

**NOT OWNERS: LIBERATORS OF THE EARTH!
THE MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF MOTHER EARTH:
AN INTERETHNIC COUNTERHEGEMONIC APPROACH**

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an analytical framework for understanding social movements and proposes a corresponding definition. It offers a detailed look at the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth (MLME) in Colombia, highlighting its interethnic and counterhegemonic approach in the struggle for land. Drawing upon concepts from social movements and related theories, the study centers on the MLME, which originated in the northern area of the department of Cauca and emerged as a response to the unequal distribution of land and natural resources. Rooted in an indigenous worldview, this movement conceives of Earth as an oppressed mother and seeks her liberation by resisting land grabbing and industrial exploitation. It underscores the importance of viewing the Earth as a living being, emphasizing the relevance of this cosmological perspective within the context of nature's rights. This study emphasizes the need to rethink the relationship between society and nature, advocating for a deeper recognition of the interconnectedness between the two.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta un marco de aproximación a los movimientos sociales y plantea una definición de los mismo. Ofrece una visión detallada del Movimiento de Liberación de la Madre Tierra (MLMT) en Colombia, destacando su enfoque interétnico y contrahegemónico en la lucha por la tierra. Mediante conceptos relacionados con los movimientos sociales y las teorías que los explican se centra en el MLMT, que surge en el norte del departamento de Cauca, Colombia, como respuesta a la desigualdad en el acceso a la tierra y los recursos naturales. Este movimiento se fundamenta en una cosmovisión indígena que considera a la Tierra como una madre esclavizada y busca su liberación, luchando contra el acaparamiento de tierras y la explotación industrial. Destaca la importancia de comprender a la Tierra como un ser vivo, resaltando la relevancia de este enfoque cosmológico en el contexto de los derechos de la naturaleza. El artículo enfatiza la necesidad de replantear la relación entre la sociedad y la naturaleza, abogando por un reconocimiento más profundo de la interconexión entre ambos.

KEY WORDS: Social movements, land and conflict, liberation of Mother Earth.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Movimientos sociales, tierra y conflicto, liberación de la Madre Tierra.

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INTRODUCTION

What is a social movement? As is the case with most definitions in the field of social sciences, there is no universal consensus. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a brief historical review and characterize the theories relating to social movements. In this regard, the definition proposed by Marisa Revilla Blanco (1996) is used, which offers a precise framework for approaching this context. It denotes “the process of reconstituting a collective identity beyond institutional politics, whereby individual and collective actions are imbued with meaning” (p. 10). This process involves a variation, change, or modification of identity (individual and/or collective) in relation to preferences and expectations.

The hypothesis under consideration here regarding the origin of social movements suggests that they emerge when collective desires concerning social order (the interaction among different societal visions) fail to include and represent all individuals and groups within a given society at a particular point in time and space. [...] The emergence of a social movement resolves uncertainty surrounding the collective wills shaping the social order. (Revilla, 1996, p. 12)

In the following, we explore a theoretical approach to social movements and the theoretical frameworks proposed by Rafael de la Garza Talavera (2011) to address such phenomena:

- **Classical approach:** This perspective, grounded solely in the notion of class struggle and political ideology, has undergone significant modifications in response to its evident limitations. These limitations emerged as social needs evolved, giving rise to new forms of struggle. It was acknowledged that the traditional social foundation had changed, and its values had become incongruous with the principles of the classical approach. The adaptations became apparent with the growing prevalence of participatory ideologies, the increasing use of non-institutional modes of political engagement, and the politicization of issues previously considered solely moral or economic (De la Garza Talavera, 2011).

- **Marxist approach:** By exclusively focusing on the labor movement, the Marxist approach stripped it of any revolutionary potential, assuming it to be the quintessential social movement (De la Garza Talavera, 2011, p. 113).
- **Functionalist approach:** This approach differs from the Marxist approach primarily in terms of the rationality attributed to social movements. It now extends beyond class struggle to also include class domination (De la Garza Talavera, 2011).
- **Constructivist approach:** The constructivist approach emphasizes that collective action primarily arises from the internal transformations that individuals experience in response to specific conditions. This approach delves deeper into cultural analysis from a symbolic perspective, emerging from the creation of interpretative frameworks generated by social ruptures and/or turning points. Given the convergence between the two central schools of social movement theory, namely the new social movements theory and resource mobilization theory, this approach primarily addresses the opposition between the idea that the system influences the individual and that the individual determines the system. “Although the analysis centers on the individual, they cannot be conceived as isolated or indifferent to the surrounding environment, especially in light of recent changes, i.e., globalization” (De la Garza Talavera, 2011, p. 114).

Theory	Definition	Common aspects relative to social movement dynamics
Collective behavior	Collective action as joint action of individuals for the defense of common interests.	1. Informal interaction networks. 2. Shared beliefs and solidarity. 3. Collective action developed in areas of conflict. 4. Action that takes place outside the institutional sphere and the usual procedures of social life.
Resource mobilization	Emphasis on structural analysis both <i>within</i> and <i>outside</i> of social movements (modes of interaction).	
Political process	Transformation of participation channels.	
New social movements	Integral to the theories.	

Table 1. Theoretical frameworks focused on such phenomena.

Source: Revilla Blanco, in “El concepto de movimiento social: acción identidad y sentido” (1996, pp. 1–18), and De la Garza Talavera, in “Las teorías de los movimientos sociales y el enfoque multidimensional” (2011, pp. 107-138).

In broad terms, the prevailing idea is that social movements “respond to imbalances within the system, particularly regarding processes of social integration” (De la Garza, 2011, p. 111). Within this framework is a proposal to acknowledge social movements as catalysts for social change. According to De la Garza (2011), this perspective “prioritized defining a social movement based on the context in which it emerges, later evolving into the resource mobilization approach, particularly with the political opportunity structure proposed by authors like Tarrow” (p. 111).

The main contribution of the resource mobilization approach lies in its analysis focused on the internal functioning of social movements. Indeed, this perspective may have a notable connection with one of the key points developed by Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres (2014) on demosprudence. They argue that social movements are crucial to driving cultural changes that enable legal transformations to endure over time. In addition, they highlight that social movement activism plays a role comparable to that of the law or jurisprudence as a source of rights. Ultimately, we will examine whether a movement such as the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth in Colombia embodies these approaches. We will analyze whether, as “ordinary people,” they succeed in challenging unjust norms through their demands and determination in the streets and fields.

1. New social movements

In summary, the social base of the new social movements has evolved, expanding beyond the working class to encompass a new middle class, alongside sectors outside the market economy (e.g., homemakers, students, unemployed individuals, retirees), as well as members of the traditional middle class (e.g., farmers, small shop owners, artisans, and intellectuals). This diverse social coalition forms the foundation of the new movements, producing different values and forms of action. In fact, the social base constitutes an alliance among various societal sectors, excluding those involved in class conflict. As a result, these movements lack values specific

to a certain class, as their values are determined by universal or specific characteristics.

In the 1960s, the idea of frustration was introduced as a motivation for the emergence of social movements. During this period, many novel mobilizations emerged, including student protests, labor strikes, anti-nuclear demonstrations, pacifist movements, anti-abortion campaigns, environmentalist initiatives, feminist activism, movements for the unemployed, consumer rights movements, and civil rights struggles, among others (De la Garza, 2011). According to this concept, relative deprivation and status incongruity are factors that lead to discontent, driving individuals to participate in these movements:

[The feeling that only a few receive benefits or privileges at the expense of others' needs] causes discontent, which is what motivates individuals to participate in social movements. This frustration can stem from various factors, such as status incongruity or relative deprivation, which are fundamental to initiating action. [...] Confronted with the impact of public policies on their everyday lives, citizens frequently choose to take actions that are often deemed illegal within the framework of existing institutional channels. (De la Garza, 2011, p. 113)

Society's increasing complexity and diversity poses a central challenge concerning the maintenance of social cohesion. According to Claus Offe, this unity can be achieved in two ways, which are defined based on the essence of such unity, either in terms of diversity of interests or of values. Given the continued development of contemporary societies, values are increasingly subject to scrutiny, as interests are, to some extent, structured around them (De la Garza, 2011, p. 114).

Old paradigm		New paradigm
Actors	Socioeconomic groups acting collectively (in the interest of the group) and engaged in distributional conflicts.	Socioeconomic groups not acting in their own interests but rather representing assigned groups.
Content	Economic growth and distribution; military and social security; social control.	Peacekeeping, human rights advocacy, and non-aligned labor practices.
Values	Freedom and security in private consumption and material progress.	Personal autonomy and identity, opposition to centralized control, etc.
Modes of operation	a) Internal: formal organization, large-scale representative associations. b) External: pluralistic or corporatist intermediation of interests; competition between political parties, majority rule.	a) Internal: informality, spontaneity, low degree of horizontal and vertical differentiation b) External: protest politics characterized by demands predominantly formulated in negative terms.
Commonalities (despite differences)		
	For instance, liberalism, which advocates for minimal state intervention in social life, strengthening civil rights and freedoms.	
Differences		
These extend beyond economic freedoms and into safeguarding and preserving values, identities, and ways of life.		
With conservatives, the new social movements share the idea of the importance of modernization, although they differ in objectives—while conservatives view modernization as a means to preserve traditional values, the new movements see it as a way to break free from those very values.		For socialists, they undoubtedly share criticism regarding the destructive and chaotic impact of industrial and financial capitalism, although they differ in terms of who will spearhead the transformations.
“The criticisms of the old paradigm are encapsulated in a redefinition of progress, no longer anchored in the state as the primary driving force but propelled by society itself.”		
“The value of autonomy [from the state] is central in most contemporary social movements and is expressed through respect for differences, identities, and ways of conceiving the world.”		

Table 2. Characteristics of social movements

Note: Source: De la Garza Talavera, in “Las teorías de los movimientos sociales y el enfoque multidimensional” (2011).

The ethical content of the demands of social movements is clearly emphasized, paving the way for contemporary approaches where symbolic content takes center stage (De la Garza, 2011).

According to De la Garza (2011), Alain Touraine's perspective is based on the notion of society as a collective entity that autonomously produces and regulates its development, independent of higher authorities. From the individual's viewpoint, they can only become empowered by taking full responsibility for managing their daily life. The cultural dimension becomes central, to the extent that it strips the workers' movement of its revolutionary nature and transfers this characteristic to social movements. The struggle lies within the individual and their capacity for subjectivation, which involves destroying the self, "defined by the alignment of personal behavior and social roles and constructed through social interactions and socialization mechanisms." In this context, the subject exists solely as action in the form of social movements, and Touraine develops what is known as his sociology of action, which is a significant contribution to the study of social movements (De la Garza, 2011, p. 113). It recognizes diversity as key when explaining the process of forming collective identities.

Social movements must be understood in terms of the emergence of an "us" that shares common goals, means, and relationships with the environment; this collective identity implies solidarity and unity rather than a precise identification of a conflict or adversary. Additionally, it is crucial for collective action to extend beyond institutional channels. This last factor paves the way for defining a typology consisting of activist, political, and antagonistic movements, resulting from varying levels of conflict. (De la Garza, 2011, p. 118)

With this brief overview and conceptual framework, we aim to provide a concise characterization of a movement that defies conventional categories: the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth.

2. The Earth, enslaved mother

The land problem in Latin America has colonial roots that, instead of being resolved over the centuries, have produced multiple conflicts and displacements. The colonial logic of dispossession persisted after the independence movements and the formation of Creole republics. The

subsequent exclusion of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and peasants as political actors deepened land grabbing and exclusion for two centuries, alongside a relentless drive for extraction. In recent decades, the indignations and frustrations inherited from the pre-industrial period have reached levels conducive to the emergence of ethnic social movements. These movements have triggered a range of protest actions deeply linked with land occupation and liberation. There is a vast body of literature addressing the issue of land in Colombia and Latin America. While it may not be possible to provide a comprehensive overview in this article, we aim to offer an approximation of the context of indigenous, Afro-descendant, and peasant land struggles in Colombia. Thus, this study aims to further understanding of the dimensions that have shaped the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth, a tremendously complex, independent, interethnic, and ongoing phenomenon.

Land has been one of the central issues of the armed conflict in Colombia. Beginning in the 19th century with the wars between federalism and centralism; continuing through the conservative hegemony in the 20th century, the Liberal Republic of López Pumarejo, “La Violencia” in the 1940s, and the political distribution of the National Front; to the stagnation of agrarian reform in the 1980s, economic liberalization in the 1990s, paramilitary violence in the early 21st century, and, finally, the peace processes, throughout all this conflict and violence, land has remained a central factor. Land continues to be a determining factor for the poverty and social inequality of farmworkers and the population in general. As a result of the war, approximately 8.3 million hectares were seized from the civilian population (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2015). It was only in 2011, with the Victims Law (Law 1448/2011), that public policy began to include mechanisms aimed at providing comprehensive reparations to victims regarding land. However, the policy still has many gaps and weaknesses that have rendered it inadequate, insufficient, and even corruptly implemented. Similarly notable is the comprehensive agrarian reform outlined in the Agreement for the Termination of the Armed Conflict with the FARC-EP, which, despite being a historical obligation in Colombian society, remains blocked (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2015).

In Colombia, nature has become one more victim of the armed conflict, especially for indigenous peoples¹. The paradoxical relationship between armed conflict and the environment is complex. Thus far, specialized literature has identified four interrelated dynamics: nature as a cause of conflict, nature as a mechanism for financing and perpetuating conflict, nature as a victim of conflict, and finally, nature as a beneficiary of conflict (Rodríguez et al., 2017, p. 19). This multiple impact becomes more concrete regarding land use and land titling. Decades of informality, land grabbing, and forced displacement have been key components in shaping the agrarian situation in the country.

According to the report “Land in dispute: Memories of dispossession and peasant resistance on the Caribbean coast (1960-2010),” estimates of the extent of land usurped or lands forcibly abandoned vary according to sources. Some have calculated the figure to be approximately 1.3 million (Ibañez, 2008), while the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement estimated the amount of usurped or dispossessed hectares at 4.8 million and the Movement of Victims of State Crimes at close to 10 million (Grupo de Memoria Histórica de la CNRR, 2014, p. 49). In this historical context², where the struggle for land serves as the backdrop to the internal armed conflict, large landowners, often with support or even illegal favoritism or bribery of state officials, emerge as the main victors, resulting in extreme inequality. The international Gini index, as measured in Colombia by the Agustín Codazzi Geographic Institute (IGAC), is 0.88, which indicates that if 10 people were to divide a pie representing all the land in Colombia into 10 pieces, one person would own nearly nine of them (Parra and Rodríguez, n.d.). It is of utmost importance to recognize the brave struggle of those who choose non-violent means.

The communities of the Nasa people in northern Cauca, Colombia, have raised their voices against capitalist power since 2005. Their resistance not only entails denouncing and confronting the process of privatizing large areas of land but also pursuing cultural liberation. They do not simply seek

¹ In this article, territory is defined as the “living integrity and sustenance of identity and harmony, as per the worldview of indigenous peoples, and due to the special and collective bond they maintain with it, it is harmed when violated or desecrated by conflict.”

² The Colombian case is undoubtedly paradigmatic, with extreme figures; however, structural-related conflict can be found in other countries in the region with incomplete agrarian reforms, such as Mexico, Bolivia, and Peru.

to free themselves from the scarcity and exclusion to which they have been subjected as a people, but they propose to stop the alliance between the state and the companies that enslave the Earth itself. For them, territory is the mother of life, not property.

Our mother is not free to thrive in life; she will only be so when she returns to being the soil and shared home of the peoples who care for her, respect her, and live with her. Until this occurs, neither are her children truly free. All peoples are slaves, along with the animals and other beings, until we succeed in restoring our mother's freedom. (ACIN, 2015)

In a country where more than 8 million people have been displaced by violence, the defense of territory using sticks and stones against specialized armies, as part of protecting a unique worldview, embodies an act of dignity that goes beyond mere land ownership aspirations.

3. Breaking chains

The Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth continues to generate significant disruptions. In addition to carrying out incursions on private land for its reappropriation and redistribution, participants have constructed a discourse based on interethnic identity, the special bond of indigenous communities with the territory, and a worldview that perceives the Earth as a mother. The counterhegemonic nature of the movement is not limited to the struggle for land; rather, it seeks a paradigm shift.

Entering large private estates, primarily owned by sugar conglomerates with a lengthy history of exploiting natural resources and rural populations, could be viewed as a strategic maneuver to defend the human right to adequate housing or even a boycott strategy against the latifundist industry. However, the movement goes further; the enslavement of the Earth through large-scale industrial exploitation lies at the root of inequality and the violation of indigenous, Afro, and peasant communities. In this regard, the struggle of the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth raises a profound questioning of power relations, both in sociological contexts and in a broader cosmological sense.

The liberation of Mother Earth embodies the anti-colonial and anti-extractive struggle, advocating for the autonomy and self-determination of ancestral peoples and communities. The movement enriches the collective identity of the involved communities through the recollection of the historical struggle of the indigenous peoples of Cauca, dating back centuries. Here, their own version of history is reclaimed:

Many years ago, these valleys were the ancestral lands and home of our peoples, who lived in what is now known as the southwest of Colombia. They lived well, eating, drinking, chewing, offering, weaving, and dancing. Then came 1535, the year of the Conquest. Overnight, we went to sleep as Nasa and woke up as “Indians.” Thus began the relentless exploitation of our lands, turning them into battlegrounds. Since then, we have had no peace nor rest. Three years later, weary of the oppressors’ claws, a remarkable woman, Gaitana, took up arms to defend our Earth. She organized an army of 20,000 guards from the Nasa, Yalcones, Pijaos, Timanaes...and defended the honor and land of our peoples, the same land we now tread upon, the same land to which we have now returned. The war of resistance she began lasted 120 years, perhaps the longest any people have fought in history. The resistance she started is 478 years old. No peace or rest. (Pueblo Nasa, 2016, pp. 8-9)

The struggles of Gaitana were followed in the 16th century by those of Juan Tama and Manuel de Quilo, who “reached an agreement with the Spanish Empire, and since then, we have lived tightly packed in territories called ‘resguardos.’” In the early 20th century, a movement led by Manuel Quintín Lame against land rents involved litigation for the titling of ancestral territories (Pueblo Nasa, 2016, pp. 8-9).

The period of “La Violencia” in Colombia resulted in terrible displacements that unfortunately have not ceased. Shortly after the adoption of the Political Constitution of 1991, on December 16, the Nasa people endured a tragic massacre in which 20 members were killed by the National Police and armed civilians. Three decades later, they continue to be killed³.

³ Twenty from Nile: Darío, Ofelia, Carolina, Adán, Edgar, Otoniel, Mariana, Eleuterio, Tiberio, Floresmiro, Mario, María Jesús, Nicolás, Feliciano, Calixto, Julio, José Jairo, Jesús Albeiro, Daniel and Domingo; family of the 13 from Gualanday—among them seven ‘kiwe thegna’ or Guardians—massacred; eight from San Pedro, massacred; 100 from El Naya,

Faced with colonial genocide, political exclusion, forced disappearances and violations, massacres, and the thousands of agreements signed and unfulfilled by the government; amid the crossfire between guerrillas, the army, and paramilitaries, displacement, and the co-optation strategies of large industrial empires and multinational corporations, the Nasa people continue to defend themselves. They protect their culture and Mother Earth through songs, dances, communal gatherings, collective work, and other creative strategies. “A desalambrarte” (“breaking chains”) was a collective work program involving artists, indigenous people, and farmworkers involving planting crops and beautifying various reconstructed indigenous villages on liberated lands. The Nasa people have radio stations, produce podcasts, have established a virtual presence, and have joined with other indigenous movements advocating for autonomy, such as the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, and for land recovery, such as the Landless Workers’ Movement.

The Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC in Spanish) has developed a key leadership role in the Colombian indigenous movement, achieving electoral victories at the local executive and national legislative levels. Disappointed by the limited and occasionally conflicting outcomes of the electoral route, the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth has voiced its own critiques of the CRIC and the political figures within their communities. This discontent has led to the emergence of new leaders among the younger generations after 15 years of collective action. Deprived of access to education and job opportunities, with their cultural traditions under threat, and weary of the internal divisions and conflicts inherited from the pioneering generations, they have embarked on a new phase of liberation with young farmworkers from the region. Liberating Mother Earth means embracing illegality, considered valid and sanctioned by a state that enforces a legal framework of dispossession in contexts or areas dictated by market interests and the financial system. The indigenous movement’s strength and legitimacy stem from its use of resistance within the bounds of legality and the array of socially accepted illegal practices it employs to defend territory and culture in every scenario, space, and time (Vargas and Ariza, 2019).

massacred, and five from López Adentro, massacred (...); the family of Cristóbal, Marden, Benjamín, Álvaro Nasa Pal, murdered (...); the tribe of Anatolio; the descendants of hundreds of men and women who fell while liberating in an act of genocide, and hundreds of leaders killed in recent months.

4. March for food

One of the actions used by the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth to transmit valuable lessons is the March for Food, now in its fifth year. The crops harvested from the liberated farms are donated to communities in neighborhoods in Cali, Popayán, and other municipalities in the region. The transportation of food, along with indigenous families, on⁴ chivas to towns and cities turns into a small carnival. The bonds of solidarity established with civil society organizations, urban groups, and NGOs have broadened the movement's identity beyond the Nasa and have communicated a message of efficacy. While marginalized and impoverished suburban areas continue to wait for the promised benefits from the government, indigenous communities provide chemical-free food, traditional cuisine, and, most importantly, bring joy and hope to many families residing in towns and cities out of necessity, fostering bonds of solidarity with rural Afro, indigenous, and peasant populations.

The food is the result of collective labor and thus an outcome of the land liberation. Sharing it has effectively countered numerous attempts to distort their message, bridging the gap with urban citizens through direct interaction and coexistence with the liberation groups. Furthermore, it addresses the challenging food situation prevalent in vast impoverished areas within one of the country's most productive departments. Food sovereignty is a fundamental part of the Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth's struggle; they have established networks of custodians for indigenous seeds and gathered interethnic gastronomic wisdom.

Since taking over the farms, we have cleared many, many hectares of the sugarcane monoculture that stretches across thousands of hectares in the northern region of Cauca that are dedicated to the production of sugar and fuel. Sugar that sweetens soft drinks made from the water that comes down from our mountains. Fuel that powers the cars that sell soft drinks and make a lot of money. Money that finances the war, the battalions that are still present in our territory and continue to threaten and kill us. The circle that enslaves Uma Kiwe

4 Used as traditional buses in rural areas of Colombia, chivas are vehicles adapted to transport cargo and passengers, typically very colorful and often overloaded with both.

[Mother Earth]. We have planted many, many hectares of food: corn, beans, cassava, banana, squash. (Pueblo Nasa, 2016, pp. 31-32)

The fifth Food March has facilitated inter-community agreements on key issues, emphasizing collaborative efforts. These include initiatives such as “Markets for resistance,” which aims to promote fair and direct trade between agrarian producers and consumer communities; “Network of gardens for the liberation of Mother Earth”; “Sharing warm experiences,” a platform for learning and exchanging knowledge between movements, such as the national strike and communities advocating for the liberation of Mother Earth in the northern Cauca region that are willing to engage with similar movements in other areas; and “Popular and community health system,” which seeks to address gaps left by the Colombian state healthcare system (Liberación de la Madre Tierra, 2021).

It is evident that the liberation of Mother Earth extends beyond land occupation; it aims to emancipate and foster autonomy across multiple dimensions while cultivating various levels of solidarity. Since the 1970s, the movement’s slogan has been “reclaiming the Earth to reclaim everything.”

5. *Uma Kiwe* and conclusion

The Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth’s conception of the Earth as a living entity and an enslaved mother is crucial for not only reevaluating our relationship with nature but also for broaching the concept of the rights of nature.

The struggle of the Nasa people, like that of most indigenous communities, is rooted in their connection to the land, which involves building social and communal identity in relation to nature, considering it an integral part of their existence. *Uma Kiwe*, which means “mother who teaches and cares” in the Nasayuwe language, symbolizes the living territory.

The Sarayaku people refer to *Kawsak Sacha*, the living jungle, while the Muisca use the expression *Hitcha Waia*. Likewise, every community, in its own language, recognizes the living entity from which we all originate. The Movement for the Liberation of Mother Earth communicates the Earth’s voice, enriching its discourse through poetry, mythology, and linguistic deconstructions of Spanish, allowing space for that voice to be heard.

Learning to listen to her and feel her presence, not abandoning her because she is our Mother. / Reflecting once more is a part of the guidance, as everything communicates. We are guided by thunder, lightning, water. / It is said that none of us came alone to occupy this space. / Mother Earth has summoned us to show respect. / If we liberate her today, it is to defend and nurture her. (Ojarasca, 2021, p. 18)

The spiritual or metaphysical dimension, with its inherent complexities, tends to be overlooked in the context of Western legal frameworks. It is the indigenous peoples who have introduced distinct categories to protect the beings in the natural world and Mother Earth. A social movement advocating for human interests, integrity, and the interdependence of all beings can greatly enrich the development of legal frameworks and deepen our understanding of concepts of justice.

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