could be broken in a moment. That's what white power was back then, and it still is. [130]

Deacon Sawyer highlights the relationships that individuals of different cultures had with Dried Indian Creek by asserting the spiritual connection to the landscape – a connection to a landscape that has been scarred by abuses of power and violence. Since Dried Indian Creek held such spiritual prominence throughout centuries, the physicals scars manifest today show only a fraction of the scarring associated with the site. The rest remains locked in the hearts and minds of individuals affected by the historical narratives of the creek.

Narrative plays a powerful role in the prominence of certain cultures throughout history. Dominant narratives use normative framing and often leave out alternative social histories related to cultures not writing history. Counter narratives offer another perspective on the same situation albeit from a different point of view. Metanarratives are used to make sense of these competing narratives to allow for reconciliation between differing traumatic histories and marginalized cultures.

For example, the dominant narrative in the naming of Dried Indian Creek is recalled as a white settler's point of view. The dominant narrative asserts that when white settlers came to what would become Newton County, they came across the mummified remains of an individual they believed to be a Native American. In an alternative narrative presented by the African American community, a Native American leader stood in protest to the white settlers trying to seize their land. The settlers responded violently and strung his body above the water to dry out.[131] Conflicting narratives such as these prompt the landscape architect to immediately

[130] Auslander, Mark, and Avis E. Williams. "Along the Ulcofauhatche: Of Sorrow Songs and 'Dried Indian Creek.'" Southern Spaces, February 18, 2022. https://southernspaces.org/2022/along-ulcofauhatche-sorrow-songs-and-dried-indian-creek/.

[131] Auslander and Williams. "Along the Ulcofauhatche: Of Sorrow Songs and 'Dried Indian Creek.'"

consider who prominent actors of the landscape were and how their relationships with each other and with the land itself influenced the state of the landscape scar in present day.

When the creek was named in the early nineteenth century, white settlers held power over the historical narrative – a perceived dominance that was only bolstered by dispossession legislation of the Andrew Jackson presidential administration. A naming counternarrative is presented by the African American community who, at the time, was marginalized alongside the Native Americans. The metanarrative is thus explored by studies such as this one seeking to weave together the dominant and counter narratives of Dried Indian Creek to heal the physical, mental, and emotional wounds that have scarred the landscape.

Jim Crow South

The American Civil War, which marks the beginning of the next historical era in this research, ushered in yet another shift in the human-environment relationship that influenced the ecology of the region. The war caused great upheaval in the agricultural status-quo in Georgia, punctuated by Union General William T. Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864. In his wake, Sherman left a path of fire and destruction, uprooting agricultural and civic life in the Georgia Piedmont.

Not long after the war, landowners sought to reestablish their plantation farmlands. According to the 1880 U.S. census, the laborers on cotton farms in Newton County were still mostly African Americans working in conditions described as "poor," "destitute," and in "a worse condition than they were during slavery." Despite freedom granted in President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, African Americans were still forced into roles of

subservience given the systemically discriminatory power structures in place during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Georgia. The renaissance of Southern agriculture "transformed extensive enslaved agriculture into intensive tenant farming" which "exacerbated soil-killing agricultural practices," trapping freed Black farmers "in cycles of debt built upon agricultural practices that exhausted the land and their bodies."[132]

The introduction of chemical fertilizer to Southern fields resulted in a higher crop year on nutrient-poor soil, but at a high environmental cost. Because the already low quality of the soil from decades upon decades of exhaustive farming practices, the South became the "most chemically dependent region in the country."[133] Fertilizer, however, became increasingly more expensive, so that by the 1920s, nearly 3.5 million acres of agricultural land in Georgia was abandoned as farmers would not afford to sustain their practice.[134] The infestation of the boll weevil only furthered the devastation of cotton farms in the Georgia Piedmont.

As Georgia agriculture, especially cotton farming, fell from prominence, the scars of history were left upon the landscape in the forms of gullies and erosion. The ecology of Newton County had been devastated by centuries of human history, thus initiating a new human-land relationship – one of trauma and scarred spirituality. The devastation of the land physically, emotionally, and mentally scarred those who worked on it and those who eventually lost it when the land was deemed irreparably unproductive. Generations later, descents of tenant farms and enslaved laborers still harbor these emotional scars passed down through their ancestry.

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[132]Silkenat, David. *Scars on the Land :An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South.* Oxford University Press, 2022, 169.

[133]Silkenat, *Scars on the Land :An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South*, 170.

[134] "May 29, 1919: Boll Weevil Arrives in Georgia." The Augusta Chronicle, May 29, 2020. https://www.augustachronicle.com/story/news/2020/05/29/may-29-1919-boll-weevil-arrives-in-georgia/113549400 7/.

Coinciding with the fall of agriculture was the era of Black and other minority disenfranchisement, bolstered by passing of racist statues, or Jim Crow laws, by state governments. Racial discrimination and segregation dominated the era of history following the Civil War through the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. During this time, destitute landscapes and the legacy of plantation culture served as reminders of past atrocities carried out by those in power over the land and enslaved human beings.

During the Civil Rights Movement, the social history of African Americans entertained the mainstream, highlighting the abusive power structures that first decimated the country's Native American populations as early as the sixteenth century. This era of confronting past aggressions and seeking social justice and retribution gave way to the attitudes of the modern South.

The Modern South

The treatment of land across the latter half of the twentieth century to the twenty-first center did not differ significantly. If anything, the landscape of Dried Indian Creek has been all but neglected. Physical artifacts of trash, shopping carts, and other human instruments litter the stream today. A site visit to Dried Indian Creek revealed that although the stream runs along the western edge of the city of Covington, it is no longer an integral part of community life.

Near Bethlehem Baptist Church, there is a clear spatial relationship between the place of worship and Dried Indian Creek. Traces of human behavior suggest that spatial might be the only relationship still maintained between the church and the creek. The banks of the creek near the church are severely eroded, overrun by invasive species like the Kudzu vine, and littered with

trash. There is a footbridge over the creek connecting the church to a newly built playground from which one can view the eroded, dilapidated, and cluttered state of the stream.

Figures 11-14. Top left to bottom right: Bethlehem Baptist Church; spatial relationship between Dried Indian Creek and Bethlehem Baptist Church; half-submerged shopping cart along the banks of Dried Indian Creek; footbridge connecting Bethlehem Baptist Church to public park (by author).

Modern engagement opportunities with the Dried Indian Creek are scarce. There is, however, a constructed wetland along the creek next to the Covington City Hall Building and the Cricket Frog trail that runs through Newton County along an old rail line. The constructed wetland project was completed in 2010 and represents an attempt to connect humans once again with their environment and restore the ecological integrity of the nearby portion stream. While

the area immediately around the constructed wetland looks more healthy and maintained, the portions of the creek adjacent to the wetland show the same signs of neglected seen at the

Bethlehem Baptist Church site – vegetative overgrowth and human litter.

Figures 15-18. Top left to bottom right: Signage at constructed wetland; constructed wetland framed by Black Willow trees; accumulation of debris and litter in Dried Indian Creek near constructed wetland; half-submerged shopping carts in Dried Indian Creek near constructed wetland (by author).

The traces of human activity abandoned buildings and belongings, and a preponderance of empty lots near Dried Indian Creek give the impression of human life and interaction with the waterway. However, over the course of a site visit on a sunny autumn afternoon, there was not another human being near the creek, leaving one with a sense of haunting. The haunting of Dried Indian Creek goes back hours to when a passerby disposes of an empty soda bottle along its

banks and then continues on their way, and centuries, as generations of communities reflect on the violent history of the creek. Feelings of haunting contribute to the mental and emotional scarring that occurs along physical scaring of a landscape.

CONCLUSIONS

As humans interact with the landscape, they "consciously change their environments to some extent," thus establishing a cultural ecology.[135] Through repeated interaction, a relationship is formed between human beings and the fruits of an ecologically robust landscape. As the environment is re-shaped through human activity, it "presents a new set of possibilities for cultural reproduction." Changes in human relationships to the land "must be analyzed in terms of changes not only in their *social* relations but in their *ecological* ones as well."[136] Therefore, it is important to understand the cultural dynamics surrounding a landscape in order the understand the landscape's present day ecology.

In the era of early history, which was guided primarily by Creek cosmology, humans' relationship to the land was one of respect and reciprocation. The Creek understood the importance of ecological stability to sustain their human populations for long periods of time. Natural resources like crops were considered to be gifts of the divine worth treasuring and not depleting.

As white settlers began to settle in the region, the human relationship with the land began to shift. The settlers, inspired by European understandings of capitalist commodity production, saw "ecological abundance" as "economic prodigality."[137] Natural resources were sources of

[135]Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 12.
[136]Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 13.
[137]Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 170.

economic wealth, not gifts from the beings of the spiritual realms. The more land there was to exploit, the more profit there was to be made. This sort of relationship to the landscape was "ecologically self-destructive", for natural resources are finite, not limitless.[138] Once the soil and other natural resources became unproductive or scarce, many Southern landscapes fell into disrepair and neglect. What drove changes in human-environment relationships throughout these eras of history? What does this mean for the human-environment relationship of today?

Throughout the four eras of harm outlines in this research, two patterns can serve to build an explanation for the changes in the human-environment relational shifts: the shifting politics of power and the loss of the sacred. The relationship humans have had with the landscape near Dried Indian Creek has been dependent on the agency each actor in the relationship has. In the era of early history, the landscape and elements of it were given agency on par with the human and spiritual world. Landscape agency waned throughout the following eras of dispossession and the Jim Crow South. The status of landscape shifted from being considered an entity with divine nature to being considered an object upon which humans could act upon. As more power fell into the hands of abusive property owners, the health of the landscape declined and left behind a wave of physical landscape scars.

In addition to oscillating power systems, the loss of the sacred between humans and the landscape instigated a change in the human-environment relationship. In the shift from early history to the dispossession era, the landscape lost its inherent spirituality. Rather than being a spiritual entity like a human being, the landscape became a mere theater for humans to practice their religious rituals. Such a shift disconnected people from the landscape, making them unaware of the harm being done to the environment with the rise of institutions like slavery. The

[138]Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 169.

abuse of power over landscape and people resulting in scarring of the landscape and individuals alike.

Landscape architects in the modern era have a unique opportunity to return agency to the landscape. The Enso Framework provides a system of thought in which the landscape is understood to be comprised of the same elements as human beings and thus worthy of humanly care and compassion. Likewise, the Enso Framework re-establishes a spiritual connection between human beings and the landscape by the means of Zen Buddhism. By understanding the interconnected and impermanent nature of all things, one can begin to calm their own mind, heal their mental and emotional wounds, and inspire others to do so through the careful, compassionate site design of a landscape scar.

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