

## The Earth as a Common Treasury: 500 Years of Collective Land Tenure as Resistance

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This story map presents a narrative arc of resistance to private land ownership models, and insistence instead on relational and culturally rooted alternatives throughout Europe and so-called North America. From late 1500's England to June 2021 at the Mississippi River headwaters, the contexts, details, and actors have shifted as the dynamics of private land ownership, enclosure, and speculation play out in different geographies and topographies of power. While these case studies help us envision positive alternatives, the narrative is also imbued with complexity and discomfort. Collective land projects have been entwined with both settler colonialism and anti-colonial struggle. Without a reckoning around the settler colonial implications of communal arrangements, as well as the use of landownership as a wealth generating mechanism from which BIPOC populations have been systemically excluded in the United States, collective tenure models cannot be leveraged towards a just and liveable future. Nevertheless, the narrative of resistance through collective land tenure re-emerges, looping a thread through histories of resistance inviting investigation into what these models offer visionaries working to – as the Zapatistas say – remake a world within which many worlds fit.

*Keywords: enclosure; resistance; land tenure; property*

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6924a1580c654c45add782b77510daee>

About the Author

**Dani Slabaugh (she/they):** My current research interests spring from investigation of my own family's historical Anabaptist (and thus anti-state and anti-property) lineage, their deportation from Switzerland in the late 1500's, and their eventual participation in a complicated colonial application of collective land stewardship in the midwestern United States. I was raised on Ottawa land in central Michigan, though my ancestors' colonization

of Indigenous land includes that of the Shoshone (Idaho) as well as Ottawa (Northern Michigan) - both claimed through the Homestead Act of 1862 – as well as lands the Standing Rock Sioux in North Dakota where my paternal grandfather exerted state authority over land stewardship through the USFS.

I currently reside and study as a PhD student at the University of Colorado Denver, which is located on Ute, Arapaho and Cheyenne territory. My interest in these legacies is intended in service of not only racial justice but also a stable climate future and thriving planetary ecosystem for generations to come. My experience as a queer agnostic critic of capitalism as well as many years of community organizing for environmental and racial justice in Austin, TX also inform my research and thinking in various ways.